State Records Office of WA

Tales of the unexpected from the State Archives Collection

Damien Hassan
Senior Archivist
Our role
Regulate government recordkeeping
Preserve and manage the State Archives Collection
Provide access to government archives
State archives come in all shapes and sizes
Correspondence files ... we’ve got lots of these
Royal wax seal attached to Governor’s Commission

Ref: Cons 6432/2
Government “money”

Ref: Cons 626
Petition for hotels to close at 6pm

Ref: Cons 1067, 1928/110
Surveyor’s fieldbook of John Forrest, first Premier of WA

Ref: Cons 3401, FORJ/01A
Eucla telegraph tape

Ref: Cons 1387/1
Original statutes passed by Parliament

Ref: Cons 1828

AN ACT to make provision for the better protection and care of the Aboriginal inhabitants of Western Australia.

Be it enacted by the King's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly of Western Australia, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1. This Act may be cited as the *Aborigines Act*, 1905, and shall come into operation on a day to be fixed by proclamation.

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires:—
   "Aboriginal institution" means and includes any mission, reformatory, orphanage, school, home, station, reserve, or other institution for the benefit, protection, or care of the aboriginal or half-caste inhabitants of the State; and in receipt of any annual or other subsidy or grant from the Government.
   "Chief Protector" means the Chief Protector of Aborigines appointed under this Act.
   "Department" means the Aborigines Department.

District
Proposed design for Fremantle Harbour, 1839

Ref: Cons 1647, 884
School emblems and badges

Ref: Cons 1574, 1965/2141
Bullet casing found in criminal indictment file

Ref: Cons 3473, case 3323
Tales of the unexpected
The State Records Office of Western Australia has responsibility for:

- Providing recordkeeping services to government;
- Preserving the State archives collection;
- Making State archives accessible for researchers.

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Item 1905/13897 v1 - Observatory. Reserve 10402 Lots 23 and 24 of Sub Lot 32 of Swan Location U. City of Bayswater.

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<th>AU WA S211 - cons3640 1905/13897 v1</th>
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<td>Title</td>
<td>Observatory. Reserve 10402 Lots 23 and 24 of Sub Lot 32 of Swan Location U. City of Bayswater.</td>
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**Context area**

| Name of creator               | AU WA A42 - DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND SURVEYS (1890-01-01 - 1986-07-01) |

**Ref:** Cons 3640, 1905/13897
International latitude stations were set up across the world from late 1800s to measure how much the Earth ‘wobbles’ as it rotates on its axis.

Only two such stations were set up in the southern hemisphere: one in South America, the other in Bayswater, Perth.
Plan showing where the latitude station was located
Architectural drawing of the international latitude station in Bayswater
A typical latitude station, with roof opened to allow for night time observations
5. If the building were removed and a close, iron railing fence about 6ft. square and 6ft. high (as per sketch in margin) were erected round the pillar, this would probably be a fairly permanent protection. If this be considered too expensive, I would recommend a six-barbed wire fence. The balance of the Reserve might then be handed over to the Road Board authorities to be used as a garden. What do you wish to be done in this matter?

Ph. 8: 8: 18.

ASST. TO SURVEYOR GENERAL.
Local speculation during WWI that Dr Hessen may have been a spy

This speculation would appear completely incorrect
The day before he was due to return overseas, Dr Hessen shot himself in the head, but survived.

Ref: *The West Australian*, 10 February 1909
Ref: Cons 3473, Case 286
Premier's Department.

Ref: Cons 1496, 1932/821

File No:

21 32

Subject:

Loan of machine guns from Defence Dept to destroy enemy in Wheatbelt.

This sheet not to be written on.

Ref: Cons 1496, 1932/821
HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL
BUSSELTON

PRIME MINISTER APPROVES CONTINUANCE SAME TERMS
MACHINE GUNS AND PERSONNEL DESTRUCTION EMUS

SHAPCOTT. 11:11:32.
We feel that some other way more humane than the MACHINE GUN could be used, if these unfortunate birds must be slaughtered; one of our members, a bird expert, has said "The older method of driving into compounds and either clubbing or beheading is a better method as it accounts for every bird."
From CENSOR, Perth,

To J.S. Battye Esqre.

Librarian,

Public Library, Perth.

I would ask you to be good enough to remove the following books from the shelves of the Library, they having been prohibited entry into the Commonwealth during the war.

2. Selected Works of Voltarine de Cleyre. Edited by Alex. Berkman
3. Anarchism & Other Essays. By Emma Goldman (3rd.Ed.)

[Signature]

Colonel, for Censor.

Ref: Cons 1198, 578
Two Alternatives for Western Australia

by

W. G. Tracey

Leader of

The National Socialist Party
of Western Australia.

Price SIXPENCE

Ref: Cons 430, 1936/3025
FIRST PHOTOGRAPH, taken today, of local Nazis. Left to right: A. Riley, C. Riley (general secretary), W. G. Tracey (leader of the National Socialist Party of W.A.) H. S. Hawkins (chief organiser) and F. Davis.
WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

POLICE DEPARTMENT.

Plain Clothes Branch

Metropolitan District

Central Station

October 31st 1936

Report of W.C. Wyatt P.C.C., Reg. No. 1363

relative to Meeting of The National Socialist Party of W.A. held in Riley's Hall Beaufort Street Inglewood 30-10-36.

I have to report having in company with P.C.C. Power and other police attended a meeting convened by the National Socialist Party of W.A. at Inglewood on 30-10-36.

The attendance was very small, and only about 45 persons were present, and of this number about twelve were Jews, and two or three were communists.

The balance of the audience did not appear to be supporters of the party, and in my opinion they attended out of curiosity or hoping that they would have some fun at the expense of the speakers.
Ref: Cons 1003, 1962/1144
The training of selected personnel in methods of fly control. Some 50 health inspectors and 20 gardeners employed by public authorities have recently attended refresher courses organised by the Public Health Department; and arrangements are in hand auxiliary for the training of up to 100 Fly Control Officers who are to be employed on a temporary basis by Local Authorities later in the year.
5/11/62  Temperature 76°
        Strong S.W. Breeze
        2 near track approx. 150 each
        1 S.W. seats approx. 2 dozen
        2 South seats approx. 2 doz. each
        All mostly bush flies.

6/11/62  Temperature 75°
        Light S.W. Breeze
        2 near track approximately 30 ea.
        1 S.W. Seats approximately 60
        1 South Seats approximately 60
        All mostly bush flies.

7/11/62  Temperature 75°
        Very light S.W. Breeze
        2 near track approx. 40 each
        1 S.W. Seats " 2 dozen
        1 South seats approx. 1 dozen.

8/11/62  Temperature 68°
        Strong to gale-force
        2 near track approximately 50
        1 S.W. Seats approximately 20

Kings Park Tennis Courts.

There was no fly or mosquito nuisance.

Dalkeith Bowls.

Bush flies were a nuisance on certain days despite the measures taken.
The Beatty Park Swimming Pool was also fogged on each occasion before use, 14 gallons of fogging insecticide being used at this Centre.

CHIEF INSPECTOR:

SUMMARY OF WORK CARRIED OUT AT FOLLOWING VENUES.

1. **EMPIRE GAMES VENUES - FOGGING**
   - Treated area = 950 acres.
   - Total acreage fogged = 3,900 acres.
   - Insecticide (3% D.D.T., 1% BHC in PY) = 2,191 gls. @ 11/- per gl. = 1,205.10
   - Man hours (2 men) = 391½ hrs. @ 8/11 per hr. = 174.11
   - Mileage travelled = 1,255 mls. @ 10.9 = 57.00
   - T.I.F.A. running time = 128 hrs. @ 10/- per hr. = 64.00

   **Total** = 1,500.12

   "Stanvac PY solvent used (as corner)"
Send cask arsenic exterminate aborigines

This 1907 telegram was sent by a Charles Morgan to Henry Prinsep, a man seemingly based 2200km away in Perth who at the time was Chief Protector of Aborigines for Western Australia. Following the arrival of British settlers in the 18th century, Australia’s indigenous population were slowly faced with disease, loss of land, stolen generations and general violence. Sadly, the introduction of arsenic to their water and flour supplies wasn’t uncommon.

Edited to add: This was sent to, not by, Henry Prinsep. There is no suggestion that Prinsep complied with the request.
TELEGRAM from Groome Station

Addressed to A. Princep

Frost of aborigines killed

Send Coek arsenic atterman

Aborigines letter will follow

Thos. Morgan

Time Lodged 6

Time Received 5
POLICE DEPARTMENT.
WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

FROM: Geraldton

Subject: Alleged poisoning of native Tobacco by mixing of strychnine with it, supplied to native TUMBLER at Turee Station

Ref: Cons 430, 1941/4697
Recalled to Perth from Wyndham 5/4/1893 as Corporal in consequence of his inability to check native trouble. Police and other boats were continually being stolen by natives owing to improper Police supervision. Also as a result of his disobedience of orders in refusing to fire upon natives when ordered to do so by the Resident Magistrate in the interests of law and order.

Ref: Cons 1065, Police Service personal file
On the lighter side
Convict Q and A

How many raisins in a convict’s Xmas pudding?
240 (4 ounces)

What did the Colonial Surgeon recommend to convicts cleaning broken sewers and cesspits?
Three ounces of tobacco each week

What was the cost of a telegram, Perth to South Africa, in 1882?
Between £50 and £60
Proposed helmet and lifebelt invention

Ref: Cons 752, 1913/73
Annual Report of the Zoological Gardens Committee & Acclimatisation Committee of Western Australia, 1925-6.

Laid on the Table of the Legislative Assembly by the Hon the Premier on 13 October 1926

Ref: Cons 855, 1926/172
Noel Coward’s wartime visit to Australia

Ref: Cons 1703, 1940/499
ONE OF THE REAL DIFFICULTIES THAT I AM MEETING IN COWARD TOUR IS ASSURANCE THAT SUITABLE VALET IS AVAILABLE FOR HIM STOP WILL YOU KINDLY ARRANGE WITH ESPLANADE HOTEL TO HAVE VALET COWARDS DISPOSAL ON ARRIVAL AND DURING COWARD PREFERENCES HIS CONTRIBUTION IN ONE PART AND AT CONCLUSION OF PROGRAMME STOP WOULD BE GRATEFUL YOU KEEP SUNDAY FIFTEENTH ENTIRELY FREE AS COWARD HAS PLACED TREMENDOUS STRAIN ON PHYSIQUE THROUGH HEAVY ITINERARY
Buffet dinner menu for visiting press, 1963 Royal Visit

Ref: Cons 1703, 1963/12
Now and Then
Rottnest Island: Schoolies Week!
Rottnest Island
Reformatory operated between 1881 – 1902 as an alternative to sending boys younger than 16 to gaol

Ref: Cons 1067, 1881/20 (2)
Routine.

7.—Rise between 6 and half-past, according to the time of the year.

Work—clean the sleeping rooms, shops, &c., carry fuel, and prepare breakfast.

At 7:30 a.m. wash.
Prayers at 7:45 a.m.
Breakfast at 8 a.m.
Education 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.
Industrial Work 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Wash.
Dinner 1 p.m.
Industrial Work 2 to 5 p.m.
Wash.
Tea 5:30 p.m.
Instruction and Prayers 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., and go to bed at 8 p.m.
16.—The additional ration of Rice and Sugar three times a week and Flour on Sundays will be withheld as a punishment for all minor offences; and for those of a graver nature Flogging, not to exceed 20 strokes, will be inflicted.

No boy shall be kept on bread and water for more than five days.

(6.) Inmates will at all times be most respectful and touch their hats when they address an officer or visitor.
Ref: Cons 5386, 1925/35 v1
The following details are all we have on record concerning recent shark attacks:

19.9.76  D. Richardson, skindiver, shark not identified (possibly white pointer), Port Lawley, South Australia, not fatal.
2.1.76   J. Leither, skindiver, shark not identified, Gisborne, New Zealand, fatal.
5.7.75   D. Thompson, skindiver, *Carcharhinus* sp., Lancelin, W. Australia, not fatal.
9.1.74   T. Manuel, skindiver, *C. carcharias*?, Streaky Bay, South Aust., fatal.
25.11.73 Mr. Copley, water-skier, *Carcharhinus* sp., Swan River, W. Aust., not fatal.
Would you have a look at the proposition submitted by Mr. Edmunds in regard to eliminating the shark menace at metropolitan beaches, and advise the Deputy Premier of your views, please, as early as possible.


UNDER SECRETARY,
PREMIER'S DEPT.

Section 24 of the Fisheries Act prohibits the use of dynamite or other explosive substance in Western Australian waters, but although that is the case its use could, I think, be regulated for the specific purpose mentioned were it considered advisable. Personally, however, I do not consider the suggestion practicable.
Hare Krishnas mark 50 years with 4,000-strong festival at Perth temple

They are known for their vegetarian restaurants and appearances in the city, dancing and singing.
SUBJECT  "HARE KRISHNA" - Activities of

Ref: Cons 4000, 1973/880
It was also suggested that perhaps I could arrange for members of the Police Department on duty in the City, keep these particular persons under observations.

It was mentioned at the meeting that the group are believed to total about eight in all. They are in possession of a V.W. Kombi van, bearing New South Wales plates, and that they reside in the Leederville District.

Respectfully forwarded. A copy of the relevant portion of this file has been directed to each relief and Central Plain Clothes Section for their information.

movement abide by their advice to ambit of Section 54B of the Police
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