



The News Quarterly

October-December 2017 >> Vol.7 No.4

The annual highlight of our calendar, the Local History Photographic Awards, were announced by Mayor Emma Cole on the 18 September. See the winning photographs inside on pages 3-6. All of the entries are now on exhibition in the Local History Centre until the end of February 2018. They will also become part of our online Image Library.

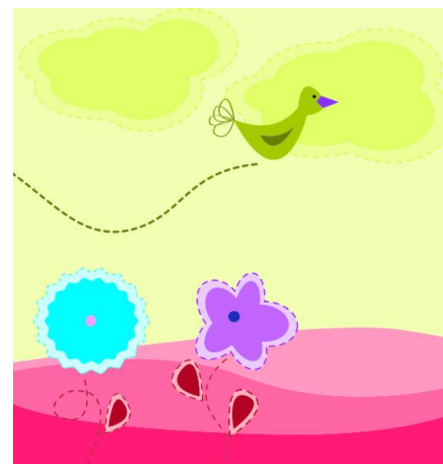
The sale of a painting of Hyde Park by local artist Walter P Meston, at an auction a few months ago, began a trail of discovery into this man and his work by one of our Friends of Local History. We hope you find his story interesting.

Where do you begin to write your life story? Come along to a workshop with Rosemary Stevens for inspiration. Places are limited, so be quick.

For those interested in architecture we have Professor Geoffrey London coming to speak about houses between 1950 and 1965, with reference to his book 'An Unfinished Experiment in Living'.

We look forward to welcoming you into the Centre, to browse, read, research or provide you with assistance.

Julie Davidson
Senior Librarian, Local History



What's in this issue?

- What's new online?
- Family History tips:
 - *Researching 18th century ancestors*
- Local History :
 - *Local History Photographic Awards winners*
 - *Beaufort Street Project update*
- From the Friends of Local History:
 - *Walter P Meston, artist*
- Calendar: *In-house events*

Visit us

Opening hours

Monday to Friday 9.00am – 1.00pm
*2.00pm – 4.45pm (*variable - ring to confirm)

Phone: 9273 6534

Email: local.history@vincent.wa.gov.au

Website: library.vincent.wa.gov.au/local-history-centre

Contact

Julie Davidson, Senior Librarian, Local History (Monday – Thursday)

Catherine Lang, Librarian, Local History (Monday, Wednesday and Friday)

What's New in ancestry library edition

Has added: *Ireland, Sustainability Loan Fund, 1821-1874*

Family history help on Wednesday and Thursday: Our Friends of Local History volunteers will help you with your family history research.

Family history tip

The 2017 Summer Edition of 'Who Do You Think You Are?' magazine lists a number of free resources for those wishing to further investigate the lives of their 18th century ancestors.

We have tried out each of these websites, and would like to suggest the following:

London Lives 1690-1800

www.londonlives.org

London Lives makes available, in a fully digitised and searchable form, a wide range of primary sources about eighteenth-century London, including Old Bailey Proceedings, workhouse records, hospital, guild and coroners' records. This resource includes over 240,000 manuscript and printed pages from eight London archives, listing over 3.35 million names.

Facilities allow users to link together records relating to the same individual, and to compile biographies of the best documented individuals. This search is a must if you have convict relatives from the London area, as records from the 'Old Bailey' give details about crimes and sentences. Remember your ancestor did not have to commit a crime to have been documented at the 'Old Bailey'. There are details for victims and witnesses as well.

The National Library of Ireland

registers.nli.ie

This site provides free access to Catholic registers for all of Ireland. Not all date back to the 18th century but some, including Dublin, start in 1740.

These free indexes are searchable by Parish only. If you are unsure of the Parish, but know the town or area your ancestor was from, it is useful to use www.swilson.info/gmapsetcoords.php to determine the Parish before using the National Library's Parish Registers. There are two ways to search for a Parish. You can either enter the name of the Parish into the search box provided or click on an interactive county map.

Local History Photographic Awards 2017 Winners



Winners were announced by Mayor Emma Cole on 18 September.

» Category One: A single photograph » Pre-1930 (Two prizes)



➤ **Winner Peter White**

110 Coogee Street, Mount Hawthorn, 1921 (corner of Woodstock Street).
Home of local baker Alfred White, who returned from WWI with one arm amputated. He continued bread deliveries in Mount Hawthorn until 1953.



➤ **Winner Annette Del Bianco**

Duncan Beaton sitting in the backyard of his home at 88 Bourke Street, Leederville, c.1928.
His parents, John and Ada Beaton, who married in 1925, went on to have 10 children.

» Category One: A single photograph » 1930-1959 (Three prizes)



➤ **Winner Tony Tornatora**

A young Tony Tornatora learning to ride a bike with his mother in Randell Street, Perth, 1951

➤ **Winner Tony Tornatora**

Tony with his Nonno Antonio Tornatora, at home in Marian Street, Leederville, 1957





➤ **Winner Stella Gasteiger**

Preparing meatballs for dinner in the kitchen at 70 Eton Street, North Perth, 1958
Angelio Figliomeni with daughters Stella (13) and Rose (5) and Marlene Denham work together around the kitchen table.

» **Category One: A single photograph » 1960-1999**
(Three prizes)



➤ **Winner Sophia Bogoiias**

Sophia, leaning on a delivery van, holding loaves of bread from her father's bakery, 1960. Tolcon's Roman Bakery was operated from 103 Alma Road, North Perth for thirty years from 1949 to 1979.



➤ **Winner Sophia Bogoiias**

View from the verandah of the house at 103 Alma Road, looking towards Fitzgerald Street, 1960. The buildings opposite were demolished for the construction of the North Perth Plaza and carpark. The deli/café on the corner was run by Nick Spartalis. The De Marte family lived behind the shop. A service station is on the opposite corner.



➤ **Winner Tony Tornatora**

Tony Tornatora standing beside a friend's FC Special Holden, in Marian Street, Leederville, 1960s

» **Category Two: A Photo Study**
(Three prizes)

➤ **Winner Shirley Shaw**



Series of two showing the house at 115 Shakespeare Street and the Campbell sisters who lived there, 1931 and 2015.

Albert Campbell migrated to Australia in 1890 when labour was required for land clearance. He is seen in the garden with his wife and two small daughters Shirley and Viola June, He lost this house during the Depression. The sisters returned to see the house in 2015.

➤ **Winner Stella Gasteiger**



Series of photographs showing the house and Figliomeni family at 70 Eton Street, North Perth in the 1950s. This is the home of Vincenzo and Angela Figliomeni. Children include: Rose, Stella, Joseph and Peter.

➤ **Winner Marie Slyth**



Series of four images showing the 1950s fashions worn by Marie Slyth of Strathcona Street, West Perth. Marie handmade many of her outfits.

» **Children at Play >> 1960-1999**

**New category sponsored by Mount Hawthorn Primary School P&C.
(One Prize)**



➤ **Winner Mary Boyd**

Fun cooling off in the wash house trough, 1983
Emma and Michael Boyd had fun in the trough while the wash house and sleep-out were being demolished to make way for a new extension at 48 Ruby Street, North Perth.

» **Packing Room Prize**

**A new prize where the library staff and volunteers
got to vote for their favourite photograph.**

This was also awarded to "Fun cooling off in the wash house trough".

This is the 14th year of the Vincent Local History Photographic Awards. Some of the prizes are sponsored by Woodville Property and we thank them for their support and sponsorship since 2004. Past winners can be seen on the [Local History Awards](#) webpage.

These Awards provide an opportunity for the community to contribute to the Local History Photographic Collection and perhaps receive some reward for their commitment to recording and preserving our history. Prize winners receive \$100 for their winning photographs.

It is important that Local History Collections encourage their communities to search out their old photographs and bring them in for scanning and sharing with the wider community and for future generations.

All entries become part of the [Local History Image Library](#), which is online and accessed from the [Local History Centre](#) webpage.

The Image Library is also linked to the National Library's TROVE website, allowing people who search there for our photographs of suburbs to be linked into to our collection. This is a valuable tool for family historians who discover they have ancestors from our area, but have no idea what the houses and streets are or were like, as they live interstate or overseas. If they are lucky they might even find a photograph of their ancestor in a school photograph.

So thank you to everyone who contributes to this valuable collection.

Congratulations to all of our winners!

Beaufort Street History Project Update

Beaufort Street, Highgate and Mount Lawley, has been a focus of in the Local History Centre after a photo record of businesses on Beaufort Street, from Lincoln to Walcott, was taken in 2015. Oral histories have been recorded with business owners, former residents and lessees of properties in this section of Beaufort Street. This is the last article in this series and it spans across the generations. This story includes a famous musical migrant family, a demolished family house and surgery, and a mischievous Highgate school boy.

If you walk up Beaufort Street, on the right, from Lincoln towards Broome Street you come across two houses 420 and 422, sold recently as a pair, '*Federation Queen Anne style semi-detached homes.*' Barry Myers grew up in Highgate in the 1950s and 60s; his hard working mother bought the house at 422 Beaufort Street in the 1950s and lived there, making very few changes to the house, until her death at ninety years old. Barry remembers that the house next door at 420 has been doctors' surgeries and an orthodontist's rooms. And he can remember the federation house at 416-418, now demolished, which stood on the corner of Lincoln Street and was built for pharmacist and doctor, Percy Waddell-Johnson and his family, in 1905.

PH02319, taken in the 1920s, on the corner of Lincoln and Beaufort streets shows the three houses on the corner.

The image was donated by family members and the descendants of Dr Percy Wardell-Johnson who were interviewed by Maxine Laurie in 2007; and the full interview, OH0170, can be accessed in the Local History Centre. [You can do a keyword search in the [image library](#) for more images of Beaufort Street.]



In an aerial photograph taken in 1965, the two semi-detached houses are standing, opposite Saint Albans Church and the Saint Albans flats and surrounded by vacant land. The flats that stand today, on the corner of Lincoln Street, were built in the late 1960s.

Barry Myers remembers that, during his childhood when he was growing up on Beaufort Street, he used to buy his shoes and clothes at the Opportunity shop, which is now the Mary Street Bakery.

Courtesy Landgate

He had a lot of freedom running around the neighbourhood:

"We used to go around the back of the Queens Hotel at night and pinch half a dozen cool-drink bottles that they'd taken out the back and stacked. We'd take them up to the fish and chip shop in Beaufort Street, get some fish and chips and go down and sit on the pavement and watch the television in the shop window of Vox Adeon on the corner of Mary Street."

He can also recollect hearing someone from the very talented Helfgott family playing the piano at the front window of the house at 460; "the windows have been changed now, they were just little old fashioned windows in those days.' It was his mother that told him Helfgott lived in the house on Beaufort Street.

This is confirmed by a 2007 interview with Les Helfgott and in 'Out of Tune', a book written by David Helfgott's sister Margaret in response to the movie, *Shine*, published in 1998. Les remembers the family moving from Bulwer Avenue to rent, '460 Beaufort Street, it is now a veterinary surgery."

Margaret Helfgott recounts, when describing their family life in Perth [in chapter 7] 'a dilapidated house ...which is now a vet clinic... there were a lot of problems with the sewerage and my father spent a great deal of time trying to fix it.'

The Helfgott family is listed in 1968, at number 460 in the Electoral Rolls:

5177	Helfgott, Elias Peter, 460 Beaufort st., Perth, electrician M
5178	Helfgott, Margaret Helen, 460 Beaufort street, Perth, typist F
5179	Helfgott, Rae, 460 Beaufort street, home duties F

Margaret writes that her father retired from the State Electricity Commission at the age 65 in 1968 and was famous for playing his violin at work. He died in 1975.



This photograph taken in 2015 shows the renovations of the business at 460 Beaufort Street, now Blacksmith Perth, which was formerly, All creatures great and small vet clinic and is next door to the Aboriginal Health Council WA at 450 Beaufort Street. [Kuld Creamery, Laneway@ 460 Beaufort Street, is now in business along the north side of the building, towards the Broome Street car park.]

And the last words are from the Highgate school boy who reminisces about winning a competition and getting their first TV at home:

"In 1961 we got our first TV, which was a real big event. We got it because there was a competition on the radio: "Identify the Tune" and the tune was "Little Brown Jug", so Mum said, 'It's the Little Brown Jug.' And I said, 'do you want me to go up..?' because the prize was three months free rental on a TV. So I raced up to Highgate School which had a telephone box, because we had no phone, and rang in; yep it's "Little Brown Jug". So out comes the TV and we watched TV for three months, and after that we just got hooked and Mum found a way to rent it or buy it."

Beaufort Street is changing rapidly, do you have any stories or photographs that contribute to the history of the City of Vincent?

From the Friends of Local History

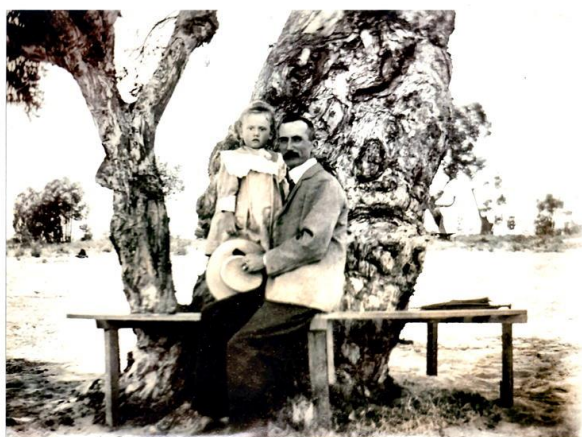
WALTER PATTERSON MESTON 1870-1936

It was brought to our attention by John Viska, Chairman of the WA branch of the Australian Garden History Society, that this 1904 oil painting of Hyde Park by W P Meston had come to auction. As the artist had lived locally we couldn't help ourselves and just had to find out more. And, yes, the painting did sell.

The painting by W P Meston, depicts Hyde Park in 1904 in its early development as a public space. John Viska, was a wealth of information in regard to the landscape. He identified the site of land clearing, tree planting and named various trees. Hyde Park was gazetted as a public park in 1899. Meston painted Hyde Park a number of times, as it was close to his home.

Hyde Park, oil on canvas, 1904 by
W P MESTON

Courtesy GFL Fine Art. Autumn 2017 art
auction catalogue.



This photograph from our [Image Library](#) shows Frank Horgan with his son Grattan (aged 4) in Hyde Park, sitting under what appears to be the same tree and bench seat, one year later.

PH04071

PERSONAL LIFE

Walter Patterson Meston, born in Scotland, travelled to Australia, via New Zealand, with his family. He became a qualified sign-writer and established a business partnership with Frank Leonard Walters. The business became respected and was able to secure government contracts.

Meston and Walters: sign writers, painters and decorators. Calico signs a speciality. Off 245 Murray street, Perth.

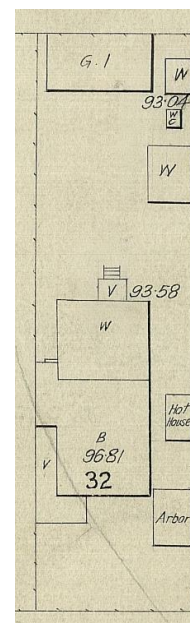
Australian Business Directory 1905

Walter married Anne Elizabeth Fran Byers in July 1901, and the couple had three children by 1906. They initially lived at 176 Bulwer Street, moved to 19 Grosvenor Road, North Perth, and then from 1905 until 1935, their home was Craigielinn at 32 Alma Road, North Perth, facing Hutt Street.

A Metropolitan Sewerage plan dated 1917 shows Craigielinn as a small brick and timber house, with a front wrap around veranda. The garden included a hot house, an arbour, a large and small wooden construction with WC in between and a galvanised iron shed along the back of the property facing Forrest Street.

Meston was a member of the Grand United Order of Free Gardeners which met in the Oddfellows Hall in Oxford Street, Leederville. This society was initially created in Scotland to promote, regulate and support the craft of gardening and the gardeners themselves. Later it attracted other professions, which the society helped by providing contacts for networking, employment, sickness benefits, pensions, grants and annuities to the member and his family.

In 1936 the Mestons moved to 5 Graham Road, Mount Lawley.



W P MESTON THE ARTIST



The West Australian Society of Arts was established in 1896. Meston showed oil, water colour paintings or sketches in most of their annual exhibitions. In 1898 Walter entered into the 3rd annual exhibition of the West Australian Society of Arts with two paintings entitled "Serpetine Falls" and "Time to go home, Otago New Zealand." In the 1899 Annual Sketch Exhibition, he received "First" place. In 1901 he won Best landscape in oil.

WA. SOCIETY of ARTS.--Seventh Exhibition.--Result of BALLOT for Award of Prizes:- Prize of £2 2s, for Landscape in Oil, W. P. Meston. Prize of £2.2s. For Landscape in Water-Colour J W. R. Linton. Prize of 1 .2s. For Flower or Fruit Painting, Miss M. Tuck. Prize of £1 1s. For Charcoal Drawing from the Cast, Miss E. McKay. Prize of £2 2s. For Wood-carved Panel, Dr Misikin.

The West Australian 3 June 1901

The artists were critiqued on their techniques as the object of the society was the advancement of fine and applied art. Some critiques of his work given by the West Australian Society of the Arts include:

'A Farm near Guildford', by W. P. Meston is one of Mr. Meston's best efforts. Though small, it is well balanced, and without any straining after effect. The colour scheme is harmonious.

The West Australian 21 May 1902

'Lengthening Shadows', a typical example of the work of Mr. W. P. Meston, is a beautiful representation of South-West landscape, in which glimpses of hills, valleys, and plain are cleverly intermingled. With *'Verdure Clad'*, by the same artist, is a hillside scene in the coast at a region near Yallingup, which treats the softening effect of distance with much fidelity.

The Daily News 14 December 1923

Meston presented his oil and watercolour paintings in numerous art exhibitions, including a new gallery owned by J W R Linton, the Perth Art Gallery, and also Foy and Gibson's Fine Art Gallery Hay Street, Perth. In 1921 Walter was Vice President of the West Australian Society of Arts, becoming President from 1924 until 1936.

It seems that Walter Meston also had some song writing talent.

Walter Meston is a lot more than a sign-writer. In addition to being an oil and water colour painter of high degree, of which he himself holds, that once a man is a sign-writer no one will accept himself as an artist. He is a writer of splendid Scottish folk songs, as well as words, some tuneful in melody and of characteristic conception. Once upon a time he published a small booklet embodying some of the sweetest and quaintest of his songs, but as they were for private circulation only, the general public did not gain a knowledge of many sweet songs that never should be allowed to linger in oblivion and moulder in the dust of neglect.

'Peeps at People', Sunday Times June 1933

Walter Patterson Meston died in November 1936 aged 65 years. He was still in partnership with Walters in their signwriting business, which was then dissolved to be continued by Frank Leonard Walters.



Walter Patterson Meston here stands,
With palette and brush in his hands.
As a master of Art
He lives quite apart strife and striving from
Merchant and mart.
For our artist dwells long in the dream lands.

Born in Scotland five decades ago,
I've painted Ben Nevis's snow,
And still I have yearns
For the locks and the terns.
The castles of Scott and the
Bannocks of Burns

And the lakes that lowlanders know.
But another art phase I've been on,
And surprised you would be did you con.
The ballads of joy
In which I employ
Loves sentiment tender
Whose charms never cloy.
For they're Scottish cum songs of the Swan.

Sunday Times 22 March 1925

Walter Patterson Meston's art is represented in the Robert Holmes a Court collection with paintings included in their catalogue *Western Australian Art: a selection of early works from the Robert Holmes a Court Collection*, by Roderick Anderson 1986.

His work is also represented in the Art Gallery of Western Australia, City of Perth and other private collections.

In-house events

Rosemary Stevens – Writing your life story

Monday 23 October 2017

1-4pm

Local History Centre

This is a three hour writing workshop. No previous writing experience is necessary, simply bring along a notepad and pen, together with a sense of curiosity and a lifetime of memories. Suitable for all ages and stages of life.

Presenter: **Rosemary Stevens, Curtin University.**

Bookings limited to 15 Cost: Free Includes light refreshments



An Unfinished experiment in living: Australian Houses 1950-1965. **Geoffrey London, Philip Goad and Conrad Hamann, UWAP 2017.**

Wednesday 22 November 2017

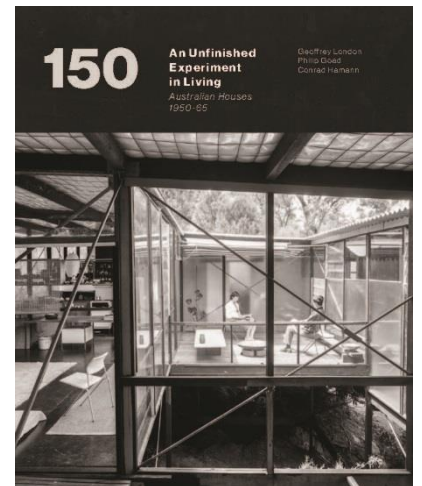
10 am to 12 noon

Local History Centre

Architect-designed Australian houses of the 1950s and 60s proposed an innovative response to the social, economic and climatic conditions of post-war Australia. This book is a catalogue of the most significant modernist houses of the period and includes houses in Leederville and in Mount Lawley. Come and listen to Professor London talk about how the book traces the emergence of this architectural phenomenon in Australia and the design history of the 1950s and 60s.

Presenter: **Professor Geoffrey London, Professor of Architecture at UWA & Professorial Fellow at the University of Melbourne**

Cost: Free Includes light refreshments



Coming in February
2018

Launch of our exciting oral history video project: Arts in Vincent

Video interviews have been conducted with six Vincent residents who are successful in the Arts. They include actors Jenny Davis and Michael Loney, musician Jimmy Murphy, sculptor Lorenna Grant, writer Briony Stewart and writer, producer, arts consultant and festival founder Barry Strickland. Meet some of these people and watch the five minute YouTube clips created. Date to be announced.

More at library.vincent.wa.gov.au. Follow the City of Vincent Library on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/cityofvincent)