

Magazine for members  
Winter 2014

# SL



STATE LIBRARY®  
NEW SOUTH WALES

## World War I centenary

Life interrupted  
*Music in the trenches*  
Diggers' dialect  
*Capture of Emden*



# Message



## What we do

As curator Elise Edmonds recounts in this issue, *Life Interrupted: Personal Diaries of World War I* will tell of the experience and impact of that war. Our capacity to present exhibitions of the quality of *Life Interrupted* exemplifies what we do.

*We collect.* In this case beginning with Principal Librarian William Ifould advertising 'good prices for good material' to attract the accounts of the 'war to end all wars', which he knew would be so important. And since then we have continued to collect, with WWI material coming in even now on the eve of the war's centenary.

*We describe.* Through our catalogue, we make this material internationally accessible. A researcher in London, a family member in Auckland, a student in Temora and many others can easily discover what we have and how to access it.

*We make available.* On site in our reading rooms and exhibitions, online through digitisation and on tour through exhibitions and in schools, we bring our collection to researchers, enthusiasts and the general public. We have digitised and transcribed – with the help of our wonderful volunteers – 82,000 pages of the WWI diaries and are continuing with the rest of the collection. All can look at images of the pages, read the transcribed text and search for places, names and engagements.

*We preserve.* From preserving these personal accounts to carrying forward the digital versions, preservation is a central priority for this Library, carried out by our expert conservators.

*We interpret.* Through our own research, such as that on *Life Interrupted* and the recent *Artist Colony*, through facilitating the research of others, and in collaborative projects, we learn about and from the collection, helping us to understand our nation and people.

In combination, these imperatives make the State Library of NSW a world leading library and centre of digital excellence.

ALEX BYRNE

NSW State Librarian & Chief Executive

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Winter 2014

## SL

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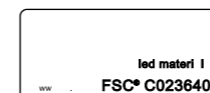
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FRIDAY 9 AM TO 5 PM  
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EXHIBITION GALLERIES  
OPEN TO 5 PM, THURSDAYS  
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THE MITCHELL LIBRARY  
READING ROOM IS CLOSED  
ON SUNDAYS.

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# Portraits of War: The Crown Studio Project



/01



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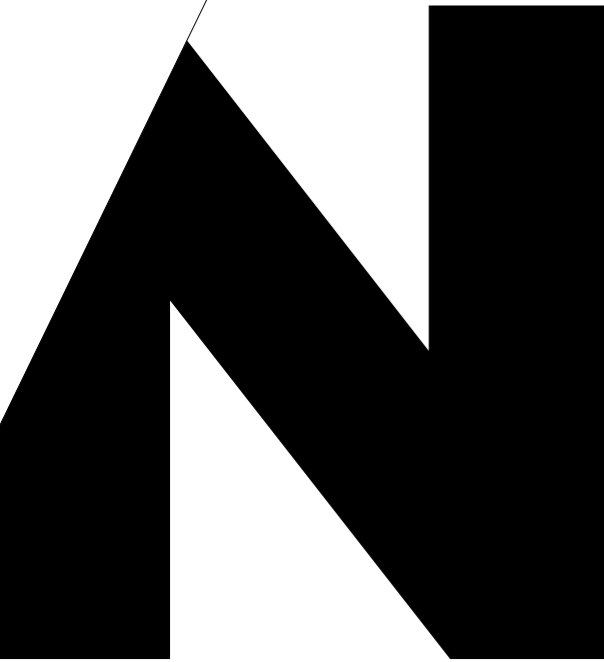
/20

In 1918 the Mitchell Library Trustees embarked upon an ambitious project: to photograph NSW soldiers heading overseas to serve in World War I. See over 230 of these portraits on display in *Portraits of War: The Crown Studio Project* from 28 June to 21 September.

- 01 JAMES MUNRO MATHESON
  - 02 JACK HODGSON
  - 03 ALFRED DUROUX
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  - 05 SYDNEY BEATTIE
  - 06 WILLIAM HENNESSY
  - 07 ROY WILFRED WILLIAMS
  - 08 FRANK ANTHONY MARTIN
  - 09 ROY HENDERSON ROBERTSON
  - 10 ERNEST CLUMPS
  - 11 REGINALD SQUIRES
  - 12 FRANK H. WARREN
  - 13 LANCELOT THOMAS CRANE
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  - 15 ERIC HUGHES
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  - 17 ADALBERT GURWOOD BROUE
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  - 19 CLAUDE JAMES S. HUNT
  - 20 ADAM SUTHERLAND
- NSW SERVICEMEN PORTRAITS, 1918-19, CROWN STUDIOS



# NEWS



## Newspapers digitised

The Library has reached a major milestone in the State Government-funded digitisation of our NSW newspaper collection. By the end of February 2014, the project had digitised and made available via Trove over 2 million fully searchable newspaper pages. The digitised pages represent over 100 NSW newspaper titles, with new editions being digitised and made accessible all the time. Newly digitised newspapers include the *Bombala Times* (1912–1938), *Dungog Chronicle: Durham and Gloucester Advertiser* (1894–1954) and the *Western Grazier* (Wilcannia, 1896–1951).

## New WWI website

Launching in July to coincide with the *Life Interrupted* exhibition, a new website will bring together the Library's WWI collections. With enhanced searching, browsing and serendipitous discovery, the site will continue to grow as diaries and letters are digitised. Along with feature articles and diary transcripts (completed by Library volunteers), the site will have online spaces where you can share your stories about the collections.

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



## Interrobang

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

**? I am researching WWI knitting and wanted to find out if the Library has any images I would be able to use?**

**!** A photograph from 1915 shows a knitting group of Red Cross members in Pilliga NSW made up of women and children. Another, from October 1916, shows a knitting group of five women from Cudgewa in Victoria. Also of interest is a collection of personal papers that includes a knitting pattern called 'The Grey Sock' (R 1117). These socks were knitted by groups and individuals all over the country during WWI and were sent to Australian troops fighting at the front.



## Rimini Antiphonal on CD

The Library's Rimini Antiphonal of 1328 has made it onto CD. ABC Classics recently released *Mysteries of Gregorian Chant*, which includes world premiere recordings of eight chants from our Rimini Antiphonal. The idea for the CD grew out of five sell-out concerts in the Mitchell vestibule in 2008 and 2009 directed by Dr Neil McEwan of the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

RIMINI ANTIPHONAL, 1328 (DETAIL)

## SPECIAL NEWS

### Honours of the Library Council of New South Wales

The Library Council of the State Library of NSW wishes to confer the following honours on distinguished individuals for high levels of achievement consistent with the mission and values, vision and strategic priorities of the Library:

**The Medal of the Library Council of New South Wales**

**The Dixon Medal**

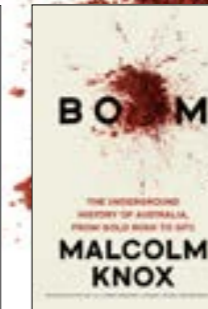
**The Ifould Medal**

**Emeritus Curator**

**Honorary Fellow**

Nominations are called for the award of these honours. The deadline for submission of nominations is 6 June 2014.

See [www.sl.nsw.gov.au/librarymedals](http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/librarymedals) for more information.



## Ashurst prize

Award-winning writer Malcolm Knox has won this year's Ashurst Business Literature Prize for *Boom: The Underground History of Australia, from Gold Rush to GFC*. Alan Cameron AO, chair of the judging panel, said *Boom* was 'an ambitious and important book which sets out to put mining into context as a critical part of the Australian story since white settlement'. Also shortlisted for the \$30,000 prize were Colleen Ryan's *Fairfax: The Rise and Fall*, Pamela Williams' *Killing Fairfax: Packer, Murdoch and the Ultimate Revenge* and Jay Harman's *The Shark's Paintbrush: Biomimicry and How Nature is Inspiring Innovation*.

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



## Premier's Literary Awards

Announced on 20 May at the Library, the Premier's Literary Awards celebrate achievement of Australian writers across the genres of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, playwriting and screenwriting, children's and young people's literature. See the Library's website for shortlisted and prize-winning works.

on this

# DAY

COMPILED BY Margot Riley, Original Materials



*11 June 1964*

The Beatles arrive in Australia. Here the 'Fab Four' disembark at Sydney's Kingsford-Smith Airport.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JACK HICKSON FOR THE AUSTRALIAN PHOTOGRAPHIC AGENCY APA - 16555

*29 June 1861*

Explorer Robert O'Hara Burke dies in the South Australian desert. This watercolour by ST Gill depicts Henry King discovering Burke's body.

PXA 1983 F. 12



*8 July 1891*

Famed international stage actress Sarah Bernhardt appears at Her Majesty's Theatre, Sydney.

FROM AN ALBUM OF PHOTOGRAPHS IN DAVID SCOTT MITCHELL'S COLLECTION PXA 2032 F. 3



*10 July 1901*

Anthony Hordern & Sons' Palace Emporium burns down at Haymarket, Sydney. In the spirit of Hordern's motto, 'While I live I'll grow', a gigantic new department store soon arises from the ashes.

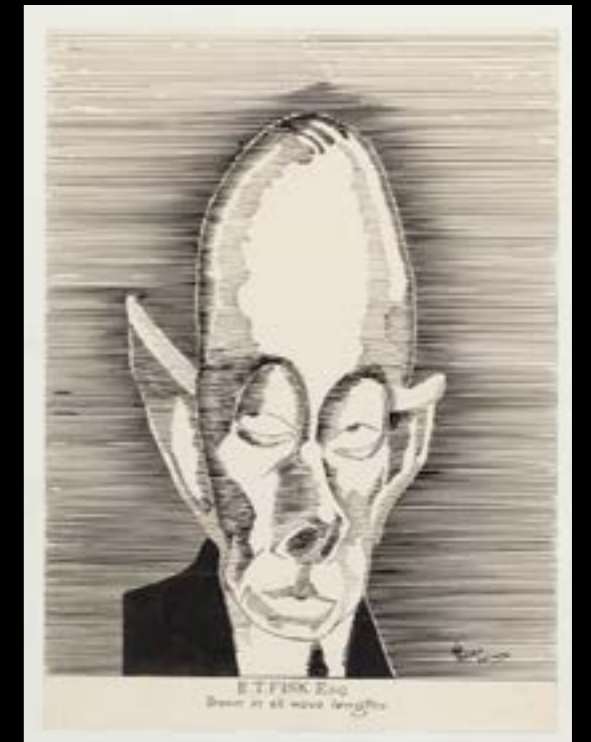
NEW PALACE EMPORIUM, C. 1905, AE FOSTER COLLECTION ON 30/BOX 9/NO. 55



*3 August 1914*

The Australian Government offers to place its naval ships under the control of the British Admiralty in the event of war in Europe. This image by Sam Hood shows spectators viewing the arrival of the first Royal Australian Navy in October 1913.

HOME AND AWAY - 8009



*13 August 1919*

ET Fisk conducts the first public demonstration of radio broadcasting in Sydney. This caricature by Will May shows Fisk 'drawn in all wave lengths', c. 1938.

MLMSS 6275/44X





# RESTORING

## *the Mitchell*



Last December, the State Library launched an initiative to renew the Mitchell Library building, a much-loved Sydney landmark and the home of research into Australian history, literature and culture. Our broad plans were featured in the summer edition of *SL* magazine.

We have heard from many of our readers and passionate lovers of this Library about the proposed changes to our services in the Mitchell Library.

Readers are at the heart of what we do. They define how our spaces are used, how collections are researched, how knowledge is shared. We have listened carefully to the comments since the December announcement and the sketch plan on page 12 addresses the issues raised by our researchers and readers.

We can now reveal our revised and more detailed plan for the renewal of the ground floor of the Mitchell Library building, with work expected to commence in July.

Under our revised plan, researchers and readers will continue to use the State Library's world-renowned Australian collections in the grand Mitchell Library Reading Room. The current special collections area will be extended, and a glass partition will return to separate the research and general reading areas, ensuring the security of our collections and the comfort of readers.

Researchers and readers will continue to work with manuscripts, maps, artworks and other special collection material alongside related reference material. The Mitchell reference collection and card catalogues for Mitchell books and manuscripts will be at hand, together with the online catalogue which now includes many previously hard-to-access lists and guides.

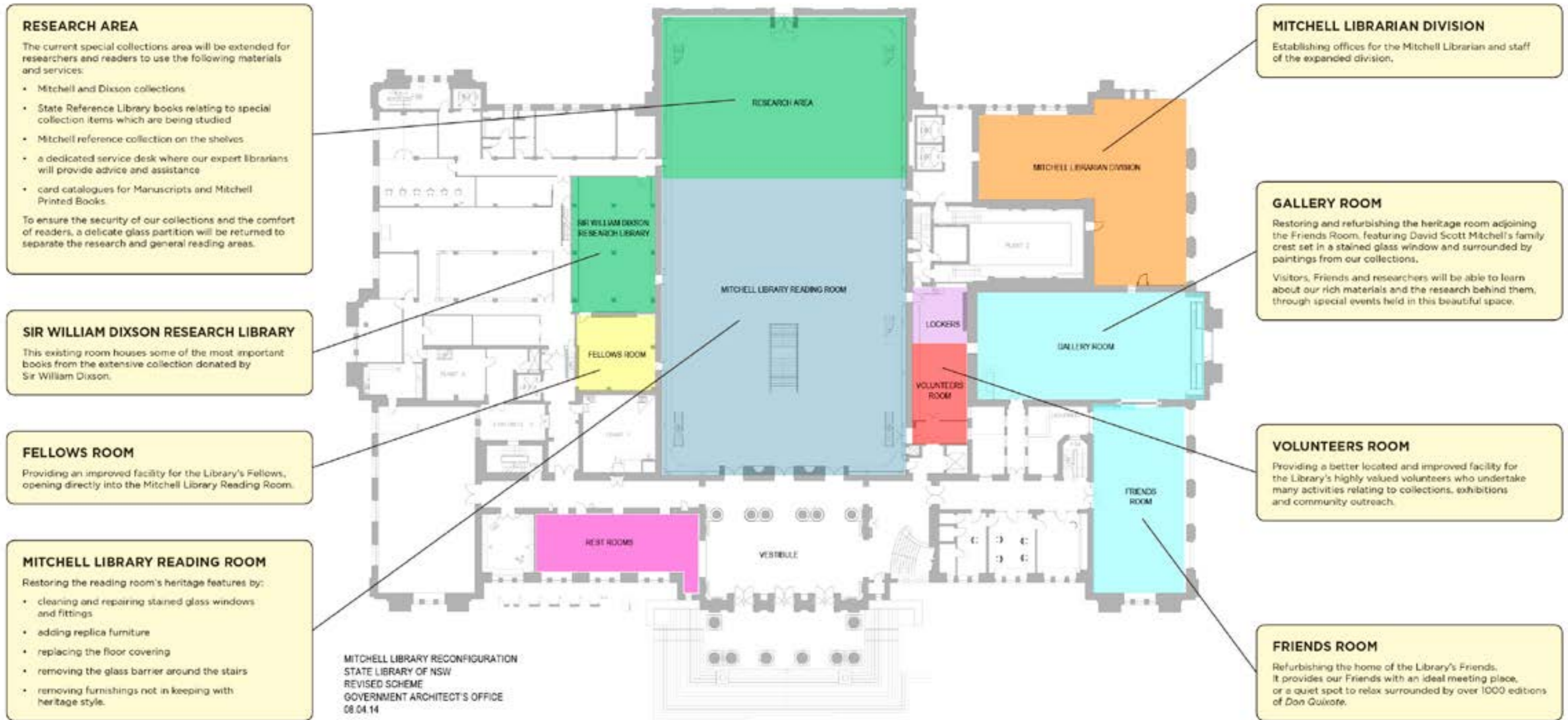
Since March readers have been able to request and read books from the Mitchell Library Collection and the State Reference Library Collection in either the Mitchell Library Reading Room or the State Reference Library Reading Room. And, as always, our expert staff are on hand to provide advice and assistance.

The Friends Room and the Gallery Room constitute the original Mitchell Reading Room and will be fittingly restored. The new Gallery Room will be used for Scholarly Musings and other events where Friends, researchers and visitors will learn about the Library's rich materials and research on them, overseen by David Scott Mitchell's coat of arms and paintings from our collection.

We will restore additional spaces on the ground floor, including an improved facility for recipients of the Library's research fellowships. Adjacent to the reading room will be offices for the Mitchell Librarian and staff of the expanded division of the Mitchell Librarian and a new room for the Library's highly valued volunteers.

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





We welcome your comments on these plans to restore and refurbish the ground floor of the Mitchell Library building. Please send comments via the online form at <[www.sl.gov.au/mitchell/feedback](http://www.sl.gov.au/mitchell/feedback)>, email <[mitchell.feedback@sl.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mitchell.feedback@sl.nsw.gov.au)> or write to Mitchell Feedback, State Library of NSW, Macquarie Street, Sydney NSW 2000.

# LIFE *interrupted*



WORDS Elise Edmonds

**THE LIBRARY HOLDS OVER  
500 ACCOUNTS OF AUSTRALIAN AND  
NEW ZEALAND MEN AND WOMEN WHO SERVED  
IN WORLD WAR I. MANY OF THEIR STORIES  
— INCLUDING THE TWO FEATURED HERE —  
ARE BROUGHT HOME IN OUR *LIFE INTERRUPTED*  
EXHIBITION.**

GEIZAH TRAIN STOP  
(DETAIL), HENRY CHARLES  
MARSHALL (1890-1915)  
KENSINGTON TO CAIRO AND  
FROM CAIRO TO GALLIPOLI:  
ALBUM OF PHOTOGRAPHS,  
1914-1915, PXA 1861





JOHN THOMAS HUTTON  
WAR DIARY, 1 JANUARY 1917  
- 10 JANUARY 1918, MOTTO,  
MLMSS 1138 / ITEM 2

**Jack Hutton** inscribed his motto at the beginning of the second volume of his diary:

My motto while in the army is as follows

Do as you are told

Be obliging always

Smile at trouble

Never say die

Think for yourself but never speak them but just wander around and say nothing

Don't argue for it ain't worth while

Jack was a 26-year-old farmer from Carnsdale in New South Wales. He enlisted in October 1915 and had been serving in France for around a year when he wrote his motto. He had survived the horror of Pozières to describe it as 'murder bloody murder'.

More like poetry than a conventional diary, Jack's account uses dark humour to recount tales of soldiering in one or two short sentences each day. He likes a drink and the company of French women, but goes to church on Sunday. He takes good care of the horses, but his Padre calls him the 'Little Disgrace'. With so many girls back home in Australia, letter writing takes a whole evening.



Jack's diary moves quickly from the terror of the front to his enjoyment of the French towns behind the frontline:

**Monday 24 [July 1916]**

Off to the line full of faith

**Tuesday 25**

After 24 hours ride in train we arrive at VICNACOURT [sic]

**Wednesday 26**

You'll soon know your fate Jack the same good spirit will lead you

**Thursday 27**

It's just like hell pure & simple

....

**[July-August, 1916]**

**Monday 31**

Wipe the scenes away they are awful

**Tuesday August 1**

Thundering guns and flame lit skys

**Wednesday 2**

Men brave men of Australia a heroic breed

**Thursday 3**

How long O Lord how long

**Thursday 17 [May 1917]**

Last night was spent in Writing home, too too many girls

**SEN LIS**

**Friday 18**

"Senlis" our first stop moving tomorrow we all got full on Champagne

**Saturday 19**

Arrived at Reubempre seems a nice place

**Sunday 20**

The country side is a perfect picture Staying with a dear old lady ...

**CONTAY**

... It is just fine rambling among these villages

**Sunday 27**

Believe me the French women are OK I still go to church



Jack stayed in England after the Armistice was signed, working as a clerk in the Finance Department. Before he returned to Australia on 25 September 1919, he wrote to William Ifould, the Principal Librarian at the Mitchell Library in response to an advertisement in the *London Daily Mail* offering 'good prices' for war diaries judged to be 'good material':

Sir,

In reference to your advertisement, "London Daily Mail" re the "Diarys" [sic] of Australian soldiers, I beg to report that I have a dinkum little journal, brief but to the point of three years warfare dealing with almost every scrap that the Aussies fought in France from Pozieres until the armistice and I doubt if any Diggers who knocked about the forward area have such a complete and authentic record of what we did in the great war as I have and the record of my unit (17th Battalion) stands second to none, so you can depend on it being 'good material' and worthy of a good price ...

I am sir, in all sincerity,  
Jackie Hutton

The Library purchased Jack Hutton's diaries for £7.

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:  
JOHN THOMAS (JACK)  
HUTTON, COROWA, C. 1914,  
IMAGE COURTESY OF  
SUSAN ROBERTS

JOHN THOMAS HUTTON  
WAR DIARY, 4 AUGUST 1915  
- 31 DECEMBER 1916,  
MLMSS 1138 / ITEM 1

JOHN THOMAS HUTTON  
WAR DIARY, 1 JANUARY 1918  
- 31 DECEMBER 1918, 'THE  
GREAT EUROPEAN WAR:  
WESTERN AREA',  
MLMSS 1138 / ITEM 3

JOHN THOMAS HUTTON  
WAR DIARY, 1 JANUARY 1917  
- 10 JANUARY 1918, COVER,  
MLMSS 1138 / ITEM 2

JOHN THOMAS HUTTON  
WAR DIARY, 1 JANUARY 1918  
- 31 DECEMBER 1918, COVER





## Sister Anne Donnell

also offered her diaries and letters for sale in 1919. Despite Library staff concern that she didn't concentrate enough on medical or war matters, she was offered £5.

Serving as a nurse with the 3rd Australian General Hospital on the Greek island of Lemnos, and later in France and England, Anne had seen some terrible sights. She was a great storyteller, who wrote frequent letters home to friends in Adelaide as well as keeping a diary.

Her stories began on board the *Mooltan* with medical colleagues. They had discovered a 12-year-old stowaway on board, 'a little chappie called Reggie' whose mother had died and whose father and brother were away at the war. Several nurses and Red Cross staff wanted to adopt him, but the Captain informed them he would be sending him back when they reached Sri Lanka.

Anne devoured each new experience, describing her adventures in Colombo, London, Alexandria and Cairo: 'Everything was so interesting'. Like many of the visiting Australians, Cairo provided cultural fascination and excellent shopping:

... the centre of the bazaar quarter ... this place seems to be devoted to everything that is oriental in the way of Alleys full of copper ware, brass-ware, gold & silver, precious & ornamental stones, Turkish slippers etc. It's most fascinating & I take a delight in beating them down for the goods ...



The hospital at Lemnos, where Anne arrived in mid-October 1915, comprised 'rows of Marquees (as wards) & bell tents. We have beds for 1040 patients — though at present we have 1200 patients. So some still are on Mattresses on the ground, they don't mind though & seem perfectly contented.' Patients arrived from Gallipoli, across the Aegean Sea, before the December evacuation. They were

wounded or suffered illnesses such as dysentery, jaundice and frostbite.

By January 1916, Anne reported, 7400 patients had been treated and 'the death rate percentage was only 2½ which was considered excellent'. 'Not one of the staff have died,' she added, 'though many have been seriously ill & we are quite proud of that — by the way Colonel's pet horse died also his kookaburra & our grey bonnets that we disliked so much, died a natural death there. Grey felt hats are on the way out from England for us — also more stylish grey coats.'

Two years on, Anne was still in the midst of war, this time serving on the Western Front at the 48th Casualty Clearing Station near Ypres. As 1917 turned into 1918, Anne was homesick and war weary. She had a cough and would be hospitalised in a few weeks' time with the flu:

Time lags. The beginning of a New Year. Twas heralded in for us by the sound of shells from the enemy and the sounds of our guns retaliating.

All the Sisters stayed up but me ... I was a bit homesick and got out some old letters and re-read them. I was tired too. Then the shelling kept waking me — And my cough was troublesome, and I didn't take Mrs Wiggs advice — Sit on the bed & smile but got sorry for myself & cried a bit — So the beginning of 1918 is not a promising omen for Anne.

Anne Donnell returned to Australia in early 1919. Heading home on the troopship, she wrote about seeing the Southern Cross in the sky. Prior to disembarking in Perth she remarked on the 'uncommon scent but we fancy it savours of trees — so we just call it the smell of Australia'.



Elise Edmonds is the curator of *Life Interrupted: Personal Diaries from World War I*, showing at the Library from 5 July to 21 September 2014.

The State Library's WWI commemoration program is generously sponsored by NewsCorp Australia and supported by the HISTORY channel.

OPPOSITE PAGE: ANNE DONNELL, FRONTISPIECE FROM ANNE DONNELL: LETTERS OF AN AUSTRALIAN ARMY SISTER, SYDNEY: ANGUS & ROBERTSON, 1920

BELOW: SISTER LINES, LEMNOS ISLAND, PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE THIRD AUSTRALIAN GENERAL HOSPITAL AT LEMNOS, EGYPT & BRIGHTON (ENG.), 1915-1917, AW SAVAGE, PXE 698





# The TRUMPET CALLS



## And the **BAND** **PLAYED** on



WORDS Robert Holden

A book on the music enjoyed by Australian soldiers during World War I has its origins in the Library's collection of war diaries.

As the grateful recipient of a CH Currey Memorial Fellowship in 2008, I was given unprecedented access to the Mitchell Library's outstanding collection of Anzac diaries, letters and related ephemera. And once that fellowship was completed, I delivered the requisite lecture to a crowded room of Library staff, Fellows and interested researchers.

For the first time in nearly 100 years, the words and emotions from some of these Anzac diaries were given voice again. The emotional reaction to that lecture, something I have never before experienced in over 40 years of such presentations, resulted in a demand for two repeat performances — a clear tribute to the power of our Anzacs' words and to the resonance the Anzac experience still retains in the Australian psyche.

And now, some of those anecdotes and the experience gained during that fellowship, as well as much new thought and knowledge, have contributed to the publication of my new book. *And the Band Played On* celebrates the music and songs I first 'heard' in the pages of those diaries.

My search for a focal point in that daunting archive (over 500 diary and letter collections) began with piecing together how the first librarian of the newly established Mitchell Library, Hugh Wright, together with William Ifould, the Principal Librarian of the Public Library of NSW (now the State Library), acquired these records. Ifould had proudly declared that his was the 'British Museum of the Southern Hemisphere', founded by David Scott Mitchell's bequest of the 'finest collection in existence' pertaining to Australasia. How easy it would have been to rest on these laurels rather than embrace the unprecedented challenge of adding wartime records to that collection.

My special access to the Library's correspondence files disclosed that this visionary pair of librarians turned the same zeal they displayed in pursuing acquisitions like First Fleet records to material that could have been overlooked or dismissed as too difficult or ephemeral to acquire, especially under wartime conditions. Indeed, an officially printed library circular of February 1919, distributed to returned soldiers' and sailors' leagues





ENGLISH THEATRE POSTER FOR A 1918 PERFORMANCE OF THE ANZAC COVES, THE FIRST FIELD THEATRE ESTABLISHED IN THE AIF, POSTERS 1204/4

RIGHT: FOR AULD LANG SYNE, AUSTRALIA WILL BE THERE, MUSIC, C. 1915, WORDS AND MUSIC BY SKIPPER WW FRANCIS, MUSIC FILE/FRA

OPPOSITE: 'ANZAC COVES' PIERROT TROUPE, C. 1918, FROM JAMES BRUNTON GIBB PHOTOGRAPHS AND POSTCARDS, C. 1915-1940, MLMSS 3446 ADD-ON 2220 / BOX 2 / FOLDER 1

throughout the Commonwealth, equated the diaries with those 'of the greatest navigators, Cook, Flinders, and others; of the explorers ... and the letters and journals of statesmen ...' The Library also sought trench newspapers, conscription leaflets, wartime sheet music, and news sheets published aboard the transport ships and in the field.

The reaction to the Library's worldwide advertising campaign was extraordinary, even though many Anzacs found it hard to understand why the Library wanted their original diaries. The fact that they might be battle-stained, faded by the Egyptian sun and written by someone with no literary pretensions made their value seem incomprehensible to many of them.

As I read manuscript diary after diary, I began to accumulate specific areas of interest. These included discovering what the Anzacs liked to read during quieter moments, their much-appreciated opportunities for sport and sightseeing, and the difference between their diaries and letters in terms of their emotional content and disclosure. But, ultimately, one theme grew into an overriding preoccupation: what was the actual repertoire — songs, music, recitations and performances — that became the morale boosting entertainment of World War I?



I first heard an echo of songs and music in diaries such as that of Private Leslie Morris. Like many of his fellow soldiers in the AIF, he mentioned two songs which convey much of the emotion and sentiment of the day. As he boarded his transport ship in Sydney the crowd on the wharf sang 'Tipperary' and when departure loomed those on both sides of the wharf burst into 'Auld Lang Syne'. Confirming that initial enthusiasm for 'Tipperary', Signaller Ellis Silas' diary records a charge at Gallipoli on 3 May 1915: 'Despite the murderous fire that was poured into us, we sang "Tipperary".'

Gradually, other scattered references to music began to sound a recurring note that finally caught my complete attention. Another such reference was in a forgotten item which Australia's greatest war historian, Captain Charles Bean, sent back from the front for syndication in Australian newspapers. On 22 April 1915 Bean's article in the *Ballarat Courier* showed how music-making was a sustained passion among the Anzacs. He wrote a poignant homage to a lone bagpiper 'about 200 yards from the corner of the camp' in Egypt. Bean supposed that because 'his mates would not support his piping in his tent or in the messroom' the piper 'went out there all by himself when the evening began to fall and piped alone to himself and to the desert'.

Perhaps the most startling discovery was found in the diary of Private James Gibb, an 18-year-old recruit and student



of elocution. In January 1917 he recorded being detached from his duties as a stretcher-bearer to join the 'Anzac Coves', the first official Anzac Corps Field Theatre concert party created by General Birdwood and Major John Spencer Churchill, Winston's brother. Gibb's recitations of CJ Dennis' poems would reach an astounding career highlight when they were part of a program the troupe presented at Buckingham Palace on 18 February 1918.

But even this accolade was surpassed by the experience of Sergeant Ted McMahon as revealed in his battalion's newsletter, the *Old 16th News*. On the eve of the Battle of Sulva, in August 1915, General Sir John Monash suggested an Australian campfire concert to buoy up the spirits of the men. McMahon's rendition on his cornet of the sentimental favourite 'The Rosary' quelled the gunfire on both sides before, as he wrote, 'everyone again settled down to the grim business of war'. This anecdote, rescued from oblivion in a battalion newsletter, becomes nothing less than the Australian equivalent of the celebrated

'Silent Night' on the Western Front, Christmas 1914. However, the most telling comment I discovered about the role of music in wartime came from a returned Australian bandsman. Writing in the *Tasmanian Mail* late in 1918, he asserted that it was 'just as essential that the soldiers know how to sing and play in a band as it is that they who carry rifles know how to shoot them'. And it is the rationale behind this opinion which provided me with a simple, yet eloquent finale to all my research: 'Music is to a city or nation's spirit what ammunition is to their army.' Lest we forget.



Robert Holden's 32nd book, *And the Band Played On*, is available from the Library Shop.





“You’ll Do Kangaroo.”

# War’s LEXICON



WORDS Susan Butler

The recently published sixth edition of *Macquarie Dictionary* includes words dating back to the Australian military experience in World War I. The dictionary’s editor shares some of the stories behind the diggers’ dialect.

As I read through the words and phrases in Australian English that date back to World War I, I am struck by two clusters of words. The first reflects the fact that any sphere of activity has not only its official names, but also its unofficial names. We tend to bond over words that are not imposed from above but spring directly from experience.

The second relates to humour, ranging from the cheerful domestic kind to bordering-on-hysterical. Black humour can be an attempt to prove, to ourselves and others, that we can deal with unspeakable horror.

The group of Australians and New Zealanders that joined the expeditionary force on the Gallipoli Peninsula was initially called the Australasian Army Corps. After New Zealanders objected to the colonial catch-all of ‘Australasia’, the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps became the official name, quickly shortened to ANZAC.

But their informal name was the Diggers. The first specialised use of *digger* in Australian English dates back to the 1850s gold rush in Victoria. This use carried on through the century right up to the goldfields rush in WA in the 1890s.

In New Zealand a digger might be a miner in the goldfields, or someone digging for kauri gum, a fossilised resin used for jewellery.

When Australian and New Zealand soldiers went to World War I in France and were introduced to trench warfare, the term *digger* perhaps came more naturally than the British *sapper*. While it was the soldiers at the front line digging the trenches who earned this name, it began to encompass Australian and New Zealand soldiers of any rank and was used as a form of greeting. Prime Minister Billy Hughes was affectionately nicknamed ‘the Little Digger’ by the Australian troops he visited in France.

The diggers referred to the Turkish soldiers as *Abdul*, a common first name in Turkey. Following a similar logic, the Turks called the Anzacs *Johnnies* and themselves *Mehmets*. As Mustafa Kemal Atatürk wrote in 1934, ‘There is no difference between the Johnnies and Mehmets to us where they lie side by side here in this country of ours.’

A discussion of significant locations during this period must begin with Gallipoli. The irony of ironies is that the name meant ‘beautiful city’ from the Ancient Greek *kallos* ‘beautiful’ and *polis* ‘city’. The other landmarks of the region are so well known that we can pass on to the unofficial naming that was part of the job of the soldier.

“YOU’LL DO KANGAROO” (DETAIL), GREETING CARD, WORLD WAR I EPHEMERA, PXA 623/2



Locations needed to be identified in fine detail and the colloquial names are engraved by terrible experience:

- Baby 700** the smaller of two adjacent hills, estimated to be about 700 ft high
  - Lone Pine** a site above Anzac Cove where the Turks cut down all the pine trees except one
  - The Nek** a ridge of land on the Gallipoli peninsula
- Then there were the names for weapons:
- Beachy Bill** a Turkish artillery battery concentrated on the beaches of Anzac Cove
  - Big Bertha** a type of howitzer used by the Germans and named after Bertha Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach (1886–1957), proprietor of the German industrial company Krupp
  - flaming onions** a form of incendiary used by German forces to illuminate and set fire to a target
  - flying pig** a heavy trench-mortar shell, named either for its large size and slow descent, the squeal it made flying through the air, or both
  - gezumph** a large artillery shell
  - Lazy Lizz** a heavy long-distance shell which made a droning sound as it passed
  - Minnie** a German trench-mortar bomb, from the name *Minenwerfer*
  - mouth organ** a Stokes shell, from the sound made by the air passing through the holes around the base of the shell as it was rising
  - pipsqueak** a small, usually high-velocity, shell fired from a field gun
  - plum pudding** a spherical iron shell filled with explosive and fired from a trench mortar
- And the soldier's life:
- lie-out possie** the position taken by troops when assembled in battle formation before an attack
  - mug-gunner** a Lewis machine gunner
  - over the top** over the top of a parapet, as in charging the enemy
  - slushy** a mess orderly
  - spook** an army signaller, especially a wireless operator
  - up the line** in action

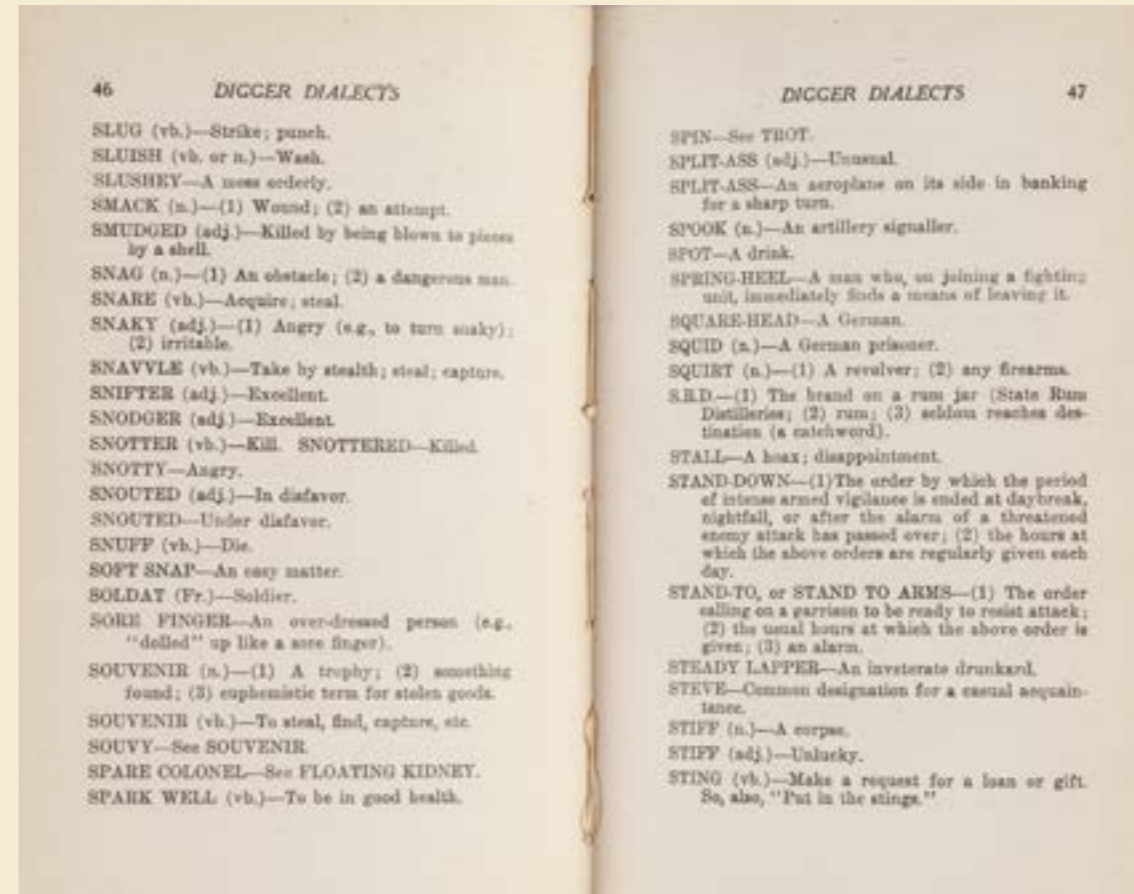
With the war's inevitable toll on a soldier's health, the *Aussie* was the equivalent of the *British Blighty* — that is, the wound that was serious enough to have you packed off home.

Humour also comes through in the various uses of *king* meaning 'expert', one of which was *iodine king* for a regimental medical officer. The *iodine lancers* were members of the Australian Army Nursing Service, a nickname that neatly captured the general use of iodine for treatment and the prevalence of boils needing to be lanced. (The *kiwi king* was the soldier who polished his boots and leather carefully, from the Kiwi boot polish brand.)

The first target in the army, as in any institution, was the food. There was the official *iron rations*, but also the joke *Anzac wafer* (modelled on *vanilla wafer*), described in WH Downing's 1919 collection *Diggers Dialects* as a hard biscuit, 'one of the most durable materials used in the war'. *Anzac stew* was made with an urn of hot water and one bacon rind. *Flybog* was the name for jam, since flies were the scourge of Gallipoli and got into anything greasy or sticky. *Axle-grease* was the word for butter. And a shell burst was known as a *cream puff*.

Humour comes also in borrowing words and phrases from the languages with which the 'six-bob-a-day' tourists (from the soldiers' daily pay rate of six shillings) have suddenly come into contact. From French came such expressions as *alley* 'to go' from *allez*, *compree* 'understand' from *compris*, *plonk* 'cheap wine' from *vin blanc*, *san fairy Ann* 'no matter' from *ça ne fait rien*, and *toot-sweet* 'immediately' from *tout de suite*. From Arabic there was *bint* 'a woman', *imshi* 'to go away', *magnoon* 'crazy, idiotic', *maleesh* 'no matter', and the *Wazza* from Haret al Wassir 'the red-light district in Cairo'.

Even heroes and villains can be taken not so seriously in war. The *cold footer* and *slacker* are basic enough terms but *deep thinker*, meaning 'a person who enlisted late in the course of the war', has that touch of amused mockery. *Knut*, meaning 'a self-important person', is definitely a joke. It is thought to have come from the popular music-hall song *Gilbert the Filbert, the Colonel of the Knuts* (1914) in which *knut* is a jocular variant of *nut*. This was parodied and used as a marching song.



DIGGER DIALECTS  
91/141, ML940.939/D

Euphemisms are common for death and slaughter, and the war situation breeds its own set. A *stoush* was Australian and New Zealand slang for 'a fight', part of the jargon of the Larrikins, the street gang of the 1890s. The *big stoush* was the war and a *stunt* was a battle. From cricket, where the batsmen are *skittled* one after the other like a set of skittles, comes the wartime reference to men being *skittled*, or killed. To be *hung on the wire* or *on the old barbed wire* was to be absent and unaccounted for. And to say that someone had *chucked it up* or been *stonkered* was a nonchalant way of saying that he had died.

And finally there was the blackest humour, the laughter that skitters over horror. These expressions are hard to understand at this distance. They are the verbal equivalent of the faded sepia photos of men with faces that are hard to read. But in their moment of creation they would have provided a powerful release.

*Anzac soup*, we read in *Digger Dialects*, is 'shell-hole water polluted by a corpse'. Other examples are:

- go into cold storage** to be killed in the freezing winter of 1916
- rest camp** a cemetery
- shooting gallery** the front line
- body-snatcher** a stretcher bearer

In *Digger Dialects* we have a comprehensive record of a lexicon which may have disappeared completely if World War II hadn't come round the corner and revived at least some part of it. Through our knowledge of the words the soldiers used to capture the physical and emotional terrain, we get a glimpse of their experience.



Susan Butler is the editor of the *Macquarie Dictionary*.

*Digger Dialects* can be accessed online through the Library's catalogue.





# The LETTER on the cuff



WORDS Brendan O'Keefe

A message from an Australian soldier to a woman in Sydney, written on the cuff of a German officer's uniform, presents a century-old mystery.

LETTER WRITTEN ON  
GERMAN OFFICER'S CUFF,  
1917, DR 89

OPPOSITE: MAY BAILEY,  
CENTRE, WITH RELATIVES  
AT COOGEE BEACH, C. 1965,  
COURTESY OF K HANNAGAN



On display from July as part of the *Life Interrupted* exhibition is a brief note by an Australian soldier named Rob to a Miss May Bailey of Tara, in David Street, Marrickville. Rob penned the note in November 1917 on a cuff he had souvenired from a German officer's uniform, 'writing paper' being 'a bit short' in Palestine.

Just who Rob and May were has always been a mystery, but the identity of May at least can now be revealed. The Marrickville address provided the starting-point for identifying her. A check of directories and electoral rolls showed that a Charles Bailey, 'manufacturer', his wife Elizabeth and a Florence May Bailey, 'company secretary', lived in the house, which is still standing.

Further checking of newspapers confirmed that Florence May was indeed the May Bailey of Tara. She had been born at Leicester in England in 1895. In 1905 her father Charles emigrated from Leicester to Melbourne; his wife Elizabeth, daughter May, and her older brother Albert followed some time later. The family settled in the suburb of Richmond where Charles established a hosiery manufacturing business.

May took to her new country with gusto. Soon after arriving, she became one of the pioneer women cricketers in Australia, joining the recently formed Victoria Women's Cricket Association and playing for the Henley club in Melbourne.

Nearly a decade later, her father moved his business to Sydney and, by 1917, he and his family had taken up residence in the house in Marrickville. In the same year May's brother was married in Sydney, while she started work as the secretary of her father's company. Then, on 25 November, Rob wrote his note to her from 'Somewhere in Palestine'.

Could it be that Rob was a suitor of the 22-year-old May, perhaps even her fiancée? Or was he simply a relative or friend? The note on the cuff suggests, albeit indirectly, that they were romantically involved. Certainly, one of May's relatives now living in Sydney had a beautiful necklace, sadly stolen in a burglary, that was given to May by 'her first boyfriend'. Was this necklace a gift from Rob?

Whatever the answers to these questions, May never married a Rob or anyone else in Australia. In the mid-1930s, she left Australia on a trip to her native England where, at the age of 41, she married Jim Connaway. The couple lived in the Bexley-Bromley area of Kent, May dying in 1983 at the age of 88. There were no children of her marriage, but numerous descendants of her brother Albert live today in Sydney and other parts of NSW.

The identity and the fate of Rob, however, remain a mystery.

A clue may lie in a name written in another hand on the front of his letter. Beneath a stamp indicating that the letter had been cleared by the local AIF censor is the name 'R B Hedley'. It's most likely that this is Lieutenant Reginald Brierly Hedley, a member of a New South Wales unit, the 6th Light Horse Regiment, which was serving in Palestine in November 1917.

The chances that Hedley himself was Rob are very low as there is nothing to suggest he was ever known by the nickname 'Rob'. Moreover, he came from Grafton, lived in Sydney in the decade before the war, and enlisted and embarked for overseas service two years before May and her family moved to Sydney.

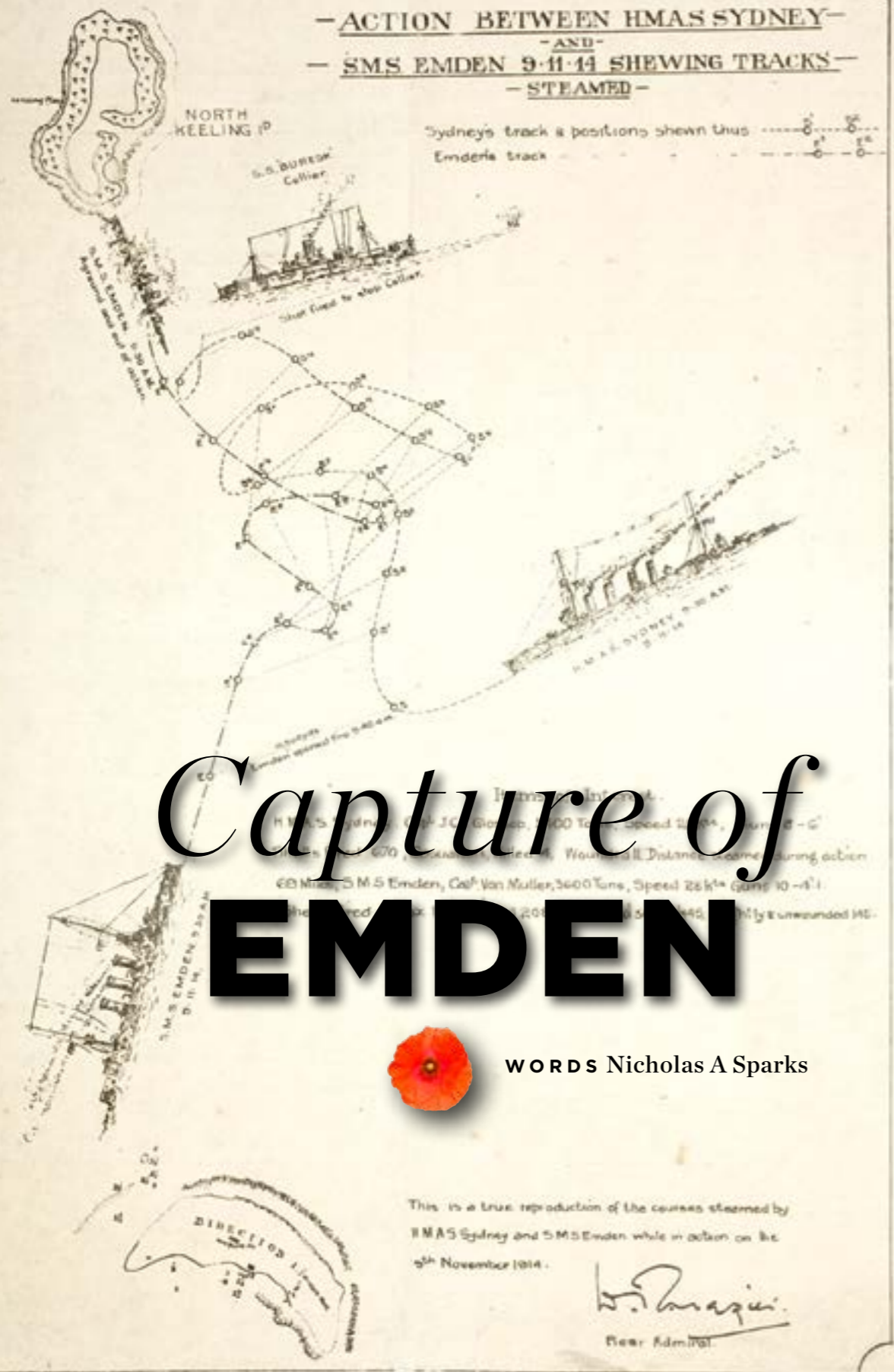
But Hedley was the commander of the 6th Light Horse's B Squadron, and was therefore in a position to act as an official censor. He would have been responsible for clearing Rob's letter, and Rob would have been one of the troopers under his command in B Squadron. Unfortunately, if Rob did serve with the 6th Light Horse, he could be any one of numerous Roberts listed on the unit's rolls.

If Rob is ever to be identified, the answer may lie with living relatives in New South Wales or further afield, or perhaps with the descendants of Reginald Hedley, who became a farmer in Hay after the war and died there in 1971.

Brendan O'Keefe is a Canberra-based historian.



— ACTION BETWEEN HMAS SYDNEY —  
— AND —  
— SMS EMDEN 9-11-14 SHEWING TRACKS —  
— STEAMED —



# Capture of EMDEN



WORDS Nicholas A Sparks

MANUSCRIPT MAP SHOWING BATTLE OF COCOS BETWEEN HMAS SYDNEY AND SMS EMDEN, 9 NOVEMBER 1914 MT3 995.31/1914/1  
OPPOSITE: 'EMDEN' 9/11/14. COCOS KEELING IS. H.M.A.S. SYDNEY'S BOAT. FROM ALBUM OF SNAPSHOTS TAKEN DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR, 1914-18, SHOWING SCENES IN NEW GUINEA, FIJI AND DURING THE ENGAGEMENT WITH THE EMDEN, 1914-1918, G NORMAN ROSKRUGE, LIEUT., PXB 14

The Australian navy's capture in November 1914 of the German ship *Emden* is the stuff of legend, but newly digitised sources might tell another story.

The Imperial German Navy ship SMS *Emden* had captured nearly two dozen ships in the first months of World War I. Intending a raid on a British base at the Cocos Islands, the *Emden* was attacked by the Australian cruiser HMAS *Sydney* and 134 men, almost a third of the crew, were killed.

Within less than a day, as news of *Emden's* capture broke, soon around it a host of stories and other pleasant associations grew. These stories hold so powerful a sway on the modern imagination that it can be hard to distinguish what we know about the details of the affair from the world of fiction. If the episode is celebrated today as Australia's first great naval triumph, it is not because of what took place, but of how it is imagined. That imagining, as in the story of the battle itself, is often retold in books — most recently in Mike Carlton's *First Victory: 1914: HMAS Sydney's Hunt for the German Raider Emden* — in films, and in other media.

In the Library's WWI holdings there is a photograph which shows the wreck of SMS *Emden*, stuck fast on North Keeling Island Reef, her funnels lying by the boards, with men in lifeboats and wide brim sunhats. The caption inscribed beneath the photograph reads: "EMDEN" 9/11/14 Cocos Keeling Is. HMAS Sydney's Boat.' The photo, part of an album of 12 snapshots (now Mitchell Library, PXB 14), was presented to the Mitchell Library in 1954 by Miss ADM Busby. The album, which was recently digitised as part of the Library's mass digitisation of its WWI content, is signed on the inside of the front cover 'Xmas 1915, With Best Wishes from Norman G. Roskruge'.

The photo undoubtedly shows the *Emden*, but once we look beneath the surface, doubts about its provenance arise. First of all, it is known from official naval accounts on both sides of the action and from AW Jose's authoritative retelling, that Captain JCT Glossop of the



*Sydney* did not send boats to the *Emden* until the day after the fight was over: at about 1 pm on the 10 November 1914, for 'transshipping' *Emden's* wounded. Secondly, when he did so, Norman G Roskruge was not on board. He isn't listed among the officers and ship's company, who were on the *Sydney* on the morning of 9 November 1914, nor was he in part of the great Australian expeditionary force which the *Sydney* was escorting while en route to Europe. In the Navy Lists for 1910s, Roskruge first appears in July 1916, at the Naval Depot, Williamstown, having enlisted just the month before as a Royal Navy Reserve. The conclusion here is inescapable. The man behind the camera could not have been Roskruge.

If the photograph was not taken by Roskruge, then who took it, and when was it taken? The album itself gives no clue as to whether Roskruge assembled all the photographs, or if he acquired the album as a single lot. Apart from the final shot, dated 1918 (also the *Emden*?), the photographs are similar in style and format, as if derived from the same source. Thus, the interesting possibility arises that WWI photographs, or collections of photographs, were exchanged, or trafficked. Under these conditions, could the stories that accompanied such images develop in a similar way, unchecked by oral transmission? Through each rendition they might grow, like a good 'yarn' between mates, further away from what would be acknowledged as historical truth.





Among the Library's remarkable WWI collection there is a wealth of evidence, much of it unique — in manuscript, in print, or in other media — about the *Sydney–Emden* action. These include diaries and letters, maps and medals, pictures and photographs, all now available, at the click of a mouse. We are now able to examine a full range of evidence for the battle in a more constructive and more critical way than has hitherto been possible. But this also comes with dangers of its own.

'Nov. 9th at 6.30 AM. proved to be yet another beginning of a chapter in Australian History ...', begins the diary entry by GH Iles; but he wasn't there. The capture of the *Emden*, as reported in the diary of RT Vowles, is full of dramatic and picturesque elements; but Vowles wasn't there either. And from the papers of Franz Bordeaux, sometime paymaster on the *Emden*: 'Monday 9th November 1914. A beautiful tropical night had just passed. Aurora in golden rays climbed over the horizon transforming the ocean into a sea of blood. Little did we surmise, that streams of blood would soon flow on our deck ...'; Bordeaux, too, was nowhere in sight. The manuscript account

by Sydney's junior medical officer, Surgeon-Lieutenant ACR Todd, who was on board at the time, is full of such wild and vivid fancy that he can hardly be taken as a genuine witness; and it betrays signs of significant editorial intervention, as though intended for future publication.

This is not to speak disparagingly of these soldiers' memories, nor to say that all our stories of the affair are unreliable. The official minute of the report of the *Sydney's* chief medical officer, Surgeon-Captain L Darby, though largely limited to medical cases, is exceptionally accurate in point of detail and no doubt authentic; and the diary entry of the ship's chaplain, Reverend VAS Little, can be taken in good faith.

Handled carefully, these and other sources from WWI — now collected, described and made available in digital form — hold much potential for research, for new methods of exploration, which can offer new and surprising views of familiar stories from our past.

**Nicholas A Sparks is a volunteer at the State Library of NSW.**



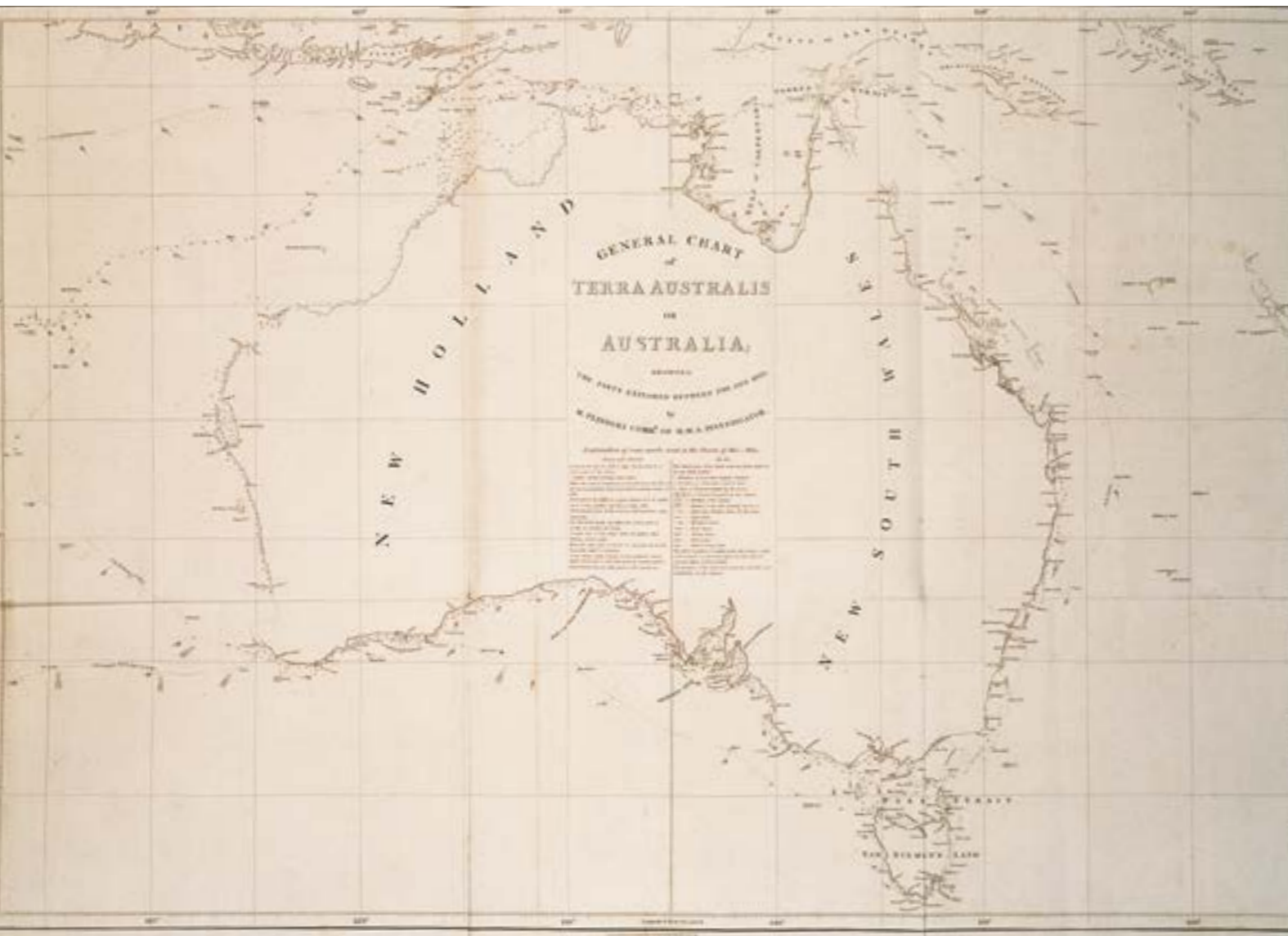
ABOVE: HMAS SYDNEY WITH SUBMARINES AE1 AND AE2, CAIRNS, QLD, AT WORK AND PLAY - 04907

OPPOSITE: EMDEN WRECK VIEW LOOKING FORWARD, FROM PHOTOGRAPH ALBUM RELATING TO THE COCOS ISLAND WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY STATION AND THE SYDNEY-EMDEN BATTLE, 1914, RHC GREEN, PXB 498



*This*  
**EARTHLY  
 SCENE**

\* WORDS Paul Brunton



MATTHEW FLINDERS STATUE OUTSIDE THE MITCHELL LIBRARY, PHOTO BY ALAN DAVIES  
 OPPOSITE: GENERAL CHART OF TERRA AUSTRALIS OR AUSTRALIA: SHOWING PARTS EXPLORED BETWEEN 1798 AND 1803 BY M. FLINDERS COMM. OF H.M.S. INVESTIGATOR DL Z F81/7

Two hundred years after the death of Matthew Flinders, a statue at Euston Station in London will be the latest monument to an explorer who only briefly saw the results of his life's work.

He just lived to know, the work over which his life had been spent was laid before the World, for he left this earthly scene of things, a few days after its publication.

Ann Flinders, Matthew Flinders' widow, wrote those words on 19 September 1814 to Thomi Pitot, a friend Flinders had made on Mauritius. Flinders had died just two months previously, on 19 July, a few months after his 40th birthday.

Flinders had indeed spent himself over his work. He was conscious of the fact that his charts, the permanent record of all that effort, would be his monument. If these were not done well then he had done nothing well.

Flinders was born in Donington, Lincolnshire, on 16 March 1774. He joined the Royal Navy at the age of 16, circumnavigated the world with William Bligh between 1791 and 1793, and saw action against the French in 1794.

In 1795, aged 21, he sailed to New South Wales on *Reliance* and made a number of exploratory voyages with George Bass, whom he had met on the ship. These were first undertaken, in 1795 and 1796, in two different boats,

each named *Tom Thumb* owing to their tiny size. They traced the Georges River and the coast as far south as Port Kembla.

Later, from October 1798 to January 1799, Bass and Flinders circumnavigated Tasmania on *Norfolk*. When Flinders' chart was published in London in June 1800, it cleared up the mystery of whether or not Tasmania, the southern part of which had been charted by Abel Tasman in 1642, was attached to the east coast of New South Wales. The discovery of Bass Strait shortened the time of the voyage from Britain and obviated the need to sail in the treacherous waters of southern Tasmania.

One further puzzle remained. Was the west coast of the Australian continent, substantially charted by the Dutch in the seventeenth century and referred to as New Holland, and the east coast, charted by Cook in 1770 and named New South Wales, one landmass?

Flinders wanted to find out and in the process bring himself fame and fortune. 'I may now perhaps make a bold dash forward, or remain a poor lieutenant all my life,' he wrote on 25 September 1800 to Ann Chappelle whom he would marry the following year.





From December 1801 to June 1803, he circumnavigated the Australian mainland in *Investigator*, skilfully charting the coastlines. He was justifiably proud and wrote to his patron Sir Joseph Banks, his ‘guardian genius’ as he called him, boasting of his achievements and noting that he was ‘a young man just commencing his career’. At the age of 29, a promising prospect seemed open before him. Yet, his career was effectively over.

In his haste to return to Britain he boarded a manifestly unsuitable vessel, *Cumberland*, and sailed via Torres Strait and the Indian Ocean. In December 1803, with Britain and France at war, he was forced to seek refuge at Mauritius, a French possession. Accused of spying, he languished under house arrest for six and a half years, his career on hold and the publication of the charts of his mighty circumnavigation in abeyance.

He plunged into work on those charts. Sometime before September 1804, he completed his General Chart, a summary of the contents of the 14 other charts he would finally compile of sections of the Australian coast including details of the Tasmanian coast from his previous voyage.

But what to call the continent which had been charted now for the first time? Even after Cook’s charting of the east coast, ‘New Holland’ was still used to indicate both the western and eastern coasts. Flinders thought this overlooked Cook’s contribution and it undoubtedly offended Flinders’ passion for accuracy.

So he introduced not a new word but a word which previously had never been applied precisely to the area Flinders had delineated. He inscribed boldly, indeed audaciously, on his chart ‘General Chart of Australia’; and then added ‘or Terra Australis’ to mollify the less adventurous and less imaginative.

‘Terra Australis’, or southern land, had been used for centuries to refer to the reputed landmass in the southern hemisphere which it was thought must exist to balance the landmass in the northern hemisphere. ‘Australia’, derived from ‘australis’, appeared in print as early as 1545, in a German book on astronomy, as a name for this supposed southern landmass and ‘Australia’ was used intermittently in the following centuries though mostly in books rather than on charts.

Flinders finally arrived back in England in October 1810. From early 1811 until his death he was occupied preparing his charts for publication, supervising their engraving and writing the story of his voyage. The charts were issued individually by the Admiralty between January and March 1814 with one last one, the Gulf of Carpentaria, appearing on 1 June.

The General Chart had been published on 1 January. The chart was titled ‘Terra Australis’ but Flinders was permitted to add ‘or Australia’. He later wrote ‘[h]ad I permitted myself any innovation upon the original term, it would have been to convert it into AUSTRALIA; as being more agreeable to the ear, and an assimilation to the names of the other great portions of the earth’.

He was, however, allowed to retain his name ‘The Great Australian Bight’ – or perhaps he slipped it in when no one was looking.

In July 1814, Flinders’ narrative of his voyages was published under the title *A Voyage to Terra Australis* in two volumes and an atlas, the latter with engravings of all his charts. The official publication date is often given as 18 July. Flinders died the next day. There is a myth that he did not see a completed copy of his book; but he did. He died knowing his life’s work had been ‘laid before the world’.



His charts would certainly bring him fame, but too late for him to enjoy it.

When a copy of *A Voyage to Terra Australis* reached Sydney in 1817, the Governor, Lachlan Macquarie, began using the word ‘Australia’ in his official correspondence. By the 1830s it was the accepted name.

To celebrate the bicentenary of Flinders’ death and of the publication of his work, a new statue of Flinders will be unveiled on 19 July this year. The Matthew Flinders Memorial Statue will be located at Euston Station in London. Euston Station and St James’ Gardens occupy the site of the burial ground of St James’ Chapel, Hampstead Road where Flinders was interred. The statue depicts Flinders at work on the map of Australia with his faithful cat, Trim, who also circumnavigated Australia, nearby. The sculptor is Mark Richards FRBS.

In November, the first scholarly edition of Flinders’ *Investigator* journal, the handwritten original of which is held by the Mitchell Library, will be published by the Hakluyt Society, edited by Professor Kenneth Morgan.



ABOVE AND LEFT: MATTHEW FLINDERS STATUE IN PROGRESS IN THE LONDON STUDIO OF SCULPTOR MARK RICHARDS FRBS

THE MATTHEW FLINDERS MEMORIAL STATUE IN LONDON IS BEING MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH THE SALE OF LIMITED EDITION, INDIVIDUALLY NUMBERED, MAQUETTES. MAQUETTES ARE CAST IN BRONZE BY RENOWNED BRITISH ARTIST MARK RICHARDS FRBS. FOR ENQUIRIES, PLEASE CONTACT MATT JOHNSON AT THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA, <MATT.JOHNSON@SOUTH-AUS.EU>

OPPOSITE: MINIATURE PORTRAIT OF MATTHEW FLINDERS, C. 1800 MIN 52



Paul Brunton OAM is Emeritus Curator, State Library of New South Wales and editor of *Matthew Flinders: Personal Letters from an Extraordinary Life* (Hordern House in association with the State Library of New South Wales, 2002).





In 25 years at the State Library, our Curator of Photographs has seen four people cry.

At Eungai Creek in 1988, Helen Downie had tears in her eyes when she showed Alan Davies a 60-year-old family photograph. She is sitting with her mother, father and two sisters on a horse-drawn sled that also carries a milk pail and a suitcase. The expression on her father's face could only be described as grim. Wounded in World War I, he had been given a disability pension and a block of 'third class dairy land — 200 acres in a rain shadow'. The family had been too poor to afford a cart with wheels, so they made do with a wooden sled. Alan was travelling the state as part of a Bicentennial campaign to copy pictures from private albums, having announced that the Library was looking for 'three impossible photographs: a dole queue, a dunny cart, and a woman washing up in the kitchen'.

## Boy oh boy!



They eventually found all three, the shame of the dole queue making it the most difficult to track down. Helen Downie's family portrait became one of 8000 images in the Library's 'At Work and Play' collection showing scenes of rural life in NSW between 1880 and 1940. Ten years later, in 1998, the Library exhibited a series of photographs and handwritten captions by William Yang. The 19 images chronicled the death from AIDS of a young man, Allan Booth, over two years in the late 1980s. Alan saw two men walk the length of the series, stop at the last image, and embrace in tears. The sight confirmed Alan's belief in 'the power of photographs as a trigger of memory'. But the first person Alan saw cry in the presence of photographs was the photographer Max Dupain.

In 1984, before becoming Curator of Photographs, Alan was at the Library on temporary assignment to put together an exhibition of Australian photography. He had just completed a survey of nineteenth century photography which became the book *The Mechanical Eye in Australia* (MUP, 1985). Alan prepared for the exhibition by identifying gaps in the Library's collection.

Max Dupain's work had found its way into the Library mainly through the papers of Harry Seidler, Glenn Murcutt and other architects. He had been the photographer of choice for the founding figures of Australian modernism, having come to prominence in the 1930s when he took up new photography trends from Europe that broke with the soft-focus romantic style.

'Dupain understood that his was a mechanical age,' says Alan, 'and it needed a different style of photography. He understood light and the way it could change the shape of an object.'

Lacking examples of Dupain's portraits and his photographs of Sydney, the Library bought a collection that included the well-known *Sunbaker*. The 1937 image had become a symbol of Australia after featuring in an exhibition at the National Gallery of Australia in the 1970s. Alan says its 'formal, monumental style' suited the popular aesthetic at that time.

Dupain was unhappy to see his mainstream reputation rest on a single image. Pushed to name his favourite, the photographer once named *Meat Queue*, depicting post-war rationing. Alan is partial to *Jean with Wire Mesh* ('it breaks all the rules of portrait photography').

When Dupain visited the Library at the time of the acquisition Alan took him down to the Pictures Stack and showed him 'a few things I thought might interest him'. He took out an album that Dupain had put together in 1940 for his friend Damien Parer. The photographer 'looked through it very carefully then started to cry'.

Parer had been serving with the Australian Army in the Middle East as a cinematographer. He came back to Sydney on leave and married Elizabeth Marie Cotter before rejoining the war in Pacific. He was killed in 1944 while filming a military advance.

Not knowing that Mrs Parer had presented the album to the Library in 1964, Dupain believed it had been lost. The album is inscribed, 'A few shots from "home" [for] Damien Parer to look at occasionally. Max - Xmas, 1940'. Alongside the photos are white pencil notes on black paper, from one photographer to another: 'Good light, don't you reckon?'

A glamorous photograph of Parer's future wife bears the handwritten caption 'Boy! Oh boy!'

Between 1991 and 2007 the Library staged several exhibitions of Dupain's work. In 2012 the photographer's commercial photographic archive was purchased, comprising some 155,000 black and white negatives and 2500 prints that record the scope of modernist architecture in NSW.

And this year Tony Vandyke contacted Alan about an album that had belonged to his father.

Chris Vandyke, an architect, had joined Dupain on camping trips to Culburra Beach on the south coast of New South Wales. He compiled an album of 108 original photographs by Dupain and his partner Olive Cotton.



ABOVE: COVER OF ALBUM, 'CAMPING TRIPS ON CULBURRA BEACH, NSW, 1937', MAX DUPAIN AND OLIVE COTTON, DONATED THROUGH THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT'S CULTURAL GIFTS PROGRAM BY ANTHONY C VANDYKE AND JOHN A VANDYKE, SAFE / PXA 1951

HORSEDRAWN SLED WITH FAMILY GOING TO SOUTH BANK ROAD TO MEET CREAM LORRY IN ORDER TO TRAVEL TO KEMPSEY, NSW, 23 NOVEMBER 1928, AT WORK AND PLAY - 04501

OPPOSITE: ELIZABETH MARIE PARER, C. 1940, MAX DUPAIN, ALBUM OF PHOTOGRAPHS FOR DAMIEN PARER, PXA 28





ABOVE: WELL-KNOWN IMAGE OF THE SUNBAKER FROM THE SECOND NEGATIVE, 1937, MAX DUPAIN

THIS ARTICLE INCLUDES QUOTES FROM A FAIRFAX MEDIA VIDEO, 1 MARCH 2014

Among those that made Alan's 'jaw drop' is a print of *The Sunbaker* taken from the original negative, which seems to have been lost. All known prints of the 'quintessentially Australian' photograph came from a second negative, adjacent to the original, which was published just once in 1948 (in Hal Missingham's *Max Dupain: Photographs*). The first *Sunbaker* — preferred by Dupain — has his hands clasped together, while the second shows the right hand relaxed.

The album shows other views of the *Sunbaker's* subject, Harold 'Hal' Salvage, which provide context to the famous photograph. Its 11 portraits of Dupain are thought to be by Cotton, and Alan points out Dupain's picture of Cotton with her 'lovely Rolleiflex camera'.

Tony Vandyke remembers the album 'hidden away' in his father's darkroom. It would come out occasionally at dinner parties, where Dupain was often present. His father 'wasn't one to dwell on the past', but would tell his children that 'life was very simple during the Depression'. The photos of a camping holiday on the south coast 'reflected some of that' and showed the pleasure of having 'such good, interesting friends'.

Having forgotten about the album after his father died, Tony came across it recently and decided to donate it to the Library under the Cultural Gifts Program. He was dry-eyed when he parted with what Alan Davies calls 'the holy grail of Australian photography'.

**CATHY PERKINS**  
SL magazine Editor



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THE FOLLOWING PHOTOGRAPHS ARE FROM THE ALBUM 'CAMPING TRIPS ON CULBURRA BEACH, NSW, 1937', MAX DUPAIN AND OLIVE COTTON, SAFE / PXA 1951. PHOTOGRAPHS ARE BY MAX DUPAIN UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED.



/04



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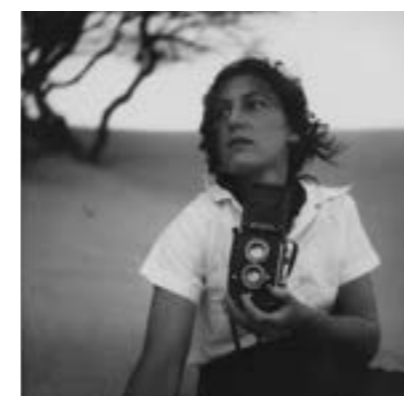
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- 01 MAX DUPAIN AND HAROLD SALVAGE ON BEACH, BY OLIVE COTTON
- 02 MAX DUPAIN, CHRIS VANDYKE (?) AND UNIDENTIFIED WOMAN, BY OLIVE COTTON
- 03 TWO WOMEN WALKING ON BEACH
- 04 AND 05 HAROLD SALVAGE SUNBAKING
- 06 AND 07 MAX DUPAIN, BY OLIVE COTTON
- 08 HAROLD SALVAGE WITH HORSE
- 09 OLIVE COTTON AND UNIDENTIFIED WOMAN, WASHING DISHES
- 10 HAROLD SALVAGE BY BEACH
- 11 OLIVE COTTON AND UNIDENTIFIED WOMAN
- 12 CHRIS VANDYKE
- 13 OLIVE COTTON WITH CAMERA
- 14 UNIDENTIFIED MAN CARRYING WOMAN ACROSS WATER
- 15 UNA DODD (?)





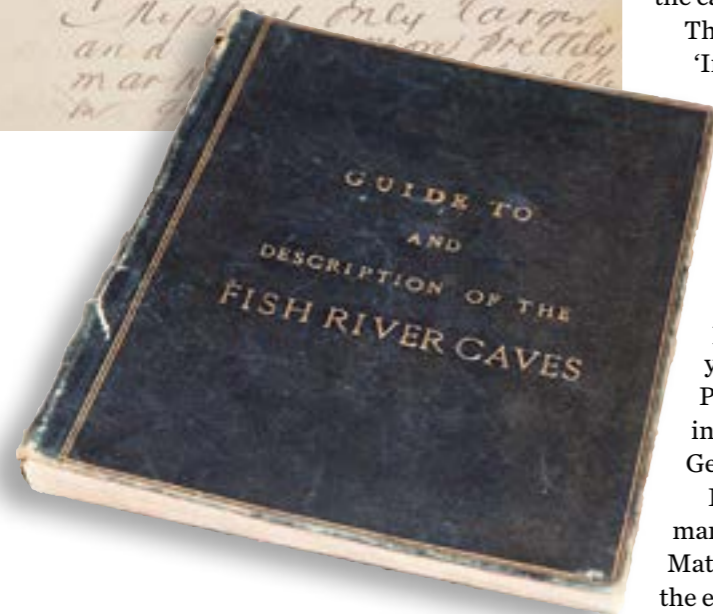
The Library recently acquired a fabulous early guide to the Jenolan Caves, known in 1882 as the Fish River or Binda Caves. Written by an enthusiastic 22-year-old George Rawson, the guide provides detailed descriptions of the caves and how visitors can enjoy them. It gives advice on travel, accommodation and the equipment needed for exploration. Rawson also includes sketches of the caves' geological features.

The volume is dedicated to Mr Geo. Cardinal, 'In grateful remembrance of their most enjoyable visit to the Fish River Caves', implying that Cardinal was present on the expedition. Unfortunately, Rawson does not name any other members of the group that travelled to the caves, although it is believed there were at least eight ladies in the underground party. The foreword to a published edition of the guide, produced last year by Jenolan Caves Historical & Preservation Society, speculates on an intriguing link between Mr Cardinal and George Rawson.

Four years after the expedition, Rawson married Mr Cardinal's adopted daughter Matilda. Was Matilda one of the eight ladies on the expedition? Did they meet and fall in love on the trip, with the romantic backdrop of the caves? Or did Rawson write the account while courting Matilda in an effort to gain Mr Cardinal's approval?

In 1884 the newly named Jenolan Caves began to emerge as a popular tourist destination. As more caves were discovered and opened up, pathways were constructed and measures introduced to protect the formations.

**SARAH MORLEY**  
Original Materials



## Fish River expedition



Heron In Flight  
By Shotei



Kingfisher In Snow  
By Shoson

## A phase in colour prints

The State Library has acquired a beautiful edition of Percy Neville Barnett's *Japanese Art: A Phase in Colour Prints*.

Percy Neville Barnett (1881–1953) was an Australian author, book designer and authority on bookplates. He produced a number of deluxe editions with hand-coloured prints and bookplates individually tipped into each volume. All were written, designed and published by Barnett and printed by the Beacon Press using the highest quality materials he could find. Barnett was a great appreciator of the book as *objet d'art*.

This book is one of a number Barnett produced on Japanese art during the 1930s and 40s. It presents a series of Japanese woodblock prints from the collections of the Adachi Institute of Woodcut Prints and the Nihon Hanga Kenkyusho. The images depict the natural world, predominantly birds and Japanese flora. The prints are accompanied by Barnett's text describing the art of woodblock printing and its place in Japanese art.

This volume, from a limited edition of 160, is a welcome addition to the State Library's holdings of Percy Neville Barnett's works, which includes proofs of his bookplates.

**SIMON COOTES**  
Collection Services

FROM JAPANESE ART:  
A PHASE IN COLOUR PRINTS,  
SYDNEY: PRIVATELY PRINTED  
BY THE BEACON PRESS, 1953,  
HQ 2014/65  
OPPOSITE: GUIDE TO AND  
DESCRIPTION OF THE BINDA  
OR FISH RIVER CAVES,  
C. 1882, GEORGE RAWSON,  
MLMSS 9411





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## News Corp Australia WWI partnership announced

The State Library of NSW is delighted to announce a partnership between News Corp Australia and the State Library that will see the two organisations work together to inspire a modern worldwide audience through access to the Library's extraordinary archival collection of World War I diaries. The State Library of NSW Foundation, particularly, wishes to acknowledge the generous support of News Corp Australia.

The partnership, announced on 15 April 2014, is part of a broad Anzac centenary program, titled '100 Years of Untold Stories: Anzac to Afghanistan', that will also see News Corp Australia encourage modern day diggers to share their stories to capture a contemporary view of war.

At the launch Julian Clarke, Chief Executive Officer of News Corp Australia, said, 'We are proud to support the commemoration. As part of this support, we will bring to all Australians the often raw thoughts and moving experiences of Australians fighting at Gallipoli and on the Western Front, as told through their diaries.'

This landmark project will enable access to our rare collection through digital and print media platforms, tours to regional NSW communities and curriculum-based learning resources. Sharing these stories will instill a deeper awareness of a defining moment in Australia's history, especially for young Australians, and will demonstrate the far-reaching personal and social impacts of war and how it changed Australia forever.

**SUSAN HUNT**  
Executive Director  
State Library of NSW Foundation



/03

## Expanded Far OUT! program continues

We are excited to announce that the successful educational outreach program *Far OUT! Treasures to the Bush* has been extended through the collaboration of the Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation, the Caledonia Foundation and the State Library of NSW Foundation.

Over the previous year, a pilot program was established to give students and teachers in rural and remote NSW communities access to the State Library's original material – especially the nation's foundation documents and artefacts. The program generated a great deal of interest and demand.

Seeing original material from the Mitchell Library has been a life-changing experience for many children as they interact with the objects and events of Australia's history. *Far OUT! Treasures to the Bush* reinforces teachers' curriculum-based lessons and equips them with further resources.

The consortium is committed to a three-year program from 2014 to 2016, and *Far OUT!* is now touring schools on the NSW south coast.

STATE LIBRARY SENIOR EDUCATION OFFICER PAULINE FITZGERALD WITH A PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENT TAKING PART IN THE FAR OUT! TREASURES TO THE BUSH PROGRAM



01 AT THE LAUNCH OF THE NEWS CORP AUSTRALIA AND STATE LIBRARY OF NSW WWI PARTNERSHIP ON 15 APRIL 2014, THE HON. TIM FISCHER AC SHOWS A WWI DIARY ON DISPLAY PHOTO BY MERINDA CAMPBELL

02 TREVER ANDERSON, CENTRE, NEPHEW OF HECTOR BREWER, SHOWS HIS UNCLE'S DIARY TO ST VINCENT'S COLLEGE YEAR 9 STUDENTS ISABELA SUCKLING, GEORGIA ST LEON, OLIVIA CROKER AND ANNA BLACKLEDGE PHOTO BY TOBY ZERNA NEWS CORP AUSTRALIA

03 BETTY PARSONS, DAUGHTER OF HENRY JOSEPH PARSONS, HOLDS HER FATHER'S WWI DIARY PHOTO BY TOBY ZERNA NEWS CORP AUSTRALIA



## VOLUNTEERS

### Over 500 WWI diaries transcribed

In 2008 the Library began a major project with our volunteers to create transcriptions for World War I diaries and letters in the collection. Over the past five years a team of more than 50 volunteers has transcribed over 500 diaries, comprising 82,000 pages. These transcriptions, accessible through the Library's catalogue, ensure that these important manuscripts can be easily read and examined.

Volunteers faced the challenge of deciphering handwritten notes that were often hastily written at the end of a long day, drafted in pencil by the light of a flickering lamp. Transcribing these personal accounts has been an emotional and engaging experience for our dedicated volunteer team. Two of our volunteers, Barbara Manchester and John Brooker, share their experiences.



I started transcribing WWI diaries and letters at the Library in 2009. It has been a very positive experience, both moving and rewarding.

As well as descriptions of fighting itself and their difficult life in the trenches, many wrote about larger issues — the conscription referenda at home in Australia, a visit to the Front by Prime Minister Billy Hughes, the Russian Revolution, the sinking of the *Emden*, the first commemorations of Anzac Day in 1916.

Many also took time to write about the personal things that made that life bearable — comradeship, the beauty of rural France, a first visit to London, the joy when a letter or parcel arrived from home, the pleasure they got from a (rare) bath and change of clothes, or the efforts that went into celebrating Christmas and other special days. You get the sense that the diaries were a way to record — for themselves and their families — memories of a time and experience that were unexpected and unimagined.

Working with the diaries and letters gives me a sense of satisfaction that I can help bring their stories to a much wider audience, who can now also get to know these young men through the words they wrote about their experiences.

— BARBARA MANCHESTER

I have been transcribing WWI diaries for some time and feel privileged to be part of this project, a very significant one for both the Library and Australia. I have found it fascinating from two aspects.

The first is historical. I have read Bean's official history volumes and a number of other books on WWI, and have visited battlefields in France, Belgium and Gallipoli.

This means I can envisage many of the areas written about in the diaries, especially at Anzac Cove where the terrain is virtually unchanged. The diaries put flesh on the bare bones of history. The other aspect is personal and is the reason for my interest in studying the subject. My father and three uncles were involved in the Gallipoli, French and Belgian campaigns. Occasionally I come across references to events in which they took part.

One such item comes from the diary of a man in my father's unit, the 2nd Battalion. Describing the wait for the attack on Broodseinde Ridge in 1917, he states that just behind their position they could see the Butte in Polygon Wood. My father was badly wounded the next day when going over the top in the attack on Broodseinde Ridge.

— JOHN BROOKER

ABOVE: ENVELOPE, RITA ALLEN LETTERS, 1916-1917, MLMSS 6225 / ITEM 1  
ANZAC COVE AND NEW ZEALAND POINT, LOOKING NORTH (DETAIL), FROM 'THE PICTORIAL PANORAMA OF THE GREAT WAR', C. 1915-1918, COLART'S STUDIOS, MELBOURNE, PXD 481

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- 01 PETER CROSSING, THE HON. GEORGE SOURIS MP, MINISTER FOR THE ARTS, LOUISE ANEMAAT AND ANTONIA KEESSEN, SALLY CROSSING AM, DR ALEX BYRNE AT THE LAUNCH OF *ARTIST COLONY: DRAWING SYDNEY'S NATURE*, 4 MARCH 2014, PHOTO BY JOY LAI
- 02, 03 VISITORS TO *ARTIST COLONY: DRAWING SYDNEY'S NATURE*, PHOTOS BY JOY LAI
- 04 TONY VANDYKE AND ALAN DAVIES, WITH ANTHONY'S DONATION OF AN ALBUM OF MAX DUPAIN AND OLIVE COTTON'S PERSONAL PHOTOGRAPHS (SEE STORY P. 38), 4 FEBRUARY 2014, PHOTO BY JOY LAI
- 05 FIREFIGHTERS MATTHEW JONES-POWER AND JOSHUA JONES-POWER WITH COMMISSIONER SHANE FITZSIMMONS AT THE LAUNCH OF THE PHOTOGRAPHY DISPLAY, *IN THE LINE OF FIRE*, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE *SYDNEY MORNING HERALD*, 21 FEBRUARY 2014, PHOTO BY MERINDA CAMPBELL
- 06 GRAHAM BRADLEY AM, CHARLENE BRADLEY, SUZANNE KELLY, JOHN LAMBLE AO AT A VIEWING OF JEAN BLAEU'S *LE GRAND ATLAS*, 2 APRIL 2014, PHOTO BY BRUCE YORK
- 07 VIEWING JEAN BLAEU'S *LE GRAND ATLAS 1667-72*, 2 APRIL 2014, PHOTO BY BRUCE YORK

- 08 CAPTAIN NICK MATTHEWS (RAN) AT THE LAUNCH OF THE NEWS CORP AUSTRALIA WWI PARTNERSHIP, 15 APRIL 2014, PHOTO BY MERINDA CAMPBELL
- 09 ELISE EDMONDS, GROUP CAPTAIN BRENDAN ROGERS (RAAF), THE HON. TIM FISCHER MP, AT THE LAUNCH OF THE NEWS CORP AUSTRALIA WWI PARTNERSHIP, 15 APRIL 2014, PHOTO BY MERINDA CAMPBELL
- 10 OLIVIA CROKER, GEORGIA ST LEON, ANNA BLACKLEDGE, ISABELA SUCKLING, MAGGIE PATTON, THE HON. TANJA PLIBERSEK MP AND ELISE EDMONDS AT THE LAUNCH OF THE NEWS CORP AUSTRALIA WWI PARTNERSHIP, 15 APRIL 2014, PHOTO BY MERINDA CAMPBELL
- 11 PROFESSOR GHIL'AD ZUCKERMANN, REVIVING ABORIGINAL AUSTRALIAN LANGUAGES TALK, 3 FEBRUARY 2014, PHOTO BY BRUCE YORK
- 12 VIEWING THE MACQUARIE COLLECTOR'S CHEST AT THE GLOBAL EMPIRES AND VISUAL CULTURE WORKSHOP, FUNDED BY JOHN SCHAEFFER, POWER INSTITUTE, UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY, YALE UNIVERSITY AND SUPPORTED BY THE LIBRARY, 28 FEBRUARY 2014, PHOTO BY JOY LAI

recent highlights





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# ‘Q&A

Tamara Dean



PHOTO BY ANNA KUCERA

A leading Australian photojournalist and award-winning photographic artist, Tamara Dean’s work is featured in the current *Sydney Morning Herald Photos 1440* exhibition. She will speak at the Library on 5 June.

**WHAT MAKES A GREAT FEATURE PHOTOGRAPH FOR THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD?**

There are a number of elements which make a great feature photograph including the fundamentals of a strong composition and a good use of colour, but I find it’s the images with an emotive quality that stand apart.

**WHICH RECENT PHOTOGRAPH IS THE MOST MEMORABLE FOR YOU?**

That would be a portrait of Neil Gaiman, an English author of short fiction, graphic novels, comic books and films. When I was in my late teens and early 20s, Gaiman was one of my heroes, inspiring me to study comic art and animation at university. I would pore over his cult comic ‘The Sandman’, scouring the shelves of dusty, badly lit comic bookshops for new issues.

So when I received the call from my picture editor at the *Sydney Morning Herald* (some 20 years later), asking me to photograph Neil Gaiman the next morning, I was elated. It was for the launch of his new book *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* so a laneway seemed appropriate. I found the perfect alley, with a post-apocalyptic feel to it, right next to where we were to meet. I dragged this author I had so admired down a laneway to reference the dreamlike world of his books. It was one of the high moments in my career.

**WHAT ARE YOU ABLE TO DO IN YOUR OWN PHOTOGRAPHY THAT ISN’T POSSIBLE IN PHOTOJOURNALISM?**

When creating my personal work I have complete control of location, time of day, light, subjects and theme whereas when I work

as a photojournalist I am responding to a real situation unfolding in front of me and I have to work around its parameters.

**WHAT INSPIRES YOU?**

I am inspired by the beauty of life. I am inspired by nature, by humanity, by happiness, sadness and all of the emotions in between.

**IS THERE AN AUSTRALIAN PHOTOGRAPHER FROM ANOTHER ERA WHOSE WORK APPEALS TO YOU?**

My work has been influenced by many artists from previous eras, including the late Australian photographer Carol Jerrems and her work ‘Vale Street’. I was drawn to the power of the woman in the photograph, and the interesting narrative between her and the boys.





# Life Interrupted: Personal Diaries from World War I

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