



CITY OF VINCENT
LIBRARY &
LOCAL HISTORY CENTRE

January - March 2019
Vol. 9 No.1

Local History News



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Lake Monger Velodrome - 50 Years



Happy New Year! We have a busy year planned for 2019.

Since starting in my new role, I've been learning

more about our local history collection and exploring fresh ways to build and to share it more widely with people of all ages and interests.

This year we'll continue to build our collection through initiatives such as the Local History Awards. We will soon be putting the call out for photos and written entries for the 2019 awards. To encourage people to record and submit their stories, we'll also be holding memoir/life writing workshops commencing in March.

Throughout the year, we'll offer our popular house history and family history workshops as well as a speaker

series. The 2019 talks program kicks off in March with the erudite and ever enthusiastic Richard Offen speaking about his latest book, *Lost Perth*. Check out our calendar of events and speakers at the end of this newsletter.

In February, the City will launch the second series of 'Arts in Vincent' interviews showcasing more talented and creative Vincent residents. We'll continue to collect stories of local artists with a focus on contemporary music and public art makers and venues in Vincent.

My colleague Catherine and I look forward to hearing your local stories and to sharing our enthusiasm and passion for the history and heritage of Vincent in 2019. Drop by and chat with us at the Centre anytime.

Dr Susanna Iuliano
Senior Librarian, Local History Centre



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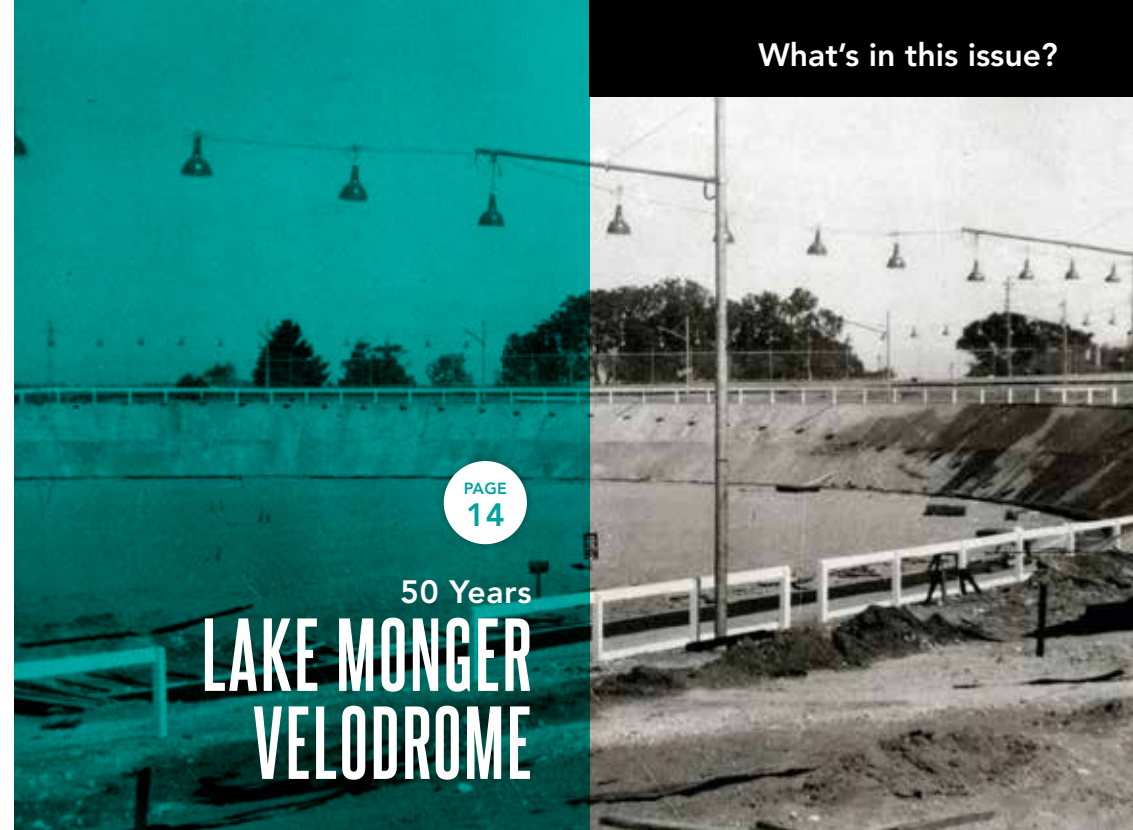
VISIT US
Opening hours: Monday to Friday
9.00am – 1.00pm
*2.00pm – 5.00pm
(*variable - ring to confirm)

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Cover image: Savas Spartalis in the baby pool at Beatty Park, 1968. PH02701



Memories OF SUMMER

Photographs courtesy of Gail Dorter.

Over the summer months, we are featuring a display of photos in the Local History Centre which evoke memories of summers past in our suburbs - from playing street cricket, fishing on the Swan, to learning to swim at Crawley Baths or later Beatty Park.

Today, there are backyard pools in almost every street in Vincent, but back in the 1940s and 50s when Gail Dorter grew up in North Perth, they were rare as hen's teeth and her family was the first in the area to have a pool. Gail wrote about her summers in the pool in 'Memories of Marmion Street' for the 2016 Local History Awards.

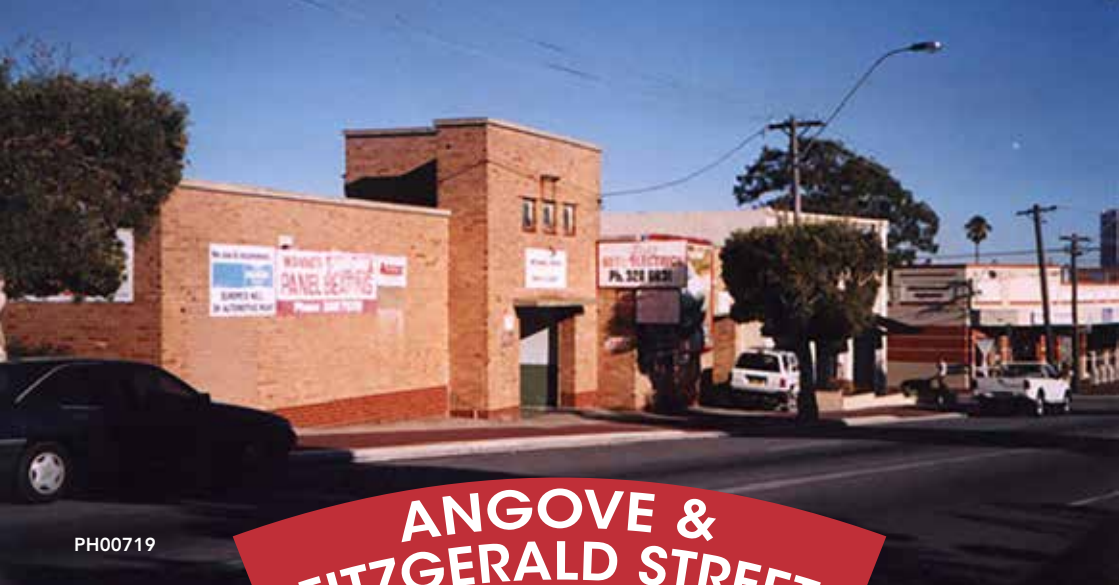
"My earliest memories are of growing up in Marmion Street, North Perth, number 14 to be precise... part of our backyard was cemented and fenced off from the main area, which wonder of wonders, contained a swimming pool. The first privately owned swimming pool in the state by a lot of years. It was built in late 1930 by my grandmother, who as family legend has it, went and saw a movie with a swimming pool around which the stars were lounging and decided to have one..."

While there was no lack of volunteers to swim in the pool, it was a different story when the time came to clean it. Without chlorination or filtration, the water quickly became dirty, then green, and finally would form a sort of horrible scum on the surface.

Initially we would simply part the scum or do bommies to splash it out, but when it got so bad that you had to hose yourself down after a swim, then we knew it was time to empty and refill the pool. On would go 'Greedyguts' (the pump) and the sprinklers would flow...We were the most popular children in North Perth when the pool was full, but we were to be avoided at all costs if it was not! When I look at the crystal clear water in my pool today, I can't help but wonder why we never contracted any of the dreadful diseases the authorities warn us about, for not only did we swim in it, but for many years we kept a long necked swamp tortoise in it and a duck called Lucy regularly did what ducks do in it. I am sure we were made of tougher stuff back then..."

Gail Dorter, Memories of Marmion Street 1945-1956.
Local History Award entry, 2016. (Available in Local History Centre: B/DOR)





PH00719

ANGOVE & FITZGERALD STREET PROJECT

Since last year, staff have been busy researching and collecting information about the history of Angove and Fitzgerald streets and we're keen to share more stories and snippets unearthed from oral histories and written memoirs in the Local History Collection.

360 FITZGERALD: THE ROSEMOUNT PICTURE GARDENS - TAKE 2

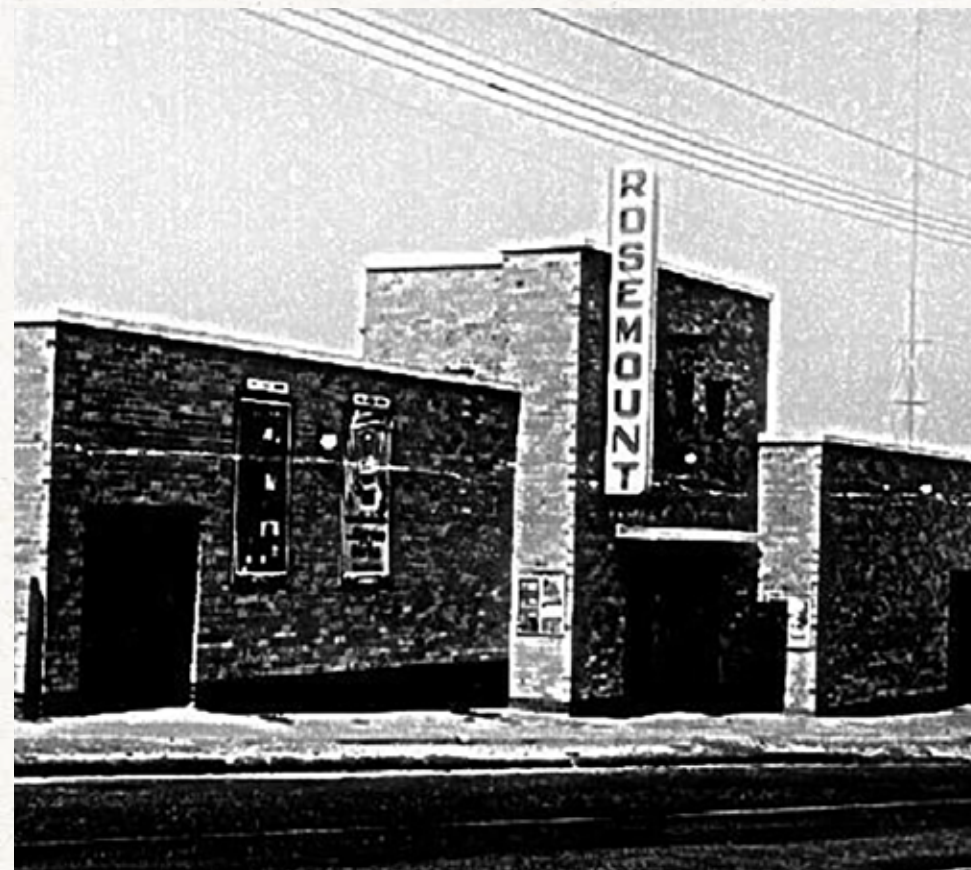
Research by Catherine Lang & Michelle Vercoe

From the 1920s, the Vincent area boasted several outdoor picture theatres including the Rosemount Picture Gardens, originally across the road from the Rosemount Theatre in what is now the carpark of the Rosemount Hotel.

The first Rosemount Picture Gardens operated from 1919-1922, closed

and then re-opened from the mid-1930s until 1949. The Local History Centre collection includes many stories from local residents of movies and public meetings in the original Rosemount Picture Gardens which we have featured in newsletters past. Less is known about the second Rosemount Picture Gardens which operated in the 1950s down the road at 360 Fitzgerald Street, in what is now an auto repair shop and mechanics yard.

Local resident Judith Ehling has fond memories of the outdoor theatre at 360 Fitzgerald:



"On Friday nights a whole group of us used to go down to the picture theatre there or in the summer we'd go down to the open-air theatre. (Inside it was) just deck chairs, that's all and they had a little snack bar that they used to open up where people could get chocolates and ice creams and things. It was just basic. Some of the naughty children used to have chewing gum and throw it and hope that it would get on the seat and somebody would sit on it and then get it on their clothes. The toilets were down the back..."

You would pay extra to go upstairs. Downstairs we all sat at the back because it was the best and we used to make all noises – and as much as you could and thump on the seats and the guy would come with his torch. You would behave yourself until he went out... It was good as kids and we had fun. The place is now being used as an automotive repair shop."

(Judith Ehling, City of Vincent Local History Collection, OH0255)



Ticket box of Rosemount
Picture Gardens, 2002 PH00718



Vivian Gauntlett, who was then a year five student, wrote a piece about movie cinemas in North Perth for the 2002 Local History Awards which mentioned the second Rosemount Picture Gardens:

"In 1949, The Rosemount Gardens and The Rosemount Theatre were taken over by Goldfields Pictures. Goldfields built a new garden closer to the city side of Fitzgerald Street. I found a picture of the new cinema in a book at the Battye Library and my mother recognised it as the auto electrician and spray painters in Fitzgerald Street. We went to visit them and talked to the man who showed us the projection room, ticket box and where the screen used to be. We took some photos where you can see the difference between then and today."

It's great to see young people taking an interest in their local area and we hope to encourage more young people to come in and explore the centre and also enter the Local History Awards. Vivian would be in her mid-20s now and we'd love to hear from her or her family and find out if she is still as interested in local history as she was as a 10 year old in 2002. If you have any stories about the Rosemount Picture Gardens please get in touch as we're keen to hear more personal recollections about the Rosemont Picture Gardens – pre or post WWII.

Information from:
cinematreasures.org/theaters/49525



Rear view of Rosemount
Picture Gardens 2002, PH00717



TRAM STORIES: TRAGEDY AND COMEDY ON THE RAILS

**Research by Michelle Vercoe,
Friends of Local History**

Trams were vital to the development of North Perth with tram services operating from 1900. The original route was from Barrack Street along Bulwer to Fitzgerald Street, with extensions of the lines along Fitzgerald to Forrest Street in 1906; Albert Street in 1910; and Angove Street by the Rosemount Hotel in 1913. The tram route turned the corner into Angove Street in 1921, eventually extending to the Charles Street intersection by 1927.

Last year, the April-June newsletter featured a story from Madeleine Galbraith 'Life, Crime and Trams in Fitzgerald Street' which touched on some of the accidents and mayhem that ensued when trams were added to the mix of horses, carts, motorcars and pedestrians on Fitzgerald Street. Newspapers of the day were filled with stories of accidents involving trams, such as the tragic death of two year old Cecil Lewis Moran who was run over by a tram on the corner of Newcastle and Fitzgerald Street while trying to retrieve his teddy bear in 1938. (See [Tragic Death: run over by tram car. Child the Victim, The Sunday Times, 3 July 1938.](#))

While there are many tragic tram accident stories, Friends of

Local History volunteer Michelle Vercoe has scoured the oral history collection for some more lighthearted North Perth tram stories and she has found with some pearls!

Bill Woodthorpe, who was part of the Woodthorpe family that established and ran the Woodthorpe and Sons butchers on Bulwer and later Angove and Fitzgerald streets from the early 1900s recalls his grandparent's pet galah joy-riding on the tram between the Woodthorpe family home on the corner of Raglan and Fitzgerald streets and the family butcher shop on the corner of Angove and Fitzgerald.

"(My grandparents) had the shop opposite the Hyde Park (Hotel) and one opposite the Rosemount Hotel. They were quite handy for that. They lived in between on the Raglan Road corner. They had a cocky and it used to get on the tram and go to that shop and they'd put it off and come home. The tram driver would be the same old one....it got on in Raglan Road at the house there – Raglan and Fitzgerald. The tram would go and then turn the corner and he'd let him off there. Then he'd do the trip home....he'd spend a little while (at the butcher shop), probably get a bit of meat, chew away and then I'm off home for a rest!"





Number 22 Tram turning from Fitzgerald into Angove Street, early 1950s. PH02897

Another light hearted story comes from David Meadowcroft. David's memories of North Perth in the 1940s and 50s include a recollection of a tram heist by local lads that reads like a scene from a Keystone Cops movie.

"The number 22 terminus was in Scarborough Beach Road, just across Charles Street, which was very convenient to the North Perth Hotel. The tram crew would stop, change over the trolley poles that ran from the overhead lines and then adjourn to the back bar for a refreshing lemonade.

Some of the likely lads of the Parish started extra-curricular activities and studied the controls of the tram and the habits of the crew. (This idea then being taken on by the Board of Education to be implemented some 30 years later as a new innovative workplace experience).

Getting the all-go from the lookout who ascertained that the driver and conductor were now served and listening to the sports on the blaring radio, the trainee trammies all scrambled aboard and turned the control handle to full ahead. Even at full ahead, there was concern at the slow rate of progress and escape across Charles Street. This concern was now alarmingly greater as the tram with its work experience crew now lumbered even slower up the hill and past the North Perth police station. For those contemplating a future secure career with the Government Tramways with a cool

lemonade, now seemed more likely a temporary number cracking rocks with bread and water with even greater security. However, the constabulary weren't to notice the apparently empty tram go by, the junior trammies now applying their studies to the floor, having ducked under the seats.

The tram eventually topped the hill and while the studies had been for forward progress, stopping had been overlooked. Now gathering speed and on an alarming sway while the steel wheels squealed and screeched around the corner of the Rosemount Hotel, throwing the trolley pole from the wires, thus coming to a stop heading down Fitzgerald Street. At this the crew took the opportunity to bale out, their now ashen white faces returning to colour as they hot-footed it to the safer grounds of home via Lake Monger. Missing the tram would have taken on an entirely new meaning for the driver and conductor."

Interview with Johan Willis, Gay Rowden and David Meadowcroft, COV Local History Centre: OH0234.

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Information gathered using Trove, COV Local History Collection and Tracks by the Swan: The electric tram and trolley bus era of Perth W.A. (2010) by Culpepper-Cooke, Gunzburg and Pleydell.



Cycling at the Velodrome 1962, PH00895.

LAKE MONGER VELODROME

6 March 2019 is the fiftieth anniversary of the official opening of the Lake Monger Velodrome. It was built in 1958/9 by Perth City Council at a cost of £110,000 for the track cycling events of the Seventh British Empire and Commonwealth Games held in Perth in 1962. The Velodrome was a carbon copy of the

Melbourne Olympics cycling track, with a concrete surface sprayed over foundations built on earthen banks. It had seating for 3,600 spectators and standing room for a further 2,000 people. During the Commonwealth Games, Australian cyclists made Games history by winning all the track titles.

Dr Pat Cranley, who volunteered as a medical officer for the games recalls:

"I was allotted the Velodrome and I was the officer in charge of the Velodrome for the racing... I wasn't very interested in bicycle riding, but I took a book with me and that kept me amused while the races were on." (City of Vincent, Local History Centre OH0080).

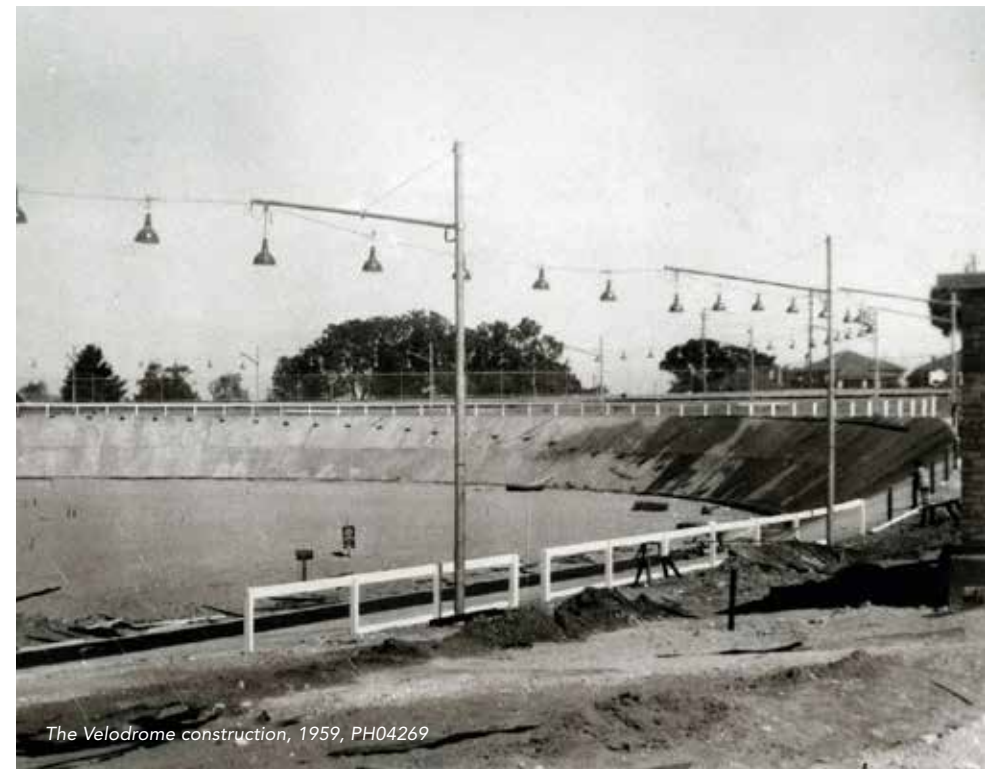
Lake Monger Velodrome operated for just over twenty years. However, the poor condition of the track made it slow and it required continual repairs. The site has been redeveloped over the years

and in 1998 the existing concrete cycle track and metal and timber grandstands built for the 1962 games were removed.

The Lake Monger Velodrome (fmr) was heritage listed in 2007. Although the banked tracks of the velodrome have been grassed over, their shape is still evident and the cycling tunnel has been left intact and is a prominent feature of the ground.

The site is now The E & D Litis Stadium and is home to Floreat Athena Soccer Club.

See Heritage Council Listing 18182.



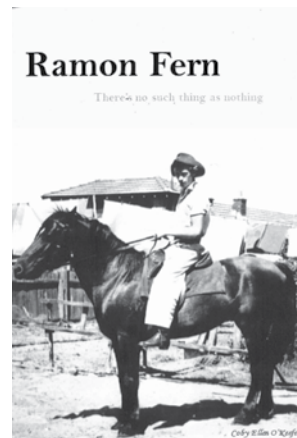
The Velodrome construction, 1959, PH04269

WHAT'S NEW in the Local History Collection?



PADDINGTON POSTERS

The suburbs of Vincent have been home to a long tradition of live music - from Rolf Harris playing Beatty Park, to punk bands at the Hyde Park Hotel. In Mount Hawthorn, The Paddington Ale house was for years home to a thriving live music scene. Former publican Neil Randal was looking for a new home for the signed band posters on the Paddo's walls and contacted the Local History Centre. Neil has generously gifted his collection of signed posters of Aussie bands who have played at the Paddo over the last 20 years. We're keen to collect more information and hear from musicians, music promoters and music loving locals about the live music scene in Vincent from way back to the present. Contact us if you have stories, posters, photos, videos - anything about the live music scene in Vincent.



RAMON FERN by Coby Ellen O'Keefe.

We recently received a delightful family history/ biography by Coby Ellen O'Keefe about her grandfather Ramon Fern who grew up in the 'wilds' of Mount Hawthorn in the 1930s and 1940s. When Coby set out to write her grandfather's story, his initial attitude (perhaps typical of his generation) was "why would you wanna do that for? I haven't done nothin'"; Coby persevered (much to his eventual delight) and has written a funny, warm and descriptive account of her grandfather's life which she has generously gifted to our collection.

From backyard bonfires, to catching gilgies in Lake Monger, to roping wild brumbies in Wanneroo, Ramon's childhood stories reflect a time when kids had less 'stuff' but more freedom to roam. Coby's done a great job of highlighting how differently kids lived in our suburbs during the Depression and War eras, without romanticising the hardship or difficulties.

Not every family is lucky enough to have a dedicated and committed person like Coby willing to take the time to listen to the stories of their elders and put them together in an engaging way. This year, we'd like to encourage and equip more people to write their own family histories or memoirs by hosting writing workshops at the Local History Centre. Check out the details in 'Events and Workshop'.



SUBURBAN BRAVERY - NORTH PERTH FIREMEN IMAGES

Andrew Duckworth, who wrote the history of North Perth's firemen *Suburban Bravery: a tale of mateship, bravery and sacrifice*, has generously gifted the Local History Centre all the images used in his 2015 publication. The photographs and information Andrew gathered in his painstaking

research is a welcome addition to our Local History Collection. That he found time to do this research with a family and a full time job as a fireman is laudable. It's great to see people from all walks of life and ages supporting and taking such a passionate interest in local history.



Aranmore Pipers 1934, PHO0877.

Family History CALLING ALL SCOTS!

Recently, we've had several queries from people asking for advice on researching their Scottish family heritage.

While Scotland has been part of the UK since 1707, it has maintained separate record systems to those in England, Wales and Northern Ireland so tracing your Scots ancestors may involve looking in different places for information. There are several good online databases, finding aids and guides that provide advice on researching your Scottish family heritage.

Family Search offers the following 'wiki' with handy tips:

https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Researching_Your_Scottish_Ancestry_From_1855

'Who do you think you are' family history magazine featured an article in 2017 with a list of great free online resources for people looking to start or dig deeper into their Scottish roots. A copy of the article is available from the Local History Centre and also online:

<http://www.whodoyouthinkyouaremagazine.com/blog/17-best-free-online-scottish-resources>

Memories OF SUMMER

Here are some of the photos currently on display in our Local History Centre.



Mt Hawthorn primary school students at Crawley Baths for swimming lessons, 1956 PH02101



Leederville children cooling off in a backyard paddling pool 1960s, PH02148



Leederville residents Charles & Ethel McGrath at the beach, 1930s. PH01824



Children on Lake Monger's Jetty, 1925 PH02447



Swimmers at Beatty Park 1963 PH02153

IN-HOUSE EVENTS

MORE AT
LIBRARY.VINCENT.WA.GOV.AU
FOLLOW THE CITY OF VINCENT
LIBRARY ON [FACEBOOK](#)



LAUNCH OF ARTS IN VINCENT 2

FRIDAY 8 FEBRUARY 2019

6PM - 7PM

Library Lounge

Join us for launch of the second series of 5 minute YouTube clips featuring talented and creative local residents. These clips were created from longer video interviews with local residents and artists Shane Colquhoun, Brendon Darby, James Ledger, Graham Seal, Brianna & Sonya Shepherd and Terri Charlesworth who have all made a mark in various forms of the arts.

Bookings preferred

Cost: Free, Includes light refreshments



LOST PERTH

WEDNESDAY 6 MARCH 2019

10AM - 11.30AM

Library Lounge

Hear Richard Offen speak about his latest book *Lost Perth* which features photographs and stories of the demise of some of Perth's iconic buildings and institutions. The book is not so much a lament for things past, but a reminder of the cost of heritage lost.

Presenter: Richard Offen

Bookings preferred

Cost: Free, Includes light refreshments



CONSUMING ANZAC

WEDNESDAY 24 APRIL 2019

10AM - 11.30AM

Local History Centre

In the years after the Great War, Australian memorials were often engraved with a simple request, 'Let silent contemplation be your offering'. Today, remembrance is fuelled by a booming Anzac industry that spruiks everything from tourism to far-flung battlegrounds to mass-produced Anzac biscuits. Jo will speak about her new book *Consuming Anzac* which explores how the commercialisation of the Anzac legend shapes the way Australians remember war.

Presenter: Jo Hawkins

Bookings essential

Cost: Free, Includes light refreshments



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WORKSHOPS



RESEARCHING THE HISTORY OF YOUR HOUSE

WEDNESDAY 27 FEBRUARY 2019
10AM - 11.30AM
Local History Centre

Every house has a tale to tell. If your walls could speak, what would they tell you about when and how the house was built or about the people who have called it home? This workshop introduces you to resources and information that will help unlock the stories and secrets of your house, street and neighbourhood.

Presenter: Susanna Iuliano & Catherine Lang
Bookings preferred

Cost: Free, Includes light refreshments

WRITING YOUR STORIES OF LIFE IN VINCENT

6 FORTNIGHTLY SESSIONS
BEGINNING 13 MARCH
10AM - 12PM
Local History Centre

Do you have a personal or family story about life in Vincent that you've been meaning to write, but just haven't gotten around to doing yet? Join us at the Local History Centre for a series of hands on workshops with writer Melinda Tognini and librarians Susanna and Catherine who will teach you how to gather and organise your information and write and edit an engaging and compelling family story or memoir.

Facilitator: Melinda Tognini *Bookings essential (maximum 15)*

Cost: \$10 per session/\$60 full course
Includes light refreshments



CITY OF VINCENT

VINCENT EVENTS OCT - MAY



ALL EVENTS ARE FREE

Join us for an epic season of events
events.vincent.wa.gov.au

ALL VINCENT EVENTS ARE SUPPORTED OR DELIVERED BY THE CITY OF VINCENT.



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