



Local History News



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As a community living in one of the most isolated cities in the world, we're lucky to have avoided the worst impacts of COVID-19. Our

new normal means getting on with things, while keeping cautious about our present safety and future wellbeing.

At the Local History Centre, we used the COVID period to prioritise making our collection more accessible by digitising more stories and photos. We've also been updating our local history webpages for a fresh new look. We've now returned to regular hours and have re-opened our doors to drop-in clients. We look forward to the gradual reintroduction of events and workshops over the coming months.

We're happy to be back gathering stories and photos for the local history collection. Increasingly, we're growing the collection through partnership projects such as 'Music in Vincent', which we launched back in February. Since then, we've been involved in several new collaborative collecting projects, some of which are featured in this newsletter.

We've also pressed on with our major collection drive, the annual Local History Awards. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Vincent Local History Awards. Despite some apprehension about whether COVID interruptions would impact on the quality and number of entries, we're delighted with the response to date. All photographic entries will be on display in October with the awards ceremony taking place in early November.

Dr Susanna Iuliano
Senior Librarian, Local History Centre

CONTACT AND HOURS

MON – FRIDAY: 9 AM–1PM DROP-IN; 2–5PM BY APPOINTMENT
WEBSITE: www.library.vincent.wa.gov.au/local-history-centre.aspx
IMAGE LIBRARY: <http://cityofvincent.imagegallery.me/>
EMAIL: local.history@vincent.wa.gov.au
PHONE: 9273 6534

COVER IMAGE:

Students celebrating 'Back to Kyilla Day', Kyilla Primary School North Perth, 1988.



Kyilla Primary School students on an excursion, 1976. Photo entered in the Local History Awards 2020.

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Aerial photo of Perth City with Kyilla Primary in foreground, late 1980s.

KYILLA PRIMARY SCHOOL – 75 YEARS

Kyilla Primary School celebrates its 75th anniversary in 2020. The school is tucked away in the furthest reaches of North Perth in a triangular site between Walcott and Charles streets, near Dog Swamp. The land for the school was set aside on Selkirk Street by the State Government in the 1920s. Despite the growing population of the area at that time, it took 20 years of petitioning by local parents for the school to be built. In February 1945, it opened as an Infants School, initially taking only children up to Grade 2.

"I well remember the beginnings of Kyilla Primary School. At the time, my family was living at 76 Eton Street. A public meeting was called for parents who were concerned that Mount Hawthorn and North Perth Primary were not catering for the children around where Kyilla is now located. The meeting was in a private house and was so well attended it was difficult to get us all in...As it was wartime, we were not hopeful of success for our request to the Education Department for another school, since

NO SCHOOL

Parents have made further pleas to "The Sunday Times" for a school to be erected on the Selkirk-street site at North Perth. "This long-suffering district has not even a kindergarten any nearer than a school," said one parent. "The nearest school is a mile and a half away. Imagine six-year-olds having to walk this distance in wet weather!"

Sunday Times, Sunday 25 July 1943

everything, including building materials and staff – was in short supply. We knew we had to make a very good case if we were to succeed. It was decided to make a survey of the district. I was one of many who worked together to canvass every house. It was a new district then and there were many young families... When I recall the beginnings of Kyilla, I still regard it as a triumph that the local committee succeeded in getting the school established while the war was on."

Marjorie Scarlett, former Kyilla student and parent.

Originally known as Selkirk Street School, the school was renamed Kyilla in 1946. The name, suggested by the P&C Association, was understood at the time to be an Aboriginal word meaning 'North'. The term was well known in Australia during the 1930s and 40s through its association with the giant 21-seater inter-capital airliner known as the Kyilla.

From its small beginnings in 1945, the school rapidly expanded from 74 students and two teachers to 200 plus students by the early 1950s. In its early years, various additions were made to the school to accommodate the growing number of students. During the 1950s, epidemics such as polio, measles and influenza affected student attendance. The most dramatic incident of the 1950s was the crash landing of a tiger moth airplane into the school on 6 February 1951.

In 1962, Kyilla changed its status from an Infants School to a Primary School taking students up until Grade 5. Kyilla student from the late 1960s and early 1970s, Alex Sarris, has written a wonderful account of his school days at Kyilla with an evocative recollection of watching the moon landing in 1969 with his Kyilla classmates.

"I recall the morning of 21 July 1969 at around 10.30am distinctly as if it was yesterday. After we finished recess, our teacher marched our entire class across the road to a house in Bedford Street.



COV LHC: PHO2976

At that time we were all wondering where we were going and had no idea that this would be a day we would remember for the rest of our lives. The Dwyer Family had children at the school so they kindly offered their house...Kyilla Primary did not have a television set...A black and white television was blurring out in the corner of the room and Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin were the centre of attention. They floated through the Apollo 11 capsule and thereafter descended the ladder and walked upon the moon. We were all totally mesmerised and in disbelief how this was even possible."

Alex Sarris, Kyilla student 1968–1975.

By the early 1970s, enrolments increased to between 150 and 200 students from 21 different nationalities representing the increasing ethnic diversity of the area. Kyilla took part in the Education Department's 'Disadvantaged Schools

Program' receiving extra resourcing for materials and programs to help students from non-English speaking backgrounds improve their literacy and school engagement.

"During this time, a lot of new migrant families were settling in the area and lots of children who spoke no English were coming."

Glenys Coulthard, former student and Kyilla parent.

In 1983, Kyilla Pre-School was established off-site at Haynes Street North Perth. The school also launched its school logo (a Boomerang) and motto: "To see and to understand'.

With student numbers hovering around the 100s in the late 1980s and early 1990s, Kyilla faced potential closure. The school survived and eventually expanded again, but its small, tight-knit community



COV LHC PHO5244



Kyilla Primary School Staff, 1992.

created unique circumstances for students and teachers alike, including the challenge of awarding and receiving multiple honour certificates within small split grade classes.

"The children were awarded "credits" by their teachers for good behaviour or special achievements. They came in the form of a small blue certificate which was awarded at assembly. These were not handed out lightly, and were of themselves, quite highly regarded. Once the children had collected six credits, they were presented with an "honour" certificate. This was a seemingly impossible achievement, but even more exciting was that once a child had earned six honour certificates, Mr Jeffrees (the

Principal) took them to Hungry Jacks for a burger ... in his prized vintage car! "

Julie-Ann Bull, Kyilla Parent 1980s and 1990s.

In the 2000s, while Kyilla grew in size, it remained a small, close-knit community school with strong parental involvement in school activities from music programs to camps, assemblies and school fetes.

In 2015, Kyilla became an Independent Public School, the culmination of many years of strong community and parental involvement in the school, dating from the time of its establishment in the 1940s. In 2013 the Kyilla P&C also established the successful Kyilla Farmer's Market held every Saturday morning.

To mark its anniversary, the school is holding an open day on 24 October from 10pm to 2pm. Former students, teachers and parents are welcome to attend and celebrate 75 years of helping children *"build a strong foundation for life."*



Kyilla Netball Team, 1980. Photo entered in the Local History Awards 2020.



HIGHGATE PRIMARY – 125 YEARS

“We’ll sing you a song of a school that is strong, with a culture and style of its own. The school came alive in Eighteen ninety five and success of its scholars will be known... ”

(Highgate Primary School Song).

Highgate Hill Primary School opened on 1 November 1895 with 80 students. It was one of the State’s earliest suburban primary schools and is the oldest continuing school in Vincent. Along with the growth of the Highgate area in the late 1890s, the school

expanded rapidly with 340 students by 1897. The original head teacher was Athol McGregor, who also lived on school grounds until his retirement in 1926. In 1899, Highgate School expanded to include an Infants School with its own building and headmistress. Prior to then, the Junior School had been housed in a circus tent! The school grew in the 1920s and 1930s reaching a total of 736 students in 1937. In the 1950s, the infants and senior schools were amalgamated under a single head to form Highgate Primary School. In the post-war period, Highgate Primary School educated a generation of inner-city migrant and

refugee children and it has a long history of being a multicultural school.

“We are centred in the city and we are connected to the world. Our inner Perth location draws families from all nations and experiences. Our many cultures promote a “one-world” attitude where students share their stories, knowledge and understandings.” (Highgate Primary School Vision and Values).

“By the end of our lower school years, many refugees had arrived from Europe and attended our school. Children from the families of Italian, Greek, Polish, and other European countries such as Latvia and Lithuania were often “identified” by the odour of the unusual contents of their school lunch box – not the jam or vegemite sandwiches of the Australian children.”

(Extract from Our Highgate School Years 1947–1953, City of Vincent Local History Collection.)

Over the years, Highgate Primary has produced many distinguished students who went on to contribute in various fields in different and significant ways – from former Rhodes Scholar Joseph Starke (Staricoff) who became a prominent legal scholar, to concert pianist David Helfgott. Many former students are recipients of Order of Australia medals including the former Governor of Western Australia, the late Ken Michael (b1938 – d2014), and businessman and fishing magnate Michael Kailis (b1929 – d1999).

For its 100th anniversary in 1995, the school held a centenary reunion. The occasion brought together a group of former students, the ‘Class of 1947’



Highgate Primary School, Infants 1 1947. PHO5818



Girls skipping Rope at Highgate Primary 1952. PH05721

who have continued to meet since the centenary reunion. We were lucky to have the 'old boys' and 'old girls' from the class of 1947 contribute to the Local History Awards in 2019. The school is celebrating its 125th anniversary with a special school assembly. We hope the occasion sparks interest in the history of the school among more recent students.

From our very humble post-war schooling we found that our group of 1947–1953 Highgate pupils has produced many great achievers with interesting and diverse lives. Bare feet and sparse clothes didn't factor in our many good memories of the simplicity of our "3 Rs" education at Highgate

School, certainly poles apart from the standard demanded for our own children.

We now look forward to celebrating the 125 Anniversary in 2020 of our school's 1895 commencement. Since our re-connection at the Centenary celebrations, the pleasure of the company of our "maturer" ex-classmates, with friendships that we have formed and renewed over the past 25 years, is immeasurable.

Extract from Our Highgate School Years 1947–1953, City of Vincent Local History Collection.



Above: Highgate Primary School, 1970. COV LHC PH01121.

Left: Recreation of historic Highgate School photo by Highgate Primary School Students, 2020. Photo entered in the 2020 Local History Awards by Highgate Primary.

Below: Highgate School, 1948. COV LHC PH01121.





North Perth Local

PEOPLE OF NORTH PERTH

Since May 2020, the Local History Centre has been assisting North Perth Local with production of a series of videos highlighting some unique individuals and organisations in the North Perth community.

North Perth Local is a not-for-profit community town team that aims to provide a voice for residents, community organisations and business owners in North Perth. It works collaboratively with the City of Vincent, community

organisations, businesses and residents to enhance the North Perth precinct.

The 'People of North Perth' is a campaign by North Perth Local to recognise and celebrate the people of North Perth. The aim is to engage residents via social media platforms and the North Perth Local website to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation among locals and visitors about what makes North Perth a special place to live, work or visit.

Videographer Kate Ferguson has captured the lives of 10 local residents, clubs and businesses who call North Perth home. These included:

- Jim Howe – Patriarch of the Motorcycle Pit Stop at 29 Angove Street. Jim began working as an apprentice for Cyril Collins whose original cycle business 'Pal and Panther' began across the road at 30 Angove Street in 1929.
- David Boothey – a familiar and friendly face to many North Perth locals on Angove Street.
- The Hon Nicholas Tolcon – retired Family Court Judge and member of the Tolcon family who ran a successful bakery business on Alma Road from the 1940s to the 1970s.
- Brett Thomson – Director of North Perth School of Early Learning located in the refurbished heritage listed former North Perth Police Station on Angove Street.
- Jo Hine – Principal of Kyilla Primary School since 2017.
- Nathan McQuade – Owner and Chef of Blake Street Merchant, Blake Street North Perth.

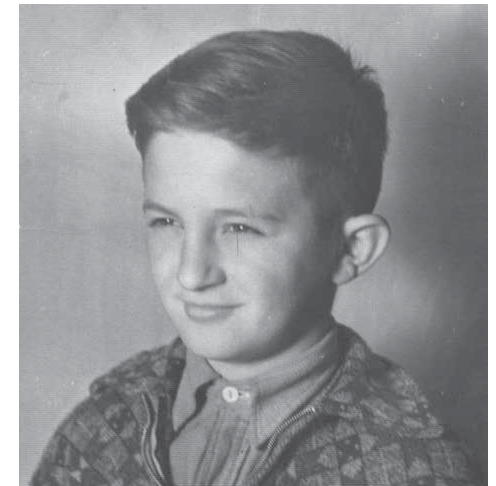
- North Perth Bowls Club – a North Perth

institutions on Woodville Reserve since 1908.

- Ida Smithwick and Andrew Ryan, Chair and Vice Chair of North Perth Local
- John Flaherty – Apiarist and business owner of Post Code Honey, Gill Street North Perth.
- Nick Casson, great-grandson of founder Susan Casson and CEO of Casson Homes, North Perth

The videos can be viewed online at: www.northperthlocal.org/people-of-north-perth/

They will also be available on the Vincent Library and Local History Centre catalogue.



Nicholas Tolcon, c 1949. COV LHC PH0988a.



Image by Dan Grant from 2019 Galup performance

GALUP

In April & May 2019, a small audience was fortunate to experience 'Galup' – a walking performance which explored the history and untold stories of Lake Monger in the early 1800s. Created by Ian Wilkes and Poppy van Oorde-Grainger with an oral history from Doolann Leisha Eatts, Galup invited audiences on a journey around the lake to hear, watch and participate in the re-enactment of historic events relating to Noongar people,

including reference to a massacre at the lake. Lake Monger/Galup is a wetland of ongoing cultural and historic significance to Aboriginal people in Perth. The lake itself, and the area to the east near Litis Stadium/the former Velodrome, are registered with the Department of Lands and Planning as Aboriginal sites of significance.

In 2020, Ian and Poppy received support from Australian Council for the Arts, Lotterywest and the WA Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries to reprise and expand the project. There are two parts to the project, a theatre performance at the lake and a virtual reality (VR) work that will make the performance more

accessible to a wider audience. Both will be launched in 2021.

The Galup team shared information about the project in an online presentation hosted by Performing Lines WA in August and invited people to give their feedback on the work. The team feel it's particularly important to keep the Noongar community informed about this work and hear their thoughts due to the cultural significance of Galup (Lake Monger).

The recording features Noongar Burdiya Elders Doolann Leisha Eatts, Liz Hayden, Darryl Kickett and Ted Wilkes and Lead Artists Ian Wilkes and Poppy van Oorde-Grainger chatting to Della Rae Morrison.

Here is a link to the recording:

www.facebook.com/watch/?v=579049992755830

If you'd like to know more about the project, email galup2020@gmail.com



Lake Monger, c 1914. PHO990

COVID-19 COLLECTION

When generations look back at 2020, what will they learn about the events and our responses to COVID-19? While so much more information is generated in our age of digital information and global connections relative to past pandemics, what will people in the future understand about our responses to the pandemic? Will Zoom recordings and Facebook posts stand the test of time and be accessible to people in the future to show how we were thinking and feeling during 2020?

Throughout the year, we have been quietly collecting photographs and ephemera that tell us more about the impacts of COVID-19 on local residents and businesses in Vincent. We've received some great submissions on this theme in the 2020 Local History Awards. Over the next few months, we will be collaborating with City of Vincent COVID-Arts grant recipient, Nunzio Mondia of Centre Stage



Promotions, to capture interviews with locals about their experience of COVID-19 in the City of Vincent.

"Through the art of music and conversation, this project offers future generations a glimpse into our local community's thoughts and feeling at the time of this unprecedented history making event."

Nunzio Mondia

Nunzio will be producing a documentary and music video that will be available to the public via the City of Vincent website in 2021.

The longer form interviews will also be made available for posterity through the Vincent Library and Local History catalogue online. We look forward to sharing the results of this collaboration.



Stella Sloan decorating the footpath on Burt Street, April 2020. Photo entered in the 2020 Local History Awards by Karen Lee.



Empty streets in Leederville during COVID quarantine. March 2020. Photo submitted in the 2020 Local History Awards by Michelle Vercoe.



Luna Cinema 1 during COVID closure, Oxford Street Leederville, May 2020. Photo submitted in the 2020 Local History Awards by Alec Campbell Thomas.



Beryl Long and her band playing at The Royal Park Bowling Club, 1948.

Vincent Heritage Hero

BERYL LONG

The strength of our Local History Collection comes from the personal stories and photographs from current and former residents like Beryl Long. Beryl was interviewed for the Local History Centre back in 2010 and her interview detailed her family's long connection to Peach Street, North Perth. Beryl also contributed her memories of shopping in North Perth in the 1930s to 1960s for the 2014 Local History Awards.

We recently contacted Beryl to seek permission to make her memoirs available online. At age 91, Beryl is still going strong and she provided us with more information and wonderful photographs

for the Local History Collection. We value Beryl's contributions to the Local History Collection and acknowledge her efforts to remember and document our local history. Thank you Beryl – you are a valued heritage hero of Vincent!



Musician and dancer Beryl Long, nee MacLennan, was born in 1929 in Peach Street, North Perth. There were only two houses on the cul-de-sac. Beryl was born and lived at number seven with her parents, and later at number nine Peach Street with her husband and their two children. Beryl is the youngest daughter of Leslie and Lillian MacLennan who lived at 7 Peach



Beryl Long, Joy & Brian Godwin at rear of 7 Peach Street, 1943.

Street with their five children for over 60 years. Lillian had a large herd of cows and ran a successful dairy from the three adjacent vacant blocks in Peach Street. Lillian MacLennan milked the cows and delivered the milk in a cart pulled by her horse, Dolly. After her last child Beryl was born in 1929, Lillian used the land for market gardening and floristry and to provide for her family ensuring they were self-sufficient during WWII.

Beryl and her husband George purchased number nine, the house next door from her parents, after their marriage in 1951. Their two children Alan and Sandra were the fourth generation of the family to live in Peach Street. The families moved from the area in the 1980s.



7 Peach Street North Perth.



Lillian MacLennan with her mother Louisa Smith, outside 7 Peach Street, Goonderup Oval is behind, 1941.

Like her mother, Beryl worked hard, running an orchestra before she was married and playing the piano in her band. Lillian and Leslie, Beryl's parents, planted two palm trees in 1941 and they are still standing in Peach Street 79 years later. The houses were demolished in the 1980s after the family moved out of the area.

Beryl has written the story of *Peach Street: That Funny Little Street... the story of Peach Street, North Perth 1897–1980 – a little cul-de-sac with only two houses and two palm trees.*

The story is available online in the COV Library Catalogue at: www.librarycatalogue.vincent.wa.gov.au/client/en_GB/search/asset/1041/0

The transcript of her interview is also available online at: www.librarycatalogue.vincent.wa.gov.au/client/en_GB/search/asset/1041/0



Illustration of Casson Homes, Woodville Street North Perth.

VALE JOHN CASSON AM (1939-2020)

Sadly, John Casson passed away on 24 August 2020. John was the grandson of Susan Casson who established Casson Homes in the heart of North Perth in 1922. Susan was a pioneering campaigner for mental health care who strove to provide a welcoming home and daily dignity for people struggling with long-term mental illnesses. Almost 100 years later, the Casson family remain involved in the provision of residential mental health care in Perth.

Frederick John Casson was born in Mount Lawley in 1939. He was active in the management of Casson Homes from the 1970s and in 2003 was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia Medal

(AM) for service to the community. The award was a fitting recognition of his work with people living with mental illness through the establishment, provision and promotion of a range of mental health services in Western Australia.

We were fortunate to have interviewed John Casson in 2009 and a transcript of his interview is available in the Local History Collection. In 2018, Cate Pattison was commissioned by John Casson to write *The History of the Casson Family and Casson Homes in Western Australia 1897–2017*.

The history is available in the Local History Centre and online at: www.cassonhomes.com.au/wp-content/



WHATS NEW?

A new addition to the Local History Collection comes from Mount Hawthorn local Keith Damon. Keith has donated an eclectic collection of materials which evoke domestic life in post-war Perth. Keith's family have lived in Mount Hawthorn since 1914.

His parents Ted and Vera built a new home on Federation Street in the 1950s. The collection includes recipe books, magazines, invitations, programmes and even beautifully decorated tins from Plaistowe's Chocolate Factory in West Perth. These items provide a wonderful snapshot of post-war domestic life in Mount Hawthorn. Thank-you Keith!

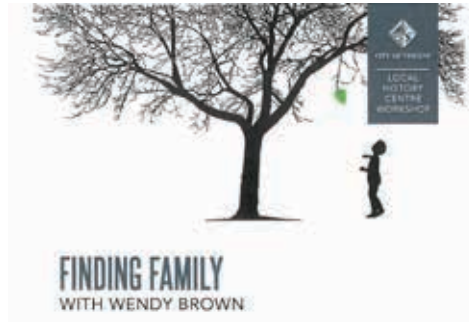




EVENTS & WORKSHOPS

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

OCTOBER



WORKSHOP: FAMILY HISTORY

WEDNESDAY 21 OCTOBER 2020
10:00 – 12:00 PM

Local History Centre

A workshop for family history beginners presented by family historian Wendy Brown. Participants will learn how to get started and be guided on navigating the who, why and how of finding family members.

Presenter: Wendy Brown

Bookings: Email
local.history@vincent.wa.gov.au
or call 9273 6090

NOVEMBER



EVENT: REMEMBRANCE DAY SUNSET SERVICE AT ANZAC COTTAGE

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 11
4:00 – 6:00 PM.

Anzac Cottage, 38 Kalgoorlie Street
Mount Hawthorn

Presenter: Friends of Anzac Cottage

Bookings: Call 0411 445 582

Cost: Free

DECEMBER



WORKSHOP: WHO'S BEEN SLEEPING IN YOUR HOUSE?

THURSDAY 10 DECEMBER
10:00 – 11.30 AM

City of Vincent Library &
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

Bookings: Email
local.history@vincent.wa.gov.au
or call 9273 6090

Cost: Free



CITY OF VINCENT
LIBRARY &
LOCAL HISTORY CENTRE

VINCENT LOCAL HISTORY AWARDS 2020

Thank you to all entrants in this year's Local History Awards.
We were delighted by the number and quality of the entries received.

Photo entries can be viewed online at:
www.surveymonkey.com/r/FW63RPZ

*Vote online for your favourite photos and
help us decide the 'People's Choice' Award.*

*Voting closes 30 October 2020.
Winners announced 2 November 2020.*

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PROPERTY

Sponsored by Claude Iaconi 0412 427 877



Follow the City of Vincent Library on Facebook

Local History Centre

www.library.vincent.wa.gov.au

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

Phone: 9273 6090

Address: 99 Loftus Street, Leederville, Western Australia, 6007

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