

= Lionel Gilbert =

Lionel Arthur Gilbert OAM ( 8 December 1924 ? 28 January 2015 ) was an Australian historian , author , curator , lecturer , and biographer , specializing in applied , natural , and local history . Born in Burwood , New South Wales , he studied at Sydney Teachers College and , beginning in 1946 , worked as a teacher and later a headmaster in state schools in various locations around New South Wales until 1961 . In 1963 Gilbert graduated from the University of New England with a Bachelor of Arts in History . That same year , he was appointed a lecturer and curator at the Armidale Teachers ' College Museum of Education , in which capacity he served until his retirement in 1984 , overseeing several expansions of the museum and establishment of a historical research centre .

During his time with the college , Gilbert published a number of articles , papers , and books , many of them focusing on local history of New South Wales , including the state 's New England area . He attained a Doctor of Philosophy ( Ph.D ) in Botanical History from the University of New England in 1972 . After retirement , Gilbert authored several books on Australian natural history , including biographies of three Australian botanists and a history of Sydney 's Royal Botanic Gardens . In recognition of his work in education and history , he was selected as a fellow by several historical organizations . In 1995 he was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia , a Centenary Medal in 2001 , and in 2007 with an honorary Doctor of Letters by the University of New England .

= = Early life and career with state schools = =

Gilbert was born in Burwood , a suburb of Sydney , on 8 December 1924 . His primary and secondary education took place at Burwood Primary School , Homebush Boys High School , and Fort Street High School , receiving a leaving certificate from the latter . After graduation , Gilbert took temporary employment at Gowings Men 's Store in Sydney . In 1942 , he received a Teacher 's Scholarship to Sydney Teachers College , where he trained for one year to be a school teacher .

In 1943 , Gilbert enlisted in the Royal Australian Air Force , joining 570 other Teachers College students who served in the armed forces during World War II , 68 of whom were killed during the conflict . Assigned as a radar operator in Arnhem Land , Gilbert served until 1946 .

After his discharge from the military , Gilbert was employed as secondary school teacher at Nabiac Central School from 1946 until 1954 . In 1955 , he was appointed Deputy Headmaster of Wauchope Primary School , and served in that capacity until 1960 . That year , he accepted an appointment as headmaster of Rocky River Primary School near Uralla , New South Wales , a position he held until 1961 .

While at Nabiac , Gilbert met Margaret Roberts and the two married in 1949 . Their daughter Anne was born in 1960 .

= = Academia and curator career = =

In 1955 , Gilbert enrolled as an external student at the University of New England in the first class of the university 's external studies program . In 1961 , he was appointed by the university as a Research and Information Officer in the Department of External Studies . In this capacity , Gilbert taught weekend classes on the methodology of local history for the university 's adult education department throughout the northwest area of New South Wales . In 1963 , he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in History with First Class Honors , submitting his thesis on the history of botanical knowledge of the eastern seaboard of Australia for the years 1788 @-@ 1815 .

In July 1963 , Gilbert accepted an appointment as lecturer in applied history and curator with the Armidale Teachers ' College ( later College of Advanced Education ) Museum of Education . Holding the position for 21 years , he guided expansion of the facility to better present the history of education in Australia . Between 1976 and 1980 he supervised the relocation to the museum of three historic school buildings from Armidale High School and Dumaresq Public School . In addition , Gilbert designed courses in applied and local history for internal and external students of the college , which became the Armidale College of Advanced Education in 1971 .

In 1974 , Gilbert successfully requested an Innovations Grant from the Schools Commission to establish a Historical Resources Centre at the college . Opened in 1976 with Gilbert as its first director , the centre 's goal was to provide education on the history of New England to primary , secondary , tertiary , and postgraduate students , and community groups .

Gilbert recalled in 2008 that between 1975 and 1978 , 5 @, @ 758 primary or secondary pupils toured the museum on field trips . A further 1 @, @ 653 adults visited during that time to conduct historical or genealogical research at the museum or the Historical Resources Centre . In 1981 the Museums Association of Australia recognised the museum with a certificate of merit for its , " authenticity and detail in building , display and education . "

In 1972 , Gilbert was named chair of the school 's newly formed Department of History . He attained the position of Acting Deputy Principal for the college before retiring in June 1984 .

In 1967 , Gilbert assisted the National Trust of Australia and the Australian National University 's Department of Adult Education with a series of lectures and exhibits on local history of the New England area . Held in Armidale , the series helped establish a local chapter of the National Trust and the subsequent preservation of several historical colonial buildings in the area .

While at the college , Gilbert pursued post @-@ graduate studies at New England and received a Doctor of Philosophy ( Ph.D ) in Botanical History in 1972 , with his thesis titled Botanical investigation of New South Wales , 1811 @-@ 1880 . Also in 1972 , he was awarded a Churchill Fellowship to the U.K. for four weeks to study how museums in the U.K. contributed to general education .

= = Other work = =

In 1962 , Gilbert succeeded Eric Dunlop as Honorary Curator of the Armidale City Council 's Folk Museum , serving in the position until 1982 . When the museum reached capacity in its original facility , he joined the Armidale town clerk in a successful petition to the Department of Education for New South Wales to relocate the museum into the nearby Hillgrove School . Opened in 1977 , the new facility is known as the Museum of Rural Life and Industry . Beginning in 1975 , he served on the New South Wales State Archives Authority .

During his career at the college , Gilbert authored or co @-@ authored a number of papers and books , particularly on Australian biographical , genealogical , and local history . In 1974 , Gilbert joined William Patrick Driscoll , Alan Sutherland , and David Rose in publishing History Around Us : An Enquiry Approach to Local History , a book on historical research targeted at younger readers . The book was re @-@ issued in 1984 . In 1978 , Gilbert and co @-@ author Elwyn Sydney Elphick wrote a book titled of Forty @-@ three and Seven : A Short Illustrated History of the First Fifty Years of Teacher Education in Armidale : Armidale Teachers ' College , 1928 @-@ 1971 and Armidale College of Advanced Education 1971 @-@ 1978 to commemorate the school 's 50 @-@ year jubilee celebration . In 1980 , two books by Gilbert were published : A Grave Look at History : Glimpses of a Vanishing Form of Folk Art and New England from Old Photographs . The former studied graveyard monuments and was representative of Gilbert 's lifelong interest in studying and documenting epitaphs . The latter book focused on local history of New South Wales . From 1966 , he contributed a series of articles to the Australian Dictionary of Biography .

= = Post retirement work , professional associations , and honors = =

Gilbert continued to write in retirement , often focusing on natural history . In 1985 , 1992 , and 2001 , he respectively authored books on botanists William Woolls , Herman Rupp , and Joseph Maiden . In 1986 , his book on the history of Sydney 's Royal Botanic Gardens was published . Two years after its publication , Gilbert was appointed an Honorary Research Associate of the gardens . He was also a patron of the Australian National Museum of Education and a member of Australia 's National Trust .

Gilbert was named a Fellow of the Society of Australian Genealogists in 1955 , an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Australian Historical Society in 1997 , and a Fellow of the Federation of Australian

Historical Societies in 2007 . On 12 June 1995 he was recognised with the Medal of the Order of Australia ( OAM ) , " In recognition of service to the community as a researcher and curator of local history in the New England region . " On 1 January 2001 he was awarded the Centenary Medal , " For service to the community through education and local history . " The University of New England presented Gilbert with an honorary Doctor of Letters ( Hon. D. Litt . ) in 2008 . Also in 2008 , he contributed a historical essay on the Auchinleck @-@ Ross family of New England to the biographical compendium , New England Lives III . Gilbert served as president of the Armidale and District Historical Society and has been honored with Freedom of the City of Armidale .

= = Personal life and death = =

Gilbert and his wife , Margaret , resided in Armidale , New South Wales from 1961 . He died in Armidale on 28 January 2015 and was survived by his wife , daughter Anne , son @-@ in @-@ law Tony Bennett , and grandson Alexei .

= = Awards and professional elections = =

1955 Fellow , Society of Australian Genealogists  
1972 Churchill Fellowship  
1988 Honorary Research Associate , Royal Botanic Gardens , Sydney  
1995 Medal of the Order of Australia  
1997 Honorary Fellow , Royal Australian Historical Society  
2001 Centenary Medal  
2007 Fellow , Federation of Australian Historical Societies  
2008 Doctor of Letters , University of New England  
Freedom of the City of Armidale , New South Wales  
President of the Armidale and District Historical Society

= = Selected publications = =

Elphick , Elwyn Sydney ; Lionel Arthur Gilbert ( 1978 ) . Forty @-@ three and Seven : A Short Illustrated History of the First Fifty Years of Teacher Education in Armidale : Armidale Teachers ' College , 1928 @-@ 1971 and Armidale College of Advanced Education 1971 @-@ 1978 . Armidale , New South Wales : Armidale College of Advanced Education. p . 85 . OCLC 220377802 . Retrieved 16 October 2012 .

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