



Kimberley Society

Book Note

Legend of the Kimberley: The Life and Stories of Lawson Holman – Flying Doctor and Flying Surgeon, compiled by Janet Holman. Hesperian Press, Carlisle (WA), 2004. Soft cover, 170 pages, illustrated, map. ISBN 085905 349 0. RRP \$25.

This book made my day. I defy anyone to keep a straight face while reading it. If the 'Hodge's Ghost' story doesn't elicit a laugh, '5KA Finch' will definitely do the trick. But the book also has a serious side. The stories headed 'You missed me, Quick Draw' and 'Dead men tell no tales' reveal the dangerous side of medical practice. 'Grasshopper' and 'A modern Lawrence' show the difficulty of reaching people in remote localities. 'Drama up north' highlights the riskiness of flying in such localities, and it provides insight into the ingenuity and individuality of outback people.

In collating and publishing stories that Lawson Holman wrote for his grandchildren, Janet Holman has produced a book that is both readable and informative. It will entertain those who read it for pleasure, and it will inform those who seek answers about the conditions that existed in the Kimberley in and after the 1950s. The inclusion (in italics) of extracts of letters that Lawson wrote to Janet provides additional context as does the occasional reference to a newspaper article.

This book is available only through the author or the Royal Flying Doctor Service because all profits are going to the RFDS.

Cathie Clement

Editor's Note: This book was updated and reprinted by [Hesperian Press](http://www.hesperianpress.com.au) in 2013. The new edition, ISBN 978-0-85905-562-8, contains 180 pages, and is priced at \$35. It is available from the press and through bookshops.