

ROWELL FAMILY

R.M. Rowell and Company was one of the biggest companies in the Kimberley, encompassing pastoral interests, heavy transport, earthmoving, storekeeping, outdoor cinema and running a pearl lugger.

Founder and family patriarch, Robert Rowell (1914 – 2007) was educated in Perth and, after qualifying as an accountant through part-time study, moved to Derby in 1938 to work for a company which he bought four years later.

Robert Rowell sat as a Justice of the Peace for 66 years, was a major Liberal Party figure, managing the state election campaign which saw Sir Charles Court defeat John Tonkin in 1974, and was Chairman of the Western Australian Coastal Shipping Commission. He was affectionately dubbed “Boab Bob” and was awarded Life Membership of the Pastoralists and Graziers Association of W.A.

He was on the West Kimberley Road Board 1949-1960 and the West Kimberley Shire 1962-1972. Life member of the Liberal Party, he was made a freeman of the municipality of the Shire of West Kimberley in 1977. He was awarded the OBE in 1968 for services to the community and local government. He was married to Ruth Rowell from 1939-1976 and to Angela Devereaux 1977-2007. His business interests also included garages and hotels.

Source: *The West Australian*, 4 July 2007, p. 67

A photograph of Mr and Mrs Rowell can be found online at [255260PD](#)

MN	ACC	meterage / boxes	Date donated	CIU file	Notes
2882	ACC 8149A, 9278A, 10289A, 10293A	2.18m	April 1997 (8149A) July 2014 (9278A) 29 September 2017 (10289A) 25 February 2016 (10293A)	BA/OM/12/0095	
SUMMARY OF CLASSES					
BOX LISTING			GREETING CARDS		
CERTIFICATES			MAPS		
CORROSPONDENCES			PHOTOGRAPHS		
DEBENTURES			REPORTS		
DIRECTORIES			RADIO SCRIPTS		
DINNER MENUS			TOAST LISTS		
FINANCIAL RECORDS					

REQUEST USING THIS NUMBER	DATE RANGE	DESCRIPTION
ACC		BOX LISTING
8149A/Box 1	1956 – 1985	Itinerary and notes relating to visit to North West and Kimberley by Lord Derby – Thistle Earthmoving Co. inventory – annotated election campaign material – mainly minutes of Pastoralists and Graziers Association meetings – Liberal Party correspondence and electoral matters – How to vote cards and Christmas cards – correspondence relating to Stateships - reports and legal papers; Australian Land & Cattle Co. – speeches and itineraries for official visits/miscellaneous council correspondence – report on Stateships by R M Rowell to Minister for Transport
8149A/Box 2	1959 – 1985	Coastal Shipping Commission minutes and agendas – Agricultural Costs Conference – Uranium Industry – Tax Review – issues papers for 1982 State Election – miscellaneous papers relating to 1982 election – Pastoralists & Graziers Association State Executive minutes, Finance Committee minutes and correspondence – Thistle Earthmoving/BJ Osborn company records including Kimberley Natives and policy for the original Australians – business and council correspondence including biographical information relating to Robert Mitford Rowell, and Aboriginal projects
8149A/Box 3	1945 – 1996	Correspondence; Thistle Earthmoving Co. – Australian Land & Cattle Co. Annual General Meeting notice and financial statements – Kimberley Holdings Annual Report (1968) – letter requesting donations for Balgo Mission – file; “Salvaging Netherlands money, cargo on way back to Djakarta after WWII, and consequent legal action” – legal action against D and I Drury – stationery – Liberal Party state conference program with notes – Coastal Shipping Commission papers and notes
8149A/Box 4	1971 – 1987	Liberal Party papers and correspondence includes Kimberley Natives and policy for the original Australians – written notes relating to invitation to lunch with United States Consul (n.d.) – letter to Shire Clerk, Derby/West Kimberley relating to presence of Singapore ant in the region – manuscript for a book; 1942 : <i>Escape from Singapore</i> (contains copies of correspondence between R M Rowell and author A Metherell)
8149A/Box 5	1959 - 1985	Business notes and correspondence – Liberal Party advertising account (1976 election) – mainly Coastal Shipping Commission correspondence, reports and minutes – Liberal Party Federal Finance Committee – expenditure ledger
8149A/Box 6	1962 – 1980	BJ Osborn & Co. pay sheets and correspondence – mainly audited statements of accounts – contracts and correspondence; fuel and superannuation – Thistle Earthmoving & Transport company records and correspondence – BJ Osborn company records – investment properties – Pastoralists & Graziers Association – Australian Land & Cattle Company
8149A/Box 7	1939 - 1985	Financial statement; Australian Land & Cattle Co. – Liberal Party papers – West Kimberley Shire Council papers – investment advice – correspondence; Australia Land & Cattle Co, Victoria League for Commonwealth Friendship – Coastal Shipping Commission
8149A/Box 8	1977 – 1982	Coastal Shipping Commission meeting papers and correspondence
8149A/Box 9	1975 – 1982	Coastal Shipping Commission meeting papers – correspondence relating to land tax – land tax records

9278A/Box 1	1936 – 1993	Awards, reference, papers related to OBE – papers related to various clubs and organisations – ephemeral items, including Permit to Employ a Native and Broadcasting License – letters about tidal power – papers about North West development – notes and papers on the cattle industry – correspondence with Essington Lewis – Conference proceedings, Kimberley Zone Development & Women in Isolation 1975 – assorted correspondence – Christmas cards
9278A/Box 2	1954 – 1994	Papers related to MacRobertson Miller Airline Services – papers related to Yampi – documents related to Pastoralists and Graziers Association – papers related to Derby Boab Festival and Lord Derby's visit to Derby 1983 – notes and papers related to the Victoria League – annotated excerpt from a review of North West tourism – documents related to Stateships – papers related to Zone Allowances – papers related to involvement with the Liberal Party – papers on Fitzroy Crossing – documents related to Derby Port/Shire of West Kimberley and Country Shire Councils Association – accounts and papers for various stations
9278A/Box 3	1942 – 1996	Accounts book for Wallal Station – three certificates of title and one pastoral lease for properties in the Derby area – chequebook of Emanuel Brothers Pty Ltd – incomplete transfer of land document – article on crocodile hunting – two papers on Camballin by Dr F. H. Bauer – Paddy Le Lievre, Kimberley Downs – papers on Aboriginal issues – correspondence and papers relating to the pearling industry – map of Wallal Downs – stories from World War Two – documents related to Lord Derby's 1968 visit to Derby
		CERTIFICATES
10293A/01	20/10/1942	Certificate in recognition of service as a Justice of the Peace: Robert Mitford Rowell
10293A/02	2/06/1953	By Command of Her Majesty The Queen the accompanying medal awarded to Robert Mitford Rowell, Esq.
		CORRESPONDENCES
10293A/03	1950-1970	Correspondences to R.M. Rowell & Co. from Department of North-West, Government of Western Australia on itinerary and notes relating to visit to Derby, Camballin, Yampi, North West and Kimberley. From West Kimberley Shire Councils, Derby, Western Australia related to a purchase of vehicle and parts. From MacRobertson-Miller Aviation Co. Ltd. related to purchase order. From Minister for Industrial Development, Perth Western Australia related to commemorate the first fifty years of commercial aviation in Western Australia stamp.
		DEBENTURES
8149A/10	1964	BJ Osborn & Co Pty Ltd to Australia New Zealand Bank Ltd
		DINNER MENUS
10293A/04	10/03/1964	Dinner menu from Centaur, Blue Funnel Line, Western Australia
		DIRECTORIES
10293A/05	September 1952	Photocopied Western Australia telephone directories, North-Western Districts September 1952, Derby.
		FINANCIAL RECORDS
8149A/11	1962 – 1967	General ledger
8149A/12	1962 – 1967	Expenditure ledger

8149A/13	1967 – 1968	Expenditure ledger
8149A/14	1967 – 1968	Expenditure ledger
		GREETING CARDS
10293A/06	1952	2 Christmas greeting cards. "Landscape", Tallarook, Victoria from Mr. and Mrs. Essington Lewis and C. Dudley Wood paintings on the card from the Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited Australia.
		MAPS
10293A/07	28/05/1957	Entitled: Plan part Western Australia, H.W. Mcl. initial in the lower right corner. No scale.
		PHOTOGRAPHS
10293A/08	1951?	Robert Rowell waist-up portrait
10293A/09	1972	Country Shire Councils Association of W.A. executive group photograph
10293A/10	1936	Federated Chambers of Commerce, Narrogin 1936 group photograph
		REPORTS
10293A/11	1983	Fitzroy River, March 1983 flood. Summary of data as at November 30 1983 by Design Branch, Engineering Division, Public Works Department, Western Australia
		RADIO SCRIPTS
10289A	1944	4 pages of radio scripts written by Ruth Rowell (nee Robinson) that describes iron ore workings at Yampi Sound
		TOAST LISTS
10293A/12	16/08/1937	Perth Chamber of Commerce 47th annual general meeting, toast list
10293A/13	12/11/1953	MacRobertson Miller Aviation Co, dinner menu and toast list

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