

# RESCUING LOCAL HERITAGE, WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

June 29, 2012 Sue Carter Day of Archaeology, Day of Archaeology 2012, Historical Archaeology Australia, Benedict von Bibra, Bibra, Bibra family, Bibra Lake, Daniel, Florence Korten, Fremantle, Fremantle carpenter, Homestead, Mary-Ann Tapper, Morton Bay, North Lake, Pennsylvania, Perth, Saale-Holzland, Schmalkalden-Meiningen, Tapper homestead, telephone exchange, Walliabup Lake, Western Australia

The Bibra Lake area of Western Australia, formally known as Walliabup Lake, was first provided as land for pioneer settlers in 1843. The first settler to the area, in that same year, was Benedict von Bibra, a Fremantle carpenter, after whom the lake is now named. In the following years other settlers chose to make the lush area their home. Land around Bibra Lake was utilized for market gardening and later dairy cows in order to supply Fremantle and Perth with fresh produce and milk. It also attracted many pioneers for picnics and recreation, as well as having an established tea rooms.

One of the founding families were the Tappers, prominent in Fremantle and associated with the maritime industry. After one of her sons died at sea, Mary-Ann Tapper was determined that her youngest son, Daniel, would not face the same fate and saved to purchase land at Bibra Lake. Her plan succeeded and the family established themselves with land at its south. Starting out as market gardeners, Daniel eventually included dairy cows in order to supplement the families living. Eventually the site of their homestead became the center of the local community with a petrol pump, telephone exchange and post office.

The site of the Tapper homestead, which included three houses, that of Mary-Ann, her son Daniel, and her daughter, Florence Korten, was recently damaged by trenches being dug for reticulation pipes. With only the Morton Bay fig trees at the site holding Heritage Listing, I have undertaken some rescue archaeology and am currently further researching the area in order to prepare a report for the local council. The aim is to ensure future protection of the area as it now stands, and also for the other homestead sites around Bibra and North Lakes, (which are barely identifiable, hardly known, and disappearing fast due to lack of knowledge), as to their importance as one of the first areas settled outside of Fremantle in Western Australia.

The project is unfunded, yet undertaken with a view for protecting local history and heritage that would otherwise be lost.



*Remains of one of the first homesteads of the pioneering settlers at Bibra Lake*