

Mount Lawley Matters

Mount Lawley Society

Vol 36 #4 December 2013

WEBPAGE: www.mountlawleysociety.org.au

MLS PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Bruce Wooldridge

Dear Members,

This is our final Newsletter of what has been a very eventful 2013. Please see below for a year-end update of heritage and other matters.

Local government reform

We welcome the Government's recent announcement that Stirling will retain its current boundaries for Mount Lawley and Menora. This is a very positive development; however most of Inglewood is still slated to move to a "Greater Morley". The City of Stirling, in conjunction with the Society, will likely hold a Community Rally for Inglewood in January. We will provide further details once announced and hope for your support, as "Heritage is Safer in Stirling".

Other Heritage matters

Whilst our fight to stay in Stirling galvanised the Society and community in 2013, 2012 was heavily weighted towards the retention of the historic façade of Mt Lawley Primary School (following the fire). The rebuild has now commenced and under the released design, the significance of the original building to Mt Lawley has been respected and the character and appearance of the Second Avenue frontage is unmistakably in line with our expectations. It will not only make a positive contribution to the street, but will again be recognised as an iconic building of the suburb that will continue into its second centenary.

We also welcome the City of Stirling's rejection of demolition applications over heritage properties on Rookwood St, Mt Lawley and Robinson St, Inglewood. Hopefully the unanimous resolution from Councillors on the Robinson St application will hold sway at SAT.

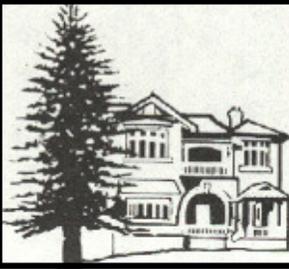
Perth Fete/ Beaufort Street festival

In November, the Society manned stalls at both the Perth Fete and Beaufort Street Festival. These community events allowed the Society to engage with a large proportion of the 100,000 revellers and share with them our aims and a collection of photos from our archives. We also had a large amount of interest in our new web site "WAheritagerenovator.com.au", which is up and running. We also received many inquiries about the history of houses in the area which we are following up.

AGM/ Sundowner

In early December we held our AGM/ Sundowner at the Mt Lawley Bowling Club. We had an excellent turnout and it was a very successful evening. Congratulations to our tireless Secretary Beth McKechnie, who was awarded Life Member in recognition of her tireless contribution over the past six years. A much deserved accolade. The evening also saw the unveiling of our new jarrah photo easels, which have been professionally designed and constructed by Committee Member Ian Merker and helpers. Thank you again to our dedicated Committee for a very successful and rewarding year for the Society. Whilst we would prefer not to have to go to battle over issues such as local government reform, these issues reinforce the importance of the Society as one of the largest and effective heritage/ community groups in Australia.

We have some changes to the Committee for 2014. We would like to thank Roger Elmitt for his contribution to the Committee, particularly in respect of the cataloguing of the extensive archives – a massive task. We also welcome new Committee Members Sheila Robinson, Celine Hugo and Marina Murphy. We have a number of interesting projects to get involved in next year, and it is fantastic to have some new faces to get involved. A special thank you again also to our members who assisted during the year with flyer distribution, manning of stalls, and archive cataloguing.



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

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



Spring in the City Garden competition

The winners of the 2013 "Spring in the City" garden competition" were announced at the AGM. Congratulations to the Menora and overall winner Carol and Jonathon Resnick, the Mount Lawley winner Deryn Thorpe and from Inglewood Pamela Miller. I would like to thank all those who entered, and the contribution to the streetscape from their hard work that is appreciated by all who like to stroll through the suburbs. Thank you also to the West Australian where we featured on Page 2 - fantastic exposure for the Society. We would like to thank the generous sponsors being Mia Flora Garden Centre, Beaufort Garden World, Mt Lawley Hardware, Planet Books, Inglewood Hotel, and La Vigna.

Forthcoming events

Our first event for 2014 will be a family friendly afternoon of lawn bowls at the Sportsmen's Lawn Bowls Club, Mt Lawley. This event was held for the first time last year, and attracted a large number of families, with the children enjoying the opportunity to join in. More details and a formal invitation will follow in February. We hope you enjoy the newsletter.

We hope you and your family had a very merry Christmas and we wish you all a safe and happy New Year.

Winners of the Spring in the Garden Competition 2013

Winner of Menora and overall winner

36 Melrose Crescent



36 Melrose Crescent

Winner of Mt Lawley
13 First Ave

13 First Ave



Winner of Inglewood
269 Crawford Rd

269 Crawford Rd

2nd and 3rd Mt Lawley

2nd: 25 Clive Rd



3rd : 18 First Ave



2nd and 3rd Inglewood

2nd : 16 Robinson St



2nd and 3rd Menora

2nd : 17 Melrose Cres



3rd : 24 Elstree Ave

3rd : 72 Wood St



From the Archives

A dedicated team of members has been gradually cataloguing and organising the extensive MLS document holdings gathered over more than 30 years.

Fordham family History (found in the MLS archives. Author unknown)

Thank you to Rosalie Ann Caddy and Elizabeth Joy Fletcher for adding to the history and loaning the photographs

From the archive; Author unknown

There were 3 Fordham sisters, Joy Mollie and Betty . I think there was a younger brother but t never knew him. Their father was the Friendly Societies Chemist (opposite the Museum) and they lived there. When I was introduced to Mrs Fordham , she remarked that she had known my Uncle and Aunt on the Goldfields so they must have come from there. All 3 girls were clever and won scholarships.

Joy who taught Music, and was for many years Secretary of the Perth College Old Girls Association. PCOGA has been very fortunate in having had a succession of good secretaries, but I have always felt that those who followed Joy Fordham built on the very firm foundation that she had established.. About 1927 she established a choir (to which I belonged). With others we gave a concert in the Burt Memorial Hall and on another occasion we broadcast from the old 6WF studio in West farmers building. In the early 30's she established a Dramatic Society (to which my sister belonged) and for a short time they had a badminton club. After the father died they lived in South Perth. Mrs Fordham was "difficult" and if I remember rightly, Joy did not survive her mother by many years.

Mollie, whose name I understand was Mahala, studied Biology and became a demonstrator at the university. Sometime in the 1920's the Professor of Biology took a post at an English University and arranged for Mollie to join him there. She returned to Australia only occasionally and usually on working holidays.

Betty, who worked in an office in Perth also worked very hard for the PCOGA, serving on various committees. She married Jim Battye and they lived in Mt Lawley and had 2 daughters. When she married she became Betty Battye and whilst her family and friends still called her Betty, at meetings etc she was referred to as Elizabeth Battye which of course was her real name and sounded a good deal better.

Family History as given by family

Richard Fordham was born 21.4.1869 in South Australia and married Joy Elinor Clark born in 1870. They married in 1895 in SA and had 3 daughters and 1 son. All 3 girls were born in SA.

Oileen Joy Clark Fordham was born in 1897 , known as Joy. Mahala Glen Clark Fordham was born in 1898 known as Mollie and Jean Elizabeth Clark Fordham was born in 1900 known as Betty.

The younger brother Richard Clark Fordham was born in WA in 1909 after the family moved to Perth from SA. Mr Fordham Snr came over to WA to follow the Gold Rush to Coolgardie and he set up in partnership with the Friendly Societies in Coolgardie. Once he had established himself the family followed by ship arriving in Albany.

The family moved to Perth and lived at 84 Beaufort St at the Perth United Friendly Societies Medical Institute Association .





Joy , Mollie and Betty



Richard Clark Fordham during the war



Mollie in Bedford 1926

All girls attended Perth College. and achieved highly in many areas and were very involved in community activities.

After Mr Fordham died in 1935, Joy and Mrs Fordham moved to 10 Bowman St South Perth . Mrs Fordham died in 1943 and was indeed described as difficult at times as she couldn't see and had trouble with glasses.

Joy continued teaching Music . She did not marry. She died in 1947.

Mollie achieved a Master of Biology and then travelled with Professor Daikin and his family to England with infrequent trips back to Australia. She died in 1973.

Betty married James Edwin Daniel Battye in 1927, one of 7 children to James Sykes Battye 1871-1954 and Sarah Elizabeth May Jenkins 1876-1954. The Battyes lived at 3 Francis St Perth .

Betty and James (an accountant with T & G) lived at 192 Central Ave Mt Lawley.
Next door at 194 Central Ave, there was a milk round and 2 horses were housed in the back.

Betty and Jim had 2 children; Rosalie Ann born 1828, and Elizabeth Joy born 1931.

The family lived at Central Ave until the war when they moved to 20 Park Rd Mt Lawley.

Mount Lawley in Governor Bedford's Time : *Peter Conole*



Mount Lawley was named after Governor Arthur Lawley, Sixth Baron Wenlock. However, his brief time in office (1901-1902) had little local significance apart from that occurrence.

His successor as the King's representative loomed rather larger in State affairs. A widely admired Royal Navy hero, Vice Admiral Sir Frederick Bedford (1838-1913), served as Governor of Western Australia from March 1903 to April 1909. Frederick's naval service years were rather interesting. As a teenager he took part in the Crimean War of the 1850s and later saw action against mutineers and pirates in the Pacific. Further adventures included a campaign against Jihadist fanatics on the Nile in the 1880s and expeditions to West Africa in the 1890s to crush slave raiders and assorted warlords.

West Australians grew to appreciate Sir Frederick's blunt way of speaking, sense of humour and kindness to young people. His wife, the noted 'society woman' Ethel Turner, was a leading light of Perth high society and cultural life. Sir Frederick himself became a close personal friend of Premier Sir John Forrest and the powerful Anglican Archbishop Charles Riley. Newspapers gave much coverage to the movements and activities of notable Mount Lawley residents of the period. They sometimes coincided with functions at Government House and the presence of the Governor and family members at concerts, fetes, opening ceremonies and the like around the city and various suburbs. The press also noted locally important events such as the public funeral in 1905 of Mary Haynes, the wife of Richard Haynes of Queen's Crescent, Mount Lawley – a notable lawyer, politician and diplomat of the pre-War years.

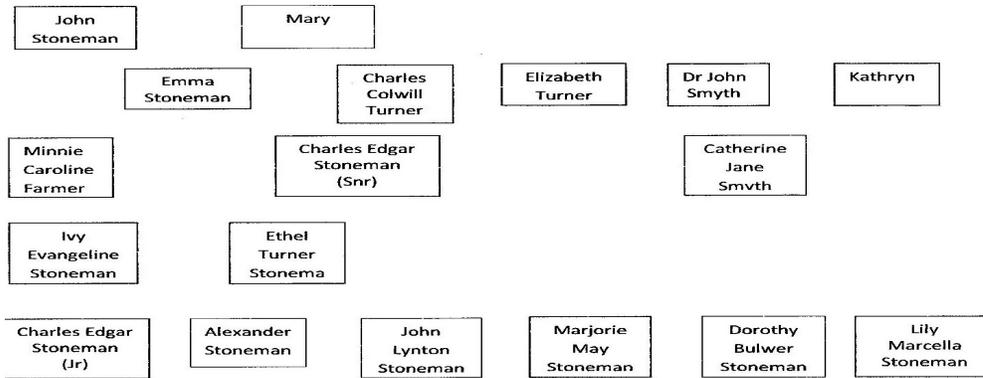
Mount Lawley was already a fashionable residential area and residents became quite assertive in their dealings with other entities. Hard arguing with the Metro Water Board ended in a deal satisfactory to Mount Lawley proprietors in November 1905. The Perth Roads Board people then agreed to the building of Park Road in May 1906. In late 1908 the press commented on moves by Mount Lawley and Inglewood people to obtain a greater role in decision making about road construction and of an agreement to extend the railway line to West Guildford.

The Governor himself made a point of naming various Perth and Fremantle streets after great British Admirals of the past and possibly suggested names of Crimean War resonance for others (Alma, Raglan, etc). In turn local people named the town of Bedforddale after him in 1905. It is now part of Armadale. Just beyond Mount Lawley, the suburb of Bedford Park is another reminder of his life and work in our State.

Sir Frederick is understood to have been anxious not to make a fool of himself in his official role, but his time among us was a triumph. WA folk regretted his departure. The retired governor settled in Surrey and died there in January, 1913. In recent years, the people of Western Australia received a posthumous gift from Bedford family descendants – an album of remarkable photographs of various people and sights of our State taken by Sir Frederick's daughters during his time in office. It is now in the safe custody of Government House. The year 1913 marks the 100th anniversary of Sir Frederick's death and it is appropriate to acknowledge his contributions to the WA community.

HERITAGE by BARRIE BAKER

THE STONEMAN FAMILY AND MOUNT LAWLEY



John Stoneman (Snr) was an agricultural labourer of Bondleigh and then Coldridge in Devon, UK. His wife, Mary, was a dressmaker. They had at least seven children .

Emma Stoneman was the third youngest child of John and Mary. She was a servant in the household of Charles Colwill Turner and his wife Elizabeth in Bideford, Devon, and almost certainly conceived her son, Charles Edgar Stoneman with Charles Colwill Turner. She was 23 years old.

Charles Colwill Turner was a member of the Royal College of Surgeons.

Dr John Smyth was a secondary school teacher, born in Ireland., who went to Victoria as a young teacher. He taught in public schools there for all of his career. He died 29 Sept 1904, and his wife Kate 23 Feb 1916. Among other children he had daughters Edith, Maude (1870 -1894) and Elizabeth (died 1947).



Charles Edgar Stoneman as a young man.

Charles Edgar Stoneman (Snr) was born 29/03/1863 in Lapford, Devon. He was raised in Nymet Rowland in the family of James and Elizabeth Parish, Elizabeth being an older (by 17 years) sister of Emma. James was a public carrier. After leaving school, Charles was employed as a grocer's assistant in Barnstable.

He arrived in Western Australia in around 1885 and immediately started as an importer and merchant of Ceylonese tea and coffee. His business, at the corner of Hull and Roe Streets, prospered, having diversified into other forms of produce and washing machines. Between 1894 and 1897 was in partnership with Edward John Ingpen. From 1888 he had been registered as an Estate and Commission Agent.

From 1904, as a subagent for the London and Lancashire Insurance Co he set up at Weld Chambers, 22/3 St George's Terrace, and arranged mortgages through them.

In 1906 he purchased 390 hectares of land in Scarborough from the Manning family. The parcel lay between Scarborough Beach Road and Newborough Street and between Deanmore Street and Huntriss Street. Over succeeding years he developed and sold off this area.

In December 1908 he acquired the pastoral lease 'Wilgoyne' of 20,800 ha at Burracoppin near Merredin. He also had mining interests. In 1907 he acquired a sheep farm at Baker's Hill.

In 1888 he married Minnie Caroline Farmer. They had two daughters – Ivy Evangeline, born 23/08/1889, and Ethel Turner, born 10/08/1890.

Minnie died 12/12/1891, having broken her neck on falling from a horse.



Charles Edgar Stoneman in middle age.

In 1897 he married Catherine Jane Smyth. They produced six children – Charles Edgar (Jr), born 12/08/1896, Alexander, born 1898, John Linton, born 1901, Marjory May, born 1903, Dorothy Bulwer, born 1905 and Lily Marcella, born 1909.

He lived at 123 Roe Street from the late 1880s until 1901, then at 155 Palmerston Street until moving to 321 Bulwer Street in 1907.

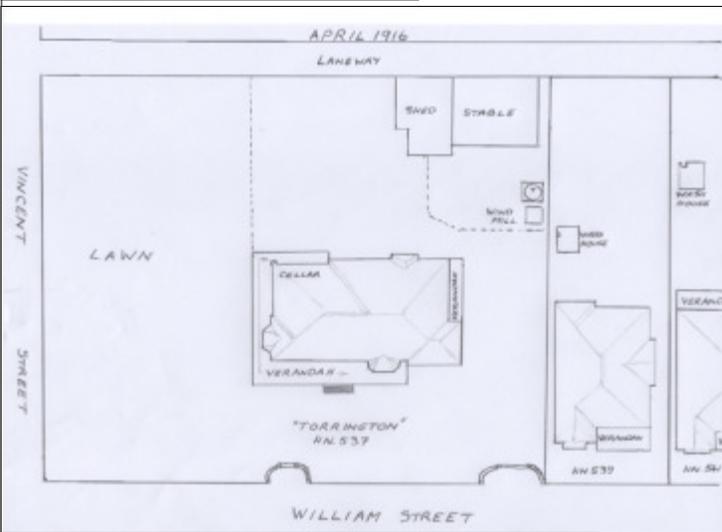


Photo taken in 1912, showing a fragment of 'Torrington' with a three year old Lily in the foreground.

In 1912 he built a large Federation styled home "Torrington" at 3 Clifton Street

(later 537 William Street), Mount Lawley. The house had a grey slate tiled roof on extensive grounds with a stable.

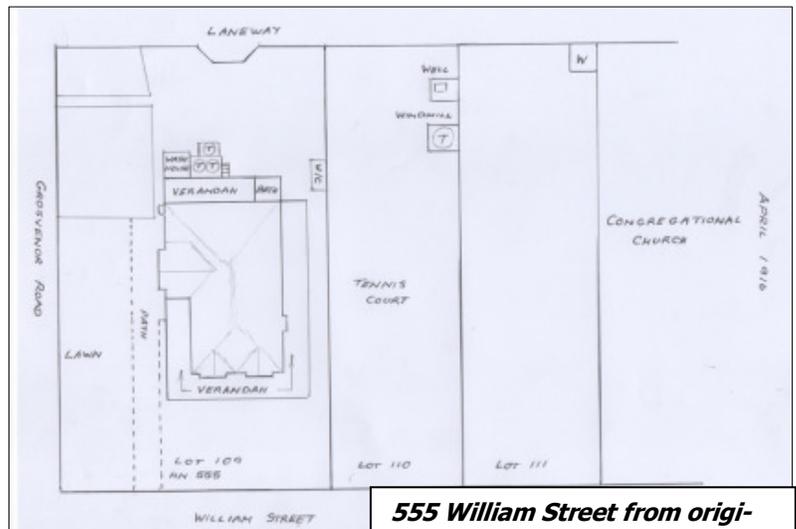
In 1919 he built a second home at 555 William Street where he lived until 1922, when he moved back to 537, where he lived until his death on 12/12/1936.



The original plans of "Torrington" 537 William



"Torrington" as it appeared in a 1959 aerial photograph prior to its 1960 demolition.



555 William Street from original plans.

Minnie Caroline Farmer was born in 1864, the ninth child of Thomas William Farmer and Lynda (nee Inkpen). Thomas Farmer was born in 1826 in Greenwich, Kent and died in 1891 in Perth. Lynda was born in 1836 and died in 1913. .



Catherine Stoneman with daughter Lily, taken about 1914.

Catherine Jane Smyth was born in 1864 and died 06/03/1922. She was a piano teacher.

Ethel Turner Stoneman (MA, M Psych, PhD)

Born 10/08/1890 in the Roe Street home of her parents.

After mother's death in 1891, brought up by her grandmother, Lydia farmer

Attended Claremont Teachers' College 1909.

Taught in schools 1910-1916 (1910 –North Fremantle, 1911-Thomas St,1912-1916-Perth girls High, in last year as deputy head)

Graduated BA in experimental psychology 1916 from University of Western Australia.

Immediately left for Stanford University to study intelligence testing and abnormal psychology, graduating MA.

1918 appointed a senior lecturer at Claremont Teachers' College, graduating first M Psych from UWA in that year.

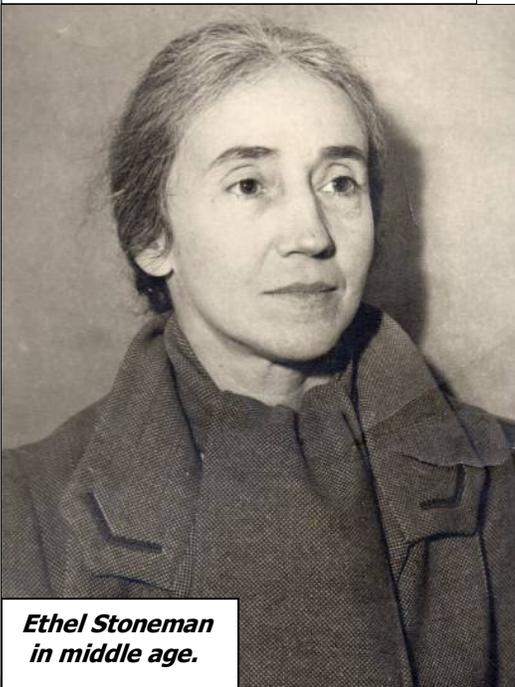
1924, did further research in The UK and France, returning in 1925.

1926, appointed State Psychologist and Director of the State Psychological Clinic situated in the State Observatory Buildings. Lectured part time in experimental and abnormal psychology at UWA.

1930, the Clinic was abolished and she retrenched.

1930 – 1934 studied for a PhD in Edinburgh.

1935 practised as consulting psychologist in Perth. 1936 left to live permanently in Melbourne, establishing a practice in Collins Street. Melbourne.



Ethel Stoneman in middle age.

Died 05/07/1973 in Melbourne.

She was small, dark haired and had extraordinary eyes 'with a hooded and hypnotic quality'. Her soft voice had a clear electrifying quality. She had no interests outside her work (which in later life included a hobby farm at Diamond Creek outside Melbourne), never married and was a devout Anglican.

She was an early eugenicist, but was appalled by the use of this by the Nazis.

Staff and students at Claremont Teachers' College, 1918. Ethel is seated, fourth from the left.





Ivy Stoneman as a very young woman.

Ivy Evangeline Stoneman was born at 123 Roe Street 23/08/1889

In 1925 she married Chales J Dallimore (26/10/1896 – 12/05/1965). He was a carpenter/builder, born at 285 Roberts Road, Subiaco.

He fought in World War I at the Battle of Bullecourt and was taken prisoner and interned near Kiel in Germany.

In 1927 they moved to Carnamah, where Charles died.

They had a daughter Effie Lydia Bridget (who married Jan Bronislav Orlicz (1920 – 1970)) and a son Anthony (1930 -1974) who had Down’s Syndrome and died in Claremont.

Ivy died on 07/08/1973.



Charles Dallimore in WWI uni-



Charles Edgar Stoneman seated on tricycle with younger brother, Alexander Stoneman in 1905.

Charles Edgar Stoneman (Jnr) was born in Adelaide 12/08/1896. He was educated at Highgate Primary School, Perth Boys School (1909 -10) then Scotch College (then in Palmerston Street) (1911-1912)).

After war service 1916-1918, he took up farming on part of his father’s property at Burracoppin. About 1928 he moved to ‘Finbar’ farm near Coomberdale, 20 km north of Moora.

He married Rosalie Elizabeth Hillman in 1929. They had one son, Trevor Charles (05/05/1930 -), an agricultural scientist, the source of much of the material in this article.



Charles and Rosalie shortly after their marriage.



Charles Stoneman ploughing with a eam of horses at Burracoppin.



They left the farm in 1935, and lived firstly at 47 Clifton Crescent until 1943.



47 Clifton Crescent



103 First Avenue

then moved to 103 First Avenue where they lived until 1951.

Charles was able to find work as an insurance inspector with the North British Insurance Co (later the Atlas Insurance Co) until retirement in 1961. He died 08/04/1980.

From 1951 they lived in Wembley until they died.

Rosalie Elizabeth Hillman (08/05/1905 – 29/05/1982) was born at 198 Adelaide Terrace where she lived until 1924, when they moved to 10 Regent Street West.

She was educated at Loreto Convent, Adelaide Terrace, and after leaving school she worked at the office of Archbishop Riley. Her father was a solicitor and later clerk of the Legislative Council.



Alexander Stoneman (1898 -1956).

He was an aeronautical engineer, qualified at the Fremantle Chamber of Commerce and the University of Western Australia. After qualifying, he worked as an engineer at the Maylands Aerodrome in Perth, becoming Engineer in Chief in 1931, and Works manager in 1933.

In the 1940s he moved to Melbourne and worked for the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation. He died in Sydney. He never married.

At Maylands Aerodrome, with Alexander standing at rear and Ethel in the cockpit.



John Linton Stoneman (1901 – 14/08/1950). He was one of Perth's principle builders and contractors. He built the Cresco Fertilizer Factory, Bayswater, in 1928. He was partner in a contracting firm 'Finlay and Stoneman' of 252 James Street, Perth, which operated from 1929 until John's death in 1951. They built:

Aircraft hangers at Maylands, Forrest (refuelling and stopover point for planes flying between Adelaide and Perth), and Parafield in Adelaide For Major Norman Brearlay, manager of Western Australian Airways in 1929.

Adelphi Hotel in Mill Street, Perth in 1936.

The Royal Institute of the Blind in Maylands in 1937

Ford Motor Company in Stirling Highway, Leighton in 1940

Zimpels' Ltd in Hay Street

Nestles house, 188 St George's Terrace in 1935

Scarborough Hotel in 1939

In 1948 he invested in the Air Beef Programme, which transported chilled carcasses from Glenroy Station to Wyndham. He built the aircraft hangars at Glenroy.

and Sydney Anderson was always referred to as "The man who never sleeps". White City closed down at the commencement of the second World War because of blackout regulations and all the equipment was split up with some being moved to the underground Tivoli Car Park in Hay Street and some to Luna Park. The White City property was taken over by the Air Force during the war and buildings were erected for use by Air Force personnel. After the war, the buildings were taken over by the Perth Technical College and many years later, were removed to make way for the Perth Bus Station and the shoppers' car park.



John Stoneman

*Luna Park Scarborough 1940
Left- Ruth Durrant John Rinaldi
and Ethel Hawlen*

He had a finan-

cial interest in 'White City', a funland entertainment park at the junction of Riverside drive and William Streets. This was taken over by the Royal Australian Air Force in 1939 and demolished.

In association with local showmen Barney Heyward and Bert Bowman forming the Scarborough Beach Development Company, he built 'Luna Park' at the SW corner of Scarborough Beach road and West Coast Highway in 1939, transferring equipment from 'White City'.

Between 1933 and 1940 he lived with his wife and daughter at 42 Woodroyd Street, Mount Lawley.

He had a passion for flying and was killed (together with passenger Leslie Arnold, sales manager for Lynas Motors) over the Hooley Homestead in the Pilbara.

In 1928 he married Lilian Isabel Price . They had one daughter, Patricia in 1929, who later married Les Gunzburg .



Lilian Isabel Price (1900 – 13/09/2004). She was a champion amateur golfer.

Marjorie May Stoneman (1903 – 05/06/1964). After leaving school at Perth College, she worked for the Shell Oil Co. She married Harry Hodgson, a farmer in Kulin in February 1935. They had two children, Geoffrey and daughter Robin .



Marjorie Stoneman at Perth College, (in grey) and just below and to the left of the priest. Taken about 1914.



Marjorie dressed for a ball, in the early 1920s.



Henry and younger brother William Hodgson, in about 1920.

Henry John Hodgson (1901 – 21/09/1983). He was the son of John William Hodgson, who came from England as a fitter and turner and in 1908 took up farming at Yealering. Henry matriculated from Scotch College and trained as a wool classer before joining the family farm. In 1927 he developed a farm at East Kulin. He pioneered the use of trace elements in the area and was involved for 30 years in local government, 20 years as Shire President.



Dorothy Bulwer Stoneman (1905 - ?) was a chiropodist. She was married to William Oliver. In 1980 they lived at 2 Capri Place, Safety Bay.

William Frederick Oliver (? – 30/07/1994) Was a farmer at 110 Mile Gate, Dumbleyung, who later moved to a farm at Irish Town which he farmed until 1970. His parents, Richard Oliver and Ellen Brown were pioneers of the Harris-mith/Dumbleyung area.

Lily Marcella/Lillian Lynton Stoneman (1909 – 07/08/2003) She regretted not being able to university and worked in the office of Dalgety and Co, in 5 William Street.

Married Horace Victor Trenaman in 1934. She moved to Melbourne in 1947, and died in Melbourne. Note that she substituted Lynton for Marcella as her middle name upon moving to Melbourne. They had a daughter Elizabeth .



Dorothy Stoneman and William Oliver.



*Wedding photograph of Lily,
29 November 1934.*



*Lily with daughter Elizabeth taken about
1943.*



Horace Victor Trenaman (1908- 1977)

He was the son of Victor Roy Wellesley Trenanam and Caroline Eva (nee Bridger). In 1931 he was living with his father at 107 Thomas Street, Subiaco.

He was a bank clerk and later manager at the Bank of Western Australia. Having married they were living at 48 Mount Street, Perth in 1936.

In 1937 their address was 19 Hardy Street, South Perth. By 1943, their address was 106 Labouchere Road, South Perth. Between 1940 and 1943 he was manpowered to work in York. After three years in Narrogin, in 1947, they had moved to 5 View Street, Hawthorn, Victoria.

In 1954, they were living in Kent Avenue, Croydon.

In 1963 and 1968, they were at 3 Orford Avenue, Kooyong. In 1972 and 1977, they were at 33 Chesterfield Avenue, Malvern.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Myles Harmer and Alison Bunker
Marina Murphy
Chris Shannon
Stephen Cohen-Jones
Jo Emmanuel
David and Fiona Adamson
Pieta Hoddy and Richard Bank

Celine and Brad Hugo
Carol and Jonathon Resnick
Martin and Jenny Cake
Helen Zorbas
Taryn Rucci
Trevor Stoneman

Erika and Biagio Faraone
Reg and Roslyn Armstrong
Julianna and Andrew Carey
Gladys Brown
Pamela Miller
Michael and Zena Gottschalk



Report on the building kindly donated to the MLS by the WA Ballet Centre . History INTERPRETATION PLAN MAY 2011 Philip Griffiths Architects

The history of Senses, Maylands in its current setting, falls into four main timeframes: -

1897-1918: *Development of the Victoria Institute and Industrial School for the Blind and construction of initial buildings .*

Inter-War period: *additions to workshops (1920s), and major expansion, with major alterations and additions to develop main building in the 1930s .*

World War II period to 1950s: *wartime activities; major expansion in the post-war period, with additions to main building and new workshops .*

1960-present: *Development of new residential buildings, hall and showrooms; decline and closure of workshops, and eventual*

decision to re-locate .

Detailed history follows Pt 4 continued from 1967 to present day

In the early 1960s, there were about 140 blind people employed in the factories. Over the next 31 years, the overall number declined to less than 50 in the mid-1990s, which was attributed to a widening of job opportunities and to medical advances leading to a better prognosis for some eye diseases.

In August 1969, when the Institute held an Open Week, with nearly 100 people employed, it was reportedly the 'largest and best' of its kind in Australia. The highly skilled workers were paid up to \$35 per week, which was supplemented by a pension of \$14 per week. The Sunday Times reported the Institute's facilities included 'a plush block of home units and dormitories'. Evidently the place ranked highly when compared with similar institutions at an international level, being praised by the Director General of the Royal Institute for the Blind in Britain, who declared it was 'as good as he had seen'.

In September 1969, workers at the Institute were engaged in manufacturing 150 ships' fenders to Australian Navy specifications, as well as making signal balls for use by ships, at harbours and meteorological stations.

In June 1971, J. B. & M. E. Thomson drew preliminary plans for 30 home units to be built at west corner of the site, with three buildings linked by covered walkways/ link buildings. There were to be two north-east to south-west aligned blocks parallel to Whatley Crescent, linked at the south-western end, with a total of 16 units. To the north-west of these, the plans show a U-shaped block with the open end of the U to the north-east, providing a total of 14 units. These units were designed to be self-contained homes comprising two bedrooms, a large living area, with a small kitchen, and a bathroom including a W.C. The units, named MayCrest Flats, were duly built. The building was designed to take an additional floor.

In 1981, two inspectors from the Department of Social Security reported that there were "serious management deficiencies" at the Institute, and 'called for a complete overhaul and more decision-making by blind workers'.

In the 1980s, the factories at the Institute were classified as a sheltered workshop. After Federal funding for such places was reduced in the late 1980s, Ray Kirwan recollects 'things suffered' at the Institute. In the 1980s and 1990s, increased competition from imported furniture resulted in a further decline in demand for goods of this nature manufactured at the Institute.

In the period 1985-90, output and income from the mat department doubled, the light engineering portion of the workshops was closed as it was uneconomic, there was extensive marketing and publicity, and various management initiatives, staff cuts, increased working hours, and higher accommodation fees.

After purchasing and up-grading a former plastics factory on Guildford Road to become the Venville Centre, a bingo centre there proved successful. In 1994, it would account for 61% of the Institute's income and 53% of expenditure. Other business efforts proved less successful, but the Institute's retail store, known as Cane City, thrived. Whilst wider acceptance of blind people in the community and greater integration led to labour shortages at the Institute, it also opened the way for employment of people with other disabilities at the Institute. In 1989, a Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) SkillShare project to train and assist the unemployed commenced, operating from the Institute's facilities.

On 8 April 1994, The Royal W. A. Institute for the Blind was entered in the Register of Heritage Places on an Interim Basis.

In July 1994, the Institute achieved Australian Standard 3902 Accreditation for its products, due to efforts by manufacturing manager Brady Williams. In c. 1994-95, the main building at the Institute accommodated the administration, the cane and sea-grass business, and SkillShare. In the lead-up to the centenary year, major renovations were undertaken, including repairs to ceilings and floor treatments, painting and decoration of the interior of the main building, including restoration and painting of the portion occupied by the cane and sea-grass business and the canteen (with 'generous assistance from the Plumbing and Painting Industry Skills and Technology Centre'), upgrading of electrical distribution, installation of a new sound and lighting and fire alarm systems, and 'state of the art seamless coating on the exterior of the heritage listed building.'

At the front entry to the building, a plaque, dated December 1994, records that the restoration 'of this Art Deco Building' was 'made possible' by the Heritage Council of Western Australia. Improvements made to the grounds, included new bitumen in several areas, enlargement of car parking facilities, re-planting of existing garden beds and new plantings, extension of the reticulation system, and the design and landscaping of the Charles Cornish Garden, commemorating his long and highly valued service to the Institute, with assistance from LEAP students.

On 10 March 1995, a sealed time capsule was placed in the reception of the main building by the Governor of Western Australia, Major General Michael Jeffery, in commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the Royal W. A. Institute for the Blind.

In 1995-96, renovations were made to MayCrest Courts with the assistance of a \$140,000 grant from the Lotteries Commission, fitting new hot water systems, new basins/vanities, and replacing baths with showers.

In 2001, around \$250,000 was expended towards achieving renewal of the Institute's accreditation to enable its continued operation through to 2006. On 21 August, the Royal W. A. Institute for the Blind (Inc.) amalgamated with the W. A. Deafblind Association (Inc.) to form Senses Foundation (Inc.), 'the organisation for people who are blind, deafblind, or multi-sensory impaired' Henceforward, the place has been known as Senses, but it has continued to be generally referred to by the wider community as the Blind School.

In mid-2003, the retail operations at the Institute were closed, which aroused mixed feelings in some of those with long associations with the place.

In 2004, Senses' CEO, Debbie Karasinski, explained the decision to sell the place had not been "made lightly ... we have a huge client base with a huge need for services ... this organisation sits on a huge asset and is losing money", and proceeds from the sale would be invested "so we can provide services to our clients", noting "The bottom line is, a whole group of people with a disability don't come together in an institution, we go to them in the community."

In November 2004, MayCrest Courts residents were informed that they would close in late 2005.¹³⁵ By September 2005, they were vacated.

In April 2005, the site was purchased by Finbar International at a cost of \$5.2 million, with settlement due in December 2005. In May, Paul Bell, former industrial manager at the place (1970-80), prior to a public meeting to discuss the sale of the place, noted that the blind community wanted to know what was planned regarding the proceeds of the sale and what Senses Foundation planned for the former residents of the place.

In 2005, Sunroom Theatre continued to lease and occupy theatre space at the place. The theatre group vacated these rented premises in September 2007.

In 2007, the site was divided into three separate lots. All areas were intended for residential development. Originally it was intended for the remaining structures to be converted into residential use, with the retention and adaptation of the Lavatory Building into storage units. Extensive conservation work to the exterior of the significant Western Australian Institute and Industrial School for the Blind and some minor interior adaptation works were completed for this conversion. However, the owners sought alternative use options and the West Australian Ballet indicated an interest in making it their headquarters.

Finbar negotiated a transfer of the property to the City of Bayswater in 2011, with financial assistance from Lotterywest and the State who in turn peppercorn leased it to the Ballet.

The relocation project was made possible by Lotterywest and State funding, together with support from a very long list of sponsors.

MLS Committee 2014

Bruce Wooldridge : President and Treasurer

Beth McKechnie : Secretary

John Wreford

Ian Merker

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

Andy Ross

Christina Gustavson

Paul Hurst

Sheila Robinson

Celine Hugo

Marina Murphy

John Baas :Represents Ratepayers Assoc

Committee meetings are held 1st Monday of the month at the Mount Lawley Bowling Club at 7.30pm.

All members are welcome to attend.