

Tesla exhibition comes to Perth

Although it took its time to recognise the genius of Nikola Tesla (1856-1943), the world eventually appreciated that the inventor's creativity outpaced the technology of his time.

Unable to find investors in Europe for his first major invention, the Alternating Current (AC) power system that is largely unchanged today, the Serbian-born scientist moved to the United States.

Still unrecognised, he gave the first of his spectacular lecture-demonstrations and later obtained one of many patents.

The showman scientist went on to produce many more inventions, demonstrating a radio-controlled boat that was the predecessor of remote control and remote sensing before a fascinated crowd in Madison Square Gardens.

With some 700 electrical patents and 1,500 inventions to his credit, he truly earned



Conrad Pogson, the 2010 winner of the Tesla Medal for Electromagnetic Theory with the Tesla bust

the title 'Father of the Modern Electronic Age'.

The Tesla Forum of WA (www.teslaforumofwa.com) has links with UWA's Schools of Physics and Electrical Engineering, donating prizes, a medallion for science students and a bust of Tesla.

In July the Forum is bringing the Nikola Tesla Science Exhibition from the Tesla Museum in Belgrade to Perth's Town Hall. The exhibition charts Tesla's remarkable life and work that includes fluorescent lighting and lasers, wireless communication, X-rays and vacuum tube amplifiers. It runs from 1 – 17 July.

A labour of love

Two UWA geographers are among a team of dedicated volunteers undertaking an extraordinary archival research project: transcribing journals of exploration in Western Australia from 1826 to Federation.

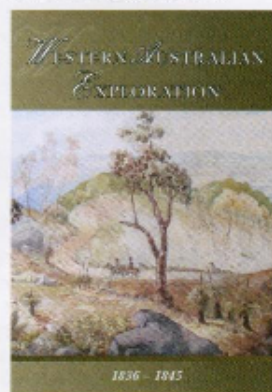
Western Australian Exploration 1836 – 1845, the second in the Western Australian Explorers' Diaries series, reproduces all the known journals, diaries and reports of expeditions over new country during that decade. It is the companion volume to a previous work (1826 – 1835).

Adjunct Research Fellow Dr Marion Hercocok was the principal editor and Honorary Research Fellow Dr Patrick Armstrong wrote the introduction. Both are from UWA's School of Earth and Environment.

"This volume reproduces physically scattered archival material in an easy-to-read format," says Dr Hercocok. "The massive task is being undertaken entirely by volunteers – a unique blend of amateur aficionados and experts from a variety of fields, including botany, history, geography, geology, law and zoology."

The diaries contain an invaluable record of people, place names, landscapes, vegetation, plants and animals and physical phenomena such as weather, fire and salination."

The book is jointly published by Hesperian Press with the Heritage Council of Western Australia. The Western Australian Explorers' Diaries Project has received a Lotterywest grant.



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