‘A SPOT SO ELIGIBLE FOR SETTLEMENT’:
SPORT, LEISURE, CLASS AND COMMUNITY AT THE SWAN RIVER COLONY 1829-1890.

by

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This thesis is presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Murdoch University, 2012.
DECLARATION

I, Roy Leonard Stanley, declare that this thesis is my own account of my research and contains as its main content work which has not previously been submitted for a degree at any tertiary institution.

(Roy Leonard Stanley).
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ABSTRACT.

SWAN RIVER COLONY IN 1829.

Most of Britain’s overseas colonies suffered many problems, having to negotiate seasons which did not match the accustomed months; hostile indigenous peoples; communication problems with the outside world; and a lack of essential supplies and amenities. The Swan River Colony, however, arguably suffered greater exposure to the above than the rest of Britain’s colonies owing to its insular geographical location; being a colony that nobody wanted or wished to visit; very little British government investment; and the existence of thinly scattered settlements with a combined population of fewer than 5000 by 1850, twenty-one years after settlement. A comparative example was South Australia, a colony settled in 1836, which had a population of approximately 40000 by 1850.

The colonisation of Swan River in 1829 was based on James Stirling’s ambitious propaganda and exaggerated claims for a spot so appropriate for settlement that it could no longer be over-looked. However, such motives became a recipe for disaster and laid the foundations for impending catastrophe, creating further complications exacerbated by a British government that declined to invest in the project; no short-term economic structure planned; the establishment of a colony administered and based on ‘class’ and private enterprise; a finite and scattered population; misguided financial speculation; and no skilled labour. Consequently, these reasons explain why the colony was painstakingly slow to project itself onto the colonial map of the British Empire. However, such a scenario did not dampen colonial enthusiasm. Such frequent setbacks only intensified and sustained greater fortitude and resilience that determined the character of the colony between the years 1829 and 1890. Indeed, they embraced a number of values inherent in Australian society today; cultural
continuity, national honour, manliness, sportsmanship, competition, and most important of all, progress.

This thesis examines the development of sport and other leisure time activities at Swan River in the context of the above social and economic issues during the nineteenth century. As the colony progressed, sport and other leisure time activities played an important part in maintaining order in Perth and Fremantle and at the same time became a catalyst for social integration, bringing representatives of all classes together. Using newspapers and the scanty memoirs and diaries of the era, it argues that most sport and other leisure time activities were the sanctuary of the small oligarchical elite and under its control. The lower classes had their own pastimes, but little time to enjoy them. However, by 1890, several ‘new’ sports had been introduced, and the furtherance of ‘high’ and ‘popular’ culture extended the colony’s overall repertoire for entertainment.

By the end of the nineteenth century the economic and social context of the colony had changed also owing to self-government and the discovery of gold, which generated unparalleled economic growth and prosperity. This established the benefits of full-employment, higher wages, and surplus leisure time for a rapidly increasing population arriving from the eastern colonies. Hence, with the arrival of more people democracy demanded representation and with it a shift away from an oligarchic society that had been so much a part of early colonial life and politics.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Michael Durey, for all the advice and encouragement he has given me throughout my studies and in the preparation of this doctorate thesis.

I would also like to extend my appreciation to the library staff at Murdoch University on South Street, in Perth and at the Rockingham regional campus university library on Dixon Road, in Rockingham.
HISTORIOGRAPHY.

The historical and sociological research into sport, incorporating their social themes has become a growth industry over the last fifty years. The most significant reason for this is the media, especially television, which in its own right has brought most games of sport into countless households and simultaneously played a leading part in advancing the arts and ‘high’ culture.

It has been observed that sport is an integral part of Australia’s history, helping to establish important social mores, traditions and relationships. Indeed, sport on its own has characterised Australia as a nation and its growth towards nationalism. Thus, Peter Bailey and Joseph Strutt are justified in stating that the character of any particular people or nations can be based upon the investigation of sport and what ordinary people did in the past. However, it is important to note that the topic of sport involves wider social themes such as representation, identity, class participation, gender, race and ethnicity. My own designs in researching sport originate from my school days, and although many years have passed since, they have not diminished my desire to investigate how various sports came into existence, how their rules refined them, and their impact on society.

THE SWAN RIVER COLONY AS A SUBJECT.

This raises the first aspect of my thesis that needs explaining, namely, why undertake a programme of research on sport and other leisure time activities at Swan River during a period when the tiny colony was troubled by uncertainty, misgivings and danger? Secondly, given that little research has been published on the colony by Australian academics, why is the Swan River Colony, which was neither wanted nor visited, worth writing about? For me, these questions answer themselves. While Britain was in the process of asserting herself throughout the world, the Swan River Colony was a frontier society on the remote edge of her empire. It was the most isolated settlement in the world’s most isolated continent. Devoid of any facilities that are now easily accessible, it took a great deal of courage for those first settlers to assert their
personality and character on an unforgiving land and, simultaneously, suppress a desire to leave. Consequently, early indicators pointed towards many years of hard work and the dream of recreating an English village in the Australian outback was never achieved. However, the pioneering settlers did have faith in their ability at least to make an attempt and simultaneously entertain themselves.

The thesis then focuses on how sport in a frontier society was an important component towards surviving and achieving social order and colonial integration in a colony that was experiencing slow economic development, Spartan conditions, fluctuating economic cycles (until the discovery of gold) and convictism. Given the lack of research on sport at Swan River, a case study of Fremantle and Perth seemed particularly appropriate. Both towns grew at roughly the same rate. The port of Fremantle was the industrial hub of the colony and Perth was the capital and centre of political administration.

PRIMARY SOURCES.

Research at Perth’s Battye Library in Western Australia included newspapers, diaries, journals, letters, and public documents. The journals of the Royal Western Australian Historical Society proved helpful, but records from the Western Australian Turf Club did not start until May 1888. A similar situation occurred at the Western Australian Cricket Association owing to records not commencing until 1900. The Western Australian Football Association gave some assistance. However, the four volumes of the *Dictionary of Western Australians* by Pamela Statham and Rica Erickson (editor) was an important source of primary material concerning the early settlers and their families from 1829 to 1888. Having researched many diaries and journals I came to the conclusion that any reference to sport was negligible. Most references to horseracing in diaries, journals, or letters were more concerned with breeding horses for the export markets as opposed to racing them. Cricket was rarely mentioned and given the sparse material offered if sport was written about or discussed, it was done so incidentally. Therefore, owing to the paucity of personal and official
information the principal primary sources concerning sport for this thesis were gleaned from contemporary newspapers and their abundant supply of information.

Throughout the nineteenth century the colony printed several newspapers, notably the *Perth Gazette and West Australian Journal* in the 1830s; the *Inquirer* in the 1840s and 1850s; the *Perth Gazette and Industrial Journal of Politics and News* in the 1850s and 1860s; the *Western Australian Times* in the 1870s; and the *West Australian* in the 1880s. Both the *Perth Gazette* and the *Inquirer* advertised and reported on horseracing, cricket and the regattas, as well as other leisure time activities. Between 1867 and 1886, colonists living in Fremantle had the opportunity to purchase the *Fremantle Herald*. Readership, however, was confined to the working class of Fremantle and became the voice of protest against Perth owing to its editor, William Beresford, and his radical nonconformist views regarding the gentry and the administration of the colony. I will discuss William Beresford later in the main text. Nevertheless, the *Herald* figured prominently in reporting all sport, which suggests sport did interest the working classes, and strongly voiced its opinion in the late 1870s regarding the colony’s urgent necessity to acquire a theatre to attract artists from the eastern states and abroad. The *West Australian*, under the editorship of Anglophile John Winthrop Hackett, established itself as the colony’s leading newspaper during the 1880s. I will discuss Hackett and his role in sport in the main text. The *West Australian*’s coverage of sport and the arts was succinct and informative and, similar to modern day editions, the newspaper offered readers a wide variety of impending sports fixtures and results, concerts, theatrical productions and other modes of entertainment.

Whilst I researched the newspapers I discovered the values and limitations of nineteenth-century newspapers as opposed to the twenty first-century editions. Compared with today’s newspapers there was very little news regarding the colony itself or the outside world, the newspaper being an avenue for advertising products and services rendered. By the 1840s, however, the role of the newspaper had changed owing to the introduction of journalism and a sounding board for its readers also.
the reader, the newspaper was an important reciprocating avenue of information, and letters to the press were a natural way of commenting on all aspects of colonial life. Like the provincial newspapers in Britain, who fed off the main sources of news from the London Times for example, a similar situation was evident with the colony’s newspapers. Consequently, acquiring news from the eastern colonies and British newspapers was standard practice until the introduction of the telegraph in 1877.

Apart from obtaining news from the outside world, an important role of newspapers was the advertisement of, and the reports on, theatre productions and concerts, which gave the colony the opportunity to witness high culture and simultaneously read about sporting events. Cricket, like horseracing, after 1850 was well documented and reported in detail by enthusiastic reporters. I discovered that in the formative years of the colony the press encouraged all aspects of enterprise, especially wine making and horse breeding. I found that a competitive undercurrent between the Perth press and the Fremantle press was evident also, especially when sport was played between the two towns. This growing rivalry between Perth and Fremantle intensified owing to competition on the field of play, which together with other leisure time activities contributed to a growing sense of community within each town. The Perth press was critical of its cricket team and the state of their wickets, chronically advocating a need for better playing conditions. The Fremantle press, on the other hand, more than encouraged its citizens to compete against Perth, especially at cricket and, later in the century, rugby and Australian Rules football. Furthermore, during the latter half of the century when the age of professionalism was creeping into British sport (association football and rugby) and in the eastern colonies (pedestrianism, swimming and sculling), the colony’s press voiced its opinion against the notion of professionalism. I will discuss the role of the press and its contribution to sport and other leisure time activities in the main text.

SECONDARY SOURCES: HISTORIOGRAPHY SURVEY.

Sport as a subject was first mentioned in newspapers, and given further
encouragement owing to the introduction and publication of magazines and books. Most of these magazines and books came into popular circulation from the 1960s onwards and created considerable appeal, generating a growth industry during the last quarter of the twentieth century. During this period many British historians and sociologists, notably Dennis Brailsford, Hugh Cunningham, Jennifer Hargreaves, Richard Holt, John Lowerson, Robert W. Malcolmson, Tony Mason, Stanley Parker, E.P. Thompson, James Walvin and Neil Wigglesworth published works on sport and other leisure time activities in British society. All of these publications explain the what, when, how and why sport and other leisure time activities took off from the seventeenth century onwards, and the impact it had on the social face of Britain. It is probably correct to suggest that British historians and sociologists laid the foundations for overseas academics to research the origins and growth of sport and other leisure time activities in their own countries. Hence, it was a natural progressive step that they would be transported to the frontiers of Britain’s empire in India, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand.

My thesis, therefore, briefly acknowledges contributions made by British historians and sociologists, but highlights research completed by Australian academics. The academic interest surrounding sport in Australia exploded during the 1980s and distinguished and significant Australian historians and sociologists such as Daryl Adair, Anthony J. Barker, Geoffrey Bolton, Douglas Booth, Richard Cashman, John E. Daly, Rob Hess, Philip A. Mosely, John O’Hara, Marion Stell, Bob Stewart, Brian Stoddart, Colin Tatz, Wray Vamplew, Tony Ward, Richard Waterhouse, and Bernard Whimpress have all contributed greatly to our understanding of the subject. They have demonstrated the strengths and shortcomings of sport in Australian history as it stands in the new millennium. This serves as a foundation for why sport became part of Australian folklore. But, more importantly, why sport became an essential part of life in Australia. What follows then, is a line of investigation into the impact sport had on class, representation, identity, gender, and race and ethnicity at Swan River from 1829
onwards.

One compelling fact of life is that sport integrates individuals, communities and nations. In the early years of building the Australian colonies communal recreation consisted of foot and horse races, and ploughing competitions. During this period, the aborigine competed with the white European in foot racing and throwing and spearing objects also. Cricket was the first organised team sport to be played in Australia in 1803, in Sydney. At Swan River, I will illustrate how cricket embraced all social groups, and how the labouring class encouraged the game in the west, and why the colonial game suffered from isolationism.

Brian Stoddart, in his book *Saturday Afternoon Fever*, states that the ‘myth of sport being open and accessible to all, irrespective of social and economic station, arose early in the evolution of Australian society’. ‘It took firm root and, despite considerable evidence to the contrary, continues to flourish’. At Swan River, I will suggest cricket and competitive rifle shooting accomplished colonial blending, but social demarcation lines were evident at horserace meetings and regattas. Hunting and trotting were exclusive to the gentry, and croquet and lawn tennis were played by the middle class. Class and status then was associated with particular sports played, and this was solidly entrenched by the outbreak of the First World War in all Australian states. This, in turn, had a marked effect on membership of sports clubs which, more often than not, excluded the labouring class. For example, athletes coming from the eastern states and those at Swan River, who had or were competing for money, and whose livelihood depended upon fishing or working on the waters, were not admitted to athletic or rowing clubs. Professionalism, according to Stoddart, equated with the lower orders, suggesting that ‘the reality of Australian sport’s social composition early in its evolution was solidly based on class and status’.

The period from 1850 to 1890 was marked by economic growth, and the presence of economic mobility gave impetus to the middle class and their quest to establish parity with the gentry. According to Richard Waterhouse in *Private Pleasure,*
Public Leisure, the manner in which this status was achieved in the colonies was determined by moral and social standards. The middle class, claims Waterhouse, were insignificant in number before 1850, but subsequent expansion in merchant shipping produced greater wholesale and retail markets that created and encouraged growth in the legal, medical, and the public service and teaching professions. By the 1870s, Swan River’s self-made middle class were aspiring towards ‘gentry’ status, although the pious teachings of the British middle class were virtually non-existent in the colony owing to an ineffectual church. Unlike their British counterparts, who did not visit the races or gamble, the Swan River middle class were actively involved in all sport and gambling. Moreover, I will show throughout the history of the colony how the gentry and the middle class, through social status, marriage and nepotism, administered the colony, organised and supervised sport, and introduced ‘high culture’. According to Waterhouse, for the same reasons the English middle class replicated the gentry, the Australian middle class duplicated them.

The establishment of the middle class in the eastern colonies witnessed a growing trend towards domesticity and true womanhood owing to middle-class women supposedly possessing superior moral qualities. Consequently, middle-class Sabbatarian women argued for a religious Sunday on social, moral and religious grounds in addition to playing a key role in temperance movements. At Swan River, I will show how these same self-made values witnessed the introduction of temperance movements, questioned the morality of women performing on the stage, and colonists playing sport on the Sabbath. However, I will demonstrate that decision making at Swan River was male orientated and women had little or no say at all regarding colonial processing. But they did nurture a generous response towards the poor and destitute, and I will illustrate how these women and their charitable organisations were considered the social security system of the nineteenth century.

After 1850, Waterhouse suggests the influence of some working-class women in the eastern colonies was potentially powerful in limiting the time and money men
spent on gambling and drinking. To portray working-class women as zealots of respectability is wrong, because some would have indulged in drinking and dancing. Middle-class women consumed wine at home whilst entertaining their peers and although most working-class women may well have shunned public houses, they probably consumed alcohol at home, and as Waterhouse implies, this was more likely influenced by notions of respectability. Most working-class women at Swan River either worked in the homes of the gentry and the middle class or in establishments where positions of rank were respected. Consequently, working-class women were more acculturated towards middle-class trends than their men folk.

In *Elysian Fields*, John Daly states colonial life was unique in South Australia owing to the colony maintaining itself without the aid of convicts. This, he says, had a distinct effect on the development of society and shaped the character of the colony’s sporting activities. Like Swan River, South Australia’s early settlers created a class structure that reflected English society and used sport to indelibly stamp their superiority on the social structure of the state. Hence, sport in South Australia was used for social vetting to represent social position, class distinction and social mobility. I will explain how similar circumstances existed at Swan River, and how a number of sports were administered by the gentry or the middle class and considered an avenue for social vetting and conferring status.

In *Saturday Afternoon Fever*, Stoddart gives several good examples of working-class identity and a sense of place within their communities, but one example was prominent. In Melbourne’s Collingwood district, the Victorian code was a community sport with a fierce partisan support, so much so, that non-Collingwood community members were ineligible to play for the team, a tradition which persisted until the late 1970s. This represented Collingwood’s aspirations as a community and the ‘Collingwood spirit’ became synonymous with that attitude. I will argue a similar case in the thesis. Like the Collingwood community, supporters of Swan River football clubs were administered by self-made members of the middle-class who, together with
working class support, reflected a sense of loyalty, pride and belonging to their communities.

One of the first books to make an impact on the history of sport in Australia was Wray Vamplew and Brian Stoddart’s *Sport in Australia: A Social History*. Similar to Tony Mason’s *Sport in Britain*, which was published some years earlier, it examines the ‘social’ history of thirteen Australian sports and strives to analyse sport as ‘social’ history. This was first developed in Mason’s publication and further recognised by Dennis Brailford’s *British Sport: A Social History* and Richard Holt’s *Sport and the British*. However, not all of the sports played in Australia are listed here, especially those sports where Australia has achieved great success in the twentieth century, notably hockey and basketball. Those sports which are included have a long history with Britain, notably horseracing and cricket. Although the depth of research is impressive by the various contributors, there are two significant issues which required further research: the representation of sport in the regions and the identification of ethnic minorities. Regional sport and community are adequately dealt with by Richard Cashman in *Paradise of Sport* and in Daly’s *Elysian Fields*. The identification of ethnic minorities, especially in the football codes, is explored further in Philip Mosely, Richard Cashman, John O’Hara and Hilary Weatherburn (editors) in *Sporting Immigrants*.

With improved transport many rural areas in the eastern colonies were established after 1850, and sporting institutions such as cricket and horseracing were launched with the birth of country towns. The commencement of horseracing in these towns confirmed social hierarchy and had the advantage of boosting local community business, the town’s image, and simultaneously advances the myth of the ‘community’ also.

Regional or country cricket and football in Australia were always social events and one of the inducements for city teams to travel to rural areas was the offer of good hospitality. As Daly suggests, sport is one of the few topics that cuts across class
boundaries, and identification with local teams did much to strengthen a sense of belonging to a community.\textsuperscript{15} One aspect of Daly’s research concentrated on metropolitan Adelaide and those small towns that were ‘colonial microcosms’, and therefore ‘symbols of unity and cohesion’ against the outside world. Daly illustrates that success or failure in the sporting arena became the yardstick by which many communities judged themselves, particularly when the opponents were from neighbouring locations.\textsuperscript{16} I will show how his examples are relevant to Swan River and in what way local unity reflected a desire to compete and achieve sporting success in Perth and Fremantle. Although Daly investigates several issues concerning sport in South Australia, one issue could have been explored further. To what extent did the ‘elites’ in metropolitan Adelaide encourage subsidies given to horseracing and rifle-shooting? These two sports were given ample financial investment and monetary assistance by the Swan River gentry. Yet, as Cashman claims, although the role of sport in country areas was given sufficient encouragement during the nineteenth-century, sport in these areas has diminished over the last few decades of the twentieth century owing to local talent signing to corporate city clubs, and economic globalisation.\textsuperscript{17} Consequently, similarities can be seen between present day regional and country sport, considered a community pastime, and nineteenth-century Swan River.

However, there is still a lack of historical research into local communities throughout Australia, but Martin P. Sharp’s thesis \textit{Sporting Spectacles: Cricket and Football in Sydney 1890-1912} is a starting point that shows how Sydney club cricket and rugby league were reorganised on the basis of localities with teams representing suburbs. Furthermore, Sharp’s thesis follows the path of former social historians and rightly suggests that the narrow tag of ‘sports historian’ should assume the broader mantle of ‘social historian’. Sharp does so by investigating local working-class ‘grass roots’ of both sports and simultaneously demonstrates why rugby league as a spectator sport triumphed in Sydney as opposed to the insular Victorian game played in Melbourne.\textsuperscript{18}
In *Paradise of Sport*, Cashman endorses Sharp’s opinions on this particular matter of linking local sporting clubs to communities. According to Cashman, the values of linking sporting clubs to a community were widely recognised by the late nineteenth century. Before the 1890s, for example, many Sydney based sports clubs were not affiliated to a district and, as a result they had ‘no following’. Once local leagues were formed and improved transport (railways) took off, local sponsorship and media coverage encouraged further support, and with it a sense of identity, representation and belonging was linked to these clubs.\(^{19}\)

Comparable themes of representation and identity were seen at Swan River, as for example cricket teams were associated with the gentry, tradesmen and the military during the colony’s formative years. This continued on a wider scale with the introduction of the first cricket match involving Fremantle and Perth in November 1852, and rugby and Victorian Rules football games in the 1880s. These fixtures evoked emotion and a feeling of belonging and loyalty to their individual towns. Consequently, I will show how support in both towns was antagonistic and deep-rooted towards the other, especially in Fremantle owing to the town’s central position regarding convicts and Perth being the seat of government. I will highlight that by the 1880s, the growth of both towns stimulated the formation of several cricket and Victorian Rules football clubs also, each in their own locality, and each representing their social and vocational position in the colony.

Further themes of representation and identity are taken up in Rob Hess and Bob Stewart’s *More Than a Game*. In Grow’s contribution, ‘From Gum Tree to Goalposts’, he traces the origins of the game back to the newly devised rules dated May 1859, in Melbourne.\(^{20}\) Although Grow claims the Victorian game had a direct impact on Melbournians and played an integral part in the social history of Melbourne, he fails to identify why the Victorian code lost the opportunity to make a similar impact in New South Wales.\(^{21}\) However, in *Sport in Australian National Identity: Kicking goals*, Tony Ward states the key reasons why the Victorian game failed to take off in Sydney was
social, and revolved around Melbourne being bigger and wealthier owing to the
discovery of gold and stronger trade union power advocating higher wages and
Saturday afternoons off. The critical issue therefore, was timing owing to Melbourne
playing the popular Victorian code from the 1850s, while the slow introduction of any
sort of football in Sydney (where rugby was played) meant large attendances were not
achieved until the 1880s. Such a scenario proved potentially threatening to the union
game in Sydney with its intricate ‘Off and On Side’ rules and the ponderous and
controversial play associated with ‘scrimmaging’. Consequently, the Southern Rugby
Football Union made several changes to the game in 1879, which included
‘scrimmaging’, and together with an eight hour working day and free Saturday
afternoons off, generated broader social involvement in rugby during the 1880s. I will
explain similar reasons why rugby failed to take-up the initiative at Swan River and
why the Victorian code became successful.

Rob Hess, in ‘The Victorian Leagues Takes Over’, presents a detailed historical
account of the Victorian Football Association and highlights how the effect of
continuous codification during the 1880s and 1890s resulted in several clubs breaking
away to form the Victorian Football League in 1897. A similar episode occurred in
English rugby in 1885, after a number of northern clubs caused a schism over the loss of
earnings by playing the game during working hours. This eventually saw the formation
of two rugby codes, league and union. Correspondingly, at Swan River in 1883, I will
elaborate on why the Fremantle Football Club broke away from the rugby code to play
the Victorian game. The end product of this saw colonial popularity in the Victorian
code increase to the detriment of the union code. The perspective presented here is that
all three circumstances emphasised strong local representation and a sense of identity
and belonging.

The violent play and unruly crowd behaviour on and off the field was central to
the popularity of Victorian football. Supporters through violence symbolically
represented identification with their teams. Both Ward in Sport in Australian National

Identity: Kicking Goals and Grow’s ‘From Gum Tree to Goalposts’ in More than a Game state how violence contributed to the games’ popularity from the 1870s onwards. Grow cites one good example of travelling British soldiers who were garrisoned in Melbourne and considered the roughest of all. According to Grow, they were always keen to test out the locals in sport. I will show how similar psychoanalytical behavioural patterns existed at Swan River and, like the game in the eastern states, violent play and spectators transgressing on and off the field were well documented at Swan River.

The importance of race and ethnicity are discussed by several writers in Vamplew and Stoddart’s Sport in Australia. The aborigine had (has) a more difficult time breaking into some sports such as cricket or tennis as opposed to rugby league, horseracing and Victorian football. Anthony Barker’s summation in his book on Western Australian cricket, The WACA: An Australian Success Story reveals very few players with non-Anglo-Saxon names had or were playing cricket for the state team. Barker suggests that historically the aboriginal population, although small in number, had little impact upon state cricket even though they were making an impression in other sports such as Australian Rules football.

The aborigine’s role in Australian sport has always been uncertain and subjected to the white man’s insensibility towards them. A good example of this was the New Norcia cricket team in Western Australia, and I will examine the reasons why they were not invited to join the Western Australian Cricket Association after it was formed 1885. However, in the context of aboriginal involvement in Australian cricket, the 1868 enterprise to England, as Bernard Whimpress reminds us in his book Passport to Nowhere: Aborigines in Australian Cricket, ‘led to nowhere’. His analysis of this statement is that many Australian first-class cricketers have appeared since the game began as an organised sporting spectacle in 1851, but only a small number have been aboriginals. A recurring pattern in the history of aboriginal cricket is the sense of talent denied or thwarted, especially at Swan River. Three good examples were Johnny...
Blurton from New Norcia in Western Australia; Jack Marsh, who was murdered in rural New South Wales; and the expulsion of Albert Henry to the remote regions of Queensland for insubordination to white authority.  

Whimpress states that the origins of aboriginal cricket started in the missions, notably by Archdeacon Hale in South Australia and the pastoralists in western Victoria and southern New South Wales, who saw the game in the context of civilising and instilling a cultural ethos. I will relate a similar situation that occurred at Swan River in the 1880s, regarding Bishop Salvado and the pastoralist Henry Bruce Lefroy and their New Norcia cricket team in the main text. Whimpress emphasises the ‘discontinuity’ of the aboriginal experience in cricket. He places the argument of the book between the ‘oppositionist’ historians, who emphasise the status of aborigines as victims, and the ‘revisionists’, who stress the active nature of aboriginal resistance or accommodation to European activity and culture. Cricket, according to Whimpress, was popular in aboriginal communities, but was destroyed by racism, social prejudice and legal discrimination. A point emphasised by Booth and Tatz, who point out in their book One-Eyed, that few aborigines have been given an opportunity to perform on the sporting field.

In The WACA: An Australian Success Story, Barker points out that although aboriginal players had virtually kept cricket alive at Swan River in the late nineteenth century only one player, John McGuire, came close to securing a place in the state team during the 1980s. Barker claims that many observers felt that McGuire, ‘one of the state’s most prolific batsman in the WACA’s district cricket, had little doubt that colour prejudice was at work’. However, Barker emphasises that it ‘seemed much more likely by the latter years of the twentieth century that it was the continuing disadvantage of aboriginal people, rather than racist selection policies by the WACA, that explained this historical anomaly’. In Barker’s Behind the Play...A History of Football in Western Australia from 1868, he stipulates that it was still unthinkable that cricket would select aboriginal players in a period when Graham (Polly) Farmer had become
local football’s latest talent.35 Barker mentions an interesting appendage to west Australian football that occurred in 1915. George Blurton, a descendent of Johnny Blurton, the New Norcia cricket player, won the Western Australian Football League’s ‘Cookson Trophy’ as a football player with Midland Junction for being ‘the most gentlemanly and fairest player for the season’.36 Given the racial prejudice associated with the laws passed in the 1880s and 1890s, and the circumstances which surrounded the New Norcia cricket team, it was, as Barker emphasises, ‘scarcely surprising that George Blurton soon disappeared from the scene’. However, as Barker underlines, it brought an aboriginal presence to football that eventually became an important element to the story of west Australian football.37

The slender size and weight of aboriginal jockeys was conducive to good horsemanship and, as the nineteenth century progressed, aboriginal riders appeared more frequently on the turf. In John Maynard’s book _Aboriginal Stars of the Turf_ he points out that in the eastern colonies aboriginal riders proved popular and were often used for important races. However, Maynard emphasises that they received little prize money, socialised separately and were not allowed to consume alcohol. Racism, according to Maynard, went with the territory and many aborigines embraced other ethnic identities to pursue a career in sport, preferring the characteristics of Islanders, Judaism, Indian, or European races.38 In spite of this, many nineteenth-century aboriginal riders, including Peter St. Albans from the eastern colonies, won prestigious cups and plates, and one aboriginal rider from Swan River, ‘Jacky’, whom I will discuss in the main text, won several metropolitan races.39

Stoddart, in _Saturday Afternoon Fever_, suggests that the history of aboriginal involvement in sport was one of restrictions imposed upon a race, together with cultural contradictions and anomalies. So much so, that by the end of the nineteenth century the aborigine was increasingly controlled in their rights of movement. Ironically, Stoddart points out how white colonists encouraged aboriginal involvement in sport, but were met by government policies and opposition.40 I will reiterate this in the main text
concerning New Norcia cricket team.

The main problem with the aborigine was cultural. The concept of ‘winning’ in addition to rules, team selections, rewards and conventions that were all part of the British ‘civilising’ process were alien to him. Both Stoddart in *Saturday Afternoon Fever* and Jennifer Hargreaves in *Heroines of Sport* confirm the aborigine participated solely for pleasure. There were no rules or rewards in his games owing to their link with lifestyle, which involved nature, the seasons, symbols and religion. Those who did participate in sport were subjected to corrupt managers and entrepreneurs, and enormous social pressures.\(^41\) Cashman suggests in *Paradise of Sport* that the aborigine was embroiled in legalised racism; laws that were passed to restrict aboriginal movement until they were repealed in the 1960s. Cashman further adds that ‘racial politics has long been part of the complexion of Australian sport and manifested itself in various forms’.\(^42\)

Such pressures existed for aboriginals in rugby league, Australian Rules football and horseracing, but it did not stop many from participating in these three sports, so why was there a difference compared with cricket? Whimpress argues that they were stereotyped; good against fast bowling, but weak against spin bowling, which Whimpress considers was a characteristic of their game. Additionally, team spirit and cricket’s subtle skills involved discipline and intelligence that was missing when batting, and physical, mental and moral requirements were lacking in their game also.\(^43\) Although Whimpress incidentally mentions the New Norcia cricket team, evidence suggests that the New Norcia players were considered formidable opposition.

Although the British introduced sport as part of their cultural baggage, ethnic minorities have been a part of Australian history since the early nineteenth century. German people populated South Australia and formed social clubs, played German skittles, and introduced gymnastics and rifle clubs. According to Daly, they arrived as early as 1838, and lived separate from the British settlement, ‘not needing to speak English and prevented from intermarriage by religious decree’.\(^44\) The Irish brought
their game ‘Caid’, a forerunner of Gaelic football, to Adelaide in 1843.45 There are references to hurling matches from the 1840s in Sydney, but in the long term, cultural Irish sports failed to take off owing to the pressures of other mainstream sports, an implication Cashman emphasises in Paradise of Sport.46 In Western Australia, Fenian prisoners were transported to Swan River and young Irish women were introduced to redress the colony’s gender imbalance. In Kalgoorlie, a handful of Italian migrants worked the gold fields during the 1890s. But, with these two examples in mind, apart from early aboriginal involvement at anniversary celebrations, there is no evidence to suggest white ethnic minorities were participating in ‘their cultural’ sports at Swan River during the nineteenth century. However, in twentieth century Australian society, the majority of ethnic minorities, as Philip Mosely and Bill Murray state in ‘Soccer’, in Vamplew and Stoddart’s Sport in Australia, and further supported by Mosely’s collaboration with Cashman, John O’Hara and Hilary Weatherburn in Sporting Immigrants, arrived from post-Second World War Europe and their preferences were directed more towards association football than any other sport.47

The gender and social problems women negotiated throughout Australian history are well documented by social historians. Stoddart, in Saturday Afternoon Fever, claims that in the early Australian education system sport or physical education became obligatory and many schools measured their success against sporting prowess. This, according to Stoddart, provided a foundation for revering physical rather than intellectual success in Australian culture. Secondly, it also moulded the attitudes of Australian girls regarding their place in the sports world, and simultaneously shaped male culture to the detriment of female culture.48 On the other hand, Marion Stell in Half the Race suggests schools adopted a logical balance between intellectual and physical development at a time many considered both to be harmful to a young woman’s health.49 However, Stoddart claims that in the evolution of this sexual division social attitudes were developed; men’s sport was socially meaningful while women’s sport was an adjunct to those male activities.50 A detrimental concept, adds
Stoddart, which continued throughout the nineteenth century owing to the requirements of the industrial revolution demanding male production-line staff while women were confined to the home fulfilling their domestic and reproductive roles. Any recreational respite therefore, was reserved for the male worker that reinforced industrial values at the workplace. Douglas Booth’s contribution on ‘Swimming, Surfing and Surf-Lifesaving’ in Sport in Australia confirms how social attitudes, especially towards women, regulated bathing and clothing restrictions on the beach and at early swimming facilities. At Swan River, schoolboys played cricket, rugby and Victorian Rules football, but there is no evidence to suggest schoolgirls participated in sport throughout the nineteenth century. In ‘Education of the People’, in Stannage’s New History of Western Australia, Laadan Fletcher states girls at Swan River were offered a ‘solid English education’ as early as 1849, augmented by the addition of accomplishments such as French, music, drawing and ‘plain ornamental works’.

Middle class Australian women played tennis and croquet, because they were the two perfect games for women to play. Both games were seen as occasions for socialising and invariably adjuncts to men’s sports. However, women were not allowed to play cricket owing to the serious and tactical nature of the game. This, Stoddart believes, crystallises the nineteenth-century opinion that women needed tennis and croquet as a diversion, because they neither could nor should attempt to understand intricate and purposeful male games.

In Paradise of Sport, Cashman advocates how sport played ‘a central role in growing up male in Australia. By implication it has some corresponding negative significance for growing up female’. He further suggests that since the nineteenth-century, sport was entirely associated with male culture and space. It shaped ‘male attitudes towards their bodies and how they communicate with other males’, and it became a powerful influence on young boys who were encouraged by their peers, school authorities, parents and the media. Cashman extends his argument further by stating that male bonding through the culture of sport was so strong it excluded women.
Like Stoddart, Cashman implies women may well have been excluded from discussing sport on the assumption they knew nothing about it.\textsuperscript{56}

On the whole, in nineteenth-century colonial Australia, sport was determined by men and their sporting organisations. Evidence from sources regarding Swan River reveal this. Women were not ‘officially’ affiliated to sports clubs and gambling and competitive riding were also prohibited. It was not until the last two decades of the nineteenth century that women participated in sport, and I will discuss their role in the main text. As Vamplew rightly suggests in ‘Australians and Sport’, in \textit{Sport in Australia}, women over the course of Australian social history have not been given a ‘fair go’.\textsuperscript{57}

Douglas Booth and Colin Tatz in \textit{One-Eyed} point out Marion Stell’s erroneous claim that some ‘early’ colonial women participated in sport independently of men.\textsuperscript{58} Stell rightly argues how the success of Australian women in twentieth-century sport has been astonishing considering facilities and sponsorship was directed elsewhere. In nineteenth-century Australia, Stell indicates pedestrianism, skiing, swimming (bathing), rowing, side-saddle jumping, croquet, tennis and rifle shooting were popular sports with women before 1900. This is true with regards to croquet, tennis and bathing. However, Stell claims women had an enormous influence on the game of cricket owing to their full dress instigating the round-arm action rather than the underarm style of bowling. Although the concept is charming, it is dubious and counterproductive to Stell’s argument.\textsuperscript{59} Jennifer Hargreaves, in \textit{Heroines of Sport}, maintains that women in the nineteenth century participated in sport more so than was previously believed. However, I do have reservations regarding her argument that pioneering women, who came from poor backgrounds, played sport to make contact with people from different classes and ethnic backgrounds.\textsuperscript{60} This may well have applied to working-class women in the twentieth century, but very few women from the lower classes took part in organised sport in the nineteenth century owing to their social position, their vocations, and the expense of participating. However, by the third quarter of the
nineteenth-century historians claim ‘respectable’ women played a supportive or
decorative role in sport.\textsuperscript{61} The conclusion is that by the 1880s, women’s organised sport
was certainly middle class and genteel, neither possessing a competitive edge nor
emphasising grace and exertion. The first of these sports was croquet and then tennis,
which were usually set in private grounds or on a club court and, as Stoddart and Daly
allude, were avenues for social vetting and gossip.\textsuperscript{62} Evidence reveals that at Swan
River, middle-class women were participating in croquet (1860s) and tennis and rowing
by the late 1880s. In the eastern colonies, women were performing in the theatre and the
concert hall, but at Swan River I will point out that apart from private entertainment
women did not successfully appear on the colonial stage until after 1869.

Although the rise of women’s consciousness since the late nineteenth century
has to a certain degree rectified their situation, old problems still persist today, as for
example, with the amalgamation of the Australian men’s and women’s cricket
associations. Both Megan Stronach and Daryl Adair in Kristine Toohey and Tracy
Taylor’s \textit{Sport in Australia: ‘Worth a Shout’} point out that although amalgamation
appears to have been a good idea, the reality has been quite different owing to women
competing in a male dominated sport and women’s cricket not receiving the same
media coverage.\textsuperscript{63}

\textbf{RESEARCH METHOD.}

The basic tools of my research methodology are collation and comparison, and
as in any historical research you can only analyse what evidence is available. Thus,
most evidence was gleaned from contemporary newspapers. There are many diaries,
letters, papers and journals in the Battye Library that focus on the history of Western
Australia. However, most entries relate to early settlement; the everyday problems that
confronted frontier farmers and their families; Nyungar insurgence; expeditionary
enterprises; the economic and political situation of the times; convictism; the growth of
the colony; and the social conventions of the day, but very little information on sport.

Therefore, I narrowed my focus of investigation on those people who were
playing sport and whose names were recorded in newspapers. Not everybody recorded their daily lives, but those who did afforded very little or no information whatsoever on sport. So, I then researched the biographies of prominent individuals and their lineage. Again, there was very little information recorded. Any reference to horses in diaries, letters, journals or biographies was, more or less, concerned with breeding good horse flesh for the export market, and cricket was rarely mentioned.

What I did discover in most diaries, letters and journals were the harsh realities of frontier farming and how settlers yearned for the old ways of ‘home’ (England), and their families and friends. For the vast majority of those people who held and cultivated land, the impression given suggested an intolerable existence owing to the unsuitability of the soil. Sudden changes in climate; the infestation of insects and flies in the summer months; influenza in the winter months; and ophthalmia (irritating inflammation of the eyes) further implied that life was not pleasant. Life then, consisted of hard work on the plough, growing and selling produce, rearing and killing livestock, bartering, or borrowing bullocks from friends to plough the fields. Many sought solace in drink, especially amongst the labouring class. In the early 1830s, the colony staved off intermittent periods of starvation and, on one occasion in April 1833, Georgiana Molloy recorded in her diary that Governor James Stirling issued a scale of rations to prevent disputes arising between servant and master. Fourteen years after the colony was settled, the Reverend John Wollaston defined and encapsulated the character of the colony:

‘People are apt to form in their imagination very beautiful pictures of retired ease and independence in this country, but the pleasing vision is soon dispelled when they come to the rough and laborious realities of colonial life’.  

Against this backdrop of hard work, together with the seasons not matching the accustomed months and the daily uncertainty of survival, it is little wonder diaries, journals, or letters do not mention time given to participating in or watching sport.
When reading the diaries we can see how the early settlers, indeed even those that followed, balanced the hard work of living in the colony with the social conventions of the day. For example, George Fletcher Moore entertained friends and on many occasions visited the Brockman, Burges and Leake households. Hence, the only enjoyment available was good conversation over lunch and dinner followed by games of cards, listening to recitals on the piano and singing. Christmas Day reminded most colonials of ‘home’ and for Moore and others like him the memory was ‘too painful to dwell upon’. Therefore, entertaining and visiting friends was a common theme throughout the diaries and journals. This theme reminded me of the characters in Jane Austen’s books. I discovered how the colony’s early gentry and later the upcoming aspiring middle class replicated the institutions and elegancies of life similar to Austen’s England. Like the characters in her novels, the diaries and journals reveal how these people were a close knit circle of friends and neighbours, who revolved around gentlemanly pleasures, courtship, and marriage. I will show in the main text how the gentry and the aspiring middle class created a world reminiscent of rustic England.

However, for the indentured labouring class and the skilled artisan, the rough and noisy camaraderie associated with public houses was the only way of meeting people and escaping the insecurity, loneliness, and the monotony of colonial life. I will highlight in the main text how the public house was the equivalent of a banqueting hall where impromptu activities such as skittles, billiards, card games, and gambling were common practice.

I discovered some colonials weathered the hard times and prospered accordingly. For example, John Ferguson (who later became Colonial Surgeon in 1846) and his wife, Isabella, bought the Houghton property in 1859, which became famous for its wines. I will discuss the growth of the wine industry in the main text. Other colonials established hotels and public houses, and some publicans were closely connected to the turf. I will give several examples in the main text concerning those publicans who figured prominently in the history of sport and entertainment in the
Another common theme that permeated throughout diaries and letters was the anticipated arrival of mail from overseas and the eastern colonies. Once received, news was disseminated quickly either by attending church on Sundays or through invitations to lunch or dinner. I will show the importance attached to receiving mail and give examples of how colonists reacted to this event.

Both Gerald De Courcy Lefroy and Alfred James Hillman shed some light on who and what sport was played in the colony. Lefroy’s journal exposes a man who was psychologically scarred by the adversity of farming and living in the colony, referring to Western Australia as ‘an abominable place…I wish I was out of it. I will as soon as I can, please God’. 70 His only means of enjoyment to counterbalance his frustrations and loathing for the colony was visiting friends, racing his horses, playing cricket and watching the rain, which according to Lefroy, was ‘the only amusement in this stupid hole’ 71 Hillman’s diaries, on the other hand, recount the thoughts of a man who was content with his position in life; his vocation, visiting friends (which included members of the gentry and the middle class), fishing, swimming, watching horseracing, and occasionally playing cricket. Hillman enthusiastically pursued fishing at the ‘Point’ on Perth’s Melville Waters and at Fremantle. In December 1882, for example, Hillman confessed that he had ‘the best afternoon’s sport (he) ever had’, catching fifty good sized pilchards and whiting. 72 I shall discuss further Lefroy’s journal and Hillman’s diary in the main text.

Apart from sparse entries in diaries and journals, most information was gleaned from newspapers that detail how the gentry in the formative years and the aspiring middle class in later years raced horses or indulged in trotting, hunting and yachting. These people were distinctly in the minority. However, as in England, the age old practice of the labouring man playing cricket with the gentry continued owing to the sport being part of the cultural baggage that crossed over from England. In April 1846, for instance, Lefroy witnessed members of the ‘gents’ team practicing for a match
against the tradesmen. Cricket was the only sport played in Australia’s colonies that had distinct majority support. Nevertheless, cricket apart, the only other sports the labouring class competed in were rowing events at regattas and competitive rifle shooting. Swimming (bathing), hunting and fishing for food were agreeable pastimes. However, once rugby, association football, and Victorian Rules football were introduced during the early 1880s, all three sports attracted various degrees of popular blessing amongst all classes, including women. I will discuss the impact of these sports on colonial society in the main text.

In the colony’s formative years the theatre and concert were exclusive occasions distinctly enjoyed by a small minority of colonists who performed for their peers. But as the colonial theatre and concert developed, together with professional entertainment from abroad and the eastern colonies, working-class people became more acculturated and receptive to the arts. I will show how the theatre and concert evolved and how entertainment from the eastern colonies became a new phenomenon for all colonists at Swan River.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS.

I have used a conventional chronological framework for my thesis narrative. This serves to develop the study of sport and other leisure time activities from its seminal stage in Britain to the latter years of the colony. Naturally, the nature and availability of evidence has determined the chapter content, but this has not limited the study of sport and other leisure time activities as an important function in the growth of Swan River society during the nineteenth century.

The current introduction to the topic forms the historiography.

The first chapter (preface) deals with the founding of the colony and the premise that any given society is sustained by a particular social structure. Consequently, the intent of this chapter is to show how a rigid class structure at Swan River had a direct social bearing on those who played sport and enjoyed other leisure time activities. In all societies then, one class tends to dominate and influence other classes either by
participation or by administration. At Swan River, the social role of the gentry had a major impact on other individuals and, as such, sport and other leisure time activities played an increasingly important part of Swan River society as it developed. The chapter evaluates who these people were and why they took it upon themselves to behave in a way similar to the British aristocracy. Furthermore, themes of communal development, social stratification, and the role they played in sport and other leisure time activities are examined. Several examples are given, mostly from Britain, but they serve as parameters to what happened in nineteenth-century Swan River society.

The second chapter encompasses the time period from 1829 until 1850 and presents reasons why sport was an influential factor behind the ethos of ‘manliness’. This chapter differs from the following chapters in that both sport and other leisure time activities are pooled together owing to a shortage of information during the colony’s formative years. Two major themes are developed and examined here. One theme considers the migration of sport from Britain and how it was sustained throughout this period to become a catalyst for social integration, often bringing together representatives of different classes. The other theme refers to the social structure of the colony, showing the diverse activities of the well to do, who introduced ‘high culture’, and the labouring class, who engaged in ‘popular’ culture.

The third chapter covers the 1850s, and how the three major sports, horseracing, cricket and the regatta played an increasingly important role in entertaining colonials. Significantly, horseracing occupied those who had the wherewithal to invest in breeding and racing thoroughbred horses. The social and economic apex of the colony is evident here with the formation of the Western Australia Turf Club. Cricket had broad based support throughout the colony and the introduction of the Fremantle-Perth cricket matches gave the supporters of both towns a sense of pride and belonging to their community, especially in Fremantle, where a sense of place replaced a sense of class also. The regatta reflected a social and economic cross section of colonial society, who either sailed their boats or entered rowing events. However, although these three
sports maintained social integration to a degree, social decorum and economic control still remained.

The fourth chapter deals with the growth of other leisure time activities between 1850 and 1890, and analyses how the gentry and the aspiring middle class continued to support ‘high’ culture. However, the introduction of professional artists from the eastern colonies significantly shows how and why entertainment progressed and how ‘popular’ culture was introduced to the lower classes during this period.

The fifth chapter covers the period 1860 to 1890 and the social changes which evolved owing to the number of different sports being introduced. The chapter reflects upon the growth of existing sports first introduced by the gentry, who continued to administer their sports, but also highlights how the emerging middle class introduced ‘new’ sports from Britain. Consequently, sport during this period was experiencing a transitional stage of administration by the middle class as well as encouraging working class participation. The chapter also brings to light the gradual social and economic changes by the 1890s, which saw women participating in sport, and a colony that was on the cusp of economic and political deliverance owing to the discovery of gold and self-government.

Chapter six analyses the growth of cricket between the years 1860 and 1890. The intention here is to show how the game developed throughout the metropolitan areas and highlights how the social backgrounds of cricket clubs. The chapter also highlights those members of the gentry who administered the game, and how they steered cricket towards the establishment of leagues, fixtures, the formation of the Western Australian Cricket Association, and the acquisition of land in east Perth upon which to play the game.

The conclusion is a summation of how sport and other leisure time activities were introduced and how they became a catalyst for social integration, bringing together representatives of different classes in nineteenth-century Swan River. The conclusion asks what was distinctive about Swan River sport and other leisure time
activities compared to other Australian colonies? How much did both aspects of
recreation contribute to an emerging identity? What did this period contribute to
post-1890 sport? What is the relationship between the conclusions reached regarding
the histories of the eastern colonies and those of Swan River? What continuities and
discontinuities in sport and other leisure time activities are there before and after 1890?
THE INTRODUCTION OF SPORT TO THE ANTIPODES.

As an *entree* to the study of sport it will be useful to sketch a brief introduction
as to when, who and why sport was introduced to the Antipodes. The majority of
historians agree that apart from trotting and minstrelsy (America) and the indigenous
Victorian rules football, most sports and other leisure time activities were part of the
cultural baggage that migrated from Britain to Australia after 1788.\(^7\) Both Waterhouse
and Vamplew suggest that in New South Wales and Van Diemen’s Land (Tasmania)
the involvement of all classes in sport and recreation presented a homogenous quality
about early Australian cultural life. So, although priority was given to establishing
settlements, this ‘homogenous quality’ fostered early colonial self-preservation
considered important for the survival of all Australia’s colonies. Once settlements were
established therefore, a foray of sport and other leisure time activities took off
throughout Australia’s colonies.\(^7\)
END NOTES FOR HISTORIOGRAPHY.


9. Ibid.

10. Ibid, p. 110.


13 Ibid, pp. 112-142 passim.

14 Stoddart, *Saturday Afternoon Fever*, p. 49.

15 Daly, *Elysian Fields*, p. 145.

16 Ibid, pp. 143-173 passim.


19 Cashman, *Paradise of Sport*, pp. 75-76.


23 Ibid, pp. 91-92.


26 Grow, ‘From Gum Tree to Goalposts, 1877-1896’ in *More than a Game*, p. 27.


34. Ibid.


36. Ibid, p. 36.

37. Ibid.


44. Daly, *Elysian Fields*, p. 93.

45. Ibid, p. 58.
46 Cashman, *Paradise of Sport*, p. 121.


50 Stoddart, *Saturday Afternoon Fever*, p. 135.


54 Stoddart, *Saturday Afternoon Fever*, pp. 139-140.


56 Ibid.


58 Booth and Tatz: *One-Eyed*, p. 35.


60 Hargreaves, *Heroines of Sport*, pp. 87 and 2.
61 See Vamplew, ‘Australians and Sport’ in Sport in Australia; Daly, Elysian Fields; Stoddart, ‘Sport and Society’; Richard Waterhouse, From Minstrel Show to Vaudeville: the Australian popular stage 1788-1914, (Kensington, NSW: NSW U Press); Geoffrey Bolton, Richard Rossiter and Jan Ryan, eds. Farewell Cinderella, (Crawley, Western Australia: UWAP, 2003).

62 Stoddart, Saturday Afternoon Fever, p. 139.


66 Georgiana Molloy, Letter dated 21st April 1833, West Australian Archives 139.

68 George Fletcher Moore, *Original Letters and Journals* (J.S. Battye Library BL 263), Wednesday 25th December 1833.


71 Ibid, Friday 29th May 1846, p. 78.


CHAPTER ONE.

PREFACE.

THE COLONISATION OF THE ANTIPODES.

Between the years 1788 and 1829 the British colonised the east and west coast regions of Australia. What lay between these two regions was subject to further British incursions as the nineteenth century progressed. Controversy still exists as to the reasons why Britain took steps to colonise Australia in 1788. The traditional and most contentious explanation infers that the land known as \textit{Terra Australis Incognita} would best serve Britain as a penal outpost for her crowded goals, exacerbated by her loss of the American colonies, which until that time was accepting her criminals. However, a colony on the east coast of Australia would also serve as an alternative trading route for Britain’s commercial empire in the Pacific circle. Consequently, the eastern seaboard of Australia became a British investment owing to its strategic location as a maritime base and an important port of call for supplying raw materials, trade, and general maintenance to her fleet. Forty years later, the Swan River Colony was founded on the west coast of Australia on principles totally different to that of New South Wales.

THE SWAN RIVER COLONY.*

When the British annexed New South Wales in 1770, and settled it in 1788, the west side of Australia (commonly known as New Holland) remained unoccupied and least wanted by the European countries. However, in 1826, Governor Ralph Darling of New South Wales, anxious to forestall French ambitions and American whaling interest in the

* The Swan River area was colonised in 1829 and became known as the Swan River Colony. However, the ‘colony’ came under the title of Western Australia in 1832. Therefore, all sport and other leisure time activities in the thesis will be referred to as taking place at the ‘colony’ owing to Fremantle and Perth being the primary source of information.
west, dispatched Major Edmund Lockyer with a small party of soldiers and convicts to claim British sovereignty by garrisoning King George’s Sound (later Albany) on the south west coast of Australia.¹ Three years later, James Stirling became the colony’s Lieutenant-Governor.

By the time Stirling and his official party had reached their destination on 2nd June 1829, the territory called New Holland had already been annexed by Captain Charles Howe Fremantle.² The pioneer group that reached the colony in June 1829 was young and predominantly male. Apart from the military, their occupations and skills ranged from civil and defence backgrounds to unskilled labourers from workhouses. Although there were no convicts, many early settlers brought indentured servants who were contracted to their employers for a period of five or seven years. The total population, which included the military, was 769.³

What confronted this small group of colonists once they arrived at Swan River severely shackled Stirling’s idea of supplanting an English village in an Australian wilderness resplendent with squire, parson, tenant farmers and agricultural labourers. There was no advance party sent to organise essential amenities (which included a suitable supply of water); land was yet to be allocated nor buildings erected; no steps were taken to come to terms with the Nyungar people; and the land was not conducive for good agriculture, especially near the coast. These early settlers were dumped with their possessions on Garden Island and later on the beaches north of Swan River. Consequently, in an environment where the seasons did not match the accustomed months and the landscape was far from familiar, this small population, which remained so for the next forty years, was another important reason why the colony’s economic infrastructure was slow to take off. All these problems diluted the promise of gentility and wealth with toil, debt, and the threat of violence.

The colony was ruled by Governor Stirling whose priorities were influenced by a
British government rather than the colonists over whose welfare he presided. Generally, when power from a distance supersedes local social conscience, problems will accrue. Politically speaking, although Stirling had plenary powers, his hands were tied from afar, circumstances which echoed throughout the colony’s history until its first local elections in 1870 and self-government in 1890. Prior to 1870, there were long periods of ‘political tutelage’ with successive governors’ hand picking an Executive Council. Consequently, the ‘tyranny of distance’ that isolated Stirling’s colony (even from New South Wales), together with bad publicity, the abrupt cessation of immigrants from England, and the twin problems of inadequate food supplies and shipping brought about his downfall in London.

In 1832, Stirling went to London to plead on behalf of the colony for government intervention, arguing that Swan River was proclaimed a crown colony from the onset and its settlers were entitled to Crown support. But a stern rebuttal by the Colonial Office reinforced previous arguments why the British government was not going to invest further in the colony. The British government, however, did enlarge the military garrison (which did boost the colonial economy); established a mounted police force (which the colony had to finance); assured twice yearly visits of warships from India; and four extra seats on the colony’s Legislative Council. The British government effectively ignored Stirling’s cries for help. At first glance the colony offered an attractive future for impending colonists owing to land being a powerful incentive to people coming from a country where it represented social, economic and political influence. Culturally, Swan River was a step ahead of the convict settlements in New South Wales and Van Diemen’s Land (Tasmania), but a culmination of events and ignorance created severe problems for the colony.

In 1835, Stirling’s arrival back at Swan River was hailed as a new era for the colony but, although Stirling tried to prepare colonists for change, few anticipated the severe concessions. Expenditure cuts were high on the British Treasury’s list of compliance and, as a result, the unemployed were put to work building roads in compensation for receiving
rations to ward off starvation. By December 1835, Stirling was pleased with the colony’s progress owing to prices stabilising and more ships arriving at Swan River. But, by mid-1837 resources were low again owing to infrequent shipping, which further crystallised the colony’s fluctuating economic position. Furthermore, Lord Glenelg’s intractable stance at the Colonial Office regarding requests for greater security of tenure and the right to exchange bad land for good only exacerbated the situation. Consequently, frustrated by chronic government prevarication, Stirling tendered his resignation in October 1837, and left the colony to further his career in the navy. He was succeeded by John Hutt in January 1839.

**THE ORIGINS OF MODERN DAY SPORT.**

Modern day sport and other leisure activities were derived from two British revolutions, the agrarian and industrial revolutions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Prior to the agrarian revolution sport and other leisure time activities belonged to England’s blissful rural past where work was intermittent and governed by the seasons. Owing to a continual increase in the population, the agrarian revolution was an important precondition for industrialisation and a key turning point in English social history. Hence, government enclosure acts were passed to increase the amount of food grown on the land and simultaneously reduce the amount of common land used for playing games. For the rural labouring class, who were now shifting towards the urban areas of production, the industrial revolution provided significant social problems. The working population was confronted with long, arduous hours and unrelenting conditions with little access to open spaces to play games or sport. Industrialisation then, intimidated and corralled the working class into accepting new work disciplines within the factory system and domestic industries, reducing time and space and limiting the activities of most people.

The industrial revolution was a long drawn-out process and despite the attrition inflicted upon everybody, many traditional ‘blood sports’, notably coursing, cock-fighting,
animal-baiting and pugilism were well supported, and the violent and destructive street
team had still played in the 1820s. However, once the British middle class procured
political power in the 1830s, parliament legislated against cruel and aggressive sports. The
Cruelty to Animals Act and the Highways Act, both passed in 1835, ensured animal baiting
became illegal and removed rowdy sports from the public bye-ways of the towns to
available common land. By the 1850s, the British middle class were encouraging sport as a
means of developing a communal \textit{esprit-de-corps}. They soothed a crude version of football
by administering the game and introducing rules and, like cricket and rugby, made all sport
an important element of daily life. What developed over a period of time was an
interwoven thread that reflected social norms and values, and served as a sensitive index
towards the values of British society.

However, there is a need to distinguish and explain the important shades of
difference between ‘leisure’, ‘sport’, and ‘recreation’. Leisure, or free time, is time spent
away from work and domestic chores, and like sport comes under the umbrella of
recreational activities. Sport is structurally different from most other forms of cultural
practice, as for example, sport is governed by written rules and they involve physical and
mental exertion and direct competition between two or more participants. Sport therefore,
is a distinctive cultural experience governed by nobody not knowing what will happen
before play starts or until it ends. Consequently, sport may unfold to be spectacular or
tedious, tragic or comic, and its central players may be depicted as heroes, villains or
scapegoats depending upon performance, and how observers identify personally with
them. In contrast, the theatre or concert, for example, indirect competition for prizes and
awards are distributed amongst actors and writers, and knowledge of a play or opera is
known. Recreational activities can be communal or solitary, active or passive, outdoors or
indoors, healthy or harmful, and useful to society or detrimental. For example, reading,
writing, playing or listening to music, visiting the cinema or the theatre, gardening, fishing,
and all sports whether watching or participating. Therefore, in order to differentiate between ‘leisure’ and ‘recreation’ I will use the term ‘other leisure time activities’ throughout the thesis.

Until the last quarter of the twentieth-century historians gave little or no attention to the relationship between sport and other leisure time activities, and their social norms and values in society. However, in early nineteenth-century England, Joseph Strutt maintained that all ‘sport and recreation’ defined English society. John Daly’s study of sport in South Australia between the years 1836 and 1890 has contributed significantly towards understanding the growth of a frontier community in the light of sport. Consequently, South Australians’ preoccupation with sport helped to shape a national character. Peter Bailey noted that ‘recreation’ was an element of social experience. Its significance to history was of particular importance owing to it reflecting and reconstructing the kind of lives that ordinary people lived in the past. Graeme Davison, referring to foundation day celebrations in Western Australia, advocated that ‘foundations are the rock upon which communities build their history’. Indeed, it was Governor Stirling’s wish that the new colony should celebrate settlement not as expatriates, but as frontiersmen and pioneers of a new state. Furthermore, Professor Ken Inglis, in his exploration of Australian social history from 1788 to 1879, quoted an American patriot who suggested that ‘If the ballads of a people are the essence of its history, holidays are, on similar grounds, the free utterance of its character’. Inglis was suggesting that the days Australian colonists set aside for ceremony, rhetoric and leisure expressed their character as a people. Sport and other leisure time activities then, encompass a wide range of human activity, which reflects prominent socio-economic cultural patterns.

Both modern day Australian and Canadian governments advocate sport and other leisure time activities as an essential part of life. Australia’s Institute of Sport and their ‘life be in it’ campaigns during the 1990s promoted all facets of rational leisure. More recently,
however, was Woolworths ‘Community Funding across Australia’, and pertinent to Olympic year ‘Coles Sports for Schools 2012’ sponsored children’s sport. All three reinforce the belief that Australia is a sports mad society. Similarly, the role of ‘Canada Fitness and Amateur Sport’ is to promote, encourage and develop fitness in amateur sports throughout the country. The Canadian Games are awarded to mid-size cities that need additional facilities. Consequently, the concept behind the games is to bequeath high-quality facilities, which the host community can use after the games.13

This thesis is premised on the argument that all sport and other leisure time activities reflect societies as a whole. Secondly, within all societies sport and other leisure time activities are enjoyed by all classes, but one dominant class influences the participation of all other classes either by playing or through administration. A good example of this occurred in the latter half of nineteenth-century England after association football was codified by the upper and middle classes. Initially, upper-and middle-class football teams dominated the game until the arrival of working-class teams and their professional approach to the game. But football and rugby, like most other developing sports in Britain at this time, continued to be administered and controlled by the upper and middle classes. This scenario created a schism in English rugby caused by the changing patterns of class relationship in nineteenth-century Britain. The northern working-class players argued that payment should be made for time lost at work whilst playing for their clubs. The southern rugby clubs, whose players were on salaries, argued against such proposals. The tensions that arose from this schism were crucial determinates in the amateur-professional struggle between the northern and southern clubs in the summer of 1895. As a result of this clash, two codes were eventually established with the southern teams playing ‘union’ and most northern teams playing ‘league’.14

The focus of this study is on the Swan River Colony, which was founded on the principle that money invested in the project would create greater wealth for those
immigrants who settled in the colony. These values were based on the belief that property, capital and birthright were the sole right towards an affluent colonial life. The southern hemisphere then, was the place to create ‘a new Britannia’.15 Financed by self-funding rather than British government investment and further fuelled by misguided ambition and greed, the Swan River Colony got off to a bad start. But, despite these setbacks the pioneers were able to mould their infant community into some semblance of English society and simultaneously establish familiar patterns of living. By 1850, it is safe to assume that sport, traditionally so much a part of British social life, was firmly entrenched at Swan River.

However, the colony’s population was a paltry 5886 people by 1850 (Fremantle and Perth’s civilian population was 1859 and 1940 respectively).16 Consequently, in the colony’s formative years this small and thinly scattered population was a major economic and social problem. If Fremantle or Perth seemed remote outposts of British civilisation, by comparison the country districts endured a Siberian isolation. Hence, the colony came close to ruin and catastrophe on several occasions owing to a finite and scattered population, exacerbated by the lack of any economic infrastructure and the looming possibility of starvation. But such a scenario did not dampen enthusiasm. On the contrary, such setbacks, which were frequent, only intensified and sustained the colony’s desire to progress and move forward beyond adversity. Consequently, sport and other leisure time activities played an important part in this progression, because they served as a distraction from the daily struggle to survive. Furthermore, such fortitude and resilience facilitated order and served as a catalyst for social integration, often bringing together representatives of all classes that encompassed a number of values inherent in Australian society today; cultural continuity, national honour, manliness, sportsmanship, competition and most important of all, progress.

After Australia was colonised in 1788, the British aristocracy did not transplant themselves and create an ordered hierarchy. On the contrary, those who emigrated hoped to
prosper in ‘untainted surroundings’. Consequently, most attempts at self-government in Britain’s Empire was made by a colonial elite who were not of aristocratic or gentry origin, but people ‘who patterned themselves on a British original’. They replicated the model of well-being, because this was recognised as the outward and visible sign of social and political consequence. Torn between failure in Britain and the desire to succeed in Australia’s colonies they were considered the ‘uneasy class’.

By what criteria were these ‘elites’ or gentry defined? Early references suggest the Henty’s were the first family chronicled at Swan River (1830s). They were substantial farmers and are the exception to the rule. After the Napoleonic Wars they responded to post-war recession by arriving at Swan River, buying and then selling vast tracts of land, and then settling in Van Diemen’s Land (Tasmania). The second example was the Lee Steeres (1850s onwards). Both ‘these families could claim landed opulence in Australia and pedigrees of respectable antiquity in England’. For the rest, and for those who followed, they felt entitled to be considered superior in birth or breeding as opposed to the majority of their contemporaries. Hence, ‘the idea of a colonial gentry’ fostered ideas through which they could express their sense of superiority within the local context. As Colonel Frederick C. Irwin remarked in 1839, ‘the superior class of colonists who settled the Swan River Colony observe the elegancies of life and have formed associations corresponding with similar establishments in their native country’. These ‘elegancies of life’ was not too dissimilar to the mansions, parks and halls associated in Jane Austen’s novels. Indeed, one can establish similarities between the characters at Swan River and those associated with Austen’s literary world. For example, ‘Herne Hill’ was William Brockman’s home; ‘Sandalford’ belonged to John Septimus Roe; ‘West Oakover’ was the residence of Samuel Moore; and ‘Faversham House’ in the Avon Valley belonged to John Henry Monger. These examples compare favourably with the Dashford’s at ‘Norland Park’; the Bennets’ of ‘Longbourn House’; and George Knightley’s ‘Donwell Abbey’.
Austen’s novels focus on the upper middle class or gentry in rural English settings and their entire narrative is central to the neighbourhood where these families existed. Like the characters in Austen’s novels, the Brockmans, the Lee Steeres, the Leakes and the Roes were people who acquired land and administered the colony, and although they were not England’s great aristocracy, they were similar to ‘her’ country gentlemen. These people had their own distinctive and exclusive sports such as horseracing, trotting, hunting and yachting, whilst dabbling in the theatre, concerts and anniversary balls. However, during nineteenth-century Swan River, high culture was muted to say the least being confined to the occasional theatre production and concert. Consequently, opportunities were few and far between for most colonists, especially the labouring class. It was not until the second half of the century that high culture gained momentum when several theatre companies began operating and grand concerts were performed.

‘High’ culture has its historical origins dating back to the intellectual and aesthetic ideals of ancient Greece and Rome. However, since the eighteenth century, it became the culture of the aristocracy or the intelligentsia, which not only transcended the class system, but was considered an essential part of a ‘gentleman’s education. The notions of high culture has been associated with the Greek and Latin classics; the cultivation of manners and etiquette; an appreciation of the fine arts such as sculptures and paintings; a knowledge of literature, drama and poetry; the enjoyment of classical music and opera; religion and theology; rhetoric and politics; the study of philosophy and history; and playing ‘elite’ sports such as polo, horsemanship, fencing, and yachting. During the latter half of nineteenth-century Europe, efforts were not only made to promote high culture to a wider audience with the opening of museums and concert halls, but to universities where all aspects of high culture became objects of academic study also. The gentry at Swan River were adept at horsemanship and yachting, indulged in theatricals and concerts, and no doubt had previously studied the classics.
The term ‘popular’ culture was coined in the nineteenth century and was associated with the lower classes. In Britain, popular culture evolved through industrial urban culture, notably the music hall and songs played and sung in public houses. The labouring class at Swan River watched horseracing and played cricket, and drank in the pubs whilst playing quoits, skittles, or billiards and various card games against a background of music from the pipe, drum or flute. In 1838, however, the colony witnessed the tradesman’s ball, an event which indicated for the first time that cultural entertainment had crossed over from one class to the other. However, by the second half of the nineteenth century a wide variety of entertainment was on offer to all colonists, which included the theatre, concerts, minstrel acts, and professional entertainment from the eastern colonies.

For most of the nineteenth-century the gentry and the labouring class were involved in or supported sport, but it was confronted by gender and racially orientated sex-based social roles also, dictating to both men and women their role in society. For women, croquet and tennis were deemed ‘ornamental’ sports and therefore acceptable to society. Ethnically, the aborigine was often denied access to playing sport or associational membership owing to the white population’s attitude towards these people. A case in point was the aboriginal cricket team from New Norcia and their disappearance from the game after the formation of the Western Australian Cricket Association in 1885.

By 1890, sixty one years after foundation, the population of Swan River was 48502.24 Ironically, when comparing and contrasting earlier decades at Swan River, the 1890s was a decade of unparalleled economic prosperity fuelled by the discovery of gold, a rapidly rising population and an extended programme of public works. The state’s period of responsible government and the Bill to grant a Constitution to Western Australia meant the government could now borrow money from abroad to help finance a railway system, the building of a harbour at Fremantle and the construction of public buildings. The state became a veritable bee-hive of industry at a time when the rest of Australia was
experiencing a slump.\textsuperscript{25}

However, very few west Australians had little to celebrate in 1890 owing to the length of the average working day, which was 9-12 hours, six-days a week. Unlike the eastern colonies, there was no Saturday half-day holiday and the ‘eight hour’ day was not introduced into Western Australia until 1892. Holidays consisted of a dozen days a year, notably Christmas Day, Easter, Foundation Day and the King’s (later the Queen’s Birthday). The labouring personnel were still governed by the Master and Servant Act of 1842, and it was not until amendments were passed in 1892 that the ‘servant’ was put on an equal footing with his ‘master’.\textsuperscript{26} Hence, throughout the period covered by this thesis, colonial democracy was fragile.

The thesis revolves around two general themes, social class and stratification and the development of communities, and the role sport and other leisure time activities played in each. Both Perth and Fremantle were pyramidal societies, containing groups of people who behaved and interacted with each other in accordance with their class status in colonial society. Therefore, the initial task of this thesis will be to determine and describe class structure in nineteenth-century Swan River.

For the social historian stratification rests on the assumption that at any given time there are recognisable differences among groups of people in a society. Such differences, like status and rank, were prominent at Swan River from 1829 also, and contribute to the understanding of the society. Societies then are usually divided into three basic categories, upper, middle and working class. A social class is defined as a group of people who become members by birth (or by entry later in their lives) and treat each other as approximate equals and rarely associate with members from other classes.\textsuperscript{27}

Among the determinates of social class are such factors as social origin or birth; individual wealth; occupation; extent of formal education; associational membership and participation in common recreational activities. Therefore, each class possesses specific
values, habits and behaviour patterns which place them apart from members of other classes. The concept of stratification is further linked to this assumption. In such a system, inequalities exist and are based on such critical dimensions as gender, ethnicity, age and political power.\textsuperscript{28} The Swan River Colony exhibited a system of social stratification from its inception and continued to do so for many years, which explains how the role of sport and other leisure time activities played an important part in the social development of Fremantle and Perth. Consequently, membership of any class determines individual behaviour which will have certain characteristic patterns significant towards analysing cultural systems. The sociologist Max Weber recognised that source and level of income was a criterion towards determining class, adding that other factors such as prestige or status in a community affected and influenced behaviour, attitudes and social interaction.\textsuperscript{29}

Status refers to the rankings of others in terms of deference, and as Weber suggests, ‘a social estimation of honour’ exemplified by a significant ‘style of life’.\textsuperscript{30} Both are closely interrelated, because income determines class position which in turn yields prestige. Status then is the social derivation of class and what people do with their money to achieve a certain life style.

The Swan River Colony reflected British society at a time when one class (the aristocracy) ruled. The up and coming middle class and the labouring (working) class existed but, parliamentary reform in Britain was denied to the middle class until they were granted political status with the aristocracy in 1832. The 1867 act of parliament enfranchised part of the urban male working class in England and Wales, and although the size of the electorate was widened considerably by the 1884 act it did not establish universal suffrage.\textsuperscript{31} On such an economic and political stage, and in such a small community as Swan River, some individuals were revered, respected, treated with deference and considered people of consequence while others were thought of as ordinary and unimportant. The labouring class dealt with things; the gentry dealt with people.
Colonists therefore socialised accordingly to a simple classification of gentry and labouring personnel.

Stratification and interaction are key conceptual tools for the study of structure and process in a community such as Swan River. The task is to determine who interacted with whom, how often, for how long and for what reasons. Unfocussed interaction implies mutual awareness of one another’s presence. That is, when people are in the presence of others, even if they do not directly talk to them, they continually engage in non-verbal communication through their posture, and facial and physical gestures. Focused interaction (an encounter) occurs when individuals directly pay attention to what others say and do. At Swan River, the daily life of colonists consisted of meeting and working with other people against a background of unfocussed interaction with other colonists present on the scene. Therefore, this thesis seeks to investigate who played, watched or arranged sport and leisure and why.

The most effective approach to studying sport is to focus on relationships and values within the community to which they belong. For example, the Canadian Games develops a sense of community and common interest. However, status groups develop within a community between persons of similar prestige who associate with one another rather than with other groups. In other words, social decorum and demarcation lines exist. The Swan River gentry and the up-coming commercial-professional class were status groups. The subcultures which emerge within each status level define how members of the community conduct themselves and behave towards one another. Consequently, these status groups often define certain activities as characteristic or uncharacteristic of a particular class.

The definition of community is defined as people sharing some common feature that binds them together. Communities involve all-round relationships between people, which extend into most areas of life. Communities have a common interest also and may
well organise collective action in pursuit of a particular goal. There is also a shared identity, a sense of belonging to a distinct group that evokes emotion, a feeling of belonging and loyalty to that community.\textsuperscript{33} 

Recognition of a class system and the degree of interaction between them does not necessarily explain community. Virtually everyone in small communities such as Fremantle and Perth during the formative years of settlement was known and can be placed in the social structure. Hence, in the formative years of the colony a man’s worth was estimated according to who he was rather than what he had done. Therefore, it is in this sense that the term ‘community’ will be used, as for example, a group of interacting people who normally reside together and are conscious of each other’s presence.\textsuperscript{34} A brief analysis of the social, economic and historical setting of other communities is needed in order to explore the foundations of social life at Swan River. These studies investigated the social life of specific communities which analysed social stratification, status and life style, but also highlighted a sense of pride and passion for their community.

In 1937, Robert and Helen Lynd investigated the structural changes of social life in Muncie over a period of fifty years from 1885 to 1925 and from 1925 to 1935 (by which time the Midwest town had reached a population of approximately 50,000).\textsuperscript{35} Their investigations revealed how distinctive life styles created separated groups within the community, as for example, the wealthy upper class played their own sports with their own social set. Like England and Australia in previous years, sporting democracy in Muncie was brief, because certain sports were used to exclude the lower class, and so affirm their own social importance. Sport for the upper class in Muncie had ‘value’ that emphasised ‘status’, and their sporting and recreational associations were structured in such a way as to preclude other classes.\textsuperscript{36} Regardless of class or status, however, supporting Muncie’s basketball team united the town’s community against outside opposition. Consequently, victory gave each supporter a sense of pride and belonging to the community.\textsuperscript{37}
Ronald Frankenberg’s analysis regarding the role of sport (football) in the social life of a Welsh village, Pentrediwaith, runs parallel with the Lynds’ study. This small community was situated on the border of England and Wales, but after the closure of its quarry and the compromising of its insular pride (ethnic customs and language), the village sought to retain a sense of community and belonging through its football team. Hence, throughout the town’s economic decline Pentrediwaith continued to play football matches against other towns ‘thus serving to represent the village as a unit…emphasising its values as a community…a symbol of unity and cohesion against the outside world’.39

A study by Norman Dennis, Fernando Henriques and Clifford Slaughter found similar values in the Yorkshire mining community of Ashton (Featherstone, England). Dennis and his associates studied Ashton, a community described as having a strong sense of solidarity dating back to the mid-nineteenth century. Memories of depressions and pit closures not only strengthened community ties, but furthered trade union solidarity. Ashton’s sense of community and solidarity was further developed through sport and recreation, notably their cricket team and colliery brass band. However, an overwhelming expression of solidarity was witnessed as soon as the town’s rugby league football team, Featherstone Rovers, played against other towns.40

All three examples reflect similar partisan support in Fremantle and Perth after the two teams first played cricket, rugby and Victorian Rules football. A feeling of belonging and a sense of place and community existed, especially in Fremantle, a town that was at the epicentre of convictism. Furthermore, the citizens of Fremantle regarded ‘their’ town important enough to petition Lord John Russell in the mid-1850s to remove government from Perth and make Fremantle the capital of Western Australia.

William Morgan Williams illustrated the role of responsibility and status also following his investigation into formal and informal voluntary organisations in Gosforth in England. Williams observed that roles of responsibility reflected the social status of
individuals within the community. For example, positions of authority in Gosforth’s clubs were mostly held by people from the gentry, thus enhancing and confirming their status and simultaneously upgrading the prestige of the associations. Both Frankenberg’s *Communities in Britain* and Margaret Stacey’s *Study of Banbury* recount a similar story of social status in their studies regarding committees, which were voluntary and small in membership and administered by people of social standing.42 Such social processes existed at Swan River also. For example, the theatre and concert; the Western Australian Turf Club; the Metropolitan Cricket Club; the Western Australian Athletics Association; and the Fremantle and Perth tennis clubs were all introduced and administered by a colonial hierarchy. Social processes which Anthony Trollope confirmed after visiting the eastern states of Australia in 1871 (and Western Australia in March 1872), critically assessing colonial life and the efforts of those of the ‘superior class’ to emulate English social life and its institutions.43

The historian Wray Vamplew noted, and it certainly applies to Swan River, that:

Sport was part of the cultural baggage brought out to Australia by …, the free settlers and the accompanying administrative and military personnel, though initially the limited size of the community and the priority given to the establishment of a viable settlement delayed the commencement of organised sporting activities.44

This is further endorsed by Vamplew (again) and Daryl Adair:

Sport has long been a central feature of Australian popular culture—so much so that the enthusiasm for sport has been described widely as characteristic of being Australian. But sport is hardly an invention of Australians. The colonial sporting culture was highly derivative, importing all manner of games and recreational pastimes from Britain, the veritable birthplace of modern sport.45

Therefore, the indication that sport and other leisure time activities in colonial Swan River reflected English culture brings to mind questions I will raise in this thesis. For example:
(1) Was this the case at Swan River? What range of sporting and other leisure time activities were transported as cultural baggage?

(2) What role did sport play at Swan River? How did it develop during this period?

(3) Was the social structure which supported English sport transferred and maintained also? Who were the most important and influential colonists, and did intermarriage amongst the gentry reinforce their social position?

(4) Were some sports exclusive whilst others were integrative?

(5) Why did the gentry invest time and resources into sport?

(6) What effect did the small population have on sport? Once the population increased did it influence particular sports?

(7) Did the other colonies influence sport at Swan River?

(8) How did the climate, flora and fauna impact on sport?

(9) Did particular sports change during the period 1829-1890 and why?

(10) What impact did gambling have on sport?

(11) Did any particular sport represent a means of identification with their towns and thereby give the supporters a sense of place and belonging instead of a sense of class?

(12) Was sport and recreational pastimes a socially unifying force that cut through barriers of class, ethnic origin and religion?

(13) What was the role of women in sport?

(14) As the colony approached political independence did the organisation of sport make it more accessible and ‘democratic’ for all members of the community?

(15) Did the church, schools and sponsorship encourage the growth of sport and other leisure time activities?

The thesis then is about how and why sport and other leisure time activities
developed in a frontier society between the years 1829 and 1890. How they highlighted the social differences at Swan River; how certain groups accepted sport and recreational pastimes as an integral part of their daily lives; how they developed the communities of Fremantle and Perth; and how they maintained order and at the same time became a catalyst for social integration, bringing representatives of all classes together.
ENDNOTES FOR CHAPTER ONE.


3 Ibid, p. 189.


8 Daly, *Elysian Fields*.


13 C. Westland, *Fitness and Amateur Sport in Canada: An Historical Perspective*,
( Ottawa: Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, 1979).

Publishing, 1994); Tony Collins, *Rugby’s Great Split: Class, Culture and the
Origins of Rugby League Football*, (London: Frank Cass, 1998); Eric Dunning and
Kenneth Sheard, *Barbarians, Gentlemen and Players: A Sociological Study of the
Development of Rugby Football*, (Canberra: Australian National University Press,
1979).

15 Stoddart, ‘Sport and Society’, p. 654.

16 R.T. Appleyard, ‘Western Australia: Economic and Demographic Growth 1850-1914’


18 Ibid.

19 Daly, *Elysian Fields*, p.15.


21 Ibid.

22 Cited in Patricia Brown, ‘Jane Austen lingers in Perth as Seen Through the Hillman

23 Ibid, pp. 557-567.

24 Appleyard, ‘Western Australia: Economic and Demographic Growth 1850-1914’,
p. 234.

26 I.H. Vanden Driesen, ‘Evolution of the Trade Union Movement in Western Australia’ in A New History of Western Australia, pp. 357-361.


30 Ibid, p. 86.


37 Lynd, Middletown, pp. 486-487.

38 For a more detailed study look at Ronald Frankenberg’s, Village on the Border, (London: Cohen and West, 1957).

40 Norman Dennis, Fernando Henriques and Clifford Slaughter, eds. *Coal is our Life: An Analysis of a Yorkshire Mining Community*, (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1956), p. 156.


It has always been widely acknowledged that in mid-nineteenth century Britain strength of character was related to the physical sturdiness of the body. Hence, the pervading ethos within Britain was ‘manliness’, *mens sana in corpore sano*, a sound mind in a sound body, expressed through a devotion to ‘manly sports’. The playing of organised sport became part of the British people’s life style after 1850. Sport was invented, organised and administered and became a cultural phenomenon that was transported to Britain’s imperial territories. Hence, British influence overseas saw the reproduction of national sports such as horseracing, hunting and cricket that reflected ‘her’ social and public life and representative institutions.

Several sports were introduced during the Swan River Colony’s formative years, notably horseracing, hunting, trotting, cricket and sailing. Horseracing was the most popular sport in England and became the first organised sport to be replicated by the colony’s gentry (elites) and military personnel in 1833, four years after colonisation. Hunting was pursued by the gentry, who attempted to imitate the English aristocracy (the sport differed greatly from that in England), and trotting favoured those who could afford to own a horse and gig. Cricket, however, did not take off until the mid-1840s, even though the occasional eleven-a-side match and single-wicket games were played. Sailing, a fashionable pastime of the gentry, eventually witnessed the introduction of the regatta in 1841. Apart from cricket most sports were unavailable to the labouring class owing to their social position and the cost of owning a horse and gig, and a boat. However, they did support horseracing and sought refuge in pubs and taverns where games such as quoits, skittles and card games were played against a backdrop of music and conversation. Their desire to play cricket ultimately witnessed the formation of three cricket teams in Perth.
Although the growth of organised sport as a form of mass entertainment was a nineteenth-century phenomenon in Britain, and quickly taken up in the eastern colonies at this time, similar circumstances did not materialise at Swan River owing to a small and scattered population; a slow growing infrastructure; no adequate transport system; and working commitments that ensured very little leisure time activities were available. Even so, the concept of ‘manliness’ had already crossed over from England when the *Perth Gazette* referred to cricket as ‘this manly exercise’ shortly after the formation of a cricket club in Perth in April 1839.\(^1\) Nevertheless, it was still many years before sport significantly gained ‘mass appeal’ status.

In a colony where there was very little social entertainment colonists desperately tried to preserve the social rituals of English provincial society. Hence, invitations to visit friends proved fashionable with the gentry. Such occasions fostered popular activities like whist and backgammon, and singing to the accompaniment of the piano. During the 1830s and 1840s, the gentry introduced the theatre and concert, and picnics, dinners and various balls figured prominently within their exclusive social circles. Domestic brewing received favourable attention and for some colonists wine making was nurtured as early as 1838. The formation of the Agricultural society in 1831 by members of the farming community witnessed the introduction of the fair and its associated entertainment. Such events evoked nostalgia with publicans’ booths, merchants selling wares, and a host of traditional English games supplementing the occasion.

The colony’s social structure consisted of the gentry or ‘elites’, artisans and indentured labouring personnel. The gentry were self-styled gentleman who were not of gentry origin, but people ‘who patterned themselves on a British original’.\(^2\) Early references indicate that the first of these influential families were the Hentys and the Dempsters in the 1830s, followed by the Lee Steers in the 1850s. James Henty, an enthusiastic racegoer, founded the ‘Yorkshire Club’ before he left for the eastern colonies.\(^3\) The Dempsters, who arrived in the colony in 1830 as cattle farmers, turned
their attentions to the lucrative business of importing and exporting horses to the eastern colonies. Over the next two decades the Dempsters took up membership with the Turf Club and formed the Northam Race Club in 1863. These families came from respectable antiquity in England and claimed landed opulence in Australia. Having arrived, they took on the outward and visible signs of a British ruling class by fostering their ideas, giving them a sense of place and superiority within the local context.

The gentry entertained each other safe in the knowledge they met only their own kind. They were the masters, they were affluent, and they possessed the time and the means to indulge in and promote sport and other leisure time activities in the colony. These people, notably the Brockman, Brown and Burges families, either held positions of commercial influence or administered the affairs of the colony, and simultaneously exhibited unflinching loyalty to the crown, the British Empire and British justice. In sharp contrast, the artisan and labouring personnel were the servants who worked long hours. From the onset then, class distinctions were rigid and due decorum was observed in public. However, the hard work of pioneering quickly exposed the primary reason for emigrating to the colony, which was to recreate an English village in an Australian frontier. However, they did have great faith in their ability to at least make an attempt and sport and other leisure time activities alleviated the harsh reality of disappointment. Consequently, the English passion for horseracing was organised and introduced by the gentry and military, who channelled their efforts towards the one sport which they deemed sacrosanct.

HORSE RACING.

As horseracing attracted both an elite and lower order following in England, it was not too long before the colony’s first meeting took place in Fremantle in 1833. Evidence suggests the only horses available in the colony were used for carting and ploughing until Governor Stirling imported a number of horses on his return from England in 1834, one being a thoroughbred. This gave Stirling and his friend, William Brockman, the opportunity to produce good horse flesh and, by October 1836, both
were submitting thoroughbred horses at the Guildford race meeting.\(^6\)

Like the eastern colonies, the gentry and military organised the first race meeting and early references acknowledge Captain Taylor of the military, Charles Smith (agriculturist) and John Weavell (merchant) imported several Timor ponies ‘for the institution of an amusement calculated to excite a considerable emulation amongst the breeders and importers of horses’.\(^7\) Consequently, the earliest definitive account of horseracing at Swan River took place on Wednesday 2\(^{nd}\) October 1833 at the Downs, near what is now South Fremantle.\(^8\) *Dandy*, owned by Captain James McDermott, won the best of three heats to become the first horse to win an event at Swan River.\(^9\)

McDermott, who held land in the Avon District and at Fremantle, was a close friend of the Molloy and Turner families, who resided in the Augusta and the Sussex areas (Margaret River). McDermott eventually married Ann Turner in April 1832. It was one of many early marital alliances upon which the gentry integrated to form influential connections throughout the colony. Other examples were Charles Smith, who married Ann Chapman, whose family came from the Vasse district, and exported jarrah to England; and John Weavell, who married Colonel Logan’s sister, Sophia.\(^10\)

At the colony’s inaugural race meeting reports reveal the existence of the ‘Fremantle Race Club’ and a social club for gentlemen known as the ‘Yorkshire Club’. The Fremantle Race Club was founded by Captain Walter Page at the Stag’s Head Inn on Wednesday 19\(^{th}\) March 1834.\(^11\) The Yorkshire Club was founded by James Henty, but there is no evidence to suggest when this particular club was formed. It may have been established in the early 1830s before Henty and his family left for Launceston (Tasmania) in the mid-1830s.\(^12\) The ‘Yorkshire Club’ was an attempt to replicate the aristocratic clubs in England such as Boodle’s (1762), Brooks’ (1764) and White’s (1781). Like the English gentlemen’s clubs, the ‘Yorkshire Club’ was exclusive and undoubtedly reflected the economic and social standing of its members. Apart from isolated newspaper reports there is no evidence to suggest who the members were or how long both clubs existed. The Fremantle Race Club was confined to the pages of
history after 1838 owing to Perth becoming an immediate venue for thoroughbred race meetings in the colony. Although horse racing continued to take place at Fremantle, there are no tangible records to indicate official thoroughbred horseracing took place in the town. Possible reasons for this were the cost and time owners and their horses spent travelling from Perth, Guildford and York to Fremantle, fewer gentry residing in Fremantle, and the sandy race course at the ‘Downs’ suggests it was dangerous and inappropriate for thoroughbred racing. However, the Fremantle Race Club was an attempt to replicate the Jockey Club in England and unbeknown to its early members was predecessor to the Western Australian Turf Club founded eighteen years later in 1852.

In June 1838, the gentry organised Perth’s first official thoroughbred race meeting on a piece of land between what is now Hay Street and Adelaide Terrace.\textsuperscript{13} Less than a year later, and six years after the colony’s first race meeting, the West Australian Stud Club was established to catalogue and publish the pedigree of all thoroughbred horses in the colony.\textsuperscript{14} The introduction of thoroughbred racing at Perth and the formation of the stud club were important social events in more ways than one. Both gave the gentry and the aspiring commercial class an identity and security that solidified their class structure and enhanced their social values within the colony. Early membership included Captain Richard Goldsmith Meares, George Leake, Barrett Lennard, Andrew Stirling and William Brockman. Although Captain Meares was a retired soldier and veteran of the Napoleonic Wars, he became a prominent member of the colony owning land in the Murray district, Helena region, and at Cockburn Sound. He eventually moved to Guildford (‘The Bower’) and attained several government positions including District Superintendent of Police and Government Resident in the Murray district and at York. Leake was a landowner in the Swan district and a Perth merchant. Lennard owned land in the Swan and Avon districts and held the position of Justice of the Peace for the district of Guildford. Stirling was a merchant and magistrate, and a member of the Executive Council before his premature death at the
age of twenty-six from hepatitis. Brockman was a land and mill owner and figured prominently in the administration of the colony. He was Director of the Agricultural Society, District Officer of the Western Australian Savings Bank, and a member of the Swan River Road Committee.\textsuperscript{15}

Horseracing in England was financially blessed owing to an increasing population and the patronal influence of the aristocracy and their ‘purses’ (a simple wager) and publicans, who saw the entrepreneurial advantages associated with donating monetary prizes as well as cups and plates at race meetings. In contrast, early race meetings in Australia’s colonies, and especially at Swan River, depended upon entry fees and subscriptions from colonists who owned and entered their horses for a particular race. After 1838, several races were introduced to attract further interest and extend meetings. For example, the race for the ‘Silver Cup’ was for thoroughbred horses only; the ‘Town Purse’ was renamed the ‘Town Plate’ in 1841; the ‘Officers’ Purse’ signified a military presence at race meetings; and the ‘Ladies’ Purse’ attracted popular blessing amongst women. There were consolation races for beaten horses, notably hurry-skurries (races organised on the spot) and the ubiquitous pony race.\textsuperscript{16} At York, in June 1845, William Brockman donated the ‘Margeaux Produce Cup’, a race for horses from the progeny of \textit{Margeaux}.\textsuperscript{17}

By 1850, on the eve of convictism, evidence supports the view horseracing at Swan River was acquiring wide colonial support and, as a result of this increasing popularity, more races were introduced. For example, the ‘Maiden Plate’ was for horses that had never won a race; the ‘Galloway Stakes’ was named after the small Galloway horse from Scotland; the ‘Rubbish Stakes’ was for hacks (old horses); the ‘Tally-Ho-Stakes’ was a cross country race named after the fox-hunting cry; the ‘Timor Race’ was for Timor ponies; and the last race on the programme was the three miles ‘Champions’ Cup’ for horses who had won their individual race at the meeting.\textsuperscript{18}

However, the problem regarding the colony’s population can be clearly seen by comparing the number of horses to that of the population. For example, the number of
horses in 1834 was 162, there were 504 in 1840, and by 1850, 2635 horses existed in the
colony against a population numbering only 5254. The upward popularity of
horseracing and the number of horses available meant that by 1850 the colony was
accommodating three thoroughbred race meetings a year in Guildford, York and Perth.
However, Perth became the major centre for thoroughbred racing after 1850.

The local terrain made horseracing difficult owing to significant quantities of
sand in the soil that created dust in the summer months and treacherous conditions
underfoot after it had rained during the winter months. Evidence indicates previous race
courses at Subiaco limekilns (between what is now Wembley and City Beach) and the
‘flats’ (near to where the Narrows Bridge is now) were susceptible to soft and slippery
conditions after rain. Consequently, by February 1848, a new race course was
completed near Belmont, appropriately named ‘Ascot’ after the English race course, to
accommodate both the sport and spectators. The course was built on firmer ground and
free of sand to secure good footing for both horse and rider. The advantages associated
with the Ascot race course was its pear shaped circumference of approximately one and
one-half miles long and a home run consisting of a straight line six hundred yards long
to elicit the best possible speeds and times.21 According to Gerald de Courcy Lefroy,
owner of several horses and a competitive rider, the new course was ‘an excellent
one’. Lefroy raced his favourite horse, Erin-go-bragh,* on the opening day of ‘Ascot’
and was just beaten by half-a-head. On the second day of the meeting he competed in
and lost two more races.23

Gerald Lefroy and his brother, Anthony O’Grady Lefroy, leased and farmed
‘Spring Hill’ from Edward Hussey Burgh. Gerald Lefroy found life intolerably hard as
a frontier settler and his journal is a vivid account of the anxieties and the physical and
emotional weariness that faced most west Australian farmers in the 1840s.24 He married
Elizabeth Brockman, daughter of William L. Brockman in 1852, and left Swan River
shortly afterwards for Ireland, but returned in 1860 to settle in Bunbury where he

* The translation means ‘Ireland forever’.
became Resident Magistrate. Betting amongst riders was customary at race meetings, and common practice for groups of spectators to mingle freely to organise bets amongst themselves. Initially, betting was frowned upon in colonial Australia for fear of provoking social disorder amongst the labouring classes, but the authorities provided little resistance to stop the activity. It has been suggested the well-to-do could afford to lose a bet, because it was considered ‘good form’ to demonstrate their wealth as opposed to increasing it.

Betting or gambling at Swan River came under the legal jurisdiction of the United Kingdom. Acts passed in parliament concerning gambling applied to the colony, as did Common Law. These English Statutes of the Realm and in particular the Gaming Act of 1845 and the Betting Act of 1853 remained law until the twentieth century when the Acts Amendment (Gaming and Related Provisions) Act was passed in 1985. The Betting Act of 1853 was passed in order to suppress cash betting shops in England and at the same time corral and control any social problems attributed to betting. The rigorous suppression of betting shops in England drove bookmakers out onto the streets, which eventually saw further laws passed to control street betting. There are no tangible records to confirm whether or not ‘bookies’ existed in the colony. If ‘bookies’ were evident at Swan River they plied their trade confidentially without the local authority knowing about it. However, taking into consideration English legislation was passed to prohibit gambling, it appears betting became socially acceptable in March 1849 when the *Inquirer*, known for its uninhibited and independent line, began printing the winning odds at Perth’s race meetings.

Once permission was granted by the stewards, private racing for wagers were run at the end of the racing programme. For example, the June celebrations of 1837 witnessed a wager between Mr. Macleod’s horse and Mr. Pawley’s mount ‘Ruan’. Mr. Macleod’s horse lost the race after it had bolted and traumatised several spectators. However, private racing organised outside the jurisdiction of official race meetings attracted many punters also. For instance, local spectators and ‘several visitors from
Perth’ witnessed (James) ‘Henty’ s’ horse *Jack* beat Joseph Walford’s horse *Iodine* in December 1835 at Fremantle.\(^{30}\) There is evidence to suggest horseracing attracted the colony’s criminal element. In June 1839, for example, *Egremont* was maimed ‘by some dastardly villain’ causing the race against *Margeaux* to be postponed. As a result of this incident, *Margeaux* raced against the clock ‘to decide some wagers that were pending upon him’.\(^{31}\)

Early records indicate several colonists invested time and money into horseracing, notably George Leake, William H. Leeder, Captain McDermott, William Samson, Nathaniel Shaw, James Solomon, Captain Taylor, Gerald De Courcy Lefroy, Edward Hammersley, William Brockman, George W. Leake, Thomas N. Yule, Francis Lochee, Captain Meares and John Phillips, all of whom either arranged or administered race meetings or played an active part in racing.\(^{32}\) Most of these people were landowners or merchants who raced their horses at meetings, arranged private races for wagers and registered their horses with the Western Australian Stud Club.\(^{33}\) They were the early pioneers and patrons of Western Australian horseracing and their *raison d’etre*.

Race meetings were usually arranged to coincide with annual holidays where a cross-section of colonists from all classes enjoyed the races, the fun of the fair, refreshment booths and various peripheral entertainments. But, only the affluent possessed the means to either own or race a horse, or invest in pure blood stock. Members of the labouring class did not possess horses and unless someone owned a pony few entered the ‘hack’ races. However, they gathered in numbers at race meetings and could be seen scattered around the track, or in close proximity to the finishing post.

It does not appear horseracing came into conflict with the church and the Sabbath owing to race meetings and anniversary celebrations being arranged to take place on the Saturday or on a weekday. Surprisingly, the weather was never severe enough to abandon race meetings. However, owing to the October harvest race meetings were rescheduled to avoid conflict with the farmer at harvest time. Initially,
race meetings took place at Perth in June and York in October. But the October race meeting at York not only conflicted with the harvest, but also restricted the training of horses. As a result of this anomaly, the gentry proposed and then sanctioned in June 1847 that Perth and York race meetings should take place on the first and third Wednesday in April to facilitate the training and preparation of horses.34

From the late 1830s onwards, evidence indicates governors and their wives, and ladies in attendance were part of the horseracing scene. Governor Stirling and Governor Hutt, for example, attended race meetings and in March 1848 and April 1849, Gerald Lefroy remarked that Governor Charles Fitzgerald attended the entire racing programme.35 According to Lefroy, who was present at the opening of Ascot in March 1848, ‘all the ladies in Perth there had a grandstand’. ‘It was’, he added, ‘truly delightful to see so many of them collected together’. However, on the second day a disappointed Lefroy remarked that their numbers had dwindled, because they were ‘keeping themselves up for the ball (in the) evening’.36

HUNTING.

Hunting was another sport which attracted the attention of the gentry owing to it representing Englishness, virility and aristocratic rank. But, unlike hunting in England, there was no deer or foxes, no packs of hounds and few horses to ride and chase down the prey. The kangaroo and dingo therefore, substituted the fox. There is no evidence to suggest ‘blood sports’ existed and there is very little information available concerning the formative years of the hunt. What evidence there is, however, suggests William Brockman founded the Kangaroo Hunt Club sometime in late 1832 or early 1833, because members of the club were dining at the ‘Cleckham Inn’ in Guildford in February 1833.37 The hunt club was a purely private affair, restricted to the gentry and merchants who had the privilege of owning a horse. On reflection, the club was an ambitious attempt to replicate hunt clubs back ‘home’ in England and, like the ‘Yorkshire Club’, there is no evidence to indicate how long the club existed, because it was never mentioned in the press again, nor are there any entries found in diaries or
Individual hunting was popular with some colonists; George Fletcher Moore and Samuel Burgess, for instance, went duck hunting in December 1832 from ‘six in the morning till three’ and walked ‘nearly sixteen miles, carrying gunpowder flask and shot belt’. A lawyer and an agriculturist in England, Moore applied for a government post, but after being refused a colonial position he still emigrated to the colony in October 1829. He was a leading member of an expeditionary force that explored the region north of the Swan River and discovered the York district. Moore was eventually appointed Commissioner of the Civil Court, a position he held until 1834 when he was made Advocate-General. Samuel Burgess, who was a successful farmer at York, further established his position in colonial society when he married Captain Richard Meares daughter, Vittoria.

There are no records to suggest members of the labouring class were involved in organised hunting. If they were involved in the hunt it was in a menial capacity, being employed to rouse prey. It is likely, but not provable from known documents, that aborigines were used as trackers to assist in the hunt. During the early 1830s, however, the colony was close to starvation owing to insufficient harvests, a reduction in British expenditure and few ships visiting the colony. It was a period when the labouring class experienced hardship and disease.

TROTTLING.

Trotting experienced mixed blessings in Australia, because it was not part of the English cultural baggage. It was more fashionable in the northern states of America where driving sleighs in the winter and rigs in the summer became a popular pastime. There is very little evidence to indicate as to when and how trotting took off in the colony. It may have been introduced by crew members from American whaling ships or visitors from the eastern colonies, but it never received widespread colonial patronage. Still, for those members of the gentry, who had the time and the money, they sporadically indulged in or supported the sport owing to it being another avenue for
gambling. There is no information whatsoever on the type of equipment used, but light-weight carts may have been pulled by the cumbersome and graceless colonial bred horse, or the Galloway and pony until the introduction of thoroughbred horses. Records reveal the first trotting race occurred at the ‘flats’ in March 1834 when William Samson’s Ruan mare ‘easily’ defeated Captain Archibald Erskine’s Perouse.\textsuperscript{42}

In the long term, trotting did not gain popular appeal in the colony until the twentieth century after an influx of migrants and businessmen from the eastern colonies supported and invested money in the sport. Like horseracing, the labouring class did not participate in the sport owing to the cost of procuring a horse and rig, but they supported trotting owing to the sport being another opportunity to gamble.

**CRICKET.**

An advertisement in the *Perth Gazette* dated Saturday 5\textsuperscript{th} April 1835 announced an impending cricket match between the mechanics, who were building the Commissariat Store, and a team of workers who were completing Government House ‘on any terms which may be agreed upon’.\textsuperscript{43} The advertisement gave notice that the game of cricket and gambling, which became synonymous with sport in Australia, had arrived at Swan River. However, there is no definitive evidence to indicate whether or not the game was played. Cricket was (is) the one game that held majority interest throughout the British Empire because of its accessibility, it was economical to play, and it instigated people from dissimilar social backgrounds to assimilate with others.

Initially, the game was slow to take off owing to the small number of people in the colony, the establishment of a settlement, and employment commitments. But in spite of this, the colony’s first cricket club was formed in March 1839 by, ironically, an indentured servant, William Glover, and not by the colony’s gentry. Early references concerning the ‘Perth Cricket Club’ are sparse, but its formation contradicted the colony’s social structure at the time. It was the first occasion members of the labouring class promoted a sport within the colony, and as such, took the initiative away from the gentry. However, like in England and the eastern colonies the gentry and the aspiring
middle class eventually organised and administered the game owing to wealth and social standing giving them the opportunity to do so.

What little evidence there is suggests the cricket club was composed of young members from the labouring class, who met every Saturday afternoon at the ‘Flats’ (where the Narrows Bridge is now). Their first game was played against Guildford on the eve of Easter 1839, which Perth won by ‘forty-odd runs’. Reports suggest the standard of play was poor, although two ‘gentlemen’ from Kent played ‘an excellent game, both in bowling and batting’. A return fixture was arranged for late April 1839, but the press did not comment on the game nor was the cricket club mentioned again in the newspaper or diaries. However, as a postscript to this game the *Perth Gazette* optimistically mentioned the possibility of Governor John Hutt granting ‘a suitable piece of ground’ for the purpose of playing cricket. It would be another fifty years before a governor granted the cricket fraternity a piece of land on which to play the game.

At this juncture, enthusiasm for the game diminished for several years until May 1846. There is no evidence to suggest why enthusiasm waned for the game, but as early as August 1840, the *Perth Gazette* reported a ‘decline in playing and attending’ a game ‘once carried on with great spirit’. However, in May 1846, a team of artisans and labourers (under the name of the ‘tradesmen’) challenged a newly formed team of ‘gentlemen’ (under the name of ‘The Perth Club’)† with the intention of encouraging ‘the establishment of one or more regular clubs’. Evidence confirms once the gentry had established a cricket club officers and men from the 51st Regiment organised a cricket team also, and by June 1846, the colony was providing three eleven-a-side teams. Gerald de Courcy Lefroy played cricket for the ‘gentlemen’ and several entries in his journal refer to these early games between the three teams. However, nothing is mentioned in his journal regarding either the playing personnel or the state of the wicket.

† The Perth Club had no previous connections with the earlier club of 1839.
All three teams reflected the colony’s social and economic structure, as for example, the tradesmen’s team consisted of bricklayers, blacksmiths, labourers, a wheelwright and a shepherd. The team included some of the colony’s leading players at that time, notably Charles King, William R. Steele, Richard Lennard, and the brothers Aaron and Edmund King. The ‘gentlemen’s’ team, however, reflected the economic and social status of the colony’s gentry and merchant class, and included such prominent luminaries as Herbert Symmons, Treverton Charles Sholl, and McBride Brown. Herbert Symmons’ father, Charles, was Protector of the Natives in the colony; Charles Treverton Sholl was a steward at the Perth races and Secretary of the W.A. Mining Company; and McBride Brown was the son of the prominent landowner and Colonial Secretary Peter N. Brown.  

Most games were arranged to coincide with public holidays, anniversary days, or royal birthdays and admission was free owing to nominal subscriptions or club membership fees. Like horseracing events, the colony’s entrepreneurs took advantage of these occasions and food stalls and publicans’ booths were commonplace at all cricket matches. However, one major and persistent problem which confronted the game was the condition of the wickets. Too much sand in the soil exacerbated by wet conditions in the winter and dry weather in the summer produced chronic problems with the playing surface. Until 1848, horseracing and cricket shared the ‘Flats’, a situation that only served to compound the problem. For example, in May 1846, an inferior wicket was the cause of thirteen ‘ducks’ in a game between the tradesmen and the military. After 1848, horseracing moved to ‘Ascot’, but problems with the wickets in Perth continued well into the second half of the century.

Even though horseracing achieved popular blessing, cricket was the first game to achieve a better social understanding of each representative class, which allowed a process of social blending to occur. Unlike horseracing, where social and economic demarcation lines existed, such divisions did not exist in cricket. The mixing of all classes allowed cricket to flourish and become popular. Evidence indicates how social
blending took place on and off the field of play when the colony’s anniversary day celebrations in June 1846 were ruined by persistent rain. Both the tradesmen and the military salvaged the occasion by staging a cricket match, after which, both teams ‘regaled themselves’ at Henry Laroche Cole’s ‘United Services Tavern’ in Perth.52

At first, betting on cricket was focused on single-and double-wicket games between members of the gentry. The first of these games to be reported was played in April 1839 when Lionel Samson and John Leake, both merchants and landowners, played a single-wicket game with Samson beating Leake by one run.53 Single-and-double wicket games became a popular side attraction owing to the simplicity of arranging and playing a game before an eleven-a-side game, and the element of one-to-one combat which, it was claimed, appealed to the British instinct.54 Once the colony had three cricket teams’ challenges of up to fifty pounds sterling were offered by ‘eleven men resident in Perth’ against ‘any eleven in the colony’.55

As in England, any sport played on the Sabbath was frowned upon and although religious authority at Swan River did not interfere with the increasing trend of playing or supporting sport, participants were aware that the Sabbath was sacrosanct. At Swan River, the clergy was not numerous enough to dominate society nor did they have the social status that was prominent in the mother country. They came to Swan River in the belief that they were helping to promote a Christian society, but as the nineteenth century progressed the clergy became disillusioned owing to a growing awareness that they did not represent the beliefs and values of most colonists.56 However, the leading newspaper of the day (Perth Gazette) was quick to report any misgivings on the Sabbath. A case in point took place on Easter weekend in April 1839 after the newspaper wrongly accused the Perth Cricket Club of playing on a holy day. William Glover, the club’s secretary, explained that the game was played on ‘Easter Eve’ and not on Good Friday as the press suggested.57

Between the years 1835 and 1850 cricket attracted majority support and became an influential factor in establishing social understanding and a better appreciation of an
individual’s social role in the colony. However, during the second half of the nineteenth century the colony was to witness significant changes in the game, notably the inaugural Fremantle-Perth fixtures. This was followed by intra colonial games with Bunbury and teams from the northern and eastern regions of the colony; games against crew members of visiting ships; the entertaining and successful aboriginal team from New Norcia; the formation of an association; and the construction of a cricket ground in east Perth.

SAILING.

Influenced by English traditions and activities in the eastern colonies, sailing on Melville Waters was another favourite pastime enjoyed by the gentry. The waters along the Swan and Canning Rivers were calm enough to encourage colonists to sail against the backdrop of Perth’s shoreline and the gentle breeze of the ‘Fremantle Doctor’. As early as February 1830, Jane Eliza Currie and her husband went sailing to the mouth of the Canning River. The pleasures associated with sailing eventually saw the introduction of the regatta on Perth’s Melville Waters.

The colony’s inaugural regatta was introduced into the anniversary celebrations on Wednesday 2nd June 1841. The event was organised by prominent members of colonial society including Peter Brown, Francis Lochee, Alfred Hillman, and William Horatio Sholl. Brown was Colonial Secretary from 1829 to 1846; Lochee was a farmer, lawyer and banker, who became editor of the Inquirer; Hillman was a surveyor; and Sholl was a doctor. The regatta was a window of opportunity for colonists who owned a boat to demonstrate their distinctive economic and social position to a watching colony. Consequently, the intricate skills associated with yachting found favour with the well to do. On the other hand, the labouring class preferred and participated in whale boat racing and rowing owing to their speed and physical endeavor, which generated a great deal of excitement close to the finish line. Given such a scenario, the programme of events at the regatta encouraged gambling. Evidence illustrates two good examples of this taking place on the second day of the 1843 regatta between two whale
boat crews‡ and an individual sailing event between Richard Nash, who beat William Samson ‘easily’.61

Originally, the Perth regatta was part of the colony’s two day anniversary celebrations held in conjunction with race meetings. But by 1843, the growing popularity of regattas ensured the event became a separate entity in the colony’s sporting calendar.62 In Fremantle, anniversary regattas was usually arranged to coincide with horseracing, but in April 1843, Fremantle saw the opportunity to accommodate colonists who wished to observe both sports. On Easter Monday, for instance, the Fremantle regatta commenced at 9-00am and horseracing started at 1-00pm.63 The climate played an influential part in the organisation and procedure of regattas, as for example, poor weather postponed the inaugural regatta until the following day. Such adverse weather conditions, however, would later influence future decisions to move the Perth regatta to the warmer months of February and March, but Fremantle and her regattas remained a central feature of the colony’s anniversary day celebrations in June.64

The male labouring class did not have the opportunity to own a race horse, indulge in organised hunting and trotting, or sail in small boats on colonial waters owing to their economic and social position in the colony. Tied to legislation (1842 Master and Servants Act) and governed by a social class not too dissimilar from England’s aristocracy, cricket and swimming (bathing) were the only two outdoor activities offered to them. Consequently, the labouring class turned their attentions to the public house and ‘old English games’.

PUBLIC HOUSES AND ‘OLD ENGLISH GAMES’.

The early pub or tavern in the Australian outback was reminiscent of ‘Old English’ pubs where traditional impromptu activities such as skittles, footraces, putting-the-stone, high-leap, billiards, card games and gambling were commonplace. The pub or tavern was the working class equivalent of a banqueting hall or ballroom,

‡ As early as April 1837, the *Perth Gazette* (22/4/1837) reported that the Perth (Carnac) and Fremantle whaling companies were competing against each other for wagers.
and quite often it was the only building in the colony with room enough to cater for large groups of people. A good example of this was William Leeder’s large rooms at the ‘Freemasons Hotel’, in Perth. True, public houses encouraged gambling and the incentive of the publican-entrepreneur was to procure profit from liquor sales, but they were a meeting place for a variety of activities that fulfilled a vital social function and contributed to a sense of place and belonging within the young colony’s community.

Publicans in Perth and Fremantle figured prominently in the colony’s early history of sport and other leisure time activities. The hotels and public houses encouraged a variety of entertainment, and some hoteliers such as William Leeder and Henry Cole were closely connected to the turf, and gave cover to early ‘bookies’. Other notable publicans included Robert Thomson, William Higgins, W. H. Smithers and Anthony Curtis. Thomson owned ‘The Stirling Arms’, which was strategically placed on the corner of High Street and Packenham Street in Fremantle (close to where the harbour, the railway station and the Esplanade are now). Thomson’s reputation for good meals and accommodation was well known; his public house was described by one visitor in 1832, as ‘an excellent inn…at which the comforts were and the charges moderate’. Higgins received a publican’s licence for the ‘Leyson Arms’ at Bull Creek and ‘advertised that there was good entertainment there’; Smithers was a wine merchant who ran the ‘Albion Hotel’ and later the ‘Royal Hotel and Billiard Rooms’ at Fremantle. Anthony Curtis accumulated a great deal of wealth owing to liquor sales and economic diversification. He owned the ‘Stag’s Head Inn’ as well as administering a store and butchering business in Fremantle. Curtis advertised to lease his inn for five years with a promise to the incumbent that an annual profit of five-hundred pounds was achievable, which was a considerable sum of money at the time. Curtis was an influential player in colonial society during the 1830s and 1840s. Already a landowner, he purchased the schooner *Fanny* and utilised the profits from trading between Fremantle and Albany to purchase *Lady Stirling* and *Vixen* for overseas trade with Ceylon (Sri Lanka). He also dabbled in whaling and established a brewery in
Women played a significant part in the history of public houses also. There is evidence to suggest Jane Barrow was probably the first woman to acquire a licence to sell liquor at the ‘Wheat-Sheaf Tavern’ in Perth’s Murray Street in January 1833. However, Mrs. Hall owned the ‘Perth Hotel’ and was fined a total of twenty pounds and thirty-two shillings costs for selling spirits without a license in February 1839. After William Leeder died in 1845, his wife, Hannah Emily took over the running of the ‘Freemasons Hotel’ until she migrated back to England in 1850.

**FAIRS AND WAKES.**

Fairs were commonplace in England and always accompanied wakes (the anniversary of the dedication of the church). In England, they consisted of banquets, blood sports (which did not exist at Swan River), comical contests, and races of all kinds to suit the young and the fit. Some fairs, like London’s St. Bartholomew’s Fair, were organised purely for pleasure and entertainment whilst others accommodated markets, and statute fairs were organised to hire agricultural labour. Fairs belonged to the festive life of European culture transferred to the eastern colonies after 1788, and later to Swan River in 1829.

Arranged by the gentry, the Swan River fair primarily encouraged social blending and ethnic affiliation between the aborigine and the white colonial during the formative days of reconciling frontier turbulence. The fair was incorporated into the colony’s social calendar and included agricultural and horticultural shows, horse race meetings, regattas as well as anniversary holidays. They became an important part of colonial life that reflected a sense of belonging and loyalty to a community, not too dissimilar to modern day country fairs in outback Australia. The major attraction of the fair included publicans’ booths, food stalls and ‘Old English games’, especially running after pigs with greased tails, climbing a greased pole to retrieve a hat, wheeling a barrow blindfolded, foot-racing and spearing loaves.

Wakes in England usually started on a Monday and lasted for the best part of a
week, but owing to the urgency of settlement and work commitments the ‘wake’ at Swan River was considered time consuming and therefore did not have the same impact as in England. Instead, public holidays were allowed each year to give some respite from the toil of every day working life. These holidays included Christmas Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Whit-Monday, King’s birthday, Queen’s birthday, Battle of Waterloo on June 18th, Battle of Trafalgar Day on 21st October, Foundation (anniversary) Day on June 2nd and the Restoration of Charles II (not observed after 1833).73

THE PIANO AND CARD GAMES.

As in England and the eastern colonies, the piano was an important piece of cultural baggage (and probably the heaviest) to be transported to Swan River. A young Emma Purkis, who arrived on the *Egyptian* in February 1830, noted that fellow passengers, after landing on the windswept beaches between North Fremantle and Cottesloe, ‘managed to have some pleasure as they had a piano’.74

The piano was symbolically elitist and early references suggest it reflected the social conventions of the time. For example, George Moore noted in his diary that several guests were cordially entertained by ‘some airs sweetly played on the pianoforte by Mrs. McDermott’ at George Leake’s home.75 In the 1840s, Gerald de Courcy Lefroy noted how the piano often accompanied after dinner pleasantries at the households of William Knight, Samuel Burgess, George Webb and John Septimus Roe.76 On another occasion, Lefroy was entertained at Bartholomew Vigors’ house by John Tomkinson, who not only sang whilst playing the piano, but was proficient at playing the guitar too.77 There are no reliable records to suggest pianos were installed in the colony’s public houses. For the labouring personnel the fiddle, pipe or drums were more appropriate musical instruments of pleasure, and similar to the piano, these instruments defined their position in the social context of colonial life at Swan River.

Often played by the gentry together with their guests and regularly played by the labouring classes either at home or in the public house, card games were a popular
attraction with all the classes. Card games passed the time of day or evening and like sport often encouraged gambling. In 1832, for example, Jane Eliza Currie and her husband, Captain Mark Currie, played cards at the governor’s ball in Perth. Currie noted in her diary that by the early evening both were losing heavily until they gained their ‘revenge’. For Jane Currie, who was a member of the elite, and women like her, playing cards identified their position in the social context of colonial society and simultaneously displayed their husband’s social importance too.

PICNICS, DINNERS AND BALLS.

The beaches and the Swan and Canning rivers together with the west Australian climate gave the gentry ample opportunity to enjoy picnics. Jane Currie, for instance, attended picnics with her husband at Pt. Heathcote in October 1830 and at Guildford in March 1831.

Early reports suggest dinners were arranged to celebrate Christmas, royal birthdays, or important work completed by the military. For example, Jane Currie and thirty other colonists were entertained to ‘a grand dinner to the Governor & by officers of Sulpher’ in July 1829. On Christmas Day 1829, she dined with guests and observed that Governor Stirling ‘appeared for the first time in full dress’. King William IV’s sixty-eighth birthday was celebrated at William Leeder’s ‘Freemasons Hotel’ on 21st August 1833, and on 27th September 1833, a dinner was given for the impending departure to England of Captain Frederick Chidley Irwin (a similar occasion greeted his return in 1837).

Balls were another example of the English aristocracy and were popular in the eastern colonies and at Swan River too. The first Swan River anniversary ball was held at Government House on 4th June 1830. Balls were mostly organised by prominent members of the gentry, who included Surveyor-General John Septimus Roe; Peter Brown, the Colonial Secretary; William H. Drake, who became Deputy Assistant Commissary General; and the explorer Edward Spofforth, who was the father of Frederick Spofforth the ‘Demon’ bowler and architect of Australia’s Ashes victory in
More often than not, the venues for these occasions were at Government House or the large rooms at William Leeder’s ‘Freemasons Hotel’ in Perth.

‘Bachelor’ balls were popular, but owing to a preponderance of men and a chronic shortage of women evidence gleaned from Benjamin Franklin Helpman’s diaries suggest most colonial balls were nothing but ‘bachelor’, and the prospects for most suitors were minimal and competitive to say the least. For instance, in his diary of November 1837, eight years after colonisation, ‘only five ladies, all married’ attended a ball given onshore for the officers of Beagle. Some balls were privately arranged, as for example, on Boxing Day 1845, de Courcy Lefroy stayed ‘until near daylight’ at a ball given by John Septimus Roe and his wife. Invitations to parties were conventional also; as for example, Lefroy was invited to attend a christening party in October 1844, to celebrate the birth of Maria Burgess. In December 1851, Lefroy was invited to Mrs Knight’s ‘grand party’ on completion of her new house.

For the gentry, the significance behind picnics, dinners, and balls not only defined their social and economic position in colonial society, but simultaneously reflected the prevailing social mores at Swan River. As in other colonial societies throughout the British Empire these people were united by friendship, intimate social contacts and marriage, which cemented the traditions of the period and the conduct of nearly all colonists.

There is no recorded evidence to suggest the labouring personnel indulged in picnics or dinners. Such occasions appeared to be exclusively elitist, but in June 1838, the inaugural tradesman’s ball ensured this particular activity crossed over from one class to another and thus created a piece of labouring class history in the colony. The tradesmen’s ball was celebrated with the gentry, who included Governor Stirling, and it was the first social step towards colonial blending beyond sport. The Perth Gazette, clearly aware of the importance and significance of the occasion, stated:

The correct manner in which the proceedings of this rising body were conducted must naturally produce a good moral influence, and tend to unite our little community in those bonds of
friendship and union which eventually will prove our best and strongest support. 89

THEATRE.

The colony’s first theatre production, Love a la Militaire, took place on Tuesday 9th July 1839 at ‘Leeder’s Hotel’ ten years after the colony was first settled. The play was organised by William Horatio Sholl and James Purkis, and the production was ‘principally (for) the friends of the gentlemen and ladies who favoured (them) with this amusing novelty’, suggesting social demarcation lines were still apparent. 90 George Moore, perhaps ironically, noted in his diary that ‘civilisation’ at Swan River had advanced ‘to such a pitch…, as to have private theatricals’. 91 The exclusive audience at the production of Love a la Militaire allowed Mrs. Turner, Mrs. Watson and Emma Purkis to participate in the production, but recriminations followed. 92 In October 1839, after further performances in September, a member of the church opposed women performing on the stage. A letter published in the Perth Gazette from Henry Trigg, a Congregational lay preacher, objected to the growing popularity of the theatre:

…, the baneful effects theatricals have on the young and inexperienced mind, and the gross immorality of many ‘stars’ in the profession… and let me ask what is to be found there?…charybdis of dissipation; a sink of infamy; the acme of licentiousness; the mart of all crime. 93

Although the Perth Gazette previously supported and encouraged the theatre company, the editor refused to take sides. 94 However, the editor did publish a letter from an anonymous ‘person’ on 2nd November 1839, who defended the performances and ‘was materially instrumental in the late private theatricals in Perth’. A week later, another letter from ‘A Wesleyan Methodist’ was published, agreeing with Trigg’s point of view. 95 Such an attack on today’s theatre companies would attract curiosity and increase sales overnight at the ticket office, but in early nineteenth-century Swan River Victorian attitudes towards women performing upon the stage were frowned upon. Consequently, there are no records of women performing upon the colonial stage until
the late 1860s, nor are there records of any further theatrical performances until early 1843. This interval may be attributed to colonists leaving the colony rather than protestations from the church, because thereafter, male actors took on the role of female characters.

In England, the negative and class ridden perceptions regarding the theatre had their origins in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century before significant attempts were made by David Garrick§ and other actors to reform and professionalise the theatre. Previously, the Puritans had already condemned the theatre as threats to godly order and, as a result, closed the playhouses down.\textsuperscript{96} However, the Theatre Regulation Act (1843) deregulated the theatre from the control of the few and made licences available to unlimited numbers of small and large scale entrepreneurial managers. The act created greater mobility of labour, a more economically competitive market place, and wider employment opportunities, especially for the working class performer. But, middle-class audiences preferred to see their own class perform rather than watch working-class actresses, because they had style, grace and refinement and they sounded and looked good. The working-class actress was considered clumsy, hideous and without ability. However, for those who did meet the visual criteria they were still handicapped by accents, rural dialects and faulty grammar.\textsuperscript{97}

Attitudes towards working-class actresses categorised them as Madonna’s or whores owing to their social status and working on less prestigious productions with low wages. Most theatres in Britain’s major cities were in close proximity to areas associated with prostitution. Consequently, open streetwalking from any type of actress, whether middle or working class meant instant dismissal without references or

\begin{footnotesize}
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\footnote{Garrick was an actor, playwright, theatre manager and producer whose reformation of the theatre in eighteenth century England included the behaviour of audiences, acting style, theatrical productions, set design and costumes. The Garrick Theatre in London was named after him.}
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recommendations. The possibility of monetary gains and marriageability for working-class actresses outweighed the disadvantages the stage shared with most other occupations. Although the risks were high, the ill-paid precarious living the stage afforded was not necessarily worse than a lifetime of mill, factory, sweated or domestic labour.

At Swan River, the format of early theatre differed from present day offerings where, more often than not, one play is offered. During the nineteenth-century two or possibly three plays were performed in one night; an overture introduced each play; and several pieces of incidental music and singing entertained audiences between each act. This was a considerable achievement owing to some actors residing outside the metropolitan area, which limited rehearsals to one night a week. Furthermore, the problem of producing plays, furnishing costumes and painting scenery was significant given the sparse material available.

CONCERTS.

In the long-term, the concert reasserted values associated with community and patronage. In the short-term, however, social and economic demarcation lines continued to exist in mid-1840s Swan River. Like theatrical productions, early references imply the first concert in May 1845 was exclusive and organised by several members of the gentry and their families to raise funds for the purchase of an organ for St. George’s Church in Perth. The choir included Charles Symmons, the colonial Protector of the Natives; the barrister John Schoales; George Webb, a clerk to the Commissariat Department; and the landowner and merchant Robert Habgood.

The concert owed much of its success to the input of a number of ladies, who included Mrs. Joanna Symmons, the wife of Charles; Mrs. Mary Wittenoon, the wife of John Burdett Wittenoom, the Anglican clergyman; Mary Ann Leake, who was the wife
of George Leake, the merchant; and Mrs. Eliza Maycock nee Trigg, the daughter of Henry Trigg, the Congregational lay preacher, who obviously thought the concert and its content was spiritually more uplifting than the theatre. The orchestra included John Wittenoom’s sons, Frederick and Charles; the school teacher Mrs. Torrens; William Nairn’s daughter, Charlotte; and Henry Trigg’s other daughter, Amelia Trigg.¹⁰¹

The success of the first concert encouraged the foundation of the Perth Concert Society in October 1845.¹⁰² Little is known of the music enjoyed by the labouring classes, but whether in the home or public house the popular music of the time was played on the pipe, drum or flute. However, George Moore noted in his diary that a farm labourer delighted his audience to the strains of ‘Ye Banks and Braes’ on his clarinet, an instrument not heard before in the colony.¹⁰³

Both the colonial theatre and concert owed much of their success to people whose hobby was acting and playing musical instruments. Unlike the theatre and concert in Britain and the eastern colonies there was no financial contracts or rental costs, nor theatrical entrepreneurs, so admission to both modes of entertainment was free. Apart from performances to obtain monies for charities, any financial inducements came from subscriptions or donations to defray the costs associated with production.

NEWSPAPERS, MAIL, AND BOOK SOCIETIES.

The newspaper was another British institution introduced into Swan River as early as April 1830 and, by comparison with other Australian colonies, journalism surprisingly established itself more rapidly in Perth than elsewhere.¹⁰⁴ Evidence suggests early editions of newspapers were limited regarding news concerning Swan River and abroad. The local newspaper was more in keeping with advertising, official notices and miscellaneous information rather than news. Consequently, most information came from British or eastern colonial newspapers delivered by sea, and
were considered important reciprocating transmission lines with the outside world. The colonial newspaper was an integral and important source of information, and as sport and the arts progressed they played a significant role in advertising and reporting on events. The first newspaper to be published at Swan River was the hand-written *Fremantle Journal and General Advertiser* on 27th February 1830. The first edition of the *Perth Gazette and West Australian Journal* was printed on 5th January 1833.

By the mid-1840s, newspapers took the opportunity to include a variety of periodicals from the latest works of English writers. In April 1844, for example, the *Perth Gazette* printed extracts from Charles Dickens’ *Martin Chuzzlewit*. Four years later, the *Inquirer* serialised *Dombey and Son* ‘for those who may not have had the opportunity of perusing the new work by Dickens’. They also informed readers of social events that included debating societies and political and historical lectures. Poems from readers were often printed in the press and on several occasions both the *Perth Gazette* and the *Inquirer* informed budding astronomers of impending eclipses of the sun and the arrival of comets over the skies. However, although the newspaper was considered an important avenue of communication in these early days of settlement, colonists eagerly anticipated the mail.

Early references suggest the mail was eagerly anticipated by all colonists, who received a wide and diverse correspondence from relatives and friends in Britain and the eastern colonies. Receiving correspondence was an essential and important form of communication within the colony and another significant reciprocating transmission line between the Australian colonies and Britain. For example, George Moore was surprised and highly delighted at receiving letters and newspapers from his father in early December 1832. A few days later, on Christmas Day 1832, Moore received information that seven letters and twenty-seven newspapers were awaiting his
collection on board a ship from Sydney, remarking in his diary that it was a ‘Christmas-box indeed’. However, the occasional letter from ‘home’ included solemn news. For example, on Christmas Day 1832 (the temperature was 103 degrees) William Shaw and his family sat down to roast kid and plum pudding. At which point they received news that mail had arrived from Sydney. Eliza Shaw, the daughter of William, noted in her diary:

‘So intent were we in opening our mail…that the black seal did not attract our attention; all our anxiety being to learn its contents, but melancholy indeed they were…’

Eliza Shaw, whose entries in her diaries tell us how much about colonial life and how much she missed her mother and sisters, was informed of her mother’s death:

‘It is odd that my sisters Caroline and Sophie did not write to me…I don’t know what they will do without her, but I hope they will now marry and settle comfortably…’

What is patently obvious after reading letters and diaries from the nineteenth century was the slow movement of time compared with the technological age of the twenty-first century. This was further compounded owing to some settlers living outside Perth and travelling up to the capital to collect their mail. Consequently, it took a long time for the recipient to receive a letter and then reply to it.

Prior to the gold-rush period of the 1890s, Swan River’s small and scattered population made book publishing economically precarious. Moreover, there were no booksellers in the colony until the early 1840s and, as a result, the supply of reading material was limited. The colony’s first book club was organised by Lady Ellen Stirling and Matilda Roe in 1830, to ‘ease the colony’s cultural needs’. In July 1833, cultural lines with Britain continued owing to the *Perth Gazette* introducing the ‘Perth and Fremantle Book Society’ (later the ‘West Australian Book Society’) to facilitate the distribution of books as they arrived in the colony. This allowed ‘the most approved
works of the mother country’ could be enjoyed by all colonists.\textsuperscript{114} Evidence suggests book auctions and book sales were popular although infrequent, but they did meet the needs of the colony’s readers during the 1830s and 1840s. By July 1843, the merchant and bookseller F. Mangle and Co. (Ellen Stirling’s brother) was advertising a ‘large selection of useful and amusing books’ in the \textit{Inquirer}.\textsuperscript{115}

**DRINKING.**

A decision was made to grant three liquor licences in Perth and four in Fremantle after the colony was barely six months old.\textsuperscript{116} By 1833, licensees were importing liquor from abroad, as for example, William Lamb was selling strong Scottish ale, stout, brandy rum, port, Madeira, sherry, claret and tobacco at his store in Fremantle.\textsuperscript{117}

Culturally, wine was a drink consumed at home by the gentry whilst entertaining friends. On the other hand, the labouring man drank in the pubs, produced homemade beer or dabbled in ‘poteen’ (a drink made from potatoes, which drunk in large quantities caused irreparable damage to the mouth and liver). In contrast to the gentry’s drinking habits, consuming alcohol offered the labouring class the rough and noisy camaraderie associated with public houses and inns. For them, it was a way of escaping the insecurity, loneliness and the monotony of colonial life.

The climate complemented drinking and wine making, and by the late 1830s, the production of wine took off. Tangible records suggest wine making in the Swan and Canning districts was showing signs of encouragement, and by January 1838, the \textit{Perth Gazette} reported grapes growing on the vine were sufficient in numbers to produce a colonial wine.\textsuperscript{118} There is further evidence to suggest that by 1844 Swan River’s wine industry was exhibiting promising potential. Thomas Brown, for instance, wrote to his father-in-law in England and confirmed Swan River was an excellent vine growing
colony with many people ‘turning their attention to it’. 119 Two years later, Eliza Brown informed her father-in-law that the ‘vineyard is going on well’. 120

However, during the colony’s early wine producing years problems accrued within the industry owing to the high cost of production and competition from the sale of brandy. As a result, wine producers discreetly used spirits to fortify their wines, an illegal practice that circumnavigated British liquor regulations until Governor John Hutt reinforced the law in 1842. Governor Hutt’s argument was twofold; he was anxious to control the indiscriminate manufacture of illegal spirits and the drinking of ‘poteen’. William Shaw, who was producing good wines on his Belvoir estate, protested and voiced his concerns regarding an act which was harmful to the production of wines and the export market. But Governor Hutt was adamant and decreed that until such productions guaranteed an exportable investment he did not consider himself entitled to apply to the British government to rescind the law prohibiting distillation. 121

The problems associated with drinking were manifold and drunken behaviour amongst the labouring classes deteriorated to such an extent in February 1833 that the Agricultural Society, in conjunction with the Perth Gazette, encouraged its members to refrain from purchasing spirits for their labourers until after the harvest. 122 But the hot summer months associated with the climate induced many to indulge in drinking. In response to this problem the colony’s first Temperance Society was established in January 1838. 123 Founded by the colony’s administrators, which included George Moore as its first secretary, the society’s aim was to alleviate the problems associated with drinking by explaining the ‘injurious effects resulting to the human frame from the habitual use of ardent spirits’. 124 In the eastern colonies, governors experienced similar problems in Sydney, Hobart and Adelaide, and encouraged the formation of Temperance Societies.
After Governor Hutt had arrived in the colony in 1839, he was duly aware of the problem and became patron of the Temperance Society a few months later.\textsuperscript{125} However, during the second half of the century, drinking and gambling were considered obstacles to disorder and efficient labour. Therefore, owing to an acute rise in drinking the Courts of Petty Session, conscious of the problems associated with alcohol, was kept busy dealing with drunkenness.

**SWIMMING (BATHING).**

The summer temperatures produced long, hot days and nights, and the unaccustomed heat and glare was intensified by the English style of clothing worn by colonists. For example, the labouring personnel wore coarse slop clothing; women wore several layers of garments; and the dress and waist coats and heavy boots the gentry wore would have been uncomfortable. Consequently, swimming or bathing became a popular and rational activity for a number of colonists.

There was no public baths during this period and the concept of constructing a swimming pool, so much a part of modern day Australia, was many years away. Hence bathing was confined to the colony’s rivers and beaches for men; and the aid of a sea-bathing house\textsuperscript{**} gave women the privacy they needed for bathing in the sea. The sea-bathing machine assisted women who belonged to the well to do, however, there is no evidence to suggest labouring class women did or did not enter the colony’s seas or rivers and, as a result, they probably bathed at home. Consequently, bathing as opposed to swimming was more in keeping with hygiene. Technically, the method of swimming employed by colonists lacked style and grace, and was considered cumbersome compared to modern day swimming with letters to the press pointing out several basic

\textsuperscript{**} A sea-bathing house was small covered wagon on wheels, which was rolled down to the water’s edge. It gave women the privacy needed to change into a costume before entering the water.
errors in technique amongst swimmers.\textsuperscript{126}

The elite indulged in bathing; as for example, in December 1829, Jane Eliza Currie experienced her ‘first bathe in the bay’.\textsuperscript{127} In 1836, Lady Stirling expressed her desire to undergo the ‘benefits of sea bathing’ after Daniel Scott, the Harbour Master at Fremantle, erected a sea-bathing machine.\textsuperscript{128} The type of costume worn by women was similar to a smock, but for most men naked bathing was considered more enjoyable and \textit{risqué}.

For the labouring man, naked bathing during the summer months was a welcome relief from the day’s toil and the clothes they wore. The beaches were empty and the Swan River was readily accessible to all colonists who wished to swim or bathe. At this juncture, the social inconvenience associated with naked bathing and impropriety was not an issue, but once the colony’s population started to increase during the second half of the nineteenth century the problem became a matter for concern. However, naked bathing was the least of the colony’s problems owing to the introduction of convicts in June 1850, which caused a lasting social impression on the colony for many years to come.

Upon his arrival in 1848, Governor Charles Fitzgerald, concerned that no regular labour force existed to work the land and accelerate public works programmes, petitioned Earl Grey in London to send convicts to the colony.\textsuperscript{129} This decision appeased the landowners who needed labour, but saddened many. The \textit{Perth Gazette’s} editorial immediately denounced the decision by informing its readers that ‘the inhabitants of Western Australia have suicidally subjected themselves and their children to the contamination and infamy inseparable from a penal settlement’.\textsuperscript{130} Ironically, the \textit{Scindian} arrived with its first batch of convicts on 1\textsuperscript{st} June 1850, the twenty-first anniversary of the foundation of the colony. The \textit{Perth Gazette} reported
this ‘curious coincidence’ as the commencement of a ‘new order’.¹³¹

Like in the eastern colonies, colonists at Swan River attempted to replicate all that was good about England and its supporting institutions. Manners and habits were certainly transferred, and so too was social and economic privilege, which continued to reinforce the social pyramid. However, unlike the eastern colonies, there was a lack of government finance, too few migrants, a small and scattered population, and no skilled labour, or convicts to build an economic infrastructure. Similar to the eastern colonies, settlement delayed the establishment of organised sport and other leisure time activities, but once the early days of settlement were negotiated, the gentry organised balls and picnics, entertained their peers, arranged the ‘hunt’ and horseracing events as well as establishing the theatre and concert.

Horseracing was a further means of displaying the gentry’s social station by racing their thoroughbreds for wagers, and cricket played its nostalgic part at Swan River and in the eastern colonies. The gentry introduced the ‘Yorkshire Club’ and a hunt club, replicating those exclusive clubs in England and the eastern colonies, which served to reinforce their gentility and position in colonial life. However, like the eastern colonies in their formative years, there were few horses of quality at Swan River.

Similar to the eastern colonies, sport and the ethos of muscular Christianity, and its emphasis on character building was transmitted to Swan River. However, unlike the eastern colonies the geographical position of the colony isolated any means of inter-colonial competition. Furthermore, like in the eastern colonies women did not play sport, but they did participate in theatrics and concerts. However, in the eastern colonies women were readily accepted on the stage more so than at Swan River. As in all Australian colonies, apart from early involvement in foot-racing and spearing loaves aboriginal participation was negligible. Similar to the east, bathing was a pleasurable
pastime, especially amongst the labouring classes. Throughout the Australian colonies
the labouring class courted traditional pub games, notably quoits and skittles, played
cards and cricket, supported horseracing, and participated in cultural games on those
days designated as official holidays. The public house or inn was an important pathway
for entertaining the labouring class, and played a significant role in giving them a sense
of identity and belonging, and simultaneously encourage them to participate in local
sporting events.

By 1850 then, there was a strong case to be argued that the Swan River Colony
had economically underachieved. In little more than twenty years the population hardly
increased compared to South Australia. In absolute terms, economic activity was still
low owing to the colony’s heavy dependence on crown financial support and a deficit in
balance of trade. During these years, a handful of pioneers negotiated periods of famine
and a heavy dependence on shipping from the eastern colonies and Britain. However,
by the time the first convicts arrived some economic progress was made. Wool, timber,
sandalwood, whale products and livestock were exported to England and elsewhere,
and the colony was self-sufficient in meat, wheat and fresh water.
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CHAPTER THREE

HORSERACING, CRICKET AND REGATTAS IN THE 1850s.

By 1850, the Swan River Colony was replicating traditional British sports, notably horseracing, hunting, cricket, regattas and recreational games associated with public houses and fairs. Most of these activities continued to flourish in the colony, whilst others, such as hunting adjusted to the new environment and fauna. The population increased to 5886 by late 1850, a figure which multiplied to 15346 by 1860 owing to the introduction of convicts.¹ By 1850, Swan River was still administered by a select group of colonists who first settled the colony, and together with a rising merchant and professional class* eventually controlled all sport and played a significant part in promoting the arts.

A lack of manual and skilled labour and a campaign of support by the landed gentry saw the introduction of convicts into the colony from 1850 until 1868. Seen as a cheap and expendable supply of labour their presence was overwhelming, especially in Fremantle. Ironically, the introduction of convicts was instrumental in establishing a successful cricket team from employees of the Fremantle prison system. At first, it was thought the presence of convicts would stimulant an economic recovery, but the majority of convicts were unskilled and, as a result of this few important projects were completed. However, the opening up of pastoral land to the east and south of Perth saw many settlers and convicts (ticket-of-leave men) move to these areas.

¹Strictly speaking, there was no middle class at Swan River during the first half of the nineteenth century. There was a commercial and professional group of colonists who aspired to the status of middle class in the second half of the century, but the pious teachings of the British middle class was non-existent at Swan River owing to an ineffectual church. Unlike their British counterparts, who did not visit the races or gamble, the Swan River merchant and professional class were actively involved in all sport and recreational activities.
HORSE RACING.

As in previous years horseracing continued to attract wide support from colonists who owned and raced horses, attended race meetings, or individuals who gambled on the outcome of a race. To attract further colonial participation a number of diverse races were offered for those who wished to race a horse, which included events for thoroughbreds and colonial bred horses for the gentry, and the Galloway and hack (old horse) races for the small farmer or members of the labouring class. However, although Swan River race meetings welcomed participants from all levels of colonial society, the control and the rewards associated with the sport was firmly held in the hands of the gentry.

By 1850, the gentry continued to administer, supervise and steer their sport through a series of race meetings and simultaneously introduce plates, cups and purses. For them, breeding and exporting horses was an important economic avenue, and like the Turf Club in the eastern colonies, the military and the colonial gentry took significant steps towards consolidating their control of the sport by establishing the Western Australian Turf Club.

The Western Australian Turf Club was modelled on the same lines as the Jockey Club in England (1756) and the Australian Jockey Club (1842), and became the most influential and significant event regarding the administration of horseracing and fostering thoroughbred breeding at Swan River. The Turf Club was proposed by Brevet Major G. M. Reeves† who, on 22nd October 1852, cordially invited a select group of landowners and horse breeders to administer the club.² They included William Ashford Sandford; George Eliot; Samuel Pole Phillips; Samuel Burges; Charles Symmons; William John Clifton and Anthony O’Grady Lefroy. Sandford was the Colonial Secretary and an architect; Eliot was the Resident Magistrate of Bunbury, who married Louisa Clifton, the daughter of Marshall Clifton, a farmer and J.P.; Phillips was a pastoralist; Burges was a farmer and pastoralist; Symmons held the civil servant position of Protector of the Natives; Clifton was a civil

† Reeves left the colony in November 1854 to join H.Q. in Van Diemen’s Land (Tasmania) after his promotion to Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel.
servant and Lefroy was a pastoralist, who married Mary Bruce, the daughter of Captain John Bruce, who had served in India and China. These people either came from the colony’s founding families whose values were still shaping colonial society or they were members of the commercial-professional class, who desired to attain the social and economic status of a gentleman. Closely connected through marriage and social rank, they formed an exclusive core that exercised extreme care when choosing its members. In this manner, social, economic and political power merged together at the Turf Club, and continued with the formation of the Weld Club in the 1870s. Governor Charles Fitzgerald was appointed the Turf Club’s first patron.

The role of the Western Australian Turf Club was to record breeding lines, introduce and administer rules and regulations, observe and implement safety standards and monitor the growth of horseracing throughout the colony. In April 1853, the Perth races became known as the Western Australian Races and, later in that same year, Fremantle’s race meetings came under the jurisdiction of the Turf Club. By April 1856, the Turf Club consisted of forty-three associate members, who included Henry Cole, Alfred H. Stone, George Braithwaite Phillips and members of the Brockman, Lefroy, Brown, Roe, Hammersley, Dyett, Scholl, Samson, Meares, Monger and Lemesurier families. The military was represented by Captain Wray, Captain Palmer, Captain Daniel Scott, Captain Harding and Lieutenant-Colonel Bruce. These people, like those before them, possessed untrammeled right to power and successfully maintained and eventually extended their authority over all sport in the colony. For them, membership of the Turf Club was an important means of maintaining social distance, first established by the old order.

The safety of spectators and riders, and the welfare of horses were continually monitored by the Turf Club. A resolution passed in April 1854, for instance, stated that if spectators and their horses encroached upon the Perth racecourse they were liable to a toll of one shilling. Reports suggest that throughout the 1850s accidents were few and far
between, but the few which did occur included one horse stumbling and breaking its neck, a rider falling off his horse and sustaining broken bones, and horses bolting and charging towards spectators.⁸

During the early 1850s, horse breeders from Perth and York were concerned by the continuous disruptions in scheduled race meetings owing to June’s inconsistent weather. York, like Fremantle and Guilford, still organised race meetings, but Perth was the major venue for hosting thoroughbred racing. Three consecutive years of bad weather interrupted the June meetings of 1852, 1853 and 1854.⁹ Given the influence members of the horse breeding fraternity possessed, they lobbied the Turf Club in December 1854 for future race meetings to take place in February.¹⁰ But owing to advanced scheduling it was a further two years before the 1856 and 1857 meetings were announced for the month of February.¹¹ In February 1857, however, hot weather caused attendances to fall considerably. Consequently, the 1858 meeting was rescheduled for April and the 1859 meeting rearranged for March.¹² It was a case of simultaneously appeasing and placating everybody, but Fremantle, with her sense of place, identity and tradition continued to arrange race meetings in conjunction with the colony’s anniversary celebrations in June.

Professional jockeys were not employed until the 1860s owing to the colony’s most distinguished riders of the day breeding pure horse flesh and whose hobby was racing horses. The colony’s most prominent jockeys either came from the landowning communities or the hospitality industry, which included Aubrey Brown; Henry Cole; Captain Richard G. Meares; Charles Von Bibra and Gerald de Courcy Lefroy. Brown cemented his position in colonial society after marrying into the Brockman family; Cole was an hotelier; Captain Meares was a large land owner in the Murray district, the Helena region and at Cockburn Sound; Von Bibra owned the ‘United Services Tavern’ and later owned land in the Murchison and Gascoyne regions and Gerald Lefroy was the brother of Anthony O’Grady, who both held pastoral interests in Walebing-Victoria Plains.¹³ However, horseracing still commanded common support, which entitled other colonists to
ride or race their own horses.

As in England and the eastern colonies, gambling remained inextricably linked to the sport, and although the authorities and the church frowned upon such activities they could do little to stop it. As in previous years, the gentry enjoyed demonstrating their wealth and social status by publicly racing and betting for large amounts of money. It was an attempt to replicate the social and cultural behaviour of the English aristocracy, and thereby establish their credentials as the antipodean equivalent of an English ruling class. Hence, the gentry organised private racing for the purpose of gambling after scheduled race meetings were concluded or during the close season, time, which proved extremely popular with the colony’s socio-economic groups.

Local rivalry was evident and intense, especially amongst those who owned and raced thoroughbreds. Evidence suggests many challenges were published in the press with wagers of between ten and fifty pounds, but in April 1852, Von Bibra confidently challenged any owner and his horse for a purse of one-hundred pounds to race against his horse, Ducrow. Such was the reputation of both horse and rider nobody took up the challenge. In February 1854, however, Von Bibra challenged his closest rival Henry Cole, who owned Jubeli, for a purse of fifty pounds. The occasion was witnessed by ‘a considerable number of spectators’, who saw Cole’s horse, beat Von Bibra’s Dandy Jim at the Perth race course. One month later, the rivalry between these two protagonists continued when the ‘whole sporting community of Perth and many from Fremantle’ witnessed a further race on Saturday 25th March 1854. The appearance of Diver, owned by Cole, ‘inspired his backers with confidence’, suggesting that a great deal of money was placed on the horse. However, on this occasion von Bibra, who was riding another horse, Sultana, won the race by ‘several lengths, and without apparently turning a hair’. As in the eastern colonies, private racing took place between the colony’s military and commissariat, but the numbers of races reported in the press were few and uninformative.

Horseracing had already received the title of ‘sport of kings’ in eighteenth-century
England, but in February 1853, the sport was given additional meaning to the expression when Queen Victoria bestowed upon her colonies a three mile race, the ‘Queen’s Plate’, with a purse of fifty guineas. The success of the ‘Queen’s Plate’ encouraged the Turf Club to increase the prize money to one hundred pounds in 1854. Furthermore, in November 1854, the Turf Club introduced a new two mile race, the ‘Ladies Purse’, for the March 1855 meeting to honour the presence of ladies often seen in great numbers at race meetings.

Horse breeding was already a lucrative business and families such as the Shaws, the Brockmans and the Browns were successfully breeding thoroughbred and colonial bred horses to meet the demands of the eastern colonies and the Indian markets. Prior to 1849, before he lost his property to fire, Thomas Yule’s reputation found favour with the press and the gentry owing to his successful horse breeding and export business. However, in 1851, Yule proposed a scheme to establish a horse rearing and exporting company, which was approved by the colony’s breeders. Consequently, the horse breeding fraternity at Swan River gained a reputation for breeding pure horse flesh, and deemed important enough to prompt many investors to visit the colony. Samuel Craig, for instance, visited the colony in 1859 for the sole purpose of purchasing two hundred horses for the Indian market, and he was prepared to ‘receive communications from any parties having suitable ones for sale’. Further evidence supports the view that breeding good bloodstock was a lucrative business and many horses were advertised for ‘cover’ in the colonial press. Fees of between two guineas and three pounds ten shillings were offered for the services of, for example, Abdallah, Margeaux, Notorious and Achbar.

Although social demarcation lines were noticeable at race meetings, the increase in the colony’s population, which now included convicts and ticket-of-leave men, amplified the possibility of criminal and unruly behaviour. For example, the press reminded racegoers of pick-pockets and the Turf Club, fearful of mobocracy, increased the number of militia to police the course. The decision to increase the number of militia was
apparently justified after violence broke out owing to bad weather settling upon the April 1852 meeting. Reports recount, however, that a ticket-of-leave man suffered a serious scalp-wound from an over-zealous militia-man.26

As in England and the eastern colonies, tipping winners was a pleasant hobby for racing enthusiasts and many predictions were published in the press.27 Sports journalism whipped up further interest in horseracing owing to the press informing racegoers of up-coming meetings, tipping horses, naming the riders and their stable colours, previous form and betting odds.28 From 1853 onwards, the Turf Club informed all owners that they could use the Perth race course prior to racing events.29 This decision allowed all competitors to acclimatise to the conditions of the course, and undoubtedly allowed tipsters, spectators and rival stables to monitor the opposition’s form and fitness. Thus by 1860, horseracing was firmly established as a major sport with Swan River residents. The sport had few critics and there is no evidence whatsoever to suggest protestations came from an ineffectual church.30

CRICKET.

Cricket, wrote Anthony Trollope, was a game by which Englishmen might be recognised in every corner of the earth and ‘where a score or so of our sons are found, there is found cricket’.31 As in England and the eastern colonies, the game at Swan River was blessed with mainstream support that stimulated social homogeneity by encouraging people to meet, mix, diversify with their acquaintances, and perhaps even share their ideas and mores. Unlike the eastern colonies, the growth of cricket at Swan River was still restricted by a small and scattered population, no efficient transport infrastructure and nobody to administer the game. However, cricket was slowly developing in Perth owing to three teams being established from the labouring class, the colony’s gentlemen, and the military. A fourth team, the ‘Sons of Australian Benefit Society’ was founded in 1850.‡

‡ This society was established by skilled labour to protect their workers from economic hardship caused by ill health and unemployment.
The tradesmen’s (or the mechanics’) team contained repair workers, indentured labourers, blacksmiths, whitesmiths, bricklayers and agricultural labourers. There is evidence to confirm that it was common practice for players from the ‘tradesmen’ and the ‘Sons of Australian Benefit Society’ to interchange§ owing to both clubs representing the labouring class. The composition of the gentlemen’s team continued to incorporate members from the gentry and the commercial class, who included the Brown, Sholl, Roe and Leake families. Like the guardians of horseracing, the social position of these people allowed them to become the game’s new cadre of administrators from the 1870s onwards.

However, owing to the arrival of convicts and penal administration, the game was on the threshold of attracting a wider audience and greater participation. Consequently, the last games to be contested between the tradesmen, the gentlemen, and the military were played in April 1852 owing to the impending introduction of the Fremantle-Perth fixture in the following November. Like horseracing, cricket became an intrinsic part of colonial sporting life, and for the residents of Fremantle and Perth the game identified and developed a sense of pride and belonging to their communities through their respective cricket teams. But, more importantly from Fremantle’s point of view, a sense of pride and place superseded a sense of class.

Reports suggest the fixture was highly anticipated and on the eve of the game the Perth team (with odds of 5-4) were favourites to win owing to Fremantle’s formation in the immediate past and little or no information known about them. The Perth team included members from the tradesmen and the Sons of Australian Benefit Society, who included Charles King, William Wellman, the brothers Edmond and Aaron King and Doctor Jones. Apart from Doctor Jones, no members of the gentry or the professional-commercial class played in this game. Moreover, evidence confirms members of the gentry did not play for

§ In a small town the size of Perth people who played sport knew each other either socially or vocationally, and players such as Edmund King, Richard Lennard, William Nairn and William Foster were invited to play for both teams.
Perth until after 1856 owing to the tradesmen fielding the best eleven in the colony at the
time. Reports indicate club cricket was not played in Fremantle until W.J. Fagan, an
employee at the Department of the Commissary General, formed the Fremantle team in
1852. Further evidence suggests the game was probably arranged by Fagan himself,
because he ‘carried out the interests of this newly formed club’ in what appears to have
been a good team to dispute ‘the laurels with the cricketers of Perth’. The Fremantle team
included employees associated with the prison establishment, a shop assistant, a
store-keeper, a schoolmaster and a policeman. Apart from the colony’s first horse race
meeting in 1833, this was the second time Fremantleites experienced a sporting occasion
whereby the attention was focused on them. This was compounded further during the next
decade owing to Fremantle’s domination over their Perth opponents on the field of play.

The first Fremantle-Perth cricket game was played on Tuesday 9th November 1852
on the grounds beyond the residence of the Roman Catholic Bishop (near what is now
Wellington Square). Perth defeated Fremantle by three wickets. A return fixture was
played at Fremantle on Friday 26th November 1852, which the home team coincidently
won by three wickets. As a result of these two games, cricket not only established itself as
a popular team sport, but laid the first cornerstone towards establishing future sporting
events between the two towns. Hence, twenty three years after colonisation, cricket
became the colony’s first team game to attract popular blessing, replicating English
sporting traditions transferred from England to the eastern colonies some fifty years earlier.

The Swan River press played an important and influential role in responding
favourably to this first ‘grand’ match. It was, according to the media, ‘the subject of much
speculation and excitement’. The journalist documented the occasion with enthusiastic and
elaborate commentary, but the game itself was reported in detail with statistical
information analysing the manner in which each team dismissed their opponents. These
early reports give us the first recorded comments about style and technique within the
colonial game. The press noted, for example, the ‘very superior’ fielding of Rosser and
Wellman; the ‘excellent’ bowling of Dr. Jones; the ‘steady batting’ of Corporal Taylor; and J. E. Henderson of Fremantle was considered ‘a very sharp round bowler’, ** indicating that some colonial cricketers were adopting this action instead of bowling underarm, which was common at the time. ** The constant use of under-arm bowling delayed adjustments to the technical aspects of batting and emphasised how insular and slow the game was developing compared with the eastern colonies.

A further problem, and a chronic issue surrounding the game in Perth, was the state of the wickets owing to sandy geological conditions and a lack of investment in turf management and irrigation. These problems continued to blight the game until a piece of land was acquired in 1889. In the mid-1840s, members of the tradesmen’s team volunteered their services to maintain the playing area at the ‘Flats’, but all efforts failed owing to the public using the area for various recreational activities. In contrast, horseracing was financed by the gentry, who with money to invest, moved to Ascot in 1848 where ground conditions were firmer and more beneficial for good racing. Cricket, on the other hand, was financed by club membership only, and little or no encouragement whatsoever was given to acquiring a piece of land for the purpose of playing the game. It was ironic that the popular image of a game, which was fostered by the gentry and the commercial-professional class, failed to encourage colonists to invest in and maintain a proper playing surface in Perth. Consequently, the lack of proper playing facilities was another reason why technical improvements in batting and bowling were delayed. For example, in February 1854, three inches of dust covered the wicket which ‘completely “bothered” Dr Jones’s bowling’. Much to the consternation of the Inquirer, the newspaper responded by accusing the Perth team of not watering or maintaining their ground. Consequently, by December 1857, the playing surface had deteriorated to such an extent that the game was described as ‘a mere pastime’.

** From the game’s inception players and spectators were accustomed to underarm bowling. Now they were seeing the bowler’s arm being raised and the ball propelled not from under the arm, but with a slinging, scything action from shoulder height. Look at John Major’s More than a Game, pp. 124-140 for the history of bowling.
an extent the January 1858 game against Fremantle was played on the grounds of the abattoir (which was probably at Claise Brook). In contrast, Fremantle’s ‘Green’ (in Phillimore Street where the railway station is now) was the recreational and social epicentre of the town. Originally a marshy area on the river side where the jetty was situated, land was reclaimed by voluntary labour in the 1840s, and became the finest ground in the colony.

Controversy and accidents in the game were scarce, although three such incidents occurred at games played between Perth and Fremantle. For example, at the January 1853 game, the Fremantle umpire mistakenly pitched the stumps too far apart at one end of the wicket before play commenced after lunch. Consequently, once play resumed Dr. Jones, who was bowling to Fremantle’s Edward Newman, saw his delivery pitch between the stumps without dislodging the bails. Unfortunately for Perth, Newman scored thirty-five runs in Fremantle’s second innings total of one-hundred and eleven runs. However, allowing for the umpire’s mistake Fremantle still won the game by one-hundred and eight runs. In March 1853, Fremantle’s Frank Dighton mysteriously broke his arm whilst in the act of throwing the ball, and in February 1854, Edmund Henderson of Fremantle caught out two Perth players after receiving a ‘severe hurt on his right hand’.

By 1860, cricket was the leading team game in the colony, but colonial insularity and poor playing surfaces hampered the technical aspects of the game and, as a consequence of this, the game was slow to develop and achieved little progress. In contrast, the game in the eastern colonies witnessed the formation of intra-colonial leagues and the introduction of inter-colonial games between Victoria, New South Wales and Tasmania.

REGATTAS.

By 1850, both Perth and Fremantle regattas were an integral part of the colony’s June anniversary celebrations. Perth, however, eventually reorganised her regattas to coincide with the summer months owing to inclement weather June invariably produced. Fremantle continued to reinforce her sense of place and tradition by arranging her regattas
and associated entertainment to coincide with the colony’s anniversary celebrations in June.

Organised by the patriarchal and military members of Perth and Fremantle, who included Henry Cole, Captain Palmer, Alfred Hawes Stone, G. Phillips, Captain Daniel Scott and Captain James Harding, the June 1851 regatta was held on Perth’s Melville Waters. The regatta was another opportunity to enhance social blending among colonists, however, like horseracing, social divisions applied, especially with those colonists who owned a boat and competed in the yachting events, or watched the regatta from their vessel. For them the regatta was another ostentatious attempt to display their colonial standing and wealth, and simultaneously replicate the regattas in England and the eastern colonies. In contrast, the labouring class mingled freely on the shore-line, took part in rowing events, or enjoyed the auxiliary entertainment.

The climate played an important part in the success of regattas and any momentary change in the weather occasionally caused problems for race officials and competitors alike. For instance, the second race for sailing boats in June 1851 was reported as a ‘slow affair’ owing to a lack of wind. The weather troubled several Perth regattas throughout the 1850s, and by 1859, the stewards were given powers to postpone sailing races if the wind was unfavourable. The lack of available wind reinforced the general opinion that sailing or yachting was slow and tedious, and the intricacies associated with yachtsmanship were never fully appreciated by most colonists. Consequently, sailing or yachting took second place to the robust and manly nature of rowing and whale-boat racing.

Reports indicate that by 1859 the continuing popularity of the Perth regatta instigated an increase in the number of races to encourage and include further colonial participation. These races included cargo boats, sailing boats, four-oar gigs, five-oared whaleboats, fisherman’s sailing boats and pleasure sailing boats. By 1855, similar changes had occurred at Fremantle’s regattas with races categorised into five different classes depending upon weight and crew numbers. Like horseracing, strict rules applied
to regattas concerning the number of boats per race, entrance fees, fouling and cheating.\textsuperscript{50}

All races started at the flag boat at Barrack Street jetty on Perth Waters near to where Riverside Drive is now. Once under way, all competitors made for the Narrows Bridge and continued across the Swan River to Point Heathcote before returning over Melville Waters alongside the shore line where the Kwinana Freeway exists now, through the Swan Estuary towards the Narrows Bridge and back to Barrack Street jetty. Those who wished to do so saw the start of a race and some spectators took up advantageous positions along the shore line where the opportunity to picnic blended in with the occasion. In Fremantle, the regatta was a popular feature at Success Harbour and South Beach. There is no evidence whatsoever to suggest women participated in regattas until the formation of rowing clubs in the late 1880s. However, women were a popular feature at the Perth and Fremantle regattas and were often seen promenading near the starting point or along the bank close to the water’s edge.

Like horseracing and cricket, sailing and rowing were two more pathways open to gambling. At the Fremantle regatta in March 1850, for example, Mr. Thompson beat two other boats belonging to Captain Daniel Scott for a prize of thirty shillings.\textsuperscript{51} Ever since the 1840s, the popularity of whaleboat racing between Fremantle and Perth was an additional attraction owing to the speed and excitement generated as the finishing line approached. These races fuelled the interest of spectators and competitors alike by the prospect of monetary gain from gambling. But early references suggest professional boat-racing and sculling were more popular in the eastern colonies long before professionalism appeared at Swan River. Like pedestrianism and athletics in the 1870s, professionalism and financial gain from competing in sport of any kind was frowned upon by the administrators of colonial sport. However, by the mid-1850s, the organisers of the regatta were offering a number of prizes to suit all categories of sailing and rowing.\textsuperscript{52} The regatta was enjoyed by most colonists, but during the latter half of the nineteenth century the occasion became less popular owing to the well-to-do establishing yachting clubs and the working-class
enjoying the benefits of rowing clubs.

**AUXILIARY ENTERTAINMENT.**

By 1860, sport whether formal or informal, existed side by side for much of the nineteenth century and made a significant contribution to the lives of individuals and society in general. Daily life revolved around work, which for most colonists was hard, frustrating and monotonous. For those who were involved in the day to day responsibilities of colonial administration and for those who toiled in the west Australian sun, life was dull and uninteresting. It is likely therefore, that any form of entertainment was appreciated and, as a result, auxiliary entertainment before, during and after sports events were well received by all colonists.

Horseracing continued to attract large crowds, with racegoers offered a wide range of entertainment and amusement including a diverse racing programme to suit all breeds of horse. Like in the eastern colonies, the number of stakes and starters increased dramatically during the 1850s. Opportunities to bet offered punters a chance to win (and lose) money and an assortment of entertainment booths tempted spectators to buy wares as well as food and beverages, all activities reminiscent of an English fair. There is an abundance of newspaper reports to suggest post-racing events in the evening were organised by the gentry and the merchant class. For instance, evening balls were a common feature after racing had finished and, more often than not, received the attention of the well-to-do and the incumbent governor and his wife. The labouring class, however, closed the day’s proceedings by frequenting pubs and taverns against a backdrop of musical entertainment. Thus, the class and gender distinctions and the employer-employee relations, which at first sight appeared blurred on the racecourse, were in fact heightened by activities off the course.

The spirit within the game of cricket consolidated social understanding and continued to integrate colonists from all walks of life. For example, luncheons and after match dinners were organised for players and their guests by Lomas Toovey, a butcher and
Michael Condron, who owned the ‘Shamrock Hotel’ in Perth, with further contributions furnished by Mr. Ronayne, the landlord at Fremantle’s ‘Victoria Hotel’. These people saw the entrepreneurial advantages associated with sport and entertainment and played an important part in supplying food and beverages for all occasions.

At regattas, refreshment booths complemented ‘Old English’ rural games reminiscent of fairs and wakes in England. At the Fremantle regatta of 1855, for instance, entertainment at the Water Police Barracks included climbing a ‘greasy pole’, jumping in sacks, wheeling barrows blindfolded and the ubiquitous footraces. A year later, Perth organised similar entertainment at Stirling Gardens, which included a firework display opposite the ‘Pier Hotel’. Accompanying all these attractions were the musical talents of the Pensioners’ Band, which complemented all sporting occasions and were often present at theatrical productions, balls, fairs and anniversary celebrations.

GOVERNORS AND SPORT.

Most governors and their wives took an interest in sport and on many occasions served as honorary patrons to several sports and societies. Usually accompanied by other colonial dignitaries, governors were seen during the 1850s at race meetings, cricket matches and at regattas. But in spite of this, governors were content to watch rather than get involved in sport or its politics. Their attendance at these events certainly contributed towards the growing popularity of sport and no doubt increased a sense of social unification throughout the colony in difficult times. Governor Fitzgerald, for instance, continued to take an interest in sport and regularly attended scheduled and private race meetings, cricket matches and regattas with his wife. His passion for horseracing included an invitation by the Turf Club to dine at Perth’s ‘Freemasons Tavern and Hotel’ in April 1854 to honour Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel Reeves' contribution to horseracing before he left the colony for Van Diemen’s Land. Traditions continued in December 1855 when Governor Arthur Kennedy and his family watched Perth beat Fremantle by five wickets, and within a year of taking office, he became patron of both the Fremantle and
WOMEN AND SPORT.

Until the twentieth-century sport was played by boys and men only. The emphasis on domestic virtues as opposed to common participation first advocated by the Puritans and then from the Methodists and Evangelicals, reinvented the nature of popular recreation. Their special denial, however, was focused towards women and their association with sport and other leisure time activities. What further compounded the issue was the sexually repressive era of Queen Victoria that governed female behavior. However, although women were restricted from playing sport, watching sport enabled them to appreciate male bodies in a socially acceptable way. Sport then was a major social instrument for keeping women in their place and any participation in or discussion about sport was considered manly and inappropriate. Evidence suggests that during the second half of nineteenth-century it was fashionable for women to watch colonial sport, a fact recorded by many newspaper reports of the day. At horserace meetings women from the upper echelons of colonial circles were seen with governors’ wives and furthermore, attended the evening ball. In March 1855, the Turf Club introduced the ‘Ladies’ Purse’ to encourage women to attend an occasion that was clearly intended as a male sport. At race meetings women were only expected to adorn the occasion and add elegance and respectability, and while it was acceptable for women to gamble a pair of gloves with each other or even have a wager with their male escorts, it was unacceptable for them to place a bet with bookies. Therefore, it is safe to assume that class and gender differences were, perhaps, more apparent on the racecourse than at any other sporting event.

Women also took a keen interest in cricket, but their role was auxiliary and therefore, another opportunity for easy socialising during the leisurely course of play. At the first Perth-Fremantle encounter, for instance, ‘a bevy of ladies graced the game with their presence’. However, reports suggest the press responded to their presence on several occasions with florid accounts suffused with imagery. At the Fremantle-Perth game
in January 1853, several ladies from Perth added ‘much to the gaiety and liveliness of the scene, and doubtless inspiring the combatants with a determination to endeavour to distinguish themselves before the bright eyes that were gazing upon them’. The regatta was another favourite sporting event for women, and although they did not compete in rowing events until the 1880s, the occasion was an opportunity for them to socialise and attract admiring glances as they perched near to the starting post, strolled along the river shore, or watched the auxiliary entertainment. Given the opportunity, most middle-class women attended race meetings, watched cricket matches or visited the regattas, but apart from several colonial holidays a year women from the labouring class were restricted from watching sport owing to their domestic duties in the home, or as servants.

General interest in sport then, was indicative of its development in colonial society, because admission was free. Similar to the eastern colonies, cricket was supported by club membership; regattas were financed by subscriptions and fees; and purses, cups and plates promoted horseracing. The social composition of spectators at these events reflected a cross section of colonial society that included families of the gentry, the commercial and professional colonists, and the labouring class. Similar to the formative years in the eastern colonies, there were no stands at these venues, consequently, spectators tended to position themselves within their socio-economic groups. At horserace meetings, for example, the gentry and members of the commercial-professional ranks mingled amongst themselves or were seen grouped together in carriages, on horseback, or part of the governors’ entourage; whilst the labouring personnel were positioned further down the track or near to the finishing post. At cricket matches the well-to-do remained under a marquee, whilst other colonists stood or sat around the circumference of the playing area marked-out by red flags. A similar scene applied to regattas; the gentry took advantage of their social position by using their boats either to participate in or to watch the proceedings on Melville Waters whilst the labouring class entered the rowing events, congregated on the jetty near the flag boat, or at the riverside. The celebrations before and during sports events continued,
creating an appearance of social understanding, but social niceties continued to be observed, lasting until the event was over when each socio-economic group participated in their own amusements.

Reflecting on activities and relationships associated with the eastern colonies, the Western Australian Turf Club was founded on similar lines as the Sydney Turf Club in the mid-1820s; the Melbourne and Adelaide Turf Clubs in the late 1830s; and the Tasmanian Turf Club in the late 1840s, which were all established under the precept that class was an appendage to the sport and simultaneously defined who was in control. In the eastern colonies, governors were at the forefront of society, seeing their role as supporting sport, and on occasions, playing an active part in cricket. However, at Swan River their role was seen as more sedentary, consequently, they were observed on several occasions at horseracing, cricket and the regatta, but not actively taking part.

In the eastern colonies, professional sculling (rowing) was popular and substantial stakes attracted large crowds. However, at Swan River, although whale-boat crews were not professional, they competed against each other for wagers. Like whale-boat racing at Swan River, sculling was associated with occupations pertinent to their vocation. For example, in Sydney, scullers rowed passengers across the coastal rivers for an occupation. At Swan River, the whaleboat crews were employed by the Perth and Carnac, and Fremantle whaling companies.

Cricket played a major role in social understanding in the eastern colonies, and similar issues were experienced at Swan River. However, the problem of poor wickets in Perth undermined the progress of cricket as opposed to the eastern colonies where early governments provided land for sport. For example, Hyde Park, in Sydney, was designated for horseracing and cricket. At Swan River, governors understandably afforded greater priority to public works programmes.

By 1860, horseracing and the regatta were well established, but cricket, unlike in the eastern colonies, was still confined to the cradle owing to chronic problems associated
with poor playing surfaces. Twenty-five years after the game was first played in the colony, the gentry who had invested time and money in horseracing did nothing to improve the state of colonial wickets despite their involvement in the game. Cricket, however, continued to succeed in socially blending colonists from diverse backgrounds, more so than regattas and horseracing, which along with the Western Australian Turf Club was dominated by those of wealth and social standing.
ENDNOTES FOR CHAPTER THREE.

2 *Perth Gazette*, 29/10/1852.

3 Erickson, *Dictionary of Western Australians Vol 3* for a more detailed study of these people.

4 *PG*, 29/10/1852.

5 *Inquirer*, 13/4/1853.

6 *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 9/4/1856; Statham and Erickson, *Dictionary of Western Australians* Vol 1 and 3 for more information on these people.


10 *Inq*, 13/12/1854.


13 Erickson, *Dictionary of Western Australians Vol 3* for more information concerning these people.

14 O’Hara, John: *A Mugs Game*... for a detailed history of gambling in Australia.


16 *Inq*, 22/2/1854.


19 *Inq*, 7/2/1855.
20 Inquirer, 16/2/1853.

21 Inq, 12/4/1854.

22 Inq, 14/11/1854.

23 Erickson, Dictionary of Western Australian Vol 3, pp.927-928; Inq, 2/4/1851.

24 PG, 7/10/1859.

25 PG, 18/1/1850, 29/1/1858; Inq, 16/2/1853.


27 PG, 21/4/1854.

28 Inq, 6/4/1853 and 7/2/1855.

29 Inq, 6/4/1853.

30 Bolton, Land of Vision, pp. 16 and 30.


32 Inq, 26/6/1850; PG, 16/4/1852.

33 PG, 5/11/1852.


36 Inq, 1/12/1852; PG, 3/12/1852.


38 PG, 19/11/1852; Inq, 1/12/1852; Major, More Than A Game...pp. 124-140.


40 Inq, 22/2/1854.

41 Inq, 22/2/1854.
42 Inquirer and Comm News, 30/12/1857; PG, 8/1/1858.
43 Inquirer, 26/1/1853.
44 Inq, 30/3/1853 and 22/2/1854.
45 Inq, 28/5/1851.
46 PG, 20/6/1851; Inq, 26/6/1851.
47 PG, 12/11/1858.
48 PG, 30/5/1856.
49 Inq, 30/5/1855.
50 Inq, 28/5/1851, 30/5/1855; PG, 12/11/1858.
51 PG, 2/4/1850.
52 PG, 20/6/1851, 30/5/1856 and 12/11/1858.
53 Inq, 7/1/1852, 14/4/1852, 17/11/1852 and 1/12/1852.
54 Inq, 30/5/1855.
55 PG, 30/5/1856.
57 Inq, 12/4/1854.
58 Inq, 30/5/1855; PG, 30/5/1856.
59 Inq, 17/11/1852.
60 Inq, 26/1/1853.
CHAPTER FOUR.

THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE 1850-1890.

Between 1829 and 1850 the gentry organised balls, picnics and levees, and generally played host to their peers. In 1839, a colonial theatre was established and the first concert was performed in 1845, giving the colony intermittent periods of ‘high culture’. As early as 1837, colonial culture crossed over from one class to another when the colony’s artisans organised their inaugural ball. However, in spite of this cultural addition, the labouring class, more often than not, frequented public houses to play ‘Old English’ games. For women, although the transfer of English values and institutions continued to affect them at both ends of the social spectrum, other similarities were few. The female well to do with time and the means to indulge in various entertainments were seen at society balls, the theatre and concert, sporting venues, entertaining their peers, or assisting those who were financially distressed. Apart from several one-day holidays, working-class women were given little opportunity to watch sport or indulge in other leisure time activities owing to time consuming domestic occupations. However, by 1890, two significant social changes had occurred in the colony; attitudes had changed towards women and class, and colonists were taking advantage of professional entertainment and enjoying a wide variety of other leisure time activities, all of which made an important contribution towards the quality of colonial life.

RECITALS AND CONCERTS.

The theatre went into decline during the early 1840s owing to protestations from a Congregational lay preacher regarding women and the theatre; a lack of colonial interest and support; and fluctuating economic cycles that caused some colonists to leave for the eastern colonies and Europe. During this period of inactivity, the flow of ‘high’ culture was maintained by colonists who possessed some musical and literary training, or from visitors
to the colony, who widened the repertoire. Evidence suggests recitals were popular and added classical seasoning to a rich, but limited literary diet. In October 1852, for instance, Thomas Cullen, who had previously performed at the Theatre Royal in Dublin, recited several readings from Shakespeare’s tragedy *Othello* at the ‘Stag’s Head’ Inn, in Fremantle.\(^1\) Many years later, in February 1879, colonists witnessed a different approach to Shakespeare owing to members of the middle class, who included George Leake and Capt. G.F. Wilkinson, combine acting, reading and singing to scenes from *Macbeth*.\(^2\)

However, until the 1860s and the arrival of faster transport (steam ships), visiting entertainers were few and far between owing to the geographical location and the distance imposed upon people visiting and entertaining the colony. Nevertheless, talent on the home front continued to entertain colonists.

Organised by the gentry, whose hobbies included playing musical instruments, early concerts were arranged for the purpose of entertaining their peers. The working class was not invited to private recitals owing to their social status, and there is no evidence to suggest they attended concerts until professional entertainment attracted a wider colonial audience in the late 1860s. Ably supported by the press, who informed readers of up-coming events, the role of the concert was to entertain rather than to educate. However, plagued by poor performances during the 1860s and 1870s, reports confirm the gentry experienced strong, critical appraisal from the press and William Beresford\(^*\) in particular. Beresford, who was joint editor of the *Herald* (and later editor of the *Perth Gazette*), used the concert and the theatre to lampoon the gentry as pretentious people who thought they were grander and more talented than other colonists. From Beresford’s point of view, the notion behind the production of concerts was self-congratulatory indulgence from extravagant gentry who offered very little in the way of entertainment. Beresford, speaking on behalf of himself through the persona of ‘Chips’, a working-class character he

\(^*\) See the section on newspapers (pages 120-123) for a more detailed account of Beresford.
introduced in the *Herald*, despised these grand concerts. For example, he compared the
playing of ‘an enchantin’ nocturne by Schumann’, performed by a lady ‘amateoar
musician’, to rats scampering at night. Spurning the social pretensions of these ‘amateoors’,
Beresford confidently asserted that for all their snobbishness ‘there weren’t the thickness
of a sheet of foreign letter paper’ between the social position of them and others.³
Nevertheless, until the arrival of professional entertainers from the late 1860s onwards, the
gentry and the professional commercial class made a serious attempt to entertain, what has
been described as, the ‘dull monotony of our metropolis’, and simultaneously provide
generous financial assistance towards colonial projects.⁴

These undertakings included the purchase of musical instruments for the
Mechanics’ Institute; repair work on churches and other buildings; and financial relief for
the unfortunate. Three good examples of this were in June 1852 when an ‘amateuor concert’
was held at the Swan River Mechanics’ Institute to raise funds for the purchase of musical
instruments.⁵ In November 1862, a concert was organised to enlarge St. George’s
Cathedral, in Perth.⁶ In June 1876, George Spencer Compton, Miss O’Grady, Miss
Manning (the daughter of Charles Alexander Manning, a landowner and merchant in
Fremantle), Barrington Wood, William Edward Marmion and other members of the
Fremantle gentry gave a concert in aid of the surviving relatives of those who died on the
*Gem* and *Stefano*, two ships which foundered off the coast.⁷ There is no evidence to
suggest members of the working class contributed to these concerts. George S. Compton
was an accomplished and popular musical leader in colonial circles during the 1870s and
1880s. He was already conductor of the ‘Minstrels of the West’ when he presented in
association with the Perth Musical Union the first performance in Western Australia of
Handel’s *Messiah* at Perth’s St. George’s Hall in December 1886.⁸

The Perth Musical Union was established in 1880, ‘for the improvement and
development’ of colonial talent. In December 1882, they performed their first concert at St.
George’s Hall, in Perth.⁹ Those in attendance were Governor Sir William Robinson (who
was noted for his interest in music) and his wife, Lady Olivia Robinson, and Lady Gifford. The Perth Musical Union was formed by a group of musically talented people, who included Edward Albert Stone; Sir Alexander C. Onslow; Alfred P. Hensman and Robert C. Clifton. Stone was later knighted after attaining the position of judge and Chief Justice in 1901. Onslow, noted for ‘his beautiful bass voice’, was Attorney General from 1880 to 1883, eventually obtaining the position of Chief Justice. Hensman was appointed Attorney General in 1884 and appeared in many concerts as a solo violinist. Clifton was a Civil Servant who built several organs which can still be seen today in Claremont, Bunbury, Fremantle, Kalgoorlie and at Highgate Hill, in Perth.

Although governors and their wives patronised the theatre and concerts for their own pleasure, they also promoted interest in the arts which assisted charity work. In November 1854, for instance, Lady Fitzgerald, Sara Dyett and Mrs. Hardy gave a concert in Fremantle for the church fund. It was reported that one hundred and forty persons paid one shilling each for the pleasure of attending the performance and ‘appeared highly delighted with the treat afforded them’. There were occasions, however, when evidence of elitism and exclusivity was prominent. Three good examples of this involved Governor John Hampton being entertained by the Perth Choral Society’s inaugural concert in December 1867. After Hampton had given his patronage to three more concerts, the second concert was attended by ‘all the elite of the city and neighbourhood’. In February 1868, the Perth Choral Society entertained officers of Brisk, and a year later they received the attention of acting-Governor Lieutenant-Colonel John Bruce.

Such occasions, however, were becoming increasingly rare as more colonists from different classes were attracted to the opportunity of experiencing ‘high culture’. In June 1876, for instance, working-class talent continued to impress the colony when the Perth Working Men’s Choral Society (formerly The Western Australian Working Men’s Choral Society, which was formed in 1862) entertained Governor Robinson to raise monies for a new working men’s hall. However, in July 1878, the Perth Choral Society organised the
largest concert seen when over fifty performers entertained an audience that included Governor Sir Harry Ord and his wife, Lady Julia Ord, and the Lord Bishop of Perth.\textsuperscript{16} Whether or not members of the Perth Working Men’s Choral Society took part in this concert is hard to say, because the programme of events suggests the majority of the performers came from middle-class members of the Perth Choral Society. Similarly, in September 1885, a ‘Grand National Concert’ provided entertainment for Governor Frederick Napier Broome and Lady Broome in aid of a new bathing house in Perth. The concert contained patriotic songs and orchestral tunes from the four ‘home’ countries, which demonstrated and echoed continuing colonial ties with British culture. Reports suggest most of the performers came from the gentry and the middle-class, who included Margaret Elvira Forrest (the wife of John Forrest) and members of the Lefroy and O’Grady families. It was the first occasion that organisers of a concert, together with the railway board, took full advantage of the new railway system by introducing ‘special trains’ to Guildford and Fremantle in order to accommodate colonists who wished to attend the concert.\textsuperscript{17}

\textbf{Colonial Theatre.}

Between 1850 and 1890, several theatrical groups emerged to present plays at various intervals throughout the colony. These included the Amateur Theatrical Company; the Perth Dramatic Corps; the Fremantle Amateur Dramatic Corps; the Garrick Theatre Company; the Western Australian Amateur Dramatic Society and the Guildford Amateurs. The theatre’s contribution towards entertaining Swan River society was immense, especially during the period when the colony was experiencing the burden of convictism, curfews and very little entertainment from elsewhere.

Two major problems which confronted the theatre in the colony’s formative years were a small and scattered population and a lack of tolerance regarding women performing on the stage. This meager population suggests how small colonial society was, thus amplifying why women were the victims of insinuation and implication. These problems
continued throughout the 1850s owing to a shortage of actresses and, as a result it was not uncommon for male actors to acquire the role of female characters and perform in two or three plays in one night. The concept of men playing female roles probably arose from plays staged by army battalions, where the male played the leading female role. By the late 1860s, the Herald was voicing its opinion regarding the plight of male actors performing female roles. However, with the arrival of female professional talent from the eastern colonies and abroad colonists began to appreciate and afford a degree of tolerance regarding women performing on the stage.18

As the theatre gained popular momentum venues changed to accommodate the theatre’s growing audience. During the formative years of colonisation theatre productions were either performed in public houses, or at Perth’s court house ‘before crowded audiences’.19 By the 1880s, larger establishments were used, notably Perth’s Teetotal Hall; Henry Cole’s large room at the ‘United Services Tavern’ on St. George’s Terrace; the Perth Mechanics’ Institute; Perth Town Hall; St. George’s Church in Perth; the Assembly Rooms in Fremantle; and Fremantle’s Odd Fellows’ Hall.

Initially, theatrical productions were financed by the gentry for the purpose of entertaining their peers, but in July 1854, Perth’s Dramatic Corps introduced admission prices to defray production costs.20 As the theatre companies were non-profit concerns, any profits made from theatrical performances and concerts were donated to relief funds and charities at home and abroad. The mother country was never too far away and the organisation of relief funds deepened the bond between the colony and Britain. In February 1863, for example, a considerable sum of money was collected throughout Perth for the Lancashire Relief Fund in England.† In that same month, the Perth Dramatic Corps donated proceeds from their first night’s performance to the fund.21 Two years later, the theatre company donated five pounds to the Perth Poor Box, and in May 1869, the Perth

† Between 1861 and 1865, the civil war between the northern and southern states of America had severe repercussions for the Lancashire cotton industry and its operatives.
Choral Society donated proceeds from one of their concerts to the Fremantle Parsonage Building Fund.²²

The gentry and the professional-commercial class were the colony’s principal actors, who previously patronised British theatres and possibly performed amateur theatricals. Information gleaned from newspapers and diaries suggests there were no working-class actors, but as the nineteenth century progressed and social equality was more evident, especially in sport, they may have taken up acting as a hobby. Those colonists who played an important part in the continuance of the theatre included Treverton C. Sholl, who also played an active part in horseracing and cricket; Robert John Sholl (the father of Treverton) was part proprietor of Fremantle’s Commercial News; William J. Clifton was a civil servant and later Resident Magistrate at Toodyay; Judge Edward A. Stone; and Mr. Laurence and Mr. Elwes.²³ Other notable members of the thespian fraternity came from Fremantle, and included Barrington Wood, James Pearse and Daniel Congdon. Wood was Fremantle’s first Mayor; Pearse established a boot factory and later became a member of the Fremantle Municipal Council and Congdon was Fremantle’s first chemist, who eventually became a member of the city Council, Mayor of Fremantle between 1885 and 1888, and Mayor of North Fremantle in 1895.²⁴ These actors can be collectively considered the cornerstones of early amateur theatricals during the colony’s formative years.

Owing to the success of the Perth Dramatic Corps and the Amateur Theatrical Company, Fremantle’s ‘merchant princes’ organised a theatrical corps and produced their first of many plays in August 1865.²⁵ The rise to power of Fremantle’s merchants paralleled the economic growth of the town, and like the gentry of Perth, these people had the time and money to indulge in theatrical activities. Founded by two merchants Michael A. Samson and William Edward Marmion, the Fremantle Amateur Dramatic Corps offered its first production at the Fremantle Assembly Rooms on 10th August 1865.²⁶ The performance included E. Slater’s Sarah’s Young Man and J.M. Morton’s To Paris and
back for Five pounds. Press reports indicate the theatre group ‘acquitted themselves in a most creditable manner’ and Perth’s thespians were ‘highly surprised at the proficiency of their Fremantle brethren’. However, as with concerts, Beresford’s vilification of Fremantle’s thespians continued unabated.

The wrath of Beresford, in the guise of ‘Chips’, mercilessly disapproved of the Fremantle Corps’ performances. Beresford criticised the performance of one ‘amatoor actress’ as deplorable compared to a professional actress, and yet took similar praise. Such ‘amatoor actors’, he stated, were ‘dressed up figures stalking about like emus in a stockyard, mumbling, lisping, and finicking’. Beresford, however, tolerated such presentations when they were confined to private amusement or raising money for the poor, but when performed for the church, an institution he disliked, Beresford described their performances as the ‘ugliest and wretchedest thing, and the biggest insult’ he had experienced.

During the colony’s formative years Congregational lay preachers voiced their concerns over women performing upon the stage. In British Australia it was thought a woman’s place was in the home, but in the second half of the nineteenth-century colonists became more receptive to female performers arriving from the eastern colonies and abroad. Hence, once the colony’s population started to increase from 15346 in 1860 to 48502 by 1890, women were becoming more involved in the colony’s social activities. Hence, women, especially from the middle class, were now in a position to command, if not greater social freedom, then a degree of toleration, and simultaneously commandeer a place in the history of amateur dramatics. There is no evidence to suggest working-class women performed on the colonial stage owing to domestic servitude and their social position. Another plausible reason was that English middle-class audiences appreciated the performance of women from middle-class backgrounds rather than working-class actresses, because they looked and sounded good. More often than not, the working-class actress looked awkward, and even though her beauty may have appealed to her
middle-class audience her accent was not tolerated. Working-class women were appreciated more in the music halls of England owing to a working-class clientele patronising these establishments.

However, owing to a chronic shortage of female actors and contrary to Beresford’s assertions, the Herald was concerned that few women took part in colonial plays, arguing ladies in nearly ‘all farces are indispensable to success, and their absence destroys all their worth’. ‘Young men’, continued the Herald ‘cannot supply this want, whatever may be their abilities’. Early references suggest the first woman to play a significant role on the colonial stage was Mrs. Lyons, who played Ellen Marchmont in the production of The Lucky Horse Shoe on Thursday 16th September 1869 at Fremantle. Her performance was considered ‘quietly and ladylike but with hardly as much force as the character demands’. Mrs. Lyons, however, did have the ability to express emotion ‘with powerful effect’. From the 1870s onwards, the colony witnessed an increasing number of female performers, who included Miss Manning; Miss O’Grady; Mrs. Wilkinson, the wife of Capt. G.F. Wilkinson (a committee member of the Weld Club); and Margaret Forrest, the wife of the future Premier, John Forrest. In June 1878, Mrs. Wilkinson’s prowess on the stage was noted by Alfred Hillman, who remarked that her performance was ‘inimitable’.

Unlike modern theatre where the audience is offered one play, Swan River presentations were a kaleidoscope of entertainment in one assembly. Newspaper reports refer to many examples of individual readings, poetry, music played by the Perth or Fremantle Pensioners’ Bands’ (who normally introduced the ‘overture’ to a play) and songs sung by members of the cast or guests during intervals provided continuity throughout the evening.

The invaluable reports by the press document the social picture of the time and the people who committed themselves to making the theatre a success. In 1854, the Perth Gazette and the Inquirer proclaimed ‘public amusements’ were rare in the colony and the theatre’s ‘kind services’ entitled the colony’s ‘warmest thanks’. Such commendations
continued fourteen years later when the Herald remarked the colony was fortunate to have in their presence people who devoted their leisure time to make the theatre a success. The press favourably acknowledged the acting and the hard work applied to constructing the scenery and making the costumes given the sparse material available. This, argued the press, was made all the more difficult owing to the colony’s ‘migratory habits’ that rendered ‘keeping together a Corps almost impossible’. However, further critical appreciation came from other quarters of the colony.

The newspapers were sounding boards for members of the public to voice their opinion through letters to the editor. Two prime examples were Call-Boy and Jacque, who were the first colonists to critically analyse plays and give us a valuable and important insight into how plays were produced, the importance of scenery, make-up and the quality of acting. At Fremantle’s production of The Harvest Storm in January 1869, Call-Boy observed Mr. Wilson’s art work on the proscenium and scenery ‘were all that could be desired’, and the characters ‘excellently well rendered’ by the actors, especially Michael Samson, whose acting ability was ‘beyond all recommendation’. Jacque witnessed the June 1869 production of The Clock on the Stairs, and stated ‘the curtain rose to one of the prettiest scenes ever put on any stage in the colony and one that would not have done discredit to a good Provincial Theatre in England’. Jacques added the character of Blanchville, played by William Marmion, was ‘truthfully conceived and naturally and effectively carried out’, and the make-up of Michael Samson as Leach, a griping money lender, was ‘excellent’.

The presence of successive governors and their wives at the theatre continued to stimulate interest and encourage attendances. In July 1854, for instance, Governor Fitzgerald and his wife attended both opening nights of the Amateur Theatrical Company’s productions of The Queer Subject, The Original, and Box and Cox. Finding much enjoyment in visiting the theatre, they both attended the production of The Miller and his Men and The Rival Valets in September 1854. Traditions continued on Monday 28th
January 1856, when Governor Arthur Kennedy and his family were present at the performance of *The Inn-Keeper of Abbeville* and *The Irishman in London*. During the 1860s, Governor John Hampton and his wife were frequent visitors to the theatre also. The Hamptons attended a performance in April 1863 at the Mechanics’ Institute, in Perth after rumours had been circulated throughout Perth regarding the structural safety of the gallery. In May 1873, Governor Frederick Weld witnessed members of the Western Australian Amateur Dramatic Society give a creditable performance alongside the professional actress Miss Adelaide Stoneham from the eastern colonies. It was the first time amateur actors from the colony had performed with a professional. Not all governors, however, confined themselves to visiting Fremantle and Perth’s theatre companies. In January 1885, for instance, Governor Sir Frederick Broome extended his approval to the theatre after travelling to Guildford to watch a performance by the Guildford Amateurs.

Charitable organisations received official patronage also. For example, in August 1885, Governor Broome and his wife were entertained by the West Australian Amateur Dramatic Society on behalf of charities organised by the Dorcas Society at St. George’s Hall, in Perth. Furthermore, governors frequently attended horticultural shows, as for example, in February 1856, Governor Arthur Kennedy and leading members of the colony supported Perth’s inaugural Horticultural Show.

The role of the theatre at Swan River needs to be put into context with that of the eastern colonies where most theatre productions were professional and profitable. In contrast to Swan River, three major developments were taking place in the eastern colonies at this time. Firstly, the emerging country towns provided a market not just for the theatre, but for all modes of entertainment. Secondly, the discovery of gold, the spread of commercial agriculture and dairy farming all contributed to rural town growth. Thirdly, the introduction of newer and faster forms of transport including the railway (which was not introduced into Western Australia until the early 1880s), and river and ocean steamers...
provided theatre companies with the means to access wider markets more readily, efficiently and economically. Such amenities either did not exist or were negligible at Swan River.

Furthermore, theatre companies at Swan River were administered and performed by amateurs and, although the theatre grew in stature during this period, it faced many problems owing to a small and scattered population, continuous migration, a lack of professional talent, and an absence of American entrepreneurial ability. Hence, not only was there a larger population and a greater flow of capital invested in entertainment in the eastern colonies, but entrepreneurial ‘know-how’ ensured their financial success. However, although the gentry and the middle class continued to harbour interests in entertaining colonists, the infiltration of professional entertainment from the east was inevitable.

MINSTRELSY.

The first minstrel act to perform in Australia was the ‘Blythe Waterland Minstrels’ from England, who performed at the Royal Hotel in Sydney, in 1850. After the discovery of gold in the 1850s, minstrelsy became a popular mode of entertainment in the eastern colonies which created a theatrical market exploited by a host of American minstrel bands through the medium of comedy and emotional songs lamenting the loss of a loved one.

Evidence indicates that in 1851, the New York Ethiopian Serenaders (from Los Angeles) were the first group of professional entertainers to perform at Swan River. Alfred Hawes Stone noted in his diary for 29th November 1851:

In the middle of the night we were awakened by the most delightful sound. I turned out and found that the concert singers were giving the Governor a serenade. It was most exquisite on the silent air of night. They sang for about half an hour.

A week later, Gerald de Courcy Lefroy observed in his journal that these talented and popular singers were good and ‘very amusing’. 
No doubt influenced by the memory and reputation of the New York Ethiopian Serenaders and press reports from the eastern colonies, the first minstrel act to perform at Swan River appeared in 1862 when four black-faced Fremantle singers known as the ‘Fremantle Minstrels’ gave two concerts at the Mechanics’ Institute in Perth. Little is known about this group of entertainers and it appears they disbanded only to emerge again four years later. The press mentioned the impending reappearance of this act, now known as ‘The Minstrels of the West’, and although there is no evidence to suggest otherwise their stage name may have been derived from the periodical *The Minstrelsy of the West*, which could be purchased in the colony at the time. In October 1865, members of the Fremantle Amateur Dramatic Corps, under the guise of the ‘Negro Melodists’, performed several minstrel songs in their presentation of ‘a Darkies farce by a dusky lot’. However, the first authentic minstrel company from America to visit Swan River was the Arlington Brothers, who were members of the ‘Chicago Minstrels’, in September 1878.

In August 1872, the ‘Minstrels of the West’, now under the leadership of George S. Compton, reappeared to offer a programme of diverse entertainment including classical pieces, romantic songs, and duets on the piano. Gone were the ‘black faces’ and minstrel songs. Musically arranged by George S. Compton, concerts performed by this group of entertainers provided finances to purchase pianos for the Fremantle and Perth town halls, instruments for the Fremantle Volunteer Band, and assisted charities in both Fremantle and Perth. In August 1882, however, they appeared with several other acts at Government House and were roundly criticised by the *Herald* for their poor performance and stage name. The *Herald* suggested their stage name should be changed from one less objectionable to one that was more ‘appropriate’. Although the *Herald* had a reputation
for championing the underdog, it did not state why the stage name was ‘objectionable’. The Herald, however, may well have been alluding to the delicate situation arising from the colony’s aboriginal policies and events surrounding the Reverend John Brown Gribble.‡

Historically, Gribble was not alone in protecting aboriginal welfare and evidence points to the fact other colonists endeavoured to protect and help them. As early as 1836 the Evangelist Dr. Louis Giustiniani came to their assistance, and Bishop Salvado established a mission in New Norcia for the benefit of aborigines in 1847. In October 1880, a letter published in the West Australian by A.C. complained of the harsh treatment, lack of medical care, and the need for educating and rehabilitating the Aborigine.57 Banished to the eastern colonies, Gribble wrote a powerful indictment against pastoralism in 1886, entitled Dark Deeds in a Sunny Land.58 At this particular time, the impressive aboriginal cricket team from New Norcia was experiencing similar racial problems. They were not invited to join the Western Australian Cricket Association after its formation in 1885 and, as a result, their well-documented trips to the metropolis stopped soon after.

During the 1870s and 1880s, minstrelsy was a popular mode of entertainment in all Australian colonies, and its formative influence on colonial variety acts held important repercussions for Australian popular culture, serving as a conduit for future American values in the twentieth century.

‡ The Reverend Gribble uncovered the inhumane side of pastoralism, especially the maltreatment of bush aborigines during the 1880s. This exposed him to public ridicule and criticism from pastoralists and their Perth mouthpieces; the West Australian, Governor Broome and Bishop Parry, who all portrayed Gribble as a trouble-maker. Both the West Australian and the church accused Gribble of ungentlemanlike conduct, ultimately leading to the church taking the extreme measure of banishing Gribble to the eastern colonies.
TRAVELLING SHOWS AND CIRCUSES.

Once gold was discovered in the eastern colonies, in 1851, a diverse range of entertainment travelled throughout the eastern sea-board, as for example, acrobatic acts and circus shows. Although the earliest Australian circus was influenced by the one-ringed British model, their programme and mode of operation was becoming increasingly more Americanised and professional in style. They now offered the two ringed circus, a diverse number of acts, and advanced publication of events in the press.

Travelling shows, the circus, and professional entertainers were well received by colonists from the late 1860s onwards. The colony’s traditional amateur productions continued, but the introduction of several acts from the eastern colonies gave most colonists a glimpse of professional entertainment for the first time. Evidence suggests, however, the success of some travelling shows hinged mostly upon circumstances beyond their control. For instance, having already incurred the cost of travelling from the eastern colonies professional acts were confronted by a lack of proper facilities in the colony and, more importantly, the colony’s small and scattered population could not guarantee instant wealth. Consequently, as the travelling show and circus appeared, sometimes simultaneously at Swan River, the press questioned their financial viability. 59

One of the first of several shows and probably the most successful to arrive at Swan River during the late 1860s was the marital duo of Mr. and Mrs. George Case. They were both professional actors from the eastern colonies who performed broad farce, musical entertainment and impersonations of leading personalities from the London stage. Their popularity guaranteed full houses in Perth and Fremantle during July and August 1867. 60 Seven months later, the Theatre Comique provided a variety of entertainment that
included comedy, songs, dances, instrumental music and a ‘screeching’ farce, “Our Gal”. By June 1868, professional entertainment was arriving at the colony on a regular basis and included a conjuror, a tenor, harpist, a wire-walker, an acrobatic troupe known as the Rocky Mountain Wonders Troupe, and Stebbings Circus.

The main problem confronting travelling artists and shows during the 1860s was the colony’s small and scattered population and a lack of facilities, which undoubtedly discouraged many professional entertainers from visiting the colony. Previously, the Herald warned both the Rocky Mountain Wonders Group and Stebbings Circus of impending financial disaster owing to an economic downturn in the colony’s business sector and the small and scattered population. Reports suggest their financial problems compounded after both companies had visited Bunbury and the Vasse District in the southern part of the colony. On their return visit to Fremantle and Perth both companies performed to diminishing audiences and, by Christmas 1869, both shows had left Swan River after performing in the eastern districts of the colony. As a result, the Herald was all doom and gloom predicting ‘many years must pass before anything in the shape of a Theatre or Concert room can be reckoned among the public buildings of Swan River’. In June 1870, however, Perth celebrated the opening of a new town hall, which became the main venue for entertainment for the next two decades. But, despite the town hall playing a significant role in the cultural life of Perth, reports suggest it was ill suited for both performers and the audience alike owing to ‘the large dimensions of the hall, its non-conductibility of sound and bad lighting’.

By the late 1870s, the colony’s social picture was changing owing to a population that was approximately 30000 and faster transport (steamships). This increased the number
of acts visiting the colony from the eastern colonies and as far away as Japan, America and Britain. Hence, towns as far north as Geraldton, Greenough, Dongara, Northampton and the eastern and southern districts of the colony experienced professional entertainment. Furthermore, colonists were to encounter the matinee, improvements in advertising technique, and the novel idea of enticing patrons with gifts.

Several circuses appeared in the colony over a number of years, but evidence indicates two stood out as being the most successful. Full houses were witnessed when the ‘Royal Victorian Circus Troupe’ from Melbourne toured the colony in March 1873. In April 1880, the ‘Great London Circus’ visited the colony and introduced the matinee for the convenience of school-children and families. It was reported the largest audience seen in Perth attended the opening night. Three weeks later, the ‘Great London Circus’ visited Geraldton and became the first circus to visit Champion Bay. International entertainment from abroad and the eastern colonies continued in November 1874 when Japanese jugglers and acrobats drew large crowds in Perth and Fremantle. In 1876, colonists were given a Yuletide treat by the Towers family from the eastern colonies. Miss Rosa Towers had a reputation of being a ‘young actress of considerable promise’. Accompanied by her parents and sister, Katie, reports acknowledge the family was well received throughout the colony. In June 1878, the versatile and talented ‘Wheeler Comedy Troupe’ from America entertained colonists with a variety of songs, comedy sketches and impersonations. Acrobatic troupes were popular also, as for example, in September 1878 the tight-rope walker ‘Young Blondin’ was accompanied by an acrobatic trio entitled the ‘Three Australian Brothers’ from the eastern colonies. Young Blondin’s amazing feats included walking the wire between Fremantle’s boat house and the landing place at the old sea
By 1880, colonists were enticed by new techniques in advertising, which attracted the reader’s attention and imagination also. For instance, the use of bold type and emotive and evocative language reflected an American entrepreneurial style of promoting acts. A good example of this was the ‘Sylvester and Griffiths Company’, who advertised Sylvester the magician and his new and remarkable feats of ‘ambidextriprestidigitation’ (conjurator) together with his ‘Cabinet of Phantoms (“Spiritual Manifestations Extraordinary”)’ outdoing all the exponents of Modern Spiritualism’.  

Reports also indicated the use of innovative ideas to entice larger audiences. In September 1880, for example, J. C. Rainor gave gifts to the value of forty pounds sterling at the last two evening performances of his ‘Great Diorama of the American Civil War’. A similar ploy was used in July 1881 by W.H. Thompson at the ‘Grand Opening Night’ of his diorama on the Zulu wars featuring four thousand moving figures and Lord Chelmsford’s march to Ekowe.  

However, the introduction of the matinee gave schoolchildren and their parents the benefit of attending an afternoon performance. The price of admission was low allowing all colonists the opportunity to witness a variety of entertainment on offer and simultaneously observe social niceties. The working class purchased the one-shilling ticket, and three shilling tickets were purchased by the middle class and the gentry. The introduction of these new forms of amusement undoubtedly improved the quality of life and generated a great deal of pleasure to those who had not experienced this mode of entertainment before.
COLONIAL ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS, BANQUETS AND DINNERS.

As in previous years, anniversary celebrations continued to be popular and well attended throughout the colony. It has been suggested that ‘to know one’s foundation day, like knowing one’s birthday, was proof of legitimacy’.\(^7\)\(^5\) Anniversary celebrations were reminiscent of English fairs and wakes transferred to Swan River during the colony’s formative years, and included publicans’ booths, merchants selling their wares, popular games such as trying to catch a pig whose tail had been greased, climbing a greased pole to retrieve a hat, foot-racing, and wheeling a barrow blindfolded.

Fairs were popular in the industrial towns of England and offered a wide variety of entertainment easily accessible to all income levels, but the high concentration of working-class patrons in England caused problems for two reasons. Firstly, the evangelical middle class regarded fairs and their ancillary attractions as a threat to the moral virtues of the worker. Secondly, fairs already had a reputation for being rowdy owing to working-class patronage, and as a result of this many emerging political groups used fairs to present their radical views. However, the rise to power of the middle class opened permanent theatres to the budgets of the working class in London and made the theatre more accessible to all classes. This eventually rendered the large fair obsolete as either a venue for trade or entertainment by the end of the nineteenth century.\(^7\)\(^6\)

During the colony’s formative years, Perth celebrated anniversary day with horseracing, regattas and ancillary entertainment, but June’s inclement weather was the main cause of celebrations moving to the warmer months of March and April. Although some Perthsites celebrated anniversary day, the impact and meaning behind the occasion was felt more so in labouring class Fremantle. A good example of this was in June 1854
when the *Perth Gazette* reported ‘the Foundation of the colony was passed over yesterday in Perth without the slightest demonstration of rejoicing’.\(^7\) Consequently, the focus of attention was on Fremantle and its citizens as well as visitors from the outlying areas celebrating the colony’s birthday with horseracing and regatta events, auxiliary entertainment, and drinking and dining in the town’s taverns and hotels. Fremantle’s celebrations emphasised the class difference between the two towns: the one, an ambitious, commercially expanding, thriving working-class port and town with a sense of working-class pride and tradition; Perth on the other hand, was more middle class and decorous. Unlike other Australian capital cities, Perth was physically separated from its port and owing to this separation the town was socially and economically dissimilar from Fremantle. Hence, Fremantle and Perth evolved into separate distinct communities.

In June 1879, however, both Fremantle and Perth celebrated the colony’s fiftieth (Jubilee) anniversary in traditional carnival style with horseracing and entertainment booths, and various sports open to all its citizens. Further reports confirm that in Fremantle money was distributed to children and in the evening colonial mingling continued when a free ball was organised for the residents of Fremantle and Perth also. At colonial sporting occasions and anniversary celebrations most colonists experienced common enjoyment, but social niceties were still observed. But the social and economic dichotomy on which Swan River was founded still existed when members of the Municipal Councils and their guests were invited to Government House.\(^7\)

There is an abundance of evidence to indicate dinners, banquets and balls continued to be a popular attraction at Government House. Most were arranged to celebrate the colony’s anniversary or royal birthdays and attendance was by invitation only. In January
1878, for example, Alfred Hillman received an invitation from Governor Sir Harry St. George Ord and his wife to dine at Government House. In the following December, Hillman was again invited to a garden party at Government House. He recorded that the occasion was ‘very pleasant, the old people do all they can to make their guests comfortable and happy’. In June 1879, however, the social conventions so prominent in Hillman’s life were strained after Miss Amy (Leake), who was staying with Hillman and his family, did not arrive home from a Government House ball until ‘nearly four’ in the morning. In May 1881, Governor Sir William Cleaver Francis Robinson and his family invited the gentry and members of the middle class to Government House to celebrate the sixty-second birthday of Queen Victoria. Three months later, Governor Robinson held a vice-regal fancy-dress ball and invited the Lefroy, Burgess and Clifton families and other well-to-do colonists. In June 1883, roles were reversed when Fremantle’s ‘merchant princes’ organised a banquet on behalf of Governor Sir Frederick Napier Broome to confirm and support his new government.

**DRINKING.**

One of the many problems in Victorian Britain, and indeed at Swan River, was the social effects of drinking. Consequently, the first temperance movement was established at Swan River in 1838. The colony’s drinking problems continued throughout the 1840s, even though Governor Hutt attempted to redress the situation by reinforcing British legislation regarding the use of spirits to fortify wines. These measures failed to ease the colony’s drinking problems and coroners’ records during this period indicate many ‘deaths by drowning’ and ‘death by misadventure’ occurring after drinking sessions. Evidence suggests that from 1850 onwards, the number of pubs increased dramatically, and
subsequent legislation by Governor Sir Arthur Kennedy to reduce their numbers failed. Governor Kennedy’s calculations in 1856 show there was a public house for every eighty male adult inhabitants in the colony. The problem confronting Governor Kennedy’s campaign was a natural one; the colony’s Mediterranean climate and the hard work associated with pioneering witnessed a substantial number of colonists drinking alcohol. Hence, the problem of excessive drinking in the colony continued unchecked throughout the nineteenth century.

Temperance societies fought the good fight, but drinking was part of the colony’s psyche. Alfred Hillman’s suggestion that working men’s clubs should be established ‘where members could have amusements provided and be able to get their glass of grog or beer more would be done towards getting down drunkenness than all the Good Templar proceedings’ was probably closer to the mark. Not only were publicans’ booths a familiar feature at fairs and sports events, but the public house or tavern was as common as they were in England’s landscape. What is more, once bottled beer was introduced colonists enjoyed a drink at home, and the power of advertising in the press was evident when the Stanley Brewery recommended their ales to publicans and colonists alike. As early as 1850, the brewery’s efforts to attract clientele included bartering by offering their clients the option of alcohol in lieu of payment by cash for malting barley and good quality wheat. Undaunted, the temperance movement continued its campaign, and by June 1863, the movement obtained further support with the formation of ‘The City Band of Hope’, an organisation founded on the principles of educating young colonists who were addicted to excessive drinking. The movement gathered momentum and on the eve of their first anniversary meeting in July 1864, membership totaled three hundred people.
Drinking and sport continued to complement each other and the public house and hotel remained a focal point for colonial entertainment. Many new premises opened and several publicans and hoteliers economically diversified by investing in various securities to lessen the risk of loss. Patrick Marmion, owner of the ‘Emerald Isle’ at Fremantle, was a good example of economic diversification, selling hosiery, haberdashery, clothing, boots and shoes, tire iron, cart arms, paints, oils, vinegar, mustard, and pepper on his premises, and supplying ships with fresh meat and vegetables, live sheep and poultry, firewood, water and ballast.  

The well to do women of the gentry or middle-class enjoyed wine at home, but for most colonists social decorum advocated good behavior. There is evidence, however, that women who were habitually drunk were known as ‘posted drunkards’, and landlords were forbidden by law to serve them. It seems more than likely, that these women were single and came from a labouring class background. The *Perth Gazette* reported in January 1862 that up to 25% of drink cases heard by Police Magistrates involved women. However, evidence points to the gentry suffering from the effects of alcohol also. Alfred Hillman reveals in his diary that the wife of Henry Maxwell Lefroy, Annette, was admitted to the Fremantle lunatic asylum in February 1879 owing to excessive bouts of drinking. Working-class women, especially those who were married with children, probably drank very little owing to their domestic responsibilities and working as servants or shop assistants where contact with the well to do was the daily norm. Consequently, women became more acculturated to the gentry and the middle-class cult of domesticity than their husbands.
HOME ENTERTAINMENT AND THE GENTRY.

The colony’s gentry replicated the old ways of English rural life and, as such, they were connected with the conventions and refinements of life similar to those characters associated with Jane Austen’s England. Like the characters in Austen’s novels, they were a close knit assembly of friends and neighbours influenced by gentlemanly pleasures, courtship and marriage, and the education of their children. The economic and social position in colonial society was such that after William Dalgety Moore’s second marriage to Annie Gallop (the daughter of fruit dealer James Gallop) Hillman refers to the ‘blue blood’ of the Moore family in his diary, which suggests Moore married beneath his social status. A similar situation occurred when Annette Lefroy was admitted to Fremantle’s lunatic asylum owing to her daughter, Bessie, marrying Augustus De Burgh, a farmer.

Certain homes belonging to Perth’s gentry took on an Austenesque appearance. The Shenton’s Rose Hall on Perth’s St. Georges’ Terrace, for example, contained beautiful terraced gardens that fell away towards the Swan River, and their Crawley home was located on what is now the University of Western Australia. William Brockman’s mansion at Henley Park, which was located in the upper Swan River area and Anthony Lefroy’s Cambray, identified these people as landed proprietors.

Visiting friends was conventional and like George Moore in the 1830s, Hillman walked considerable distances to visit his friends also. Visits to friends and family were often obligatory (especially after church on Sunday), which included invitations to tea, dining in the evening, conversing, playing cards or lottery, and listening to music played on the piano. Music was a fashionable way of entertaining guests and on several occasions Hillman recalls the operatic voice of Attorney-General Alexander C. Onslow, who often
complemented such occasions with his after dinner singing. In 1878, Hillman visited the Monger household on Good Friday and was entertained by several guests, including Mr. Needham, who was ‘a first rate amateur musician’; Miss Gordon, who ‘sang very well’ and Edgar Sendey, who was ‘splendid in a comic song’. It was not uncommon for the gentry to visit more than one household in a day. In May 1878, for instance, Hillman and his family had ‘breakfast at Venn’s, dinner at Forrest’s, and tea at Clifton’s’.  

Class, education and good lineage were important to members of the Swan River gentry, because marriages were about money and many were arranged to keep families of similar wealth and milieu together. Hence, it was considered important to take a second wife or husband if the first one died. Such arrangements tempered loneliness and economic misfortune if too many children were left with the surviving spouse. It was also considered appropriate for the gentry to send their children back to England to be educated, whereupon most boys went to public schools and young ladies continued their education at private finishing schools.

STATE AND PRIVATE EDUCATION, AND THE MECHANICS’ INSTITUTIONS.

The first colonial school was established by John Burdett Wittenoom in 1830 with the assistance of Governor Stirling and the support of a small subsidy. Although the school successfully catered for up to forty children it failed in 1839 owing to the withdrawal of the grant. From then on, most education was based on home tuition and private endeavour. Although the colony was experiencing economic fluctuations during the 1830s, the Perth Gazette reminded the colony’s governing body that a proper education system should be implemented to attract settlers from better social backgrounds. The argument was given additional impetus in 1841 when a correspondent, Philomathes, advocated a better system.
of education or the colony would become a ‘degraded race’.\textsuperscript{99} However, the problem continued and by 1843, the \textit{Inquirer} further reminded the colony that education ‘unseals the fountains of all that is generous, ennobling and valuable in human nature’.\textsuperscript{100} To make matters worse, a growing conflict between Catholics and Protestants was emerging in the colony that was to have a bearing on colonial education.

In 1845, the Roman Catholic order of the ‘Sisters of Mercy’ established a school in Perth against the backdrop of a Protestant society. At this moment in time a growing conflict surfaced between government and Catholic colonials over education grants and, as a result, both Governor Andrew Clarke and Acting Governor Frederick Chidley Irwin took measures to re-establish colonial schools in 1846 and 1847.\textsuperscript{101} Irwin had already been appointed Acting Governor after Governor Stirling left the colony to visit England in 1832, and again in 1847, following Governor Andrew Clarke’s sudden death. In that year, Irwin created the General Board of Education.\textsuperscript{102} As a result of Irwin’s efforts elementary schools for boys and girls were opened and a central administrative committee was formed under the chairmanship of John Wittenoom. By the end of 1847, six government schools existed in Perth, Guildford, Fremantle, Albany and York, and by 1855, the number of schools had doubled and the school population had trebled.\textsuperscript{103}

A report by the education board in 1855, announced that a policy should be adopted to accommodate a higher class of education similar to a good English grammar school.\textsuperscript{104} This was approved by Governor Fitzgerald but rejected by Governor Arthur Kennedy, who declared the scheme to be ‘too grand for the wants of the colony’ and too expensive. Governor Kennedy advocated a ‘plain and practical education…available to those only who (were) unable through poverty to pay’. Anything, according to Governor Kennedy,
exceeding this minimum was to be left to private enterprise. As with previous governors, this suggests Governor Kennedy was more concerned with running the colony to extract maximum benefit at minimal cost to the British government. Hence, by 1856, the colonial school was based on all classes being ‘educated alike and together’, a decision which Francis Lochee, who had already established a mechanics’ institute in Perth (1851), agreed with owing to his stance on class education. Lochee, with one eye on the gentry, advocated that a person’s intellect and not his class will command greater respect.

Although colonial schools were established by the late 1850s, private tuition was readily available for those who were interested in furthering their education. There are no available records to show which particular group of colonists took advantage of private tuition. More likely than not, children from the professional-commercial middle class took advantage of this schooling before they embarked to England and her public school system. Three good examples confirm W. Peele offered piano and violin lessons; Tuition in the arts was obtainable on three evenings of the week from Alfred Grey, in Perth; and Mr. Coleman offered tuition ‘to any pupils who may be desirous of devoting a portion of their evenings to the study of the French and English languages’. Furthermore, colonists could purchase musical instruments such as the piano, violins, flutes, fifes and accordions as well as teach-yourself music books.

The Mechanics’ Institute had already been established in Hobart (1827), Sydney (1833), Newcastle (1835), Adelaide (1838) and Melbourne (1839). Consequently, Francis Lochee, who was lawyer editor of the \textit{Inquirer} and staunch supporter of literary societies, advocated the establishment of a mechanics’ institute in Perth, which opened in January 1851, with promises of financial support from the gentry.
In Fremantle, the mechanics’ institute came under the patronage of Charles Alexander Manning, who was a leading landowner, merchant and visionary. Manning was chairman of the Fremantle Trust, Consul for France, a Captain in the Fremantle Volunteer Rifle Corps, Director of the West Australian Bank and honorary member of the Working Men’s Association. He had ‘Manning’s Folly’, which was a huge mansion built with the idea of using it as a sanatorium, and suggested decimal currency a hundred years before it was introduced in Australia.\textsuperscript{112}

The principles behind the mechanics’ institute were the improvement of the working class and the rehabilitation of convicts. However, the Swan River institute in Perth was patronised by the middle-class and their sponsors rather than the working man for whose benefit they were supposedly formed. But unlike its Perth counterpart, the Fremantle branch, more socially aware of convictism and the importance given to such institutions regarding rehabilitation, enrolled convicts from the onset. There is no evidence to suggest working-class men used the mechanics’ institute as a platform for rising to positions of leadership in Perth or Fremantle. Further institutes were eventually established throughout the colony in Albany (1853), York and Busselton (1861), Guildford (1862), Greenough (1865), and Northam and Newcastle (Toodyay) in 1866.\textsuperscript{113}

The public were admitted free of charge to a curriculum containing a number of lectures covering diverse topics such as astronomy, Egyptology, political economy, microscope (biology) and gardening. The most popular classes were chess and discussion, but rules governing the mechanics’ institute generally prohibited the discussion of current politics, although the discussion group at the Swan River Mechanics’ Institute gave the carpenter Joseph Chester the opportunity to express his views on theoretical topics such as
the nature of liberty and the merits of republicanism.\textsuperscript{114}

In Perth, proposals to build a library, a hall and discussion rooms at Howick Street was completed at the end of 1852, giving the residents of Perth the opportunity to use the facilities.\textsuperscript{115} The mechanics’ institute was the first important step towards educating and enlightening all adults at Swan River during the nineteenth century, and became the cornerstones for future TAFE colleges and universities in Western Australia.

**BOOKS.**

The reading of books prior to the 1850s was a hobby taken up by the gentry, who formed majority memberships in book societies such as the Western Australian Book Society, the Swan River Lending Society, and the Perth Book Club. Although there are no tangible records to indicate contemporary literary preferences, many press advertisements suggest there was a diverse range of reading material available from book societies and book auctions. However, during the formative years of the colony very few members of the labouring class were literate.

During the 1840s, two prominent booksellers F. Mangles & Co., and L. and W. Samson organised popular auctions for colonists who could afford to buy books.\textsuperscript{116} By the early 1850s, bookselling was firmly established at Swan River and, by 1853, Arthur Shenton of St. George’s Terrace was selling a variety of books, including novels by Sir Walter Scott and Henry James, and the poetry of Byron, Shelley and Keats.\textsuperscript{117} During the mid-1850s, however, colonists were given the opportunity to obtain reading material through the benefits of mail order purchasing when Smith Elder and Co., of London and East India exported books and periodicals to all parts of the world, including Australia.\textsuperscript{118} The purchasing of books was a small, but profitable growth industry, and by 1860 both
Arthur Shenton and the press were regularly informing readers of their latest editions to arrive by sea.  

**NEWSPAPERS.**

Prior to the completion of the telegraph line to South Australia in 1877, the press gleaned the latest English news and literary offerings by way of an expensive and highly selective, and sketchy cable system of communication. Consequently, local newspapers continued their long established practice of reprinting news from British and colonial journals and newspapers delivered to the colony by sea. Primarily, the colonial press served as an avenue for advertising until reporting evolved and local and international news was printed. By then, the newspaper had become the cultural centre of learning, not only publishing the works of Charles Dickens, Thomas Hughes and William Shakespeare, but encouraging local literary talent, who presented poetry and many short stories.

However, Fremantle’s *Herald* was constantly open to vilification from the gentry whose conservatism sharply contrasted with the paper’s controversial traditions of radical journalism. The *Herald* was edited by William Beresford, James Pearce and James Roe, three men of journalistic talent who shared ‘liberal, independent, and forthright views’. One of the paper’s editors, William Beresford, published a weekly article entitled ‘Chips by a Sandal-wood Cutter’. It first appeared in February 1867, and has since been considered a significant landmark in colonial literature. Beresford came from a notable old Anglo-Irish family, numbered among the most influential and powerful of the Protestant Ascendancy, who controlled Ireland between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. A graduate of Dublin’s Trinity College in 1824, Beresford was appointed Protestant rector of Inniscara, County Cork. However, Beresford committed a fraudulent
act, and after being found guilty, was transported to Swan River in 1858.123

In February 1867, Beresford, with another ex-convict ex-clergyman, James Roe, and the self-educated emancipist James Pearce, published the Herald. The position of all three journalists was one of critical and sometimes radical disrespect for the gentry of Swan River. Beresford’s stance was one of sympathy towards the plight of the aborigines and poverty in general, and critical of those colonists who found their way into the upper echelons of Swan River society by virtue of possessing wealth. Hence, the paper took up the fight for the worker against the employer, the farmers against the town’s merchants, colonial officialdom, and anybody who was in opposition to the ruling clique at Government House. It was a newspaper written for those who wished to protest at some aspect of the status quo in the colony.124

Beresford, however, is best remembered for his levity as a columnist after creating the persona of ‘chips’ an illiterate ‘Old Sandalwood Cutter’. ‘Chips’ reflected upon and criticised the social structure of the colony, often delighting Beresford’s poorer and less educated readers whilst his witty malapropisms entertained his more literate ones.125 Fremantle’s merchant princes and their self-aggrandisement often came under Beresford’s microscope with humiliating results. He declared Fremantle’s storekeepers’ ‘were once poor enough, but now, my eye, they has shops and horses and lands and some of ‘em has got so exalted that you need a very high ladder to reach ‘em’.126 Politicians came under his watchful eye also, as for instance, after the 1871 elections Beresford referred to Edward Newman as the ‘pratin’’ member and William Moore, ‘silent will’ in a published stanza after both were elected for representative government:

Fremantle I hate and detest
with its tunnel, its prison, and hill.
One pratin’ member’s a pest,
the other well dubbed ‘silent will’.  

Beresford was noted for his bluntness on many occasions, as for example, after he criticised the arrangements made by acting governor Colonel John Bruce for the visit of Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh. Although there are no tangible records to confirm this, Beresford was probably correct in assuming the gentry used the occasion for themselves rather than the colony as a whole. According to Beresford, more colonists should have been given the opportunity to meet the Duke. Subsequently, John Ferguson in a letter to his daughter, Helen, defended Colonel Bruce, who came ‘in for a large share of most unmerited abuse from a large section of the Colonists, for not having done what it was quite impossible for any man to do’.  

John Ferguson, a good friend of Colonel Bruce, remarked, ‘but it matters little what a person of Beresford’s stamp can say—he was a most disreputable member of a highly respected Irish family and sent out here free for his country’s good’.  

After criticising Governor Hampton on numerous occasions for his public works programmes, Beresford came to the conclusion that he (Hampton) was not as trifling a character as Governor Frederick Weld. At least, Beresford stated, Governor Hampton was ‘more accessible’.  

The years after 1880 saw considerable changes in the ownership and publication of colonial newspapers owing to Lewis and Horace Stirling, who were already the proprietors and editors of the Inquirer, launch the Daily News, Perth’s first daily paper in 1882. The Stirling brothers later acquired the Herald in 1886. Their rival newspaper, the Western Australian Times (Formerly the Perth Gazette), reinvented itself and became known as the West Australian in 1885. Politically speaking, the Daily News advocated self-government whereas the West Australian, under the editorship and part ownership of John Winthrop
Hackett, was more conservative. \textsuperscript{131}

**CHARITABLE WORK.**

Poverty was endemic in industrial England during the nineteenth century and given Swan River was founded on the principle that money would make money it is not hard to visualise the colony’s economic philosophy after 1829. Consequently, as the colony grew poverty at Swan River became a major social concern. Poverty had (has) many causes, but during the nineteenth century the working class were caught in economic cycles that caused social and personal despair. At Swan River, the gentry thought poverty was self-inflicted amongst the labouring class owing to excessive drinking.

In 1834, English society experienced the passing of the controversial Poor Law (Amendment) Act that primarily sought to help those who were unable to work owing to old age and infirmity. What the act did achieve was abolishing the Speenhamland System of local dole rates and simultaneously punish the able-bodied pauper and their families who took advantage of the system. The political and social policy of the act meant that if the poor needed subsistence they went to the workhouse and worked under strict and humiliating supervision or found work, however hard and poorly paid. Such political and social philosophy was transferred from England to Swan River with the indentured servant signing a contract of servitude for five to seven years (these contracts were annulled in 1831). Therefore, the gentry nurtured a natural instinct for self-help and hard work; a philosophy upheld by applying the English Master and Servants Act of 1842. This act applied to servants who breached their contracts and carried a penalty of three months in prison with hard labour. It was a rich man’s law and remained trenchant until 1892. \textsuperscript{132}

Historically, working class self-preservation first came to prominence in 1850 with
the formation of the ‘Sons of Australian Benefit Society’ to protect members from unemployment caused by ill-health, or a downturn in the economy. In May 1862, the Western Australian Working Men’s Society was formed for social and cultural reasons rather than industrial aims, making it apparent that a sense of working-class solidarity had not yet emerged at Swan River. However, the growth of the trade union movement occurred in the 1870s when a boom in lead and copper mining and the discovery of high quality pastoral land gave Governors Sir William Robinson and later Sir Napier Broome the opportunity to invest in railway and telegraph construction. Successful gold strikes in the Kimberleys, the Pilbara and at Yalgan in the 1890s provided an additional impetus to the eight hour movement formed in the mid-1880s and recognised in the early 1890s. Such industrial progress spread abroad the conviction that Western Australia had much to offer. However, women were more vulnerable than men during adverse economic cycles and therefore bore the brunt of hardship and neglect.

For women, the system of outdoor relief and the poor house was the only means of surviving. Evidence suggests that the authorities saw outdoor relief as an opportunity for colonists to exploit the system, because they had no control over how the recipient spent the allowance. This in turn, influenced the authority’s unwillingness and their preoccupation with the morality of granting relief. It was an argument based on the man being independent and the woman being dependent upon the man, which unfortunately shaped and forced through the Poor Relief Act of 1845. This act established women as dependent upon men and simultaneously placed them at the mercy of relatives who were possibly in a similar position of destitution. Consequently, the central problem for women was the unemployed husband and, worst of all, abandonment. This draconian act of 1845
was introduced during a period of economic depression and effectively minimised the financial responsibilities of the authorities.\textsuperscript{134} While records indicate very few single pregnant women were refused entry into the poor house, the written responses of the poor relief authorities often indicated a reluctance to admit women who had transgressed the boundaries of appropriate moral and sexual behaviour.\textsuperscript{135}

One early practical response towards eradicating poverty was the establishment of insurance and benefit societies to protect and insure investors in hard times. These societies grew out of the Methodist-inspired benefit clubs started in England during the eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{136} The first of these societies to be established at Swan River was the Perth Building Society in 1862, followed later by the Fremantle Benefit Society in 1875.\textsuperscript{137} Some benefit societies, however, were open to criticism, because they were run commercially rather than as a charity. Two notably examples were the Australian Mutual Provident Society (1889) and the Equitable Life Assurance Society of the United States (1890), who occasionally refused to pay-out compensation.\textsuperscript{138} Both societies argued against the right to pay compensation, but a vigorous and successful campaign by the \textit{West Australian} denounced both societies of fraudulently ‘gaining victory over the widow and fatherless’.\textsuperscript{139}

Another response, and a strong indication in the progress of English society, as indeed at Swan River, was the part played by organised charity groups and individuals. Such organisations were usually encouraged by governments, because they did not have to legislate for benefits. Thus, while economists and social theorists argued for a policy of \textit{laissez-faire} there was always the minority who campaigned to redress the social imbalance.
At Swan River, some members of the gentry nurtured a generous philosophy towards the desolate and destitute also. Several leading colonial philanthropists donated considerable amounts of money to the poor, particularly Ann Moore, who married Charles Wittenoom, a pastoralist and farmer; William Samson, the son of Lionel Samson, the merchant; Mary Higham, a merchant; Arthur James Diamond, a businessman, who played an important role in the development of football in Fremantle; William Marmion, who eventually took office in John Forrest’s administration; and the shipping and import export magnate, William Silas Pearse.¹⁴⁰

Charitable organisations were administrated by the female well-to-do, whose daily lives revolved around a Victorian social circle of charity. These people used their own leisure time to embark upon humanitarian work in times of economic turbulence and social change, and can be considered Swan River’s social security system in the nineteenth century. Monies were usually raised through bazaars, raffles, selling goods at tea-meetings and performing in concerts. For example, Governor Sir William Robinson, who was noted for his musical interests, supported a concert organised by the Dorcas Society§ for unfortunate women in November 1876.¹⁴¹ In July 1881, the Dorcas Society entertained 266 people at Government House, and raised over thirty seven pounds sterling towards their charities.¹⁴² Benevolence was not just confined to charitable organisations, as for example, the theatre and concert companies in Fremantle and Perth donated monies to various charities. In June 1876, after entertaining Governor Robinson and his wife on the Monday night, the Perth Working Men’s Choral Society repeated their performance on Tuesday night with the proceeds being donated to the survivors of the victims of the Gem and

§ The Dorcas Society was founded in 1868 by Mary Hampton (Governor Hampton’s wife) and Mary Moore. Named after a mythological Greek woman famous for her charitable work.
In January 1881, a visiting Austrian band distributed one half of the proceeds from their farewell concert to charitable institutions in Perth and Fremantle. There are many examples in the press of other institutions which raised money for the poor and the orphans, notably the Sisters of Mercy (Perth) and the Sisters of St. Joseph (Fremantle). The importance of charitable organisations can never be underestimated and by raising monies ‘these women exercised a perceived patriarchal responsibility for the highest in the social stratum to care for those beneath them’.

**PICNICS AND PROMENADE CONCERTS.**

In the colony’s formative years the gentry arranged and enjoyed picnics, but during the second half of the nineteenth century the labouring class was experiencing the joys and benefits of picnics. In October 1862, for example, Fremantle members of the Western Australian Working Man’s Association organised their first ‘Pic-Nic and Rural Amusements’ to Point Walter in Perth. Reports confirm members of the association and their families were entertained by the colony’s volunteer bands and the association’s choral society. In November 1867, school children from Fremantle, Perth and Guildford enjoyed a picnic organized by the colony’s inter-denominational clergy. Governor Hampton participated in the spirit of the occasion by waving the children off. Entries in the diary of Alfred Hillman suggest Perth’s beaches and the Swan River were popular places to have picnics. On Christmas Day 1877, for instance, Hillman noted in his diary that the ‘usual picnics and water parties’ took place on the Swan River.

During the summer months, the Perth community was entertained by the Metropolitan Band on Saturday afternoons at Stirling Gardens to a programme of waltzes, quadrilles, polkas and marches. A similarly pleasant scene was witnessed at Fremantle’s
Barrack Green (where Fremantle Oval now stands) to watch ‘moonlight’ manoeuvres and listen to the music of the Fremantle Volunteer Corps.\textsuperscript{149} It was an echo of urban England where the ‘band-stand’ was a prominent feature in parks at weekends and on public holidays. Occasionally, colonists were entertained by both the Fremantle and Perth volunteer bands, as for example, Fremantle visited Perth to accompany the Perth band on Monday evening ‘moonlight’ concerts.\textsuperscript{150} By the mid-1870s, the cool summer evenings prompted the Fremantle Volunteer Band to organise moonlight excursions to Perth. In Perth itself, the promenade concert became a popular and regular feature with most colonists by the late 1870s. For instance, in February 1879, Hillman noted that the concerts on offer were ‘very nice and the music was good’. According to Hillman the outdoor concert was ‘getting popular’ and much ‘better than being glued to a chair in one place all evening’.\textsuperscript{151} The abundance of evidence available suggests the volunteer bands from Fremantle and Perth made a significant contribution towards entertaining the colony, and were often seen and heard at most sporting events, balls, dinners and anniversary celebrations from the 1860s onwards. However, picnics and promenade concerts took on greater significance with the planning and building of gardens and parks.

**BOTANIC GARDENS, RECREATIONAL GROUNDS AND PARKS.**

The role and significance of botanic gardens was three fold. They were seen as scientific centres for botanical exchange (exchanging seeds with other colonies and governments); growing produce for local and national markets (economic botany); and, like parks, furthered a socially acceptable recreational activity for colonists. The significance of the botanical garden was aimed at creating a passive, recreational atmosphere of law and order that would morally up-lift all colonists. The style and lay-out
of colonial landscape gardening in Australia was adopted from the English Victorian era of smooth lawns and exotic flora; an environment that encouraged the English ‘band-stand’.

Like parks, botanic gardens were noticeable features in the eastern colonies and many early gardens were an attempt to recreate a ‘Garden of Eden’. Given that Governor Stirling thought the colony was reminiscent of an enchanted garden, he appointed James Drummond, who was well connected in Britain’s horticultural circles, as Colonial Naturalist to establish a nursery at Government House and introduce plants and trees from the Royal Horticultural Society and the Cork Botanic Gardens into Swan River.152

The concept of a botanic garden in Perth has (had) a turbulent history. In the late 1830s, the land adjacent to Government Domain (administration offices) became the colony’s first botanical garden (where Stirling Gardens is now). However, this was considered too small and a second site at Claise Brook was proposed, but this too had shortcomings owing to government mismanagement and the collapse and failure of the silk worm farms.153 After 1878, Claise Brook became a nursery for the Perth Council, but owing to a lack of finances the project was abandoned until the early 1960s.

During the second half of the century members of the Perth public voiced their concerns over the establishment of a botanical garden. For example, several indignant letters were sent to the press after a grant of two hundred pounds was awarded by the Legislature for a botanical garden at the recreational centre known as the Government Domain and river-side grounds (Stirling Gardens) in May 1884.154 A botanical garden in Stirling Gardens was considered ‘the height of folly’ by Citizen, and Another Citizen argued the gardens should be used as a place of public recreation and not as a botanical garden.155 Topographically, the area was unsuitable for such a project owing to a lack of
water (lake or reservoir) and no shelter from the south and west winds, which botanical
gardens need. Both Citizen and Another Citizen recommended the ‘Third Swamp’ (where
Hyde Park is now) as an area suitable for a botanic garden. But the editor of the West
Australian, John Winthrop Hackett, argued that although the ‘Third Swamp’ was ideally
situated the small sum of money given to undertake such a project was not sufficient to
meet the demands for improving the area. However, the main problem for the citizens of
Perth was the absence of recreational land in or near the town centre.

RECREATIONAL GROUNDS.

One major recreational problem for the citizens of Perth was a piece of land for the
purpose of playing sport or pursuing other leisure time activities. Since the 1840s, the
cricket fraternity continuously petitioned council members for a portion of land for the
purpose of playing cricket. The city council, keen to ‘encourage moral amusements and
manly sports’, donated the Old Recreation Ground (now Wellington Square) for
recreational purposes. However, this piece of land was continually exposed to military
parades, brass bands and grazing animals, and considered too far away from the town
centre. It was a major bone of contention for Perthites and the Perth Cricket Club, who
petitioned the press on several occasions with letters of appeal on the subject. For example,
correspondence from Cricketer, who was a member of the Perth Cricket Club, suggested a
‘moderate supply’ of convict labour would accomplish the feat.

In May 1864, proposals to establish a recreation ground between the jetties of
William Street and Barrack Street was discussed by the Perth Council, but problems over
cost and labour shortages postponed decisions on the subject. The campaign was given
further support in 1866 owing to the press suggesting liberal subscriptions, convict labour,
help from ‘public spirited citizens’ as well as land-fill projects between the two jetties, but to no avail. The major stumbling-block was Governor Hampton, who possessed a Macquarie-like passion for public works and his use of convict labour to achieve his goals. Consequently, the press warned residents of Perth that their proposals were futile unless Governor Hampton gave his approval for such a project. Unfortunately, Governor Hampton refused to invest money and labour in recreational facilities. Several proposals were put forward over the ensuing years, but without much success. However, in April 1879, the *West Australian* announced that the Perth Council was making contingencies to develop land between the jetties of Barrack Street and William Street (now the Esplanade) for the sole purpose of developing recreational activities. This project was successfully completed in time for the colony’s jubilee anniversary in June of that year.

**PARKS.**

The morality behind the creation of parks was a legacy of the Victorian age that served to alleviate the cramped and confined conditions of working-class ghettos in the large industrial cities of Britain. Unlike Britain, where parks were brief avenues of escape for the working-class, colonists at Swan River had ample opportunity to experience the ‘bush’ in relative proximity. Nevertheless, although such industrial conditions did not prevail at Swan River, the general idea was to introduce all colonists to a cultural and educational experience that took on-board the moral benefits of horticulture.

In the early eastern colonies, settlers and administrators believed there was no great intrinsic beauty in the Australian landscape, and where ever possible the environment in both town and home should be improved so as to replicate those of the mother country. Two years after the Swan River Colony was settled Governor Stirling and John Septimus
Roe had the foresight to select an area (now King’s Park) for the pleasure of all colonists. Roe, an enthusiastic horticulturist and scientist, planted most of the large trees which now grace Government Gardens. In 1872, with an eye to the future, Governor Frederick Weld and Surveyor General Malcolm Fraser formally gazetted 175 hectares of the 1831 reserve for a public park.

In August 1890, whilst the Bill to grant Western Australia responsible government was receiving Queen Victoria’s assent, John Forrest, as Commissioner of Crown Lands, advocated the reservation of all available lands on Mt. Eliza for the use of a public park. The colony was on the threshold of a new era fuelled by the 1890s gold rush that would transform the social character of a once isolated Swan River community. Consequently, suburban development increased and a rise in population saw the formation of tent cities and makeshift housing in Subiaco, Claremont, Cottesloe and Fremantle. The flourishing colony with its new found wealth and status, and a government committed to creating a society suffused with cultural, educational and recreational facilities to supplement the growing economic boom, pressed home the prospects of a resplendent one thousand acre park of natural bush land.

ROLLER-SKATING.

Roller-skating can rightly be described as another leisure time activity rather than a sport. Unlike ice-skating, which developed into a sport, roller-skating was a pleasurable pastime that encouraged colonial mingling, especially amongst the working class. In November 1876, the Herald proclaimed ‘about the last place in the world where we should expect to hear of a skating rink would be Western Australia’. Initially, roller-skating

** In July 1901, the park was renamed King’s Park, and to this day the people of Perth and its surrounding suburbs visit the park at weekends or on one of the several public holidays of the year.
gave the gentry and the commercial-professional class a further opportunity to organise and administer another leisure time activity. Like tennis, skating was introduced to the colony in November 1876 at Government House where an asphalt rink was established.\textsuperscript{168} Such was the novelty and attraction of roller-skating a private club was formed at Perth’s town hall in 1879 by members of the gentry and the middle-class, who included Earnest A. Lee Steere, a member of the affluent pastoral family with affiliations to the Turf Club, and Thomas Hills, an account and proprietor of the ‘Grosvenor Hotel’ in Perth. Like other previously formed clubs in the colony, the roller-skating club was exclusive with limited membership subject to committee approval.\textsuperscript{169} This stance manifested itself in other colonial sports’ clubs and societies, and was inspired as much by social and economic considerations as opposed to the love of the pastime for itself. For most colonists, the economic and social gap regarding membership to this exclusive club was pointed out by the \textit{W.A. Times} in May 1879, which stated that ‘it would prove a source of enjoyment during the winter months to those that were fortunate enough to secure the privilege of \textit{entrée}.’\textsuperscript{170} The club’s exclusivity was not lost on Alfred Hillman in October 1878, who confirmed that prior to a fancy dress ball at the mechanics’ institute members of the gentry and the middle class met at the town hall and skated for two hours.\textsuperscript{171} In the short term, the roller-skating club was reserved for the few and there is no evidence to suggest how long the club existed. In the long term, however, interest associated with the activity increased after the press notified the general public of a ‘new form of amusement’ in 1888.\textsuperscript{172}

In July 1888, the general public witnessed the opening of a roller-skating rink at the Oddfellows Hall in Fremantle. The proprietors were A.W. Armstrong, owner of the ‘Commercial Hotel’ in Fremantle, and S.F. Sandiford, who was an accomplished rinker.\textsuperscript{173}
Four months later the citizens of Perth enjoyed the pleasure of skating owing to Richard Septimus Haynes visualising the economic advantages of transforming a section of the town hall into a skating rink. Haynes was a lawyer, who became a representative of the Legislative Council for Geraldton, Mayor of North Perth and Consul for Norway.

Roller-skating became a central feature for communal integration in both Fremantle and Perth owing to the low cost of admission, equipment being cheap to hire and the absence of club membership fees. Consequently, it was an activity that appealed more to the working class than any other class. In Fremantle and Perth, for instance, it provided pleasure for couples and families, who skated to the music of the volunteer bands. There is no evidence to suggest gambling was present, and if it did exist, it would have been spontaneous. However, entrepreneurial forces were on hand with the introduction of ‘staggered speed skating’ over a given distance for prizes of one pound upwards to five pounds that attracted many contestants. In one particular race, for example, Mr. Wilkinson started from scratch, B. Hurst received the advantage of one and one-half laps of the rink, and P.J. Hussey received a charitable eight laps start, which he took full advantage of by finishing second to Wilkinson.

The very nature of roller-skating produced injuries to those who were not coordinated or skilled in the art. For example, Mrs. Luke Leake slipped and broke her wrist whilst skating at Government House in November 1876. Once the Fremantle and Perth rinks commenced business, the health and safety of customers was observed by allowing the more experienced skaters to operate in the central areas of the rink, whilst the inexperienced circumnavigated the rink’s wall.
SWIMMING.

Swimming in the nineteenth century was a pastime that differed greatly from modern day competitive swimming. Today, children learn to swim at school or at the local swimming club, and some later develop as professional swimmers through local, national and international competitions. Competitive swimming first appeared in Greek and Roman times, but modern day swimming in Europe did not take off until the last quarter of the nineteenth century. At Swan River, the art of swimming was slow to develop and therefore not categorised as a sport, but considered more of an ornamental pastime where a person enjoyed bathing in a leisurely fashion and simultaneously appreciate the benefits of personal hygiene.

However, although many male colonists indulged in bathing, the major social and moral problem was naked bathing which aggravated Victorian morality espoused by the authorities. What was firmly entrenched in Australia’s Victorian society was the idea of correct social behaviour and morality amongst bathing men in the presence of women. Men were stronger whilst women were petite, graceful and frail, attributes that complemented their reproductive function and role in life. But the hot days and cool evenings of the west Australian summer, and the isolated beaches along the immediate coast-line and rivers encouraged naked bathing. However, once Fremantle and Perth expanded, naked bathing created problems of impropriety and morality that prompted official intervention and, as a result naked bathing was virtually outlawed in the metropolitan areas. Women enjoyed bathing, but larrikin misbehaviour created a socially intolerable situation until the introduction of sea bathing houses and beach segregation in the mid-1870s. As early as February 1872, Perth Council forbade persons
from bathing near the jetties. However, there were exceptions, as for instance, bathing was tolerated at Perth’s Barrack Street pier before 7-00am and after 7-00pm. In February 1874, larrikins bathing at Barrack Street outraged public sensibility by their behavior, which according to the press, had reached ‘new heights’ in notoriety. Consequently, larrikin misbehaviour was one reason why bathing became respectable. The point is, however, that larrikin misbehaviour was abnormal, and in 1880, the Legislative Council passed an act punishing disorderly conduct with up to six months in gaol for insulting passing females or making too much noise. By comparison, the behaviour of most colonists who went to the beach or swam in the rivers was decorous, if prudent.

The opening of a sea-bathing house in Fremantle in November 1874 presented women with an opportunity to bathe, but the price of admission and the opening times offered favoured the more ‘respectable citizens’ of Fremantle rather than the labouring class. The *West Australian Times* insisted swimming was ‘one of the healthiest and most manly of recreations’, advocating that Perth’s council should also accommodate ‘the bathing Briton’. If anything, sea bathing houses and segregated enclosures offered women the pleasure of removing their clothing in private before entering the water. Unlike the sleek modern day swimming costumes, nineteenth-century costumes (smock-frocks) were burdensome and absorbed the water, but by the 1870s, bathing fashions allowed women to wear short-legged cotton costumes without pants, similar to what male bathers were wearing. The male orientated sports such as athletics, rowing and cycling imposed strict social constraints upon women participating. Yet, the sea bathing house and segregation legitimised women’s swimming, because it did not threaten the male dominant sporting hierarchy owing to it creating the impression little effort and exertion was used in
the water.\textsuperscript{185}

Over the years many irate letters to the press voiced their opinions on the availability of swimming facilities in Perth. For example, in December 1874, a correspondent in a meticulously detailed letter suggested a floating bathing house, replete with building plans, measurements and materials needed to accomplish the task.\textsuperscript{186} However, such lateral thinking went unrewarded, but the concept did not escape some influential members of society, notably Alfred Hillman, who recommended a bathing house in January 1878 also.\textsuperscript{187} Hillman was a keen swimmer and several entries in his diary indicate this, as for example, in January 1879, he went swimming at the Point on Melville Waters with several friends from his place of work.\textsuperscript{188} In February 1879, the \textit{W.A. Times} published a letter written by \textit{Physic}, who accused the Perth council of deliberately delaying decisions regarding propriety and cleanliness, suggesting a bathing area adjacent to Coles Jetty should be made available during regulated hours.\textsuperscript{189} After much debating regarding costs and location, the Perth council commissioned the building of a public baths in 1884 on what is now the Esplanade in Perth.\textsuperscript{190} Such facilities, however, were not readily available for many colonists, who by now had the advantage of wearing the latest bathing fashions. The cost, low as it was, deterred working-class children from making regular use of the baths in the summer. Instead, many children were tempted to swim in the sea and the Swan River, or at Crawley Bay.\footnote{Unlike modern day swimming baths, public baths in nineteenth-century Swan River were constructed by cordoning off the area with ropes or nets to protect bathers. A good example of this can still be seen in part on the beach that runs parallel with Mounts Bay Road near the Old Swan Brewery. A figure of a bathing woman replete with costume and hat stands in the water, signifying the location of Crawly Baths.}

Although swimming races took place on the Swan River, evidence suggests most challenges were sporadic and came mostly from crew members of visiting ships. In
October 1873, for instance, C. H. Harrod, who was a crew member of *Hawk*, issued a swimming challenge to any member of the public from Fremantle or Perth for a prize of five pounds on any chosen water. Much to the annoyance of the *Perth Gazette*, who tried to encourage members of the public to compete against Harrod, nobody took up the challenge.191 A further example was in January 1889, when two swimmers from England attracted a large number of spectators to Melville Waters to witness J. Whittle gain victory over A.E. Simpson for a prize of five pounds.192 Given the colony was situated on the coast with access to the sea and rivers, most colonists were aware of the dangers confronting children and adult bathers. As a result of this, colonists were given the opportunity to learn to swim when Carl Fuchs established a City Swimming School on the beach near Mt. Eliza, in January 1879.193 However, although there is no evidence to suggest what the cost of these swimming lessons were, enrolment was more likely to gain favour with the middle class rather than the working class. If anything, over the course of the summer months children, especially from the working class, probably taught themselves a rudimentary form of swimming. Like cricket, athletics, rugby and Australian football swimming became part of the school curriculum, and in December 1884, High School entertained their peers at the school’s inaugural swimming contest held at Crawley Bay.194

English Freemasonry had (has) always been the bastion and preserve of the Protestant male aristocracy since the eighteenth century. In eighteenth-century colonial Australia, Freemasonry was taken up by members of the New South Wales Corps, who attempted to form lodges in 1796 and 1803. But owing to the Irish rebellions and a revolutionary climate that was gripping Europe at the time, Governor Philip Gidley King
forbad further meetings for fear of revolutionary sentiments spreading throughout the corps.\textsuperscript{195}

At Swan River, Freemasonry was introduced by the gentry and influential businessmen, and membership to these lodges was governed by stringent codes. Consequently, very few, if any, working-class men were invited to become members of a lodge. The Freemasons were a strong, ‘elite’ institution bound by social and economic privilege that sought an instinctive understanding between its members. Several Masonic lodges were already established in Fremantle and Perth by the 1870s, notably the Perth Assembly; Good Templers; St. John’s; St. George’s lodge; the New Swan Lodge Manchester Union Independent Order of Oddfellows, and the Fremantle Lodge.\textsuperscript{196} However, like the theatre and concert, Freemasonry was open to ridicule from William Beresford and others. Upon Governor Sir Frederick Aloysius Weld’s arrival in the colony in 1869, Beresford sarcastically urged the governor, who was a Catholic that he should become a Mason, otherwise ‘it will be impossible to get on’.\textsuperscript{197} Another critic of the Freemasons was the businessman Joseph Thomas Reilly who, reminiscing on the subject of his early life was informed prosperity came with being a Mason.\textsuperscript{198} Reilly, like Governor Weld, was a Roman Catholic and therefore unable to join the Freemasons. During his life, Reilly observed on more than one occasion that nepotism was rife in government services and in order for anybody to secure promotion he had to ‘be a Mason’.\textsuperscript{199} Alfred Hillman was a Freemason, but over a period of time he took ‘very little active part in the ceremonies’. However, he did like ‘to put in an appearance occasionally’ owing to the ‘influence’ associated with membership.\textsuperscript{200}

Within their world of lodge meetings, high finance and exclusivity Freemasons’
balls and dinners were popular with those who wished to climb the colonial ladder. In September 1860, for instance, a Masonic ball accommodated two hundred people of ‘high colonial rank’. Masonic banquets were usually organised to celebrate the anniversary of a lodge and, more often than not, were honoured by the presence of governors and high ranking military personnel. For example, Governor Hampton and his son, George, who was Hampton’s private secretary also; Lieutenant-Colonel John Bruce; Lieutenant-Colonel John Molloy and Lieutenant-Colonial Edmund Henderson all attended the anniversary banquet of the Lodge of St. John No. 712 in December 1863. On some occasions the banquet was followed by a ball, as for instance, a banquet and ball was held at the ‘Horse and Groom’ in Perth to commemorate the anniversary of the City of Perth Lodge in February 1864.

THE WELD CLUB.

The gentlemen’s clubs in Perth and Fremantle were not as clandestine as the Freemasons, but they were still exclusive. Founded in 1871, the Weld Club was named in honour of Governor Weld, who was governor of Western Australia between 1869 and 1875. The prestige associated with the Weld Club meant colonial politics and business problems alike could be resolved within its walls. The ‘club’ was unique as a centre of sociability and to be admitted reflected social respectability and stature in colonial circles. As Phillip Mennell proudly remarked:

"Unique as a centre of sociability and once admitted to its somewhat exclusive portals you are admitted into pleasant contact with everybody who is anybody in the small capital of the largest colony."  

Furthermore, Gilbert Parker, a Canadian and a seasoned traveller of Australia, compared the Weld Club with the Australian Club in Sydney.  

"In December 1892, a new building was officially opened by Governor Sir William..."
Robinson. The ceremony reflected what had previously gone on before in the colony; a show of pomp and ceremony and social exclusiveness that other colonists were expected to accept and admire. A large number of people gathered to officially open a building which was sacrosanct to the gentry and the professional-commercial class only, making it impossible for most other colonists to obtain membership. Consequently, there is no evidence working-class men entertained the club owing to membership being costly and exclusive.\textsuperscript{206} Evidence suggests that such was the club’s prestige most active members resided outside Perth and Fremantle. For example, ninety-one members lived in Perth, twelve in Fremantle, seven in Albany, five on the goldfields and 612 in the country districts and the north west of the state.\textsuperscript{207} Socially affiliated to the Turf Club, the Weld Club was popular with pastoralists who resided at the club once the day’s race meeting had finished.

Following the opening of the club’s new premises in 1892, evidence illustrates the social and economic significance of the club. For example, a roll call of its membership reveals that twenty-one out of the thirty members of the Legislative Assembly were registered with the club, who included the President of the Legislative Council, the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly and all the members of Sir John Forrest’s Ministry.\textsuperscript{208} It was a male dominated club and women were allowed in on special occasions, but only in the company a member. Like the Freemasons, It was a gendered institution of significant social and commercial importance, especially for those who wanted the state to progress.

The Weld Club, however, was not without its detractors, as for example, at the May 1888 by-election for the constituency of Perth, John Horgan, a veteran Irish Catholic and radical lawyer, narrowly defeated the conservative Septimus Burt. Horgan ran a lively, vitriolic campaign denouncing the ‘six hungry families’\textsuperscript{‡‡} (hungry for land, money and power) who, he claimed, dominated west Australian society, dubbing the Weld Club a ‘pot house’.\textsuperscript{209}

\textsuperscript{‡‡} Horgan was probably referring to the Leake, Roe, Shenton, Burt, Lee Steere and Lefroy families.
THE FREMANTLE CLUB.

Very little is known about the history of the Fremantle Club owing to few records surviving. The club was probably established in 1885 when Alverenga’s Coffee Palace in Fremantle’s Henry Street was purchased by members of the town’s gentry. The club’s founder was William Marmion who, a year later, organised a dinner to celebrate the anniversary of the club.

Its fellowship was enjoyed by Fremantle’s merchant princes, who held power, status and wealth in that town. They included Michael Samson, the Pearse brothers, James Lilly, Arthur J. Diamond, T.W. Bateman, Jack Higham, William Moore and Lucius Manning. Like the Weld Club, there is evidence to suggest that a rigorous induction process was set up for those who wished to become members. Prospective members were proposed and seconded, and then accepted or rejected by members who had voting rights. Such was the club’s induction process with its strict rules that very few people in Fremantle had the opportunity to become a member. Consequently, few working-class men, if any at all, were invited to join.

On special occasions the club organised champagne lunches for members who were getting married, achieved a particular milestone in their lives, or were leaving the colony. In 1889, for example, Jack Higham received a farewell dinner at the club prior to departing for England. Visiting politicians from the eastern colonies were cordially invited and entertained by members of the club, prompting the West Australian to report that it was a ‘centre of good fellowship’. The Fremantle Club was patriarchal and limited newspaper reports suggest women did not attend any of its functions.

WOMEN’S CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE UNION OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA AND THE KARRAKATTA CLUB.

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century the improvement in the social status of women at Swan River was a continuing process. For example, the law compelling women to surrender property to their husbands was removed in 1892. In that same year, the
first female pressure groups came into existence with the formation of the Women’s Christian Temperance Movement, and in 1894, the Karrakatta Club was formed. Both clubs were inspired by visiting American women, notably Jessie Ackerman from the Second World Missionary of the American Union, and Dr. Emily Ryder.

The Women’s Christian Temperance Union of Western Australia was primarily dedicated to total abstinence in a society where alcoholism was prevalent among all classes. Both the Women’s Christian Union and the Karrakatta Club did have broader agendas and issues such as family values and social and political reform (women’s suffrage), which was prioritised owing to Lady Onslow and Lady Forrest’s involvement with both clubs.216

A ROYAL VISIT.

Having been received and entertained in the eastern colonies, Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh visited Fremantle and Perth in February 1869. Letters from Isabella Ferguson to her daughter, Helen, convey the anticipation and excitement generated throughout the colony by the Duke’s visit.217 Upon his arrival the Duke was entertained by acting-governor Colonel John Bruce and members of the gentry, and included a shooting match on the Swan River, a ball and supper for some 180 persons of ‘high colonial standing’ at Government House, and a cricket match.218

To mark the occasion, a cricket match was arranged between officers of the Galatea and a combined Fremantle-Perth cricket team, who won a one sided contest by ten wickets. The social composition of the Swan River cricket team reflected both the occasion and the status of its members. That is, colonial economic and political power united through membership of the Turf Club, the Perth Cricket Club, Freemasonry, and rank attained through nepotism, marriage and social status gave the occasion an air of exclusivity. Although some working-class cricketers were acknowledged as being the best players in the colony at this time none were involved in this particular game.219

During the period 1850 to 1890, the colony witnessed a process of cultural change
and greater economic prosperity than previously experienced. Against a backdrop of convictism and fluctuating economic cycles, a handful of colonists established modes of entertainment for residents in Fremantle and Perth. However, were there similar or dissimilar connections between Swan River and the eastern colonies?

The eastern colonies during this period experienced the gold rushes, substantial increases in population, and the growth of new towns. Similar circumstances transpired forty years later at Swan River in the 1890s, which transformed the colony’s fortunes at a time when the eastern colonies were undergoing an economic depression. Like the eastern colonies, the theatre continued to prove popular, but the theatre in the east attracted professional entrepreneurs and entertainers, and publicists and agents developed new forms of advertising. At Swan River, theatre and concert productions were performed by amateurs and were subject to financial and migratory problems. Concerts were an example of high cultural entertainment, receiving official patronage, and the first working-class choral society reflected changing attitudes towards a labouring class. Minstrelsy and vaudeville maintained its popularity in the east as well as in the west, and travelling shows and circuses were a popular attraction in the major cities, and at racing carnivals throughout the eastern colonies. However, given that the population of Swan River was small and scattered, travelling shows from the eastern colonies experienced economic hardship before returning home. Circuses were popular in the east and was an enjoyable attraction in the west, offering a variety of entertainment, including trapeze acts, clowns, and a menagerie of animals from Asia and Africa. Individual acts from the eastern colonies added another dimension to colonial entertainment, which brought further enjoyment to the residents of Swan River. Women in the eastern colonies, like those at Swan River, continued to be exploited owing to a narrow range of employment with low wages, especially in the domestic service industries. The railway not only opened up new towns in the east, but extended urbanisation, releasing further possibilities for sport and other leisure time activities to develop and expand. A similar situation occurred at Swan River when the
railway offered travel arrangements in conjunction with concerts. Bathing machines appeared on Sydney’s Coogee Beach and at Swan River also, and swimming pools were created in rivers, bays, harbours, and the sea. However, unlike at Swan River, competitive swimming emerged in the east at an early stage of settlement. Parks and gardens were established in the eastern colonies, which included recreational space for croquet lawns. Similar to Perth, the creation of public parks generated debate about what part of parks should be allocated to recreation and what should be devoted to sport. In all Australian colonies, the Sabbatarians justified their arguments for a religious society, and opposed everything Australians take for granted today. Not only was the public house an avenue to entertainment for the labouring class, they played an integral part in establishing social clubs and sporting associations throughout the period also. However, eastern publicans attracted clientele by establishing singing saloons, which evolved into music halls. The introduction of the mechanics’ institute in Perth and Fremantle paved the way for higher adult education, and together with private tuition encouraged literacy, stimulated further by a readily available supply of newspapers, periodicals and an abundance of imported books. The introduction of gentlemen’s clubs was gender orientated and, similar to those in the east, continued to reflect social and economic order. But, more importantly, the opening of similar clubs for women laid foundations for equal opportunity throughout Australia. By 1890, the colony had negotiated convictism; experienced a royal visit; laid the foundations for future cultural achievement; achieved self-government; and economic prosperity loomed on the horizon owing to an abundance of mineral wealth.
ENDNOTES FOR CHAPTER FOUR.
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3  *H*, 13/3/1869 and 3/7/1869.

4  *PG*, 21/11/1862.

5  *PG*, 4/6/1852.

6  *PG*, 21/11/1862 and 5/12/1862.

7  *H*, 10/6/1876.

8  Erickson, *Dictionary of Western Australians Vol 4, part 1, A-K*, p.321.

9  Erickson, *Dictionary of Western Australians Vol 3*, p. 804; *West Australian*, 26/12/1882.

10  *H*, 30/12/1882,


13  *Perth Gazette and W. A. Times*, 20/12/1867.

14  *PG and W. A. Times*, 14/2/1868; *Herald*, 15/2/1868, 22/2/1868 and 13/2/1869.

15  *H*, 17/6/1876.

16  *H*, 6/7/1878.

17  *West Australian*, 3/9/1885.

18  *H*, 24/10/1868.

20  *PG*, 30/6/1854 and 8/12/1854.

21  *PG*, 13/2/1863.

22  *PG*, 13/2/1863; *Perth Gazette and W. A. Times*, 10/2/1865; *H*, 15/5/1869.

23  *PG*, 21/7/1854; *W. A. Times*, 16/6/1864; Erickson, *Dictionary of Western Australians* Vol 3 for a brief account of these people.

24  Erickson, *Dictionary of Western Australians* Vol 3 for an account of these people.

25  *PG and W. A. Times*, 18/8/1865.

26  Ibid.

27  Ibid.


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30  *PG*, 21/7/1854; *Inq*, 25/7/1854.

31  *H*, 24/10/1868.

32  *H*, 25/9/1869.


34  *PG*, 21/7/1854; *Inq*, 25/7/1854; *W.A. Times*, 24/12/1863; *H*, 19/10/1867 and 15/2/1868.

35  *PG*, 21/7/1854; *Inq*, 25/7/1854 and 6/9/1854.

36  *H*, 22/2/1868.

37  *H*, 23/1/1869.

38  *H*, 12/6/1869.

40 *PG*, 21/7/1854.

41 *Inquirer*, 6/9/1854.

42 *PG*, 1/2/1856.

43 *PG*, 3/4/1863,


45 *WA*, 2/1/1885.


47 *PG*, 8/2/1856.


51 *PG*, 12/12/1862.

52 *PG*, 16/9/1864.

53 *PG and W. A. Times*, 13/10/1865 and 20/10/1865.

54 *H*, 28/9/1878.


56 *H*, 26/8/1882.

57 *WA*, 5/10/1880.
See Neville Green, ‘Aborigines and White Settlers’ in *A New History of Western Australia*, pp.100-107 for a more detailed study of the incident.


60 *H*, 17/8/1867.

61 *H*, 21/3/1868.


64 *H*, 6/11/1869 and 1/1/1870.

65 *Inq*, 5/2/1871.

66 *H*, 1/3/1873.


69 *H*, 23/12/1876.

70 *H*, 6/7/1878 and 13/7/1878.

71 *H*, 14/9/1878.

72 *H*, 3/7/1880.

73 *H*, 11/9/1880 and 30/7/1881.


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CHAPTER FIVE.

BROADER HORIZONS: SPORT IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA 1860-1890.

By 1860 colonists were acutely aware that their colony was changing owing to convictism, a growing infrastructure, improved roads and the gradual transformation from wind assisted sailing ships to those of steam. Furthermore, the colony was on the cusp of broadening her horizons in sport also. Prior to 1860, the ‘old’ sports such as cricket and horseracing were popular and remained so thereafter; cricket continued to have a broad social base, and for most people horseracing remained a spectator sport fuelled by the excitement of the race and the possibility of winning money. Hunting and trotting were pursuits favoured by the privileged, and the regatta with its ancillary entertainment continued to find approval with many colonists. However, between the period 1860 and 1890, the middle class introduced several ‘new’ sports at a time when social and political changes were developing in the colony. The gentry of Perth and the ‘merchant princes of Fremantle’ had formed a snug coterie, but were now met with a determined proletarian and democratic challenge. Consequently, through the discovery of gold a number of democratising influences evolved, stimulated by an abundant supply of working-class labour from the eastern colonies and a trade union movement pressing for an eight-hour day in Western Australia, which it achieved in part by 1891.1

The descendants of the first colonists still played their part in participating and administrating the ‘old’ sports and the aspiring quasi aristocracy,2 who were the migrating middle class, made significant contributions towards introducing and administering the ‘new’ or ‘modern’ sports. These sports included croquet, tennis, yachting, cycling, athletics, rugby, association football and Victorian Rules football. During this period greater participation by the working class was noticeable in competitive rifle shooting, pedestrianism, athletics, rowing, cricket and the football codes. But owing to social
decorum, club membership fees, and the cost of participating in some of these ‘new’ sports meant they were inaccessible to most working-class colonists. However, the football codes were immediately taken up by the working class owing to their robust nature that fostered camaraderie, rivalry and the will to win; all Australian characteristics which still exist to this day.

CROQUET.

Croquet had already achieved popular status with the English Victorian upper class and, after arriving at Swan River in the 1860s, was quickly taken up by the gentry and the middle class.³ The game was leisurely paced and strategic, emphasising recreation and relaxation rather than competition and performance. Its role was part of the matrimonial services scene, whereupon it was deemed fashionable ‘ladies of leisure’ should be seen playing croquet with their friends and husbands.

Croquet attracted the colony’s attention when the Perth Gazette reported several ‘ladies and gentlemen’ were playing a game in Perth’s public gardens considered ‘for some time past a very fashionable outdoor amusement in England’.⁴ However, the sport was rarely reported in the press and what little evidence there is suggests a small, but select group of people played the game and participation was by invitation only. For example, Lady Margaret Forrest, the wife of Premier John Forrest, invited guests to play the game on their croquet lawn.⁵

Socially, for middle-class women the game supported their ornamental functions, manoeuvring them away from the colonial drawing-room and tea-meetings towards outdoor social chitchat. As such, croquet must be considered one of the first sports in Australia where the participation of women was socially recognised and accepted. There is no evidence whatsoever to suggest the working class played the game owing to restrictions imposed upon them by social barriers, domestic and working commitments, a dress code that signified affluence, and the expense incurred purchasing equipment. The working class, who were already playing and supporting cricket, eventually leaned towards the
football codes, a trend which continues to this day.

**LAWN TENNIS.**

In February 1885, an article published in the *West Australian* mentions two amendments to the laws of lawn tennis concerning the serve and obstruction in returning the ball. The article gave notice that colonists were playing the game of tennis by the mid-1880s also.

The game, however, was confined to the gentry and the middle class and early records indicate that in October 1887, Edward Vivian Harvey Keane organised the first of many tournaments on his grounds at Peppermint Grove in Perth. Edward Keane was a qualified civil engineer in Victoria and South Australia before migrating to Perth. He was manager of the Midland Railway Company, a Member of the Legislative Council for Geraldton 1886-1890, a Member of the Legislative Assembly for Perth 1890-1891 and Mayor of Perth between 1891 and 1892.

In June 1888, Thomas Breame Beuttler, headmaster of High School (later Hale School), organised the colony’s first handicap tournament for men and women on the grounds of Government House in Perth. The tournament was held over several weekends probably owing to occupational commitments and June’s inclement weather. The women’s event was won by Miss Amy Moore in July and the men’s tournament was completed and won by Thomas Beuttler in August.

Tournaments were by invitation only, and more often than not, the order of play read like a who’s who of colonial society. Thus, the game’s underlying strength was social and economic, creating an exclusive club of middle-class players brought together by marriage, nepotism and social rank. Good examples of this were Miss Rose Louise Leake, who married into the affluent Clifton family; Miss Amy Moore, who married Lionel de Courcy Eagles Harston, the surgeon and resident medical officer at the Colonial Hospital; and Miss Lefroy, who was a member of the wealthy Lefroy family. The male members of this elite club included Governor Sir Harry St. George Ord’s nephew, Duncan Beresford...
Ord; Raymond Gee, a civil servant and member of the Weld Club; J. D. Booker, the manager of the National Bank at Fremantle; and Frederick Dudley North, who was married to Flora Francis Hamersley whose father was the landowning giant Edward Hamersley. North later became aide-de-camp to Governor Sir William Cleaver Francis Robinson in 1894 and the Mayor of Cottesloe in 1913. Frederick North was a keen sportsman and his position in colonial society was such that he was influential in organising the first Western Australian cricket team to visit the eastern states in 1893.10

As with croquet, one of the major attractions of tennis was its appeal to women, who by the 1880s were demonstrating their social acceptability in Australian sport. Indeed, for tennis’s society ladies there was probably greater competition off the court than on it owing to the game providing opportunities for social vetting. Such was the game’s allure tennis soon attracted more prominent female members, as for example, Margaret Elvira Forrest nee Hamersley and her younger sister Flora Frances. Flora was married to Frederic Dudley North and Margaret Elvira, who was married to John Forrest, competed in numerous tournaments and attended many of the game’s social functions, all of which are well documented by the press.11

The format, style of play and the equipment used in early tournaments differed greatly from the modern game. For example, competitions were based on a handicapping system known as *bisque*, whereupon a player of less ability was given points and a higher handicapped player was penalised by owing points. The game itself was gently paced and long rallies were considered conventional and acceptable to both player and spectator. Hence, the game lacked the tactical guile, agility and fitness witnessed in the modern game. The dress code for both male and female not only highlighted a player’s social position and prevailing tastes in attire, but it was probably not conducive to the Western Australian summers. Ladies wore white blouses, long skirts and ornate hats whilst the gentlemen wore long cream trousers or knickerbockers, a shirt and tie, striped tennis blazer and a straw boater or skull-cap.
Like the well-to-do in England, the colonial gentry and the aspiring middle class were aware of the social and economic significance of building tennis courts and forming tennis clubs. Two good examples of this occurred at the homes of Premier John Forrest in Perth and George Pearse in Fremantle. Thus, the game in Perth and Fremantle became an important social activity for the merchant and professional middle-class communities of both towns. In February 1895, for instance, Fremantle’s inaugural tennis club started with thirty members and evidence suggests membership came from the middle class. For example, H.F. Brandon was the manager of the Fremantle branch of the Bank of Australasia; W.R. Hodge held the position of chief accountant at the Western Australian Bank in Fremantle; J. Bassett was a Fremantle broker and R.M. Walker was an accountant.

Shortly afterwards, in April 1895, a letter seeking the formation of a tennis club in Perth was sent to its leading citizens. Notable recipients included Justice Edward A. Stone, A.C. Willis and A.K. Money. Stone was a major player in the Perth community for several reasons. Called to the bar in 1865, he was clerk to the Legislative Council between 1871 and 1874, eventually becoming solicitor, judge and Chief Justice. He was proprietor of the *West Australian Times*, founder of the Musical Union, Vice President of the Mechanics’ Institute and President of the first Reform League that advocated responsible government for Western Australia. Stone was keen sportsman and participated in football and boxing also. In July 1867, he married Susannah Shenton, the daughter of George Shenton, thus firmly fixing his social position within the colony’s establishment. A.C. Willis was the manager of the Union Bank of Australia and A.K. Money was the local organiser for the Australian Mutual Providence Insurance Company. Given the composition of the letter and its membership, the club was more in keeping with social values rather than the game itself, highlighting the need for a ‘place of general resort where members can readily meet their friends’.

The game was socially and economically above the working class on account of its
decorous nature, dress requirements, the economic and social importance attached to club membership, and a lack of playing facilities. Like croquet, the working class never saw tennis as an immediate attraction owing to the game’s etiquette, strategy and gentle pace taking second place to the brute strength of rowing and the robust play of the football codes. However, during the early years of the twentieth century, a number of courts were built in Fremantle and Perth, which encouraged social mingling to take place between the classes owing to a preponderance of women playing the game.

PEDESTRIANISM (ATHLETICS).

Since the formative years of colonisation pedestrianism was one of several activities associated with the colony’s anniversary celebrations, and the earliest sport where colonial and ethnic integration through participation was first witnessed.

Reports confirm that the colony’s first official foot-racing competition took place at the Esplanade in Fremantle on Saturday 10th February 1872.15 The competitors, who included George Parker and Octavius Burt from Perth; Mr. Lewington from Fremantle; Mr. Richardson from Nickol Bay in Karratha; and able-seamen Taylor and Francis from the visiting ship Cossack, competed in the one-hundred yards and two-hundred yards races, and a quarter of a mile race. Francis won both the short course events and Mr. Lewington won the quarter of a mile race. Two days later, after the Fremantle-Guildford cricket match was completed, George Parker beat the same opposition over one hundred yards.16

Professional pedestrianism attracted widespread colonial support during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, with most races taking place at Robert N. Bullen’s ‘Albion Hotel’ on the Fremantle road near Cottesloe, in Perth. Competitors were encouraged to participate for prizes of five pounds to twenty-five pounds, and it was not uncommon for punters to gamble on their local favourite. The popular and successful athlete William Fitzgerald was sponsored by his friends, who placed large amounts of money on their champion at race meetings. On one occasion, for instance, Fitzgerald
defeated J. Armstrong after clocking ten and one-half seconds in a one-hundred yards race.\textsuperscript{17}

The colony’s leading pedestrians came from various social milieus’, but most came from working-class backgrounds, as for example, Patrick John Healy, Walter Spooner, Stephen Richards and Harry Moore. Patrick Healy was a committee member of the Boot and Shoemaker’s Union and Spooner, Richards and Moore were Perth boot-makers. However, members from the gentry and middle class competed in pedestrianism also, notably Patrick Lawler and John Edward Hardwick. Lawler was a farmer and a foundation member of the Jennacubbine (near Northam) cricket, football and horseracing clubs. John Edward Hardwick was a Member of the Legislative Council for East Perth, a Government Whip and councillor for the City of Perth.\textsuperscript{18} Reports suggest that although some races were arranged spontaneously many were prearranged challenge matches advertised in the press. A good example of this was in February 1888, following an advertisement in the \textit{West Australian} publicising the ‘Sheffield Handicap’, a race held over nine heats for all colonists interested in ‘amateur’ pedestrianism.\textsuperscript{19}

The success of pedestrianism and the rich rewards associated with racing, either in prize money or gambling was responsible ultimately for the sport’s decline in Western Australia. Continuous reports in the \textit{West Australian} during the 1880s were suspicious of events regarding the conduct and organisation of some meetings. Athletes could, for example, compete under assumed names, collude with bookmakers, mismeasure distances, and stall against local champions whilst simultaneously betting on the result.\textsuperscript{20} Such duplicity, it was thought, might provoke social disorder in the colony and, as a result, the \textit{West Australian} discouraged athletes from the eastern colonies visiting the colony. The newspaper argued that ‘in the strict sense of the term’ there were very few professional athletes in the colony and given the circumstances it was not economically viable for athletes from the eastern colonies to visit Swan River. ‘Amateurism’, reported the newspaper, was the true definition of a sportsman.\textsuperscript{21}
In their place amateur sport of any kind was seen as healthy, manly and morally uplifting activities, which sought to counteract the appeal of professionalism and gambling to an easily distracted working class. Yet, evidence suggests the morality behind professionalism and gambling questioned standards indicated previously by the colony’s gentry. In October 1890, the professional and middle-class, who dominated the Western Australian Athletic Club, stated that any person who had not run for money since the Proclamation of Responsible Government in Western Australia was eligible for club membership. However, the appeal of athletics and its diktats muscular Christianity, good sportsmanship and team spirit were all values associated with Britain’s growing empire and her public school system that influenced Perth High School to include the sport in their curriculum.

School athletic meetings were usually organised by members of the gentry and the middle class owing to previous connections with the school, or their children attending the school. These events depicted what had previously gone on before in the colony’s formative years. A show of conspicuous splendor wrapped in an air of exclusivity that furthered the growth of dominant cultural values among the colony’s young gentry. In August 1882, for example, several members of the gentry, who included Governor Sir William Robinson and his wife and Lord and Lady Gifford, attended the annual High School athletics meeting.

In May 1882, having witnessed the popularity of athletics at Perth’s High School, John Charles Horsey James, Richard A. Sholl and George Parker played a pivotal role in promoting and developing an amateur athletic club in the colony. These people from similar backgrounds were influenced by the theory of a sound mind and body linked to character and healthy living, which for them were the requirements for breeding a superior British race. During the 1880s, James was probably the most important and influential person in colonial sporting circles. Born the son of a Berkshire clergyman in 1841, James was educated at Rugby School and Oxford University before being called to the bar in
1866. He arrived in Perth, in 1875 as the first Commissioner of Land Titles, and cemented his connections with the colony’s hierarchy through marriage and sport. James married Rebecca Catherine of the prestigious Clifton family and his sporting interests included cycling, rowing and cricket. He was captain of the Metropolitan Cricket Club and influential in establishing the Western Australian Cricket Association.  

The social and economic denominators attached to the Western Australian Amateur Athletic Club were similar to those of the Turf Club. Records indicate that an analysis of James’s committee members and those who administered the athletics club originated from the landowning gentry and the professional middle-class, who mixed socially to fortify the colony’s prevailing cultural values. For example, Lord Gifford, V.C., was elected president; James was vice-president; Edward Gustavus Hare was the secretary and treasurer; and George Parker, Theo R. Rowe, Duncan B. Ord and Ernest Chowner Shenton took-up administrative roles in the club. As with all colonial sporting clubs and societies these men invited the incumbent governor to become patron of the club, and on this occasion Governor Sir William Robinson was invited to take up the position.

The club’s first official athletics meeting was held on Tuesday 3rd October 1882 at the Recreation Grounds, in Perth. Membership numbered only thirty-five people, which implied elitism, and included Francis Hallet Clyde, who was a merchant involved in the export and import trade; Frank E. Stafford, who married into the Clifton family; the land-owner Herbert John Lee-Steere and Robert Henderson Cowan, who was an accountant and acting-manager of the National Bank. It was an occasion reserved for the few and there is no indication whatsoever the working class competed in, or attended the event.

However, although the club’s first athletics meeting suggested elitism, social integration took place a year later owing to the club inviting all members of the colony to compete in an athletics program to mark the colony’s fifty-fourth anniversary. Like cricket and competitive rifle shooting it was another occasion where the gentry and the
middle class stood next to the working class before the start of an event. The time was not yet appropriate for women to compete in athletics, but like other colonial sports they were enthusiastic spectators at athletic meetings, as for example, Lady Robinson and her entourage of young ladies attended the first official athletics meeting.

TROTTING.

Trotting races were held in New South Wales from the earliest days of colonisation, but with the growth of thoroughbred horseracing the sport virtually disappeared. However, by the 1880s, the importation of American-bred trotting stallions to the eastern colonies of Australia reinvigorated a sport that eventually gained popular blessing throughout the country.29

Trotting made a brief appearance at Swan River during the 1830s, but scanty reports suggest the sport disappeared until the 1870s. What little evidence there is suggests races were infrequent, but like horseracing, the sport was a window of opportunity for colonists who could afford the expense and time to participate, and simultaneously gamble. In September 1872, for example, Mr. Lyon and his horse Tommy raced against James Underwood Lapsley’s Fanny for a prize of twenty pounds. A large group of spectators with similar designs on making money witnessed Lapsley’s Fanny taking the honours.30 Apart from trotting, Lapsley was a keen rower and cricketer who assisted in raising funds for the establishment of a ground for the Western Australian Cricket Association. He strengthened his social and economic ties by marrying Ellen Augusta Glyde, the daughter of George Glyde, a prominent businessman in Fremantle.31

In February 1887, a large crowd witnessed a race between W.B. Wood and his mare and Mr. Colman’s horse, Maud, for a prize of twenty pounds sterling. The race covered a considerable distance, starting at Perth’s Ascot race course and finishing in Guildford.32 Trotting was useful as an entree to horse race meetings also, as for example, in February 1873, a trotting race opened Guildford’s annual race meeting.33

Unlike New South Wales, where the sport took off in the 1880s, trotting received
mixed fortunes at Swan River owing to the sport being seen as a hobby for the well-to-do and an opportunity to compete for money. The working class never indulged in trotting owing to the cost of purchasing a horse and gig, but they would have attended trotting races and used the occasion to gamble. However, once the state’s businessmen fostered and organised trotting at the beginning of the twentieth century, the sport became a popular means of entertainment and a source of betting for all the classes.

HUNTING.

Prior to 1860, the colonial gentry introduced the ‘hunt’ to replicate traditional English values which continued after 1860 owing to British connections guaranteeing the sport’s heritage. Even so, the colonial hunt was unlike the traditional English chase owing to procedure, the breed of dog, the type of prey chased, and the breed of horse available.

Early references concerning hunting are sparse and it was not until the late 1880s that more light was cast upon the sport. If horses were unavailable hunting was accomplished on foot with a breed of dog known as ‘kangaroo dogs’ (a cross-breed between mastiff and greyhound, or foxhound and Scottish deer hound). Hunting with ‘packs of hounds’ did not take place until 1890 following the York Hunt acquiring a number of harriers (a taller, longer legged beagle) from South Australia.34

In England the sport was associated with a pack of hounds pursuing a fox; at Swan River, the kangaroo and wallaby were hunted on foot or on horseback with two or three dogs. However, evidence suggests another form of hunting was introduced in the 1880s known as the ‘drag hunt’, whereby ‘hounds’ (riders on horse-back) pursued a man-made scented lure (the hare) dragged over the terrain by a runner or mounted rider before the hunt took place.35 Reports suggest the first ‘drag hunts’ were staged at York’s inaugural hunt in October 1889 and at Guildford in May 1890, on James Morrison’s property.36

The topography of the land was consistent with dense scrubs, sedges or swamps that assisted the prey more than the hunter. This, however, was an integral supplement to the sport, which tested the hunter’s skills. Those who participated in the ‘hunt’ rode on
light-weight colonial horses called ‘hunters’ and, although they were not thoroughbred horses, they were considered beneficial for hunting the bush-tailed wallaby in Banksia woodlands and swamps off the coastal plains.37

In England, hunting was a popular and exciting means of entertainment in many ways. The landed gentry started the ‘hunt’ with a toast and finished the day’s proceedings with an invitation to dine in the evening. For the local rural population, the excitement of watching or following the ‘hunt’ on foot was supplemented with bouts of drinking at local taverns. At Swan River, colonists who were not invited to take part in the ‘hunt’ either positioned themselves on carriages or obtained a more favourable spot on the course. Hence, the gentry and the middle class dominated membership of a sport whose main participants in the mother country were the landed gentry. Members of the hunt club invited guests and evidence suggests women participated in the ‘hunt’, although there is no information to establish who they were.38 Notable members of the York Hunt Club included Everard Darlot, who was the first master of the hounds; Dr. John A. O’Meehan; Kenneth Edwards; Frederick A. Hare; and members of the Parker and Monger families.39 Lady Broome and her entourage often played an ancillary role in the hunt by way of arranging refreshments for participants who had been hunting.40

There are no references to indicate whether members of the working class were invited to take part in the ‘hunt’. However, they or the aborigine may have been employed as ancillary workers to manage the horses and the hounds, or to lay a trail for the ‘drag hunt’. In contrast to the heavy criticism hunting has received in modern times, press reports acknowledged the ‘hunt’ as a social and sporting occasion.41 But the sport in late nineteenth-century Western Australia was handicapped for three reasons. There was always going to be a shortage of people skilled in the management of hounds, it was an elitist sport, and the expense of maintaining a pack of hounds would have been considerable.
FISHING.

Fishing did not have the same sporting impact that it has today, but the activity in nineteenth-century Swan River was an everyday occurrence on the colony’s waters. Enclosed by the sea to the west and the number of rivers to the east and south of Perth and Fremantle, colonists were confronted by a veritable cornucopia of food that included tailor, whiting, pilchards and crustaceans. There is no evidence in the press, diaries or journals to suggest fishing was an organised sport. However, in the summer of 1880, Alfred Hillman observed a ‘lively’ scene on the Swan River as a number of boats and their occupants were crabbing, fishing and swimming. Hillman was a keen fisherman and his diaries are a testament to his love for an activity that he pursued at the ‘Point’ on Melville Waters and at Fremantle. In December 1882, for instance, Hillman confessed that he had experienced ‘the best afternoon’s sport’ after successfully catching fifty good sized pilchards and whiting. After visiting Rottnest Island in 1884, Lady Broome noted that the fishing was ‘splendid’.

REGATTAS.

Having already been established as a traditional part of the colony’s anniversary day celebrations since 1841, the regatta’s itinerary still included yacht races and events between cargo boats, two-and four-oared boats, and whale boats. As in previous years, the weather played an important part in the success of regattas, but on numerous occasions races were bedevilled by calm weather that rendered yachting slow, monotonous, and tedious for the observer. After the 1872 Perth regatta, a decision was made to reschedule the event to the month of November ‘in order to secure, if possible, settled weather’. Even though the month of June was usually wet and windy, and unfavourable for both competitor and spectator alike, Fremantle’s regattas were still an integral part of their traditional anniversary celebrations.

As in previous years governors continued to patronise regattas and were often seen on Melville Waters enthusiastically supporting the occasion. For example, the colony’s
gentry greeted Governor Weld when he attended the 1870 regatta, and later that day he accompanied his aide-de-camp, Francis de Lisle Phillips, around the course. Governor William C.F. Robinson, later Sir William, attended the Fremantle regatta in June 1876. Governor Sir Harry Ord enthusiastically supported regattas to such an extent that he rowed himself to several vantage points to observe the November 1878 regatta. In November 1884, Chief Justice Alexander C. Onslow and his wife attended the proceedings owing to Governor Sir Frederick N. Broome’s indisposition.46

Although women did not participate in regattas, they took advantage of the occasion by promenading along the jetty or shore-line. Like cricket and horseracing, it was a good opportunity for women to meet people in socially acceptable circumstances. Consequently, in April 1870, the organisers of Fremantle’s regattas were hopeful of stimulating female interest further when they introduced the ‘Ladies’ Champion Challenge Cup’. However, the Herald was disappointed with the number of women who ‘graced the day on this occasion’.47

Events at regattas varied from one year to the next, but most programmes catered for a cross section of the colony’s population. For example, the ubiquitous whale boat and cargo boat races were arranged for competitors whose occupations involved working on the sea and rivers; and the well-to-do, who owned a yacht competed in the yachting races. Like horseracing, no matter what race colonists competed in regattas gave everybody an opportunity to participate, and to a certain degree mingle with other members of the colony. However, like cricket, a psychologically interesting note recorded in the press depicts the social and economic gap between competitors. For example, the names of the labouring personnel who competed in whale boat and licensed cargo boat events were given as surnames only. The gentry and the middle-class, who entered the yachting races, had their first names or initials printed before their surnames.48 Those who watched the regatta either appreciated the skills of seamanship associated with yachting events, or anticipated the excitement of a close finish that rowing created. Other colonists
participated in ancillary events such as swimming, old English games or frequenting publicans’ booths, giving the occasion the trappings associated with a carnival.

Rivalry between Perth and Fremantle continued owing to Fremantle’s yachtsmen accepting an invitation to compete at Perth’s regatta in 1876.49 Each regatta was reported by the press and supplemented by the latest news and editorials. In November 1873, for example, Paul Pry from the *Perth Gazette* gave his readers the latest information concerning forthcoming regattas, and editorials were quick to criticise the organisers regarding the sluggish proceedings at yachting events. For example, at the November 1878 regatta, the press criticised the slow and tedious yachting races. A year later, Alfred Hillman remarked that the 1879 regatta at Fremantle was ‘as always a stupid affair to look at and this proved no exception’.50 In direct contrast, the rowing events were fast, exciting and noted for their swift and close finishing at the end of a race.51 On hindsight, the regatta was an occasion for those people who appreciated the intricacies and skills associated with yachting as opposed to the tour de force of rowing. However, by the mid-1880s, the popularity of yachting at regattas was beginning to diminish owing to its elitist status and the growing popularity of its ‘sister’ sport, rowing.

**YACHTING.**

The ‘Perth Yachting and Boat Club’ was formed in June 1876 at the ‘Freemasons Hotel’ in Perth by James G. Lee Steere, Godfrey C. Knight and Richard A. Sholl.52 Lee Steere was a pastoralist and politician and Knight was a Fremantle businessman in the pearling and steamboat industries. Richard Sholl was a major character in colonial sporting circles whose interests lay in horseracing (he was secretary of the Turf Club) and obtaining the rank of Major in the volunteer rifle corps, as well as playing cricket and participating in rowing and athletics. He was the Postmaster General of Western Australia until 1909.53

The formation of the yachting club gave members the opportunity to race their yacht and participate in club dinners and monster picnics. Racing programmes were scheduled for Boxing Day, New Year’s Day, Easter, anniversary celebrations, and days
allocated in the months of November to April owing to those months having fine weather and mild prevailing winds. Once a detailed sailing programme was established, the first season of summer handicap racing was introduced in November 1882. Like the Metropolitan Cricket Club, dress was considered important and the prestige associated with the honour of club captain held similar status. There is no evidence to suggest middle-class women were involved in sailing owing to the physical nature of handling a yacht. If anything, their role was ornamental and considered an attraction to the scene.

In 1890, the reputation of the club and its members gained regal recognition with the prefix ‘Royal’ bestowed on the club’s name by Queen Victoria. Criticism of the charter brought derisive comments in the press with one commentator referring to the ‘Royal’ prefix as ‘absolute sickening nonsense…asking permission to dub a potty little Yacht club in a fourth-rate colonial city that hasn’t a ten-tonner in its fleet, a Royal Yacht Club’. Other colonists, however, were quick to explain the importance of the ‘Royal’ insignia* and its association with sailing.54

The yacht club never attracted large numbers of participants, especially from the working class, but it was a significant institution for the gentry and the professional-commercial middle-class, who wished to take advantage of the opportunities associated with membership. If anything, the club was an overt symbol of status and became the cornerstone for colonial yachting to this day. So much so, that the desire to achieve similar status was evident with the formation of several more yachting clubs during the 1890s.

ROWING.

The Western Australian Rowing Club was formed in 1868 when ‘two old boats-fixed seat fours-were found in the mud at south Perth’.55 Little is known about the club’s early history or its personnel, but in 1883, members of the professional middle-class, * The “Royal” prefix is obtained from the Home Office in England, which is signified by a white and blue ensign. It is only given to yachts registered under the provisions of the 1854 Merchant Shipping Act.
who included Sir Walter James, Robert B. Burnside and Henry S. King were affiliated to
the club. Sir James became Premier and Attorney General from 1902 to 1904 and was
noted for championing the lower classes and campaigning women’s suffrage. Burnside
became Crown Solicitor in 1894 and a member of the Supreme Court Bench in 1902. King
was a mining surveyor at Yilgarn and a Justice of the Peace.\footnote{56}

In May and July 1887, two rowing clubs were established by two people who were
socially and economically dissimilar. In May 1887, Cornelius Glasson established the
Swan River Rowing Club, and in July, the Fremantle Rowing Club was formed owing to
Douglas G. Gawler interests.\footnote{57} Glasson was a former Private in the 58th Regiment, an
Enrolled Pensioner Guard and night warder at Fremantle gaol. Gawler was a barrister and
solicitor, a member of the Turf Club and Fremantle’s first rowing captain.\footnote{58}

Membership to rowing clubs was open to all classes, especially at the Swan River
Rowing Club owing to Glasson’s background. It was a sport suitable for colonists whose
occupations covered the whaling and cargo boat industries, and like the labouring class in
the formative years of English cricket a good strong oarsman was a prized acquisition for
rowing clubs. Evidence suggests, however, that members of the Perth and Fremantle
middle class participated in rowing also, notably George Parker, John Charles Horsey
James, and Richard Sholl from Perth. The Fremantle club’s early members included Arthur
J. Diamond and Joseph John Holmes. Diamond was President of the Young Australia
Football League and a politician, and Holmes, who was associated with the East Fremantle
Football Club, was active in politics also. He played an influential part in obtaining the vote
for women in Western Australia in 1899, and eventually became Mayor of Fremantle in
1910.\footnote{59}

Having previously supported rowing, women were participating in the sport by the
late 1880s. Like croquet, swimming (bathing), tennis and cycling the sport influenced and
eventually spearheaded the female liberation movement throughout Australian recreation
during the twentieth century. The sport began as a leisurely pursuit for those women who
came from prosperous families with access to river craft. On such a social background, the Fremantle Ladies Rowing Club was formed in the same year as the men’s rowing club, and by the late 1880s, middle-class women were adopting a different approach to rowing, acknowledging the sport as an athletic pursuit rather than as a promenade. Early references indicate the colony’s most notable female rowers originated from the gentry and the middle-class, who included Miss Georgina Harwood and her sister Matilda Zoe Harwood, Miss M. Fothergill, Miss L. Dearle, Miss O’Connor, Miss Cooke and Miss Waldeck. These women, who were socially and economically in a position to partake in the sport, also took the initiative to organise ‘social’ rowing, ‘picnic’ regattas, as well as organising the club’s inaugural annual rowing ball in September 1888.60

Rowing, like yachting, was given very little encouragement in colonial schools probably owing to the cost of purchasing boats more than anything else. But in 1889, W.F. Evans, who was the headmaster at Fremantle Grammar School and committee member of the Fremantle Rowing Club, persuaded members to allow boys (those who could swim) from his school to use the club’s facilities.61

Once rowing clubs were established an association was quickly suggested in May 1888 and, as a result, the Western Australian Rowing Association was established on Saturday 9th June 1888.62 Like the Turf Club, and the cricket and athletic associations, evidence suggests the rowing association was administered by those members of the colony who were attached to the gentry and the professional middle class. For example, Chief Justice Edward A. Stone was the rowing association’s first president and Dr. Henry Calvert Barnett was the vice-president. Dr. Henry Barnett was a qualified doctor from England, who gained recognition as Colonial Surgeon at York and Fremantle, and membership to the colony’s first Medical Board in 1894. He became President of the Fremantle Rowing Club until his death in 1897.63

Initially, there were no competitions between the Fremantle and Perth rowing clubs, but individual clubs throughout the colony held in-house regattas and invited other
rowing clubs to compete for a silver cup donated by the Fremantle club in 1888. In September 1888, the Swan River Rowing Club was the inaugural winner of the cup.\textsuperscript{64}

\textbf{COMPETITIVE RIFLE SHOOTING.}

Once the threat from external forces dissipated, the British garrison withdrew from the colony in the early 1860s, and the burden of defence fell on companies of volunteer riflemen, introduced to protect the colony against possible aboriginal incursion. Once this threat from external forces and aboriginal incursion was dispelled several volunteer corps’ were formed over a period of time to become, like cricket, opportunities for social blending. So much so, that many years later, in December 1879, an editorial in the \textit{West Australian} remarked that governors and the gentry rubbed shoulders with bakers, greengrocers and butchers ‘on that vantage ground where the best man alone is awarded the palm of superiority’.\textsuperscript{65}

The Perth Metropolitan Rifle Volunteer Corps was formed in September 1861 by Colonel John Bruce, which prompted the Fremantle Rifle Volunteers taking an oath of allegiance to Queen Victoria three months later in December 1861.\textsuperscript{66} Each corps, which contained a cross-section of colonists from different social backgrounds, held rifle practice and competitions that eventually witnessed the introduction of a challenge match between Perth and Fremantle in February 1864.

The inaugural Fremantle-Perth rifle competition occurred at Fremantle (probably near Coogee Beach) in February 1864 when Colonel John Bruce of the Perth volunteers issued a challenge to the Fremantle volunteers.\textsuperscript{67} Like the Fremantle-Perth cricket matches the competition was important enough to attract large numbers of spectators from both towns and influenced the commercial sector of Fremantle to close their shops. The spectators saw Perth (370 hits) defeat Fremantle (343 hits) by 27 hits.\textsuperscript{68} The success of the inaugural shoot saw the introduction of competitions taking place between the two towns for the rest of the century. Women did not compete in rifle shooting, but responded by attending competitions and supporting their town.
A bone of contention, however, for low income volunteers was the lack of prizes at competitive events and the reimbursement of monies for cartridges after practice sessions. Letters published in the *Perth Gazette* in February 1864 from *Volunteer* and *One Pound* are two good examples of volunteers from the laboring class who purchased cartridges at their own expense to practise and improve their proficiency, and at the same time defend the citizens of Fremantle and Perth.\(^69\) This problem was reconciled in March 1864 owing to Colonel Bruce informing all volunteers that expenses would be reimbursed and a series of prizes made available to all competitors at the September 1864 shoot.\(^70\) In 1868, further monetary prizes of ten shillings (eight in all) and one prize of five shillings were introduced.\(^71\)

The sport’s most prestigious prizes were the ‘Farmaner Challenge Cup’, first introduced in 1867 by Joseph Farmaner, a Perth merchant, landowner and a member of the Freemasons; A silver cup, entitled ‘The Governor’s Cup’, was donated by Governor Sir Frederick Weld in 1871; and the ‘Hillman Cup’ was bequeathed by Captain Alfred James Hillman in 1883. Hillman was a committed benefactor of the rifle corps and arranged on one occasion for volunteers to be paid one shilling and sixpence for time lost at work whilst attending a parade.\(^72\) On numerous other occasions Hillman donated monies to keep the defence corps financial, which the *Inquirer* acknowledged ‘ought to be defrayed out of the general taxation of the country’.\(^73\)

Hillman, whose father Alfred had previously obtained positions of importance in the colony, reinforced his position in the world of the privileged by first marrying George Shenton’s daughter, Anna Marie, who died in 1877, and then Elizabeth Drake-Brockman, the daughter of Edmund Ralph Brockman in 1878. He was an active volunteer in the Perth Metropolitan Rifle Corps and in 1876 attained the rank of Captain. Hillman’s diaries from 1877 to 1884 contain many references regarding the rifle corps’.\(^74\)

By 1868, overall competitions came under the jurisdiction of the Western Australian Rifle Volunteer Force, which was administered by the gentry and ex-military
personnel. These individual volunteer forces, like cricket, reflected a broad social and vocational base of colonists from the surrounding areas of the colony, which included ex-members of the Enrolled Force of Pensioners; the Perth Metropolitan Volunteers; the Guildford Rifle Volunteers; Fremantle Rifle Volunteers; the West Australian Troop of Artillery; and the Police Force.

Competitive rifle shooting was a popular sport in the eastern colonies and, as a result, the prospect of challenging teams from the east further encouraged the sport in the west. It became the first sport from the colony to compete with and against the eastern colonies. Records indicate the colony’s first official inter-colonial sporting encounter took place between Western Australia and South Australia in March 1880. However, owing to the geographical distance involved between the two states, the significance of the ‘shoot’ meant competitors did not have to leave their respective states owing to the completion of the east-west telegraph system in 1877. This was an ingenious strategy by the sports promoters and further attests to their inventiveness to overcome the colony’s problems regarding isolationism. Each competitor’s shot was wired to the judges in both colonies, the results of which saw Western Australia narrowly defeat South Australia by five points. The victory pleased Hillman and surprised many South Australians. The importance attached to this first inter-colonial ‘shoot’ encouraged a second competition six months later in October 1880, and by 1882, the competition included Tasmania.

Important factors that influenced results at shooting competitions were the climate and the location of the shoot. Heavy rain, strong winds, glaring sun-light and the location often proved counter-productive for marksmen. In February 1864, for example, strong winds in Fremantle caused fine sand to impede the vision of competitors. Similar problems occurred in September 1864 owing to strong winds and squalls making shooting virtually impossible at the Mount Eliza range in Perth. At a ‘shoot’ in December 1879, the press reported that a change in the ‘atmosphere and light’ was not conducive to good shooting.

Governors supported the volunteer corps’ and on many occasions observed an
interest in the ‘shoot’ or played an active part in competitions. Governor John Hampton visited the inaugural Fremantle-Perth shoot in February 1864. Governor Frederick Weld not only donated a silver challenge cup in 1871, but participated in competitions and presented prizes at after match dinners also. Over the next few years Governor William Robinson, Governor Harry St. George Ord, and Governor Sir Frederick Napier Broome presented the ‘Governor’s Cup’ to successful contestants. Like cricket, colonial collaboration was an important element of the sport. In September 1864, for example, a dinner at the ‘Freemason’s Hotel’ in Fremantle was arranged for all competitors and guests, who included Lieutenant-Colonel Bruce, Major Crampton, George Shenton, Joseph Farmaner and Francis Loche commandeering the ‘top table’. In September 1874, prizes were distributed before a ball at Perth’s town hall, and a year later, ‘a generous supply of refreshments’ were provided for all contestants. Similar to cricket, competitions between ‘married’ and ‘single’ men were popular, and the ubiquitous Fremantle and Metropolitan Volunteer bands attended all competitions, dinners and prize-giving ceremonies.

**COMPETITIVE PIGEON SHOOTING.**

Unlike competitive rifle shooting, competitive pigeon shooting attracted very few members of the colony. They were spontaneously arranged and usually occupied the interests of small land owners and middle-class businessmen, who had the time and means to indulge in the sport. Unlike the volunteer corps, members of the working class were not invited to the ‘shoot’, but they may have been employed to retrieve dead birds and supply shot for the competitors. One of the first matches to be reported by the press was in May 1871 at Brigg’s ‘Half-Way House’, situated between Fremantle and Perth, to celebrate Queen Victoria’s fifty-second birthday.

Entrance fees depended upon what prizes competitors chose to shoot for and, unlike competitive rifle shooting, contestants could nominate somebody else to shoot for them in the latter rounds. For example, J. Wellby nominated James Gallop to shoot for him.
in the final and won a field glass. As with most other sporting events in the colony, the occasion was complemented with a ‘cold collation’.

Throughout the history of the colony private shooting was an activity enjoyed by a number of colonists, as for example, Alfred Hillman who, upon visiting William Brockman’s “Seabrooke” estate at Northam, thought nothing of walking ‘16 to 17 miles’ in a day to shoot birds, and considered it ‘good sport!!!’. Shooting prey, however, was a daily occurrence for people who lived in the rural areas of the colony, because it was an important source of food as well as killing wild life that threatened their live-stock.

THE FOOTBALL CODES.

In pre-1880s Britain football, of any code, was essentially a middle-class game controlled by former schoolboys from the English public school system. The formation of the Football Association and its laws in 1863 was the first significant step towards association football reaching global proportions. In contrast, the indigenous game in Victoria evolved over many decades from humble beginnings in the 1850s to become a national game described as an integral part of the Australian lifestyle.

The earliest definitive account of football played at Swan River appeared in the *Herald* in October 1868 owing to members from the visiting second battalion of the 14th Foot (Buckinghamshire) Regiment playing a game similar to association football. In April 1869, a footnote on a reported game of cricket between Fremantle and Perth stated that a rudimentary football match between Fremantle and Perth ‘was kept up with great spirit for nearly two hours with the Perth team scoring a goal in the first half and a drawn game in the second half’. Football, whatever code was played, during the late 1860s and 1870s was sporadic and rarely reported in the press. In May 1879, however, the *W.A. Times* published a letter from *Old Boy*, who suggested that as the cricket season was finished the ‘young men of the colony should turn their attentions to that ancient and excellent game-football’.

A major factor that influenced the growth and organisation of horseracing and
cricket in the colony’s formative years was the gentry and military personnel. However, during the 1880s the ‘new’ sports came under the auspices of the middle-class (some of whom saw the economic advantages associated with sport). They included Lieutenant George St. Ord, who encouraged the growth of rugby; Thomas Beuttler organised the first lawn tennis tournament in 1888; Richard A. Sholl was secretary of the Turf Club, founding vice-president of the Western Australian Football Association, and played a major input in the Rovers Football Club; John Charles Horsey James instigated the Western Australian Cricket Association (WACA) and became its first president in 1885; George Parker was a committee member of the WACA, the Western Australian Amateur Athletic Club, the Turf Club, president of Swan River Football Club, and the first man to score a century at club cricket in 1875; and John Winthrop Hackett, who was part-owner of the West Australian newspaper and staunch supporter of English sport and English ideals, as well as being the mouthpiece of colonial sport.91

Victorian football, however, was administered by colonists who held strong local ties and a sense of place and belonging to their community. Good examples of this were Barrington Clarke Wood, who was Fremantle’s first mayor in 1883, and later president of the Western Australian Football Association; Daniel Keen Congdon held deep interests in the Fremantle Football Club; John Hardwick was a saddler and boot-maker, a real estate proprietor and treasurer to the Metropolitan Football Club; R.H. Barrett was a stock and share broker, who became president of West Perth Football Club in 1895; and E.L. Wilson was a real estate agent, who became secretary and treasurer to the West Perth Football Club.92 Most of these people came from working-class backgrounds and differed greatly in social terms from their administrative counterparts associated with the ‘old’ sports. For them, Victorian football offered a major opportunity to extend and reinforce their position in a colony that was on the threshold of discovering gold and acquiring responsible government. The boundaries between those families who held strong ties with the colony’s formative years and those who knew the heights to which they might aspire were rarely
crossed. Hence, relatively few members of the gentry moved in football circles, confining themselves to the traditional sports associated with the colony’s formative years.93

The football clubs and their supporters held strong local working-class allegiance, giving them a degree of pride and a sense of place and belonging in their growing communities. In Fremantle, for example, there was strong commercial support for the East Fremantle club; South Fremantle had a dominant following among waterside workers; East Perth owed its origins to local factory workers; Subiaco had a strong artisan culture; and a Midland Junction side, which was supported by the railway workshops, held ancestral rights to the formation of Swan Districts Football Club.94 However, before the impact of the Victorian game took hold in the west evidence confirms rugby was the second team sport to take off in the colony.

A social conduit for rugby was Perth’s elite High School, whose headmaster in 1881 was Thomas Beuttler, a product of Rugby and Cambridge and a keen rugby and tennis player. High School, which was founded by Bishop Mathew Blagden Hale, reflected ideals similar to that of the English public school system whereby the ethos behind sport was ‘manly’ involvement that produced mentally and physically strong young men.95 Such ideals had already been transmitted to Swan River through ‘that manly game’ cricket. Consequently, those members of the professional middle-class, who migrated to Swan River with a public school background, introduced a sport that was growing in stature and competing with association football in England.

Rugby was quickly taken up and received notable support from the Fremantle Club, which was formed in May 1882 owing to a group of people turning up to play the game. In June 1882, Alfred Hillman noted in his diary that the game was ‘all the rage now’, but went on to add that ‘if the bank clerks get incapacitated we shall have to restrict their playing’.96 After witnessing the club’s second scratch match, the Herald, eager to fuel on-going rivalry between Fremantle and Perth, proclaimed the town was capable of fielding a team strong enough to play against Perth.97 As a result of this proclamation, five hundred people
witnessed Fremantle’s victory over Perth Rovers by two tries and a goal on the colony’s anniversary day celebrations in June 1882. By 1883, five rugby football clubs had been formed, notably Perth, Rovers, Fremantle, Unions, the Fearnoughts (who quickly disappeared from the game), and High School.

Although rugby was receiving encouragement from the press owing to outside connections with Britain rather than the eastern colonies, the Victorian game was beginning to impose itself on the colony. By 1883, the Unions Football Club was playing the Victorian game and Perth Football Club was experimenting with the sport. Two opportunistic Fremantle players, Harry Herbert and William Bateman, had already played the Victorian game in Adelaide and enjoyed its physical presence and style that made the game faster than rugby. Consequently, the enthusiasm generated for the Victorian game by these two players eventually caused a schism within the Fremantle club, which later influenced the club’s decision to adopt the Victorian code. In 1885, Victorian football received further encouragement owing to Hugh Dixson forming a club in the western suburbs of Perth, and in that same year, Fremantle, West Perth, Rovers and High School were playing the game. After the formation of these clubs the Western Australian Football Association was formed, with another club, Unions, joining in 1886. Eventually, High School, which continued to play rugby, broke away from the association, reducing the number of clubs to four.

There are several possible reasons why rugby failed to make an impact at Swan River. After the Victorian game took off in the 1850s, colonists arriving from the eastern colonies continued to support the game; the Victorian game appealed to the working class as opposed to the union game, which attracted middle class support; and from a spectators’ point of view, rugby lacked entertainment owing to ponderous play caused by too many scrimmages (now called the ‘scrum’). Lastly, and of great significance was the Fremantle football club’s decision to adopt the Victorian code, which had far reaching consequences in achieving inter-colonial competition, which was the Holy Grail of Western Australian
Supporters of Victorian football welcomed and encouraged the growth of ‘their’ game, because it appealed to the working class and it was the perfect sport to foster inter-colonial matches against teams from the eastern colonies. Two good examples of this appeared in the June 1881 and April 1883 editions of the *West Australian* and the *Daily News*. A letter from *Goals* pointed out rugby’s lack of cohesive play, too many ‘scrimmages’, forwards persisting in playing as quarter or half-backs, and no free-flowing passing. This was later endorsed by *Little Mark*, who argued that a ‘proper game, namely Victorian Association, would be enjoyed more than the Rugby Union’. On the other hand, supporters of rugby argued that although ‘their’ game was played in New Zealand it was played in the eastern states also. However, in April 1883, the *Daily News* pointed out that the Victorian code was ‘now generally adopted in all the other Colonies’. The debate continued throughout April when the *West Australian* applauded proposals to test the Victorian game in a series of matches to allow colonists the opportunity of choosing which was the more entertaining of the two codes. Australian football was fast, exciting and considered more spectacular than the slow ponderous game of rugby. Consequently, in contrast to all the other sports played at Swan River, Victorian football emerged through a democratic process and within ten years the game’s attraction was greatly enhanced owing to the discovery of gold and the migration of working-class people from the eastern colonies. Thus, the Australian code was the third team sport to grace the playing fields of Swan River.

In Fremantle, rugby and Victorian football matches were played at Barrack Green, which was later developed as Fremantle Oval, and considered the finest ground in the colony by 1885. Although Perth City Council had created a general recreation ground between Barrack and William Street jetties, a lack of proper playing facilities still hampered sport in Perth. In 1886, administrators from both the football and cricket associations continued to petition Governor Sir Frederick Napier Broome for a sports
ground until a decision to grant a piece of land on which to play cricket was given in 1890.  

Although cricket and football formed their respective associations in 1885, it was far more important for cricket to establish an association and find proper playing facilities, so that the technical aspects of the game might improve. Cricket teams were being formed in all quarters of the colony, but football had a more penetrating effect upon working-class communities. Consequently, Victorian football evolved through the strength of the game’s individual communities, which in turn established ovals (local cricket was played on some of these ovals) and football stadiums.

As with other colonial sports large numbers of women supported the football codes, although their preference eventually leaned towards the Victorian code. Their role was seen as supporters, socialites, passive onlookers and barrackers. Barracking at football matches and brandishing umbrellas in the heat of the moment was some compensation for women who were still stifled by Victorian social attitudes towards their involvement in sport. Throughout the sexually repressive reign of Queen Victoria, sport enabled women to appreciate male bodies in a socially acceptable way, admiring the way they looked as well as the way they played. In 1880s Perth and Fremantle, it was fashionable for women to promenade at football matches on Saturday afternoons and a further opportunity to meet young men in an approved social setting. Early photographs depict women dressed in their finest as the Victorian game continued to be a major draw card.

Although the football codes were popular with most colonists at this time, press reports suggest governors did not attend games. In the colony’s formative years most governors encouraged the growth of sport to achieve colonial integration and social understanding, which was considered important for surviving the west Australian frontier. By 1890, however, a trilogy of events stimulated a colony that was no longer seen as a village on the Swan River. The discovery of gold, the granting of responsible self-government and a rapidly increasing population (48502 by 1890 and rising to 179967
by 1900) galvanised a slow growing colonial economy.\textsuperscript{110} After 1890, the role of the semi-autocratic governor as an important influence on social, economic and political affairs diminished and his place was superseded by elected government.

Initially, the press raised critical social issues with a game considered too violent on the field of play. The source of this apprehension was the understanding that physical violence in a sports setting created tensions and dislocations in any given society. At Swan River, violence of any form was regarded as a breakdown of cultural values most cherished by the early settlers.\textsuperscript{111} However, against this backdrop of alleged social disorder, Victorian football was singularly growing in popularity and the working class warmed to the very nature of the code. The game was a potent combination of aggressiveness, territoriality and fluid interplay between communities and individuals, seen more often in Fremantle than Perth, where fanatical support for any football code associated with Fremantle was described as passionate. For instance, after Fremantle defeated Perth in a game of rugby in August 1882, Alfred Hillman commended the support of Fremantle’s supporters who ‘cheered their side on’, adding that ‘If the match had been played in Perth there would have been no such demonstration’.\textsuperscript{112} Hence, a sense of place, pride and class distinction were apparent on many occasions in Fremantle.

Reports suggest football’s officialdom and the press frequently expressed fears that antisocial behaviour was counter-productive and not beneficial to the game owing to the ‘roughs and rowdies’ taking over the sport. Hence, the \textit{West Australian} greeted the formation of the Western Australia Football Association in 1885 with some relief.\textsuperscript{113} But the voice of administration did little to reduce violent play. The implication was that if the game’s governing body could not control violence on the field of play, then the colony might experience the first signs of social disorder amongst the working class. Consequently, after several incidents during the 1889 and 1890 seasons, the \textit{West Australian} called for stronger action against rough play on the grounds that it was killing healthy sport. Three good examples of this were in June 1889 when Rovers and Unions
requested police help to keep players and spectators apart. A year later, owing to a lack of policemen at Fremantle’s home game with Metropolitans, ‘hand to hand’ fighting amongst the players and spectators took place. It was reported that at one point in the game there were more spectators (and their dogs) on the field of play than there were players. After a Fremantle game in 1891, the ringleader of a crowd who had invaded the pitch was sentenced to twenty-four hours imprisonment for riotous behaviour. On his release he was carried through the streets of Fremantle by enthusiastic fans. However, has the Victorian game and its rules developed the violence it produced remained on the field of play, and did not spill over to generate widespread social significance.

Like horseracing, attitudes towards gambling continued to demonstrate widespread concern in maintaining social order. Gambling appeared early on and by 1890 the pastime was associated with every sport in the colony. Forecasting football results, like horseracing, was an attraction widely pursued by all classes, but the morality behind gambling was evident in the early 1890s owing to the West Australian questioning the delegates’ betting habits regarding decisions about disputed matches at the football league’s annual meeting.

Like other colonial sports, the press commentated on the game and notable journalists included Looker On, Stripes and Argus, who all informed their readers on the football association’s general meetings, impending fixtures, team form and match reports. Like cricket, the football codes attracted after match celebrations and on many occasions players from both sides renounced their allegiance and inter town rivalry to indulge in celebratory dinners. For example, at the first Fremantle-Perth rugby match played in June 1882, players took the occasion a step further by adjourning to the ‘Freemasons’ Hotel’ in Fremantle for refreshments at half-time and then dined at ‘Caesar’s Hotel’ in Fremantle after the match finished.

One of the greatest achievements of the British Empire was to spread association football to the four corners of the globe. Today, the sport is played in every country in the
world and can rightly claim to be the world’s most popular team game. Although association football was played in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria at the end of the nineteenth century, it was never a serious contender to rugby and Victorian football in those colonies. During the colony’s gold rush sporadic games were played in Kalgoorlie and probably amongst the working class in Fremantle and Perth. But, even though association football was played and enjoyed by the working class in Britain, this did not enhance its reputation in Australia owing to the stigma of professionalism influencing the English game in the 1880s. The *West Australian*, influential in pointing out the social impediments of professionalism in rowing and athletics, further counselled against the growing dangers regarding association football. Association football did not become central in Australia’s sporting calendar until after the Second World War owing to an influx of migrants from across war-torn Europe generating greater enthusiasm for the game.

**GYMNASIUMS.**

Although Victorian football was first introduced in the eastern colonies for the benefit of keeping the cricket fraternity active during the winter months, the sport also encouraged the establishment of gymnasiums to keep all sportsmen fit throughout the year. The earliest account of colonial gymnasiums suggests members of the Rovers Football Club in Perth met at the Oddfellows Hall in June 1888 to form the Rovers Gymnastic Club. Two months later, a ‘gymnastic and athletics club’, fitted with the ‘necessary appliances for the development of the muscles’, was formed in Fremantle under the management of James Byron Hayes, a local boxer.

Modern day gymnasiums employ professionally trained personnel to instruct clients in weight-lifting, aerobics, keep-fit programmes and dietary planning. In contrast, the nineteenth-century gymnasium at Swan River probably replicated the gentlemen’s clubs in England to include a diverse range of programs such as trapeze, rings, horizontal bars and boxing lessons. Early references regarding membership to nineteenth-century
gymnasiums do not exist, but their clientele was probably middle class and membership
would have been few in number. The working class was rarely attracted to an activity
performed for its own sake owing to physical results being too slow and satisfaction
occurring over a period of time. Their preference lay towards the rigours of the football
codes, rowing and boxing.

BOXING.

Once the agrarian population moved to the industrial cities of nineteenth-century
England they were confronted by overcrowded housing and urban squalor. This was
compounded further by a rise in the population and a lack of social services that created an
urban milieu unfavourable to the health of the working class. In such a setting, strangers
thrown together in city pubs and taverns settled their differences in back-yards with
clenched fists. Consequently, entrepreneurial inn-keepers, whose back-yards were
available, encouraged those people who were willing to fight and spectators who wanted to
gamble.

Although the sport was popular in the eastern colonies it was frowned upon by the
authorities and, as a result, boxing became part of the popular travelling ‘bush’ circuit.
Despite its lineage being a major attraction with the English aristocracy and the working
class, the sport was never totally accepted by the Swan River authorities. There are no
tangible records to suggest boxing matches took place, but they probably did, although
surreptitiously. Bouts were probably sponsored by landlords catering for a working-and
middle-class clientele wishing to gamble. Privately, boxing was part of the gymnasium
scene and sparse references suggest George Parker, Chief Justice Sir Edward Albert Stone
and Maitland Brown dabbled in the sport. Indeed, Maitland Brown was noted for his
physical strength, which probably served him well in boxing and wrestling. 124

By the 1880s, the introduction of the Marquis of Queensbury rules and the use of
gloves assisted in controlling fighting, making the sport acceptable to the authorities. The
first boxing match to take place at Swan River under the Marquis of Queensbury rules was
an eight round contest for the championship of Western Australia between John
Armstrong, who defeated James B. Hayes at Perth’s Town Hall on 6th February 1889 for a
prize of twenty-five pounds.125

CYCLING.

The Swan River Colony’s first cycling club transpired after a meeting was held at
the ‘Criterion Hotel’ in Perth on Thursday 14th June 1888.126 Known as the Metropolitan
Cycling Club, its members organised a series of Saturday runs that started from Perth’s
town hall and finished either at Guildford, Fremantle or Chidlow’s Well (now Chidlow) in
the Shire of Mundaring. As with all sport, the issue of Sunday riding was frowned upon by
the church. However, reports suggest criticism towards Sunday riding declined during the
1890s partly because respectable people rode bicycles and ministers used their bicycle to
visit their parishioners.127 Although bicycle racing took off and became popular and
competitive in the eastern colonies during the 1880s, the sport in the west was leisurely
paced, uncompetitive, class based, and popular with colonists who could afford to purchase
a bicycle. Evidence suggests membership to the Metropolitan Cycling Club was male
orientated and drawn from the middle class, who included Samuel John Rowe, Richard
Septimus Haynes, Joseph Hope, John Charles Horsey James, R.P. Brown, A. Brady and D.
Rogers. Apart from the other well-known colonists Samuel John Rowe was clerk to the
Chief Justice and captain of the cycling club, and Joseph Hope was Chief draftsman for the
Lands Department in Perth.128

Cycling did not have the desired effect upon the working class as it does today
owing to the expense of purchasing a bicycle and membership being confined to social
groups where decorum applied. More often than not, the lure of Australian football and
 cricket, and games played in taverns and public houses took preference. Consequently, it
was not until the late 1890s that cycling as a competitive sport took off, appropriately in the
west Australian goldfields, where an increase in the population owing to a series of gold
strikes generated surplus money giving colonists the opportunity to race and gamble.
QUOITS AND SKITTLES.

During the colony’s formative years the taverns of Fremantle and Perth were supported essentially by a drinking and card playing working-class clientele, but quoits and skittles were probably interesting diversions from these practices. Although quoits was played in England there is little evidence to indicate that the game was played in the formative years of the colony. If it was played in the colony’s early years it would have been open to gambling. However, evidence suggests the game caught the colony’s attention in the last quarter of the nineteenth century as a result of the *West Australian* in September 1888 reporting on the impending formation of a quoits club in Fremantle.\(^\text{129}\)

With the aid of press coverage, F.T. Pamment, owner of the ‘Freemasons’ Hotel’ saw the entrepreneurial opportunities associated with accommodating quoits and skittles at his hotel. For example, in October 1888, D. Taylor from Perth challenged Pamment for a prize of seven pounds sterling, and in December a game between Pamment and F. Thorn was played for one pound sterling and considered ‘a very close contest’.\(^\text{130}\)

Skittles was an alternative game that dominated the colonial pub scene also, but again, like quoits, there is no corroborating evidence to suggest the game was played in the colony’s formative years. In October 1888, however, it was reported that skittles was very popular ‘judging by the number that nightly indulge in the game’.\(^\text{131}\) In December 1888, press reports indicate a skittle match was played at the ‘Court Hotel’ in Perth between ‘two well-known players, one a local man, the other hailing from Adelaide’.\(^\text{132}\)

Both games encouraged gambling and the incentive for publicans like Pamment was profit from liquor sales. Like other sports they were considered ‘manly and traditional’ at the time, and undoubtedly contributed towards colonial camaraderie and a place in the social calendar.

BILLIARDS AND SNOOKER.

Billiards and snooker, like quoits and skittles, had a checkered history at Swan River. Billiards dates back to the early sixteenth century in Europe and in 1885 the English
Billiards Association was founded. In the mid-1870s, bored military personnel introduced snooker in Jubbulpore in India. There are no records whatsoever to indicate who first played billiards in the colony. However, early references suggest the ‘Royal Hotel and Billiards Room’ in Fremantle accommodated their clientele as early as 1834. During the second half of the nineteenth-century billiards was played, but again there is no evidence in the press or diaries to suggest who played the game and if competitive games were organised. However, gambling was common and evidence suggests that by the 1890s billiards and snooker were open to this pastime. It was reported in the *West Australian* in 1895 that two ‘leading amateurs’ played billiards for prize money totaling twenty-five pounds sterling, and it was not uncommon for spectators to gamble amongst themselves on the outcome of a match.

In England, it was a game that was popular in gentlemen’s clubs and, for those who could afford to purchase a table, it would have been part of their lounge-room décor. The billiard table (and later snooker) would have been popular with the working class in working men’s clubs. However, like most secondary sports billiards and snooker came to prominence more so during the first half of the twentieth century and took off in the latter part of that century owing to increased media coverage.

**HORSERACING.**

By 1860 the gentry through an interwoven web of marriage and economic and social standing continued to administer horseracing and, like cricket, the sport followed new settlements throughout the colony. Race meetings continued to be well received by colonists who attended a number of races held over two days. These included the ‘Maiden Plate’, the ‘Margeaux Cup’, the ‘Three Year Old Stakes’, the ‘Settler’s Stakes’, the ‘Consolation Stakes’, the ‘Hack Race’ and the prestigious and lucrative ‘Queen’s Plate’. But after the 1850s, the necessity to continue breeding pure horse flesh meant horseracing experienced several phases of reinvention. As a result, certain races became unfashionable owing to the termination of breeding lines, and financial gains associated with sponsorship
witnessed the introduction of additional races such as the ‘Perth Cup’ in 1887.

The first and foremost race to disappear from the racing calendar was the ‘Margeaux Cup’ in 1861. Early references suggest the race was the mainstay and bulwark of colonial horseracing from 1845 onwards and considered to be ‘the’ trophy to win by many colonial breeders. However, the race was for non-thoroughbred horses only and given that the breeding lines covered by Margeaux were diminishing the race was terminated owing to insufficient numbers for the event to continue.\textsuperscript{136}

Given the number of years publicans and hoteliers had been reaping rich dividends from horseracing, the ‘Publicans’ Purse’ commenced in 1865 owing to the Perth Gazette coercing a number of proprietors ‘to be more liberal in their contributions’.\textsuperscript{137} The ‘Volunteer Plate’ was also introduced in 1865 as a mark of respect for the good work achieved by the colony’s volunteer bands. Both races were for non-thoroughbred horses only, giving colonists who did not own a thoroughbred horse the opportunity to enter an important race.\textsuperscript{138}

Over the next few years further races were introduced that indicated breeding lines, the names of towns, and cups and purses donated by individuals. These included the ‘Red Heart Stakes’ (1868); the ‘West Australian Derby’ (1873); the ‘Metropolitan Handicap’ (1877); the ‘Fremantle Town Plate’ (1878); the ‘Forrest Cup’ (1882); the ‘Railway Stakes’ (1885), which commemorated the opening of the Fremantle to Midland railway line; the Hordern Handicap (1885); and the ‘Perth Cup’ (1887). The ‘Red Heart Stakes’ was introduced in 1868 by Samuel Burges for all horses who were the progeny of his imported stallions Khorassan and Agriculturist.\textsuperscript{139} Samuel Burges was a leading player in the colony and early references indicate that he arrived at Swan River in March 1830. He consolidated his position in colonial high society after marrying Vittoria Meares, the daughter of Captain Richard G. Meares in 1843. Burgess settled first on the Upper Swan as a farmer and pastoralist and then transferred to ‘Tipperary’ at York where he became a Justice of the Peace and a member of the York Race Club. He spent numerous years breeding stock for
the Indian markets and invested large amounts of capital to import thoroughbred horses and mares from England.\textsuperscript{140}

Two other notable members of the professional-commercial class who introduced cups and purses to the racing diary were Alexander Forrest and Anthony Hordern. Forrest (the brother of the future Premier, John Forrest) donated the ‘Forrest Cup’ in 1882, and was chiefly responsible for instigating the ‘Perth Cup’ in 1887. Anthony Hordern introduced the ‘Hordern Handicap’ in 1885.\textsuperscript{141} Hordern was a former Sydney merchant with offices in Britain, United States of America, Europe and China. He formed a syndicate in England to construct the Albany-Beverley railway line in a package deal that included land grants and migration proposals. However, his premature death at sea in 1886 saw many of his ideas come to an end and, as a memorial to his achievements, the citizens of Albany erected a monument to him in 1890, a year after the Albany-Beverley railway line was opened.\textsuperscript{142}

The vanguard of colonial horseracing, however, was the ‘Perth Cup’ (formerly the ‘Metropolitan Handicap’), which was introduced in 1887, and has been the foremost race in the colony’s equine calendar from that day. The brainchild of Alexander Forrest, the ‘Perth Cup’ was a two mile handicap race for thoroughbreds for a stake of two hundred and fifty pounds. The winner, \textit{First Prince}, coincidently owned by Alexander Forrest, received two hundred pounds, with the second and third horses receiving thirty pounds and twenty pounds.\textsuperscript{143}

The comfort of spectators was of paramount importance to the Turf Club and an issue with the press. The splendour and the hustle and bustle associated with race meetings still meant most colonists stood at various vantage points on the course or congregated near the finishing post to witness the end of a race. Other colonists stood on carts or wagons and the well to do found comfort sitting in their carriages. In 1867, the \textit{Perth Gazette} suggested a grandstand should be built for the benefit of both the sport and its spectators. Although good recommendations came in small supply in the colony they still took a considerable amount of time to develop. Three years later, at a special meeting held at the Turf Club, a
The grandstand was proposed and eventually completed seven years later in time for the Easter race meeting in April 1877. However, the grandstand was not without its critics, as for example, Alfred Hillman was unimpressed with the architect’s design, because it ‘shut out all the sea breeze’.

Membership to the Turf Club was still associated with social and economic hegemony, matrimonial unity and nepotism. A detailed look at the Turf Club’s membership in 1860 differs little from that of the 1880s. Evidence suggests membership in 1860 consisted mostly of the landowning gentry, who included Kenneth Brown, Augustus F. Lee Steere, Thomas Burges, Anthony O’Grady Lefroy, and Count Von Bibra. Brown was a pastoralist and horse breeder who exported horses to India. He married Mary D.E. Wittenoom, the daughter of Reverend John Burdett Wittenoom. Lee Steere was a pastoralist and farmer, who married Ellen E. Roe, the daughter of John Septimus Roe, the Surveyor-General; Burges, the son of Samuel, was a pastoralist and Member of the Legislative Council. He married Augusta Henrietta Wittenoom, another daughter of the Reverend John Wittenoom. Anthony O’Grady Lefroy was Private Secretary to Governor Fitzgerald and a Weld Club committee member. He married Mary Bruce, daughter of Captain John Bruce. Count Von Bibra was an Indian tea planter, who migrated to Swan River and married Matilda Flaherty, the daughter Edward John Flaherty, a land owner.

By the 1880s, the personnel may have changed, but the opportunities for those who had social and economic privilege remained. A comprehensive examination of this impressive list suggests that if they were born in the colony, they came mostly from the colony’s early families whose values had shaped society. If they were not from the established colonial families, they were the new settlers with professional and commercial backgrounds who shared the gentry’s aspirations by identifying themselves with their social, economic and political interests. For example, Dr. Alfred R. Waylen was Colonial Surgeon and principal medical officer. He was a member of the Turf Club and a pioneer vigneron who won many prizes. Waylen’s second marriage to Lady Louisa Leake, widow...
of Sir Luke, firmly established him in colonial social life. Alexander and John Forrest’s reputations were founded on their exploration of the colony during their formative years. Alexander became a member of the Legislative Council in 1887 and the Legislative Assembly in 1891, and Mayor of Perth in 1892-1895 and 1897-1900. He married Amy Barrett Lennard whose father was an early settler and horse breeder at ‘Belhus’ farm. John Forrest, who became the first Premier of Western Australia in 1891, married Margaret Elvire Hamersley, the daughter of Edward Hamersley, who owned land throughout the colony; Richard Aldolphus Sholl was a member of the well-connected Sholl family from the colony’s formative years. Geoffrey F. Eliot was the son of George Eliot, who was Resident Magistrate of Bunbury. William E. Marmion was a pastoralist and Minister for Lands and Mines in John Forrest’s administration. Marmion married Annie Mary Gibbons, the daughter of Peter Gibbons who was a farmer in Capel. Maitland Brown was a member of the Legislative Council for Geraldton and later Gascoyne, and Resident Magistrate for Geraldton. Brown married Amy Francis Howard, the daughter of Reverend George R. Howard. George Parker was a solicitor; James Brown Roe was secretary of the Turf Club and Sheriff of Western Australia in 1877. Roe married Alice Stone, the daughter of Advocate General and Attorney General George Frederick Stone, the brother of Alfred H. Stone. William Bedford Mitchell, a horse trader, was the son of William Bedford snr, who was manager of Belvidere and Prinsep Park in Bunbury. Mitchell jnr married Fanny Priscilla Pearse, daughter of William Silas Pearse, the Fremantle merchant.147

The role played by governors was twofold; their appearances throughout the colony were still considered a social and integral part of office, and they presented and donated cups to the sport. Governor Hampton attended race meetings in the 1860s and as patron of the Turf Club donated the ‘Northern Members Plate’. In August 1879, Major General Sir Harry St.George Ord K.C.M.G. donated the ‘Governor’s Cup’.148 At the February 1873 meeting, Governor Weld and his family attended both days, and in January 1875, Governor Robinson graced Guildford’s race meeting with his presence.149
The colony’s early jockeys were amateurs who bred and trained their own horses. They were part of a colonial network of landowners and members of the commercial middle-class who dominated horseracing. The 1870s witnessed a growing dynasty of riders, who included Stephen and George Parker, Maitland and Kenneth Brown and the hotel proprietor William Henry Strickland. Their supremacy at race meetings was witnessed at Perth in 1873 after Maitland and Kenneth Brown and the Parker brothers won four and three races respectively out of the eight events on offer. Stephen H. Parker was successful in winning the ‘Queen’s Plate’ in 1872, 1873, 1874, 1875 and 1876, and William Strickland won the ‘Maiden’s Plate’ on three occasions in 1875, 1884 and 1887. Maitland and Kenneth Brown were the colony’s leading horse breeders. Their father, Thomas Brown and an early settler in the colony, held large estates at Newmarrincarra and Glengarry in the Champion Bay district, near Geraldton. Both Maitland and Kenneth managed his estates and their lasting legacy to horseracing was furnishing valuable bloodlines to the colony.

During the 1880s, the colony witnessed a new breed of trainer and professional rider. These professional riders were self-made men from working-class backgrounds, who were employed by the country establishment to train and ride their horses. The Woolhouse brothers from Geraldton, for instance, later rode for the Brown brothers. Other notable trainers and riders were George Andrew Towton, J. Ford, Mr. Rotton, G. Cleverley, J. Corbett, J. Byrnes and J. Walker. Towton became a jockey at the age of fifteen, and in his later years successfully trained six ‘Perth Cup’ winners in a career spanning forty years in the sport. The G.A. Towton Cup, which is raced for at Ascot race course in Perth, was named in his honour.

There is an abundance of evidence to suggest the press continued to offer informative articles on the latest racing news and results. For example, articles by Yorick and Ben Bolt kept readers of the Herald informed, and Sporting Notes and Vindex notified West Australian readers. Moreover, the press published racing cards detailing the name
of the horse, the jockey and his riding colours, the owners and trainers, and betting odds.\textsuperscript{157} Letters from enthusiastic racegoers predicting winners at future meetings were popular additions in the press. Four good examples were \textit{Water-Cress}, \textit{B.D.F.}, \textit{Robiscum} and \textit{Zadkiel}.\textsuperscript{158} In contrast, some letters from the reading public were critical of decisions made by the Turf Club. A good example of this was in 1867 when \textit{Bushman} explained that the Turf Club’s stance on Rule 2 (the age of a horse) was incorrect and should be amended.\textsuperscript{159} The Turf Club, aware of their mistake, revised the law accordingly for the January 1869 meeting to read ‘all horses take their age from the 1\textsuperscript{st} August of the year in which they are foaled’.\textsuperscript{160} Newspaper editorials were quick to inform the reader of irregularities associated within the sport. For instance, in January 1886, the \textit{Herald} successfully raised objections over a wealthy English bookie, Mr. Madden, becoming a member of the Turf Club for financial reasons only. The \textit{Herald’s} traditional stance against the colony’s hierarchy was one borne of mistrust characteristic of a previous editor of the paper, William Beresford, who was an implacable opponent of anything authoritarian in the colony.\textsuperscript{161}

Gambling has always been inextricably linked to the sport, and breeders of good horse flesh together with the horseracing public played for stakes as low as thirty pounds sterling and as high as five hundred pounds sterling. In November 1882, for instance, a large number of spectators saw Mr. Armstrong’s \textit{Belle Mahone} beat George Towton’s \textit{Greyhound} for a prize of thirty pounds sterling at the Perth race course.\textsuperscript{162} At most race meetings it was considered normal for colonists to bet large amounts of money on horses to finish first and second (place). For example, betting was ‘brisk’ for the 1888 ‘Perth Cup’ race owing to rumours that a bet of five hundred pounds had been placed against \textit{Satyr} winning the cup. However, \textit{Satyr}, who was favourite for the ‘Railway Stakes’ also, did not appear at the meeting.\textsuperscript{163}

Gambling and sport received official investigation during the 1890s with parliamentary attempts to regulate bookmakers’ activities.\textsuperscript{164} Two problems associated with gambling were the bookies and the totalisators. Did they encourage betting amongst
the lower classes and should betting be permitted off the race course? The *West Australian* argued against gambling owing to the possibility of fuelling social disorder amongst the working class. The working classes, argued the *West Australian*, were encouraged to bet indiscriminately for the benefit of racing clubs. The Turf Club responded by arguing that small time gamblers used the totalisators, but only lost small amounts of money. But the major problem was the bookies who plied their trade off the course owing to allegations of dishonesty. It was much easier to control the totalisator, a machine, than the bookies.

The weather was still an important indicator regarding the arrangement of race meetings which were usually held on New Year’s Day and in the months of February, March or April. In 1885, objections were raised over the New Year's Day meeting owing to the hot weather, but given the holiday and carnival atmosphere of the occasion this popular tradition remained and continues to this day.

Horseracing was fast and it brought into sharp focus the dangers associated with the sport. Consequently, owing to the deterioration of the track during the rainy winter months couch grass was laid and further maintenance was completed on the track before each meeting. Even so, the race course was always considered rough and dangerous and, in March 1863, the *Inquirer* commented on the poor condition of the course, claiming that it was not safe to gallop down the section of the course known as the ‘hill’. Hence, several minor incidents occurred at race meetings that included horses stumbling and riders being thrown. A good example of this transpired in April 1860 when a horse threw a young unnamed aboriginal rider. There are no tangible records to corroborate who he was, but it may have been ‘Jackey’ who, some years later, had the notable distinction of winning several metropolitan races, including the ‘Red Hart Stakes’ at Perth in 1877.

Ancillary entertainment was an integral part of horseracing and like previous years refreshment stalls and publicans’ booths remained a lucrative business. In March 1883, for example, Mrs. Games secured the rights to refreshment stalls on the grounds of the race course and under the grandstand; and James Dearden, a licensee, purchased the rights to
erect drinking booths on the ground.\textsuperscript{170}

By the 1880s, attending race meetings was a problem for colonists who did not have transport. Alfred Hillman noted fewer people were attending race meetings than in previous years owing to insufficient numbers visiting Perth from the country areas, and ‘the difficulty of getting to the course keeps the general mob away’.\textsuperscript{171} To arrive at the Ascot race course spectators travelled from Perth by road, across the causeway, and along the eastern banks of the Swan River. On the other hand, the Fremantle to Midland railway line was situated one mile away from the western side of the Swan River. Once at the river, spectators were ferried across and then had to walk to the racecourse alongside the east bank of the Swan River. However, the problem of reaching the race course was alleviated in 1890 after a footbridge was built to avoid waiting for the ferry, although a toll of one shilling was charged to use the bridge.\textsuperscript{172}

By 1890, horseracing like cricket had found new settlements throughout the state, as for example, meetings were held in Perth, Fremantle, Guildford, Wanneroo, Northam, York, Canning (the Maddington course), Gingin, Woodman’s Point, Geraldton, Bunbury and Albany. As in 1833, a day at the races saw colonists mingling amongst publicans’ booths and refreshment stalls, albeit demarcation lines existed and social niceties were still observed. Women were seen promenading to and fro with friends or husbands, and peripheral entertainment such as old English games appealed to many colonists. The races themselves produced a great deal of pleasure amongst racegoers who enthusiastically cheered their horse to victory. Such scenes were witnessed by Alfred Hillman, who could never quite understand ‘the frenzy of excitement’ generated by spectators, especially from women whose behaviour, he noted, was ‘perfectly ridiculous, and almost contemptible’.\textsuperscript{173}

\textbf{WOMEN AND SPORT.}

The years between 1860 and 1890 saw a gradual transformation in the English speaking societies regarding women participating in sport. The history of sport in Australia during the nineteenth century was dominated by men; woman took a secondary role as
spectators or ancillary workers. They were also absent from positions of public influence in
government, the press and the business sector. But, did women participate in sport during
the nineteenth century and, if they did, what impact, if any, did they have? It has been
suggested women did participate in sport, but how far and to what degree? Female
historians argue that male writers have hidden and down played the nature and extent of
women participating in sport in the colonial period to 1900, where it has been suggested
‘all classes and all ages of women played a variety of sports in significant numbers’.

At Swan River, for instance, middle-class women seized upon the opportunity to play sport
owing to their social status allowing them to participate in sports such as croquet, lawn
tennis and rowing. Working-class women watched sport on one of several holidays given
during the year, but they neither had the finances to indulge in or purchase equipment, nor
the inclination to play sport owing to time and their domestic vocations. Furthermore, there
is no evidence to suggest schoolgirls played sport at Swan River. It appears that although
men cultivated the amateur and professional versions of popular games such as cricket and
the football codes, many men excluded or marginalized women from playing sport.

The historical study of women in Australian, indeed Western Australian sport is
still in its infancy, but research through newspapers, journals and diaries more than
suggests middle-class women did participate in competitive sport from the 1880s onwards.
However, having stated that women played croquet and tennis, skated and bathed in
bathing houses, these sports were considered ornamental in their day, emphasising
recreation and relaxation rather than competition and performance. The only sport that may
be deemed competitive was rowing, although like every other sport women participated in
competition was more profound in the twentieth century.

THE CHURCH AND SPORT.

From the seventeenth century onwards cricket in England was spearheaded by the
landed gentry, who used the game as a vehicle for gambling. But the English authorities
and the church in particular frowned upon those who played the game on the Sabbath.
Hence, the church and the cricketing fraternity became fierce adversaries over the centuries owing to Sunday being a day of worship and perhaps rest, and not a day for sport or leisurely pastimes. However, during late nineteenth-century England sport was encouraged by religious and social leaders who promoted associations for recreational activities with the intention of promoting a stable society. Consequently, unlike cricket, a sport which had survived religious opposition for over three-hundred years, several English football clubs such as Barnsley, Fulham, Everton, Bolton Wanderers and Aston Villa (The Villa Presbyterian Church of Aston) sprang from church or chapel connections during the period 1875 to 1900. In contrast, the Swan River clergy was not numerous enough to dominate colonial society and, unlike Britain, they were not supported by an infrastructure of tradition and property that had survived since the dissolution of the Catholic monasteries and the formation of the English church in 1541. John Wollaston, who arrived in the colony during in the 1840s, was met with ignorance and skepticism. He quickly learned that small landed farmers and labourers were not interested in religion and the gentry, who were involved in sport, were not prepared to set an example. At Bishop’s Collegiate School, which was founded by Bishop Mathew Blagden Hale in 1858, they encouraged pupils to play cricket and by 1862 the game was part of the school curriculum.

In the eastern colonies, cricket was the first team sport to attract popular support, and by the 1860s, the Victorian football game was gathering momentum. The formation of these associations sprang from middle-class administration, working-class enthusiasm, and an increase in the population and growing prosperity in Sydney and Melbourne, but not the church. However, the teachings of the church influenced religious life; imposing religious observance, temperance in all things, and beliefs in altruism, charity and thrift. Consequently, at this time and intrinsic to the church and the middle class were the doctrines of Muscular Christianity and the ethos of ‘a sound mind in a sound body’. These ideals were promoted and considered inherent to good healthy living, and an important requirement for the improvement of the British race and its colonies. They were the
precepts of Dr. Arnold, headmaster of Rugby school in England. Hence, colonists such as Arthur J. Diamond and Jack Higham advocated that sport kept boys, and especially young men, away from the fashionable saloons, smoking cigars and drinking brandy.\textsuperscript{176} By the second-half of the nineteenth century several sports, notably horseracing, cricket and the football codes indelibly printed themselves upon Swan River society. This growing enthusiasm for sport met with little opposition from the church as a whole, but in 1880, Bishop Parry of Perth voiced his concern that young men were too engrossed in sport at the expense of scholarly learning.\textsuperscript{177}

Typical of these religious overtones in sport witnessed the organisation of the Young Australian Football League in the 1890s whose membership included Arthur Diamond, who advocated that sport was a wholesome and character-forming pastime. The religious ingredient of Diamond’s football league served this purpose and combined fitness with nature and lectures on physical health, geography and politics. Under his auspicious guide football matches were preceded by prayers well into the early years of the twentieth century.\textsuperscript{178}

THE GROWTH OF THE COLONY AND SPORT.

During this thirty year period the continued flow of migrants from Britain and the eastern colonies reinforced early cultures associated with sport and other leisure time activities first witnessed in 1829. The ‘new’ migrants or middle class introduced the ‘new’ or ‘modern’ sports such as croquet, lawn tennis, rugby, tennis, athletics, cycling and association football. They were supported by migrants who arrived from the eastern colonies in the 1890s owing to the discovery of gold in the west, and played a significant role in cementing Victorian football into the colony’s psyche. The slow rates of economic and demographic growth between 1860 and 1890 were transformed by the multiplier effect of continuous gold strikes in the Yilgarn district. In 1869, for example, the population was 24653 and by 1890, it had reached to 48502. Once gold was discovered, the population increased to 179967 by 1900.\textsuperscript{179} During this period the colony saw the first signs of
modernisation with the introduction of the east west telegraph in the 1870s and the commencement of railways in the 1880s. Improvements in transport contributed to individual freedom and mobility, far more so than the vote, and simultaneously encouraged the growth of sport in all given civilised societies.

The social picture of the colony had changed during this period. Those who gained wealth during the colony’s formative years continued to reinforce their economic position through social standing and marriage. Politically speaking, the landed gentry and their ideals were eventually superseded by democratic change, given additional impetus owing to economic and demographic growth attributed to the discovery of gold. However, one aspect of social change did allow members of the working class to share greater participation and rite of passage with the gentry and middle class in colonial sport. Consequently, the psychological notion that games were considered ‘gentlemanly’ when played by the gentry, and as ‘manly sports’ when played by the artisan became more democratised during the period 1860 to 1890.

Although ‘modern’ sports gained favour with most colonists, the old sports like cricket, horseracing and the regatta were still an integral part of the colony’s sporting calendar. Horseracing attracted huge audiences in the eastern colonies and stimulated gambling. At Swan River attendances were comparatively large given the size of the population. However, like in the east, jockeys, trainers, bookmakers and administrators figured prominently at Swan River. The military oversaw the security of the eastern colonies during the formative years of settlement, but at Swan River once the military left volunteer rifle corps’ were formed to maintain security, which introduced competitive rifle shooting in 1864. Cricket and regatta events continued to foster colonial mingling, although social decorum was observed. Similar to the eastern colonies, horseracing, hunting, trotting and yachting at Swan River were indelibly associated with the gentry, who had the means, the time and the finance to invest further in ‘their’ sports. Therefore, cricket and horseracing developed administrative structures. Club competition was
organised through cricket and competitive rifle shooting, but the first competitive inter-colonial match was a ‘shoot’ against South Australia in 1880. Gambling was a common-denominator in all sport and the proliferation of racing events provided more bookmakers throughout Australia. The public house remained popular with drinkers; it was a place where people gathered to play quoits, skittles, marbles as well as staging boxing matches. However, professional boxing at Swan River did not take off until the late 1880s. Throughout Australia, few respectable women frequented public houses. The pub was a male sub-culture and women, who were discovered in public houses and young girls found in dance halls, were assumed to be prostitutes. In the eastern colonies, sport was influenced by the gold rushes, the growth of cities, and the eight-hour day movement. The eight-hour day movement was celebrated in Queensland by the mid-1860s, and followed by South Australia in the 1870s. At Swan River the discovery of gold and the eight hour day movement came to fruition in the 1890s. In the east, recreation grounds were developed in the early days of settlement, as for example, after Hyde Park, Sydney’s Moore Park was developed for sport in the 1860s and 1870s. In Melbourne, open space was made available to Melbournians in the 1850s. Unlike at Swan River, recreational grounds were not developed until the 1870s, and a piece of land upon which to play cricket was not granted until 1889. Similar to Swan River, the middle class in the eastern colonies introduced new sports, notably croquet (played in public parks); lawn tennis, rugby and cycling. Lawn tennis appeared in Australia during the 1870s and 1880s and was considered an ornamental sport for the elite. The wealthy built courts and the game became part of the social round of entertainment. The University formed the first rugby club in New South Wales, in 1864. Rugby was the second team sport to be played at Swan River in the 1880s. However, rugby was superseded by Victorian football, and like the game in the east, quickly gathered momentum and popular support with the working class. Cycling in the eastern colonies was both recreational and a sport. At Swan River, cycling was popular during the 1880s, but the element of gambling in the east saw the introduction of racing,
which was not allowed at Swan River. The ever popular regatta continued throughout Australia, but two events, rowing and yachting formed their own associations and became separate entities and class based; at Swan River, the gentry and the middle class competed in their yachts, the working class enjoyed rowing. Billiards was popular in the east; it was exclusively male orientated and was associated with drinking and gambling. The game was played in private homes, exclusive clubs, billiard-halls and hotels. However, at Swan River billiards was given little attention until the 1880s.

From the 1880s onwards, rugby influenced the few, but Victorian football attracted many. Although association football had a greater impact on British society during the 1880s, it had little effect in Australia until the second half of the twentieth century. Certain sports like boxing and wrestling were part of the ancillary entertainment at horserace meetings and anniversary celebrations, but were yet to make an impression on the colony. Like trotting, boxing and wrestling needed entrepreneurial know how to succeed on a wider scale. Professionalism, considered anathema by the press and the authorities, briefly alighted on rowing and pedestrianism, but insufficient competition at Swan River meant athletes from the eastern colonies had little to race against and even smaller amounts of money to win.

Although women were restricted from playing sport in Australia, they were regularly seen at most sporting occasions throughout the nineteenth century. However, given the encouragement to play croquet, lawn tennis, skating and the facilities to bathe, the participation of women competing in sport was looming on the horizon. However, what was vital and important to the growth of sport in any given society was a good infrastructure of transport. In the eastern colonies, most race courses and football and cricket grounds were built close to the railways, affording greater opportunities for colonists to watch or participate in sport. At Swan River, the railroad was slow to develop until the gold rushes triggered colonial prosperity.
END NOTES FOR CHAPTER FIVE.


3 Croquet is played on a lawn thirty-five yards (approximately thirty-two metres) by twenty eight yards (twenty-six metres), with four balls, either by four people on two sides or by two people each taking two of the balls. Play involves hitting one’s ball(s) twice through a series of six hoops in a certain order, and then hitting a peg in the middle of the court, making thirteen ‘points’ in all for each ball. The team who scores twenty-six points wins the game. The term ‘bisque’ differs from that of lawn tennis. In croquet, a player with a large handicap has an extra turn.

4 Perth Gazette, 2/10/1863.


6 West Australian, 11/2/1885.

7 WA, 15/10/1887.

8 Erickson, Dictionary of Western Australians Vol 4 A-K, p. 875.

9 WA, 10/7/1888 and 28/8/1888.

10 Erickson, Dictionary of Western Australians, Volumes 3 and 4 for more information on these people.

11 WA, 27/7/1891 and 16/9/1893.


13 WA, 23/2/1895; Stoddart, Sport and Society, p. 660; Erickson, Dictionary of Western Australians Volumes 3 and 4 for more information on these people.

14 West Australian, 8/4/1895; Stoddart, Sport and Society, p. 660; Erickson, Dictionary of Western Australians Volumes 3 and 4 for more information on these people.
Western Australians Vol 3 and 4 for more information on these people.

15 Inquirer and Commercial News, 14/2/1872.

16 Inq and Comm News, 14/2/1872.

17 WA, 8/2/1888.

18 WA, 6/2/1888 and 8/2/1888; Erickson, Rica: Dictionary of West Australians Vol 4, Pt 1 and 2 for further information on these people.

19 WA, 24/2/1888 and 27/2/1888.

20 WA, 6/7/1888.

21 WA, 6/7/1888.

22 WA, 28/10/1890.

23 WA (supplement), 8/8/1882.

24 Erickson, Dictionary of Western Australians, Vol 4, Pt 1, p. 832.

25 WA, 2/5/1882.

26 WA, 6/10/1882.

27 Erickson, Dictionary of Western Australians Vol 4, pt. 1 and 2 for further information on these people.

28 WA, 5/6/1883.


30 Inq and Comm News, 18/9/1872.

31 Erickson, Dictionary of Western Australians Vol 4, p. 927.

32 WA, 5/2/1887.

33 Inquirer and Commercial News, 12/2/1873.


36 *Eastern Districts Chronicle*, 12/10/1889 and 31/5/1890.


40 Lady Broome, *Remembered with Affection*, p. 135.

41 *WA*, 14/4/1890; *E D Chronicle*, 19/4/1890.


43 *The Hillman Diaries*, Saturday 16/12/1882, p. 774.


45 *PG and W.A. Times (Supplement)*, 21/11/1873.


47 *H*, 30/4/1870.


49 *H*, 29/4/1876.

50 *The Hillman Diaries*, Wednesday 1/1/1879, p. 189.

51 *Perth Gazette and W.A. Times*, 14/11/1873; *H*, 16/11/1878.
Inq and Comm News, 7/6/1876.

Erickson, *Dictionary of West Australians Vol 3*, pp. 474, 490 and 762.


Erickson, *Dictionary of Western Australians Vol 4 Pt. 1*, pp. 212, 833, 901.

*WA*, 5/5/1887 and 22/7/1877.


*West Australian*, 21/9/1888.

*WA*, 24/7/1888.

*WA*, 12/6/1888.

Erickson, *Dictionary of Western Australians Vol 3* and *Vol 4* for more information on these people.

*WA*, 27/9/1888.

*WA*, 16/12/1879.

*PG*, 20/12/1861.

*PG*, 19/2/1864.

*Perth Gazette*, 19/2/1864.
69  *PG*, 19/2/1864.

70  *WA*, 31/3/1864.


73  *Inq and Comm News*, 13/10/1875.

74  Erickson, *Dictionary of West Australians Vol 3*, p. 395.

75  *WA*, 23/3/1880.


77  *WA*, 19/9/1882.


79  *WA*, 16/12/1879.

80  *PG*, 19/2/1864.


82  *PG*, 16/9/1864.

83  *WA Times*, 25/9/1874 and 29/10/1875.

84  *Inq and Comm News*, 31/5/1871.

85  Ibid.

86  *The Hillman Diaries*, Wednesday 13/10/1880, p. 421.


88  *H*, 17/10/1868.

90 W. A. Times, 13/5/1879.

91 Erickson, A Dictionary of Western Australians Vol 3 for more information on these people; Stoddart, ‘Sport and Society’, pp. 652-674; Anthony Barker, Behind the Play: A History of Football in Western Australia from 1868, (Perth: West Australian Football Commission, 2004), pp. 8-9.

92 Erickson, Dictionary of Western Australians Vols 3 and 4; Stoddart, ‘Sport and Society’, pp. 660-1.

93 Stoddart, ‘Sport and Society’, pp. 661 and 664.


95 See Erickson, Dictionary of Western Australians, Vol 3, p. 347 for more information regarding Hale.

96 The Hillman Diaries, Thursday 8/6/1882, p. 681.

97 Herald, 20/5/1882.

98 H, 3/6/1882.

99 Barker, Behind the Play, p. 4.

100 Ibid, pp. 4-5.


102 WA, 9/5/1882.

103 Ibid, 28/6/1881.


105 West Australian, 16/5/1882.

WA, 16/9/1885.

Inq, 23/6/1886.

Barker, Behind the Play, p. 21.

Appleyard, ‘Western Australia: Economic and Demographic Growth’ in A New History of Western Australia, p. 220.


WA, 13/5/1885.

WA, 10/6/1889.

WA, 17/6/1890.

Bolton, Land of Vision, p. 56.


WA, 30/4/1895.


H, 10/6/1882.

WA, 30/7/1894.

WA, 8/6/1888.

WA, 13/8/1888.

Peter Cowan, Maitland Brown: A View of Nineteenth Century Western Australia,

125 *WA*, 2/2/1889 and 7/2/1889.

126 *WA*, 15/6/1888.

127 *Morning Herald*, 20/5/1897 and 24/5/1897.

128 *WA*, 18/9/1888; Erikson, *Dictionary of Western Australians, Pt 4 Vols 1 and 2* for more information on these people.


130 *WA*, 6/9/1888, 26/10/1888 and 13/12/1888.

131 *WA*, 10/10/1888.

132 *WA*, 22/12/1888.

133 *PG*, 13/12/1834.


135 *West Australian*, 14/9/1895.


139 *PG and W.A. Times*, 15/3/1867.

140 Erickson, *Dictionary of Western Australians Vol 3*, p. 91.

141 *H*, 30/12/1882; *WA*, 26/1/1883, 13/11/1884 and 11/9/1885.

142 *WA*, 4/7/1890; Erikson, *Dictionary of Western Australians Vol 4*, p. 785.

143 Tomlinson, *Born Winners Born Losers*, p. 113; *WA*, 15/9/1886 and 5/1/1887.

144 *Perth Gazette and W.A. Times*, 22/2/1867; *Inq and Comm News*, 11/5/1870; and *H*,
24/3/1877 and 7/4/1877.

145 *The Hillman Diaries*, Tuesday 1/1/1884, p. 1006.

146 *PG*, 27/4/1860; Erickson, *Dictionary of Western Australians Vol 3* for more information on these people.

147 *WA*, 10/4/1886; Erickson, *Dictionary of Western Australians Vol 3* for more information on these people.


149 *H*, 22/2/1873; *Inq and Comm News*, 3/2/1875.

150 Erickson, *Dictionary of Western Australians Vol 3*, p. 809.


153 Erickson, *Dictionary of Western Australians, Vol 3*, pp. 81-82.


155 Erickson, *Dictionary of Western Australians Vol 4*, p.1609.

156 *H*, 16/12/1882, 30/12/1882, 24/3/1883, 10/4/1886; *WA*, 29/12/1882.

157 *H*, 20/12/1879.


The age of a horse is always on the 1st August, but in March 1867 the Turf Club changed Rule 2, which caused consternation amongst breeders, owners, and the gambling public. According to the Turf Club, a foal dropped in September 1859, for example, will not, for all racing purposes, be considered to be twelve months old until 1st August 1861. These changes meant the age of a horse when competing in a race for three year olds in 1864 would, in reality, be four years of age.

160 *Perth Gazette and W.A. Times*, 18/12/1868.
161 Herald, 9/1/1886 and Herald (supplement), 9/1/1886.


163 WA, 20/12/1887.

164 WA, 2/1/1895.

165 WA, 15/1/1895.

166 Cited in Stoddart, ‘Sport and Society’, p. 666.


168 Inq, 18/3/1863.


170 WA, 23/3/1883.


172 Tomlinson, Born Winners, Born Losers, p. 188.

173 The Hillman Diaries, Tuesday 1/1/1884, p. 1006.

174 Marion Stell, Half the Race, (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1991), pp. 1 and 25.

175 J. Hirst, Is Feminist History Bunk, (Weekend Australian 4-5 March 1995).

176 WA Times, 18/1/1879.

177 WA, 26/11/1880.

178 WA, 20/5/1904.

CHAPTER SIX.

CRICKET: THE ROAD TO MATURITY 1860-1890.

Assisted by an increase in the population of both Sydney and Melbourne and the improvement in transport and communications, cricket in the eastern colonies of Australia achieved popular blessing by 1860. Moreover, good administrative skills saw the introduction of intra-colonial leagues and the development of inter-colonial competition that became vital components towards strengthening the growth of the game. The first inter-colonial cricket match took place between Tasmania and Victoria in February 1851, a trend that continued in March 1856 when New South Wales defeated Victoria at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.¹ The New South Wales-Victoria games were part of Australia’s early sporting culture, given further nourishment by the visit of English cricket teams in December 1862 and 1863/4.² However, although the game in the east was improving beyond recognition cricket in the west was still labouring under several long-term inveterate problems.

Although cricket at Swan River was attracting a social base by the late 1840s, the game was experiencing a hiatus owing to several chronic problems. For example, the main port of call was Albany rather than Fremantle or Perth, and as long as this continued the development of inter-colonial and international competition was unlikely to occur.³ Too much sand in the soil created poor wickets and simultaneously delayed the development of fluent stroke play. Under-arm bowling crystallised much of what was wrong with the game. The game lacked a central point of administration that was needed to stimulate and improve the sport. The response by governors to allocate a piece of land for the purpose of playing the game was negligible owing to the expediency of using convict labour on public works programmes. The press was the game’s mouthpiece in the eastern colonies, and evidence acknowledges similar encouragement was forthcoming in the west. Indeed, the
western press was openly critical of the wickets and, over the coming years, opinions were voiced, but very little was achieved. The gentry, who had the wherewithal and wealth to respond to the games problems, did very little to redress the issue until the 1880s.

The 1850s saw the introduction of the Perth-Fremantle fixtures, but from the 1860s onwards further growth in the game witnessed wider social interest, as for example, games were organised against crew members of visiting ships and intra-colonial matches were arranged. Most games were played in the spring and autumn months owing to the temperate climate, but one game was arranged to accommodate the summer holidays, as for example, Perth and Fremantle arranged a game to coincide with the New Year celebrations of 1867. This particular cricket game was a significant moment in colonial cricket owing to members of the Perth cricket team being transported by boat to Fremantle. The game responded to the colony’s anniversary celebrations and royal birthdays also, as for example, in June 1866, Fremantle and Perth met for the first and only time to celebrate the colony’s birthday. In November 1867, colonists witnessed Fremantle’s nine wicket defeat of Perth whilst celebrating His Royal Highness, Alfred, the Duke of Edinburgh’s birthday.

The game’s growing popularity reached out to achieve majority interest throughout the colony, and an abundant supply of press reports acknowledges this. Single-wicket and double-wicket games (first played in 1839) continued, and a variety of cricket teams from different social and vocational backgrounds sought common ground. In some games, teams used excessive numbers of players in order to accommodate everybody who wanted to play the game. For instance, a team with eleven players beat a team consisting of fifteen players by nineteen-runs. On the other hand, a team comprising of nineteen players lost to a team containing twelve players by six runs. Games between single and married men (often under the sub-title of ‘Bachelors versus Benedicts’) were popular attractions for the

* A name for a newly married man, especially one who has held out against marriage. From Benedick, a character in Shakespeare’s play, Much Ado about Nothing.
gentry, who graced the occasion with food and beverage. A game between ‘employers of
different Government Offices and an eleven of the free and independent lovers of the noble
game’ was played in January 1867. In July 1870, a match between ‘Officials’ and
‘Non-Officials’ started on Saturday, but owing to bad weather the game was not completed
until Wednesday afternoon. The ‘Non-Officials’ team won by one-hundred and two runs.
In June 1872, a Fremantle team with only six players to call upon produced a spirited
counter attack against a ‘North West Settler’s’ eleven when they narrowly lost by eight
runs. The ‘Smokers’ played and lost to the ‘Non-Smokers’ owing to the ‘Smokers’
uncompleted innings and the ‘late hour’, and an odd rule which allowed the team that
batted first to win the game if the second team did not finish their innings. Colonial
lineage came into question in March 1881 owing to the West Australian reporting on a
match between a ‘native’ or West Australian-born eleven against an ‘equal number of
outsiders (i.e. those not enjoying the grand distinction of being colonial-born)’. The game,
played on the New Recreation Ground, witnessed the ‘West Australians’ winning by
seventy-two runs. A curious incident took place in March 1887, between members of two
teams who had never played cricket before; Mr. Bretnall’s team defeating Mr. Lousada’s
team ‘rather easily’. On some occasions, owing to the poor standard of play and the
condition of the wicket, ‘Ducks’ were plentiful. A case in point happened in a two-innings
game between Canning and a local cattle station when the Inquirer reported ‘quite a
nest-full of duck’s eggs unbroken’, there being twenty-two all told. However, games
between Fremantle and Perth continued and, in April 1865, a game involving the two sides
was given additional spice owing to the long hot summer’s day and the prolonged absence
of English beer in the colony.

Charities throughout the history of the colony were financed by the female well to
do, the gentry, theatre companies and concert programs. However, cricket was a sport
whereupon charitable games were organised also, and in May 1883, for example, a
‘Costume Cricket Match’ between the ‘Lynch Family of Bell Ringers’ and the
Metropolitan Cricket Club raised funds for the Perth Orphanage. In September 1887, the same charity benefited from a game played between the ‘All Comers’, who beat the ‘Clowns’ convincingly.17

The sport was growing throughout the immediate colony with both Fremantle and the Metropolitan Cricket Club making significant contributions towards expanding the game to the frontier regions of the colony. Fremantle’s reputation for being the leading cricket team in the colony witnessed the first intra-colonial cricket match between Bunbury and Fremantle on 25th November 1862.18 The occasion marked the introduction of sponsorship in colonial sport owing to John Wesley Bateman, who owned the cutter *Wild Wave*, sponsoring Fremantle’s trip to Bunbury.19 Bateman was a Fremantle shipping merchant, who monopolised coastal trade to the northwest and the Kimberleys. His son, John Wesley, played an active part in promoting Victorian football in Fremantle in 1883.20 In May 1879, the Metropolitan Cricket Club travelled to the eastern regions of the colony to play New Norcia and Newcastle. Reports confirm that it took the team two complete days to reach the mission. The journey would take less than two hours today. However, with the assistance of George Randell’s fourteen wickets against New Norcia and his twelve wicket haul against Newcastle, the Metropolitan club won both games. The New Norcia game involved twelve-a-side in order to accommodate Mr. E.B. Learmouth, a cricket enthusiast and visitor from Melbourne, who played for the Metropolitan team.21

Owing to the introduction of steam ships, and the improvement in transport generally, colonists now had the opportunity to take advantage of faster transport instead of relying upon wind assisted cutters. The problem facing the cutter was a lack of prevailing wind, resulting in most journeys planned to coincide with the easterlies in the morning and the south-westerly ‘Fremantle Doctor’ in the afternoon. The steam ship improved colonial transport beyond all measure and, as Alfred Hillman noted, induced ‘a great many more people to travel’ on them.22 In 1880, the construction of the Perth railway station with lines running to Fremantle and Greenmount (even though the cost of a ticket was high until the
1890s) resulted in both modes of transport becoming major turning points in the social history of the colony. Consequently, the improvement in ocean-going transport encouraged teams from various out-posts of the colony to visit Fremantle and Perth. A team from Geraldton (‘Victoria’) visited and lost to Fremantle in January 1881. It was reported that there was a total of sixteen ‘Victorian’ ‘ducks’, and at one point in the proceedings ‘Victoria’ lost seven wickets without adding to their total.23

The improvement in river and carriage transport provided easier access to most regions of the colony and, as a result, colonists witnessed the introduction of games played between teams from various outposts of the colony. In February 1875, for example, a combined team from Northam and Newcastle (later Toodyay) suffered a defeat after travelling to Perth.24 A notable inclusion in the Perth team was Henry Bruce Lefroy, the eldest son of Anthony O’Grady Lefroy, who was Private Secretary to Governor Fitzgerald in 1854. Lefroy was an old Rugbeian, who coached and captained the successful aboriginal cricket team from New Norcia until work on his farm and political ambitions saw him take up responsibilities as a member of the Legislative Assembly for Moora in 1893, and later premier of Western Australia in 1917. Although his position in colonial society was established he further cemented his status in the colony when he married Rose Agnes Wittenoom, the daughter of Charles Wittenoom, the pastoralist and farmer.25 The game was still some years away before a team from Swan River played against teams from the eastern colonies. In the meantime, however, the best that teams at Swan River could do was play cricket against opposition comprised of crew members from ships visiting the colony.

Whilst games against crew members from visiting ships attracted colonial interest, early references confirm the opposition was poor and only served to prolong the adverse problems associated with the game in the west. Nevertheless, with shore leave readily available, crew members challenged teams from Fremantle and Perth. The year 1866 witnessed the first of these games to be played after members of *Falcon* challenged a combined colonial team. However, the game ended in a draw owing to the late arrival of
Falcon’s crew to the ground. Even so, this fixture encouraged a popular trend that saw several more fixtures arranged over the following years. In February 1869, for example, the colony entertained His Royal Highness Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, who witnessed members of his ship, Galatea, lose to a combined Perth and Fremantle team by ten wickets. In November 1874, personnel of the Barracouta challenged both Fremantle and Perth and were convincingly beaten. Fremantle won their game ‘with ease’ and a similar situation transpired the following day after Perth won by an innings and two-hundred and twelve runs. In the latter game, there was a total of ten Barracouta ‘ducks’ owing to the fine bowling of Perth’s Joseph Hillman and Frederick Hare, who between them shared twenty wickets. Five months later, in March 1875, the crew of Sappho played a Perth eleven and lost by an innings and three runs.

A significant moment in the history of colonial cricket took place during a game played between Fremantle and Sapphire in November 1875. The home team reached two-hundred and sixty runs (the highest score in the history of colonial cricket at Swan River at the time) with George Parker scoring one-hundred and six runs, which was followed shortly afterwards by Charles Hanham, who scored one-hundred and two runs. It was the first time players from the colony had scored a century, and two were completed on this occasion.

There is no early evidence whatsoever to confirm players from the eastern colonies graced the colony with their presence, but in 1886 both the Fremantle and Perth cricket clubs employed the services of two South Australian batsmen, notably W. Watling and B.V. Scrymgour. Watling, who played for Fremantle, came from the Adelaide Cricket Club, and B.V. Scrymgour played for the Perth club. However, both players returned to Adelaide after one season in the colony.

During the nineteenth century it was considered unacceptable for women to participate in any sporting activity owing to Victorian attitudes defining sport as ‘manly’ and therefore inappropriate for women. Accordingly, women who wanted to play cricket
were not taken seriously and those who wished to trespass upon a male orientated sporting territory were regarded as unfeminine.32 There is ample evidence to confirm, however, that like other colonial sport cricket was considered socially acceptable and fashionable for women to attend. For example, on New Year’s Day 1869, a cool breeze and good ground conditions at Fremantle attracted a large number of females to the Fremantle-Perth game.33

The number of spectators at the Perth-Sappho game in March 1875 was small, but consisted mostly of females.34 Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, including the Duke of Edinburgh, attended the match against Galatea in February 1869.35 In February 1882, the cricket establishment erected a large open tent containing seats ‘well filled by fair spectators who evidently took a deep interest in the game’.36 In February 1886, the West Australian reported many ladies were seen amongst the dignitaries at New Norcia’s final game against Fremantle.37

As cricket continued to be a major attraction the game witnessed the undesirable side of colonial life owing to hooliganism from the larrikin element. The game had previously experienced social disorder amongst supporters of Fremantle and Perth in April 1867 when Fremantle hooligans, incensed by their team’s defeat, threw stones at the Perth players as they were leaving Fremantle.38 In May 1879, this social problem continued after an outbreak of missile throwing by both sets of supporters was roundly condemned by the press.39 As a result of larrikin misbehavior and a lack of proper facilities, the Metropolitan Cricket Club debated the possibility of erecting a pavilion for women in October 1882. However, cricket was still eight years away from receiving land upon which to play the game, and reports suggest the cost of constructing a pavilion was considered too expensive to build and the idea was postponed.40

During the 1870s and 1880s, the growing popularity of the game was clearly illustrated with the formation of several new clubs throughout the state. Locally, they included York United, Guildford Union, New Norcia, and Northam and Newcastle. In the North West regions of the state, the game attracted the attention of Roebourne and
Cossack, and in the Geraldton area Good Templars (Rose of Victoria), Non-Templars and Bootnall played the game. In the southern regions of the state 125 Mile Cricket Club and Williams River Cricket Club (off the Albany Highway) participated. Although members of the Good Templars (The Rose of Victoria) advocated an alcohol free society, the Non-Templars not only enjoyed playing cricket, but warmed to the social side of the game also.

The game was quickly developing throughout the metropolitan area, and a number of clubs from working-and middle-class backgrounds were established. Apart from the Perth Cricket Club, whose membership comprised of ‘gentlemen’ and the professional middle class, most other clubs mirrored the commercial and blue-collar section of colonial society. For example, Perth Union (formed in 1873) included members from middle-class retail backgrounds; the Commercial and National Cricket Club embraced members from the insurance and banking section of the community; the Land Survey and Titles Department cricket team reflected members who worked for government departments; and the Works and Railway Department Cricket Club consisted of artisans and unskilled members of the community. Another club with the odd sounding name of I’Zingari† was established in the 1880s also. However, both Perth cricket clubs would eventually have a profound bearing on the future of the colonial game when members from both clubs combined to form the Metropolitan Cricket Club.

Although the game attracted broad base social support, there is evidence to suggest that the social composition of some teams, especially those who represented the colony, became more emphasised owing to the status of its playing members. Like in England and the eastern colonies, the game may well have crossed social demarcation lines and held majority support, but on isolated occasions the position of working-class cricket

† Named after the famous English cricket club formed in 1845. Like the Barbarian rugby union team the club did not have a ‘home’ ground. The name means the ‘wanderers’ or the ‘gypsies’ in Italian.
in colonial society was marginalised. These games were indicative of the social and economic barometers observed in colonial society. Such elitism was first witnessed at a representative game in February 1869 when a combined Fremantle-Perth cricket team played against crew members of the Duke of Edinburgh’s ship, *Galatea*. The distinguished and notable members of the colonial team included George C. Attfield, George B. Humble, William E. Marmion, George Stapleton, Edward Newman, John de Courcy Hillman, Richard A. Sholl, Robert F. Sholl and Septimus Burt. Attfield was the Imperial Surgeon at the convict establishment and husband to Alice Roe, the daughter of the colony’s first Surveyor-General, John Septimus Roe. Humble, who was headmaster of Fremantle Boys’ School, later became the Deacon of the Congregational Church. Marmion was a businessman, who eventually became Minister for Lands and Mines in the John Forrest administration. Stapleton was the colony’s assistant surveyor. Newman was a Freemason and member of the Fremantle Town Trust and Fremantle Municipal Council. Hillman was captain of the Perth Cricket Club; Richard A. Sholl became Postmaster General, and his brother (Robert F. Sholl) became a committee member of the Western Australian Cricket Association. Burt was the son of Sir Archibald P. Burt, who was the Chief Justice of the W.A. Supreme Court.41

Another good example of elitism took place in March 1875 when colonists witnessed an invitational team from Perth defeat crew members from the *Sappho*. The team included such colonial celebrities as George and Stephen Henry Parker, Charles Howard, Leonard Clifton, Lt. Col. James Tierney Skinner, Edward Ashton, Reginald Charles Hare and Octavius Burt. Both George and Stephen Henry Parker were solicitors (Stephen, who became the unofficial leader of the foundation movement for self-government in the 1880s, eventually became Mayor of Perth and foundation member of the Western Australian Cricket Association). Howard was secretary of the Horticultural Society. Clifton’s land owning family was well-connected throughout the colony. Skinner was Deputy Commissary. Ashton was inspector of post offices and director of the Perth
Building Fund. Hare became Inspector of Police in 1886 and secretary to the Agent General for Western Australia in 1891. Burt was Private Secretary to Governor Weld and later to Governor Robinson. Separate from representative games, another good example of colonial elitism was the formation of the Metropolitan Cricket Club in 1879. Membership to this exclusive club reflected a social and economic base previously witnessed at the Turf Club and the Weld Club, and similar patterns would emerge in colonial cricket also.

Early references suggest similar patterns of elitism were discernible at schoolboy level also. As early as 1862, schoolboys’ from Bishop’s Collegiate School\(^\ddagger\) were attracting the attention of at least one of the colony’s leading teams. In April 1862, for instance, Perth fielded several students from the school for their game against Fremantle. Over the years the school replicated traditions and values associated with an English public school system with most of its pupils originating from the colony’s ancestral families and the migrant middle class. They included Lawrence S. Eliot; Andrew Mitchell; Alfred J. Hillman (and his brother John de Courcy); William J. Roach; Octavius Burt; George and Stephen Parker; Frederick Hare; Edward and Francis Wittenoom; Augustus Roe; Edward Newman and Alfred Lochee.\(^{43}\) These children were destined to succeed their fathers in commerce and trade, and provide leadership to Western Australia at the end of the nineteenth century.

Cricket at schoolboy level not only reflected the social and economic composition of colonial society, but simultaneously highlighted the depth of talent that was starting to blossom throughout the colony. In November 1869, for example, Bishop’s Collegiate School played Fremantle and narrowly lost by three wickets.\(^{44}\) On New Year’s Day 1870, the collegiate cricket team challenged an eleven representing the ‘Colony’ and won by an innings and forty-six runs.\(^{45}\) Furthermore, the school not only supplied talent to the Perth and Perth Union clubs, but represented the town of Perth also. After 1878, the school

\(^\ddagger\) The school was later renamed ‘High School’ from 1878 to 1929, and then ‘Hale School’ after 1929.
changed its name to High School and together with Fremantle Grammar School, Cygnet Cricket Club, Swan Orphanage, Government School, Catholic Boys’ School, Fremantle Juniors, and Mr. Letch’s Commercial Academy in Perth played an important part in developing the game at grass-roots level in the colony.

Cricket in the eastern colonies was a template upon which the west was required to restructure its game, but the social and economic values deemed important by the colony’s gentry was expressed through horseracing and breeding good horse flesh. As a result, cricket suffered considerably. However, the social and economic structure of the colony was changing from the 1860s onwards owing to an aspiring business and commercial middle class wishing to replicate those values first set down in the colony’s formative years. These people were wealthy and influential, and cricket needed their administrative acumen to organise the game accordingly. During the course of the next twenty years these people took the game to a new level and simultaneously introduced new sports to the colony.

In February 1878, Richard Aldolphus Sholl proposed a meeting at Perth’s ‘United Services Hotel’ to discuss the future of colonial cricket in the colony. Sholl suggested both Perth cricket clubs should amalgamate and form an elite club to be known as the Metropolitan Cricket Club. He further recommended club members wear an obligatory uniform, which if anything, again underlined the colony’s social and economic demarcation lines associated with club membership. A number of players from both the Perth clubs changed allegiance to form the Metropolitan Cricket Club and, although the two clubs suffered as a result of this, they continued to play cricket, and both were present at the formation of the colony’s cricket association in 1885. The establishment of the metropolitan club does suggest elitism, but owing to Sholl’s foresight it was the first step towards reinventing the colonial game that saw the formation of an association, a calendar of fixtures, and a ground upon which to play the game.

The Metropolitan Cricket Club boasted some of the most important and influential
people in the colony, notably John Charles Horsey James, Roger Tuckfield Goldsworthy, Stephen H. Parker, Lawrence S. Eliot, George Leake, James Henry Thomas and R.W. Rowe. James was Commissioner of Land Titles and captain of the Metropolitan Cricket Club. Goldsworthy was Colonial Secretary; Parker was a solicitor; Eliot was a civil servant, who later became Assistant Colonial Secretary in 1889 and permanent head of the Commonwealth Sub-Treasury in 1902; Leake became Premier of Western Australia in 1901; Thomas was Director of Public Works; and Rowe was an accountant. However, these people, and those of similar ilk, were influential in concluding aboriginal cricket and their role in the colonial game.

The role of the aborigine in Australian society has always been prone to prejudice, ignorance, and the white population’s ill-conceived historical perception of how this race of people would play a role in the growth of Australia. Apart from isolated moments of indigenous achievement, very few aboriginals have played an active part in Australian sport. Early traces of aboriginal involvement point to 1868 when a team from Victoria, under the captaincy of the English professional Charles Lawrence, became the first Australians to successfully tour England. However, between 1879 and 1886 an aboriginal team from New Norcia successfully toured the colony. Coached by Henry B. Lefroy, they were the first aboriginal cricket team in the colony and, over the course of several years, proved to be formidable opposition.

On their first visit to Perth in February 1879, New Norcia beat Fremantle by nine runs and lost to Perth by five wickets. These two results not only announced New Norcia’s capabilities, but according to the Australian newspaper embarrassed the two leading teams in the colony. The eastern press reported on what was inherently wrong with cricket in the west, notably sub-standard wickets and a lack of technique that produced ‘very mild’ stroke play from the Perth team. According to Alfred Hillman the natives ‘played capitally’ against Fremantle, and although they ‘got a licking’ against Perth it was ‘not a disgraceful one’. Within two years, the West Australian observed that these ‘sons of the
soil’ were technically better than their metropolitan counterparts owing to their batting ability, remarkable agility and speed in the field, and a good throwing arm. Johnny Blurton was considered their most effective batsman and Jackimarra, a left-handed spin bowler, was ‘splendid’, with very few deliveries ‘being off the wicket’.51

A good example of Blurton’s prowess occurred in 1881 between one of the colony’s more prominent players, John Charles Horsey James, who was playing in a game for the Metropolitan Cricket Club against Blurton’s New Norcia. Both players originated from very different social backgrounds; James was a Rugbeian and Oxford graduate, and Blurton was a half-caste from New Norcia. It took James fifty minutes and two innings to score 2 runs. Blurton, on the other hand, contributed 39 runs and sealed victory for New Norcia by an innings.52 Given the plight of Western Australian cricket at the time it was ironic that the colonial game was based on the success of the least English cricket team in the colony.53

Over the next few years reports confirm New Norcia continued to play successful cricket and their lively and refreshing approach to the game secured substantial victories against Fremantle, Perth, Metropolitan, Guildford, York and High School.54 On her visit to New Norcia in October 1883, Lady Broome witnessed ‘a capital game of cricket’ between the aborigines and the ‘lay Brothers’ of New Norcia. Lady Broome observed that the New Norcia cricket players made ‘capital cricketers, with their correct eye and accurate aim, and (their) love of the game’.55 However, their appearances in the metropolitan area were becoming more infrequent and in 1886 the colony witnessed their last visit to Fremantle and Perth. It was a significant year in many ways than one, because although it reinforced New Norcia’s prowess on the cricket field, it also brought into question the legal rights of the aboriginal people throughout Australia. They lost their first game against Fremantle by ten wickets owing to some fine bowling by John Bateman, who took fourteen wickets for 42 runs. But in spite of this setback, they comfortably beat High School by 95 runs; they beat the Metropolitan club by 44 runs; overwhelmed Perth Union by an innings and 129
runs; and defeated York by an innings and 59 runs.\textsuperscript{56} Owing to New Norcia defeating the Metropolitan Club, letters to the press accused the Perth players of a lack of enthusiasm and suggested that more time should be spent practicing their bowling and batting technique.\textsuperscript{57} After February 1886, however, newspapers recorded no further contests played between New Norcia and the other colonial teams. It was a sad and disappointing episode in Western Australian cricket that saw ‘the end of their vivid appearances in Perth’.\textsuperscript{58}

There are several possible reasons why these fixtures were terminated and until further evidence suggests otherwise it is safe to assume that Lefroy’s involvement in managing his father’s station on the Victoria Plains at Moora (north of Perth) and his passion for colonial politics prevented him from taking any further part in playing cricket. Bishop Salvado’s cause for aboriginal rights, together with his absence and frequent visits to Rome stifled any further encouragement. The year 1886 was a further significant moment in aboriginal history owing to the introduction of the \textit{Aborigines Protection Act}, which was an attempt to eradicate their chronic exploitation. In reality, however, the social and political climate considered the aborigine inferior and therefore a doomed race. Since colonisation in 1829, their plight was forlornly championed by a few people, notably Dr. Louis Giustiniani in the 1830s, Archdeacon John Ramsden Wollaston in the 1840s, Salvado himself from the late 1840s onwards, and the Reverend John Brown Gribble, an Anglican missionary in the Gascoyne region during the 1880s.\textsuperscript{59} It is likely, although difficult to prove, that members of the Western Australian Cricket Association shared similar prejudicial views with that of the country and rejected any further involvement with the aboriginal team. Nevertheless, New Norcia offered an important contradiction to the myth of aboriginal backwardness and their cricket team made a significant impact on colonial cricket. They were a close knit group of men trained in the art and manners of life by Bishop Salvado’s philosophy and ably assisted by Lefroy on the field of play. Their contribution to the game should have been acknowledged more than it was since colonial
cricket would have been the richer for it. Unfortunately, they had to negotiate racial innuendo, burlesque humour and social exclusion. As a result, some of the colony’s most gifted players were excluded from the colonial game and the future of west Australian cricket.

During this period the colony was blessed with a number of good cricketers, notably Johnny Blurton, Johnny Maher and Jackimarra from New Norcia. Fremantle’s Edward Newman and George Cooper, and together with Perth’s Joseph Hillman and Frederick Hare produced good spells of fine bowling. Edward Ashton was a consistently good batsman. Henry B. Lefroy was a good all-round Rugbeian sportsman, and George Parker and Charles Hanham were the first colonials to score one-hundred runs in an innings. Fremantle’s Frank E. Stafford and William Black were considered the fastest bowlers in the colony. Paradoxically, George Randell took many wickets even though he was bowling fast underarm deliveries, and W. Watling and B.V. Scrymgour were the first players from the eastern colonies to represent club cricket at Swan River.

One of the major problems concerning the game in Perth was the appalling state of the wickets. Conversely, Fremantle had already acquired ‘Fremantle Green’ (in Phillimore Street where Fremantle’s railway station now stands) by 1862 owing to the game receiving greater encouragement in that town. Thus, Fremantle played on good wickets with easy access for spectators to move freely to and from the ground owing to the construction of good roads and paving. In contrast, Perth played on wickets considered dangerous owing to rain creating ruts in the pitch, and the dry and dusty conditions of summer caused the ball to bounce inconsistently. Historically, Perth’s inadequate playing facilities at the Old Recreation Ground were a contentious issue, exacerbated by fruitless applications to the

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§ Round-arm bowling superseded under-arm bowling in England from c1807. However, over-arm bowling was used in the eastern states, but was not approved by the MCC until 1864. The term ‘bowling’ comes from the game Lawn Bowls owing to the player bowling the ball along the ground to the batsman. See Major *More than a Game* pp. 124-140.
council for a piece of land on which to play the game. These problems persisted until the formation of the Western Australian Cricket Association in 1885 and the acquisition of land in East Perth in 1890.

The diaries of Alfred Hillman yield no references whatsoever on the subject of poor wickets, even though he played cricket for Bishop’s Collegiate School and the Weld Club, and umpired a number of games also. However, when Hillman travelled to the eastern colonies in 1878, he remarked on the ‘splendid oval cricket ground’ at Adelaide and Sydney’s ‘beautiful oval’ in his diary, suggesting that he may have had prior knowledge of the problem associated with the Perth wicket. 60 Apart from newspaper reports there is no evidence whatsoever concerning the plight of colonial wickets in diaries, or journals.

The disadvantages associated with Perth’s Old Recreation Ground was its location, which was considered too far away from the city centre, and bad drainage caused unpleasant seasonal visitations of mosquitoes. The winter rains made the ground swampy and during the summer months it was subjected to parades and animals continuously grazing. Another major problem was the intractable stance of Governor John Hampton, who focused more on the improvement of Perth’s roads and pavements than a piece of land on which to play sport. Over the next few years Perth Council took responsibility for the Old Recreation Ground, but any response concerning the improvement of playing facilities proved negligible. 61 Evidence shows landfill projects between William and Barrack Street jetties were discussed at council meetings in June 1863. 62 However, it was not until April 1879 that the West Australian reported on a decision made by the Perth Council to allow land between the jetties at Barrack and William Streets to be cleared for the sole purpose of playing sport. 63 As a result of this decision, the colony celebrated its fiftieth anniversary at the New Recreation Ground (Perth’s modern Esplanade) in June 1879. However, the New Recreation Ground was for general use only and not solely for any particular sport. Therefore, a decision to form a cricket association with suitable playing facilities was
imperative for the game to improve.

At the annual general meeting of the Metropolitan Cricket Club in October 1885, initial moves were made to form a cricket association and at the same time procure land on which to play the game on. This was further endorsed on Thursday 12\textsuperscript{th} November 1885 when members from the Metropolitan Club, Perth Cricket Club, Perth Union Club and City Temperance Club held a meeting at Perth’s ‘United Service Hotel’. Foremost on the agenda was the formation of an association ‘subject to the municipal council letting an adequate portion of the Recreation Ground for the exclusive right of playing matches thereon by such association’.\textsuperscript{64} On Friday 20\textsuperscript{th} November 1885, representatives of the four cricket clubs attended a meeting with the city council for permission to use a portion of the New Recreation Ground. The meeting was spearheaded by John Charles Horsey James and George Parker from the Metropolitan Cricket Club; H.Gamson and Edward Rodoreda represented the Perth Cricket Club; A. Lake and Edmund Prendergast spoke for the Perth Union Cricket Club; and W. Traylen and Louis Ranford appeared for the City Temperance Cricket Club.\textsuperscript{65}

Reports recount that the deputation argued against investing money in a piece of land if the general public was going to interfere with the wicket. They reassured the council that they were not asking for exclusive rights for cricket or a proposed closed shop for the four clubs making the request. On the contrary, schools were invited to play on the wicket and furthermore, the game would not clash with the growing popularity of the football codes. The deputation requested a lease for three years for two pieces of land thirty yards by twenty-five yards. The council again recommended and offered the Old Recreation Ground and further suggested to the cricket fraternity that they should share the facilities with the athletic and rowing clubs, who leased the ‘Flats’ above the Perth causeway. However, like the Old Recreation Ground, the ‘Flats’ was considered too far away and individual sports with different needs rarely integrate. ‘Gate money’ was suggested, but frowned upon owing to professional implications and the amateur ethos that all sport was
played for fun. It is more than likely that the council was procrastinating and hiding behind legal technicalities. Consequently, owing to a legal clause in the bylaws the council sidestepped the issue once again and adjourned the meeting until 25th November 1885.  

At a meeting on 25th November 1885, Septimus Burt advised the council that granting such a lease to the cricket clubs of Perth endorsed ‘the very purpose or trust upon which the land was granted, the recreation of the people’. Councillor Bernard Smith, an implacable opponent of cricket, suggested adjourning the debate owing to the mayor retiring. However, Smith’s two underlying arguments concerned the betrayal of the people’s trust in the council and other sports clubs might desire portions of the ground also. In spite of Smith’s protestations, they were not compelling enough to sway the other councilors, and matters arising from the agenda were put to a vote. The ensuing vote witnessed eight councillors voting in favour of the delegation obtaining a piece of land, whilst two councillors were against the motion, and a further two councillors (including Smith) abstained. As a result of this decision, the Western Australian Cricket Association was established on 25th November 1885. Its founder members were Perth Cricket Club, Metropolitan Cricket Club, Perth Union and City Temperance. A notable absentee was a club from Fremantle, which had previously played a significant part in the formative days of colonial cricket. However, the original club disbanded and a more formal cricket team was established in 1883, and admitted to the association in 1886.

Governor Sir Frederick Napier Broome became the association’s inaugural patron and John C.H. James was the first President. Upon analysing James’s committee members it is not hard to visualise how and why the established gentry and the ambitious middle class mixed socially through business, membership of other clubs, or through kinship to fortify their prevailing cultural values. They included Dr. Edward Scott, Edward Sholl, Robert Edwin Bush, Everard Firebrace Darlot, John Winthrop Hackett, and George T. Fruin. Scott practised medicine at Greenough and Guildford, and eventually became Mayor of Perth. He married Edward Sholl’s sister, Penelope Fanny Sholl. Sholl was a
solicitor and barrister, and a member of the Metropolitan Rifle Corps and Metropolitan Cricket Club. Bush was a grazier and explorer, and a Justice of the Peace. He eventually became a Member of the Legislative Council in 1890. He married Penelope Fanny Scott nee Sholl after Scott died. Everard Darlot and his brother, Leonard, came from the eastern colonies and, after investing in property and gaining considerable social and economic influence, entered colonial politics. The Darlots encouraged the progress of cricket in colonial schools by donating the Darlot Cup, which is still contested amongst Perth’s leading private schools to this day. Hackett, who married into the elite Brockman family, was the proprietor and editor of the *West Australian* and influential in establishing the University of Western Australia, and Fruin was an accountant. These people established a conservative ruling group in colonial cricket with values based on similar lines to those social groups that dominated English county cricket clubs. The association’s trustees, who completed this socially hierarchical pattern were John Forrest; Josceline G.H. Amherst, who became future private secretary to Governor Frederick Broome; and the politician and solicitor George Parker. It was a committee which possessed an aptitude for business and understood the values associated with cricket.

After the formation of the Western Australian Cricket Association the next logical step was to procure proper playing facilities and establish headquarters for the game, but this was not forthcoming until 1889. However, the Holy Grail of west Australian sport was to compete against teams from the eastern colonies. Several meetings were held by the association during 1887 to ascertain the possibility of sending a team to tour the eastern states in January 1888. Such an undertaking, it was argued, would cost the association twelve-hundred pounds. E.C. Pendergast, captain of I’Zingari Cricket Club, suggested that it would be more cost effective (six-hundred pounds) if the association invited the English cricket team to west Australia. Prendergast did, however, mention the deplorable state of the wickets in Perth. Arthur Diamond, a Fremantle merchant and future president of the Fremantle Football Club, supported an eastern colonial tour. Diamond estimated that the
tour would cost approximately six-hundred pounds providing players took their own spending money, subscriptions were raised on the home front, and if the eastern railway company sponsored the cricket team. But, the Victorian Cricket Association could not give any assurances that the tour would be a financial success. On the other hand, the South Australian Cricket Association was more optimistic and promised a share of the gate receipts, although other expenses had to be incurred by the Western Australian Cricket Association. Reports suggest, however, that upon further calculations this proved to be too costly. Consequently, the dream of an immediate tour of the eastern colonies was cancelled owing to a lack of financial sponsorship. As a footnote to this episode Frederick Dudley North organised the first west Australian cricket team to visit the eastern colonies in 1893.

Meanwhile, the major problem regarding the association’s efforts to obtain a piece of ground continued and, on 17th December 1889, several members of the association, who included John C.H. James, George Parker and Arthur Lovekin convened with Governor Broome to discuss the possibility of obtaining a piece of land. As a result of this meeting Governor Broome agreed to and granted fourteen acres of foreshore land in east Perth to further the cause of the association and cricket in the west. The success of the meeting was ‘the most vital decision in the history of the WACA’ and a major turning point for the game in the west.

Such was the final outcome for cricket in Western Australia. The game, having come from humble origins in 1835, moved glacially towards maturity, and successfully reflected a sense of social understanding within the colonial milieu. Furthermore, a sense of pride and belonging was established owing to inter-town matches between Fremantle and Perth, and games played against crew members of visiting ships. Like in the eastern colonies, as the colony grew the game progressed from a transitional period of teams composed of tradesmen, gentlemen, and the military to association-run cricket by 1885. Similar to the east, cricket travelled the length and breadth of the colony, and after 1860,
more clubs were formed from various social and vocational backgrounds. However, like
the Adelaide Cricket Club, which confined their membership to ‘gentlemen’, Perth’s
Metropolitan Cricket Club based its membership on the colony’s gentry also. The
problems confronting cricket in the west did not materialise in the east, as for example, the
state of the wickets at both the Adelaide and Sydney ovals were conducive to good cricket.
At Swan River, and Perth in particular, the problems of dry, dusty wickets did much to
hinder the technical progress of the game. But, like the expansion of the eastern economy
and population after the gold rushes in the 1850s, similar events at Swan River in the 1890s
witnessed a turning-point in the colony’s fortunes and sport also, which as the twentieth
century approached, was central to an emerging Australian way of life.

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5 Perth Gazette and W.A. Times, 8/6/1866 and 15/11/1867.


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12 H, 2/12/1882.

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69 West Australian, 27/11/1885.

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71 Stoddart, ‘Sport and Society’ pp. 658-659; Erickson, A Dictionary of Western Australians Vol 3 and Vol 4 for an account of these people.


73 See Erickson, Dictionary of Western Australians Vols 3 and 4 for a more detailed account of these people; Stoddart, ‘Sport and Society’, p. 660.


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CONCLUSION.

This thesis has focused on how sport and other leisure time activities reflected the social values and class structures at Swan River, and how they were important catalysts for social integration and bringing representatives of all classes together during the difficult years of slow economic development until the discovery of gold and self-government in 1890. However, certain questions need to be asked and answered.

What was distinctive about Swan River sport and other leisure time activities in this period compared to the other Australian colonies; how much did sport and other leisure time activities contribute to an emerging identity; what did this period contribute to post 1890; what is the relationship between the conclusions reached regarding the histories of the eastern colonies and those of Swan River. What continuities and discontinuities are there before and after 1890?

The distinctions in sport and other leisure time activities in this period of study compared to the other Australian colonies was the slow economic growth of the colony; the geographical position of the colony; the small and scattered population; no government assistance; and the geological disadvantages associated with the soil. The colony was founded on exaggerated claims that Swan River was the ideal place to colonise. However, once the British government rejected Stirling’s suggestions for settlement, his scheme for funding the project with individual private capital was a recipe for disaster. The British government agreed with his scheme of self-funding the colony, but was unwilling to spend money in the long-term on a new colony or provide welfare for the settlers after they arrived. This was one of the main reasons why the colony failed to establish a workable immigration policy and an economic infrastructure. Consequently, Swan River in 1829 was unlike all the other Australian colonies owing to it being the first colony to be settled exclusively by private enterprise and free of convict taint. However, the small and scattered population and the implementation of large free grants of land (a concept that would have benefited Stirling’s leisured class only), and a scarcity of labour were other reasons why the
colony failed.

Furthermore, the geographical position and the geological structure of the colony meant that the first port of call was Albany and not Fremantle or Perth owing to a sand bar at the mouth of the Swan River. Consequently, invitations to visit the colony were often, if politely, declined, and once the reputation of the colony floundered owing to a continual flow of bad news few people migrated to the colony.

How much did sport and other leisure time activities contribute to an emerging identity at Swan River? Similar to the eastern colonies, sport and other leisure time activities contributed to the colony’s identity. Owing to the colony’s economic infrastructure collapsing, the Spartan conditions suffered, and the daunting prospect of isolation the colony came close to starving, but such a scenario did not dampen enthusiasm. These setbacks, which were frequent, only intensified and sustained the colony’s desire to progress and move forward beyond adversity. Consequently, sport and other leisure time activities played an important role in this progression, because they served as a distraction from the daily struggle to survive. Furthermore, such fortitude and resilience served as a catalyst for social integration, often bringing together representatives of all classes that encompassed a number of values inherent in Australian society today; cultural continuity, national honour, manliness, sportsmanship, competition, and most important of all, progress.

What did this period contribute to post-1890? The period before 1890 laid the foundations for greater involvement in sport and other leisure time activities in the twentieth century. Once early settlement was established a foray of sport and other leisure time activities took off throughout the colony, thus laying foundations for unlimited participation in the twentieth century. For example, the colony’s inaugural horserace meeting was held at Fremantle in 1833, and cricket was introduced in 1835. Horseracing was popular at Fremantle, York and Guildford (where the first thoroughbred racing event took place in 1836). After 1838, Perth became the epicentre for thoroughbred racing for the rest of the century. The introduction of the Yorkshire
Club, the West Australian Stud Club and the Western Australian Turf Club saw the gentry and the horse breeding fraternities take control of their sport, and therefore consolidate their distinctive social and economic values. However, like in England and the eastern colonies, although horseracing attracted wealth and social standing it also received popular blessing from the labouring class, who took the opportunity to participate in the ‘hack’ or Galloway events. Gambling was inextricably linked to horseracing and trotting, and although the authorities frowned upon the practice all colonists indulged in this pastime. Cricket (apart from isolated eleven-a-side and single-wicket games) did not take off until the mid-1840s. Cricket was a game that naturally crossed social barriers with players from all classes meeting on common ground. From its earliest days in England ability on the field of play was a determining factor, which generated social understanding. However, at Swan River demarcation lines were penciled in with the formation of three teams comprised of the gentry, tradesmen and the military in the 1840s, and when several members from both Perth cricket clubs amalgamated to form the prestigious ‘Metropolitan’ club in 1879. However, cricket continued to attract majority support throughout the colony, especially in her schools, and once transport improved many teams were formed in the metropolitan area and in the country districts of the colony. This encouraged intra-colonial competition between Fremantle and Perth and teams from York, Guildford, Northam and Newcastle, and as far away as Bunbury (where the first sponsored game was played) and Geraldton. The game attracted competition from crew members of visiting ships, who played against teams from Fremantle and Perth. An aboriginal cricket team from New Norcia alighted onto the colonial scene in 1879 and within a year they were considered formidable opposition. But political doctrine handed down by Australian authorities was the root cause of this team disappearing from colonial cricket by 1886, resulting in some of the colony’s finest players vanishing from the game.

The majority of the population lived near the sea or close to rivers, which
proved advantageous for those who wished to fish, bathe, or sail. The commencement of Fremantle’s bathing-house in 1874, provided a luxurious retreat for colonists who could afford the entrance fee, but for most colonists bathing in the sea or rivers was equally enjoyable. Sailing on the Swan and Canning Rivers ultimately led to the colony’s inaugural regatta in 1841. The labouring class did not own boats owing to economic reasons and their social status. However, occupational circumstances encouraged whaleboat crews to compete for private wagers and enter the regattas whaleboat racing events. Organised hunting was controlled by the gentry and the establishment of a Kangaroo Hunt Club in 1832 reflected the pursuits of the British aristocracy, fortifying further social and economic demarcation lines in the colony. However, there were no packs of hounds, hence, the dingo and the wallaby superseded the fox. During times of hardship the labouring class hunted for food.

Home entertainment and various balls were organised by the gentry, who replicated the old ways of English rural life. The gentry invited and entertained their friends to dinner, played cards, listened to music played on the piano, or indulged in singing also. However, the labouring class instigated their own tradesmen’s ball in 1838, and cordially invited Governor Stirling and other colonial dignitaries. It was the first time that a particular cultural habit crossed over from one class to another. But for the most part, the labouring class found pleasure in frequenting public houses to play cards, skittles, or quoits against a backdrop of music played on the pipe, drum or flute. Like the piano, the above musical instruments underlined the colony’s class structure and social identity also. The gentry produced the colony’s first theatre production and concert in 1839 and 1845 respectively. They were arranged to entertain their peers only and attendance was by invitation only, thus emphasising once more the colony’s class structure.

By 1850, the colony continued to struggle economically owing to a small and scattered population and a shortage of skilled labour. This shortage of labour induced many landowners to petition Governor Charles Fitzgerald to increase the supply of
labour. However, Governor Fitzgerald, aware of the situation, knew that the only source of available labour was convict personnel. Consequently, Governor Fitzgerald petitioned the British government to supply the colony with convict labour, and on 1st June 1850 (the twenty-first anniversary of the colony) the first convicts arrived at the colony. The arrival of convict labour did achieve some success in public works programmes, but most were used for the expanding agricultural and the sandalwood industry. As a result of convict labour, Fremantle and her prison became the epicentre of convictism whilst Perth remained convict free and decorous. This social division was felt more so in Fremantle than Perth and, as a consequence, laid the foundations for future sporting rivalry between the two towns that continues to this day.

By the 1850s, sport in middle-class Britain came under the umbrella of ‘Muscular Christianity’, an ideal fostered by the middle class, who preached a code of conduct regarding strength of character related to manliness and courage on the field of play. ‘Manliness’ therefore, was the most admirable of Victorian male qualities produced by playing sport. It came as no surprise then that those who migrated to the colony transferred and sanctioned sport at the time when such activities were undergoing social prioritisation in Britain also.

Like Victorian England, Swan River witnessed a variety of sports and other leisure time activities that reflected the social status and interests of different classes. Furthermore, these activities significantly served different functions for various groups, although democratic claims ensured that those who wished to be different did not, for the most part, indulge in them. In terms of social order horseracing, trotting, hunting and yachting were symbols of class and status. Games such as croquet, tennis and cycling received the attentions of the middle class (who were achieving economic prosperity and simultaneously climbing the social ladder). Swimming, roller-skating, pedestrianism, and later the football codes found favour with the working class. However, the social utility of sport was clearly seen in areas such as competitive rifle shooting owing to the gentry and the commercial and professional class integrating
with the working class to play an important and significant part in defending the colony during the 1860s.

The colony was initially composed of British people and although attempts failed to integrate with the Nyungar people it was not until the end of the nineteenth century that ethnic minorities infiltrated west Australian sport. As a result, there was no diversification of ethnic sports until that period. Few Irish people settled in the colony and those who did were mostly women bound by servitude and the promise of marriage. Italians, however, did settle in Kalgoorlie, but not until the after 1893. An aboriginal cricket team made an impact on colonial sport, but soon disappeared after 1886 owing to prejudice, ignorance, and their perceived role in Australian society.

Working-class women enjoyed watching horseracing, cricket, regattas, and later the football codes. However, because of their social status in society they were confined to domestic chores, or servitude and too few holidays. Middle-class women, who had previously enjoyed playing croquet and bathing, now found common ground with men in tennis and rowing by the mid-to-late 1880s.

Although the west Australian press encouraged rational sports and other leisure time activities, they discouraged professionalism in all sport. Hence, professionalism in athletics and rowing was roundly censured. The church discouraged gambling, especially amongst the labouring class, but the church’s status in colonial society was minimal, and it was always going to be difficult to persuade the gentry not to gamble owing to horseracing and other sports being their major justification for gambling.

The football codes attracted popular blessing, especially the Victorian game. Rugby was the second team sport to be introduced to the colony in 1882. In the short term, the game suffered from slow play owing to complicated rules and ‘scrimmaging’, and competition from the Victorian code. In the long-term, rugby attracted middle class support whereas the Victorian game attracted working-class allegiance. Australian Rules football took off owing to the foresight and enterprise of local middle-class businessmen (as opposed to the gentry) taking the unprecedented step of administrating
the sport. Unlike rugby, the Australian game was fast, physical and demanding, which created pockets of support in various working-class areas. This gave the game in those areas a sense of identity and representation instead of a sense of class. Although, association football surfaced in working-class minority areas such as Fremantle and Kalgoorlie, the game never took off in Western Australia until after the Second World War owing to an influx of migrants from war torn Europe promoting the sport.

Having achieved wealth and prosperity and commandeering positions of social importance the gentry sought to live the good life indicative of an English provincial gentleman. In true Jane Austin style they built palatial houses, tennis courts and croquet fields, visited their friends, and played card games against a backdrop of music. It was not uncommon for governors to play a similar role and many well established colonists were invited to Government House to enjoy various entertainment. The gentry played their part by dressing for the fashionable sports such as horseracing, hunting, tennis and the regatta, all considered conspicuous displays of status and wealth. These early attempts to emphasise colonial aristocracy may well have commandeered respect from the labouring classes in the formative years of the colony, but by the 1880s, their authority was never going to be absolute owing to a persistent tradition of proletarian and democratic challenge.

Once gold was discovered in the Yilgarn region (Southern Cross) and a democratic assembly was elected to control local economic expansion, migration from the eastern states gave the working class the benefits of full-employment, higher wages, and surplus leisure time. Hence, with the arrival of more people from the eastern states democracy demanded representation and with it a shift away from an oligarchic society that had been so much a part of early colonial social life and politics. Consequently, the colonial gentry were superseded by an aspiring middle class and together with the working class established a sporting egalitarian society.

What are the relationships between the conclusions reached regarding the histories of the eastern colonies and those of Swan River? In most cases similar
relationships occurred owing to early settlers creating a class structure similar to English society. Like Swan River, the gentry in South Australia used sport to indelibly stamp their superiority on the social structure of the colony. Similarly, sport was used for social vetting to represent social and economic positions in society, class distinctions, and social mobility as for example, the Turf Club and the hunt club.

Stoddart’s examples of working class identity and a sense of place within communities are evident at Swan River also. For example, fierce partisan support was evident in Collingwood, in Melbourne. Similar occurrences were witnessed amongst followers of cricket and supporters of Victorian football between Fremantle and Perth supporters. Furthermore, self-made members of the middle-class, who played an active role in administering sport, together with working class support reflected a sense of loyalty, pride, and belonging to their communities.

The values of linking sporting clubs to communities as Cashman suggests were widely recognised by the late nineteenth century. These comparable themes of representation and identity were witnessed early on at Swan River after three cricket teams were formed that represented distinct social and economic backgrounds, the introduction of the Fremantle-Perth cricket games, and when rugby and Australian Rules football took off also. These sporting events stimulated the formation of many other cricket and football clubs, which represented not only the team’s location, but their vocational groups also.

Further relations between this thesis and other eastern colonial historians are evident when comparing the Victorian game with rugby. In Melbourne (Victorian Rules football) and Sydney (Rugby) the contrasts between the two games strengthened the belief that rugby was not as fast or as spectacular as the Victorian game. A similar situation occurred at Swan River when the Fremantle club, who was playing rugby, decided to play the Victorian game. However, several clubs were undecided on which game to play and the sporting population at Swan River, in conjunction with the press, held the first sporting referendum in Australia to decide which game should be played.
The importance of race and ethnicity are discussed by several eastern state historians who reflect upon the disadvantaged aborigine in sport. A similar incident was witnessed at New Norcia where the aboriginal cricket team was not invited to join the Western Australian Cricket Association in 1885. Cricket was popular in the aboriginal communities throughout Australia, but enthusiasm was destroyed by racism, social prejudice, and legal discrimination. However, since then many aboriginal players have become successful playing the Victorian game and have achieved success at the Olympics also.

Although ethnic minorities have always been part of Australian history, very few sports belonging to their cultural baggage have made an impact in Australia owing to the presence of main stream sports such as cricket, Victorian football, and later association football. Consequently, most ethnic minorities have adopted sports associated with Britain. However, German migrants played German skittles and introduced gymnastics and rifle clubs in South Australia, and the Irish brought their game, ‘Caid’, a forerunner of Gaelic football, and hurling to the eastern colonies. But apart from Italian migrants in Kalgoorlie, who played association football, no ethnic minorities played sport in Fremantle and Perth until after the 1890s.

Several eastern states historians have maintained that the role of women in sport was ornamental and in most cases they have only played an ancillary role. Two female authors, Stell and Hargreaves, imply that women played a far more significant role in sport than has previously been suggested. However, sport was channelled towards boys and the concept of male bonding served to highlight Muscular Christianity in early Australian education. Each school in the eastern colonies measured their success in what they achieved on the field of play. At Swan River, Hale school demonstrated similar ideals to that of an English public school. Whether in the eastern colonies or at Swan River, schoolgirls were given very little encouragement to play sport during the nineteenth century. Middle-class women played tennis, croquet and rowing, because they were deemed socialising games and invariably adjuncts to men’s sports. Hence,
sport was associated with male culture and space. At Swan River, working-class women did not play sport owing to domestic servitude, or because of their social position in the colony, but middle-class women played croquet and tennis, and organised the first women’s rowing club in Fremantle in the late 1880s. Similar to the eastern colonies, sport at Swan River was determined by men and their sporting institutions.

An important contribution to sports clubs and other leisure time activities was the public house. Often thought of as being one of the first buildings to be erected, many clubs in the eastern colonies used the public house to establish sporting clubs and the theatre. Like in the eastern colonies, the public house at Swan River was used to perform plays and establish sports clubs also. For example, the Turf Club used the public house for administrative purposes and the Fremantle Rowing Club was founded in a public house. For the labouring class, they were considered the equivalent of a banqueting hall and offered several modes of entertainment that included quoits, skittles, and card games against a backdrop of music, thus providing an atmosphere of congeniality.

What continuities and discontinuities are there before and after 1890? Many aspects of continuity remained, others were discontinued, and some were introduced after 1890. The granting of parliamentary government coincided with the gold rush, which continued to shape and sustain the social structure. However, the ‘colony’ went through an important and rapid change, as for example, it evolved from being a ‘face to face’ society before 1890 to Perth becoming a major capital city and Fremantle being the industrial hub and major sea-port of the state.

This general progress corresponded with the continual growth in sport and other leisure time activities. However, there were only a few sports competitions organised by 1890 and other leisure time activities were to gain momentum after the First World War. Horseracing continued to absorb attendances and a handful of cricket and Victorian football teams competed in annual fixtures. Cricket was still played by a
variety of people from different social and vocational backgrounds, and its social importance was confirmed in 1890 when the association obtained a ground in east Perth (the WACA) where it still controls all cricket played in the state today. Victorian football was accumulating popular support with the working class, and by the turn of the century, there were regular competitions in cycling, athletics, golf, boxing, wrestling, rugby union, and association football. Hunting, although popular with the gentry never established itself as a main stream sport and, as a consequence, disappeared in the twentieth century. However, the twentieth century brought with it the technological age owing to a speedway company being established in the 1920s. But, the sport was open to criticism owing to several minor accidents and one man being involved in a fatal accident.

The face of horseracing had not changed since the nineteenth century, being firmly established as a subculture by the twentieth century. The press continued to publish lists of winners, jockeys and trainers. Tennis continued to be an important social activity for the middle class owing to several courts being built in Fremantle and Perth, and King’s Park Tennis Club won international praise during the 1920s. A new sport, Lacrosse, formed an association and held a fifteen team competition by the end of the 1920s. By 1929, the popularity of Victorian Rules football saw the introduction of a new team called the Claremont-Cottesloe Football Club, and the University of Western Australia competed in the WACA pennant competition. Interstate football and cricket fixtures were established on a regular basis, and after the Second World War the Western Australian cricket team joined the Sheffield Shield competition and won it at their first attempt. Golf took off in the mid-1890s, and by the late 1920s, facilities had improved when the new Lake Karrinyup Golf Club became a favourite course and social institution for golfers.

The Turf Club continued to be the bastion of the gentry and men of social position and still, as in previous years, applied extreme care in choosing its members. Consequently, throughout this period, and up until the Second World War, the Turf
Club maintained its social exclusiveness and its cultural standards. Such was the popularity of trotting that by 1914 regular night racing was being conducted under lights. However, although trotting had mixed blessings in the colony’s formative years, the sport moved away from its sister sport, horseracing, to establish itself as a sport for the people. Like Victorian Rules football, the gentry did not get involved in trotting. Consequently, trotting’s major sponsors, like football, came from diverse backgrounds such as drapers, butchers, chemists, hotel proprietors, and boot-makers.

After 1890, the numbers of people settling in Western Australia increased dramatically owing to the discovery of gold and an influx of migrants from the eastern colonies. For example, in 1890 the population was approximately 49000; in 1901, this figure rose in the region of 194000, and by 1915, the population count was almost 317000. However, with this rise in population violence, gambling and social order became a major issue with the authorities. The very nature of football created violence on and off the field of play that over-spilled in society during the latter half of the nineteenth century. However, such concerns appeared again during the economic depression of the 1930s when there was widespread concern about a breakdown in social order.

As in the nineteenth century, the role of women in organised sport had not changed even though the prospects of social transformation were being universally acknowledged. Sport in Perth and Fremantle was still the preserve of men until after World War Two. However, social reform was gradually being accepted during the First World War over the question of mixed bathing. Billiards was another sport where women, owing to the war effort in 1915, assumed roles that were previously reserved for men. A women’s billiards tournament attracted a large number of entrants to raise money for patriotic funds. Women appeared at boxing events, and one women Fay Taylor, who wanted to compete on equal terms with men, appeared as a rider at Claremont Speedway. Similar to the philosophy of the nineteenth century, sport was still used to keep women in their ascribed places, especially at horserace meetings.
where women were not allowed to enter the members’ stands unless accompanied by a man, and placing a bet was still not allowed. Furthermore, the use of sport to acquire a position on the social ladder was still restricted, and like in the nineteenth century, boundaries between social groups were rarely crossed. If anything, unwritten rules restricted upward social mobility in the administration of some sports.

After 1890, organised sport played a significant role in establishing and maintaining a code of social and cultural values. Cheating was frowned on and respect for the administrators of sport was foremost. Similar to Swan River in the early nineteenth century, if sport could unite all classes in the colony, then the years of depression in the 1930s were a similar catalyst for society to survive also.

Other leisure time activities played an important role in the character of Western Australia. However, owing to a small population, which still persisted from the colonial age, high culture was slow to make an impact in the state. Consequently, significant advances in high culture, notably the opera, ballet, and symphony orchestras echoed earlier colonial entertainment and did not come to fruition until after the Second World War. Weekly concerts by the Perth Symphony Orchestra had been established by the early 1920s, but it was not until 1950 that the West Australian Symphony Orchestra (WASO) was founded, offering a creative partnership with the West Australian Ballet Company (1952) and the West Australian Opera Company (1967). The Perth Concert Hall, which was opened in 1973, offered a permanent venue for WASO. The theatre remained popular, even more so once His Majesty’s Theatre was opened in 1904, and the Black Swan State Theatre Company (formerly the Black Swan Theatre Company established in 1991) offers a wide range of Australian and international plays. The public house continued to play a dominant role in Australian society as a whole, and the circus visits most towns and cities in the state to this day. Education projected itself from the colonial days of the mechanics’ institutes to establish the University of Western Australia in 1911, Murdoch University in 1973, Edith Cowan in 1982, and Curtin University in 1986.
Organised sport and other leisure time activities continued to play an important role in encouraging and merging together group identities after 1890. Both sport and other leisure time activities help shape a society, but what lay at the heart of this was the acceptance of established values, so much a part of the founding fathers of the Swan River Colony, together with all classes understanding their social role.
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