

Magazine for members  
Spring 2016

# SL



STATE LIBRARY®  
NEW SOUTH WALES

## Planting Dreams

A free exhibition, 3 September 2016 to 15 January 2017





# Message



## What makes a great library?

Penning my last column as the State Librarian of New South Wales has led me to reflect on the enormous honour it has been to lead this Library over the past five years and on what makes a great library.

Since it was established as Australia's first library 190 years ago, this great and much loved institution has developed into a world leading library with an unparalleled collection focusing on Australia, NSW and our region. That hasn't been a matter of chance. The Library's standing is the result of concerted and sustained effort by librarians and other staff, supported by collectors, donors, readers, volunteers, the general public and, since 1869, the NSW Government. The everyday work of talented, passionate and dedicated staff is complemented and enabled by our strong supporters.

As a library of record, the State Library continues to document the people, life, culture and business of NSW and, more broadly, Australia through periods of elation and those of sadness, as governments come and go, fashions change. Our great collections include foundation documents of this country, objects with key associations, artworks that depict important figures and moments, personal records and the writings of our great authors.

While its responsibility persists, the Library can't be unchanging. It must and does adapt to the evolving needs of readers and researchers, new and fading technologies, emerging and well established documentary media. It is that constancy of mission and adaptability of method, well served by its staff and loyal supporters, which mark a great library.

The State Library of NSW will continue to be such a great institution as it serves today, tomorrow and future generations.

My thanks to all I've met and worked with over the past five years. It has been a pleasure and an honour.

**ALEX BYRNE**  
NSW State Librarian & Chief Executive

# C

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Spring 2016

### SL

THE MAGAZINE FOR FOUNDATION MEMBERS, FRIENDS AND VOLUNTEERS IS PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY THE LIBRARY COUNCIL OF NSW.

SPRING 2016  
VOL. 9 NO. 3  
ISSN 1835-9787 (PRINT)  
ISSN 1836-1722 (ONLINE)

P&D-4747-8/2016  
PRINT RUN 3500

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UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED ALL PHOTOGRAPHIC WORK IS BY DIGITISATION AND IMAGING, STATE LIBRARY OF NSW.

#### SUSTAINABILITY

PRINTED IN AUSTRALIA BY RAWSON PRINT CO. USING SPICERS REVIVE LASER 200 GSM AND 110 GSM. THE PAPER IS AUSTRALIAN MADE, CARBON NEUTRAL AND FSC® 100% RECYCLED CERTIFIED.

SURVEY PRINTED ON SPICERS OPTIX ZODA LEMON 80 GSM AUSTRALIAN MADE AND PEFC CERTIFIED.

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THE GOVERNOR MARIE BASHIR AND MITCHELL LIBRARY READING ROOMS  
MONDAY TO THURSDAY  
9 AM TO 8 PM

FRIDAY 9 AM TO 5 PM  
WEEKENDS 10 AM TO 5 PM

THE SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AREA IS CLOSED ON SUNDAYS.

GALLERIES OPEN TO 5 PM, THURSDAYS TO 8 PM

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#### COVER

COVER, ANDERSON'S GARDEN BOOK AND CATALOGUE: SPRING 1956, FROM THE EXHIBITION PLANTING DREAMS: SHAPING AUSTRALIAN GARDENS, FROM 3 SEPTEMBER 2016 TO 15 JANUARY 2017 (SEE ARTICLE BY CURATOR RICHARD AITKEN, P. 10).



THE STATE LIBRARY OF NSW IS A STATUTORY AUTHORITY OF, AND PRINCIPALLY FUNDED BY, THE NSW STATE GOVERNMENT

## Next door

Photographs by Paul Blackmore on display in the first floor Macquarie Street corridor show neighbourhood life in a range of Sydney suburbs in the 1990s.

Part of the History Week theme 'Neighbours', on display until 27 November.

*BIRTHDAY PARTY, WATTLE GROVE, 1997, PAUL BLACKMORE  
PXE 794/7*





# M



## Maximum Dupain

News that the Library now holds the entire photographic collection of Max Dupain (1911–1992) gained wide media attention when it was announced in June. The recently acquired Max Dupain Exhibition Archive of 28,000 negatives includes the *Sunbaker* and *Bondi, 1939*, as well as lesser-known photographs such as his fantastic record of Penrith in Sydney's west in 1948. These images join existing collections of Dupain's commercial and architectural photography, studio portraits, and his record of the Ballet Russes. The Library plans to make the definitive Max Dupain archive accessible online.

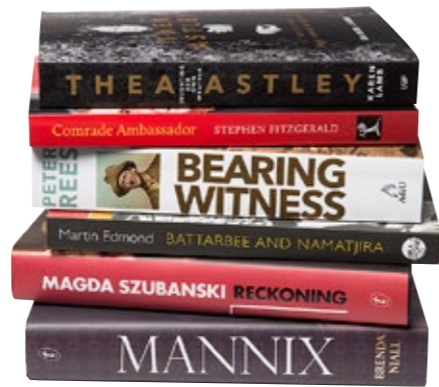
PENRITH MILK BAR, 1948, PHOTO BY MAX DUPAIN



## Library champions honoured

The prestigious Honours of the Library Council of NSW were announced on 20 June by the Council's recently appointed President, the Honourable George Souris AM. The Honours recognise outstanding contributions to the cultural enrichment of Australia through library and information excellence. Rob Thomas AM received the Medal of the Library Council of NSW in recognition of his exceptional and enduring support for the Library. Dr John Bell OBE AO was awarded the Dixson Medal and Jennefer Nicholson FALIA the Ifould Medal. Professor Emerita Jill Roe AO became an Emeritus Curator, and Kathleen Bresnahan and Dr Russell Leslie David Cope were recognised as Honorary Fellows.

LIBRARY COUNCIL PRESIDENT GEORGE SOURIS AM WITH DIXSON MEDAL RECIPIENT JOHN BELL OBE AO, PHOTO BY BRUCE YORK



## National Biography Award

With a record number of entries and judges commending an outstanding shortlist (above), the 2016 National Biography Award was announced at the Library on 8 August. Brenda Niall won the \$25,000 award for *Mannix* (Text Publishing), her biography of controversial Archbishop of Melbourne Daniel Mannix. (The 2016 National Biography Award lecture, by last year's winner Philip Butters, is on p. 16.)



## Indigenous voices

Collections generated by communities are a focus of the Library's new Indigenous Collecting Strategy, announced on 7 July. Our Indigenous Services team consults with communities to identify the key people, places, initiatives and events that should be documented. The Library recently acquired works by leading Indigenous artist Bronwyn Bancroft and photographer Michael Riley (1960–2004), as well as portraits and oral histories of Aboriginal families living in Sydney's south-west by Jagath Dheerasekara.

GRACE CONNOLLY AND HER FAMILY, WIRADJURI + GUNAIKURNAI, AIRDS, 2015 PHOTO BY JAGATH DHEERASEKARA

## Top 10 ebooks

Register for a State Library card to access ebooks from our catalogue. Last year's top 10 ebooks downloaded were:

1. *Tempest: A Critical Reader* edited by Alden T Vaughan
2. *Don't Go Back to Where You Came From* by Tim Soutphommasane
3. *The Rosie Project* by Graeme Simsion
4. *The Writing Book* by Kate Grenville
5. *Murder and Mendelssohn* by Kerry Greenwood
6. *The Colony* by Grace Karskens
7. *Post-Colonial Studies* by Bill Ashcroft
8. *Dreadful Murder* by Minette Walters
9. *Midnight Promise* by Zane Lovitt
10. *Black Echo* by Michael Connelly



## Publication awards

*SL* was the winner in the magazine category of the 2016 Museums Australasia Multimedia & Publication Design Awards (MAPDA), with judges appreciating its 'playful balance between text and images'. Our gallery guide for *What a Life! Rock Photography* by Tony Mott was highly commended.

# NEWS



## Interrobang

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

**? I'm researching machine cut nail manufacturers from Birmingham in the 1800s and their involvement in international trade exhibitions. I'd like to know the details of any manufacturers who may have exhibited at the Sydney International Exhibition in 1879?**

**!** The Sydney International Exhibition opened on 17 September 1879 and ran for seven months (see article, p. 20). The Library has a copy of the *Official Record of the Sydney International Exhibition*, printed in 1881 by the Government Printer, which gives details of the exhibitors and awards. It lists three cut nail manufacturers from Birmingham, UK, who presented their wares at the exhibition and also received commendations.

In the category of 'Clothing, Jewellery, Ornaments etc. Gt. Britain', Henry Bell received an honourable mention for 'Pins of various kinds', that were described as 'Suitable & cheap'. In another category, 'Hardware, Edge Tools Cutlery etc., Gt. Britain and Ireland', Bell was commended for 'Shoe tips, Nails, Eyelets and Shoe Makers' Tools'. And in the same category, fellow Birmingham-based manufacturer John Israel Parkes was highly commended for his 'Cut Nails & Shoe Tips', described as 'A good exhibit of useful, well made articles'; and John Reynolds & Sons were highly commended for their cut nails, described as 'A small but good exhibit of nails from tacks to the length of 8 inches'.

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



on this

# DAY

COMPILED BY Anna Corkhill, Research & Discovery



## 9 September 1754

William Bligh is born. Best known as Captain of HMS *Bounty* — the ship on which a mutiny took place in the South Pacific in 1789 — Bligh was an exceptional navigator, and went on to become Governor of NSW. His governorship was overthrown in 1808, after less than two years.

WILLIAM BLIGH'S TELESCOPE, C. 1770-1790  
SAFE / LR 6



## 11 September 1863

Bushranger Captain Thunderbolt (Frederick Ward) escapes gaol on Cockatoo Island and swims to Woolwich, commencing a six-year crime spree. A small island in Sydney Harbour, Cockatoo Island was used as a penal establishment until 1869, when convicts were relocated to Darlinghurst Gaol.

COCKATOO ISLAND, C. 1859, UNKNOWN PHOTOGRAPHER  
SPF / 817

## 25 October 1616

Dutch sea captain Dirk Hartog becomes the first European to set foot on Australia's western coast, leaving behind an inscription plate to mark his landing. Dutch skipper Willem de Vlamingh took the plate in 1697, replacing it with his own, which was subsequently taken by French navigator Louis de Freycinet. Vlamingh's plate was returned to Australia in 1948 and now resides in the Western Australian Museum.



COPY OF THE 1697 VLAMINGH PLATE, 1950  
R 175

## 16 November 1920

Australian airline Qantas is founded by former Australian Flying Corps members W Hudson Fysh and Paul McGinness. Fysh and McGinness had identified a need for a fast and reliable mail and delivery service in the remote areas of outback Queensland and the Northern Territory. The airline accepted its first passenger on the Charleville-Cloncurry route in 1922.

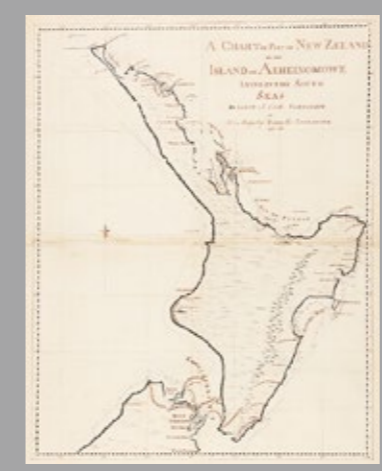
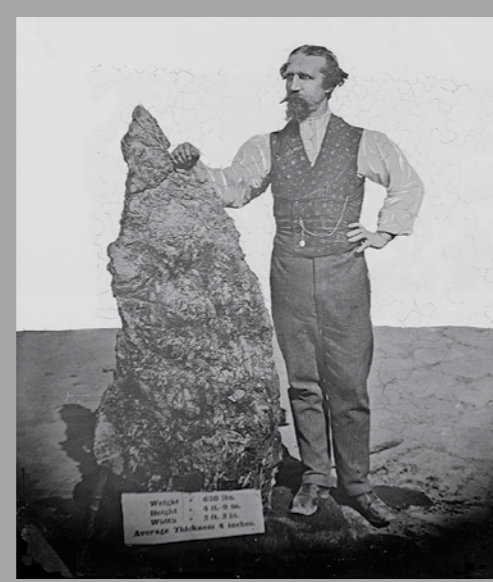
TIME TABLE AND GENERAL INFORMATION FOR THE  
BRISBANE-CAMOOWEAL-NORMANTON AIR ROUTE ... C. 1929  
QANTAS AIRWAYS EPHEMERA/AVIATION/QANTAS/1920-



## 19 October 1872

The largest specimen of reef gold in the world is found at Hill End, NSW. Named the 'Beyers and Holtermann specimen', this massive discovery weighed 630 pounds (286 kg). Bernhardt Otto Holtermann, part-owner of the mine that uncovered the gold, later commissioned photographers Beaufoy Merlin and Charles Bayliss to photograph gold-producing regions and cities in NSW and Victoria.

BO HOLTERMANN WITH THE HOLTERMANN NUGGET,  
HILL END, C. 1872, AMERICAN & AUSTRALASIAN  
PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPANY  
ON 4 BOX 71 NO Y



## 16 November 1840

New Zealand becomes a separate colony of the United Kingdom. The law of NSW had been extended to New Zealand for the preceding five months, while British sovereignty over New Zealand was being asserted.

CHART OF ART OF NEW ZEALAND, OR THE ISLAND OF  
AHEINOMOWE LYING IN THE SOUTH SEA, 1770, JAMES COOK  
SAFE / DLSPENCER 166





EXHIBITION

# SLIDE show

\* WORDS Richard Aitken

The quirky and obscure Hallams slide collection is a curator's dream, revealing ordinary Australian gardens in the 1960s and 70s.

The dumpster. It's the call librarians dread. The tip-off that a valuable collection has been trashed. A concerned neighbour or eagle-eyed historian spots books or documents. Boxes of stuff are rescued. The library is alerted.

But libraries can't collect everything. Patient explanations are made. Collection policies are invoked. Is the material significant? Disappointment spreads. Priceless material has been rejected. Complaints are made. Who said the librarian has an easy life?

I'm making this up, of course. I'm not a librarian, and in many cases this scenario has a positive outcome. Priceless material is saved every week. We are all the beneficiaries and indeed the protectors of the state's cultural collections.

Robert Hallams' 35 mm colour photographic slides are one example of a happy ending. And as curator of the Library's exhibition *Planting Dreams: Shaping Australian Gardens*, I'm in the fortunate position of helping to breathe new life into this largely forgotten collection.

CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND, EARLWOOD PARK,  
26 AUGUST 1973

OPPOSITE: PLANTING DREAMS CURATOR  
RICHARD AITKEN AND STATE LIBRARY  
CURATOR SARAH MORLEY VIEW HALLAMS  
SLIDES, PHOTO BY MERINDA CAMPBELL







In many ways, Hallams' photographs help us understand the main aims of the exhibition: to examine how and why we create gardens and to trace the sources of our garden-making ideas.

Gardening is a passion for many Australians. It gives pleasure, sustenance and dignity to daily lives. It cuts across cultural, social and national boundaries like few other activities.

But it also helps define those boundaries. Gardens touch on spiritual values and cultural traditions. Landscapes tell of deep attachment to place and country, the comfort of seasonal delights, the mystery of beauty.

With its broad collection of rare books, photographs, manuscripts and ephemera, the Library is almost uniquely placed to tell these stories. I've been using these resources since I was a student in the 1970s and I'm always astonished at the breadth of works held here.

But I had not come across the Hallams collection until recently. Since its rescue from the proverbial dumpster in 1993, it has sat undisturbed in basement storage. During my research for the exhibition, I spent a privileged hour flicking through the slides, alive to the potential of the quirky and the obscure.

Comprising over 1800 colour transparencies from the 1960s and 70s, this collection evokes all the innocence and charm of an old-fashioned slide night. And perhaps even a touch of the boredom, as Uncle Neville reaches for the third or fourth carousel of slides. Here is the car park at Ryde shopping centre, there the flowerbeds at Parramatta psychiatric hospital and, coming up, a faux Georgian display house at Falconbridge. Hardly the stuff of dreams, you might think.

Yet I was electrified when I saw this collection! The Library seemingly bulges with early colonial material, which can be easily accessed through vast digital portals. But contemporary garden material is much harder to locate, waiting in boxes of manuscripts or closeted among ephemeral publications such as real estate plans or nursery catalogues. And even among these riches, the Hallams slides are gems.

What beguiled the Library's acquisitions team when they acquired the collection is easy to see. The slides are meticulously labelled and dated. (How many of us could say the same of our personal photos?) The transparencies are shot on relatively stable Kodachrome stock. And the images are prosaic to the point of perfection, capturing the ordinary and the normal with a flair for artless composition and deathless charm.

Suddenly the Ryde shopping centre car park can be seen in the context of Sydney's postwar suburban modernism, the flowerbeds at Parramatta as the last gasps of Victorian moral welfare, and the neo-colonial style of a Falconbridge house as part of an emerging national identity.

Gardens were not the main focus of Robert Hallams and his camera. The amateur photographer from the northern Sydney suburb of Eastwood, who died in 1981, captured a much wider range of city, suburban and rural imagery. But in the record of this phase of Australia's social and cultural history, the garden stands as a marker of tradition and change. Rocket-shaped playground equipment at Earlwood sits alongside spiky rockeries; front gardens, clipped and prim, vie for attention with vases of dahlias and gladioli.

This is the Australia of Edna Everage and Norman Gunston. Yet this collection is not a parody. These slides are the real deal, documenting gardens in their unwitting fashion for Australia's national memory.

***Planting Dreams: Shaping Australian Gardens*, curated by Richard Aitken, is a free exhibition from 3 September 2016 to 15 January 2017.**

**Richard Aitken's new book *Planting Dreams: Shaping Australian Gardens* (NewSouth Publishing), generously supported by the Australian Garden History Society, is available in the Library Shop.**



RESIDENCE AT FAULCONBRIDGE, 26 JULY 1975

DAHLIAS AND GLADIOLI, WARRIMOO, 29 NOVEMBER 1972

PART OF TOP RYDE SHOPPING CENTRE, 16 AUGUST 1964

NO. 2 YOUNG PARADE, EASTWOOD, 19 SEPTEMBER 1968



# The modern GARDEN

\* WORDS Howard Tanner

OUTSTANDING GARDENS ARE REVEALED  
BY LEADING PHOTOGRAPHERS  
IN A NEW EXHIBITION.

## EXHIBITION

In 2016 we celebrate 200 years since the founding of Sydney's Royal Botanic Garden and 50 years since landscape architecture was established as a profession. The Library will recognise these anniversaries in two complementary exhibitions, opening in September under the banner *Planting Dreams*.

In preparation, I undertook a survey of larger, innovative gardens created in NSW since the 1980s, and interviewed the designers involved. Leading photographers Jason Busch, Murray Fredericks, Sue Stubbs and Nicholas Watt recorded a selection of these gardens. Along with the survey's findings, their spectacular images will form a permanent collection at the Library, and are the essence of the exhibition *Planting Dreams: Grand Garden Designs*.

Today's growing appreciation of the Australian landscape and its more remarkable plants echoes the sentiments of nineteenth-century travellers such as botanical artist Marianne North and landscape gardener William Guilfoyle, who admired the handsome rainforest trees and flora found along the east coast.

In recent decades, the Japanese garden has become an important influence through its use of massed clipped shrubs, known as 'cloud pruning', of 'borrowed landscapes', and of subtle conjunctions of stone and gravel.

Trans-Atlantic phenomena emulated here include landscape architects Oehme and van Sweden's sweeping banks of native grasses in North America, and Piet Oudolf's masterly deployment of seasonal field plants along New York's High Line. These are examples of a significant trend in landscape design using architectural foliage. Strongly textured and coloured plants in clever combinations are frequently seen in contemporary landscapes; another international trend is for gardens to be designed as a setting for modern sculpture.

In exploring innovative landscape designs in NSW, many exciting gardens came into view. Most were designed to complement the natural setting, placing new garden elements into an established landscape. At Thubbul, near Bermagui on the far South Coast, forest glades are accented by low walls that define spaces set with sculptures and flowering shrubs. A different relationship with wild and rugged country is found at Eagles Bluff, south of Tenterfield, where sweeps of lawn and banks of subtly coloured ornamental grasses and shrubs allow a seamless transition between the garden and the wider landscape.



In complete contrast, the garden at Sea Peace on the far North Coast turns its back on paddocks and broad-acre residential development to recreate the wondrous native forest which existed before land-clearing. Its trees are layered with orchids and staghorns and under-planted with Helionias and Hedychiums.

For some, the classical garden ideal remains, but is interpreted in a new way. Nestor Farm, near Berry, recalls great English gardens where smooth lawns descend between clumped trees to a lake. The tradition has been reinterpreted to grand effect using distinctive East Coast rainforest trees.

Landscape opportunities in a big city are different. In Sydney the survey discovered several innovative gardens which are settings for historic houses. In the city, large private gardens are rare, and inventive outcomes in the public realm are vital. Paddington Reservoir Gardens and Prince Alfred Park demonstrate the importance of the public park as a haven for urban dwellers, while the outstanding roof garden above apartments at MCentral in Pymont brings a meadow into the heart of the city.

Making a larger garden is an age-old pursuit to create one's own earthly paradise — a beautiful retreat from the everyday world. A more expansive 'canvas' enables the exploration of bold ideas, and the Library is recording these remarkable creations as an important reflection of our own age.

**Howard Tanner is the Contemporary Gardens Survey coordinator and exhibition consultant. *Planting Dreams: Grand Garden Designs* is a free exhibition from 3 September 2016 to 15 January 2017.**

**This initiative was sponsored by the State Library of NSW Foundation.**

PADDINGTON RESERVOIR GARDENS, PADDINGTON, LANDSCAPING: ANTON JAMES, PHOTOGRAPHER: JASON BUSCH, C11693 ONLINE

OPPOSITE: EAGLES BLUFF, TENTERFIELD, LEAD DESIGNER: CAROLYN ROBINSON, PHOTOGRAPHER: NICHOLAS WATT, C11695 ONLINE





# F OR BETTER

*or worse*

\* WORDS Philip Butters

The relationship between biographer and subject is like a marriage, according to C.J. Dennis' award-winning biographer.

Literary biographer Claire Tomalin believes that, ideally, a biographer should fall in love with his or her subject, because there needs to be an element of obsession. Recalling her lengthy and intimate liaisons with Charles Dickens, Thomas Hardy, and Jane Austen, she suggests that the relationship between biographer and subject is like a marriage: 'There are ups and downs, days when you are irritated or disappointed, others when you are delighted and surprised.'

It's far from a perfect simile, but in some ways I feel like I was married to C.J. Dennis for the 12 years of researching and writing his biography, even if legally we couldn't have claimed that status.

Millions of Australians have been smitten by his work. In October 1915, when people read the opening of *The Songs of a Sentimental Bloke*, they found Dennis' infatuated larrikin hero 'instantly lovable', as cultural historian John Rickard puts it. Reeling from months of terrible news about casualties at Gallipoli, readers were delighted to have something

to laugh about. The sentimental love story about the Bloke and Doreen also allowed them to release some emotion: one reviewer felt that it would be difficult for anyone to finish the book without finding the words on the page 'grow strangely misty'. *The Songs of a Sentimental Bloke* sold more than a thousand copies a week for its first year, an extraordinary figure in a population of only five million people. Today it still holds the title of best-selling book of Australian verse, with a tally of well over 300,000.

Unsurprisingly, readers felt a great affection for the book's author, too, imagining him as something like his hero — an easygoing fellow with a naïve and slightly romantic view of the world. A few months prior to publication, Dennis had begun signing his contributions to the *Bulletin* 'the Sentimental Bloke' partly to advertise the forthcoming book. For the rest of his life and well beyond it, people would continue to blur the boundaries between creator and creation.



CJ DENNIS (1876-1938), C. 1925, PHOTO BY FRED MONTEATH, P1 / 466  
OPPOSITE: PHILIP BUTTERS  
PHOTO BY JOY LAI





Like generations of Australian schoolchildren, I first came across Dennis through some of the enchanting pieces from his *A Book for Kids*, such as ‘The Triantiwontigongolope’, a poem about an imaginary creature. It begins:

There’s a very funny insect that you do not often spy,  
And it isn’t quite a spider, and it isn’t quite a fly;  
It is something like a beetle, and a little like a bee,  
But nothing like a woolly grub that climbs upon a tree.  
Its name is quite a hard one, but you’ll learn it soon, I hope.  
So, try:  
Tri-  
Tri-anti-wonti-  
Triantiwontigongolope.

As a seven-year-old, I loved Dennis’ use of language and rhythm. His poem was also intriguing: I was pretty sure that there was no such thing as a triantiwontigongolope – but not completely.

Later, as we began our more adult relationship, the same things attracted me.

It was easy to admire the humour of Dennis’ dialogue, his amusing rhymes, his affectionate characterisations, and his sense of comic timing. The writer and critic Vance Palmer saw him as the best of the Australian balladists, a poet who

surpassed Paterson, Lawson and their fellows in ‘sheer technical dexterity’. ‘The Play’, in which the Bloke and Doreen go to see *Romeo and Juliet*, contains what is arguably Australia’s greatest parody.

That early sense of intrigue was revived as we began our more mature connection. What were the reasons for his immense popularity? What was his part in the development of those important images of Australian identity – the larrikin and the Anzac? Did he deserve his title as Australia’s unofficial poet laureate? What might lie behind his sentimental bloke persona?

As happens in marriages, less attractive sides slowly revealed themselves. A heartbreaking letter in the Angus & Robertson papers in the Mitchell Library shows how difficult Dennis’ wife found his drinking. The archives also show that Dennis liked to see himself as an operator, canny in doing deals and proud of being able ‘to work’ people, as he put it. His letter asking Henry Lawson to write the preface to *The Songs of a Sentimental Bloke* hints at his skill in getting what he wanted. After initially buttering Lawson up, Dennis continues:

I want only a brief introductory par. Or two; but if you refuse I shall quite appreciate your reasons for doing so and shall try not to feel hurt. All the same, knowing you, I don’t think you will refuse if you really think the verse is worth it. Indeed, I should not ask you if I did not think you would do it gladly, despite the cheek of the request.

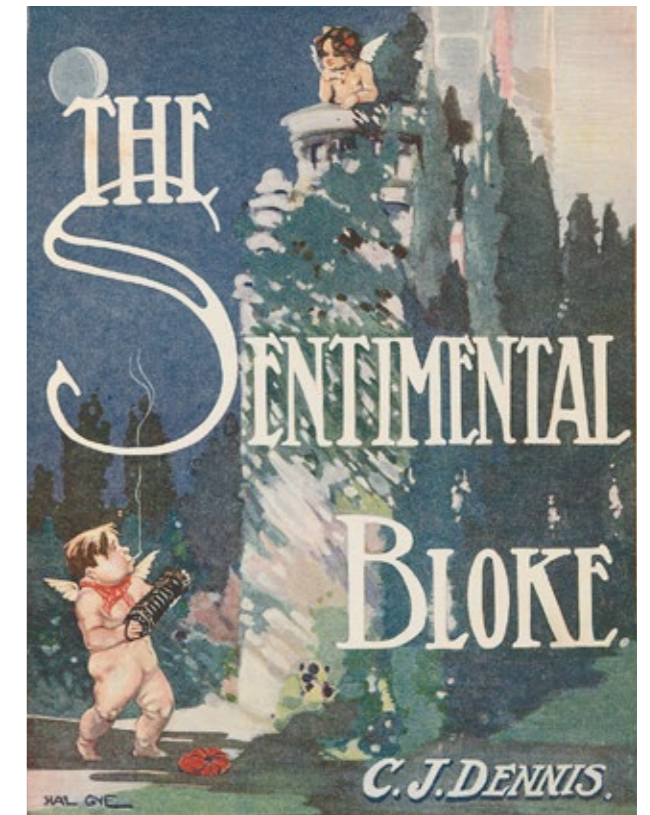
Even if he had wanted to decline, Lawson didn’t have much room to move. Adopting Dennis’ own larrikinese, he replied: ‘Dear Den. I dips me lid. Of course I will you ole fule.’

Nor were his poems as naïvely sentimental as they might seem. He deliberately added ‘an extra touch of sentiment’ in the last chapters of *The Songs of a Sentimental Bloke*, asking his mentor, Garry Roberts, ‘Have I slopped over?’ He even wondered about having the Bloke and Doreen’s baby die ‘to get a weep into it’, as he put it in another letter.

I found myself like a spouse at a dinner party, sometimes embarrassed by him and sometimes going in to battle for him. Dennis struggled to adjust to sudden wealth and fame, and many were uncomfortable with his regular behaviour in the grand Menzies Hotel in Melbourne, where he hobnobbed with the rich and famous, tipped ostentatiously, and drank too much. A fellow writer described him as ‘the gilt-spurred rooster of Menzies’ Hotel’.

But when he was unfairly attacked, I took his side. Norman Lindsay was one of the very few who did not like *The Songs of a Sentimental Bloke*. In fact, according to one reporter, he ‘solemnly and savagely crucified’ a copy of *The Songs of a Sentimental Bloke* ‘on a specially prepared cross in his front garden’ and left the tatters there as a protest against its success. Among other things, Lindsay was furious that all over Australia people were reading this book and its sequel, *The Moods of Ginger Mick*, and, as he wrote privately, ‘find[ing] the maudlin rubbish a consolation for their dead’. Though there was no need, I couldn’t stop myself pointing out that, at the same time, Lindsay consoled himself over the shattering death of his brother Reg by using a Ouija board to receive messages from the recently deceased. The board also proved useful for contacting Shakespeare and Apollo.

If my initial affection for Dennis had been followed by some disillusionment, by now we had a mature, deep and steady relationship, and I understood some of the reasons for his shortcomings. In the Mitchell Library, I pieced together the story of how he had squandered the enormous wealth generated by the Bloke and Ginger Mick books through profligate spending and poor business decisions, and I felt very sorry for him. His serious bouts of depression, of course, deserve sympathy, as does his terrible suffering from asthma. How sad, too, that after



such enormous success, and having made such a contribution to Australian culture, he lived most of the last third of his life as a lonely and melancholic figure. Thankfully, there were some high points during this period, such as in 1934 when the English poet laureate, John Masefield, visited Australia’s unofficial poet laureate in his bushland retreat. It was a significant public acknowledgment of what Dennis had achieved from a poet he greatly admired.

We both have some regrets. I’m sorry about my affairs – the brief flirtations with other pieces of research, and the unfortunate seduction by an administrative role that kept me from him for a few years. He’s probably not thrilled by some of what I’ve said about him in public. I hope, though, that deep down he admits it’s a reasonably fair and balanced account.

**Philip Butters’ *An Unsentimental Bloke: The Life and Work of C.J. Dennis* (Wakefield Press) won the 2015 National Biography Award. This is an edited version of his National Biography Award Lecture, delivered at the Library on 10 August 2016.**

HAL GYE’S COVER ILLUSTRATION FOR *THE SONGS OF A SENTIMENTAL BLOKE*, 1915

THESE COMIC PORTRAITS OF C.J. DENNIS WERE PUBLISHED IN *THE GADFLY*, THE ADELAIDE SATIRICAL MAGAZINE HE EDITED, TO ACCOMPANY HIS ANTI-WOWSER POEM, ‘THE PARSON AND THE PLAY’, 1907, PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN, P1 / 465



# How brightly you SHINE

\* WORDS Sarah Morley

Built to house the Sydney International Exhibition, the Garden Palace was a magnificent building that dominated the skyline and captivated society from its opening in 1879. Three years later it was destroyed in a devastating fire.

The motto of the Sydney International Exhibition would prove tragically apt: *Orta Recens Quam Pura Nites* or ‘Newly risen, how brightly you shine’. The exhibition was planned in the hope that it would contribute to the prosperity and advancement of the New South Wales colony and demonstrate Australia’s real identity. A building fit to house the prestigious event was needed quickly.

In February 1878 the Colonial Secretary’s Office announced that ‘it is intended to hold under the supervision of the Agricultural Society of New South Wales an International Exhibition in Sydney in August 1879’. By December the same year it had become clear that the Agricultural Society lacked the resources to complete the project and control passed to the state government. Government Architect James Barnet was directed to prepare ‘plans for a building suitable for an international exhibition, proposed to be built in the Inner Domain’. Within three days he had submitted a set of drawings for approval. From this point on there was a great sense of urgency to complete the building in less than 10 months.

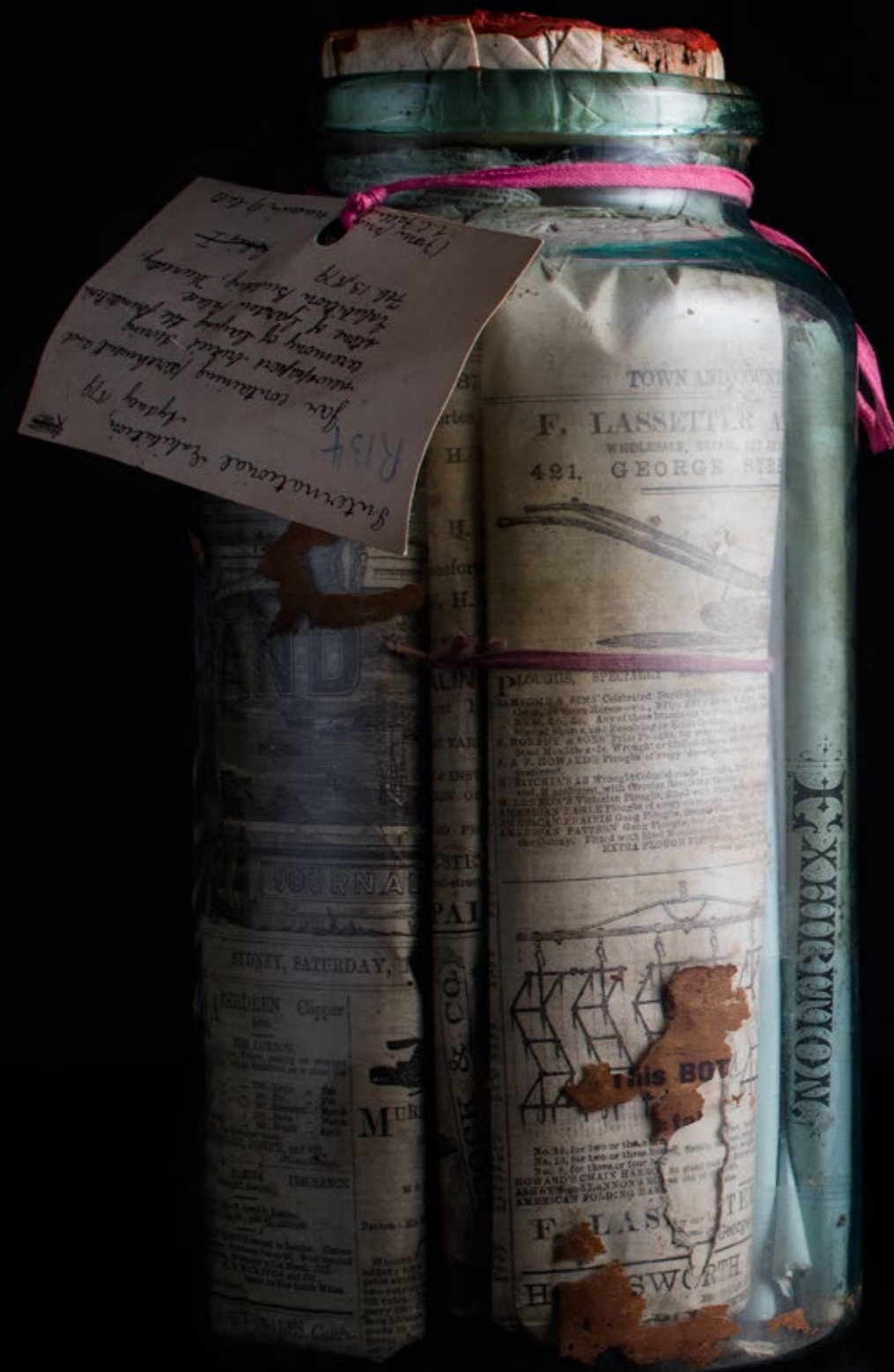
The successful contractor was John Young, a highly experienced building contractor who had worked on the Crystal Palace for the 1851 London International Exhibition and locally on the General Post Office and Exhibition Building at Prince Alfred Park. Young was confident he could deliver the



building in time, and electric lights were procured from London so that work could be carried out 24 hours a day.

The structure was built using over a million metres of timber, 2.5 million bricks and 220 tonnes of galvanised corrugated iron. It was an architectural

PIECE OF MOLTEN GLASS FROM THE GARDEN PALACE FIRE, 1882, R 633  
OPPOSITE: GLASS TIME CAPSULE CONTAINING PARCHMENT AND NEWSPAPERS BURIED UNDER THE FOUNDATION STONE OF THE SYDNEY INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION BUILDING, 13 FEBRUARY 1879, R 134, PHOTOS BY JOY LAI







Burning of Garden Palace  
From Eaglesfield Darlinghurst  
Sketched at 5.55 am. Sep 22/82

and engineering wonder set in a cathedral-like cruciform design, showcasing a stained-glass skylight in the largest dome in the southern hemisphere (64 metres high and 30 metres in diameter). The total floor space of the exhibition building was three and a half hectares, and the area occupied by the Garden Palace and related buildings — including the Fine Arts Gallery, Agricultural Hall, Machinery Hall and 10 restaurants and places of refreshment — was an astounding 14 hectares.

A number of innovative features set the building apart. The rainwater downpipes were enclosed in hollow columns of pine along the aisles, and Sydney's first hydraulic lift enabled visitors to ascend the north tower and take in the harbour views.

A month after building had commenced, on 13 February 1879, the foundation stone was laid by Lady Robinson, wife of Governor Hercules Robinson.

A glass time capsule filled with newspapers, an official program of the exhibition and a document detailing attendees of the ceremony was placed in a cavity of the foundation stone.

When the Fallick family presented the capsule to the Library in 1954, the donor reported that his grandfather, Edward C Fallick, had removed it while contractors were demolishing the ruins of the building after the fire. He believed the intention had been to fill the bottle with coins, but this had not happened due to a delay in getting them from the Mint. It was reported that on visiting Mr Fallick's private museum, Sir Henry Parkes remarked that the jar was government property.

The International Exhibition was responsible for bringing the world to Sydney at a time when the colony was prosperous and full of potential. It boosted the economy and encouraged authorities to improve the city's services and facilities. A steam-powered tramway was installed to transport exhibition-goers around the city. After the exhibition, the tramway network was expanded and by 1905–06 the trams were converted to electric traction.

Almost 18,000 visitors attended the exhibition on the opening day of 17 September 1879 and over 1.1 million people visited during its seven months of operation. Despite exceeding the predicted cost by almost four times, it was deemed a resounding success. After the exhibition closed, the imposing Garden Palace building was used as office space and storage for various government departments.

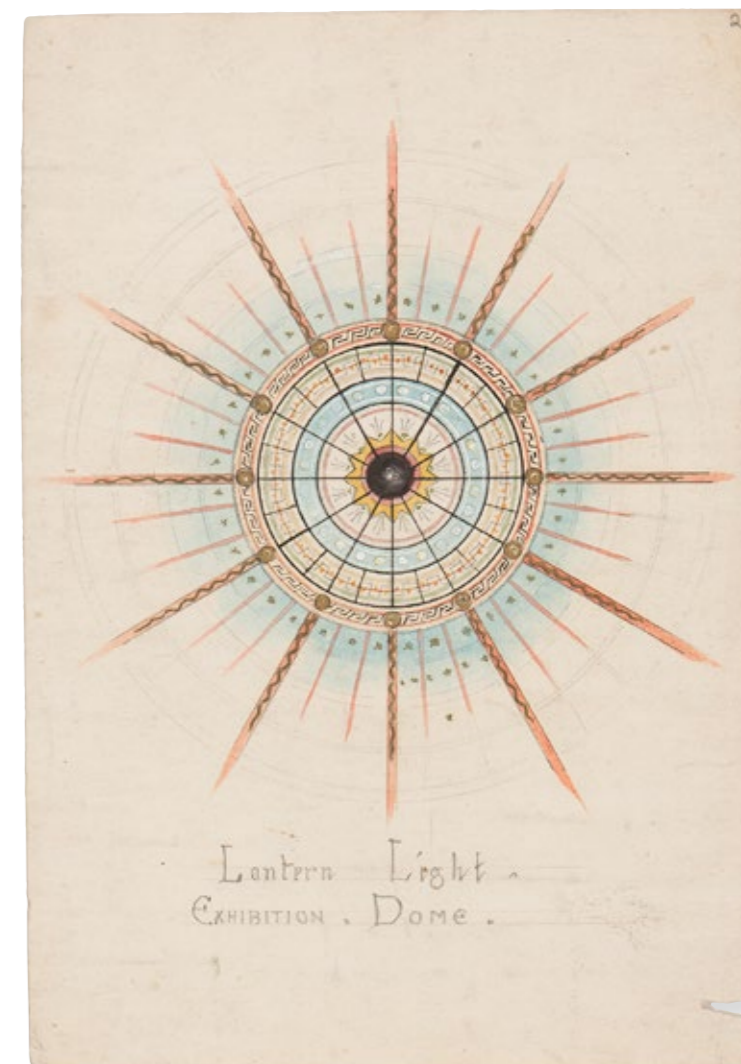
In the early hours of 22 September 1882 tragedy struck when the palace was engulfed by fire. Among the building's contents — all destroyed — was the foundation collection of the Technological and Sanitary Museum, due to open on 1 December 1882. This collection included significant ethnological specimens such as Australian Indigenous artefacts, many of which were acquired from the Sydney International Exhibition. Collections belonging to the Linnean Society and Arts Society of New South Wales were lost, as was the colony's census of 1881, documents relating to land occupation and railway surveys. The fire was so ferocious that the windows in the terraces along Macquarie Street cracked with the heat and sheets of corrugated iron were blown as far away as Elizabeth Bay.

Many accounts and illustrations of the Garden Palace fire can be found in contemporary newspapers and artworks. A recent acquisition by the Library is a rudimentary drawing by an unknown artist that appears to have been created as the palace was burning. The precise time and location is recorded on the painting, suggesting it was painted from Eaglesfield, a school on Darlinghurst Road. With its sense of immediacy, the image gives some insight into the chaos and heat of the tragedy.

A French artist living in Sydney, Lucien Henry, was among those who attempted to capture the fire. His assistant, GH Aourousseau, described the event in the *Technical Gazette* in 1912:

Mister Henry went out onto the balcony and watched until the Great Dome toppled in; it was then early morning; he went back to his studio procured a canvas, sat down and painted the whole scene in most realistic manner, showing the fig trees in the Domain, the flames rising through the towers, the dome falling in and the reflected light of the flames all around.

The painting Henry produced is clearly not the Library's recently acquired watercolour, however it is interesting to see how people were moved to document such a significant event in our city's history.



Lantern Light  
EXHIBITION DOME

Today, little is left of the captivating building that brought such enthusiasm and celebration. A lasting legacy may be the exhibition motto, which was adopted by the state of New South Wales in 1906.

**Sarah Morley**  
Curator, Research & Discovery

**Works shown here, relating to the Garden Palace, are on display in the Amaze Gallery.**

**See Q&A with Jonathan Jones on his Kaldor Public Art Project on the Garden Palace site, p. 47.**

DESIGN FOR STAINED GLASS DOME OF GARDEN PALACE, C. 1879, JOHN LAMB LYON, DGD 30, VOL. 1, NO. 2



# PASSIONATE

## *printers*

\* WORDS Louise R Mayhew

A collection of striking posters is testament to the radical productivity of the Women's Warehouse in Sydney from 1979 to 81.

One of the women around the movement at the time had found this space. She called up a number of other women to go ... and see if perhaps it might be suitable as a women's centre ... I remember being called and asked to come down with a group to look at the space. We went and we said 'Ohhh, this is wonderful!'

— Barbara Halnan, member of the Women's Warehouse Screenprinters

In 1979, ten women signed a lease on Bay 9, No. 4, Ultimo Road, Haymarket, a cavernous and dilapidated building in Sydney's inner-city. Photographs from the building's archives reveal broken windows, mis-matched curtains, exposed brick walls and wooden staircases. With a vision of the building described in *Girls' Own: Sydney Feminist Newspaper* in 1981 as a 'cultural and artistic centre for the wimmin's movement', women set to work. They volunteered weeks of labour to transform the space: sanding floors, painting walls and sparsely furnishing the rooms with eclectic second-hand furniture. Over 100 women attended the first meeting and, two days later, five groups agreed to the division and rental of the space.

For the next two and a half years, the Women's Warehouse was a hotbed of feminist, political and cultural activity. In its large wooden rooms, women gathered to socialise, learn and organise, repurposing the five-storey building for multiple and overlapping pursuits. These included the production of women's



newspapers (*Girls' Own* and *Rouge*), band practice, tai chi classes, childcare, protest headquarters, discussion groups and artist slide nights.

'It's really hard to imagine, it was just so buzzing,' Anne Sheridan, a participant at the house, tells me. 'There was so much women's political activity. You met women and it opened up another activity or

MARLA GUPPY, ANNE SHERIDAN AND LOUISE MAYHEW, PHOTO BY MERINDA CAMPBELL

OPPOSITE: *BOYCOTT NESTLE AND OTHER MULTINATIONALS WHO PROFIT FROM CHILDREN'S PAIN*, MARLA GUPPY AND ANNE SHERIDAN

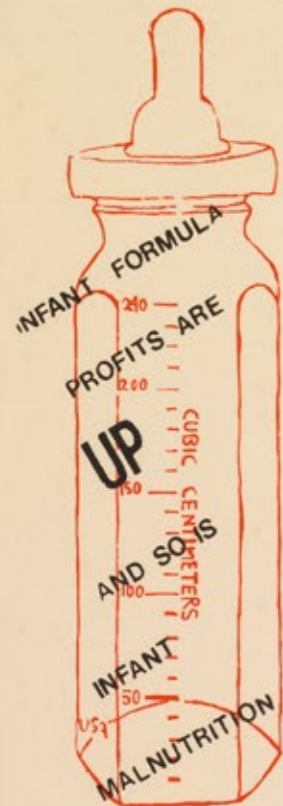
ALL POSTERS BY THE WOMEN'S WAREHOUSE SCREENPRINTERS, C. 1980-81, COMPILED BY ANNE SHERIDAN, PXD 673 / 15-26

I Wait For The Day When All Children Are Well - Fed

And Multinationals

Go Broke

And Crumble



bottle feeding kills third world babies

**BOYCOTT NESTLE AND OTHER  
MULTINATIONALS WHO PROFIT  
FROM CHILDREN'S PAIN**





another thing to be involved in, or to be asked to help with, or to participate in.’

Amid this bustle of activity, Barbara Halnan and Marie-Jeanne Mestagh teamed up to transform the basement into a space for screen-printing and photography. At the far end of the room they hung thick black material to create a makeshift darkroom. They strung up pieces of twine and arranged pegs for drying prints. They stocked the room with workstations, screens, ink and lightboxes. Thirty-five years later, Barbara remembers the basement as a pleasantly cool space in the height of Sydney summers.

The loose and informal group of women who shared the warehouse basement branded their posters ‘Women’s Warehouse Screenprinters’. Under this logo they worked solo and in small groups, teaching one another and sharing skills. This was the era of poster collectives; groups formed and flourished around Australia. Operating somewhere between artwork and advertisement, posters promised creative freedom and political expression; their accessibility and, if desired, anonymity, lured students, artists and activists alike. With provocative text, graphic images and bright colours, posters spoke to the local and counter-cultural issues of the day, giving voice to alternative opinions and challenging the imagery of mainstream media, particularly sexist advertising.

Fiona Graphs’ *Boycott Myer* provides a blistering example. The photographer was incensed by a promotion for jeans that welcomed passers-by to admire women’s ‘cheeky’ bottoms. Snapping a photograph of the promotion, Graph returned to the warehouse to organise a protest. When the protest resulted in the arrest of four women, Graph was prompted to print a poster calling for women to boycott Myer. It argued that ‘promotions like this put women down’ and drew attention to the brutality of the police force. The poster’s bold text and simple red, black and white design is an example of the quick call to action and dissemination of information that was common to poster-making. When considered in terms of the huge marketing budgets of companies like Myer, and the authority of the police force, this work is also an example of how poster-making gave a voice to the voiceless.

The women of the warehouse were deeply entrenched in Sydney’s network of feminist, political and educational groups including, among others, Women’s Liberation House, Leichhardt Women’s Health Centre, the Inner West Education Centre and the Rape Crisis Centre. Part of the Women’s Warehouse Screenprinters’ ethos was lending their skills, at reduced prices, to these politically aligned community initiatives. In dot-point form, a poster for the Feminist Legal Action Group lists the sobering reality of the gender bias women experience in the legal profession. The heroic image of barrister Joan Rosanove dominates the right-hand side. Rosanove was the first woman in Victoria to sign the Victorian Bar roll and was an advocate for women’s right to practice law. The rich purple and aqua of this poster pay homage to the colours of the suffragette movement.

Beyond Sydney, members of the Women’s Warehouse connected to an international feminist movement, communicating through books, newsletters and postcard exchanges. Artistic projects that communicated solidarity with international women’s struggles were common. Key members of the collective, Marla Guppy and Anne Sheridan, worked together on this poster for the ‘Boycott Nestlé’ campaign: an international boycott highlighting Nestlé’s practice of aggressively marketing breast-milk substitutes to women in third-world countries. In the centre of the image a young child, bright and happy, gazes directly at us.

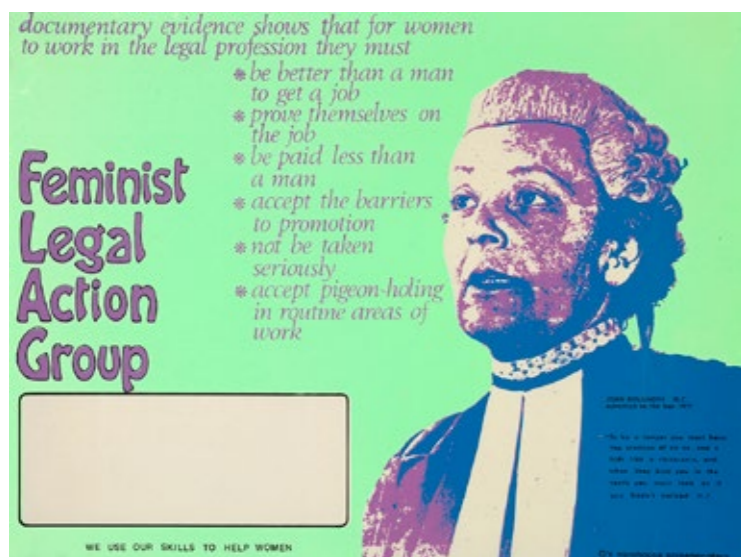
Posters produced at the house resonate with the anger and pain of the era. They are defiant, heartbreaking and haunting. In a horror-film inspired script, a poster by Marla Guppy screams: ‘Recall the Dalkon Shield’. The shield was a US-invented intrauterine contraceptive prone to deterioration, cracking and movement, which caused infection, infertility, septicemia, miscarriage and death. Although the device was recalled in the US it continued to be distributed to other countries, partly, and shamefully, in the form of US foreign aid. In Australia, doctors were continuing to recommend the Dalkon Shield without properly explaining the risks associated with its use. Guppy’s stark white skull pictures the Dalkon Shield as a harbinger of



corruption, danger and death. Lined with informative text, she warns readers of the dangers of the device and suggests immediate removal.

Despite the extraordinary levels of energy and activity at the Sydney Women’s Warehouse, very little remains in the form of written histories or archival material. The Library holds 12 posters related to the warehouse. Jura Books in Petersham and the National Gallery of Australia have a smaller selection. I owe my gratitude to Fiona Graph who, with great foresight, put together the archives that remain in the Library’s collection. I also thank Barbara, Anne and Marla whose memories activate these records.

**Dr Louise R Mayhew is an Australian feminist art historian and a casual academic at UNSW Art & Design. She was the Library’s 2015 Nancy Keesing Fellow.**



TOP: PROMOTIONS LIKE THIS PUT WOMEN DOWN; BOYCOTT MYERS, FIONA GRAPH  
ABOVE: FEMINIST LEGAL ACTION GROUP

RECALL THE DALCON SHIELD, MARLA GUPPY





Rare

# TREATMENT

## COLLECTION CARE

The Library's talented team of book conservators is treating the collection of over 200 incunabula, including some of the world's oldest and rarest printed books.

Meaning 'from the cradle', the Latin term *incunabula* refers to books printed with movable metal type between 1456 and 1500. This new technology revolutionised book production, sharply increasing the variety of designs and the sheer volume of books published, and transforming the business and influence of printing throughout Europe.

These first printed books were designed to resemble earlier manuscripts, with numerous scribes employed to 'illuminate' the ornately printed initial letters. Additional illuminated pages were often inserted to enhance a book's appeal as a luxury item.

One of the main challenges of treating the incunabula is that most of the bindings and their sewing structures are not original, having been repaired and rebound in the eighteenth or nineteenth century. Now also part of the history of the item, the newer binding can be at odds with the medieval sewing style, lacking flexibility and putting pressure on the spine and joints. Most of these books have also been trimmed on three sides to remove rough edges, often losing some of the print.

In treating the collection, we began by photographing and assessing each work to decide which level of treatment was needed. We estimated that 15 of the 237 books would require a complex treatment of between 70 and 100+ hours, including extensive paper and leather repairs. Some of these would need to be re sewn with new leather spines, in keeping with traditional medieval binding style. Individual clam-shell boxes would be created for six of the most valuable items.

Treating the incunabula is a rewarding project. The aim is always to keep as much of the original item intact as possible. Treatment involves research into the origins of these remarkable works as well as their provenance in public and private collections. It will result in volumes that are preserved into the future and are easier for researchers to use.

Steve Bell and Anna Brooks, Conservators, Collection Care



### INCUNABULA

With the project now halfway through, significant incunabula have passed through conservators' hands including:

*Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* – among the most beautifully illustrated incunabula, this volume was produced in 1499 by Aldus Manutius, one of the most influential printers in Venice.

*Liber Chronicarum* – known as the *Nuremberg Chronicle*, records the history of the world from the time of creation to the year it was printed, 1493; the most extensively illustrated book of the 15th century, with 1809 illustrations from 645 woodcuts.

*Geographia di Francesco Berlinghieri* – printed in Florence in 1482, this was one of the first printed works based on Ptolemy's *Geographia* and the first to be printed in vernacular Italian with copper engravings.

LIBER CHRONICARUM (DETAIL), 1493

OPPOSITE: CONSERVATOR STEVE BELL TREATS INCUNABULA  
PHOTO BY MERINDA CAMPBELL





# Taking FLIGHT

On its first trip outside the Library since it was acquired in 1885, Audubon's *Birds of America* is travelling to MONA. Our registrars chart the journey of this extraordinary loan.

Over the past few months we have been preparing one of the Library's most significant items for an exhibition at the Museum of Old and New Art (MONA) in Hobart.

John James Audubon's *Birds of America* (1827–1839) is considered one of the finest of all ornithological works and is the most valuable set of rare books in the Library's collection. The four-volume set was acquired in 1885 and consists of hand-coloured, life-size prints known as 'double elephant' folios, made from engraved plates. MONA will display the first volume, open at the magnificent *Carolina Parrot*, one of several now-extinct birds featured by Audubon.

Although *Birds of America* has been exhibited at the Library on several occasions — most recently in the exhibition *The Art of Audubon & Gould* in 1999 — this is the first time it has been sent out on loan. As a result, there were many new considerations as we prepared the item to take flight.

As registrars, we manage all exhibition loans from the collection. Working closely with conservators and curators, we balance the Library's obligation to ensure the safety and security of the collection with increasing requests for physical access to original items. This involves managing loan agreements and insurance, coordinating packing, safe transport, handling and display at the exhibition venue, and rehousing material on its return.

MONA approached the Library back in June 2015, with a visit from the Senior Research Curator to enquire about borrowing an Audubon volume. A formal letter of request then arrived from the museum's founder and owner David Walsh. Enclosing a detailed facilities report — outlining MONA's loan expertise, environmental conditions, and building information including doorway and corridor sizes — Walsh explained the rationale behind the planned exhibition *On the Origin of Art*. From this point, we began to assess logistics and obtain costings on specialised packing and transport.

MONA believes that *On the Origin of Art* is its most ambitious exhibition to date. It is based on the premise that art is more than a cultural phenomenon — its ubiquity throughout societies is associated with evolutionary processes. To provide arguments both for and against this concept, the museum engaged four leading scientists to curate the exhibition with its resident curatorial team.

Audubon's *Birds of America* was requested by guest curator Steven Pinker, an evolutionary psychologist who has been named among *Time* magazine's 100 most influential people. Pinker believes the arts are 'unnecessary but wonderful "cheesecake", with Audubon's volumes offering one of visual art's greatest visual and intellectual superdoses'.

Along with conservators, we analysed MONA's facilities report to ensure there would be no surprises after the volume leaves the Library. The scale of the volume is a logistical challenge: it measures 1.5 metres when opened and weighs approximately 20 kg — not your standard book!

It took nearly two days to photograph the oversized volume, with conservators using the high-resolution images to produce a report on the condition of the work, which is necessary for insurance.

For all outgoing loans, there are key considerations to minimise the risks. We need to approve all showcases and display methods, and prepare the item



for transport in a custom-made, well-insulated crate. To reduce handling, the most direct transport route must be used. A conservator will accompany the item in transit and oversee its unpacking, checking its condition and assisting with the installation. Strict security is maintained by limiting knowledge of transport arrangements to a need-to-know basis.

With all of these measures in place, it is exciting that one of the Library's most significant items will soon be on display at MONA, impressing its wonder on a twenty-first century audience. As David Walsh stated in his request letter:

We do believe that *On the Origin of Art* ... will reinvigorate these great works in a tremendously exciting dialogue with contemporary art ... Our guest-curator scientists, needing to show why they think we make art, need bloody good art to make their point.

**Caroline Lorentz, Registrar, and Lauren Dalla, Assistant Registrar, Collection Care**

***On the Origin of Art* is at MONA in Hobart, Tasmania, from 5 November 2016 to 17 April 2017.**

CAROLINA PARROT, PLATE 26, FROM JOHN JAMES AUDUBON, *BIRDS OF AMERICA*, 1827–1839

MATTHEW BURGESS AND WENDY RICHARDS, DIGITISING AN AUDUBON VOLUME, PHOTO BY JOY LAI



# Personal EXPERIENCE

The often confronting and dramatic oral histories of refugee and migrant experiences have an important place in the Library's collection.



## NEW ACQUISITIONS

'In South Sudan,' recalls Deng Adut, 'I fought for the right to be called South Sudanese, to have a passport and an ID. I fought for every bit of it, I bled, I almost died, my father died.'

Deng Adut was interviewed and photographed by Louise Whelan in 2014, as part of an oral history project commissioned by the Library. He recounts his time as a boy soldier in Sudan, having been taken from his mother at the age of six. He survived training and war and was eventually rescued by his older half brother. Coming to Australia as a refugee in 1998 aged 14, he taught himself to read, write and speak English, and eventually won a scholarship to study law. He came to wide attention in 2015 through a video advertisement for the University of Western Sydney, and gave an inspiring Australia Day address this year.

While not turning his back on his Sudanese history, Adut, now a lawyer and refugee advocate, told Whelan, 'I am happy to be Australian, to be in Australia and to be who I am. If I was still in the country I was born in, I would never have had a say. I would never have gone to primary school. I would be dead.' He is among several of Whelan's interview subjects who work in support of other refugees.

An accomplished photographer and oral historian, Whelan interviewed 28 Australians of African, Iranian, Afghani, South Asian and Pacific Island origin. Many came here as political, economic or environmental refugees. Having built relationships of trust through photographing diverse communities over several years, she has elicited honest and raw stories from courageous new citizens.

Refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Isaac and Justine Kisimba now live in Western Sydney with their six children. They arrived in Australia in 2004 after spending a long time in detention camps.

Justine, who married Isaac at 18, was only 10 when she had her first child, a little girl who died two years later. The couple fled the Congo when the rebels invaded. 'When we had Mobutu, everything was ok, up until Kabila came, he came with the soldiers; they started killing people,' Justine told Whelan. 'We left that night into the bushes, we wrapped our two children on to our body, we went through other villages. It was terrible, people were dying on the way, especially children, and older people because they can't walk the extra miles.'



'I am so glad I came here,' she says. 'I was educated up to year 9, my parents didn't have much, but education was the most important to them.' Isaac was a teacher in the Congo and, having retrained, is now a welfare officer at the University of Western Sydney. Like Justine, he believes in the importance of telling their stories for future generations.

They were recently featured in a *Sydney Morning Herald* article 'Cool Threads' as icons of Sydney's *sapeur* scene. SAPE is an acronym for La Société des Ambianceurs et Personnes Élégantes (Society of Tastemakers and Elegant People), which began after Belgium seized the Congo in the 1880s and the colonists began paying Congolese 'house boys' in second-hand European clothing. Over the decades, the *sapeur* philosophy of dressing in defiance of your circumstances became a subversive way of undermining oppressors.

These contemporary oral histories, gathered by Louise Whelan, join the Library's longstanding collection — going back to the 1950s — of first-hand accounts from people who have successfully resettled in Australia after terrible experiences in their homelands.

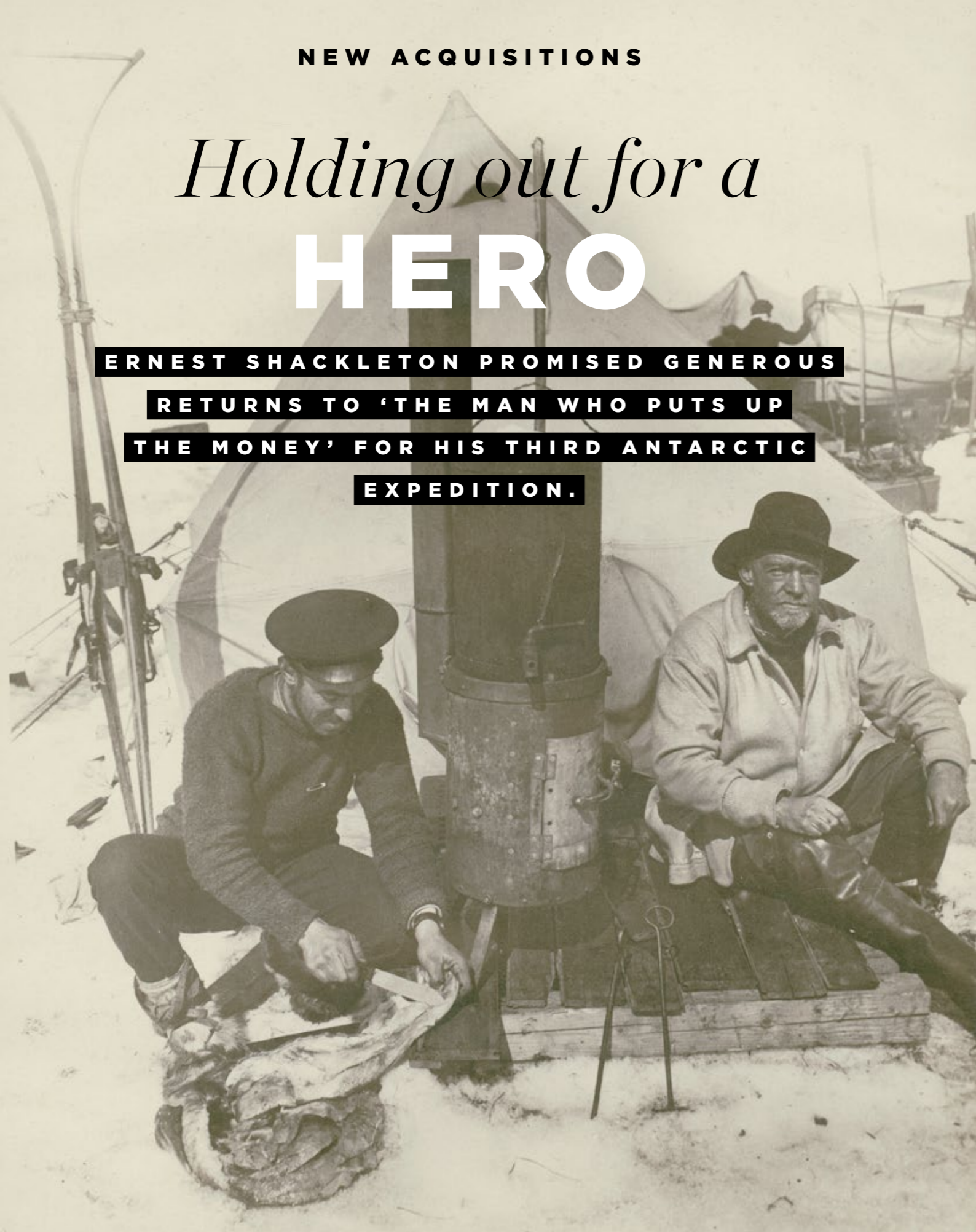
**Anni Turnbull, Curator  
Research & Discovery**

ISAAC AND JUSTINE KISIMBA  
AND FAMILY  
OPPOSITE: DENG ADUT  
PHOTOS BY LOUISE WHELAN



# Holding out for a HERO

**ERNEST SHACKLETON PROMISED GENEROUS RETURNS TO 'THE MAN WHO PUTS UP THE MONEY' FOR HIS THIRD ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION.**



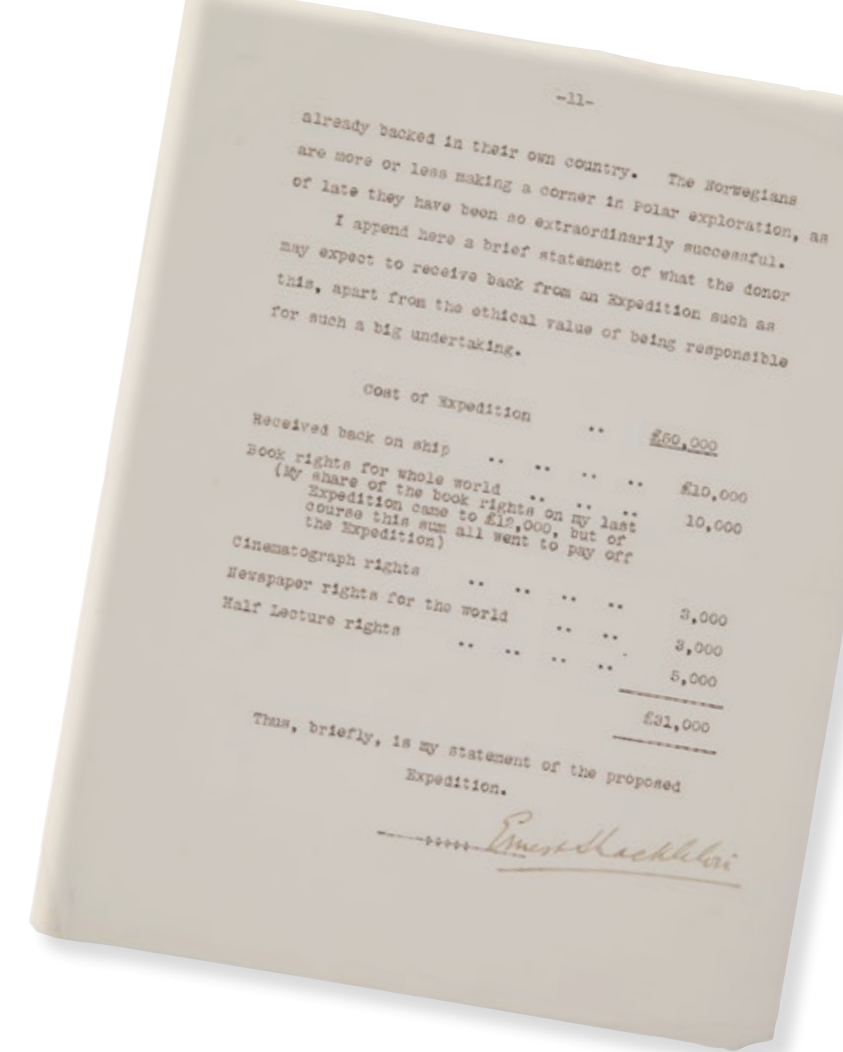
One of the great explorers from the 'heroic age' of Antarctic exploration, Ernest Shackleton embarked on his third and most famous expedition on the *Endurance* in 1914. His ambition was to cross the continent 'from sea to sea' – from the Weddell Sea below South America, to the Ross Sea to the south of New Zealand.

A year earlier, Shackleton had been seeking financial backing. He devised a proposal document – recently purchased by the Library – to distribute among potential supporters. In 11 pages he outlined the Objects of the Expedition, the Method of Conducting the Expedition (including a list of personnel needed), the Programme of the Expedition, the Cost of the Expedition (£50,000) and the Return to the Man who Puts up the Money.

Shackleton offered unprecedented benefits, including joint naming of the expedition, the right to send the first telegram to His Majesty the King, and 'the right to name new mountain ranges and all the mountains except one, which I want to name after my youngest son'. He also promised to sign over 'all the money from book rights and cinematograph rights, throughout the world'. Appreciating the benefits of media and publicity, he encouraged the talented Australian photographer Frank Hurley to join the expedition in late 1914.

Shackleton wanted England to retain the 'premier place in Polar exploration', which had been lost in the previous three years when a number of other countries sent out expeditions, including the Australasian Antarctic Expedition led by Douglas Mawson.

The *Endurance* set out on 1 August 1914, but disaster struck early in 1915 when the ship became trapped in the ice. (It would sink 10 months later.) The crew was forced to camp on the ice before setting off in three lifeboats and reaching Elephant Island on 15 April 1916. Shackleton went with five crew members to find help, spending 16 days in a small boat crossing 1300 km of ocean to reach South Georgia, then trekking across the island to a whaling station. The other men from the *Endurance* were rescued in August 1916. The expedition remains one of the most dramatic and perilous in Antarctic history.



Shackleton's preliminary document gives a rare insight into the early planning and desperate appeal for funding for this famous expedition. It predates the more detailed *Prospectus for the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition*, published in 1914, which proved successful in generating the required funds. By 1914 the British Government put £10,000 towards the expedition, and private sponsors had come forward in support.

Ernest Shackleton's proposal points to the ambition, bravery and competitive spirit of one of the heroes of Antarctic exploration. Given the enormous hardships and fight for survival that were to come, the document is even more powerful and significant in hindsight.

**Elise Edmonds**  
Senior Curator, Research & Discovery

'PROPOSED TRANS-ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION', ERNEST SHACKLETON, c. 1913, MLMSS 9807  
OPPOSITE: SIR ERNEST SHACKLETON (RIGHT) AND FRANK HURLEY IN FRONT OF THEIR CAMP, PXA 715



# Room for SHAKESPEARE



## NEW ACQUISITIONS

An intricate and imaginative drawing of the Shakespeare Room marks a century since planning began for a memorial library.

This year the Library joined in the celebrations to commemorate the life and work of William Shakespeare, marking the 400th anniversary of his death on 23 April 1616. Among many events and activities was the acquisition of several Shakespeare-related items.

The Library has had a keen interest in Shakespeare since the tercentenary celebrations in 1916 when the decision was made to establish a memorial library with funds raised by the Shakespeare Society of NSW. The Shakespeare Room, in the Mitchell Library building, was finally completed in 1943 and houses a small collection of books about Shakespeare. The Library continues to acquire items for the Shakespeare Tercentenary Library and is the only library in Australia to hold all four of Shakespeare's Folios.

As part of the Shakespeare 400 celebrations, the Library purchased a contemporary drawing of the Shakespeare Room by Sydney-based artist Simon Fieldhouse. Fieldhouse works in pen and watercolour to produce intricate drawings of iconic historical architecture from Australia and around the world. The drawing, featuring the Bard working in the Shakespeare Room on a laptop, makes a fabulous companion piece to the drawing of the Mitchell Library — also by Fieldhouse — acquired in 1993.

Simon Fieldhouse attended our Shakespeare Open Day on 23 April and was pleased to see his drawing on display in the Shakespeare Room.

**Sarah Morley**  
Curator, Research & Discovery



### LOVE STORY

**'For never was a story of more woe,  
than this of Juliet and her Romeo.'**

It may be small enough to fit in your pocket, but this book inspired arguably the greatest (and saddest) love story of all time. The Library has acquired a collection of stories from 1564 by Italian author Matteo Bandello — one of only three copies known to exist — including a tale of ill-fated lovers. Shakespeare drew inspiration from an English translation of Bandello's story to create his tragic play, which has been performed for over 400 years and has not been out of print since it was first published in 1623.

LA SFORTUNATA MORTE DI DUI INFELICISSIMI  
AMANTI, 1564, MATTEO BANDELLO  
OPPOSITE: SHAKESPEARE ROOM,  
STATE LIBRARY OF NSW, 2016  
SIMON FIELDHOUSE, XV/165



# LISTENING *and responding*

## What happens to the feedback forms you write?

With over 800,000 visits to our reading rooms each year, the Library receives over 800 written comments from clients and we guarantee a response within seven working days. Feedback can range from a 'thank you' note to a librarian, to an idea for improving accessibility, or a request to turn up the airconditioning. In 2015, compliments made up 66% of feedback, and the remaining 34% were suggestions on how we can improve our services.

Over the past two years we have made a number of changes to how we manage and report this feedback. These include analysing the recurrent themes, writing a quarterly report for key staff and communicating some of the major changes to our clients. This has changed our perception of the common themes, particularly concerning client dissatisfaction or complaints. We have been able to successfully use the feedback to support decision-making and service development.

Written complaints can be the tip of the iceberg. This becomes clear when we make a change in response to feedback and the take-up is higher than we anticipated. For example, after a small but steady number of complaints (about one a month) about bag restrictions in the Governor Marie Bashir Reading Room, we introduced an exemption for laptop bags. Thirty-two people registered for the exemption in the first two weeks, indicating a greater level of need than the complaints suggested.

Positive feedback is, of course, always welcome and like most organisations we share it with individual staff. It can also be used to reinforce decisions and confirm the right path was taken. Reporting the feedback has had some unexpected



benefits. There is now an increased awareness across the organisation of clients' needs and interests, and staff are taking pride in the improvements they have been involved with.

But the real winners are our clients. We are engaging with clients directly by responding to their feedback and showing that we are listening. The infographic on the opposite page, sharing the positive changes introduced as a result of client feedback, is on display near the entrance to the Governor Marie Bashir Reading Room. A recent tweet was exactly the response we had hoped for: 'Cudos to @statelibrarynsw for communicating how they use patron feedback'. We will continue to monitor the feedback, as we aim to keep improving the experience of clients at the Library.

**Philippa Stevens, Manager, and Kim Thomson, Coordinator, Information & Access**

**The Information & Access team provides the reference and information services in the Mitchell Library and Governor Marie Bashir reading rooms. They also respond to over 15,000 telephone and email enquiries each year.**

## You asked, we listened.



We want your feedback!



Illustrations sourced from freepik.com



# building strong Foundation

## Custodian Patrons



AT THE CUSTODIAN PATRONS RELAUNCH  
PHOTOS BY JOY LAI

## FOUNDATION



A recent meeting with a longstanding Custodian Patron reinforced for me the deep relationship many of our donors have with the State Library of NSW, particularly the Mitchell Library collections. So many Custodians have an extraordinary passion for this Library and for the role of knowledge and Australian history in our society. This connects with the words of Lord Chelmsford at the official opening of the Mitchell Library in 1910 when he said, 'we ought to value this library as relics of our national existence – part of ourselves – and give it the very highest reverence that we can'.

The Custodian Patrons program is our annual fund. These donors fund critical projects each year and help keep the Library's work visible in the community.

One of the first items I came across after commencing at the Library was a series of beautifully bound leather tomes containing the names of the inaugural Custodian Patrons. Today we are proud to report that over 80 Custodians have shown how much they value this institution by continuously supporting the Library for over 15 years. This level of engagement is very special and is not taken for granted.

During the past 10 years alone, Custodian Patrons have contributed more than \$1.6 million, enabling the Library to acquire unique collection items, preserve rare documents and artefacts, and present innovative exhibitions.

Among key acquisitions supported by Custodians in the area of early exploration was the 2011 purchase of an exquisite Dutch chart of the Indian Ocean,

produced in 1677 for the Dutch East India Company. This was followed in 2014 by the significant sixteenth century Dutch map *Nova Tabula Insularum Javae Sumatrae*, published by Willem Lodewijcz. Custodian support made it possible last year to purchase a 1628 first edition of *The World Encompassed* by Sir Francis Drake, a narration of his circumnavigation of the Pacific. These great maps and publications have enriched our collections and enhanced our knowledge of the Age of Discovery.

Custodians contributed to our considerable photographic record of the twentieth century by supporting the acquisition of the Max Dupain and Associates Commercial Archive (1946–1992) in 2012. This part of the Dupain archive comprises some 155,000 black-and-white negatives and 2500 prints of architectural and commercial photography. The Library's recent acquisition of the Max Dupain Exhibition Negative Archive from Jill White completes the collection of Dupain's entire body of work.

Custodian funding has also been important in conserving our collections. Conservators have treated significant works such as the watercolour *Newcastle in 1849* by John Rae, portraits of Sarah and John Larking Scarvell by the acclaimed nineteenth century painter Richard Noble, large glass plate negatives from the world class Holtermann Collection, and the extraordinary but fragile HL White postage stamp collection (1838–1913).

We chose a critical milestone for the relaunch of our Custodian Patrons program this year – the celebration of the life and work of William Shakespeare, 400 years since his death in April 1616. Our Custodian-supported Shakespeare 400 activities included an update and refresh for our much admired Shakespeare Room, and the acquisition of a 1564 collection of stories by Italian author Matteo Bandello that served as inspiration for *Romeo and Juliet*.

Kim Williams AM, the Chairman of the Foundation Board and a Custodian Patron for over 14 years, launched the renewal of the program and we were honoured to have Robyn Nevin AM, acclaimed actor, theatre director and artistic leader, speak briefly about the importance of Shakespeare's work to contemporary theatre.

ALEX BYRNE AND ROBYN NEVIN AM  
AT THE CUSTODIAN PATRONS RELAUNCH



## FOUNDATION

Robyn delighted the audience by performing extracts from *Macbeth*, *King Lear* and *Antony and Cleopatra*. She described the Library as ‘one of the great – possibly greatest – social memory institutions of Australia’, and talked of a collection of treasures so diverse that all members of the community ‘can learn, discover and share the wonder that knowledge always kindles’.

A special thanks to those who have joined as new Custodians, and a warm thank you to our loyal continuing Custodians.

If you would like to discuss becoming a Custodian Patron, please contact me directly on (02) 9273 1529 or email <susan.hunt@sl.nsw.gov.au>.



**Susan Hunt**  
Director, State Library of NSW  
Foundation & Executive Manager,  
Advancement



## Friends travel draw winner

At a recent Foundation event on 16 June, Rob Thomas AM drew the winner of the Friends of the Library travel competition. We are delighted to announce that Friends members Catherine and Christopher Reynolds were the recipients of the Luxury Perth Getaway Travel draw, valued at \$12,000.

Catherine and Christopher will receive business class return travel to Perth with Virgin Australia on the brand new A330, plus three nights accommodation in a Heritage Room at Perth’s new COMO The Treasury Hotel.

The Foundation is delighted to be able to offer this prize and sincerely wishes to thank its sponsors Virgin Australia and COMO Treasury for their generosity.



TOP: COMPETITION WINNERS CHRISTOPHER AND CATHERINE REYNOLDS WITH FRIENDS COORDINATOR HELENA POROPAT  
ABOVE: FOUNDATION EVENT, 16 JUNE 2016  
PHOTOS BY MERINDA CAMPBELL

### PLAY A SPECIAL ROLE

Custodian patrons play a special role in the growth of the State Library by providing annual donations. This financial support enhances access to our unique collections, promotes the history of our nation and provides opportunities for every Australian to pursue lifelong learning.

Starting from just \$150 you can help us with our vision of being a world leading library by becoming a Custodian Patron today.

### AS A CUSTODIAN PATRON YOU WILL RECEIVE:

- early information about events and activities at the Library
- exclusive invitations to behind-the-scenes programs
- tax deductibility for your gift.

### JOIN TODAY BY:

- using our secure online payment system [www.sl.nsw.gov.au/support](http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/support)
- completing the enclosed donation form
- contacting our Foundation office (02) 9273 1593
- emailing us at [foundation@sl.nsw.gov.au](mailto:foundation@sl.nsw.gov.au).



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The *Planting Dreams* book and a colourful range of garden-related gifts are available at the Library Shop.



H I G H L I G H T S



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PHOTO BY JOY LAI
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- 04 ROMANCE WAS BORN FASHION SHOOT IN SHAKESPEARE ROOM, 16 MAY 2016  
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- 05 KATE MULVANEY, JAMES EVANS, DR MICHAEL CATHCART, DR LIAM SEMLER, CHRISTINA NGUYEN, 'A LOVE AFFAIR WITH SHAKESPEARE' 18 MAY 2016  
PHOTO BY BRUCE YORK
- 06 THE NGUYEN FAMILY, 'A LOVE AFFAIR WITH SHAKESPEARE', 18 MAY 2016  
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- 07 WORLD PRESS PHOTO 16 EXHIBITION OPENING, 20 MAY 2016  
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- 08 AT A LIBRARY FRIENDS EVENT, 'THE PERFECT MATCH', 16 JUNE 2016  
PHOTO BY MERINDA CAMPBELL
- 09 JENNEFER NICHOLSON FALIA, ROB THOMAS AM, DR JOHN BELL OBE AO, KATHLEEN BRESNAHAN, HONOURS OF THE LIBRARY COUNCIL OF NSW 20 JUNE 2016  
PHOTO BY BRUCE YORK
- 10 COLOUR IN DARKNESS EXHIBITION OPENING, 27 JUNE 2016  
PHOTO BY JOY LAI
- 11 DR LAILA ELLMOOS, JACQUI NEWLING, DR LISA MURRAY, 'VOYAGES AND VISIONS' LAUNCH, 30 JUNE 2016  
PHOTO BY MERINDA CAMPBELL
- 12 AMY BOYLE AND JARROD HORE, 'VOYAGES AND VISIONS' LAUNCH 30 JUNE 2016  
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PHOTO BY JOY LAI
- 14 TIAHNI BUSSELL AND BRONWYN BANCROFT, INDIGENOUS COLLECTING STRATEGY LAUNCH, 6 JULY 2016  
PHOTO BY JOY LAI
- 15 DR ALEX BYRNE, THE HON. LESLIE WILLIAMS MP, NSW MINISTER FOR ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS, KIRSTEN THORPE, INDIGENOUS COLLECTING STRATEGY LAUNCH, 6 JULY 2016  
PHOTO BY JOY LAI

recent highlights



# Our vision

*new  
world-class  
galleries*

*a global  
destination  
for all*

*greater access  
to our extraordinary  
collections*

*inspiring physical  
& digital experiences*



STATE LIBRARY®  
NEW SOUTH WALES

For more information about our vision,  
visit [www.sl.nsw.gov.au](http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au)

# ‘Q&A

Jonathan Jones



Artist Jonathan Jones became immersed in the Library’s Indigenous collections when preparing his major installation for the Royal Botanic Garden.

#### WHAT DRIVES YOUR PRACTICE AS AN ARTIST?

There is a Wiradjuri concept known as *yindyamarra*, which is often translated as ‘respect’, but as many elders remind me it’s actually much broader. It involves your relation to other people, the world around you and everything in it. Yindyamarra encourages you to go slow, and to be polite and honorable. Yindyamarra drives my practice.

#### WHY IS THE GARDEN PALACE STORY IMPORTANT?

One of the most important buildings ever built in Sydney, the Garden Palace has largely been forgotten. The site on Gadigal land has been a gathering and celebration place for countless generations. It is no coincidence that the Garden Palace continued this tradition of celebrating and displaying cultural objects. Yet all these cultural collections, including many significant Aboriginal

objects, were destroyed by fire in 1882. For me, the Garden Palace has become something of a Trojan horse: once people appreciate that an enormous building — a grand imperial palace some 250 by 150 metres — can be forgotten, we can start to appreciate other forgotten stories. All too often Aboriginal stories have been the victim of Australia’s narrow view of history and the Garden Palace is an opportunity to see history in a new light.

#### HOW WILL YOUR INSTALLATION BARRANGAL DYARA (SKIN AND BONES) CONNECT LANGUAGE AND LANDSCAPE?

The sculpture *barrangal dyara* (*skin and bones*) listens to country and tells the story of that place. Marking the footprint will be a native meadow of kangaroo grass and thousands of shields, which will come together as a celebration of the site’s identity. There will be a

soundscape created by Aboriginal communities in languages from across the south-east region to recall the objects lost in the Garden Palace fire. Indigenous wordlists from the Library have often been a source of local languages.

#### WHICH PARTS OF THE LIBRARY’S COLLECTION RESONATE WITH YOU?

As the State Library of New South Wales — the first colony and the state of my cultural homelands, both Wiradjuri and Kamilaroi — the Library is full of extraordinary Aboriginal collections from the south-east region. Those I deeply connect with are by Aboriginal authors, including works on paper by the Yuin artist known as Mickey of Ulladulla (c. 1820–1891), that depict the iconic south-east coastal shield, and the notebooks of Tommy McRae (c. 1835–1901), which are enormously inspiring. McRae also

depicts south-east broad shields, often being used in ceremony, and shows them as integral to regional identity. These shield designs will be incorporated into the project.

#### WHAT WILL YOU DO NEXT?

I’ll continue my research within historical collections, retrieving Aboriginal knowledge from the archive to be placed within a cultural continuum. In particular, I’ll be looking at the works of McRae and other south-east artists to better understand the cultural footprint of a region so many Australians call home.

**Jonathan Jones’ Kaldor Public Art Project *barrangal dyara* (*skin and bones*) is at the Royal Botanic Garden from 17 September to 3 October 2016.**

PHOTO: EMMA PIKE/KALDOR PUBLIC ART PROJECTS