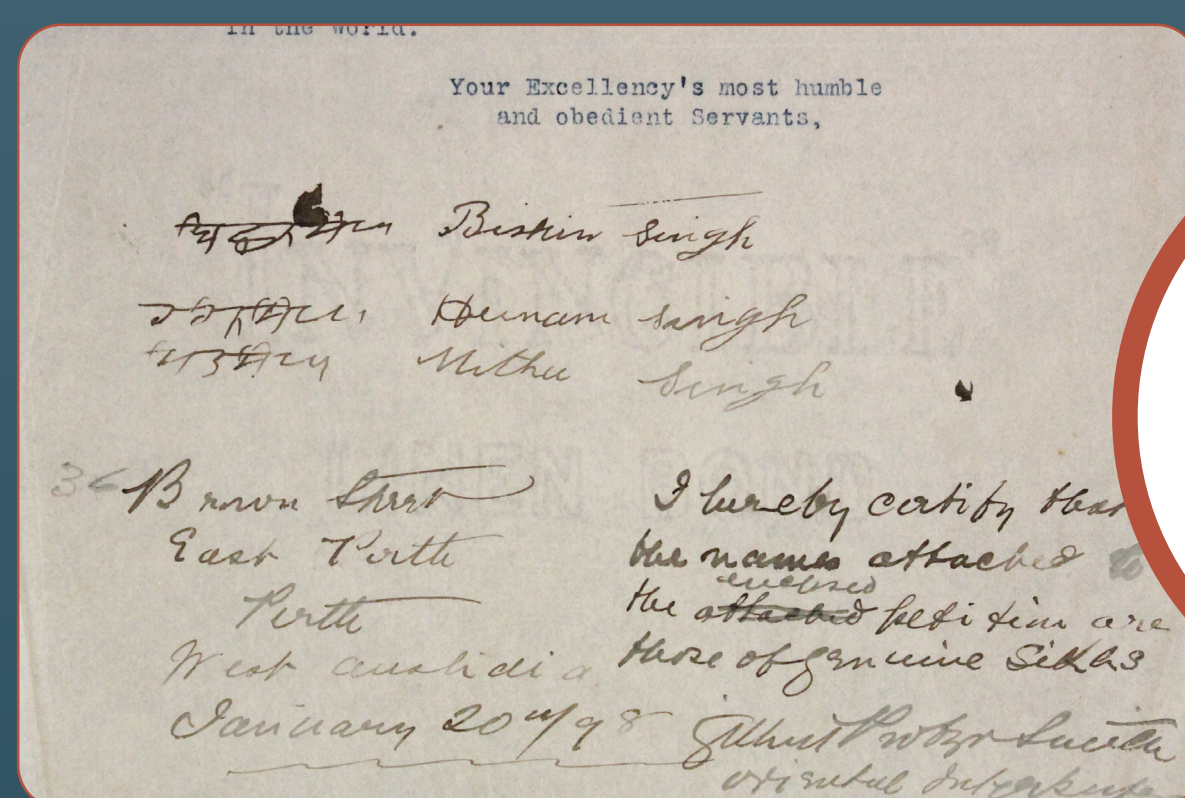


AUSTRALIAN SIKH PIONEERS

REVEALING A MINORITY'S PLACE IN AUSTRALIA



1898

On 20 January 1898, Sikhs living in Western Australia delivered a petition signed by 100 Sikhs to the Governor seeking equal rights and justice before the law. Their complaints included being treated as enemy aliens notwithstanding prior service in the British Army, not being granted miners' rights, hawkers' licences or free entry for Sikhs including family members from the Punjab into the colony.



2018

On 17 April 2018, a trail that recognises the remarkable contributions of Sikhs to Western Australia was officially opened by Environment Minister Stephen Dawson and Acting Local Government and Heritage Minister and Cannington MLA Bill Johnston.

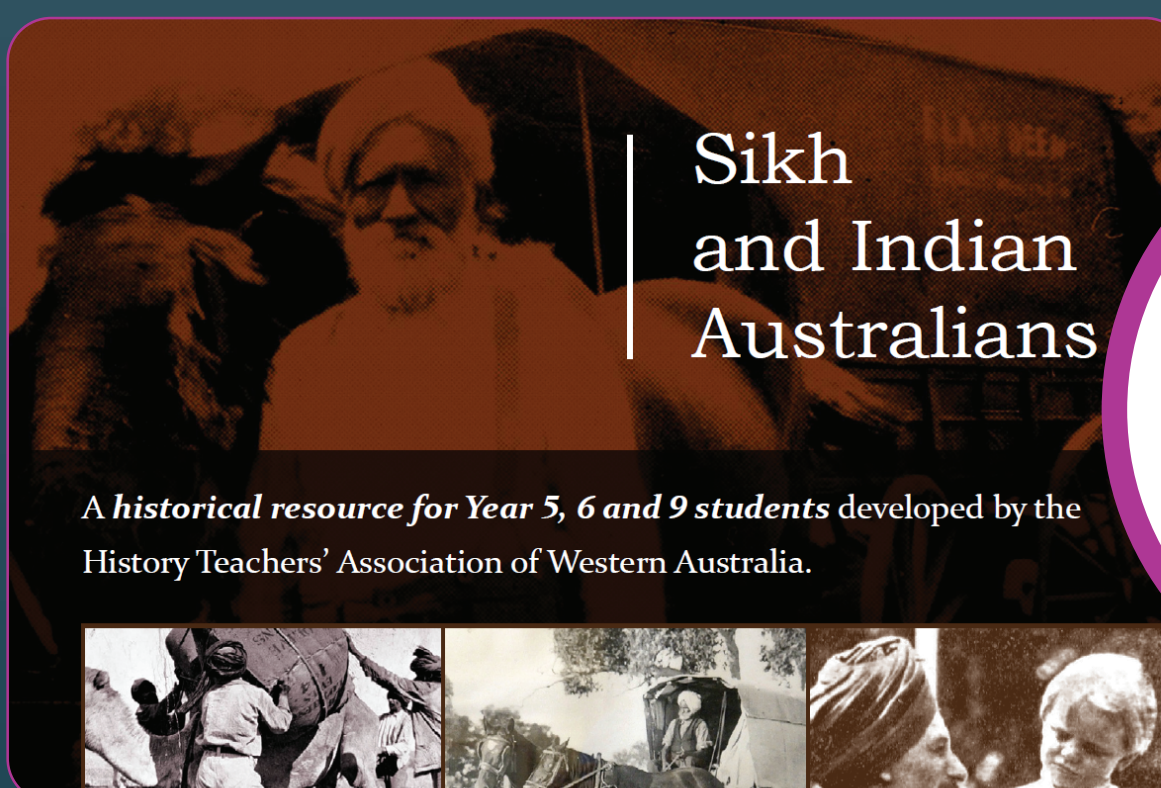
The Australian Sikh Heritage Trail in Adenia Park, Riverton is a 250 metre-long trail and footpath which provides visitors with information about the history of the Australian Sikh community, as well as information about Whadjuk Noongar culture and the Swan Canning Riverpark.

The project has been a collaboration between the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, the WA Sikh Community and the City of Canning.

On 1 January 1901, Australia celebrated the proclamation of the new Commonwealth of Australia in Sydney. The Federation procession had a strong military flavour and included 100 officers from a range of Indian regiments including the Punjab and Sikh Regiments. On 13 December 1900, the visiting Indian regiments' steamer 'Dalhousie' stopped at Albany, Western Australia.

"Indian officers at the back of the Post Office near the junction of Spencer Street and Lower Stirling Terrace" courtesy of Albany History Collection

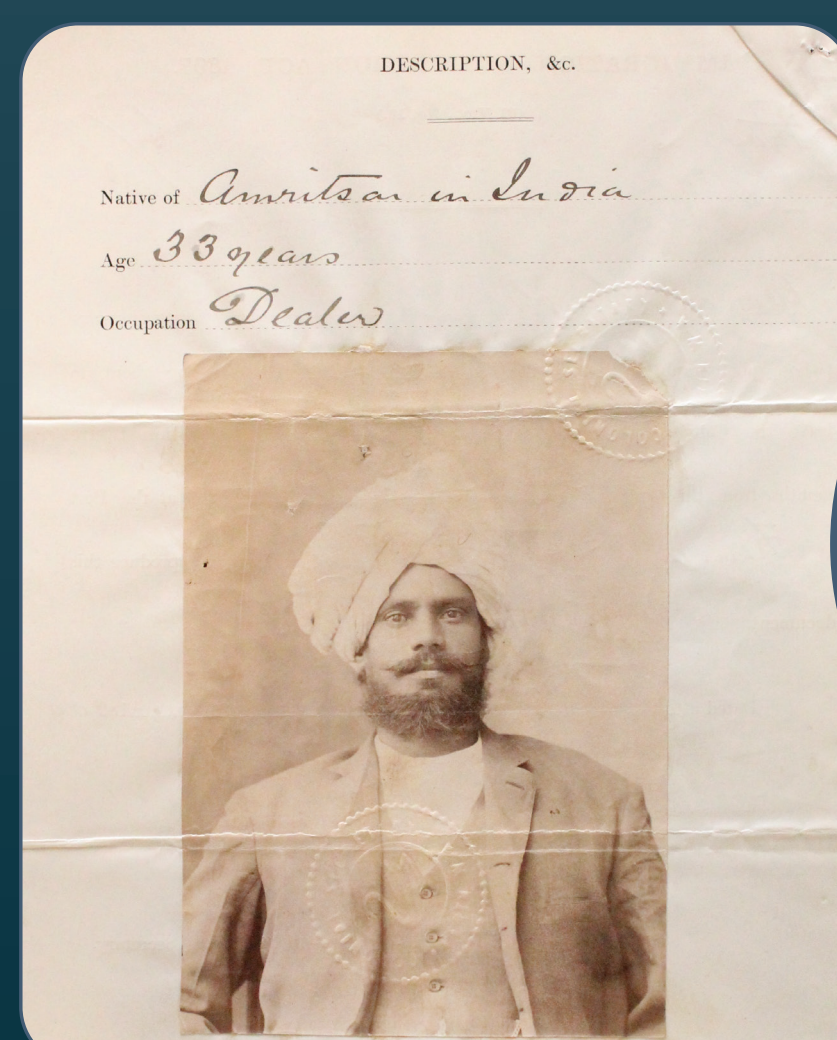
1900



2017

In 2017, a historical resource for Year 5, 6 and 9 students was developed by the History Teachers' Association of Western Australia.

This resource can be accessed at http://htawa.net.au/sikh_indian_australians/



1897 - 1932

Newspaper reports record cremations in Claremont (1897), Manjimup (1901), Kalgoorlie (1910), Wandering (1914), Woodman Point (1916), Dongara (1920), Mount Magnet (1932), Cunderdin (1932). Sikhs, some travelling hawkers as shown in the picture above, living in Western Australia petition the State Government for many decades to legalise the practice.

Image courtesy of the State Records Office of Western Australia

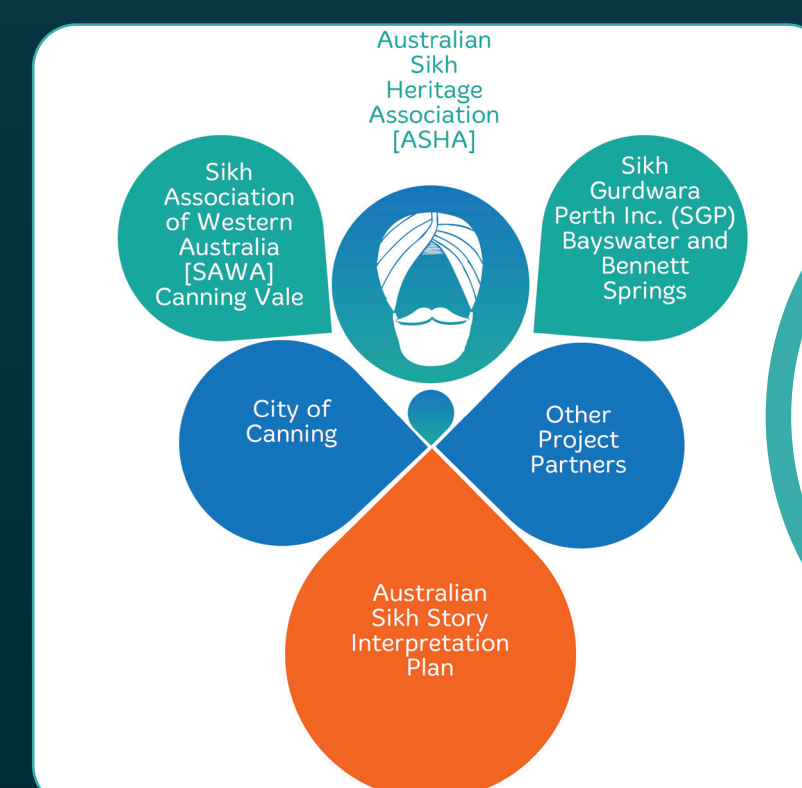
City of Canning receives \$149,635 Lotterywest grant to highlight WA's Sikh history with interpretative panels along the Australian Sikh Heritage Trail located at Adenia Park, Riverton.

2016



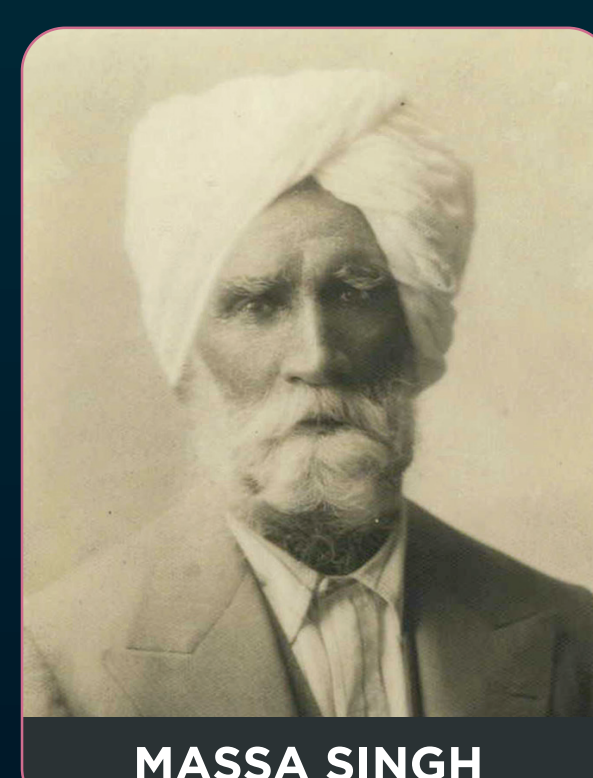
Cremation Act 1929 enacted by WA Parliament.

1929

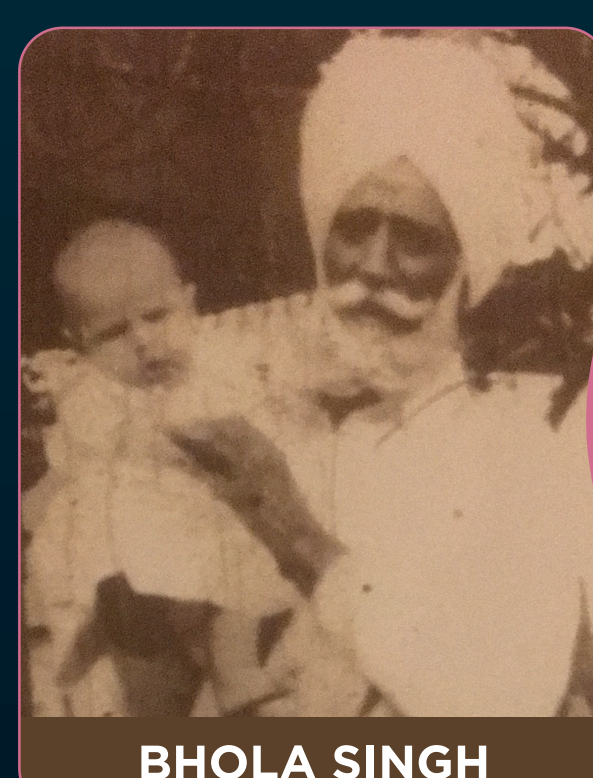


2015

To document the significance of the WA Sikh Cremation Site and provide a roadmap to the WA Sikh community in relation to their heritage related activities, an Interpretation Plan was commissioned jointly funded by Lotterywest and the Sikh Association of WA.



MASSA SINGH



BHOLA SINGH

1932

In 1932, two Western Australian Sikhs, Bhola Singh and Massa Singh, were allocated half an acre of land by the State Government for the purpose of cremation. The site was formally gazetted as the 'Sikh Cemetery'.

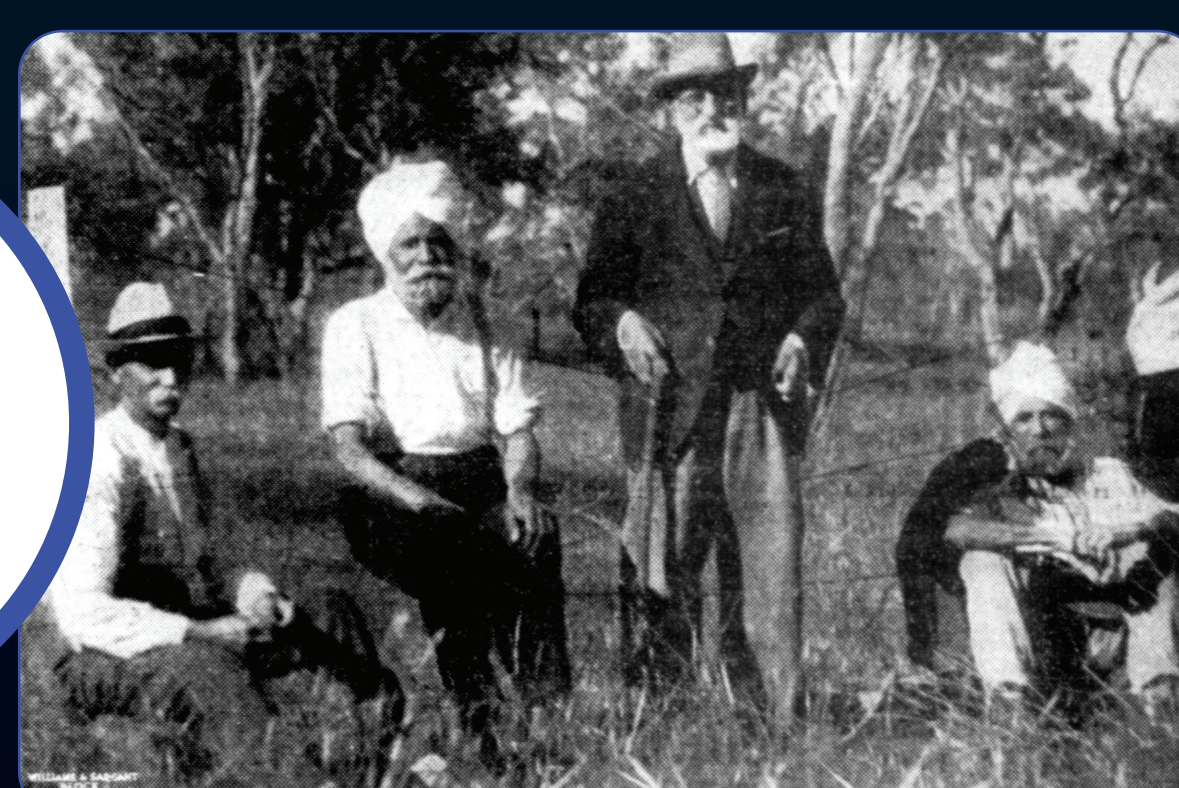
Sikh Cremation Site added to the State Register of Heritage Places by the Heritage Council of Western Australia.

1997



Some of Ottim Singh's friends including Bhola Singh at Ottim's cremation. Taken from page 8 of 'The Mirror' newspaper, 30 June 1934. Accessed via Trove.

1934



1992

On 22 November 1992, memorial stones were unveiled at the Sikh Cremation Site - Adenia Park to acknowledge the existence of a Sikh cremation site within Adenia Park and to celebrate Australian Sikh pioneers. Local residents Ugo Gianatti, John Parker and Peter Gibellini were instrumental in the construction of the memorial. Photo shows Dr Geoff Gallop - Former Premier of WA and Minister for Fuel and Energy at that time and Judyth Watson who was the Minister for Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs at that time unveiling the memorial.