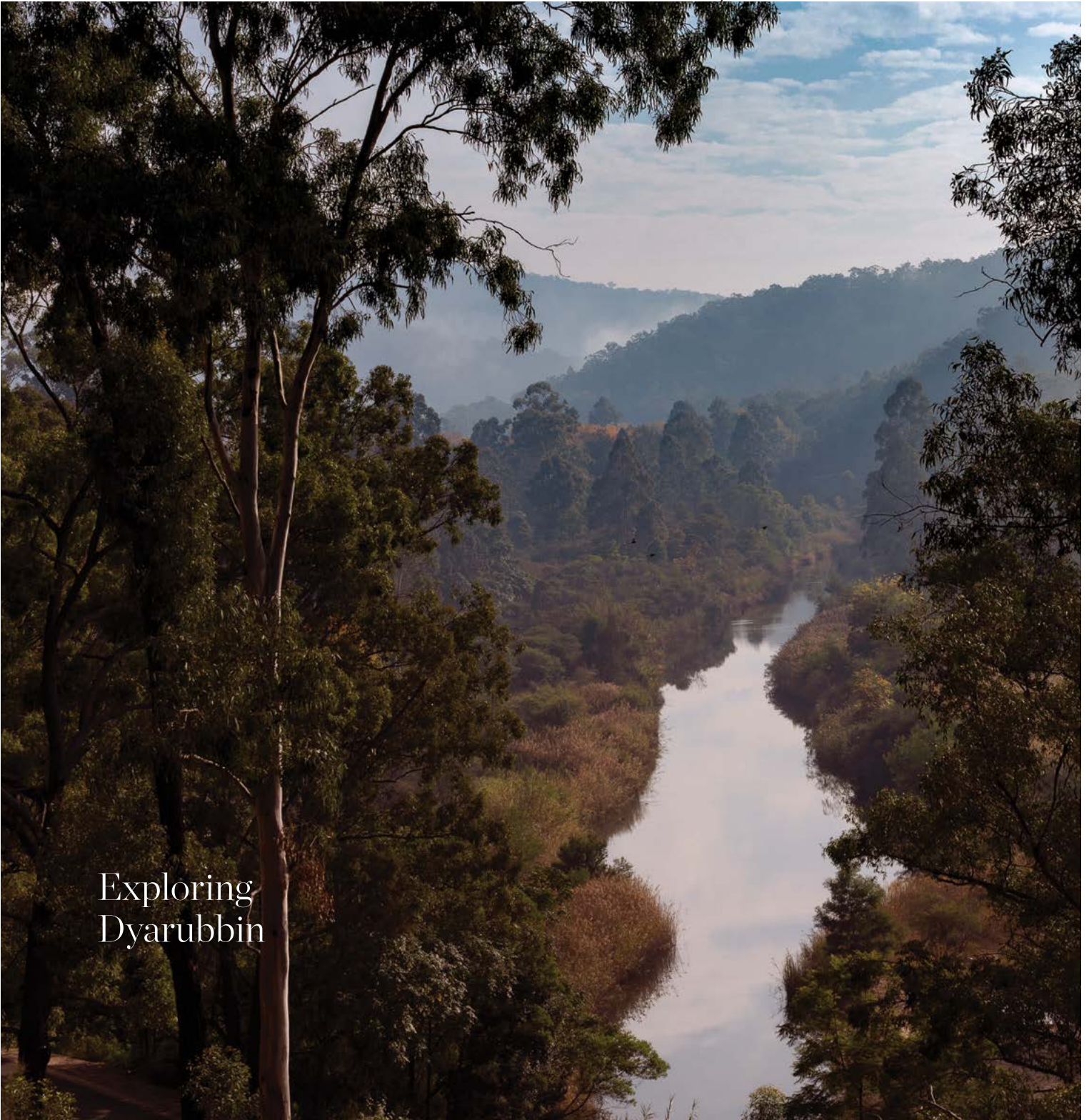


Spring 2019

SL



STATE LIBRARY®
NEW SOUTH WALES



Exploring
Dyarubbin

‘ Message



Welcome to another excellent edition of *SL* magazine. This one includes several articles that touch on the theme of language.

What’s so special about that, you might ask. There is a sense in which all we do at the Library is about language. We use language to transmit information, knowledge and understanding for learning and enjoyment. We tend to concentrate on written language, but we all know in practice that language is oral as well. People have been talking to each other for much longer than they have been writing and reading.

In the gallery guide for our wonderful *Sydney Elders* installation, curator Jonathan Jones observes that without a living human context, written materials are little more than dry, dead paper. The *Living Language* exhibition, opened on 13 July by a group of Elders and language-keepers from across the state, makes the same point in a way that marks a new departure for the Library.

Some of the earliest Western references to reading suggest that the first readers read aloud. More than one ancient text refers to neighbours asking solitary readers to ‘keep the noise down’. In June I was invited by Stanton Library in North Sydney to participate in their Bloomsday celebration. Lubricated by generous supplies of Guinness, we happily read passages from Joyce’s *Ulysses* until we were asked by some historians upstairs to ‘keep the noise down’.

The idea of noise in libraries is paradoxical. Unapologetically, libraries across the state are making quite a bit of noise at the moment, as communities discover the joy of reading out loud, curiosity in the company of others, new friendships and a deeper sense of who they are and where they come from. What Jonathan Jones says about our Indigenous collections applies to everything else we hold as well.

By engaging with our libraries — with their collections, programs, exhibitions and events — we bring them to life. Watching this happen before my own eyes is one of the most exciting experiences I’ve had and I hope you will visit us soon to see what I mean. Silence may be golden in our reading rooms and galleries, but beyond their walls we encourage you to do all you can to bring our collections into noisy, stimulating, gregarious life. It’s all about language, you see, and it’s part of who we are.

DR JOHN VALLANCE FAHA
State Librarian



C ontents

Spring 2019

SL

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Bri Lee

Living language

Artist Pavel Mikhailov was visiting Sydney in 1820 with the first Russian expedition to the Antarctic when he drew Aboriginal people he met at Kiarabilli (Kirribilli) and the view of Warran (Sydney Cove). The drawing is on display in the exhibition *Living Language: Country, Culture, Community*.

MRB F980/3A1







National Biography Award

Associate Professor Behrouz Boochani has won the National Biography Award for *No Friend But the Mountains*, written during his ongoing detention on Manus Island. The nation's richest prize for biography and memoir was presented at the Library on 12 August to translator Dr Omid Tofighian. Judges called the book 'an astonishing act of witness and a testament to the lifesaving power of writing as resistance'. A new prize for a debut biography or memoir was awarded to Sofija Stefanovic for *Miss Ex-Yugoslavia*, 'an exceptionally well-written, thoughtful, grim yet un-put-downable account of migration to Melbourne in the 1980s'. Senior Judge Margy Burn commented on the shortlist that 'none of these exceptional works could be described as traditional biography'. The National Biography Award is generously supported by the Nelson Meers Foundation.

National Biography Award shortlist

The Burial Files

Our popular podcast series *The Burial Files*, accompanying the *Dead Central* exhibition, is revealing the 'history beneath our feet': stories of the Devonshire Street Cemetery that once stood where Central Station is today. Produced by the Library's Sabrina Organo and Elise Edmonds, the podcast features interviews with leading historians, curators, archaeologists, forensic experts and railway enthusiasts. Each episode uncovers a different aspect of life and death in Sydney between 1820 and 1900.

Photo by Josephine Foster, c 1900, ON 146



Rare Book Week

If you love rare books, you won't want to miss Sydney Rare Book Week, from 17 October to 2 November at venues across Sydney. Highlights at the Library are the Book Week launch by *Shakespeare's Library* author Stuart Kells, a workshop on 'Preserving your Personal Collections', Phillipa McGuinness and Elspeth Menzies of NewSouth Publishing discussing 'A Day in the Life of a Publisher', Robert Clancy AM on 'Collecting Maps', and historian Mark Dunn's free walking tour to discover the world of books in colonial Sydney.

www.sl.nsw.gov.au/program-sydney-rare-book-week

Decorated fore-edges, see article p 24

Funding boost for public libraries

Public libraries across NSW are set to benefit from a record boost in funding, with the NSW Government delivering \$36.5 million in 2019–20. State Librarian John Vallance welcomed this significant increase, which will see a total of \$60 million in additional government funding going directly to public libraries over four years. 'The funding will make a huge difference to public libraries across the state, helping them to better meet the growing demands from their communities,' said Dr Vallance. Included in the boost is a capital grants program of \$24 million over four years, which will enable improvements to library buildings and IT systems. The State Library will work closely with councils on library improvement projects.

www.sl.nsw.gov.au/public-library-services



If pictures could speak

Leading web developer Mauricio Giraldo has been awarded the Library's \$30,000 DX Lab Fellowship for his innovative project aimed at transforming how we discover and access items in our online catalogue. Posing the question, 'What if images could speak?', Giraldo will explore how images can be used alongside text-based information to make it easier to find Library materials and allow new types of serendipitous discovery.

dxlab.sl.nsw.gov.au

Emma, Harriet and Fanny Samueller, c 1857, by Fortescue Hitchens, ML 1199, on display in *Paintings from the Collection*

NEWS



Interrobang

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

? In 1837 a series of articles titled 'Sketches of New Zealand' appeared in the *Sydney Herald*, credited to a writer called 'M'. Are you able to suggest who this 'M' might be? The writer seems to have spent some years in New Zealand as a flax trader before becoming a trader at the Bay of Islands.

! We consulted books on flax trading, and the book *Country of Writing: Travel Writing and New Zealand 1809–1900* by Lydia Weavers (2002). A number of writers listed in the book's index have a surname beginning with M, but none seems to fit the criteria.

A research paper from Massey University, 'The New Zealand Timber and Flax Trade, 1769–1840' mentions the flax trader John Israel Montefiore, and an entry in *Te Ara, the Encyclopedia of New Zealand* is among other sources that confirm Montefiore as the mysterious 'M':

By February 1836 Montefiore had moved to the Bay of Islands, where he lived alone with his servant, Bill, in Kororareka (Russell) and carried on business as a merchant. In August 1836 he purchased land at Manawaora Bay in the Bay of Islands and reportedly established himself there as a ship's chandler... Montefiore left New Zealand on board the whaling ship *Montreal* on 24 December 1836, and arrived in Sydney on 11 March 1837. Between 20 March and 7 August 1837 he published a series of 15 articles entitled 'Sketches of New Zealand' in the *Sydney Herald*.

www.sl.nsw.gov.au/ask

Take

5

LANGUAGES

Compiled by Maria Savvidis,
Curator, Research & Discovery

Spanish

Don Quixote by Miguel de Cervantes, published in two parts in 1605 and 1615, is often considered the first modern novel. It has been translated into more than 60 languages and adapted for theatre, opera, ballet and film. The Library's 1100-strong Cervantes Collection was donated by Dr Ben Haneman in 1997 and is housed in the Friends Room.



Vietnamese

You can browse the Library's range of contemporary Vietnamese books on our catalogue and borrow them through your local library's multicultural loans service, or read Vietnamese newspapers in the Governor Marie Bashir Reading Room.



Urdu

Mir Hasan (1736–1786) was a master of the Urdu romantic *masnawi*, a poetic form originally from Persia that relies on rhyming couplets. This 1838 edition of his work, titled *Kissā i Badr i Kunīr wa Bai Nazūr*, features gilt inlay and intricate hand-coloured drawings. It was donated to the Library in 1926 as part of the Richardson collection.

RICHARDSON/ MSS/ 253

Hungarian

Susan Varga's award-winning 1994 memoir *Heddy and Me* recounts her Jewish Hungarian mother's life during the Second World War, and their shared bond as Holocaust survivors in postwar Australia. Thirty-two hours of original interviews between Susan and her mother, in Hungarian, are in the Library's collection, along with manuscripts and papers related to the book.

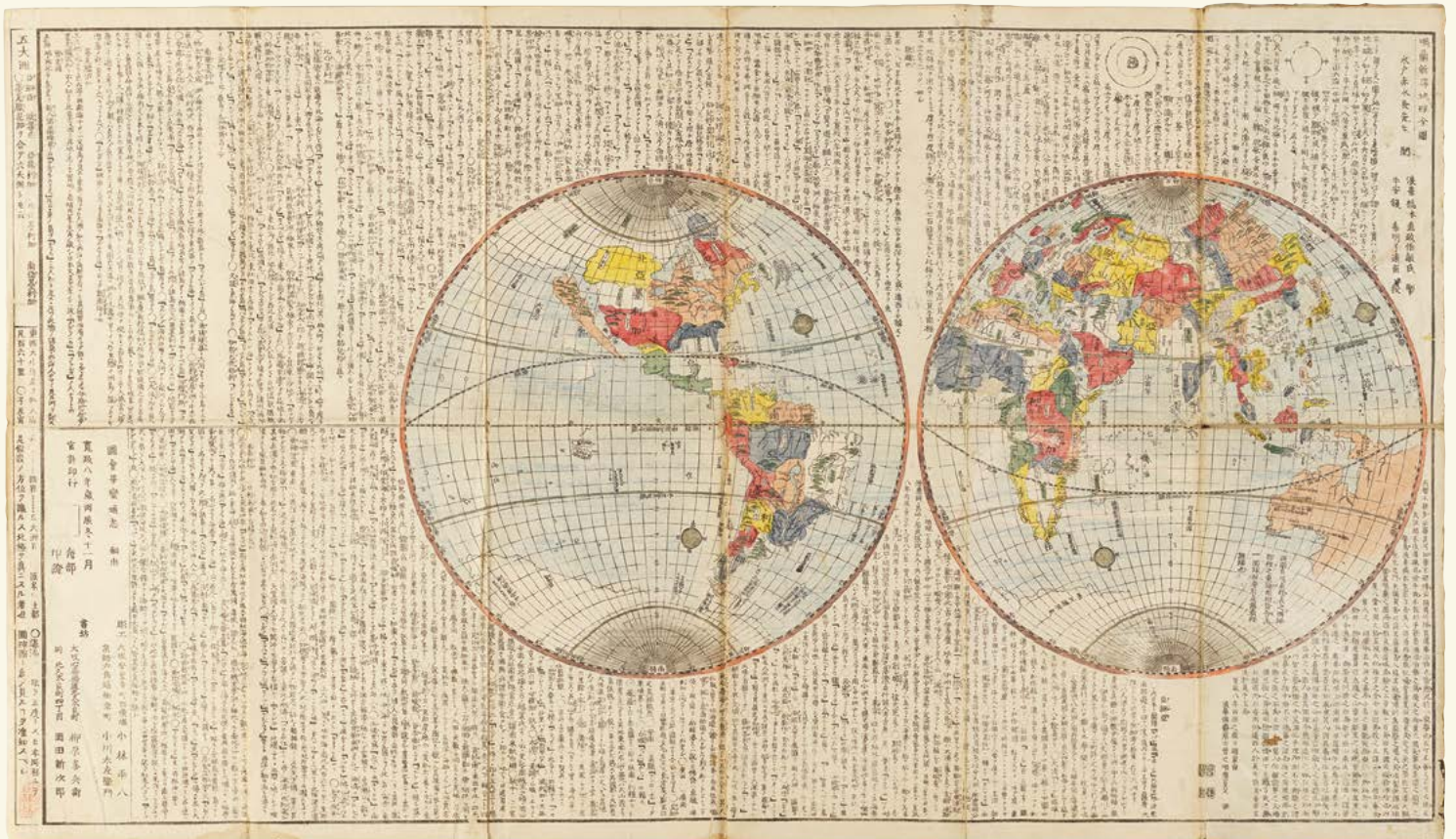
MLOH 174/1-32



Japanese

This hand-coloured woodcut map was created in 1796 during Japan's Edo period. Based on Dutch maps of the early 1700s, it shows two hemispheres surrounded by detailed commentary that mentions 'Magellanica' – the mythical southern land mass.

M4 100/1796/1





Free **PUBLIC LIBRARY**

This year we celebrate the 150th anniversary of a vital public institution.

Opening of the Sydney Public Library by His Excellency Earl Belmore (detail), *Illustrated Sydney News*, 27 October 1869, p 3

Opposite: Free Public Library, Sydney, 1871, attributed to Charles Pickering, SPF/192

The opening of the Free Public Library – which we now know as the State Library of NSW – on 30 September 1869 by the NSW Governor, Earl Belmore, was a gala affair. Above a bust of William Shakespeare, a large portrait of Captain Cook dominated the official dais. Other windows were decorated with portraits of Sir Joseph Banks, Christopher Wren, Plato and Phidias: exemplars of the Library’s aspirations.

The Free Public Library arose from the ashes of the Australian

Library and Literary Institution and its immediate predecessor, the Australian Subscription Library.

The Australian Subscription Library, which opened in 1826, had initially operated as an exclusive organisation for gentlemen readers. But its continued failure to deliver a viable library forced it to be more inclusive. By the 1860s, the Australian Library, as it now called itself, had also proved unsustainable, and it turned to the NSW Government as a potential saviour.

In September 1869 the government purchased the book stock of the Australian Library for £1500 and the building for £3600. Although the building, on the corner of Bent and Macquarie streets (diagonally opposite the current Library complex), was in poor condition, the Library remained on this site until 1942 when the magnificent Mitchell Library Reading Room, then called the Public Library Reading Room, opened to the public.

For much of the 1850s and 1860s the idea of a free public library had rolled around the Sydney press. Melbourne's Public Library (now the State Library of Victoria), which opened in 1854, was an obvious model, but public libraries were still a comparative novelty across the colonies, and even in England itself. There were other subscription-based libraries in Sydney — the Mechanics School of Arts, for instance, was proud of the some 8000 books on its shelves by 1860, although critics despaired of the demoralising influence of its substantial popular fiction holdings.

For the colonists who engaged in public debate about libraries, a quality library collection meant useful educational books that improved the capacity and self-reliance of the working classes. For some, like 'OHR', who wrote to the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 8 August 1865, the imperative of public libraries was to 'convey knowledge and truth to the ignorant'. For this reader, concerned that suffrage was rapidly devolving to the lower classes, libraries offered a free education to potential voters.

More optimistically, the *Illustrated Sydney News* declared in 1875 that libraries delivered 'that diffusion of knowledge, which is so essentially a characteristic of a country's social and moral progress'. Earl Belmore himself noted that the Free Public Library was the only place where the 'adult labouring classes', having missed out on the education now provided to the colony's children, could improve themselves.

Popular fiction, on the other hand, was dangerously and frivolously enervating. Classic literature and drama, like Sir Walter Scott's Waverley novels, was acceptable, but the Trustees who assumed control of the Library in September 1869 immediately withdrew some 2100 mostly popular fiction books from the 16,000 or so they had just purchased: as a consequence the numbers of readers using the Library dropped by 12%.

Although the Free Public Library opened with only three staff and limited resources, its fortunes rapidly improved. Contemporary European periodicals brought new readers to the Library. Donations like Justice Wise's bequest of early Australian publications inspired a focus on collecting colonial records: by 1889 the *Australian Town and Country Journal* noted that the Library pursued with 'great perseverance ... everything treating of Australia ... pamphlets, journals, magazines and paper'.

It was the intelligence and perspicuity of this collecting which attracted into the Library's orbit its two great Australiana benefactors, David Scott Mitchell and Sir William Dixson.

A lending branch of the Library opened in 1877 (now known as the City of Sydney Library, it was transferred to the control of the Sydney Municipal Council in 1909). A country lending service was established in 1883 to service regional NSW.

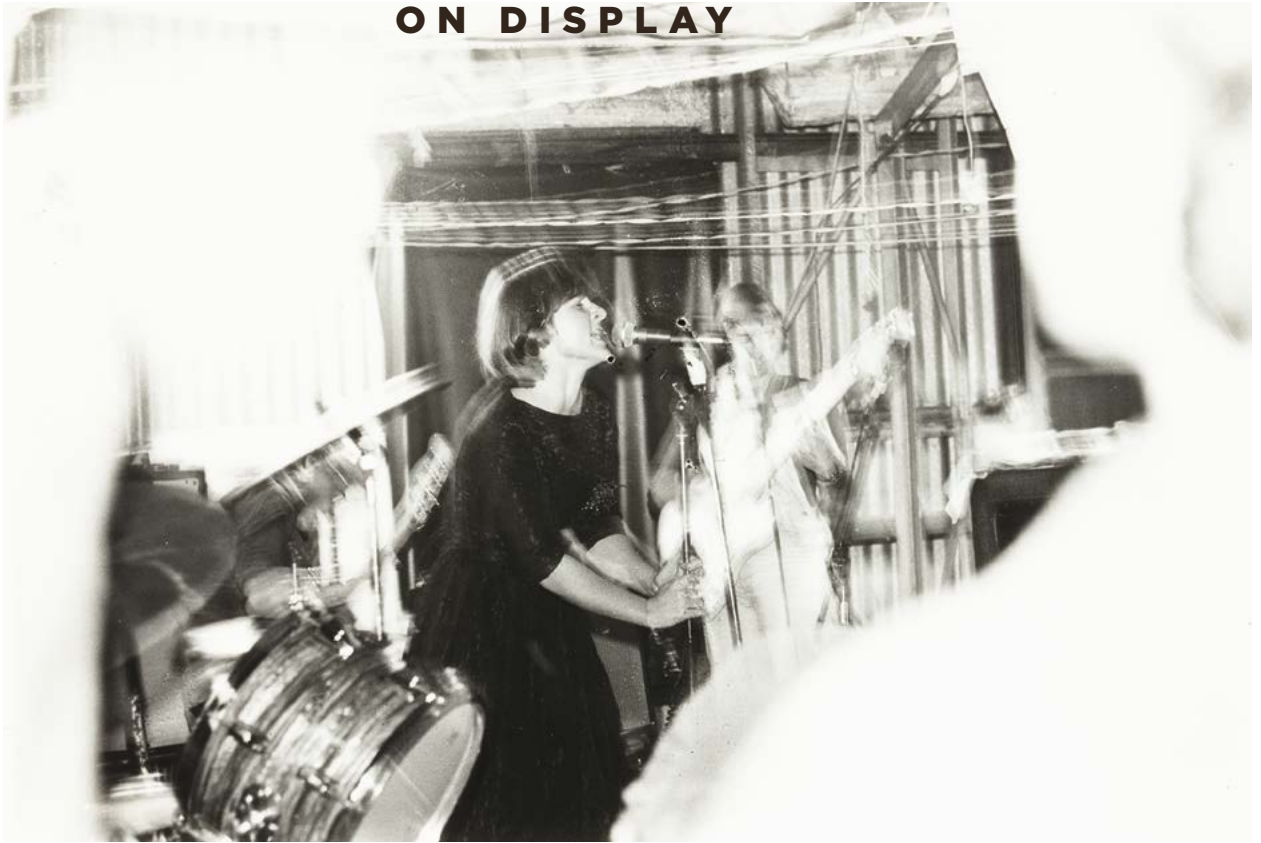
In 1895 the Free Public Library was renamed the Public Library of NSW, to reflect the 'scope of its operations and its national character.' A nascent profession of librarianship began to emerge, and Principal Librarians like Henry Anderson and William Ifould elevated the Library's role in Sydney's cultural life through their intelligent and passionate advocacy for its services and resources.

The opening of the Mitchell Library in 1910 significantly added to the prestige and international importance of the Library, and contributed to an understanding of the relevance of libraries to contemporary Australian life. Indeed, this was the foundation upon which the Free Library Movement of the 1930s was built. Without the inspiration of the Public Library of NSW it is difficult to see how the *Library Act 1939* — which led to the growth of the public library network throughout NSW — could have been so successfully realised.

**Richard Neville, Mitchell Librarian and Director,
Education & Scholarship**



ON DISPLAY



ELECTRIC

image

An eye-catching poster got the message out for an emerging Sydney band in 1980.

The International Women's Day march in Hyde Park on 10 March 1980 saw Sydney feminist band the Electric Fans pull their biggest crowd ever. The politically motivated band had come together in mid-1978, combining members of the all-female punk group Alias and other friends. They played their first gig at The Settlement in Redfern, before landing a residency at the Native Rose Hotel in Chippendale (now the Rose Hotel), and often appeared at protest rallies and political fundraisers.

One of the main ways the band reached its audience was with posters like the one shown here, which promoted the band's independently funded, first (and only) EP. According to sociologist, writer and Electric Fans drummer Professor Vivien Johnson, it was the band members themselves who plastered them on walls and hoardings and outside gigs. Later, when they ran out of the official photo covers for their EP, they cut up the remaining posters to make extra covers.

'Electric Fans' performing at the Sydney Uni Tin Sheds [?], singer Moira McLain-Cross, 1980, photoprint by Heather Anne Grey, PXA 1127/151



The poster was created by Sheona White, then a member of the Lucifoil Poster Collective based at the Sydney University Art Workshops. Known as the Tin Sheds, this workshop was established in the late 1960s, and housed the Earthworks Poster Collective from 1972 to 1979. By 1980 the largely female group of printers working there had evolved into the Lucifoil Poster Collective, named by combining the name of the resident cat, Luci, with a reference to the metal-clad building they worked in.

A recent purchase has enabled the Library to strengthen its collection of 1980s Sydney poster art with a series of production proofs for the Electric Fans poster, documenting the screen-printing process used at the Tin Sheds. Reflecting the 'do-it-yourself' punk sensibilities of the time, the poster's design was a collaborative process between Sheona and the band. Sheona found and photographed the industrial-looking fan and turned the 's' into a 'z' in the band's name to give the design a bit more edge. She recalls that 10 screens were used in the original printing set-up.

The Electric Fans proofs are part of a display of posters created by Sydney artists and activists in the 1960s, 70s and 80s. Community arts activism surfaced during these decades to spotlight the social concerns of the times: the Vietnam War, the women's movement, gay and lesbian rights, Aboriginal land rights and the environment. With its equipment easily and inexpensively manufactured, screen-printing was a means of direct expression that helped to politicise a generation.

Margot Riley, Curator, Research & Discovery

***Sedition: The Art of Agitation* is on display in the Amaze Gallery, launching in September for History Week 2019 and coinciding with Sedition Festival 2019.**

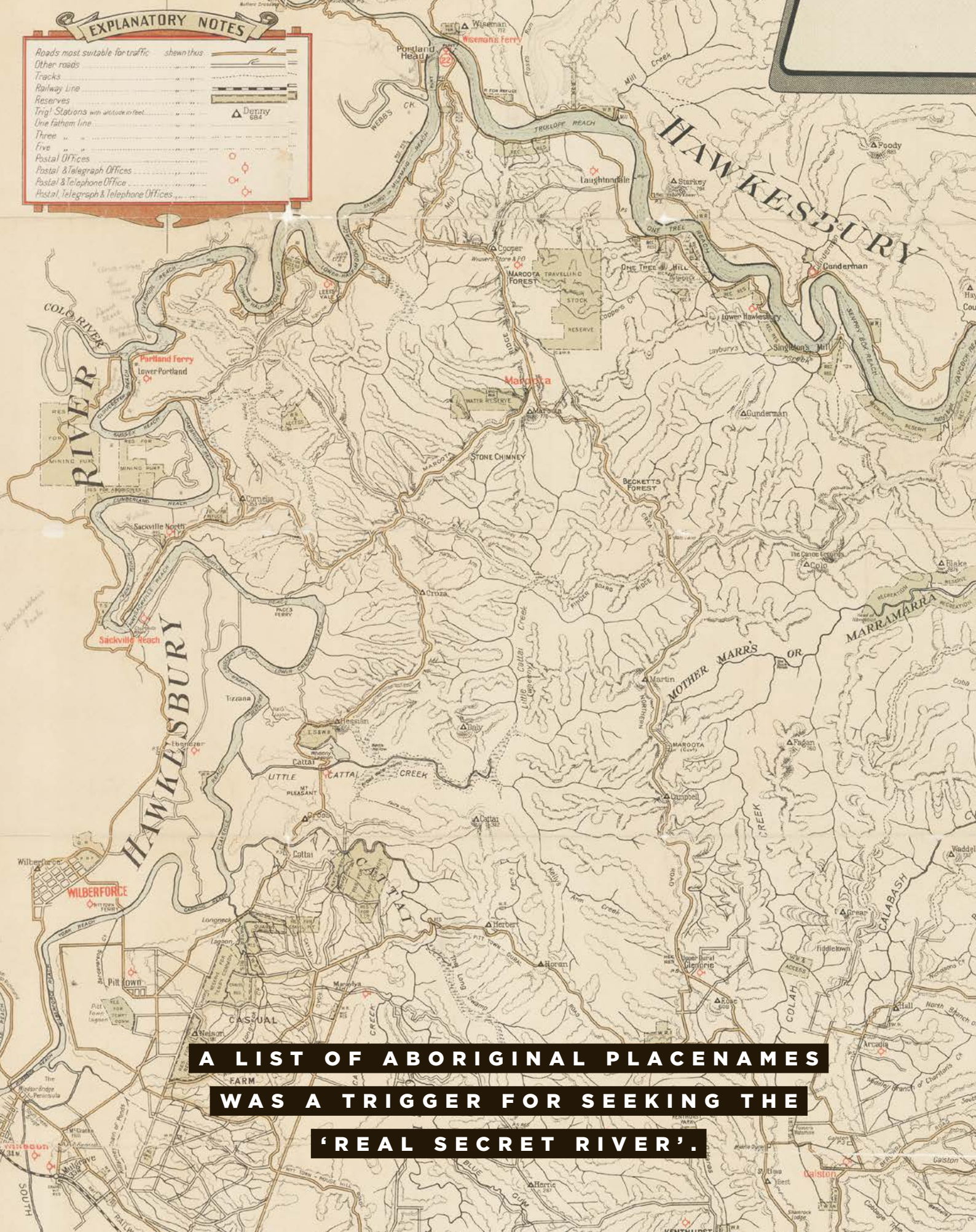
Electric Fans band members were Brooke Daniels (bass), Kaye Greenleaf (guitar), Rick Hawkins (guitar), Vivien Johnson (drums), Roberta Johnston (guitar) and Moira McLain-Cross (vocals). Sheona White is now Director, Penrith Regional Gallery & Lewers Bequest.

This article was corrected on 29 August 2019.

'Electric Fanz' poster, 1980, colour and metallic ink screen-printed on paper, © Sheona White, Lucifoil Poster Collective, PXD 1500/2

EXPLANATORY NOTES

- Roads most suitable for traffic shown thus
- Other roads
- Tracks
- Railway Line
- Reserves
- Trig Stations with altitude in feet
- One fathom line
- Three
- Five
- Postal Offices
- Postal & Telegraph Offices
- Postal & Telephone Office
- Postal, Telegraph & Telephone Offices



**A LIST OF ABORIGINAL PLACENAMES
WAS A TRIGGER FOR SEEKING THE
'REAL SECRET RIVER'.**

Exploring DYARUBBIN

* WORDS Grace Karskens

A day in the Mitchell Library is always filled with the promise of discovery. But, of course, it's mostly the slow but satisfying slog of research. Today is no different. I'm looking through microfilm copies of the papers of the Reverend John McGarvie, Presbyterian minister at Pitt Town and Ebenezer on the Hawkesbury River in the late 1820s, hoping as ever for glimpses of this river Country and its people.

So far it's slim pickings. Reverend McGarvie spent a lot of time writing long, elaborate poems and wordy diatribes for the *Sydney Gazette*, but very little time describing what life was like on the river.

I keep scrolling, and suddenly a list appears on the screen. It's headed 'Native names of places on the Hawkesbury'. And there follow five pages of Aboriginal placenames along Dyarubbin (the Hawkesbury River), over 170 of them, written neatly in ink or pencil.

I'm stunned. I sit there staring at the screen, hardly believing my eyes. After years of research, my own and others, I had thought that most of the Aboriginal names of the Hawkesbury were lost forever, destroyed in the aftermath of invasion and dispossession. Yet, suddenly, this cache of riches.

Looking more closely, it's clear that McGarvie took a lot of care with this list. The names appear to be in geographic order, and he included locational clues, like settlers' names, creeks and lagoons.

An extraordinary idea dawned on me: what if we could restore these names to their places on the river? And then: what if these beautiful, rolling words came back into common usage?

The scores of names on these pages contrast so strikingly with the modern landscapes of the Hawkesbury and Western Sydney. Once every place had an Aboriginal name. Now there are so few reminders of Aboriginal history and presence.

Yet Western Sydney is home to one of the biggest concentrations of Aboriginal people in Australia. With some important exceptions, Aboriginal people rarely see themselves represented in key heritage sites, or in the everyday reminders and triggers of public memory. Could this list be the catalyst for change, for shifting the shape of our landscapes towards recognition of Aboriginal history?

I contacted Darug knowledge-holders, artists and educators Leanne Watson, Erin Wilkins, Jasmine Seymour and Rhiannon Wright, asking if they would be interested in working on a project based on McGarvie's list. The response was instant: in fact I was bowled over by their enthusiasm!

We designed the 'Real Secret River Dyarubbin' project together, and were thrilled when it won the State Library's Coral Thomas Fellowship for 2018–19. This generous fellowship brought the project to life: not only because the funding enabled us to carry out

Oposite: Map of the Hawkesbury River from Windsor to Broken Bay including tributaries ... 1923 (detail), Department of Lands, NSW, Myles J Dunphy collection, M2 811.111/1923/1



the research and fieldwork, but because the Library and its staff have been so welcoming and supportive.

Looking back, it seems uncanny that McGarvie's list reappeared when it did — after all, we are in the midst of an extraordinary period of Aboriginal cultural renewal and language revitalisation.

The project's Darug researchers are committed to these quests. They want to research and record Aboriginal environmental and cultural knowledge and raise awareness of Aboriginal presence and history in the wider community. And because the Aboriginal history of Dyarubbin is continuous, the project includes an oral history component, recording twentieth century Aboriginal voices and stories of the river.

So it was obvious that McGarvie's words could be more than a list of names: it could be the key to a bigger story about the *real* secret river, Dyarubbin, and the Aboriginal history that was lost, submerged below what Tom Griffiths called 'the white noise of history making'.

But to do this, we need to put the words in their wider context: we need to see the river whole. Besides reconnecting the list to living Aboriginal knowledge, the project explores the history, languages, ecology, geography and archaeological evidence of the Hawkesbury River.

Our multidisciplinary team includes archaeologist and historian Paul Irish, linguist and anthropologist Jim Wafer, and photographer Joy Lai. Many local experts have also given generous support for the

project, including Hawkesbury historians Michelle Nichols and Jan Barkley-Jack, curator Rebecca Turnbull and geologist, historian and bushwalker extraordinaire Gil Jones.

The Library's collections hold so many precious clues to recreating the world of Dyarubbin in the early colonial period. Early maps showing the old river farms help us work out where the Aboriginal names belong. They also record long-lost landscapes of swamps, lagoons and creeks — important places for Aboriginal people that have since disappeared.

The letters and journals of Hawkesbury settlers contain hints about the ways Aboriginal people and settlers lived in this country over the nineteenth century. Local Aboriginal people befriended some of the settlers, like the Hall family at Lilburndale, and cultivated this relationship over generations. The Hall family papers hold some powerful and poignant traces: store receipts for goods Aboriginal people were purchasing from them, for example, and lists of the work they did at Lilburndale.

What about the words on McGarvie's list? What can they tell us? Jim Wafer and Darug team members are working on a glossary in six local and adjacent Aboriginal languages. Some of these words refer to specific places, environments and objects: caves and types of trees and plants, or tools and weapons.

Perhaps most evocative are two different words meaning 'rainbow': *Dorumbolooa* and *Gunanday*. Both are located in places with dramatic cliffs and

Gunanday, the Macdonald River (tributary of Dyarubbin, the Hawkesbury River), photo by Joy Lai

Dyarubbin team and friends: Gil Jones, Jim Wafer, Grace Karskens, Richard Waterhouse, René Breuls (back), Lully Cochrane, Erin Wilkins, Jasmine Seymour, Leanne Watson, Colin Lyons and Joy Lai

Names,

on the S. Side of the River Hawkesbury

Gunanday	—	Lower Branch
Boobloony	—	The upper side of it.
Moovvombury	—	Lower side —
Endé (n)	—	on the Branch.
Yambüny	—	Smiths & Flemings
woolloomoony	—	Wisemans

sharp river bends. These words are probably linked with Gurangatty, the great Eel Being, who is associated with rainbows, and who created the river and its valley in the Dreaming, leaving awesome chasms and sinuous bends in his wake.

Such words remind us of something obvious, and profound: if Aboriginal people are to be at the centre of this story, we need to *look beyond* European history and landscapes, beyond European knowledge and ways of thinking.

Dyarubbin and its tributary Gunanday (the Macdonald River) are part of a much larger, immensely rich archaeological zone, reaching from the Blue Mountains and the Wollemi in the west and up to the Hunter Valley and Lake Macquarie in the north. Many of the major recorded archaeological sites have sacred, spiritual and ceremonial meanings, especially those located on high places.

Closer to the river, Paul Irish's archaeological mapping has revealed how much of the Aboriginal cultural landscape survives today *within* the 'settler' landscape. From Richmond in the south, to higher Macdonald in the north, the river corridors are lined with more than 200 archaeological sites, including engravings, grinding grooves, stone arrangements and rock shelters, some with scores or hundreds of images in ochre and charcoal.

This search for Dyarubbin, the real secret river, is framed and guided by an Aboriginal sense of Country: the belief that people, animals, Law and Country are inseparable, that the land is animate and inspired, that it is a historical actor.



Leanne Watson's painting 'Waterholes', inspired by the project, expresses this sense of Country. Her painting represents the beautiful lagoons around Ebenezer near Wilberforce and all the nourishment and materials they offered people. Now we may be able to restore Aboriginal names to these lagoons.

Grace Karskens is Professor of History in the School of Humanities and Languages at the University of New South Wales. Her latest book, *The Colony: A History of Early Sydney*, won the 2010 Prime Minister's Literary Award for non-fiction and the US Urban History Association's prize for Best Book 2010. She is the Library's 2018-19 Coral Thomas Fellow. Bookings are open for her Coral Thomas Lecture on 24 October.

Hawkesbury river wordlist (detail),
Reverend John McGarvie papers, 1825-47, A1613

Waterholes, 2018, by Leanne Watson, courtesy of the artist

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

STAIRWAY STUDIO

* WORDS Caroline Baum



Yesterday, upon the stair,
I met a man who wasn't there.

That line from the 1899 poem *Antigonish* by William Hughes Mearns came to me when I stumbled on the Library's current Artist in Residence, Hadyn Wilson, who has set up a temporary studio on a small backstairs landing in the Mitchell building.

Although the space is not very prepossessing at first glance, it is blessed with excellent natural light, a prerequisite for any artist. And while the stairs are used occasionally by staff, there is no significant passing traffic, meaning that Wilson can work relatively undisturbed. For him, the landing is an ideal spot, within close reach of the collections he is mining for material.

His assistant, Pru Smith, runs up and down to source books and references from late nineteenth and early twentieth century documents. Wilson is building an intriguing series of fictional narratives around the lives of Australian artists and associated figures — from Arthur Streeton to Robert Louis Stevenson — even going so far as to write fake letters they might have penned.

In one cheeky instance, he has cut and pasted a photograph of Paul Gauguin into a group shot of Australian artists at the Montsalvat colony in Victoria. 'I am creating backstories and alternative versions of history like a novelist,' he says, describing his project as '*historyonomy* — a word I coined that is a weird combination of history and the word "onomy", as in a system of rules or laws, or a body of knowledge'.

Supplementing the letters, diaries and artworks Wilson and Smith have discovered in the Library's collection are paintings from the Howard Hinton Collection at the New England Regional Art Museum.

So far Wilson, a prize-winning artist, has created a series of miniature oils on canvasses little larger than postcards. He is copying paintings by various artists, and tweaking them with a playful or mischievous detail to add an element of intrigue and invite speculation. In one instance, he has altered a painting of a ballerina by Jean Béraud, dating from 1873, adding a small silver Glock pistol in the subject's clasped hands. 'I try to make these intrusions subtle and do them with integrity.'

His portraits, landscapes and still-life pictures will, when exhibited later this year, be supplemented by short videos in which Wilson is the unreliable narrator in a series of mini-mockumentaries that include almost plausible histories and encounters.

In the process of researching his subjects, Wilson has uncovered the lives of several women artists who were contemporaries of their more famous male counterparts — among them Hilda Rix Nicholas, the wonderfully named Polly Hurry, and Vida Lahey.

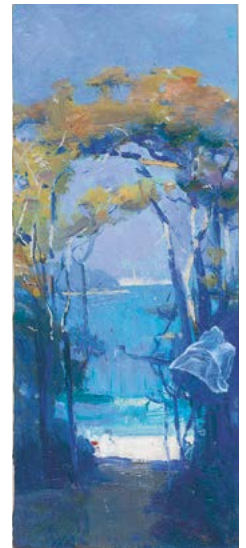
The colonial past has been a consistent theme in his body of work, in particular the Curlew Camp at Sirius Cove in Sydney, where Tom Roberts, Arthur Streeton and other artists explored the innovative practice of plein air painting.

A fossicker and bowerbird by nature, Wilson is a long-time collector of found organic material and objects, which he keeps in the Mosman studio he shares with Stephen Coburn (the son of artist John Coburn); it is his contemporary version of a cabinet of curiosities.

Having first visited the Library as a schoolboy, Wilson is completely at home here. Although back then he would not have known about the landing that has become his studio.

Caroline Baum's latest book is *Only: A Singular Memoir*.

More about Hadyn Wilson at www.hadynwilson.com



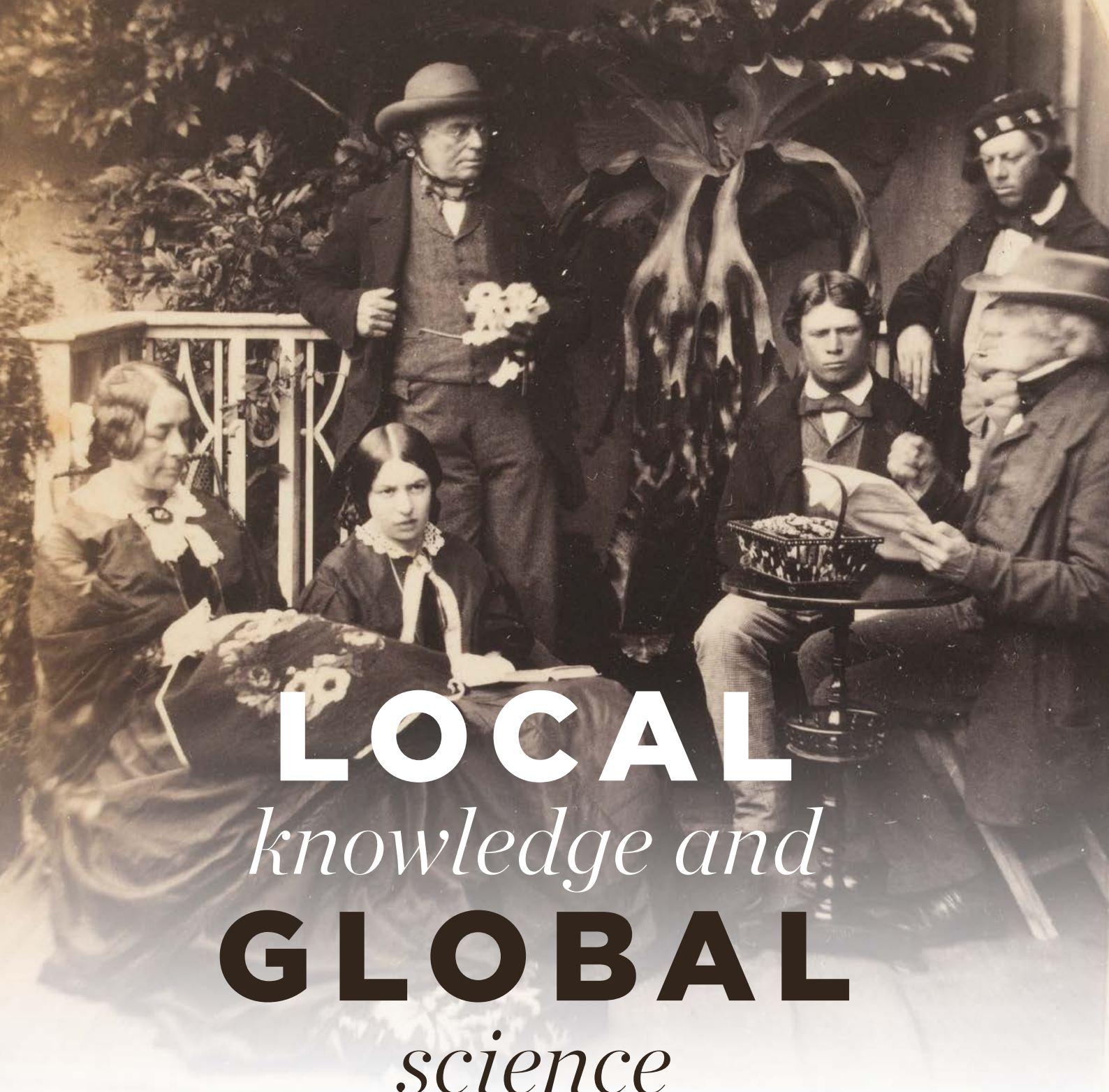
Artworks by Hadyn Wilson:

Arthur Streeton's 'Balmoral Beach' (also known as 'Sorrento, Naples'), 1897, with non-biodegradable item

Jean Beraud's 'La Danseuse', 1873, with silver Glock

Portrait of Arthur Streeton, 1895 (Talma Photographic Studios, Melbourne), sporting a rarely seen early example of the Greenpeace logo

Opposite: Hadyn Wilson, photo by Joy Lai



LOCAL
knowledge and
GLOBAL
science

Grazier, horticulturalist and amateur botanist
William Macarthur was one of few early settlers to take
Aboriginal knowledge of plants seriously.

* WORDS Julie McIntyre

In 1809 John Macarthur and his younger sons James and William are laid over in Rio de Janeiro on their way from New South Wales to England. Macarthur is making the journey for legal reasons after the rebellion against Governor William Bligh, and has taken the opportunity to deliver the boys to their English tutor.

‘William has the activity of a monkey,’ he writes with a mixture of exasperation and affection to his wife Elizabeth at Parramatta, ‘and sits on a yard arm on a top gallant masthead with as much apparent ease and satisfaction as if he were in an elbow chair. Coming on board a few days since I saw him perched aloft like a bird, but before I could ascend the side the urchin had descended like lightning down one of the back stays, and was at the gangway before me.’

The slightly older and more serious James accompanies his father onshore to meet a British envoy, but William’s clothes are too stained with ‘pitch and tar’ for such distinguished company.

Now picture this. Forty years later, in the early 1850s, William is in bushland in the Illawarra region of New South Wales, a place familiar to him from field trips observing and collecting native plant specimens. He has sent many such plants to the herbarium at London’s Kew Gardens – the locus of nineteenth-century English-language botanical science. He has a small notebook and pencil, and is in the company of Tharawal (Dharawal) man Doctor Ellis and probably another Aboriginal man known as Johnny.

The men are discussing the Aboriginal names and uses of particular trees. William will draw on these notes to draft a catalogue, to be published in French, for the Paris International Exhibition. Macarthur’s catalogue presents ‘noms botaniques, noms arborigènes and noms locaux’. Latin-style botanical names are followed by Aboriginal names for 128 of the 258 plants recorded.



How did the urchin in the rigging at Rio in 1809 grow into one of the few early settler Australians to pay respectful attention to Aboriginal knowledge, and broadcast it to the wider world of science? The currents of political, economic and women’s history that have illuminated the achievements of Elizabeth and John Macarthur, and their sixth child James, have tended to overshadow William, seventh of the eight Macarthur offspring.

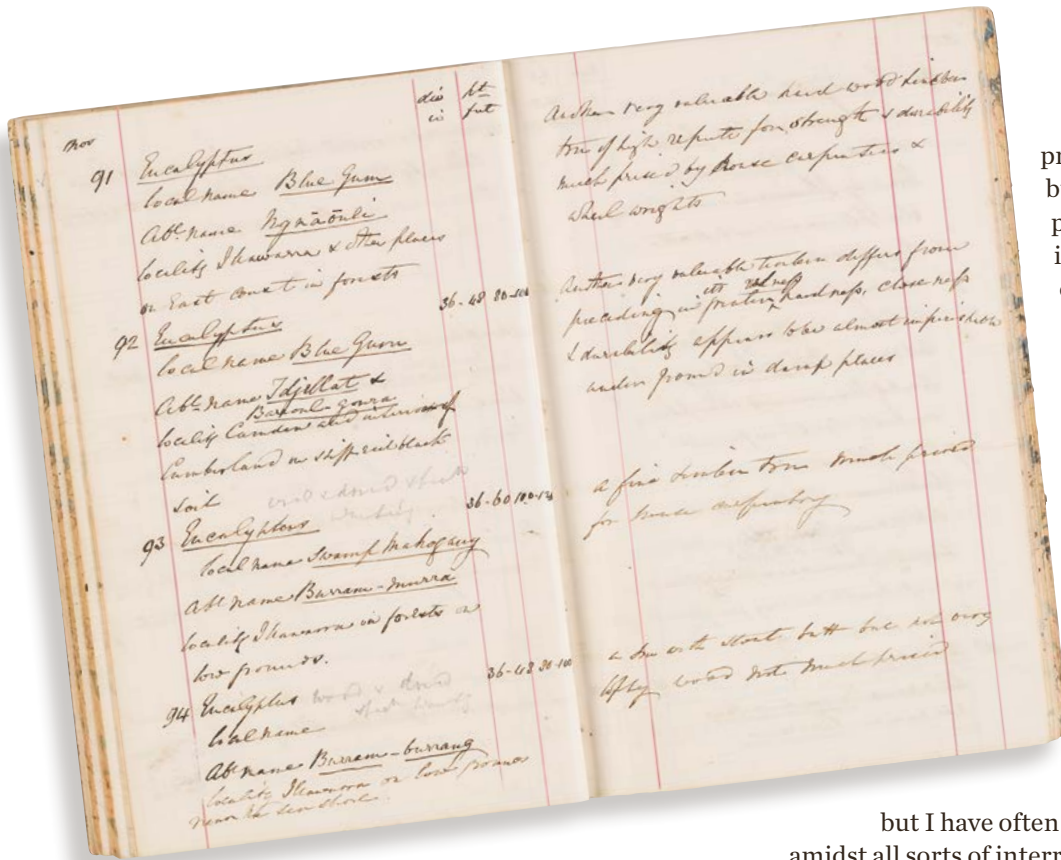
William was born in early summer of 1800 at Elizabeth Farm, Parramatta, into a first generation settler household at the centre of colonial politics and society. As historian Alan Atkinson and Elizabeth Macarthur’s biographer Michelle Scott Tucker have shown, the family was bound intimately to the Dharug and Tharawal people, whose land they occupied.

William and his brother James (born 1798) were educated at Elizabeth Farm from 1807 to 1809 by Frenchman Huon de Kerilleau, originally of the New South Wales Corps. This laid the foundation for William’s skills in writing and speaking French, and perhaps too for his cosmopolitan mindset, sharpened during his schooling in England and Switzerland.

In London from 1809 to 1815, James and William boarded with Dr Lindsay, a well-known tutor. Their father wrote to their mother that they were good boys, favoured by their teacher. They were reading Virgil. James was steadfast; William apparently quite the opposite.

Opposite: Group identified (in pencil) as Sir W Macarthur, Bowman, Mrs Macarthur, [illegible], Mr Macarthur, in ‘Album of views, illustrations and Macarthur family photographs, 1857–66, 1879 PXA 4358/Vol 1/124(a)

‘The residence of John McArthur Esqre. near Parramatta, New South Wales’, 1825, by Joseph Lycett, in *Views in Australia*, London, 1824–25, SAFE/F82/16



William's duty to the most profitable facet of the family business — wool export — took precedence over his botanical interests. In the absence of colonial standards of wool classing, William told his brother Edward that 'up to 1831, every fleece, every flock of sheep was sorted at great pains by me. It formed nearly constant occupation of a very irksome kind for two or three months of every year. I should have preferred hard labour in the field. I never shrank from it or uttered a word of complaint, because I knew it was necessary,

but I have often pursued it with aching eyes, amidst all sorts of interruptions and discomforts, which a sense only that it was for the good of all would have induced me to submit to.'

Still, in these same years, William began a correspondence with a British collector of exotic plants, William Hooker, who would later become director of Kew Gardens. In 1827, Hooker asked Macarthur to send any native plant specimens he could spare, 'provided they were in flower or in fruit ... particularly the Ferns (in which I am now engaged), the mosses and the seaweeds'.

William sought Hooker's support in his, ultimately unsuccessful, advocacy for the eager, penniless German Ludwig Leichhardt to become director of the Sydney Botanic Garden. (Letters addressed to Leichhardt were sent to Camden Park during his final fateful expedition from Moreton Bay in 1844, and are among the vast collection of William Macarthur's papers in the Mitchell Library.) William was friend and supporter of the Botanic Garden's first director John Bidwill, who served briefly in 1847.

Among William's achievements were fostering the classification of Australian flora while also cultivating introduced flower and fruit species,

When James and William were at school in Switzerland in 1816 they accompanied their father to visit Jean-Jacques Dufour, the key figure transmitting winegrowing practices from Vevey, Switzerland, to Kentucky in the United States at the turn of the nineteenth century. James was disgusted at the sight of Dufour's fermenting wine grapes, but William likely took a keen interest as he would go on to lead the development of a colonial Australian wine industry.

When John, James and William returned to Parramatta in 1817, Elizabeth described James as 'six feet high and stout withall, William more slender but evidently giving promise of being stout also ... They are delighted to return to their native land and breathe not a regret for the gay scenes of the English Metropolis. Nothing they saw in France or Switzerland effaced the strong desire they had to return to their native wild woods in New South Wales'. The beauty and commercial prospects of these woods beguiled William, and he paid them close attention.

William Macarthur's notebook, 1850s, Macarthur papers, vol 56, A 2952

N°	NOMS BOTANIQUES.	NOMS ARBORIGÈNES.	NOMS LOCAUX.	DIAMÈTRES. POUCES.	HAUTEURS. PIEDS.
82	C MELIA AUSTRALIS. Joli petit arbre, surtout lorsqu'il est en fleur, ressemblant beaucoup au Melia Azederach commun; bois mou et de peu de valeur.	<i>Dtheera.</i>	White-Cedar.	12 à 24	40 à 60
83	A EUCALYPTUS SP. Variété d'Iron Bark (écorce de fer) mais ayant l'écorce extérieure lisse; bois beau et dur, produisant des charpentes d'une durée extraordinaire.	<i>Bàrrénma.</i>	Iron Bark.	36 à 40	80 à 100
84	A EUCALYPTUS SP. Il y a plus de 55 ans que cet échantillon d'une variété d'Iron Bark fut coupé.		Iron Bark.	» »	» »
85	A EUCALYPTUS PILLULARIS? Remarquable échantillon d'Eucalyptus trouvé seulement sur les sommets rocailloux ou pierreux des montagnes, très-commun sur une longue chaîne de montagnes divisant le pays. Arbre de couleur très-brune, ayant l'écorce du tronc raboteuse et celle de ses branches lisse; bois très-dur, coriace et de longue durée, très précieux pour faire des timons de chariot; — échantillon au-dessous de l'ordinaire.		Mountain Ash.	36 à 60	100 à 100
86	C ALSOPHILA AUSTRALIS? Fougère de grande beauté, ne pouvant être utilement employée.	<i>Beeow-wang.</i>	Tree Fern.	6 à 9	40 à 45
87	C BALANTIUM ANTARCTICUM. La plus grosse et la plus belle des quatre espèces d'arbres fougères qu'on trouve à Illawarra.	<i>Gourroo-mool.</i>	Tree Fern.	9 à 18	40 à 25
88	A EUCALYPTUS MEDIA? Un des plus gros des Eucalyptus, produisant un bois de charpente excellent pour le bâtiment ou pour tout autre objet où la force et la longue durée sont les qualités requises. Cet arbre atteint plus de 30 pieds de circonférence mais alors il est souvent creux.	<i>Yarr-warra.</i>	Black Butt.	36 à 72	100 à 200
89	A EUCALYPTUS SP. Arbre très-gros, donnant de belles charpentes; bois très-apprécié, pour faire des jantes de roue et autres ouvrages demandant à la fois force et solidité.	<i>Ngnâôuli.</i>	Woolly Butt	36 à 72	100 à 150

including wine grapes. William sold wine-grape cuttings from his Camden Park plant nursery and published one of the earliest English-language manuals on viticulture and winemaking. As of 1844 Sydney merchants carried the Macarthurs' wine.

In 1854 William travelled to England as New South Wales Commissioner for the Paris Exhibition, for which he was later knighted. He oversaw a large collection of products from the colony, including Camden wines, wood samples and furniture manufactured from Australian timbers in England.

On this trip, William helped arrange publication of the widely celebrated illustrations of Australian Lepidoptera (moths and butterflies) by Harriet and Helena Scott. He used funds from their father, Walker Scott, to engage a British entomologist to check text and nomenclature and at Scott's request, had 'the work published at all events and in a superior manner'.

Historians are increasingly interested in the contribution of Aboriginal people as well as white women to settler science. Along with the Aboriginal names of plants, William Macarthur's list in the Paris catalogue includes Aboriginal usage of parts of the plants for food, cordage (ropes) and weaponry.

A record in Macarthur's papers of payment to Doctor Ellis and Johnny, possibly for supplying this information, further suggests the landholder's respect for Aboriginal expertise.

William Macarthur's family connections placed him at the crux of colonial influence and development. It is significant that he shaped European-style pastoralism, agriculture and horticulture in Australia. Yet in 2019, the International Year of Indigenous Languages it is most poignant that Macarthur is a rare case of a settler who took Aboriginal plant knowledge seriously.

By the time of his death in 1882, Macarthur's name was attached to at least five Australian plants listed in sales catalogues for the Veitch nursery business in Britain. And also to *Eucalyptus macarthurii*, the Ngnâôuli (Camden Woollybutt), number 89 in Macarthur's 1855 catalogue. This once common eucalypt species from the Illawarra region is now threatened and eligible to be listed as endangered.

Dr Julie McIntyre is an environmental historian at the University of Newcastle. She was the Library's 2018 Merewether Fellow, and is a Fulbright scholar. Her latest book, *Hunter Wine: A History*, was published by NewSouth in 2018. She is writing a global history of Australia for Princeton University Press.



ON EDGE

WITH PRACTICAL ORIGINS,

FORE-EDGE DECORATION

IS AN ENDURING ART.

Heading to the library 800 years ago you would have found what you were looking for by scanning the fore-edges (the opening edges, opposite the spine) of books lying flat on the shelf. The edge facing outwards would display the title, author or shelf number, and an owner may have branded it with his name or coat-of-arms.

As libraries grew and needed more space, books were stored upright, concealing the edges and placing the spines on display. Fortunately, this change didn't end the fascinating art of edge decoration, which can turn a plainly bound book into a work of art.

Decorating the fore-edge enhances the appearance of a book, but it also protects the contents from dust, dirt and overhandling.

Examples of plain coloured edges — the simplest form of edge decoration — have been found on books from the fourth century. Once the edges of the book have been trimmed and smoothed, the colour is sponged or brushed onto the edge.

Another simple edge decorating technique is sprinkling. The coloured pigment is applied by flicking the stiff bristles of a brush dipped in pigment or dabbing the edge with a 'sprinkle-brush' of hog hairs. The Library has examples of these techniques, as well as books with edges decorated with coloured starch paste.

Opposite: Maggie Patton with a selection of decorated fore-edges



Perhaps the most eye-catching edge decoration is gilding with gold leaf or gold coloured paint, creating a luxurious appearance that was popular with wealthy collectors from the fifteenth century.

Taking the gold edging further is the practice of gauffering, in which a pattern is impressed into the edges of the book after gilding. An example in the collection showing this technique is *Alexandri Picolhominei De Sphaera Libri Qvatvor ...* 1568 edited by Johann Niklaus Stupanus.

Sermoni di beato Leone papa di lingua latina in toscana ... 1485 by Filippo Corsini and Antonio Miscomini, MRB/Q252/L (Incunabula)

Speculum orbis terrae, 1593, by Gerard de Jode, MRB/X912/13 (16th century)
In prima Pauli ad Romanos ep[isto]la Athanasii prologus, 1477, by Athanasius Saint, Patriarch of Alexandria, MRB/Q227/T (Incunabula)



A more intricate gauffered edge could be created by scraping away the gold to uncover edges stained with a contrasting colour.

Marbled edges began to appear in the seventeenth century, and became common over the next couple of centuries. The edges of the book were dipped into the marbling mixture, or a marbled paper was dipped in hydrochloric acid and pressed onto the fore-edge, or a patterned roller was used. The edges often carry the same marbled pattern as the decorated endpapers.

Regardless of which technique is used, the pages must be fanned out before decoration begins and talcum powder or corn starch rubbed into the edges to stop them sticking together.

Fanning the gilded or marbled edges may reveal something spectacular. The practice of hiding a painted scene or figure on the edge of a book was introduced in the mid-seventeenth century. The technique may have been used to hide a secret image or message from the general public.

A book is clamped with the edges fanned out and an artist uses watercolours to paint an image that disappears when the book is closed. Some artists have created double fore-edge paintings by clamping the book with the pages fanned back to front as well as front to back.

The popularity of fore-edge painting reached a peak in the nineteenth century. Sometimes the subject of the painting reflected the contents of the book; at other times it was purely decorative.

Often paintings were added many years after the book was published. The fore-edge of *The Rise and Progress of Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand*, published in London in 1857, shows a north view of Sydney. Although artists rarely signed fore-edges, this one is signed by 'Miss Currie', who was active in the early 1900s. Another fore-edge painting by Miss Currie shows a view of Sydney Harbour from Watsons Bay.

Hidden fore-edge paintings are still produced by artisan bookbinders. In 2014 the Library acquired a limited edition copy of *French Designs on Colonial New South Wales: François Péron's memoir on the English settlements in New Holland, Van Diemen's Land and the Archipelagos of the great Pacific Ocean*. Bound in South Australia by Anthony Zammit, it includes a fore-edge painting by Stephen Bowers depicting an arrival of European settlers in Australia with local Indigenous men in the foreground.

Maggie Patton, Manager, Research & Discovery

Top left: A selection of marbled edges

Top right: 'A North view of Sydney', by Miss Currie, from *The Rise and Progress of Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand ... 1857*, by an Englishman, C 888

Opposite: A selection of decorated fore-edges, including *Alexandri Piccolhominei De Sphaera Libri Qvatro ... 1568*, by Johann Niklaus Stupanus, SAFE 56/1 (second from bottom);

French Designs on Colonial New South Wales: François Péron's memoir ... 2014, translated and edited by Jean Fornasiero & John West-Sooby, MRB/210 (bottom)

COLLECTION SPOTLIGHT





In the MARGINS

Artist and civil servant John Rae is the likely contender for nineteenth-century Sydney's most impressive doodle drawer.

✱ WORDS Rachel Franks



FEATURE

The shipboard diary of John Rae, en route from Scotland to New South Wales in 1839, conveys the sensibility of the man who would become the Town Clerk of the newly formed City of Sydney four years later. 'A beautiful morning — breese [*sic*] died away to a whisper,' Rae writes, 'water smooth as glass and sparkling in the sunbeams walking the water like a snail of life at one knot an hour.'

Rae made the most of his time on the ship *Kinnear*. He swam when in port, talked to fellow passengers, read and set puzzles for himself. The amateur artist, author and photographer also worked on designing photographic equipment. He was not a man with idle hands.

Rae arrived in Sydney as secretary and accountant to the North British Australasian Loan and Investment Co, but sought alternative employment when the company's prospects collapsed in 1843. Having declined a civic position with the City of Melbourne, he joined the City of Sydney as secretary, administrator and chief advisor, or Town Clerk, to the City of Sydney on a salary of £400. Although the salary — which was reduced to £300 after six months — would be a sticking point for Rae, he proved himself a competent and level-headed bureaucrat through the difficult period of establishing the council.

As part of this role, Rae took the council's minutes, now held in the City of Sydney Archives. They record dates of meetings, who attended, matters discussed, resolutions carried and defeated, and reports from (often controversially formed) committees and sub-committees. They were handwritten, with a clean copy created from rough notes taken at meetings.



A set of original rough minute books, covering Rae's tenure, survives in the City's records. Intriguingly, the florid script documenting the business of the day is supplemented with hundreds of small artworks. These delightful images, occupying the margins of official records, range from elaborate ornamental motifs to people, animals, buildings, plants, sailboats and sea monsters.

According to an accompanying note, these sketches are 'presumably drawn by the Town Clerk, John Rae, or his assistant'. So who was the doodler in the council's minute books? Was it Rae, or his assistant? Comparing the City's minute books with Rae's substantial collection of papers and artworks at the State Library leads me to believe the Town Clerk was indeed the City's most impressive colonial-era doodler.

In the letters Rae sent home to his parents and siblings in Scotland between 1840 and 1854, illustrations and words mix seamlessly on the page. Similarly, the tight nesting of images and text in the minute books makes it unlikely that the drawings were made after the minutes were taken.

Opposite: 'Minutes of Council', City of Sydney, from 9 November 1842 (details), CRS 7/3A and CRS 7/4A [draft copies], photos by Will Newell

John Rae, artist, between 1860–1880, photographs by J Lyne Brown and unknown, P1 / 1404



Many of Rae's paintings of Sydney, Wollongong and Newcastle are held in the Library's collection, as well as portraits of Aboriginal people in the Illawarra and several photographs. His best-known work, the 1850 watercolour *The Turning of the First Turf of the Railway in NSW at Redfern*, shows a cloudy blue sky in Sydney on 3 July 1850 — despite the fact that torrential rain dampened the spirits of the thousands who gathered on the great occasion. Yet, the artist has given prominence to a family of Aboriginal Australians in defiant residence on a patch

of land in Redfern. Rae might have failed to tell the truth about the weather but he tells what would have been an uncomfortable truth about First Nations people in colonial Australia.

Several themes across the minute book marginalia — notably architecture, people and the sea — are echoed in Rae's papers and artworks. His distinctive line work is obvious. The way he sketched people in the street, his focus on a front door, the inclusion of a chimney, a garden or window boxes — all these appear across the City's minute books and



his papers in the Library. In his sea-themed sketches in both sets of papers he creates multiple lines with a single pen stroke: a continuous squiggle as his hand moves easily from left to right and back again. Many single lines, short and sharp pen marks, have a hook at the end.

The drawings in the minute books align with Rae's tenure but not with the employment of any of the assistants appointed to him. A particular style of penmanship — and a clearly identifiable thread of whimsy — can be seen across all the volumes of the draft minute books during Rae's almost 10 years as Town Clerk.

As well as the identifiable drawings, some of the images are more traditional doodles — aimless wanderings of ink producing small, often repetitive patterns — the product of a mind 'idling' during a period of activity. This suggests a single source rather than a crew of casual assistants, for as neurologist GD Schott notes, 'no doodler sets out in advance to doodle, and doodlers are individualistic and do not seem to copy one another'.

Some examples of marginalia within the minute books are quite personal. In 1849, a notice to discuss and decide upon the salary and allowance for the Mayor drew a pointed response from the doodler, who drew a volcano with an angry face spewing forth.

Another matter of remuneration rankled Rae in 1853. It was agreed that Michael Golden, the City Building Surveyor on an annual salary of £200, would be given an additional £200 to compile an early Building Act. It was argued at Town Hall and in the press that this was part of Golden's job and the bonus was excessive. The minute taker's frustration is palpable. The words 'dog' and 'Diogenes', complete with exclamation marks, are written with such force they are visible on the other side of the page.

Rae was awarded some satisfaction in December of that year. The entire council was sacked and Rae was one of three Commissioners who took over the City's administration; his salary as a Commissioner, from 1844 to 1856, was £525 per annum.

Cohabiting with pages of dry legal text, Rae's marginalia offer an accessible, visual narrative of an important chapter in the story of Sydney and enhance the formal history of the city. The comparison of his personal papers and works held in the Library with the professional records in the City's archives adds to our picture of John Rae as a creator and an influential figure in Sydney's history.

Dr Rachel Franks, Coordinator, Education & Scholarship

With thanks to the City of Sydney Archives for facilitating access to the City's minute books.



The first
MRS DARK

INTIMATE LETTERS FROM 100 YEARS AGO

PAINT A DETAILED SELF-PORTRAIT

OF A YOUNG AUSTRALIAN WOMAN.



WORDS Margo Beasley

FEATURE

It is more than 30 years since John Oliver Dark deposited in the Mitchell Library a set of letters that his mother wrote to his father before, during and after the First World War. His mother, Kathleen Aphra Dark nee Raymond — known by her nickname ‘Daidee’ — wrote more than 100 letters to her fiancé and then husband, Dr Eric Payten Dark, before she died in 1920, a few weeks after John’s birth.

Eric Dark went on to enjoy a long marriage to celebrated Australian novelist Eleanor Dark, and his marriage to Daidee is occasionally mentioned as a brief prologue to that larger cultural story.

But the ‘Daidee letters’, as they are called, have their own story to tell. Although they can now only be read in light of the tragedy that was to come, their vitality and ardour paint a detailed self-portrait of a young middle-class Australian woman coming to emotional and sexual maturity in the second decade of the twentieth century.

Daidee, born in 1892, and Eric, born in 1890, met when they both lived with their families on Sydney’s lower north shore. She began training as a nurse at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in 1914 and he, already studying medicine and in love with her from 1912, arranged to be posted there so that he could see her more often.

Eric proposed marriage early on, but for several years Daidee didn’t reciprocate the depth of his feelings. In her first letter, written some time before war broke out in 1914, she wrote:

... thank you for the handkerchiefs. They were very pretty and it was good of you to send them; but I don’t know if you realise that you are making me have to be very careful what I say when you are here. This is the second time you have given me something I mentioned I would like, and if you don’t mind I would rather you didn’t go spending your money on things for me ...

yours sincerely
D Raymond

But Daidee offered Eric friendship, which he accepted with a view to his longer-term hopes. The couple picnicked together, took day trips to Narrabeen on Sydney’s northern beaches, toured Centennial Park and went on boating excursions. At the hospital, Eric was able to meet up with Daidee casually, escort her out on her days off and help her with her studies.

In 1915, in return for an early graduation, he volunteered to join the British Army as a doctor. Daidee and Eric’s correspondence, of which only her letters survive, began in earnest.

Daidee’s early wartime letters were full of gossip news about the hospital, friends and family members. She bemoaned the dreariness of cookery classes, made fun of her teachers, grumbled about punitive nursing sisters, and complained about her workload, especially during prolonged stints of night duty. She asked for Eric’s thoughts about the nurses and doctors they knew, and derided ‘catty’ colleagues who ‘think they are upper class ... when really a lot of kitchen maids wouldn’t lower themselves by talking as they do’.

While Eric was running field ambulance units in the trenches of France and Belgium, Daidee kept up an active social life in Sydney: in the hospital common room, on the tennis court, on wildflower excursions, on day trips to Sans Souci, and at morning and afternoon teas at Farmers’ department store. She attended public talks about the war and queued for hours to buy half-price tickets to hear Dame Nellie Melba. She visited Sydney landmarks: the Royal Botanic Garden, the Art Gallery of NSW, and the newly opened Taronga Park Zoo. She enjoyed holidays with friends to Avoca, Palm Beach and the Blue Mountains. In between, she studied, read, played music, and sewed almost all her own clothes, as well as gifts for friends and family. And she knitted socks for soldiers.



On the fashionable topic of spiritualism she reported heated arguments within her family, and she was also sceptical of the miraculous cures promised by Christian Science. In 1917 she complained about the General Strike, which she called the ‘tram and train strike’. Later that year, she attended a public meeting at Sydney Town Hall about the second conscription referendum, addressed by Prime Minister Billy Hughes. She hoped sincerely that the ‘yes’ vote would come out ‘on top’ because she was worried that too few men were doing their patriotic duty, as Eric was.

But as she developed, both as a nurse and a young woman, her natural exuberance was softened by life’s experiences. After the death from septicaemia of a young patient, Thelma, she asked, ‘Why have little things like that got to suffer so, it seems so wicked.’ She recounted the profound grief experienced by the parents of a three-year-old boy whose malignant eye tumour meant certain death. And she prayed for the hasty demise of a male patient because he would be released from unbearable pain.

As hostilities deepened half a world away, they began to puncture Daidee’s life at home. When her brother Eric and her cousin Jack enlisted, she wrote to Eric Dark that it was ‘a horrible sort of feeling to have, that they may be going to their death’. Her brother returned but Jack did not, dying not of wounds but of influenza and pneumonia. Towards the end of 1918, when peace seemed probable, Daidee wrote that the welcome news only made her sad, because ‘when flags are flying and boats whistling and everyone [is] going mad it makes one pretty blue’.

But alongside Daidee’s experiences on the home front is the compelling story of her increasingly warm long-distance relationship with Eric, with a barely submerged subtext of her sexual awakening.

As Daidee’s feelings deepened, the gifts the couple exchanged became more personal. She sent Eric a copy of the new literary sensation *The Songs of a Sentimental Bloke*, a silk scarf she knitted for him, sprigs of wattle from his family home and hers, boronia from Narrabeen, and forget-me-nots for remembrance. A tiny parcel containing a little bronze boomerang engraved with the words ‘I go to return’ was lost en route to Europe.

Eric sent her sheet music, photographs of himself in uniform, and pictures of the famous English medieval country house Haddon Hall. Extravagant gifts of a dressing case and furs, probably a matching collar and muff, were received with enthusiasm: the furs were ‘deliciously warm’ and it was absolutely ‘bonz’ of him to send them.

In early 1917, having accepted Eric’s proposal in a letter that does not survive, Daidee wrote that it was ‘funny to be engaged to a man who has never even kissed me. You can have a double lot when you come back. No-one else ever had any, you can have all I had in store.’

But her feelings were not unequivocal. While at times she said the sight of him was the only thing that could make her happy, she also expressed her doubts about her capacity to be fully ‘in love’ with anyone. She described herself as behaving like a ‘pig’ to him before he went to war, but also said, ‘I miss you terribly sometimes only I simply can’t make up my mind one way or another whether I want you or whether I don’t.’

Eric came back to Australia on leave after he was gassed at Passchendaele, and he and Daidee married in late January 1918. Ten weeks later, he returned to

FEATURE



the war. From that time, her letters were filled with rapturous references to the physical side of marriage but she also recalled that her blissful response was not immediate. She reminded him of the Saturday night before the ceremony: ‘You absolutely scared me in the work room the way you kissed me. You seemed to be demanding body and soul from my lips and I just felt as if I couldn’t let you have what you wanted. I’ve heard of kisses scorching. That one did.’

Later, she told Eric she was ashamed of saying ‘don’t’ so often in the first weeks of marriage ‘but I did feel a very sick girl ... going away with you was such a complete step out of one life into another’. She reminded him that it had taken time for her feelings to change. ‘Think hard for a few minutes, just remember the very first time you made me respond to you absolutely and you will find it was about three or four weeks after Jan 25th [their wedding day]’.

She was increasingly frank about her own desires: ‘it was absolutely awful the barefaced way I made love to you. Personally I think I did just as much love-making as you did’. On his return, he could kiss her anywhere he liked, ‘and you did have quite a lot of favourite little spots didn’t you?’

Before Eric left Australia, Daidee wrote him a letter that he would receive when he returned to the war: ‘Do you remember the night, only two ago now ... when I’ve lay with your head on my breast, or my head tucked into your neck and shoulder and just talked quietly for hours. The hours we had later on won’t bear putting into words, they were too exquisite to be desecrated so.’

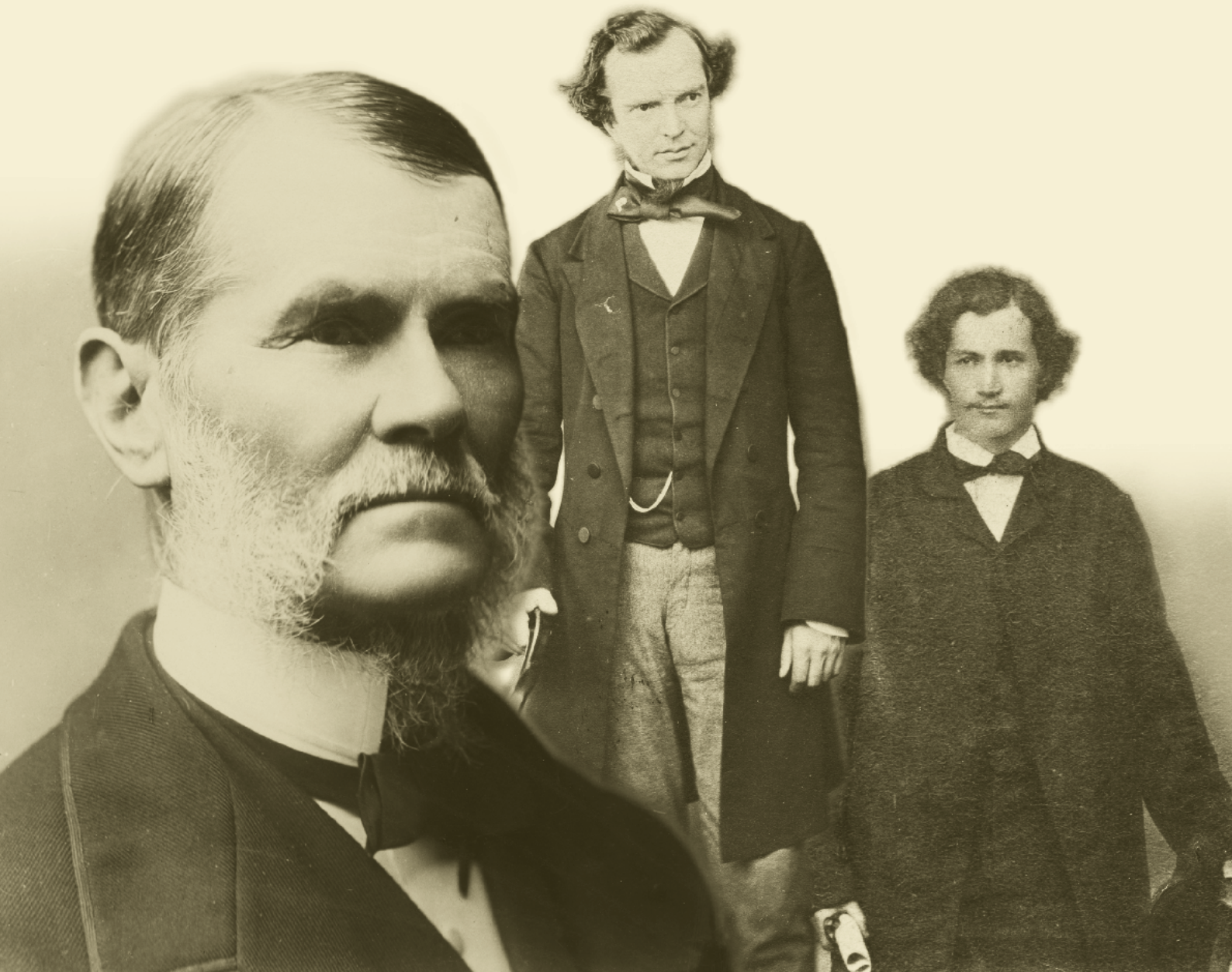
Eric had become her ‘dearest’ and her ‘best beloved’. When he returned from the war, the couple had a year in which to cherish one another. Eric later gave Daidee’s letters to their son John, who gave them to the Mitchell Library in 1988 with other material belonging to his father. These letters ensure that the mother he never knew has not been forgotten.

Historian and writer Margo Beasley was a 2018 Visiting Scholar at the Library, researching the life of Eric Payton Dark.

John Dark with his father, Eric, c 1922, courtesy of Ann Dark

FRIENDS AND FOES

* WORDS Ross Edmonds



Four early satires caused great mayhem in Sydney but were eventually forgotten.

Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, first published in 1726, is one of English literature's best-known satires. But modern readers, oblivious to the policies and politics of the early eighteenth century, can read it simply as a novel about power and society. In transcending its time, Swift's book is unusual.

Four early satires that appeared in Sydney between 1844 and 1866 had a major impact in their time but have since lost much of their power. Even if their popular appeal is short-lived, though, satires like these give historians a perspective that is often absent from official documents, memoirs and newspapers.

The squatter William Forster was a regular contributor to the *Atlas* newspaper, whose editor, Robert Lowe (later a member of the House of Commons and Viscount Sherbrooke) shared Forster's opposition to the policies of Governor Sir George Gipps. Gipps was frequently ridiculed in the *Atlas*, most notably in Forster's verse satire 'The Devil and the Governor', which caused a stir when it was published in 1845. In it the Devil tells the Governor:

You've borne me in deeds the best good will.
Come, come, cheer up, don't look so blue —
I'm a Governor, George, as well as you.

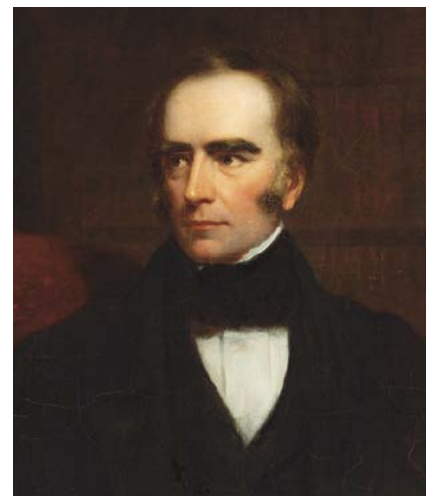
Forster was elected to parliament when the state gained self-government in 1856, and served a brief term as Premier. He had his supporters, but many opposed his conservatism. He was once described as 'disagreeable as an opponent, dangerous as a supporter, but fatal as a colleague'.

In early 1855, another satire appeared that caused considerable mirth among those lucky enough to get a copy. Provocatively titled *To Bourke's Statue this appropriate effusion of unprofitable brass is unceremoniously dedicated by Ichneumon, anxious to instruct his grandmothers in the Inductive Science of sucking eggs*, it was filled with cutting mockery of prominent NSW politicians. While most of its targets were disguised by pseudonyms, the publication was predictably condemned by those in the firing line.

In breach of the law, no author, publisher, date or printer's name was included in the 30-page octavo booklet. It was posted to friends and foes alike, and a few copies made it into the Library's collection. The ephemeral publication soon became rare and the Trustees of the Public Library (now the State Library) published a facsimile in 1894.

Newspapers ignored the booklet, possibly for fear of being slapped with a lawsuit if they reprinted any of its contents. While *To Bourke's Statue* appears to be the work of an angry young man, suspicion fell on Sir Thomas Livingstone Mitchell, the explorer who managed to quarrel with nearly every governor when he served as surveyor-general of NSW from 1828 until 1855.

After Mitchell denied authorship — supported by the fact that he was one of the men lampooned in the booklet — suspicion fell on his son Livingstone. According to Percival

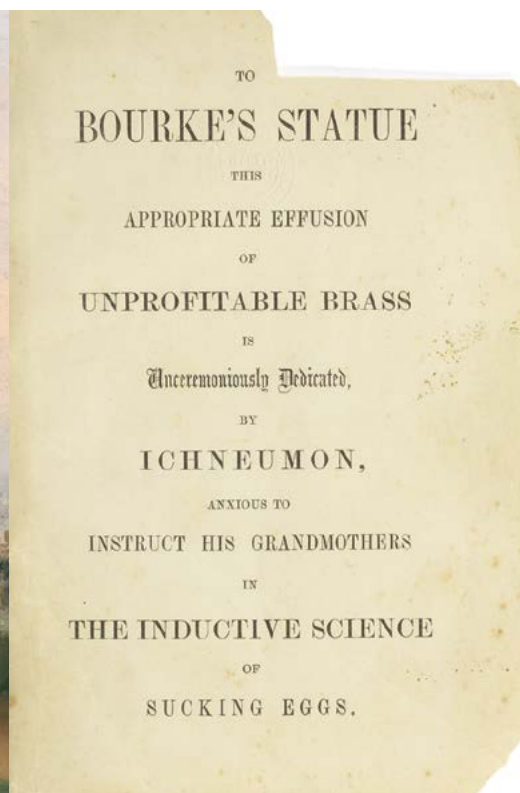


Sir George Gipps, undated, by William Pickersgill, ML 4

Opposite from left: William Forster, 'Eminent citizens of New South Wales, 1850-1900', PX*D 624

Daniel Deniehy (detail), c 1860, studio portrait by Freeman Brothers, P1/462

Henry Kendall, poet (detail), 1880s copy of a c 1870 carte de visite, by Federal Studio, Melbourne, P1/877



Serle's *Australian Dictionary of Biography* entry on Sir Thomas, Livingstone had tried to 'divert suspicion' by being 'as severe on his father as anyone else, but he afterward regretted the publication and tried to suppress it'.

The third Sydney satire, *The Attorney-General of New Barataria*, was written by journalist and politician Daniel Deniehy and published in 1860 by Edward Greville. The 24-page octavo booklet of prose was originally published in the weekly journal, *The Southern Cross*, its characters and placenames loosely disguised by pseudonyms.

The story was inspired by Deniehy's outrage, as a member of parliament, when a well-connected and wealthy young Englishman, Lyttelton Bayley, arrived in Sydney and was appointed to the position of attorney-general within two months.

The booklet is now very rare, but can be accessed online through the Library's website. Its tone is illustrated by the following quote:

Just at this time one morning at breakfast, Laura said to me in her nonchalant way — Laura never joked. 'Well love! They're going to make you Attorney-General. I looked at her, and went on scooping my egg. It was a duck egg. Those odious boarding houses at Port Innocence! The women used to say hen-eggs could be procured no nearer than Zoology Bay. 'It'll be very nice to write that home' continued Laura. I felt astounded. Laura might be wrong, but Laura was in earnest. And I'd been married long enough to know it was impossible my wife could be wrong.

Finally, *The Bronze Trumpet* was published by John Sheridan Moore in 1866 with no author's name given. David Scott Mitchell attributed it to Henry Kendall on the basis of a letter from Kendall to fellow poet Charles Harpur. The title refers to a line by English poet Robert Browning: 'I blow through Bronze — not breathe through silver.'

Government House, Sydney, NSW, from the statue of Sir Richard Bourke, c 1845, by GE Peacock, ML 657

To Bourke's Statue ... 1855, attributed to Livingstone Mitchell, SL 85/948

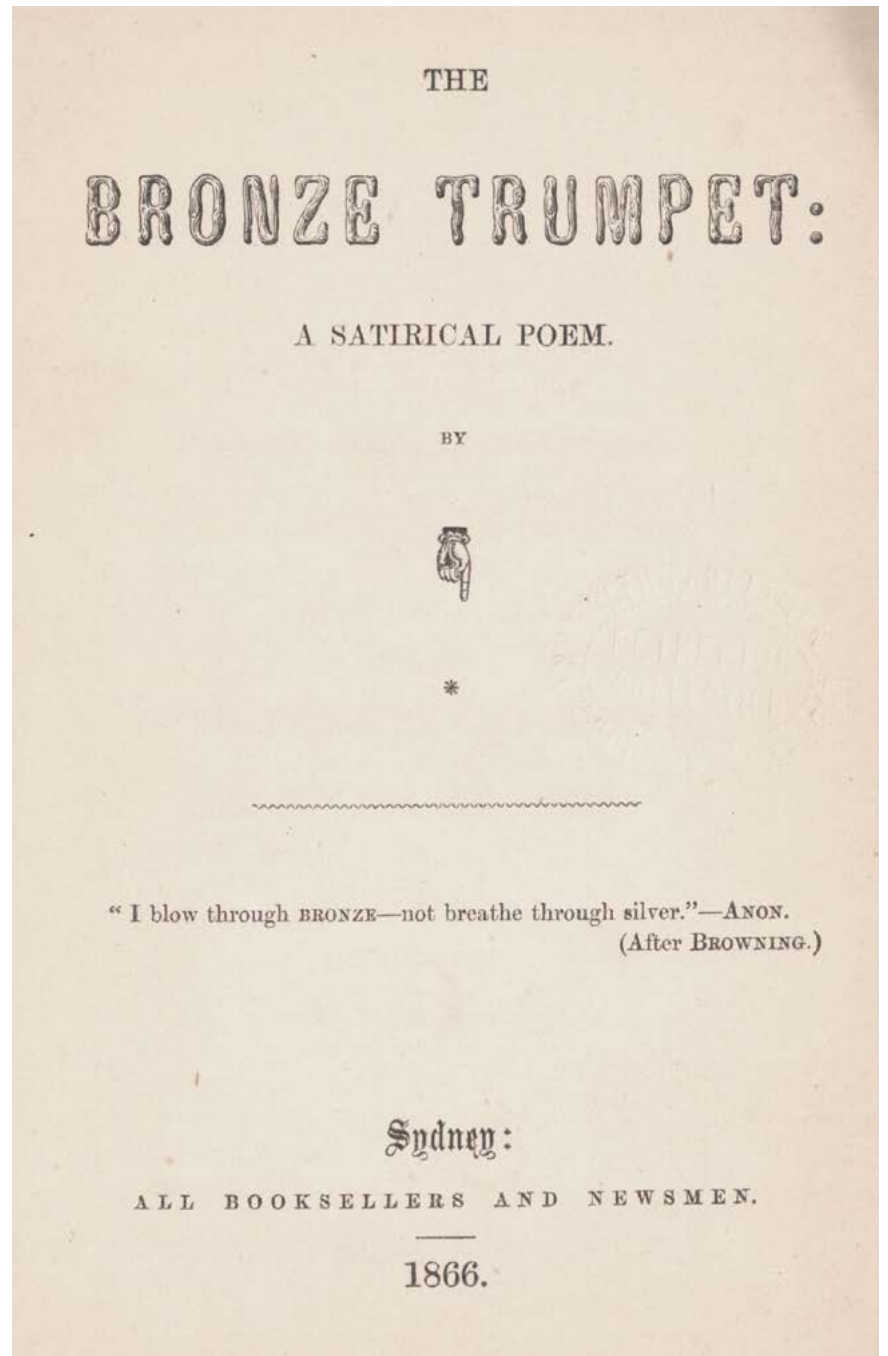
In contrast to the previous satires, Kendall's piece saved its most savage satire not for politicians but for Sydney's literati, in particular the critics from *Sydney Punch*, who were not always appreciative of Kendall's work. In June 1865 *Punch* said that Kendall 'writes nonsense' and in October it dismissed 'the particularly ridiculous and generally nonsensical school of which Mr Kendall is so undeniably *facile princeps*'.

Kendall was not one to take criticism meekly, and dedicated *The Bronze Trumpet* to 'the Shams, Political, Clerical and Critical, of Sydney and, in particular, to the Puny Punsters of Punch, these brazen notes are (without permission) dedicated by their most appreciative admirer, the Printer's Devil.'

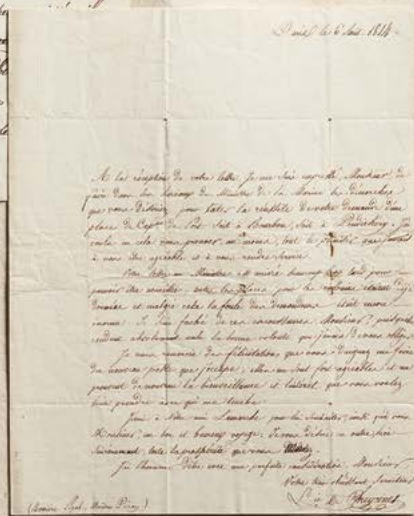
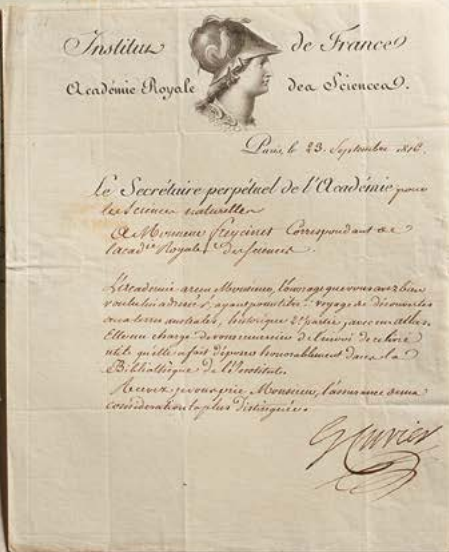
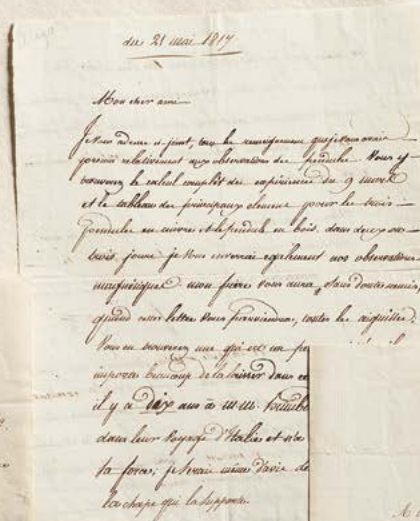
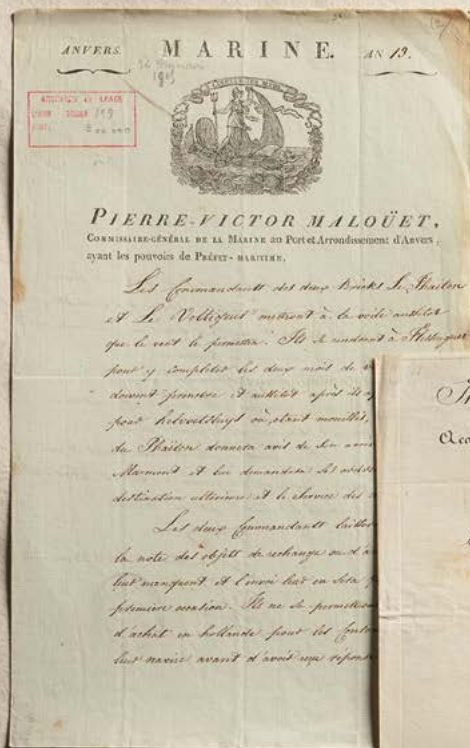
Most of the men who came in for ridicule were easily recognisable, even though only their surnames were used. Among them was the critic George Burnett Barton, the elder brother of prime minister Edmund Barton, and some of Kendall's fellow poets. *The Bronze Trumpet* can be viewed through Trove.

These four satires are little known today but have considerable value for literary and political historians. They give a rare insights into the political machinations of the time and provide a glimpse of a society in the early stages of developing a literature of its own, despite the crass materialism of the age and the lack of support for local writers.

Ross Edmonds is a Novocastrian and a regular contributor to *Biblioweb*, the journal of the Book Collectors' Society of Australia. He is also a Friend of the Library.



The Bronze Trumpet, 1866, attributed to Henry Kendall, DSM/ C477



Freycinet LETTERS

PERSONAL LETTERS BRING INSIGHTS
INTO THE BROADER HISTORY
OF THE PACIFIC REGION.

NEW ACQUISITIONS



On 19 October 1800 two French ships, the *Geographe* and the *Naturaliste*, set sail from Le Havre on a voyage to the South Seas under the command of Nicolas Baudin. This was an era of oceanic voyages lasting three or more years that aimed to deepen understanding of the Pacific region through science, cartography and art.

Among Baudin's officers were two brothers, Louis and Henri de Freycinet, both of whom would go on to distinguished careers. Louis would establish himself as a great hydrographer, while Henri would see action against the British, rise to the rank of admiral, and govern three French colonies.

Baudin explored the south-west and south coasts of Australia – famously meeting Matthew Flinders in Encounter Bay – before spending five months in Sydney, where the French were hospitably received by Governor Philip Gidley King. The expedition returned to France in 1804 without Baudin, who had died on Mauritius. Following the death of the expedition's naturalist, François Péron, in 1810, the official narrative of the voyage was completed by Louis with cartographic contributions from Henri.

Thirteen years after his return from the expedition, in 1817, Louis was given command of the

corvette *Uranie* to undertake scientific observations and hydrographic surveys around the world. Remarkably, in defiance of naval regulations, his wife Rose was smuggled on board disguised as a cabin boy. Her lively record of the voyage was later published.

During a five-week stay in Sydney in late 1819, the Freycinets were feted by Sydney society, striking up firm friendships with the Macquaries, Macarthurs, Pipers and Fields. They attended balls and dinners, and visited Parramatta. A party of the French crossed the Blue Mountains to Bathurst. After returning to France in 1820, Louis would spend the rest of his life preparing the official narrative of the voyage.

Manuscripts relating to Louis, Henri and Rose were absorbed into the Freycinet family archive, which has gradually been dispersed since the 1960s. More than 200 documents and letters from this archive were recently acquired by the Library.

At the heart of the collection are more than 50 letters and documents, the majority of which were written or received by Louis between 1811 and 1842. One of the earlier manuscripts is Louis' much-corrected draft of a notice to be displayed on the corvette after departing from Rio de Janeiro. In it he congratulates his officers on having done 'everything

Henri de Saulces de Freycinet (image flipped), 1794, artist unknown, ML 1247

Opposite: Selection from the Freycinet family archive, 1804–80, SAFE/MLMSS 10275

Engraved portrait of Louis Claude de Saulces de Freycinet, c 1804–10, by Sebastian Leroy, P1/2242

in their power to enrich the voyage as much by their observations as by the documents that they have gathered’.

A series of letters and documents then chronicles the long, troublesome undertaking of researching, writing and publishing the official narrative of the voyage. In a letter to his sister-in-law Clémentine, Louis describes his labours as ‘this terrible nightmare that has driven me mad for very many years of my life’. In another note he grumbles that his maritime career has suffered because of his devotion to ‘the study and practice of hydrography and science for the benefit of the navy’.

In time, Louis came to be regarded as an authority on New South Wales. In a letter to Henri about the mapping of Port Jackson he comments on the ‘huge increase’ he has made to his account of the colony, which would eventually amount to about 600 pages. His thoughts on the moral redemption of convicts, particularly through religion, are expressed in a draft manuscript that was not included in the final narrative.

Two lengthy manuscripts provide evidence of Louis’ lasting friendship with Judge Barron Field, poet and Supreme Court judge, whom he had met in Sydney in 1819. One is a translation of Field’s seminal essay on the Aboriginal people of Australia, in which he contends that they should be regarded as ‘Ethiopians’. Interestingly, in the printed version Field concludes that Aboriginal people will never be civilised, a statement that Freycinet omits from his translation, which suggests he held an opposing opinion.

Louis’ correspondence with eminent scientists of the day is also represented in the collection: he consulted the famous naturalist and geographer Alexander von Humboldt on the effects of barometric pressure, and wrote to physicist François Arago about the inaccuracy of navigating by ‘dead reckoning’.

Drawings of sea battles are among the papers that detail Henri’s naval career and later governorships of Île de Bourbon, Martinique and French Guiana. Insights into his personal life can be found in letters to Henri from his parents. They enquire anxiously about Louis and Rose, who were then halfway through their voyage, fretting that ‘we are all the time without any news of our dear navigators’.

Nine delightful letters from Rose, written mainly to her sister-in-law Clémentine, convey family news, including occasional lively glimpses of Louis.

Letters from the next generation of the Freycinet family, continuing until 1880, make up the rest of the collection. Henri’s son Charles-Henri, on a lengthy visit to Sydney on the ironclad *L’Atalante* in 1873, describes the colony to his sister as ‘a farming country, a real meat factory’. Sydney is ‘a big city ... in full prosperity ... If our father and uncle could see these places again what changes they would find!’ He is struck by the noticeable absence of Aboriginal people from the town.

Another letter from Charles-Henri includes an entertaining account of a ceremonial dinner with Queen Pomare in Tahiti. ‘The queen’s house is not really built for the giving of balls,’ he writes, ‘the floor didn’t glide and we scuffled. Nevertheless we danced brisk polkas, lancers, waltzes and quadrilles’.

This manuscript collection is a source of much fresh information about Henri, Louis and Rose de Freycinet, whose lives intersected with the early years of European settlement in Australia. But it is more than just a record of an influential French family with strong links to New South Wales; it also has a broader importance in the history of the Pacific region.

Warwick Hirst, Librarian, Collection Strategy & Development

NEW ACQUISITIONS

WINTER'S TALES

Many different views of life in Antarctica are captured in a collection of oral history interviews.

In 2014 oral history interviews were added to the Library's internationally significant Antarctic collection of photographs, manuscripts, maps and books gathered over the past 100 years.

The 61 interviews with members of the Australian National Antarctic Research Expedition (ANARE) were conducted in 2011 and 2012 by Dr Ingrid McGaughey, a medical doctor from Tasmania who completed several Antarctic expeditions and was elected as the first female president of the ANARE Club in 2010.

ANARE was created in 1947 by the Australian Government to establish permanent Australian Antarctic stations that could support scientific research and exploration. The ANARE Club was established in 1951, with membership open to anyone who has travelled to Antarctic or sub Antarctic regions with the Australian Antarctic program.

The interviews offer firsthand accounts from men and women — of different ages and cultural

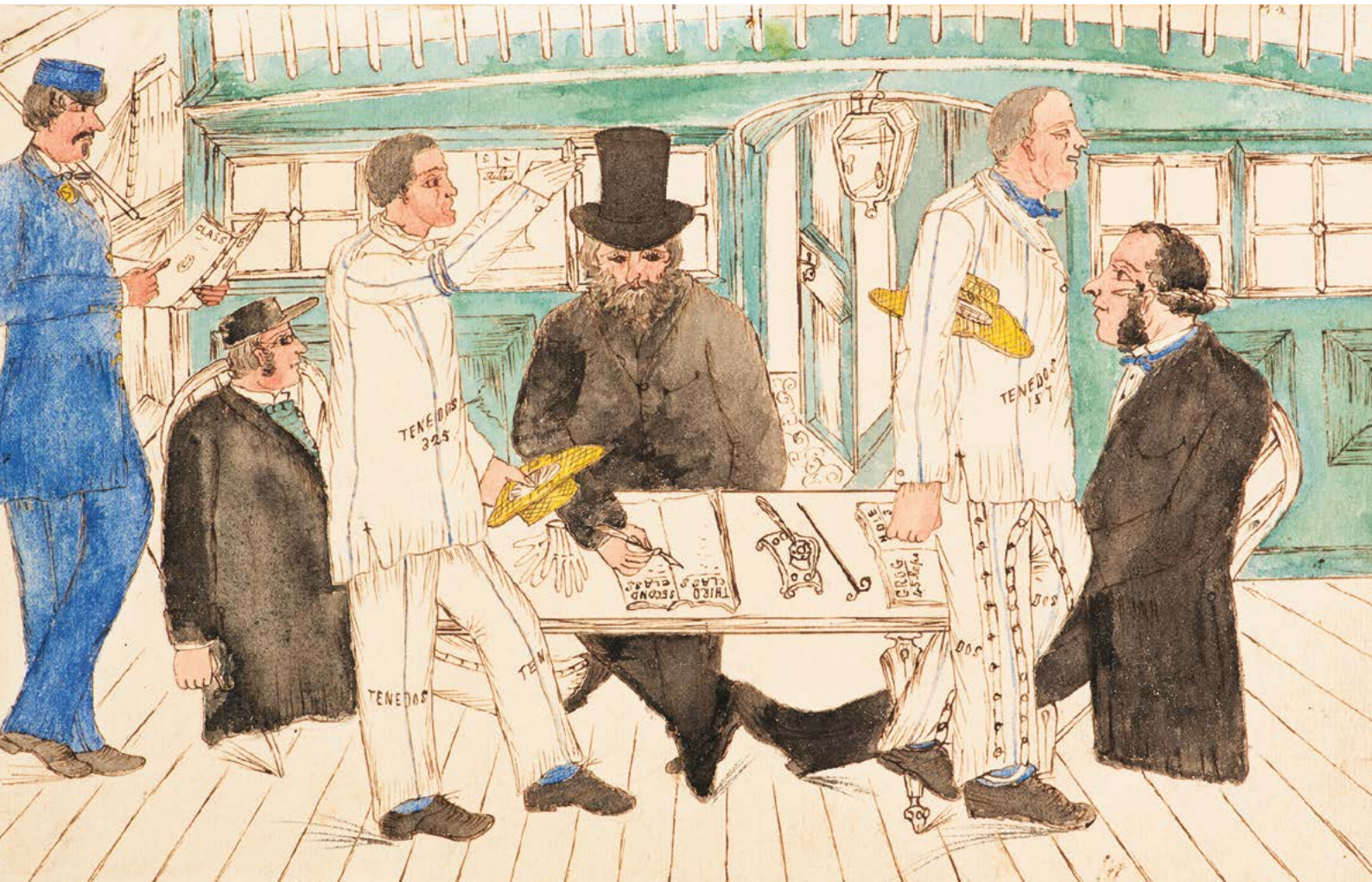
backgrounds and from different parts of Australia — who have worked in the Antarctic between 1954 and 2010. They include scientists with various areas of expertise — glaciology, science engineering, meteorology, auroral science, medicine, geophysics, cosmic ray physics, biology, and atmospheric physics — as well as chefs, plumbers, carpenters, electricians, diesel mechanics and other workers carrying out essential services.

Through more than 90 hours of recordings, we hear about personal and practical aspects of living in a small isolated community, how people maintained relationships back home, women expeditioners who joined the Antarctic community, and the celebrations of Midwinter and other social events.

You can listen to the Antarctic oral histories online through the Library's catalogue.

Maria Savvidis, Curator, Research & Discovery

Photographs from Louis Edward Macey papers related to ANARE and Antarctica, 1947-84, MLMSS 5343



The **CONVICT** *system*

A new manuscript volume from the heart of the British Colonial Office throws light upon convict transportation.

NEW ACQUISITIONS

The Library's holdings of early convict records, particularly relating to the transportation of convicts to Tasmania and New South Wales, are some of the most comprehensive anywhere. This is due not least to the riches of the David Scott Mitchell and Sir William Dixon collections of Tasmanian Papers, which include original records such as correspondence, warrants, returns, printed notices, plans and lists of convicts on various ships, and those with special skills or who were very badly behaved.

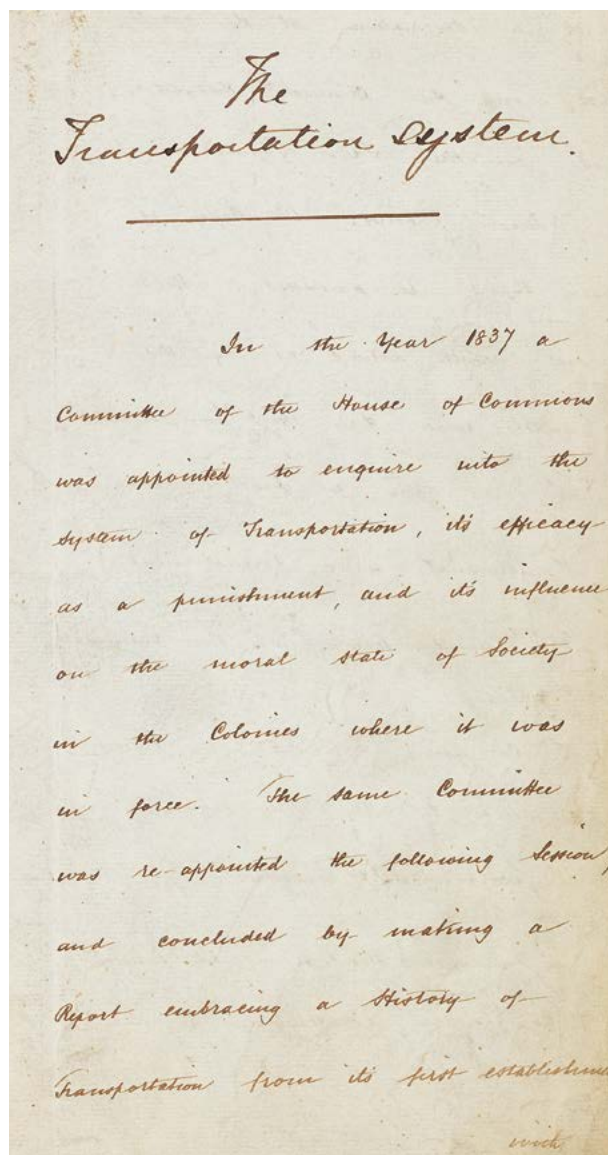
This newly acquired volume is an important addition to these holdings. It contains two draft manuscripts of confidential reports from the 1840s British Colonial Office, relating to the transportation and settlement of convicts in Australia.

Compiled by civil servant Thomas WC Murdoch for Earl Grey, to be submitted to Cabinet, the manuscripts throw light on the system of transportation at a decisive moment, when the great nineteenth-century British prison apparatus was beginning to crumble.

The first manuscript in this volume is a draft of a confidential Cabinet minute. It gives an account of the history of transportation, documents its problems, and outlines the divisive debate in the British Parliament about the legitimacy of sending convicts to New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land.

The report presents evidence contributed by key government figures in New South Wales including Sir George Gipps, Sir John Franklin, Captain Maconochie, Lord John Russell, Lord Glenelg, Lord Stanley, Sir E Wilmot and others, as well as detailed statistics on the number of convicts transported and their occupations.

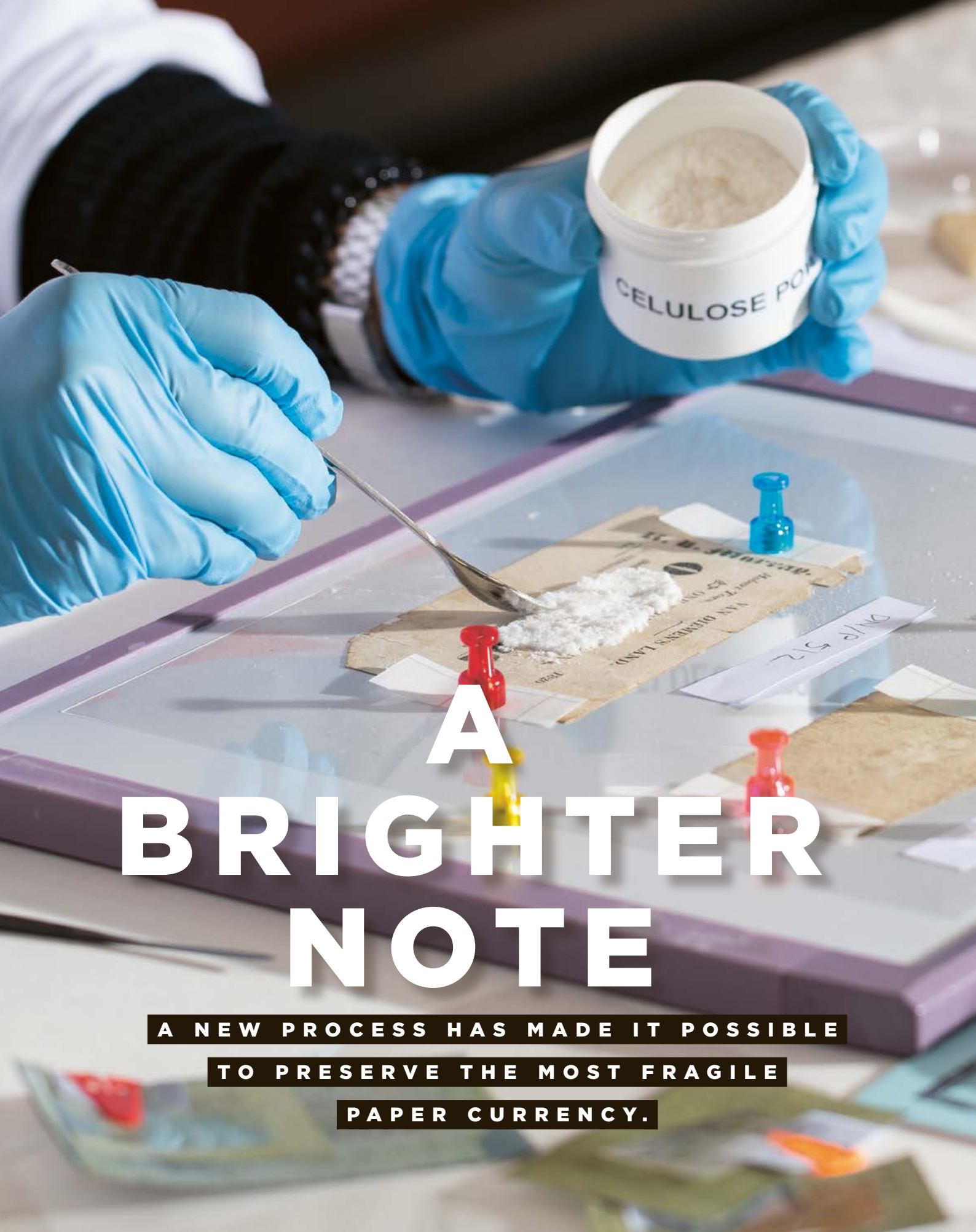
The second, shorter manuscript is a draft letter, dated 31 August, addressed to Benjamin Hawes, Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies. It is likely to have been composed by James Stephen, Permanent Under-Secretary at the Colonial Department. Stephen is anxious to supply what he sees as some 'omissions' in Murdoch's statement relating to acts of 'depravity' and 'debasement' of convicts which were, until now, 'unimaginable among our fallen race'.



The volume contains some intriguing bits of information not found in the final printed Cabinet minutes, a copy of which is held by the Library (see *Transportation to Van Diemen's Land*, 1846–50, C 941). It offers a glimpse into the inner sanctum of the British Colonial Office, on the brink of change that would ultimately bring about the end of convict transportation to Australia.

Nicholas Sparks, Collection Strategy & Development

Confidential reports prepared for the British Cabinet concerning the convict transportation system, 1845–46, by Thomas WC Murdoch and James Stephen, MLMSS 10170



A BRIGHTER NOTE

A NEW PROCESS HAS MADE IT POSSIBLE
TO PRESERVE THE MOST FRAGILE
PAPER CURRENCY.

COLLECTION CARE

A large collection of coins, medals, tokens and paper currency was bequeathed to the Library by benefactor Sir William Dixson in the 1950s. Known as the 'Dixson numismatic collection', it contains many rare examples of Australian and overseas currency, as well as promissory notes and private bank notes.

For the past six years, the Library has been conserving and digitising this collection. The coins, tokens and medals have all been treated, rehoused and digitised.

Conserving the paper currency has been particularly challenging. In the past, each note was adhered to plastic with a strip of double-sided tape, enclosed in a plastic pocket, and sealed with more tape. While this kept the notes secure and in the correct order, sticky tape causes irreversible damage to paper as it breaks down over time.

The notes all displayed acidic staining where the paper had absorbed some of the adhesive. To prevent further damage, Library conservators recommended removing the double-sided tape and rehousing the notes in archival storage.

Initially, we used a two-step process, separating the plastic from the note with heat and a solvent, then using an eraser to remove the residual adhesive. A Foundation-funded project, beginning in 2015, saw a third of the collection of 830 notes successfully treated and rehoused.



During the process, we began to have concerns about its efficiency and its effect on the most fragile notes. As the notes were not labelled, we were treating one note at a time to retain its identification, or call number. Because the paper quality of some notes was pulpy and degraded, removing the adhesive with a crepe eraser would have caused further damage.

We revisited the treatment last year, looking at alternative methods to remove the adhesive, and devising a system that allowed us to work on more than one note at a time while retaining the call numbers.

We began using a whiteboard with magnetic pins to keep the notes and their labels together during treatment, and we found solvents that did not dissolve the inks. Cellulose powder poultices enabled us to remove the adhesive without abrading the notes' soft paper fibres. Having tested gels and gums as a vehicle for the solvent, we found that the dry cellulose powder worked best for paper currency.

These simple adaptations have greatly reduced our treatment times and can be used on the most fragile notes without causing damage. The notes are now rehoused in archival envelopes and boxes, ready for digitisation.

**Lang Ngo and Bronwen Glover,
Conservators, Collection Care**



Lang Ngo conserving paper currency,
photo by Joy Lai



With each of these initiatives we are extending a hand of friendship and inviting families from Western Sydney to join the State Library family.



WELCOME

‘You are welcome here!’ is easy to say but more challenging to demonstrate. The Library’s Learning Services team has found ways to extend a welcoming hand to many recent arrivals to Australia through a valuable collaboration with Information and Cultural Exchange (ICE) in Paramatta.

Established in 1984, ICE works with communities and community-focused artists in Western Sydney to generate cultural engagement and activity. Over the past two years Learning Services and ICE have collaborated to introduce families to the Library and support their developing skills and confidence as they move into employment. These initiatives have taken a variety of forms.

Spellbound Storytime is a multilingual storytelling enterprise developed and delivered by migrant women in childcare centres, libraries, children’s festivals and bookshops. The Library hosted storytellers from the group twice in 2018 – at a Family Sunday event and at our Open Day for the new galleries in October.

Audiences were enthusiastic, and the events provided a platform for the group to showcase their skill. In May we welcomed a new group of women training as storytellers and we look forward to including them in our program for Open Day 2019.

The Multicultural Women’s Sewing Hub is a space to learn and share skills, develop a business and gain employment. The manager of Learning Services, Megan Perry, shared her sewing skills at a training session and taught the group how to make capes for children’s dress-ups from recycled Library promotional banners.

With Foundation funding we were able to provide a bus to bring a group of mothers and preschool children to the Library earlier this year. We had feedback that the visit made the women feel comfortable about visiting the Library again in the future, and that most of them planned on doing so during the holidays.

These examples show some of the ways the Library can reach out to culturally diverse communities and demonstrate they are welcome here. The ongoing relationship with ICE provides a link to communities we may not traditionally reach.

The Library also collaborates with Settlement Services International, a community organisation and social business that supports new arrivals. A visit to the Library is part of their whirlwind tour of the city for young people in the first few weeks after their arrival in the country.

The 14–24-year-olds on a recent visit were excited to participate in the digital exhibition *#newselfwales*, which crowdsourced selfies and combined them with portraits from the Library’s collection. The ability to upload their images to reflect ‘the face of NSW’ demonstrated simply but powerfully that they are indeed welcome here!

Pauline Fitzgerald, Learning Services

Opposite: Spellbound Storytime on Open Day; Mothers and children enjoying the Library, photos by Joy Lai
Sewing Hub modelling their capes, photo by Megan Perry



SHORT STACKS

A short film competition invited creative takes on the Library's collection.

The State Library of NSW Foundation is proud to have supported many of the Library's recent efforts to turn itself 'inside out', opening the Library to new groups of people and making its collection accessible to all. The latest project was Shortstacks, a short film competition with a total prize value of over \$20,000.

Shortstacks was developed on the premise that key works in the Library's collection could be reinterpreted through the medium of film to take on

new meaning for new audiences. Filmmakers of all ages and experience levels were encouraged to apply, under the caveat that they base their short film on one or more items preselected from the Library's extraordinary collection.

The six items, which were on display in the Library's galleries when the competition launched in January 2019, included Dorothea Mackellar's handwritten poem about her beloved 'sunburnt

BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION



country', a letter smuggled out of the Holsworthy Internment Camp in 1919, and a quirky scene of modern domesticity painted by Herbert Badham in 1959.

Shortstacks provided a fantastic opportunity for filmmakers, including those just starting out, to say something new and interesting using the Library's collection — with the result to be shared with everyone.

The Library received a huge variety of entries, including animation and live-action films, from filmmakers across all age groups, each with a unique interpretation of the collection items. Judges Margaret Pomeranz AM, Michael Caulfield, Jason Di Rosso, and Nick Ward selected seven of the most engaging, imaginative and innovative entries to be screened at the Shortstacks Short Film Festival.

On 12 June more than 120 people gathered at the Library to watch the shortlisted films. After the screenings, the anticipation in the room was palpable as Ms Pomeranz announced the runner-up, *Domestic*, by Nick Harriott, Nick Spellicy and Ryan Stubbs and finally the winner: *Comeback*, by Jayce White.

Mr White's film was based on a photograph titled *Assen Timbery, Aboriginal boomerang maker, La Perouse*, 1959, by Don McPhedron. The innovative film begins with the photograph, before moving into black and white animation. Mr White was awarded \$15,000 for his film.

Of the competition and his win, Mr White said 'The concept behind Shortstacks immediately appealed to me. A compelling historic image always makes me wonder what's beyond the frame and I find myself conjuring a story around it. To have the film screened and be well received completely exceeded my expectations so to win the prize was a monumental cherry on top. The other finalist films were really accomplished and I particularly enjoyed seeing the diversity of approaches and interpretations.'

The Foundation is delighted to have supported the inaugural Shortstacks competition. All the shortlisted films can be viewed on the Library's website.

www.sl.nsw.gov.au/about-library/awards/shortstacks/shortstacks-film-festival

SUPPORT THE LIBRARY

If you would like to learn more about how you can support the State Library of NSW, please contact Susan Hunt, Director, State Library of NSW Foundation, on (02) 9273 1529 or visit us online.

www.sl.nsw.gov.au/support

Shortstacks winner Jayce White, and a still from his winning film (opposite)

Shortstacks runners-up Nick Harriott, Ryan Stubbs and Nick Spellicy

Recent HIGHLIGHTS



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/02



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/04



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/07

01 David Cohen, Tracy Sorensen, Tony Martin, Ryan O'Neill, Russell Prize for Humour Writing, 2 May 2019, photo by Bruce York

02 Michael Williams, Li Jianjun, Daphne Lowe Kelley, Richard Neville, Mary Chan, Ann Toy, Sebastian Chan, at the Henry Chan Lecture by Li Jianjun, 14 May 2019, photo by Bruce York

03 At the launch of Libby Hathorn's children's book *Miss Franklin*, 21 May 2019, photo by Gene Ramirez

04 Michelle Law and Gretel Killeen, Storytime for Grown-ups, 22 May 2019, photo by Bruce York

05 Josephine Bourne, Talking Deadly, 29 May 2019, photo by Joy Lai

06 & 07 Dr John Vallance and alpacas; Matt Cosgrove, author of *Alpacas with Maracas*, National Simultaneous Storytime, 22 May 2019, photos by Joy Lai



/08



/09



/10



/11



/12



/13



/14

08 Summer Hill Public School students tour *Paintings from the Collection* with Louise Anemaat, 21 June 2019, photo by Gene Ramirez

09-13 Launch of *Living Language: Country, Culture, Community* exhibition, 13 July 2019, photos by Gene Ramirez
09 Raymond Ingrey

10 Callum Clayton-Dixon, Steve Widders, Don Bell, Tyronne Bell

11 Ronald Briggs, Michelle Webb, Rhonda Ashby, Damien Webb

12 Bryce Wilson

13 Kira Anderson, Aunty Diane McNaboe, Melissa McNaboe

14 Melissa Jackson and John Langdon with Dawes and Hale notebooks for display in *Living Language*, 9 July 2019, photo by Joy Lai

For our **FRIENDS**



LITERARY WORLD

Friends of the Library form a significant cohort of enthusiastic audiences at the Library's many literary events. There are special Friends events — including close-up viewings of the Library's stunning original collections — curator, author and scholar talks, as well as annual prize events. Something to appeal to everyone! Friends receive priority booking with early delivery of the *What's On* and receive free or discounted entry to most public events.

The Library hosts some of the most prestigious Australian literary awards such as the NSW Premier's Literary Awards and History Awards, the Premier's History Awards, the National Biography Award, and the Russell Prize for Humour. Friends have the opportunity of sharing in the excitement and engaging with literary Sydney — authors, researchers and publishers.

On a more intimate scale, the Reading Lounge book club for Friends members meets over afternoon tea every second month in the heritage Friends Room. Discussion is led by a guest convenor and the readings focus on Australian award-winning literary fiction.

The B List is an exciting, new style of evening book club hosted by Australian writer and editor Bri Lee. Each month Bri will be in conversation with an author previously shortlisted for one of the Library's literary awards. After the conversation, retire to the Friends Room for a drink and to chat further with your new book club friends!

For details of events and to book, please see your *What's On* program booklet or visit our website.

www.sl.nsw.gov.au/whats-on

Friends

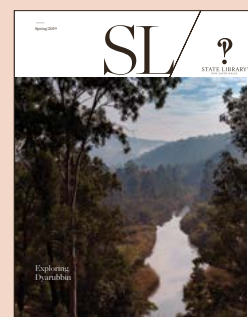
Contact the Friends office to find out more about the many benefits of being a Friend of the Library.

To join or renew your membership, or make a gift membership, please contact Helena Poropat.

Email: friends@sl.nsw.gov.au

Phone: (02) 9273 1593

www.sl.nsw.gov.au/friends-state-library



‘Q&A

Bri Lee



Award-winning writer Bri Lee hosts the Library’s monthly book club, the B List.

WHAT HAVE BEEN THE BEST RESPONSES TO YOUR BOOK *EGGSHELL SKULL*?

I’ve received emails from survivors of sexual assault who told me that after reading my book they spoke out for the first time — either to family, or to the police — and that their lives were irrevocably changed. It also means a lot to me when I hear from people in the legal profession who say I put their frustrations and concerns into words.

WHY WAS A BOOK THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO TELL THIS STORY?

There is so much nuance in every story of survival in the courts, and there were complex legal issues I wanted time to unpack. For readers to be really affected, their experience of hearing the story needs to be private, and a book allows for that special time and space. I also think I needed the legitimacy of a book — of being an

‘author’ — to give me a platform from which to campaign for legislative reform.

WHICH AUSTRALIAN WRITERS DO YOU MOST ADMIRE?

Krissy Kneen for her relentless work ethic and commitment to supporting other writers. Clementine Ford for her enduring public service in the face of such disgusting pushback. Anna Krien for dogged determination to get to the heart of issues and problems we’d rather turn away from. Garner, Wood, and Krestser because they’re just so damn good.

WHAT ARE YOU ENJOYING ABOUT YOUR BOOK CLUB SERIES, THE B LIST?

Honestly, I *love* talking to other writers, and I’m delighted that the B List gives a platform to authors whose books are so high-calibre but who didn’t necessarily reap the rewards of literary prizes.

The first featured author, Jamie Marina Lau, is an excellent example — everyone came away from the event raving about how smart and wonderful she is. More people should read her novel *Pink Mountain on Locust Island*.

WHAT HAS SURPRISED YOU ABOUT THE LIBRARY’S COLLECTION?

I didn’t know how precious so many of the items are — things from the 1500s and 1600s! Museum-quality. Just incredible. And so many paintings by high-calibre and revered artists. I suppose I didn’t realise that there was so much more here than books!

DO YOU HAVE A FAVOURITE PLACE IN THE LIBRARY?

The Friends Room! Maybe it’s cheeky to say that because it’s where the B List is held. It’s just so beautiful and makes me feel very inspired.

WHAT ARE YOU WORKING ON NOW?

I have a new book out in November called *Beauty*. It’s an essay combining memoir with social commentary, philosophy and criticism. Just finishing the edits and proofs to get it ready for publication!

www.sl.nsw.gov.au/whats-on



Photo by Joy Lai

In the Amaze Gallery

Sydney artists and activists of the 1960s, 70s and 80s used eye-catching screen-printed posters like this one by the Tin Sheds' Possum Poster Collective from 1981 to raise awareness for many causes. See a selection in *Sedition: The Art of Agitation*.

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