

Family and Local History Newsletter

Summer 2013 EDITION

Joondalup Library, Local History
102 Boas Avenue, Joondalup 6027

Monday – Friday 9.00am – 5.00pm
Saturday 9.30am – 12.30pm

New Aquisition

Earlier this year, the Local History Library acquired *The 2013 adoption services guide: covering Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom*.

The book was researched and compiled by Bill Jackson. Bill was adopted at a young age by a good family living in country New South Wales. Even though the circumstances of his adoption were tragic (following the death of his mother in a car accident in 1957

and the separation of all of his siblings), Bill feels that he was one of the lucky ones.

Bill found out he was adopted when he was ten years old. He started searching for his biological family in 1996. Whilst searching for his siblings, Bill compiled his book after finding that there were no publications covering Government and Private Adoption Agencies in Australia.

The 2013 adoption services guide is a new and updated edition of earlier similar publications. The book is very clearly laid out and easy to read. It discusses fees, the rights of adoptees and includes the addresses of agencies.

All of the books in the Genealogy Collection are available to be borrowed. Library staff are happy to assist you to locate books and CDs that will help you with your research.

Family History for Beginners Course 2014

Do you have a friend who is starting to compile their Family Tree? Are you stuck and need a new direction or more advice on how to continue your research? The City of Joondalup Local History Library will be conducting several Family History for Beginners Courses in 2014. Please subscribe to the **Library Enewsletter** or go to the **City of Joondalup Library Events Calendar** for more information.

The next **Family History for Beginners Course** will be from 2.00pm – 4.00pm on Saturday 15 March 2014 in the Joondalup Local History Library. The course costs \$27.00 per person. To book please contact the Local History Library on 9400 4746 or send an email to local.history@joondalup.wa.gov.au



Oral History Update

Nothing holds greater value and is more fascinating to listen to than a person's recollections of times gone by. The Local History Collection holds many valuable oral histories that illustrate how times have changed and how people lived their lives in times past.

In October we were able to add the memories of Mr Bill Casson to our collection. Bill has lived in various suburbs along the coast. He reflects on the changing values of real estate over the last 60 years.

Life certainly seemed to be idyllic at North Beach in the 1950's – even though services were not as good as they are now. Bill recalls how the fishing has changed. The abalone were as big as bread and butter plates. Crayfish were abundant then as well.

Bill reminisces about a heatwave in the summer of 1957. He and his

girlfriend (later wife) would go to Scarborough each night after work to cool off. The Mitchell Freeway didn't exist then, nor Marmion Avenue but people made do and enjoyed life. He recalls that the Castle Hotel (on the corner of Flora Terrace and Castle Street) was a popular watering hole.

Perhaps you have memories of the area that you would be happy to share and would be willing to be interviewed or maybe you have photographs of the area that would be a valuable addition to the City's "Picture Joondalup" catalogue. Staff at the Local History Library are happy to scan your photographs, return the originals to you and provide you with a digital copy. Please call **9400 4746** if you would like to assist in ensuring the memories of the past are captured for future generations.



Aerial view of the beach shacks lining the coast at Whitford Beach ca. 1950.



John Theodore (Bob) and Jack Steele fishing at Mullaloo Beach ca. 1940.



Whitford shack after storm damage ca. 1964.

The Northern Beaches

The Northern Beaches are comprised of Marmion Beach, Sorrento Beach, Whitford Beach, Mullaloo Beach and Burns Beach.

Twenty thousand years ago, the sea level was much lower. The area that is now known as Marmion Marine Park was part of the mainland. Sand dunes that fringed the coast were slowly swallowed up by the rising sea. Rainwater leached through the remaining dunes and slowly turned the peaks into limestone. The limestone formed the base of the islands, rocks and reefs off the coast.

The Mooro people were attracted to the coast by the abundance of food. Abalone were collected in great numbers off the reefs at Marmion, Mullaloo, Ocean Reef and Burns Beach. Pointed stones were used to lever the shells off the reefs.

Fish were speared in the shallows, often by children who were learning to fish. Crayfish were collected in the late afternoon. Shellfish were gathered in large numbers and cooked on the beach at Mullaloo. Some of the shell middens still remain along the coast, buried under the sand dunes.

The elderly Mooro men used to sit by the ocean and chant with their tapping sticks. Hearing the loud noise made by the tapping sticks, the dolphins would come rushing to the beach. The mullet would shower out onto the beach sand to get out of the way.

On 4 July 1849 Patrick Marmion sent a letter to Governor Fitzgerald asking for permission to establish a whaling station on the beach that was to bear his name. The whaling station operated for three years before it was closed down due to the whalers preferring to make their fortune on the goldfields.

In 1996 a monument in the shape of a chimney was erected near the Sorrento Surf Life Saving Club to commemorate Patrick Marmion's whaling station. As the workmen were putting it in place, they looked out to sea and saw a mother whale and her calf.

After the whaling station closed down, Patrick Marmion used the land to farm sheep. The property became a regular stopping point for drovers and their animals travelling along the Old North Road Stock Route.

The Northern Beaches have always been a popular destination for holiday makers. The first shacks were built in 1925. They were owned by Jack Hopkins, a fisherman, Gordon Kay, a contractor for an oil company and a man named Mr Walcott who ran the National Service Accounting Firm. Tom Simpson owned the land which he bought from the Midland Railway Company. Frank Whitford was unsuccessful in buying the land from him. The land was bought by a syndicate of shack owners (Whitfords Beach Limited) in 1967. Another syndicate consisting of Taylor



Bert Bolitho's shack ca. 1948.

Woodrow General Agencies and another company bought the area for subdivision and development in 1971.

Shacks were located on Marmion Beach and on Whitford Beach from Pinnaroo Point northwards. Clearing the shacks started in 1972. Attempts were made from as early as 1940 by the Wanneroo Road Board to have the shacks removed.

The early shacks were built of 'beach timber' and kerosene tins. If you would like to see what a beach shack looks like, please visit **Wanneroo Museum**. One of the original beach shacks from Marmion Beach is on display inside the museum.



David Watkin's shack at Marmion Beach ca. 1950-

Boy Scout Camp on Lake Joondalup

Do you know that there was once a Boy Scout Camp at Lake Joondalup?

On long weekends and during the school holidays in the 1950s, Robert (Rex) Hardy and the 170th Mt Hawthorn Baptist Scout Troop camped at Lake Joondalup. The camp was on the edge of the lake near Duffy's dairy (now Woodvale Drive) on land their scoutmaster, Mr Edward (Skip) Ritchie leased from the council.

The boys rode their bikes from Mt Hawthorn to the camp. The food and the canoe were transported in Mr Ritchie's car.

The scouts lived in tents and spent their time on the lake canoeing, swimming, duck hunting, fishing, exploring and learning bush craft skills for their scout badges.

Each patrol would cook meals (usually a stew) in a big pot which was easy to do. Milk was collected each day by several of the boys who walked to and from Duffy's Dairy.



Robert (Rex) Hardy at a scout camp on the shores of Lake Joondalup, 1950s.



Robert (Rex) Hardy and a fellow scout canoeing on Lake Joondalup, 1950s.



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This document is available in alternate formats upon request.

Genie Exchange

Every Friday morning the Local History staff host the Genie Exchange where family historians come together and help each other by sharing their tips and advice. Expert volunteers are available to help you with your research. Why not join in and research your family history in a warm and friendly environment.

The Genie Exchange is held in the Joondalup Library, Local History area, every Friday morning from 10.00am – 12.00noon. Tea, coffee and biscuits are provided.

Bookings are not necessary for the Genie Exchange.