A HISTORY OF THE

Ugly Men's Voluntary Workers' Association of W.A.

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Murdoch University 1993.
I declare that this thesis is my own account of my own research.
ABSTRACT

In recounting the history of the Ugly Mens' Voluntary Workers' Association of Western Australia this thesis addresses several themes. It challenges the depiction of Western Australia in the inter-war period as a prosperous and consensual society. Until recently this has been the dominant construction in Western Australian historical writing. The existence of a welfare organisation of the size and scope of the Ugly Men's Association indicates that there was a greater degree of poverty and hardship experienced in Perth than had previously been acknowledged. An account of the activities of this body of voluntary workers helps bring to light the nature and the extent of that poverty.

The thesis illustrates changing community responses to poverty. The provision of charity to the poor was ceasing to be the province of the wealthy elite by the end of the nineteenth century. Comprehensive welfare programmes were not implemented by the Commonwealth government until the 1940s. The Ugly Men's Association, during that intervening period, represents an attempt by the lower middle and working classes to provide for their own welfare. The response of the upper middle class self-appointed 'moral guardians' to some of the Association's fund raising methods, however, resulted in the curtailment of those activities and ultimately the end of the Association.

The areas in which the Association sought to provide assistance incorporate some of the dominant social concerns of the inter-war period. The problems addressed by the Association - of soldiers and their dependants, newly arrived immigrants and the development of the state's rural industries - reflected the prevailing ideologies of Empire
and the agrarian myth. The changing role of government in these areas is also elucidated through the study of the Ugly Men.

This thesis has retrieved from obscurity a band of voluntary workers who provided not only material relief from hardship but also a great deal of entertainment. The Ugly Men were a major force in the cultural life of Perth in the 1920s.
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Introduction.

The Ugly Men's Voluntary Workers Association of Western Australia (Inc) was formed in 1917 by a group of citizens who were, in the first instance, concerned about the hardship caused by the absence or loss of male breadwinners as a result of Australia's involvement in World War 1. The problem, they decided, could be directly addressed through voluntary labour and publicly donated funds. While the executive committee was dominated by businessmen, merchants and entrepreneurs who directed the Association's activities, its membership base included women, skilled tradesmen and labourers whose voluntary work was essential for the achievement of the Association's aims.

The Association is referred to in a number of texts dealing with the inter-war period of Western Australia's history, but the references are, on the whole, fleeting; often merely recording its existence as one of several charity organisations operating at that time. F.K. Crowley's *Australia's Western Third*¹ and G.C. Bolton's *A Fine Country to Starve In*², for example, both refer to the Association only to note briefly the nature of its operations. Some recent local histories and autobiographies provide examples of the organisation's activities, but within a very specific context.³ Such evanescent references belie the

size of the organisation and the extent of its activities, masking the fact that, at its peak in the mid- to late-1920s, the Ugly Men's Association was annually raising and distributing around £12,000 to upwards of 7,000 applicants for relief; that there were over 2,000 names on the membership roll; that there were 21 suburban branches; and that it operated, albeit with changing objectives and *modus operandi*, for more than two decades.

A closer study of the Ugly Men's Association makes possible a number of things. The existence of, and need for, a voluntary welfare organisation of this size poses an implicit challenge to the portrayal (by Crowley and Bolton, for example) of inter-war Western Australia as a prosperous and contented society. It also affords the opportunity to examine the changing roles of government and community in providing for the poorer members of society during that era. The socialist model of income maintenance was not developed until the middle of the twentieth century, but by the end of the nineteenth century the concept of charity as the moral duty of the wealthier classes was becoming increasingly inappropriate for a society which saw itself offering opportunities for advancement within a more egalitarian structure. Within this transition period, the Ugly Men's Association was insistent that the help they gave was not *charity*, but rather *assistance* to those who, through temporary misfortune, were suffering hardship. With the right sort of help, these people could once again take their places as productive members of society.

A survey of the fund raising methods of the Association can add to the body of knowledge of inter-war popular culture, and the response of the middle class guardians of public morality further challenges Bolton's depiction of inter-war Western Australia as a consensual, homogeneous society. It provides another example of the control exercised by that small sector of society which imposed its views of appropriate behaviour on the rest of the community through persistent and self-righteous lobbying. The actions of the moral guardians in asserting their standards of propriety have been documented by other writers in addressing gambling, censorship and popular entertainment in the inter-war period.4

The Association's efforts in assisting soldier settlers and immigrant settlers and the establishment of a farm training school for boys reflect the contemporary concern with the development of the state's rural industries and the dominant ideology which asserted the superiority of agrarian life - the arcadian myth. Finally, the growth and decline of the Association itself provides a fascinating insight into the workings of an autonomous group - one which seemed very much the product of two men, Alex Clydesdale and Harry Mann, both of whom were members of the Legislative Assembly but tried to shape their society by extra-parliamentary means.

While the voluntary nature of the membership of the Association suggests a grassroots response to suffering which largely coincides

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with Bolton's characterisation of a close-knit community, the 
Association 's *raison d'être* by implication contradicts the suggestion of 
civic self-satisfaction which flavours the first few chapters of *A Fine 
Country to Starve In*. Although unemployment in the early 1920s was 
by no means as extensive as it was during the years of the depression, 
neither was it insignificant. In the absence of either self-contributory or 
government funded income maintenance programmes, considerable 
hardship ensued if the period of unemployment was protracted.

Bolton's citation of Opposition leader James Mitchell's 1930 election 
campaign speech (which Bolton refers to as 'a message of hope' for the 
electors compared with the 'platitudes' offered by the Labor 
government) paints an idyllic picture of Western Australia which should 
be treated with not a little scepticism:

*During the five years I led the coalition government from 1919 to 1924 we had no unemployed trouble, no starving people. Everyone was at work, prosperous and happy.*

Although this statement bears all the hallmarks of election rhetoric, the 
vision created seems to have influenced Crowley's earlier assertion 
that it was 'evident that the State had gone far towards providing for ... 
the economic needs of its citizens'\(^6\), and his conclusion that the 1920s 
was a decade of considerable and widespread prosperity in the state.\(^7\)

Even a cursory examination of the kind of assistance provided by the 
Ugly Men's Association reveals clearly that the economic needs of 
some citizens were far from being met, at least a decade before 
widespread unemployment was acknowledged as a political and

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\(^7\)ibid., p237.
economic reality. The role of government in providing welfare services within this period can be elucidated by studying the activities of the Ugly Men's Association, particularly since the organisation often sought government endorsement and material support for its projects. The New Settlers' League branch of the Ugly Men's Association, for example, which found rural employment for immigrants planning to take up land under the Empire Settlement scheme, received a subsidy from both the Commonwealth and state governments; and returned soldiers who attended the Ugly Men's Instructional School for Returned Soldiers were, through the intercession of the President of the Ugly Men's Association, able to continue receiving sustenance payments while in training and free rail travel.

The changing nature of the Ugly Men's Association's objectives was in part a response to changes in government welfare policy and practices, which in some instances can be seen as partly due to the activities of the Association itself. Government dissatisfaction with the activities of the New Settlers' League, for instance, ultimately saw this role absorbed into the Immigration Department. Implicit within this process, however, was the government's acknowledgement that the resolution of the types of problems which had faced immigrants and prompted the formation of the League ought to be one of its responsibilities.

A study of the Ugly Men's Association fund-raising techniques adds a good deal to our understanding of popular culture in inter-war Western Australia. The Association was imaginative and entertaining in its fund raising efforts, aiming to involve as large a part of the community as possible. Torchlight processions, dances, popularity contests, talent quests, mock courts which extracted donations by way of 'fines' imposed for 'misconduct', and the production of a four reel feature film
directed by local film-maker Fred Murphy all engendered a great deal of public enthusiasm and provided entertainment for adults and children alike. Gambling, in a variety of forms such as bingo, art unions, and simple guessing competitions, formed a significant part of the Association's money-making repertoire. The annual Uglieland carnivals at Perth and Fremantle provided an even greater variety of games of chance, and public enjoyment of them is evident in the amount of revenue they generated for the Association.

Despite the fact that this revenue was used for public good and not private profit, the persistent efforts of several women's groups and church councils in protesting that the moral dangers outweighed any positive effects of the charitable works eventually resulted in the closure of the amusement parks. The drastic loss of revenue resulting from this marked a turning point in the history of the organisation. The Association's income in the early 1930s dropped to a quarter of what it had been in the previous decade, at a time when, somewhat ironically, the calls on its services were even more numerous and urgent. Despite this, the work of the Association continued, relying on regular donations from individuals and sympathetic business houses. A new venture in 1932 was begun with the establishment of an agricultural training school for boys at Wokalup, continuing to project an ideal of a Western Australia depending on the growth of its rural industries.

In 1939, with the outbreak of war, the Association went into recess. Alex Clydesdale by this time had been president of the Association for 21 years and Harry Mann, after a year as president, had also been vice president for 21 years. Both men were well into their sixties by then, but there was no suggestion of passing control to a younger person. It is tempting to speculate whether the Association would have maintained
its vitality longer had there been an infusion of energy at the executive level, or whether an end was inevitable with the introduction of a wider range of government welfare services in the 1940s, reducing the need for an organisation such as this. As it was, no further meetings of the executive were held and when, after Clydesdale's death in 1947, an investigation into the affairs of the Ugly Men's Association was conducted by the Chief Secretary's Department, it was found that there was sufficient evidence of maladministration for the remaining assets of the Association to be vested in the Minister responsible for the administration of the recently implemented Charities Act. After two decades of enthusiastic and generous service to the people of Western Australia, the Ugly Men's Association had come to a rather inglorious ending.

Despite this rather untidy dénouement, or perhaps even because of it, the history of the Ugly Men's Association deserves to be recorded. Its telling fills a gap in Western Australian historical writing which has only acknowledged the existence of poverty relatively recently\(^8\) and provides an insight into the way one community responded to the hardship in its midst. Western Australian welfare initiatives in the inter-war period which were neither church nor government sponsored have hitherto been largely unaddressed.

The origins of the Association and its philosophy are explained in Chapter One with an overview of the Association's activities. Chapter Two discusses in more detail the work of the Association in relation to soldiers and their dependants, while the activities of the New Settlers'

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\(^8\)C.T. Stannage 'Uncovering Poverty in Australian History', *Early Days: Journal of the Historical Society of Western Australia*, Volume 7 (8) 1976,
League are discussed in Chapter Three. The Association's fund-raising techniques and the unfavourable response to them from some quarters are the subject of Chapter Four, while the recipients of those funds and the scope of contemporaneous government welfare services are detailed in Chapter Five. An Epilogue summarises the fortunes of the Association from its decline in 1930 to its official demise in 1947.
Chapter 1 - Ugliology - the New Science, dealing with the Solution of the old Problem 'How to Cure Suffering'.

The history of the Ugly Men's Association properly begins before the Association itself was formed. In January 1917 the fund-raising committee of the East Perth Football Club organised an 'Ugly Man' competition to raise money for the Children's Hospital and the Patriotic War Fund. The 'Ugly Man' competition had been invented, so her descendants claim, by Alicia Pell, of Kalgoorlie. An energetic fund raiser for the Red Cross during World War 1, Mrs Pell had already organised popular girl and baby competitions when she was asked by a gentlemen from whom she was soliciting a donation whether she could organise a contest in which men could participate. The competition she devised was both simple and entertaining: anybody could be nominated, for a fee, and 'votes' could be bought and directed to any of the candidates. Whoever had the most votes directed towards him won the dubious honour of the 'Ugly Man' title, and all monies went to charity.1 The idea had instant appeal and became, for some years, a popular method of raising funds throughout the state.2

When the East Perth Football Club organised their 'Ugly Man' competition, nearly £2,000 was raised and the 132 nominations for the title included Club members and a variety of entrants from Perth's racing community, local business men, Alex Clydesdale, who at that


2 Ibid. Also see, for example, J.P. Gabbedy, Yours Is the Earth: The Life and Times of Charles Mitchell, (UWA Press, Nedlands, 1972), pp 99 - 102.
time was the Mayor of South Perth, Father Crowley, the Reverend Wheatley and Police Sergeant Egan. Each vote cost one penny but as many votes could bought as desired. The competition, which ran for a fortnight, climaxed in an auction of donated goods, with each lot representing a specified number of votes which could be directed toward the successful bidder's preferred candidates. Mr P.A. (Paddy) Connolly, one of the contestants, bid £360 for a £200 cheque donated by Harry Boan, and even after directing £150 worth of votes to some of his competitors, had accumulated enough votes to be declared the winner.³

After the close of the competition, the committee members recognised that there was a continuing need for an organisation to raise funds and deal with the many cases of distress caused by the war. After several meetings with interested persons the Ugly Men's Voluntary Workers' Association of Western Australia was formed and registered as an incorporated body. Harry Mann, the President of the East Perth Football Club and Chief Inspector of the Criminal Investigation Bureau, was elected as the Association's first President, while Paddy Connolly was elected Patron.

Membership was open to all, the annual subscription being ten shillings, payable quarterly, or the donation of goods to that value, or one day's voluntary labour. Life membership would be awarded to anyone donating over £5.5.-. It is difficult to be precise about the nature of the membership since all of the Association's records were accidentally destroyed at some point in the 1940s but it appears that the majority of members were either lower-middle or working class members.

³West Australian, 25/1/17, p6; 1/2/17, p8; 20/2/17, p8.
people. It is logical to argue that if a branch was formed in a particular suburb it was because there was a need for one there. And if there was a need for a branch of the Association in a suburb then that suburb, and the membership of that branch, was probably predominantly working or lower-middle class. The preponderance of branches in suburbs like Belmont, Bayswater, Bassendean, Leederville, Victoria Park, North Perth and Fremantle, for example, also suggests that the membership was dominated by people in the lower income brackets. The fact that membership could be obtained through donating one’s labour meant that it was not exclusive of people on limited incomes.

The Association ensured that the efforts made by its members did not go unnoticed or unrewarded. Outstanding efforts by individuals were frequently rewarded by gifts and presentations. The winner of the 1924 popular lady competition, Miss Winnie Cole, received an illuminated address and a gold brooch in recognition of her contribution to the Association’s funds⁴, while another entrant was awarded a framed

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⁴*West Australian*, 24/5/24, p9.
certificate and a silver teapot.\textsuperscript{5} Life membership was often conferred on especially hard-working individuals at complimentary social evenings arranged by the Association. A picnic held at Kalamunda in 1927 for members and their families was attended by 1,000 people and two special trains were required to transport them all to the picnic grounds where sports and games were organised. The executive regarded the fact that so large a number of persons participated as 'a gratifying indication of the strength of the association'.\textsuperscript{6}

At the inaugural meeting of the Ugly Men's Voluntary Workers' Association in August 1917, Harry Mann defined its as assisting the dependants of soldiers who had fallen at the front, and other good work, while his fellow committee member, Alex Clydesdale, added that it would be 'a standing disgrace to the people of Western Australia if it was found after the war that the wives and children of the men who had fallen had been neglected.'\textsuperscript{7} Although these sentiments embodied the rhetoric of Empire and patriotic duty, the 'Ugly Men' were vociferous in dispelling the idea that they were dispensing a Victorian form of charity, preferring instead to describe their role as assisting those 'less fortunately situated than themselves'.\textsuperscript{8}

The distinction was not mere pedantry, but a reflection of a changing attitude toward poverty and the way it ought to be relieved. The word 'charity', in the early twentieth century, still carried rather demeaning overtones of the 'deserving poor' and the moral obligations of their betters in a hierarchical society. Brian Dickey, in reviewing the history

\textsuperscript{5}West Australian, 2/7/24, p6.
\textsuperscript{6}West Australian, 27/4/27, p10.
\textsuperscript{7}West Australian, 15/8/17, p6
\textsuperscript{8}West Australian, 4/9/19, p6.
of social welfare in Australia, describes this concept of 'conditional welfare', dominant throughout the nineteenth century, as being governed by a principle of selectivity which ensured that only the morally respectable poor were entitled to receive charity. Applications for relief would be most favourably regarded if the applicant were sober, honest and industrious; while the drunkard or the prostitute, if not prepared to mend their ways, could expect to receive no help at all.

In Australia in the early twentieth century, this selective response to poverty was being replaced by a universalist approach which was more egalitarian, and which rejected 'the direct moral supervision of the poor by the ruling classes through charitable societies which charity had bought.' The idea that poverty could be the result of an individual's environment, not just their moral character, was also gaining currency. A spirit of free enterprise operating within a capitalist economy generated a self-help approach to welfare which viewed poor relief more as the distribution of surplus than as charity. Genuine cases were those who, through misfortune, had temporarily lost their place within the system. With the right sort of assistance, they could again become productive members of society.

Operating from within this philosophy, the Ugly Men's Association (to cite just two examples) supplied a sewing machine to a soldier's widow with three young children so that she could support her family, and an old man was given a cart so he could continue his work which up to

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9 Brian Dickey, No Charity There, (Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1987), p xii
10 Ibid., pp 40-42.
11 Ibid., p108.
12 Ibid., p74.
13 Ibid., pp xii-xvi.
that point had mostly meant carrying loads on his shoulders. Refusing to see himself as the recipient of 'charity', however, the old man repaid the cost of the cart as soon as he could afford it. The aims of the Association and its attitude toward its clients were clearly stated in a booklet entitled *Ugliology*, which was printed and sold to raise funds in December 1918:

*All the Association does is to provide ... what the recipient is entitled to, a 'fair deal by the Fates'. No family ... should starve because the one-time breadwinner is absent or ill - all children should receive a fair start in a home surrounded and supported by the only things that make good men and women - clean home influence and ample good food.*

A fundamental principle of *Ugliology* was the belief that people are essentially 'good', that if everybody started from a good home and had the means to earn a reasonable wage, then the world would be full of decent citizens. The importance of 'a good home' and the ideal of a community which supported its weaker members and worked toward a common good were stressed at every opportunity. Those who were temporarily down on their luck should be helped by those who were fortunate enough to have secured the makings of a decent life. *Ugliology* was both an explanation of the Association's work and an attempt to rally more public support, pointing out that the Association

*is out determined to help humanity, to raise the fallen, to smooth the path of the sufferer, and in the names of all who suffer undeservedly calls upon Westralia to support its efforts.*

In the transition toward a more universalist approach to welfare, the belief that a lack of opportunity, rather than a lack of moral fibre, was

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15 *Ugliology*, p7.
responsible for straitened circumstances did not necessarily mean that there were no selection criteria to be met before assistance was granted. The eligibility criteria for old-age pensions introduced by the Commonwealth government in 1908, for example, were not entirely free from moral requirements\textsuperscript{16}. And the 1925 Royal Commission into National Insurance which inquired into the operations of voluntary welfare organisations throughout Australia reported that although there were many people who, despite suffering hardship, were reluctant to ask for assistance, there were others with fewer scruples who applied for help from a number of agencies concurrently. As a result, the Commissioners reported, most charitable organisations employed an investigations officer who, 'in a sympathetic and tactful manner' ascertained 'the character and general circumstances of applicants for relief'.\textsuperscript{17} The Ugly Men's Association also followed this practice (although the investigations officers in each branch acted in a voluntary capacity) as explained in \textit{Ugliology}:

\begin{quote}
Every case is quietly but most thoroughly investigated before relief is granted. In all cases the brain directs the heart, but never, even in the case of proven imposters, is the eye-for-an-eye theory put into force.\textsuperscript{18}
\end{quote}

The motivation behind the investigations seemed to be as much due to financial constraints as it was a desire to weed out imposters. Mrs Hendren, whose father was the secretary of the Victoria Park branch, recalled that

\begin{quote}
a lot of people were refused, because they (the Association) didn't have the money to give everybody what they wanted,\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{16}T.H. Kewley, \textit{Social Security in Australia}, (Sydney University Press, 1965), pp75-76. The moral requirements for pensions are discussed more fully in Chapter 5.
\textsuperscript{17}First Progress Report of the Royal Commission into National Insurance, Parliamentary Papers (General) Vol II, Session 1925, p 1275.
\textsuperscript{18}\textit{Ugliology}, pp5-7.
so it had to be decided by the Committee who was to be helped and what help they were to be given.\textsuperscript{19}

Somewhat paradoxically, it was believed in some quarters that the most deserving cases were the ones least likely to ask for help. The Anglican Archbishop of Perth, C.O.L. Riley, publicly commended the Association for their efforts in 'seeking out' these deserving cases\textsuperscript{20}, while some of those who were refused assistance virtually 'proved' by the same logic that they were undeserving by responding violently to the rejection. Mrs Hendren could remember several instances of angry demonstrations after her father, in his capacity as secretary, had informed people that they were not to be given assistance:

\textit{Sometimes you'd get people that were angry because they were refused help, and one time my father was stopped, on Mint Street actually, on his way home from work and the gentleman punched him in the face, knocked him down and broke all his teeth. And it was nothing for us to have rocks thrown through our front door down the passage. And people used to come to the [house] because they'd been refused, and they used to stand outside and abuse us. If they knew there was a Committee meeting going on, they would, naturally, come worse [sic]. And they'd stand outside and carry on and go on. Even us kids at school, we used to get it: 'oh, your father's mean', you know.\textsuperscript{21}}

The Association maintained, however, that it wanted to help 'every family really in need to the extent of its resources' and invited 'persons who know of cases of distress [to] call on or send particulars to the secretary'.\textsuperscript{22}

Although the Ugly Men's Association was initially devoted to relieving hardship experienced by soldiers' dependants, the scope and aims of

\textsuperscript{19}Interview with Mrs Ellen Hendren, Tape 1, Side 1. Tapes in my possession.
\textsuperscript{20}West Australian, 26/11/18, p6.
\textsuperscript{21}Interview with Mrs Ellen Hendren, Tape 1, Side 1.
\textsuperscript{22}West Australian, 28/10/20, p9.
the Association changed as time progressed. As the soldiers themselves were repatriated, they, too, were offered assistance through the establishment of a training school for those taking up land under the Soldier Settlement Scheme. The Association also helped them in making applications for land or for living allowances as required. By 1919, however, as a result of public pressure, the Commonwealth government had assumed responsibility for war widows and ex-servicemen and was exercising this responsibility through the Repatriation Commission.23 The Association did not view this change as a sign that its efforts were no longer needed - it simply redirected its time, money and energy to other causes. As a consequence, the patients at the Woorooloo sanatorium benefited from the building of a recreation hall and the Children's Protection Society headquarters were renovated and enlarged. All the orphanages in the Perth area were visited and books and sweets were distributed amongst the children.

A new area of interest also presented itself in the form of immigrants arriving to take up land under the Empire settlement schemes of the 1920s. The New Settlers' League branch of the Ugly Men's Association, formed in 1920, devoted itself to ensuring that the welfare of these migrants was assured, until the flow of migration ceased during the depression. And, if soldiers' widows were being looked after, there were still civilian widows who might need help in keeping their houses in repair, and children who might need help in continuing their education. The Association seemed to recognise no limits when it came to finding subjects worthy of their energy and generosity, and it was both imaginative and innovative in the way it raised money to fund its

23Dickey, No Charity There, pp 110-111.
projects. An amusement park, White City, was established at the river end of William Street in 1921 by David Martin who was a member of both the Association's executive committee and the Young Australia League. The Association conducted its annual fund raising carnivals there - the 'Uglieland' carnivals - until the park was closed in 1929.

The capacity of the Association to alter its direction and respond to any crisis that arose was signalled at the second Annual General Meeting in August 1919. Alex Clydesdale, as President of the Association, announced his intention to address the issue of hardship caused by the high cost of living. There was no doubt in his mind, he is reported to have said,

_ that a man receiving a salary of less than £3/10/- a week could not provide for a family of 5 or 6 with commodities at their present prices. The problem was one that the Government would have to face at once._

_A Voice: They are not game to face it._

_Clydesdale: Well, if the Government will not face it the Ugly Men's' Association will. (Cheers)._ 24

The relationship between the Ugly Men's Association and the state government is difficult to define precisely. Both Alex Clydesdale and Harry Mann were themselves Members of Parliament for many years, although they belonged to different parties. Clydesdale had arrived in Western Australia from Victoria in 1894, walking from Geraldton to Cue where he worked as a plumber. He then moved to Mt Magnet and started a business as a bicycle agent. In 1896, he earned the distinction of becoming Australia's youngest mayor when he was elected mayor of Mt Magnet. On moving to Perth in 1903, he became

24West Australian. 15/8/19, p8.
involved in horse racing, managing the Goodwood and Canning Park race clubs for many years. His interest in racing and connections with a number of metropolitan race clubs is evident in the charity race meetings and sweep-style consultations held to raise funds for the Association. He became the mayor of South Perth in 1913, holding that position until 1921 when he was elected to the Legislative Assembly. He held the seat of Canning for the Labor Party until 1930, and after being defeated at the 1930 election won a seat in the Legislative Council in 1932, which he held for six years. Upon losing this seat in 1938, he retired from politics.25

Mann, too, came to Western Australia from Victoria, arriving in 1895 and joining the police force in 1897. He resigned from the police force in 1920 and entered Parliament at the same time as Clydesdale, holding the seat of Perth as a Nationalist for 12 years, Although he contested the seat in 1933, 1936 and 1939, and stood for election to the Legislative Council in 1940, he was unsuccessful in all these attempts.26 Differences in political allegiances did not appear to affect the partnership of these two men or reduce their effectiveness in managing the affairs of the Association successfully. The Association’s constitution, in fact, prohibited the discussion of subjects of ‘a political or religious nature’ at any of its meetings.27

Harry Mann’s speeches in Parliament indicate a wide and varied range of interests. Although he was the Member for Perth he was particularly

26 ibid., p134.
27 Australian Archives, A2485/1, Repatriation Department, C18/86 A18 C/86, UMVWA Articles of Incorporation.
interested in agricultural issues and discussed, among many other things, the effects of the wheat pool on the poultry industry in his maiden speech. The speeches he made vastly outnumbered those made by Clydesdale, and covered an astonishing range of subjects from abattoirs and bedsteads to wheat and workers' compensation and almost anything in between. He introduced a private Member's bill for the abolition of capital punishment, despite the fact this was part of Labor's platform, and called for a Royal Commission into the release of one of the inmates of the Insane Asylum after a relative had made representation to him. Clydesdale's speeches, on the other hand, reflected a far greater concern with issues directly affecting his Canning electorate, urging an upgrade of the ferry and tramway services and the development of the beach at South Perth as a tourist attraction. He also used the opportunity provided by the address-in-reply speech to argue for the abolition of the address-in-reply debate 'so we may get on with the business of running the country' showing the preference for direct action and dislike of formalities which characterised the work of the Association. Exchanges between the two men in Parliament throughout the 1920s reveal a friendly political rivalry characterised by good natured banter.

Both the Mitchell and Collier governments were generally supportive of the Association's efforts, although Mitchell, perhaps because of a greater similarity of interests, was the more effusive in his praise.

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26 Western Australian Parliamentary Debates, Vol 64, 1921-22, pp224-226.
31 Western Australian Parliamentary Debates, see speeches for 1921, '22, '23, '24, '25 for example.
Projects like the Ugly Men's Instructional School for Returned Soldiers, for training ex-servicemen in farming techniques before they took up land as soldier settlers, naturally won Mitchell's support, committed as he was to a policy of farming as much of Western Australia as was possible. Harry Mann shared this vision, believing firmly that Western Australia's future depended on the development of rural industries and the proper training of the rising generation to maximise the state's potential. He was the lessee of a farm at Nungarin and in the mid-1930s gave his occupation as a wheat farmer, although he lived in Perth. 33

It may have been this coincidence of interest that enabled the Ugly Men's Association to dictate terms to the Repatriation Department in May 1919 when the Soldiers' School was being established. A deputation led by Mann and comprising other Association representatives and members of the Perth business community had sought Mitchell's views on the idea of the Soldiers' School, pointing out the level of distress amongst the families of returned soldiers, and had received his endorsement. When Colonel Tilney, as Deputy Comptroller of the Repatriation Department in Western Australia, wrote to the Association asking for a written report of their scheme, Mann responded that there must have been some misunderstanding - everything had already been explained to the Premier. The Association, moreover, flatly refused to undertake the scheme under the direction of Colonel Tilney, or the local Repatriation Committee 'with whom they had no sympathy', and said that they were 'not anxious to undertake the large amount of work necessary if they were to be

33 Black and Bolton, Biographical Register of MPs of WA, p48.
fettered\textsuperscript{34}. In this they revealed the distaste for bureaucratic methods which characterised much of their work. Although Colonel Tilney subsequently occupied a place on the Instructional School Committee, control of the operations remained with the Ugly Men's Association. An abhorrence for 'red tape' was a cornerstone of its philosophy which it frequently proclaimed.

The scheme aimed at helping immigrants arriving under the Empire Settlement Scheme received similar support and praise from Mitchell. At the first annual conference of the New Settlers' League in 1922, Mitchell eulogised the Association, saying that

\begin{quotation}
I don't suppose there is anywhere an organisation that is doing in a voluntary way all the work for the Empire you are doing. It is a wonderful thing not only that you have been able to do so much in the past, but that you are willing to continue this work. This organisation is almost perfect. I know of nothing that works so well. .... It would have been impossible to set up a departmental organisation that would have filled the place you do. In doing voluntary work, you do it because you love it. You need have no fear this scheme will work any man out of a job.\textsuperscript{35}
\end{quotation}

Contrary to these remarks, the Collier government, seven years later, found that it was quite possible to have this work done by a government department. When the level of immigration was reduced in 1929, in response to growing rates of unemployment, the New Settlers' League, via their official organ \textit{The Outlook}, criticised this as short sighted, foreseeing long term economic ruin for farmers as the result. The Premier's secretary subsequently advised the New Settlers' League that as a consequence of its 'having overstepped the boundaries upon which it was originally constituted' the state subsidy of £750 \textit{per annum}

\textsuperscript{34}SAWA, AN 2/1, Acc 1496, Premier's Department File 150 of 1919, f 8.
\textsuperscript{35}West Australian, 8/8/22, p7.
was to be henceforth discontinued, and it would be recommended to the Commonwealth government that they take similar action and withdraw their subsidy, too.\textsuperscript{36}

Despite Clydesdale's involvement, the Western Australian Labor Party had been opposed to the objectives of the New Settlers' League almost constantly since its inception. The Labor Party regarded the League as a 'body of employers' rather than as the protectors of rural workers' interests and claimed that the low wages paid to immigrant workers were reducing the standard of living. Just prior to the state election of 1924, the Party invited migrants to assemble at Trades Hall where they were encouraged to air their grievances and urged to give notice of their dissatisfaction by identifying themselves with the Australian Workers' Union. When the Labor Party won the election, W.C. Angwin, the new Minister for Lands and Immigration, wrote to the League advising that he thought the wage fixed by the League at 25 shillings per week was too low, 'even in regard to migrants', but he adopted a rather more conciliatory tone:

\begin{quote}
Could not your Association reconsider the wages question regarding the minimum paid? It has been stated that local residents have been dismissed on account of the low wages for which migrants can be engaged. I have no proof of this, but the statement has been freely made.\textsuperscript{37}
\end{quote}

The League responded by increasing wages to 30s per week, and keep, but did so to suit its own purposes, seeing the increase as a means of strengthening their hand in attracting 'a good class of single

\textsuperscript{36}SAWA, AN 2/1, Acc 1496, Premier's Department File 48 of 1930. Letter dated 10/2/30, Shapcott to Secretary, New Settlers' League.

\textsuperscript{37}West Australian, 17/9/24, p11.
migrant from the old country and ...put[ting] the state in a better position to counteract the attractions of the eastern states'. 38

The Labor Party was not opposed to all the work of the Ugly Men's Association. When the Uglieland carnivals were opened each year, the opening ceremony was often performed by either the Governor or a representative of government. In December 1925, for example, Alex MacCallum, Minister for Works in the Collier government, performed the opening ceremony of the Fremantle Uglieland. 39 Although it was Collier who closed White City in 1929, he did so under a great deal of pressure from a small but persistent lobby group, trying perhaps to forestall the problem from becoming an issue in the forthcoming election. He had, however, been resisting their efforts since 1926, having rearranged the leasing system of White City in preference to closing the place down altogether. 40

On the whole, both the Mitchell and Collier governments appreciated the efforts of the Ugly Men's Association, no doubt realising that as long the 'Uglies' were willing to raise funds for Fremantle Hospital and the Children's Hospital, for example; or buy an ambulance for the Fremantle district; or help house, feed and clothe the needy, they were addressing problems which, if not resolved, may have come to be seen as the responsibility of government.

38 ibid.
39 West Australian, 28/12/25, p7.
40 SAWA, AN 20/5, Acc 3054, Perth City Council file 62 of 1937. Letter dated 4/4/26, Premier to Town Clerk, Perth.
Chapter 2 - 'Monuments of the Ugly Men's work ...'

Although there had been some resistance to the philosophy of a universalist approach to welfare assistance - at the federal level, the conservatives in opposition argued that to receive benefits without having worked for them would lead to a weakening of moral fibre\(^1\) - the outbreak of war in 1914 had added another variable to the equation. Promises were made in the course of the recruitment campaigns that the soldiers, their widows and dependants would be cared for. As Dickey writes,

\[\textit{there is no doubt that the rhetoric of war, of suffering and sacrifice, and of home and Empire, all invested this new group with a degree of emotional and moral significance far beyond the established range of welfare categories.}\]

The sacrifices made by the servicemen, citizens were reminded, had allowed them to escape the horrors of the war. In launching the public appeal for the Repatriation Fund in 1916, Senator Pearce, as Minister for Defence, urged the public to 'fulfil their obligations to our brave troops by assisting soldiers and their dependants to gain a permanent livelihood after the War'\(^3\), hoping that community benevolence would obviate the need for government action.\(^4\) Opinions differed, however, on whether this 'sacred duty' was properly the responsibility of the general public or of the government. The Melbourne \textit{Age}, for example, argued that it was 'a betrayal of trust' to leave the matter in the hands of

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\(^{2}\)\textit{ibid.}, p110.


\(^{4}\)Dickey, \textit{No Charity There} p110.
of public-spirited citizens, although other newspaper editorials doubted whether the government had the wherewithal to meet the challenge adequately.\(^5\) Indeed, one of the motivating factors in the development of the Returned Sailors and Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia was the realisation

\[
\text{after four years' experience of military and departmental control, that a huge task, such as that of repatriation, would inevitably bring forth mistakes and injustices, however unwittingly the latter would be perpetrated.}\(^6\)
\]

The original rate of pension, for example, paid to war widows in 1914 was, at £2/- per fortnight\(^7\), so inadequate that public pressure forced the government to increase it\(^8\); the Australian rate of pension paid to a private, in respect of total incapacity was, at 30 shillings per week one of the lowest of the Allied Armies\(^9\).

Acceptable rates of pension were eventually established, and the introduction of the Discharged Soldiers' Settlement Act and War Service Homes Act in 1918 indicates that the Commonwealth government eventually accepted that the welfare of returned soldiers and their dependants was its responsibility. It is difficult to judge whether the legislation was passed, as Jill Roe has suggested, through the fear that 'soldiers might return not only embittered but infected with

\[^{5}\text{McDonald, 'The Australian Soldiers' Repatriation Fund' p113.}\]
\[^{7}\text{There was an incremental scale of pensions paid to widows (depending on the rate of pay that their husbands had received) up to a maximum of £6/- per fortnight. Additional payments were made in respect of children, at the rate of 20/- per fortnight for the first child, 15/-, for the second, and 10/- for each subsequent child, irrespective of the rate of widow's pension. Figures supplied by courtesy of the Department of Veteran's Affairs.}\]
\[^{8}\text{Dickey, No Charity There p110.}\]
\[^{9}\text{Hills, The R.S.S.I.L.A. p25.}\]
Bolshevism\textsuperscript{10}, or whether it was the result of the efforts of the R.S.S.I.L.A. who felt that 'success [in winning the war] called for some special recognition as a set-off against the personal and financial sacrifices made by the great majority.'\textsuperscript{11} Whatever the reason, the government was slow to respond to the needs of its ex-servicemen and their dependants and for many, hardship was the inevitable result of inadequate relief measures.

The Ugly Men's Association was quick to acknowledge the distress being experienced and responded with direct, practical action. As one contemporary writer noted:

\begin{quote}

want and suffering are the inevitable concomitants of war, and the inelastic methods of the State are inadequate for their alleviation.\textsuperscript{12}
\end{quote}

But,

\begin{quote}

given a deserving case the Ugly Men are speedily on the scene; a house in its entirety here, two rooms added there, a decaying cottage rendered habitable, a verandah built - anything that is required.\textsuperscript{13}
\end{quote}

Much of the early work of the Ugly Men's Association was organised rather like a series of busy bees. Word would spread that a particular job needed doing, mostly repairs and renovations in the first instance, and those who could spare the time simply turned up on the day. The Association's work was frequently recorded in the \textit{West Australian}, and work on hand publicised:

\begin{quote}

\textsuperscript{11}Hills, p19.
\textsuperscript{13}\textit{ibid}. 
\end{quote}
Voluntary workers carried out necessary work of completion at the home of a soldier's widow in Perth, only leaving painting to be done. This afternoon, workers are requested to be at 184 Hay St East to make the home of another soldier's widow habitable. Carpenters, labourers, plumbers particularly invited.¹⁴

The community response was quite astonishing. By the time the first weekly meeting was called in August 1917, the Claremont branch, for example, had attracted a membership of 100 people willing to give their time and labour to a worthy cause and branches were fast being formed in other suburbs.¹⁵ There was an urgent need for them, too, as these excerpts from a report sent by the Association to the Department of Repatriation testify:

Soldier's widow, 5 little children, living in two rooms. Building lined with bags and old linoleum, part of roof missing and rain pouring in. With bush fence. Place practically pulled down and four roomed house with fireplaces in two rooms, asbestos lined, stone, electric light throughout, and new fence erected. Cost [to the Association] £113/11718.

Soldier's widow, 3 daughters living in house which is absolutely a submarine, water being at time of writing all round and inside the house, frogs being all over the house. Caused by Roads Board building roads at much higher elevation than natural, thereby diverting all water to house. Endeavouring to obtain compensation from the Road Board or another block of land.¹⁶

The increasing size of the organisation enabled works of a larger scale than renovation to be undertaken and the Association began acquiring land and building new cottages for soldiers' widows with young families. Although the cottages were fairly simple - usually built from jarrah weatherboard and comprising two rooms with a kitchen and a verandah

¹⁴West Australian, 21/7/17, p8.
¹⁵West Australian, 1/8/17, p6.
¹⁶Australian Archives, Repatriation Dept. file C18/86 A18 C/86, Series A2485/1, letter dated 11/2/18, President UMA to The Comptroller, dept of Repatriation.
- the formal handing over of the keys to the cottage provided the opportunity for ceremony and a last minute burst of fund-raising to provide furnishings. A house built in Queen's Park, for example, was formally handed over in November 1917 in a ceremony attended by the Anglican Archbishop of Perth and the Chairman of the Queen's Park Road Board, while the Queen's Park Volunteer Fire Brigade Brass Band performed 'a selection of patriotic and other airs' and the sale of afternoon tea provided by the ladies of the Association raised £11/5/- for furnishings.¹⁷

Although small and built by volunteer labour, the houses were not flimsy. A house built in Bayswater, for example, for Mrs Margaret Chinnery whose husband was killed in France the day before Armistice

¹⁷West Australian, 13/11/17, p6.
Day, was occupied continuously by her until she died, and then by her daughter and son-in-law until the latter's death in 1992.  

By April 1919, thirty houses had been built and handed over to soldiers' widows. Twelve more houses were built subsequently, but not necessarily for soldiers' families as the Repatriation Department had by then assumed that responsibility. In August 1920, however, Clydesdale advised the Annual General Meeting that a scarcity of labour was making it difficult to continue this work. The building process had been streamlined as far as possible with the adoption of a set of standard plans, donated by 'leading architects of the metropolitan area', enabling homes to be built at a lower cost than before, and all voluntary workers were insured by the Association under the Workers' Compensation Act, as if they were being paid for their labour.

Clydesdale had earlier observed that people did not appear to be so generous once the war had ended and urged the introduction of a charity tax to ensure equitable contributions for the support of the needy.

The legal ownership of these houses was a complicated business. At the ceremony to hand over a cottage in Palmyra, the President of the Fremantle branch, Mr E. Wray, 'desired to dispel the rumour that the Association charged for their services', while the President of the Subiaco branch, Mr L.T. Boss, at a similar ceremony five months later explained that

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18 Letter from Mrs V. Chinnery of 11/11/92, in my possession.
19 West Australian, 15/4/19, p5.
20 West Australian, 20/8/20, p8.
21 Ugliology, p17.
22 West Australian, 26/11/18, p6.
23 West Australian, 20/5/18, p4.
all [the occupant] would be required to pay would be 5 shillings per week, out of which the Association would maintain the house and pay all rates, including £3 per annum rent of the site, which was a portion of the Subiaco endowment lands. The central committee had given £150 for materials but not one farthing had been spent on labour.24

There were letters to the editor of the West Australian on the issue of ownership and one woman made a statement to the Repatriation Department complaining that she had been intimidated into paying 10 shillings per week rent for a house she thought had been given to her:

My reason for signing the agreement was because I was frightened of being turned out and incur the enmity of the Uglies, who gave me to understand that they were the Repatriation department and that everything first went through them.25

Clydesdale explained to a journalist from the West Australian that some of the widows were paying for their houses, on their own terms because they preferred 'not to accept them as mere charitable gifts'26 - an attitude which the Association always heartily endorsed, not only because it admired a spirit of independence and self-help, but because the money could be used again to help another person in need. In other cases, however, agreements were signed whereby a specified amount was to be paid off in weekly instalments, with the condition

that in the event of the said tenant vacating the premises for a period of one calendar month or more without the written permission of the Association, or if she fails for eight weeks to make any payment on account of rental, then the condition or promise on the part of the Association to permit

24West Australian, 28/10/18, p4.
26ibid., newspaper clipping from West Australian, 8/1/20.
When an investigation was conducted into the affairs of the Association following Clydesdale's death in 1947, several properties were found to be still owned by the Association, their occupants having only a life interest in them, while a number of other properties had been sold by various Roads Boards to recoup unpaid rates. A different set of problems was presented by the return of the soldiers themselves. Prime Minister Hughes wrote to Premier Lefroy in December 1918 that it was essential that work should be found for the men as soon as they arrived. Although the Commonwealth Government had, he wrote, assumed responsibility for this task through the Repatriation Department,

*it confidently relies upon the assistance of employers, public bodies, and the community generally to assist it in satisfactorily discharging that responsibility.*

It was not stated what exactly the Commonwealth government intended to do about generating employment for the returned servicemen, but six months later the Premier’s Department appointed a committee to 'confer with and assist the Ugly Men's executive committee in their efforts toward the repatriation of soldiers'. In seeking the Premier's views on a scheme the Association was developing - to open a school of instruction for returned soldiers - Mann informed the Premier that the Association had noted a great deal of distress amongst the families of returned soldiers, and that in the previous week it had spent £50 on

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32 SAWA, AN 2/1, Acc 1496, Premier's Dept file 19 of 1919, letter dated 3/12/18, Prime Minister to Premier WA.
33 SAWA, AN 2/1, Acc 1496, Premier's Dept file 19 of 1919, letter dated 17/5/19, to secretary Ugly Men's Association.
miserable looking, dirty place in an acre or two of castor oil shrubs—into an operational venture. The state government had contributed £2,000 to the foundation of the school, while the Association had put in £1,000 from its own resources and raised the further £2,000 needed through a special campaign, selling illuminated cards and specially made 'Peace' Union Jacks as part of the Peace Day celebrations.38

The Governor praised the work of the Association saying that

Monuments of the Ugly Men's work were to be seen all over the metropolitan area, and theirs was the greatest labour of practical love he had ever seen.39

While the Prime Minister thought there was 'something of deep significance in the operations of the Ugly Men's Association and the spirit in which they were carried out', his comments on the school's pupils were not altogether flattering:

37 ibid.
38West Australian, 17/7/19, p5, 26/8/19, p4.
39West Australian, 26/8/19, p4.
The Ugly Men's Association were [sic] teaching the habit of industry and directing it how best to apply itself; they were putting the returned soldier on the right track, making of him a citizen of more use to himself and the community, curing him of the bad habit of idleness.\textsuperscript{40}

Even so, when approached by the Association some months later for official recognition of the school, and accompanying subsidy, both the state and Commonwealth governments agreed. There was, at that time, no other establishment for re-training ex-soldiers and the Land Qualification Board wanted some form of assurance that the men to whom they were allocating land grants were, in some measure, capable of farming it. The Association also 'hustled' successfully to have free rail travel granted to their students and arranged for sustenance payments to continue to be made to them while training was undertaken, irrespective of the requirement to remain eligible for work. Mitchell was enthusiastic about the school, taking part in a ceremonial grape vine planting at Herne Hill\textsuperscript{41} and declaring 'excellent' the samples of butter sent to him that had been made by the students.\textsuperscript{42}

Only eight months after the official opening, however, the Commonwealth government withdrew its subsidy on the grounds that other arrangements had been made for the training of returned soldiers. It took a full year for the state government to recover from the Commonwealth government what had been promised in subsidies and paid on its behalf on the strength of that promise.\textsuperscript{43} Although Mitchell was enamoured of the Ugly Men's school, he clearly did not intend to contribute more to it than he needed. Despite the loss of government

\textsuperscript{40} ibid.
\textsuperscript{41} WeSt Australian, 14/9/20, p8.
\textsuperscript{42} SAWA, AN 2/1, Acc 1496, Premier's Dept file 150/19, folio 47.
\textsuperscript{43} Australian Archives, Prime Minister's dept. file 403/10, Series A 457/1, various correspondence items between 22/4/20 and 12/5/21.
subsidies, the annual report for 1922 of the Ugly Men's Association, published in August of that year, showed that 82 returned soldiers had been assisted to obtain their own holdings in the preceding year making a total of 419 who had been settled on their own land through the medium of the instructional school.44

Chapter 3 - '... guide-philosopher-and-friend to the migrants ...': the New Settlers' League.

Despite belonging to different political parties, one of the fundamental principles shared by Harry Mann and Alex Clydesdale was a commitment to immigration as the key means of developing the state's natural resources. It is not surprising that Mann as a Nationalist should have held this view, and that his thinking followed that of party leader, Sir James Mitchell, since a high volume of imported labour was essential to realise Mitchell's vision of a closely settled Western Australia. Clydesdale's views, however, did not coincide so closely with other members of the Labor Party. In his maiden speech to Parliament in August 1921, Clydesdale observed that the government's annual interest bill was 'almost killing progress'. The problem should be solved, he argued, not by the government's proposal to reduce expenditure through the indiscriminate sacking of public servants, but by increasing population and production. While some within the Labor Party viewed assisted migration schemes as the means of forming 'a big unemployed army' which would effectively lower the standard of living, Clydesdale supported immigration and in his Parliamentary speech urged the Premier to open up more land for settlement, adding that land left lying idle should be forfeited. Acknowledging that British farming conditions were significantly different from those facing immigrants to Western Australia, Clydesdale emphasised the need for training before land holdings were allocated, and criticised the women

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1Western Australian Parliamentary Debates, Vol 64, 1921-22, pp 224-226.
2West Australian, 14/9/20, p6.
3Ibid., p432.
4West Australian, 31/7/23, p8.
of Western Australia for not taking the 'interest in the women folk arriving here which might reasonably have been expected of them'.

His own conscience would have been untroubled on that score, since the Ugly Men's Association had, in the previous twelve months, been meeting immigrants on their arrival in the state and canvassing farmers for employment vacancies so that immigrants could be working as soon as possible. It is difficult to determine exactly how the Association came to be involved in the reception of migrants - the West Australian reported in August 1920 that a deputation of members from the Ugly Men's Association had offered their assistance to Premier Mitchell - but the New Settlers' League Handbook, printed in 1925, later claimed that Sir James had asked them 'to help the government in finding employment for migrants on the land'. The Premier's Department deputations file for 1920 does not contain a record of a deputation in August of that year, although there is a record of one made in February, when Clydesdale informed the Premier that the returned soldiers would soon be finished with the training school and proposed continuing it for the benefit of British immigrants. The file note recorded Clydesdale as saying:

*It had been suggested the Ugly Men were 'butting in' on something they had no right to. Personally he had no doubt as to what the Premier's attitude would be.*

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5Western Australian Parliamentary Debates, Vol 64, 1921-22, p432.
6West Australian, 5/8/20, p7; 20/8/20, p6.
7*ibid.*, 5/8/20, p7.
9SAWA, AN 2/1, Premier's Department, Acc 1496, file 607 of 1920, deputation of 26/2/20.
Mitchell replied that he had done nothing but help them as far as he had been able, and although he suggested that Clydesdale's request for £3,000 to finance the school for immigrants was better directed toward the Commonwealth government, he asked for a definite plan of operation. Since, however, there was no further reference made to a training school for immigrants, the plan seems to have been allowed to lapse. Although the government had established a school of agriculture at Narrogin in 1914 and the Muresk Agricultural College near Northam in 1926, these appear to have operated for the benefit of local farmers. The immigrants were instead found positions with established farmers as a form of on-the-job training.

'The chief object of the Association in regard to these men,' the West Australian reported, 'is to obviate the necessity of them being compelled to remain in the city for any lengthy period with nothing to occupy their time.' Procedures for handling the flow of migrants certainly reflected that concern - in October 1920, the Association demonstrated that it was able to process a batch of fifty immigrants from the Woodman's Point quarantine station in little more than an hour. The newcomers received a welcoming address from the Mayor of Fremantle, F.E. Gibson, and were then despatched to farmers who had jobs waiting for them. When rural employment became more scarce in the late 1920s, however, those staying in the Immigrants Home in Fremantle were kept 'contented' with organised sports, tours of fertiliser

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11Ibid., p206.
12West Australian, 20/8/20, p6.
13Ibid., 30/10/20, p8.
works and agricultural machinery showrooms, and other entertainments.\textsuperscript{14}

The Association's activities were concentrated on migrants arriving to take up land in the wheat belt - there is no evidence which links them with the Group Settlements of the south-west, probably because full responsibility for the settlement of these migrants was assumed from the outset by the state government. Schedule A of the Group Settlement Migration Agreement of February 1923 clearly stated that these migrants would be received on arrival by officers of the state government who would also ensure that they were placed in suitable employment in country districts.\textsuperscript{15} There was some involvement with group settlers on the Peel Estate but only with those who, as ex-soldiers, had initiated contact with the Ugly Men's Association through the Instructional School.

Twelve months after beginning this work with migrants, the Ugly Men's Association was approached by the Commonwealth Superintendent of Immigration with an invitation to join the New Settlers' League which had just been formed in other states. Although the change of name entitled the Association to an initial subsidy of £500, there appeared to be very little change in either the activities or management of this endeavour and there was no apparent loss of autonomy. The Executive Committee of the New Settlers' League Branch of the Ugly Men's Association was the same body of men who had established the

\textsuperscript{14}Dampier Herald, 16/8/28, p1.
Instructional School for Returned Soldiers\textsuperscript{16} and the League's stationery clearly defined it as a branch of the Association.

The Committee of Management comprised representatives from, among others, the Chambers of Commerce and Manufacture, the Primary Producers' Association and Pastoralists' Association, the Young Australia League and Returned Soldiers' League. There were also 123 country representatives of the League. The majority of these were employees of either the local Roads Boards or co-operative stores who met the immigrants on their arrival in the area and ensured that they settled in comfortably and were introduced into the social life of the district as well as enjoying secure and satisfactory employment.\textsuperscript{17}

When the Commonwealth government increased its subsidy to £1500 \textit{per annum} in January 1922 and this was matched by a subsidy from the state government\textsuperscript{18}, the League was able to employ a full-time

\textsuperscript{18}SAWA, MN 300, ALP State Executive, Acc 1573A, Minutes Vol 3, 1920-25, meeting of 13/1/22.
secretary, a country organiser who canvassed the rural districts for potential job vacancies, a publicity officer and a typist. Clydesdale's and Mann's positions of president and vice-president remained honorary, as did the country representatives and management committee.

At first, the assisted immigration scheme was only available to ex-Imperial servicemen, but deteriorating economic conditions in Britain in 1920 led to the adoption of broader categories of eligible migrants and the implementation in 1922 of the Empire settlement scheme on a shared cost basis. A tripartite agreement between the British and Australian federal and state governments in 1925 further guaranteed the flow of migrants, which by 1929 had totalled 43,700 assisted passages to Western Australia.19 Despite the concerns raised at Labor Party State Executive meetings and the fact that the concept of the schemes had predominantly been the work of Sir James Mitchell, the volume of immigration was highest in the periods 1923 to 1925 and 1927 to 192920, largely coinciding with the Collier Labor government of 1924 to 1930. Collier, in fact, negotiated a new migration agreement with the British and Commonwealth governments in April 1925, which, while gaining interest concession on loans, meant that for every £1,000 borrowed Western Australia was obliged to accept one British family.21

The ALP State Executive was critical of the New Settlers' League, seeing it as a body of employers rather than as protectors of the rural workers' interests.22 This criticism was mostly undeserved, however, as

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20ibid., p200.
22*West Australian*, 31/7/23, p8.
the League was strongly committed to protecting the welfare of the immigrant settlers. While it is true that immigrants' wages were fixed at the League's first annual conference in 1922 (at which only employers were present - the workers were not represented), in many other cases the League interceded on the workers' behalf against unscrupulous farmers who occasionally tried to take advantage of a 'new chum'. The League's honorary solicitor was able to obtain redress, for example, for one migrant who was charged 25 shillings by a farmer for a ride back to the farm in his truck. More mundane assistance was offered in finding lost luggage, supplying a recipe for tanning skins, and replying to letters from England inquiring into the whereabouts of immigrant relatives. Through questions in Parliament and deputations from the League, pressure was also continually exerted on Mitchell to address the problem of inadequate housing for married couples in farming districts. In addition, the League worked to streamline procedures within the system of land allocation. A series of tours by various members of League's executive committee throughout rural districts in 1922 found that settlers were not making applications for advances to the Agricultural Bank, because they were unaware that men were available for clearing work. The League encouraged the government to institute a policy of clearing before settlement - a move which not only facilitated rural settlement, but also absorbed some of the

23Dampier Herald, 16/8/28, p1.
24West Australian, 2/6/28, p16.
25See, for example, Clydesdale's speeches of August and September 1921, and 1925, Mann's in 1926, in Parliamentary Debates for those years; and reports of deputation to Premier, in West Australian, 18/8/22, p8.
26SAWA, AN 2/1, Premier's Department, Acc 1496, file 265 of 1922. Deputation of 5/7/22.
unemployed from the metropolitan area by sending them out on clearing projects.

The League also monitored the suitability of migrants and their aptitude for a farming life. Although it remained convinced that most newcomers would 'make good' given the right sort of encouragement from the farmers with whom their training had been entrusted, there were occasions for complaint. Some farmers had complained of 'the manner in which some of the migrants are behaving', and there were reports of farmers supplying stores to cover the duration of a clearing contract only to find that the men left after the first week, taking the stores with them. 27 Dissatisfaction with one group of migrants who had all arrived on the Hobson's Bay resulted in a deputation to Mitchell, with the secretary of the League, Vern East, complaining that they were

of a type ... which was most unsatisfactory. Those on the boats preceding and following were of an excellent type, but trouble had been experienced with the 'Hobson's Bay' quota ever since their arrival in the state. They were not the class of men who took to country work. 28

Harry Mann added that 'there was something wrong with the whole shipment, because Victoria had complained as well as the other passengers on the ship.' 29 Mitchell agreed to write to the Agent-General in London to ask for more stringent application of the screening procedures, but a record of the Agent-General's reply, if there was one, cannot not be found. Clydesdale later told Parliament, however, that

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27 West Australian, 31/7/23, p8.
28 SAWA, AN 2/1, Premier's Department, Acc 1496, file 571 of 1923. Deputation of 14/9/23.
29 ibid.
Judging from the information I have received from the Old Country, the type of migrant we really require is not available. That being so, we must fall back on the type that is likely to swell the unemployed in this state.\textsuperscript{30}

There was no response to this remark from the other members. On another occasion Clydesdale had also asked that greater care be taken be taken in England to ensure that migrants were not tubercular.\textsuperscript{31}

Although the League was concerned about the 'type' of migrant, this concern related only to the capacity of the migrant to work hard for long hours, as farming practices demanded. In spite of the prevailing ideology which regarded most other Europeans as inferior to those of British stock, when a Mr de Pedro attended a League meeting to ask if the League would find jobs for any Spaniards who might arrive, he was assured that it would.\textsuperscript{32} In December 1922 when a number of Italians arrived unexpectedly, they presented, so the \textit{West Australian} reported, 

\textit{something of a problem as neither the machinery of the state nor the League has been modelled to deal with other than immigrants of our own blood ...}\textsuperscript{33}

The League rose to the occasion, however, and found jobs for them all on clearing projects\textsuperscript{34}, doing work which had earlier been refused in disgust by a British immigrant who told Premier Mitchell that it was 'black man's work' and he wasn't going to do it.\textsuperscript{35}

The \textit{West Australian} waxed lyrical about the activities of the League, asking:

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\textsuperscript{30}Western Australian Parliamentary Debates, Vol 72, 1925, p416. \\
\textsuperscript{31}West Australian, 8/8/22, p7. \\
\textsuperscript{32}SAWA, MN 300, ALP State Executive, Acc 1573A, Minutes Vol 3, 1920-25, meeting of 4/9/23. \\
\textsuperscript{33}West Australian, 19/1/23, p8. \\
\textsuperscript{34}ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{35}SAWA, AN 2/1, Premier's Department, Acc 1496, file 302 of 1921.
\end{flushright}
If there is a percentage of unemployment today - due to no shortcomings in the agricultural industry - what would have been the industrial position in the State had not the League, with its hundreds of enthusiastic country workers, been in existence to preach the gospel of financial and industrial salvation by and through the land?

The boundaries between the government's responsibilities towards immigrants and the areas for which the League assumed responsibility changed over the decade of its existence. Mitchell believed that a voluntary organisation would be better able to work for immigrants than a government department, but this approach necessarily reduced the level of control the government could exercise over the League's activities. At times the government asked the League to take action in areas which, had it assumed responsibility for them itself, it could have been directing. For example, a deputation in 1924 to W.C. Angwin as the Minister for Lands and Immigration by members of the New Settlers' League and the Young Australia League agreed to assist the Minister in finding rural employment for 'local lads' as well as migrants:

As the Minister has made a special point of the necessity of placing our own youths in country centres, and apparently is of the opinion that the need of finding opportunities for these lads is urgent, the League, while not renouncing its view that there are ample avenues in the State for migrant boys, is also anxious to impress the Minister and the public that the machinery of its organisation is now, as ever since its inception, at the service of our West Australian youth.

And, as mentioned in Chapter One, Angwin asked the League if it could increase the wages paid to immigrant rural workers. The League did,
but it is interesting to speculate on the possible government responses had it refused.

Although the slogan of the League in 1925 was

*To welcome all new settlers*
*To assist them in securing employment.*
*To afford them advice, and generally,*
*To promote their welfare and settlement*\(^{40}\)

by 1928, its stated objects were 'to foster migration and educate the people as to its advantages'\(^{41}\). The Department for Lands and Immigration had taken over responsibility for placing immigrants in employment, but the League continued to liaise with farmers and advised the Department of any vacancies it found, while assuming as its primary responsibility the welfare of the immigrants themselves. The Development and Migration Commission, a Commonwealth body which had been established in 1925 to generally supervise the immigration and settlement schemes, had no doubt that the state Immigration office should be responsible for finding employment for immigrants and that the League's primary function should be their after-care. It was considered commendable that the League was finding positions at all, since that task was seen by the Commission as 'undoubtedly the State's responsibility.'\(^{42}\) The Officer-in-Charge of the state Immigration office in Perth did not share this view, however, or, at any rate, thought that the League should not be entitled to receive subsidies amounting to £3,000 per annum for merely attending to the welfare of immigrant settlers, that that sum could be spent most usefully in employing staff to

\(^{40}\) *A Souvenir of the Golden west*, p27.

\(^{41}\) Australian Archives, A1/1, Department of the Interior, file 1932/7160, letter dated 21/5/28, OIC Immigration to Under Secretary for Lands and Immigration.

\(^{42}\) *ibid.*, lettergram dated 13/5/29 to the Hon. J. Gunn, Development and Migration Commission.
canvass the farming districts for possible employment vacancies.

Although invited to attend the monthly meetings of the League's executive, Harold Pullin, as OIC Immigration, declined, informing the Under Secretary for Lands and Immigration that

_I could not conscientiously remain a member of the League whilst that body were aimlessly wandering and returning little value for the money they were spending, more so when I realised that my protests to you were passing unheeded. The League has latterly set out to ignore me officially. Immigration business and discussions have been taken to other quarters though they should have passed through the official channel created by the government, that is, this department of which I am immediate head._

Pullin was critical of the League's inattentiveness to the problem of finding employment for migrants. When, in June 1928, the League's country organiser was hospitalised, Pullin urged the League to not only replace him, but to employ an additional person. Part of Pullin's concern may have stemmed from the fact that the longer migrants stayed in the Immigrants' Home in Fremantle, the more it cost his department. Under the scale of charges fixed by the Immigration Department, the first three days' stay were free, a charge was levied for the fourth, fifth and sixth days, and charges for the seventh day onward were written off. In August 1928 there were ninety men in the Immigrant's Home, fifty-eight of whom had been there for more than three weeks. Charges written off for July 1928 amounted to £296/3/7.

The temporary absence of the country organiser, 'in view of the

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43_**ibid.**, letter dated 1/3/28, OIC Immigration to Under Secretary for Lands and Immigration.

44_**ibid.**, letter dated 7/6/28, OIC Immigration to Secretary NSL.
urgency of the situation', Pullin wrote, 'revealed a very irresponsible attitude on the part of the League'.\textsuperscript{45}

Whether Pullin's assessment of the League was accurate, or whether he was opposed to the League because its members refused to toe the bureaucratic line, is difficult to determine. The League itself seemed, at times, unclear of its own role. Although claiming to be primarily concerned with the welfare of the migrants and that finding jobs was the government's responsibility, when faced with a reduction in the Commonwealth subsidy, the League's publicity officer, Andrew Clementson, in an impressive piece of back-pedalling, argued that the best welfare work that could be done for a migrant was to find him a job. Real welfare work, he wrote,

\textit{is more than a handshake, a cup of tea, a cheer-up letter, an invitation to a bush dance, or a visit from a clergyman. Real welfare is getting a man a job, seeing that he is decently treated by his boss, seeing that he is compensated in case of accident, and seeing that unscrupulous farmers are sued in cases where they try to bilk the migrant. That is the work this League is doing.} \textsuperscript{46}

If there was to be a cut in the subsidy, however, the country organiser - the one who was out in the field finding jobs - was to be the first sacrifice. The League secretary, Colonel Denton, was described by Clementson as someone who 'every day of his life acted as guide-philosopher-and-friend to the migrants who called at the office'. Clementson's own position of publicity officer was, he thought, absolutely indispensable and had been proved so several years earlier

\textsuperscript{45}\textit{ibid.}, letter dated 13/8/28, OIC Immigration to U/S for Lands and Immigration.
\textsuperscript{46}Australian Archives, A1/1, Department of the Interior, file 1932/7160, letter dated 23/5/29, Publicity officer, New Settlers' League to Development and Migration Commission.
when, temporarily without one, the work of the League sank into decline.\textsuperscript{47} Clementson also resisted attempts to have the League's office accommodated within the Immigration Department building, pointing out that Colonel Denton's office was next door to the Ugly Men's Association


d\textit{and in cases where no job is available and the migrant is in real distress the Colonel arranges with the U.M.A. to give the migrant a feed and a bed.}\textsuperscript{48}

Despite the problematic relationship with the Immigration Department the League clearly earned the respect and support of the majority of its clients and regularly published in its journal, \textit{The Outlook}, extracts of letters from satisfied migrants and farmers alike:

\begin{quote}
I am happy to state I like my new work very well [sic]. I have a good employer. Your letter gave me great pleasure and made me realise that there are people who really interest themselves in the migrant.

The migrant you sent is still in my employ, and is giving every satisfaction. He is very willing.\textsuperscript{49}
\end{quote}

The decline in the rate of immigration and the worsening financial situation in 1929, however, prompted a closer examination by the Commonwealth government of any areas where savings might be effected. It was decided in the first instance to reduce the subsidy to the New Settlers' League from £1,250 per annum to £750, and to streamline procedures to avoid duplication of effort with the Immigration Department. Since, however, the state government followed the practice of matching the Commonwealth subsidy, and reduced its subsidy accordingly, the League suffered a loss of income of £1,000

\textsuperscript{47}\textit{ibid.}, letter dated 23/5/29, Clementson to Development and Migration Commission.  
\textsuperscript{48}\textit{ibid.}  
\textsuperscript{49}\textit{The Outlook}, Vol 1, No. 11, August 1929, p309.
per annum. Clydesdale rallied some support by writing to Commonwealth members of Parliament, asking them to argue on his behalf against the reduction, and although this action generated a series of letters to the Prime Minister and Treasurer, the subsidy was not increased. The League accommodated the loss of revenue by dispensing with the country organiser, as had been foreshadowed.

It can only be guessed at for how long the League could have continued to receive a subsidy at all - in the interests of economy, even the Development and Migration Commission was disbanded in 1930\textsuperscript{50} - but two articles in the January 1930 issue of The Outlook provoked a swift response from the state government. One article, titled 'the Luck of Politics', criticised the Commonwealth government's decision to suspend migration and increase tariffs, arguing that losses incurred to British shipping companies through reduced passenger traffic would necessarily result in increased freight charges to counteract them. British investors would also become apprehensive, fearing that progress in this 'huge, empty country' had been arrested:

\begin{quote}
The spectacle of a dependency like Australia, with neither army, navy nor credit balance building up a tariff wall and closing the door on migration - in flagrant opposition to the interests of the Mother Country - is somewhat amazing.\textsuperscript{51}
\end{quote}

Yet another article in the same issue, while not openly criticising the state government, praised the now opposition leader Sir James Mitchell in such glowing terms that it amounted to the same thing. Sir James, according to the article, was 'one of the greatest boosters Western Australia has ever had.'\textsuperscript{52} The response of the Premier's secretary,

\textsuperscript{50}Crowley, p246.
\textsuperscript{51}The Outlook, Vol 2, No 4, Jan 1930, p87.
\textsuperscript{52}ibid., p103.
Louis Shapcott, was both unequivocal and vindictive. He wrote to the Under Secretary for Lands to ascertain details of assistance the League received:

I see they are freely criticising the Commonwealth and state governments and their position needs looking into.\(^{53}\)

And on the same day he advised the New Settlers' League

... that, in consequence of the New Settlers' League having overstepped the boundaries upon which it was originally constituted, it is intended to discontinue the state subsidy of £750 and to advise the federal government accordingly, with a recommendation that the federal subsidy for the same purpose be likewise discontinued.\(^{54}\)

Requests from the League for the Premier to receive a deputation were refused on the grounds that the Premier was departing for the eastern states soon and was therefore too busy. Although they were invited to clarify their objections in writing, the Premier's secretary subsequently informed the League that the Premier considered that it had outlived its usefulness and that it should be discontinued.\(^{55}\) A column in the *West Australian* of 13 May 1930, by-lined 'A.C.' (it can be probably assumed fairly safely that this was Alex Clydesdale, although the attempt at anonymity is a little puzzling), re-iterated the argument against the curtailment of migration and declared that 'the League will "carry on", with or without financial support from the federal or state governments. If necessary, it will endeavour to raise funds from citizens.'\(^{56}\)

\(^{53}\)SAWA, AN 2/1, Premier's Department, Acc 1496, file 48 of 1930, letter dated 22/1/30 Premier's Secretary to the Under Secretary for Lands.

\(^{54}\)ibid., letter dated 22/1/30 Premier's Secretary to Secretary, New Settlers' League.

\(^{55}\)ibid., letters dated 10/2/30 and 26/3/30, Premier's Secretary to Secretary, New Settler's League.

\(^{56}\)*West Australian*, 13/5/30.
In a move that can only be described as optimistic, the Minister for Lands in Western Australia, Charles Latham, wrote to the Federal Minister for Transport, Senator Daly, pointing out that the cessation of the subsidy to the New Settlers' League had resulted in savings to the Commonwealth government of £750 per annum, and since the state Immigration Department had now assumed the responsibility for the after-care of migrants previously undertaken by the League, could that department be given an extra £400 per annum to fund it? Senator Daly replied that responsibility for welfare work amongst migrants devolved upon the state government and that the Honourable Minister for Lands, 'would doubtless [be] appreciative of the fact that the Commonwealth government could not reasonably be expected to contribute towards the maintenance of the work of [his] Immigration Department.'

It is, perhaps, an indication of the actual cost of providing welfare services to immigrants that the Minister for Lands, after his request for additional funding was refused, should then re-instate the subsidy to the New Settlers' League to the extent of £300 so that its after-care work could be continued for the remainder of that financial year at least. It is not clear from the available evidence for how much longer the work of the League continued. The need for it in the 1930s would certainly have diminished since only immigrants for whom assisted passages had already been arranged were accepted after the scheme was suspended in 1929.

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57 Australian Archives, A1/1, Department of the Interior, file 1932/7160, letter dated 8/7/30 WA Minister for Lands to Senator Daly.
58 ibid., letter dated 29/7/30 Senator Daly to WA Minister for Lands.
59 ibid., letter dated 9/9/30 WA Minister for Lands to Senator Daly.
60 Crowley, Australia's Western Third, p246.
Harry Mann's interest in rural matters continued after the League's involvement had ceased and in August 1932 he announced his intention to establish a farm training school for boys at Wokalup, near Harvey. The Ugly Men's Association had acquired 2,270 acres of mixed farming land with an eight-roomed house and a further 700 acres of coastal land. Between 20 and 30 boys of around fifteen years of age would be taken in to be instructed in all aspects of practical farming. A farm manager and a welfare officer were to be employed - 'to guide and instruct the lads - both the farming and the moral side will be looked after.' The Bundidup Farm School was officially opened by Sir James Mitchell, who had regained the Premiership in 1930, on 9 December 1932. On the school's first anniversary, it was reported that 18 boys were attending the school and nine had already graduated and been found farming positions.

By September 1934, 52 boys had completed the course, and there were 22 current enrolments. The curriculum had been expanded to include a special course in veterinary science and applications for admission exceeded the number of vacancies. Positive reports were received from farmers who employed boys trained at Bundidup. The majority of the students at the school came from low-income families, and most had not worked since leaving school. Mann reported in 1936 that

the economic benefit of the work to the boys concerned, and to the state, can be reached by calculation, but the more important result is building up the character of an idle lad with no outlook to that of an industrious young fellow earning his

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61West Australian, 17/8/32, p7.
62Ibid.
63West Australian, 2/9/33, p8.
64West Australian, 1/9/34, p24.
own livelihood and assisting to increase the production of his own country. These matters are beyond calculation in money. We have found that almost every lad, with care and proper training, will develop a farm craft and become interested in agricultural production.65

By the end of June 1936, a total of 146 boys had been trained through the school, with an average attendance of 20 at any one time. The average duration of attendance was 5½ months. Although the school appeared to be largely self-funded - lambs and pigs reputedly fetched the top market price and wool and surplus dairy products and vegetables were also sold - financial difficulties in 1936 caused a reduction in the number of staff and enrolments had been reduced to ten. Except for two special cases, applications for admission were refused.66 It is not clear exactly when the school ceased to function as the last detailed report of the Association's activities was published in 1936. The financial difficulties must have worsened considerably, however, as the plant and stock were sold in April 1938 and the farm itself was sold to the government in August 1939.67

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65West Australian, 2/9/36, p19.
66ibid.
67SAWA, AN 24, Chief Secretary's Department, Acc 752, file 106 of 1947, report dated 16/5/49.
Chapter 4 - 'Charity, in the guise of carnival ...'

At its thirteenth annual meeting in August 1929, Alex Clydesdale reported, with justifiable pride, that the Association had raised over £158,000 since its inception in 1917¹. Its success in raising money for charitable purposes can be attributed, to some extent, to its recognition of the fact that most people would give more generously to a worthy cause if they received something in return. The Ugly Men offered both entertainment and the chance of making a profit - many of their fund raising ventures involved gambling in a variety of forms, incurring the criticism of a vocal minority who saw gambling as a sin and argued that the end did not justify the means. The amount of money raised, however, is proof that a large proportion of the population obviously endorsed the Ugly Men's methods and participated in the different forms of entertainment offered.

The underlying concept of the initial 'Ugly Man' competition suggests that for the group of men who formed the nucleus of the Association, neither pride nor dignity was to be permitted to stand in the way of alleviating distress and that the emphasis was on fun. Although several of the early fund raising drives were 'art unions', or raffles, which had as prizes either donated items of furniture or cash (a major effort in 1918 for the benefit of a number of charitable institutions even offered a car as first prize) there were also many novel competitions which aimed at involving as many people as possible. In 1917, for example, in order to raise funds for the War Patriotic Fund an election was held to

¹West Australian, 3/8/29, p7.
form a ten member Ugly Men's Ministry. The successful candidates elected to the ministry were those who raised the most money.²

![Ugly Men's Ministry badge. It is likely that these were sold to raise funds for one of the contenders for the Ugly Men's Ministry. Courtesy of Mrs Betty Dix.]

The suburban branches frequently organised their own fund-raising efforts, through dances, one day carnivals, euchre tournaments, raffles and competitions. The Nedlands branch took advantage of its proximity to the river to hold gala days on the foreshore with yachting regattas and aquatic events for children as well as sideshows and sports programmes, while the Cottesloe branch held its carnivals on the beach. The Guildford branch held an Industrial Exhibition in November 1920 to develop, so it was reported,

> the educational, industrial and musical talent of both juveniles and adults of the state generally, and at the same time aid the funds of the children's hospital.³

Over 200 competitions were conducted as part of the exhibition, encompassing such a variety of interests as art, flower arranging, national dancing and vocal, instrumental and choir music. A silver cup was donated for the winner of an essay competition on the subject 'How to make Western Australia a more prosperous state and its people more contented'. The choice of the essay topic adds further weight to

²Ugliology, p27.
³West Australian, 9/11/20, p7.
the argument that prosperity and contentment were not as widespread as Crowley and Bolton had suggested, especially since it was hoped, apparently sincerely, that the essays would 'result in some useful suggestions for the benefit of the community upon many matters of vital and widespread interest'.

Mr Laurie Barker, whose parents were members of the Victoria Park branch, could remember more humble and less elaborate fund raising methods. He recalled trailer loads of firewood being raffled from outside his house and fair days at the Recreation Ground in Victoria Park where, for a small sum odd pieces of donated crockery could be smashed with a ball if one's aim was good enough. 'Penny-a-prick', according to Mrs Hendren, was another popular method of raising money which involved a piece of card with squares printed on it.

People would be invited, for a penny, to poke a hole through the card with a pin - the pin pricks through the card probably fulfilling an accounting function by tallying with the number of pennies handed in. Children would often be involved in collecting donations in this way on behalf of adult friends and relatives who had entered one of the many popularity

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4 Ibid.
5 Interview with Mr Laurie Barker, notes in my possession.
contests. Children were, as a rule, included in events rather than excluded, Mrs Hendren recalled. She and her sister helped raise money for the Association's Infant Health Clinic Appeal, when, dressed as nurses, they rattled tins to collect coins from customers in the local hotels; there were also fancy dress balls, picnics and competitions designed expressly to entertain children.  

A fancy dress ball - the children are dressed up as members of the Ugly Men's executive. Photo courtesy of Mrs Hendren.
'Mystery Man' guessing competitions were also popular in Perth and Fremantle, illustrating the sense of community that Geoffrey Bolton describes in A Fine Country to Starve In. The very basis of the competition implies that, even before the introduction of television, prominent citizens could be recognised easily enough by the general public to make it a viable exercise:

A special appeal for funds to carry on the good work will begin today when a mysterious 'Ugly Man' will parade the streets of the city. The mystery man will lunch in Hay St. at 1 pm., have afternoon tea at one of the tea rooms, and in the evening visit one of the shows. A reward of £50 is being offered to the person who identifies him.

A little ingenuity could go a long way in fund raising, the Association found. 'Kewpie Day', for example, realised almost £450 through the sale, on just one day, of Kewpie doll lapel pins. Stalls were set up on the footpaths of city streets, located strategically to capture as much passing trade as possible. The dolls were dressed in brightly coloured tulle skirts and competition between the sellers of red-skirted dolls and yellow-skirted dolls, for instance, was fierce - contributing no doubt to the number sold.

A mock police court in St George's Terrace in October 1919 raised over £300:

It was an imposing centre of justice, presided over by a judge who was adamant to all excuses, and assisted by a determined force of red-coated policemen, who, without respect for creeds, financial status, political beliefs or social importance, scoured the Terrace and pounced furiously on harmless offenders. ... Loitering in the Terrace, picking one's

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7 G.C. Bolton, A Fine Country to Starve In, p3.
8 West Australian, 23/12/18, p6. See also the Fremantle Times 14/2/19, p7 and 21/2/19, p4 for details of a similar competition involving a Fremantle 'Mystery Man'.
9 West Australian, 1/3/19, p6, and 4/3/19, p6.
teeth outside a hotel, anything and everything were taken as
evidence of misdemeanour or criminal intent, and penalties
were imposed with no regard at all for previous good
character or prior convictions.10

A special appeal day in September 1920 raised £900 for the Children's
Hospital through a carnival with an estimated attendance of 10,000.
The carnival opened with a forty item procession through the city,
culminating at the Esplanade where a variety of stalls had been set up.
A 'Freak Show' offered such spectacles as the fat lady, the giant, an
indiarubber man, a Circassian beauty, a mermaid, a living skeleton and
a wild man, while fortunes were told from signs of the zodiac by Madam
Olitszaka.

"UGLY MEN'S" APPEAL.
PLAN OF ATTRACTIONS.

From West Australian, 17/9/20, p9.

10West Australian, 18/10/19, p8.
A human spider race - people pulling trotting spiders - provided entertainment as did the five bands. The identity of 'a prominent citizen highly camouflaged in Oriental attire' could be guessed at for one shilling, but, as one journalist reported,

the throbbing centre of interest was the improvised race track, 300 yards in length on which woolly and cumbrous draught horses were urged to amazing turns of speed by well known citizens.\textsuperscript{11}

Yet another attraction of the carnival was the filming of scenes for the 'Uglies' Moving Picture', directed by Fred Murphy, the screenplay for which was written by his uncle, 'Dryblower' Murphy. The film, a four reel comedy, starred Chester Bond as Hooza Mugg, a Chaplinesque hayseed from Tangleup. A competition was later held to choose the best title for the film - \texttt{Twins and Trouble} - and the proceeds of £3,000 from the screening in December 1920 went to the Children's Hospital.\textsuperscript{12}

In 1919, a 'Coon Town' carnival ran for twelve days on the reserve opposite the Supreme Courts, with nearly £2,000 raised through an associated ladies' popularity contest conducted over several months. The coronation ceremony for the winner of this competition, the Coon Queen, was conducted with elaborate ceremony as the \textit{West Australian} observed:

\begin{quote}
No portion that is really interesting in the ceremonies usually conducted in Westminster Abbey at the coronations of Kings and Queens will be omitted with the necessary exception of certain religious and historical rites.\textsuperscript{13}
\end{quote}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{11}\textit{West Australian}, 17/9/20, p5, 18/9/20, p6 and 19/9/20, p6.
\textsuperscript{12}\textit{West Australian}, 16/12/20, p8, 17/9/20, p5, and notes from a talk given by Fred Murphy to the State Film Centre on 1/10/69, held in Film Archives at Battye Library.
\textsuperscript{13}\textit{West Australian}, 7/5/19, p7, 4/3/19, p6.
\end{flushright}
When the foreshore reserve opposite the Supreme Courts was renovated and was consequently no longer available for carnivals, the Minister for Works proposed that the vacant land at the river end of William Street be set aside for charitable groups to use for fund raising.\(^{14}\) The area became known as Carnival Square and in 1921 the Ugly Men's Association ran a carnival there called Pantomime City. The costs involved in erecting and dismantling temporary structures for each carnival necessarily reduced the profits that could be made, however, prompting David Martin, an entrepreneur who was also a member of the Association's Executive Committee, to establish a permanent amusement park at the site. The park, known thereafter as White City, was let to a variety of groups for charitable purposes but was maintained by him as a business venture.\(^{15}\)

\[\text{White City. Courtesy Battye Library 3045B/169}\]

\(^{14}\)SAWA, AN 20/5, Perth City Council, Acc 3054, file 62 of 1937, letter dated 12/10/20 Under Secretary for Works and Trading Concerns to Town Clerk, Perth.

\(^{15}\)West Australian, 5/3/26, p15.
The fact that a private individual appeared to be profiting from carnivals ostensibly conducted for charity was just one of the criticisms that were later levelled against White City by the Council of Churches and the National Council of Women.

The first Uglieeland carnival held at White City was opened by the Governor, Sir Francis Newdigate-Newdegate on 3 February 1922. Attendances at the opening night were estimated to be around 9,000 and the fact that £5,736\textsuperscript{16} was realised in profits from this carnival suggests that subsequent nights also attracted large crowds. Eight weeks after the Perth carnival opened, the Fremantle Uglieeland, opposite the railway station in Phillimore Street, was officially opened - 'brilliant in a blaze of electric light' - by the Mayor of Fremantle, F.E. Gibson. Although not as large as the White City Uglieeland, the Fremantle carnival usually netted between £1,000 and £2,000 for the Association and drew attendances of up to 4,500.

The Uglieland carnivals proved to be particularly successful in generating revenue for the Association - the 1928 carnival, for example, raised nearly £11,500\textsuperscript{17} - as they were always well attended. Newspaper reports of the opening nights provided free publicity:

\textit{In many respects the scene last night was a replica of previous Uglielands. There were the same bright side shows, the same brilliant illuminations. Gaiety went with the crowd and the crowd went everywhere. Dancers danced until a late hour, wild shrieks from the toboggan frequently rent the night air and told their tale of momentary thrills and depleted purses. Spectators tried their luck and lost cheerfully in a good cause.}\textsuperscript{18}

The entertainments offered at Uglieland were varied and numerous. A roller coaster, chair-o-plane and merry-go-round catered for those in search of physical excitement, while a Punch and Judy show, jugglers, illusionists, and national dancing competitions provided visual entertainment. The 1925 carnival also had stands advertising the principal primary industries of the state, and - 'to make the displays both spectacular and instructive' - included exhibits of scoured and greasy wool, dried fruits, minerals, forestry products, locally manufactured commercial products, and dairy and agricultural products.\textsuperscript{19} There were also tug-of-war competitions offering a prize of £150, log chopping competitions, boxing competitions, and a sheep shearing competition which attracted interstate as well as local entrants.\textsuperscript{20} The participation of young Aboriginal men in the boxing and rodeo events displeased the Chief Protector of Aborigines, A.O. Neville, but although he complained to the Commissioner of Police

\textsuperscript{17}Daily News, 5/8/27, p2.  
\textsuperscript{18}West Australian, 12/1/24, p10.  
\textsuperscript{19}West Australian, 22/1/25, p10.  
\textsuperscript{20}West Australian, 8/12/24, 8.
about this and the attendance of Aborigines at White City generally, his requests to have police monitor (and prevent, wherever possible) their entry to the park received very little support.\(^{21}\)

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\(^{21}\)SAWA, AN 1/7, Aborigines' Department, Acc 993, file 38 of 1927.
The Fremantle Uglieland provided for the enjoyment of its patrons a dance floor with a cabaret orchestra, a merry-go-round and swinging boats. Although there were many dancing competitions held there for children, most of them young girls, and occasionally a children's fancy dress ball, popular opinion has it that it was not really a place for children. Mrs Vera Farrell could recall a sense of daring in helping to hand out Bingo cards, knowing that she should not have not been on premises where there was gambling; Mrs Jessie Balcombe remembered her mother always whisked her away as soon as she had danced in her competition event. The Uglieland carnivals held at White City are remembered as being more suitable generally for family entertainment. Mrs Hendren recalled visits to Uglieland with great affection as did Mr Horry Davies:

> We often used to go there because there was a lot of sports. There was boxing, foot running, and all that sort of thing. And there was dancing on the stage and vaudevilles. It was always interesting and very popular with the youth of Western Australia. We always enjoyed going there.

The crowds at Uglieland, he recalled, were largely composed of families and young people, representing a fair mix of all levels of society, all enjoying the carnival atmosphere.

Newspaper reports generally managed to convey that the Uglieland carnivals were simultaneously both good fun and in a good cause:

> A toboggan rattled its way down the incline singing its song of help for those whose way of life lies more on the hollows than on the hills. A merry-go-round, with its burden of laughing children and adults whirled and wheezed its song of

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22 Interviews with Mrs Vera Farrell and Mrs Jessie Balcombe, notes in my possession.
23 Interview with Mr Horry Davies, tape in my possession.
aid... Chance, clothed in attractive forms walked hand in hand with Charity.24

A wide variety of games of chance ranked amongst the most popular forms of entertainment:

All the excitement and uncertainty of the racecourse was entered into on Saturday by the crowd who gathered round the racegame. So much depended on the selection of a single strand in ‘Bunty Pulls the Strings’ that the spice of doubt was treasured often by those who played that game.25

Both the Perth and Fremantle parks had chocolate wheels and lucky dips, as well as games which involved some skill like the shooting gallery, coconut shies, darto and hoopla. Bingo, or Housie, was also well patronised - not surprisingly as the investment of a shilling could return a pound to the winner - attracting big crowds at Fremantle Uglieland, especially. Mrs Hazel Scott described the Bingo booth at Fremantle as having a counter (at which players stood) with numbered boards nailed to them. Crown seals were used to cover the numbers as they were drawn.26 Nevertheless, there were always rumours, Mrs Vera Farrell recalled, that the Bingo games at Fremantle were rigged.27

In 1926, more serious allegations were made of impropriety at White City, although there is no evidence that charges were ever laid. The Perth Town Clerk wrote to the Premier, Phillip Collier, to advise him of a resolution passed by Council

That in view of the serious abuses arising out of the existing system of leasing and conducting the public reserve known as White City whereby a private individual is permitted to profit at the expense of public charities and encouragement

24West Australian, 26/1/25, p6.
25West Australian, 26/1/25, p6.
26Mrs Hazel Scott, Fremantle Library Oral History Collection, transcript p11.
27Interview with Mrs Vera Farrell, notes in my possession.
is afforded to the youth of our state, Council resolves that the aforesaid reserve of White City should be vested in the Municipality of Perth to be leased, at a rental covering the cost of maintenance, to any bona fide charitable object in the state.  

Complaints about the leasing arrangements may have been little more than a smoke screen for the real issue, which was a moral objection to gambling, but they were persistent enough to provoke David Martin, the leaseholder of White City, into writing a letter to the Editor of the West Australian to defend his reputation:

Some of my critics have made irresponsible statements about the 'enormous profits' which they allege I am making out of White City. This, I might say, is a fetish of their own imagination. As I have made the conduct of appeals my life work, and as I am taking the financial risk, bearing the expense of the upkeep of the grounds, I naturally expect to receive a reasonable return for my services and outlay. Even my critics cannot quibble at that, for they do the same in their respective spheres of activity.  

The Premier refused to see a deputation from the Perth City Council on the matter since the lease was due to expire shortly anyway and arrangements had already been made for the control of leasing to be transferred to the State Gardens Board. In a rather caustic conclusion to his reply to the Council, Collier wrote that

after reflecting upon the condition of many of the parklands in the metropolitan area, I regret to say I can see no good reason to anticipate any improvement if any of the reserves now controlled by the State Gardens Board should be vested in the City Council.  

28SAWA, AN 20/5, Perth City Council, Acc 3054, file 62 of 1937, letter dated 22/1/26 Town Clerk, Perth to Premier.  
29West Australian, 5/3/26, p15.  
30SAWA, AN 20/5, Perth City Council, Acc 3054, file 62 of 1937, letter dated 4/2/26, Premier to Town Clerk, Perth.
The fact that a private individual had been earning a livelihood from White City was only part of the problem, however. Criticisms of the Ugly Men's fund-raising methods which had earlier been murmurings, became louder, more frequent and more organised. Throughout 1926 and 1927, a steady stream of correspondence to the press and to the Perth City Council complained about the 'blot [on] our city life' and the 'moral danger' it posed to the city's youth. The wording of many of these letters was very similar, suggesting a collaborative effort by the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, the Women's Service Guild, the Western Australian Housewives' Association, the Children's Protection Society (which regularly benefited from the Ugly Men's largesse), several chapters of the Mothers' Union, and the Presbyterian and Congregational Churches. Letters of support and encouragement were sent to the Perth City Council whenever it passed one of its frequent resolutions declaring disapproval of the gambling at White City and pressure was continually applied to the Premier. He resisted this for several years until the matter seemed set to become an election issue, prompting one writer from the Trinity Congregational Church to complain in December 1928 that

\[
\text{the objectors to that morally pestilential swamp at the river's brim are fobbed off with promises that are not seriously meant.}^{32}
\]

The women's groups were particularly concerned about the presence of women at White City. One delegate to the annual conference of the Women's Auxiliary of the Churches of Christ said that in her opinion

\[31\text{SAWA, AN 20/5, Perth City Council, Acc 3054, file 62 of 1937, series of letters and press clippings.}\]

\[32\text{ibid.}\]
The saddest sight is to see our young women there. I know nothing of what has occurred during the past twelve months, but I have paid about twenty visits to the place and have seen some heart rending scenes.³³

Some hearts must have been very easily rent, however, as the mere sight of a couple dancing bare-headed on the dance floor at White City was enough to cause outrage and indignation for one woman, while horror at the 'Wembley Bedroom Stunt' could have been more easily predicted. This scheme involved a young woman 'clad in night attire' and reclining on a bed being tipped into a tank of water whenever a ball hit the target. The men representing the views of the church groups, on the other hand, concentrated on the dangers posed to the moral well-being of young people, who, they claimed, were being introduced to the evils of gambling through observing their parents' blithe disregard for proper conduct.³⁴

White City was not devoid of supporters, however, who argued that the entertainment offered there was relatively inexpensive, conveniently located, had music and bright lights in the open air and that it funded many charitable institutions. Some agreed that it was an architectural 'blot', but argued that it only needed an overhaul. James Drinkwater, the Organiser for the School for the Blind in Maylands in a letter to the Editor of the West Australian argued for its retention on egalitarian grounds:

White City is a pleasure ground of the workingman and by trying to close White City you are penalising one section of the community of Western Australia.³⁵

³³Ibid.
³⁴Ibid.
³⁵West Australian, 7/12/27, letter to the editor.
Alex Clydesdale tried to dissociate the Association from the slurs heaped by the women's and church groups, pointing out that

_White City opened in the first instance with the object of benefiting the Ugly Men's Association and the Silver Chain. Had the use of the grounds been confined to these organisations, with perhaps an occasional carnival for some deserving cause, there would have been no complaints._³⁶

After refusing for two and a half years to see a deputation from the Council of Churches and the National Council of Women, Collier finally succumbed to pressure in May 1929 and ordered that White City be closed. Fremantle Uglieland, too, was felled by the same stroke of the pen, having been in the preceding two years the target of complaints from the Fremantle Businessmen's Association and the Fremantle Retail Traders' Association. They claimed that carnivals held in December at Fremantle Uglieland did a 'great amount of harm ... to the business community'.³⁷ The nature of the conflict between Uglieland and the interests of the business community was, unfortunately, never made clear. It is possible to assume, however, that the traders viewed the money spent at Uglieland as money which was not being spent in their stores, given that most people have a limited disposable income.

The women's and church groups were silent when letters to the Editor of the _West Australian_ suggested that

_... it behoves those who were opposed to White City and yet are charitably disposed, to point out other means of raising the £7,000 required. ... Everyone recognises the wonderful charitable work the Ugly Men's Association has carried out in the past, and will ardently hope that the necessary money_ ³⁶³⁷

³⁷_West Australian_, 8/9/27, p10.
Regrettably, no other methods of fund raising as successful as the Uglieland carnivals offered themselves and the Association's annual meeting of 1930 reported a net income for the year of just over £7,000; by 1934, that figure had dropped to a little over £3,000. Charity race meetings and Melbourne Cup sweep-style consultations provided the bulk of this revenue, but in 1931 the state government took over the management and operation of art unions, closing off yet another avenue of fund raising. Ironically, the Committee Controlling Art Unions, which reported to the Minister Controlling Art Unions, John Scaddan, comprised F.E. Gibson, the former Mayor of Fremantle, and Alex Clydesdale, Harry Mann, and Robert Buscombe (Secretary to the Ugly Men's Association) who were appointed to these positions because of their experience and expertise in running art unions. Mr Alfred Carson, on accepting a cheque from the Committee on behalf of the Silver Chain Nursing League, said that

while he had for a long time been opposed to the raising of money for charitable purposes by consultations, bitter experience had taught him the utter impossibility of getting sufficient money to maintain the institution by other means.

When the State Lotteries Commission was formed in 1933, Clydesdale, Mann and Scaddan were all on the board of management, although Clydesdale resigned his position on the board after a lawsuit brought

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38 ibid.
39 Lotteries were referred to as either consultations or art unions, apparently interchangeably.
40 Daily News, 8/12/31, p7.
41 ibid.
by T.J. Hughes deemed it as an office of profit under the Crown, incompatible with his position as a Member of the Legislative Council.42

By 1936, grants from the State Lotteries Commission constituted the revenue base for the Association43 which were supplemented to a limited extent with small but regular donations from groups and individuals who were clearly loath to see the Association fold. The staff of the Infants' School in east Victoria Park regularly donated £1/-/-, for example, and the Civil Service Association and the Correspondence Classes branch of the Education Department made fortnightly donations of £5/-/- and £3/-/- respectively throughout the winter of 1930. Staff at the Wooroolo Sanatorium gave £25/-/- as part of the proceeds from their own fund-raising drive.44

While the Lotteries Commission was now funding institutions like the Silver Chain Nursing League, for example, which the Association had assisted during the 1920s, there was still a demand on the Association from individuals who were either not entitled to, or had exhausted, other forms of relief available. Sadly, the lack of funds prevented the Association from giving the help that it would have provided immediately and willingly a decade previously.

42Peter Johnston, 'Freeing the Colonial Shackles' in David Black (ed) The House on the Hill, pp318-319. and David Black 'The era of Labor Ascendancy' in C.T.Stannage (ed) A New History of Western Australia. Retrospective legislation was passed, as a result of Hughes' challenge in the Supreme Court, which protected Clydesdale's position in the Council. Hughes then appealed unsuccessfully to the High Court. Clydesdale's position on the Lotteries Commission was deemed to have been offered and accepted in good faith and he was permitted to hold it until its two year term expired. At that point, he was given the choice of resigning from the Council or the Commission. He chose to resign from the Commission in 1935 but when his term on the Council expired in 1938, he resumed his position on the Lotteries Commission once more.


Chapter 5 - 'The Handsome Deeds of Ugly Men'.

Although some of the Ugly Men's fund-raising methods had attracted criticism, support and appreciation of the work they did was very nearly unanimous. When one critic - an 'unbending Christian' - publicly expressed his objection to some Ugly Men chopping wood for an elderly woman on Sundays - the ring of the axe, he claimed, disturbed the Sabbath calm - he in turn was reviled by a journalist who wrote a review article of the Association's activities:

*What is Christianity if not compounded largely of charity and kindliness, and a recognition of the claims of the weaker and poorer members of society. As a counter-blast to the sour protest of the self-elected defender of the Sabbath it may be said without irreverence that God is the Chief Patron of the Ugly Men's Voluntary Workers' Association of W.A.*

That sort of criticism was very rare, however, and unstinting praise came from most quarters. Sir Francis Newdigate-Newdegate, as Governor, was glad, he said, to conduct the opening ceremonies for the Uglieland carnivals 'because I do so admire what they do.' The former Governor, Sir William Ellison-Macartney, then living in London, showed a copy of Ugliology to King George V and wrote to the Association that the King was both interested in and appreciative of their work. The Anglican Archbishop of Perth, C.O.L. Riley, commented approvingly that they did 'right things in the right way', and Archbishop Clune of the Catholic Church expressed his admiration of the work of the Ugly Men, writing to them that

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2 West Australian, 2/2/23, p5.
3 West Australian, 4/12/19, p6.
I know of no other association of voluntary workers that has done such splendid philanthropic work in the community, and I earnestly hope that the people will mark their appreciation of your services in the way you desire viz., by generously supplying you with the necessary funds to enable you to continue your charitable work on behalf of those in need.\(^5\)

Rabbi Freedman wrote that

\[ I \text{ particularly like their religion, which as I heard one of their leaders express it, consists in doing all the good they can to all their fellow creatures found to be in need.} \(^6\] \]

The Association found that there was plenty of good to be done. Indeed, it appears there were many more 'fellow creatures' found to be in need in Perth in the post-war period than may be appreciated from reading the standard authorities on Western Australian history.\(^7\)

Figures published in reports of the Association's annual meetings showed that from 1920 assistance was given to over 5,000 applicants each year, reaching a peak in 1929 of just over 7,000, and representing an average yearly expenditure on the Association's part of £6,500. The population of the Perth metropolitan area in this period, it should be noted, also increased from around 167,000 to 235,000\(^8\). A more useful assessment of the incidence of poverty may be gauged, however, through a comparison of the Association's figures with the number of occupied private dwellings in the metropolitan area, which in 1921 was

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\(^4\)West Australian, 20/10/20, p7.  
\(^5\)Unification, pp10-11.  
\(^6\)ibid.  
\(^7\)See, for example, Crowley's comment that 'the nineteen twenties were years of considerable prosperity' in Australia's Western Third, p237; and Bolton's in A Fine Country to Starve In, that there was 'a short, temporary recession in 1921', p32. Nor are poverty or welfare the subjects of detailed discussion in C.T. Stannage's A New History of Western Australia.  
29,741⁹, since much of the assistance given was in respect of families, not just individuals. This comparison suggests that a significant portion of the population experienced hardship at some point. For many, tight budgeting on a low income meant that the necessities of everyday life could be secured, but illness or unexpected expenses spelled disaster. A few people who were ineligible for any form of government assistance were almost entirely supported by the Association for months, and sometimes even years.

Government welfare programmes were comparatively meagre affairs until a federal Labor government began to institute reforms in 1941.¹⁰ The Commonwealth government had assumed responsibility for the aged and infirm when it passed the Invalid and Old-Age Pensions Act of 1908, although the eligibility criteria relating to residence, income and assets were stringent, as were the moral requirements. A conviction for drunkenness or an imprisonable offence could result in the pension payments being suspended, while having deserted one's spouse in the five years preceding the application for pension would render a person ineligible.¹¹ A Maternity Allowance, introduced in 1912 and paying £5 on the birth of a child, had less exacting requirements, being granted regardless of the mother's marital status or income.¹² The introduction of child endowment payments in 1941, in lieu of income tax deductions for children, addressed the long recognised difficulties experienced by low income earners with large families.¹³

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⁹Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census: Australia 1921, microfiche, p23. 'Private dwellings' includes houses, tenements, flats and boarding houses, with an average of 4.52 persons per dwelling. It does not include inmates of institutions.
¹⁰Brian Dickey, No Charity There, pp131-44.
¹¹T. H. Kewley, Social Security in Australia, (Sydney University Press, 1965), pp75-76.
¹²Ibid., p103.
¹³Ibid., pp190-195.
Although war widows were provided for under the War Pensions Act of 1914–16, a pension for civilian widows was not introduced until 1942. The problem of income maintenance for the unemployed, although the subject of a Royal Commission in 1925, remained the responsibility of state governments until Commonwealth legislation was enacted in 1944.

The state government in inter-war Western Australia supported several orphanages, homes for the aged, and the insane asylum, while many other hospitals and institutions caring for the blind, deaf, or chronically ill, received some government grants but had to resort to fund-raising drives to cover the bulk of their running costs. The allowance paid to unemployed workers by the Western Australian government was, according to Bolton, more generous than that paid in other states, although the eligibility criteria, designed to 'weed out malingerers' caused hardship in many genuine cases. Mitchell's response to reports of unemployment in the metropolitan area was always that there was plenty of work to be found in the country where conditions, he believed, were better anyway. In some respects, this response suggests that unemployment was seen as the fault of the unemployed themselves and provision for their welfare, therefore, ought not be too generous or too easy to obtain. Mitchell, in the early 1920s, refused to believe that there were very many unemployed men in Perth.

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17 ibid., p265.
deputation of unemployed men in 1921 tried to convince the Premier that there were at least 500 men out of work in the city but met with very little success:

Spokesman. I invite you to go round in the morning with me and I will show you hundreds who are out of work. I invite you to come down to the Esplanade and meet the unemployment demonstrations yourself. If you are desirous of finding out whether there is any unemployment in this state, we are equally desirous of showing you the unemployed. We are prepared to bring them in a demonstration to you to this office.

Premier. That will settle the question. This room only holds a hundred.²⁰

The executive of the Ugly Men's Association, realising that paid employment was a better solution to poverty than unemployment relief, found jobs for people whenever it could. Mitchell pointed this out to the deputation when it complained that the New Settlers' League was placing immigrants in jobs to the detriment of local labour:

Do you know that a few weeks ago a complaint of this nature was made to the Ugly Men, and they said - 'Very well, if you have men who want employment, we will find it for them.' Six men turned up and they were all found employment.²¹

In September 1921, Clydesdale headed a deputation of unemployed married men to the Premier with the suggestion that he institute a relief project to clear King's Park of dead wood. The difficulty facing married men, Clydesdale pointed out, was that if they took work in the country they either had to take their families to inadequate rural housing, or were forced to maintain two households if they left their families in the

²¹ibid.
The Association was far more sympathetic to the privations suffered by the unemployed than was the Premier. Noting that state relief payments ceased immediately a job was found, even though wages would not usually be paid for at least a week, the Association often provided food vouchers or cash to cover the intervening period.23

Other assistance offered by the Association was quite astonishing in its variety. Returned soldiers and soldiers' widows were helped to complete application forms for repatriation living allowances, or to apply for land under the soldier settlement scheme.24 Soldiers in the base hospital at Fremantle were entertained with outings and visits25 and a programme of visits to the patients at the Woorooloo sanatorium was instituted. Clydesdale commented at the annual meeting in 1919 that he thought this was one of the Association's finest efforts.

*The people were not so much in need of clothing as for someone to cheer them up. One of the inmates had confessed to him that it was the first time in six months that any one had come to give them something in the way of good cheer. Brightening the lives of the inmates was equal, in his opinion, to the supplying of goods, and it was a pleasure to be able to do it.*26

An American Negro who had once sold newspapers in Perth was unable, at 80 years of age, to continue working. Ineligible for an Australian age pension, he was entirely supported by the Association.27 Artificial limbs were supplied to two people who needed them and two widows who had no relatives in Australia were provided with passages

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as old friends, will always be among the happiest recollections of our lives. 31

Although assistance was often given in the form of food, furniture and bedding, the Association was one of few organisations which also gave cash. The St Vincent de Paul society, for example, only ever provided material relief, showing, as Katharine Massam suggests, 'a certain distrust of the poor'. 32 The Ugly Men also arranged free medical treatment for people in need from doctors in both the Fremantle and Victoria Park districts, and several pharmacists supplied medicines at cost price. 33

In addition to helping individual cases, the Association provided assistance to charitable institutions, either in the form of regular donations or as major fund-raising drives for specific causes. Donations to institutions ranged between £25 and £100 each year with the various orphanages throughout the metropolitan area always singled out as particular beneficiaries. The Salvation Army, St John's Ambulance and Silver Chain Nursing League also received regular donations, as did the After-Care Committee at the Hospital for the Insane and two groups which looked after the welfare of ex-prisoners. 34

The Association was particularly concerned to help the Children's Hospital - Harry Mann was a governor and member of the Children's Hospital Board for seventeen years, and Alex Clydesdale was its

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31 West Australian, 21/12/25, p8. 'Little Brothers' is a reference to the Big Brother immigration scheme, which sponsored young boys emigrating from England.
32 Katharine Massam, 'The Catholic Church in Western Australia at the time of the great depression', (BA Hons, UWA, 1984), p48.
34 See, for example, the report published in Daily News of 22/8/24, p5, where individual donations are tabulated. Reports from other years' meetings also provide this information, although in a less accessible format.
honorary treasurer.\textsuperscript{35} On top of the regular donations to help with running costs, the Association raised £7,000 in a special campaign to build a new out-patients' department. The Association assumed complete responsibility for the project, arranging for plans to be drawn free of charge and handing over the completed building to the Hospital in 1921.\textsuperscript{36} In 1925, another special fund raising effort provided £366 to the hospital and an additional £200 was given to the Perth Hospital, to buy new X-ray plant.\textsuperscript{37} Noting in 1924 that Western Australia had the highest rate of infant mortality in Australia at 55 per 1,000, the Association raised £2,000 to go toward the establishment of infant welfare clinics in the metropolitan area.\textsuperscript{38}

By 1926, the Fremantle branch had donated over £2,000 to the Fremantle Hospital\textsuperscript{39} and a further fund raising campaign in 1927 prompted the government to promise the Ugly Men that it would 'match 10 shillings to the pound' to augment the £1,000 raised by the Association on behalf of the hospital.\textsuperscript{40} Later that year, the Fremantle branch also presented the citizens of Fremantle with a locally built ambulance. Costing £500, the ambulance was considered by experts to be 'superior to any in Australia', and the president, Mr J.M. Farrell, said that his branch 'took great pride in being able to make such a gift to the town. The Uglies were always willing to assist in relieving distress.'\textsuperscript{41}

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\textsuperscript{35}David Black and Geoffrey Bolton, \textit{Biographical Register of Members of the Parliament of Western Australia, 1870-1930}, p134, 48.
\textsuperscript{36}Daily News, 4/8/22, p5.
\textsuperscript{38}West Australian, 17/9/24, p11.
\textsuperscript{39}West Australian, 7/8/26, p12.
\textsuperscript{40}West Australian, 31/5/27, p8.
\textsuperscript{41}West Australian, 20/6/27, p6.
\end{thebibliography}
In 1923 inmates of the Woorooloo Sanatorium benefited from a new recreation hall built with funds provided by the Ugly Men's Association:

_They now have a very comfortable hall in which to spend their leisure time, of which, unfortunately they have such a great deal, but this can now be spent in comfort, whereas before they had nowhere to go but in their own wards, or wandering around the grounds, and even this was impossible in winter months._\(^{42}\)

Small things, too, could make a big difference to people's lives and the Ugly Men were quick to provide these wherever they could. The Carlisle Branch provided 'a wireless listening-in set, including the registration fee' to the aged residents of the Edward Millen Home, and arranged for two seats to be installed between the Home and the tram terminus so that they could rest en route if they needed to.\(^{43}\) And, although no new homes were built after 1922, the members of all the branches were 'always willing to provide the necessary labour required for repairs and small additions, in order to make the homes a little brighter.'\(^{44}\)

In December 1924, the executive of the Association,

seeking for a means, in some small way, to brighten the lives of the children of the orphanages of the metropolitan area, hit upon the idea of giving them a picnic, and it was arranged that the whole of the children from the orphanages should be given a day's enjoyment at the zoo. The idea was carried out, the girls being taken on the 9th December, and the boys the following week, December 16. Over 800 children participated in the outings. Letters from the children themselves, expressing their delight and appreciation of the outing were received.\(^{45}\)

\(^{43}\)SAWA, AN 20/5, Perth City Council, Acc 3054, file 248 of 1925, Annual Report of the Carlisle Branch, 1924.
The picnics were such a success that they became an annual event for the next six years. Other attempts at entertaining orphans were not always appreciated by their custodians, however. Mrs Alice Lawford, who was raised in the Salvation Army girls' home in Cottesloe, recalled a concert given by the Ugly Men, which featured both a musical saw player and a tap dancer. The Matron of the home, Mrs Lawford remembered, commented that the show was neither fit nor proper, since dancing was a sin, but she supposed they had to take whatever entertainment was offered. 46

The collection and distribution of second-hand clothing and blankets, begun in 1920, proved to be one of the most successful and enduring projects the Ugly Men undertook. What began as the distribution of unwanted clothes from the members of the executive themselves expanded into an industry which kept volunteer workers busy mending,

46Conversation with Mrs Alice Lawford, notes in my possession.
altering and sorting the garments as required in a series of 'sewing bees' across the metropolitan area. The clothing department had moved into separate accommodation shortly after it was established in 1920, but by 1923 it had been forced to move to larger premises, so generous was the response of the public to requests for their 'left-off clothes'. Even so, the Association had difficulty keeping up with demand and on several occasions the department had to close for several weeks while it replenished stocks. Between 2,500 and 7,000 people were helped each year through the clothing department until 1936. Although there are no figures available after this date, the Perth telephone directory contained a listing until November 1940, suggesting that it was active until this time, making it the last active function of the Association.\textsuperscript{47}

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{GIVE IT TO THE UGLIES—} & \textbf{THEN BUY A GOOD ONE FROM} \\
\hline
\textbf{FITZGERALD AND GOULD, THE DIPLOMA TAILORS.} & \\
\hline
\textbf{Three Bumping Good Bargains for July — the whole of July.} & \\
\hline
\textbf{TREMENDOUS PURCHASE, MUCH BELOW COST... YARDS AND YARDS OF GOOD SHIRTINGS.} & \\
\hline
\textbf{ALL WOOL SILKNEY REESEANCE, 6s 10d. FOR 24s.} & \\
\hline
\textbf{BEAUTIFUL SHERID, LOVELY COLOURED INDIGO, 6s 8d. FOR 2s 3d.} & \\
\hline
\textbf{WORSTED, ALL COLOURS, OUTFITINGS, ETC., 11s 1d. ALL FOR 3s 9d.} & \\
\hline
\textbf{OUR DINNER SUITS PLEASE EVERYBODY, 12s 2d. FOR 4s 6d. 12s 6d.} & \\
\hline
\textbf{COUNTRY PEOPLE, SEND FOR PATTERNS AND SELF-MEASURE FORMS. DON'T BE HAD BY PEDDLEIG TRAVELLERS.} & \\
\hline
\textbf{FITZGERALD \& GOULD, Perth's Best Tailors,} & \\
\hline
\textbf{OPPOSITE HORSESHOE BRIDGE STEPS, 435 WELLINGTON-STREET.} & \\
\hline
\textbf{The popularity of the UglyMen's second hand clothing depot is illustrated by this advertisement which appeared in West Australian 3/7/25.} & \\
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\textsuperscript{47}Figures compiled from reports of annual meetings published in Daily News and West Australian, 1920 - 1936.
To obtain clothing, shoes, boots or blankets a chit had to be obtained from the Association's headquarters and presented to the clothing department, where

there are two kindly women employed to investigate their requirements. Neither time nor trouble is spared to match jumper to skirt, coat to trousers, to fit a prospective land worker with suitable boots, or select a pair of bootees for a baby. Sometimes a handbag or a pretty buckle is added to a utility outfit to the obvious delight of the recipient so favoured.48

The fact that no money was required to fund this operation meant that it could continue after the closing of White City had curtailed most of the Association's other work. Between 3,500 and 5,000 people used this service each year between 1929 and 1934, when through lack of revenue, the Ugly Men were powerless to do much else to ease the hardship caused by the depression.

48West Australian, 10/8/28, p6.
The following are a few reasons why you are asked to give your left-off clothing to the above organisation:

1. There is a big demand upon the finances of the Association for children's clothing, and for blankets.

2. All recent Fortnightly Meetings of the Executive contain from 50 to 60 applications for relief are dealt with, and in most instances children's clothing and blankets are needed.

3. The Institution is better able to distribute articles and in other ways attend to the needs of a large number of suffering mothers and children of all creeds than is any other body in the State.

4. Special Committees deal with every case and institute inquiries into every case brought under the notice of the Association.

5. The investigation Committee's work has been continued since the outbreak of war, and relief has been given to hundreds of cases without the slightest cost for services.

6. The "Ugly" Women Workers are experts in making the most of what they receive in clothing, having had years of experience in converting men's and women's garments, and left-off goods into suitable suits, and comfortable garments for the poor children who require- more warm clothing than their parents can afford.

7. When you give a garment of any description, you can be sure that it is destined to provide warmth and comfort for some little one.

MINTS THAT, IF FOLLOWED, WILL ASSIST IN THEIR WORK.

Address your parcel to:- The Organiser, Ugly Men's Children's Clothing Appeal, Howard Place, Perth.

Any doubts that would do a turn after repairing, we will find the right man to fix them up, thereby saving another sold from straying.

Cost of Hats & Caps: We have an "Ugly" expert Milliner who will remunerate them for the needs of those who need them.

Collars, Ties, and every other article suitable for the necessary work we are carrying on for the poor of the cities and country.

NO MATTER HOW SMALL YOUR PARCEL ITS WORTH TO US ARE THE CHILDREN GREAT.

The Organiser, W. H. DOWNY.

Circular distributed by the Association for the second hand clothing appeal. Courtesy Batye Library PR 6360.
Epilogue.

The closing of White City in 1929 effectively sounded the death knell for the Association - the removal of its major source of revenue meant that it did not have the funds to help either individuals or charitable institutions in the way that it had in the preceding decade. In 1928, the Association reported that in the previous twelve months it had given over £8,000 in relief to needy cases. By 1934, this figure had dropped to £3,000, and by 1936 had dropped further still to £1,300, and most of this money had come from the newly formed State Lotteries Commission in the form of grants. The clothing department continued to operate until 1940, although the number of people assisted in this way also began to drop after 1934. Newspaper reports of the Association's activities became less frequent and less detailed as the 1930s progressed - reflecting, no doubt, the diminishing vitality of the organisation itself. The Victoria Park branch held a meeting in September 1935 in an attempt to revive interest in the Association but no further reports of activity were found after a second meeting was held in November of that year.

The existence, or otherwise, of the Association caused some consternation in 1940 in meetings of the Fremantle City Council. The Council was pressing the state government to allow the Fremantle Uglieland site to be turned into an attractive park, instead of the eyesore it had become. Councillor Hines claimed that when asked

\[1\textit{West Australian}, 13/8/28, p7.\]
\[2\textit{West Australian}, 1/9/34, p24.\]
\[3\textit{Daily News}, 2/9/36, p19.\]
\[4\textit{West Australian}, 14/9/35, p13, and 11/11/35, p13.\]
previously if the Ugly Men's Association was still in existence, Councillor Farrell, the former president of the Fremantle branch, had answered that it wasn't. Councillor Farrell pointed out, however, that he had only been referring to the Fremantle branch,

*that he never said that the Ugly Men's Association did not exist. How could he when they were an incorporate body and are still alive in Perth. He could not possibly admit that it did not exist.*

Although the exchange proves little in concrete terms, it does illustrate the uncertainty that existed then about the Association's status, showing that it no longer figured prominently in the public mind. It took Alex Clydesdale's death in January 1947, however, to trigger a series of events which led ultimately to end of the Association.

Clydesdale had been appointed a member of the War Relief Funds Council during the second world war, and when he died, the Chairman of the Council wrote to the Chief Secretary's Office asking if the Ugly Men's Association would like to nominate another member to take Clydesdale's place. After some preliminary investigation, Findlay, the Clerk in Charge of the Chief Secretary's Department, concluded that according to the rules of its own constitution, the Association could no longer exist.

Under the constitution, the committee of management comprised the president, three vice-presidents and twelve other committee members, seven of whom were required to form a quorum. This committee was required to retire annually and elections were to be held to fill the positions anew. A quorum of twenty-five members was required for an

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5SAWA, AN 217/2, Fremantle City Council, Acc 1317, minutes of council meeting held 8/4/40.
annual general meeting. Since more than a year had passed from the time the last annual meeting had been held, Findlay argued that the old committee must be deemed to have retired, and no new committee of management had been elected. Fourteen of the last elected officials had since died, moreover, and the last treasurer, Jack Hodge, was 82 years old while Harry Mann was 74. The Association, Findlay concluded, was therefore without an executive body and consequently unable to effect any business. He had not reckoned on the tenacity of Harry Mann, however.

A newly enacted Charitable Collections Act required that charitable organisations be registered and the Chief Secretary's Department duly sent to Hodge in June 1947 an application form for registration, accompanied by a request for a balance sheet and statement of assets. Hodge ignored all the written correspondence from the Chief Secretary's Department, but when interviewed by Findlay in his, Hodge's, office, claimed that although he had been treasurer for twenty years, and technically still was,

he had no knowledge of any books or any other property and merely signed the cheques prepared for his signature, when required to do so.\(^6\)

Harry Mann, he suggested, might know more about the affairs of the Association than he did. Mann, too, ignored all written requests for information until he was interviewed at his office, whereupon he produced a book of the minutes of several recent meetings, some rate notices and one file of two pages, which, he said, were the only records of the Association he held. Clydesdale, he said, had inadvertently burnt

\(^6\)SAWA., AN 24, Chief Secretary's Department, Acc 752, file 106 of 1947, report dated 30/8/48.
all the Association's records when destroying some records relating to
the Goodwood race course. Findlay noted in his report that he
encouraged Mann to talk about the Association and gathered from the
conversation that at the outbreak of war in 1939, it had gone into
recess. Clydesdale, as president, had been authorised to carry out the
routine duties of administering its trusts. Any major business which
arose was to be dealt with by the executive committee which would
reconvene if needed. No such meetings were called, but shortly after
Clydesdale's death in January 1947, Mann called a meeting,
advertising the date and venue in the press. This meeting was attended
by 30 members who elected him as president. When Findlay asked
how these members had become financial 'as required by the
Constitution', Mann replied that 'they were all life members and were all
in possession of their membership badges.'7 Several meetings were
subsequently called by Mann to try to sort out the Association's affairs.

Despite the agreement reached in 1939 that the executive committee
would reconvene to conduct major business, by 1947 it was found that
several of the Association's properties had been sold, including the
boys' farm at Wokalup. Findlay noted in his report that

*I imagine Mr Mann was shocked when he went into the
affairs of the Association, following Mr Clydesdale's death,
and found how little was left of what he believed to be very
considerable assets.*8

The Chief Secretary's Department ordered a more thorough
investigation into the Association's affairs, beginning from July 1937
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7ibid.
8ibid.
Association, at the end of June 1937, to be £18,782, with liabilities of £10,211. By September 1948, although the farm at Wokalup had been sold (in which the Association's equity was shown to have been just over £7,000), the Association's balance at the Bank of New South Wales was only a little over £100.\(^9\) The lack of documentary evidence made it impossible for the investigating officer to determine fully what had become of the Association's assets - the only documentation available to him was the farm ledger, which recorded entries up to the point of sale in August 1939, and a general cash book which contained entries of transactions of metropolitan activities for the period August 1939 to May 1942.

Harry Mann clearly thought that Clydesdale was in some way responsible for the poor state of finances, moving at a meeting in October 1947 that a claim be lodged on behalf of the Association against Clydesdale's estate for monies owing. He also claimed that a presented cheque made in his favour had not been cashed by him and that he had sought legal advice on the matter. It is interesting to note that the legal advisor engaged by Mann was T.J. Hughes - the former Independent Member of Parliament who had brought the case against Clydesdale in 1933 over his appointment to the Lotteries Commission. The investigating officer noted that Mann's 'whole demeanour indicated a very bitter attitude to the late Mr Clydesdale'.\(^{10}\)

Mann also behaved rather oddly in connection with a sum of money the Association was holding in trust for a woman who had lost a leg in a childhood accident. A sum of £100 had been raised for her by the

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\(^9\)ibid., report dated 16/5/49.  
\(^{10}\)ibid.
residents in her district, such money to be held in trust until she reached 21 years of age. The woman, now married and over the required age, had asked for the money but Mann refused her request on the grounds that it would not be in her best interests. The woman's husband, Mann alleged, 'was addicted to drink and would squander [the money].'\(^\text{11}\) 'Discreet and reliable inquiries' made by the police, however, found

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\text{that there is absolutely no truth in the allegation that the husband is addicted to drink, but that he is sober and industrious and furthermore, that Mrs M. is in urgent need of the money to pay for a new wooden leg and a kerosene refrigerator which she has ordered.}\(^\text{12}\)
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The absence of documentary evidence makes it impossible to explain Mann's actions or suggest any possible motives.

The investigating officer also found that there were several properties around the metropolitan area in which the Association had an interest. Some were owned by the Association but were tenanted on a life interest basis, some were rented, one had been abandoned and appeared to be inhabited by squatters, and six properties were found to have been resumed by the Crown. Other properties had, in the preceding decade, been sold by various metropolitan roads boards to recoup rates which had not been paid on them. In short, the affairs of the Association had deteriorated to a rather ugly state.

The outcome of the investigation was that under the terms of the Charitable Collections Act 1946-47, 'due to maladministration' the Ugly

\(^{11}\text{ibid.},\) letter dated 21/10/49, Under Secretary, Chief Secretary's Department to Commissioner of Police.  
\(^{12}\text{ibid.},\) letter date 1/11/49, Commissioner of Police to Under Secretary, Chief Secretary's Department.
Men's Association was deemed to be defunct and a Proclamation signed on 18 August 1948 vested the Association's remaining assets in the Minister Controlling Charitable Collections.\footnote{ibid., Proclamation dated 18/8/48.} The Ugly Men's Association had officially come to an end.
Conclusion.

The activities of the Ugly Men's Association reflect some of the dominant themes of Western Australian history in the inter-war period. The social dislocation and upheaval caused by the first world war, the problems caused by the repatriation of the soldiers themselves, immigration and the concern to settle more closely the state's 'empty spaces' were all issues which the Association addressed through its policy of giving assistance wherever it seemed to be needed. The prevailing beliefs that rural life was superior to urban living and that the state's future was bound to its development of the rural industries also found expression in the establishment of the soldiers' instructional school and the farm school for boys. Of greater significance, however, is the change in attitude to welfare that the Association represents.

Discussion of this change is almost impossible without reference to class although the term is unsatisfactory because it tends to imply that individuals or groups can be easily categorised through the way in which they earn their living and that there are barriers to movement between these groups. While membership of the upper class is probably easiest to define (professionals, the judiciary, and long established pastoral and business families), membership of other groups is more problematic. Politicians like Mann and Clydesdale are an especially ambiguous group because they enjoy power without commensurate social status.¹ Distinctions between the middle and working classes are probably most usefully made on the basis of values rather than occupation. Middle class values in inter-war Western Australia

can best be summarised as conservative - advocating thrift, sobriety and industry with an aversion for drinking, gambling and sexual permissiveness.

The dominance of the upper classes in providing charity to the poor had already waned by the start of twentieth century and was being replaced by the development of organisations like the Kindergarten Union in 1912 and the Women's Service Guild in 1909 which saw the upper middle class assuming a greater role in directing the activities of the working class. The attempts of the middle class moral guardians to regulate working class lives has been documented by other writers. Charlie Fox, for example, in his study of gambling in the inter-war period notes that off-course betting was the focus of a class conflict and that starting price betting as a working man's pastime 'was part of that catalogue of social demoralisation which included drinking, dancing and prostitution'. Sonia Walker's study of film censorship showed that the calls for stricter controls over the content of films screened in Western Australia came from the same women's groups and clergy. Their basis for complaint, she writes, was that the fictional films imported from America 'threatened the institutions of marriage and family by presenting immoral themes which subtly corrupted the child's mind'. Censorship controls were seen as necessary because parents could not be relied upon to preserve their children's well-being.

The issue of children's physical well-being was discussed by Mary Ann O'Hara in her thesis on the state Public Health Department. Staffed by the upper middle class, the department's policies, she writes, reflected the belief

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2Charlie Fox, "'Bookies, Punters and Parasites': Off course betting, conflict and consensus in Western Australia between the wars.' Studies in Western Australian History, Vol 11, June 1990, p57.
4ibid., p80.
that attention to cleanliness and hygiene would improve moral standards and that mothers needed to be educated to care for their children. Ignorance, rather than poverty, was seen as the cause of ill-health. Annette Davis’ study of popular entertainment concludes that in an attempt to 'keep Western Australian society wholesome, clean and decent' the upper middle classes 'prescribed what others could and could not do in their leisure time.' The demise of the Ugly Men's Association adds another chapter to the story of middle class control.

Prior to the implementation of comprehensive welfare programmes, assistance for the needy was available from church groups like the St. Vincent de Paul Society and the Salvation Army, for example, although the help they offered was often conditional. The Ugly Men's Association, under the leadership of Clydesdale and Mann, mobilised the working class to help itself although it enjoyed the support and patronage of some members of the wealthy elite. The Association provided a welfare service to ordinary people in a way in which these people could comfortably respond. Direct action and a minimum of red tape characterised its activities and procedures for obtaining relief were informal rather than intimidatory. Assistance was probably less likely to be viewed as charity, too, if the help came from concerned neighbours rather than one of the middle class agencies.

Participation in the Association offered to its members more than just the opportunity to help others. It provided a range of social activities through dances, picnics and social evenings. The annual meetings, too, always offered a programme of entertainment once the business had been

5M.A. O'Hara, 'The work of the West Australian Public Health Department between World War I and World War II', (BA Hons, UWA, 1984).
concluded. In short, membership in the Association meant that good fun could be had while doing good works and fund-raising must surely have seemed less like work when it involved running a stall at a carnival or taking part in a popularity contest.

Criticism and control of the way in which the Association funded its welfare activities attacked the very basis on which the organisation was structured. Once the carnivals were prohibited and restrictions imposed on games of chance, the activities and membership of the Association dwindled. Denied the means to raise funds in a way it knew to be successful, the Association was thus denied the opportunity to provide assistance. Although its members could have continued to offer their labour to their neighbours in need - there were no prohibitions on busy bees - it seems that the success of the organisation had depended on the total package of charity and carnival. The success of the 'respectable' middle class in restricting the fund-raising methods of the Association meant that it effectively denied the working class the means to provide for its own welfare.
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