Cockman House
Teacher's Resource



HISTORY HUNTER PROGRAM

Background information
Curriculum links
Pre- and post-excursion activity suggestions

Revised June 2018

The story of Cockman House involves three generations of one family and demonstrates the conditions of the residents for much of the 130 years of habitation. With the 13 children of the second generation and 6 children of the third having been raised in this house, there is plenty for today's children to compare their own lives with.

As the first permanent settlers of the area in the 1850s, the Cockman family has left us with a significant example of simple colonial farmhouse as well as a place to focus on the changes to domestic technology (including no electricity, running water or sewage connection) and the importance of retaining such heritage places.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

This History Hunter Teacher Resource Kit provides additional background information along with Australian Curriculum linked pre- and post-excursion activity suggestions to build on the Cockman House History Hunter experience. Here students discover the story of Cockman House, the families that lived there and life in old Wanneroo.

With the story of the Cockman family beginning at the very start of the Swan River Colony in 1829, the program at Cockman House touches on the concept of immigration and the land use of the farm. It suggests the beginnings of local government in Wanneroo with the use of Cockman House for the early meetings of the Wanneroo Road Board, the precursor to the Shire and later City of Wanneroo, and considers the impact of World War 1 on this family with one of the four Cockman sons who enlisted to fight in WW1 dying in the fields of France.

The resource kit has been divided into five themes providing five different perspectives of the house as a home, farm and as one of the starting points of the Wanneroo community:

- Theme 1 – The Family
- Theme 2 – Work
- Theme 3 – The House
- Theme 4 – The Environment
- Theme 5 – Change and Heritage

For more information please contact the Education Officer – Museums at the City of Wanneroo on 9405 5906.

History Hunter program - curriculum links

Summary

The program is designed for lower and middle primary. The program material applies most specifically to the Australian Curriculum–History for Years 1-3 and 5. The curriculum information for these years is provided below:

Year 1: Present and Past Family Life

The Year 1 curriculum provides a study of present and past family life within the context of the students' own world. Students learn about similarities and differences in family life by comparing the present with the past. They begin to explore the links and the changes that occur over time.

Historical Knowledge and Understanding strand focus:

Differences in family structures and roles today, and how these have changed or remained the same over time (ACHASSK028)

Differences and similarities between students' daily lives and life during their parents' and grandparents' childhoods. (ACHASSK030)

Key inquiry questions:

1. How has family life changed or remained the same over time?
2. How can we show that the present is different from or similar to the past?
3. How do we describe the sequence of time?

Year 2: The Past in the Present

The Year 2 curriculum provides a study of local history. Students explore, recognise and appreciate the history of their local area by examining remains of the past and considering why they should be preserved.

Historical Knowledge and Understanding strand focus:

The history of a significant person, building, site and/or part of the natural environment in the local community and what it reveals about the past (ACHASSK044)

The importance today of an historical site of cultural or spiritual significance in the local area, and why it should be preserved (ACHASSK045)

How changing technology affected people's lives (at home and in the ways they worked, travelled, communicated, and played in the past) (ACHASSK046)

Key inquiry questions:

1. What aspects of the past can you see today? What do they tell us?
2. What remains of the past are important to the local community? Why?
3. How have changes in technology shaped our daily life?

Year 3: Community and Remembrance

The Year 3 curriculum provides a study of identity and diversity in both a local and broader context. Moving from the heritage of their local area, students explore the historical features and diversity of their community as represented in symbols and emblems of significance, and celebrations and commemorations, both locally and in other places around the world.

Historical Knowledge and Understanding strand focus:

How the community has changed and remained the same over time and the role that people of diverse backgrounds have played in the development and character of the local community (ACHASSK0632)

Days and weeks celebrated or commemorated in Australia (including Australia Day, ANZAC Day and National Sorry Day) and the importance of symbols and emblems. (ACHASSK064)

Celebrations and commemorations in other places around the world (for Example, Chinese New Year in countries of the Asian region, Bastille Day in France, Independence Day in the USA), including those that are observed in Australia such as, Christmas Day, Diwali, Easter, Hanukkah, the Moon Festival and Ramadan (ACHASSK065)

Key inquiry questions:

1. Who lived here first and how do we know?
2. How has our community changed? What features have been lost and what features have been retained?
3. What is the nature of the contribution made by different groups and individuals in the community?
4. How and why do people choose to remember significant events of the past?

Year 5: The Australian Colonies

The Year 5 curriculum provides a study of colonial Australia in the 1800s. Students look at the founding of British colonies and the development of a colony. They learn about what life was like for different groups of people in the colonial period. They examine significant events and people, political and economic developments, social structures, and settlement patterns

Historical Knowledge and Understanding strand focus:

Reasons (economic, political and social) for the establishment of British colonies in Australia after 1800. (ACHASSK106)

The nature of convict or colonial presence, including the factors that influenced patterns of development, aspects of the daily life of the inhabitants (including Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islander Peoples) and how the environment changed. (ACHASSK107)

The impact of a significant development or event on a colony. (ACHASSK108)

The reasons people migrated to Australia from Europe and Asia, and the experiences and contributions of a particular migrant group within a colony. (ACHASS109)

The role that a significant individual or group played in shaping a colony. (ACHASS110)

Key inquiry questions:

1. What do we know about the lives of people in Australia's colonial past and how do we know?
2. How did an Australian colony develop over time and why?
3. How did colonial settlement change the environment?
4. What were the significant events and who were the significant people that shaped Australian colonies?

History Hunter vocabulary

Here are some words in the text at Cockman House the students may need a little help with before they visit:

artefact	**inherited**
Coolgardie	**kerosene**
embroidery	**museum**
enlist	**procedure**
heritage	**verandah**
hessian	**volunteer**
history	**washboard**

THEME 1: THE FAMILY
1.1 The Beginnings

James Cockman and his wife Mary Ann Roper came to Western Australia to be part of the new Swan River Colony in 1829. James had been contracted as an *indentured servant* in England to the merchant, George Leake and Mary Ann had travelled with her brother as a servant to the Waddell family.

So how and why was this colony established on the coast of Western Australia so far from Britain?

A useful place to start is to define what a **colony** is. A colony can be described as any territory which does not govern itself but is under the authority of another, usually distant country and settled by a group of people from that foreign country who retain political or cultural connections with their home nation. In this case the Swan River Colony was settled by the British and was administered from London.

So why come all the way to Western Australia? This was during a period of widespread colonisation throughout the world by the powerful European countries in the 18th and 19th centuries. Colonisation spread the influence of the colonial country providing trading and military outposts. However, the colonial authorities usually had little regard for the indigenous peoples who already lived where the colonies were established.

The east coast of Australia had already been 'claimed' by Great Britain thanks to Captain James Cook in 1771 and by the 1820s Britain had well-established penal colonies at New South Wales, Tasmania and Norfolk Island. Penal colonies were places of punishment to which convicts were sent.

Although a small penal settlement had been established at King George Sound (Albany) in 1826 by Major Edmund Lockyer with 52 convicts and military escort, the colonisation of the western side of the country really began when Captain James Stirling (pictured), accompanied by the botanist Charles Fraser, explored the Swan River area in the ship HMS *Success* in 1827.

After this expedition, Stirling arrived back in England in July 1828, and reported with wild enthusiasm of the agricultural potential of the area. He declared that the district '*held out every attraction that a country in a State of Nature can possess*' and that *'both the soil and the anchorage were ideal'.*

He lobbied for the establishment of a free colony (unlike the penal settlements) in the Swan River area with himself as its Governor.

Based on these reports, and a rumour in London that the French were about to establish a penal colony in the western part of Australia (French navigators had explored much of the western coast), the Colonial Office agreed to the request in October 1828.

The first ship to reach the Swan River area was the *HMS Challenger*, which anchored off Garden Island on April 25th, 1829. Its Captain, Charles Fremantle, declared the Swan River Colony for Britain on May 2nd, 1829. The port of Fremantle is named after him.

Captain Stirling arrived aboard the HMS *Sulphur* on June 8th as Lieutenant Governor of the new colony. The first merchant ship to arrive shortly after was the *Calista* on August 5th carrying passengers including James Cockman to begin what in today's terms would be a real estate development.

What was important to both the Colonial Office and the settlers was the land that was available and how it was allocated to the colonists.

This was done through land grants, which were based on set of regulations that had been worked out to allocate land to settlers.

At the beginning of the colony, settlers were granted 40 acres (16.2 hectares) of land for every £3 (three Pounds) of financial resources invested in the colony but valuations of the assets by authorities were inaccurate and inconsistent. There was an example where two rabbits entitled a settler to a grant of 200 acres (81 hectares).

Settlers were also entitled to 200 acres of land for every adult introduced at their expense, with smaller amounts of land for children. This fact encouraged settlers to bring out indentured servants to increase their land grant entitlement. Indentured servants received their keep, but earned no wages until they had paid off their passage. These servants were also the only labour force available to the new settlement.

When the first settlers arrived at the colony, it was quickly discovered that the quantity of good land had been greatly exaggerated. In fact the only good farmland found near the site of the colony was a narrow strip of fertile soil along the Swan and Canning rivers, and much of this was immediately taken up by government officials and military personnel.

The settlers had been offered large areas of land in the new colony however this relatively small amount of available good land resulted in Captain Stirling having to limit the amount of river frontage per grant. He also limited the amount of land that each settler could claim near Perth, with the remainder of their entitlements to be claimed further out, in areas yet to be declared available for *selection*.

Indentured servitude

James Cockman came to the Swan River Colony as an indentured servant to Mr George Leake. George Leake was a merchant and like many of the colonists he had sufficient means to pay for the voyage and assets including servants to secure the land grant he travelled to Western Australia to receive. However the young James Cockman was not in a position to pay for such a voyage himself and so entered a 'contract of indenture' with Mr Leake to become an indentured servant.

An indentured servant is a labourer under contract to the employer for some period of time, usually four to seven years, in exchange for such things as ship's passage, food, land and accommodation.

Most indentured servants came from the rapidly growing number of poor people in urban areas of England. In a period approximately from the 1770s to the 1820s,

Britain experienced what is known as the' Industrial Revolution' that saw the rapid growth of factories thanks to inventions such as the steam engine and the 'Spinning Jenny' cotton spinning machine. This huge social and economic transformation followed enormous changes in the production of agricultural products such as wheat and barley thanks to technological development in the form of new farm machinery. This change was given the title, the 'Agrarian Revolution'.

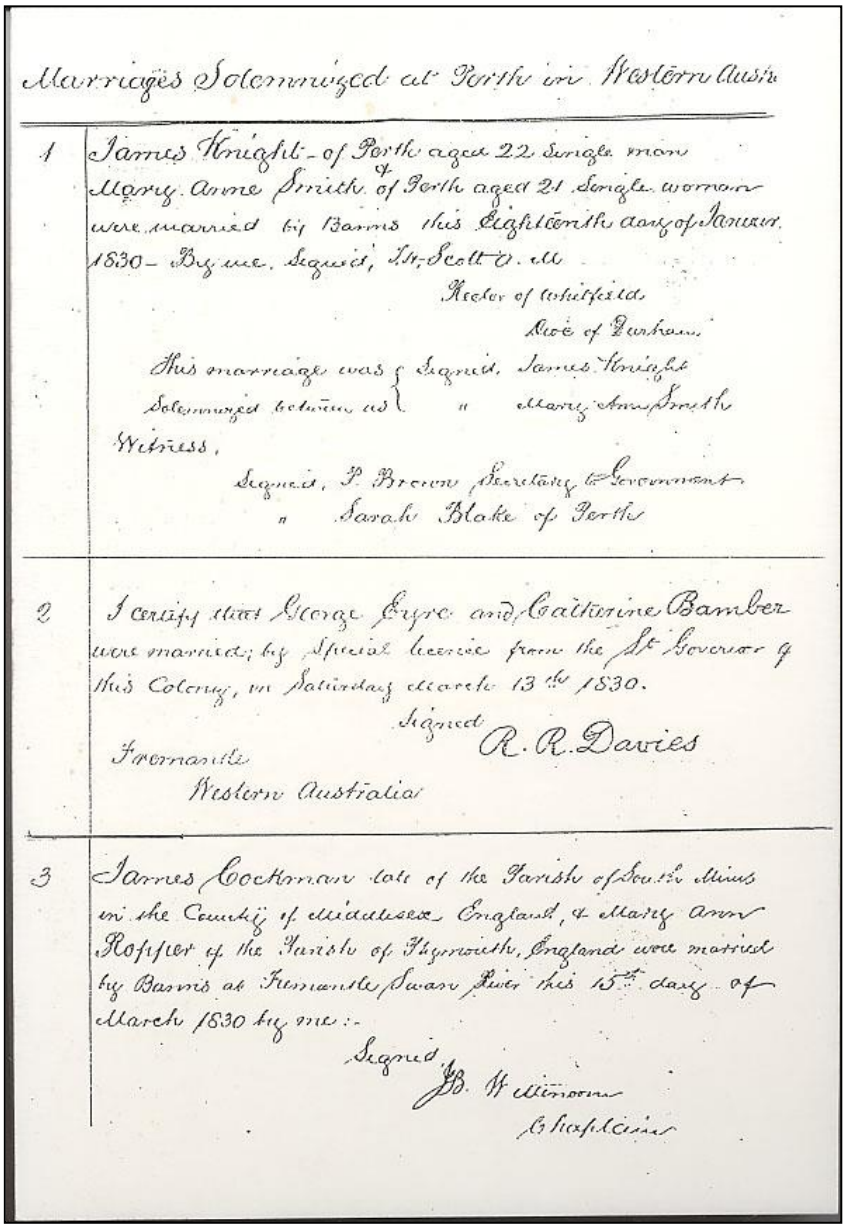
One of the negative effects of these changes was that many people were forced off their small plots of land or became unemployed because their labour was no longer needed. Many people moved from the rural areas to the large cities to try to find work in the new factories.

Displaced from their land and unable to find work in the cities, many of these people signed contracts of indenture and took passage to colonies in America and Australia. Many like James must have seen this as an opportunity to create a better future. In November 1830, George Leake and James Cockman agreed to cancel his indenture. He then had to find his own work in the new colony.

First Anglican wedding in the colony

Having accompanied Mr Leake to the new colony, young James set about not only assisting his employer but also establishing himself. He met Mary Ann Roper who had arrived in October 1829 aboard the *Atwick,* and married her in March 1830 in what is recorded as the first Anglican marriage and only the third marriage in the colony.

This marriage was not only important to James and Mary Ann but represented an important establishing event for a new settlement and showed that the young British colony was taking root in the mostly sandy soil of Western Australia. It was the beginning of the Cockman family story as well. In 1831 James was granted the plot of land in Fremantle on which built his first dwelling (appropriately this land is now part of Pioneer Reserve in Fremantle). By February 1832 his first son John was born. In 1835 the family moved to Perth and by 1839 he had built a new house, had three children, a cow and pigs making the family self-sufficient and well established in the colony.



Marriages Solemnized at Perth in Western Aust.ª

1 James Knight of Perth aged 22 Single man
& Mary Anne Smith of Perth aged 21 Single woman
were married by Banns this Eighteenth day of January
1830 – By me. Signed, Th. Scott A. M
Rector of Whitfield
Dioc of Durham.
This marriage was { Signed. James Knight
Solemnized between us { " Mary Ann Smith
Witness,
Signed, P Brown Secretary to Government
" Sarah Blake of Perth

2 I certify that George Eyre and Catherine Bamber
were married by Special licence from the Lt Governor of
this Colony, on Saturday March 13th 1830.
Signed R. R. Davies
Fremantle
Western Australia

3 James Cockman late of the Parish of South Mims
in the County of Middlesex England, & Mary Ann
Rosser of the Parish of Plymouth, England were married
by Banns at Fremantle Swan River this 15th day of
March 1830 by me :-
Signed J. B. Williamson
Chaplain

James and Mary Ann's Marriage Certificate

1.2 Family History – Genealogy

Genealogy is the study and recording of family history and is often displayed as a 'family tree'. This is a diagram that shows the 'place' of each member of a family, when they were born, married and died and how a family has grown.

Cockman House is unusually significant because it had the family of James and Mary Ann Cockman and their descendants living in it from 1860 right up to 1987.

On the next page is the family tree of the residents of Cockman House beginning with James and Mary Ann Cockman. On the diagram, males are indicated with a square and females are indicated with a circle.

The challenge for anyone interested in genealogy is to see how far back they can go in their family history. Students can ask their parents and grandparents to find out about their family, where they came from and how they all fit in their family tree. To track their family further back they can use local, state and national libraries, as well as family history sites on the internet.

A good place to start is the local library or more specialist organisations such as the Genealogy Centre at the State Library of Western Australia or the Western Australian Genealogy Society. You can also try these links:

www.familysearch.org
www.ancestry.com.au
www.findmypast.com

Pre/post-excursion activities

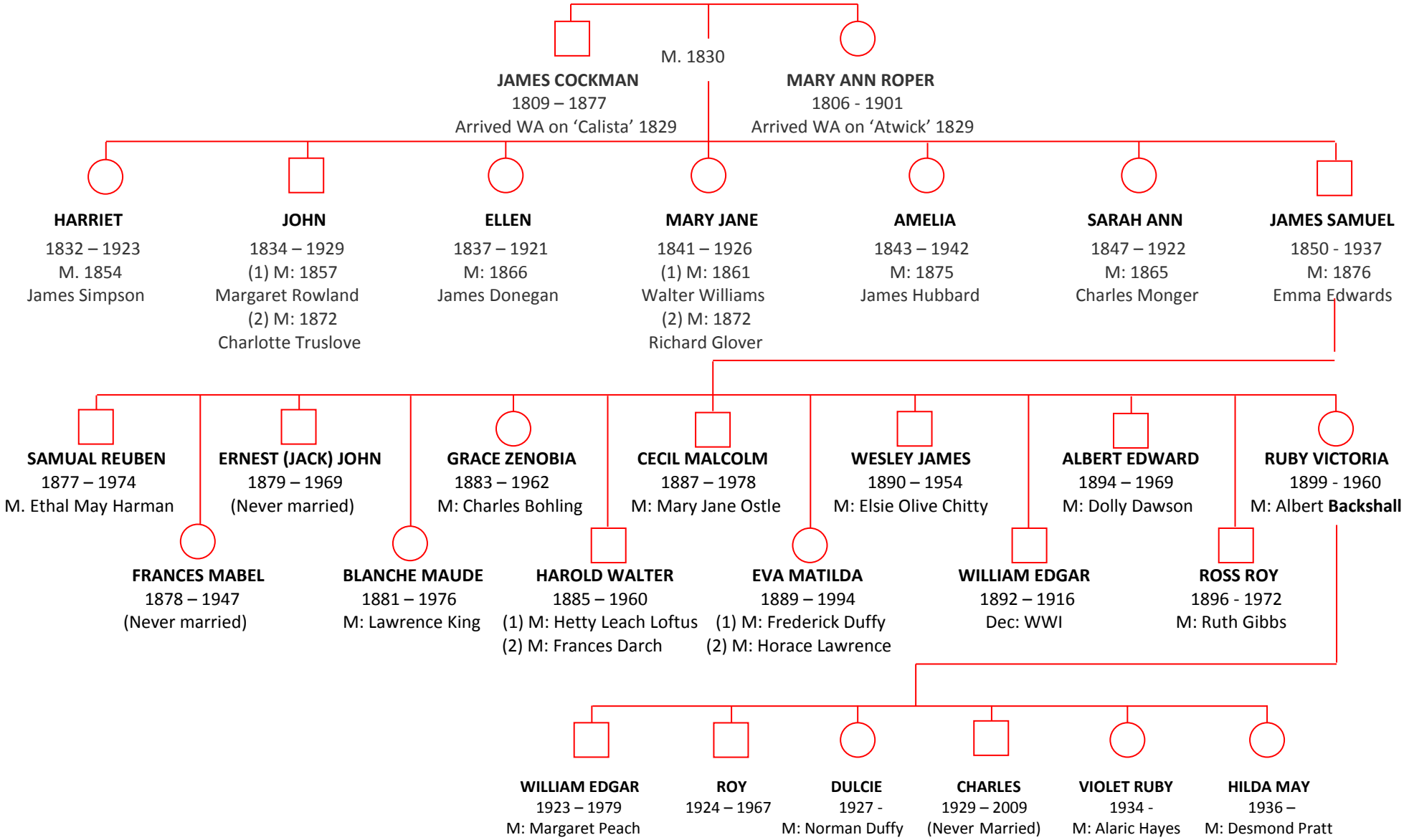
Lower Primary:

Students draw a pictogram version of a family tree that includes a drawing of themselves and their siblings, parent(s) and grandparent(s) (this obviously depends on family makeup, but this can be a topic of discussion). A different kind of 'family tree' can be made by placing family member names on the apple shapes, cutting them out and sticking them to the tree.

Upper/ Middle Primary:

Discuss the study of Genealogy and produce a family tree using the graphic system describing the residents of Cockman House.

Cockman and Backshall Family – Residents of Cockman House



1.3 Family heritage

Although it is really interesting to produce a family tree, 'Family' is much more than lines on a page and a great part of genealogy is discovering the stories of family members that came before us.

In Western Australia, the Swan River Colony was established for *immigrant* free settlers. An immigrant is a person who leaves one country to settle permanently in another. The act of moving to another country to settle is called *immigration*.

The original colonists were British and brought with them British culture and lifestyle. The language they spoke, their religion, their approach to farming, the food they ate and their social structure all came from their country of origin. However they did come to settle to find new opportunities.

Many of the later migrants from Southern and Eastern European countries such as Italy and Slovenia who settled in Wanneroo in the aftermath of World War I and World War II came to Western Australia for the same reason - the hope of making a better life for themselves and their children.

Often men travelled out to Australia first in order to find work and earn money before sending for their wives and family. For those who settled in Wanneroo there were two main choices for a good livelihood: market gardening or working in the lime kiln industry.

Despite having established themselves in Wanneroo between the wars, the declaration of World War II in 1939 created divisions within the community because Italy and Yugoslavia had aligned themselves with Germany.

One of the Wanneroo Road Board resolutions at this time determined that only British labour was to be employed on roadwork and failing this, that only those from neutral countries would be employed. The Federal Government interned some of the non-British Wanneroo residents.

After the war these misunderstandings were put aside as other waves of European migrants made their way to Western Australia. These and later waves from South East Asia and again from Britain have brought with them their own cultural expressions which have enriched their new community.

Check the Wanneroo area in a modern road directory and the names Allia, Ariti, Crisfulli, Menchetti, Villanova, Sinagra, Togno, Luisini, Romeo, Jambanis, Dimitrios are some of those families that have been commemorated in street, suburb and park names in addition to the earlier English migrant names such as Backshall, Hastings, Butler, Quinn, Caporn, Pearsall, Gibbs, Hocking, Berriman, Ashby and Tapping.

Today, around 24% of Australia's population (just over 35% in Wanneroo) was born overseas and has experienced many waves of immigration since European settlement, so all of us except indigenous Australians have forebears who came from another country.

Pre/post-excursion activities

Lower Primary:

- Find out what countries the children's families come from and find a picture of the flag(s) of that country. Draw and colour the flag.
- Discuss symbolism. What do the colours in the flags symbolise in our national flags (Australian flag, Aboriginal flag, Torres Strait Islander flag)?
- Have the children create their own flag with 'symbols' representing important places in their lives.

Upper/Middle Primary:
The coast of Western Australia was explored by Dutch, French and Portuguese mariners before the English decided to claim the land and settle here.

- Discuss how coming from England affected the way the settlement in Western Australia developed.
- Discuss how the society that developed in Western Australia might have been different had these other European countries colonised here instead of the English.
- Research the Industrial Revolution in Great Britain and how these changes affected its colonisation of other countries.
- Compare and contrast the colonies established in New South Wales and Western Australia. What were the main differences?
- Research the other passengers that arrived on the ship *Calista* or the *Atwick* along with James Cockman and Mary Ann Roper. Choose some passengers to research what happened to them and their families.
- Research the history of Wanneroo and discover the waves of immigrants from overseas that settled in the area. Write a report indicating where these immigrants came from and what events made them want to leave their home country and come to Australia.
- Research and report on the significant local and world events that resulted in the waves of immigration experienced in Western Australia.Prominent names inthe Wanneroo district such as, Conti (Italian), Susac (Yugoslavia), **Truong (Vietnamese)** give a clue to the origins of families in the area. What do you think their cultures have added to Australia?
- Research migration in your local community and compare and contrast the changes from early settlement to the present.

1.4 Family structure

The structure of the families that lived at Cockman House was typical of most farming families at the time.

The father was considered the head and authority of the family. His role was as provider for the family. He had to run the farm and make sure his family had sufficient food and water as well as basics such as shelter and clothes.

In the 19th and well into the 20th century the extended family was common. This meant that families included grandparents in the same house as retirement villages and aged care services did not exist and families were expected to look after their older members as they aged.

In Cockman House two long-lived women resided as the 'Granny' of the household: firstly Mary Ann Cockman (wife of James) and later by Emma Cockman (wife of James Samuel).

Although the Grannies were not seen as the head of the household, they were certainly in a position of considerable influence. They provided additional 'authority' and 'education' for the children. They assisted where their age and physical abilities allowed in the many domestic chores that were part of the successful running of the house.

Given the relatively small size of the house and the large families it accommodated, it was necessary for Granny to share her bed with the older girls to allow more room for the rest of the children in the beds in the children's room. This must have forged a close relationship with her, but at the same time meant they were under her watchful eyes (and ears) at bedtime as well.

This close and long established family structure allowed the farm and household to function successfully and allow the family to remain self-sufficient.

The children of the house

Large families were much more common in the past so children had to share most things including a bed at night. The second generation of Cockman House children had to sleep up to four to a bed because there were 13 children in the family. Each child in the bed alternated head or feet at the top end of the bed or slept 'top and tail' as the most comfortable arrangement.

In an interview with Cecil Cockman in 1977, he said:

> *We needed a big house for 13 kids. Even so, we had just three bedrooms; my mother and father had one, the girls had one, they were the two bedrooms at the front of the house, and the boys had the bedroom at the back, which is off the kitchen. We slept two or three in one bed and three or four in the other; it was the same for the girls. The beds were big double beds with iron bars above and a canopy over the top to help keep out the winter cold.*

The education of the children remained an issue until the opening of the Wanneroo School in January 1899 with Mr Charles Shaw as teacher (although a school had been opened in 1874 but closed when student numbers fell). Prior to this, children either were schooled at home to some extent or were sent away to school.

Eva, one of Cecil's sisters, was ten when she was sent to stay with relatives in Caversham in 1898. Here she was able to attend school and

begin her formal education as there was no school at Wanneroo at that time. She stayed with her aunt Sarah Logue and her husband George and went to school with her cousin Margaret.

After a year away from the family home with each school day involving an hour's walk to and from the school she was able to return once the school at Wanneroo was opened on 30 January 1899.

Eva, like the rest of the children now had to fit her school work in with the many chores that the house and farm required. However there still remained some time for play. In the days before television and plastic toys the children had to make their own fun.

Eva recounted that they had no toys except the rag dolls their mother had made for the girls. Sometimes she had dolls made out of wooden clothes pegs. Her father would blow up a pig's bladder for the boys to use as a football. The children would create farms using sticks and banksias nuts – the big nuts were cows and the little ones were calves. They would be the farmer and ride big sticks around.

Pre/post-excursion activities

Lower Primary:

- Compare toys from the 19th and 20th century to modern toys. See if any continue to be used today (e.g. teddy bear, skipping rope).

- Research the history of an old toy (e.g. teddy bear, skittles).

Upper/Middle Primary:

- Report on what you see as the advantages and disadvantages of having a grandparent share your house? What do you think would be the advantages and disadvantages of having lots of brothers and sisters in a small house like Cockman House? E.g. sharing rooms, beds, toys.

1.5 The effect of World War 1 on the family

Even in the small, isolated community of Wanneroo, events on the other side of the world would deeply affect the residents of Cockman House in the early years of the 20th century.

Australia, as part of the British Empire, provided troops to fight against Germany and its allies in what was called the Great War and later World
War I from 1914 to 1918.

In thousands of households throughout Australia, families said goodbye to sons, brothers and husbands as they travelled off to war to fight 'for King and Country'.

Many considered it a great adventure that would "be over by Christmas" and were not prepared for the horrors they would witness.

Many considered it their duty to enlist and often those who did not join up and were physically able to do so, were accused of being a coward or 'shirking' their responsibility. The recruiting poster (right) from 1915 illustrates the kind of pressure men were placed under to 'sign up'.

By 1916 thousands of men had been killed in action and there were not enough volunteers to provide the troops promised to Britain by the Australian Prime Minister Billy Hughes. On 28 October 28th 1916 a *referendum* was held to seek support from voters in Australia to make *conscription* and overseas military service compulsory. This referendum resulted in a 'No' vote so joining the military remained voluntary.

James Samuel and Emma Cockman had 13 children, including 8 boys, who all grew up in Cockman House. Four of the boys enlisted for service and three returned home after serving on the fronts of World War I.

William and Wesley (pictured) left Fremantle for Europe in November 1915. William was taken into the 51st Battalion in March 1916 and fought on the **Western Front**.

William and Wesley Cockman

WWI Recruitment Poster

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

Looking toward Mouquet Farm. December, 1916

By August, William was in **Pozières**, France and suffering from '**shell shock**' (now called Combat Stress Reaction). A few months later he was killed in action at nearby **Mouquet Farm** on September 3rd at the age of 24, one of 378 men of the 51st Battalion killed in this attack, part of the **Battle of the Somme.**

Another Wanneroo man, Richard Smales, had enlisted the same day as William and sailed to Europe on the same ship. Richard died the same day in the same battle. Both men's names can be found on the Wanneroo War Memorial.

Four months after William's death his brothers Ross Roy and Ernest John (pictured right) enlisted for active service leaving in June 1917. Having already lost one son it would have been a very hard for their parents and family to say goodbye to the youngest boys.

The mixed emotions experienced by families that lost loved ones during the war have been expressed in many ways including poetry. The poem by Nellie Evans called "Greeting: Easter 1918" describes this mix of grief and pride and ends:

Oh, I think you know, as memories of the dead days gather o'er me,
that I speak your name this morning with a passionate pride: and yet bitter tears of hopeless longing blot the blue hills out before me -
Pride is mighty, Heart's Beloved, but it cannot curb regret.

Wesley, Ross and Ernest all survived the war and returned to Wanneroo.

In 1921, a memorial was erected in Wanneroo commemorating local men who had lost their lives during wartime. The names of three Wanneroo men were added after their death in World War II. Later notations have been included that reflect on other wars.

Ross and Ernest Cockman

Following is some additional information about the places and battles that saw the death of William Cockman.

The Western Front
Western Front was a term used in both the First and Second World War to describe a boundary between lands controlled by Germany to the East and the Allies to the West. In World War I it consisted of a relatively unchanging arrangement of trenches that stretched from the coast of the North Sea south to the Swiss border.

For most of World War I, Allied and German Forces were stalled in what became known as *trench warfare* along the Western Front.

Battle of the Somme
The *Battle of the Somme*, fought in the summer and autumn of 1916, was one of the largest battles of World War 1. With more than one million casualties, it was also one of the bloodiest battles in human history. The Allied forces attempted to break through the German lines along a 40 km front north and south of the River Somme in northern France.

Pozières
Pozières is a village in Somme, France, that was completely destroyed in World War I during what became the *Battle of Pozières*, which was part of the Battle of the Somme. The village was subsequently rebuilt, and is now the site of several war memorials. Australians suffered over 5,000 killed, wounded or taken prisoner.

Mouquet Farm
Mouquet Farm was the location of nine separate attacks by three Australian divisions between August 8th and September 3rd, 1916. The farm stood on a ridge next to the much fought over villages of Pozières. Although the farm buildings were reduced to rubble, the strong stone cellars remained below ground and were used as part of the German defences. The attacks against Mouquet Farm cost the Australian divisions over 11,000 casualties, and not one succeeded in capturing and holding it. The British advance eventually bypassed Mouquet Farm. It eventually fell on 27 September 1916.

A good place to start your research on World War I is at your local library but some great basic websites to start with are provided by

- the ANZAC Day Commemoration Committee of Queensland - www.anzacday.org.au,
- the Australian War Memorial – www.awm.gov.au;
- Land Forces of Britain, the Empire and Commonwealth – www.regiments.org;
- Australians at War – www.australiansatwar.gov.au

Australian troops on the Western Front

Pre/post-excursion activities

Lower Primary:

- Discuss what ANZAC Day is and why it is important in Australia (and New Zealand).
- Make ANZAC biscuits and share at recess. These biscuits were included in soldier's parcels from home.

Upper/Middle Primary:

- Research and report on why the First World War began and why Australia was involved.
- Discuss how the WWI enlistment poster in the text is promoting joining the army.
- Research and report on the Gallipoli campaign and why it failed.
- Discover and report on why ANZAC Day is considered so important in Australia. How does our community commemorate the ANZAC heritage?
- Discuss the famous poem 'In Flanders Field' by Dr John McCrae. What makes this such a compelling written work?
- Research and report on how WWI affected your family or local community – do you have a local war memorial? What is written on it and what is significant about this?
- Design your own recruitment poster to encourage young men to volunteer for the armed forces for a war now. What would you include? How might the posters differ for male and female recruits?
- Research the conscription referendum of 1916 and determine what were the Yes and No arguments
- Along with the conscription referendums, discover what have been famous or crucial national referendums in Australia's history. What has made them so important?

William Edgar Cockman 1892 - 1916

THEME 2: WORK

2.1 Establishing at Wanneroo

By 1839 James Cockman and his growing family were living in Perth with James working in the building industry. However a new opportunity was about to present itself in the form of Mr George Shenton.

George Shenton had arrived in the colony in 1833 and took up 640 acres (259 hectares) in what was then called the Lakes District, now in the Wanneroo area, around 1843.

Soon after this, George Shenton asked James Cockman and his son John to go with him on a trip to his new property. It took more than eight hours to travel the sand track but when they arrived they were amazed by the beauty, wildlife and tall timber of the area.

Mr Shenton promised that when James had enough money he could buy a small plot of this lakeland. He allowed James to build a family house on the property on condition that he worked for him for a wage. Mr Shenton also agreed to let James have the use of several bullocks, horses and a wagon for transport to and from Perth.

So in the spring of 1851 James took his wife, their two most recent children: Sarah Ann (4), and James Samuel (1), as well as their other two young daughters, on a visit to the property.

His wife Mary Ann was uneasy about the move to the isolated area. She was worried about the long distance from medical help and that the younger children would not be able to get a formal education.

However, James was enthusiastic about the possibilities of the area. He continued to work in Perth, but also spent periods on George Shenton's land, clearing land and cutting fence posts.

Over the summer of 1851, James completed a wattle and daub house with a thatched roof for his family and a well for drinking water. With this house built, Mary Ann finally agreed to move from Perth out to the Lakes District.

Wattle and daub are building materials used in constructing houses. A woven lattice of wooden stakes called *wattles* is *daubed* or spread with a mixture of clay and sand and sometimes animal dung and straw to create a wall.
Thatch is a roof covering using material such as straw, rushes, leaves, or similar material.

The Cockman family, through their hard work on Shenton's land holding, and with the sale of their Perth property, finally had enough money to buy the land they lived on. On the 25th June 1853, James Cockman officially purchased the 45 acre (18.2 hectares) plot for the sum of 100 pounds.

James Cockman having arrived as a young servant, had become a landowner of his own freehold farm land in just 24 years to fulfil a dream of land ownership. He and his family went on to become not just successful farmers but important members of the growing Wanneroo community.

2.2 Farm work and food production

Having purchased his property, James and his family now worked to make it usable agricultural land.

One of the main reasons that James Cockman decided to locate his home on the shore of Wallaburnup Swamp is because it is close to the lake system and its reliable source of water. Here he established a market garden and dairy farm.

At Cockman House, like all farms, the jobs were many and varied and began with the clearing of areas of bush. Farm areas were cleared of much of the native vegetation to provide open grassed areas for cattle and closer to the lakes for the growing of vegetables. The reeds and other vegetation at the lake fringe were removed and vegetables planted into the mud.

Runoff into the lake system over time brought with it fine sediment and organic matter to produce far richer soils than the infertile sandy soils on much of the Perth coastal plain. This meant this location was much better for the growing of vegetables and fruit, as well as feed for the cows and pigs produced by the Cockman family.

A description of the garden was recorded in a journal entitled *To my fellow-sojourners in Sunny Lands* by Alfred Wood reflecting on his journey to WA in 1876. He wrote, '*Gardens are rare in this part of the Colony, the soil being of too 'burning' a nature to suit European vegetables and fruits. But, in any case, old Cockman's would have fully justified the evident pride in it. At the end of the garden was a good spring of sweet water, which no doubt partly accounted for its condition.'*(from *A Sea Voyage* by Alfred Wood, 1904)

The main vegetables grown were tomatoes, cabbage, cauliflower, potatoes, carrots and herbs. They also had an orchard, growing citrus fruits such as oranges and lemons, and other fruits such as plums, peaches, figs and olives.

The wooded areas further from the lake contained tree species such as Jarrah and Marri as well as Sheoak, which became important sources of building materials for houses, sheds and fences. James had worked for George Shenton clearing and fencing his land and continued the job on his own land.

Once the farm was established the daily routine of farm work settled in. This included feeding and maintaining all the farm animals, planting, weeding, watering and harvesting the fruit and vegetables grown and later taking the produce to market in Perth.

All this had to happen along with the building of the house. James, with the help of his son John, quarried the limestone for the walls as well as burning limestone to make lime mortar. The timber was cut from local jarrah trees, then cut into planks in the saw pit built for George Shenton near the house, using large two handed pit saws. The roof shingles were made from sheoak split and cut into shape with a broad bladed axe.

James and the family also had to build and repair their fences, farm buildings and tools as well as slaughtering stock, shooting

kangaroos and other local game for food and preparing it for eating or preservation.

At this stage in the life of this farm it was all about sourcing food to feed the family.

Food Preparation
The Cockmans were fortunate because they grew all their own vegetables and kept chickens for eggs and cows for milk, so most food was fresh. Keeping food once it had been collected was much more difficult in the 19th century, so tried and true methods of food preservation were used to keep food longer.

Unless sterilized and sealed, all food contains bacteria. Food *spoils* as a result of bacterial growth in the foodstuff so the basic idea behind all forms of food preservation is to either slow down the activity of disease-causing bacteria or to kill the bacteria altogether. For example, bacteria naturally living in milk will spoil the milk in two or three hours if the milk is left out at room temperature. By putting the milk in the refrigerator you don't get rid of the bacteria already there, but you do slow down the bacteria enough that the milk will stay fresh for a week or two.

In the case of refrigeration, the idea is to **slow bacterial action** so that it takes food much longer to spoil - perhaps a week or two, rather than half a day. In the case of freezing, the idea is to **stop bacterial action** altogether. Frozen bacteria are completely inactive.

As refrigeration was not available, other methods were needed to preserve food particularly meat. An example is ***salting*** meat.

Salting, especially of meat, is an ancient preservation technique. The salt draws out moisture and creates an environment inhospitable to bacteria. If salted in cold weather (so that the meat does not spoil while the salt has time to take effect), salted meat can last for years.

Today, salting is still used to make dried beef or *jerky* and corned beef, which is made by soaking beef in 10-percent salt water brine for several weeks.

Eva, one of the 13 children of James Samuel and Emma Cockman recounted how her father would use brine (salt water used for preserving and pickling foods) to preserve pork meat: *He would put the slaughtered pig into a big wooden tub and then make his brine in a kerosene bucket. He would put salt into the hot water and use an egg to tell when it was ready. He would keep adding salt until the egg rose to the top. That's when the brine was ready. He would wait for it to cool and pour it over the pig. The pig was cut up and when Mama wanted some she would just take out and boil some. We would have corned pork.*

A related technique is called ***pickling.***
Pickling was widely used to preserve meats, fruits and vegetables in the past, but today is used almost exclusively to produce pickled vegetables such as onions and cucumbers. Pickling uses the preservative qualities of salt combined with the preservative qualities of acid, such as acetic acid (vinegar). Acid environments inhibit bacteria. To make pickles, cucumbers are soaked in 10% salt brine for several days, then rinsed and stored in vinegar to preserve them for years.

With innovations such as the Coolgardie Safe, then later the Ice Chest food could be kept cool and therefore longer at Cockman House. However a refrigerator as we know it today never appeared at Cockman House, even well into the 20th century.

2.3 Family work

In order for the farm to run successfully and for the family to be self-sufficient, all the members of the family had to work and work hard, toiling from sunup to sundown. The settlers living some distance out of Perth had to travel many hours to get to markets and shops and would have little money for luxuries.

The women of the family provided all the domestic and child raising duties and assisted in farm work as well. During construction of the house, Mary Ann and the girls helped with many of the arduous tasks of mustering cattle, caring for pigs and grinding wheat and corn with a hand operated grister to make flour.

As the saying goes, "A woman's work is never done." The women of the household were responsible for all the cooking, cleaning, washing, ironing and child rearing, as well as assisting with farm work when required.

Washing and ironing

Monday was usually the official washday and the ironing took up most of Tuesday. One reason for this was that on Sunday there was often a roast, so the cold leftovers could be served without interrupting the busy washing schedule to do cooking.

The work began Saturday or Sunday night by putting really dirty clothes into a tub to soak.

On Monday the woman of the house rose early, filled the copper with water and lit the fire beneath the copper.

All the small slivers of soap in the house were collected, soaked in water and made into a bluish-white gluey paste called soap jelly that could be used for washing. If no slivers were available then newer bars of soap were grated using a soap grater.

The soap was used sparingly and no pieces thrown away because it was "precious". All supplies originally came by ship from England, which took many months. Some soap was made at home out of clarified fat and caustic soda.

The clothes and other things to be washed went into the boiling water with the soap jelly for around 30 minutes. A long piece of wood or tongs were used to turn over and lift the very hot clothing from the copper.

Clothes and other items were then scrubbed on a washboard. The washboards were used standing in a washtub of water and with a little soap the material was rubbed up and down the ridged surface of the washboard using knuckles and the heel part of the palm of the hand until the article was clean. The washboards were usually made from corrugated wood or glass. The washed items were then rinsed in clean water to remove the remaining soap and dirt.

After washing and rinsing, the white clothes were 'blued' to make them look whiter. This meant they were rinsed in water steeped in Reckitt's Blue in what were called Blue Bags, *manufactured by Reckitt & Sons in the UK.* Each bag was a cube of blue powder wrapped n a cotton cloth to stop the yellowing of the undyed natural fabrics.

The **blue bags** contained a **substance called Prussian Blue or (fer**ric ferrocyanide to the chemists). It is a blue pigment that does not dissolve but disperses evenly in water. It is deposited into the fibres of the fabric being washed, giving it a slightly bluish appearance.

Most fibres, especially cotton, tend to go slightly yellow when exposed to light and oxygen, as in being worn or used, washed and hung out to dry in the sun. This is especially noticeable with white sheets, shirts, undies, serviettes, tablecloths, napkins and the like. The fabrics end up looking dull, and not bright and "clean".

But when the blue pigment is dispersed onto the surfaces of the fabric fibres, it reflects more blue light, thus correcting the appearance away from the yellow towards the blue end of the spectrum. The result is that the fabric looks whiter than it would be otherwise.

Next step for white articles such as shirt collars , cuffs and linen was starching to stiffen them. The white chunks of starch were dissolved in cold water then made up with boiling water and the laundry items left to soak in the starch solution prior to ironing.

Laundry starch is a vegetable starch dissolved in water used in the laundering of clothes. During the 19th century and early 20th century, it was stylish to stiffen the collars and sleeves of men's shirts and the ruffles of girls' petticoats by applying starch to them as the clean clothes were being ironed.

Aside from the smooth, crisp edges it gave to clothing, it served practical purposes as well. Dirt and sweat from a person's neck and wrists would stick to the starch rather than fibres of the clothing, and would easily wash away along with the starch. After each washing, the starch would be reapplied.

Blued and starched, the clothes were hand squeezed or went through the rollers of a *mangle*. To hand squeeze the excess water out of sheets and other larger items, the sheets were folded in half and held by a person at each who twisted the sheet in opposite directions. Then using ‘dolly’ pegs each item was pegged onto the line. This was usually a pair of timber post with wire strung between and a bush pole with a fork in the top that would ‘prop up’ the line raising the dangling clothes off the ground.

A **mangle** is a mechanical laundry aid consisting of two rollers in a frame, connected by cogs and powered by a hand crank used to force water out of fabric.

Ironing was often done on the kitchen table using old blankets and sheets. Irons were heated up on the kitchen wood burning stove or fireplace. Two or more were usually heated at a time so that when the one that was being used cooled down the other one was hot and ready to use. There were a number of different shapes and sizes of flat irons to accommodate the different areas on the items to be ironed.

Making and mending clothes as well as keeping them clean was also a big part of domestic work. Commercially made clothes were expensive and were available only in large towns and later through mail order, so they were maintained for as long as possible. Rips were repaired, children's clothes were passed down to younger brothers and sisters, and holes in socks were *darned* (to mend torn clothing, with rows of stitches, sometimes by crossing and interweaving rows to span a gap).

New clothes were more often made than bought, particularly when sewing machines became more available. Sewing machines were precious possessions for women who did not have domestic help or who lived a long way from shops. However they were very expensive. Hand sewing was done by those without machines and when small repairs were needed. Hand sewing was the basis for crafts such as embroidery which decorated clothes and other items around the house and was often part of an evening's leisure for the ladies of the house.

2.4 Gender roles

Although not confined to the men of the family, farm work was hard physical labour and was seen as the *role* of the males as was the building of the house. The women were seen as responsible for the domestic jobs and looking after the children.

All the members of the family were part of the household workforce. The children of the family would fit into the work routine when they became old enough and when education became available would attend school as well. A typical day would begin at 5.30am with the boys attending to small farm related tasks such as feeding animals or less appealing jobs such as emptying the chamber pots. Girls tended to help with more domestic duties such as helping prepare breakfast and assist with making beds and washing dishes.

Chopping wood for the fires in the house were done by whoever was available, male or female, but such jobs tended to be given to the boys to do.

You can see that the type of job they were given often depended on whether they were a boy or a girl. This difference based on their *gender* began early in their lives in preparation of the gender roles they would take on as husbands, wives and parents in their community at this time.

For women in outposts such as Wanneroo the hard work and social isolation was often devastating. For example, a coronial inquest was held in 1899 into the death of a baby girl at Wanneroo. According to historian Gillian O'Mara,

> *"The police inquiry highlighted the harsh reality of family life in the district. Margaret Dearden, who had lived at Lake Jandabup for more than ten years, had little social contact with neighbours other than the Hatch family. Few settlers had [even] visited her property and she led a very lonely and isolated experience. Frequent pregnancies,*

poor nutrition and the constant hard work of caring for her family had drained her stamina.

Fortunately the Cockman family did not suffer this degree of isolation as the position of the house close to the road to Perth meant they hosted a number of visitors who were travelling the road as well as later community involvement.

2.5 Changes in work opportunities into the 20th century

However as the 20th century progressed the younger residents of Cockman House were presented with new opportunities. This perhaps is best represented by the story behind the lounge suite in the lounge room.

Bought by Violet Backshall around 1955, the settee and two armchairs are the most modern pieces of furniture in Cockman House. She bought the lounge suite when she was 21 after getting her first job as a thank you present for her parents Albert and Ruby Backshall.

The change in style and level of comfort of this furniture reflected the improving general standard of living in Western Australia.

At this time great social changes continued to take place outside the house, particularly the new job opportunities and growing financial independence of women. Two world wars had seen women enter the workforce doing jobs previously unavailable to women exposing them to new skills and possibilities.

At the time Violet worked in an office in Perth as a ledger machinist, operating an Accounting or Ledger Machine, a kind of early computer. This was a vocational prospect unimagined by her mother and grandmother and the gift showed that the young Violet had achieved a new social and financial position.

Settee in Cockman House

Pre/post-excursion activities

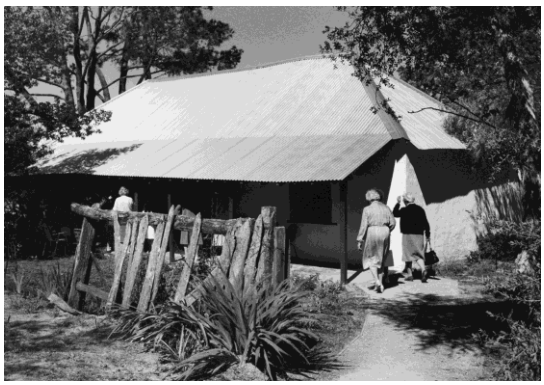
Lower Primary:

- Have the children complete 19th century chores, noting the gender differences. E.g. girls can wash dishes, boys could polish shoes.
- Discuss the differences in chores such as cleaning between today and before household electricity.

Upper/Middle Primary:

- Compare and contrast the types of food prepared in the 19th century with what you eat today. What changes in technology have taken place that have affected what food we eat today?
- Compare the working lives of people today with the time of the building of Cockman House. Apply this idea to different times in history.
- Research the changes in women's occupations and employment in Western Australia. Interview your mother and/or grandmother about what work opportunities they have experienced. How does this compare to Mary Ann Cockman? Write a report on what you find.

3.1 The Building of Cockman House



The origins of the Cockman property begin in 1841 when James Cockman entered into an arrangement with George Shenton, a wealthy merchant and landowner who had taken up 640 acres (259 hectares) of land north of Perth in what was then known as the Lakes District.

They agreed that if James worked there for Shenton, he could build his own home on the property and later have the opportunity buy some of the surrounding land. However James' wife Mary Ann was apprehensive about the isolation and complete lack of schooling and medical help in area.

Although James continued with his building work in Perth, he spent long periods camping on Shenton's land, clearing and fencing as well as building a wattle and daub house with thatched roof for Mary Ann and the children. This house later became known as the 'Little House' and was completed in 1851. At this point Mary Ann agreed to move up from Perth.

Wattle and daub are building materials used in constructing houses. A woven lattice of wooden stakes called *wattles* is *daubed* or spread with a mixture of clay and sand and sometimes animal dung and straw to create a wall.

Thatch is a roof covering using material such as straw, rushes, leaves, or similar material.

James and Mary Ann were the first Europeans to settle in the area. Although several wealthy colonists had taken up large areas of land, they were only used for grazing cattle. By 1853 James and Mary Ann had the required £100 to buy just over 45 acres (18 hectares) from George Shenton to become landowners.

Once he had purchased his Wanneroo land, which was capable of supporting his family, James set about building a more substantial house. For the next few years, with the help of his son John, he quarried stone, mainly by hand, from outcrops on the eastern side of the lake. James burnt limestone in a makeshift kiln using a big log fire - in this way he made lime to mix with sand to make mortar.

James had previously constructed several saw pits for Mr Shenton and one was located about 100m from his chosen home site. All the timbers for rafters, weatherboard for the roof, joinery for the doors and windows and 12-inch (300mm) wide floorboards were prepared in the pit. This was the first home in which the family would have had the luxury of wooden floors.

Following the marriage of the elder son John, who moved to Perth, the back breaking job of completing the house walls had to be fitted in with the many other tasks of tending the herd, milking, cutting timber and carrying water for domestic and garden use. Mary Ann and the girls helped with many of the arduous tasks of mustering cattle, caring for pigs and grinding wheat and corn with a hand operated grister.

By the autumn of 1859, the thick walls of the new house with windows and doorframes in place was completed. The erection of the roof timbers required help that was readily given by other Shenton employees. James purposely designed a high gable roof in order to allow for a cooler house and easier run off in heavy rains.

For the roof, James utilised the sheoaks that grew in profusion on the eastern portion of his land. With the help of two wide blade axes, the type used by shingle splitters, he laboriously cut the sheoak logs into sections ten inches (25cm) long by four inches (10cm) wide and a quarter of an inch (0.6cm) thick. Overlapping shingles were then nailed to the jarrah boards, which covered the rafters.

Once the shaping of the shingles to match the gable ridges was mastered, the roof was completed in a week. The shingle roof was pleasing to look at, as well as being weatherproof and of a lasting nature. Proof of this is that although later covered with corrugated iron, some of the original shingles can still be seen on the front verandah's south-east corner.

3.2 Design, additions and adaptations

Built in stages, the core of the house containing the lounge and main bedrooms was completed first. The lounge was to become the recreation and social hub of the house where the family could sit and enjoy the warmth of the fire once the chores were completed, or entertain the many visitors to the house.

Violet Backshall recalled that "*on a winter's night, a log fire was always burning in the lounge room, which we all sat around, enjoying the warmth and the togetherness."* After seven years on the property, the Cockmans at last had a house that was now very definitely a home and family space.

The kitchen and children's bedroom lean-to was added later. You can see that the exterior wall of the kitchen lean-to addition is not continuous on the outside wall near the chimney.

The kitchen would rapidly become the hub of the family home where meals were prepared and eaten, ironing done and any number of domestic jobs undertaken. The children's room provided them with their own space despite having to share with several siblings. Here they could play or read, away from the adults.

Later still a second lean-to was added forming the back room later used as a bathroom and verandah with another step down in floor level.

At one point, George Cockman, the son of Emma Cockman's daughter Grace, used this back room. After his marriage George, who had been brought up by Granny Emma, brought his wife back to the farm to live. They shared the room which had been added on at the back and which later became the bathroom. Before the relative luxury of having it attached to the house, the bathroom was part of the exterior washhouse.

3.3 Isolation, self-sufficiency and recycling

Living in Wanneroo placed many demands on pioneer families such as the Cockmans.

The majority of food supply had to be produced locally and supplemented by hunting of kangaroo and other game. Other items such as salt, sugar and flour could be purchased in Perth but had to last between trips to town. There was a lack of medical and educational facilities as well as the difficulty of getting farm produce to the market in Perth particularly vegetables and fruit. The market gardeners of the area including the Cockman family would have to leave with their loaded wagons at sunset to arrive in Perth in time for the morning market. All these factors reinforced the sense of isolation of the Wanneroo settlers.

Such an isolated lifestyle required a high level of self-sufficiency. One approach to this was to recycle everything they could.

Recycling is certainly not a 'new idea'. In the pioneer days people were unable to buy new or replacement items because there were no shops nearby and they had very little money. Therefore as many things as possible were reused or improvised (made into something else). A good domestic example was hessian bags, which had a long list of uses after they had arrived in the home containing flour, wheat or animal feed.

Hessian or *jute* sacks were used a lot because there were no forklifts or machinery, so items needed to be transported in an easily carried container that could be carried on an average man's back. Therefore sacks were used to carry many commodities and were recycled into household items such as floor coverings, aprons, potholders, the covering of Coolgardie safes and general storage. Kerosene tins were also used after the kerosene they contained had been used in the kerosene lamps. The metal was easy to cut and form and all manner of containers and metal items could be produced. Before the building of the washhouse containing the 'copper', the Cockman women like many others of the time, used kerosene tins to boil water over a fire to begin the lengthy process of washing clothes.

Socks were 'darned' or repaired by sewing, old clothes that could no longer be worn were made into rag mats and anything that could be reused, was.

However as more people settled in the area, this isolation from the main colony in Perth became a source of irritation for the growing Wanneroo community.

3.4 The Road and the beginnings of local government

At the time of settlement it took around 8 hours to travel between Perth and the remote Wanneroo along the track that became Wanneroo Road. It was the Road that connected Wanneroo to the main colony and the development of the area is closely linked to the story of Wanneroo Road.

For many years the settlers at Wanneroo in the mid-19th century had to deal with little more than a wheel-rutted sand track through bushland to Perth that was part of the old stock route through to the northern settlements.

The position of Cockman House although dictated by the Shenton land grant became significant because of its relationship with the track that was to become Wanneroo Road. Cockman House is located by the Wanneroo Road. This made it a natural stopover for people travelling along the road and the Cockmans became well known for their hospitality. There is some suggestion that James operated his house for a time as a tavern for weary travellers. In a journal entitled *To my fellow-sojourners in Sunny Lands,* reflecting on his journey to WA in 1876, Alfred Wood wrote, '*Next stop at a Mr Cockman, who in England would have been taken for a game keeper by his dress – dark velveteens, leather gaiters, and a knowing reserved look….and deportment. In short D. privately described him as the most "uppish" publican on the road'.* (From *A Sea Voyage* by Alfred Wood, 1904.)

The house location also allowed direct access to the only northern transport artery to Perth and became an important meeting place for the beginnings of local authority in the area, as we will see.

By 1862 there were enough people travelling along the road for it to be *gazetted* or to be announced officially in a government journal. By 1871, despite the introduction of government in Western Australia (previously the colony was 'governed' by the Colonial Secretary's Office in London), little construction had been completed, which prompted a petition from several residents of the Wanneroo to the newly formed Perth Districts' Road Board, *'drawing the Board's attention to the wretched condition of the main line of road…'* Road Boards were responsible for the construction and repairs of roads, bridges and drainage works and were forerunners to local government in many areas.

In May of that year Governor Weld and Road Board Chairman Michael Smith led a party along the road, discovering how badly the road needed work and ordered the use of convicts to labour on it. The road was to be built of the cheapest materials available, which were the jarrah trees along the line of the road.

These were cut into blocks approximately 15 inches (45 cm) wide and 8 inches (20 cm) thick and laid in two rows with sand between. Only 6 km of the Road was completed when the convict party was withdrawn in 1875 (convict transportation had stopped in 1868). By 1900 the road was a mixture of blocks, planks and sand and was constantly under repair as heavy wagons would break and knock blocks out of alignment.

In October 1902 the decision to establish a Wanneroo Road Board was announced and the first meeting was held on the January 16, 1903, marking the beginning of the Road Board's ongoing role of the upgrading and repair of the Road. Cockman House was the location of many of the very early meetings of the Wanneroo Road Board with many of the Cockman and Backshall family members later working for the Board and later local government.

Many changes in construction were made to the road between 1902 and 1944 from blocks and limestone in 1908, through a plank road, and reconstruction after WW1 to limestone and rubble in the early 1920s. The road was bituminised up to the Wanneroo townsite by 1934 with several sections widened and recovered up to the 1940s.

In 1961 the Shire of Wanneroo replaced the Wanneroo Road, Health and Vermin Board to achieve local government, as we know it today. As one of Australia's three levels of government (Federal, State, Local) Local Government is the one that most closely affects the daily lives of citizens. It is also referred to as elected Councils, Shires or Local Councils.

Walking From North Perth *(a short story)*

During the early 1940s there was no bus service to Perth from Wanneroo. The 15-mile section of road, made from wooden blocks and limestone was rough and bumpy. To get to Perth, people would walk or hitch a ride to North Perth, then catch the number 22 tram into town, traveling the reverse when returning home. There were still a few horse and carts and some locals that had trucks. It was always appreciated if someone with a vehicle gave you a ride along the way.

Three or four times a year, my mother Eva Emma Buck (nee Pope) would either visit her sister Kitty in Gloucester Street, Subiaco, or in later shopping in Perth. She would set off real early in the morning, walking the two miles from her home in Caporn Street to the corner of Pinjar and Wanneroo Roads. If she arrived there before 7.00 am she would generally have been lucky enough to get a free ride on Della's milk truck.The driver would take her and sometimes other people, through to Mabel Street, North Perth where Della's Dairy was situated. She would then walk down to Charles Street to catch the tram into Perth and later continue on to Subiaco.

One time, on her return journey she left late to head home, catching the tram to North Perth. She as usual started to walk towards Wanneroo Road. On this occasion there were no people going in that direction. She walked the whole distance from North Perth to Caporn Street, Wanneroo and did not arrive home until well after midnight.

AS TOLD BY TED BUCK

Picture shown is Eva Emma Buck in later years

Pre/post-excursion activities

Lower Primary:

- Discuss some of the roles of local government that children might be aware of – e.g. rubbish collection. Brainstorm what would happen if rubbish was not collected? What would your family do with their rubbish? OR developing and maintaining recreation areas – ask who uses a local park – what do they like about it? What if there was no play equipment or no one to cut the grass? Where would you play if there were no parks? Where would people play sport if there were no ovals or sports centres?

Upper/Middle Primary:

- Discuss the role of local government. Why do we have it? How is it different from the other levels of government?
- Research the history of your local government and write a report about it.
- The community at Wanneroo 'petitioned' the central authority in Perth a number of times to improve transport links to the area. The presentation of a petition can be a powerful way for citizens to let governing bodies know about the issues affecting them. Think of an issue at school or the local area and write a petition to the appropriate authority.
- Research and discuss the changes to Wanneroo Road and how transport along it has changed. Consider how your life would have been different if your family did not have access to a car or bus service.

City of Wanneroo entry statement

THEME 4: THE ENVIRONMENT

4.1 The original wetlands environment

John Butler is the first recorded European to visit the Wanneroo area in 1834. While searching for lost cattle he noted that it would be a good place for future settlement.

Later in 1838, Lieutenant George Grey explored the area camping at a lake some 15 miles (24.1km) from Perth. Here he was visited by Aboriginal people, who told him the lake was called Mooloore and the land they were sitting on was called Doondalup.

Wanneroo lies on Whadjuk Noongar Country. Prior to European settlement the land north of the Swan River was the district of the Mooro, the family group led by the esteemed Noongar Elder, Yellagonga. Their main camp was at Mount Eliza (where King's Park is now). They were displaced by the new colony and withdrew to their camp site at Lake Monger where subsequent violent attacks from soldiers acting on behalf of settlers wanting to occupy the area again displaced them, leading the Mooro to flee to Lake Joondalup.

The wetlands adjacent to Cockman House remain significant to the Noongar people because it was an important camping area used widely for watering, food-gathering, tool-making, hunting and corroborees, and summer social life. This camping area was one of several that were part of a walking trail along the chain of lakes that run north from Perth used by the Noongar people. Here food was readily available with kangaroo and tortoise plentiful.

The arrival of European settlers also brought significant changes to the plants and animals of the lakes area. Originally in the areas close to the lake where the soil was always moist grew what is called *Melaleuca Woodland*, made up of Melaleucas such as Tea Trees and Paper Barks as well as Flooded Gum.

Further away from the water grew woodlands comprising a number of kinds of Eucalypt trees primarily Tuart, Jarrah, and Marri as well as Banksia and Sheoak. These provided habitat for a variety of birds and animals and were to become important as building materials by the colonists.

The area contained several species of mammals including the Quenda or Southern Brown Bandicoot, the Echidna, Brush-Tailed Possum and plentiful Western Grey Kangaroo that provided an important food source for both the local aborigines and the incoming colonists.

Subsequent clearing and land use changes and later urbanization of the area have significantly affected these populations as well as the introduction of foxes which either eat or compete with native animals, as well as plant weeds which have displaced native species in many areas.

4.2 Adapting the area for market gardens and livestock – influence of the environment on land use

One of the main reasons that James Cockman decided to locate his home on the edge of Wallaburnup Swamp at the southern end of Lake Joondalup was because of its proximity to the lake system and reliable source of water. Here he established a market garden and dairy farm on his 45 acres (18 hectares) of what was to become prime agricultural land.

Farm areas were cleared of much of the native vegetation to provide open grassed areas for cattle and closer to the lakes for the growing of vegetables. The reeds and other vegetation at the lake fringe were removed and vegetables planted into the mud.

Runoff into the lake system over time brought with it fine sediment and organic matter to produce far richer soils than the infertile sandy soils on much of the Perth coastal plain. This meant this location was much better for the growing of vegetables and fruit, as well as feed for the cows and pigs produced by the Cockman family.

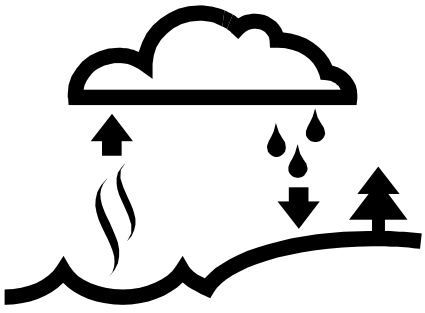
Like today, water was a major issue so we should consider how it works in the environment.

4.3 The Water Cycle and Cockman House

Water is one of the most important elements for life on Earth and it was certainly no different when James Cockman built Cockman House. Let's have a look at how Cockman House and its residents interacted with the *Hydrology* of the area and how changes in the technology of water supply made things a little easier for them. *Hydrology* is the science of water above, on and below the Earth's surface and how it circulates in the Water (or *Hydrological*) Cycle. A number of words are in *italics* and their meaning can be found in the glossary at the end of the information sheet.

This continuous cycle has no beginning or end with water able to change between liquid, vapor, and ice within it.

The water cycle consists of four distinct stages: *storage, evaporation, precipitation,* and *runoff*. Water may be stored temporarily in the ground; in oceans, lakes, and rivers; and in ice caps and glaciers. It evaporates from the earth's surface, *condenses* (changes from gas to liquid) in clouds, falls back to the earth as precipitation (rain or snow), and eventually either runs into the seas or re-evaporates into the atmosphere. Almost all the water on the earth has passed through the water cycle countless times.



Most precipitation falls back into the oceans or onto land, where the precipitation flows over the ground as surface *runoff* .

Part of the runoff enters rivers in valleys with streamflow moving water towards the oceans. Runoff, and ground-water *seepage*, accumulate and are stored as freshwater in lakes. Not all runoff flows into lakes and rivers. Much of it soaks into the ground as *infiltration*. Some water infiltrates deep into the ground and replenishes *aquifers* which store huge amounts of freshwater for long periods of time.

Some infiltration stays close to the land surface and can seep back into surface-water bodies (and the ocean) as *ground-water discharge,* and some *ground water* finds openings in the ground and comes to the surface as freshwater springs.

This process was particularly important in the Wanneroo district. The European settlers soon realised that although many of the lakes in in the area dried back significantly each summer, the soil would stay wet due to springs and seeps. The underground water allowed settlers to feel less of the effects of the harsh Western Australian climate.

The sun, which powers the water cycle, heats water in the oceans, some of which *evaporates* into the air as vapour. Ice and snow can *sublimate* or change state from solid to a gas directly into water vapour. Rising air currents take the vapour up into the atmosphere, along with water *transpired* from plants and evaporated from the soil. The water vapour rises into the air where it cools and *condenses* into clouds. Air currents move clouds around the globe, cloud particles collide, grow, and fall out of the sky as *precipitation*.

Like you today, the Cockmans needed water for drinking, cooking and washing as well as to water their animals and irrigate vegetables and fruit trees. But unlike today they did not just turn a tap on in their house; they had to collect it. At first this was done by filling buckets up at the lake and bringing them back to the house which was hard work and very time consuming.

Galvanised buckets or kerosene tins were used from the late 1800s for fetching water. The Cockmans may have carried the water in two buckets using a yoke across the shoulders or a potstick enabling two people to help carry the buckets.

Later a well was dug next to the house which provided water much more conveniently with George Shenton supplying a winch for the well. Water wells are made-made structures put down into the ground by digging or drilling in order to retrieve water from underground. As rain water seeps into the ground, it settles in the pores and cracks of underground rocks and into the spaces between grains of sand and pieces of gravel. In time, the water trickles down into a layer of rock or other material that is water tight.

This water tight zone collects the ground water, creating a *saturated* zone known as an *aquifer*. The top of this zone is called the *water table*. A well is made by reaching ground water in the water table.

At the site of Cockman House the water table is relatively shallow, so the well did not need to be very deep before reaching the ground water.

In the later 1800s, water was often stored at homesteads in a square iron tank. There was generally no tap: water was dipped out with a dipper, pouring it into a bucket on the ground. Cockman House had such a tank near the back verandah of the house, which is now stored in the shed. The Cockmans had attached a tap at the bottom of their tank.

Later rainwater tanks were placed near the house with pipes to take the runoff from the roof into the tank. The Cockman House water tank has pipes running from the tank connected to the water taps inside.

In the 1960s, a level of technology arrived at Cockman House with the construction of the windmill or wind pump seen in so many Australian farms that uses the wind to power a simple pump to bring the water up from the well. This water was stored in the large tank. Later pipes with taps were added which brought water into the house directly – quite an innovation!

In the early 20th century with the invention and arrival of refrigeration, improved road surfaces and truck transport, ice deliveries to Wanneroo became possible and the so did the use of what was then a great leap forward in storage technology, the ice chest.

Large blocks of ice were placed in the top section to keep the items inside the chest cold allowing things such as meat and milk to last considerably longer before they 'went off'. The ice was placed at the top and would slowly melt. The water collected in a tray at the top and could then be used for other purposes.

Remember, Cockman House was lived in until 1987 without connection to scheme water or electricity supply. Likewise the house was never connected to the sewerage system or indeed to a septic tank. All wastewater was returned directly to the soil including material from the outdoor 'dunny' (usually one of the domestic duties of the boys of the family).

Have a good look at the landscape you see today around Cockman House. Although the view across the swamp remains similar to when the house was first built, most of the surrounding land has been developed for housing and commercial activities and much of the woodland has been removed.

The increased number of people and buildings or *urbanization* has a number of consequences for the water quality in the area. Runoff is reduced in areas and although the wetland is recharged by groundwater, more and more of this supply is being accessed by suburban bores.

Runoff that does make it into the wetlands sometimes has higher levels of nitrogen from fertilizers used by growers and gardeners and leaching from septic tanks. This material stimulates the growth of some species of algae in the lakes and streams causing massive population growth, what are called *algal blooms*, which have devastating effects on water quality and as a result the wildlife that live in and on the lake. This process of dramatically increasing nutrient levels is called *eutrofication*.

It is clear to see that the activity of people have an increasingly significant effect on the water cycle and looking back on how Cockman House fitted into the cycle, can help us understand how it works and how we now influence it.

Glossary

aquifer - an underground bed or layer of earth, gravel, or porous stone that yields water.
evaporation – the process of becoming a vapour
galvanise - to coat (iron or steel) with rust-resistant zinc.
precipitation - any form of water, such as rain, snow, sleet, or hail, that falls to the earth's surface.
runoff - something that drains or flows off, as rain that flows off from the land in streams.
sublimate - to transform directly from the solid to the gaseous state or from the gaseous to the solid state without becoming a liquid.
saturated - soaked, impregnated, or imbued thoroughly.
storage – capacity or space for storing.
water table – the level below which the ground is completely saturated with water.

Pre/post-excursion activities

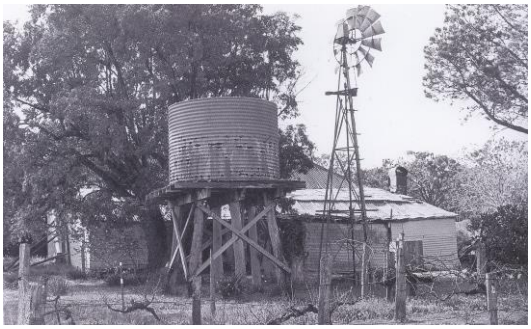
Lower Primary:

- Discuss an illustration (from the internet) of the Water Cycle and consider how people interact with it.
- Make a table and list the activities involving water – one column would have your family water use and one column would have the Cockman House water use.
- Discuss how much and where you use water each day.
- How much do you think is used by your household – display this as a number of buckets?
- What are the ways you could reduce your water use?

Middle Primary:

- Investigate the influence of the natural features had on the selection of this location as the site for Cockman House and on the choice of land use by the settlers in the Wanneroo area.
- Investigate the reasons why the settlers chose to utilise the land in the way that they did in relation to the natural and built features.
- Reflect on the differences between your water use and that of the residents of Cockman House.
- How do you think having water supplied to your house has affected how you use and think about water?
- What else are we putting into the water cycle?
- Consider what we add to water then send down the sink with it or when we flush the toilet?
- How are these things affecting our environment?
- Check the Water Corporation website at www.watercorporation.com.au

THEME 5: HERITAGE AND CHANGE



5.1 The ideas of history and heritage – what is the 'value' of heritage places?

The word ***History*** can simply be defined the record of people, events and times in the past, usually recorded as a description in time sequence.

Heritage has been defined as 'something we have inherited from the past and something we value enough to leave for future generations'. *The National Trust of Australia (WA) 1997*

You can see that both ideas deal with things from the past but heritage also deals with the future. Often heritage places, natural or built, have important historical connections but it is the *value* that a community places on the locality, building or object that moves it from part of the historical record to something that is part of that community's heritage and worthy of *conservation* and *interpretation.*

The Heritage Council is the State government's agency for heritage matters and promotes the conservation of the cultural heritage of Western Australia. It maintains the **State Register of Heritage Places**, a list of places given official recognition of heritage significance to Western Australia.

The acceptance of a place as significant by a community can be recognised at a number of levels from local inclusion on a municipal inventory to international with World Heritage listing.

5.2 The 'significance' of Cockman House

Cockman House was considered to be of such great heritage value to the community of Wanneroo that in 1987 the then Shire of Wanneroo purchased it and some of the surrounding land to make it a museum and preserve the building.

The City of Wanneroo and the Wanneroo and Districts Historical Society worked together to change the house into a museum so that members of the community could learn about the life and times of the Cockman and Backshall families and enjoy the experience of visiting. The house has added significance as many of the pieces of furniture and artefacts contained are original to the house and were used by the families that lived there.

By 1996 it was fully restored and its heritage value recognised at a State level in 1997 when the *Heritage Council of Western Australia* placed it on the *Register of Heritage Places*.

Conservation - the act of preserving, guarding, or protecting; the keeping (of a thing) in a safe or entire state.
Interpretation - the act or process of explaining the meaning of something.

The State Register also legally protects these places by requiring that any proposed changes maintain the heritage value of the place.

The Heritage Council stated that Cockman House was culturally significant because:

- of its association with European settlement and the establishment of farming in the Wanneroo, district in the 1850s;
- the place demonstrates the way of life of a small landholding farmer in the colony in the mid-19th century; its association with James Cockman and his family; and
- it is a rare example of an improvised mid-19th century rural cottage in the metropolitan area of Perth and is representative of cottages of its era.

5.3 Technological change – domestic environment

Compare your own house and the technology it contains with Cockman House.
The house was not connected to any of the services that are provided to householders today such as water, sewage and electricity.

Water had to be collected from the lake initially when James first settled on the property but later wells were dug to supply a more convenient water supply. This did however require the daily chore of collecting the water from the well and bringing it to the house for use.

Similarly, it was not until the 1900s that well to do houses had toilets built inside the house. Before this outside pan toilets (dunnies) were used during the day and chamber pots and commodes within the house at night. The material collected would have to be disposed of in the morning, usually by the children of the family.

Cockman House was built before the invention of the electric light and did not have any electrical power until it was converted to a museum.

Candles or kerosene lamps provided lighting at night. Candles and lamps enabled people to read, sew, clean and repair clothes and tools.

Originally the early settlers used candles that were made from animal fat tallow or beeswax. These gave off a strong smell and a lower light than the later paraffin candles. Paraffin wax was produced in commercial quantities from petroleum oil by 1850 and with improved cotton wicks allowed mass production of cheap, high quality candles using candle-making machines.

However with the development of commercial production of kerosene in the 1850s, kerosene lamps largely replaced candles after it was first brought to Australia around 1860. By 1880 it was being used in most homes in Australia because it was cheap, produced a much brighter light than candles and lasted much longer. The lamps were also virtually smokeless and odourless.

The lamps needed to be cared for, and it was a household duty to clean the lamps and trim or replace the wicks – a good supply of fuel had to be kept so the lamps were always full.
The lack of electricity at Cockman House also meant that when it was lived in, everything was done by hand in the house – all washing, cleaning, and cooking – with the great

majority of domestic work done by the women of the household.

Cooking was done originally on an open fire in the kitchen. This was the central point of the kitchen. It provided heat for cooking, hot water for washing up and bathing, heating the irons and also helped to warm the room in winter.

There had to be a supply of chopped wood available for the kitchen stove, as well as the lounge fireplace and laundry. This was another job for the boys of the family.

For information about cooking and cleaning see *Theme 2 – Work.*

The Cockmans were fortunate because they grew all their own vegetables and kept chickens for eggs and cows for milk, so most food was fresh.

Food could not be stored for long as there were no refrigerators. Meat could be kept a day or two in a meat safe kept in the coolest part of the house. This kept flies off and was out of reach of other wildlife. Meat was often salted or smoked allowing them to last longer before spoiling.

The kitchen safe stored less perishable foods such as sugar, jam, and bread and had fly wire on three sides. It was the kitchen 'pantry' and was used to keep food safe from insects and pests. The legs often stood in tin cans filled with water and a drop of kerosene to prevent the ants from crawling up the sides of the safe.

Perishable food such as meat, milk and butter could be stored longer with the invention of the Coolgardie Safe. Water dripped from a water container at the top and soaked the hessian sacking draped down the sides of the safe keeping the food inside cool through the process of evaporation. Much later when ice could be manufactured, the ice chest became the latest technology for keeping things cold. Ice deliveries were made to the home by the 'ice man'. The large blocks of ice were put into the top tin lined compartment of the ice chest to keep the lower compartment, also lined with tin, cool. Compare this with today's refrigerators that contain freezers. Some even connect to the internet!!

Look around Cockman House and see what other changes in technology have occurred since the middle of the 19th century. Imagine how you would live using the technology of that time.

Coolgardie Safe

Curriculum links

Historical Knowledge and Understanding strand

Lower Primary:

- Discuss why visiting old houses might be useful and fun. What would you look for in such a visit?
- Discuss what it would be like to have a kitchen with no electricity. What appliances would not be able to be used? What would it be like to live with no refrigerator or food processor? How would you make and store your food?
- Collect pictures (or the real thing if possible) of objects used in early 20th century kitchens. Discuss how each object worked.

Middle Primary:

- Discuss the 'heritage value' of the house and land. Do you feel that Cockman House should be retained as a heritage place? If so, why?
- Imagine you are a member of your local historical society and wish to preserve an historic house. Write a letter expressing your arguments why the house has should be retained. State what it is that is so important it should be preserved?
- Research the Heritage Council of Western Australia. Report on the advantages and disadvantages of having such an organisation providing legal protection over heritage places.
- Volunteers are a very important part of running a museum. Discuss the 'value' of volunteers and community involvement, and plan an advertising campaign to attract more volunteers to a museum. What are the attributes of the people you are after and what do think will attract them?
- Write a list of items you think will become the museum artefacts of the future and explain why you this.
- Plan and construct a Coolgardie safe using a milk carton and hessian. How would you test it was working?
- Hessian was also used to construct 'bag houses' in Wanneroo. Research and report on these.

We hope you enjoy your visit to Cockman House.

If you have any further questions, please contact the Education Officer on 9405 5906.