



PO Box 1619 West Perth 6872
ABN: 8338 3850 795

ANNUAL REPORT 2010/2011

The 2010/11 Committee of the History Council of WA comprised:

Dr Sue Graham-Taylor (President); Professor Ed Jaggard (Vice President); Dr Sue Hart (Secretary); Mr Nick Drew (Treasurer); Ms Julia Wallis (Executive Officer) and Committee Members: Ms Gail Barrow, Mr Glen Bennett, Ms Anne Brake, Ms Ann Delroy, Ms Jane King, Ms Ruth Marchant-James, Mr Robert Mitchell, Dr Felicity Morel-EdnieBrown, Ms Moira Mulligan, Dr Naomi Segal, Ms Merredith Southee and Dr Lise Summers.

In the past year the History Council has continued to campaign strongly to promote history and heritage in all its forms and to engage with a broad range of organisations and individuals with similar aims. The economic climate has not been positive in these areas with infrastructure developments ignoring or often paying only lip service to history and heritage and funding for the Arts and Arts related agencies (the Batty Library, the State Records Office and the WA Museum) failing to reflect their key and positive roles in society.

The Council has continued to engage with the process of development of the Australian Curriculum for History. Our active History in Schools Group recently organised another successful stakeholder forum allowing key representatives from system-sectors, university organisations and key support institutions to share information on the process involved and progress in implementing the K-10 Australian History Curriculum. It is vital to plan how to support teachers, particularly primary teachers with training and resources for the introduction of the Australian Curriculum. We have been particularly concerned with the lack of history exhibitions and materials, with the closure of history related exhibitions at the WA Museum and the earlier loss of the Fremantle History Museum and the Museums of Sport and Childhood. The History Council has an important role to facilitate and coordinate all stakeholders and will continue to work hard in this area of history and schools.

As President of the History Council I have attended several meetings that have engaged a range of sectors in planning for the future of Perth. There seems to be little regard for history and heritage in planning for Perth's future and we must ensure that what remains of our heritage is not simply a few interpretive signs. City Vision organised a meeting of key players to discuss Perth's future in February 2011. Committee for Perth discussed the implementation of *Directions 2031 and Beyond*, the Planning Commission's planning framework for Perth, in June. The Council will continue to engage in planning matters and seek to make planners and architects aware of Perth's history and heritage and the key role that it should have in planning for the future.

The History Council has lodged a submission to the WA Planning Commission (WAPC) and also written to the Heritage Council of Western Australia regarding the Perth Waterfront plans. An opinion piece in the *West Australian* drew attention to the outstanding heritage significance of the Esplanade site. As President I presented our views to the hearing of the sub-committee of the WAPC. We will monitor and continue to be involved with this project as it develops.

Other Issues

We worked over the year to promote history and heritage in various ways. Some of our key functions were as follows:

- **21 October 2010, Western Australian Museum ShipWrecks Gallery, Fremantle** – to celebrate WA week the education officers at the ShipWrecks Gallery provided members with an enthralling tour behind the scenes.
- **26 September 2010, History in the Pub, Albion Hotel, Cottesloe** – our AGM meeting was followed by a lecture by Sue Graham-Taylor entitled *The Swan River Dolphins – a product of history?*

- **14 November 2010, Public Forum, *Making the most of the Boom: the arts, heritage and history in Western Australia*** - The State Library of Western Australia hosted this event that was organised by the History Council of Western Australia together with The City of Perth Heritage Unit.
- **26 November 2010, End of Year Function at the Army Museum of Western Australia** – our end of year function was held in Fremantle at the Army Museum and our guests enjoyed a tour of the displays followed by a function in the Officers' Mess.
- **10 February 2011, Brian Dibble Sundowner at John Curtin Prime Ministerial Library** – Emeritus Professor Brian Dibble, winner of the 2008 Western Australian Premier's Book Awards in the category of Western Australian History presented an entertaining address on the writing and research for his biography of Elizabeth Jolley.

We thank all retiring members — Anne Brake, Nick Drew, Ruth Marchant-James, Felicity Morel Ednie Brown, Moira Mulligan and Naomi Segal for their valuable work and in Ruth, Moira and Felicity's cases, very long term involvement with the History Council. We are always sorry to see people step down from the Committee but it usually means we are assured that they will continue to support us in a variety of ways.

I would also like to thank all members for their support for, and confidence in the History Council over the past year. In particular I would like to again thank Jennie Carter for her work on the newsletter. Jennie undertakes this important but difficult role willingly and capably with the assistance of Leith Robinson. This year I believe she even prepared one edition while on holiday overseas!

We are grateful to Robert Mitchell for maintaining our website and to Lise Summers for her research and work on moving the website onto a new platform – and getting us into the modern world with a presence on Facebook.

We can assure you that the next year will be equally stimulating and rewarding and we urge more of you to become involved. Your expertise in drafting a letter or having input into an event would lighten the load of those members already participating and ensure we operate more effectively and efficiently.

The Constitutional Centre of WA and the National Trust provide the History Council Committee with meeting space and we are grateful to Ms Betty O'Rourke and her staff and to Tom Perrigo and his staff for their ongoing support. Thanks too to the WA History Foundation for its ongoing financial support for the work of the Council.

Finally, this is my last year as History Council President. Four years has passed surprisingly quickly thanks to great support I have always had from a very dedicated Committee but above all from Julia who does so much for the Council as Executive Officer. She always thinks ahead, reminding us of what needs doing and doing it where she can. It is thanks to her that we have been able to achieve so much.

Dr Sue Graham-Taylor
President
August 2011