

## OPENING OF THE NEW SPECIAL COLLECTIONS READING ROOM

The fifth of January was a milestone in the life of the National Library: the opening of the new Special Collections Reading Room.

The Special Collections Reading Room is the product of much planning and consultation. In 2001, workshops were held on the modernisation and integration of the reading room services. In 2008, a Building Master Plan was produced. This examined all the component parts of the Library with the aim of facilitating easy access to collections and resources and the efficient use of staff. This was to be achieved while preserving the building's beauty and functionality.

The first steps were taken with the opening of the new Treasures and Exhibition galleries (in 2011), the creation of a new Friends Lounge on Level 4, the upgrading of the Bookshop and the establishment of Paperplate on Lower Ground 1.

The next stage of the plan—involving major work on the public areas and the redesign of the reading rooms—required a reassessment of the functions of these rooms and their relationship with the reception and Foyer area. Every change would have flow-on effects. Following Council and Ministerial approval, the design contract was let to Cunningham Martyn Design in October 2012.

So what has been the result? The new Special Collections Reading Room is on Level 1 and incorporates the former Maps, Pictures and Manuscripts, and Petherick reading rooms. It is open to all. As Chris Wallace wrote in *The Canberra Times*, 'That's the democratic thing about our national library: from the most humble to the most esteemed researcher, if you need to use special collections material, it is provided along with expert help about how to find and use it'.

The new room makes available the 'jewels in the Crown', the special collections that are unique to the National Library. Here you can find a range of curatorial expertise and advice, with supervised use of special collections at one end and the Petherick Reading Room (a facility for advanced researchers)

*continued on back page*



The Special Collections Reading Room



The new Petherick Reading Room

## INSIDE

**Message from the Chair 2**

**Feature Articles 2**

**Recent Events 5**

**Friends News 7**

**Other News 8**

**Friends Events 9**

**New Library Publications 11**

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



Dear Friends

Greetings to you all and welcome to a year of new events, exhibitions, learning and Friendship.

This year the Friends aim to consider the notion of 'why libraries matter'. Often, from a table in the café or while I am doing a volunteer session on the Front of House desk, I am aware of the stream of people coming into our National Library. Those heading towards the Main Reading Room have a certain air of purpose about them. They are on the hunt for knowledge. One thing that strikes me is the vastly different ages of National Library readers and visitors. Throughout January, the children and family programs have been immensely popular. Now that the academic year has started, the Main Reading Room is populated with students, young and old. Every day the Treasures Gallery and the *Keepsakes* exhibition attract people from all age groups around Australia and beyond. In addition, there are thousands of readers who use Trove and other digital resources online. To all of these people, our Library matters. It tells us about our world and about ourselves.

I hope you will be able to join us for our talks, our tours and the opportunity to meet and listen to some extraordinary thinkers and writers this year. Do share with others why the Library matters to you.

I look forward to meeting new Friends and catching up with long-time Friends throughout 2015.

Robyn Oates

## FEATURE ARTICLES

### Friends of the National Library 25th Anniversary

2015 marks the 25th anniversary of the formation of the Friends of the National Library of Australia Inc. and provides us with an opportunity to look back and to see how far we have progressed since our first member, the late Rt Hon. Gough Whitlam AC QC, joined the organisation.

The Friends of the National Library was launched by Gough Whitlam at the inaugural Kenneth Myer Memorial Lecture on 5 April 1990. This was followed by a Friends Welcome Day on 7 April 1990 with the late Ruth Cracknell AO officiating. Approximately 2,200 people attended this day and participated in a number of activities including behind-the-scenes tours. The first elected Friends Committee was formed at the Annual General Meeting on 5 December 1990, replacing a Steering Committee which had been charged with setting up the organisation. We now number more than 2,000 members and provide an active annual program of events, as well as supporting the Library through donations to the annual Friends of the National Library Travelling Fellowship and Friends Creative Arts Fellowship, and other special projects.

This year, we are celebrating our 25th anniversary with a number of special events, including a cocktail event on Friday 17 April. This event, entitled *Inspiration and Information: Why Libraries Matter*, features some of Australia's best writers talking about the importance of libraries in their lives, and highlights the reasons the Friends are so passionate about supporting the National Library.

In addition to the various events planned for the anniversary, the Friends Committee has also earmarked \$25,000 to purchase two large artworks to donate to the National Library; these will be hung on the back wall of the newly renovated section of the Main Reading Room. The grand unveiling of these artworks will take place at our birthday event on Friday 17 April.

Sharyn O'Brien

## 2014 Friends Travelling Fellowship: Kate Ross

As the recipient of the 2014 Friends of the National Library Travelling Fellowship, I visited the Pitt Rivers Museum at Oxford University, the Musée du Quai Branly in Paris and Te Papa Tongarewa in Wellington. I explored collections of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century photographs of Indigenous Australians and discussed cultural rights with staff across curatorial, rights liaison, public programs and online teams.

These historical photographic collections operate in a murky space between science, art and documentation and, as such, can be found in museum, art gallery and library collections. Photographic portraits and tableaux of Indigenous Australians were produced as documentation of a 'dying race'; as visual evidence for scientific research; as picturesque representations of the noble savage to feed the commercial taste for the exotic; and in service of the colonial project. However, they were predominantly collected by museums for the medium's perceived capacity to document reality. Even staged studio photographs intended for the souvenir market were collected by anthropology museums as scientific data.

The Pitt Rivers Museum is a holy grail for anthropologists. It was founded in 1884 by General Augustus Henry Lane Fox Pitt Rivers to house his donated collection. It was built as an annex to the Natural History Museum. To descend into the dimly lit and packed Pitt Rivers Museum, I had to first walk under the airy and bright vaulted ceiling and past the towering dinosaur skeletons of the Natural History Museum. As stipulated in the terms of his donation, Pitt Rivers' collection must forever be displayed according to 'typology', a now anachronistic approach which sought to demonstrate the progress of humankind from primitive to civilised through disparate pieces of material culture. It was arguably a misappropriation of the evolutionary theory of Charles Darwin. This makes for fascinating limitations for a museum in a post-colonial context, but also for a uniquely valuable time capsule. I was able to step into the context in which these photographs were collected.

This experience was then contrasted with my visits to two contemporary museum projects, the Musée du Quai Branly which opened in 2006 and Te Papa Tongarewa (Te Papa) which opened in 1998. The Musée du Quai Branly is a dramatic contemporary building which peeks out from behind its huge vertical garden and bathes in the linear shadows of the Eiffel Tower. It combined two different museums: The Musée National des Arts d'Afrique et Océanie, and the Musée de l'Homme, an ethnology museum that includes photographs. It was designed to exhibit objects of the non-western world all on one level,



Kate at Oxford University. Photo: Kate Ross



The Pitt Rivers Museum. Photo: Kate Ross



Te Papa Tongarewa. Photo: Kate Ross

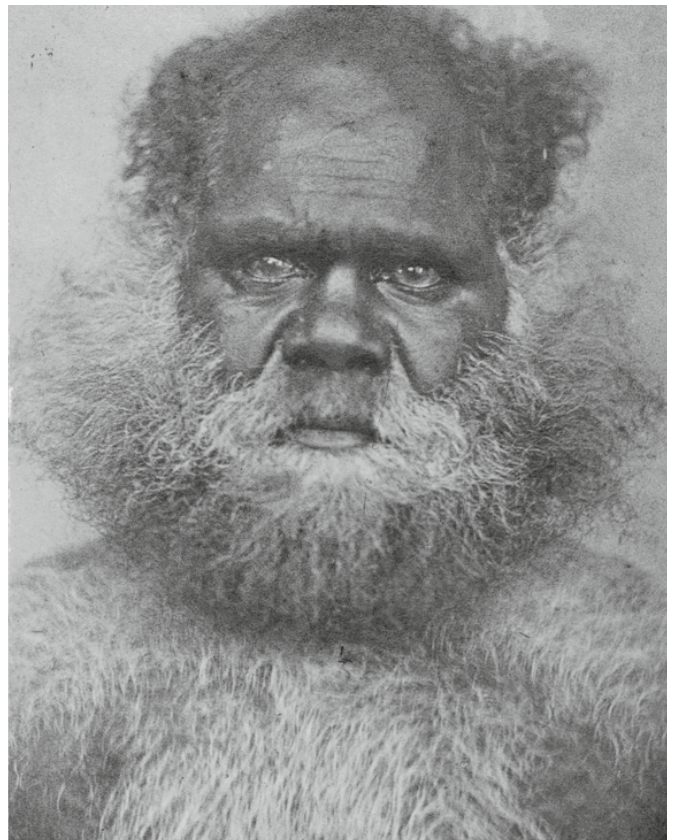
in line with its stated principles of universality and equality. It describes itself as a dialogue between cultures, rather than a museum. To this end, it strives for a diverse array of indigenous curatorial partnerships for its temporary exhibitions and performances.

Te Papa Tongarewa (broadly, 'the place of treasures of this land', or just Te Papa, 'Our Place') is the National Museum and National Art Gallery of New Zealand. It was once the Colonial Museum, later known as the Dominion Museum. It is renowned as the world's pre-eminent bicultural museum, and its core principle is the partnership between the *Tangata whenua* 'people of the land' (indigenous New Zealanders) and the *Tangata tiriti* 'people of the treaty' (non-indigenous New Zealanders).

In museums, photographic collections have long been considered only as internal reference material relating to objects on display. Their exhibition value was considered minimal compared with the centrality of the object. Research in this area is growing and it is fascinating to see how these museums have been constructing new physical exhibition spaces for photographs and undertaking large-scale digitisation projects to make them available online. In the digital environment, the value of online photographs for research and for print and online publication compares favourably with the heavy material significance of the object. Digitisation also breaks them out of the museum and into the homes and hands of their audiences, including the members of the Indigenous communities whose ancestors are depicted.

The full photographic collections of Indigenous Australians at Pitt Rivers and the Musée du Quai Branly are digitised and available on their online catalogues as low resolution files. The approach of both institutions was to enable open online access to collections, with the understanding that an item would be removed if later requested by a community. The curators of both of these collections are involved in a project to travel to Australia and visit the nation-groups depicted in some of their foremost collections. They have received from communities a great deal of meta-data for their catalogues, which they are in the process of updating. They are also undertaking repatriation of digital copies and prints to these communities. At the time of my visit, Te Papa's Collections Online had recently been launched, making 30,000 high-resolution images freely downloadable, with either open access with 'no known copyright' or released under a Creative Commons licence. This was a big step for Te Papa, and I was fascinated to hear that they had decided not to digitise any Maori content in this first batch, and are currently planning their cultural rights procedures and communications. This made for very timely and detailed discussions.

Changes to museological approaches to these collections mirror shifts in the scholarship of early photographs of



Tenberry (or Tenbury), 'Chief of the Murray Bend Tribes' pre-1855, Courtesy Pitt Rivers Museum, 1998.249.33.1

Indigenous Australians, as well as shifts in the perception of them by many Indigenous communities. They were once seen as predominantly exploitative, a mechanism of control. Without discounting the context in which they were taken, today many Aboriginal people are likely to see them first as family photos. I heard from staff in all three museums who felt strongly that it was a priority to make the vast majority of these photographs accessible online, and occupy a stronger place in our public programs. All agreed that increased communication and collaboration with Indigenous cultural rights holders was instrumental, as was increased institutional courage in engaging with risk management when there are gaps in descriptive meta-data.

When I first turned the page in Pitt Rivers' album at Oxford University and saw Tenberry, currently the oldest known photograph of an Indigenous Australian, I was overwhelmed by the historical magnitude of this tiny flimsy photograph to my country. Professionally, I have been incomparably challenged and rewarded by this hugely valuable and generous fellowship. The experience has cemented a passion and given me skills that I'm sure will remain with me for the rest of my career. As an Australian, I have been honoured to engage with such far-flung treasures of Australians' shared cultural heritage.

Kate Ross

## RECENT EVENTS

### *Keepsakes:*

#### *Australians and the Great War*

Bill Gammage is well known to many as historian and author of *The Broken Years: Australian Soldiers in the Great War*. Originally published in 1974 and re-issued in 2010 by Melbourne University Publishing, this study focuses on the diaries and letters of Australian soldiers in what we refer to as the First World War, but until 1939 was called the Great War.

In his address (5 December 2014), Professor Gammage linked his work to the current National Library exhibition *Keepsakes: Australians and the Great War*. This absorbing exhibition focuses on individuals. It acquaints us with the humanity of the soldiers and nurses, the leaders and the led, both in the field and on the homefront.

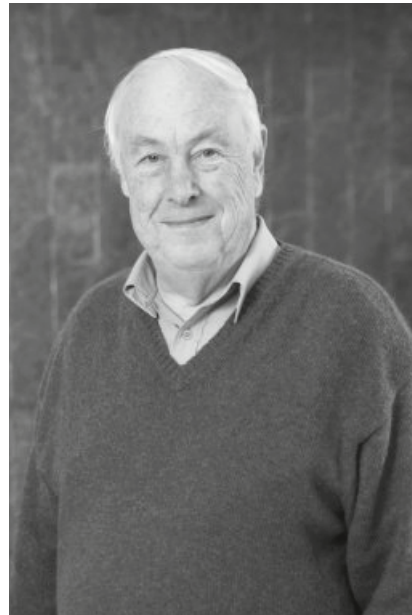
This talk was based on the written records of the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) soldiers, which covered the battle of Gallipoli and the campaigns of France, Flanders, Egypt and the Middle East. As Professor Gammage recounts:

*Soldiers ... wrote for varying purposes. Some were writing home, others deliberately recording the climax of their lives. Some hardly mentioned the war, others rarely ignored it. Some minimised their discomforts, a few exaggerated them. Many, when it came to the point, described just what they saw and felt, because the tumult of the hour denied them an alternative, because they wanted an exact account for themselves if they lived or for their relatives if they died, or sometimes because they realised that the thoughts they wrote down might be their last on earth.*

The written records were supplemented by many hours of interviews with returned soldiers, who recalled the experiences of their youth.

To the Friends, Professor Gammage spoke of some remarkable men. Three of note were Staff Sergeant A.W. Bazley, who had an encyclopedic knowledge of the war, enriched by his own experience as a soldier; J.H. Sturgiss, a tireless writer and expert on the First World War and bush lore; and Lieutenant A.W. 'Eddie' Edwards of the 1st Battalion, who wrote a brilliant account of his war experience.

Bazley enlisted at 19 years of age. At Gallipoli he was batman to Captain C.E.W. Bean. Later, over many years, he assisted Bean in the compilation of the *Official History of Australia in the War of 1914–1918*. He was also acting director of the Australian War Memorial during the Second World War. Professor Gammage pointed out that Bazley knew more than anyone about the 1st AIF. He knew them man by man. He provided letters identifying British staff who



Bill Gammage



C.E.W. Bean (1879-1968), Captain J Balfour of Canberra with Griffin and Arthur William Bazley at Mudros 1915. photograph: b&w ; 21.9 x 16.4 cm, nla.pic-vn3671659

held Australian troops in high regard and French refugees who spoke of the Australian troops as 'soldats terribles et formidables'. Bazley also reported the actions of Bill Harney, who 'refused to lead his officer's horse because he did not join the army to lead horses and because, as he put it, if his officer wanted to ride he could bloody well lead'.

At this point it should be mentioned that there was no conscription in Australia; all our troops were volunteers and as such many saw no reason to be blindly deferential to officers.

The second Anzac discussed was Sergeant J.H. Sturgiss. Sturgiss reported a moment, directly after the Armistice, when the Australian soldiers who gathered in Trafalgar Square, London, found it impossible to comprehend that all the slaughter and sacrifice was over.

Lieutenant A. W. 'Eddie' Edwards wrote poignant descriptions of the strong mateship of men and their officers in the trenches. He also emphasised how big the Aussies were compared to the British soldiers. This was, in part, because in 1914 doctors set the recruitment standards extremely high. Later in the war, those early recruits who had survived could be clearly identified by their physical stature and were known as the '1914 men'. Edwards was a member of the 1st Battalion; he wrote a brilliant account of his war experience in which he stressed the difference between the concept and the reality. Sadly, the pre-war idealism of youth had been built on the chivalry and romance of history texts and tales of Horatio Nelson and the 'drums of glory'. Edwards wrote in order to tell the real story and the items in the *Keepsakes* exhibition prove how ill-informed that early idealism was.

Professor Gammage claimed that the war neither divided nor united Australia but simply reinforced what was already there. He remarked on the style of these soldiers; they were individuals who had grown up with a strong sense of themselves. They had not been beaten into a common mould by mass media. He also stressed that 'Gallipoli' is a civilian term. 'Anzac' was the word used by the veterans themselves. He emphasised the Anzac tactics of 'peaceful penetration'. This was something between a raid and a patrol, with an aim to take prisoners, to conduct reconnaissance and to capture ground. It was conducted quietly by individuals and without direction from superior officers and it had a damaging effect on enemy morale. According to Professor Gammage, this is one of the great untold stories of the war.

Following this introduction to some extraordinary soldiers, Friends accompanied Professor Gammage on an exclusive tour of the exhibition.

*Robyn Oates*

## Friends Book Club

Margaret Robinson led a lively discussion at the most recent meeting of the Friends Book Club held on 27 January. Seventeen participants gathered in the Friends Lounge to discuss Graeme Simsion's debut novel, *The Rosie Project*. Margaret opened discussion, outlining Simsion's varied and interesting career before *The Rosie Project* was published.

The efforts of a socially challenged academic to find a wife, by using a scientifically valid questionnaire to filter appropriate 'wife' candidates, is the ostensible theme of the book (unsurprisingly, the methodology didn't yield many suitable candidates).

Participants agreed that the book was not a 'literary' novel and most thoroughly enjoyed it. A smaller number found resolution of issues raised in the book unsatisfactory.

Discussion focused on aspects of Asperger's and the way those with the syndrome are viewed in our society. Although the main protagonist, Don, does not identify as having Asperger's, the group concluded that for most of the novel he displays inflexible and obsessive characteristics consistent with the syndrome. While Don's antics often induced laughter in readers, we agreed that we laughed with Don, not at him.

The group discussed the apparent irony that Don, with his high moral principles and positive approach, seemed rather more normal than some other characters who, by contrast, were utterly dysfunctional.

The next book to be discussed by the Friends Book Club will be Tim Winton's most recent novel, *Eyrie*. The group will meet again on Tuesday 24 February at the slightly earlier time of 6.15 pm to enable discussion to finish before the Library closes at 8 pm.

*Kathryn Cole*

## Meet the Author

Join Graeme Simsion, author of *The Rosie Project* and *The Rosie Effect*, as he talks about his literary journey, and help us raise awareness of autism spectrum disorder.

*In association with Autism Asperger ACT*

**Wednesday 29 April, 5.30 pm**

**Theatre, \$21.50**

**Bookings: [www.stickytickets.com.au/23511](http://www.stickytickets.com.au/23511)**

## FRIENDS NEWS

### The 2015 Friends Committee

The Chair of the Committee is Robyn Oates and the Deputy Chair Joan Kennedy. Dennis Pearce is temporarily acting as Treasurer, but is anxious to find a replacement. He is not only filling in as Treasurer, but is also the Chair of the Events Sub-committee and is a member of the Communications Sub-committee. If you have financial experience and would like to volunteer for the position of Treasurer, please contact the Friends Executive Officer, Sharyn O'Brien on 02 6282 1551 or sobrien@nla.gov.au.

Other members of the committee are: John Seymour, Kathryn Cole, Alan Ives, Alan Kerr, Dianne Parrey, James Sandry and four National Library representatives. They are Anne-Marie Schwirtlich (Director-General), Cathy Pilgrim (Assistant Director-General, Executive and Public Programs), Kathryn Favelle (Acting Director, Community Outreach Branch), and the committee's Executive Officer, Sharyn O'Brien.

Not all positions have been filled. The Executive Officer would welcome expressions of interest from anyone who wishes to contribute to the work of the committee.

The committee has three sub-committees. Dennis Pearce chairs the Finance Sub-committee; he is assisted by Robyn Oates, Kathryn Cole and Kathryn Favelle. The Events Sub-committee is also chaired by Dennis, the other members being Robyn Oates, Alan Ives, Alan Kerr, Dianne Parrey and Kathryn Favelle. The membership of the Communications Sub-committee is John Seymour (Chair and Editor of the Friends Newsletter), Joan Kennedy, Dennis Pearce and Kathryn Cole. Sharyn O'Brien is a member of all three sub-committees.

### Friends Creative Arts Fellowship

In 2015, the Friends Committee agreed to a suggestion from the National Library that we sponsor an annual Creative Arts Fellowship worth \$10,000 to be awarded to an outstanding creative artist who would be required to use the National Library collections.

The Committee judged that a fellowship would not only benefit the individual but would also showcase the richness of the collections.

I was delighted to represent the Friends on the selection panel, chaired by the Director-General. We were pleased that the fellowship attracted so many excellent applications, 42 in all, across a wide variety of fields. Of the applications, 20 were in the visual arts, with another three theatre and writing projects with a strong visual basis; 11 were in creative writing (including for novels, film, theatre);



Chris Williams. Photo by Hayden Shepherd



Page 7 of *The Desolate Kingdom* by Nigel Butterley, Papers of Nigel Butterley, c. 1953–c. 2007 MS Acc09.081

four in music; four in theatre; two in dance and one in hybrid performing arts.

I appreciated the expertise that my fellow panelists, David Williams and Patricia Clarke, brought to our task. We were ably assisted by Robyn Holmes from the National Library in sorting the applications and we came to the meeting with our top five selections for discussion.

Even so, the selection process was difficult because of the originality, depth and breadth of the applications, but we ultimately agreed to award the 2015 fellowship to Chris Williams, a young Australian composer currently working as a freelance composer and theatre practitioner in the UK. He most recently completed a Master's degree in music composition at the University of Oxford and has already won

several significant prizes, commissions and residencies. He had outstanding references.

The panel was particularly impressed with his artistic concept, his clearly articulated project goals, project plan and intended use of the collections plus his artistic and research capability. His project is Discovering 'The Desolate Kingdom': exploring the imaginary cultural space of Nigel Butterley's 'lost opera'. Chris intends to compose a musical response to this incomplete work held in Nigel Butterley's manuscript papers. Butterley, who was one of Chris' compositional mentors and among the most significant Australian composers of his generation, will be celebrated widely this year on the occasion of his eightieth birthday. Chris will both reconstruct and arrange for performance the hitherto unheard 'lost' sketch of the opera and will compose his own original response drawing on his examination of Butterley's papers and those of related composers. Chris has already secured agreement for a workshop performance by the Sydney Chamber Opera Company.

Chris has written to the Library in the following terms:

*Thank you so much for the wonderful news. I am just so thrilled, and while I am incredibly happy for myself, I am also happy that this work will be able to happen during Nigel's 80th Birthday year. I really hope it'll be a way to honour such a significant Australian artist and bring some new insight and interest into his outstanding work.*

*If you are able to convey to the Friends of the National Library just how overwhelmed, excited and grateful I am for this opportunity, I would be extremely grateful. It really couldn't be more significant for me and could not have come at a more meaningful moment.*

I feel sure Friends will agree that the Fellowship seems to be getting off to a promising start.

Joan Kennedy



## OTHER NEWS

### Generations Meeting across Time— Australasian Congress on Genealogy and Heraldry

The largest family history event in Australasia is being held in Canberra from 27 to 30 March and the National Library of Australia is working with the Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra



(HAGSOC) to ensure its success. There is a great line-up of speakers including Mat Trinca (Director, National Museum of Australia), Richard Reid (Irish/Australian historian), Michael McKernan (military historian), Grace Karskens (historian and historical archaeologist) and many more. The National Library's Tim Sherratt will share his expertise on the National Library's amazing resource Trove. There will also be a number of well-known UK and USA speakers, including Simon Fowler who specialises in UK records and archives, David Holman, a UK military records expert, and Colleen Fitzpatrick, a forensic genealogist. The Congress will also see the Australasian launch of the Irish Anzacs database.

The National Library will also host a seminar on Thursday 26 March for librarians from across Australia and New Zealand, being held in conjunction with the Congress, and featuring an address by the Library's Director-General, Anne-Marie Schwirtlich.

If you would like to know more about this exciting event, a full program is available online at [www.congress2015.org.au](http://www.congress2015.org.au).

## COMPETITION

Thanks to Entertainment One, we have 20 copies of the new children's movie, *Esio Trot*, to give away on DVD to members.

Based on the adored and cherished book from Roald Dahl and featuring an absolutely stellar performance from a fantastic cast including Judi Dench (*Philomena*), Dustin Hoffman (*Tootsie*) and James Corden (*Into the Woods*), Roald Dahl's *Esio Trot* is a magical, warm-hearted film for the whole family. This movie is available to own on Blu-ray, DVD and Digital HD from 22 April.

To win a copy, tell us which of Roald Dahl's books is your favourite and why. Send your entries to [friends@nla.gov.au](mailto:friends@nla.gov.au) by 31 March 2015.



## FRIENDS EVENTS

**Bookings** for all Friends events may be made through the Friends Office on 02 6262 1698 or by emailing [friends@nla.gov.au](mailto:friends@nla.gov.au).

**Ticket payments** may be made over the phone at the same number.

**Cheque payments**, made payable to 'The Friends of the National Library of Australia', should be posted to Friends of the National Library, National Library of Australia, Canberra ACT 2600.

**Cash payments** may be dropped off at the National Library Bookshop during opening hours, and must be delivered in an unsealed envelope, with details of your name, the event and the dollar amount written on the envelope. These will then be passed on to the Friends Office.

For further details of these events, as well as other Friends and National Library events, please refer to the *What's On* guide and the *Friends Newsletter*, or visit [nla.gov.au/events](http://nla.gov.au/events).

### Coffee with a Curator: Secrets of the Treasures Gallery

Join James and Bettison Treasures Curator, Nat Williams, for a special guided tour focusing on the latest additions to the Treasures Gallery. New items on display include: John Webber's iconic *White Bear*, one of the earliest images of a polar bear; the first depiction of an Australian bird in print by natural history artist Peter Brown; hand-coloured lantern slides used by artist explorer Thomas Baines to illustrate lectures about his adventures; a Henry Lawson volume *In the Days when the World Was Wide and Other Verses*, featuring a unique and poignant inscription from Lawson to his wife Bertha; and Dorothea's Mackellar's hand-carved cedar bookcase made as a girl in Sydney. The tour will be followed by tea and scones in the Friends Lounge. For Friends members only.

Friday 27 March, 10 am

Treasures Gallery, \$10 Friends

Bookings: [nla.gov.au/bookings/friends](http://nla.gov.au/bookings/friends) or 02 6262 1698



John Webber (1752-1793), *White bear* 1779  
[nla.gov.au/nla-pic-an2668084](http://nla.gov.au/nla-pic-an2668084)

### Inspiration and Information: Why Libraries Matter

As part of our 25th anniversary celebrations, join us for an exhilarating cocktail event with some of Australia's best writers talking about why libraries still matter.

Friday 17 April, 6.30 pm

Foyer, \$55 Friends / \$70 non-members

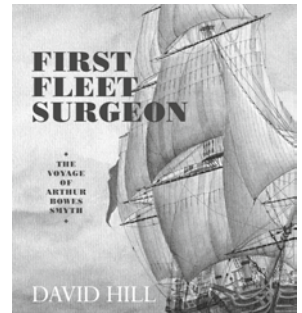
(includes light refreshments)

Bookings: [nla.gov.au/bookings/friends](http://nla.gov.au/bookings/friends) or 02 6262 1698



### Book Launch: *First Fleet Surgeon*

Join the Friends for the launch of the new National Library publication, *First Fleet Surgeon: The Voyage of Arthur Bowes Smyth*. Author David Hill will speak about the process of researching and writing the book.



Tuesday 28 April, 5.30 pm

Theatre, \$10 Friends / \$15 non-members

(includes light refreshments)

Bookings: [nla.gov.au/bookings/friends](http://nla.gov.au/bookings/friends) or 02 6262 1698

### Friends Viewing of *Revealing the Rothschild Prayer Book*

The 500-year-old *Rothschild Prayer Book*, considered one of the most important books in existence, will be on exhibition at the National Library from 21 May to 9 August. Alongside the *Rothschild Prayer Book* will be a selection of the Library's own medieval treasures. Be one of the first to see this Renaissance masterpiece at an after-hours viewing exclusively for Friends members.



St Helena and prayer to St Helena in the *Rothschild Prayer Book*, fols 233v-234r, Kerry Stokes Collection, Perth.

Friday 29 May, 6 pm

Treasures Gallery,

\$30 members

(includes light refreshments)

Bookings: [nla.gov.au/bookings/friends](http://nla.gov.au/bookings/friends) or 02 6262 1698

## Fearful Symmetry: The Medici Legacy and Renaissance Gardens

Gardens both set and follow fashion and exploring garden history reveals surprising insights. Sue Ebury's desire to understand three ground-breaking Renaissance Tuscan gardens made by the Medici around six centuries ago has taken her on a decade-long journey from Ovid and English diarist John Evelyn to today's Professor John Dixon Hunt. In this lecture, she will visit, study and 'read' their importance through paintings, literature and her stunning photographs.

Sue Ebury is the national patron of the Australian Garden History Society and a founding committee member. She is also the biographer of Sir Edward 'Weary' Dunlop and Kenneth Myer and an honorary research associate in the History Department, University of Hong Kong. She is currently writing the biography of Australian Brigadier Sir Lindsay Ride, academic, and spymaster in China during World War II.

*A joint event with the Australian Garden History Society*

**Thursday 18 June, 6 pm**

**Conference Room, \$15 Friends and AGHS members / \$20 non-members (includes light refreshments)**

**Bookings: [nla.gov.au/bookings/friends](http://nla.gov.au/bookings/friends) or 02 6262 1698**

## Friends Storytime

Bring your children or grandchildren to the monthly Friends of the National Library Storytime sessions. Enjoy hearing new tales and rediscovering old favourites, as told by members of the ACT Storytellers Guild.

**Thursdays 19 March, 16 April, 21 May, 11.30 am**

**Ferguson Room, free for Friends and their accompanying children / \$5 per child for non-members**

**Bookings not required, pay at the door**

## Friends Book Club

A monthly literary discussion for members only.

Tuesday 31 March

*The Rise and Fall of Great Powers* by Tom Rachman

Tuesday 28 April

*History of the Rain* by Niall Williams

Tuesday 26 May

*The Conjuror's Bird* by Martin Davies

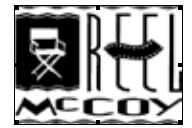
**6.15 pm**

**Friends Lounge, free**

**Bookings not required**

## Free Film Screenings

In association with the Reel McCoy Film Society, the Friends present film screenings exclusively for members of both organisations.



**Wednesday 18 March** *Night of the Demon* (1957, 95 mins, PG)

**Wednesday 15 April** *Dance, Girl, Dance* (1940, 90 mins, NR)

**Wednesday 20 May** *Dr Strangelove* (1964, 103 mins, PG)

**6 pm,**

**Theatre, free (bookings not required)**

The program is included in your Friends March mail package.

## Become a Friend of the Library

As a Friend you can enjoy exclusive behind-the-scenes visits, discover collections that reveal our unique heritage and experience one of the world's great libraries. Friends of the Library enjoy exclusive access to the Friends Lounge, located on Level 4. This lounge features seating areas, a dedicated eating space and panoramic views of Lake Burley Griffin.

Other benefits include:

- Discounts at the National Library Bookshop and at selected booksellers
- Discounts at the Library's cafes, Bookplate and Paperplate
- Invitations to Friends-only events
- Quarterly mailing of the Friends newsletter, *The National Library Magazine* and *What's On*.
- Join by calling 02 6262 1698 or visit our website [www.nla.gov.au/friends](http://www.nla.gov.au/friends)

## Library Bookshop—Special Offer for Friends

In conjunction with the Library's Bookshop, the Friends are pleased to announce a special offer for members who make a purchase using the National Library's Online Bookshop.

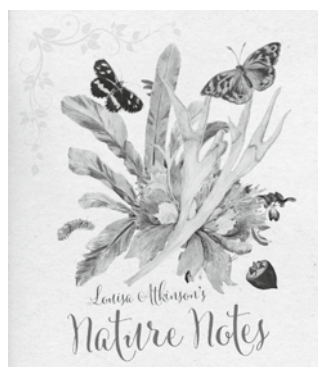
For any purchase between 1 March and 31 May 2015, Friends will receive a free *John Hunter Perpetual Diary*. This offer is in addition to the usual Friends discount and any other offers advertised on the Library Bookshop website.

To claim your free *John Hunter Perpetual Diary* and your 15 per cent discount with all online purchases, use the promotional code FR15MAR15 at checkout.

### **Louisa Atkinson's Nature Notes**

Edited by Penny Olsen

Nineteenth-century writer and journalist Louisa Atkinson was also a keen naturalist, whose close observations and detailed knowledge of the natural world found expression in the articles she wrote for Sydney newspapers. Yet Louisa Atkinson also created many wonderful paintings and sketches of the flora and fauna around her home in the Blue Mountains, most of which went unpublished during her lifetime.



Presented in the style of a sketchbook, and organised by season, *Louisa Atkinson's Nature Notes* teams Louisa's beautiful drawings and paintings of Australian plants, animals and birds with short extracts from her nature writings. The book includes an essay about Louisa Atkinson's life and milieu by nature and science writer Penny Olsen.

An ideal Mother's Day or Christmas gift.

ISBN 978-0-642-27860-9

2015, pb, 230 x 200 mm, 108 pp

RRP \$34.99

### **Royal Visits to Australia**

By Jane Connors

Out of Australia's total population of around nine million, an estimated seven million people turned out to catch a glimpse of the newly crowned Queen Elizabeth II in 1954.

Sixty years later, in April 2014, television news bulletins, newspapers and social media

were awash with stories of the royal visit of Prince William, his wife Catherine and their baby son George.

The frequent, whirlwind royal tours of today are a far cry from those to Australia between 1867 and 1954. These stretched



over months, bursting with events such as civic receptions, state banquets, military reviews, cricket matches, agricultural shows, processions, schoolchildren's pageants and the laying of foundation stones. Occasionally shambolic, quarrelsome and raucous affairs, they were always intensely patriotic.

*Royal Visits to Australia* is richly illustrated with stunning full-page and double-page photos from the early years to magnificent colour photos of more recent visits. Also included is a vast array of drawings, lithographs, illuminated addresses, magazine articles, programs, menus and invitation cards and other souvenirs.

ISBN 978-0-642-27870-8

2015, hb, 275 x 220 mm, 232 pp

RRP \$39.99

### **Lennie the Legend: Solo to Sydney by Pony**

By Stephanie Owen Reeder

This is the inspiring true story of nine-year-old Lennie Gwyther who, at the height of the Great Depression in 1932, rode his pony from his home town of Leongatha in rural Victoria to Sydney to witness the opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Lennie's 1,000-kilometre solo journey captured the imagination of the nation, and his determination and courage provided hope to many at a difficult time in Australia's history.



At the end of each chapter, a double-page spread provides information on topics relating to the chapter, such as the Great War, living on the land, the Great Depression, Australia's capital city, city living, and the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

ISBN 978-0-642-27865-4

2015, hb, 210 x 190 mm, 108 pp

RRP \$24.99



Dr Bruce Kent and Margy Burn officially open the Special Collections Reading Room



Library staff members Elizabeth MacKenzie, Neil McCabe, Aileen Weir, Margy Burn, and Hugh Lennon, with former staff members Bet Dracoulis and Susanne Bruhn, at the opening of the Special Collections Reading Room.

at the other. In addition, there are three individual cubicles for listening to oral histories, four meeting rooms for discussions, small group work or consultations with curators and reference librarians, and a 'private viewing room' in which to access sensitive materials. Provision is also made for printing and copying behind a noise barrier.

To quote Chris Wallace again: 'The north wall is glass and overlooks the general reading room below, with views through to Mount Ainslie beyond. It is calm, beautiful and will be more productive for both users and the Library than the previous split-floor arrangement'.

The room has been designed to accommodate changing readership patterns and to make it easier for readers to access and use the materials. Previously there were six reading rooms over four floors, with 80 per cent of use occurring in the Main Reading Room and the Newspapers and Microforms Reading Room. The Main Reading Room will function as it has in the past, serving users of general collection materials with minimal supervision. The Special Collections Reading Room will make available rare and unique materials to advanced scholars and researchers. There will be a higher degree of supervision. Asian Collections will remain as a specialist unit on Level 3.

In the past, the special reading rooms had limited opening hours (9 am–5 pm on weekdays). This has changed with the opening of the Special Collections Reading Room. It will offer extended opening hours. It will be open from Monday to Thursday, 10 am to 8 pm, and on Friday and Saturday, 10 am to 5 pm.

At the opening ceremony, Margy Burn (Assistant Director-General, Australian Collections and Reader Services) welcomed readers past and present. She noted that the last occasion on which a new reading room had been opened was in 1992, when the Petherick Reading Room was relocated to the Ground Floor.

The new reading room represents a significant development: it enhances the National Library's fundamental role as a research library. As Margy explained, this 'beautiful new space' would serve scholars and researchers by bringing together a range of resources, including rare books, pictures,

maps, manuscripts, oral histories, music and ephemera. 'No longer will readers have to move around the building if, while using a manuscripts collection, they need (for example) to consult a map.' So many people had contributed to the successful completion of the project that Margy could not acknowledge them all. She did, however, make special mention of Jan Fullerton, the former Director-General, architect Julian Martyn for his skilful interpretation of the design brief, and Graeme Hollands, Project Manager for the construction company Manteena.

A number of National Library staff had also made special contributions, and Margy acknowledged the work of Neil McCabe and Hugh Lennon in the Building Services team, the Collections Management staff and the staff of the Australian Collections and Reader Services Division. Former Reader Services directors, Bet Dracoulis and Susanne Bruhn, were mentioned, as was their successor, Aileen Weir, and her colleague, Elizabeth MacKenzie.

Historian Dr Bruce Kent officially opened the new Special Collections Reading Room. He has used the Petherick Reading Room for many years; his application for a reader's ticket dates back to 1970, two years before its creation. He started using the National Library's special collections as an undergraduate at the University of Melbourne (hitch-hiking along the Hume Highway to do so). His many publications are now held in the Library's collection, including *The Spoils of War: The Politics, Economics, and Diplomacy of Reparations, 1918–1932*.

When he cut the ribbon, Dr Kent inaugurated a significant development in the history of the National Library. The splendid new Special Collections Reading Room will enhance the contribution that one of Australia's leading cultural institutions will continue to make to our understanding of the world around us. The Friends of the National Library applaud the vision, expertise and hard work that have combined to reassert the commitment to excellence which has long been a hallmark of 'our' Library.

*John Seymour*