

City Walking Trail

Women in Western Australia:

This walking tour highlights the experiences of Western Australian women, many of whom are recognised in the **WA Women's Hall of Fame**.

The trail starts at the State Library in the Perth Cultural Centre and finishes near Royal Perth Hospital. To return to the State Library, catch the free Yellow CAT bus.

Discover more...

The State Library collects stories, photographs, maps and other items that record the history of Western Australia. It also provides free online resources and workshops for school students to develop historical investigation skills.

Send workshop enquiries to ed@slwa.wa.gov.au

Links to additional resources can be found through the State Library catalogue and website.

slwa.wa.gov.au



@statelibrarywa

Women in Western Australia: City Walking Trail

1 Start at the State Library of Western Australia.

The State Library of Western Australia collects, preserves and shares the stories of Western Australia.

2 Walk towards the Art Gallery and turn right to walk through the Urban Orchard onto the Horseshoe Bridge. Carefully cross the road towards Yagan Square.

Where you are standing once was an extensive wetland the Whadjuk Noongar people call Googoolup. The British colonists disrupted access to the wetland and the food and resources it provided.



URBAN ORCHARD, 2013 | [BA2493/162](#)

3 Walk along the Horseshoe Bridge towards the CBD. At the top of the bridge, look up and across to find the artwork commemorating Balbuk Yooreel.

Noongar woman Balbuk Yooreel protested the settlers' occupation of her traditional home ground. In protest, she broke through and climbed over fences to gather bush foods. This artwork commemorates Balbuk Yooreel's protection of her bidi (regular walking track).



'PASSENGER' BY PAUL CARTER
PHOTO: STATE LIBRARY OF WA, 2025



FANNY BALBUK YOOREEL, WELSHPOOL RESERVE (MAAMBA) 1895 | [BA129/15](#)

COVER IMAGE: PIONEER WOMEN'S MEMORIAL, 1968 | [143123PD](#)

4 Continue down the Horseshoe Bridge, turn right into Yagan Square and look west to find the ECU City Campus.

Edith Cowan (1861-1932) is best known as the first Australian woman to serve as a member of parliament. In 1991, the Western Australian College of Advanced Education was renamed Edith Cowan University in her honour.

EDITH COWAN, ca. 1922 | [6004B](#)



5 Cross Wellington St to The Royal Hotel on the corner of Wellington and William St.

The Royal Hotel was one of many properties purchased by Mary Raine née Carter. Mary came to Australia in 1900 and initially worked as a barmaid. With astute business skills, Mary became a significant property owner. Her bequests to The University of Western Australia created and funded the Raine Medical Research Foundation.



ROYAL HOTEL, 2019
GOSTELOW | [BA2493/2567](#)

6 Cross over William St and turn left into Globe Lane. Find the mural by Marcia McGuire.

This artwork is titled *Mothers & Women Before Me*.

"In Noongar, the word for mother and sun are the same, Ngangk, meaning giver of life. The mural explores this idea through her nanna's face as depicted in her youth and haoled in light, and through all the women who came before, represented by the flowing wind and water". - Marcia McGuire



MARCIA MCGUIRE'S MURAL
PHOTO: STATE LIBRARY OF WA, 2025

7 Walk through Globe Lane to Forrest Place and turn right to find the old General Post Office (GPO) building.

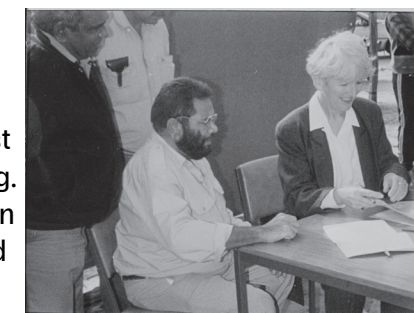
This grand building signifies the importance of the postal and telegraphic services. Mary Ellen Cuper (1847-1877) was one of the telegraphists who ensured connection for the most distant communities. Working in New Norcia, she defied prejudice with her professionalism and went on to train other Aboriginal women.



GENERAL POST OFFICE PERTH
ca. 1928 | [21103BPD](#)

8 Head south and turn left into Murray Street Mall. Find the David Jones store on the right.

David Jones in partnership with WA Health offers free breast cancer screening. Dr Judyth Watson OAM contributed to improving women's health with community projects such as Breastscreen (WA).



RALPH WINMAR AND JUDYTH WATSON, MINISTER FOR ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS, 1986 | [06119BPD](#)

9 Cross Barrack St and continue east up Murray St. Do you look for the best bargains when you're shopping?

Ruby Hutchison MLC worked for consumers' rights. She founded the Australian Consumers' Association, which became CHOICE. You can access CHOICE magazine online with your free [State Library membership](#) to help make informed purchases.



RUBY HUTCHINSON
ca. 1955 | [BA1272/15](#)

10 On the corner of Murray and Pier St, find the European Hotel.

The European Hotel was once famous for the Swedish smorgasbord restaurant Miss Mauds. Maud Edmiston emigrated to WA in 1968 and through her hard work became a business success.



MAUD EDMISTON, 2019 | [BA2493/2468](#)

11 Continue on Murray St and find the Salvation Army building.

The Salvation Army is dedicated to the care of disadvantaged people. West Australians like Dr Dorothea Parker (1900-1992) worked at the Salvation Army to provide health services for unfortunate women and infants. Dr Parker was the first WA-born woman to practice as a doctor in this state.



THE SALVATION ARMY CONGRESS HALL, CITADEL OF THE PERTH FORTRESS 2019 | [BA2493/2231](#)

12 Continue on Murray St and find Curtin University Law School.

In 1923, the Women's Legal Status Act was passed. Until this time women could not become lawyers. This act paved the way for women such as Margaret Battye to be admitted to the bar and ensure that women's voices were heard.



MARGARET BATTYE 1935 | [BA1272/B](#)

13 Continue on Murray Street and look for a big tree on the left - the "Kissing Tree".

Kirkman House was built in 1909 to accommodate the nurses for Royal Perth Hospital. The Kissing Tree is where the nurses would say goodnight to their sweethearts before returning to their rooms.



KIRKMAN HOUSE ca. 1930 | [O17677PD](#)

14 At the top of Murray St, find Saint Mary's Cathedral and walk around to the other side. Look through the Convent of Mercy gates on the corner of Victoria Square and Goderich Street.

Ursula Frayne (1816-1885) was an Irish nun. She established the order of the Sisters of Mercy who focused on education and providing accommodation for children considered destitute.



CONVENT OF MERCY, VICTORIA SQUARE, 1929 | [100833PD](#)

15 Walk north on Lord Street and turn right into Wellington Street. Pass the WA Country Health Service to the Hill St CAT bus stop.

May O'Brien was the first WA Aboriginal woman to graduate with a degree despite harsh WA legislative restrictions impeding Aboriginal people from self-determination, education and movement. Between 1927 and 1954, Aboriginal people had to carry a permit to enter Perth. You're now near the edge of the once prohibited zone.



MAY O'BRIEN SECOND FROM LEFT 1992 | [BA1340/ERAS/STD](#)

16 Take the next Yellow CAT bus. Two stops later, hop off at Wellington St Western Power.



BARRACK STREET NEW BRIDGE, FELIX WHITWELL 1907 | [3075B](#)

1 Walk west and cross Wellington St to reach the Barrack St bridge. Head north on Beaufort St then cross to Boola Bardip WA Museum, and walk through to the State Library. Welcome back!



ALEXANDER LIBRARY BUILDING, EASTERN FACADE 1985 | [325683PD](#)

