

Mount Lawley Matters

Mount Lawley Society

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WEBPAGE : www.mountlawleysociety.org.au

MLS PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Paul Hurst



Secretary/ Newsletter
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Committee

The MLS would like to hear from members who would be interested in contributing to the newsletter.

Views expressed by members are not necessarily those of others or of the committee.

Dear Members,
I hope that this newsletter finds you well.

The Society's historical photographic display has been drawing interest in the community lately. The committee is committed to having a selection from our historical photographic collection displayed continually throughout the year at various locations. Our display spent January and February at the Inglewood Library and is currently at the City of Stirling Mount Flora Museum in North Beach until May. The display has been popular and has resulted in an increase in enquiries about the Society through the website. The Society is grateful to the City of Stirling for hosting our display. We hope to establish the display at the Town of Vincent later in the year.

If you were disappointed that you did not receive an invite to the royal wedding in April and can't find an unwanted invite on eBay, dry your eyes because Charlotte Christo, (our social coordinator), has seized on the perfect opportunity for a fun dinner for the Society. On Friday 29th April, the Society will be hosting a Royal Wedding Dinner at the Mount Lawley Bowling Club to commemorate the wedding of Prince William to Kate Middleton. The timing is perfect for a live telecast of the proceedings punctuated by a lavish three-course dinner and celebratory festivities. Tickets are \$50 – see the reminder flyer that will be sent in a couple of days for details. This is an excellent opportunity to get a table together with your friends and neighbours to join in the fun. We hope to see you there!

Finally, if you are passionate about our thriving Beaufort Street café strip, I encourage you to join the Beaufort Street Network. This volunteer organisation established in 2010 aims to promote Beaufort Street and according to their website; make "the Street an even better street for people to enjoy – but making sure we keep its unique feel". The Beaufort Street Network in conjunction with the Town of Vincent and numerous corporate sponsors were responsible for the hugely successful Beaufort Street Festival held in November last year. Membership is only \$10 and funds will assist the Network to prepare for more events to make our community an even better place to live.

We hope you enjoy the newsletter!

Paul Hurst
President

PS: The Mount Flora Museum on Elvira Street is housed in an old water tank that has a lookout with commanding 360 degree views of the ocean and bushland behind – It's run by passionate volunteers and open between 1:30pm and 4pm on Sunday's only and is really worth a look.

PPS :Don't forget to buy ticket for the Parliament House luncheon. Again a reminder will come out in a couple of days

ITEMS OF INTEREST

Barrie Baker has been nominated for the **Western Australian Heritage Awards**. The winners will be announced at the Heritage Awards ceremony on Thursday 14th April 2011

Dion Dosuado from **Landgate**, recently met with the Town of Vincent's Historical Society to discuss what products and services they could provide. He has offered the same opportunity for members of the MLS.

He did mention that he may be able to provide some services free of charge if the MLS was non-profit.

It was reported that a person (who had just purchased a 100-year old property on Guildford) was able to search Landgate records and obtain a copy of the original Title. Landgate was able to provide a coloured copy of the most original Titles for \$65.

Dion mentioned they also have original plans of land releases and some historical photography.

Dion Dosuado

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Heritage Minister John Castrilli and Planning Minister John Day have announced increased penalties of up to \$1million for **illegal demolition and unauthorised development of heritage-listed properties in Western Australia**.

Mr Castrilli said amendments to the Heritage Act ensured meaningful protection for the 1,300 properties currently listed in the State Register of Heritage Places.

"Current penalties for illegal works on heritage-listed places are extremely low and offer little deterrence to deliberate destruction," he said.

"With this legislation, properties which have been recognised for their heritage value through entry on the State Register of Heritage Places will be assured meaningful protection for current and future generations."

Presently, the Heritage Act provides a maximum fine of \$5,000 for damaging or despoiling of a place listed on the State Heritage Register.

The increased penalties apply to damaging or despoiling a State-registered place without a valid approval under sections 11 and 78 of the Heritage Act.

Penalties for persons convicted of this offence are:

- monetary penalty of up to \$1million, and \$50,000 daily penalty for continuing offences
- a development moratorium placed on the property for up to 10 years
- restoration orders (where offender is obliged to make good the unauthorised works).

Planning Minister John Day also announced amendments to the Planning and Development Act which will result in increased penalties for unauthorised development.

"Initial penalties will increase from \$50,000 to \$200,000 and increased daily fines rise from \$5,000 to \$25,000," he said.

Mr Day said these amendments applied more generally to unauthorised development to any property, including heritage-valued properties listed on municipal inventories protected by local governments.

"The State Government is making it clear it values the retention and conservation of our heritage buildings," he said.

Heritage Minister's office - 9213 6800 Planning Minister's office - 9213 6600

The Guildford Association new website will be launched towards the end of April with an associated email address. Web: www.guildford.asn.au Email: ga@guildford.asn.au. The Guildford Association says that the owners of the Guildford Hotel have reportedly submitted concept plans to the City of Swan but these have not been shared with the community at all to date which is disappointing.

CITY OF STIRLING DEMOLITION BY NEGLECT

Council meeting of 2010(December 14) the City passed the following:-

That, pursuant to Section 75 of the Planning and Development Act 2005, Council INITIATES an Amendment to Local Planning Scheme No. 3 to incorporate:

- a. heritage management provisions as outlined in attachment 1; and**
- b. provisions relating to 'Demolition by Neglect', as drafted by the City's solicitors to the satisfaction of the Director Planning and Development.**

In relation to Part B of the above resolution, the following comments in the report were provided:-

4. Demolition by Neglect

The process of allowing heritage buildings to fall into disrepair is known as 'demolition by neglect'. The usual intent of this process is to allow the building to become so dilapidated that it will facilitate its eventual demolition. It is an internationally recognised problem which is often difficult to regulate. The City is aware of several properties within the Heritage Protection Areas that would fall into this category. The derelict nature of these buildings brings with it social issues such as squatting, vandalism, antisocial behaviour and environmental health issues which are distressing for those living close by.

At present the City has no statutory powers specific to heritage buildings to regulate this problem. The use of legislation such as the Health Act (through an 'Order to Repair') presents problems because if taken to Appeal, can ultimately result in an order to demolish as there is no requirement to consider heritage value.

In considering heritage provisions for Local Planning Scheme No. 3 an opportunity to investigate and address the issue of demolition by neglect exists. The City's solicitors were requested to provide advice in respect of this issue.

A summary of this initial advice is outlined below:

- *The Planning and Development Act 2005 allows local planning schemes to include provisions dealing with the preservation of places of cultural heritage significance. This would appear sufficiently broad to permit provisions addressing the dilapidation or neglect of heritage buildings.*
- *There are two (2) types of provision which may be suitable:*
 - *a provision which requires a heritage building to be maintained to a specified standard, contravention of which would lead to prosecution; and*
 - *provisions which allowed the City to serve a notice on the owner and/or occupier of a heritage building requiring specified works to be undertaken where the building had fallen into a state of neglect or dilapidation. The provisions would need to include an enforcement mechanism to enable the City to respond to instances of non-compliance with a notice.*
- *These provisions would need careful drafting, but the legal answer of whether provisions could be included in LPS3 to address the neglect of heritage buildings is 'yes'.*

It is considered essential that appropriate provisions be drafted by the City's solicitors and be added to the Amendment which creates the Management Categories (as outlined earlier in this report).

The scheme amendment is progressing and expected to go out for advertising by **May 2011**.

TOWN OF VINCENT

The Town has called for nominations for the newly created Local History Advisory Group

The purpose of the group is to:

- 5.1 Encourage and promote local history in the Town.
- 5.2 Oversee the objectives of the Local History Collection Strategic Plan as shown in Attachment A.
- 5.3 Make recommendations to the Council concerning:
 - (a) the Town's Local History Collection;
 - (b) marketing and promoting the Town's Local History Collection and Centre to the community and other potential users;
 - (c) attracting items from the community to include in the Local History Collection;
 - (d) the use of technology for the maintenance and access to the collection; and
- (e) the development of interpretive works including but not limited to plaques, signage, publications or artworks.

Crossing the line: early policing around Mt Lawley #8

By Peter Conole, Police Historian

As mentioned at the end of the seventh article in this series, a lot of prior planning made in the year 1986 for various police divisions and stations north of the line was made redundant by new realities. A good many commitments were shelved from 1993 onwards and by the beginning of the 21st Century the shape of policing work and operations around Mount Lawley had changed forever.

In 1987 a State Planning Commission report reviewed the Perth Metropolitan Corridor Plan, which focussed on population growth and development trends north of the line. At the time the Inglewood Police District, with its operational 'capital' at Morley station, covered eleven suburbs, including Mount Lawley. However, the northern population and infrastructure spread was continually adding new suburbs and causing alterations to law enforcement priorities. A Police Management Service Branch report of March 1988 stated flatly that *'Morley is inadequate to accommodate additional staff and associated facilities envisaged for the area'*.

Much was to happen before anything really drastic happened. One potential method of dealing economically with some issues emerged from Mirrabooka. Commissioner Brian Bull became increasingly aware that innovative measures were needed to cope with rapid change and he endorsed the establishment of 'shop front' police offices to see what would happen. In 1986 he had stuck to his guns in the course of disputation with Mount Lawley's parliamentary representative by stressing that the usual pattern of renovation and gradual resource increases at stations was the best way to go. Some years later sheer pressure of circumstances caused him to accept police 'shop fronts' as a potentially attractive option.

A fairly new major shopping centre at Mirrabooka, not to mention population growth round about, required considerable police attention. The WA police came to believe it was unrealistic and a bit unfair to expect local people to travel to Nollamara police station to report traffic accidents, make licence applications and lodge complaints.

In May 1990 Minister for Police Graham Edwards made the announcement that Mirrabooka was to get a police office ('shop front') to handle such matters. He stressed that it fitted in well with Brian Bull's well known interest in community policing and the commissioner's support for *'outstandingly successful schemes such as Neighbourhood Watch'*. The office was set up in the same year, but within three years it came under fire.

The Mirrabooka Community Development Advisory Committee complained in July 1993 of higher crime levels – home invasions, burglaries, car theft and assaults. Residents now wanted a *'fully manned police station in a prominent location within the Mirrabooka Shopping Complex'*. In 1995 the police 'shop front' office closed; a lot of things were going on in the background which were to change the administration of policing north of the line very drastically.



Commissioner Brian Bull, in office 1985-1994

As it happened, in June 1993 – just before the Mirrabooka difficulties rated a mention – the WA Police Development and Evaluation Branch decided that a similar 'shop front' police post could be located at the Morley City Shopping (the Galleria). Unfortunately, although negotiations were positive, the project came to a halt at the end of the year because of financial constraints and problems in dealing with a short term lease.

In the meantime, major decisions were being formulated about the North Metropolitan Corridor plans of the late 1980s. Under Mr Bull's auspices, virtually all aspects of future policing requirements in the Inglewood and expanding Joondalup police districts were brought under the ambit of a police North West Corridor Review conducted in the course of the year 1993.

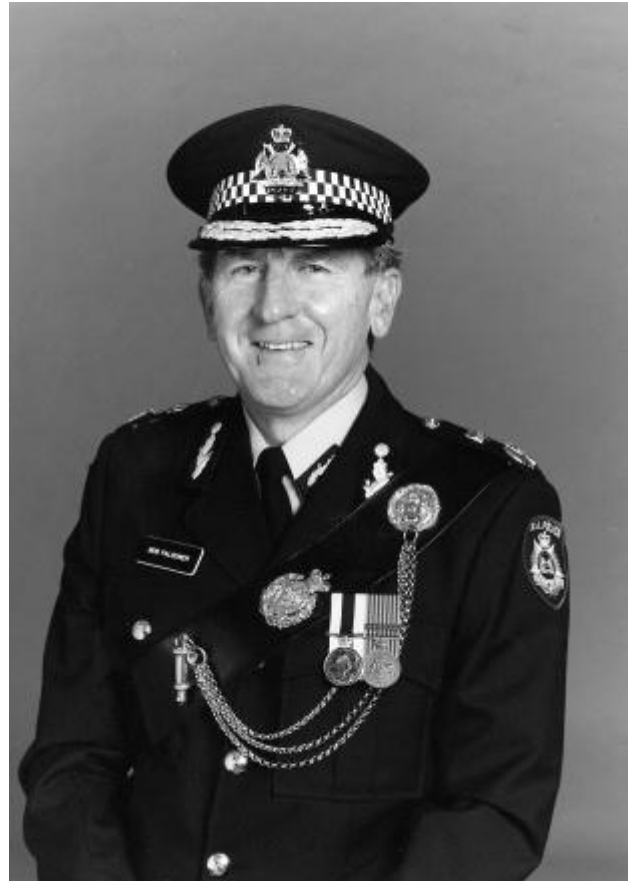
The most dramatic recommendation of the Review Report was summed up by Sergeant Con Boardman of that Branch in April 1995: *'the need for a new Regional Complex to be constructed as a replacement for the current Inglewood Regional Facility'*. By then a new police commissioner – Robert Falconer – had taken the helm and he pushed energetically for major changes in all areas of policing administration and local level law enforcement. He was in office from 1994-1999 and the drastic nature of some decisions certainly stem from his reform mandate.

After Morley had been deemed unsuitable for a really large complex, a case study established that a Mirrabooka Regional Complex should be built in the vicinity of the local major shopping complex. More importantly, the new operational 'capital' eventually took over the management of the old Inglewood District completely.

Other recommendations determined the ultimate fate of various police facilities within the district. Maylands Police Station was reduced to the status of a day post and then closed completely in 1995. The WA Police Academy, based at Maylands since the 1960s, changed location by way of a major development at Joondalup. A world standard, state-of-the-art new Police Academy was formally opened at Joondalup in 2002.

More recently, the police station at Inglewood joined North Perth and Maylands on the closed and non-operational list. A modern and elaborate police complex at Mirrabooka is now the managerial and operational centre of the WA Police West Metropolitan Region.

The police stations at Morley, Bayswater, Scarborough and Stirling are included with this comparatively new set-up. Mount Lawley has maintained its previous status, as a stable and rather vibrant residential area on the boundaries of more than one law enforcement



Commissioner Robert Falconer



jurisdiction. During the year 2010 there can be no doubt that the officers of Bayswater station took the lion's share of responsibility for policing work in the suburb.

Mirrabooka Police Complex-front view

beaufort street network

For information about joining the Network, please email us info@beaufortstreetnetwork.com.au or contact 9328 5365.

What is the network?

The Beaufort Street Network is a new community organisation for people who love one of Perth's most unique cafe and retail strips – Beaufort Street in Mt Lawley.

Beaufort Street is dynamic, interesting and unique; with its own sense of community and diverse culture; and funky and quirky shops – including fashion, art and food – and more traditional corner stores – which make it different to anything else in our city.

The new network, kick started just this year, brings together local residents, community organisations and retailers who want to bring out the full potential of the strip.

The network aims to:

- Provide a strong voice for residents, retailers and community organisations within the Beaufort Street precincts in the Town of Vincent and Town of Stirling;
- Encourage and promote the unique vibrancy, lifestyle and retail environment of Beaufort Street; and
- Work with Local Councils, community organisations and private developers wherever possible to develop new initiatives and projects that enhance Beaufort Street, including the development of new public art and innovative streetscape design.

The Beaufort Street Network is brimming full of ideas to make the strip even better – with plenty of different community, fashion, and art projects on the horizon – and we hope you can join in!

Who can join?

The Network is open to any local resident, consumer, small business or community organisation who has a genuine commitment to enhancing Beaufort Street.

By joining, you'll be kept up to date via email newsletter on the latest projects and initiatives of the Beaufort Street Network and be invited to attend local meetings and forums.

To become a member, cut off the membership slip below and drop it in to the Behind The Money store on 479 Beaufort Street, Mt Lawley.

Membership costs just \$10 per year for residents and \$40 per year for small business and community organisations. Funds go towards the organisation of the Network.



Name:

Business Name: (if applicable)

Address:

Home/Business Number: Mobile Phone:

Email:

Amount (Tick Box)

\$10 Resident \$40 Small business/Community group

Interests/Concerns:

Street upgrade/amenities Public art Marketing
 Fashion/Art events Carparking Other

Signature:

TRIPPING DOWN MEMORY LANE or TIPS FOR RESEARCHING THE PAST

By Andy Ross, MLS member, Heritage Advisory Panel member, Geologist , Amateur Family Historian **will be continued next newsletter**

DO YOU REMEMBER ? if so please contact us and tell us more or tell us your story

EARLY DAYS in 42 Chatsworth Rd Highgate Hill by Erica Biermann (1910-2002) continued

I suppose you could call this "War Wounds", for the scar that my sister carried on her forehead, and in both our hearts lasted all her life.

We lived in Chatsworth Road, Highgate Hill. It was a nice street, with some good people living there. One of its sons was to become a well-known Clergyman, another a well-known Lawyer. I was about five years old at the time and World War 1 was in its second year.

My father, an ex-university student came out from Germany when he was twenty, and subsequently married my mother who was born in Victoria, of German Parentage. They had seven children, all Australian born, and my father never returned to his homeland.

Unfortunately at that time, due to Newspaper propaganda, there was much hate engendered for anything or anyone connected with Germany . My father, who had been employed in a large Government Department as a senior, was relieved of his position because of the discontent of those under his jurisdiction, having to work under a "Hun". My father was a proud man of dignity, a nationalized British Subject, with an Australian wife and children, and with such a stigma imposed those days, life was hard for all of us. My eldest brother could not offer his service to the forces, because his wages were needed to keep our home going.

We survived, as did many others, but perhaps the hardest time for me was at school, where I was bewildered at not being able to make friends, being mobbed and called names, and not quite knowing why, or what it was all about. I can remember coming home from school crying because the teacher had told the class that the Germans in Belgium marched about with babies stuck on the end of their bayonets. My sister and I attended Highgate School. The Infants School (as it was then known) where I started, had its entrance in Bulwer St. The "Big" School- the Highgate State School, was in Lincoln St. To get to the Infants School, one could walk down Cavendish St. into Bulwer avenue, or down Harley St. into Knebsworth Ave. Our family Grocer (Mr. Dagnia) had his shop on the latter corner. We liked going with mother when she paid her weekly account, because he always gave us a bag of boiled sweets.

One day, my older sister was sent down to the infants school with an Umbrella to bring me home as it was raining. She was a very shy and retiring person, but we chatted happily as we came up Cavendish St. when just about to pass a laneway, out rushed about 5 or 6 children who started belting into us, calling us names etc. She yelled to me to run home and get mother, quickly. Being the cowardly sort, I lost no time in doing what was asked. Of course you can imagine the reaction of an outraged mum racing to the scene, and when the children saw her, they shot off and hid. My sister's head was cut, probably not very badly, but she did carry the scar until she died.

I do understand now, that ignorance was a lot to blame. The only news came from Newspapers, who printed lists of wounded, dead and missing. We also lost friends amongst the lists. Nowadays with the inter-travel of young people, and old ones, we have far more respect for other Nations and culture, and humanity.

We had good friends living in Mary St. and there was just a lane dividing the houses .A block lay vacant next door (in Mary St) and this made a playground for us, building Cubbies etc., much to the despair of the mums, as sand was black, and so were we, when called in from play.

Beaufort St. between Chatsworth Rd and Mary St. was the shopping centre, and I remember with affection the Chemist (Mr Scurlock) a kindly man, helpful with advice, yet not overstepping his Profession. Many an anxious Mother was helped, and directed to Medical Help, only if really necessary. There was no such thing as Immunisation, so childish ailments were treated, if possible to allay expense of calling for the Doctor. The local , well-known respected and liked Medico was Dr. Wardell-Johnson who lived in Beaufort St. He used to do his round by push bike until he bought a Horse and trap.



Biermann family 1917

HERITAGE of Mount Lawley by Barrie Baker

THE COHEN FAMILY OF 692 BEAUFORT STREET

The house at 692, now a business and much altered, was built in 1915 for Alexander Cohen (1862 – 1919).



692 Beaufort Street

COHEN FAMILY TREE

Elias Gabriel Co-
(Adelaide) Alexander Jacob Levie

hen (d prior to 1852) = Aaltje

Gabriel Elias Cohen (12/03/1824 – 12/01/1897) = Rosette Simon Gompertz

Alexander Cohen (28/12/1862 – 08/09/1919) = Dora Kott (1870 – 08/07/1931)

Leon Cohen (1902 – 24/12/1956) = Doris Muriel Weiss (1903 – 26/02/1997)

Alexander Keith Cohen (1926 -)= Adele Shillman (1931 – 11/02/1998)

Elias Gabriel Cohen lived in Amsterdam, Netherlands and was an assistant Rabbi. He later went to London where he died. **Gabriel Elias Cohen** was born in London, migrated to Victoria, and he and his wife arrived in Western Australia in 1895. He was associated with the Kott family in establishing the synagogue in Fremantle.

Alexander Cohen was also born in Whitechapel, London, where he trained as an optician. He migrated to Victoria via South Africa and Mauritius, which was a successful tour testing the eyesight of many of many customers and supplying them, and other residents of the British and French colonies. In Victoria, he and his brother Maurice entered into a partnership as builders and built the Malvern town hall. They continued their partnership in Perth, building the Royal Arcade at the corner of Hay and Barrack Streets, as well as the Brisbane Street Synagogue in 1898. Prior to moving to 692 Beaufort Street he lived at 145 Hamersley Road, Subiaco He married widow Dora Kott in 1898. She was probably born in Victoria, the daughter of Victor and Lena Mandelstam. Her first husband was Abraham Kott (born 1866 in Poland and died 1898) and they married in 1887 in Fremantle.



Alexander Cohen



Dora Cohen

She and Abraham had five children:
Arthur Maurice (1888-1888)
Stillborn son
Max (1891-1976)
Rose (1893-1959) married Alkin Wallace.
Polina(1896-1948) married name Maywood

The issue of Alexander and Dora were:
Gabriel (1898-1952)
Leon(1902-1956)
Ruby Violet(1906-1969) married Gordon Bloomfield

Leon Cohen was born and educated in Perth, and started training as a lawyer, but this was interrupted by the death of his father. He initially worked with his mother making women's clothes, and then started a venture with his brother in law Albert Weiss, called N R Coyle Co Ltd, which was unsuccessful. He then branched out on

his own in dressmaking, sending his products to the country and the Eastern States. This developed into Mercia Modes in Queen Street, Perth, which employed 25 women in its workroom. He built the house at 118 First Avenue in 1926 and lived there until he died.



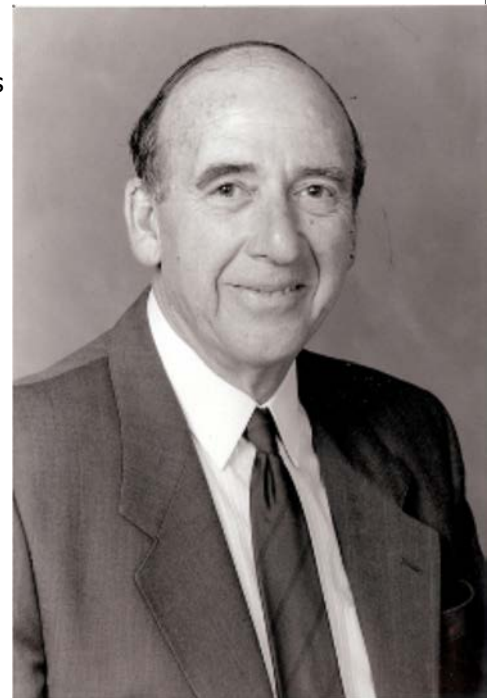
Leon Cohen



118 First Ave

Alexander Keith Cohen was born at 118 First Avenue and grew up there. He attended Mount Lawley Primary

School and Wesley College. He graduated in Medicine from Adelaide University. Prior to retirement he was a consulting physician, specialising in endocrinology and the treatment of diabetes. He was a President of the Royal Australian College of Physicians and Chancellor of the University of Western Australia from 1999 to 2002. He has kindly provided the material for this article.



Prof Alexander Cohen AO FRACP

BRICKS & MORTARS Renovation of 98 First Ave by Marcus Liley continued



As it was

But all the last part in the newsletter was just about bricks, mortar and money and recent discoveries about our little house are so much more interesting.....

Initially I was interested in the history of the house itself. City of Stirling advised that the original plans may have been kept on microfiche at the Batty Library. Upon enquiry I was directed to plans for the year of 1937 – this seemed a little later than I had thought, but proceeded as advised. I became very excited seeing some of the extremely detailed plans of nearby homes with ornate federation frontages. It was therefore somewhat disappointing to discover that the plans in 1937 were for an extension that brought the outside loo indoors – Oh! what luxury. I was then redirected to plans for 1923. While still a little underwhelmed by the very basic plans (no more than an overhead sketch of the layout) it was interesting to uncover a piece of history.

We had suspected that our house may have been a “war service home”. We took that to mean that the government of the day had “given” it to a World War One veteran. We have since learned that this was probably not the case - instead the first owner was probably given a small grant towards the purchase of the land and a war-service loan to assist with construction.

A chance Google search some months ago confirmed that the previous owner, James Edwin Aylett, was indeed a veteran of WW1. My appetite was whetted....

Further investigation revealed that the service records of all WW1 veterans are available for viewing at the website of National Archives of Australia (www.naa.gov.au).

James enlisted 18 January 1916 and became a member of the 44th Battalion. Although James was born and educated in Victoria, the 44th was made up of 1000 proud West Australians who sailed for England in June of 1916. The 44th spent the bleak winter of 1916–17 alternating between service in the front line, and training and labouring in the rear areas. In the second half of 1917 it was heavily employed in the Ypres sector, participating in costly defensive operations in horrendous conditions. Of the 992 men from the battalion who were involved in the Ypres operations, only 158 emerged unscathed when it was relieved for a rest on 21 October. The 44th took part in the preparatory battle of Hamel on 4 July 1918, and was part of the first wave when the offensive itself was launched on 8 August. It had crossed the Hamel start-line approximately 600-strong, but just on 80 men were relieved on 3 October. The battalion was out of the line when the war ended, and was disbanded in May 1919.

Service records disclose that unfortunately (or not) James was wounded in action 4 July 1918 and was admitted to hospital suffering a severe shell wound to his left arm. James spent several months in hospital in England before being invalided back to Australia in January 1919. Upon his return he was still under treatment at Fremantle Hospital until he was eventually discharged in December 1920.

James purchased the vacant block at 98 First Ave on 22 September 1919, married a lass by the name of Grace in April 1921 and had building plans to the value of £700 approved by Perth Road Board 14 November 1922. The couple owned the home until 1966 during which time Grace gave birth to two daughters - Betty and Elaine.

In recent weeks I have attempted to contact any living relative who might still have some early photos of the house. Unfortunately, trying to discover the daughters’ married names has proved problematic. As there are only a dozen Aylett’s in the white pages I decided it was worth a try. I started at #12 and met with immediate success - the lady who answered the phone was married to James’s nephew (his brother’s son). She is somewhat of a family historian and was able to provide a list of James’s 13 siblings.



It turns out that James's elder brother, Frank Thomas Lewis Aylett, also served in WW1. Sadly, his service record does not have such a happy ending. Having enlisted in May of 1915, he was killed in the Somme two years later at the age of 26.

The isolated grave of 5796 Private Frank Thomas Lewis Aylett, 27th Battalion, enlisted Collie, WA, killed in action 26 March 1917, in Queant Road British Cemetery, Bussy. This image is one of a set of photographs of the original graves of some members of the 27th Battalion.

In fact, his service record includes a letter penned by their mother to 'Base Records' 17 September 1917:

"As mother of the above soldier and legated under Will would you please forward me anything which you may hold belonging to my poor boy. If there should be a pocket-book, letters, photos, etc, I should like so much to have them. Also could you tell me if it is possible to get a photo of his grave?"

Sadly, Base Records replied that no personal items were held. It was not until December 1921 that a photo of Frank's grave was supplied (during which time his remains had been transferred to a British Cemetery in France). It must have been with a heavy heart that Frank's parents had to sign for Frank's Memorial Scroll (December 1921), Memorial Plaque (June 1922) and Victory Medal (April 1923).

On a brighter note, James lived to the ripe old age of 91 (passing away in 1990). His wife Grace lived on for a further seven years, passing away at an impressive 93.

Whilst our search for the girls continues, we have never been more mindful of our role as custodians of our little piece of history. One cannot be a slave to the past, and history has to make way for a few luxuries (like an inside toilet), but we have to respect the past.

Some of our neighbours might spare a thought for the blood, sweat and tears that have been absorbed by the very fabric of the houses and homes that surround us.



The house today

RENOVATION 18 Almondbury Rd by Darryl Ryan Pt 4 Commencing Work

You could already tell in early December 2009 that it was going to be a hot summer. The average temperature hovered around 30 to 35 degrees. The winter grass surrounding the house was long since dead and desiccated. A straw track had been created between the worn verandah and the side gate from our various treks to and fro, before settlement had taken place.

To say we were itching to get into our house to start cleaning up would be a gross understatement. There was so much to do and the anticipation was excruciating. The grass had gotten so high, that weeks before, when we were looking for the green dome that housed the underground power connection, we couldn't find it. We had to call Western Power so that they could give us some clue to where it might be on the block. Even then we couldn't find it. At one stage, the real estate agent, who coincidentally happened to be driving past as we were peering over the fence just before the house had settled, stopped to see what we were doing. Although I could sense she was not overly happy that we were at the property, the challenge of trying to find the little green dome was too great, and despite her high heels and immaculately presented business suit, she traipsed through the knee-high grass, stopping occasionally to wipe away a stray blonde strand and groping as aimlessly as ourselves, without any luck.

The problem was, if we couldn't find the power dome, then the electrician, who was coming the week following settlement to re-wire the house, wouldn't be able to turn the power on. It sounds unbelievable, but it was, at the time, a real issue and incredibly frustrating. Moreover, our builder, who we had scheduled to commence work on the dilapidated verandah, the day after Boxing Day, obviously needed power. A very friendly neighbour across the road from us offered to string an extension cord from her house, and although I have to say I did consider it, it simply wasn't practical.

To find that elusive power dome, the dead grass and detritus that covered the block would have to be cleared as a matter of priority.

The house settled on 11 December 2009, a Friday. That same day, we arranged for a huge skip bin to be delivered in readiness for the big clean-up.

By 7.00 o'clock the next morning, it was hot when we arrived at the house. We had rakes, shovels, pruning saws, secateurs, sunscreen and hats. My wife, Ali, had prepared an esky and a big flask of chilled water. As I took the wheelbarrow off the back of our ute, I thought, "Where do you start?"

Perhaps because it seemed more achievable or maybe because of the relative proximity to the skip bin, Ali and I decided to start cleaning up the narrow strip of land between our red brick fence that surrounded our house and the footpath. This may not sound like it was much, however, as our house is on a corner block, it was quite a task. At some time in the house's past, someone had thought it a good idea to randomly place all manner of shrubs and climbers along the outside of the boundary walls. Years of neglect and lack of water, meant these plants had assumed twisted, grotesque shapes. Some had invaded the footpath, others had collected rubbish – papers and bottles and plastic. Some were dead, others half dead. Although there was evidence of reticulation, no water had flowed through those pipes for eons.

Ali and I commenced at the gate at the rear side of the block and worked our way down the hill, pulling out dead grass, peeling stunted ivy from the fence brickwork, picking up beer bottles thoughtlessly thrown into the undergrowth. Slater bugs and earwigs scuttled as we cleared the debris. It was slow going and already I could feel the sweat accumulating on my forehead and the back of my neck.



Ali moved down to the letter box, which was flanked either side, by two overgrown shrubs. "You should have a look at this," she called out. Ali pulled one of the shrubs aside and revealed a decaying pile of junk mail and advertising material.



On reflection, it really is marvelous the incredible amount of optimism that the type of person who takes up pamphlet delivery as an occupation must possess. To any other individual, looking at the enormous piles of catalogues for Kmart, Coles and Target that lay either side of our front gate, it might appear that the chances of any individual coming along to our stuffed to overflowing letter-box to collect a catalogue would be zero. Not so to our local delivery people. With the springs of eternal hope gushing through their veins, they carefully place another pile of pamphlets on top of the existing pile (as there is clearly no room in the letter-box itself) just in case someone might appear from inside a house that has obviously been uninhabited for years, desperately needing to know how much a 2 litre bottle of Coca-Cola might be selling for this week. Or margarine, toothpaste or soap powder. I filled two and a half wheel barrows with decomposing advertising and dumped them into the skip bin.

Up until now, I appreciate the story of renovating our house has focused on the background of how we came to buy it. But it has occurred to me that I should provide some advice for would-be or novice renovators (which Ali and I still are) or for anyone who might be reading this. So it will be my intention to list, as it comes to mind, little nuggets of solid gold truths with respect to home renovation – particularly the renovation of an old house that has been neglected for many years.

When we first arrived at the house, I peered into the cavernous expanse of the very large skip bin we had ordered and felt a smug sense of satisfaction. You could swing a cat in there. There was no way we were going to fill that baby.

RULE NUMBER ONE: One skip bin will never be enough.

When we first arrived at the house, I peered into the cavernous expanse of the very large skip bin we had ordered and felt a smug sense of satisfaction. You could swing a cat in there. There was no way we were going to fill that baby.

After three or four hours of hacking away at the vegetation on the outside of our house, it was becoming increasingly apparent that the bin was filling rapidly. Some of the shrubbery was very bulky and a few had reached the size of small trees. It was amazing how the grass and other rubbish also took up space. It occurred to me that we hadn't even started on the inside of the fence. Things were not looking good. To make matters worse, the flask that Ali had brought with us was almost empty, and we had not yet stopped for lunch. This leads me to the second golden rule.



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RULE NUMBER TWO: Two litres of water will not be enough for two people renovating an old house in 37 degree heat, especially if the house is not connected to the water mains and they are working outside. This is more so if one of those persons has to push a full wheel barrow from the front gate, uphill to a skip bin, numerous times whilst wearing heavy work boots.

When the water ran out, Ali decided to go to Antonio's to buy us some fresh rolls for lunch and, more importantly, some liquid refreshment. Whilst she was gone, I lay on the worn boards of the verandah, my parched tongue lolling about in my mouth. It was so dry, I couldn't even swallow. A small wave of panic swept over me. What if my tongue starts to swell or shrivel? Could your taste buds die from drying out? This was bad, very bad. There wasn't even a green blade of grass I could chew on. It was like being in the Sahara Desert, or more accurately, like laying on the verandah of an old Federation House that had been plonked in the middle of the Sahara Desert. I could see the heat haze coming off the road. It looked like the tar was melting, but I couldn't be sure. My mouth was so dry, I couldn't speak, couldn't call for help. I could only wonder what Bear Grylls would have done in this situation. It wouldn't have made very entertaining viewing, because I was simply lying there, ostensibly unable to produce the mandatory narration that accompanies people who put themselves into stupid situations.

A wet patch had formed on the old jarrah boards where my back was resting. Bear Grylls probably would have tried to lick it up, but I wasn't prepared to do that. I would rather die with some dignity. It seemed like Ali had been gone for hours, but as I feebly raised my arm to look at my watch, I could see it was only five minutes.

I moved away from the wet patch. Astoundingly, I could feel the heat coming up from the boards, which were in the shade.

How much hotter was it going to get?

How were we going to fit the rest of the rubbish into the close to full skip bin?

And crucially, how long does it take a middle aged Italian lady to make two meat and salad rolls with a sprinkle of salt and pepper?

These are the things about home renovation that they don't tell you in Better Homes and Gardens



MLS Committee 2011

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Jan Wilkie

Ian Merker

Charlotte Christo

Barrie Baker : Historian/ reports on City of Stirling/ Town of Vincent matters

John Baas :Represents Ratepayers Assoc

Neil Hodgkinson ; Inglewood representative

Committee meetings are held 1st Monday of the month at the Mount Lawley Bowling Club at 8.00pm.

All members are welcome to attend.