

Year 2: The Past in the Present - technology



Each excursion begins with a National Trust Education Officer telling the story of the Samson family and Samson House. After a short break for morning tea students are split into smaller groups for the remainder of the session which may include:

Tour of the house – Students use inquiry learning to identify comparisons between the past and present as well as discussing changes in technology.

Artefacts: Students observe, touch and discuss artefacts, in small groups. What is the artefact? How was it used? Who might have used it? Where in the house would it be found? Is it still used today or has it been replaced with improved technology? Why?

Old Fashioned Games – Looks at how in the past children made their own toys and games using items found in the environment. Students play some old fashioned games such as quoits, skipping and knucklebones.

Sketching – a comparison activity of old fashioned technologies and their modern replacements.

We offer a half day visit which runs for approximately two hours and includes a small break for morning tea. We also offer a full day programme which runs for four hours and may include a **Guided West End Walk**. The walk starts at the Esplanade, includes Bathers Beach, the Round House and Cliff Street where the Samson family businesses still operate today. Buildings and places of significance are pointed out as well as the ways that Fremantle has changed to keep pace with modern demands. Timetables for every excursion are coordinated by National Trust Education Officers. Morning tea is scheduled for both excursion options and a lunch break is included for a full day visit.

The house can accommodate up to 30 students at any one time. For Year 2 students it is recommended that the school supervisory team consist of 1 adult to 5 students. Parent helpers are encouraged and are free of charge. Please note that some of the grounds and the toilet facilities have limited disability access, the house is accessible for wheelchairs. Students need to bring food and a water bottle, we do not recommend drinking the tap water on-site. Should the weather be inclement on the day of your excursion students can shelter on the verandah for morning tea and lunch and there are sheltered spaces for the activities. Entry to Samson House is via Ellen Street, Fremantle. There is no parking for coaches at the property; there is limited paid street parking for cars.

CURRICULUM LINKS

Content Strand		Knowledge and Understanding					Humanities and Social Sciences Skills				
Key Concepts	Geography	Place	Space	Environment	Interconnection	Sustainability	Scale	Change			
	History	Source	Evidence	Continuity and Change	Cause and Effect	Perspective	Empathy	Significance	Contestability		
General Capabilities		Literacy	Numeracy	ICT capability	Critical and creative thinking	Personal and social capability	Ethical understanding	Intercultural understanding			
Cross- Curriculum Priorities		Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures			Asia and Australia’s engagement with Asia			Sustainability			

CONTENT DESCRIPTION AND ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS

Knowledge and Understanding	Humanities and Social Sciences Skills	Relevant Aspects Of The Achievement Standard
Geography People are connected to many places <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local features and places are given names, which have meaning to people, and these places can be defined on a variety of scales, including personal (e.g. home), local (e.g. street, suburb or town), regional (e.g. state) and national (e.g. country) (ACHASSK048) History The past in the present <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The history of a significant person, building, site or part of the natural environment in the local community and what it reveals about the past (ACHASSK044) The importance today of an historical site (e.g. community building, landmark, war memorial, rock painting, engraving) and why it has heritage significance and cultural value for present generations (e.g. a record of a significant historical event, aesthetic value, reflects the community's identity) (ACHASSK045) The impact of changing technology on people's lives (e.g. at home, work, travel, communication, leisure, toys) and how the technology of the past differs from what is used today (ACHASSK046) 	Questioning and Researching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflect on current understanding of a topic Pose questions about the familiar and unfamiliar Locate information from a variety of provided sources Sort and record selected information and/or data Analysing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify relevant information Process information and/or data collected Explore different points of view Represent collected information and/or data in to different formats Evaluating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draw conclusions based on information and/or data displayed in pictures, texts and maps Participate in decision-making processes Communicating and Reflecting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present findings in a range of communication forms, using relevant terms Develop texts, including narratives, that describes an event or place Reflect on learning and respond to findings 	<p>At Standard, students pose questions, locate, sort and record collected information and/or data from provided sources. They identify and process relevant information and/or data by categorising, sequencing events and exploring points of view. Students use different formats to represent their information, and draw simple conclusions. They participate in decision-making processes by contributing to group discussions. Students share their findings in a range of ways, and develop simple texts, using some relevant terms. They reflect on what they have learnt using oral and/or written forms.</p> <p>Students locate major geographical divisions of the world, and describe places at a variety of scales. They describe the interconnections between people and places, and they identify the factors that influence people's connections with others in different places. Students identify people, sites and parts of the natural environment in their local community that reveal information about the past, and those that have significance today. They identify examples of how technology has changed and its impact on people's lives.</p>

Source: Schools Curriculum and Standards Authority, <http://k10outline.scsa.wa.edu.au>

INTRODUCTION

Samson House was built for the prominent Fremantle couple Michael and Mary Samson and subsequently occupied by their descendants for almost 100 years. It was constructed in two phases; 1888-9 and 1899-1900. The architect for Samson House was JJ Talbot Hobbs and it may have been the first house designed after his arrival from England in 1887. The first stage was constructed by John Hurst and son, also newly arrived from England. The original house is a symmetrical plan consisted of seven rooms with a central hall leading from the front door straight to the back door (with a 20 metre deep well just outside). It is said that in the 1890s Afghan camel drivers used to water their animals from the well before setting off to the Eastern Goldfields.

The house is a single storey limestone, brick and iron house in the Federation style with elements of the Queen Anne style. It was constructed of local limestone said to be quarried on site, with red brick dressings and framed by a graceful veranda. Additions to the rear of the house in 1899-1900 included a new dining room and drawing room, Italianate tower and bathroom. A cellar was built beneath the new extension with steps leading down from the new back door. The extension of the hall corridor also meant the well, with its hand-operated pump, was inside the house.

Outbuildings were also constructed in the second phase of building. The limestone multi-purpose block at the rear of the block contains five separate rooms; a toilet, laundry, man's (servants) room, workshop and carriage room. A stable was also constructed and a two-roomed cottage built and rented out.

The house passed from Michael to Mary Samson when he died in 1907 and then to Fred when his mother died in 1921. The north-east veranda was enclosed in the 1950s to form Fred Samson's movie theatrette with seating from the old Fremantle tramway which closed down in 1952. When Fred died in 1974, his sister Rita lived in the house until she died in 1982. The house was then bequeathed to the Trustees of the Western Australian Museum in February 1983 and to the National Trust in 2010. Samson House today showcases middle-class, suburban, domestic life in the late colonial period through the twentieth century.

TOPICS TO EXPLORE

The Year 2 curriculum provides a study of local history. Students explore, recognize and appreciate the history of their local area by examining remains of the past and considering why they should be preserved. The programme provides suggestions of pre-visit and post-visit activities. The programme should be adapted to suit your needs. Use as little or as much of the programme as you wish.



SAMSON HOUSE PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLORE THE FOLLOWING:

- What aspects of the past can you see today? What do they tell us? Tour the house and grounds. See evidence of how it has served as a family home and a National Trust property.
- What remains of the past are important to the local community? Why? The architecture, ornaments, fixtures and family memorabilia provide evidence of the past and opportunities for discussion about the heritage value of Samson House.
- How have changes in technology shaped our daily life? Tour the house and look at examples of technologies; compare with modern appliances and technologies.
- Identify how changes in lifestyle and technology have affected the way homes are built and the way people do things
- Through the story of Samson House students identify the changing roles of the house.
- Students see how the Samson family lived and hear stories about what their life was like and make comparisons with their own life to develop empathy with the Samson's experiences.
- Students develop an understanding of what makes Samson House special and worth keeping for future generations.

ON THE GUIDED WEST END WALK STUDENTS WILL:

- Look for reminders of the past in the present e.g. dates on buildings and street names and reflect on their significance.
- Stop at significant buildings from the past that have been kept although their functions may have changed.
- Identify the changes in transport and refer to the trams in Fremantle and the link with the Samson family.



PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

- **Student research** – Why did Lionel Samson and his brother William (the first family members to arrive in the colony) come to Fremantle? What is the connection between Lionel Samson and Samson House? (Go to <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/stirling-sir-james-2702> for a biography of James Stirling and <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/samson-lionel-2628> for a biography of Lionel Samson). (Teacher Resource 1 “Stories from pre-European Settlement” and Teacher Resource 2 “The Samson Family in Fremantle”)
- **Find out about Samson House** - Why was it built there? Who lived there? Why is it important? (Teacher Resource 3 “Introducing Samson House”)
- **List some of the ways we live, work and play today.** Use the following headings; Cooking, Heating, Travelling, Communicating with each-other and Playing. (Teacher Resource 3 “Introducing Samson House”)
- **Investigating Historical Significance-** make a Memory Box (Teacher Resource 4) by bringing 5-10 items to class that have personal or family value. Visit <http://hewit.unco.edu/dohist/teachers/plans/histpres/pres1.pdf> for ideas.
- **Pose questions about the Past** - Distinguish between the past and the present. As a class, small group or individually students complete the ‘K’ AND ‘W’ sections of a KWL Chart (Student Activity 1). Visit www.education.com/reference/article/K-W-L-charts-classroom/ for ideas. Ask the students what they *know* about the past and what they *wonder* about the past. Ask students to think about how we can answer their questions about the past, i.e. guest speakers, books, photos, excursion and museums. What does ‘The past in the present’ mean? Show items or pictures from the past, i.e. photo or picture, book, letter or postcard, or an object. One of the items could be a picture of Samson House. Discuss what they tell us about the past.
- Discuss the meaning and value of objects. Students interview an adult about what items they have or wish they had saved and why. Discuss the findings and create a list of the types of items people save and why they save them.
- **Changes in technology over time** - Reminiscence Boxes can be borrowed from the National Trust. Observe and handle artefacts. Discuss what they were used for in the past. Select one item, eg. Washboard, whisk etc. Investigate who invented the item and illustrate how it has changed over time. What is it replaced with today? (Go to <http://www.oldandinteresting.com/> for ideas).



POST VISIT ACTIVITIES

- **Revisit the Memory Box** activity and the reasons people save items. Discuss the value/significance of Samson House. Do students think that the property should have been saved by the National Trust and kept for the future?
- **Distinguish between the past, present and future** - KWL Chart –Students revisit the question they posed prior to the excursion about the past. Ask students to share what they LEARNED whilst at Samson House. Students complete the final part of their KWL chart.
- **The history of Samson House** - History of Samson House (Teacher Resource 3 “Introducing Samson House”). Students retell the story of Samson House. Each student then draws a picture and writes a sentence about a part of the story. This is used to create a class timeline that shows the history of Samson House.
- **Investigate other historic places in the local community:** Students may use the internet, newspapers, community information guides and local knowledge to find out more information about some of the landmarks visited on the Guided West End Walk, such as, the Round House, Fremantle Harbour, Kidogo Art House and the Shipwreck Galleries.
- **Imagine you are taking your family to Samson House.** Use Student Activity 2 to design a tour through Samson House to show them what is special and significant about the property.
- **Discuss suitable future uses of the property for the community.**
- **Changes in technology over time** – students work in groups to recall examples of technology from the past. Under the headings of transport, work, education, environment, entertaining and daily life.



Teacher Resource 1

Stories from pre-European settlement

Many thousands of years ago, during the last ice age, the sea level was considerably lower than now. The Swan River didn't flow directly out to sea, it followed a course through the west end of Fremantle to where Fishing Boat Harbour is now situated, and continued across 30 km of coastal plain and tuart forest before flowing into the sea past Rottnest, which in those days was a range of hills.

About 7000 years ago the sea level was slightly higher than the current level and Arthur Head would have been an island. Indeed much of present-day Fremantle would have been under water.

In the last 5000 years the water level has fallen to its present level. The Swan River completely abandoned its former course and entered the sea over a shallow reef that lay between the outcrops of Arthur and Rous Heads.

The people who lived here knew the ancient history of the area. They told how the land once extended west beyond Rottnest but had been inundated by the sea. This area is home to some of the oldest oral traditions in human history. Stories in this region have been passed down through hundreds of generations and some of these Dreaming stories are still told today.

The land around Fremantle has always been a significant place for the Aboriginal people of this area. Walyalup was the country on both banks of the Derbal Yaragan (Swan River). To the Aboriginal people of the Fremantle region (the Whadjuck people), Manjaree, the area on the south bank of the river near the mouth and the headland, was an important meeting and trading place. Here tracks from the north and the south converged. The rocky bar sheltered the estuary from the sea and provided good fishing. Fresh water was abundant in shallow wells.

Manjaree attracted European interest for precisely the same reasons and when Captain Charles Fremantle arrived at the Swan River in May 1829 as the advance party for the first European settlement he set up camp there. From 1831 the Round House, Western Australia's first public building, stood like a fort on the headland.

There are many stories about Walyaup. Trevor Walley, Nyoongar community leader, tells the following version:

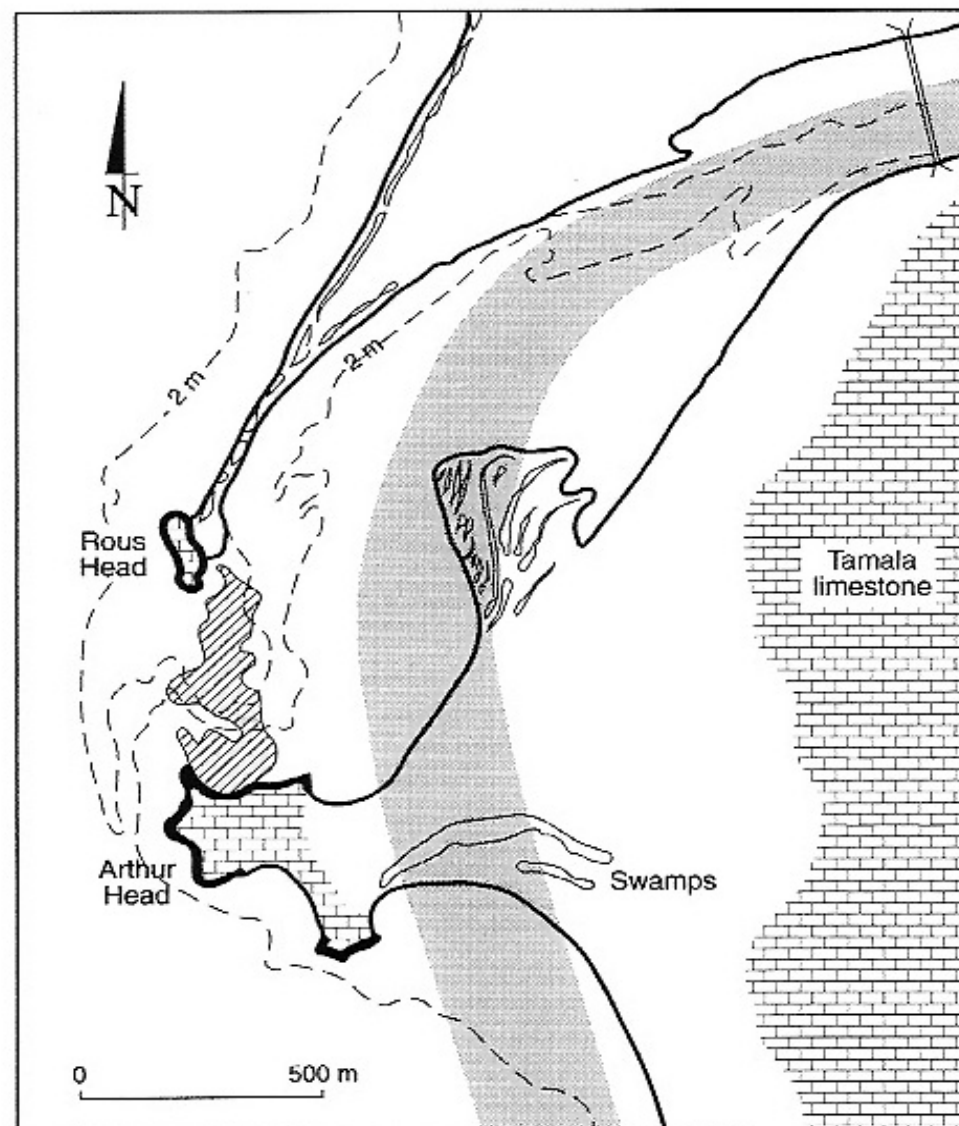
The Walyalup (Fremantle) Dreaming story tells of Yondock, an ancestral crocodile that travelled down from the north, causing floods and disturbances, creating Wadjemup (Rottnest Island), Gnooroolmayup (Carnac Island), Derbal Nara (Cockburn Sound), and flooding the Derbal Yaragan (Swan River) with salt water. The Waagle or Rainbow Serpent, guardian of the fresh water, smells the salt and travels down Derbal Yaragan to see what's happening. With advice from Woorriji (a lizard) from the Waagle cave in North Fremantle and strength gained from a freshwater spring at the East Street Jetty, he fights the crocodile, bites off his tail and places the tail across the mouth of the river to prevent salt water coming up stream. The tail is secured with hair from the armpits of the Waagle on the southern side of the river, and with toenails from the crocodile on the north side of the river. The rest of the crocodile's body remains as Meeandip (Garden Island) and dingoes watch from Cantonment Hill to make sure the spirit of the crocodile is not reunited with its tail. The rock bar at the mouth of the river was a crossing place for Aboriginal men. In the 1890s, with CY O'Connor's plans to create the Fremantle Harbour, the rock bar was blasted to make a deep-water port. Part of the tail remains and is visible from the Maritime Museum.



Above: If you look out to Garden Island (Meeandip) you can see the white scar where the tail of the crocodile Yondock was bitten off by the Waagle or Rainbow Serpent and laid across the mouth of the river.



Above: Bathers Beach (Manjaree) in 2008 looking south. The original coastline is now difficult to see. Arthur Head (in the foreground) is now hidden by the Round House Prison (one of WA's oldest building, completed in 1831) and cottages using limestone quarried along the shore. The small harbour extending into the ocean in the middle of the photograph, initially built for the 1987 America's Cup yacht race, disguises the original coastline.



This diagram shows the entrance to the Swan River before the building of the Inner Harbour in the 1890s. Superimposed on this map is the approximate line (shadowed) of the river channel during the last glacial low sea level about 10,000 years ago. Later coastal sands accumulated and the entrance moved northwards. At the time of European exploration and settlement, the entrance between Arthur Head and Rous Head was barred by a reef and vessels had to negotiate a narrow passage through the rocky bar and into the river.

Sources:

City of Fremantle: 1987; *Manjaree Track* brochure

Trevor Walley oral history, 2007

City of Fremantle: 2004; *Walyalup Dreaming*

Mike Lefroy: Fremantle Fishingboat Harbour Trail consultant's report 2007

Swanland Map 2.8 from *Ernest Hodgkin's Swanland* – Anne Brearley, UWA Press, 2005.

Data from R Gordon. Adapted from Hodgkin and Hesp 1998. Courtesy Marine and Freshwater research, CSIRO publishing, Victoria, Australia. Permission Ernest Hodgkin Trust.

The Samson Family in Fremantle

How often do we think where names come from when we see them on street signs, parks and buildings? Many names in Fremantle come from local pioneer families such as the Samsons. Since 1829 the Samson family has provided:

- The first merchants in the Swan River Colony, which has grown to be the oldest family business in Australia – Lionel Samson and Sons
- The first auctioneer – William Samson
- The second post master – Lionel Samson
- The designer of the first postage stamps – Horace Samson
- An inspector of customs – Michael Samson
- Three mayors of Fremantle – William Samson (1892/3), Michael Samson (1905-07) and Sir Fred Samson (1951-1972)
- A suburb east of Fremantle (Samson) and a town in the Pilbara (Point Samson), and a number of streets around the Perth metropolitan area.

Lionel Samson (1799-1878), pioneer and merchant, was the son of Michael Samson, a member of one of the old established and wealthy families of English Jewry. He studied at Magdalen College, Oxford, and later became a member of the London Stock Exchange. With his friend George Leake he became interested in migration to the colonies. Legend has the two friends meeting Captain (Sir) James Stirling who persuaded them to turn their eyes from Canada towards the new Swan River colony in Western Australia.

Lionel Samson with his brother William arrived at Fremantle in the *Calista* in August 1829 with personal effects and much merchandise. He took up several land allotments in Perth and Fremantle. Within a year of his arrival Lionel had set up a business as a wine and spirit merchant, importer and auctioneer. His brother William was associated with the venture but after some years moved to Adelaide. Lionel Samson maintained his original business interests throughout the rest of his life, adding whaling and other projects to his activities such as postmaster-general (1830 to 1832). In 1842 he returned briefly to England, where he married Frances Levi. They returned to Western Australia soon after and had three sons and three daughters: Michael (born 8/6/1844), Caroline (born 7/8/1845), Adelaide (born 1/11/1847), Louis (born 6/5/1849), Elizabeth (born 28/7/1850), William Frederick (William) (born 1/4/1855).

Lionel Samson was a prominent figure in the public and business life of Perth and Fremantle. With his wit and charm and his commercial integrity he achieved a respected and prominent position in society. He was a member of the Fremantle Town Trust. He was a nominee in the Western Australian Legislative Council in 1849-56 and 1859-68. In 1849 he argued for the establishment of a penal colony to provide much needed labour and capital, particularly for the development of public works. The increase in shipping through convict transportation would also provide more opportunities for exporting colonial produce, such as wool, on return voyages.

Lionel Samson died on 15 March 1878. His wife Fanny died 10 years later. One of the tributes at the time stated: "The district has lost a very kind hearted and benevolent woman, who will be missed by many poor families. She was beloved by all who had the pleasure of her society." The business which Lionel Samson started in Fremantle passed to his sons. It has remained in the family's hands ever since and is the oldest family business in Australia. His descendants have also remained closely identified with the commercial and civic life of the city of Fremantle.



Today, Lionel Samson & Son's interests include wholesale liquor distribution, vineyards and wine making, woven bulk bags for industrial use and industrial packaging. It also owns Sadleirs Transport, a national transport and freight forwarding company. Lionel Samson Building, in Cliff Street, Fremantle, is on the Heritage Council of Western Australia's Places Database.

Michael Samson worked with his father in the family business before a disagreement in 1861 led him on a life of adventure including pursuing trade and commercial interests in Singapore and China. His place in the family firm was taken by his youngest brother William.

Michael was actively involved in the commercial, cultural and social life of Fremantle. At the age of 44 he married Mary Murphy. They had 3 children: William Frederick (born 12/1/1892), Kathleen (born 8/4/1894) and Adelaide Rita (born 21/10/1897). Soon after their marriage Michael and Mary commissioned newly arrived English architect Joseph John Talbot Hobbs and builder John Hurst to begin building a family home in Ellen Street Fremantle. It is now commonly referred to as Samson House.

After his mother's death in 1921, eldest son Frederick inherited the house and lived there for the rest of his life. Fred or Freddy Samson as he was known had an outstanding career in business and in public life. He studied engineering and worked as a surveyor. In 1931 he set up as an auctioneer and real-estate agent. In his leisure time Fred Samson was a keen photographer, cinematographer and gardener.

Like his father Michael, Fred became Mayor of Fremantle. He served from 1951 until he retired in 1973. "Mr Fremantle" as he was called was knighted in 1962. He was passionate about his city and campaigned vigorously to preserve numerous heritage buildings in and around Fremantle. He was a prime mover in salvaging and restoring the Old Lunatic Asylum now the Fremantle Arts Centre. After his wife Daphne died, his sister Rita moved back from Melbourne assist Fred with his Mayoral duties. Rita was awarded an OBE in 1967 for her community work. Fred Samson died in 1974. Rita remained in Samson House until her death in 1982.

In 1983 Samson House was bequeathed to the WA Museum just as it was when Fred and Rita lived there. The museum conserved, catalogued and researched its collections and with the help of a keen group of volunteers took the public on guided tours. Every artefact in the house has a story to tell about members of three generations of the Samson family.

In July 2010 the house was officially passed to the National Trust of Western Australia. It is a house museum opened by appointment, for schools and special interest groups; and for events and special occasions.



Sources:

Shirley Shaw
Patricia Brown
David Mossenson
Kate Gregory

The Samson Heritage WAM 2871 Vol1-part 2
Australian Dictionary of Biography, Fred Samson.
Australian Dictionary of Biography, Lionel Samson
Samson House Conservation Plan – Documentary and Oral Evidence DRAFT, March 2012

Introducing Samson House



Samson House in 2012. Image: National Trust of Western Australia

Samson House was built for the prominent Fremantle couple Michael and Mary Samson and subsequently occupied by their descendants for almost 100 years. It was constructed in two phases – 1888-9 and 1899 -1900.

In those days the aspiration was to move up from town and live on the hill overlooking Fremantle. Michael and Mary were married in July 1889 and began their life together in a residence attached to Lionel Samson and Son's warehouse in Cliff Street. Later that year they moved to their newly constructed house on the eastern edge of Fremantle. Living by the sea was not necessarily considered the best position and ship owners and wealthy merchants had houses built on the hills overlooking the port away from the noise and bustle of the busy port.

The architect for Samson House was JJ Talbot Hobbs and it may well have been the first house designed after his arrival from England in 1887. The first stage was constructed by John Hurst and son, also newly arrived from England. The original house is a symmetrical plan consisted of seven rooms with a central hall leading from the front door straight to the back door (with a 20 metre deep well just outside). It is said that in the 1890s Afghan camel drivers used to water their animals from the well before setting off to the Eastern Goldfields.

The house is a single storey limestone, brick and iron house in the Federation style with elements of the Queen Anne style. It was constructed of local limestone said to be quarried on site, with red brick dressings and framed by a graceful veranda.

Additions to the rear of the house in 1899-1900 included a new dining room and drawing room, Italianate tower and bathroom. A cellar was built beneath the new extension with steps leading down from the new back door. The extension of the hall corridor also meant the well, with its hand-operated pump, was inside the house.

Outbuildings were also constructed in the second phase of building. The limestone multi purpose block at the rear of the block contains five separate rooms; a toilet, laundry, man's (servants) room, workshop and carriage room. A stable was also constructed and a two-roomed cottage built and rented out.

Before electricity came to Fremantle in 1904 kerosene lamps would have provided lighting as there is no evidence the house was ever lit by gas.

The north-east veranda was enclosed in the 1950s to form Fred Samson's movie theatrette with seating from the old Fremantle tramway which closed down in 1952. Just outside the dining room in the corridor you can see a photograph of Daphne and Fred Samson driving the last tram, beside his parents, Mary and Michael, driving the first tram in 1905.

The house passed on from Michael to Mary Samson when he died in 1907 and then to Fred when his mother died in 1921. When Fred died in 1974, his sister Rita lived in the house until she died in 1982. The house was then bequeathed to the Trustees of the Western Australian Museum in February 1983 and to the National Trust in 2010.

The inside of the house represents layers of the Samson family story with every piece having some connection with a family member. The earliest pieces, attributed to Lionel Samson, are the cutlery canteen, the workbox and the dining table described by expert Frank Richmond as one of the most significant in the collection. He describes it together with... 'the scratches in the table, each one done by somebody well known (or a maid), as one of the best pieces in the house.'

Acquired furnishings mingle with inherited furnishings to establish a picture of an enduring family, with ties to Europe and strong connections to the political, economic and cultural life of Fremantle. Within the house Fred Samson displayed artworks and photographs, souvenirs, mementoes and precious artefacts which all work together to convey a narrative of the Samson story and reflect Fred's place within the story.

After designing Samson House JJ Talbot Hobbs (1864-1938) went on to become a very prominent West Australian architect and founded the firm of Hobbs, Smith & Forbes. He was also a famous commander in World War 1.

The Garden

In the early 1920s Fred Samson became a keen gardener growing a variety of flowers in the north-east garden. A rose garden developed later and Fred's interest led him to become a member of the Rose Society and a foundation member of the Fremantle Horticultural Society.

A key feature of the front garden is the two Norfolk pine trees said to be planted by Fred Samson in 1900 when he was 8 years old.

Sources:

Linda Young	Samson House Fremantle, Conservation Analysis and Policy WAM
Shirley Shaw	The Samson Heritage WAM 2871 Vol1-part 2
Kate Gregory	Samson House Conservation Plan – Documentary and Oral Evidence DRAFT, March 2012

Memory Box Activity



This activity introduces students to historic preservation in a personal and family context to develop an appreciation of the importance of saving and preserving items from everyday. Students will examine some olden day's objects and gain an insight to life in the olden days and consider items from today that might be of value to future generations.

Students will discuss why people save objects from the past, consider creating their own and justify their selection of items through the development of a criterion. They will reflect on this to consider the significance of historic preservation for the wider community.

1. A staff member (i.e. the teacher) brings a selection of approximately 5-10 items that have been saved because they have personal or family value.
2. Discuss the meaning and value of these items; highlight the fact that sometimes the value is not monetary. Talk about the reasons people save things or discard them i.e. a special memory, time, person, place, achievement, sentiment or monetary value.
3. Students develop interview questions and select a friend or family member to interview about the precious items they have kept, or things that they wish they had kept, and the reasons they feel this way.
4. In small groups, share the results of these interviews; as a whole class identify the comments and observations that were common in the interviews. Use a Venn diagram to show the differences and similarities. Begin to formulate a criterion for saving things from the past – what makes something precious or valuable?
5. Students brainstorm objects of their own that they think should go into a memory box of their own. In small groups, justify their selections and prioritise their lists before reducing the number of items to just 10. Objects might include letters, jewellery, keepsakes, medals, games, books, garments, photographs – anything that holds significance for an individual or a family.
6. Students collect these 10 items to form their own memory box.
7. What do these objects tell others about life? How do they reflect the things that are important today, interests, hobbies, pastimes? Do these items match the criteria? Discuss the need to modify the criteria as a means of explaining why people find value in historic objects and why historic preservation is important.
8. Students write a reflection about the value of objects and what they tell people now and what they might reveal to future generations.



KWL Chart

What do you KNOW about the past?	What do you WONDER about the past?	What have you LEARNED about the past?

Name: _____

Copyright NTWA 2017

My Tour Through Samson House

You are taking your family to visit Samson House. You will be their guide. Write down what you will show them and why it is special and significant. You do not have to visit every room.



Name: _____

Copyright NTWA

REMINISCENCE BOXES



Three Reminiscence Boxes are available for loan. They are themed – the Shed, the Kitchen and the Laundry. Each contains a range of artefacts that may have been used in family homes in the olden days.

Items in each box will stimulate conversation and questions about the past. The items can be handled and conversation cards can be used to initiate discussion and reflection about the past and how everyday life has changed or remained the same.

Each box includes a Reminiscence Book that asks for comments and thoughts to be written in it so that in time, the book will become an artefact in its own right and will encourage further discussion and act as a memory stimulus.

Boxes can be loaned for occasions as a special school event (eg Grandparents Day), as a way of introducing Time, Continuity and Change in the classroom or in conjunction with a visit to a National Trust property.



Please contact the National Trust to book

Telephone: 9321 6088 during business hours

Email: trust@ntwa.com.au

Please note, the boxes are very popular so please book early to avoid disappointment. Loan periods are strictly two weeks.