

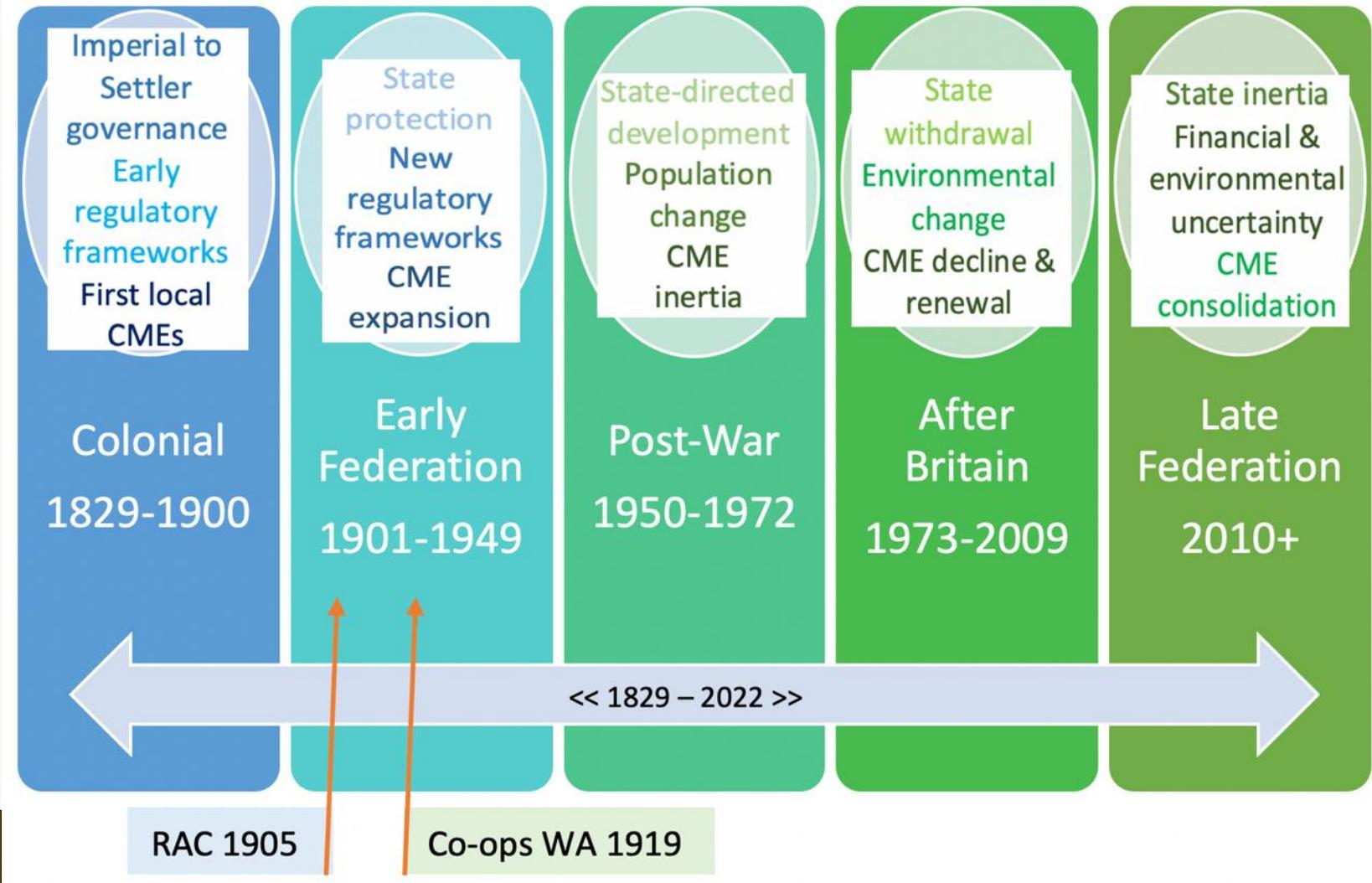
Looking Back – Looking Forward

The economic and social contribution of the WA Co-operative and Mutual Enterprise sector to the state's development

FROM THE VAULT

SCIENCE & ART OF RESEARCHING & RECORDING SOCIAL &
CORPORATE HISTORY (E.G. RAC OF WA AND CO-OPS WA)

Bruce Baskerville



Timeline

The RAC – founding purpose

The objectives of the Club adopted in 1905 were:

1. The promotion of a **social organisation** and club composed mainly of persons owning self-propelled vehicles or motor cycles.
2. To afford a means of **recording the experiences** of members and others using motor-cars and motor-cycles.
3. To promote investigation in their development.
4. To co-operate in **securing rational legislation and the formation of proper rules and regulations** governing the use of motor-cars and motor-cycles in cities, towns, and country districts.
5. To **maintain the lawful rights and privileges and protect the interests of owners and users** of all forms of self-propelled vehicles whenever and wherever such interests, rights, and privileges are menaced.
6. To promote and encourage the improvement, construction, and maintenance of **roads and highways** and the development generally in the State of motoring.
7. To maintain a club devoted to the interests and **advancement of automobilism**

Summary: safeguard the **common interests** of drivers and vehicle owners [members], develop a system of road and driver **regulation** [as none existed], **lobby the State** to develop of roads suited to motor vehicles [protect expensive machines and lives], develop **support services** for members, **social activities** for members.

Co-ops WA – founding purposes

Matthew Padbury, Chairman, Westralian Farmers in 1919: to advance the activities of the co-operative movement “by uniting all bodies into one body controlling the central organisation” - the ‘central organisation’ was Westralian Farmers’ Ltd.

1. Costs of production and cost of living issues after Great War – search to find a common ground between producers and consumers to **cut-out the profiteering middle man** (e.g. shipping companies)
2. Great uncertainty post Great War about how global trade systems would operate, and need for **certainty in marketing and exporting produce** (co-operation v. competition)
3. Incorporation of non-grain producer co-ops into a broader movement that would have **more economic and political clout** (e.g. fruit growers, dairying, storekeeper co-ops)
4. Provide a **stronger economic base to local co-ops** through orderly retailing and distribution of goods (e.g. centrally allocating agencies and defining territories for local co-ops so they did not compete against each other, but each could be stable and generate viable incomes, especially in new wheatbelt towns)
5. Provide **training and education for local co-operators in business management skills**, both for their local co-ops (especially retail co-ops) and for their own producer businesses (Co-Ops Federation Propaganda/Education committee role)
6. Facilitate the use of **new technologies and crops**, such as farm machinery and superphosphate, and improved fruit or grain varieties, as well as value-adding such as butter factories.

Summary: financial **certainty** for producers [members] at a time of great uncertainty, through co-operating rather than competing against each other; **lobby the State** to provide support services; providing a **viable economic base** for local co-ops; train co-operators in **business skills**; **facilitate networking** between members

RAC and Co-ops WA: founding comparisons

SIMILAR

- Identify, protect and advance common interests of members
- Lobby to have effective regulatory frameworks put in place by the State
- Provision of support services for members
- Training/education in skills (driving, business)

DIFFERENT

- Co-ops – support and develop economic base; work with Westralian Farmers Ltd as part of larger organisation, support 'Bold Yeomanry' State policy; initial member base new farmers and settlers in Wheatbelt, with interest from trade union movement (worker and consumer co-ops)
- RAC – not-for-profit, develop services in lieu of the State in absence of any State policy related to developing motor transport; informal links to RAC (UK); initial member base wealthy middle class in Metro area, with interest from motor sports (motor cyclists and motor boats) and heavy transport operators

Multiple founding purposes are characteristic of Western Australian CMEs

Key Personalities



RAC Collections

The Automobile Club of Western Australia.
 ANNUAL REPORT, 1914-15.
 To be presented at the Annual General Meeting to be held
 on 31st May, 1915, at the Sports Club,
 Viking House, Perth.



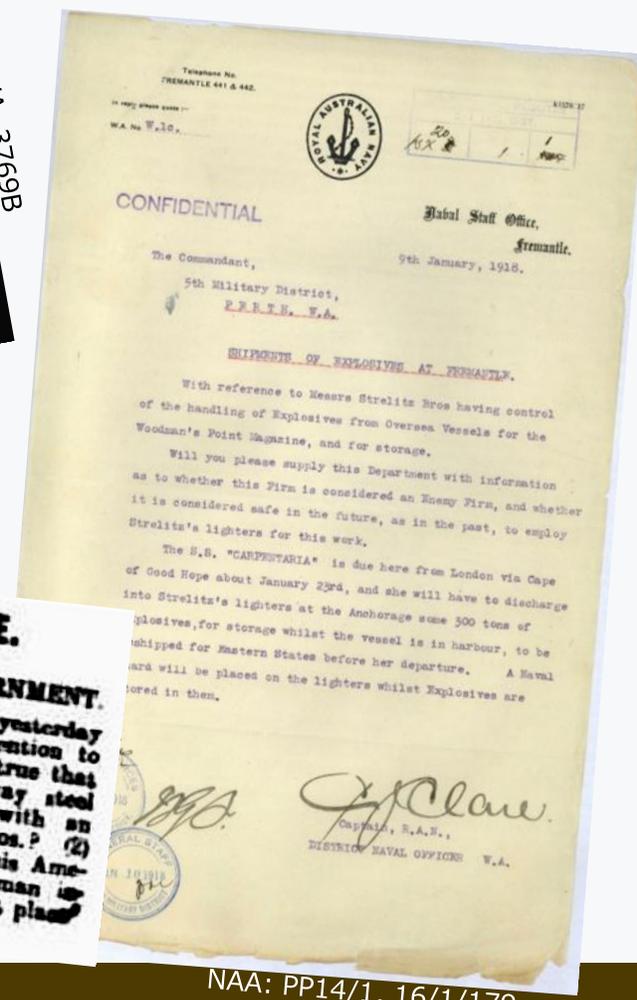
SLWA, 3769B

STRELITZ BROS.,
 IMPORTERS OF
EXPLOSIVES, CEMENT, MINING MACHINERY, Etc.
 SOLE AGENTS FOR -
 Nobel's Hamburg Explosives
 Cradock's Wire Ropes
 Erenstein and Koppel's Mining
 and Cyanide Trucks
 Tennant and Sons Cyanide
 Dehne's Filter Presses
 Star Crucibles
 Westphalian Coke, etc., etc.
 COMPLETE STOCKS KEPT IN KALGOORLIE AND FREMANTLE.

The Sun (Kalgoorlie), 6 August 1905

WA,
24 September 1915

TRADE IN WAR TIME.
QUESTION FOR THE GOVERNMENT.
 Legislative Assembly yesterday
 asked the Acting Premier:—(1) Is it true that
 a Government contract for railway steel
 tyres has recently been placed with an
 American firm through Strelitz Bros.? (2)
 Did the Government ascertain if this Ame-
 rican company was free from German in-
 fluence? (3) Why was the order not placed
 with a British firm?



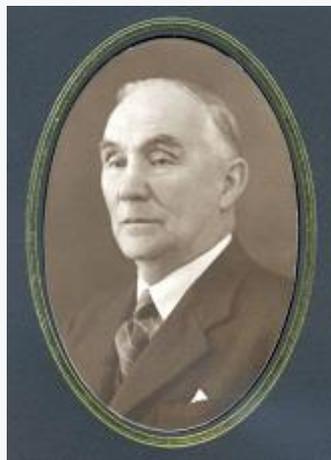
NAA: PP14/1, 16/1/179

An RAC Story: Richard Strelitz and the limits of membership



Key Personalities

raswa.org.au

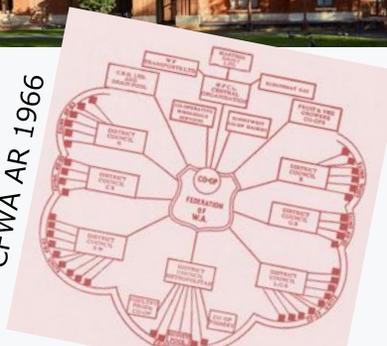


WA Parliament
Biographical Register

NTWA



CFWA AR 1966



CFWA 53rd AR, 1953



WD Johnson
1870 - 1948

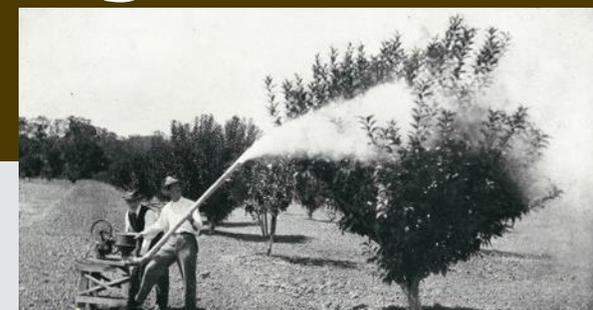
Walter Harper
1880 - 1956

Tom Bath
1875 - 1956

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A Co-ops Story: The Three Amigos and shaping from the inside



RAC and Co-ops WA: critical incidents

RAC – over 117 years

- Automotive technologies and war-time acceleration of technologies and knowledge
- Regulating road and vehicle safety developments by the State
- State assumption of vehicle and road regulation
- Centralised corporate structure
- Adaptability in corporate structures (e.g. NFP owning for-profit businesses)
- Environmental change, especially with regard to emissions and fuels
- Urban population growth
- Motorist [member] support (insurance, tourism, mechanical)
- Key personalities

Co-ops WA – over 103 years

- Grain production and transport technologies
- Standardised packaging technologies
- Regulating production and markets through the State
- Regional variation and federated structure
- Governance inertia in post-war period
- UK joined Common Market
- Demutualisation of Wesfarmers
- Environmental change – Wheatbelt expansion, soil decline and EEZ
- Rural depopulation
- Member support (advocacy, business development)
- Key personalities

Conclusions

Key research questions
(tentative responses
based on observations
from RAC and Co-ops WA
only)

7. Purposes have evolved but retained sense of original purpose, and are not fundamentally different; however organisational structures have changed substantially to continue to fulfil purposes and keep members engaged

6. Support for regulating fisheries has led to world-leading fishery sustainability; research and lobbying for transition from ICE to electric and automated vehicles has laid foundations for dramatic change in next decade

5. Post-war prosperity masked inertia in the sector, which made adaptation to the neoliberal order in the 'After Britain' period challenging

1. Orderly development of rural/fishery resources and development of transport networks; development of local and WA identities

2. Key personalities facilitated collaboration for common objectives and organisational sustainability

3. The State has been critical to establishing and enforcing supportive regulatory frameworks

4. Provision of rural community and business services, and development of whole system of road signage and traffic management

