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PHANFARE

The Tasty Issue!



PHA NSW



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President's Page



As I shall not be standing for re-election as President at the Annual General Meeting in August, this will be my last opportunity to speak to you through this page in *Phanfare*. It has been gratifying to be part of the expansion in PHA activities over the past two years. Amongst these I could mention the *President's Newsletter*, the weekly Professional Historians Association Employment Service *Bulletin*, the Small Projects Panel for brief research jobs, our first regional mini-conference, the peer-reviewed electronic journal *Showcase*, and the PHA Undergraduate Prize for excellence in public history. In addition we have maintained a strong program of continuing professional development activities and social networking

occasions. Our relationships with other organisations have been strengthened, and our public image improved through revision of the internet website and preparation of brochures, posters and banners all displaying a consistent visual theme. It is also pleasing to see that professional historians are becoming more active in the conferences of other history associations. We have built up a collection of books and other publications written by PHA members that can be used for displays at history or heritage gatherings. All this has been a team effort, and I congratulate the members who have contributed so much to the success of these initiatives. In particular, I wish to place on record my appreciation to those members who served on the management committee for their support.

I am sure that the newly-elected committee will continue to develop projects that provide value-added activities for members, and which will help to raise the profile of professional historians within the broader community.

Many people tell me that they enjoy the little quotations about history that appear in each *Newsletter*. Allow me to conclude this message with another one:

"Men make their own history more wisely when they know what that history has been about." [Manning Clark, *A History of Australia*, Vol.5, p.427]

Peter J. Tyler

President

10 August 2008

Letter from the Incoming President

Dear Members

There was good attendance at the PHA NSW AGM last Saturday at History House where ACPHA representatives from the States and Northern Territory were also gathered. We enjoyed a demonstration of the new ACPHA database which lists members' works and is searchable under author and topic, and met delegates informally at tea afterwards.

A new executive committee was elected for the year 2008-9 -

President, Virginia Macleod; **Vice President**, Christine Cheater; **Secretary**, Ruth Banfield; **Treasurer**, Peter Tyler; **Committee members**, Rosemary Kerr, Susan McClean and Zoe Pollock.

Peter Tyler is retiring as President and I would like to express my appreciation of all his work over the last two years. He has put considerable time, thought and effort into the organisation and its direction. Pauline Curby, another tireless worker, was not standing for re-election but has promised to continue to support the committee's CPD program and still supply her excellent catering. I welcome new committee member Zoe Pollock, who some of you may know in her position as executive officer for the History Council. I should like to add that all the committee has contributed, volunteering to undertake a variety of tasks, as well as pooling ideas and executing them. The 2008 annual report detailing what has been achieved is available on the website. The past year has been very productive and I hope that we will continue in the same vein. We usually have dinner after meetings and members are very welcome to join us. The next meeting is Wednesday 3 September at 4pm at History House 133 Macquarie Street.

I would welcome any feedback, input or comment from members. My email address is virginia.macleod@gmail.com

Virginia Macleod

President

20 August 2008

EXHIBITION REVIEW

Bateaux Jouets: Toy Boats from Paris 1850-1950

20 March 2008 – 12 October 2008

Australian National Maritime Museum, 2 Murray St, Darling Harbour, Sydney

www.anmm.gov.au

Recently I took myself along to see the exhibition *Bateaux Jouets* currently on show at the National Maritime Museum, at Darling Harbour. The display of toy boats from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century may not sound like an exhibition to every one's tastes, but I would highly recommend a visit. On display are over 200 boats and other marine toys, including submarines, dolphins and fish dating between the 1850s and 1950s for the collection of the Musée national de la Marine in Paris. The display not only traces the development of the styles and trends of these toys but also documents the unique manufacturing industry that grew up around them.

Boats have been a centre piece of human experience since the first travellers set out to explore. They have held a fascination, both as objects and as the platform for story and legend since Noah or Jason went looking for the golden fleece. Likewise, toys have played a central role in the young lives of just about every person ever born. Until the mid nineteenth century boats and toy boats (indeed all toys) were largely handmade, individual pieces. The advent of the industrial revolution changed this, as factories began to emerge and manufacturing on a grand scale took hold. Toys were just as much affected by this change as other goods. In Germany and France a trade war of sorts was underway by the late nineteenth century, with toys at the centre of the battle. Factories employing thousands of workers mass produced a huge range of toys, often, in terms of the toy boats, taking inspiration from the growing number of famous liners and battleships that were being built in the nationalistic fervour of the 1890s and early twentieth century. Advances in steel production and the development of tin plate also allowed for more intricate and delicate designs to be incorporated into the toys, producing some extraordinary examples.

The exhibition covers the floor of one of the museum's special exhibition spaces, with boats ranging from a few centimetres to some over one metre long. Ocean liners, sail boats, battleships, speed boats and submarines, row boats, boats to be pulled along on the floor, others for the bath and bigger ones for the lake are all on display. The colours of the ships dazzles the eye while the various methods of propulsion boggle the mind with their complexity. Some of these 'toys' are equipped with working steam engines!

To help explain them and their role, a short film made in the 1960s by French illustrator and collector Jean Fondin and only recently rediscovered, runs in the exhibition space. A number of the toys on display are featured.

The popularity of the toys is obvious amongst the visitors, with children and adult alike entranced. The exhibition has been extended into October, leaving plenty of time for you to get down and mess about in the boats.

While you are there stop in and have a look at the other temporary exhibition, *Trash or Treasure? Souvenirs of Travel*. This little side collection includes everything from 13th century pilgrims badges, to tea towels, war time collections to snow domes. If nothing else it made me feel all the better for my own collection of bits and pieces I have picked up on various travels.

Mark Dunn

MPHA

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History Week 2008: *The Water's Edge*

The History Council of NSW this year has set on the theme *The Water's Edge* for its annual celebration of the state's history. The Water's Edge invites participants to consider the role of the water and its place in the development and historical understanding of the state of NSW. Events once again cover a diverse range of interpretations of the central theme, including activities in and around Sydney Harbour, to the story of drought and flood in rural NSW, shipwrecks on the coast, the marine environment, newspaper advertisements for all things aquatic, baths to bathers and a host of other activities across the state.

The PHA is right in there amongst it all with a chartered ferry ride to historic Chowder Bay and the Institute of Marine Science on 10 September.

As is tradition, the week is launched with the Annual History Lecture, presented this year by Professor Joy Damousi from the University of Melbourne. Professor Damousi is speaking on the development of Australian speech patterns and accent. The lecture is back at Government House this year, after a sojourn at The Mint in 2007. Also returning in History week is the Off the Beaten track lecture series. This year, Emeritus Professor Jill Roe, President of the History Council is visiting Tumut, Goulburn and Parkes presenting her lecture on Brains from the Bush, looking at the changing perspective and opportunities for the rural communities with a focus on such luminaries as Miles Franklin and the current Governor Marie Bashir, amongst others.

BOOK NOTE

***Pearls and Pearling Life* by Edwin W Streeter.** Facsimile, jointly published by Hesperian Press, (Carlisle, WA) and Matching Press (Essex, UK). Hard cover, 329 pages, ISBN 0951 8 664 2 7, RRP \$116.

This facsimile of a pearling classic, originally published in 1886 by George Bell and Sons of London, will grace any bookshelf. With original copies having long been scarce, the facsimile will appeal to scholars and book collectors as well as providing fascinating reading for anyone interested in the history of pearls. Its plates (colour as well as black and white) are very attractive, and a fold-out map shows the principal pearling regions in northern Australia, New Guinea and the Asian islands.

The book covers pearls and pearling regions throughout the world, and the author (the founder of the Streeter & Male businesses in Broome) devotes four chapters to Australia. Chapter VIII offers an overview of the north-west Australian pearl shell fishing industry which, although operating mostly out of Cossack, extended to waters off the Kimberley coast. It describes the men involved in the industry, the prevailing practices, the impact of cyclones and other bad weather, the recruitment of Aboriginal divers (who worked as shepherds and shearers in the off-season), and the failure of the Australian Fishery Company (floated in London in 1872). Chapter IX is devoted to Torres Strait fisheries, Chapter X to Streeter's 1883 pearling activities, and Chapter XVII to the famous, or perhaps infamous, Southern Cross pearl.

Also of interest is that the Matching Press published Patrick Streeter's biography of Edwin William Streeter in 1993. In that book, *Streeter of Bond Street*, Chapter 4 discusses the Streeter family's involvement in the north-west Australian pearling industry between 1883 and 1911.

Cathie Clement

MPHA

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MEMBERS' WORK DATABASE

The number of entries in the recently launched Members' Work Database is growing and, on 26 July, it stood at 215. You can access the entries at www.data.historians.org.au, or via the "Quicklinks" list on the ACPHA website (www.historians.org.au/).

To search for entries, you can use Item, Author, or Keyword; and scope exists to do a Keyword Browse. Examples of Keywords, and the number of entries already attached to them are: Aboriginal Heritage (7), Aboriginal History (17), Adelaide (3), Administrative History (8), Biography (17), Building and construction (10), Communities (10), Defence (5), Education History (13), Family History (12), Garden History (5), Heritage (59), Historic Buildings (28), Historic Sites (18), Historiography (9), Immigration (5), Infectious Diseases (4), Interpretation (8), Land (9), Law and order

(4), Local History (36), Medical History (11), Melbourne (5), Migration History (8), Mining History (4), Native Title (2), New South Wales (4), Newcastle (4), Northern Territory (2), Oral History (3), Organisation History (8), Pastoral Industry (18), Pastoral Leases (4), Political History (3), Ports (4), Quarantine (6), Queensland (6), Regional History (7), Religious history (1), Science History (4), Social History (15), South Australia (9), Transport History (3), Twentieth century history (6), Urban history (1), Voluntary Associations (1), Western Australia (6), Women's History (9), World War 1 (5), and World War 2 (5).

ACPHA is pleased with this progress but it would like to see a lot more PHA members taking advantage of this opportunity to promote their work. It is very conscious that each member who does so will be helping to showcase the breadth and the standard of public history in Australia. The instructions for opening accounts and adding entries were sent to members individually by e-mail at the end of May. Most if not all of those e-mails had the subject line: Launch of ACPHA's "Members' Work Database". Any member who does not have that information can obtain it from the PHA. Plenty of assistance is also available in the six pages of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) in the database.

The database statistics of 26 July provided some interesting figures, not just for the uptake and usage but also with regard to PHA membership figures.

Account creation by Branch

<u>Branch</u>	<u># Members</u>	<u># Accounts Opened</u>	<u>% Accounts Opened</u>
NSW	101	11	10.89
NT	15	4	26.67
QLD	72	4	5.56
SA	42	5	11.90
TAS	16	0	0.00
VIC	119	19	15.97
WA	<u>60</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>15.00</u>
Total	425	52	12.24

Ninety-two of the entries come from PHA (WA) members – an outcome of two WA people having submitted the majority of the test entries when the database was trialed. Sixty-seven entries come from ten PHA (Vic) members – a result of several having participated in the trial and others having become active immediately after the launch. The other PHA tallies are lower, and uploads from all PHA members appear to have stalled. Eight new items appeared in the fourteen days to 20 July, but, between then and the 26th, nothing new appeared.

So, what about it? Can you spare some time to start listing your output?

It would be great to see a comprehensive Members' Work Database in place when the new ACPHA Web site, which is currently being designed, is demonstrated during the ACPHA and PHA (NSW) AGMs in Sydney in August.

Cathie Clement

MPHA ; Vice President, ACPHA

History in July

History House, 23 July 2008

History in July, now in its third year, has become a standout event in the PHA (NSW) calendar. Organised by the executive committee, it is an important networking opportunity for members, providing the chance to mix with professionals from libraries, archives, publishing houses and cultural institutions.

Each year there is a guest speaker, who reflects upon an aspect of practising history. This year we were honoured to hear Dr Dawn Casey, who was appointed as Director of the Powerhouse Museum in March 2008.

Dr Casey was CEO of the Western Australian Museum from 2005-8, and was the inaugural Director of the National Museum of Australia in Canberra which opened in 2001. It was her experience in opening the National Museum which she reflected upon in her address at History in July. Most of you will remember the controversy surrounding the presentation of history in the museum, and the subsequent review. It was informative to hear how Dr Casey dealt with this and her conviction of the important role cultural institutions play in public history.

The event was held in the Reception Rooms of History House and the convivial atmosphere was enhanced by the wine and tasty catering.





Above: Networking at History in July

LOCATING HISTORY

Australian Historical Association 14th Biennial National Conference

**The University of Melbourne
7-10 July, 2008**

Society is a process. It is never static. The historian's duty is that of recapturing that process. The Australian Historical Association 14th Biennial National Conference titled 'Locating History' which is sponsored by the University of Melbourne was held from 7th to 10th July 2008. The aim of the conference is to explore the various resonances suggested by the theme of history and locality – to connect the lineages of place and time as the past has spatial as well as temporal dimensions, and spatial metaphors shape the construction of history, whether through notions of frontier, homeland, territory, neighbourhood, land or country. More than two hundred participants from all over the world descended on Melbourne for this conference which was diverse and very intense with up to twelve concurrent sessions at any one time. Themes such as home and residence; gender and place; scaling history: local, regional, national, global; contested spaces; finding history in archives; placelessness, alienation and dislocation; forgotten places; worlds between nations; landscape and cultural traditions; founding places; suburbs and neighbourhoods;

the place of history in the national school curriculum; history and new media; mapping the past; expatriates and homeland; exploration and spatial history; cultural landscapes; territory and sovereignty; heritage and place; memorialisation; naming places; places of pain, shame and disaster; and history and environment were included. With an enormous number of concurrent sessions over three days, one could only sample a few of the presentations on offer. The conference attracted academics, professional historians, general public and students and there were presentations on Australian as well as non-Australian subjects. Although the weather was very cold and wet, the thought-provoking and lively discussions enabled everyone to have a most pleasurable and informative conference. The activities associated with the conference were well organised.

Similar to all history related conferences this one was useful for exchange of ideas and enhance knowledge. This three day conference provided a varied range of presentations. Most of the papers delivered made a valuable contribution to the discussion of social and cultural history. Nonetheless, there were scarcely any papers on costume history and the subject of 'convicts' was almost disregarded as only two papers were presented. In the costume historians' perspective, clothing and fashion's ultimate function of signifying power and prestige which linked with financial capability, and its impact on society and societal practise, is significant. Clothing is one of the cardinal social practices which emphasises the social position and social domination of the wearer and appearance accomplishes and accompanies power, especially in the pre-twentieth century Western societies.

I am a proud Australian who works in the United States as an Assistant Professor at the State University of New York. As someone who lives overseas for the most part of the year, I am very much interested in keeping in touch with the Australian history, primarily through these conferences.

Damayanthie Eluwawalage

PhD, MPHA

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EXHIBITION REVIEW

Art Deco 1910 – 1939 : “True Glamour Never Fades”

28 June – 5 October 2008

NGV International. 180 St Kilda Road, Melbourne

www.ngv.vic.gov.au

Lisa Murray considers one of the fringe benefits of attending the AHA conference.

I was already looking forward to attending the AHA conference in Melbourne. But my anticipation was heightened by the prospect of also catching the Art Deco

exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria, just as it had opened! I was aware of the calibre of the exhibition. I was lucky enough to see the Art Nouveau exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London back in 2000 (along with about 231,000 others). And its follow up exhibition - Art Deco 1910 - 1939 - was by all accounts a corker. My sister went along when she was in London in 2003 and she thoughtfully brought me back the weighty catalogue from London so I too could enjoy the beauty and the scholarship of the exhibition. ⁽¹⁾ According to Ghislaine Wood, curator at the V&A, the Art Deco exhibition has been the most successful exhibition ever held by the museum, with a record-breaking 359,000 visitors. ⁽²⁾

So the current exhibition in Melbourne has the hallmark of a blockbuster. The version mounted in Victoria is not simply a touring exhibition from the V&A. It is not an exact replica, nor a scaled down travelling version of the original. It is a reconfiguration; exploring the same themes but drawing more heavily on local collections, and including a focus room on the host nation.

Art Deco 1910 - 1939 is presented in five main themes, with each thematic gallery becoming more and more cluttered with objects as the viewer progresses. It opens with a simple introduction to the main elements of the style and then proceeds to look at the diverse stylistic sources that fed the Art Deco craze. This gallery opens up into a much larger space which explores the National Traditions and the Spread of Deco. Here were some of the most exciting displays in the exhibition – two room reconstructions that placed chairs, tables and furnishings together as an ensemble, rather than treating them as individual objects. These rooms drew the eye and, with windows and walls, framed other parts of the exhibition.

Early on, the visitor is struck by the diversity of objects and materials on display. From book binding to fashion, glassware to travel posters, meat slicers to radios: the quality and quantity of the objects is astounding. Film footage of Josephine Baker dancing underlines the exotic side of the Deco style. I had never seen more than a quick grab of Baker's dancing, so it was mesmerising to see several minutes of her performance.

The Paris 1925 Exhibition (*the Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes*), which gave its name posthumously to the stylistic movement, is perched somewhat uneasily amongst the theme The Spread of Deco and beside The Deco World – Travel & Transportation. Again, film footage associated with the historic exhibition proved popular with visitors. So much so that I skipped it - the crowds were too great. Same with the photographic projections illustrating the architectural manifestations of the Deco World : too many people for my liking. I didn't indulge in an audio tour, as the captions and wall text were highly informative. But having waited yet again to shuffle my way to the front of a display cabinet to read some captions, the benefits of an audio tour in a crowded exhibition became obvious.

The room exploring the Moderne aspect of Art Deco, whilst showing some of the most extraordinary objects – particularly the Cartier jewellery and the couture evening dresses – was also the most unsatisfactory from a curatorial perspective. The reconstruction of the Strand Palace Hotel foyer (1930-31) was the stand-out “piece” in the room. All glass and chrome, I wished I could have pushed the barriers aside and walked the stairs myself – wearing a Madeleine Vionnet gown, of course! But it was almost like the effort to pull this off, left other pieces neglected. I couldn't get over the lost opportunity of the Maurice Adams Cocktail Cabinet. According to the catalogue entry, it was built in 1933 out of ebonised mahogany, chrome and glass. Tucked away in a corner, it was displayed all shut up, with not a hint of chrome or glass to be seen. Where was the cocktail shaker? the martini glass? They were off in another display case across the room. So much more could have been done with this!

The final gallery room explores Art Deco in Australia. This is both the most vibrant room and the most cluttered. The collection of objects here seemed a bit of a hodge-podge as the curators tried to address all five themes as they applied to Australia. The usual suspects were there: The Home Magazine, Cazneaux, the Sydney War Memorial... I was a little disappointed with this final display room, but perhaps I was just suffering gallery fatigue. Jazz music from the period was piped into this room (why only this room?) which did lift my spirits and ensured a left the exhibition on an up-beat note.

The exhibition is being marketed by the tag-line “True Glamour Never Fades”. A clever moniker, building upon Melbourne's reputation as the style, fashion and culture capital of Australia. It sets up an expectation of luxury and nostalgia, and this is carried through the presentation of the exhibition. This emphasis on glamour means that another crucial aspect of Art Deco as an artistic movement is downplayed: the democratisation of art and stylistic trends through the application of mass production. Art Deco is about popular culture and consumerism. Yet this was only touched upon lightly in the section on the Moderne, in the context of bakelite jewellery.

Consumerism was not lost on the gallery shop, a now obligatory way to exit major art exhibitions. The exhibition shop was not overpowering; it has a wonderful array of books on the subject and a smattering of appropriate fashion accessories and tasteful postcards. (This mirrors the main gallery shop, which in my opinion is one of the best gallery shops in the country, a gorgeous, tempting mix of scholarship, craft and design.) I bought the catalogue ⁽³⁾ assuming there would be some differences with the original London catalogue. Indeed there is. Whereas the London catalogue presents major essays on the style and its manifestations in different countries, the Australian catalogue is much more object based in its photography and presentation. While I am happy to have such beautiful close-ups of the objects I saw, I think an opportunity was lost on the scholarship front. This exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria is the most substantial exhibition on the Art Deco to be

held in this country to date, and yet it makes a much slighter contribution to historical understandings of the style and the period than did its London sister.

Perhaps I had too high expectations. My disappointment on the scholarship front shouldn't overshadow my sheer enjoyment of the exhibition. I spent a couple of delightful hours marvelling at the furnishings, objects and ephemera. The National Gallery of Victoria certainly has a blockbuster on its hands. The sheer numbers who visit the exhibition will ensure that the cachet and appeal of Art Deco will not fade.

Lisa Murray

MPHA

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2020 Summit

The Rudd Government proclaims a commitment to evidence. It seeks clarity of vision as it plans for 2020. To see into the future is an impossibility; to look back is not. Having a clear-eyed appreciation of the past is a neglected tool of policy development. It is, as Dawn Casey argues elsewhere in this edition, time for historians to sell the benefits of their craft to those who wish to shape the future of our nation.

Those people are not just politicians and public servants. The list of attendees at the 2020 summit is testimony to that. But as PHA member Bruce Pennay has observed history was not much on their minds that Saturday in autumnal Canberra. A word search of the 405 pages of the final report finds 14 mentions of the word 'history'. Of these the majority refer to the teaching of Indigenous history and heritage, and to a lesser extent, of Asian history.

Only Foxtel's Kim Williams took history out of the narrow educational mindset to observe that history provides a body of evidence that can support innovation. He was calling for public investment in creativity and the celebration of intellectual capacity. ⁽¹⁾ Hear, hear!

The debate about history we have seen in Australia over the last decade has been anything but a celebration of historical method. Instead the focus has been on the

misuse of history. It is time for us to rise above these ideological battles and champion the use of history.

Some are already doing so. Morag Fraser, adjunct professor in Humanities and Social Sciences at La Trobe University, recently advised Julia Gillard that she would benefit from having an historian in her office. Such a person 'might have given a cautionary list of the unintended consequences, the collateral damage of all revolutions, before the "[education] revolution" policy was broadcast'. The revolution, Fraser notes, is becoming a reform. ⁽²⁾

Such an adviser would have more than just case studies from the past to offer as warnings or exemplars – too often this is the crude way in which episodes from the past creep into the rhetoric of current policy. They would bring a particular mode of thought – thinking in time, as David Reynolds, Professor of International History at Cambridge University ⁽³⁾ has called it – to apply to all sorts of policy problems. Historians can also bring a perspective that goes beyond the 24-hour media cycle, which so preoccupies politicians. And they can compensate for the chronic loss of institutional memory in the public service. Imagine the script of an episode of *The Hollowmen*, which featured an historian rather than a spin doctor!

That would only work if the historian told a good story. This is part of the historian's craft, one that also needs celebration but honing too, if it is to compete in the world of information overload. It is a fine art to be able to distill the painstaking hours of evidence-gathering into a message that can compete with the glib opinion our newspapers so often serve up.

The onus, however, does not lie solely with historians. Those really committed to evidence have to shun short-termism and media hype. They have to develop thicker skins. Not only must they be open to learning the lessons of the past; they must undertake to ensure we preserve that past. This calls not just for frank advice, based on the evidence; that advice must also be recorded to help those looking back from 2020 to judge just how visionary we were in 2008.

Francesca Beddie

MPHA in Canberra

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How to search for more information than you could ever need without leaving your desk

Home based researcher, Graduate Historian, Margaret Blundell offers a participant's view of the PHA Electronic Database Workshop held at the State Library of NSW on 24.6.08.

After a fortifying afternoon tea of gourmet cookies and slices, twenty PHA members were ushered up to the State Library of NSW computer training room for two intensive hours of database discovery. The hands-on workshop was divided into two parts, each with a different presenter from the Professional Researchers Team.

During the first hour Lynne Hewitt gave us a glimpse of the newly scanned **State Library Card Catalogue** which can now be searched via the Library website. 'Subject' and 'Author' are the main access points. If the image of a card is illegible, the Library's Telephone Inquiry service is available to assist researchers by, if necessary, checking the details on the original card. Lynne also told us about **Federated searches**, which allow a simultaneous search across the catalogue and thirteen different electronic databases from the comfort of your home. These thirteen include: **Times Digital Archive 1785-1985; Informit; ProQuest Australia; ProQuest 5000; Proquest Historical Newspapers; Eighteen century collections online and New Zealand newsstand**. Researchers who journey into the State Library can access a further forty nine databases. The main disadvantage of a Federated search is that it is not very detailed. There was just enough time in Lynne's session to sample *three* of the databases: **Historical Abstracts and America History and Life, Periodicals Archive Online** and **The British Newspapers 1600-1900 collection**. Of these three only the latter is currently accessible from home.

Before we had time to digest all that information the second presenter, Anthony Estorffe, launched into a speedy overview of nine databases, two of which - **Factiva** and the **Sydney Morning Herald (and Sun-Herald) Archives (1955-1990)** are only available to home based researchers by private subscription from the relevant providers. The other seven are freely available from home via the Library website. Anthony showed us how to navigate our way through three of these - **Informit, Libraries Australia, and ProQuest Australia and New Zealand Newsstand**. At this point the pace increased, making it hard at times for some participants to keep up. This was probably the only real criticism this reviewer had of the workshop. Fortunately, Anthony had prepared several pages of notes and search tips for the three databases, so that those of us who were only casual users of the databases could work on improving our knowledge and skills at our own pace at home.

Overall, it seemed that the two hour workshop was a very useful, though all too brief, demonstration of the effort that the State Library is making to provide scholars with free access to a wide range of valuable research material from all over the world.

Margaret Blundell margblundell@westnet.com.au

CITY OF SYDNEY ASSESSMENT BOOKS 1845-1948

The City of Sydney Archives recently received a national award from the Australian Society of Archivists for publishing a new online history resource. Mark Stevens, the City Archivist, explains the project and its benefit to researchers.

The volunteer team at the City of Sydney Archives has completed stage 1 of a long term project to make the City's Assessment Books available online.

This project makes an important family and social history resource available online for the first time. Name details (owner, occupier) associated with every rateable property in the City, plus basic details about the property, are now available.



Above: Mark Stevens collecting the award in Perth

The web site is

<http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/AboutSydney/HistoryAndArchives/Archives/ServicesForResearchers/SearchTools.asp>

Nearly 250,000 records and 500,000 personal names are in this first stage of the project.

You will find: transcriptions of the Assessment Books completed so far; ward boundary maps to help you navigate to the right books; and an information leaflet backgrounding these archival records.

There was a property assessment about every three years on average, starting in 1845 and ending in 1948. After 1948 the City stopped doing its own assessments and used the NSW Valuer-General.

So far the volunteers have completed data transcriptions for an assessment from every decade. Over the next few years all the in-between assessments will be added to the database.

Information in the assessment books

The assessments were property valuations, done by the City Council as a basis for levying rates (local property taxes). Each assessment is recorded in a separate volume for each city ward. Information recorded for each property includes:

- Street name and street number.
- Name of the ratepayer.
- Name of the owner.
- Description of the property, including type of use (eg 'house' 'shop'), and brief details of size and construction materials.
- Annual value (this is based in improved capital value).
- Comments: such as a house or hotel name, or 'a miserable place, scarcely habitable' are sometimes recorded.

AN ASSESSMENT OF GROSS AND NET ANNUAL VALUE OF ALL PROPERTY LIABLE					TO THE RATEPAYERS		WARD OF THE CITY OF SYDNEY			
No. of Assessment	No. of Rate Book	No. of House	Name of Ratepayer	Name of Owner	DESCRIPTION	OF PROPERTY				REMARKS
						Rateable, (No. of Rooms)	Rateable, (No. of Rooms)	Gross Annual Value in Pounds	Net Value Paid by Ratepayer	
187	804	170	Law St	Law St	House	2	9	600	580	
188	805	172	George Street	Law St	House	2	5	250	190	no way but upon ground, water pipe off
189	806	174	Walter Hamilton	Law St	House	2	5	90	60	
190	807	176	William Watson	Walter Hamilton	House	1	5	215	200	Small on but upon floor below street
191	808	178	Edward O'Shea	Law St	House	2	6	120	100	
192	809	180	John Bradley	Ann Weston	House	2	8	120	100	
193	810	181	Harriet Curry	J. W. Perry	Public House	2	17	250	210	
194	811	182	Richard Dwyer	Mrs. Shaw	House	2	12	120	360	
195	812	183	John Chad	Mrs. Shaw	Public House	2	8	150	150	In bad repair
196	813	184	John Chad	Mrs. Shaw	Public House	3	6	100	100	150 @
197	814	185	John Chad	J. Shaw	House	3	6	120	100	
198	815	186	Edward M'Evane	J. Shaw	House	1	2	120	110	
199	816	187	James Harding	John Williams	Shop	2	6	110	25	25 In. miserable condition
200	817	188	David Prater	John Williams	Shop	1	6	110	25	
201	818	189	Patrick Brennan	J. O'Shea	House	2	2	20	16	In bad repair, water pipe
202	819	190	John Chad	J. O'Shea	House	2	2	20	16	
203	820	191	John Chad	J. O'Shea	House	2	2	20	16	
204	821	192	John Chad	J. O'Shea	House	2	2	20	16	
205	822	193	Henry Bradley	J. O'Shea	House	2	2	20	16	

Above: Page 46 of the original Assessment Books for Bourke Ward 1861, showing houses along 170-198 George Street

The Assessment Books cover only the 'historical' City of Sydney area, from Port Jackson south to Cleveland Street, and (roughly) South Dowling St / Boundary Road to the east edge of Glebe. Camperdown is included after it was absorbed by the City in 1908.

The transcriptions give precise citations to the original volumes, which are available on microfilm at the City of Sydney Archives.

Future directions

Transcription of the remaining assessments should be finished by the end of 2014. We will add them to the database one by one as they are completed.

We are planning to digitise the original assessment book volumes and add them to the website. In this way it will be possible to keyword search using the transcribed data, then flick to the equivalent original page to view the manuscript record.

If use of the database is high enough to justify the cost, we will also add a more sophisticated 'front end' search tool, to enables searches across multiple wards and years. At present it is only possible to search one volume at a time. We want to allow searches such as < find all persons with the surname Smith living in Steam Mill or Barker streets between 1867 and 1882 > or < find all properties owned by Catherine Hart >.

Mark Stevens

City Archivist, City of Sydney

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REPORTS

STATE RECORDS' COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)

www.records.nsw.gov.au

The Community Advisory Committee met on 31 July 2008 at the Sydney Records Centre and discussed the following matters.

- **Online Index** – there are now 8049 names forming part of the index (in addition to other listings, such as those provided by Mary-Anne Warner)
- **Hitwise** – State Records is ranked 25 out of 600 NSW government websites
- **You Tube and Flickr [www.flickr.com/photos/state-records-nsw/]**– State Records has images on Flickr and 6 videos on You Tube (eg, railway refreshment rooms, Sydney Harbour Bridge). Endeavouring to progress discussion about these images and exploring technology to increase profile of and traffic to www.records.nsw.gov.au
- **Amendment to State Records Act** – the recent amendment to the Act allowing State Records to enter agreements with third parties to publish and provide access to copies of archives will expand means of accessing State archives – eg, through Ancestry.com – and State Records is one of the first archives institutions to do this.
- **100th Anniversary of the Great White Fleet** - individual items & ephemera of celebratory pictorial material available

- **Ticket of Leave Passport 1835-1869** - index now complete, volunteers have prepared over 11,000 entries
- **Digital copying services** – larger items in colour (eg maps) can now be digitised. Prices are \$25 for first copy and \$5 each thereafter up to five images. Provision of copy service for Doctors photographs (1889-1920s) is being trialled (forms accessible online). Visitors to Kingswood may ask to be shown the digitising process.
- **Old Handwriting** – State Records is looking to create an online resource to help interpret handwriting – samples of handwriting various sources provide a range of styles.
- **ARC Grants** – State Records is participating in two ARC grants as an 'in kind' supporter: Soldier Settlement Records (documenting, publicising and creating a database of these records); Australian Women's Archive project (identify location and creating a database of individual women and women's organisations).
- **Special Bundles - Colonial Secretary's correspondence** - bridging aids already accessible on *Archives Investigator* and more aids are to be added.
- State Records has a range of seminars and talks for History Week and throughout September

www.records.nsw.gov.au/archives/activities_program_57.asp

Roslyn Burge

MPHA

What's On

History Week! A wonderfully rich and exuberant expression of history right across the state. Organised by the History Council of NSW, you'd be mad to miss it!

Highlight events:

Annual History Lecture. Elocution Lessons: A history of Australian speech and accent. Presented by Professor Joy Damousi, University of Melbourne.

Friday 5 September 2008 , 6 for 6.30pm Government House, Sydney

\$ 50 general; \$45 HC members

History Week Open Day. The Water's Edge: from Circular Quay to Millers Point
Saturday 6 September 2008 Talks, film screenings, tours, and displays happening at 16 venues at the water's edge in Sydney.

Marine Science at the Water's Edge. PHA excursion to the Sydney Institute of Marine Science at Chowder Bay.

Wednesday 10 September 2008, 10am – 2pm, departing Circular Quay

\$35 general; \$30 PHA members bookings essential!! phone 9252 9437 or email

secretary@phansw.org.au

For a full listing of History Week events www.historycouncilnsw.org.au

THE WATER'S EDGE FILM FESTIVAL – PART OF THE HISTORY WEEK OPEN DAY

11am – 4pm, level 2, Customs House Library, Circular Quay

Australasian Gazette – HMAS Brisbane launched at Cockatoo Island 1915

Black and White Silent 3mins 16secs
Unique footage of the launch of the HMAS Brisbane from Cockatoo Island into Sydney Harbour. The HMAS Brisbane was built during the First World War for the navy. Look out for the public perched high up on a working crane at the end of the film.

In Harbour 1953

Black and White Sound 11mins
A gently narrated film about the working life of the smaller boats in Sydney Harbour. Featuring a typical day for an Italian fisherman and the trials and tribulations for the Sydney Water Authority dealing with pollution from boats visiting the Harbour.

Santa lands at Farm Cove (Here Comes Santa) 1929

Black and White Silent 1min 23sec
As part of a campaign for Anthony Hordern & Sons dept store, we see Santa land by seaplane in Sydney Harbour and row ashore to Lady Macquaries Chair to deliver presents to children at a local hospital.

7 Woolloomooloo 1947

Black and White Sound 9mins
This film depicts the end of a migrant's long journey to Australia as his ship docks at Wharf No 7 Woolloomooloo, illustrating the places and situations a new migrant is likely to encounter living and working near the waters edge.

Archibald Family – Family Scenes & Outings in Sydney Home Movie 1932

Black and White Silent 49secs
Rare home shot footage of the Archibald family taking an afternoon jaunt on Sydney harbour by boat. A special thank you to Helen Phillips for permission to show this footage.

Pensions for Veterans 1953

Black and White Sound 19mins
This film launched the Waterside Workers Federation Film Unit. Depicting shocking footage of life for the wharfies working in Sydney Harbour. This showed life for men before superannuation and what led to one of the most significant campaigns for the waterside workers Union.

Bushells Tea : The Charmed Cup (the honeymooners return) 1929

Black and White Silent 1min 44sec
This is the second of a three part serial for Bushells Tea that was shown as a cinema advertisement. In Part two of the series we see happy newlyweds returning to Sydney harbour following their honeymoon – keep your eye out for the Bushells sign in Circular Quay and the half built North Shore Bridge that is now the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

Italian Fishermen in Woolloomooloo 1960s

Black and White Sound 20mins
A delightful film about the Italian fisherman who once called the Woolloomooloo docks home. This sentimental film shows the annual religious parade for the blessing of the fishing fleet. N.B All attempts have been made to source the copyright for this film. If you have information please contact the History Unit, City of Sydney Council

Calling Sydney Harbour 1960

Colour Sound 18mins
Just another day on the job for Sydney Harbour's tug masters. An insightful look into working life on the harbour featuring the foreshores of Kirribilli, Lavender bay, Circular Quay and Garden island.

Newsreel Film of Dockyard Activities Cockatoo Island 1936

Black and White Sound 3mins
Excerpts from 3 newsreels. The first of HMAS Swan being launched from the island, followed by various clips of the ship builders of Cockatoo Island Dockyards working on the Dutch tanker Vaardas, using enormous turbines to carry out machine shop work.

Hungry Miles 1955

Black and White Sound 26mins
The hungry mile was the distance men walked along the harbour in search of a job in the thirties and forties. This film shows the conditions waterside workers had to complete their jobs in and how the industrial conflicts affected everyday life for the working class working on the water front.

More info:

www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/history

RARE ARCHIVAL FILM FOOTAGE OF THE HARBOUR. FOR ONE DAY ONLY! DON'T MISS IT.

PHA (NSW) DIRECTORY 2008-9

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Editorial Collectives: See list at front of *Phanfare*

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The Professional Historians Association (NSW) Inc is the organisation representing qualified historians in NSW and ACT who are professionally employed or commissioned to undertake historical work.

Publications

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