

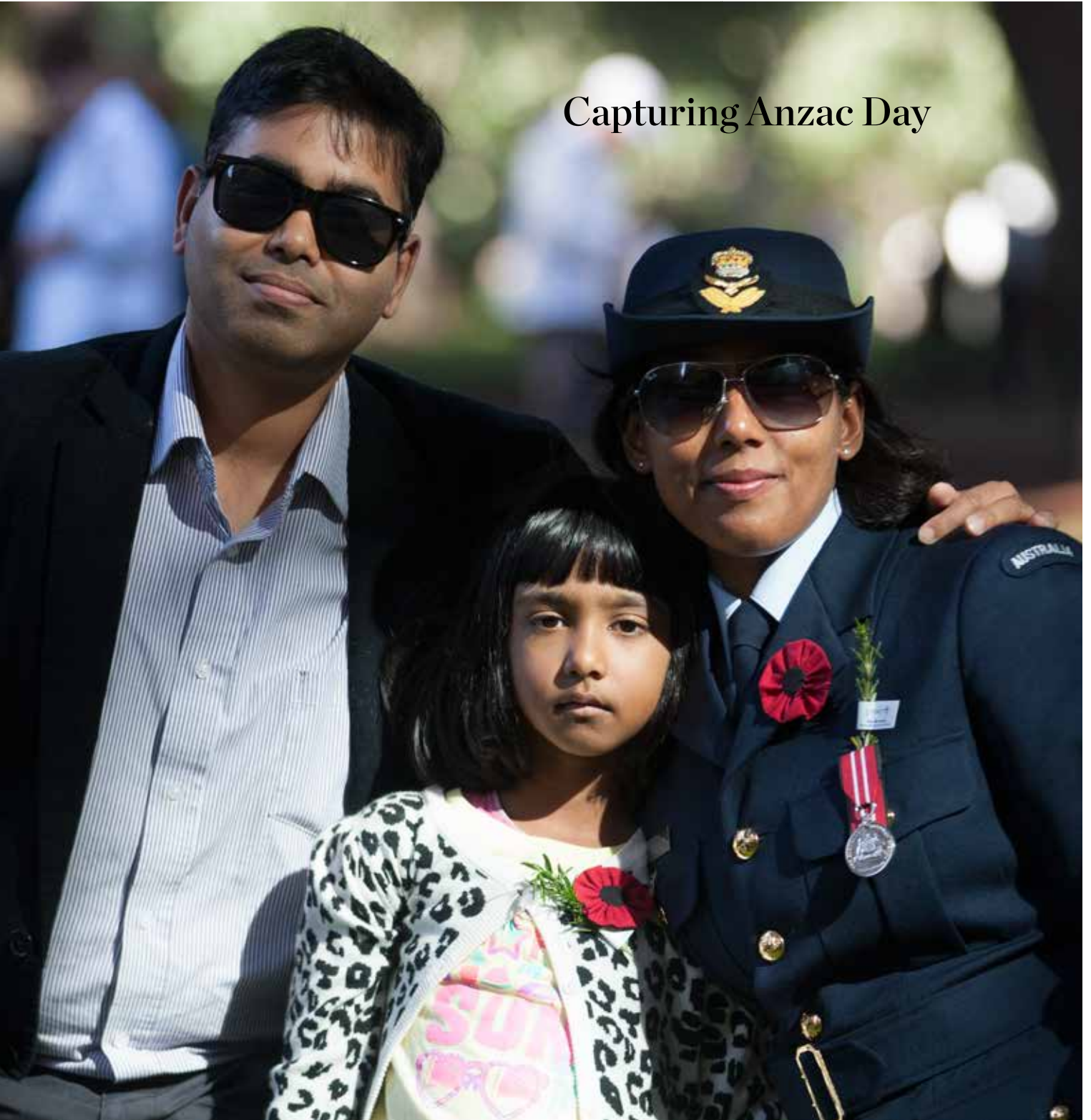
Magazine for members
Autumn 2016

SL



STATE LIBRARY®
NEW SOUTH WALES

Capturing Anzac Day



Message



The city of the mind

It is a truism that our minds are shaped by what we read, hear and see. Visiting a library or looking over the bookshelves at home can bring back a memory from an influential book, a timely article, a striking image or remind us of those we meant to read or see.

As in our current major exhibition *Imagine a City*, the story of the NSW Government Architect's Office, with its images and plans of buildings that have become landmarks and of others imagined but not constructed, our personal cities of the mind include signal memories of reading that moved us, and shadows of those that left little trace.

Libraries offer us publications which answer to our interests, stimulate our imagination, take us down byways, open new vistas. These aspects — and the challenges and frustrations we can experience — were depicted by the great Argentinian author Jorge Luis Borges in his magnificent story 'The Library of Babel'.* That imaginary library was eternal and comprehensive. Its hexagonal rooms included much that was incomprehensible which led to:

another superstition of that time: that of the Man of the Book. On some shelf in some hexagon (men reasoned) there must exist a book which is the formula and perfect compendium of all the rest: some librarian has gone through it and he is analogous to a god.

The librarians and curators of the State Library aren't gods but we are in some way architects of the city of the mind. Over nearly two centuries, we have shaped the collections of this great library and helped generations of readers and researchers to explore their interests, find their landmarks and create their own works.

Many of us — librarians and readers — would agree with Borges that 'I have always imagined that Paradise will be a kind of library'.

ALEX BYRNE
NSW State Librarian & Chief Executive

*Jorge Luis Borges, 'The Library of Babel', in *Collected Fictions* (trans. Andrew Hurley), New York: Penguin, 1998. Originally published in *The Garden of Forking Paths* (1944).

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Autumn 2016

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THE SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AREA IS CLOSED ON SUNDAYS.

GALLERIES OPEN TO 5 PM, THURSDAYS TO 8 PM

COVER

FLIGHT LIEUTENANT TANUSHREE DAS WITH HER FAMILY AT HYDE PARK, SYDNEY, NSW, 25 APRIL 2015 (DETAIL)
PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES ALCOCK (SEE P. 36)

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NEW ACCESSIBILITY GUIDE

Our new *Accessibility Guide* has the latest information about accessing the Library and our services, including parking, getting around the Library, hearing loops and adaptive technology. A large print version is also available. You can pick up the guide in the Macquarie and Mitchell foyers, call or email to request a copy, or visit our website. <http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/using/disability/>



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Street photographer

A recent purchase for the Library's pictures collection, this delightful oil sketch, c. 1940, is attributed to New Zealand-born artist Roland Wakelin (1887–1971). Touching on caricature and perhaps unfinished, it captures the once common sight of a commercial street photographer in action.

F

Five languages

Our *Visitors' Guide* answers all your questions about the Mitchell Library's historic features, and it's now available in five community languages: Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese, Arabic, Korean and Hindi. Pick one up in the foyer or contact the Library to request a copy.



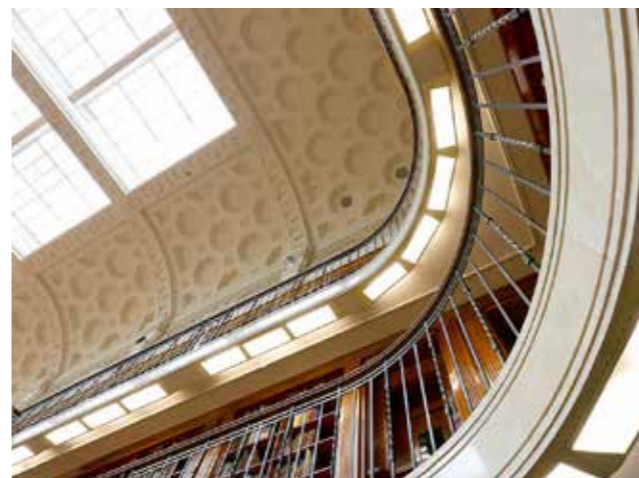
Celebration in photography

D-Mo Zajac has been photographing refugee and migrant communities in Australia and overseas since 2010. Having recently discovered her own Jewish heritage, documenting the Jewish community was a personal journey for the Sydney-based Polish photographer. 'It was around Hanukkah time in 2010 that I went to take my very first photograph of the Jewish community in Double Bay,' she says. 'I remember meeting Rabbi Dovid Slavin that evening and he kindly invited me to join his beautiful family to celebrate the "Festival of Lights" ... from that moment my five-year journey documenting the Jewish community here in Australia began.' Her intimate glimpses of religious and cultural events can be seen at the Library in *Celebration: Jewish Community Photographs*, launched as part of Multicultural March and on display from 1 March to 5 June.

REBBITZIN (WIFE OF A RABBI) LAYA SLAVIN PRAYS WITH HER DAUGHTERS DURING SHABBAT, PHOTO BY D-MO ZAJAC

Vale Roslyn McDonald Luger

The Library pays tribute to Roslyn McDonald Luger, who died on 26 November 2015. Roslyn was a long-standing friend and donor to the Library. She was passionate about libraries and the role of education in transforming people's lives. Roslyn established the Milt Luger Fellowship at the State Library to promote research by and for young people on aspects of Australian history, life and culture. This fellowship, awarded in 2004 and 2008, was in honour of her late husband, Milt Luger. She was a wonderful advocate of the State Library of NSW and will be greatly missed.



Five stars

Last year the Library reduced its carbon emissions by 510 tonnes – the equivalent of taking 100 cars off the road for a year – and achieved a five-star NABERS energy rating. As well as reducing our carbon footprint, replacing 500 lights in the Mitchell Library Reading Room with high-efficiency LED fittings has made the room brighter and more enjoyable to work in.

PHOTO BY WALTERS MEDIA

Library award for Alex Byrne

Alex Byrne was presented with the HCL Anderson Award by the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) in November 2015, acknowledging his contribution to the library and information profession. The award recognises Alex's role as NSW State Librarian, as former University Librarian at UTS and as President of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions. The highest honour that can be bestowed on an Associate Member of ALIA, the award commemorates HCL Anderson, Principal Librarian of the Free Public Library of NSW from 1893 to 1906.



NEWS



Interrobang

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

? I'm looking for information about water taxis on Sydney Harbour from the 1880s to 1932.

! Before the Sydney Harbour Bridge was completed in 1932, water taxis (watermen) transported people across the harbour in rowing boats when they missed their ferry. Two books with information about the watermen are *The History and Description of Sydney Harbour* by PR Stephensen and Brian Kennedy, and *From the Quay* by Harvey Shore. Information can also be found in newspapers through Trove. An article published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 13 September 1890, 'Concerning Watermen', reminisces about the days of the watermen (having been largely replaced by ferry steamers by this time). It deals with issues such as the character of the watermen, the nature of their job, the passengers, licensing arrangements, fares and so on. The article estimates that in 1890 only 50 of the 387 licensed watermen were plying their trade on Sydney Harbour.

www.sl.nsw.gov.au/ask

on this

DAY

COMPILED BY Margot Riley, Research & Discovery

3 March 1818

Charles Throsby, James Meehan and Hamilton Hume set out to find an overland route from Sydney to Jervis Bay.

'EXPLORING PARTY' FROM JAMES ATKINSON, AN ACCOUNT OF THE STATE OF AGRICULTURE & GRAZING IN NEW SOUTH WALES... LONDON, J CROSS, 1826, PLATE 1



11 March 1987

The Sydney Police Centre is officially opened. This image shows an artist's impression of the proposed building.

GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 3 - 36027

17 April 1835

Colonial artist Conrad Martens arrives in Sydney aboard HMS *Beagle*.

CONRAD MARTENS, 1853, BY PIERRE NUYTS DG 266



17 May 1964

Midget Farrelly wins the world's first surfing championship at Manly, NSW, before a crowd of 63,000.

SURFER MIDGET FARRELLY AT PALM BEACH, NSW, 1966, BY JEFF CARTER PXD 1070/95



11 April 1856

Dr Thomas Ebling incites labour reform under the banner 'Eight hours labour, eight hours recreation, eight hours rest'.

POSTER FOR EIGHT HOUR DAY DEMONSTRATION & ART UNION, 1905 PXD 2/8



30 May 1801

French mariner Nicolas Baudin arrives at Geographe Bay, Western Australia. This bronze gilt medal was struck to commemorate the expedition to Australia and the Pacific between 1800 and 1804. The medals were offered as souvenirs to people encountered on the voyage.

R 942





EXHIBITION

Imagine A CITY

* WORDS Charles Pickett

Our new exhibition explores the remarkable breadth and impact of public architecture in New South Wales.

Imagine a City: 200 Years of Public Architecture in NSW is a different type of architecture exhibition. It's not about designer houses or a famous architect. Instead it's about the hundreds of architects who have worked at the NSW Government Architect's office and the many thousands of buildings they've designed during the 200 years since Governor Macquarie hired Francis Greenway as the first government architect. Today, Peter Poulet is the 23rd NSW Government Architect.

During those two centuries the Government Architect's office has imagined buildings of all types, but especially those that make up the basic infrastructure of our modern society. Its story is about meeting social expectations and needs, about architecture as a social statement rather than an individual vision, about buildings and sites which embody social ideals. It is an intensely practical output, but also an idealistic one.

Francis Greenway famously enlarged his brief to create impressive buildings at a time when the British government wanted only the basics for its distant, deterrent new colony. When Sydney was a town barely worthy of the name, he designed Australia's first courthouse, first lighthouse and first market building, as well as churches and other pioneering structures.

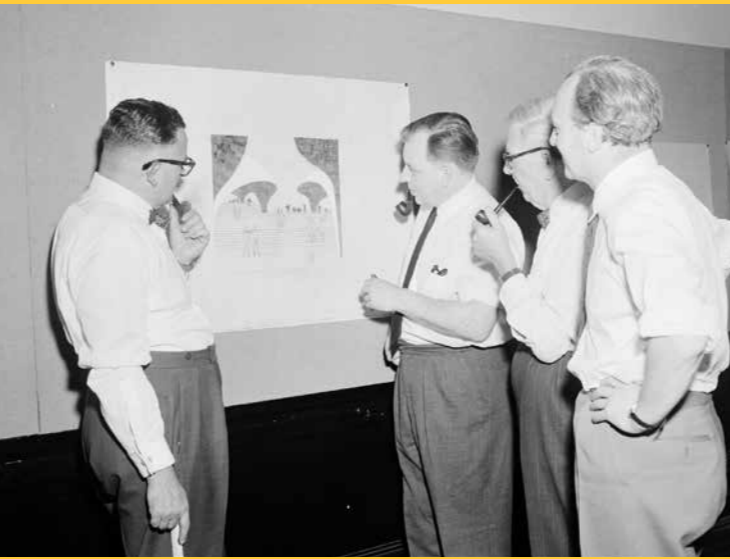
The first government architect to enjoy a lengthy tenure (1835 to 1849), Mortimer Lewis was instructed to focus on the architecture of law and order. The colony was losing the summary powers of the transportation era while expanding rapidly in population and area. Courts dominated Lewis'



GOVERNMENT HOUSE STABLES, 1842,
CONRAD MARTENS, DG51

OPPOSITE: STATE OFFICE BLOCK, PHILLIP
STREET, SYDNEY, PHOTO BY MAX DUPAIN,
1967 © MAX DUPAIN & ASSOCIATES
PXD 720 / 87

DESIGNED BY A YOUNG KEN WOOLLEY
UNDER GOVERNMENT ARCHITECT TED
FARMER, THE STATE OFFICE BLOCK WAS
SYDNEY'S TALLEST BUILDING UNTIL
AUSTRALIA SQUARE SURPASSED IT A FEW
YEARS LATER. IT WAS DEMOLISHED IN 1997
TO MAKE WAY FOR A TOWER DESIGNED
BY 'STARCHITECT' RENZO PIANO



architecture, his temple porticos communicating the power and reach of the law.

Before long, the new communications media of cheap postage and telegraph meant the rollout of post offices across the state — like courthouses, they were the first substantial buildings in many towns. Schools were also a major focus. Founded at the same time as the French and American revolutions, Australia’s European colony was ripe for the new ideals of democracy and opportunity. The universal right to education gave rise to compulsory schooling, which meant a vast design and building program.

School is one of several places most of us have experienced public architecture. Like many people, the first public building I remember was my primary school, a big old place built in the 1920s. With rows of wood and iron benches screwed to the floor and a long echoing hallway running past, the regimented classrooms were a physical reflection of ideas about education in the early twentieth century. School wasn’t meant to be creative or exciting, but perhaps it would have been if I’d been lucky enough to attend one of the new schools designed during the 1960s and 70s.

One of many young architects employed by the Government Architect’s office at that time, Michael Dysart designed the first of these schools as a series of pavilions linked in a ‘donut’ around a central courtyard. This dispensed with space-wasting corridors while creating a balance of openness, enclosure and adaptation to the site. The 1960s and 70s were exciting times for the architecture of education as the post-war migration and baby booms created a vast demand for new schools and also new expectations. Schools were designed for freedom of movement and flexible teaching models.

Probably the most distinctive result of this innovative period is the Binishell, a concrete dome pioneered by Italian architect Dante Bini. Using an inflatable membrane, the Binishell could be cast in one day, and several Sydney schools still use them as libraries and classrooms.

I got to enjoy some of this new architecture when I made it to university and encountered the Roundhouse at the University of NSW. Like a lot of university architecture of the postwar years, the Roundhouse — the University Union — was aimed at people like me with parents who’d not been to university, with no old school, college or other social networks to help them fit in. It filled some of the social void as a meeting place and an emblem of the university. Designed by Ted Farmer in his first year as Government Architect, the Roundhouse looked like a recently landed flying saucer and its circular column-free interior was a great space for performances and events, both formal and informal. To me it proclaimed that UNSW wasn’t a

tradition-bound sandstone campus but a place open to new ideas and new people.

This tradition of innovative education architecture persists to this day in buildings like the award-winning Winanga-Li Aboriginal Child and Family Centre in Gunnedah, designed by Cathy Kubany. Hosting childcare and other services for local children, this centre was designed in consultation with the Gunnedah community and embodies the reality that education extends far beyond school hours. As well as meeting traditional needs, the Gunnedah centre addresses environmental sustainability, Indigenous cultural issues, basic health services, local employment opportunities and skills within a modest budget. Importantly, it is a place of welcome for the Indigenous community.

Public buildings form a special type of architecture that helps shape our lives by creating shared experiences and promoting the ideal that society is more than a collection of private spaces and private lives. Two standout examples are the Sydney Opera House and its 1800s equivalent, the General Post Office. These buildings were designed and built over decades against backgrounds of controversy but have become sources of pride and symbols of a sophisticated metropolis. You can’t imagine Sydney without them.

One of the enduring achievements of the Government Architect’s office is the design of major museums and other arts buildings. They are places assumed to be essential to any city worthy of the name, and demonstrate the adaptability and potential of public buildings.

At the State Library, for example, you can write a novel, research a school project or a doctorate, view an exhibition, search for a new job, find a warm place off the streets, make or meet friends, watch a movie or listen to music. The history of the Library’s buildings shows the ongoing challenge of accommodating all of these possibilities. It underlines the sense of ownership many of us feel towards public places, and the special status they hold in our lives.

It’s appropriate that the story of the Government Architect’s office will be told in the galleries designed by Government Architect Walter Vernon as part of the Mitchell Library, completed in 1910. Drawn predominantly from the Library’s collection, the photos, models, artworks and drawings in the exhibition feature not only two centuries of public architecture, but also many of the people who made and used these structures. Along the way, we hope to refresh your memories of life at school, work and pleasure in and around public architecture in NSW.

Imagine a City: 200 Years of Public Architecture in NSW, curated by Dr Charles Pickett, is on show until 8 May.

TOP LEFT: MAROUBRA JUNCTION PUBLIC SCHOOL, 1946, PHOTO BY SAM HOOD HOME AND AWAY 11435

TOP RIGHT: OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NSW ROUNDHOUSE, 1961 PHOTO BY DON MCPHEDRAN, APA 10929

TOP LEFT: OPERA HOUSE JUDGING COMMITTEE AT ART GALLERY, 1957 GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE, GPO2 08373
TOP RIGHT: WINANGA-LI GUNNEDAH FAMILY CENTRE, 2013, PHOTO BY BRETT BOARDMAN GOVERNMENT ARCHITECT’S OFFICE

Imagine a LIBRARY



When David Scott Mitchell offered his vast collection to the trustees of the Sydney Free Public Library in 1898, it was on the proviso that a suitable building be erected to hold the collection. After numerous delays, with Mitchell threatening to cancel his bequest, in 1905 Government Architect Walter Liberty Vernon was instructed to prepare designs for a 'National Library' with construction commencing in early 1906.

Vernon's proposed two-storey sandstone building would have a hexagonal reading room in the centre, topped with a copper dome; its basement would feature neo-classical detailing. Now known as the Mitchell Library building, the first stage of this grand

vision was completed in 1910. The second stage — the Dixson wing and basement — was completed in 1929 under the direction of Government Architect Richard Macdonald Seymour Wells.

When tenders were called for the third stage — including the portico, vestibule and reading room — the Second World War was imminent, and money and materials would become scarce. The staff of the Government Architect's office, under Cobden Parkes, worked closely with Chief Librarian William Ifould, with the final development omitting the proposed octagonal reading room and dome. Completed in 1942, this major addition was one of few government

buildings constructed during the war. The final stage of the Mitchell Library building was completed in 1964 with the construction of the south-eastern section facing Hospital Road.

By the late 1960s, the Library was already running out of room. In 1980, a new building to commemorate Australia's Bicentenary was announced. Designed by Andrew Andersons, the Macquarie Street building has six levels of library space and staff accommodation with an additional five stack levels below ground. Linked to the Mitchell building via a glass bridge from the first floor and a tunnel at basement level, it was opened by Queen Elizabeth II in 1988.

The Government Architect's office continues to be involved in restoring and renewing the Library's buildings, most recently the refurbishment of the Mitchell Library Reading Room and adjacent rooms in the Mitchell building, completed in early 2015. During the *Imagine a City* exhibition, architects from the Government Architect's office will lead special tours of the Library (see *What's On* for details).

Matthew Devine is an architect and heritage specialist at the NSW Government Architect's Office.

NORTH ELEVATION OF WALTER LIBERTY VERNON'S DESIGN FOR THE STATE LIBRARY OF NSW, 1905
PXD 363 / FF1-55

FACE TIME

* WORDS Richard Neville

Portraits like the newly acquired *Thomas Meehan* reveal the fears and aspirations of colonial society.

The story of colonial art is traditionally about trees, and how artists came to depict them with increasing 'truthfulness' over time. It is as much about faces, though, and how colonists used portraiture to sell themselves, and possibly hide the truth.

'Portraiture is one of the staple manufactures of the Empire,' noted English artist Benjamin Robert Haydon in 1817. 'Wherever the British settle, wherever they colonise, they carry and will ever carry trial by jury, horse-racing, and portrait painting.'

Portraits often tell intriguing stories, which is why in November 2015 the Library purchased John Carmichael's *Thomas Meehan*. In this painting, a young man presents himself to the world in ways the world did not perhaps see him.

Of course, portraits in nineteenth century Sydney held a particular potency because, as Lt Colonel Godfrey Mundy put it in *Our Antipodes* in 1855, 'There is one grand feature of the social status of Sydney ... the convict infusion.' The presence of successful emancipated convicts deeply disturbed free settlers, who were petrified of unsuspecting contamination: how could anyone tell that a well-dressed emancipist, living in a fashionable house and driving a nice carriage, was actually a former convict? Emancipists were, Mundy wrote, 'a class apart from the untainted. There is a line of moral demarcation by them peremptorily impassable.' A portrait was a way to recompose a questionable past.

When John Piper commissioned Augustus Earle to paint a nearly life-size portrait of his wife, Mary Ann, and their children in the mid-1820s, it was an explicit statement of his wealth and social pre-eminence. Yet such ostentatious display was surely also designed to



THOMAS MEEHAN, 1828,
JOHN CARMICHAEL
OPPOSITE: MARY ANN PIPER
AND HER CHILDREN, C. 1826
AUGUSTUS EARLE, ML 672



shadow the potentially embarrassing truth that Mary Ann's parents were convicts.

On the whole, colonists approached such situations pragmatically, accepting them when it was in their interests to do so (and Piper did throw the best parties in Sydney). But after Barron Field, the former NSW Supreme Court Judge, described Mary Ann Piper's circumstances to Elizabeth Macleay, wife of the new Colonial Secretary, he noted, 'We thought it right to explain Mrs Piper's situation to [her], and to recommend her to notice; but Mrs McLeay did not stomach it ...'

It is not surprising, then, that portrait painting was where the money was. As John Rae reported to struggling landscape painter John Skinner Prout on 20 May 1847, 'Portraiture always pays best. Our vanity too favours the portrait painter.' The artist William Nicholas was reputed to be earning £500–600 a year in the late 1840s from portraits.

The Library's recent purchase, depicting 20-year-old Thomas Meehan, is by trade engraver John Carmichael. Dated 1828, this little painting — some 15.5 x 14 cm — is the only known formal portrait by Carmichael, and has come from Meehan family descendants.

Carmichael, who described himself as 'deaf and dumb', was trained as an engraver — considered a suitable occupation for deaf people — in Edinburgh. He had emigrated to Sydney on his own, with no family and only his profession to support him, in 1825. Advertising himself as an 'engraver and copperplate printer', he seems to have found work quickly. Considered one of the best engravers in Sydney, his skills supported him and his eight children, until his death in 1857. His talents are perhaps most evident in his work on Sir Thomas Mitchell's *Map of the Nineteen Counties* of 1834,



but his many designs for local bill heads and advertisements are his most visible legacy.

In 1828, Sydney's most prolific portrait painter Richard Read was advertising regularly in the local press, offering 'Miniatures painted in a superior style, from two to five guineas ... Miniatures and portraits accurately copied'. Towards the end of the year, in a surprising shift from his career as an engraver, Carmichael advertised his skills in miniature at the same price as Read.

Presumably young Thomas Meehan saw Carmichael's advertisement and decided to commission a portrait. Meehan had been born in the colony in 1808, the son of James Meehan, a surveyor and convict, transported for his involvement in the Irish Rebellion of 1798. Although a respected surveyor, James' intimacy with Governor Macquarie as one of the emancipists invited to the Governor's table had been controversial. In 1828, though, James was two years dead, and young Thomas had expectations of succeeding to his father's extensive estates at Macquarie Fields.

Thomas had been educated at Sydney Grammar School, where he won prizes for his knowledge of Horace. Interestingly, three of his four classmates were the sons of wealthy emancipist businessmen — education has always been an important step in social mobility.

Thomas stands proudly in this miniature, surrounded by what appears to be native plants, with Sydney Harbour distant behind him. It is an image both traditional in conception (alluding to late eighteenth century portrait painting) and specific in locality. Yet this romantic, complex image seems old fashioned, and would have been interpreted by Sydneysiders as aligning Thomas with the Exclusivists, the old established free families who saw the colony's future economic prosperity being built around land, which of course they owned.

Recently married, and about to inherit substantial estates, the young man in this portrait is presented on the cusp of a propertied future, as part of the landed gentry. Whether the landed gentry themselves



considered him this way is a moot point — Mundy described people in Meehan's situation as 'moral bastards' who suffered for the sins of their fathers. Sadly, Meehan's potential was never realised: he was forced to sell the estates to Samuel Terry (the father of a schoolmate) to pay debts on the land. He died in 1835, aged 27, the postmaster and pound-keeper at Campbelltown.

A comparison with another miniature painted in 1828, Richard Read Junior's *Selina Tomlins*, is instructive. The opportunities open to 28-year-old Tomlins, who was married to an Audit Office clerk, were considerably fewer than Meehan's. Her world was urban rather than landed, and in many ways she represents the growing class of free immigrants (she arrived in Sydney in 1824) who were beginning to pour into the colony. Their interests coincided more with the emancipated convicts and the Australian-born lower and middle classes, who were looking for greater representation and influence in the colonial economy and government, and saw themselves as in opposition to the Exclusivists.

Read's simply conceived miniature, with its focus on dress and personal presentation, represents a more modern style of portraiture than Carmichael's. Read's mechanical presentation did not impress aspiring portrait painter young Samuel Elyard, who recorded in his diary of 8 February 1837 that he had

seen some of Read's drawings 'meant for ladies — more like pieces of wood however — one would think that his breast is a stranger to love, and the more beautiful feelings, or he could not help painting better than these wretched things'.

The criticism that colonial portraits were 'coat-and-waistcoat paintings', where 'crochet-work and jewellery rage rampant' was not entirely unfair, but it also reflected what patrons were looking for — from Read's *Jane Tompson* (wife of an emancipist) to William Nicholas's *Hannah Tompson* (wife of poet Charles Tompson, who was the son of an emancipist). These are not sophisticated rhetorical portraits for prominent display in public places — it was acknowledged that those had to be commissioned in Europe — but they are a confident expression of material possessions and putative social positions.

Thomas Meehan seems to suggest a pastoral future for the colony, while at the same time alluding to its subject's privilege in the present. With its paradox of aspiration and embarrassment, it is a wonderful microcosm of colonial society in New South Wales.

Richard Neville is the Mitchell Librarian and Director, Education & Scholarship.

JANE TOMPSON, 1836, RICHARD READ, DG P2 / 56
HANNAH TOMPSON, 1839, WILLIAM NICHOLAS, ML 626

Some of the Fifth Division's GLORY

* WORDS Jean Hart

One woman's efforts to pay tribute after the First World War have left us with first-hand accounts, letters, photographs and artworks, but not the book she intended.

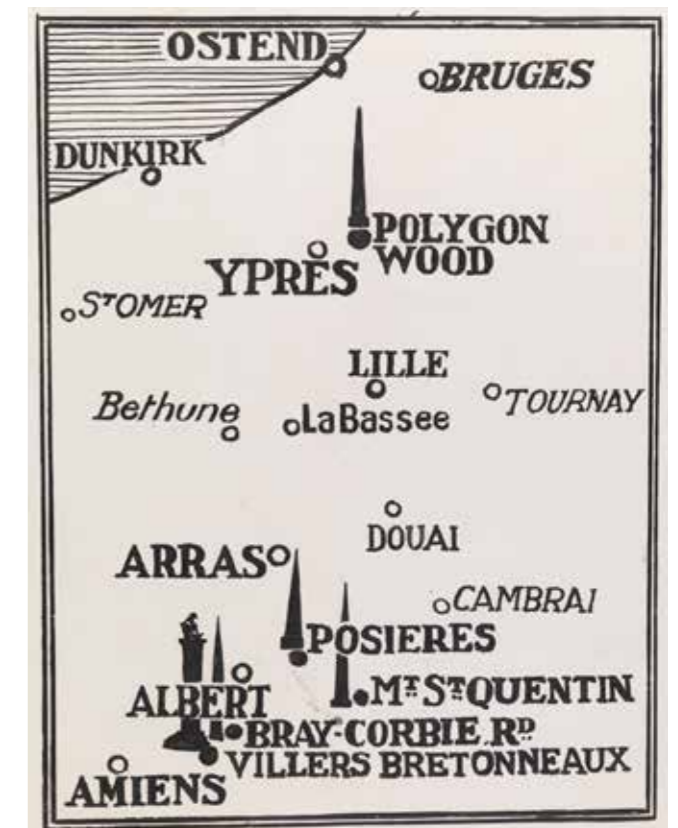
Alfred Smith and Wal Oldham, born and schooled in Newcastle, enlisted as infantrymen in the Australian Imperial Force with high hopes of defending the Empire. They sailed from Sydney on SS *Suevic* on 23 December 1915, bound for Egypt and further training in the recently formed 5th Division. At sea, Alfred expressed his patriotic fervour in poems that were published in the *Sportsman's Gazette*. Having memorised the works of Robert Burns, he was ever ready to recite them, on request or even without.

Arriving with the certainty of racial superiority, common at that time, they were disappointed by Egypt. The climate, the people and the disastrous march across the desert to Ferry Port made them eager to leave. Alfred put his disdain into verse as they departed on the troopship *A25* on 20 June 1916:

The land of whores and septic sores
And lice and fleas and flies!
I gladly quit your barren shores
That mock your tearless skies.

By contrast, arrival in France rekindled their high spirits. 'The magic touch of spring' suffused Alfred's letters home during the long train journey across the countryside from Marseilles to Fleurbaix. The letters reveal Alfred Smith's youthful sensibility, and make his death shortly afterwards, at Fromelles on 19 July 1916, the more tragic.

Wal Oldham's Distinguished Conduct Medal was awarded at Pozieres, where he 'brought wounded



MAP OF CITIES AND TOWNS WHERE THE FIFTH DIVISION FOUGHT, BELGIUM AND FRANCE, C. 1916 COLLECTED BY MISS AAN SMALL, PXD 508 / 11
OPPOSITE: FIRST WORLD WAR SKETCH, C. 1916, NIELS A GREN COLLECTED BY MISS AAN SMALL, C. 1916, PXD 508 / 4





men under heavy fire from no man's land for 20 hours without rest'. He was later promoted to lieutenant in recognition of exemplary leadership in battle. He fought in all the 5th Division's subsequent battles until its last hard-fought victory at Péronne. There, as he bound the wounds of a soldier in his platoon, he was killed by a sniper on 1 September 1918. Wal Oldham's sudden death within months of the armistice brought an outpouring of admiration, grief and even love in letters to his family from senior officers and troops alike.

Copies of Alfred and Wal's letters, and those of their grieving families, are among 425 pages of First World War material in the Library's 'Miss Small Folder' (1917–1920), which I transcribed over many months in 2015.

In July 1918 Aileen Small announced in newspapers around the country her intention to compile and publish a volume titled 'Some of the Fifth Division's Glory'. She sought photographs and written contributions, which might include:

- 1) The most interesting unofficial story connected with the Division and anyone in it.
- 2) The most interesting character in the unit, from General to Private.
- 3) The best yarns about the unit.
- 4) The bravest thing you ever personally knew of a man in the Division.

Contributions please to 73 Raglan Street Mosman OR welcome to my Dugout at 26 Jamieson Street Sydney, weekdays between 1 and 2 pm.

The response was impressive. But while Small garnered support from all ranks of the division, one high-profile member was initially unconvinced. Gallipoli veteran Brigadier General HE 'Pompey' Elliott had transferred from the 1st to the 5th Division in Egypt. By 1918 he was probably the most renowned fighting man in the AIF, a thorn in the side of his superiors but a hero to the troops. In September 1918, while the decisive battle of Péronne raged, Aileen Small wrote to Elliott, seeking his account of the Fifth's widely publicised triumph at Villers-Brettonneux.

'Sorry, can't help,' was his curt reply in January 1919 from Doulers, France. 'All records now in London archives. Why proceed now the war is over?' Miss Small was not deterred. Her further importuning in March 1919 elicited his further discouragement. He'd 'returned to his Melbourne

legal practice where between making a living by day and attending official functions every night, he lacked time to oblige ... suggest you contact Colonel Cass'. When she wrote again to say that her project's finances were strained, he was characteristically dismissive, but Elliott nonetheless sought a £500 grant from the Minister for Defence.

And there contact between Elliott and Small might have ended if the *Sydney Morning Herald* had not published a stinging criticism by Colonel McLaurin of the 5th Division at Fromelles, a debacle in which 5153 Australians were killed, 400 taken prisoner and many others wounded. Pompey Elliott sent his livid handwritten response to Aileen Small and he soon became president of her organising committee, which included colonels Cass, Pursur and McIntosh (Treasurer), majors Simpson and Hewitt, Corporal Cope, Messrs. Charlton and Lockley and the reputable publisher Sydney Ure Smith.

With the transcription completed, I was eager to see the final publication, but found that no such title existed. Nor was there a manuscript. A Trove search for 'Some of the Fifth Division's Glory' revealed only newspaper advertisements of December 1919 heralding the impending publication. The collection purchased from Aileen Small in 1921 includes artworks by Grace Cossington Smith and other artists and an introduction for the book from the most senior officer of the Australian Corps, Lieutenant General William Birdwood.

Why the project was abandoned remains a mystery. When Rupert W Moon posted his photo in January 1919 he asked, 'When can I expect it returned?' It never was. Miss Small, who so confidently announced her project in 1918 and vigorously pursued its aims for two years, left no explanation of her decision to sell the material to the Library.

Perhaps her compilation was eclipsed when *The Story of the 5th Division: Being an Authoritative Account of the Division's Doings in Egypt, France and Belgium* by Captain AD Ellis MC — with maps, charts, photographs and appendices — was published c. 1919 by Hodder & Stoughton, London. This substantial work was reprinted many times, most recently in 2002 as a facsimile edition by Naval & Military Press. Could the committee have decided that a second book about the 5th Division was too much of a commercial risk?

Aileen Small's inspiration for the project is equally inexplicable. In the absence of a relative in the



division, or any hint of a romantic involvement, she may have been caught up in civilian euphoria about the 5th Division's valorous deeds at Villers-Brettonneux in March and April 1918. Its role in stopping the German advance was a turning point in the war, and the French to this day pay homage to the Australians.

Ross McMullin's weighty biography of Pompey Elliott is silent about his presidency of Miss Small's committee. Aileen Small, in her Elizabeth Street premises, was recognised in the 1930s as Sydney's first woman to succeed in the business of advertising and art service. She moved in 1943 from Mosman to Lane Cove, where she died in 1975 aged 84. The stories she collected by and about the men of the 5th Division can now be read on the Library's website.

State Library volunteer Jean Hart's father served in the 2nd Division of the AIF, January 1915 – July 1919.

'TO THE GLORY OF THE FIFTH DIVISION', c. 1918
GRACE COSSINGTON SMITH
COLLECTED BY MISS AAN SMALL, PXD 508 /15
COURTESY THE ESTATE OF GRACE COSSINGTON SMITH

TOP: BRIGADIER GENERAL ELLIOTT,
PHOTOGRAPH BY THE SCARS, MELBOURNE
ABOVE: HALL, VC
PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE 5TH DIVISION, AIF
COLLECTED BY MISS AAN SMALL, PXD 508

A fixed GAZE

Our conservators work with inspiring objects every day.

Every Friday morning, a group of us meets deep within the Library stacks to examine the Library's 'realia' collection and choose items for rehousing. Each time, without fail, we are amazed at what we see: jewellery encrusted with colourful gems, a small bush candle-box with the tiniest bit of wax left, or Captain Cook's ditty box, carved by his sailors after his death, containing a lock of his hair.

During the year we have rehoused 440 of the Library's most valuable objects, many of which were donated by Sir William Dixon as part of his large bequest to the Library in 1952. Dixon's eclectic taste translated into an extraordinary collection of books, manuscripts, coins, pictures, maps and relics from across the globe. His diverse interests — with a strong focus on Australiana, but covering subjects such as exploration, geography, natural history and Pacific history — saw one especially interesting object reach my work bench for rehousing.

Inside an old wooden crate, with an Angus & Robertson label and assorted packing material, lay a carved bust of a heavily tattooed Maori male with

strong features and a mesmerising stare. Catalogued as Male Maori Head, dated c. 1880, the bust is made from a single large piece of kauri gum resin.

Created as a by-product of the kauri gum trade, a huge industry that thrived in New Zealand from the 1850s to the 1950s, the bust was probably carved by European gum-diggers from resin that oozed from the kauri trees. Resin carvings were produced as tourist pieces, mementoes and prizes in fairs.

While resin carving was common throughout the northern parts of the north island, pieces as large as this one are rare. Busts were often made in a mould, with the hair and torso built up using softened resin. Details were added by painting, carving and, because Kauri gum has a low melting point, impressing with heated metal tools. The carvings often include authentic depictions of the tattoos of the individual represented.

Once the gum has hardened and set, it becomes brittle and is easily damaged. This bust has a crack running through the back of the neck, a large section missing on the base and small pieces broken off in other places. The weight of the Maori head made its rehousing a challenge. A box was made to fit the bust, using archival corrugated board reinforced with a variety of supports to aid stability while enabling access for clients and staff.

A number of questions about the Maori head remain unanswered. Is it a true representation of an individual and, if so, who was he?

Ana Barros Soares Watts, Conservator, Collection Care

We welcome additional information on this piece and thank our colleagues Colin McGregor, Dion Peita and Logan Metcalfe from the Australian Museum, Sheri O'Neill from the Kauri Museum and Conservator Anne Cummings for their invaluable responses to our questions.

On display in the Amaze Gallery.





Although often attributed to Governor Macquarie, the annual distribution of blankets was initiated by Governor Darling in 1826. Conflict at Bathurst and in Argyle County, near Goulburn, early that year led Darling to act on a request from Bathurst magistrates and order distributions of blankets and ‘slop’ (cheap ready-made) clothing to Aboriginal people in several districts. He requested that magistrates identify Aboriginal leaders who could assist in the capture of bushrangers and communicate Aboriginal grievances so that future conflict might be prevented.

A letter in the Mitchell Library from Argyle magistrate David Reid – written in October 1826 in response to Darling’s request – contains an observation that would lay one of the foundations of the annual distribution of blankets:

With respect to slop clothing, it is decidedly my opinion that Blankets are the only articles which would prove useful to them ... for these they would do anything.

The first general distribution of blankets and slops took place across the Nineteen Counties of the colony on 23 April 1827, the King’s Birthday. Although the process soon descended into complete confusion, the Aboriginal reaction was most instructive. People began to move towards Parramatta and Sydney to demand the promised blankets. It was not until 1829 that the distributions were properly organised and limited to blankets.

Blankets played a crucial part in negotiations with the Aboriginal people who had waged a campaign of resistance in the coastal ranges of St Vincent County in 1830. When they demanded to be included in the scheme, Darling readily agreed and conflict ceased. Local settlers such as William Turney Morris, who had called for the usual military action against the Aboriginal people, now competed to be appointed agents for blanket distributions, which were seen to offer ‘security and convenience’. In 1832, Morris distributed blankets at his Mooramoorang station and compiled the census of the district’s Aboriginal population that is now part of the Mitchell Library collection.

Morris’ ‘Return of Aboriginal Natives’ is typical of the census returns distribution agents were required to submit between 1828 and 1844. They recorded each Aboriginal man’s English name, native name, probable age, number of wives and children, tribe and district of usual resort. While they often provide



the earliest written records for Aboriginal family historians, the returns have limitations. They were gathered only in the colony’s Nineteen Counties (an area reaching Wellington in the west, Port Stephens in the north and Batemans Bay in the south), Twofold Bay and Port Macquarie. Many agents failed to complete the required census returns or used them to record only those who received blankets, which sometimes meant women and children’s names were recorded but relationships were rarely noted. The spellings of names varied from year to year, and ages were very ‘probable’.

Darling had issued 626 blankets in 1831; under his successor, Governor Bourke, the number reached 2160 by 1835. The success of the scheme, however, was underpinned by the willingness of Aboriginal people to participate. By issuing blankets, the colonists had unwittingly chosen an item which, in its traditional skin rug form, was a potent element of Aboriginal gift exchange. David Dunlop, magistrate at Wollombi, explained it thus:

... any encroachment on each other’s boundaries occasions much hostile feelings betwixt the tribes. Sometimes the price of peace must be either a young gin, or an opossum cloak ... Their simple nature understood it thus, that the Governor sold their grounds to people ... and that in lieu thereof he gave blankets.

DETAIL FROM ‘NUMBER OF BLANKETS SERVED OUT TO ABORIGINES AT BATHURST, 1867-1888’, A 3016
OPPOSITE: GOVERNMENT AGENTS DISTRIBUTING BLANKETS TO ABORIGINES, C. 1890s
PHOTO BY KERRY & CO., PX*D 398/13

The price of PEACE

* WORDS Michael Smithson

The most enduring institution in Aboriginal–European relations – the annual distribution of blankets – produced valuable documents for Aboriginal family and social historians.



By participating in the annual distribution of blankets, Aboriginal people sought to contain the overwhelming European threat, restore some semblance of order to a world now shared with Europeans, who were at least meeting some traditional obligations, and ensure a measure of security for themselves. Their hopes proved illusory.

In 1844 Governor Gipps abolished the annual blanket distribution. Aboriginal people within the Nineteen Counties were no longer a military threat,

and the effects of disease and dispossession had made them dependant on blanket distributions. Gipps had not witnessed the blanket diplomacy of the 1830s. Instead, he saw only a thriftless and powerless people receiving 'indiscriminate charity'.

Nevertheless, Aboriginal people maintained their belief that blankets were their right. Many local white officials and clergy also supported the distributions. In 1848 Governor FitzRoy responded to appeals and restored the annual distribution of blankets in settled districts. In subsequent years, it expanded to apply to all Aboriginal people in the colony. However, neither Aboriginal people nor white supporters saw blankets as sufficient recompense for Aboriginal losses.

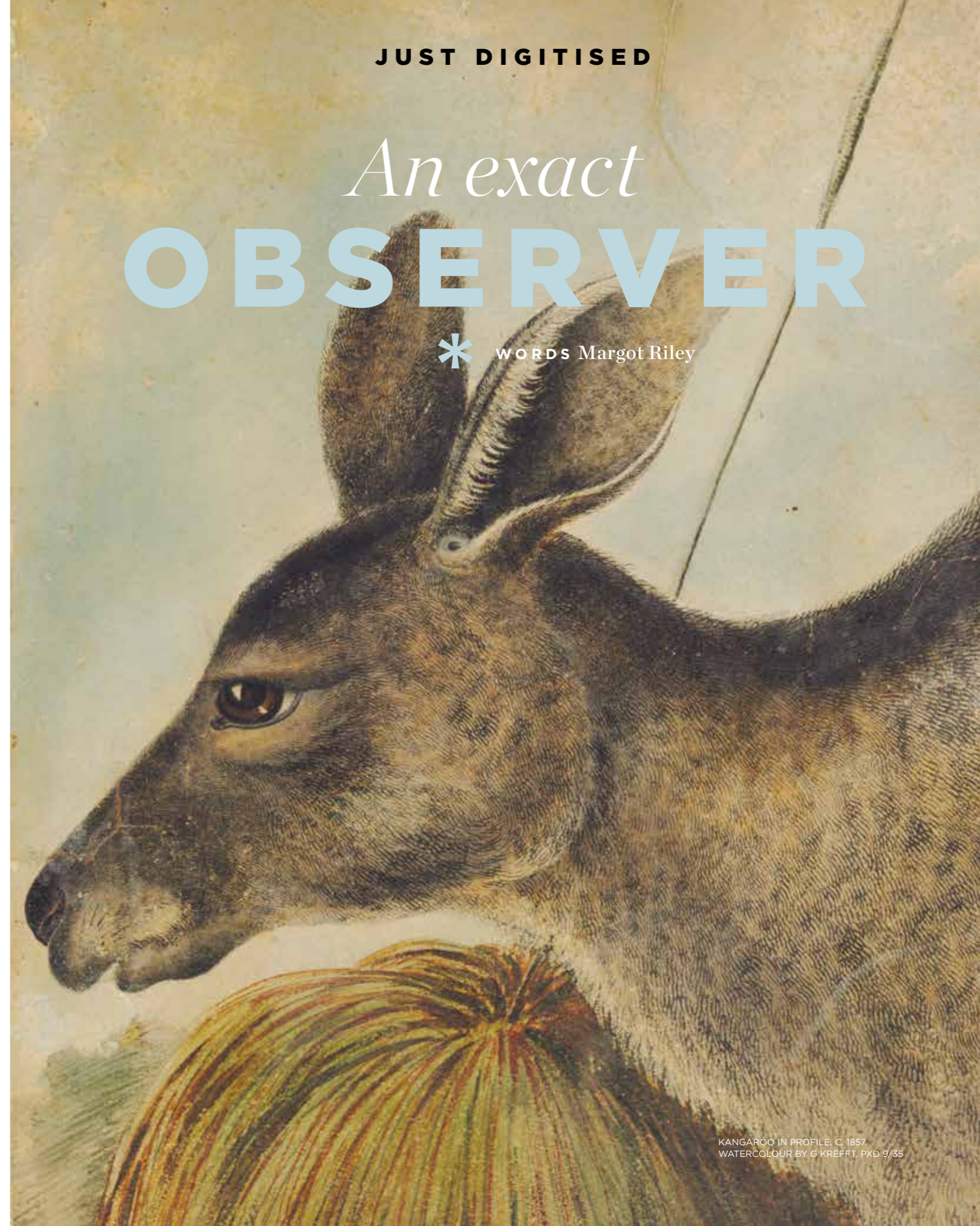
From this time, blankets were usually distributed by police at local police stations or courthouses. They were supposed to be issued on the Queen's birthday, but this was often impractical. Police recorded the names of Aboriginal people who received blankets, and some lists have survived in a ledger held in the Mitchell Library. The ledger contains the names of Bathurst Aboriginal people, their home locations and the dates in the 1860s and 70s when they received blankets – often not on the Queen's birthday. By this time, these Aboriginal people had adopted standard European surnames in addition to their Aboriginal names, greatly assisting family historians in tracing their ancestry.

Aboriginal attitudes towards blanket distributions changed after the 1880s as blankets became a tool of control in the hands of the Aborigines Protection Board. Economic austerity during the First World War provided the Board with the opportunity to stop the annual gift of a blanket to every Aboriginal person, which had cost the government £3734 in 1913. The distribution of blankets was restricted to indigent persons, and by 1962 it had been subsumed by the wider welfare system. In this way, the annual distribution of blankets to Aboriginal people faded away. It is remembered, not as an attempt to achieve security through reciprocity, but as a symbol of paternalism and dependency.

Historian Michael Smithson completed a thesis on the annual distribution of blankets in NSW and has written on the Aboriginal history of the Braidwood district.

An exact OBSERVER

* WORDS Margot Riley



A recently digitised set of watercolours by controversial nineteenth century Australian Museum Curator Gerard Krefft includes 36 paintings from the 1857 Blandowski expedition to the Murray and Darling rivers.

Johann Ludwig Gerard Krefft was born in Germany in 1830. Passionately fond of drawing animals from a young age, he was prevented from pursuing a career in fine arts by his parents. Migrating to America in 1850, he worked as a clerk and draughtsman, depicting sea views and shipping. On viewing the magnificent work of John James Audubon at the New York Mercantile Library, Krefft asked permission to make copies of some of the plates, which he then sold to raise his passage to Australia. Arriving in November 1852, he spent the next four years trying his luck on the Victorian goldfields.

Back in Melbourne by December 1856, Krefft was appointed as naturalist on the year-long Victorian Government Collecting Expedition to the lower Murray and Darling rivers in 1857. Under the direction of Wilhelm Blandowski, the group gathered 28 boxes of specimens and made over 500 drawings of Aboriginal and natural history subjects.

Later employed by the National Museum in Melbourne to catalogue the 17,400 specimens collected on the expedition, Krefft showed examples of his drawings at the 1858 Victorian Industrial Society Exhibition. One reviewer commented that 'Mr Krefft's drawings ... are illustrations from the life of some of the more curious animals & c. of the country ... the most striking is that of a native corroboree at Gall Gall ...' (see opposite).

After a trip to Germany, Krefft went to work at the Australian Museum in Sydney in 1860 as Assistant to the Curator, Dr Pittard. He succeeded Pittard as Curator in 1864. Over the next decade Krefft expanded the museum's collections and, as one of the few Australian scientists to accept Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, built up an international reputation. Publishing over 200 articles, he also

authored two important books, *Snakes of Australia* (1869) and *Mammals of Australia* (1871), illustrated by sisters Harriet Scott and Helena Scott Forde.

Despite his professional successes, in July 1874 after many clashes with the Trustees, Krefft barricaded himself and his family inside the museum. On 21 September he was physically carried off the premises. Several lawsuits followed as Krefft attempted to gain compensation for unfair dismissal, but the long fight ruined his health. He died five years later on 19 February 1881, aged 51, at Randwick.

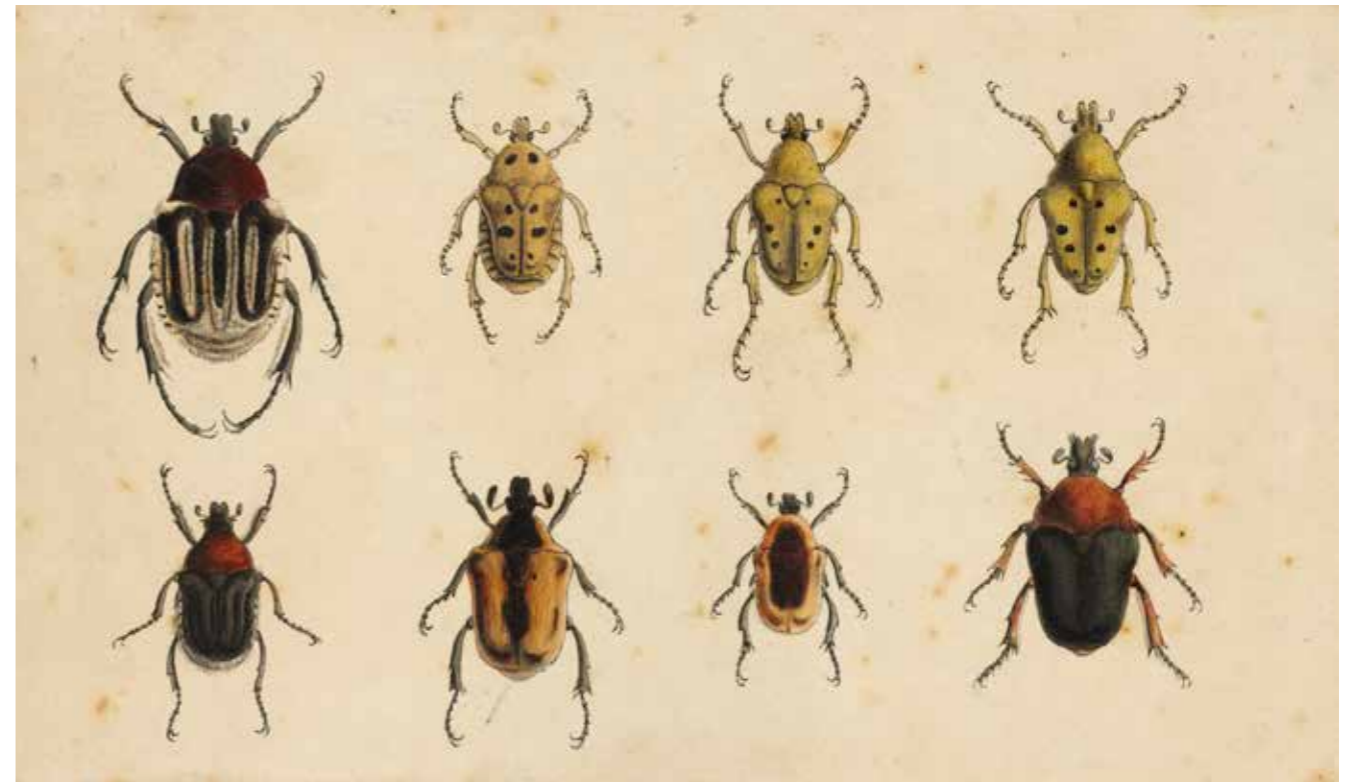
In the years after his death, Krefft's wife Annie was forced to dispose of her husband's papers, books and drawings. The drawings in this collection, including a large watercolour of a kangaroo's head, were originally offered for sale as single works. The accompanying catalogue states:

The widow of the late Gerard Krefft desires to appeal to the public and friends of her late husband to assist her in the disposal of the following drawings from nature from his pencil. They are chiefly from original specimens furnished from the Murray River District and have special value to collectors from the well-known genius and knowledge of Mr Krefft as an exact observer.

The catalogue bears the signature and annotations of Sydney-born naturalist JS Bray Esq., which provides a clue to the drawing's pathway into the Mitchell Library collections. Bray was museum curator at St John's College, University of Sydney, and later the proprietor of Bray's Museum of Curios. In the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 19 July 1884, he advertised the display of a number of watercolour drawings of Australian scenes and subjects by the late Gerard Krefft at his recently established museum at 84 Forbes Street, Darlinghurst.

Several years later, on 15 September 1899, the watercolour drawing of 'a kangaroo's head by the late Gerard Krefft' was listed in the *Herald* among the first 50 paintings deposited with the Public Library of NSW by fellow Darlinghurst resident David Scott Mitchell. This album of watercolours, and other items including Krefft's log of the Blandowski expedition, were presumably acquired from Bray, and now form part of the collection bequeathed to the Library by DS Mitchell in 1907.

Margot Riley is a curator in Research & Discovery.



OPPOSITE: GERARD KREFFT (1830-1881), ZOOLOGIST, C. 1865, CARTE DE VISITE PORTRAIT BY JH NEWMAN, SYDNEY, P1/912
CORROBOREE [AT GALL GALL] ON THE MURRAY RIVER C. 1857, WATERCOLOUR BY G KREFFT, PXD 9/20
STUDY OF EIGHT BEETLES, C. 1866 WATERCOLOUR BY G KREFFT, PXD 9/33

'A Liar, a Slanderer, and A COWARD'

* WORDS Warwick Hirst

A placard from 1830s Sydney recalls a city with a strict social hierarchy and the occasional duel.

The evening of 24 May 1838 saw a procession of carriages rattling along a brilliantly illuminated Bridge Street. Their destination was Government House where Governor Sir George Gipps was hosting a ball in celebration of Queen Victoria's birthday. More than 1100 people had received invitations.

By 10 pm the avenue leading from Bridge Street to Government House was crammed on both sides with rows of carriages, leaving barely enough room for late arrivals to pass. Inside, the names of guests were announced at the ballroom door before they were received by Governor and Lady Gipps.

Among the throng was Irish wine merchant and former soldier Henry MacDermott, accompanied by his wife and her family. For the occasion he had donned his old military uniform 'with all the decorations attached to his rank emblazoned on his arm (viz. three stripes)'.

Scarcely had MacDermott entered the ballroom when the Governor's aide-de-camp and another officer informed him that on the Governor's orders he was to immediately retire. On requesting an explanation for this very public humiliation MacDermott was given to understand it was because he had been a non-commissioned officer in the 39th Regiment.



To MacDermott's thinking this could not possibly be the real cause. He decided that the Governor 'must have been prejudiced against him for some other alleged reason'. And that reason, he came to believe, was a false statement about his character made to the Governor by Lieutenant Pietre Laurentz Campbell, the police magistrate at Parramatta.

In pursuit of this belief, and in vindication of his honour, MacDermott challenged Campbell to a duel. When Campbell rejected the challenge –

presumably on the grounds that MacDermott was a person of inferior rank – MacDermott had a placard castigating Campbell printed and posted in numerous places around Sydney.

One of these placards, dated 31 May 1838, was recently purchased by the Library. It is possibly the only one still in existence. MacDermott bluntly proclaims that Campbell, 'having refused to render me the satisfaction that one Gentleman has a right to demand of another', is 'a Liar, a Slanderer, and a Coward'. Measuring 19 x 31 cm, the placard has been mounted on cardboard by a previous owner.

This extremely rare and unusual document highlights prevailing social attitudes in New South Wales. Events such as the ball celebrating the Queen's birthday were important in maintaining the social

hierarchy and demonstrating attachment to the home country. To receive an invitation to such an event was an indicator of social acceptance.

The text of the placard implies that duelling, although illegal, was still prevalent in the colony as a means of settling quarrels between gentlemen. (The first duel was fought in 1788 between Surgeon John White and his assistant William Balmain, who sustained a slight flesh wound to his thigh).

Campbell's refusal to accept MacDermott's challenge did no apparent harm to his reputation, and less than a year later he took over the duties of the Colonial Treasurer. He contemplated criminal proceedings in response to the placard's scathing attack on his honour, but did not pursue them. This suggests that by 1838 duelling had ceased to be quite as socially acceptable a mechanism for resolving disputes as it had once been. Indeed the last reported duel to be fought in Australia would occur just 16 years later.

MacDermott's headstrong reaction to his humiliation can be viewed as a desperate attempt to reclaim the social standing he had lost as a result of his ejection from the ball. His precarious situation had already been compromised when, according to the *Sydney Gazette*, he had 'resigned his pretensions to fame for glory, by inviting himself to a more spiritual calling' – that is, he gave up his military career to become a wine merchant.

Although he failed to receive satisfaction from Campbell, MacDermott's feelings had been salved to some extent when he was granted an interview with the Governor a few days after the ball. The Governor 'had reason to believe that the statement made against my character was untrue', MacDermott stated after the meeting, 'and that he wished to contradict a report which had gone abroad, that my expulsion from Government House originated in my having formerly been a non-commissioned officer'.

MacDermott ensured that the Governor's validation of his character became widely known by publishing it in the principal Sydney newspapers together with a testimonial from his former commanding officer extolling the 'marked zeal, talent and rectitude' of his conduct.

In the following years, Henry MacDermott made his name as a politician with radical views and a fiery temperament. A founding member of the Australian Patriotic Association, he turned to municipal politics after his attempt to obtain a seat in the Legislative Council was rejected. He became Mayor of Sydney in 1845.

Two years later, MacDermott's political career ended when he was declared bankrupt. For some time he had been in poor health and he died the following year.

Warwick Hirst, Collection Access & Description



HENRY MacDERMOTT, c. 1840s
COURTESY CITY OF SYDNEY
ARCHIVES

PLACARD PROCLAIMING PIETRE
LAURENTZ CAMPBELL TO BE
'A LIAR, A SLANDERER, AND A
COWARD', 31 MAY 1838, HENRY
MacDERMOTT [SIC], MLMSS 9723

DOUBLE TAKE

* WORDS Elise Edmonds



Stereoscopic slides of Gallipoli by military surgeon Charles Snodgrass Ryan include rare scenes of a brief truce.

An extraordinary collection of glass stereoscopic slides of Gallipoli, taken by Charles Snodgrass Ryan in May 1915, was recently purchased by the Library. These slides, made up of two nearly identical images, give the illusion of a three-dimensional picture when seen through a stereoscopic viewer.

Charles Snodgrass Ryan, born in 1853, was a doctor from Victoria. He served as a military surgeon in the Turkish army in 1876 when Turkey was at war with Serbia and then in the Russo-Turkish campaign of 1877-78. For his war services, he was decorated with the Turkish orders of the Osmanieh and the Medjidie. He wrote of his experiences in *Under the Red Crescent* (London, 1897).

When war was declared in 1914, Ryan was appointed assistant director of medical services in the 1st Division of the Australian Imperial Force. He sailed for Egypt in October and was appointed to Lieutenant-General Sir William Birdwood's staff. Serving briefly at Gallipoli, he faced the Turkish forces he had supported some 40 years earlier.

During his month and a half at Gallipoli, Ryan photographed various locations on the Peninsula, including Anzac Beach, Cape Helles, Plugge's Plateau, Quinn's Post, Shrapnel Valley, Russell's Top and Watson's Pier, as well as key Australian military personnel — generals Birdwood, Carruthers, Wagstaff, Walker and Wright — other officers and men of the AIF.

Four of these images depict Australian burial parties burying Australian and Turkish dead at either

Quinn's Post or the Nek during the temporary armistice on 24 May 1915. There had been a high death count on 19 May during the Turkish attack on Anzac positions, with 3000 Turks and an estimated 169 Australians killed.

Ryan not only captured the burials on 24 May, but also the negotiations two days earlier between General Birdwood and a Turkish envoy, Major Kemal Ohri, at Birdwood's headquarters. One image shows the blindfolded Ohri helped along by Captain Sam Butler, who is carrying a large white truce flag.

The truce lasted just one day, from 7.30 am to 4.30 pm. Red Cross flags were placed along the 3000 yards (2.74 kilometres) of Anzac frontlines, and the Turks marked their territory with Red Crescent flags. Photographing the burial parties was banned by the terms of the truce agreement, and there are few other images of the event.

In June 1915, Charles Snodgrass Ryan contracted enteric fever and was evacuated to Egypt and later to England. He continued to serve in London as a consulting surgeon and then honorary surgeon-general, returning to Australia in May 1919.

CAPTAIN SAM BUTLER AND THE BLINDFOLDED TURKISH ENVOY, MAJOR KEMAL OHRI, AT GENERAL BIRDWOOD'S HEADQUARTERS, GALLIPOLI PENINSULA, TURKEY, 22 MAY 1915
 SURGEON CHARLES S RYAN SITTING OUTSIDE HIS DUGOUT (MARKED M.O. FOR MEDICAL OFFICER), GALLIPOLI PENINSULA, TURKEY, C. MAY 1915.
 SOLDIERS ON THE BEACH AT ANZAC COVE, GALLIPOLI PENINSULA, C. MAY 1915
 SLIDES 307



BEHIND THE SCENES

It's a job with constant variety, many pleasures, lots of walking, and a few challenges. We spend our day working from a number of different service desks, and have other tasks to do when we're not helping people face to face.

One of the immensely rewarding parts of the job is the wide variety of interesting people we meet during the day. They might be writing a book or thesis, preparing a history of their local area, or trying to track down an elusive ancestor.

Some are regulars, visiting weekly or fortnightly for many years. For others, it might be the only time they will ever visit the Mitchell Library. Those who travel from interstate or overseas usually try to pack in as much as possible during their visit, arriving at 9 am and soldiering on until the evening.

One of my favourite places to work is the Special Collections desk in the Mitchell Library Reading Room. Working there reminds me that the Mitchell is part library, part museum and part art gallery, as we get to handle an amazing range of material. Letters, diaries, ledgers, pictures, photographs and objects are requested every day. We help find and provide access to this material.

We often supervise viewings of fragile and valuable material. I recently showed some watercolours by colonial artist John Lewin to a couple visiting from Brisbane, and I have supervised viewings of coins, early maps and objects such as convict caps and scrimshaw.

If people aren't able to visit, we can help by carrying out limited research on the Library's unique items. Last week one of these enquiries found me, with two other members of staff, in the Library's strongroom looking at old Irish flintlock pistols originally owned by Captain John Piper. We were searching for identifying information on the pistols that would help the researcher with the book he was writing.

We often spend part of the day on the busy telephone enquiry service. A caller might be planning a visit and looking for background information, wanting to donate something to the Library, or seeking help to use an online database. Sometimes they're looking for answers to simple research questions. A recent caller with no access to the internet wanted to know the Prime Minister's birthdate so they could work out his astrology chart.

As well as promoting the collection through a variety of social media such as Tumblr, Instagram and Pinterest, we present talks for special interest groups, students and lifelong learners. I've spoken



on the history of gardening in NSW, and at our ever-popular 'Reliving the 60s' talks we learn as much from our audience as they do from us.

People often come in, look slowly around the Mitchell Library Reading Room and say, 'Wow, you have a great job!' We usually smile (perhaps a little smugly) and agree with them.

Lynne Hewitt, Information & Access

MITCHELL LIBRARY READING ROOM
OPPOSITE: LIBRARIAN LYNNE HEWITT, LEFT,
AT A VIEWING WITH ALISON AND ROD CAMPBELL
PHOTOS BY MERINDA CAMPBELL

A day in

THE LIFE

* **WORDS** Lynne Hewitt

No day can be described as typical when you work in the Mitchell Library.



building a strong Foundation

An exciting future

As a long-standing advocate for and donor to this extraordinary institution, I am honoured to have assumed the role of Chairman of the State Library of NSW Foundation Board, succeeding Peter Crossing last August. We are all in Peter's debt for his generosity and leadership in an exceptionally productive period for the Foundation.

The Foundation has a strong partnership with the Library Council (and its chairman Andrew Tink AM), and the State Library's dedicated staff led by Dr Alex Byrne, in raising critical supplementary funds for the Library's work as a world-leading library and centre of digital excellence. The Foundation's fundraising programs assist and support the Library's objectives, and cover the full range of this precious Library's work, including capital improvements, exhibitions, awards, education, acquisitions and conservation.

While the NSW Government provides significant funding for major capital works, acquisitions and operations, no cultural organisation today can rely on government support alone. Indeed, planned philanthropy is arguably a vital aspect of community engagement in the modern life of any institution. The Foundation extends the opportunities provided from core government investment, through additional financial resources which expand access to the Library's rich collection for people of all ages, nationally and internationally.

Some may be familiar with my strongly held plea to 'banish the bland' in modern Australian creative institutions. Together with my colleague board members, my aspiration for the Foundation is to establish meaningful relationships with far-sighted supporters and donors who share the vision of the State Librarian and his team as supported by the Library Council. This shared goal is to ensure a confident future for a world-leading library that is



central to a national sense of place and memory of and about Australia and the South Pacific. The State Library houses the largest and most valuable collection in any museum or gallery in our nation. Its Foundation aims to nurture, acknowledge and excite donors in the true sense of meaningful modern philanthropy.

Led by Director Susan Hunt, the Foundation has a wide remit and has strong relationships across a broad spectrum of supporters including the Friends, members, family trusts, corporate sponsors, individual benefactors and of course all-important volunteers.

KIM WILLIAMS AM, CHAIRMAN, STATE LIBRARY OF NSW FOUNDATION BOARD
PHOTO BY JOY LAI

OPPOSITE: THE LIBRARY'S GALLERIES DURING THE WORLD PRESS PHOTO EXHIBITION, PHOTO BY BRUCE YORK

FOUNDATION



The Foundation has a proud history of funding a variety of wonderful projects: endowed fellowships, landmark collection acquisitions, significant literary awards, critical conservation work, online and onsite exhibitions, exciting education programs, as well as innovative partnerships. Our News Corp sponsorship, for example, allowed the Library to preserve, interpret and share thousands of pages of diaries and letters written by Australian men and women who served in the First World War. And last year we successfully raised over \$1 million for the renewal of the Mitchell Library Reading Room and heritage rooms on the ground floor of the Mitchell building.

The Foundation's greatest work, however, is yet to come. Building on the successful Stage 1 of the Mitchell Campaign, we now have an opportunity to support a transformational initiative – the Mitchell Galleries project. This project is truly thrilling in scope and objective. Its planned new gallery spaces, which will double our exhibition space, will provide an environment designed for presenting all aspects of our unique collection, from print volumes through to photos, artworks, maps, manuscripts and artefacts. A sophisticated digital platform in this state-of-the-art extension will offer a deeper context for viewing the collection. The new exhibition spaces will take

audiences from an unfiltered online experience to a curated experience that is compelling, theatrical and entertaining. Throughout the year ahead, we will share more of the Library's plans with you.

We also look forward to our upcoming 2016 exhibition program, as we present such imaginative and important exhibitions as *Imagine a City: 200 Years of Public Architecture in NSW* and *Planting Dreams: Celebrating Australian Gardens*.

This is an exciting time for the State Library and those who value it as a key social memory institution for the nation. We hope you will join with us in its remarkable journey as one of Australia's finest public enterprises dedicated to creativity, experience and human imagination. Consider volunteering your time and talent, join our Friends program to enjoy exclusive Library benefits, or enjoy exclusive access to the Library's collection through joining our Custodians' annual giving program – something well worth considering as a gift with a difference!

Kim Williams AM
Chairman, State Library of NSW Foundation Board

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STUDENTS AT THE *LIFE INTERRUPTED* EXHIBITION, 2014, PHOTO BY GILLIAN GRATTON
KIM WILLIAMS AM (CENTRE)
AT A FOUNDATION COLLECTION VIEWING EVENT
PHOTO BY EMMA BJORND AHL

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H I G H L I G H T S



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01 CURATOR MARGOT RILEY (LEFT) AND PRESENTER RACHEL FRANKS (SECOND FROM LEFT), 'CRIME: TALES TALL AND TRUE', 15 OCTOBER 2015 PHOTO BY JOY LAI



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02 RICHARD COREY, ALISTAIR TEGART, LOUISE TEGART, JEFF POPE, LAUNCH OF *WHAT A LIFE! ROCK* PHOTOGRAPHY BY TONY MOTT, 16 OCTOBER 2015, PHOTOS BY MERINDA CAMPBELL



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08 NICOLAS CROIZER, CONSUL GÉNÉRAL DE FRANCE, DR ALEX BYRNE, FRANK MOORHOUSE AM, ROSS STEELE AM, DANIEL PATA, ARCHIVE PREVIEW OF THE ASSOCIATION CULTURELLE FRANCO-AUSTRALIENNE, 26 NOVEMBER 2015 PHOTO BY MERINDA CAMPBELL

03 *WHAT A LIFE!* LAUNCH



/06

04 TIM OXLEY AND JODI PHILLIS, *WHAT A LIFE!* LAUNCH

05 AZARIA BYRNE (LEFT) AND FELLOW GUEST, *WHAT A LIFE!* LAUNCH

06 DR ROBERT YOUNG AND BRUCE WELCH, LAUNCH OF DR YOUNG'S BOOK *THIS WONDERFULLY STRANGE COUNTRY: REV WB CLARKE, COLONIAL SCIENTIST*, 17 NOVEMBER 2015 PHOTO BY MERINDA CAMPBELL



/07

07 ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR MELANIE SWALWELL, NICOLE CANHAM, SOMAYA LANGLEY, CLARE COOPER, AUSTRALIAN SOUND RECORDINGS ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE 18 NOVEMBER 2015 PHOTO BY JOY LAI



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09 FRIENDS COORDINATOR HELENA POROPAT WITH LYNETTE ARCDIACONO, MAUREEN FITZSIMMONS, ELIZABETH SUGGIT, FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY CHRISTMAS PARTY, 2 DECEMBER 2015 PHOTO BY JOY LAI

10 JAN RICHARDS, CAMERON MORLEY, SHARON SMITH, COUNCILLOR GRAHAM SMITH, LIBRARY COUNCIL CHRISTMAS PARTY, 7 DECEMBER 2015 PHOTOS BY JOY LAI

11 ANDREW URBAN AND FELLOW GUESTS, LIBRARY COUNCIL CHRISTMAS PARTY

12 COUNCILLOR LINDA GILL AND ROBERT KNIGHT, LIBRARY COUNCIL CHRISTMAS PARTY

13 VOLUNTEERS ZOE MIDDLETON, ROS BEAN, CLEO LYNCH AND JEAN HART WITH THE FOUNDATION'S MARK SIECKMAN (LEFT) AND EMILY MIERISCH (CENTRE), VOLUNTEERS CHRISTMAS PARTY, 10 DECEMBER 2015 PHOTO BY BRUCE YORK

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‘Q&A *John Bell*

Bell Shakespeare founder John Bell of the Library's *Shakespeare 400* s in April. He muses on the Bard's own life and in modern society.



—
WHEN AND HOW DID WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE COME INTO YOUR LIFE?

I was very fortunate to have had two wonderful English teachers in high school — men who loved poetry, Shakespeare and theatre. They both encouraged me to become an actor.

—
WHICH OF HIS CHARACTERS HAVE BEEN MOST MEMORABLE TO PLAY?

Richard III because of the way he can charm/shock an audience, and Falstaff, who is an irresistible Life Force.

—
WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE LINE FROM ONE OF HIS PLAYS?

‘This thing of darkness I acknowledge mine.’ (Prospero in the *Tempest*). We each have to confront our dark side.

—
WHERE IS THE BEST PLACE TO SEE ONE OF SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS?

The space doesn't matter as long as the production is good. But I prefer somewhere small (say 600 seats and intimate).

—
WHY IS SHAKESPEARE RELEVANT NOW?

As long as we have families, as long as we have wars, as long as we have ambition, murder, practical jokes, song, merriment and the joy of sex — Shakespeare will be relevant.

—
HOW CAN WE INTEREST CHILDREN IN SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS?

Tell them the stories, give them a context, and then get them to design the sets and costumes and act out their own version of the plays.

—
WHAT SHAKESPEARE ITEMS IN THE LIBRARY'S COLLECTION INTEREST YOU MOST?

The First Folio is obviously the jewel in the crown, but there are a lot of other fascinating early editions, including Ben Jonson's plays which list Shakespeare as one of the leading actors.

—
HOW CAN WE ENGAGE WITH SHAKESPEARE'S WORK AT THE QUADRICENTENARY OF HIS DEATH?

I would like to see a bunch of good actors give semi-staged readings of some of the Shakespeare plays that are never performed in our theatres simply because they are unfamiliar to us.

Shakespeare 400 celebrations are on from 18 to 24 April, coinciding with global events to mark 400 years of Shakespeare's legacy. For more information about events, displays and online exhibitions see our *What's On* or website.



PHOTO BY PIERRE TOUSSAINT

" Whenever John was in town during those war years, my place - the studio in Clarence Street - was their meeting place. This was an impromptu portrait. He was reading, Jean was leaning over his shoulder, and I asked them to hold it a moment...Jean was a model for one of the city art schools then, up on the dais in various positions. " (Olive, 1998)



Family Fragments: Photographic Etchings by Sally McInerney

A free exhibition, until 8 May 2016

FAMILY FRAGMENTS (DETAIL), 2004.
SOLAR PLATE PHOTO ETCHING, F/2017