

April 2022

Welcome.

As usual **Gabor Bedo** gave us a well-researched and interesting talk. This time it was based on a tour he did last year to the southeast part of Western Australia. He began with Wave Rock at Hyden and the Great Western Woodlands before travelling south to the coast. From Esperance he explored Cape Le Grande and went as far as Israelite Bay – well known from weather forecasts but a place not many of us have visited. He found a lot of recognition of the Aboriginal people and their relationship to the land. All the National Parks have excellent notice boards, and they include information on the traditional people who lived there. He was intrigued by the story behind many of the names which may be Aboriginal, English or French.



Our second speaker was **Flight Lieutenant Sue Freeman**, a fighter pilot with the RAF for 25 years and now a trainer of fighter pilots at RAAF Pearce. She told us her story, how on a sudden whim she applied to the Ministry of Defence and was accepted for pilot

training – one of 40 young women who applied. She is disappointed very few Australian girls apply to the RAAF and would like to see that change. She spoke of reluctance, soon overcome, of male trainees accepting a female, and younger than them, as an instructor. Sue held us all in her spell as she spoke of the steps in her training, navigating in an aircraft travelling at super sonic speed, lack of toilet facilities on long haul flights, and the need to be in the pilot's seat ready for take-off within 30 minutes, 365 days, 24 hours a day.



That's Sue piloting the uppermost fighter plane.

Nigel Ridgway's talk on TE Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia) was broken into three areas – Lawrence as a soldier, politics of the Middle East and Lawrence the man. Lawrence had no military training. Instead he was seconded to the Ministry of Defence during WW1 because he spoke Arabic fluently and had cartography skills. He did not take kindly to military discipline believing, for officers, intelligence and initiative were more important than obedience.

He hated the Turks but idolised the Arabs becoming Feisal's right-hand man. Using guerrilla tactics Feisal and Lawrence demoralised the Turks. He reckoned a war of preaching was more effective than a fighting war. He talked and used gold as a bribe to win people to his way. Lawrence felt very guilty for living a lie, letting the Arabs think Britain would give them their independence. Instead, France and Britain carved up the Middle East without reference to the Arab tribes.

He was not a tall man, but he had a huge intellect and great stamina. The brutality of war hurt him deeply. He thrived on dangerous activity and was not an easy man to understand. He dabbled in clairvoyance and was described as a troubled soul. He tried unsuccessfully to straddle two cultures and died aged only 42.

From the sands of Arabia, we moved to the wetlands of urban Perth. **Jane Chambers** gave us much food for thought in her presentation. 75% of Perth's wetlands have been lost and continue to be lost. In 1829 Perth was a landscape of wetlands with a bounty of food for Noongar people.

In 1920 the population was 207,000 and the wetlands were seen as resources for recreation. Swamps were deepened and the surrounds planted with European trees.

There are some urban survivors, but they face big issues -

- loss of fringing vegetation, which leads to ..
- change water regime, which leads to ..
- acidic sulphate soils, which leads to ..
- eutrophication, ie, algae bloom.

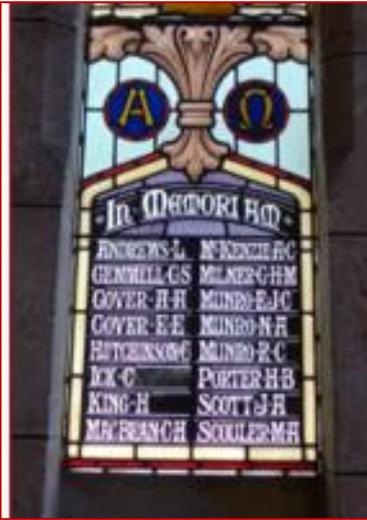
Today our wetland vegetation is being lost at the rate of two football fields per day.

Jane recommended a 45 min. video made by one of her PhD students - <http://vimeo.com/672591770>

APRIL'S PROGRAMME

Monday 11 April

1.00pm **Judith Amey**, *The Men in the Window*. A stained-glass window in St Aidan's Church,



Claremont is a memorial to 16 young men who died in the First World War. Who were these men? Who were their families? In her talk Judith will make these men live again as she tells the story of their lives, their families, and the part they played in history. The ANZAC watchword is 'Lest we Forget'

and this talk is a tribute to those men at our meeting day closest to 25 April.

2.30pm. **Eddie Marcus**, *Bricks, Beer & Bars*. A man walks into a bar. He won't stop talking about the architecture. That's not a joke. Although there will be plenty of light moments in an engaging talk about WA's unique pub history. Take part in a virtual pub crawl as we explore well-known and lesser-known hotels and find out why each looks the way they do, with a couple of surprises on the way. It'll make you want to have a beer or two. No joke.

Monday 25 April

Public holiday. No meeting

SPANISH CONVERSATION GROUP.



Meets at 9.30am on Thursdays 1 and 15 April at Drabble House, Nedlands. Please contact Jean Robinson on 0409 553 871.

CANASTA

Seniors Hub, Cambridge Community Centre, Alexander Road, Wembley.

Play begins at **2.00pm** and finishes at **4.00pm every Friday**.

Would-be players, rusty players, never played players, and those who just enjoy the game are welcome. It is very social, and non-competitive. Contact Clive Funston clive_funston@yahoo.com

EXCURSIONS

Our Excursions leader, Ian Deany, has been researching opportunities for outings, although he had a nagging feeling he may be wasting time because the logistics were just too difficult. For example, everyone must wear masks and the bus we use must be sanitised both before and after every trip.

He regrets but feels we should curtail our popular 'bus-based' outings until our normal world returns. Contact Ian if you have any ideas for 'non-bus based' outings. ianandsue.deany@gmail.com



UKRAINIAN EASTER TRADITIONS

Ukrainian Easter celebrations are a beautiful melding of traditional Christian practices, folklore, and ancient pagan symbolism.

What is known as Palm Sunday in most other countries is Willow Sunday in Ukraine. A combination of pre-Christian pagan symbolism and a lack of local palm trees led Ukrainians to adopt willow switches as their symbolic branches.



Ukraine is famous for its colourful dyed and hand decorated eggs (pysanka). Decorating eggs for Easter was banned under Soviet rule as a religious

practice but was kept alive in secret.

A special bread, *paska*, is baked in tall and cylindrical tins, with symbols made of rolled dough or dusted in flour on the top.



The paska bread, along with dyed eggs and non-Lenten foods like sausage, cheese, lard, and ham, is placed in a basket with lit candles and brought to church on Easter morning. The baskets are blessed, and the food taken home to be eaten in an Easter feast.

In the week after Easter, family graves are visited with stories and memories shared about those who have died.

May this Easter resurrect Ukrainian life.



Newsletter compiled by Judith Amey

 0414 76 78 77

