

PORTMAN, JOHN ALEXANDER, 1928-2005

John Alexander Portmann was born on 18 November 1928, in America. He grew up in Bubikon, Kanton Zurich, Switzerland and arrived in Australia on 18 June 1955, per the *SS Oronsay*. He travelled from Western Australia to Queensland and worked in Aboriginal Missions before returning to Switzerland. He met and married his wife, Margi in Switzerland. In 1968 he returned to Australia with Margi and children, Carol and Patrick. The family settled in Brisbane, Queensland, where John became actively involved with the Swiss Community and also Community Radio Station, 4EB. After retirement, John and Margi moved from Brisbane to Blackbutt. John died on 2 November 2005 and is buried in the Blackbutt-Banarkin Cemetery. Source: <http://www.swiss.org.au/page.php?ID=364> (Swiss Society of Queensland Inc.)

Letters of reference in the collection indicate Mr Portmann was employed as a draftsman by Tomlinson Steel Ltd., Perth in 1959 and by CH Warman, consulting engineer, Kalgoorlie from August-December 1956 and February-May 1957.

Letters to and from John Alexander Portmann during his time in WA between 1955-1957 use the spelling "Portmann" (2 ns). However, later information from John Portman's daughter indicate he changed the spelling to "Portman". It is presumed this occurred when he returned to Australia, sometime after 1968.

PRIVATE ARCHIVES MANUSCRIPT NOTE (MN 3063; ACC 8917A)

SUMMARY OF CLASSES	
CORRESPONDENCE FILE – MISCELLANEOUS ORAL RECORDINGS (magnetic tape)	
See also the State Library of Western Australia's Pictorial collection of photographs by John Portman	

Acc. No.	DESCRIPTION
	CORRESPONDENCE
8917A/1	June 1955-April 1957 Letters from John Portmann. First letter dated 2 June 1955, written on <i>SS Oronsay</i> , Orient Line letterhead. Later letters from Fremantle, Perth, Gwalia, Leonora, Ida Valley Station, Mt Ida, Riverina Station, Menzies, Kalgoorlie, Lakewood, Kurrawang Mission, Mt. Margaret Mission. Written in German language, some hand-written, some typescript
8917A/2	17 December 1959 Tomlinson Steel Ltd., Perth, letter of reference for JA Portmann
8917A/3	4 April 1960 CH Warman, consulting engineer, Kalgoorlie. Letter of reference for John Portmann
8917A/4	14 June 1976 Leonora Tourist Committee, to John A Portman, regarding payment to John A Portman for photographs of Gwalia

	FILE - MISCELLANEOUS
8917A/5	<p>5.1. Western Australian motor driver's license, issued to JA Portmann, expiry 9 March 1961</p> <p>5.2. International driving permit, valid for driving in the Commonwealth of Perth. Issued at Perth, 17 November 1960</p> <p>5.3. Road map, Western Australia, not dated, probably 1950s</p> <p>5.4. Folded sheet, "Ein dutzend vortragsthemen" (a dozen lecture topics). Describes scenes in Western Australia</p> <p>5.5. Circular. Kalgoorlie Youth for Christ House Party, Easter 1956</p> <p>5.6. Circular. Kurrawang Native Mission, 22 June 1956. Asking for workers to help at the Mission. Mentions three women – Mrs Sharpe, Estelle and Sister Jean Emmins – are caring for 30 children.</p>
	ORAL RECORDINGS
	Recorded on magnetic tapes. Not yet viewed. Descriptions from reel labels and boxes. Boxes marked "Portman". No dates apparent, but presumed after 1968
8917A/6	<p>Side 1: Corroboree. Warburton – Mt. Margaret, Swiss songs – Kurrawang recordings – corroboree and native dance songs</p> <p>Side 2: New Zealand – piano – Wangatha – boys song – Perth HA Fortress</p>
8917A/7	<p>Title: Australien. Side 1: Musik – Auffahrt – Bubikon (municipality in Zurich) – 2 CH</p> <p>Side 2: Australien. Vogecruf? Mine – farm – native singen (translate: sing) and reden (translate: talk)</p>
8917A/8	<p>Side 1: Aboriginal speaking – Korroborie – gospel singing – ansprache (translates: speech) – Hockleas? Tag Von Freudnen</p> <p>Side 2: Gerausche: kookaburra – bird – dingo – minen- sheep – track? Aboriginal talking and korroborie – Aboriginal gospel singing of records</p>
8917A/9	YHCA Rottnest camp
8917A/10	Yuna CWA – Roelands sings – problem of natives

Holdings =4 cm + 5 magnetic tape reels

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