



Founded 1926

HISTORY WEST

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April 2016

GENERAL MEETING

The next meeting at Stirling House is on Wednesday 20 April at 6pm.

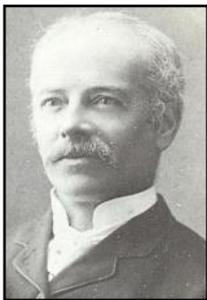
Anthony Lunt will present a paper entitled **Francis Bird, Willing Immigrant**

Refreshments available from 5.30pm; Bookshop open until 6pm.

Did you have a problem hearing the speakers clearly at general meetings last year?

In February a totally new system was installed in the Meeting Room. It includes eight new speakers in the ceiling giving perfect sound wherever you are sitting. The Overhead Projector has also been replaced as it simultaneously crashed.

Do come along and experience our splendid new audio-visual system!



Francis Bird arrived in Fremantle on the *Bridgetown* in 1869. The third son of a wealthy builder and property speculator, he had studied architecture and appeared to have a bright future in London. Instead, he made a life in Western Australia, firstly in the timber industry and then as an architect and public servant. Bird owned two of WA's most important heritage homes – The Old Farm at Strawberry Hill in Albany, and Woodloes on the Canning River. Alexandra Hasluck's 1969 study, *Unwilling Immigrants*, described the privations facing those on the lowest level of society who made the journey to WA in the 1860s – the convicts. Bird's story, in contrast, demonstrates that at least some of the new arrivals were quite willing, and indeed enthusiastic, about their new home.

Why did Bird decide to leave London? And why choose such an isolated and struggling outpost as a destination? A wide range of factors influenced those immigrating to the colonies in the 19th century and this study considers the point of view of the wealthy rather than the disadvantaged.

What did Western Australia have to offer? Bird's story highlights the potential that existed in the new colony, and how a select few invested in that potential, even if their enthusiasm was often premature. Bird was the archetypal colonial entrepreneur. He identified an opportunity and took risks in pursuing it, eschewing the comforts of home for a chance to forge a reputation in the romantic world of the colonial pioneer.

Anthony Lunt is a PhD student at the University of Western Australia. He has previously completed an Honours degree in History at UWA, and a Post-graduate Diploma in Heritage Studies at Curtin University. Anthony has been a high school History teacher for 25 years and is currently head of History at Trinity College in East Perth.



Quiz Night



Some fifty people enjoyed themselves on the night – and there would have been more if we had the room! The questions came thick and fast from our Quiz-Master Extraordinaire Patrick Cornish. There were eight rounds of eight questions with separate competitions between rounds – door prizes; a challenging 'which WA town is this' in jumbled letters; 'name the country belonging to this flag'; and rounds of 'heads and tails' to get everyone moving. All were warmly received, and Kerry and her

helpers (the Drews and Cornishes) did a marvellous job in amassing a variety of prizes. At the end of the night the winning table, led by the perspicacious Jack Honniball, scored 41.5 out of 64 – showing just how hard some of the questions were. All round it was an A1 evening; so many thanks to Kerry and her team.



Government of Western Australia
Department of Culture and the Arts



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Council News

At its meeting held on 10 March items of business included the following where Council

- welcomed new members – Jennifer Corr, Gina Culley, Hugh Edwards, Dr Alan Everett, Larry Graham and Marie Jahan;

- resolved to increase fees for membership from 2016/17, subject to confirmation at the April general meeting;
- heard a report from Dr Nonja Peters on planning for more engagement with ethnic organisations to present the diversity of WA history;
- noted with pleasure the successful launch of the website redevelopment project;
- heard reports from the President on both the Community History Centre project and the Exhibition ‘Western Land – a journey of discovery and rediscovery’, which opens in April to coincide with the National Trust Heritage Festival WA;
- expressed gratitude to the many volunteers who provided 1175 hours of work in February;
- was pleased to hear that Bill Marwick, President of the Wanneroo & Districts Historical Society, has been nominated by the Affiliated Societies Committee of Council as its representative on Council.

Lennie McCall

Please Note

The April general meeting will consider for confirmation Council’s determination that Members’ subscriptions will increase from 2016/17.

History in the City

David Brown provided an interesting start to our 2016 programme with his talk on ‘The Perth Tramway - Beginnings to 1914’. Perth Electric Tramways Ltd was formed in 1898 to build a tramway system in Perth to enable people to live in the suburbs. On 28 September 1899 the first tram ran from East Perth, via Hay Street, to Thomas Street. Then from January 1900, following an extension of the Thomas Street line into Subiaco, many more branches opened up - to Mt Lawley, Bulwer Street, Newcastle Street, Lord Street and East Perth. Private extensions took in Osborne Park, Victoria Park and Nedlands.

There were, however, many complaints. The charge per ride was three pence, irrespective of distance and age of the passenger, even children being charged 3d. People complained that the bright yellow colour of the

trams frightened the horses. Trams were overcrowded and did not run early enough. According to the *Daily News* the trams’ bells disturbed church services. On the other hand, the Osborne Park Hotel was outside the limit of restricted drinking hours and passengers were termed *bona fide* travellers, making that particular tramline a popular one!

History in the City is held on the first Wednesday of each month. Our talk on 4 May will be given by Glenn Burghall on Western Australia’s Centenary Year, 1929. Join us at 2pm at the Citiplace Community Centre on the Perth Railway Concourse. Donation \$5 entry with afternoon tea, all welcome.

Lorraine Tholet

Good news – the website project is underway

On 4 April the Hon. Bill Marmion MLA launched this project which is so important for the Society’s future. It will involve the transfer of the historical collections datasets (Museum, Library, Photograph and Public Memorials) and Bookshop into software to make them accessible via the internet to all members, affiliated societies and users worldwide. Made possible by a Lotterywest grant of \$141,839 and a contribution of \$30,000 by the Society, the new website will be easier to use, will extend the Society’s services and outreach to everyone online, and will therefore greatly promote WA history.

An e-commerce facility will allow members and the wider community to do business with the Society online—join and become active in the Society, renew memberships, purchase tickets for events, and order copies of images from its extensive Photograph Collection and books on Western Australian history and archival products from the Bookshop.

GAIA Resources will undertake the technical aspects of this project and we look forward to working with them to strengthen the Society and its influence in understanding and promoting Western Australian history.

Helen Henderson



From left: Kehan Harman (GAIA), Helen Henderson, Alex Chapman (GAIA), Sally Anne Hasluck. Courtesy: Wendy Lugg

A tribute to benefactor member Dawn Kelly



Members will be delighted to hear that a former member Dawn Kelly has left the Society the very generous sum of \$18,423.31 in her estate. We are really thrilled that Dawn should think of the Society and wish us well in such a kind and practical way.

Some members may remember Dawn in her senior years as a lively and engaged presence, despite being then on a walking frame with limited mobility. Perhaps you remember Dawn's brightly coloured hats and the floral decorations adorning her frame? She mainly enjoyed the Society's day tours and the talks at general meetings. Cheerful and outgoing, lively and chatty, Dawn loved to talk with others, one member recalling 'a colourful, larger-than-life person'. She enjoyed life!

Originally from Sydney, Dawn came with her family to Perth where she completed a mature-aged BA degree majoring in English at UWA. She then worked professionally as a secretary at UWA. She was an avid reader before her eyesight failed towards the end of her life.

Dawn was always a joiner who undertook a succession of volunteering activities, first in Sydney at the Asthma Foundation. She did radio for the blind and produced a number of talking books. She was a JP. An interest in history led her to volunteer as a Government House guide and also to work for the National Trust where she dressed in colonial costume to be part of the Tranby House guides group. Jenny Marshall recalls Dawn 'dressed the part and singing whole-heartedly at the annual Tranby Christmas Carols night for many years'.

Dawn's generosity in her will extended not just to our Society but also to other good causes – among them the Shenton Park Dogs' Home, St Andrew's Anglican Church and polio survivors. All of us are grateful to her.

Dawn leaves a family of three children, five grandchildren and two great grandchildren. As well, she leaves a lasting legacy in the social activities and causes in which she believed and to which she gave her time, skills and financial support. We pay tribute to her.

A Coat of Arms returns home

History West in July 2014 drew attention to a stone lying alongside the wall of Stirling House – a preserved gable stone depicting the Coat of Arms of the Anglican Diocese of Perth. It came from one of the gables of the former Diocesan Offices erected under the inspiration

of the architect J. Talbot Hobbs in 1896-97 in Cathedral Avenue and demolished to make way for the Law Chambers in 1968/9. In turn the Law Chambers was recently demolished.



A keen reader, Ian MacLeod, referred the *History West* article to a member of the firm engaged in building the

Diocese's new offices in Pier St, on land next to the Cathedral and the Deanery formerly occupied by the Playhouse. Excited to discover the stone's preservation, the firm is considering its possible use in the foyer of the new building. In response to this interest, the RWHS Council has de-accessioned the stone so that it may be returned to the Diocesan Trustees.

Although the Coat of Arms had been in use by the Diocese of Perth from the 19th century the actual Granting of the Arms by the Royal College of Heraldry was not given until 29 March 1956. Governed by tradition, the free use of a Coat of Arms had been allowable in earlier times but this era was ending and so the Diocesan Trustees acted to ensure the granting was made official.



It is pleasing to see the Society playing such a practical and useful role in the survival of a significant historic artifact.

Fr Ted Doncaster

Affiliates News

How many of us remember when producing a newsletter involved painstakingly typing a stencil and then roneoing multiple copies of the document, with surplus ink an ever-present danger? The arrival of computers and photocopiers revolutionised this process. Now colour printing is becoming more popular, and newsletters are bursting into colour. The current issues of the **Albany, City of South Perth and Kalamunda & Districts Historical Societies** are colourful and attractive as well as containing interesting articles.

Albany Historical Society reports on its ongoing work at Patrick Taylor Cottage and the Old Gaol. The Society is a host provider for the Work for the Dole (Skillhire) scheme, in fact Albany's largest placement provider. Last year their work won the Museum garden a Certificate of Appreciation for the City's Best Business Garden. The 2015 Agricultural Society Show was reportedly a great success with a highlight being the visit of Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall.

Bayswater Historical Society began the year with a talk on the importance of wetlands conservation, specifically in relation to the Baigup Wetlands. Hosting wedding celebrations, book launches and naming ceremonies in the grounds of Halliday House is an occasional but valuable money raiser for the Society. A coming event of interest at Halliday House is an ANZAC exhibition to be held over three days from Sat. 23 April to Mon 25 April, 10am to 4pm, with accompanying Devonshire teas.

Busselton Historical Society is grappling with construction work – the replacement of the museum stairs. Business continues as usual behind the reconstruction!

This year the **Esperance Bay Historical Society** will host two exhibitions – in April a travelling exhibition from the Australian National Maritime Museum telling the naval story of the world wars; and later in the year a major new exhibition titled 'The New Era in Agriculture'. The Society has received a Lotterywest grant to commission John Bridges to undertake the research for this exhibition which will also be assisted by the generous donation of John Helms, son of Andreas Daniel Helms, of \$US1,000 to house and maintain the Helms Collection, which shows his father's contribution to the development of the sand plain country. Watch out for this new attraction later in the year.

Fremantle History Society has two pieces of good news to broadcast. First, the Fremantle City Council has set up a History & Heritage Committee with representatives from community groups – the Fremantle History Society and Fremantle Society and lots more. It will co-ordinate and promote history and heritage in the port city. Second, the State Heritage Office is placing Fremantle's historic West End on the State Heritage list, making it the biggest heritage project undertaken by the Heritage Office and providing additional protection for the architecture and culture of the area. It covers 250 buildings and an area of 200,000 sq metres.

Kalamunda & Districts Historical Society honours the memory of several former residents whose lives enhanced the local environment – Barrie Oldfield, Man of the Trees, who was active in preserving remaining bushland around Lesmurdie, Tommy Roads who is said to have planted Pickering Brook's Irish Strawberry tree, and Paul Hasluck who purchased bush blocks in the Pauls Valley area, enjoyed spending periods of quiet retreat there and held the area 'in trust'. It is now incorporated in the Darling Range Regional Park.

South Perth Historical Society recounts the interesting story of Hoyle's Corner on Hopetoun & Alexandra Sts. Former local resident John Hoyle cared for the corner, watering and mowing it, for 25 years until his death. A fine man indeed! His work was greatly appreciated by his neighbours and the corner became the site of street parties. In 1997 the local community erected a plaque in his and his wife Leoni's honour, and continues to use and value the place. But the struggle to ensure that it is properly cared for is ongoing. Such community action ensures that local areas are pleasant and enjoyable places to live.

In the **VOC Historical Society** newsletter Monica de Knecht declares – 'Let's get Australian history right and get rid of the 'Captain Cook myth'. Dutchmen Willem Janszoon and Dirk Hartog were the first Europeans to land in Australia, Cook himself recording in his journal – 'I therefore may find no more upon the Eastern coast of New Holland and on the western side I can make no new discovery, the honour of which belongs to the Dutch navigators'. Let's hope, she declares, that the year of Dirk Hartog will really make a difference!

Diary Dates

Sat /Sun 2 & 3 Apr: Giant Second-hand Book Sale

Mon 18 Apr: Exhibition Opens *Western Land—a journey of discovery and rediscovery*
Mon - Fri 10am - 3pm

Sun 1 May: Open Day Exhibition 2pm Floor Talk by Deborah Gare, Associate Professor of History, Notre Dame University

Wed 11 May: Philippa O'Brien The two founding documents 10am Bookings essential. Please contact the office \$10pp includes coffee/ tea.

Wed 25 May: Save the date in your diary - Day tour to Cockburn on 25 May, featuring visit to Azelea Ley Homestead Museum as well as other interesting local sights. Please contact the office with expressions of interest.

Welcome to two new Affiliated Societies

Friends of Donnelly Village Inc.

Donnelly River Village is a historic mill town nestled deep in the heart of Australia's South West Karri forests. It is best known for 'The Giant Karri' felled near Donnelly and trucked to Kings Park in 1958.



Timber milling has been an integral part of the village, starting in 1909 when Thomas and William Wheatley purchased a small fruit-case cutting mill on the Donnelly River and

operated Wheatley Mill until 1912. Bunning Brothers took over the Wheatley Mill, now classified as State Forest, during the post-World War II building boom and built a new mill which became Donnelly River Mill.

From 1950, when the first log was cut at the mill, to the mill's closure on 30 June 1978 a timber milling village was built on Crown Land to house the workers and their families. The village consisted of 35 workers' cottages, the Mill Club (the first club to allow women), boarding house, general store, butcher's shop, first aid post (the Clinic), school, sports oval and swimming dam. During this period single men's huts and temporary housing for migrant workers were also built, the latter no longer standing. At its peak in 1965 the workforce reached about



150.

Friends of Donnelly Village was formed in 2012 to collect, preserve and document the history and natural and social fabric of Donnelly

Village through the development of interactive trails, displays and events for the wider community. In August 2013 the Friends organised a reunion for past mill workers and residents of the Donnelly Mill. This was a very moving occasion with many attendees seeing one another for the first time since the closure of the mill in 1978.



The mill, which is the mainstay of the village, is owned by the State government. Bunnings Pty Ltd at the time of closure handed it to the government 'for the

benefit of the people' with the machinery and workings deliberately left intact for this purpose. Unfortunately, the mill is now in great disrepair and to lose this significant heritage building, which has played such an important part in the history of Western Australia's timber milling, would be amiss. Therefore, the Friends of Donnelly Village are currently working closely with the State government to remedy this situation and have

the mill restored to the point where part of it can be opened to the public.

Wheatley (Donnelly Village) is currently a finalist in the 2016 Western Australian Heritage Awards, category Private or Public Organisation.

Email: friendsofdonnellyvillage@gmail.com
Facebook – Friends of Donnelly Village
www.donnellyriver.com.au/donnelly_village/

The Australian Lebanese Historical Society Inc.

Anne-Marie Wharrie, who represents the Australian Lebanese Historical Society (ALHS) in WA, outlines the new organisation.



I was recently elected to the Board of Directors of the ALHS and appointed as Western Australian Ambassador. In this role I am working to establish a group of people from diverse Lebanese backgrounds residing in WA.

The objectives of the Society are to encourage, assist and promote the study of Lebanese migration and settlement in Australia and to publicise the contributions of the Lebanese community to Australian society.

The Lebanese have been settling in WA since the 1890s when there were also sizeable communities in Sydney and Adelaide. Fremantle was a disembarkation point for many Australian Lebanese (often described in archival records as 'Syrians') where they undertook dictation tests and other formalities for admission to Australia. Some continued by ship or overland to the eastern states, others settled in WA. One early Lebanese migrant was Leslie Keamy (1886-1957), a well-known personality and prominent stud sheep breeder.

My object is not only to record the oral histories of the older generation who are great raconteurs but also to meet with the younger generation who are now in diverse professions. These include actors, writers, poets, chefs, musicians, artists and academics. In this way the preservation of the stories of people who have made up our history continues into the future, albeit with a generational twist.

I am excited that Mr Richard Mellick has agreed to become our first member. Richard graduated from NIDA (Sydney) in the late 1980s before relocating to Broome in 1989. He currently resides in Fremantle. Richard has worked as an actor, playwright, director, acting teacher and voice-over artist.

If you would like to contact me, my email is: wharrie@tpg.com.au
My website: www.wharrie.com

Anne-Marie Wharrie

Spotlight on Members' Research

The Department of Lands & Surveys' Great War Honour Board

Member **Glenn Burghall** is researching *Western Australia's Centenary year in 1929, looking specifically at the celebrations and other significant events of the year. Glenn points out that, although bits and pieces have been written about aspects of the Centenary, there has been no comprehensive account. He has been working on this project for more than four years and has compiled what he describes as 'quite a collection of material'. As well, his research leads him off onto some interesting paths at times and this article below is one of those paths.*



A most attractive Honour Board is housed at the Landgate offices in Midland listing the names of officers and contract surveyors of the Department of Lands and Surveys who served in the Great War, 1914-1919. In all, 31% of the permanent and temporary staff of the

Department enlisted for active service. The Board holds 76 brass nameplates, of which 22 plates honour men who lost their lives in the conflict.

The Board is the product of a design competition advertised in August 1919, with an award of five guineas for the successful design. Nine designs were received from entrants using *noms de plume*. An employee of the department, Arthur Wakefield Bassett, submitted the winning design, an outcome that surprised and pleased the selection committee. Wm Sandovers & Co. was responsible for turning Bassett's design into reality. The Premier, Sir James Mitchell, unveiled the Board on 7 April 1920.

A ribbon and wreath carving sits at the top of the polished jarrah board, and on the ribbon is carved the Latin phrase '*vincit amor patriæ*' (love of country prevails). Columns on each side of the nameplates are supported at their base by figures of two grieving women carved by renowned sculptor William Howitt who at the time was in his seventies. The plinth is ample and flat, allowing for the placement of flowers or photographs, and for small lamps to be set up on either side of the board.



The King's Message for those who lost their lives reads:

These officers are numbered amongst those who, at the call of King and country, left all that was dear to them, endured hardships, faced dangers, and finally passed out of the sight of men by the path of duty and self-sacrifice, giving up their own lives that others might live in freedom. Let those that come after see to it that their names be not forgotten.

Over the next ten years a departmental employee, Mrs Ellen Lindley Cowen, took responsibility for the tributes to these men. On the anniversary of a serviceman's death, the album containing his photograph was opened to the appropriate page, and the small lamps flanking the Board were lit. Mrs Lindley Cowen ensured that there were always flowers at the base. Employed at the Department from shortly after the death of her husband in 1902 she had been a member of the selection committee that chose the design and it is likely that she knew all the men whose names are listed on the board. After her retirement, and up to the Second World War, other female employees dutifully shared responsibility for the memorial.



Mirror 9 Aug. 1930 p. 1

The three photograph albums showing all those who enlisted, which were such important elements of the memorial, were recently converted into digital format for the State Library's 'Centenary of WWI' project, and can be viewed online at SLWA Call Number 4068B.

Glenn Burghall

Sources

West Australian, 16 Aug. 1919, p. 3; 26 Sept. 1919, p. 6; & 8 Aug. 1936, p. 5.
Daily News, 25 Sept. 1919, p. 9; & 7 Apr. 1920, p. 6.
Sunday Times, 27 July 1930, p. 23.
Western Mail, 7 Aug. 1930, p. 23.
Mirror, 9 Aug. 1930, p. 1.
The Civil Service Association of Western Australia Journal – Centenary Number, 20 July 1929, p. 28

The Australian Honour Flag

Have you heard of this home-front flag from the 1914-18 War?



The Commonwealth government created this flag to promote fund-raising and the purchase of war bonds to help fund the cost of Australia's involvement in the war.

In total, the government floated seven war loans during the war and raised £250 million, which covered almost 60% of the cost of the war. By far the most successful was the seventh loan, which was held during September-October 1918 and raised £43,850,160. Almost one quarter of all Australian households joined the scheme.

One reason for the appeal of this seventh loan was that, for the first time, an 'Honour Flag' was produced and presented to those local government authorities which raised a set amount of money based on their populations.



An Honour flag without bars or star was presented to districts which successfully raised their quota of funds. For every 25% over quota, a bar was added. Local communities subscribing twice their quota were presented with the Honour Flag sporting three blue bars. A star was included if a district raised substantially more than double its quota.

Many Western Australian communities from around the state were awarded the flag with three bars and star – Armadale, Beverley, Bunbury, Cannington (Queen's Park), Donnybrook, Geraldton, Greenbushes, Guildford, Kalgoorlie, Katanning, Kellerberrin, Kelmscott, Leonora, Marble Bar, Meekatharra, Melville (Bicton), Menzies, Norseman, Northam, Pinjarra, Plantagenet (Mt. Barker), South Perth, Wagin, Westonia, Wickiepin, Yalgoo and York.

Dangin, Moora, Northampton and Subiaco managed to accumulate 75% more than their quota and were awarded the flag with three bars.

Pingelly reached 50% over quota to receive a flag with two bars.

Belmont Park, Busselton, Cottesloe and Midland Junction raised at least 25% over quota and were

presented with a flag featuring one bar.

Balingup, Claremont, Coolgardie, Narrogin, Toodyay Wanneroo and Williams reached their quota and were entitled to a plain honour flag.

I wonder how many of these flags survive in local collections?

References

West Australian, 7 Nov. 1918, p. 7. *Hamilton Spectator*, 17 Aug. 1918 p.3.

http://www.crwflags.com/fotw/flags/au_hon.html

Research by Jennie Carter

Book Review

Peter J. Bridge & Gail Dreezens (eds), *Sketches from the South West. Louis Cox in Peace and War*, Hesperian Press, 2015. A4, 74 pp, illustrated. SP \$25 MP \$23. In Library.

Reviewer: Sally Hincks



This book contains stories written by Louis Cox, an Englishman who came to Western Australia with his family as a young child in the late 19th century. His stories were first published in the *Western Mail* (now *The Countryman*) from 1915 to 1922 (apart from an interruption during World War I).

Louis started work as a survey hand and then cleared land at Kojonup. His first story is called 'Going on the Land' and describes his trip south with horses Ben and Pete pulling the cart. He describes camping, campfires, magpies and a charming imaginary chat between two dogs. When passing farms, his dog Becky barked at pigs, ducks, cows, turkeys, children and, even at dark, barking at a dark little smudge across a paddock – four horses dragging a cultivator with the farmer guiding the horses. At last Louis reached his 1000 acres at Kojonup where he pitched his tent and hobbled his horses. A swaggie named Tom helped him build a humpy and throughout the book are delightful sketches (by Louis) to show his progress as he settles his farm. The construction of a horse-made dam is included. Also described is his interesting encounter with Aboriginal people.

The 'Wartime Sketches' story is based on Louis' experiences in France after he joined the AIF in 1916 and paints a vivid picture of what it was like for a soldier. The devastation of shelled villages is vividly described. 'Surely there is nothing so pitiful as war spread over a smiling land'. The horror of conflict in No Man's Land is graphically told in a section entitled 'In the Hands of the Huns' when Louis was a prisoner in Lille, France. There was little food and guns boomed night and day.

Louis describes the soldiers' praise for the 'girls at home' who had knitted their socks and packed them with other items. So, in gratitude, the soldiers gathered enemy souvenirs: copper bands from unexploded shells were made into bracelets and polished for sweethearts, wives and mothers. Australian mail arrived with letters and illustrated papers from every state and soldiers enjoyed the cartoons.

The last story in this delightful book is 'Tom's Little Farm'. This is a yarn about two friends who meet after seven years and tells of one looking after the other one's small farm, while the owner, on doctor's instructions for his health's sake, goes away for a fortnight's holiday.

The Vintage Wireless and Gramophone Club presents
SOUNDS LIKE HISTORY

Free public presentations at Wireless Hill Museum in support of the new exhibition **RADIOSONIC**

The First 50 Years of the Wireless and The Gramophone in WA (1884-1934)

For details see: http://vwgc.org.au/html/public_events.html

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