



Digitisation opens up a world of local history

Local history librarians face the ever-present challenge of providing our communities with access to their heritage treasures, as well as preserving these resources for future generations. The Picture Joondalup project – a finalist in the 2011 Western Australia History Awards – links preservation and access to historical materials in an online environment, enabling the Joondalup Library to share many previously untold tales of heroes and pioneers.

Picture Joondalup is an online pictorial catalogue created by the City of Joondalup Local History Library. This heritage initiative is part of a



The Joondalup Local History Digitisation Team (LtoR) Back: Angela Calitz, Daniel Rozas and Karen Newman. Front (seated): Gregory Burford and Steven Hughes

multi-phased digitisation project that aims to preserve and conserve the history of the Joondalup and Wanneroo region in the North West corridor of Perth. Our online catalogue is a result of cutting-edge digital image technologies, old-school local history librarianship and ongoing support from library professionals, the local community and the City of Joondalup.

The local history digitisation team was formed in 2010 with a Local History Librarian, a Local History Digitisation Officer and four Library Officers. The City began by conducting historical research and digitising its pictorial collection of 7000 items. In conjunction with the collection management team, the digitisation team uploaded each photograph along with its historical context to the library management system, using this online platform to publish on the internet.

The team has uncovered fascinating tales of courage and hardship and stories of men and women with a dream, people to whom we owe what the Joondalup and Wanneroo communities are today. As part of this project, the Local History Library also discovered an eerie ghost story from our past that we would like to share in this Histories, Hauntings and Heroes issue of *INCITE*: the story of the haunting of the *Alkimos*.

The Greek freighter *Alkimos* (originally christened *George M. Shriver*), was a wartime Liberty ship used to supply war cargo from the USA to Britain. In 1953 it was sold to a Greek shipping line and renamed *Alkimos*, a Greek word for "strong" or "young man". On May 30th 1963, on her way to Hong Kong for repairs, the ship was forced onto a reef during a storm. All attempts to refloat the ship were unsuccessful and while repairs were being done, the *Alkimos* mysteriously caught fire, causing extensive damage. A year later on May 2 1964, the ship broke her anchor during another storm and ran aground offshore four kilometres south of Yanchep in Western Australia.

A number of people have allegedly witnessed a ghost known as Henry walking the decks of the *Alkimos* in a seaman's oilskin coat and rubber boots. The ghost is supposedly Henry John Bishop, a smuggler who was murdered at the age of 42. Crayfishermen, caretakers, salvagers and visitors to the *Alkimos* have seen and heard Henry prowling the decks and moving things around. Tools disappearing and then reappearing have also been reported.

The *Alkimos* has gained a reputation as a jinxed ship as her owners, crew members and visitors have been affected

by accidents, unexplained illnesses and bad luck after coming into contact with her. Jack Sue, a Perth diver and *Alkimos* researcher vowed never to return to the *Alkimos* after suffering a series of life-threatening illnesses and the accidental death of his wife.

The haunting of the *Alkimos* and other captivating stories and images from the City of Joondalup glorious past and present can be found by following the links on our website www.joondalup.wa.gov.au.

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Future Katoomba Library - 3D rendering

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