

Spring 2018

# SL



STATE LIBRARY®  
NEW SOUTH WALES



Personal  
reflections



# ‘ Message



This is the last issue of *SL* magazine before the Library begins to turn itself inside out. You will find articles here about the preparations currently underway.

Grand buildings and collections are all very well, but only if they can be used. Ancient Greek temples were built to be enjoyed from the outside. Only the priestly initiates could go in. I still meet people unsure if they are *actually allowed* into the Mitchell Building – because it is so imposing. In a few months we will all be able to find something of interest, something to stimulate, to inspire us both inside and outside. Please make sure that 6 October is firmly marked in your calendars. Come and experience one of the grandest public spaces in Australia, and see what’s inside.

Major exhibitions opening in October include *UNESCO Six* – our Memory of the World collections, *Sydney Elders* – a new installation by Wiradjuri/Kamilaroi artist Jonathon Jones, *Paintings from the Collection* – more than 300 rarely seen works from our fabled framed picture store hidden many floors below Macquarie Street, *Memories on Glass* – an exceptional family collection of early photographs of Sydney, *The Collectors’ Gallery* – hundreds of objects from the stacks, many of them never before presented in public, and *#NewSelfWales* – a collaborative community portrait project which you may already have seen advertised around the city.

Throughout history, confident and imaginative societies have looked to their environment to sustain them and embolden their descendants. Some weave rich narratives into country, creating in the process a permanent record of who they are. Others seek to do this through architecture, music, poetry and art. Put modestly, we aim to do it all.

Standing as it does on ancient Gadigal country – with its Gadigal traditions still very much alive – and with the added benefit of its amazing treasures, the State Library is in a uniquely strong position to illuminate our collective pasts, presents and futures. When we turn ourselves inside out in October, the Library will assume a new presence in our State. We are looking forward to making you part of it.

**DR JOHN VALLANCE**  
State Librarian



# C ontents

Spring 2018

## SL

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State Library photographer Joy Lai with portrait of Chief Te Hapuku, 1877, by Gottfried Lindauer, photo by Joy Lai, see 'Personal Reflections', page 12

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*Paintings*  
*from the Collection*

More than 300 paintings, many never exhibited before, will be on permanent display in our Galleries from 6 October.

Stoneleigh, Beaufort near Ararat, Victoria, 1866,  
by Eugene von Guérard, DG 231





## National Biography Award

A 'beautifully researched and satisfyingly rounded' biography of former Australian prime minister Alfred Deakin was awarded the 2018 National Biography Award at the Library on 6 August. Judith Brett's *The Enigmatic Mr Deakin* won amid a strong shortlist (pictured below), which included personal memoirs as well as political and literary biographies. 'With 81 entries this year, the award's success is testament to the initial vision and passion of Dr Geoffrey Cains and the late Michael Crouch AC,' said State Librarian Dr John Vallance. We are pleased to announce the Nelson Meers Foundation as the award's new supporter. In recognition of the long-standing support from the Crouch family, an additional \$5000 prize in Michael Crouch's name for the first published biography by an Australian writer will be offered.



## Mungo Man oral histories

After decades of lobbying by anthropologists and Indigenous groups, Mungo Man and other significant ancestral remains were returned home to Country in November 2017 to their original resting places in Mungo National Park in south-western NSW. The Library commissioned oral historian Louise Darmody to record interviews with 12 people about their lives and their involvement with the repatriation process. Included in the series are interviews with Paakantji, Ngayampaa and Muthi Muthi people recognised as the traditional owners of Mungo National Park in the Willandra Lakes Heritage Area. Professor Jim Bowler and other scientists associated with the 1974 discovery and subsequent research into Mungo Man have also been interviewed. Part of the Library's Indigenous Collecting Strategy, these interviews can be heard and transcribed through our Amplify website.

[amplify.sl.nsw.gov.au](http://amplify.sl.nsw.gov.au)

Pleistocene human footprints, Mungo National Park, by Michael Amedolia, 2005, PXE 996

# NEWS



## Interrobang

*The following is one of approximately 350 questions answered each month by the Library's 'Ask a Librarian' service.*

**? I'm researching a book about Revere Beach in Massachusetts where the Australian swimmer Annette Kellerman is said to have been arrested in the early 1900s for wearing too skimpy a bathing suit. I'd like to know if this event took place or was made up for the 1952 film *Million Dollar Mermaid*.**

**!** The earliest reference we can find to Annette Kellerman's arrest in Massachusetts is a 1925 article from the *Los Angeles Times*, found through Proquest Historical Newspapers (see our Eresources). Quoted in the article, Kellerman says she had come back from a four-mile practice swim off Revere Beach: 'you can imagine my surprise when two huge policemen came up to me and told me to get my bathrobe and follow them to the Courthouse. I was being arrested for wearing a short one-piece racing bath-suit, the first I suppose that had ever been seen in this country.'

She also devotes a page to the event in her unpublished memoir, 'My Story', held in the Library.

Despite these later references, we couldn't find evidence of any press interest at the time the event was supposed to have taken place. And Kellerman's 1919 book *How to Swim* doesn't mention her arrest at Revere Beach.

[sl.nsw.gov.au/ask](http://sl.nsw.gov.au/ask)

## Images of Nauru

Early twentieth-century photographs of Nauru are being 'digitally repatriated'. The Library is working with photographer Sally McInerney to send back digital copies of the 'Nauru Island photographs' taken by the head of the police force, Thomas Cude, between 1905 and 1966. The repatriation coincides with the 50th anniversary of Nauru's independence and the opening of a new library at the Nauru campus of the University of the South Pacific. 'It's a beautiful place,' says McInerney, 'and I think it may change the lives of many people in the island community.'

Nauruans on a bicycle, 1938, by TH Cude, PXE 650



## New-look reading room

An expanded 'Critics' Picks' selection of books reviewed by top critics now spreads over both levels of the recently refurbished Governor Marie Bashir Reading Room. The room has new carpet, more comfortable seating, seats with side tables and a new service desk. Come and see the refurbished reading room when you're next in the Library.



# Take

# 5

## MENUS

Compiled by Anna Corkhill,  
Curator, Research & Discovery

### Flight kitchen

Airline menus featuring bold graphic designs were intended to be taken home as travel souvenirs in the 1960s. The Library's large collection of Qantas ephemera includes samples like this menu from about 1960, along with travel brochures, flight timetables, fare schedules, route maps, safety instructions, luggage labels and boarding passes.

Ephemera/Aviation/Qantas/1920-



2, ROSLYN STREET  
Corner DARLINGHURST ROAD  
KINGS CROSS  
All The  
Main Din  
Sparkling Wines

	LARGE	\$
Mitchinbury Champagne	4.50	
Groot Western	5.00	
French Champagne	9.00	
Sparkling Burgundy	4.50	
Sparkling Moselle	4.50	
Sparkling Rose	3.50	
Sparkling Ringdale	2.75	
Bourbon Pearl	2.75	
Sparkling Starline	2.75	
Sparkling Chateau-Gay	2.75	

Wines

	HALF LARGE	\$	\$
Moselle	1.25	2.00	
Riesling	1.25	2.00	
Still Hoch	1.25	2.00	
Sauterne	1.25	2.00	
Claret	1.50	2.20	
Chairette	1.00	1.50	
Still Burgundy	1.50	2.20	
Wines of the Rhone	2.00		
	2.50		

85c

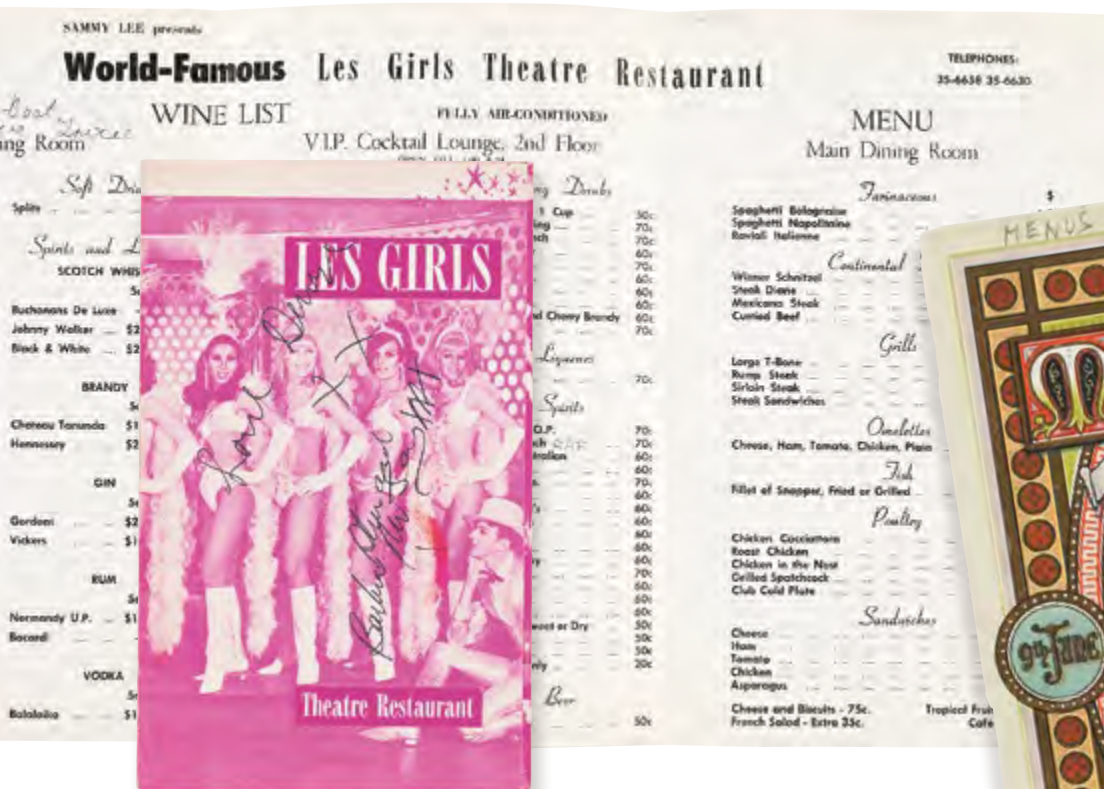


### Midwinter Day dinner

On 22 June 1912, Douglas Mawson's Australasian Antarctic Expedition celebrated the winter solstice with a dinner at the 'Grottoes' of Shackleton Glacier, feasting on mulligatawny soup, sirloin of veal, and plum pudding with whisky sauce. This menu comes from the collection of expedition surveyor George Dovers.

MLMSS 3812/Folder 1/Item 5





## Les Girls

The popular Les Girls Theatre Restaurant in Kings Cross, with its cast of drag queens, ran for several decades from 1963. Though the restaurant offered standard fare, audiences were drawn by entertainment from the likes of Nikki, Trixie and Carlotta, who have autographed this menu.

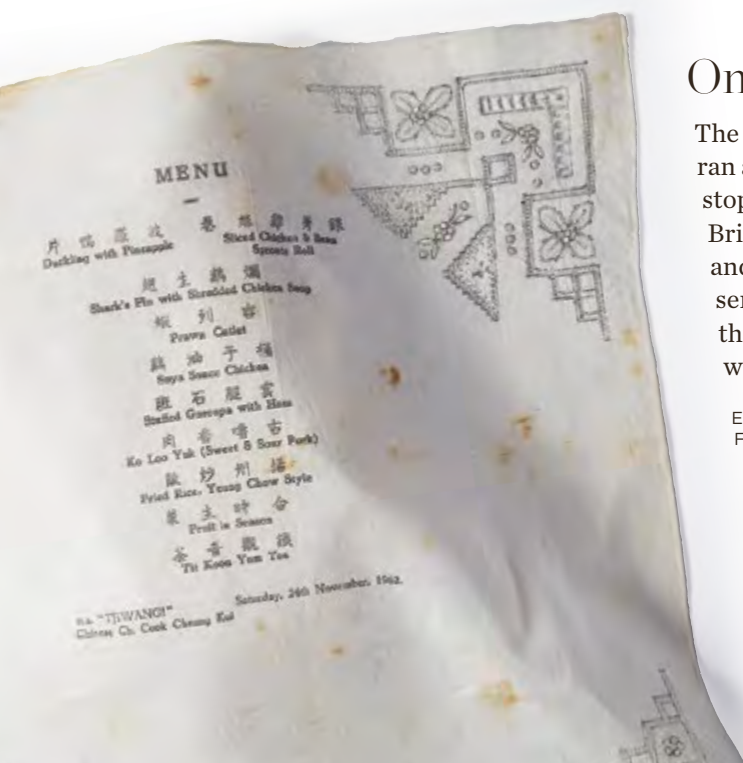
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## Jubilee year

Queen Victoria's golden jubilee on 20 June 1887 — commemorating 50 years since she ascended the throne — was celebrated across the Empire. In Sydney, festivities started early with a mayoral banquet on 21 June 1886, marking the start of her 'Jubilee year', with oyster soup, various roast meats and, of course, Victoria Pudding.

Ephemera/Menus/Pre-1900/1880s



## Onboard

The passenger ship MS *Tjiwangi* ran an Australia–Asia service that stopped in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, various Japanese ports and Hong Kong. First class service was quite opulent, and this Chinese menu from 1962 was printed on a cloth napkin.

Ephemera/Menus/Pre-1900/1930-1989/  
Folder 1960-1969



# ORIGINS

HISTORY OF THE LIBRARY, 1944-1988



Compiled by Geoff Barker,  
Senior Curator, Research & Discovery

The grand design of the sandstone building completed in 1943 ensured that the Mitchell Building quickly became an icon on Sydney's cultural landscape.

In the following years, work proceeded on additions to the south-east corner, the marble staircase and Dixon Galleries.

The Library's collections and services continued to expand, putting pressure on the building's capacity. In 1988 a second building was opened on Macquarie Street, moving the general reference library. The new building had a large reading room and five levels of underground storage.

ABOVE: Macquarie Street Building, State Library of NSW, architectural drawing by Kara Deason, 1985, PXA 2133/102

LEFT: Public Library reading room, State Library of NSW, 29 October 1943, ON 388

OPPOSITE: 'Style Spy' at the Library, *The Sun*, 28 August 1949

Sir William Dixon, c 1929, DL PE 276

Work on extension to the Dixon Wing, c 1959, PXD 363

Installing Brownbuilt shelving in the new wing, 16 April 1961, by Jack Hickson Australian Photographic Agency - 10488

State Library of NSW, excavation of Macquarie Street site, November 1984, PXA 2133/100



# ORIGINS

**1949**

*The Sun* newspaper's 'Style Spy' visits the Library: 'Wearing our cloak of quiet, we invaded the Mitchell Library to study the trend of fashions displayed by seekers of scholarly solitude.'

Most inmates had taken as much care with their toilet as with their choice of literature. It seems the only items that weren't blue were your stockings ...'



**5 APRIL 1951**

Fire breaks out in a storeroom on the roof, destroying furniture and copies of old newspapers. Eight fire engines attended the fire, but damage was minimal.

**1952**

Sir William Dixon dies, bequeathing his remarkable collection to the Library.



**1955**

Relics linked to Captain Cook are transferred from the Australian Museum.

**MARCH 1958**

Work begins on extensions to the Dixon Galleries and the Botticino marble staircase dedicated to Sir William Dixon.



**1962**

Work begins on the second stage of the south-east wing.



**1969**

The Public Library of New South Wales is renamed the Library of New South Wales.

**1975**

The Library of New South Wales is renamed the State Library of New South Wales.

**1978**

State records collected by the Library are transferred to the NSW State Archives at The Rocks.

**DECEMBER 1983**

The new Macquarie Street site is cleared for building work to begin. Archaeologists determined that its earliest use was as the Light Horse barracks, built by Governor Macquarie.



**4 MAY 1988**

The Macquarie Street building is opened by Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip.



*Personal*

# REFLECTIONS

We've almost doubled our gallery space to show more of the Library's collection and give exhibition visitors a chance to make their own connections.





## NEW GALLERIES



On 31 May, Library photographer Joy Lai ‘spent an afternoon bouncing light around an incredible portrait of Māori Chief Te Hapuku, painted by Gottfried Lindauer in 1877’. Te Hapuku was the leader of Ngāti Te Whatuiāpiti, in New Zealand’s Hawke’s Bay region, and the painting shows him in full ceremonial dress.

Joy set up her lights to allow the oil painting’s natural sheen to show through in her photographs. She researched other paintings by Lindauer to see how major art galleries had digitised his work. But it was the subject of the painting that made the strongest impression on her. ‘Great to hang with another Kiwi at work,’ she posted on social media, ‘We didn’t talk about the rugby once!’

The portrait of Chief Te Hapuku is one of 301 extraordinary artworks, many leaving basement storage for the first time in decades, that will be on permanent display in the *Paintings from the Collection* exhibition when the Library’s new galleries open in October. *The Collectors’ Gallery*, off the Mitchell Library Reading Room, will permanently house hundreds of objects – from coins and teaspoons to larger ceramic and metal artefacts, some dating to the early days of the colony.

Four temporary exhibitions will open at the same time: *Sydney Elders: Continuing Aboriginal Stories*, guest-curated by Wiradjuri Kamilaroi artist Jonathan Jones; *UNESCO Six*, showcasing our collections listed on the

UNESCO Memory of the World register; *Memories on Glass: The Macpherson Family Collection* and *#NewSelfWales*.

The expansion of the galleries is the Library’s largest construction project since the Macquarie Street Building was completed in 1988. ‘We’ve not only revamped and upgraded our heritage galleries,’ explains Rawiya Jenkins, Manager of Exhibitions & Design, ‘but we’ve created a new set of galleries that almost doubles the footprint of our exhibition space and unveils areas of the Library that have never been seen by the public.’

Stretching across the first floor of the Mitchell Building, the expanded exhibition spaces will make it possible to display more of the six million items in the Library’s collection. ‘It will demonstrate that we are more than collectors of books and manuscripts,’ says Rawiya.

*UNESCO Six* will bring together our world-heritage collections: First Fleet journals, First World War diaries, a poetry notebook of Dorothea Mackellar, papers of ‘enemy aliens’ interned in Australia from 1914 to 1919 and the Holtermann Collection of photographs, including the world’s largest glass-plate negatives (measuring up to 1.5 metres in width).

As this exhibition will be built in a large new gallery that was once a staff area, a challenge for exhibition designer Paul Bewley has been designing for a space that hasn’t been used in this way before. Paul produced a

ABOVE LEFT: Paul Bewley and Rawiya Jenkins with a scale-model of the *UNESCO Six* exhibition, photo by Zoe Burrell

ABOVE RIGHT: Anna Corkhill researching picture collections, photo by Joy Lai

OPPOSITE: Joy Lai in the photography studio, self-portrait

Andrea Nottage, Michelle Wassall and Basia Dabrowa in the Collection Care lab, photo by Joy Lai



three-dimensional model to examine how exhibition visitors would encounter the space. He had to consider the placement of objects, as well as lighting and acoustics, while coming up with an exhibition design that flows around the gallery's many columns.

*Sydney Elders* documents the living memory of four Indigenous elders, with video interviews, photographs and documents from the collection. The installation will feature display panels leaning against the gallery's walls: 'They play on the relationship between Aboriginal people and the knowledge housed and displayed within western institutions,' according to Jonathan Jones. 'But they also celebrate the alternative ways Aboriginal people live and engage with space.'

In preparing for *Memories on Glass* — showcasing a selection of the century-old glass-plate negatives donated by the Macpherson family in 2014 — curator Margot Riley came up against a lack of information about these images of Sydney street scenes, beaches and trips to popular leisure spots in the early

twentieth century. 'Very few of the people or places recorded in the images were described,' says Margot.

A remedy was found in the expertise of the online community. A selection of images was uploaded to the Library's Flickr page, attracting the attention of 'digital volunteers' who quickly generated information about the locations.

Some images in the Macpherson collection needed extra sleuthing, such as a photograph of people walking along a path above a rocky shoreline scattered with enormous bones. 'At first I thought the image may have been taken overseas,' says Margot, 'documenting an archaeological excavation and the pre-historic remains of either a dinosaur or a mammoth. But, using a magnifying glass, I noticed the women in the group were holding handkerchiefs to their noses. That's when I realised, if there was still a bad smell in the air, then these giant skeletal remains must be more recent.' Looking at the topography of sheer cliffs rising out of the sea and the pine trees, Margot suspected this could be the whaling station at Cascade Bay on Norfolk Island. An online image search produced a perfect match.

As part of the team of curators preparing for the paintings exhibition, Anna Corkhill had to find a date





## NEW GALLERIES

for a painting of the corner Pitt and Spring streets, Sydney. She identified the location with help of Google maps, then looked at architectural features. One of the main buildings – the headquarters of the Australian Mutual Provident Society – was constructed in 1864. Searching through newspaper articles and documents on the Trove website, Anna found that the statue on top of the building was moved to the society's new premises on the corner of Pitt and Bent streets in 1880. As the statue is visible in the painting, she was able to give it a date between 1864 and 1880.

To earn a place in the *Paintings from the Collection* exhibition, artworks had to pass the vigorous assessment of the Library's Collection Care team. Many stunning and significant paintings were found to be in need of conservation treatment due to tears, cracking, missing or damaged frames and other problems predating their time in the Library. Conservators need to separate a frame from its canvas for cleaning and photography; conservators with different specialisations treat the frame and the painting.

The 'Sponsor a Painting' campaign, run by the Library's Foundation, offered members of the public a chance to choose an artwork that appealed to them and support its preparation for exhibition. 'The campaign generated more interest and passion than any of us expected,' says Foundation Director Susan Hunt. 'People have been excited to explore the website and choose works which have personal significance. I've heard wonderful stories about paintings that show a place



associated with their family, a portrait of a person they admire, or a town they grew up in.'

A painting that stands out for Anna Corkhill is a portrait of Banjo Paterson by Agnes Noyes Goodsir, an artist who flourished in the 1920s but was 'virtually unknown until an exhibition of her paintings at the Ballarat Art Gallery in Victoria in the late 1990s brought her work to the surface'.

Goodsir spent most of her career in Paris, but returned to Australia for one year in 1927 when the Paterson portrait was commissioned by Eadith Campbell Walker. The painting's provenance was established through a combination of newspaper research and the Library's acquisitions committee minute books.

'The lines of Paterson's face are quite pronounced in this portrait,' says Anna, 'which was painted when Paterson and Goodsir were both 63 years old. I wonder if her emphasis on the age lines in his face reflects the artist's own understanding of their mutual stage of life.'

**Cathy Perkins, Editor, SL magazine**

**The Library's new Michael Crouch Family Galleries open on 6 October 2018.**



## #NewSelfWales

A digital installation featuring thousands of portraits from the Library's collection – alongside photos that show the face of NSW in 2018 – will be projected in the new Michael Crouch Family Galleries when they open on 6 October. The Library's DX Lab is asking people to upload a portrait of themselves via Instagram using the hashtag #NewSelfWales, or use one of the onsite photoboos, to become part of the exhibition.

ABOVE LEFT: AB Paterson, 1927, by Agnes Goodsir, ML 269

ABOVE RIGHT: Portrait, 1940, by Max Dupain, PXA 28

OPPOSITE TOP: Whale skeleton scattered over rocks at Cascade Bay, Norfolk Island, c 1905, glass-plate stereograph, Macpherson Collection, ON 588/Box 12/11

OPPOSITE BOTTOM: Pitt Street, Sydney, 1864-80, by unknown artist, DG 347



# *The* MAGIC PUDDING

It never occurred to me that the little work would be popular but GR [George Robertson] thought otherwise when I passed the m.s. on to him. He appears to have been right.

— Norman Lindsay, undated letter

In October 1918 Angus & Robertson published what would become one of Australia's best known children's stories. Released a month before the end of the First World War, just in time for Christmas, *The Magic Pudding* was the first of only two children's books written and illustrated by Norman Lindsay.

This October marks the 100th anniversary of this whimsical Australian tale about a group of travellers — Bill Barnacle, Sam Sawnoff and Bunyip Bluegum — who wander aimlessly through the bush, sustaining themselves on an inexhaustible 'magic pudding' named Albert.

The idea for the book came from a bet between Lindsay and his friend Bertram Stevens, the editor of *Art in Australia*. The pair were discussing 'popular motifs in books for children'. Stevens was of the opinion that

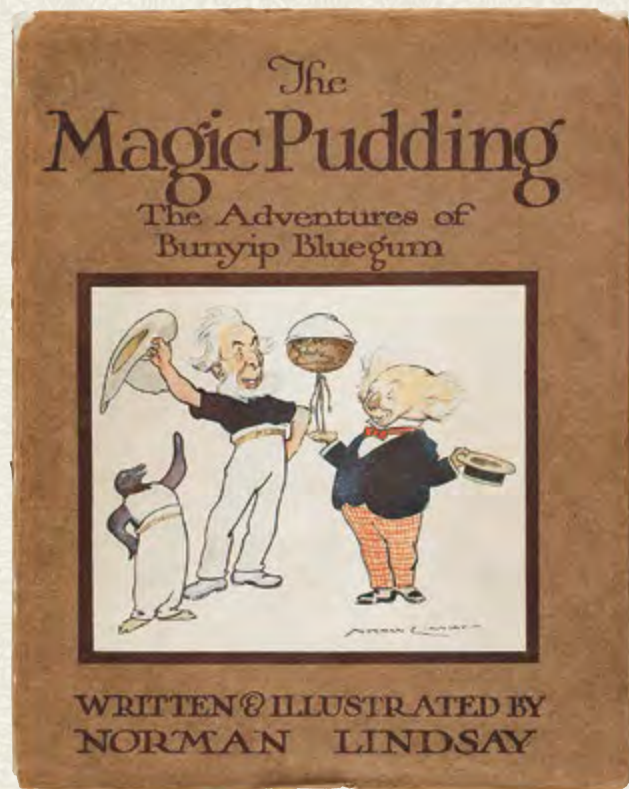
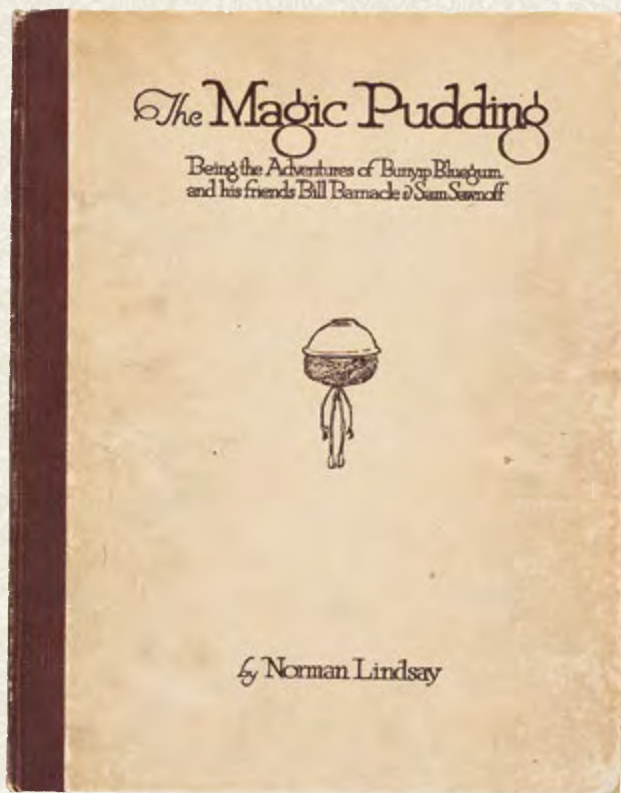


fairies formed the most fascinating subject matter; but Lindsay, based on his theory 'that infantile concepts of happiness are based on the belly', felt that children would prefer food. On being told about the conversation, publisher George Robertson is reported to have said, 'If you can persuade him to write a story for children, you're on for a fiver.'

During the First World War Lindsay produced war cartoons and recruitment posters. One evening he began jotting down nonsense about Bunyip Bluegum. He found it amusing to experiment with nonsense verses, even though they were 'not so easy to write as their simplicity would suggest'.

He then produced 102 drawings for the book, which was ingeniously divided into 'slices' rather than chapters. He wrote the prose and verse in an unmistakable style, featuring the Australian vernacular of the time.





The first edition of *The Magic Pudding* was produced as a 'guinea book', a limited edition high-quality art book sold for 1 guinea (21 shillings). The first 50 copies of the first edition featured light green A&R monogrammed endpapers designed by Walter Syer. The others are distinguished by a blue spine and cream endpapers.

Lindsay disagreed with the high price of his book, believing it should have been 'sold at a price that would allow the kid to tear it with a clear conscience'. The prospectus for the first edition advised that 'Only one edition will be published'; of course, this was a marketing ploy rather than an estimate of the book's success, and this children's literary classic has never been out of print.

The Library holds copies of both issues of the first edition of *The Magic Pudding*, together with the original sketches — mostly black and white, with a small number of watercolours.

'The truth is,' Lindsay confided to his publisher in October 1918, 'I'm not at all proud at having produced this little bundle of piffle.' Thankfully Lindsay's opinion of his book did not resonate with generations of Australian readers, who continue to enjoy it 100 years on.

**Sarah Morley, Curator, Research & Development**

**To celebrate *The Magic Pudding's* centenary, in October 1918, a selection of Norman Lindsay's original drawings and manuscripts will be shown in the Amaze Gallery, and reproductions of original illustrations will be on display from 29 September 2018 to 24 February 2019.**

ABOVE LEFT: First edition of *The Magic Pudding*, by Norman Lindsay, Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1918

ABOVE RIGHT: *The Magic Pudding* book jacket, 1918

OPPOSITE: Norman Lindsay, c 1900–12, by Lionel Lindsay, ON 186/4

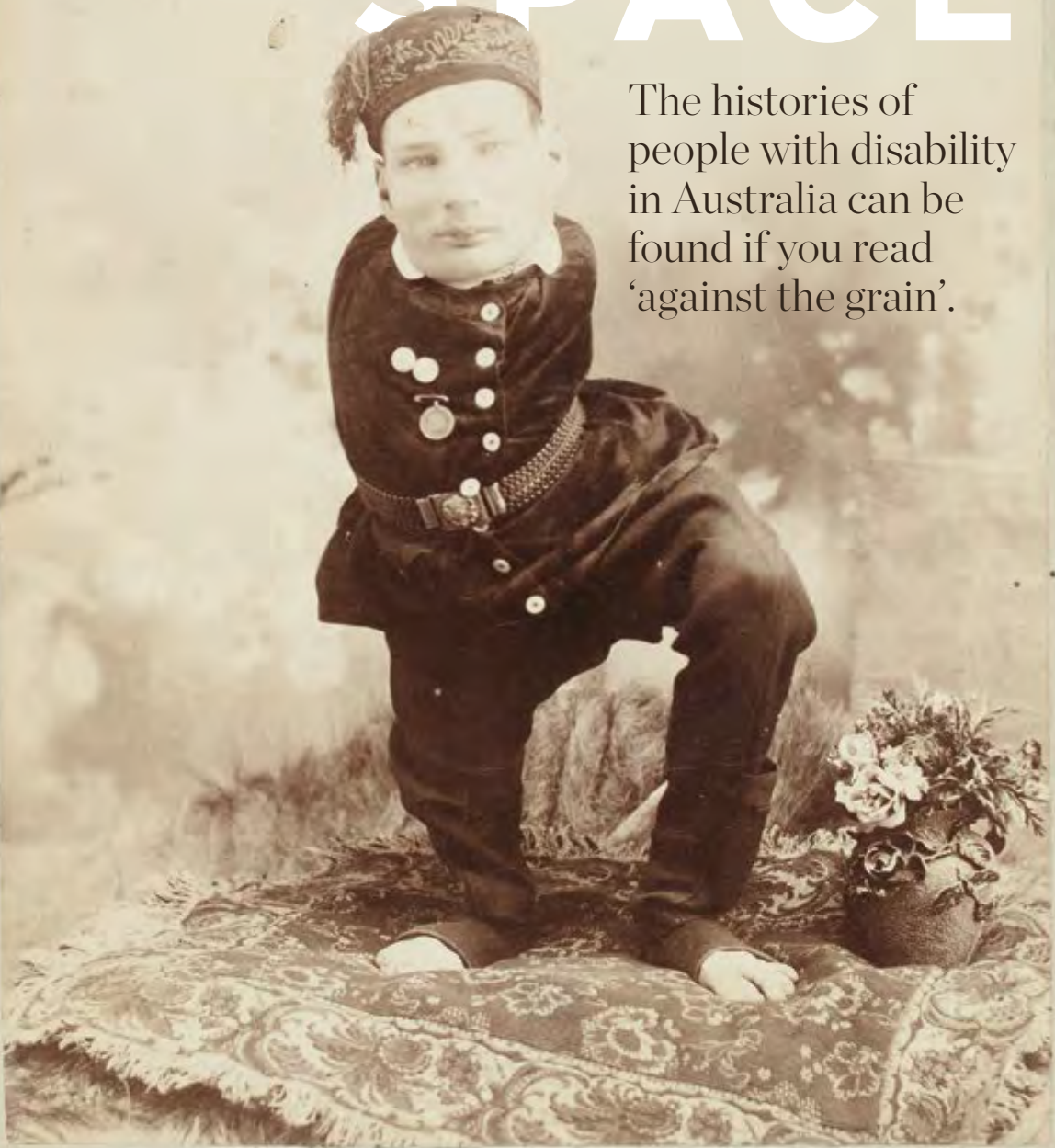




WORDS Breda Carty

# CLAIMING SPACE

The histories of  
people with disability  
in Australia can be  
found if you read  
'against the grain'.



*P. Mathewson  
& Sons*



PETRIE'S BIGHT  
BRISBANE



It has been a revelation to explore collections in the State Library that deal — directly or indirectly — with the lives of people with disability. We often use the terms ‘invisible’ and ‘marginalised’ to complain about the absence of these stories in mainstream history, but I’ve found many intriguing primary sources, and some detailed and eloquent published accounts.

When historians write about people with disability, they often focus on one organisation and, therefore, on a particular group of people. Although these histories can be compelling and thoroughly researched, they don’t always link into the wider story of disability in our society.

I have been looking for the social history, the ‘history from below’ — trying to recover experiences of people with disability rather than institutional histories and overviews of Australian legislation and policy. This is always a challenge, as most of the records are left by the people in charge.

But the Library’s collection offers some surprising gems. Most of the relevant materials have not been left directly by people with disability, but by the organisations that cared for or represented them — if read ‘against the grain’, however, they reveal much about the lived experience of people with disability and show us lines of enquiry for further research.

Australia’s first charity was the Sydney Benevolent Asylum, established in 1813. Its early aims were to ‘to relieve the Poor, the Distressed, the Aged, the Infirm’, and it was usually the first port of call for those in hardship. Some — possibly many — of the destitute and needy people referred to the asylum were people with disability;

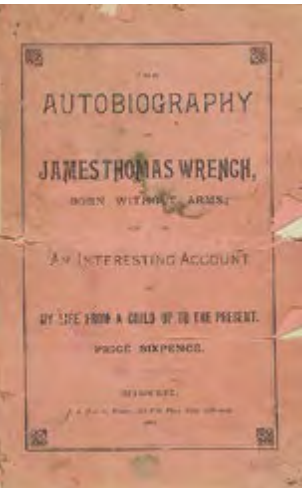


sometimes whole families were thrown into chaos through the disability of one or more members and found themselves in the asylum.

This long-running organisation (now the Benevolent Society) has placed an invaluable collection of historical records, from 1813 to 1996, in the Library, and voluntary archivists associated with the modern organisation are very helpful in navigating the early records.

There are many entries for people with ‘weak intellect’, people listed as ‘imbeciles’ who could ‘give no particulars’, those who were ‘deaf and dumb’ or had ‘weak eyes’. Although the records do not give us the full story of these people’s lives, they point to the impact of disability on individuals and families during this time, and are something of a road map for the slowly increasing range of institutions in the nineteenth century. The asylum referred many people to places such as the ‘Deaf and Dumb Institution’, the ‘Blind Asylum’,

Blind musicians, Sydney, NSW, c 1894, by JH Newman, At Work and Play - 03998  
OPPOSITE: James Thomas Wrench, c 1880s, PXA 4462



TOP LEFT: James Thomas Wrench, c 1880s, PXA 4462

ABOVE: *The Autobiography of James Thomas Wrench*, Melbourne: JJ Howard, 1893

TOP RIGHT: Blind switchboard operator at CT Lorenz & Trade Display Organization, 1955, by Jack Hickson for Royal Industrial Blind Institution, Australian Photographic Agency - 00124

or the ‘Imbeciles Asylum’ in Newcastle, which means we can further trace their pathways.

Occasionally, we are fortunate to have a personal account from a person with disability. An article in *The Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser* on 30 July 1898 referred to an unusual visitor to the newspaper office: ‘one James Thomas Wrench, 2ft. 9in. high, born at Sofala in 1868 without arms, and with one leg very short and without a knee joint, and minus one of his toes. He is being shown in Sydney as a freak under the name of “General Peden”, and sat down and wrote his autograph with his toes as easily as an ordinary person could do it with his hands.’

The article gives us a brief insight into the social view of people with physical disabilities during the late nineteenth century, and the ‘freak’ industry which grew around them. But, in this case, we also have Wrench’s own perspective, in a small collection his family later placed in the Library. It includes a short ‘Autobiography’, self-published in 1893, describing his family life, education and artistic work. Wrench’s story is an engaging early account of the importance of physical access to places such as school buildings, and of the crucial influence of a supportive family and enlightened teachers.

As well as individual experiences, evidence of collective action by people with disability also caught my attention. During the 1920s and 30s, there was political unrest and radical activity within many minority groups in Australia (reflecting unrest in wider society) – women and Aboriginal organisations, for example, were agitating for greater social participation and citizenship rights, and so were some groups of people with disability.

Institutional records often provide detailed accounts of the external challenges they face.



The records of the Royal Blind Society, for example, include voluminous files from their Industrial Blind Institution, which was challenged on some of its practices – such as its compulsory ‘boarding-in’ rule and lack of representation for blind people on its board of management – by the Association for the Advancement of the Blind (later Blind Citizens NSW). These records help us to understand the experiences of the blind people who were part of the institution.

In 1929 there was an acrimonious breakaway from the Adult Deaf and Dumb Society of NSW when a large part of the Sydney Deaf community felt they were not represented in the society’s governance. A new rival organisation was formed: the NSW Association of Deaf and Dumb Citizens, which published *The Deaf Advocate* magazine between 1930 and 1937. The Library holds one of the few remaining collections of this magazine – a rich resource on the political issues and everyday lives of deaf people in Sydney at the time.

The opening up of women’s employment options during the Second World War is a familiar story, but it is less well known that the same thing happened for many groups of people with disability. The Royal Blind Society’s collection includes ‘Blind Worker’s Records’, which detail workers’ movements in and out of the Industrial Blind Institution, recording any outside work they found. These records show that many blind people found work in armaments and aircraft factories in the early 1940s.



**BLIND WORKER'S RECORD**  
PARTICULARS SUPPLIED WITH APPLICATION

SURNAME *Dodley* CHRISTIAN NAME *Michael Anthony*  
 DATE OF BIRTH *16<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1919* BIRTH PLACE *Newtown*  
 RESIDENCE WHEN ADMITTED *72 Kay St. Katoomba*

STATE OF VISION *Partially blind*  
 CAUSE AND DATE OF BLINDNESS *Tumors on the Brain 2/10/1937*  
 STATE OF GENERAL HEALTH *Good*  
 PREVIOUS OCCUPATION \_\_\_\_\_  
 MONEY OR PROPERTY *Nil*  
 AMOUNT OF PENSION RECEIVED *£2.30 fortnightly*  
 MARRIED OR SINGLE *Single*  
 NUMBER OF DEPENDENT CHILDREN UNDER 14 YEARS OF AGE \_\_\_\_\_  
 GENERAL REMARKS *Age when admitted*

**SUBSEQUENT HISTORY**

DATE	
<i>26<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1941</i>	<i>Admitted</i>
<i>5<sup>th</sup> Jan 1943</i>	<i>Started work Aircraft Production</i>
<i>27<sup>th</sup> May 1945</i>	<i>Paid off from Aircraft Production Returned to Institution</i>



As most large institutions such as Peat Island have closed, it is important that the experiences of those who lived there are not lost. We are fortunate that the research material for Laila Ellmoos' excellent history of Peat Island has been placed in

Many deaf people had a similar experience, as noted in the Adult Deaf and Dumb Society of NSW's Annual Report of 1941-42: 'The present war has transformed the position with regard to employment of the deaf. Before the outbreak of the war large numbers were unemployed, but this year we cannot place our hands on one unemployed deaf and dumb person who is able to work. In every case those employed are receiving full award wages.'

We may have moved towards a more inclusive and accessible society, but institutions such as the Peat Island Centre (formerly Hospital) and the people who lived there are a rich and instructive part of our history. Peat Island, on the Hawkesbury River, was a residential centre for people with intellectual disability for 100 years between 1910 and 2010. In the late twentieth century, centres like this were the subject of heated debate about institutional care for people with disability, especially after the Richmond Report in 1983 (the Inquiry into Health Services for the Psychiatrically Ill and Developmentally Disabled).

the Library, including interviews with many former residents. This collection gives insights into the everyday experiences of residents, staff, families and administrators, and contains artefacts such as magazines produced by the school on the island.

People with disability are not absent from our historical records. Their voices are often muffled by the dominance of institutional histories, but they are present if we search in the right places. These collections at the Library, along with records in other libraries and archives, show the kinds of stories that might inform a truly inclusive history of Australia. As historian Douglas Baynton has observed, 'Disability is everywhere in history, once you begin looking for it ... but conspicuously absent in the histories we write.'

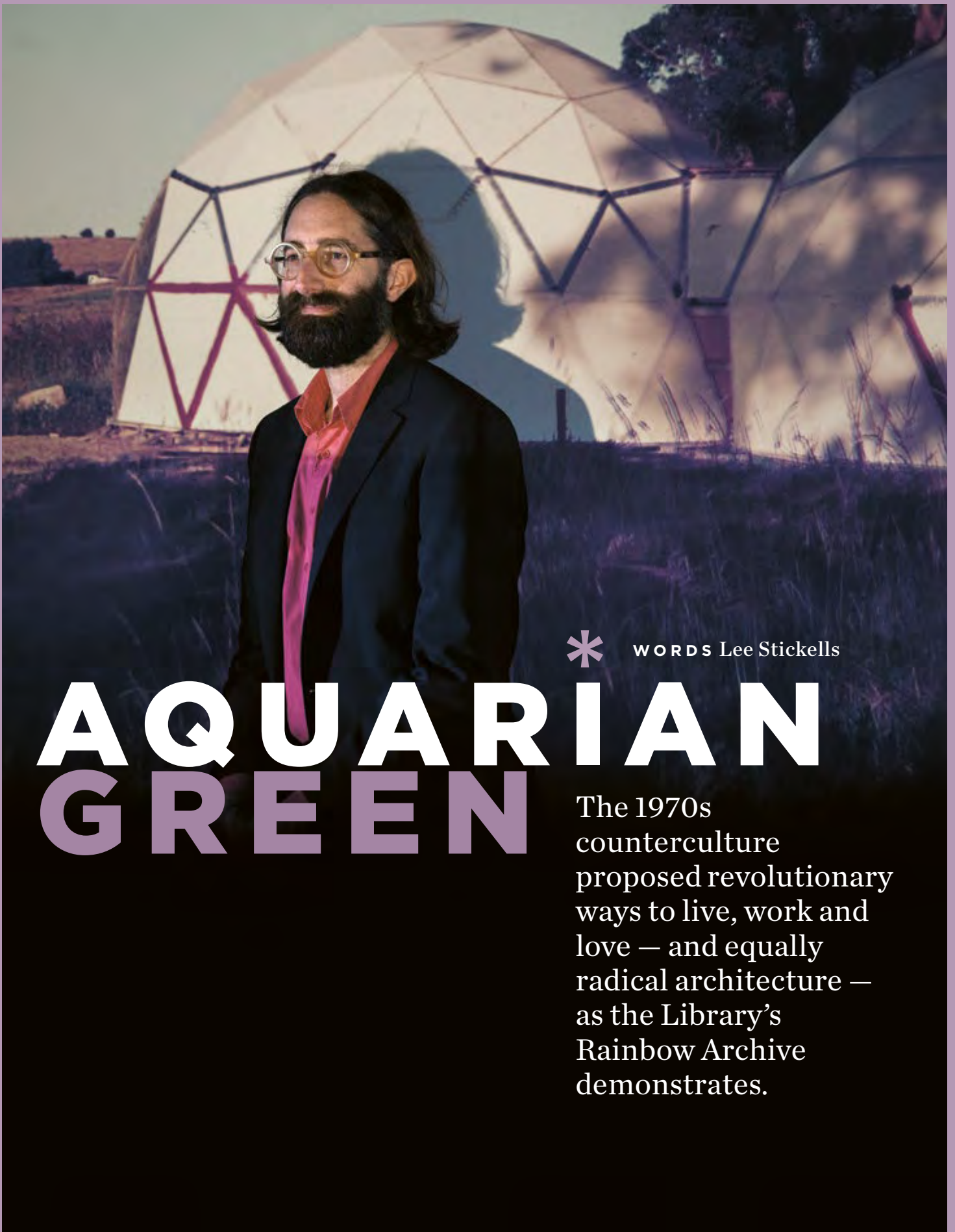
**Dr Breda Carty was the Library's 2017 CH Currey Fellow. Her book *Managing Their Own Affairs: The Australian Deaf Community During the 1920s and 1930s* was published in 2018.**



TOP LEFT: Blind worker's record, 1940s, MLMSS 2472/Box K21623

TOP RIGHT: Teaching carpentry to boys at the School for the Deaf, 1955, by Jack Hickson for Deaf, Dumb and Blind Institution, Australian Photographic Agency - 00302

ABOVE: Dr Breda Carty, photo by Joy Lai



\* WORDS Lee Stickells

# AQUARIAN GREEN

The 1970s counterculture proposed revolutionary ways to live, work and love — and equally radical architecture — as the Library’s Rainbow Archive demonstrates.





Geodesic domes, c 1977,  
by Roger Marchant, PXB 321  
OPPOSITE: Lee Stickells,  
photo by Joy Lai

At the beginning of 1973, Peter Hamilton was teaching architecture at the University of Sydney. At the same time, he was immersed in the encounter group movement and experimenting with transcendental meditation. An odd mix, perhaps, but an adventurous career path and a history of personal exploration had brought him to this point.

Hamilton trained as a pilot with the RAAF during the Second World War, and went on to study architecture and sculpture. He hung out with the Sydney Push and organised what would later become the Sydney Film Festival. He founded the important Australian folk music label Wattle Records in the 1950s and undertook groundbreaking architectural anthropology research in central Australia in the 1960s. But in the 1970s, he was still seeking something more.

In early 1973, Hamilton was approached by some of his students keen to attend the upcoming Aquarius Festival — a 10-day countercultural experiment near the isolated rural village of Nimbin in north-eastern New South Wales. The festival was a pivotal event for Australia’s counterculture.

While the 1972 Sunbury Pop Festival is often seen as ‘Australia’s Woodstock’, the 1973 Aquarius Festival was deliberately different. Unprogrammed and focused on participation rather than consumer entertainment, its organisers urged participants to ‘be the festival’. Seeing it as the testing ground for a new society to come, they encouraged festival-goers to develop experimental structures and communal living arrangements. Sure enough, alongside the communal toilets and showers built by architecture students, a host of plastic inflatables, tree huts, wurlies, tee pees, adobes and domes clustered in the fields and valleys around Nimbin.

As for many others, the Aquarius experience was pivotal for Hamilton. In the following years he spent significant periods in the area around Nimbin attending meditation

retreats. By 1977, he’d joined with a like-minded group to establish the ‘intentional community’ of Bodhi Farm, one of the many countercultural settlements

established in the wake of the Aquarius Festival.

Australia witnessed a flourishing of these communal living experiments during the 1970s. They converged not only in the Northern Rivers, but also in Western Australia’s southwest and in the rural hinterlands behind Queensland’s Sunshine Coast and Cairns. The back-to-the-landers bought cheap land in places that enabled them to opt out and live a simpler life — in remote backwaters, up mountains, in steep valleys, or on the shorelines of wild coastal districts.

In 1992, Bodhi Farm member Gloria Considine recalled her initial idealistic attraction to ‘peace loving, brown rice and getting back to nature’. Naivety meant a significant number of communities quickly fell apart due to a lack of planning and resources, or simply personality clashes.

Those who persisted, and managed to find ways to productively coexist, cultivated a distinctive countercultural presence. A strong self-build culture emerged alongside permaculture and organic farming practices. They often advocated for home-birthing and community schooling and were participants in landmark environmental campaigns in the area, such as the blockade against the logging of the forest at Terania Creek in 1979.

The new settlers forged unconventional, and often controversial, lifestyles driven by passions for environmental harmony, anti-consumerism, and notions of personal freedom. David Spain moved to the Tuntable Falls community in 1975, riding on what he has since described as the ‘euphoria’ of the period and ‘the possibility of really building examples of utopian lifestyle in Australia and evidencing a low-impact, low-demand way of life, which made big, centralised government unnecessary’.

## MAKE YOUR OWN SHELTER



ideas for structures, recycled from the "Earth Rebirth" issue of *Tharunka*.

/01

While the new settlers of NSW were frequently examined as a kind of sociological puzzle during the 1970s and 80s — and have often had their lifestyles sensationalised by the media — the architectural dimensions of their experiments have been given less attention.

My interest is in rethinking the way architecture and the counterculture were intertwined. Piecing together a picture of the new settlers' design ambitions and building practices, though, hasn't been a simple task. They were typically amateur builders (often very amateur) and their structures were rarely of much interest to mainstream design and architectural media. Because the communal structures often defied planning regulation, building was done surreptitiously and illegally, at least in the early days.

In the absence of more traditional documents, the Library's vast Rainbow Archive of oral histories, photographs, ephemera and papers has allowed me to explore these experiments. The oral histories recorded by the Library with members of pioneering communities, the hundreds of photographs taken by photojournalist Roger Marchant, and the pages of alternative culture magazines such as *Earth Garden* and *Maggie's Farm* greatly assisted me in building an understanding of the way environmental, social and political ideals connected to building practices.

The new settlers arriving in northern NSW during the early 1970s held different outlooks and ambitions, ranging from individual interest in



/02

small-hold farming and a simpler life, to deep shared commitment to idiosyncratic spiritual communities.

Jyllie Jackson, who arrived in 1973 after having 'dropped out' in the Himalayas, was one of those who became part of the region's Homebuilders' Association. She described her first house at Lillian Rock as: 'made entirely of recycled materials, and very beautiful, and had mad ideas, like the poles were made from dead trees'. White ants eventually infested the tree trunk-columns, but Jyllie saw the house as an 'exquisite,' 'biodegradable' venture in communal living.

By contrast, Kali McLaughlin went to the Aquarius Festival as a disillusioned engineering student and was so inspired she left a share house, and her studies, in Sydney to help establish the Tuntable Falls community. There she built a series of ferro-concrete geodesic domes and deployed her engineering skills to help set up a renewable power grid.

These are just a couple of stories from the busy decade after the Aquarius Festival, which saw the growth of a landscape populated with communal dwellings and 'expanded houses', methane digestors, rudimentary solar power systems, timber pole structures, rammed earth walls, salvaged materials and cosmic geometries.

Mainstream residents of the region were sometimes affronted by what they saw as the threats to public health and order represented by the illicit building. When demolition orders were issued by the local council for 11 of their 'dwelling segments',



# FEATURE



/03

Peter Hamilton and Bodhi Farm found themselves at the heart of the conflict. But the NSW Land and Environment Court largely upheld the arguments made by the Bodhi Farmers in their 1984 appeal against the orders. Assessor Fitz-Henry saw their desires to ‘live so close to nature’ as part of a ‘fringe lifestyle’ unlikely to provide a significant precedent.

While the new settlers might have been seen as a fringe movement, we now can see how their practices tackled questions of sustainable design and living that we are still confronting today. Searching for responses to environmental dilemmas that seemed overwhelming – finite resources, nuclear threat, rising population and the impacts of growing urban regions – the new settlers turned to the remaking of everyday life. Their experiments don’t offer simple templates for us to apply now, but looking back at them reinforces how important rethinking our everyday living environments can be in imagining alternative futures in a climate-constrained world.

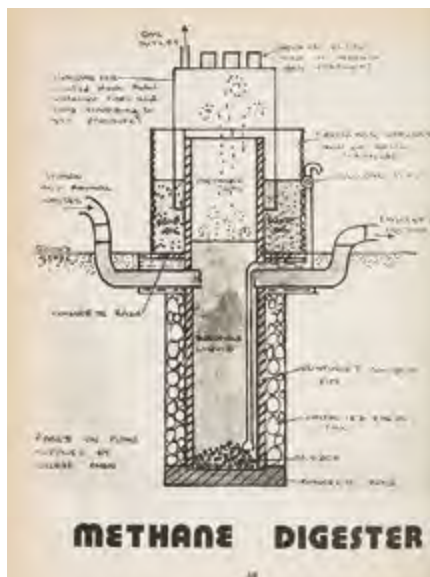
**Lee Stickells is Associate Professor in the University of Sydney School of Architecture, Design and Planning. He was the Library’s 2017 Nancy Keesing Fellow.**



/04



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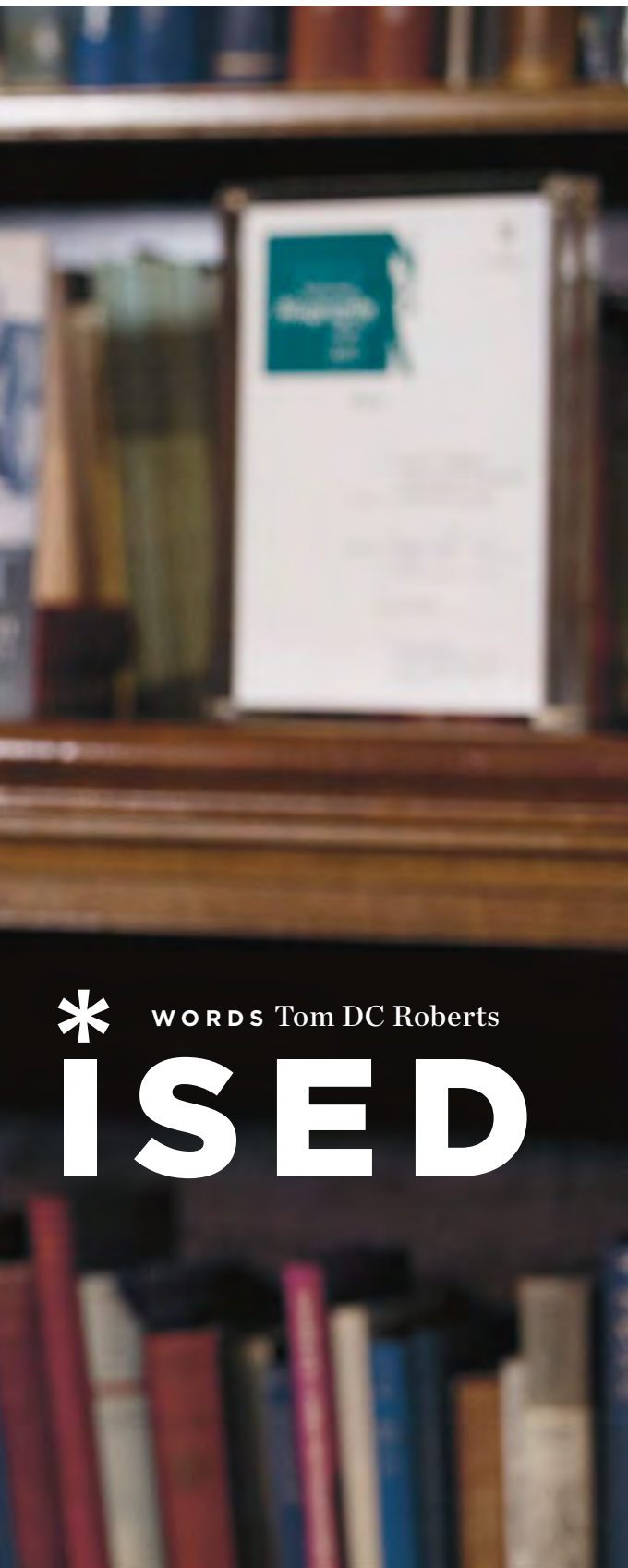
- 01 ‘Make Your Own Shelter’, from *Earth Garden* magazine, Q635.05/12
- 02, 03, 04, 05 Rainbow Archives photographs, c 1977, by Roger Marchant, PXB 321
- 06 ‘Methane Digester’, from *Earth Garden* magazine, Q635.05/12



# UNAUTHOR

A TRAIL OF COMMISSIONS, OMISSIONS  
AND UNPUBLISHED BOOKS LAY AHEAD  
OF THE 'UNAPPROVED' BIOGRAPHER  
OF SIR KEITH MURDOCH.





\* WORDS Tom DC Roberts

# USED

Writing in 1914, HG Wells argued that approved biographies were guilty of ‘the worst kind of falsehood – the falsehood of omission’. Their writers, beholden as they were to ‘continuing interests and sensitive survivors’, could not help but produce works that were ‘cold, dignified – not a life at all, indeed, so much as embalmed remains.’

At the beginning of my research into the life and legacy of Sir Keith Murdoch, I was presented with two books: biographies of Sir Keith by Ronald Younger (2003) and Desmond Zwar (1980), both commissioned by the Murdoch family. These staid and dutiful accounts provided a course I might have retrodden, but I was determined to pursue another path – unvetted, unfettered, unauthorised by the family. The result would not be the first unapproved biography of Keith Murdoch to be completed, but it would be the first to reach publication.

Identifying omissions in the approved biographies served as a guide. I was determined to fill in the gaping holes – especially those of a ‘personal nature’ – in order to present a rounded, nuanced life of Keith. Turning away from the sanctioned accounts, I found the threads of those stories in archives around the world – in diaries and unpublished papers – not least here at the State Library. The personal would be paired with the political.

While my book would come to be titled *Before Rupert*, much of its story shines a light on Keith’s actions and loves before Elisabeth, the woman he married when he was 42 and she barely 19. Following Keith’s early death just two decades later, Dame Elisabeth Murdoch would

Tom DC Roberts,  
National Biography  
Award announcement,  
July 2017, photo by  
Joy Lai



come to serve as the matriarch of the most powerful media dynasty the world has ever seen. She, together with her son, would protect and burnish Keith's reputation for many decades.

The fairytale nature of Keith and Elisabeth's meeting — sparked by a photograph glimpsed in a magazine — is as much the stuff of Murdoch mythology as Keith's 'Gallipoli letter' and his supposed battle against the political and military elite in London during the First World War. These events are the highlights of the authorised biographies.

But Keith had been engaged to be married twice before. His first fiancée was the most politically connected young woman in Britain during the war; his second an eligible heiress of Australian sheep-squatting royalty. The identity of Keith's first fiancée, in particular, and the timing of their secret, wartime engagement, points to a far more complicated tale than the authorised biographers depicted. But their readers were not even told of her existence.

Following his visit to Gallipoli, Keith spent the rest of the war in London and Europe. He cut a handsome figure, eligible and prosperous, with a dash of Antipodean exoticism. Resplendent in his officer's uniform he enjoyed the profile of a war correspondent, socialising at the officers' Australasian Club on fashionable Piccadilly and hosting dinners on Saturday evenings at the Piccadilly Grill. Attention from women was unavoidable. 'Khaki fever' was everywhere, with one commentator claiming to have seen 'some young Colonials running for their very lives to escape a little company of girls [as if] they had tigresses at their heels'.

Keith had told Prime Minister Billy Hughes that his journalistic and public work was his passion and

that the social side of his life was still 'undeveloped — I won't say fallow or barren but waiting its chance'. He feared that at the early age of 31 he was doomed to remain an uncle and godfather.

But at the start of 1918, Hughes wrote to Keith having heard some 'most "awfully interesting" news!' One of Keith's aunts had let slip that her nephew was engaged to be married to a young lady named Isabel Law, as Hughes emphasised: 'daughter of Bonar Law Chancellor of the Exchequer no less!'

Hughes' hard-to-decipher scrawl hid the importance of this information, even though his letter is held in the Murdoch papers at the National Library of Australia. After this date there is a gap in the retained correspondence between the pair; the next surviving letter — with no mention of the engagement — is in Hughes' papers. Written by Keith on 3 May 1918, it is marked 'Confidential' with a handwritten postscript 'Tear this Up', perhaps indicating that similar instructions had previously been carried out.

If a single reference was too weak a source for earlier biographers, they would have found further insight in the wartime diary of Australian-born foreign correspondent for the London *Times* George Ernest ('Peking') Morrison, held here in the Mitchell Library. Before setting off for Europe, Keith's employer, Theodore Fink of the Melbourne Herald, had impressed on Morrison that Keith would be a useful man to meet. He was, after all, at the heart of power in London, 'intimate with [Lord] Northcliffe and Lloyd George and to marry the daughter of Bonar Law'.

While time and the vagaries of personal correspondence have frustrated the search to establish the course of the relationship between Keith Murdoch and Isabel Law, the reason for Keith's choice of fiancée is easier to discover. 'Charm she had in abundance, but she had something more' was one contemporary verdict.



# NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY AWARD LECTURE



By 1917 Isabel was living at Number 11 Downing Street, the eldest daughter of the Chancellor Andrew Bonar Law. Only just entering her 20s, she acted as her widowed father's

political hostess, even

representing him on occasion. In the male-dominated world of wartime Whitehall, hers was a rare and privileged spot: a young woman present at formal state events and privy to the unofficial meetings and dinners in which Keith participated. Bonar Law had been born in New Brunswick, Canada, and was, like Keith, the son of a Free Church of Scotland minister. He would go on to serve as British Prime Minister and remains the only man born outside the British Isles to have done so.

The threads of Keith's 'secret engagement' have certainly been well tidied. But Morrison's diary provided corroborating evidence to the snippets I had detected. The Australian journalist and adventurer proved wonderfully indiscreet in that form — a diary — in which the author has full and complete authority and freedom. Recording a first lunch meeting with Keith in the Parisian spring of 1919, Morrison described him as 'a rather common ugly man' who took pains to emphasise his high level connections and the fact that he saw and studied 'all highly confidential documents on British *desiderata*'.

Morrison was able to hear, this time from the horse's mouth, what Fink had told him before he set off. Keith was indeed engaged to marry Bonar Law's daughter. By the next year, however, the engagement was over, with Isabel engaged to another man.

Well before Zwar and Younger, Charles Sayers was the first person commissioned by the Murdoch family to write a biography of Keith. Over five years from 1965 he exercised great care in his task, though it didn't ultimately do him much good.

During the research process, Ralph Simmonds, former editor-in-chief of the *Herald* and the family confidant tasked with assessing Keith's papers, informed Sayers that a file of correspondence dated 1919 should be treated 'as private and confidential'. Simmonds stressed that he would explain the reason 'in person'.

Sayers agreed to hand over material on 'any other matter' that Simmonds felt 'should be passed' to Elisabeth Murdoch 'as being of a personal nature'. Despite Sayers' discretion on this personal point, when he came to write up his research he did not hold back in his criticism of Keith's politically charged activities during the rest of the war.

After Sayers finished the job in 1970, his unpublished manuscript was awarded the Victorian government's Captain James Cook Bicentenary Prize for Biography. However, despite a book contract having been in place with William Heinemann since 1967, and Sayers' own pleas, Rupert would not agree to publication.

The entry on Charles Sayers in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* had stated that the author's commissioned biography of Keith Murdoch 'remained unfinished'. I am glad to say that following my National Biography Award lecture, it has been corrected to 'remained unpublished'.

**Dr Tom DC Roberts won the 2017 National Biography Award for *Before Rupert: Keith Murdoch and the Birth of a Dynasty* (UGP, 2015).**

**This is an edited version of the 2018 National Biography Award lecture.**

Miss Isabel Law, *Illustrated London News*, 8 May 1920

OPPOSITE: Keith Murdoch, c 1917, MS 2823/8/1, courtesy National Library of Australia



# A NEW MISSION

Frank McGarry recorded his time in central Australia as a lay missionary in frequent letters home.



✱ WORDS Charmaine Robson





Catholic missionary Frank McGarry stood back to admire the two tidy rows of new huts that formed his fledgling mission settlement at Charles Creek in Alice Springs, and took a photograph. Barely any sign of life is visible in the image, taken in 1937 — just a few distant figures, a couple of dogs, some straggly saplings and the huts, or ‘wurleys’, as they were known, on a flat expanse of dry earth. But, aware of its significance, McGarry sent the photograph for publication in a Catholic newspaper.

The wurleys were on land the government had recently granted to the Catholic Church, and Aboriginal families from a town camp had just moved in. McGarry had organised the men to build the new homes, which were apparently of ‘superior’ construction to the ‘humpies’ they’d left behind. He encouraged the women to keep them clean, sweep the ‘streets’, and plant and tend trees in front. Before the move to Charles Creek, the children had made the long trek each day to the church, where McGarry schooled them, gave them food, tended their sore eyes and taught them the catechism. Now, whole families lived nearby, their wurleys like anchors to the church, and symbolic of the concrete presence of the Little Flower Black Mission.

We know of McGarry’s delight with the new settlement from the letters and photographs he sent home to his family in the Sydney suburb of Manly through the 1930s and 40s, which are held in the Mitchell Library. Long, detailed and heartfelt, they chronicle his life in Central Australia as a lay missionary for the Catholic order known as the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart. They trace the development of the Little Flower Black Mission through McGarry’s eyes, from a hope and a prayer, to its realisation, and then to his forlorn departure.

Striking in these letters is their author’s self-portrayal as the mission’s lifeblood. Yet who was Frank McGarry? Not a priest or bishop — the usual people senior enough to head Catholic missions.

Frank McGarry was born in 1897 into a large devout Catholic family in Wagga, New South Wales. After the death of his father a few years later, the family moved to beachside Manly. McGarry first worked as a warehouseman for a Sydney department store, interrupted in 1917 when he enlisted to serve in World War I. Having seen action in northern France, he returned two years later without injury, and went back to his prewar occupation for the next 16 years. He and several of his unmarried

ABOVE: Mission huts, 1937, by Frank McGarry, PXD 1022

OPPOSITE: Prayer book, c 1900s, Frank McGarry relics, Safe 1/111

Frank McGarry as a soldier, 1917, PXD 1022



adult siblings remained living at home with their mother.

The McGarry home seemed to fit what historian of Catholicism Katharine Massam has called the ‘household of faith’, which characterised early twentieth-century Catholic devotionalism. The close-knit family often spent evenings together around the fire, in companionable conversation, saying the rosary, or listening to ‘Question Box’, a radio program presented by Dr Rumble, a Catholic priest. The short path to the local church was well-worn by the McGarrys’ footsteps,

if not by those of the parish priest on his visits to their house.

Taking up the Church’s call to Catholic laymen to more actively practise their Christianity, Frank McGarry joined his local ‘conference’ of the St Vincent de Paul Society in 1922 becoming vice-president in the late 1920s. Charitable work with Sydney’s sick and impoverished multiplied with the onset of the Great Depression. On Sundays, as part of the society’s ‘special works’, McGarry visited people with leprosy at Little Bay Lazaret, south-east of Sydney, bringing them requested items, and offering his friendship and religion.

He hoped to help their souls and his own. Paraphrasing St Matthew, he explained the motivation for his work as ‘What you do to these, the least of my brethren, you do unto me’.

Yet, McGarry came to the conclusion that prayers and charity work were not enough to earn God’s grace. In April 1934, Father Francis Xavier Gsell from Northern Territory’s Bathurst Island Mission addressed the St Vincent de Paul Society’s Manly festival meeting at McGarry’s parish church. He spoke of missions as ‘perhaps the only way of saving the native race of Australia’ and of the Pope’s wish to increase Catholic missions in the Northern Territory. The speech struck a chord; within the year, McGarry was assisting Gsell’s confrere Father Patrick Moloney to establish a new mission in Alice Springs.

It was Moloney who approached the Aboriginal people in the camp about a new mission but, as he attested later, McGarry immediately took the reins, only deferring to the priest on sacramental or official matters. At first only children visited the church grounds, where McGarry ensured they washed, changed into ‘school clothes’, had school, and finished with a meat and vegetable stew. The mission rapidly grew to include more than 100 people, with parents attending the church, curious about their children’s lessons, and old people hearing that McGarry gave out better tucker than government rations.

The mission presented a viable alternative to life in the fringe camps. Food, as well as education and healthcare – even if rudimentary – were otherwise scarce. Unsurprisingly, Aboriginal people were amenable to these offers. But McGarry wanted them to make the new mission site their home, in the way he had experienced and understood that concept. The mission was to become a haven of Christian families, shutting out all nefarious influences. For him, Alice Springs township with its racism and non-believers embodied moral decay as surely as the whole world was on a fast track to the devil’s doorstep.







Arrernte culture was itself incompatible with McGarry's Christian domicile. He attempted to ban polygamy, initiation rites and traditional healing practices, viewing them as wicked or overly superstitious. The Aboriginal men verbally acquiesced but, privately, kept up these traditions as much as they could, as McGarry discovered.

Disappointment was inevitable. Having set up the mission and taken on such a broad sphere of responsibility, he was loathe to relinquish any part of it when the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart brought in more staff. On the arrival of a Sister to teach the children, he wrote, 'I feel like the mother whose children have all grown up and left home'. He constantly criticised the Sister's teaching and relations between the two deteriorated. The priests became increasingly unwilling to tolerate a layman who laid claim to such authority. After the mission moved to a new location at Arltunga, they waited for McGarry to set up the infrastructure and transfer the people there; then in 1944, they dispensed with his services.

McGarry immediately took up a paid position with the Department of Native Affairs, establishing and supervising new government settlements. He continued working with Aboriginal people but his life as a missionary was over. This stressful, physically exhausting and spiritually unrewarding role lasted only three years. McGarry then resumed his old life at Manly until his untimely death in 1955 from cancer.

Frank McGarry had written that he had not yet heard the call to become a religious brother but did not rule out its possibility. Had he taken that path, the Missionaries would have been obliged to support him in conflicts, and not cast him adrift. But the rule of religious life at the time prohibiting close family relationships would probably have been unthinkable for McGarry. Our knowledge of mission history would also have been poorer, given the absence of those long intimate letters to his family, detailing the minutiae of the Little Flower Black Mission.

**Dr Charmaine Robson is an Adjunct Lecturer at the University of New South Wales with an interest in health and religious histories. She was the Library's 2017 Australian Religious History Fellow.**

Frank McGarry and mission children collecting timber, 1930s, PXC 1022

OPPOSITE: Frank McGarry arrives in Alice Springs to start mission work, 1930s, PXC 1022

Glasses and pipe, c 1930s, Frank McGarry relics, Safe 1/111





*Art of*  
**THE  
BRIDGE**



WORDS Anni Turnbull



Whether it's called the 'bridge', the 'coat hanger' or the 'arch that cut the sky', the Sydney Harbour Bridge has long been idealised by poets and painters, writers and photographers.

Today after seven thrilling and eventful years, the bridge is completed. It stands with its head in the sun and, its feet on either shore, waiting the turning of wheels of traffic.

**Robert Emerson Curtis, artist**

Building a bridge to join the north and south banks of Sydney Harbour had been a dream of the city's early settlement. But it would take over a 100 years of debate, and more than 70 proposed designs, before the final arch structure was chosen and began to capture the imagination of the country. When it was completed in 1932, the Sydney Harbour Bridge was recognised internationally as a symbol of progress and a vision of modernity.

Grace Cossington Smith, Jessie Traill, Harold Cazneaux and Robert Emerson Curtis were among the many artists who depicted its construction. Traill was one of the first Australian women to use the medium of line etching. She was given special access during the bridge's construction, and created six etchings and two aquatints of what was then the most ambitious engineering project in Australian history.



'What we see is a solid mass of concrete and intricate lace work of iron made more intricate by the play of light and shade,' Traill wrote in 1929, 'something that giants might play with as a child would with his Meccano Set.'

Another Sydney artist who shared Traill's fascination with the bridge construction was Gladys Owen — also known as Gladys Owen Moore. A significant supporter of the British Red Cross during the First World War, Owen left for London in 1924 and studied painting at the Grosvenor School of Modern Art.

During her time in Europe, Owen painted watercolours and created woodcuts of villages and landscapes. Her paintings were accepted by the Spring Salon in Paris and the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colours, London.

The Bridge Workshops, 1931, Gladys Owen, watercolour, SVI/BRI/Syd Har/2, courtesy David Moore Photography Pty Ltd

Gladys (Mrs John) Owen Moore, 1931, by Norman Carter, ML 322

OPPOSITE: Building the Harbour Bridge III the granite workers, 1929, by Jessie Traill, etching, PXD 335/3



The Bridge Workshops, 1930s, by Gladys Owen, wood engraving, PXD 765/1, courtesy David Moore Photography Pty Ltd

Sydney-Circular Quay: limited edition original prints etchings, 1996, by Barbara A Davidson, MRB/769.994/37



On returning to Sydney, as well as working as a print and radio journalist, Owen continued her practice as an artist. She was described by Nancy Phelan as ‘a lively painter with dangling earrings and plaits round her ears like Chelsea buns’ (*Australian Dictionary of Biography*). Owen’s woodcuts and watercolours reveal her passion for recording the history and architectural features of Sydney, including the Harbour Bridge.

Contemporary artists Barbara Davidson, Peter Kingston and Wendy Shortland have captured the striking shape of the bridge in cartoons, etchings, prints and artists’ books.

Barbara Davidson, a printmaker and creator of hand-bound books, has been working as an artist for more than 30 years. Her work features Circular Quay, the Opera House, the Sydney Harbour Bridge and the Royal Botanic Garden.

Using a traditional method of binding known as ‘French simplicity’, Barbara

creates unique hand-printed artists’ books. Each book contains a series of original prints that creates a visual narrative. She explores the details and complexities of the places she knows best: the domestic and harbour environments. Her images are characterised by a rich density, fine detail and texture.

Davidson’s interest in the bridge is connected with her family history, as she told Margaret Leask in a 2017 oral history interview:

My grandfather went to the opening because he knew Bradfield, and my father-in-law walked the bridge on the day it opened and took amateur movies ... I did have a book that my father had signed by Bradfield of the designs that were submitted ... I think I’ve always had an interest ...

Peter Kingston, a significant Sydney-based painter, printmaker and cartoonist, has long been an observer of Sydney harbour foreshore scenes and environmental subjects.

The harbour and Sydney icons seep in to Kingston’s artwork, the influence of living around the harbour all his life, from Parsley Bay to Lavender Bay. Kingston is quoted in Scott Bevan’s *The Harbour*: ‘The relationship between the Opera House, Luna





## Online exhibition coming soon

The Sydney Harbour Bridge digital story, *The Arch that Cut the Sky*, launches later this year, supported by Custodian donors. The story digs deep into the archives to reveal the Library's extensive Harbour Bridge collection spanning sheet music, artworks, literary quotes, oral histories, engineering drawings, photographs, moving images and ephemera, and the many creative interpretations that define the bridge's vital role in the life of Sydney. It showcases the alternative bridge proposals, including designs by Norman Selfe and JJC Bradfield, and brings to life the building process through photography and voice recordings of the men who built the bridge.

Park and the bridge — along with wharves and ferries — make Sydney very special. They are all the anchor points, aren't they?

Artist Wendy Shortland documented Sydney's urban life in a series of sketches and paintings. She drew in pen, pencil and watercolour on high-quality art paper, then collected her work in artists' books with hand-sewn bindings and delicate covers.

Artists and writers continue to replicate, pay homage to and interpret this enduring symbol of Australia. As Ruth Park wrote in 1973, 'It hangs there like the ghost of the wheel of fate, in a sky brindled with sunset, until darkness comes and vanishes away this remarkable shape which is above all things that sign of Sydney.'

**Anni Turnbull, Curator, Research & Discovery**



Pooling, 1989, by Peter Kingston.  
DG XV1/36

Artists' sketchbook, Volume 2, 2009-10,  
by Wendy Shortland, PXE 1690/2

Sydney after Chagall, 2012,  
by Barbara A Davidson,  
limited edition, H 2016/2134



Fashion studies, 1937,  
by Max Dupain,  
ON 609/Box 27/No 50

OPPOSITE: Fashion shot  
– Cronulla Sandhills,  
c 1937, by Olive Cotton,  
courtesy McInerney  
Family and Josef Lebovic  
Gallery, Sydney

The vast trove of images in the Max Dupain Exhibition Negative Archive reveals connections between Dupain's work and the photography of his colleague and first wife, Olive Cotton.

When Max Dupain set up a photography studio in Bond Street, Sydney, in the mid-1930s, his childhood friend Olive Cotton became his assistant, then studio manager (they were married from 1939 to 1941).

During this time, Dupain received many commissions to photograph products, from fashion to vacuum cleaners. Many shoots took place in the studio but he would also photograph on location, often accompanied by Cotton.

Among Dupain's favourite settings for commercial and personal work were the sandhills at Cronulla. These expansive slopes, where pale sand contrasted with dark shadows, suited Dupain's modernist aesthetic and provided a dramatic backdrop for glamorous gowns.

Cotton was also a photographer, and one of her best-known images is *Fashion shot – Cronulla Sandhills*, c 1937. In it we see Dupain, barefoot with shirtsleeves rolled up, crouching as he



## COLLECTION SPOTLIGHT



carefully focuses on one of his preferred models, Noreen Hallard, in a striking evening gown. The image is a rare glimpse of Dupain at work on a fashion shoot for department store David Jones.

Sorting through the newly acquired archive, we discovered a corresponding image by Dupain. While another version has been published (in Helen O'Neill's *David Jones: 175 Years*, 2013), it's possible that this negative hasn't been seen since it was produced 80 years ago.

It shows the other side of Hallard, and a soft-focus Olive Cotton in the distance, wearing a long, white dress as she looks into the camera held at her waist. It's the moment she pressed the shutter to capture Dupain at work.

Other images in the series Dupain shot that day show Hallard in different poses, sometimes holding a single gladioli stem. Cotton also appears as a background model, without a camera. In *Untitled (two women on beach – one in white & one in black holding gladiola)*, a print of which is held by the Art Gallery of NSW, a previously unidentified Cotton walks away from Dupain's camera.

Bringing these two images together reveals not just how the pair worked – both as subject and photographer – but also highlights the rich research potential of the Max Dupain Exhibition Negative Archive.

**Belinda Hungerford and Cathy Williams,  
Librarians, Collection Access & Description**

# SKIRTS *and* BRAINS

\* WORDS Wendy Michaels



Millicent Preston Stanley (1883–1955), courtesy NSW Parliament

Millicent Preston Stanley, 1950, by Mary Edwards, DG 396

OPPOSITE: Millicent Preston Stanley, 1951, by Jerrold Nathan, courtesy NSW Parliament



Millicent Preston Stanley took her seat on the opposition benches of the NSW Legislative Assembly in 1925 just as the fiery Jack Lang — who she would later describe as ‘a wily old sprinter’ — was commencing his first term as Premier.

Concealing her convict/working-class origins, she had invented an aristocratic lineage that opened doors to upper social and political echelons in Australia and the United States. A skilled orator, persuasive platform speaker,

The first female MP in New South Wales, Millicent Preston Stanley, will take her place in our *Paintings from the Collection* exhibition, opening in October.

expert campaigner, adept political performer and collaborative networker, she held executive positions in many voluntary, charitable and political organisations, and acquired a reputation as a *femme forte*.

This feisty feminist’s sharp-tongued ripostes hurled at hecklers with the ‘swift return of a punching ball’ attracted press attention. Newspaper photographs showed Millicent in action and recounted her controversial exploits in evocative prose.



# PORTRAIT

Towards the end of her life, Millicent expressed her desire to be remembered not only for her feistiness but also for her dedication to women, children and the nation. She wanted to be acknowledged as a ‘politician of depth and understanding’.

Seeking to bequeath this image of herself to posterity, Millicent sat for two portrait artists, Mary Edwards and Jerrold Nathan. Their styles were markedly different: Edwards was a flamboyant post-impressionist and Nathan a realistic traditionalist. While neither of their portraits depict the fiery politician so often portrayed in the press, each creates a unique image of the enigmatic Millicent.

Sydney-born Mary Edwards studied in Paris, lived in Fiji and became a controversial figure in the Australian art scene. Her 1943 Supreme Court challenge, with Joseph Wolinski, to the Archibald Prize awarded to William Dobell’s portrait of Joshua Smith cast a shadow over her subsequent artistic career. In 1945 the Historic Memorials Committee had commissioned her to paint Enid Lyons, the first woman elected to the House of Representatives, which it then rejected as ‘unsatisfactory’ for hanging in Kings Hall.

In her 1950 portrait of Millicent, Edwards presents a stylishly feminine woman — a performer engaging her audience with welcoming friendliness. Her Millicent is attired in a soft red tam-o-shanter, matching jacket over a blue blouse, long pearl necklace, feather boa draped over her arm, white-gloved hands gesturing towards her interlocutor. She looks directly at the viewer through framed glasses (added by Edwards in 1952 to match those she then wore), encircled with Edwards’ signature floral swirls.

London-born Jerrold Nathan, who had trained at the Royal Academy and won a medal there for portraiture, arrived in Australia in 1924.

He was elected President of the Australian Art Society and his traditional portraits were hung as Archibald finalists almost every year from 1926 to 1958. Nathan was commissioned to paint Millicent by a committee of ‘citizens of Sydney’ chaired by Millicent’s colleague Mrs Lilla O’Malley Wood.

In his 1951 portrait of Millicent, Nathan presents a haughty aristocrat — a woman conscious of her intelligence and patrician status. His Millicent is seated majestically on a leather chesterfield, attired in a square-necked ruby taffeta cocktail dress, three-stringed pearl necklace, *pince-nez* spectacles and white fur stole draped around her shoulders like a royal robe. She appears to be holding court, directing her gaze beyond the viewer.

Both portraits featured as finalists in the Archibald Prize, although neither won. In 1952 they were hung in different locations, each appropriate to its image of Millicent.

Nathan’s portrait was unveiled by former Prime Minister Billy Hughes at the Royal Empire Society and then presented to the parliament where it has since hung, adjacent to a portrait of Jack Lang, in the Legislative Assembly lobby.

Edwards’ portrait was unveiled by the singer Gladys Moncrieff in the Feminist Club, where it hung until the club closed in 1973. It was then stored for four decades in the basement of the Mitchell Library. In May 2018 it was restored and unveiled in the Legislative Assembly lobby, and in October it returns to the Library to be displayed in the new Galleries.

Regardless of their different representations, both portraits uncannily mirror Jack Lang’s description of Millicent as a woman of ‘skirts and brains’.

**Dr Wendy Michaels is Conjoint Research Fellow at the University of Newcastle.**



SERNHARDT, SARAH (Bm)



*The divine*  
**SARAH**  
*and the third dog*

\* WORDS Caroline Baum

P1  
B

to Mr Goodman  
and Miss Henderson  
Sardis Street  
1900



# CELEBRITY

It is widely known that Sarah Bernhardt, the greatest actress of the nineteenth century, spent three months touring Australia in 1891, creating a sensation wherever she went. The stories of her visit — beginning with the crowd that greeted her train when she arrived at Redfern station — suggest the kind of hysteria we associate with celebrity in our own times. Savvy about manipulating her audiences, Bernhardt would no doubt have embraced social media if it had existed in her day — @TheDivineSarah would have attracted millions of followers.

Coming here at the peak of her powers, the Parisian Bernhardt was flamboyant and extravagant offstage. She travelled with an extensive entourage and a menagerie that included the snakes she used in her performance as Cleopatra.

Today's journalism often has a short memory, exacerbated by the now-ness of tweets and posts. But in 2015 commentators who dug into the past found a parallel between the fracas that occurred when actor Johnny Depp clashed with Barnaby Joyce over the fate of his dogs, Pistol and Boo, and an episode involving Bernhardt.

When she was told that her two canine companions, Star and Chouette, would have to be quarantined at Long Island (north of Sydney at the mouth of the Hawkesbury River) for the duration of her stay, Bernhardt threw a theatrical tantrum until the Premier, Sir Henry Parkes, intervened. Something of a womaniser, drawn to Bernhardt's charisma, and also a keen animal collector, Parkes gave permission for the dogs to be quarantined at Rodd Island in Iron Cove in the care of the Pasteur Institute.

The facility had been established just a year earlier in the hope of creating a vaccine to kill rabbits and protect sheep from Cumberland's disease. It was run by Louis Pasteur's handsome nephew, the bacteriologist Adrien Loir, who took his responsibilities for Bernhardt's dogs very seriously, reportedly purchasing an ivory comb to groom them before her weekly visits. Thanks to the dogs, and to Bernhardt's taste for younger men, the two became lovers.

Bernhardt was a bit like Michael Jackson in both the scale of her fame and her passion for shopping.

Continually acquiring new animals, she seems to have bought herself a Saint Bernard while in Sydney — not the most practical of breeds, but she was a woman of whim and caprice who already had a pet lion cub. Somewhat confusingly, she called the Saint Bernard 'Auckland' (she visited New Zealand briefly on the same tour, but did not perform there).

Her conquest, Dr Loir, went back to Paris, where he married twice. It is not known if he ever saw Bernhardt again. After a couple of years in Paris, he accepted a position in Tunisia. Together with his second wife, Hélène, he later published a book on the cat and its use as an effective killer of rats.

The Library has several images of Bernhardt, taken during her stay in Sydney by well-known celebrity photographers Falk Studios (who also photographed Mark Twain on his visit). The actress posed in the studio, at 496 George Street, in some of the elaborate costumes made for her legendary roles. One image shows her in diaphanous knife pleats, lace and feathers as the courtesan Marguerite in Dumas' *The Lady of the Camellias*.

But there are also more intimate, unposed photographs of the actress taken in a garden in the company of her niece. A large hound lies placidly at their feet. This, presumably, is Auckland, the third dog, who, together with Star and Chouette, returned to France with his celebrated mistress.

**Caroline Baum, the Library's inaugural Reader in Residence, is the author of *Only: A Singular Memoir* (Allen & Unwin, 2017). She was awarded the Hazel Rowley Fellowship in 2015 and writes about the arts and aspects of contemporary life for the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Guardian* and other publications.**



Sarah Bernhardt with her niece and pet dog, c 1880-1891, P1/2125  
OPPOSITE: Bernhardt as Marguerite Gautier in *La Dame aux camellias*, 1891, P1/168





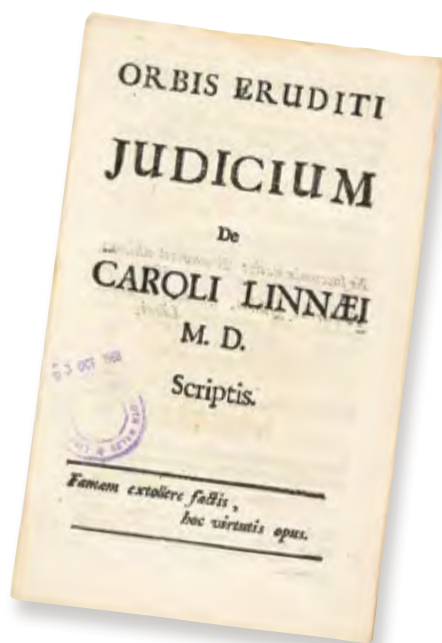
# ORIGINS *of* TAXONOMY

A donation adds to the Library's fine collections on Carl Linnaeus.

At the inaugural State Librarian's Dinner on 12 April 2018, the Linnean Society of NSW generously presented the Library with a copy of Carl Linnaeus' *Orbis eruditi iudicium de Caroli Linnæi MD scriptis* (or 'Opinion of the learned world on the writings of Carl Linnaeus, Doctor'), c 1740, and associated historical materials.

This small, octavo-sized pamphlet is among the rarest of all the writings of Linnaeus (in Swedish, Carl von Linné, 1707–1778), a central figure in scientific studies in the eighteenth century. Published at a crucial moment in his career, this pamphlet was vital in securing his appointment to a professorship of medicine at Uppsala University. From this senior position, Linnaeus would lay the groundwork for his radical new theory of classifying and naming organisms, which established his reputation as the founder of modern taxonomy.

The document comes with excellent evidence of its provenance. In 1969 the Linnean Society of London presented the pamphlet to the Linnean Society of NSW, with an unpublished note by William T Stearn of the British Museum. This note, and two other letters concerning this first donation, came to the Library with the pamphlet. Included, too, was the book *A Linnaean Keepsake*, which provides a translation of the original Latin and places the pamphlet in its wider historical and social context. Considered as a whole,



the collection affords an opportunity to study this remarkable man and his place in the history of science.

This donation supplements the Library's fine collections on Linnaeus — particularly those from the Linnean Society of NSW — including documents, photographs, prints and drawings, and one superb portrait of Linnaeus painted in about 1800.

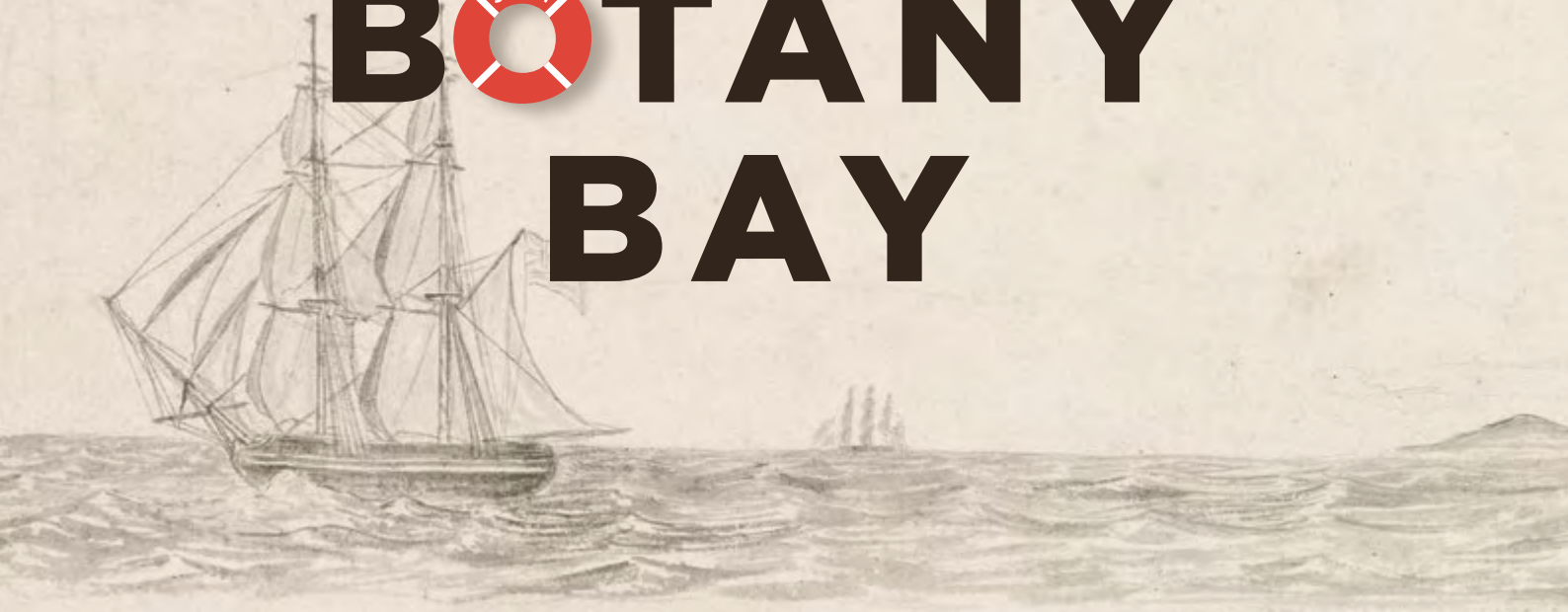
**Nicholas Sparks, Librarian,  
Collection Strategy & Development**

*Orbis eruditi iudicium de Caroli Linnæi MD scriptis*, by Carl Linnaeus, Linnean Society of London; Linnean Society of New South Wales, c 1740, RB/Q738

OPPOSITE: Linnaeus, c 1800, by unknown artist, ML 1079

# Escape from

# BOTANY BAY



The merchant ship *Surry* was five days out of Sydney, bound for London via Batavia (now Jakarta) when first mate William L Edwardson's breakfast was disagreeably interrupted. At 9 am on 21 March 1817, 'three strange men came on Deck from out of the Forehold in nearly fainting states'.

When the men were interrogated, it was found that 'Theophilus Mitchell had swum off from Dawes Point [in Sydney] on Sunday night [five days earlier]. Henry Heasty [sic] also on Sunday and Thomas Prosser on Monday' while the anchor was being hauled up.

'The wind being foul,' Edwardson explains, the ship 'could not get back to Sydney or into the Coal River [Newcastle].' The men were put in irons 'to be delivered to Justice at 1st opportunity'.

Edwardson makes only one other brief reference to the three men in his journal, which the Library has held since the 1930s. But a recently acquired manuscript provides a glimpse of their fate.

The memorandum, 'Regardg. 3 Runaways from N.S. Wales', dated 31 July [1817], is the record of a report made by Lieutenant Barnes, first officer of HC *Nautilus*, an armed brig-sloop of the Honourable East India Company.

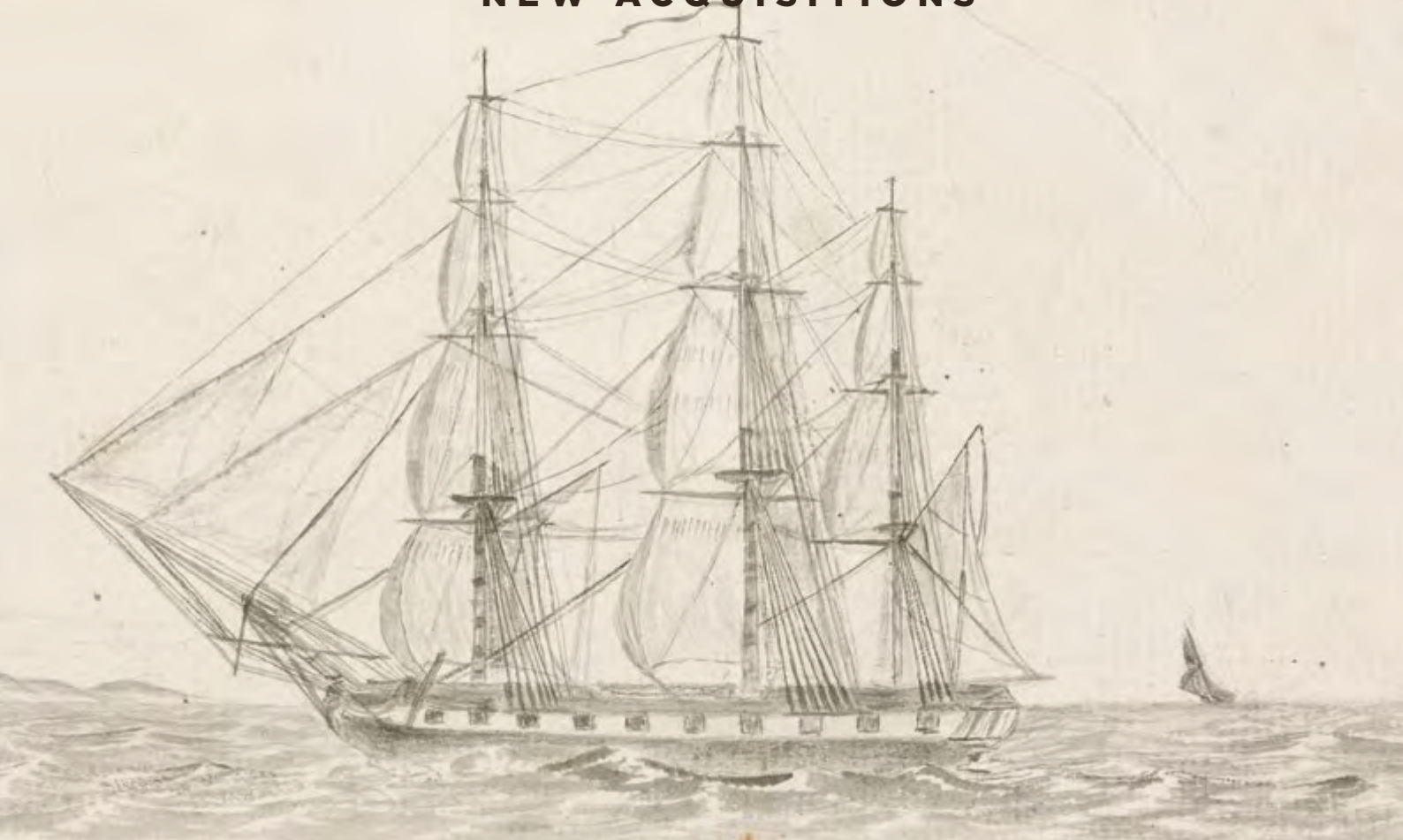
When the *Surry* arrived in Batavia on 13 June, Barnes reported, 'it was intended that these men should have been sent round ... to Bombay on board the HC Cruizer *Aurora* which was then also lying at Batavia'. But when the *Nautilus* arrived in port, it took the three prisoners from the *Surry* instead. 'There is no doubt of these men having come round from Botany Bay,' Barnes added.

Although Barnes doesn't state the destination of the *Nautilus*, we can assume it was India — most probably Calcutta (Kolkata) — and it was there that he made his report.

Notes on the memorandum state that the first man, Mitchell, had shown the master of the *Surry* 'his certificate of discharge on the part of him being a free man in Port Jackson' and then offered security for his return to Batavia.



## NEW ACQUISITIONS



Casting doubt on this claim is a report in the *Sydney Gazette* of 29 March 1817 that a number of convicts had absconded from their employment, some of them with false certificates, and were still at large. Among them was Theophilus Mitchell. From this and other reports it is clear that there was a lively trade in forged documents in Sydney at the time.

Mitchell had arrived in Sydney on the *General Hewett* in 1814 on a seven-year sentence for fraud. Two years before his escape from the colony he had married a Miss Crowder. He was last heard of in 1818 when, as the *Sydney Gazette* reported, he was being returned to New South Wales from Calcutta on the brig *Greyhound* under a further sentence of transportation and ‘eloped from on board this vessel while lying at Batavia.’

Heatley, also put on board the *Greyhound*, was returned to Sydney, and from there sent to Hobart. Also known as Henry Headley or Hateley, he had been transported on the *Duke of Portland* in 1807, having been given a 14-year sentence for horse theft. Three years later he married another convict, Caroline Laycock, and received a conditional pardon, which was cancelled following his escape.

Thomas Prosser had been in the colony since 1800 when he had arrived on the *Minerva* under a life sentence. Despite having previously absconded at least twice, he was granted an absolute pardon in 1812. At the time of his escape on the *Surry*, he was still a free man and was fleeing the colony to elude his creditors, leaving behind a wife and child. What became of him is unrecorded.

*Surry*, 1820–21, from  
‘Journal of a Voyage from  
London to New South  
Wales & V Ds Land’,  
A 131, p 69



A Government jail gang, c 1830, by Augustus Earle, from *Views in Australia and Van Diemens Land*, F83/19-20

Escaping convicts were a recurring challenge for the colonial authorities and it was not unusual for runaways to be secreted on board departing ships by sympathetic seamen. Ships' captains, too, were sometimes willing to look the other way in order to fill vacancies in their crews. In 1813 Governor Macquarie warned Earl Bathurst that the facility with which convicts were escaping by sea was so great 'that Unless Measures are adopted at Home to terrify these Fugitives from revisiting their Native Country in this Manner by stealth such Desertions will become every day more frequent, as the Commerce and Shipping increase'.

Four years later, when he learned that the merchant ship *Harriet* had taken 16 escaped convicts to the Cape of Good Hope despite having been 'diligently searched' before leaving Sydney, Macquarie complained once more to Bathurst that 'it is hardly possible to find these Runaways, when the Sailors are in league with them and Connive at their Concealment on board, few Ships leaving this Port without carrying off some convicts of both Sexes in the same way'.

The situation had not improved by the time Commissioner John Thomas Bigge's 1822 *Report into the State of the Colony of New South Wales* was published. Bigge noted that frequent escapes were made by convicts 'either by concealing themselves on board vessels, or by attempting to seize them by violence'.

He calculated that between 1808 and 1820 at least 255 convicts had attempted to escape. Nine had died and 194 had been recaptured.

Just one year earlier, Bigge had had his own experience of stowaways while returning to England in the store-ship *Dromedary*. The ship had been preparing to leave Sydney when two convicts, William White and Peter Penny, rowed a stolen boat alongside. It was a dark, overcast night, and under cover of a heavy downpour they succeeded in getting aboard and into the hold undetected.

They remained there for eight days without food and with only a little water before breaking into the bread room and stealing just enough to keep them alive. It was not until 17 weeks later that White was seen by a soldier and then Penny was also discovered. When they were brought on deck, they were found to be nearly blind from their lengthy confinement in the hold. They had planned to leave the ship at Rio de Janeiro but instead were tried in Exeter for absconding and sent back to Port Macquarie.

Security measures such as severe fines, stringent port regulations, the encouragement of informers and fumigating ships with sulphur to smoke out hidden stowaways were devised to prevent this exodus, but convicts still managed to find ways of escaping. It was a problem that successive governors found impossible to solve.

**Warwick Hirst, Librarian, Collection Strategy & Development**





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Sydney beach scene (detail), c 1890-1910,  
by William Joseph Macpherson, ON 588/Box 05



## A bequest from Robert White AO (1923–2017) joins an important legacy of significant contributions to the Library.

Bequests and legacies have played a critical role in the history and development of the State Library of NSW. From landmark bequests by major benefactors David Scott Mitchell, in 1907, and Sir William Dixson, in the 1940s, to Jean Garling's wonderful legacy in the 1990s, this institution is indebted to patrons for their generosity and foresight. Bequest funds help strengthen our collections and enhance our programs.

Over the past few years important Library projects have been made possible through bequest funds, among them the Mona Brand Award, the Russell Prize for Humour Writing, the DX Lab Fellowship, the *My Weekend with Pop* Indigenous language program and the Word Express education program.

Recently, the Library has received gifts from the estates of Jack G Brann, Ruby Faris, Gabriel Keleny, Nathalie Kulakowski, Lady Anne Loewenthal, Jean Millner and Ethel Murray. These people valued and cared about our work and have been associated with the Library for many years as volunteers, Friends, donors or researchers.

One person in particular who fundamentally believed in the role of libraries in our society was longstanding supporter Robert James White AO, better known as Bob White, who died in June last year.

White was a boy from country New South Wales who became CEO of Westpac, was twice named Australian Banker of the Year and was honoured with an Order of Australia. Behind this public persona was a deeply generous and very humble man, whose legacy continues to both inspire and make a practical difference.

Born in 1923, White grew up in the town of Conargo, where he attended the one-teacher primary school. He completed his secondary education at Hay War Memorial High School, four hours away by dirt road. At Hay, Bob became captain of the debating team, an achievement he remained proud of for the rest of his life.

# BOY *from the* BUSH

Bob White at the launch of Westpac, 1982, courtesy Westpac Banking Corporation



# BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION

By this time, Australia was at war; encouraged by the school principal to find a secure job, he began working in 1940 as a probationer for the Bank of New South Wales at Echuca. In 1942 he enlisted in the army and was posted to Darwin, which was then under attack by enemy forces. He remained with the AIF until he was discharged in 1947, having formed lifelong friendships and gained an enduring appreciation of a life of service.

After the war, White returned to the Bank of New South Wales, this time to the South Yarra branch in Melbourne. His passion for banking shone through: he had an intuitive grasp of the financial needs and cash flow vicissitudes of small businesses, and understood the importance of the banker-customer relationship.

He was bright and dedicated, and it wasn't long before he was appointed to the Inspector's office in Melbourne. A number of similar promotions followed: five years in London, which was then the centre of the financial world; an appointment as head of the Bank's Staff College in Sydney; a period as Assistant Chief Manager in New Zealand; and then to Sydney in the Chief Accountant's Office.

In 1972 he was posted back to London as the Chief Manager for the UK and Europe. He was recalled to Sydney in 1975 just as the Whitlam government was facing constitutional crisis, and within two years was appointed to the top job.

Bob White was Chief General Manager (CEO) of the bank from 1977 until the end of 1987. During his tenure he oversaw the merger between the Bank of New South Wales and the Commercial Bank of Australia to form Westpac. To mark the occasion, designer uniforms were issued to staff — the first corporate wardrobe in Australia.

He oversaw the introduction of the bank's EFTPOS and ATM networks, as well as the expansion of services to business and corporate customers. He became the second president of the Business Council of Australia, and also chaired the Australian Bankers Association and the Bankers Institute of Australasia.

Bob White was named Banker of the Year by Australian and Asian business magazines, and received the John Storey Medal for Management. In 1982 he was made an Officer of the Order of Australia for services to banking, commerce and the community. Not bad, as he often remarked, for a boy from the bush with few formal qualifications!

While many knew of Bob White's business achievements, his quiet — often anonymous — support of charities and community organisations gave him great pleasure. One example is the annual donation he gave to the Westpac Retired Officers club, so that its members could continue to enjoy get-togethers to maintain their friendships and camaraderie.

Always adopting a modest profile, White is recalled by his contemporaries as never having uttered a word out of place and being happiest surrounded by customers and, especially, staff, who he always called 'my fellow officers'.

Bob White is remembered as a gentleman, who was held in the highest esteem and greatest respect by many people both inside the bank and out.

**Kim Eberhard, Head of Historical Services,  
Westpac Banking Corporation, and Susan Hunt,  
Director, State Library of NSW Foundation**

## Your planned gift can make a difference

Please consider supporting the future of the Library by making a gift in your will. Whatever amount you can afford, when multiplied by the contributions of many supporters, will significantly strengthen our wonderful Library.

There is an opportunity to join the Library Circle — a group of people who have made a commitment to the Library by including us in their will.

**Please contact Susan Hunt,  
Director of the State Library Foundation  
on (02) 9273 1529 or  
susan.hunt@sl.nsw.gov.au**

# Recent HIGHLIGHTS



/01



/02



/03



/04

01 Back row: The Hon Ray Williams MP, The Hon Don Harwin MLC, The Hon Gladys Berejiklian MP, Jennifer Beale, Darren Dale, Dr Roanna Gonsalves; front row: Dr John Vallance, Bram Presser, Zana Fraillon, Bella Li, Kim Scott, Gerard Lee; NSW Premier's Literary Awards, 1 May 2018, photo by Joy Lai

02 Richard Neville and Andrea Sturgeon; National Simultaneous Storytime, 23 May 2018, photo by Zoe Burrell

03 National Simultaneous Storytime, 23 May 2018, photo by Bruce York

04 Pauline Fitzgerald; National Simultaneous Storytime, 23 May 2018, photo by Zoe Burrell

05, 06 Tim Smith, The Hon Gabrielle Upton MP, Dr John Vallance; presentation of 'Collaroy bill of sale', 18 May 2018, photos by Joy Lai

07 Catherine du Peloux Menagé, Professor The Hon Bob Carr, Helena Carr; opening of Donald & Myfanwy Horne Room, 24 May 2018, photo by Bruce York



/05



/06





/07



/08



/09



/10



/11



/12



/13



/14



/15

- 08 Anna Garton, Associate Professor Julia Horne, Professor Stephen Garton; opening of Donald & Myfanwy Horne Room, 24 May 2018, photo by Bruce York
- 09 Nick Horne; opening of Donald & Myfanwy Horne Room, 24 May 2018, photo by Bruce York
- 10 Visitor at launch of World Press Photo Exhibition 2018, 25 May 2018, photo by Gene Ramirez
- 11 David Campbell, World Press Photo Foundation, and Andrew Giles, Canon Australia; launch of World Press Photo Exhibition 2018, 25 May 2018, photo by Gene Ramirez
- 12 Jake Duczynski; 'Talking Deadly', 30 May 2018, photo by Joy Lai
- 13 Red Cross Archive event, 19 June 2018, photo by Joy Lai
- 14 Ben Mckelvey, Joan Healy, Dr Bernadette Brennan; National Biography Award shortlist announcement, 9 July 2018, photo by Joy Lai
- 15 Professor Judith Brett, Troy Bramston; National Biography Award shortlist announcement, 9 July 2018, photo by Joy Lai

# For our **FRIENDS**



## Hello Emma!

One hundred Friends and guests gathered earlier this year to welcome a special addition to the Library's collection: an 1816 first edition of Jane Austen's *Emma: A Novel*.

The audience was delighted to learn about the edition and view a display of related items. Susannah Fullerton, President of the Jane Austen Society (Australia), gave a selected reading from the novel, along with some background on the author and her oeuvre.

*Emma* was the last novel Austen completed and saw published before she died in July 1817. 'How wonderful that the State Library now has this very special book in its collection,' said Fullerton, 'and what a privilege to be able to briefly hold a copy of the novel I love most in the world.'

According to Maggie Patton, Manager of Research & Discovery, the first edition was published in three volumes, 2000 copies were printed and it sold for the princely sum of £1 1s.

ABOVE LEFT: Curator Margot Riley, right, at a Friends of the Library Jane Austen event

ABOVE RIGHT: Mark Burns, Paula Cameron, Robert Cameron AO, Susannah Fullerton OAM

## Travel competition winner

We're excited to announce that Julianne Patterson is the winner of a business class return trip for two to Auckland, courtesy of Virgin Australia.

The State Library of NSW wishes to thank Virgin Australia for their generous support for the annual Friends Travel Competition.

## Friends of the Library

Become a part of the life of this great Library with use of the heritage Friends Room, collection viewings, special lecture series, bimonthly Reading Lounge book club, free Family History consultation, free or discounted tickets to Library talks, and discounts at the Library Shop and Cafe Trim.

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### CONTACT THE FRIENDS OFFICE

For more information,  
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# ‘Q&A

Thomas Wing-Evans



Designer, architect, thinker and tinkerer Thomas Wing-Evans is exploring art through sound installations in the Mitchell forecourt.

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**WHAT DID YOU SET OUT TO DO AS THE LIBRARY'S 2017 DX LAB FELLOW?**

My original proposal was to create a tool that turns entries in the Library's catalogue — books, manuscripts and artworks — into soundscapes.

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**HOW HAS THE PROJECT CHANGED?**

It's become more ambitious. We're constructing two shimmering metal sound pavilions in front of the Mitchell Building that will contain immersive soundscapes based on paintings in the collection. By day, the sculptural spaces will reflect the heritage sandstone building and the natural arch of the huge Moreton Bay fig trees. By night, the pavilions will be transformed by light, creating a completely different experience for passers-by.

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**HOW DO YOU TURN A PAINTING INTO SOUND?**

A painting has a lot of visual information — colour, contrast, composition and so on. When an artwork is digitised, further metadata is included, such as date, location and artist. We take this data and map it to musical values like rhythm, melody and percussion. When a visitor chooses an artwork, they are hearing a sonic representation of all the elements that comprise that image, and they might be surprised by the sounds they hear.

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**HOW DID YOU CHOOSE THE IMAGES?**

The Library's collection is so extensive that I decided to focus on the 301 artworks that will be showcased in the upcoming *Paintings from the Collection* exhibition. I scoured the selection for a variety of images that had, among other features, historic significance, a prominent artist or compelling subject matter.

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**WHAT DO YOU HOPE VISITORS WILL EXPERIENCE THROUGH THE INSTALLATION?**

I hope the project adds another layer to their exploration of the collection, transporting them momentarily out of the city and into the catalogue in a new and intriguing way. The immersive experience is intended to appeal to everyone, from kids to seasoned Library-goers.

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**HAVE YOU DONE ANYTHING LIKE THIS BEFORE?**

I've worked on a number of international architectural projects and co-directed a digital design festival in a forest in the UK that uses the natural surroundings as the basis for experimenting with new media and creative technology. This project brings those two worlds together.

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**WHAT'S NEXT?**

We're hoping the installation will tour through NSW public libraries and into other parts of Australia.

The DX Lab Fellowship was supported by the State Library of NSW Foundation through a generous gift by Dr Charles Barnes. The installation *80Hz: Sound Lab* opens on 6 October, also supported by the Foundation.





*Another  
brick?*

This sandstock brick from the first Government House, 1788, is on display from 6 October in the new *Collectors' Gallery* with hundreds of other objects from the collection.

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