"Looking Back, Looking Forward"

Guest Speaker: Dr Ronda Jamieson

Tuesday 8 March 2005
5.00pm for 5.30pm start
Great Southern Room - Alexander Library Building (4th floor)
Please take lift to the 3rd floor, then stairs to the 4th floor
See page 3 for details
OBJECTIVES
The objects of the Society are to assist and promote the interests of Battye Library and State Records Office and of those activities of the Library Board of Western Australia concerned with the acquisition, preservation and use of archival and documentary materials.

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The Secretary Friends of Battye Library (Inc.)
PO Box 216
NORTHBRIDGE WA 6865
Our Topic

‘Looking Back, Looking Forward’

With Dr Ronda Jamieson

The recently retired director of the Battye Library, Ronda Jamieson, will talk about the history of the Battye Library from the arrival of James Sykes Battye in 1894 to the present day. There will be consideration of challenges ahead in collecting and preserving our heritage, and in ensuring its accessibility for the benefit of all Western Australians, particularly a new generation of researchers with different expectations. Will the Battye Library and its services remain relevant into the future?

Ronda Jamieson joined the staff of the Battye Library in 1978 and has worked in oral history and preservation, ending her career at the State Library as director of the Battye Library. Along with degrees in librarianship and history, in 1991 she was awarded a Churchill Fellowship to study oral history overseas. Her doctoral thesis was on storekeeping in isolated rural communities in South and Western Australia. She has a passion for history and heritage, but believes that heritage must be shared, not just preserved.

Members and friends are welcome to join us at the March 2005 meeting

8 March 2005
5pm for 5.30pm start
Great Southern Room, 3rd floor
Alexander Library Building
Perth Cultural Centre

Petition for six o’clock closing of liquor bars, submitted to the Legislative Assembly, 1928 (SROWA, AN 347/2, Accession 1067, Item 110.)
INSIDE OUT

Treasures

The ‘Treasures of the Battye Library’ website referred to elsewhere has attracted many enthusiastic comments, but also an award. The excellent design by Cadmium Design and Development was awarded ‘Site of the Month’ by the international Guild of Accessible Web Designers who strive to promote websites that can be viewed and experienced by people with disabilities. Congratulations to all concerned.

The Amazing Doctor Battye

Publicity has recently been given to a forthcoming auction of an outstanding collection of Australiana which Rodney Davidson has taken a lifetime to accumulate. Included is *Journaal Wegens een Voyagie*, or what is known as the Vlamingh journal, published in Amsterdam in 1701. It was not written by Vlamingh but is about his 6-week exploration of Western Australia in 1696-1697 during which he discovered and named the Swan River and explored extensively. It is of 24 pages. Dutch scholar P A Leupe reported in 1856 that he could not trace a copy, 'and one and a half centuries later it remains one of the most conspicuous Australiana rarities. We have found no record of a copy at auction and no copy is to be found in any of the great catalogues of the past century'. [Davidson catalogue]

Well, if the State Library's catalogue had been checked it would have been found that we hold a copy of the first edition bought by James Sykes Battye in 1916 for six pounds. Its estimated price for the auction is $400,000 to $500,000. What an amazing collector he was.

Farewell Kath Edwards

I would like to add a personal farewell to Kath Edwards, long time member of the Battye Library staff and for the past 17 years, a welcome and valued volunteer. We will miss you Kath and your niceness, stories

When His Majesty’s opened in 1904, the three-tiered auditorium was reportedly able to seat 2,584 people all told, of whom an amazing, surely sardine-like, 1,070 were in the upper circle or gallery. Up there in ‘the gods’, the seating consisted simply of long wooden slats fastened to curved rows of steep concrete steps.

Then, in two operations in 1928 and about 1940, the total capacity underwent a drastic reduction to just 1,621. The main improvement was to the gallery, thanks to the installation of thinly padded individual seats with skeletal wooden backs and armrests. A new biobox for projecting motion pictures also took up some valuable central space there.

After the wonderful renovation and refurbishment accorded the theatre in 1976 – 80, the total seating fell to 1,262. One very interesting innovation was that the rows of very comfortable seats throughout were arranged in ‘continental’ style. This put a maximum of seats in prime central areas that could have been wasted on aisles, and another advantage was that the wider spacing needed between rows afforded patrons more leg-room once all were seated. Very welcome too for some of the sightlines from rear seats was the re-positioning of the once- vexatious pillars that support the two upper tiers.

The changing pathways for access to the seating have been particularly noteworthy on the ground floor. There the 974 stalls of 1904 were fed from one central aisle; from 1928 the 800 or so seats were served by two aisles separating a wide central block from two smaller side-sections; nowadays most of the 580 stalls seats can be approached only from the aisles which flank the side walls.

There could well be the odd occasion when a researcher is confronted by an old but undated photo of the auditorium and an audience. Clearly then, there is greater scope for assigning a reasonable date if the conformation of the seating is one of the factors taken into consideration.

For other purposes perhaps, it could also be useful to know that for the past few years the box plan of His Majesty’s has been a regular feature of the Perth telephone directory, along with those of several other entertainment venues.

The centenary of His Majesty’s was marked by year-long celebrations which came to a fitting climax with several events in the week before Christmas. Not least, the theatre was named one of twelve ‘heritage icons’ so designated in honour of Western Australia’s 175th year.

May it live at least another hundred years!
Jack’s Back: HERE’S A HEALTH UNTO HIS MAJESTY’S!
It was recently my pleasure to read, and to review elsewhere, the handsome new book, A Dream of Passion: The Centennial History of His Majesty’s Theatre, by David Hough. From all the various strands of the theatre’s rich history, I am here focusing on one subject which further engaged my attention as a result of a photo lately on display in one of Battye’s showcases. This topic is the changes that have occurred in the theatre’s seating configuration and capacity over the years.

The photo, taken from the stage, shows the ‘citizens’ rally’ at His Majesty’s on 30th July 1930 which became the inaugural meeting of the Dominion League of Western Australia, the body that led the campaign for the secession referendum of 1933. Given the accession number 3964B/1, and reproduced above, the photo comes from a splendid collection of glass negatives acquired from the firm Illustrations Ltd in the 1960’s. (A further assemblage of scrapbooks and pamphlets relating to the League is held in the Private Archives section.)

and skills. Thank you for all you have done to make more of her precious heritage available.

Goodbye

I will be forever grateful for the past 6.5 years as director of the Battye Library. It has been an exciting journey with an exceptional staff whose support and friendship has been greatly valued. We faced many challenges together – some successfully, and some that are overwhelming. The acceleration in the deterioration of many of the original materials is of concern, as is the inability to be as proactive in collecting as should be the case if the collections are to represent all the people and subjects that are important for research.

To mention just a few of the many highlights:

- the use of the Battye Library continues to increase;
- the adding of photographs to the State Library’s online catalogue;
- the availability of details of archival collections online;
- electronic publications and websites being archived through the National Library of Australia’s PANDORA archive and available through the online catalogue;
- more is known about the collections today from a preservation point of view than ever before and number of items in correct conservation housing has greatly increased;
- the Treasures exhibition in David Jones;
- the specialist websites that have been created:
  - Treasures of the Battye Library
  - Western Perspectives of a Nation
  - the Centenary of Federation
  - Rica Erickson
- the many wonderful additions to our various collections, including the Freycinet collection;
- photographic negatives being rescued through the Cyril and Ethel Peet Memorial Fund and the State Library Custodians;
- the establishment and continuation of the Migrant Communities Archive;
• the newspaper microfilming projects supported by Lotterywest, the Sunday Times and the National Library of Australia; and
• the Post Office Directories in the process of being digitised.

There are too many people to thank but included are the outstanding staff of the Battye Library and our many friends, chief among them Lindsay Peet, Sir James Cruthers, the Historical Records Rescue Consortium, the Friends of Battye Library and the State Library Custodians.

I look forward to our continued association through meetings of the Friends of Battye Library.

Ronda Jamieson

Gerard Foley receives Megan Sassi Award

The last edition of the newsletter carried the good news that Gerard Foley had been honoured with the Megan Sassi Award for Excellence in Reference Librarianship. The full citation follows:

Gerard Foley has participated in all Battye Library's reference services since joining the staff in 1989 and he is a very proficient researcher and cheerful assistant to clients.

On the Reference desk, Gerard is welcoming and extremely helpful, giving a high level of service to all clients. With 15 years of reference duty in the Battye Library he well knows his way through the intricacies of the many Battye Library collections. This includes not only knowledge of Innopac and Internet search techniques, but also of the many catalogues and indexes which can be used to help clients locate information or material. His knowledge of all collections is invaluable in steering clients along the appropriate research path. When it is his turn to do email and written enquiries, Gerard carries this out in a timely and professional manner to the satisfaction of all concerned.

Preservation Services
Pam Fraser

Pam continues to work tirelessly in the photographic area on the Illustrations Ltd pictorial negative collection to record descriptions of the images in Preservation Services. Pam’s vast travelling experience throughout Western Australia and her ability for detail has contributed greatly to fully identifying over 6,600 large format negative images of this collection. This information will be used in the creation of the catalogue record once the scanned images go on-line.

Natalie Weissbach

Natalie is a new volunteer and has been working in Preservation Services since July. She is very keen in the area of conservation and has contributed her time to a variety of tasks. Natalie's work in the conservation area involved assisting in preparing manuscript material for microfilming by flattening and repairing tears using heat-set tissue, washing single pages of newspaper and removing tape, making archival boxes to store preservation film and using the ultrasonic welder to house items from the ephemeral collection.

One of the preliminary designs for the State Coat of Arms (SROWA, Accession 1495, Item 2).
Lynley Edwards
Lynley was ‘drafted’ into Pictorial late in the year and has been assisting with the rehousing of the print collection. As she was once a staff member in the Pictorial Collection, her knowledge of the systems has proved invaluable.

Noreen Hocking
Noreen’s background in librarianship and pictorial collections has served her in good stead with her work on sorting the large and complex WA Surf Lifesaving Collection. She is now working her way through the even more complex collection of the Serventy Family, housing and matching the prints and negatives.

Barbara Judge
Barbara has been one of the driving forces behind the project to rehouse the extensive collection of smaller prints amassed over the last 45 years. Without help from the volunteers involved in this work, staff in the Pictorial Collection could never have hoped to achieve what has been achieved in the past year. Barbara has also continued with her work with the postcard/published images collection.

Dorothy Lee
With her innate ability to work with numbers, Dorothy has not only been a regular volunteer, but one who has transcribed complex and demanding listings as well as working on the print rehousing project. Dorothy’s last project was to compile a listing of the difficult Gore Collection. This project was one which only a meticulous lateral thinker could have brought to a happy resolution.

Tess Thomson
Tess was invited into Pictorial to help with the housing of the portraits of soldiers from the Adopt a Soldier Project. Having successfully completed that task, she embarked on the appraisal of the Dwyer negative collection, identifying a number of significant images as well as producing a comprehensive box-by-box appraisal in a marvellous report format. This will allow staff to finally make some informed decisions about this collection, which has been in Battye Library’s possession since the 1980s.

Gerard’s collection specialty in the Battye Library is the State Film Archives and in this field his reference skills excel. His work in the film and video collection includes supervising the description and cataloguing of the collection. The latter process is essential for client access and reference work and the transfer of the State Film Archives catalogue from card to INNOPAC has largely come under Gerard’s leadership.

Film is an exceedingly complex medium to work with and requests, whether to locate footage of a certain theme or to obtain copies of footage, often require lengthy study and negotiation. Gerard uses his extensive knowledge of the collection and his people skills to satisfy client requests, including those of Indigenous filmmakers and community custodians where culturally appropriate ways of making film available to a much wider audience need to be considered.

As a further testament to Gerard's reference and other skills, he has given many presentations on the film collection to staff, clients and specialist groups. These presentations promote the reference services available through the Battye Library and ScreenSound Australia. Gerard works closely with ScreenSound in the provision of information and film access.

In addition to direct client services, Gerard undertakes considerable study of the collection to locate suitable material for the Save our Film and other conservation projects. These projects do have a direct bearing on reference services, as one of the criteria for selecting the limited number of films that can be conserved is the value of the film to clients. Gerard’s knowledge of the collection ensures that conserved films will add considerably to the subject matter already available to clients. This work, together with the general appraisal and selection work, enables the State Film Archives to be an important, accessible collection of the Battye Library.

Gerard Foley is a worthy candidate for the Megan Sassi Award and epitomises the values placed on reference services by Megan.
ARCHIVES EXPLORED ONLINE
Launch of the SRO’s Online Search Engine

The State Records Office of WA has officially entered the 21st century with the launch of its new online archives catalogue – AEON (Archives Explored Online).

At a well attended function in the Alexander Library Building theatre on 30 November, Department of Culture and the Arts Director General, Mr Alastair Bryant, conducted the official launch. Mr Bryant stated: “Today marks a momentous event in the history of the State Records Office. This project has been in the planning for some time and it is gratifying that this day has now come and that Western Australia has joined other Australian States in providing such a service.”

During his speech, Mr Bryant quantified the amount of archival records that would be searchable and gave a tantalizing indicator of what the very near future holds: “Approximately 75% of the 2.5 million (or 15 linear kilometres) of archival records currently held by the State Records Office are now electronically catalogued and are now searchable online via AEON. To add to this good news, the State Records Office is currently conducting a large-scale Work Experience project so that remaining archive listings will be added to this system over coming months. The State Records Office aims to have 100% of its archive listings entered into its database during 2005 so that the entirety of the State archives collection will be searchable via AEON. This too will be a very significant milestone as the State Records Office of WA will be the only government archive in Australia to have reached this goal.”

As well as listing those State archives held by the State Records Office, AEON also documents the important contextual information in which these records were created and managed. AEON also supports digitized images of archives and this is a feature that the State Records Office hopes to exploit as much as possible.

Under Section 73(d) of the State Records Act 2000, the State Records Office is required to maintain a register of all State archives, including those not in the collection (that is, those in the custody of government organizations). The ability of AEON to perform this function will lead to improved government accountability and transparency.

Alex George
Alex has worked on identifying and assessing the value of agricultural films. His expertise, botanical knowledge and skills have been invaluable in assisting us to manage, document and rationalise this large collection.

Nancy and Ross McKenzie
Nancy and Ross have been working on the Midland Railway workshops films which they finished, and then the Westrail collection - doing a splendid job, having to contend with a lot of resplicing and re-spooling. Their descriptions and assessments have been to a very high standard, allowing collection staff to make more effective decisions on the management of this collection.

Jim McKinnon
Jim spent the first part of the year continuing his invaluable work in SFA, viewing, describing and evaluating unprocessed films. His fine work has enabled a good selection of films to be prepared for further conservation work. He is also working for Preservation Services to rehouse microfilm working negatives. His work has been vital to preserving an important collection.

Pictorial

Linley Batterham
Linley has been putting in many hours sorting, appraising, housing and listing collections such as that from the activist group Desperate Measures, the vaudeville trouper Effie Fellows and the Dowson collection of Wiluna photos. In addition, she has finalised some of the larger collections which she accessioned in 2003.

Patrick Bunbury
Patrick has continued to work through the extensive Prinsep Family Collection which has been with the State Library since the 1980s. His meticulous work in housing and accessioning this collection should draw to a close in 2005 and we are fortunate to have had someone who has stayed with the project to see it through to a conclusion. In the midst of all this, for a change of pace, Patrick appraised the Atkins Carlyle photographic collection (he was a former employee so had “inside” knowledge) and rehoused the contemporary images from the Government Photographer collection.
Oral History

Mary Bairstow
Mary's "off site" contribution with her computer skills at home has been a great help getting some of the donated collection on to an electronic format with synopsis completion. She shows special skills in document analysis.

Heather Campbell
Has finalised some long-term outstanding interviews by contacting people and negotiating copyright formalities. Her deep knowledge of the Collection and oral history skills are always an asset.

Beth Frayne
Beth has begun a pilot project to convert old card catalogue records to on-line index records. Because she has extensive professional cataloguing experience, she is able to ensure as part of this project that existing and new records have headings, such as the individuals’ names, done consistently so people searching the catalogue retrieve all the records that relate to their search.

Jill Sexton
Jill and her oral history synopses preparation for donated material has again this year been a great help in clearing oral history backlog material. Jill’s "sense of order and discipline" is such an asset when she has been asked to put something into some numerical or alphabetical sequence, or the never ending labelling of tapes. She has also helped Julie out in the Pictorial Collection with these great skills.

State Film Archives

Bobby Albert
Bobby Albert, from the Jarlmadangah Community, has assisted staff of the State Film Archives identifying film which may contain sensitive cultural information. She brings to the task a great knowledge of the issues involved and an appreciation of the needs of different communities of users of the State Film Archives.

AEON - and the system it runs from, Business Operations System (BOS) - was procured from the State Records Authority (SRA) of NSW. It is largely through the goodwill and generosity of the SRA NSW Director, David Roberts, that AEON has been made possible for Western Australia. The State Records Office would like to warmly thank David for his assistance and support in this achievement.

AEON is now accessible via the homepage of the State Records Office at www.sro.wa.gov.au. Happy browsing!

KATH EDWARDS RETIRES - AGAIN.

The Friends of Battye Library volunteer program is all the poorer for the retirement of Kath Edwards at the end of 2004. Kath worked as a Librarian in the Battye Library from the mid 1970s until her (first) retirement in the mid 1980s. But she quickly returned to the library environment as a volunteer. From the never ending work as a Serials Librarian, Kath joined the never ending work brigade of Private Archives and over the years has processed a large and varied number of collections. Of special note is Kath’s work on the papers of the Clifton and Bussell families. Both are extraordinary large collections and many letters were extremely difficult to indentify because of the recurring family names through the generations. Kath became a handwriting expert during this time! Letters written in the 'crossed' style to save paper and weight were particularly taxing. Her Clifton papers work resulted in a Friends of Battye Library published bibliography in 1995. Another notable project was the Sir Claude Hotchin papers and Kath processed and listed over 3 metres of the papers of this prominent Western Australian art collector and benefactor.

At the 2004 Volunteers Christmas Lunch Kath let it be known that she was retiring from the program. Kath is one of the longest serving volunteers, with nearly 20 years of service. Kath is continuing with other volunteer work closer to home and her cheery nature and the stories of her (and her family’s) many ventures will be sorely missed by staff and volunteers alike in the Battye Library.

David Whiteford
Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA) Conference

In November 2004 I was lucky enough to attend the AMIA Conference in Minneapolis, USA. AMIA is the largest professional membership association concerned with the archiving and preservation of films in the world. I was the very fortunate and grateful recipient of the Maryann Gomes Award which honours the memory of the one who was instrumental in the creation of AMIA’s Regional Audio Visual Archives Interest Group and served as its first chairperson.

It was quite a journey to Minneapolis (literally the other side of the world) and on my way there I spent a couple of days in Los Angeles and visited the Academy of Motion Picture Sciences and Arts Film Archive in Hollywood. It was wonderful to see the work they do to preserve Hollywood productions and also to discover the emphasis they have on collecting the ‘culture’ of Hollywood. It was amazing to be in the place where the power of moving images is promoted above everything else.

Almost 400 people attended the AMIA Conference in Minneapolis, the vast majority from North America but also a smattering from the UK, Europe, Central and South America, Australasia and Africa. I met people I had only communicated with via the AMIA online list. Attendees included those employed as archivists in institutions, organisations and businesses specialising in moving image materials and there were also a sizeable number who worked to preserve films. Private film collectors and film historians also came.

The Conference started in earnest with the welcome reception where the enthusiasm for the cause to preserve and make accessible moving image archives was palpable. The Conference lasted four full days and comprised concurrent sessions, each day commencing at 7.30 with breakfast and on some days the sessions not ceasing until near midnight. I can’t describe in detail each of the sessions I attended, as there’s not enough room in this newsletter, but I can say the diversity of tasks, the trends in preservation work, the diversity of archival efforts and ideas, the descriptions of work in varying types of role in the compilation of our microfilming and conservation programmes.

Annabel Capp
Annabel has helped to sort and list the many ephemera items which come into the Battye Library every week. She is currently going through the many boxes of valuable material which sit unprocessed in the collection backlog. Through her exceptional work she is helping to make available those items which are so evocative of our everyday past - from election leaflets to performance programs - and an important resource for researchers. Annabel volunteers her time for one half day every week and makes a substantial contribution to this ongoing project.

Meira Goddard
Meira has been a long-term indexer of Western Australian serial publications and her work this year has been on the long running Western Methodist (1899 - 1977). Obituaries, construction of new churches, anniversary celebrations, and district descriptions through the eyes of travelling ministers are among the interesting information recorded. Meira also assists in the collection of monthly volunteer statistics and prepares donated postcards.

Grif Griffiths
Grif is another long-term indexer of serial publications and this year has concentrated on Western Wireless (1923-1927 and its subsequent titles) and now The Builder and engineering register (1924-1931). He has covered the development of radio in WA, and buildings and architecture, compiling index records on template sheets. The data is later input onto our system by staff. Reference staff have noted demand for such entries with internet users arriving at the library to request articles they have located.

Margaret McKay
Margaret must be one of the most well-read people of Western Australian short stories for she has been looking at book anthologies and also magazines in order to index short stories on the State Library on-line catalogue. This is a valuable resource for anyone wanting a bibliography of local authors' work.
Douglas is a prominent member of the Freemasons in Western Australia and has been instrumental in depositing the archives of closed Lodges with the Battye Library. Douglas brings the material to the Battye Library, is given accession numbers for each collection and then does on-the-spot listings of the material for us.

Richard Matthews
Richard is another 2004 addition to the Private Archives volunteers. Richard is the Uniting Church Archive's representative and he is powering through unprocessed Church collections. The Uniting Church Archivist, Sheena Hesse, keeps in touch with Richard and also oversees a group of volunteers who work within the Church Archives premises, preparing archives for transfer to the Battye Library.

Judy Mitchell
Judy transferred to Private Archives from Serials and if she thought that serials were never ending, she soon learned that the same applies to the archives! Judy's collection work includes the WA Music Teacher's Association and John Lysaght Pty Ltd.

Ian Murray
Ian has been a long-time Private Archives volunteer and works steadfastly through some of our very large collections - including the Krantz and Sheldon architectural archives, WA Turf Club, and Atkins Carlyle.

Kate Sullivan
Kate may be last alphabetically in the Private Archives register, but like all our volunteers has enabled us to make so much more material available for research. Kate's projects include the Albert E Greenwood (mining agent and consultant and husband of Irene Greenwood) and Joyce Dunphy (St John of God Sisters) material.

Published Collections

Herman Blom
Herman is one of the few volunteers to work alone with a collection. He has patiently and diligently been working through the bound newspaper collection and providing general condition reports on each volume. This assists us identify deteriorating volumes and plays a

institutions and of projects, were all discussed in detail. I contributed to a panel session on Archives and the Law. Though a little nerve wracking it was also rewarding to be an integral part of the conference.

Some international visitors described the conditions in their countries where decades of strife and lack of funding have created situations where historically significant moving image collections are maintained in perilous conditions. There were also public screenings of newly restored works, or ones of particular interest to moving image archivists and these added some Hollywood pizzazz to the proceedings.

I was impressed by the number of technical presentations detailing audiovisual preservation that explained initiatives in the digitisation of moving image materials. I was particularly impressed by the commitment to ensure the solutions that are developed for the long term. I came away with a good understanding of the importance of the work being done.

Attending the AMIA Conference was an opportunity to experience first hand the dynamism of the moving image archives community. I was particularly impressed by the opportunities for presenters to display, in quite tangible ways, the results of their work. I discovered that the moving image archives world has more diversity of work than I expected but also a great unity of purpose. It has certainly restimulated my interest in archiving audiovisual materials.

On my way back to Australia I travelled through the United States, and also England where I visited several moving image archives, museums and art galleries. Warmly received wherever I went, it was a marvellous journey into ‘AMIALand’, an unexpectedly diverse place populated with extremely dedicated people.

Gerard Foley
Archivist: State Film Archives
A new website for Battye Library treasures

The Battye Library has amazing items in its collections, some of which were showcased at David Jones’ Hay Street store in June 2004. More than 1500 people visited the exhibition and most appreciated the varied and valuable items on display.

Launched by Emeritus Professor Geoffrey Bolton, the Treasures of the Battye Library website makes accessible via the Internet twenty remarkable items from the collections. The website was funded by the Friends of Battye Library (Inc.) from the bequest of Maude Sholl who was a great supporter of the Battye Library and left money for the compilation of finding aids and editing of documents with a view to publication.

The items featured reflect the unique range and diversity of the collections and among them are Francisco Pelsaert’s Ongeluckige voyagie, van’t schip Batavia… (Unlucky voyage of the Ship Batavia) published in 1647; maps and sketches from Louis de Freycinet’s 1801 and 1818 visits to the West; watercolours from John Septimus Roe’s 1817 logbook; an 1831 handwritten newspaper; Western Australia’s first published book; an 1860 daguerreotype of Perth; Norwoodiana, a journal written on the convict ship Norwood in 1867; illuminated addresses presented to Governor Sir Gerard Smith in the late 1890s; coloured drawings by Billingee, an Aboriginal man from the Broome area, presented to the Governor in 1907; drawings and paintings from a book of school children’s art given to Governor Sir Frederick Bedford in 1909; letters from D H Lawrence to Mollie Skinner in 1923; and a diary written on a toilet roll by Lieutenant Ray Stewart while a prisoner during World War II.

Steve Howell, Helene Charlesworth and Dianne Calway made the website possible and Cadmium Design and Development superbly fulfilled the design brief of a simple, uncluttered and elegant website, allowing the treasures to speak for themselves. The items are arranged chronologically and for each there is a short story, further detailed images and some links to further information.

The Treasures of the Battye Library website can be accessed through the State Library of Western Australia’s home page (www.liswa.wa.gov.au) in What’s New, or you can go straight to it at www.liswa.wa.gov.au/treasures.

Steve Howell
Senior Librarian, Battye Published Collections.

The Wonderful Work of Volunteers in Battye in 2004

Private Archives

Private Archives has a large contingent of volunteers without whom much of the collection processing undertaken each year would not get done.

Del Baude
Del has processed many small collections, including H. I. Blake (South West real estate surveyor and valuer), the Olive and Carl Kemp collection, and singer Sydney Glasson.

Patrick Bunbury
Patrick is prepared to tackle some of our large collections and his processing includes Australian Association for Speech and Hearing (WA Branch) and the Peter V Jones collection of North West Shelf natural gas and other industrial projects.

Perpetua Durack-Clancy
Perpetua is working through the papers of her mother, artist and author Elizabeth Durack, and has deposited some of the collection with the Battye Library. There is considerable more material to be deposited and Perpetua will be doing most of the sorting and listing of this important collection.

Kath Edwards, Lesley Gilks and Judy Gluyas
Kath, Lesley and Judy have unfortunately been unable to come into the library for much of the year for various reasons, but their contributions include processing the Lilian Wooster Greaves (author) 1894-1972 and Letters and diaries of Ambrose and Nance Durack of Argyle Station 1890 - 1930. Kath has been a long-term volunteer, while both Lesley and Judy commenced as volunteers in 2004 and we pass our good wishes to all three and hope we'll see them next year - there's plenty of work available!

Douglas Kirkby
A new website for Battye Library treasures

The Battye Library has amazing items in its collections, some of which were showcased at David Jones’ Hay Street store in June 2004. More than 1500 people visited the exhibition and most appreciated the varied and valuable items on display.

Launched by Emeritus Professor Geoffrey Bolton, the Treasures of the Battye Library website makes accessible via the Internet twenty remarkable items from the collections. The website was funded by the Friends of Battye Library (Inc.) from the bequest of Maude Sholl who was a great supporter of the Battye Library and left money for the compilation of finding aids and editing of documents with a view to publication.

The items featured reflect the unique range and diversity of the collections and among them are Francisco Pelsaert’s Ongeluckige voyagie, van’t schip Batavia… (Unlucky voyage of the Ship Batavia) published in 1647; maps and sketches from Louis de Freycinet’s 1801 and 1818 visits to the West; watercolours from John Septimus Roe’s 1817 logbook; an 1831 handwritten newspaper; Western Australia’s first published book; an 1860 daguerreotype of Perth; Norwoodiana, a journal written on the convict ship Norwood in 1867; illuminated addresses presented to Governor Sir Gerard Smith in the late 1890s; coloured drawings by Billingee, an Aboriginal man from the Broome area, presented to the Governor in 1907; drawings and paintings from a book of school children’s art given to Governor Sir Frederick Bedford in 1909; letters from D H Lawrence to Mollie Skinner in 1923; and a diary written on a toilet roll by Lieutenant Ray Stewart while a prisoner during World War II.

Steve Howell, Helene Charlesworth and Dianne Calway made the website possible and Cadmium Design and Development superbly fulfilled the design brief of a simple, uncluttered and elegant website, allowing the treasures to speak for themselves. The items are arranged chronologically and for each there is a short story, further detailed images and some links to further information.

The Treasures of the Battye Library website can be accessed through the State Library of Western Australia's home page (www.liswa.wa.gov.au) in What's New, or you can go straight to it at www.liswa.wa.gov.au/treasures.

Steve Howell
Senior Librarian, Battye Published Collections.

The Wonderful Work of Volunteers in Battye in 2004

Private Archives

Private Archives has a large contingent of volunteers without whom much of the collection processing undertaken each year would not get done.

Del Baude
Del has processed many small collections, including H. I. Blake (South West real estate surveyor and valuer), the Olive and Carl Kemp collection, and singer Sydney Glasson.

Patrick Bunbury
Patrick is prepared to tackle some of our large collections and his processing includes Australian Association for Speech and Hearing (WA Branch) and the Peter V Jones collection of North West Shelf natural gas and other industrial projects.

Perpetua Durack-Clancy
Perpetua is working through the papers of her mother, artist and author Elizabeth Durack, and has deposited some of the collection with the Battye Library. There is considerable more material to be deposited and Perpetua will be doing most of the sorting and listing of this important collection.

Kath Edwards, Lesley Gilks and Judy Gluyas
Kath, Lesley and Judy have unfortunately been unable to come into the library for much of the year for various reasons, but their contributions include processing the Lilian Wooster Greaves (author) 1894-1972 and Letters and diaries of Ambrose and Nance Durack of Argyle Station 1890 - 1930. Kath has been a long-term volunteer, while both Lesley and Judy commenced as volunteers in 2004 and we pass our good wishes to all three and hope we'll see them next year - there's plenty of work available!

Douglas Kirkby
Douglas is a prominent member of the Freemasons in Western Australia and has been instrumental in depositing the archives of closed
Lodges with the Battye Library, Douglas brings the material to the Battye Library, is given accession numbers for each collection and then does on-the-spot listings of the material for us.

**Richard Matthews**
Richard is another 2004 addition to the Private Archives volunteers. Richard is the Uniting Church Archive's representative and he is powering through unprocessed Church collections. The Uniting Church Archivist, Sheena Hesse, keeps in touch with Richard and also oversees a group of volunteers who work within the Church Archives premises, preparing archives for transfer to the Battye Library.

**Judy Mitchell**
Judy transferred to Private Archives from Serials and if she thought that serials were never ending, she soon learned that the same applies to the archives! Judy's collection work includes the WA Music Teacher's Association and John Lysaght Pty Ltd.

**Ian Murray**
Ian has been a long-time Private Archives volunteer and works steadfastly through some of our very large collections - including the Krantz and Sheldon architectural archives, WA Turf Club, and Atkins Carlyle.

**Kate Sullivan**
Kate may be last alphabetically in the Private Archives register, but like all our volunteers has enabled us to make so much more material available for research. Kate's projects include the Albert E Greenwood (mining agent and consultant and husband of Irene Greenwood) and Joyce Dunphy (St John of God Sisters) material.

**Published Collections**

**Herman Blom**
Herman is one of the few volunteers to work alone with a collection. He has patiently and diligently been working through the bound newspaper collection and providing general condition reports on each volume. This assists us identify deteriorating volumes and plays a

Institutions and of projects, were all discussed in detail. I contributed to a panel session on Archives and the Law. Though a little nerve wracking it was also rewarding to be an integral part of the conference.

Some international visitors described the conditions in their countries where decades of strife and lack of funding have created situations where historically significant moving image collections are maintained in perilous conditions. There were also public screenings of newly restored works, or ones of particular interest to moving image archivists and these added some Hollywood *pizzazz* to the proceedings.

I was impressed by the number of technical presentations detailing audiovisual preservation that explained initiatives in the digitisation of moving image materials. I was particularly impressed by the commitment to ensure the solutions that are developed for the long term. I came away with a good understanding of the importance of the work being done.

Attending the AMIA Conference was an opportunity to experience first hand the dynamism of the moving image archives community. I was particularly impressed by the opportunities for presenters to display, in quite tangible ways, the results of their work. I discovered that the moving image archives world has more diversity of work than I expected but also a great unity of purpose. It has certainly restimulated my interest in archiving audiovisual materials.

On my way back to Australia I travelled through the United States, and also England where I visited several moving image archives, museums and art galleries. Warmly received wherever I went, it was a marvellous journey into 'AMIALand', an unexpectedly diverse place populated with extremely dedicated people.

**Gerard Foley**
Archivist: State Film Archives
Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA) Conference

In November 2004 I was lucky enough to attend the AMIA Conference in Minneapolis, USA. AMIA is the largest professional membership association concerned with the archiving and preservation of films in the world. I was the very fortunate and grateful recipient of the Maryann Gomes Award which honours the memory of the one who was instrumental in the creation of AMIA’s Regional Audio Visual Archives Interest Group and served as its first chairperson.

It was quite a journey to Minneapolis (literally the other side of the world) and on my way there I spent a couple of days in Los Angeles and visited the Academy of Motion Picture Sciences and Arts Film Archive in Hollywood. It was wonderful to see the work they do to preserve Hollywood productions and also to discover the emphasis they have on collecting the ‘culture’ of Hollywood. It was amazing to be in the place where the power of moving images is promoted above everything else.

Almost 400 people attended the AMIA Conference in Minneapolis, the vast majority from North America but also a smattering from the UK, Europe, Central and South America, Australasia and Africa. I met people I had only communicated with via the AMIA online list. Attendees included those employed as archivists in institutions, organisations and businesses specialising moving image materials and there were also a sizeable number who worked to preserve films. Private film collectors and film historians also came.

The Conference started in earnest with the welcome reception where the enthusiasm for the cause to preserve and make accessible moving image archives was palpable. The Conference lasted four full days and comprised concurrent sessions, each day commencing at 7.30 with breakfast and on some days the sessions not ceasing until near midnight. I can’t describe in detail each of the sessions I attended, as there’s not enough room in this newsletter, but I can say the diversity of tasks, the trends in preservation work, the diversity of archival efforts and ideas, the descriptions of work in varying types of role in the compilation of our microfilming and conservation programmes.

Annabel Capp
Annabel has helped to sort and list the many ephemera items which come into the Battye Library every week. She is currently going through the many boxes of valuable material which sit unprocessed in the collection backlog. Through her exceptional work she is helping to make available those items which are so evocative of our everyday past - from election leaflets to performance programs - and an important resource for researchers. Annabel volunteers her time for one half day every week and makes a substantial contribution to this ongoing project.

Meira Goddard
Meira has been a long-term indexer of Western Australian serial publications and her work this year has been on the long running Western Methodist (1899 - 1977). Obituaries, construction of new churches, anniversary celebrations, and district descriptions through the eyes of travelling ministers are among the interesting information recorded. Meira also assists in the collection of monthly volunteer statistics and prepares donated postcards.

Grif Griffiths
Grif is another long-term indexer of serial publications and this year has concentrated on Western Wireless (1923-1927 and its subsequent titles) and now The Builder and engineering register (1924-1931). He has covered the development of radio in WA, and buildings and architecture, compiling index records on template sheets. The data is later input onto our system by staff. Reference staff have noted demand for such entries with internet users arriving at the library to request articles they have located.

Margaret McKay
Margaret must be one of the most well-read people of Western Australian short stories for she has been looking at book anthologies and also magazines in order to index short stories on the State Library on-line catalogue. This is a valuable resource for anyone wanting a bibliography of local authors' work.
Oral History

Mary Bairstow
Mary's "off site" contribution with her computer skills at home has been a great help getting some of the donated collection on to an electronic format with synopsis completion. She shows special skills in document analysis.

Heather Campbell
Has finalised some long-term outstanding interviews by contacting people and negotiating copyright formalities. Her deep knowledge of the Collection and oral history skills are always an asset.

Beth Frayne
Beth has begun a pilot project to convert old card catalogue records to on-line index records. Because she has extensive professional cataloguing experience, she is able to ensure as part of this project that existing and new records have headings, such as the individuals' names, done consistently so people searching the catalogue retrieve all the records that relate to their search.

Jill Sexton
Jill and her oral history synopses preparation for donated material has again this year been a great help in clearing oral history backlog material. Jill's "sense of order and discipline" is such an asset when she has been asked to put something into some numerical or alphabetical sequence, or the never ending labelling of tapes. She has also helped Julie out in the Pictorial Collection with these great skills.

State Film Archives

Bobby Albert
Bobby Albert, from the Jarlimadangah Community, has assisted staff of the State Film Archives identifying film which may contain sensitive cultural information. She brings to the task a great knowledge of the issues involved and an appreciation of the needs of different communities of users of the State Film Archives.

AEON - and the system it runs from, Business Operations System (BOS) - was procured from the State Records Authority (SRA) of NSW. It is largely through the goodwill and generosity of the SRA NSW Director, David Roberts, that AEON has been made possible for Western Australia. The State Records Office would like to warmly thank David for his assistance and support in this achievement.

AEON is now accessible via the homepage of the State Records Office at www.sro.wa.gov.au. Happy browsing!

KATH EDWARDS RETIRES - AGAIN.

The Friends of Battye Library volunteer program is all the poorer for the retirement of Kath Edwards at the end of 2004. Kath worked as a Librarian in the Battye Library from the mid 1970s until her (first) retirement in the mid 1980s. But she quickly returned to the library environment as a volunteer. From the never ending work as a Serials Librarian, Kath joined the never ending work brigade of Private Archives and over the years has processed a large and varied number of collections. Of special note is Kath's work on the papers of the Clifton and Bussell families. Both are extraordinary large collections and many letters were extremely difficult to indentify because of the recurring family names through the generations. Kath became a handwriting expert during this time! Letters written in the 'crossed' style to save paper and weight were particularly taxing. Her Clifton papers work resulted in a Friends of Battye Library published bibliography in 1995. Another notable project was the Sir Claude Hotchin papers and Kath processed and listed over 3 metres of the papers of this prominent Western Australian art collector and benefactor.

At the 2004 Volunteers Christmas Lunch Kath let it be known that she was retiring from the program. Kath is one of the longest serving volunteers, with nearly 20 years of service. Kath is continuing with other volunteer work closer to home and her cheery nature and the stories of her (and her family's) many ventures will be sorely missed by staff and volunteers alike in the Battye Library.

David Whiteford
ARCHIVES EXPLORED ONLINE
Launch of the SRO’s Online Search Engine

The State Records Office of WA has officially entered the 21st century with the launch of its new online archives catalogue – AEON (Archives Explored Online).

At a well attended function in the Alexander Library Building theatre on 30 November, Department of Culture and the Arts Director General, Mr Alastair Bryant, conducted the official launch. Mr Bryant stated: “Today marks a momentous event in the history of the State Records Office. This project has been in the planning for some time and it is gratifying that this day has now come and that Western Australia has joined other Australian States in providing such a service.”

During his speech, Mr Bryant quantified the amount of archival records that would be searchable and gave a tantalizing indicator of what the very near future holds: “Approximately 75% of the 2.5 million (or 15 linear kilometres) of archival records currently held by the State Records Office are now electronically catalogued and are now searchable online via AEON. To add to this good news, the State Records Office is currently conducting a large-scale Work Experience project so that remaining archive listings will be added to this system over coming months. The State Records Office aims to have 100% of its archive listings entered into its database during 2005 so that the entirety of the State archives collection will be searchable via AEON. This too will be a very significant milestone as the State Records Office of WA will be the only government archive in Australia to have reached this goal.”

As well as listing those State archives held by the State Records Office, AEON also documents the important contextual information in which these records were created and managed. AEON also supports digitized images of archives and this is a feature that the State Records Office hopes to exploit as much as possible.

Under Section 73(d) of the State Records Act 2000, the State Records Office is required to maintain a register of all State archives, including those not in the collection (that is, those in the custody of government organizations). The ability of AEON to perform this function will lead to improved government accountability and transparency.

Alex George
Alex has worked on identifying and assessing the value of agricultural films. His expertise, botanical knowledge and skills have been invaluable in assisting us to manage, document and rationalise this large collection.

Nancy and Ross McKenzie
Nancy and Ross have been working on the Midland Railway workshops films which they finished, and then the Westrail collection - doing a splendid job, having to contend with a lot of resplicing and re-spooling. Their descriptions and assessments have been to a very high standard, allowing collection staff to make more effective decisions on the management of this collection.

Jim McKinnon
Jim spent the first part of the year continuing his invaluable work in SFA, viewing, describing and evaluating unprocessed films. His fine work has enabled a good selection of films to be prepared for further conservation work. He is also working for Preservation Services to rehouse microfilm working negatives. His work has been vital to preserving an important collection.

Pictorial

Linley Batterham
Linley has been putting in many hours sorting, appraising, housing and listing collections such as that from the activist group Desperate Measures, the vaudeville trouper Effie Fellows and the Dowson collection of Wiluna photos. In addition, she has finalised some of the larger collections which she accessioned in 2003.

Patrick Bunbury
Patrick has continued to work through the extensive Prinsep Family Collection which has been with the State Library since the 1980s. His meticulous work in housing and accessioning this collection should draw to a close in 2005 and we are fortunate to have had someone who has stayed with the project to see it through to a conclusion. In the midst of all this, for a change of pace, Patrick appraised the Atkins Carlyle photographic collection (he was a former employee so had “inside” knowledge) and rehoused the contemporary images from the Government Photographer collection.
Lynley Edwards
Lynley was ‘drafted’ into Pictorial late in the year and has been assisting with the rehousing of the print collection. As she was once a staff member in the Pictorial Collection, her knowledge of the systems has proved invaluable.

Noreen Hocking
Noreen’s background in librarianship and pictorial collections has served her in good stead with her work on sorting the large and complex WA Surf Lifesaving Collection. She is now working her way through the even more complex collection of the Serventy Family, housing and matching the prints and negatives.

Barbara Judge
Barbara has been one of the driving forces behind the project to rehouse the extensive collection of smaller prints amassed over the last 45 years. Without help from the volunteers involved in this work, staff in the Pictorial Collection could never have hoped to achieve what has been achieved in the past year. Barbara has also continued with her work with the postcard/published images collection.

Dorothy Lee
With her innate ability to work with numbers, Dorothy has not only been a regular volunteer, but one who has transcribed complex and demanding listings as well as working on the print rehousing project. Dorothy’s last project was to compile a listing of the difficult Gore Collection. This project was one which only a meticulous lateral thinker could have brought to a happy resolution.

Tess Thomson
Tess was invited into Pictorial to help with the housing of the portraits of soldiers from the Adopt a Soldier Project. Having successfully completed that task, she embarked on the appraisal of the Dwyer negative collection, identifying a number of significant images as well as producing a comprehensive box-by-box appraisal in a marvellous report format. This will allow staff to finally make some informed decisions about this collection, which has been in Battye Library’s possession since the 1980s.

Gerard’s collection specialty in the Battye Library is the State Film Archives and in this field his reference skills excel. His work in the film and video collection includes supervising the description and cataloguing of the collection. The latter process is essential for client access and reference work and the transfer of the State Film Archives catalogue from card to INNOPAC has largely come under Gerard’s leadership.

Film is an exceedingly complex medium to work with and requests, whether to locate footage of a certain theme or to obtain copies of footage, often require lengthy study and negotiation. Gerard uses his extensive knowledge of the collection and his people skills to satisfy client requests, including those of Indigenous filmmakers and community custodians where culturally appropriate ways of making film available to a much wider audience need to be considered.

As a further testament to Gerard’s reference and other skills, he has given many presentations on the film collection to staff, clients and specialist groups. These presentations promote the reference services available through the Battye Library and ScreenSound Australia. Gerard works closely with ScreenSound in the provision of information and film access.

In addition to direct client services, Gerard undertakes considerable study of the collection to locate suitable material for the Save our Film and other conservation projects. These projects do have a direct bearing on reference services, as one of the criteria for selecting the limited number of films that can be conserved is the value of the film to clients. Gerard’s knowledge of the collection ensures that conserved films will add considerably to the subject matter already available to clients. This work, together with the general appraisal and selection work, enables the State Film Archives to be an important, accessible collection of the Battye Library.

Gerard Foley is a worthy candidate for the Megan Sassi Award and epitomises the values placed on reference services by Megan.
• the newspaper microfilming projects supported by Lotterywest, the Sunday Times and the National Library of Australia; and
• the Post Office Directories in the process of being digitised.

There are too many people to thank but included are the outstanding staff of the Battye Library and our many friends, chief among them Lindsay Peet, Sir James Cruthers, the Historical Records Rescue Consortium, the Friends of Battye Library and the State Library Custodians.

I look forward to our continued association through meetings of the Friends of Battye Library.

Ronda Jamieson

Gerard Foley receives Megan Sassi Award

The last edition of the newsletter carried the good news that Gerard Foley had been honoured with the Megan Sassi Award for Excellence in Reference Librarianship. The full citation follows:

Gerard Foley has participated in all Battye Library’s reference services since joining the staff in 1989 and he is a very proficient researcher and cheerful assistant to clients.

On the Reference desk, Gerard is welcoming and extremely helpful, giving a high level of service to all clients. With 15 years of reference duty in the Battye Library he well knows his way through the intricacies of the many Battye Library collections. This includes not only knowledge of Innopac and Internet search techniques, but also of the many catalogues and indexes which can be used to help clients locate information or material. His knowledge of all collections is invaluable in steering clients along the appropriate research path. When it is his turn to do email and written enquiries, Gerard carries this out in a timely and professional manner to the satisfaction of all concerned.

Preservation Services
Pam Fraser
Pam continues to work tirelessly in the photographic area on the Illustrations Ltd pictorial negative collection to record descriptions of the images in Preservation Services. Pam’s vast travelling experience throughout Western Australia and her ability for detail has contributed greatly to fully identifying over 6,600 large format negative images of this collection. This information will be used in the creation of the catalogue record once the scanned images go on-line.

Natalie Weissbach
Natalie is a new volunteer and has been working in Preservation Services since July. She is very keen in the area of conservation and has contributed her time to a variety of tasks. Natalie's work in the conservation area involved assisting in preparing manuscript material for microfilming by flattening and repairing tears using heat-set tissue, washing single pages of newspaper and removing tape, making archival boxes to store preservation film and using the ultrasonic welder to house items from the ephemeral collection.

One of the preliminary designs for the State Coat of Arms (SROWA, Accession 1495, Item 2).
Jack’s Back: HERE’S A HEALTH UNTO HIS MAJESTY’S!

It was recently my pleasure to read, and to review elsewhere, the handsome new book, A Dream of Passion: The Centennial History of His Majesty’s Theatre, by David Hough. From all the various strands of the theatre’s rich history, I am here focusing on one subject which further engaged my attention as a result of a photo lately on display in one of Battye’s showcases. This topic is the changes that have occurred in the theatre’s seating configuration and capacity over the years.

The photo, taken from the stage, shows the ‘citizens’ rally’ at His Majesty’s on 30th July 1930 which became the inaugural meeting of the Dominion League of Western Australia, the body that led the campaign for the secession referendum of 1933. Given the accession number 3964B/1, and reproduced above, the photo comes from a splendid collection of glass negatives acquired from the firm Illustrations Ltd in the 1960’s. (A further assemblage of scrapbooks and pamphlets relating to the League is held in the Private Archives section.)

and skills. Thank you for all you have done to make more of her precious heritage available.

Goodbye

I will be forever grateful for the past 6.5 years as director of the Battye Library. It has been an exciting journey with an exceptional staff whose support and friendship has been greatly valued. We faced many challenges together – some successfully, and some that are overwhelming. The acceleration in the deterioration of many of the original materials is of concern, as is the inability to be as proactive in collecting as should be the case if the collections are to represent all the people and subjects that are important for research.

To mention just a few of the many highlights:

- the use of the Battye Library continues to increase;
- the adding of photographs to the State Library’s online catalogue;
- the availability of details of archival collections online;
- electronic publications and websites being archived through the National Library of Australia’s PANDORA archive and available through the online catalogue;
- more is known about the collections today from a preservation point of view than ever before and number of items in correct conservation housing has greatly increased;
- the Treasures exhibition in David Jones;
- the specialist websites that have been created:
  - Treasures of the Battye Library
  - Western Perspectives of a Nation
  - the Centenary of Federation
  - Rica Erickson
- the many wonderful additions to our various collections, including the Freycinet collection;
- photographic negatives being rescued through the Cyril and Ethel Peet Memorial Fund and the State Library Custodians;
- the establishment and continuation of the Migrant Communities Archive;
INSIDE OUT

Treasures

The ‘Treasures of the Battye Library’ website referred to elsewhere has attracted many enthusiastic comments, but also an award. The excellent design by Cadmium Design and Development was awarded ‘Site of the Month’ by the international Guild of Accessible Web Designers who strive to promote websites that can be viewed and experienced by people with disabilities. Congratulations to all concerned.

The Amazing Doctor Battye

Publicity has recently been given to a forthcoming auction of an outstanding collection of Australiana which Rodney Davidson has taken a lifetime to accumulate. Included is *Journaal Wegens een Voyagie*, or what is known as the Vlamingh journal, published in Amsterdam in 1701. It was not written by Vlamingh but is about his 6-week exploration of Western Australia in 1696-1697 during which he discovered and named the Swan River and explored extensively. It is of 24 pages. Dutch scholar P A Leupe reported in 1856 that he could not trace a copy, ‘and one and a half centuries later it remains one of the most conspicuous Australiana rarities. We have found no record of a copy at auction and no copy is to be found in any of the great catalogues of the past century’. [Davidson catalogue]

Well, if the State Library’s catalogue had been checked it would have been found that we hold a copy of the first edition bought by James Sykes Battye in 1916 for six pounds. Its estimated price for the auction is $400,000 to $500,000. What an amazing collector he was.

Farewell Kath Edwards

I would like to add a personal farewell to Kath Edwards, long time member of the Battye Library staff and for the past 17 years, a welcome and valued volunteer. We will miss you Kath and your niceness, stories

When His Majesty’s opened in 1904, the three-tiered auditorium was reportedly able to seat 2,584 people all told, of whom an amazing, surely sardine-like, 1,070 were in the upper circle or gallery. Up there in ‘the gods’, the seating consisted simply of long wooden slats fastened to curved rows of steep concrete steps.

Then, in two operations in 1928 and about 1940, the total capacity underwent a drastic reduction to just 1,621. The main improvement was to the gallery, thanks to the installation of thinly padded individual seats with skeletal wooden backs and armrests. A new bio box for projecting motion pictures also took up some valuable central space there.

After the wonderful renovation and refurbishment accorded the theatre in 1976 – 80, the total seating fell to 1,262. One very interesting innovation was that the rows of very comfortable seats throughout were arranged in ‘continental’ style. This put a maximum of seats in prime central areas that could have been wasted on aisles, and another advantage was that the wider spacing needed between rows afforded patrons more leg-room once all were seated. Very welcome too for some of the sightlines from rear seats was the re-positioning of the once-vexatious pillars that support the two upper tiers.

The changing pathways for access to the seating have been particularly noteworthy on the ground floor. There the 974 stalls of 1904 were fed from one central aisle; from 1928 the 800 or so seats were served by two aisles separating a wide central block from two smaller side-sections; nowadays most of the 580 stalls seats can be approached only from the aisles which flank the side walls.

There could well be the odd occasion when a researcher is confronted by an old but undated photo of the auditorium and an audience. Clearly then, there is greater scope for assigning a reasonable date if the conformation of the seating is one of the factors taken into consideration.

For other purposes perhaps, it could also be useful to know that for the past few years the box plan of His Majesty’s has been a regular feature of the Perth telephone directory, along with those of several other entertainment venues.

The centenary of His Majesty’s was marked by year-long celebrations which came to a fitting climax with several events in the week before Christmas. Not least, the theatre was named one of twelve ‘heritage icons’ so designated in honour of Western Australia’s 175th year.

May it live at least another hundred years!
Our Topic

‘Looking Back, Looking Forward’

With Dr Ronda Jamieson

The recently retired director of the Battye Library, Ronda Jamieson, will talk about the history of the Battye Library from the arrival of James Sykes Battye in 1894 to the present day. There will be consideration of challenges ahead in collecting and preserving our heritage, and in ensuring its accessibility for the benefit of all Western Australians, particularly a new generation of researchers with different expectations. Will the Battye Library and its services remain relevant into the future?

Ronda Jamieson joined the staff of the Battye Library in 1978 and has worked in oral history and preservation, ending her career at the State Library as director of the Battye Library. Along with degrees in librarianship and history, in 1991 she was awarded a Churchill Fellowship to study oral history overseas. Her doctoral thesis was on storekeeping in isolated rural communities in South and Western Australia. She has a passion for history and heritage, but believes that heritage must be shared, not just preserved.

Members and friends are welcome to join us at the March 2005 meeting

8 March 2005
5pm for 5.30pm start
Great Southern Room, 3rd floor
Alexander Library Building
Perth Cultural Centre

Petition for six o'clock closing of liquor bars, submitted to the Legislative Assembly, 1928 (SROWA, AN 347/2, Accession 1067, Item 110.)
OBJECTIVES
The objects of the Society are to assist and promote the interests of Battye Library and State Records Office and of those activities of the Library Board of Western Australia concerned with the acquisition, preservation and use of archival and documentary materials.

PATRON
Mrs Ruth Reid AM

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Dr Ronda Jamieson, Mr Tony Caravella
Newsletter Editor: Mr Martin Fordham

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Membership Subscription (from July to June - GST inclusive)

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Ordinary $20
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For more information, membership forms, or a copy of the Friends of Battye Library Constitution, please contact:

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Views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily the views of the Committee.
**J S Battye Library of West Australian History**

Opening hours:
- Mon/Thurs 9.00 am - 8.00 pm
- Fri 9.00 am - 5.30 pm
- Sat/Sun 10.00 am - 5.30 pm

Retrievals:
- Private Archives Retrievals: 9.30am, 11.30am, 2.30pm.
  Please allow 1 hour for items to be accessed.
  Every 60 mins on the half hour

Telephone enquiries: (08) 9427 3291 • Fax enquiries: (08) 9427 3276
Website: www.liswa.wa.gov.au • Email: askus@liswa.wa.gov.au

**Infolink**

Telephone enquiries: (08) 9427 3100 or contact Battye Library.

**State Records Office**

The Search Room on the Ground Floor is open for enquiries and use of material on weekdays from 9.30 am to 4.30 pm.

Retrievals:
- Previous Day - Available 9.30 am
- 11.00 am - Available 12.00 pm
- 1.00 pm - Available 2.00 pm

Requests for use of government archives in the Battye Library must be lodged at the State Records Office by 1.00 pm if required the same evening and by 1.00 pm on Friday if required on the weekend; for continued use of the material in this way, the requests must be renewed on each occasion they are required. Requests must also be lodged for after hours use of State Records Office microfilm.

A Researcher’s Ticket is required. Telephone enquiries: (08) 9427 3360
Website: www.sro.wa.gov.au • Email: sro@sro.wa.gov.au

**The Genealogy Centre**

(situated on the First Floor of the Alexander Library Building)

Opening Hours: as per Battye Library opening hours

Volunteers from the Western Australian Genealogical Society Inc (WAGS) are available for additional assistance to researchers at the following times:

- Tues, Wed, Thurs: 9.30 am - 1.00 pm
- Telephone enquiries: (08) 9427 3187
- Fax enquiries: (08) 9427 3256
- Email: geneo@liswa.wa.gov.au