

GEM OF TIME RECIPIENT – FATHER EDWARD DONCASTER 2008

Father Ted Doncaster was born in Busselton in 1931, educated at Hale School and in 1957 was ordained a Minister of the Church of England in Perth. As an Anglican Priest, Archdeacon, and Canon, Father Ted spent many years ministering to congregations in various parts of the State.

As a young man in his early twenties, not long before his ordination, Edward Doncaster worked for the Government Statistician's office. He also had a keen interest in Western Australia's past and as one early example of his skill in researching and analysing information, in 1952 he compiled a detailed index to names on more than 1,000 graves in the Anglican portion of the East Perth cemetery.

Father Ted can often be seen in the Battye Library and State Records Office reading rooms carrying out research for his latest work and is highly and affectionately regarded by staff and colleagues alike for his gentle humour, sharp wit, unflinching courtesy, and his immense knowledge of the varied and sometimes obscure Anglican Church resources held in the Battye Library's collections.

Many of these valuable materials were, in fact, donated by Father Ted himself. It is a tribute to his foresight many years ago that some irreplaceable country and regional church records which were under threat of destruction and decay are now preserved in the Battye Library. His understanding of the importance of archives led to him accepting the role as Perth Diocesan Archivist from 1980 to 1985. The Diocesan Archives now also holds an extensive and well-organised collection of Anglican Church records.

For almost sixty years Father Ted has researched and written on the histories of many of Western Australia's Anglican parishes, biographies of key figures in the Anglican Church as well as many other related topics. At last count the State Library of Western Australia holds 32 published and unpublished works written from 1950 to 2008 including *The Wollaston legacy* published in 2007 which he coauthored with Bishop Brian Kyme.

The 'Gem of Time' Award celebrates living treasures who have had a long-term and significant commitment to the Battye Library and/or the State Records office. Father Ted is an outstanding Western Australian who has made a remarkable contribution to the collection, preservation and understanding of the State's History.