

Mundaring & Hills Historical Society Inc

Newsletter Spring 2021

Recent Donations: 1929 Ink Blotter

Without assistance from our wonderful members and followers, we would not have our fabulous collection. Recently, an intriguing **ink blotter** was donated to the Society by Brian Cornish.

The blotter has a decorative metal plate depicting an overflowing Mundaring Weir, as well as the years '1829' and '1929'. It includes a curved metal piece with clips where the blotting paper would have been attached and changed when necessary. We are unsure how many of these blotters were manufactured in 1929. However, Brian informed the MHHS that his father, Charles Alfred Cornish, was presented with the item to acknowledge his work on one of the many Centenary Committees of the time that marked 100 years of European colonisation.

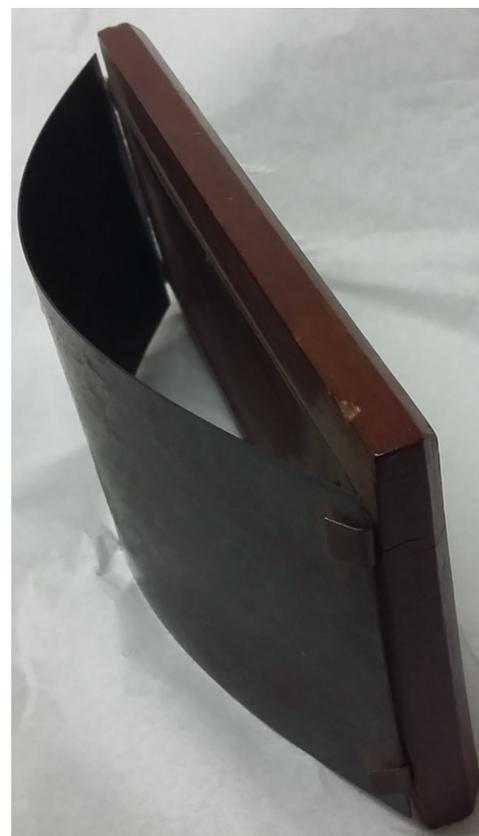
Charles Alfred Cornish, also known as Fred, was born in Manchester UK in 1893 and came to WA in 1912. He died in 1971 at the age of 78. Fred's biography indicates his commitment to improving people's lives in the WA community.

In 1935, Fred became Executive Director of the Royal West Australian Institute for the Blind, a position he held for 30 years. During his time as Director, he

transformed the Institute by developing plant and building works which enabled the Institute to make and sell a range of products. He counted the well-known author and disability activist Helen Keller as a close personal friend.

Fred was very community minded and worked extensively for the Perth Magisterial District as a Justice of the Peace. He was awarded a Most Excellent Order of the British Empire in 1963/64 for his services to the community and to the blind.

Whilst researching the origins of the ink blotter, we found that hundreds of souvenirs were manufactured to commemorate the centenary of the establishment of the Swan River Settlement. This included a medallion created by the Perth Mint. Do you have any such souvenirs in your collection?



We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land we are on, the Whadjuk and Ballardong Noongar people. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this region.

From the Curator's Desk

While the MHHS's Museum Collection contains a number of intriguing objects, it is often the story attached to the item that is of most interest to the public. When preparing the Mundaring District Museum's current exhibition, *Open All Hours*, I was pleased to see the MHHS had a couple of 1920s lolly jars in the Collection. For many of us, the lolly jar at the local Deli is a favourite childhood memory. I still remember walking to the corner shop near where I grew up in Nedlands with a couple of cents in my hand so I could choose an assortment of freckles, sherbets, bananas, and musk sticks from the jars lined up on the counter. So of course an exhibition on shops and shopping **had** to have a lolly jar or two on display. But what story could be told about these rather bland-looking objects?

Plaistowe - a West Australian Company

The name *Plaistowe* on the lid of one of the jars provided a starting point for an interesting story. While today the name *Plaistowe* is associated internationally with cocoa and cooking chocolate, the company was in fact started in WA in the 1890s by Hugh Plaistowe, in partnership with J. Hobbs. Originally named Silver Pan Confectionary, the company had a factory at Marquis Street West Perth.

By 1911, the company's name had changed to Plaistowe & Co., and in 1915 a new factory was constructed. This factory still exists on Plaistowe Lane, near Scitech. By 1930, *Plaistowe's* manufactured over 400 types of confectionary ranging from 'the humble milk stick which delights the juvenile to the toffee

de luxe of the grown-up' (*Western Argus*, 1923). Interestingly, *Plaistowe* was an early manufacturer of '100s and 1000s' - nonpareils - the essential ingredient for fairy bread.

Hugh Plaistowe was interested in research and development and post WW1 the business moved beyond confectionary to develop perfumes distilled from local products such as sandalwood and boronia. In 1928 Plaistowe also developed a process for developing tomato concentrate that was successfully exported to the UK.

Hugh Plaistowe died in 1935, at the age of 70 years. The factory kept manufacturing until well into the 1970s. *Nestlé's* bought the company in the 1990s but kept the name *Plaistowe* for various cooking-related products.

And what about *Plaistowe's* in Mundaring? James Wells, following his purchase of Mundaring's General Store in 1911, bought from *Plaistowe & Co*: 1 Box each of Choc Planks, Snow Balls, Nestles #1 Choc, and Nestles #2 Choc, as well as 4lb of Choc Mixtures, 9lb of Ace Mixtures, 9lb of Mixed Jubes, and 10lb of #2 Creams. Clearly the locals liked their chocolate!



Above: *Plaistowe* Lolly Jar c. 1920s, MHHS Collection. Left: A display of *Plaistowe's* products, 1929. Image courtesy State Library of WA. b3418208_1 .

'The Royals' 56th State History Conference, 3-5 September

MHHS members, Fiona Bush and Jeff Murray, attended the Royal West Australian Historical Society's conference at the Boulder Town Hall in Burt Street. It commenced at 9am with a well presented Welcome to Country by Gavin Murray which was followed by the official welcome by the RWAHS President, Dr Steve Errington. The day

continued with eight interesting guest speakers covering a varied range of topics, including histories of: the Boulder Town Hall, the Goatcher Curtain that has hung in the Hall since 1908, and Kanowna - Australia's largest ghost town. The day concluded at 5pm with the presentation of the Affiliate Merit Award for the 2020 Heritage Recognition Awards.

On Sunday, tours were arranged for those who wanted to participate. These included a visit to the Kalgoorlie Super Pit and the Bush Two Up School.

MHHS News

SNAPPED 2021: Mundaring's Historic Photo Comp.

The MHHS once again teamed up with the Shire of Mundaring Libraries for a historic photograph



Michael receiving his prize from Trish Beaman-MHHS Office Manager

competition. As well as the usual 'call-out' for historic photos, this year's competition included a 'Caption this Photo' Category. The winners were: Michael Thompson-Judges' Award, Martin Binsley-People's Choice Award, and Geraldine Rees-Photo Caption Winner. Check our Facebook page for the winning photos and caption: [Facebook.com/MundaringAndHillsHistoricalSocietyInc](https://www.facebook.com/MundaringAndHillsHistoricalSocietyInc).

Community Heritage Platform

Did you know that you can provide feedback on local heritage to the Shire of Mundaring via their Community Heritage Platform? Community members can contribute by nominating new

heritage locations as well as make submissions on existing sites. Registration is required before comments can be made. Access to the platform is via Engage Mundaring at:

www.engage.mundaring.wa.gov.au/heritage.

In the Devil's Snare: Salem's Witchcraft Trials, 1692. Talk by MHHS Curator, Dr Helen Brash.

Okay, don't get too excited—there is no connection between Mundaring and the Salem Witchcraft Trials of nearly 330 years ago. Instead, this is a farewell performance by Helen, before she departs as curator at the end of the year. The Salem trials have fascinated Helen for many years, so come along to the MHHS's General Meeting at the Boya Community Centre on Saturday 20 November to find out more.

New MHHS Website

Thanks to a \$4000 Covid Rebuild Grant from the Shire of Mundaring, the MHHS is currently redesigning its website which will go 'live' by the end of the year. We are very grateful to the Shire for the chance to update and improve our online presence for our members and the community.

President's Report

It is great to see members participating in the Cash 4 Cans Refund Program. Well done to all who have dropped off their cans at the Depot or MHHS. It is difficult for our Society to raise funds so this scheme is an easy earner!

On 9 August, members of MHHS and Mundaring Residents & Ratepayers Assn weeded, raked, mulched, and planted local native plants at the Mundaring Cemetery. The area still needs more care but we are waiting to see Council's Concept Plan for improvements before planning more busy bees.

I met with Mike Pengelly from the Shire to discuss

MHHS's concerns about the consultant's report on the proposed relocation of MHHS to the Mundaring Hall. I stressed that any move would need to be cost neutral to MHHS before we considered the option.

I recently attended the 10th Anniversary of the Darlington History Group held at the Darlington Hall. DHG Talks recommenced in September and Aiden Kelly, a passionate historian from Fremantle, discussed the 1903 French Tragedy at Smith's Mill.

A new sign is being made to publicise events, and boost attendance at MHHS meetings. So look out for the sign and ensure you visit the MHHS stall at various upcoming community events.

Upcoming Events 2021

DATE/TIME	EVENT	LOCATION
Currently Open	'Open All Hours' Museum Exhibition	Mundaring District Museum 7225 Great Eastern Hwy Mundaring
6 October 4pm	Executive Meeting	Mundaring Stationmaster's House 3060 Jacoby St Mundaring
31 October All day	Whim Festival	Pioneer Park Mount Helena
6 November 9am to 1pm	Annual Community Fair Church of the Epiphany	Mann St Mundaring
20 November 2pm	General Meeting	Boya Community Centre 119—135 Scott St Helena Valley
20 November 2.30 pm	Dr Helen Brash <i>In the Devil's Snare: Salem's Witchcraft Trials, 1692</i>	Boya Community Centre 119—135 Scott St Helena Valley

Mount Helena Street Names

Keane Street and White Street

In 1882, J Wright and Edward Keane established a mill to cut sleepers for the second section of the Eastern Railway. The mill was managed by Abraham White and the settlement became known as White's Mill. The mill closed in 1888.

Honey Street and Lion Street

In 1890, Richard Honey, whose company insignia was a

rampant lion, re-opened the mill and the area assumed the name of Lion Mill. This was gazetted in 1899.

By the 1920s timber milling in the town had diminished and the residents lobbied for a new name not connected to the timber trade. Mount Helena was chosen and officially recognised on 28 March 1924.



MUNDARING & HILLS HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC
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MUNDARING DISTRICT MUSEUM
7225 GT Eastern Highway Mundaring
(Inside the Visitor Centre)
MONDAY - SATURDAY: 9.30am - 4pm
SUNDAY: 10am—2.30pm

MEMBERSHIP FEES
Senior/pensioner: \$15 (Couple \$20)
Single: \$25 (Couple \$30)
Company/Institution: \$35
Account: Mundaring & Hills Historical Society Inc
BSB 633-000 Acc No 122609431

MUNDARING STATION MASTER'S HOUSE
3060 Jacoby Street, Mundaring
(PO Box 334, Mundaring WA 6073)
MONDAY AND FRIDAY: 9.30am - 4pm
WEDNESDAY: 9.30am - 1.30pm