



The News Quarterly

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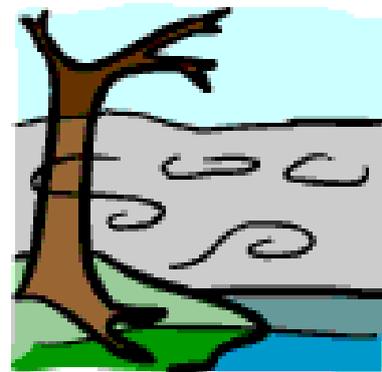
For those of you who knew or were interviewed by Maxine Laurie between 2001 and 2013 there is sad news. Our wonderful historian passed away in April. Her lovely smile and cheerful personality will be greatly missed. Maxine and I built have up a wealth of local knowledge between us since the inception of the Local History Collection in 2000. Her contribution to recording Vincent's rich history will remain in the hundreds of interviews she conducted and the many history books she wrote.

Thank you to all those who took the time to search through their old photographs to enter into the Local History Photographic Awards. The judging will take place mid-July and the winners announced at a special event at the beginning of August. Good luck to all entrants.

Julie Davidson
Senior Librarian, Local History



Can you guess where this is? See p.2



Winter

What's in this issue?

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- Local History :
Old glass plate negatives reveal dramatic incident

Useful resources for land research in Australia
- From the Friends of Local History
Massa Singh, Cameleer of 123 Richmond Street
- 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

Contact

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

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

What's New in our online subscription sites?



Australian records

- NSW, St John's, Paramatta Baptisms 1838-1918, Burials, 1790-1986, Marriages 1790-1966
- Victoria, Index to naturalization Certificates 1851-1928
- Australia, Electoral Rolls 1903-1980 (updated)
- Australian and New Zealand Find a Grave Index 1800s to current (updated)
- Victoria, Assisted and Unassisted Passenger Lists 1839-1923 (updated)

UK records

- Lancashire, Quarter Session Records and Petitions 1648-1908
- West Yorkshire, Select Apprenticeships Records 1627-1894
- West Yorkshire, Bastardy Records 1690-1914 (updated)
- UK and Ireland, WWI diaries (France, Belgium and Germany) 1914-1920
- UK and Ireland, WWI diaries (Gallipoli and Dardanelles) 1914-1916
- UK and Ireland, Find a Grave Index 1300- current

Global

- Find a Grave Index for burials at sea and other select burial locations 1300s-current
- Users of Ancestry can now email and save records to their own Discovery Page.*



Please note we no longer subscribe to Find my past.

British Newspaper Archive.

This subscription is ongoing until September 2015. Follow this link to see the newspapers that have recently been added to this website [Recent additions](#)

Answer to mystery photo on page 1

The Golden Age Centre in Leederville for child polio victims. Members of the Leederville Salvation Army visit a young patient in the former Golden Age Hotel building, which was transformed into an after-care hospital for children with polio. The Golden Age Sunday School, held there every Sunday afternoon, was popular with the children. Note the wall decorations and the food and drink brought for the children.

L-R: Rohna Mullane, John Venables, Grace Venables, Brian Golding, Evelyn Sedgman. (PH02538)

What's new in the Local History Centre?

Old Glass Plate Negatives reveal dramatic incident

John Risely Venables, founder of Venables Engineering and hardware store at 99-101 Oxford Street, Leederville, had a keen eye for a good photograph. He was a prolific photographer from the early 1900s and had his own darkroom. Some of his early photographs on glass plate negatives have recently been uncovered. The Venables family brought them into the Local History Centre, and we organised digital scans to be made, allowing the images to be viewed.

This image of a hot air balloon was intriguing. The detail in the scan revealed that it was on fire on the left side. It was obviously on an oval, and we hoped it would be Leederville Oval, nearby his home. Many hours of searching through Trove online newspapers revealed that the incident occurred on Saturday 16 April 1910.

SENSATIONAL BALLOON ASCENT.
AERONAUT'S DARING FEAT.
Melbourne, April 17.
A sensational incident occurred in connection with a balloon ascent made yesterday by Mr. C. Sebpho, of the "Beebee" Company. During the process of inflating the balloon, the fire was kept burning close by. Just as everything was ready for the ascent, one of the persons holding the balloon allowed it to slip, and it immediately drifted over the fire. In a second the lower part of its sides were enveloped in flames, and beholders, to their horror, observed the aeronaut being borne rapidly heavenwards, hanging by his hands from a rope of the trapeze, while the flames, raging above him, threatened instant destruction of the balloon.



The location was described as the 'Association Ground', so unfortunately for our Collection, not Leederville Oval. But where was the Association ground? Further searching revealed it was the grandstand built in 1895 at what is now known as the WACA ground

The company who promoted this show around Australia was the Beebee Company. It seems that this unusual name is in the Venables family tree, and this may have been why Mr Venables attended the show. The Venables family are investigating this further.

Useful resources for land research in Australia

Those who attended the Google Earth talk or tutorial would be familiar with LANDGATE, the Western Australian source of lands and titles information. This can be found at <https://www0.landgate.wa.gov.au/maps-and-imagery>

The following is a list of some of the resources available around Australia:

NSW

For New South Wales parish maps visit Historical Lands Records Viewer images.maps.nsw.gov.au/pixel.htm

Land and Property Information's (LPI) Historical Land Records Viewer (HLRV) provides online access to more than 2.5 million images of historical maps, plans, titles and indexes. These titling related records provide a wealth of information about the land and its ownership over time. Includes:

- **Charting Maps:** Parish Maps, Town Maps, and other maps known as 'Charting Maps', recording subdivision and status changes to land parcels.
- **Plan Lodgement Books:** used between 1863 and 1995.
- **Old Form Torrens Registers:** Torrens Titles from 1863 to 1961
- **Historical Parish Maps:** cancelled editions of Crown Land Parish and Town Maps which show how subdivisions and other actions have altered land parcels over time.

VICTORIA

Parish and township local plans prov.vic.gov.au/provguide-30

This guide outlines how to access online Parish and Township working plans in VPRS 16171 Regional Land Office Plans Digitised Reference Set. The series contains digitised copies of parish and township working plans, as well as closer settlement, land settlement, soldier settlement, county and other miscellaneous working plans

QUEENSLAND

Visit the State Library of Queensland at slq.qld.gov.au/resources/family-history/land-records or the State Archives at archives.qld.gov.au/Researchers/Indexes/Lands/Pages/Default.aspx

Includes:

- Register of lands 1861-1868
- Register of land sold 1842-1861
- Register of pastoral holdings 1863-1880

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

The State Records Office at archives.sa.gov.au/content/family-history has records of land purchase, lease and transfer, as well as municipal rate assessment records which document land value, geographic location, land owner and land occupier

TASMANIA

Visit LINC Tasmania. Map links at linc.tas.gov.au/research/browse-by-category/maps

Also try the Land Information System Tasmania at thelist.tas.gov.au/app/content/home

ACT

ACT Planning and Land Authority at planning.act.gov.au/

A comprehensive collection of colour aerial photography captured over the past 40 years and a limited black and white coverage dating back to the early 1950s is available

FROM THE FRIENDS OF LOCAL HISTORY

Massa Singh: Cameleer and resident of 123 Richmond Street, Leederville

It all started with a conversation between friends; mates, with a mutual interest in books, history and urban myth. An exchange of copies of photographs and official documents occurred and these pieces of information eventually were placed in front of me where, as a Friend of Local History, my investigation began.

Camels were used for exploration of inland Australia in the Burke and Wills Expedition of 1860. With the discovery of gold more camels and their drivers were called for as a valuable method of transport, which could survive long periods without water. Between 1860 and 1907 it is estimated that over 10,000 camels were imported into Australia.

In 1896 Massa Singh, aged 26 of Kale -Ki, near Amritsar Punjab, travelled to Australia. He disembarked at Fremantle as a British Indian to become one of many "Afghans" employed as a Cameleer using his skills of handling and caring for camels.

Probably illiterate, Massa Singh went through customs receiving a certificate of "Exemption from dictation test", by the Collector of Customs. He was photographed and provided a hand and thumb print. (a requirement of the White Australia Policy, although formerly instated from 1901-1973 it was in practice prior to these dates).



Form No. 21. **DUPLICATE.** No. ~~112~~ 2/05
COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.
IMMIGRATION RESTRICTION ACT 1901 AND REGULATIONS.

CERTIFICATE OF DOMICILE.

I, Clayton A. Mason Collector of Customs
at the Port of Fremantle in the said Commonwealth,
hereby certify that Massa Singh
hereinafter described, has satisfied me that he is domiciled in the Commonwealth,
and is leaving the Commonwealth temporarily.

Date 4th January 1905 Clayton A. Mason Collector of Customs.

DESCRIPTION.

Nationality Indian Birthplace Punjab
Age 35 years Complexion Dark
Height 5ft 11 inches Hair Black
Build Fairly Stout Eyes Brown
Particular marks Dark marks on face
(For impression of hand see back of this document.)

PHOTOGRAPHS.

Full Face:— Profile:—

Date of departure 24/1/05 Destination Colombo
Ship Royal Grotto
References in Australia Fremantle WA

By Authority: ROSS S. BAIN, Government Printer, Melbourne.

According to documentation; by 1933 Massa had worked in Coolgardie for 11 years, Peak Hill for two years, Carnarvon for six months and the Murchison area in the gold fields for 17 years as a Carting Contractor working with camels.

From the 1920s the use of camels declined with the growth in motorised transport. While at Peak Hill Station, Massa advertised in the *The West Australian*, 21 January 1925,

Particulars, 110 Park Street Subiaco.

For sale: 17 Camels, with harness and 1 –14 Ton Wagon. All is first class order. May be seen at address above. Massa Singh, Twin Peak Station via Mullewa

At the age of 63 Massa resided at 123 Richmond Street Leederville. The homeowner was Meer Singh, also a Cameleer and later a Hawker. Meer Singh was seriously assaulted in a racial attack in 1904 while leaving the Victoria Hotel (now Rosie O'Grady's) in James Street with friends. Three men were arrested.

Life had not been easy for Massa who, over the years, had been cheated of wages and gone to court to protest. Massa did travel back to his home in India and on one occasion spent five years there. Upon his return in 1916 Massa left a wife and children, who were to remain in India.

Massa Singh has been recognised as being one of the first Sikh's to arrive in Western Australia by the Sikh Association of WA Inc. and noted to be living in Leederville. Their newsletter stated:

"Riverton Crematorium Most Sikhs would travel around W.A. hawking their wares and would then return to India to retire. Some, however, were not able to do so and in 1932, the Sikhs were allocated a piece of land on the banks of the Canning River to be used as a cremation ground after a sickly Sikh immolated himself as he feared that he would be buried. Massa Singh and Buttan Singh made the application for this land. This area is now a heritage site."

The Government Gazette Dec. 23. 1932

"It is deemed expedient that Reserve No. 20968 Canning (near Riverton) should vest in and be held by Bollah Singh and Massa Singh in trust for the purpose of a Cemetery (SIKHS)". "His Excellency the Lieu-Governor and Administrator with the advice and consent of the Executive Council."

The City of Vincent Local History Centre has also uncovered amazing information, as two patrons remembered the "Afghans" of Richmond Street.

Elizabeth Kirkham nee Sorley, said, "My grandfather (Mr. Sorley), who lived at 199 Oxford Street, was a good friend of the men and would often meet in the laneway for a chat. During the war the men were given a higher rice ration of which they would share with her Nan. They worked together in Coolgardie at the "Government Camel Paddock."

Mrs. Ivy Baraiolo, in her oral history interview, recalled the Afghans of Richmond Street, where she lived from 1942, aged 8. "There used to be an Afghan man [living] on the right...and our parents told us not to talk to them because, they would take us away! And of course we listened! [laughter]. We were very, very scared; so we used to walk in the middle of the road ...the Afghan man knew what was going on and he used to come out when we children were going to school and go "boo" at us. He had a big turban on him. I can see him, very much so.

Meer Singh is registered in the City of Perth rate books at 123 Richmond Street in 1946, but not in 1947. A Mier Singh is registered as dying in Perth in 1946. No trace can be found of Massa after this date. Meer Singh was still the owner of 123 Richmond Street when he died in 1946. It is not known what happened to Massa Singh.

Written and researched by Michelle Vercoe

In-house events

THE TREASURES FROM THE TRUNK – RECORDING YOUR FAMILY HISTORY

Presenting the life of Maggie Kelly Kane (1875-1959)

Wednesday 8 July 2015

10am – 12 noon

Local History Centre

Maggies Journey is a short film produced by Lyn Dale which tells the story of her grandmother, Maggie, a 25 year old domestic servant who embarked on the 'bride ship' *Banffshire* from London to start a new life in Australia. View the film and then see and hear of the many ways Lyn has recorded her family history.

Lyn is a passionate family historian who you can't fail to be inspired by!

[Click here for further information.](#)

Presenter: **Lyn Kane Dale**

Bookings preferred

Cost: Free

Includes light refreshments

CINEMAS AND THEATRES OF PERTH

Wednesday 29 July 2015

10am – 11.00am

Library Lounge@Vincent

Richard Offen will trace the history of places of entertainment, looking at some of the lavish venues built in Perth and the surrounding suburbs during the halcyon days before television.

[Click here for further information.](#)

Presenter: **Richard Offen**

Bookings preferred

Cost: Free

Includes light refreshments



LOCAL HISTORY PHOTOGRAPHIC AWARDS PRESENTATION

Tuesday 4 August 2015

2.30pm

Local History Centre

Mayor John Carey will be presenting the awards. All entries will be on exhibition from the day of the awards until the end of the year.

This is an in invitation only event for entrants and their guests.

Please register your interest if you would like to attend as there may be places available.

YOUR (LOCAL) STORY, OUR HISTORY: FINDING WESTERN AUSTRALIAN STORIES IN THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF AUSTRALIA

Coming in September 2015 [TBC]

Local History Centre

Details to follow

Presenter: **Dr Kellie Abbott**

Bookings preferred

Cost: Free

Includes light refreshments

The treasures from the trunk—recording your family history



Presenting the life of Maggie Kelly Kane (1875-1959)

Maggie, a young domestic servant, emigrated to Western Australia in 1900 with other young females on a 'bride ship'.

Her grand-daughter, Lyn Kane Dale, will present 'Maggie's Journey' a short film she has created to record this story.

Lyn will also show items from her grandmother's 120 year old cabin trunk and discuss interesting ways to record and present family history.

Come along and be inspired!

Presenter: Lyn Kane Dale

When: Wednesday 8 July 10am to 12 noon

Where: Local History Centre

City of Vincent Library and Local History Centre, 99 Loftus Street, Leederville

Bookings preferred: email local.history@vincent.wa.gov.au or call 9273 6534

Melnotte

TRAFFORD RD
OLD TRAFFORD,
MANCHESTER