



RESOURCE 11 - Memories of the Wildlife Show by Gill Swan - Perth resident

*When I was at Primary School in North Perth, in the early 1950's, we were taken to the Perth Town Hall to visit the Wildlife Show. This involved a trip to the CITY by bus and as we had very few excursions this was a very exciting excursion. We got off the bus right outside the Perth Town Hall and had to be very quiet and **sensible** as we went into the Hall. Inside, it was another world! There were lots of live exhibits and the place had a funny smell – a mixture of bush and animal smells. Mr (Vincent) Serventy was there and, to me, he looked as though he had just come out of the bush for a few days to show and tell us about the reptiles, insects, animals and birds that we could see. Some years later Harry Butler was there too and he was very keen for us to see 'his' reptiles! The creatures were displayed in glass containers, rather like aquariums. I cannot remember all of the creatures that were on display as I was always worried that a snake, or several snakes, would suddenly appear in the hands of Mr Butler.*

This is what I was afraid of seeing in front of me!



If you can find the following web site [Snakes Alive! Harry Butler's Wildlife Show Perth Townhall](#) you can see what I was afraid of bumping into!

This picture was taken in 1959, after I left Primary School, but, this is what he used to do – take the snakes out of their display and get us up very close to them.

The other creatures that I remember very clearly are the Blue Tongued Lizards – they hissed and flicked their tongues as anyone or anything that went anywhere near them.

The boys used to like to hold the lizards and snakes and try to frighten everybody around them.

Mr Butler also showed us how to eat Bardies – Witchety Grubs.

The birds were lovely to look at but I could never touch their feathers! Mr Serventy could answer almost any question we had about any of the birds on display.

All too soon it would be time to leave, to get on the bus and go back to school, probably to write a story on what we saw at the Wildlife Show!