STRIKE A POSE EXHIBITION OPENS
HALFWAY TO ANTARCTICA
CELEBRATING THE CONSTITUTION
WITH THE CAMERA AT ANZAC.
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This description indicates that the image comes from the collection of the National Archives of Australia (abbreviated as NAA), from the series A1500. The item number is K17370.

Front cover: Colourful fashions from a 1967 Pierre Cardin fashion parade at the Canberra Theatre Centre. The National Archives’ exhibition Strike a Pose showcases photographs of Australian fashion from the 1960s and ’70s. NAA: A1500, K17370

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Alias Smith and Jones

Researcher Terry King has uncovered some fascinating stories in the service records of Australians who fought and died in World War I – but who did so under a false name.

Eighteen-year-old Stanley Howard O’Neill (photo left), from Launceston, died in France in August 1918. According to a comrade, O’Neill was killed instantly by a bullet to the head while at his machine gun. The military authorities reported his death as that of Sydney Harold Smith, for that was the name under which he had enlisted.

William Mansfield, of Maclean in New South Wales, enlisted in January 1916. When he died, in February 1917, it was under the alias of William Joseph Jones.

These were not exceptional cases. A browse through the more common surnames on the Australian War Memorial’s World War I Roll of Honour reveals a host of other men enlisting, and sometimes dying, under aliases. It is impossible to determine the number of men who served in the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) under false names, but military historian Neil Smith estimates that more than 15,000 employed some sort of alias.

Why would a man serving his country choose to do so under a false name? An exploration of World War I service records held by the National Archives can provide some fascinating answers. The reasons are not clear in every case, for even the soldier’s nearest and dearest were often unable to explain his actions, but frequently the files include letters and other documents that reveal why the soldier acted as he did.

Boy soldiers

For some, an alias was primarily to help them elude their parents. In Stanley O’Neill’s case, this was his widowed mother, Stanley
was one of many youths who sought to enlist despite being under the minimum age of 18. While some had parental approval, he did not. When he first enlisted, in July 1916, he was three months short of 17, but claimed to be 18. His deception was soon detected and he was discharged, only to re-enlist 11 days later. This time, he gave a false name – Sydney Harold Smith – an appropriately false next-of-kin and home address, and an equally fictitious note of parental consent.

At 19, William Mansfield was old enough to enlist but, being under 21, was required to produce written parental consent. He avoided this obstacle by claiming his age as 21 years and 9 months when enlisting in early 1916. He gave his name as William Joseph Jones. After William was killed in action, his father explained that ‘he adopted that name fearing his mother would not give her consent.’ Unlike Stanley O’Neill, he seems to have informed his parents after he enlisted, who reluctantly accepted what he’d done.

Wives abandoned

In January 1915, the Melbourne Argus newspaper carried an item headed ‘An absent-minded beggar’. It told of a woman confronting the paymaster at Victoria Barracks with a recent issue of the illustrated weekly The Australasian. She claimed her husband appeared in one of its photos of soldiers at Broadmeadows camp, peeling potatoes. He had been missing from home for some weeks, and had left her and their daughter ‘quite unprovided for.’

Although quite possibly fictitious, the story addressed a real concern. On enlistment, a married man was required to agree to the allotment of at least two-fifths of his pay to his wife – three-fifths if he had children. However, a significant number of married men were failing to inform their wives of their patriotic intentions and signing up as single men. Some took this ‘absent-mindedness’ still further, apparently forgetting their real names when enlisting, making it difficult for their wives to have them identified, located and called to account.

James Stribling, a Victorian by birth, enlisted in September 1914 as a single man, despite having married in New South Wales only five months earlier. The New South Wales and Victorian Police circulated his name and physical description on their Deserters of...
Wives and Children lists, but to no avail, for he’d enlisted in Western Australia as James Edward Smith and embarked for service overseas.

Stribling clearly regretted deserting his young wife. He named her as sole beneficiary in his will in April 1915, just a few weeks before the landing at Gallipoli, where he was wounded on the first day. His file contains copies of three poignant letters to her. In the first of these, bearing Christmas greetings in 1915, he told her how he wished ‘to be back with you when I am a little better off and you grow a little older.’ In the third, from France in July 1916, he told of meeting a mutual acquaintance who had told him that the couple’s infant daughter was ‘a lovely little child & very like me.’ He wrote, ‘I would love to see her.’ But in surviving Gallipoli, Stribling had used up his share of luck, and he was killed in action about a fortnight after writing this letter.

Deserted or discharged

Other men who used aliases were trying to deceive military authorities. A number had previously deserted His Majesty’s Services or been discharged, found seriously wanting in some respect. Others, like Walter Potts, were seeking to hide perceived failings or minor misdemeanours.

Potts, of Stanthorpe, Queensland, was a labourer in his mid-20s and a big man, 183 cm tall and 90 kg, and his record contains nothing to suggest that he was anything less than a model soldier. Nevertheless, he’d twice tried to enlist and been rejected: a note on his file indicates that he may have required dental treatment. For his third attempt he used an alias – Roy William Smith – fearing, his father said, ‘that having been turned down twice he might get in trouble over it.’ Potts was killed in Belgium in 1917.

William Lonsdale, aged 33, enlisted with his brother Percy, 22, at Warragul, Victoria, in February 1916. Subsequently, Percy was allocated to a unit training at Broadmeadows, and William to one at Castlemaine. It was from there that William deserted in July 1916, with his sister Mabel later explaining that he’d done so ‘because he was parted from his brother and got down-hearted.’ William re-enlisted as Joseph Smith in August 1917, and died in France in October 1918. His sister revealed his secret to military authorities because she wanted him to ‘bear his own name on his headstone.’

English-born Charles Ernest Sladen was another to become a Smith. He enlisted in Tasmania, served both at Gallipoli and in France, and rose to the rank of sergeant before being killed in action in September 1916. In settling his estate, which was inevitably a more complicated affair than in normal circumstances, the reason for his alias was revealed. He’d deserted from the HMAS Una in Sydney in May 1915 and, to avoid detection, enlisted interstate under a false name.

Leslie Thomas Meryment of Rozelle in Sydney enlisted in August 1915, but after misbehaving in camp – refusing to do guard duty, breaking camp, and so on – was discharged in December as ‘unlikely to become an efficient soldier.’ Using a false name, he re-enlisted three days later, embarked for overseas service in April 1916, and was killed in action in Belgium in September 1917.

And although the military authorities may have doubted his efficiency, Meryment’s foresight certainly facilitated their handling of the administrative matters relating to his death. Often, the death of a soldier who’d enlisted under an alias led to added grief and uncertainty for his family, and proved an administrative nightmare for the authorities – for a start, how could they notify his next of kin? Meryment, however, left in his kit ‘A Soldier Confession’, detailing his true name, contact details for his mother, and his reasons for using an alias. He claimed he was discharged for ‘no fault of my own’ and declared, ‘I was willing to go away and make a name for myself.’

Meryment’s choice of an alias was not Smith or Jones, but Bryant, his mother’s name. A glance through the more common surnames on the Roll of Honour demonstrates that many other men, for one reason or another, enlisted not under their true names, but rather as Baker, Brown, Cook, Kelly, Thompson, Williams, and so on.

Recently retired, Terry King has returned to the area of historical study which formed the subject of his 1988 PhD thesis – Australian society and the men of the 1st AIF.
Photographs of Australian fashion from the 1960s and '70s, with commentary by fashionista Lee Lin Chin, feature in the National Archives’ latest exhibition. Strike a Pose is the Archives’ entry in the Vivid National Photography Festival.
Strike a Pose showcases 89 images taken by Australian Government photographers during the dynamic decades of the 1960s and ‘70s to promote the burgeoning Australian fashion industry.

Many images are drawn from the collection of the Australian News and Information Bureau, which took a vast array of images to promote Australian industry and lifestyle overseas.

The photos go behind the scenes of the fashion industry as well as showcasing trends on the catwalk, on the street, and at events such as the Melbourne Cup.

The 1960s saw the emergence of the fashion boutique, and with it mass-produced, ready-to-wear designs. Technological innovations led to the development of synthetic fibres and new fabrics. Teenagers, products of the post-World War II baby boom, provided a growing market for them. Local designers, including Norma Tullo, Prue Acton and Trent Nathan, were making their mark in Australia and on an international stage.

Strike a Pose also includes images from the Australian Wool Board. Bold and colourful clothing made to appeal to younger generations featured in the Board’s advertisements in the 1970s. They were part of vigorous advertising campaigns to promote wool in a competitive market inundated with mass-produced synthetic fibres. This collection of photos demonstrates outdoor photography that made the most of the Australian landscape.

The exhibition records not only the clothes Australians wore but also how the social and cultural changes of these years influenced their fashion choices. Guest curator Lee Lin Chin gives her unique insights on the fashions – fabulous and frightful – of the 1960s and ‘70s.

[opposite page] A winter coat from the days before animal rights became an issue.

[above left] Casually dressed on the way to a jazz festival in country New South Wales, 1974.


Liberation from a grey predictability: Lee Lin Chin on *Strike a Pose*

As a student of history, to be invited to take part in a National Archives’ project is about as happy an assignment as one could wish for. To be specifically directed to the fashion component of its vast photographic collection is an added thrill, even though it’s the socio-cultural context of the pictures which is of deeper interest.

Almost as if made to order, the National Archives’ collection of fashion photographs offers up images almost exclusively from the 1960s and ’70s – that slice of recent history of special interest to me for its impact on all things social, cultural and even political we still live with today.

These were the years of revolution, and pop music was the catalyst. For those in tune with the emerging vibe, clothes more than ever became an indicator of individual sensibility. Youth culture asserted itself in a way which changed the world, familiar and comfortable up to that point.

Beyond the sights and sounds, this new consciousness found free expression in attitudes that challenged convention. Radical change in the way we viewed things and the way we lived was not only possible and desirable but was nothing less than liberation from a grey predictability.

Australia was, of course, not immune from the sweep of these winds. While the pictures in *Strike a Pose* appear to speak from a very different time upon initial viewing, they also convey a sense of things to come, not least of which are the first stirrings of ‘Australian fashion’, part of a self-consciousness of a distinct identity taking its place in the world.

These photographs may have been taken for trade and commercial reasons, mostly by anonymous government photographers, but they certainly record and reflect both a new boldness in approaching how we dressed, while retaining and re-working what was inherited from previous eras. These were the early days of pant-suits for women, mini skirts and dresses matched up with symbols of modernity (such as white knee-high vinyl boots, space and op-art inspired prints), and of menswear throwing off inoffensive shades for bright colours, checks and prints. Simultaneously, fair-isle sweaters, satin gowns and matching accessories still had their place – but not for much longer. Rules were about to be seriously broken and fashion to be widely accessible. How one chose to express oneself through clothes was limited only by one’s imagination.

These then were crucial years spanning one era and the next. In these images we can...
discern intimations of a new world of fashion peopled by celebrity designers, celebrity photographers, celebrity models, celebrity wearers, celebrity editors of celebrity fashion magazines. For us lesser mortals a new freedom of expression was just about to dawn.

Lee Lin Chin presents World News Australia and hosts Fashionista on SBS Television.
Halfway to Antarctica: Australia’s subantarctic islands

The history of Macquarie and Heard Islands features dramatic rescues, unusual diets and an environment under threat. Dr Bernadette Hince has visited these remote territories and researched many files in the National Archives to write her PhD thesis, an environmental history of the islands.

In the high latitudes of the Southern Ocean are some of Australia’s most spectacular landscapes. The small subantarctic Heard and Macquarie Islands in the ‘furious fifties’ are so remote that few people see them, and far fewer have lived on them. They can be reached only by ship – and have no safe harbour or anchorage. But these Australian territories are meccas for researchers studying global warming, glacier history, island biogeography, albatross breeding patterns and elephant seal ecology.

The Australian Antarctic Division involved in administering the islands has its headquarters at Kingston, Tasmania. Records from the Division, now held at the Tasmanian Office of the National Archives, can tell us a huge amount about these islands, such as what Australian scientists ate there in the 1940s and 1950s, the animals they studied, what the weather was like, and where the field trips went.

Heard Island

The more remote of the two islands, Heard Island, is as far from Australia (2500 km) as it is from Africa. It is roughly circular, with a sand and gravel spit fingering out eastwards into the sea towards Australia. The spectacular volcanic peak of Big Ben dominates the island, rising 9005 ft (2745 m) above the surrounding sea.

Australia claimed Heard Island as part of its territory in December 1947. Until then, it had been accepted as being a British territory, even though Britain had only a thin claim to it. An American, Captain John Heard, discovered the island in 1853. He urged the United States Government to claim it but, unable to believe that it could possibly be of any benefit to them, the Americans ignored his requests.

With Britain’s urging, Australia made its claim in 1947, sending small parties of a dozen or so men annually to occupy the island until March 1954. The men did biological and physical sciences research there after building and occupying a base at Atlas Cove. The work was an almost incidental benefit to the Australian Government, which saw Australia’s occupation principally as a way to reinforce its territorial claim. At the same time as Heard Island was occupied, men were also sent to Macquarie Island, where they built a base near its northern end on a site where elephant sealers had lived nearly a century earlier.

Life on Heard Island was gritty, cold and dangerous for the men of the Australian National Antarctic Research Expeditions (ANARE). The constant strong winds blew the island’s black volcanic sand into everything. Fresh fruit, vegetables and imported meat were limited to the few months of the year after the annual resupply ship had called. The keeping qualities of the meat were not all they might have been. Reluctant to waste food, the men washed their ageing supplies of mutton in dilute permanganate of potash, which took off the meat’s coating of slime and sand. They then cooked and ate it.

In 1950, Heard Island was the scene of an emergency rescue of the base’s doctor, Serge Udovikoff, ill with appendicitis. On 27 July 1950, HMAS Australia sailed from Melbourne, where the Antarctic Division had its headquarters at the time. A Movietone News cameraman, two journalists and two photographers were on board to capture the historic winter landing. When the ship reached Heard, its crew sent ashore fresh vegetables and some reading material. After retrieving the sick man, the ship took on two penguins, which they named Percy and Pauline. They were washed overboard before the ship had gone far on its return voyage to Melbourne.

Heard Island’s icy shores are no longer occupied year-round, though sometimes there are expeditions in the summer months. After Dr Udovikoff’s emergency evacuation, any doctor intending to work on an Australian base in Antarctica now has an appendectomy before ‘going South’.

**Macquarie Island**

Macquarie Island, 750 km south of Tasmania – halfway to Antarctica – is a long thin island with a high central plateau. Its narrow coastal terrace has shingle, rocky and grey sand beaches. In places, the cliffs drop sheer to the sea. It is 5 km at its widest, and 34 km long.

After its discovery in 1810, sealers sailed to Macquarie Island to kill fur seals for their skins. By 1815 there were no more fur seals – they had been “sealed out”. Later visitors killed penguins and elephant seals, whose blubber produces a clean-smelling and long-lasting oil. On his way to Antarctica in late 1911, Douglas Mawson left five men from the Australasian Antarctic Expedition on Macquarie Island under the leadership of meteorologist GF Ainsworth. ‘Sealers were on the Island continuously during the time of our occupation,’ Ainsworth noted in a report now held by the National Archives, “and thus [there was] an unique opportunity for observing the methods employed in obtaining bird and animal oil.”

Macquarie Island once had the southernmost parrot in the world, the Macquarie Island parakeet. In November 1820, the Russian explorer Thaddeus Bellingshausen recorded that ‘to our surprise we saw a quantity of small parakeets, all belonging to one species, on this semi-Arctic island.’ Bellingshausen’s men were keen to get specimens of the rare parrot, and in three hours collected 20 dead parrots and a live one, the latter by trading a sealer three bottles of rum for it. The species survived on Macquarie Island until the late 19th century. Parrots were apparently very good eating (especially, I suspect, if there was not much else). In midwinter 1879, men from a shipwreck roasted parrots on sticks over a driftwood fire. Both the parrot and Macquarie Island’s own flightless rail, a blackish brown bird, were extinct before the turn of the century.

After World War I, concern about Macquarie Island’s wildlife increased. Mawson and others called for the seal and penguin harvest to be regulated. This campaign reflected not only a local concern but a rising general consciousness of conservation issues during the early 20th century. Macquarie Island was protected as a wildlife reserve in 1933.

In the summer of 1959–60, the first group of women to venture south with the Australian Antarctic Division travelled to Macquarie Island – Isobel Bennett, Hope Macpherson, Mary Gillham and Susan Ingham. Antarctica had been an exclusively male province for Australians, and the women tested the waters in more ways than one. They were warned – ‘rather unnecessarily’, said Bennett later – to behave themselves because the future of women in Antarctica depended on them.

Rabbits galore
At the time of the discovery of the two islands, neither Heard nor Macquarie Island had any native land mammals. Many were later introduced, and some survived to become pests. On Macquarie Island, a sealing company introduced rabbits from New Zealand as a food source in 1878. The rabbits thrived on a diet of the island’s showy and palatable plants, and it quickly became clear that they were causing extensive damage. Long before the early ANARE parties went to live on Macquarie in the late 1940s, slopes once covered with lush growth of tussock grasses and unique subantarctic plants, including Macquarie Island cabbage, had been eaten down to bare earth.

Attempts at rabbit control started in the 1960s using the poison 1080, which reduced but did not eliminate the population. Entries from the Sandy Bay hut logbook reveal attempts to come to terms with the problem. In a log entry of Saturday 21 May 1966, A Parker and his companions wrote:

Arrived 1215 hrs after intrepid trip around coast. Purpose of visit ‘Rabbit extermination’. Departed 1300 hrs conceding overwhelming victory to rabbits.

Though Parker’s short trip was not a serious rabbiting excursion, many others in the logbook were. Three summers later Bob Gould wrote: ‘Shot about 125 rabbits, collected 101 samples but found no rabbits with fleas.’ The European rabbit flea had been introduced in December 1968, and the myxoma virus was introduced in the summer of 1978–79. After the removal of feral cats from the island in 2000, rabbit numbers increased rapidly, and the native plants continued to be badly affected by their browsing and burrowing.

Walking across Macquarie Island
In 2004, I walked on the long skinny island of Macquarie, carrying a permit from the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service to ‘enter and remain in Macquarie Island Nature Reserve.’ As my colleagues and I skirted the black sand of Sandy Bay, peopled with king penguins and elephant seals, the ranger Richard Koch pointed out a steep, eroded hillside above the bay where dozens of white oval disks formed a mosaic on the dark, sparsely vegetated soil. The white ovals were the exposed roots of the native Macquarie Island cabbage, sawn off at ground level by browsing rabbits. From Sandy Bay we cut inland, following
a “penguin road” made by royal penguins up to their inland rookery.

In 2007, the Australian and Tasmanian governments began a joint $24.6 million program to remove rabbits, rats and mice from Macquarie Island. Such programs will help protect the subantarctic into the future, while part of its fascinating history is preserved in the archives.

Looking at the sun

The sun has been an ambiguous presence in Australia’s history. In the early 20th century, scientists, farmers, graziers and the government thought the sun might hold the key to understanding the weather, as Dr Tim Sherratt explains.

From Wallal, in Australia’s far north-west, to Goondiwindi, near the New South Wales-Queensland border, local and international scientists watched the sun and waited.

A total solar eclipse was due on 21 September 1922. An eclipse always held scientific interest, but this one offered the chance to confirm one of the most revolutionary theories in science. Albert Einstein’s general theory of relativity predicted that light passing near an object such as the sun would be bent by gravity. In 1919, Arthur Eddington’s observations of a total solar eclipse lent support to Einstein’s theory, but some challenged his results. The 1922 eclipse, best observed in Australia, promised to decide the matter.

‘The occasion is unique’, noted the Commonwealth Meteorologist, Henry Ambrose Hunt, ‘and the observations are likely to be of much scientific value, and in the interests of and for the credit of the Commonwealth.’ The Australian Government proudly played its part, with Hunt coordinating support for visiting scientists. Since 1920 he had been collecting data on possible observation sites and communicating with scientific institutions around the world. On his advice, the Lick Observatory in the United States mounted a major expedition to isolated Wallal. Transport was difficult and Hunt considered possibilities ranging from pearl-luggers to motor cars before recommending that the Navy provide the necessary logistical support.

As the big day neared, Prime Minister Billy Hughes cabled the scientists his ‘best wishes for a fine day and successful observations.’ While the research seemed mainly of scientific interest, an eager public followed preparations for the eclipse. There were also hints that the study of the sun might have more practical consequences.

[Left] Goondiwindi was the observation site for expeditions from Melbourne Observatory, Sydney Observatory and the University of Sydney. Only identified as ‘Wellish’, this is probably Edward Wellish, a lecturer in applied mathematics at the University of Sydney.

A brutal climate

For many European settlers the Australian sun seemed alien and unyielding. Others embraced it as a symbol of optimism and pride. At the turn of the 20th century, Federation abounded in references to the dawn – the sun which rose over the new nation symbolised something fresh, full of energy and life. Yet Federation was also a time of severe drought, when the sun was a daily reminder of the rains that would not come. But what if the sun could tell us when it would rain?

While the sun appeared to be eternal and unchanging, research in the early 20th century revealed much about its moods and inconsistencies. At the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory, the eminent astronomer Charles Greeley Abbot embarked on a lifelong quest to chart variations in solar activity. His observations suggested that the sun’s output varied by up to 10 per cent. Abbot believed that detailed knowledge of such variations would fuel the development of long-range weather forecasting.

Afflicted with a brutal climate that seemed to defy prediction, the possibilities of such research offered hope to beleaguered Australian farmers. ‘Anything we can do to help us to forecast our weather is of extreme urgency and moment to the people who are building up our primary industries,’ commented Prime Minister Joseph Cook to a delegation of scientists in August 1914. Did the sun hold the key? Records in the National Archives of Australia reveal how, in the early decades of the 20th century, Australians looked to the sun for deliverance.

Watching the sun

A number of the world’s top astronomers, including Abbot, visited Australia in 1914 for a meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. They took the opportunity to pressure Prime Minister Cook for the establishment of a solar physics observatory in Australia. This would complete a worldwide chain of observatories enabling the sun to be kept under constant surveillance.

The idea was not new. Expatriate physicist Walter Geoffrey Duffield had lobbied the Australian Government for a number of years, winning the support of Prime Minister Alfred Deakin. In 1909, Deakin pronounced that the Commonwealth would maintain such an institution ‘for the sake of science and Australian meteorology.’ Deakin and his successor, Andrew Fisher, set the plan in motion, but by 1914 a firm commitment was needed. Deakin, his enthusiasm undimmed by retirement, accompanied the delegation to persuade his former deputy to act.

A solar observatory appealed both to national pride and practical ambitions. Australia could contribute to the international research effort, while perhaps bringing within its grasp the means to tame its capricious climate. Sir Frederick Dyson, the Astronomer Royal, stressed the scientific significance of the research while admitting that they all hoped the study of the sun ‘might enable forecasts of the weather to be made.’ Henry Hall Turner, from Oxford, and CG Abbot emphasised the reality of solar variation. ‘Sometimes a very small variation might be of immense value to agriculture,’ Turner noted.

Confronted with this parade of scientific worthies, Prime Minister Cook glumly admitted the merits of their case: ‘I am inclined to think we cannot over-estimate the value of the enquiry you are suggesting today.’ But while the scientists’ arguments were sound, their timing was inopportune.
– war had been declared only a few weeks before. Cook could make few assurances, but he promised to do what he could. Finally, in 1923, the government formally announced the establishment of the Commonwealth Solar Observatory, atop Mount Stromlo in the new Federal Capital Territory.

In the meantime, a group of influential Sydneysiders had also set their sights on the sun. Impressed by the possibilities of CG Abbot’s research, businessmen and scientists formed a Solar Radiation Committee in 1921. Their aim was to establish an observing station at the Riverview Observatory. Abbot provided advice and instruments, but the committee sought further government funding. They won the support of the Commonwealth Board of Trade, and a submission was presented to Cabinet arguing that the connection between changes in the weather and solar radiation had been ‘scientifically determined.’ What remained, it was stated, was to find ‘the laws expressing the relationship between weather variations and solar changes in radiation.’ Under a program of research such as that proposed by the committee, results were ‘sure to follow in the long run.’

**A beguiling prospect**

Long-range forecasts were a beguiling prospect, offering those who made their living on the land relief from the cruel vagaries of nature. The Graziers Association of New South Wales embraced the promise of solar research, ‘convinced of the enormous advantages which would be gained … through accurate forecasts of weather being made for periods considerably longer than those which are at present possible.’ The graziers joined a deputation to the New South Wales government in 1923, when geographer and meteorologist Thomas Griffith Taylor argued that a weather forecast six months ahead ‘would be of more value than the many thousands spent on research in the hope of getting something out of irrigation.’
Government advisers urged caution, but the sober voice of scepticism was sometimes hard to hear amidst the exciting buzz of possibilities. Commonwealth meteorologist HA Hunt bluntly pointed out that the claims for improved weather forecasting were based on a small number of questionable studies. While it seemed likely that variations in solar activity did have some impact on the weather, much more research was needed to understand and quantify this connection. ‘To make promises of direct practical advantages,’ he warned, was ‘both a pernicious and dangerous practice.’ Nonetheless, in its announcement of the creation of the Commonwealth Solar Observatory, the government proclaimed its hope that solar research would yield ‘a better knowledge of the causes of weather changes’ and ultimately ‘more accurate and longer range weather forecasting.’

As expected, the Commonwealth Solar Observatory made careful observations of solar activity, even maintaining a plot of trees on Mount Stromlo to pursue correlations between radiation and plant growth. But while the observatory’s research blossomed on many fronts, the radiation studies lost impetus. At Riverview, the Solar Radiation Committee pushed ahead to initiate observations even without government funding.

But the laws governing the weather failed to materialise as hoped. While CG Abbot remained steadfast, other scientists began to admit that the degree of solar variation was much smaller than had been presumed. The connections between climate and solar activity are complex, and remain subject to debate.

The observations of the 1922 solar eclipse confirmed Einstein’s prediction. The old order of physics was overthrown – space, time and gravity followed laws that seemed counter to our everyday experience. But the commonsense assumption that the sun’s moods would be reflected in the patterns of the Earth’s weather resisted all attempts at proof.

In the early 20th century, the sun seemed to offer a glimpse of enlightenment, but only thwarted once more the desperate hopes of farmers and embarrassed the confidence of scientists. The dream of long-range weather forecasting remained as elusive as ever.

Dr Tim Sherratt is a websites content developer at the National Archives. He is the author of Inigo Jones – The Weather Prophet (2007), and editor, with Tom Griffiths and Libby Robin, of A Change in the Weather: Climate and Culture in Australia (2005).
Making a nation: the Australian Constitution
On 9 July 1900, Queen Victoria signed the Royal Commission of Assent, which provided for the creation of the Commonwealth of Australia. On this day, the Australian Constitution became law. Dr Lenore Coltheart explores the history of these important documents.

A crimson cord, a silver skippet, and the remains of a paddle steamer called Lucinda – these would be some of the first things we would find if we could look under the floorboards of Australia. They are all there, amongst the constitutional foundations that still hold us steady, and still hold us together.

The fact that we have only occasionally needed to fix our foundations suggests their solid workmanship. We comfortably forget them, and our 108-year-old Constitution seems invisible though it is as much part of our everyday lives as our streets and houses. So do we need to know any more about how it was designed and built?

The National Archives of Australia thinks this is so important that it has initiated an annual commemoration of the 9 July ‘birthday’ of the Australian Constitution. Inspecting our foundations is a good way to start discovering how they are built and learning about the architects and artisans who made a nation.

**Formed from words not war**

It took 10 years to create our Constitution. In the autumn of 1891, men from the six Australian colonies (and from New Zealand, then considering becoming part of the new nation) gathered in Sydney to discuss proposals for a Federation. The committee formed to draw up the draft constitution completed their work while afloat on the waterways just north of Sydney, where they spent the whole Easter holiday. Their craft was the Queensland Government’s elegant little paddle steamer Lucinda, named for Lady Musgrave, wife of Queensland’s former Governor and daughter of prominent United States law reformer David Field. The relics of the Lucinda thus have a place among our foundations as another reminder of the international inheritance of Australia’s Constitution. The few precious remnants of this paddle steamer whisper the story of where and how the nation’s foundations were laid.

Despite the disastrous depression and drought of the 1890s, the dream of a democratic federation was kept alive. There were conferences in New South Wales at Corowa and Bathurst and in Hobart before another convention to work on the Constitution Bill was held in 1897 and 1898. By then the idea of Federation had captured the imaginations of writers and artists, as well as pro-Federation politicians. Australia would be the first nation in the world to be formed not from war, but from words.

Women’s suffrage societies petitioned for the right to vote to be included in the new federal constitution, encouraged by South Australian women’s success in winning voting rights in their colony in 1895. But the Constitution Bill passed by the six colonial parliaments omitted this provision. Each colony then held a referendum and every voter had a voice in deciding on the creation of the new nation. In every colonial city and town, crowds cheered as the referendum results were posted up on towering noticeboards outside newspaper offices.

**The silver skippet**

But the birthplace of Australia was a long way from home, and there were only a few new Australians in attendance at the birth of their nation. Though the Constitution Bill was already approved throughout the six federating colonies, it still had to be passed by the British Parliament and assented to by the Crown. Edmund Barton and Alfred Deakin were among the six men who took the document to London for its passage through both the House of Lords and the House of Commons.

And that’s where the silver skippet comes in.

Our Constitution became law on 9 July 1900, in the summery countryside beyond the western outskirts of London, at the moment Queen Victoria signed her assent to the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act. In a traditional procedure that continues today, there are two signed originals of an Assent instrument. One is for the Executive, headed by the Queen herself. The second signed original is for the Parliament and, in
July 1900, that document was returned from Windsor Castle to Westminster. It is there today, secure in the archives of the House of Lords housed in the tall square tower rising at the opposite corner of the Houses of Parliament from Big Ben.

The other original was not kept by the Queen, but was specially prepared for presentation to the people of Australia, written by a skilled scribe on the pearly surface of a single sheet of vellum. Queen Victoria signed it at the top corner and her Great Seal was attached at the base. The wax seal, contained in a magnificent embossed silver skippet, is attached with a silver-wrapped crimson cord that can never be cut. Just as the faded ink of the Queen’s signature can never be retouched even by conservators, neither can her seal be severed from the document.

The Commission of Assent has been in Australia since Edmund Barton brought it back in 1900. However, the document it made law, the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act, was only brought to Australia in 1988. These founding documents were reunited for the first time in 2001, in the special gallery built at the National Archives in Canberra where they are now on permanent display.

Shaping the future

So there today we find the silver skippet. It tells of a historic moment for the ageing and ailing Queen Victoria, as well as for the people of the new nation she created by delegating some of her authority to a parliament, a judiciary and an executive headed by her appointed representative, a Governor-General. It tells us the story of our past and of our present as a constitutional monarchy, where authority to govern ourselves comes from the Crown. Under the Constitution, Bills passed by Parliament become law when the Governor-General gives assent on the Queen’s behalf. It might be a surprise to know that Section 59 gives the Queen a year to disallow any of our laws.

It can also be surprising to realise how the Constitution touches our lives every day – starting with breakfast! The provisions of Section 51 relating to quarantine, customs and overseas trade underpin our laws on imports. As such, they can affect the kind of coffee we drink and the sort of jam we put on our toast. Thanks to Section 92, which regulates interstate trade, our scrambled eggs or orange juice can come from anywhere in Australia – and it is this same section that guarantees our right to travel anywhere in the country.

Our Constitution is the ongoing authority for the powers of our Parliament to make laws, for the Executive to implement them, and for our federal courts to make binding judicial decisions. Speaking at a special citizenship ceremony at the National Archives in Canberra on Constitution Day in 2007, Governor-General Sir Michael Jeffrey declared:

The birthday of our Constitution is of significance to all Australians. It is a day for us to ‘own’ our Constitution and celebrate how it has shaped our past, our present and our future.

This is really what our constitutional story is about: the future Australia that we are helping to shape. What we learn from inspecting our constitutional foundations is that we all have a place there, that we all make our nation.

The original Australian Constitution and other founding documents are on permanent display at the National Archives’ Federation Gallery in Canberra. They are also accessible online through the Documenting a Democracy website at foundingdocs.gov.au.

After retiring from academic life in 1997, Dr Lenore Coltheart joined the National Archives and was responsible for researching and writing websites including Documenting a Democracy and Uncommon Lives: Jessie Street. She is now a heritage consultant and freelance writer based in Canberra.

(left) The first Commonwealth ceremony, in Centennial Park in Sydney, on 1 January 1901. During the ceremony, the first Governor-General took his oath of office at the desk where Queen Victoria signed her assent, which was specially sent from England for the occasion.
The National Archives invites all Australians to celebrate 9 July as Constitution Day, the birthday of the nation’s government. It is an opportunity for Australians to learn about the Constitution and why it is relevant to our lives and the issues that face Australia today.

In 2008, the National Archives held a series of special events to mark 9 July. In June, a successful Constitution Founders Lecture was held in association with the Supreme Court of Queensland Library. The Chief Justice the Honourable Paul de Jersey spoke on Sir Samuel Griffith and his role in framing the Constitution, and Justice Patrick A Keane spoke in celebration of the Constitution, challenging the necessity for a Bill of Rights. An original first draft of the Constitution, annotated by Sir Samuel Griffith, was on display.

On 9 July in Canberra, Senator John Faulkner, Special Minister of State, delivered the Constitution Day address, urging public engagement with the Constitution and the process of constitutional change. He also presided at a citizenship ceremony and launched the Making Australia Home project (see right).

A citizenship ceremony was also held in Brisbane, with Her Excellency, Ms Quentin Bryce, Governor of Queensland, welcoming new citizens.

On 13 July, as part of Constitution Day and NAIDOC week, Professor Mick Dodson delivered a thought-provoking lecture on the relevance of the Constitution for Indigenous peoples, both as ‘unfinished business’ for Australia and as part of international human rights.

In future years, it is hoped that Australians will come to understand their Constitution better and mark 9 July on their calendars as a day to celebrate.


Making Australia Home

Did you or someone in your family migrate to Australia during the 20th century?

The National Archives of Australia holds the migration records of many of the seven million people who made Australia home during this time.

If you or a member of your family migrated to Australia, your records could be held by the National Archives. Information about migrants may be found in passenger records, case files, naturalisation and citizenship records, migrant selection documents, and alien registration forms.

To provide easier access to these records, the National Archives is progressively making millions of migration files available online through the Making Australia Home project. Senator John Faulkner, Special Minister of State, launched the project on 9 July, Constitution Day. Under the Constitution, the Commonwealth Government received responsibility for administering migration.

For more information about Making Australia Home and migration records in the National Archives, go to www.naa.gov.au.
In 1919, a photograph album bearing the title ‘With the Camera at Anzac’ was submitted for copyright registration by the photographers – three young Australian soldiers from the First Railway Supply Detachment. It contains 41 black-and-white photographs of life at war in a campaign that has since become a national symbol of Australian mateship, sacrifice and resilience.

The album reveals views of Anzac Beach and the surrounding hills and steep gullies. There are images of sandbags and barbed wire, hospital tents and supply depots, captured Turkish soldiers, diggers in trenches, Lord Kitchener with his generals, crosses in the cemetery, the narrow beach and imposing landmarks such as the ‘Sphinx’, a rocky pinnacle on the cove.

Each image includes a handwritten caption by the photographers. Together the photographs make the album a powerful record of the Australian soldier’s experience at Gallipoli.

The photographers were George Downes, aged 21, of Leichhardt; Arthur James Cook, 22, of Balmain; and Henry James Lowe, 21, of Kogarah. All listed their occupation as railway clerk when they enlisted in September 1914 in Sydney. They were among 60 young men chosen from the staff of the New South Wales Government Railways by Lieutenant (later Major) EO Milne to form the First Railway Supply Detachment (RSD), 11th Australian Army Service Corps.

The detachment was sent to Gallipoli to operate a light railway intended to connect Anzac Beach with inland positions. The railway never became operational, but the unit remained responsible for off-loading and distributing water, rations and medical supplies. The photographs show scenes that must have been familiar to RSD soldiers – men leading and unloading mules, supply depots along the narrow beachfront and ships anchored offshore.

The album was sent to the Australian Government’s Copyright Office in February 1919 with an application for registration of artistic copyright as required under the Copyright Act 1905. The file contains a letter dated 10 March 1919 in which George Downes explained how the photographs were taken:

Messrs H J Lowe, A J Cook and myself worked together with the camera while on the Gallipoli Peninsula. Mr A J Cook was evacuated sick from Anzac on 27/9/15 and Mr Lowe and myself carried on until evacuation leaving the peninsula on 17/12/15 … The photos were actually taken on various dates between 1 July and 17 December 1915.

The application was delayed as Lowe was ‘held up in Melbourne owing to the influenza epidemic.’ Copyright was finally registered on 23 April 1919 after being signed by all three applicants.

The service histories of each soldier are recorded in their service files. After the withdrawal from the Gallipoli peninsula, the three men went on to serve in France, England and the Middle East before returning to Australia in late 1918 and early 1919.

Through this small album of photographs, the service files and the copyright papers, we can glimpse a mateship that survived the war. The soldiers’ determination to record their experience has left a permanent and personal record of Gallipoli.

You can view the entire album under the April 2008 ‘Find of the Month’ at www.naa.gov.au.

Jane Ellis is an exhibitions researcher at the National Archives of Australia.
From the House to the Archives

In early 2008, the National Archives and the Department of Parliamentary Services signed a document that will ensure important records about Parliament House are kept for the future.

The National Archives preserves the most valuable records created by Australian Government agencies. Among the most significant are those of Cabinet, which reflect decisions made at the highest level of government. But what about those decisions made about the house on the hill – Parliament House, that is. Brick, timber or fibro? Native garden or English? The location of the Prime Minister’s office? Height of the flag?

Records containing the answers to those questions will shortly come into the National Archives’ custody with the signing of the Records Authority for the Department of Parliamentary Services. This is a document which enables the department to transfer its most important records to the National Archives where they will be preserved and made accessible to the public in the future.

These records include more than 12,000 broadcasting videotapes of Parliamentary and Committee proceedings. Files covering the design competition of the new Parliament House, records relating to the construction of the building, and the official set of construction photographs will also be kept as national archives. Other records cover the Parliament House art collection, operation of the main flag, security of the perimeter of the building, and the landscaping and maintenance of the grounds.

The broadcasting videotapes provide a rich, visual perspective of Australia’s parliamentarians and their sometimes heated debates. Voices raised in anger, the waving of documents, pregnant pauses, the jeers – which cannot be captured by the written transcript – will soon be in safekeeping at the National Archives.

In addition to the audiovisual record of Chamber proceedings, there are also recordings of significant events held at Parliament House such as the memorial service for victims of the 2002 Bali bombings, visits by royalty and heads of state, swearing-in ceremonies for Governors-General, and the opening of a new Parliament. The recordings capture the emotion and ceremony of these important events.

With the signing ceremony for the Records Authority complete, the process of examining and sorting through the records is now well under way. The first delivery will consist of 300 rolls of Parliament House Construction Authority drawings and more than 1600 boxes that include the official set of construction photographs.

Under the Archives Act 1983, all records become available for public access 30 years after they are created, unless they contain sensitive information about individuals or information relating to national security or intelligence.

The Department of Parliamentary Services Records Authority has been several years in the making. It is a significant achievement for the department and was marked with a final signing ceremony in February this year.

By Matthew Eggins, government communications manager at the National Archives.
The position of Australia’s security and intelligence agencies 30 years ago was significantly different from that of today. Most Australians were aware of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO), which had achieved prominence in the 1950s with the defection of Soviet spies Vladimir and Evdokia Petrov and the subsequent Royal Commission on Espionage. ASIO’s main targets were the Communist Party and organisations and individuals believed to have communist links. Its relationship with sections of the Australian Labor Party (ALP) was at best uneasy.

An inquiry established

Gough Whitlam became Prime Minister in December 1972 with a commitment to review the operation of the security and intelligence agencies, particularly ASIO and ASIS. Relations between the government and the intelligence agencies were further strained by the so-called ‘Murphy Raid’ by Whitlam’s Attorney-General Lionel Murphy on ASIO offices in Canberra and Melbourne in March 1973. But the review was not solely a product of tensions between the Whitlam Government and ASIO. As the inquiry found, there were basic issues about the structure, efficiency and priorities of the agencies that any government would have had to face sooner or later.

On 21 August 1974, the Governor-General, Sir John Kerr, appointed Justice Robert Marsden Hope as Royal Commissioner to review Australia’s security and intelligence agencies. Hope was a judge of the NSW Supreme Court and Court of Appeal and had been President of the Australian Council for Civil Liberties between 1967 and 1969. George Brownbill, a senior officer of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, was Secretary to the Royal Commission and also acted as counsel assisting Hope.

The Royal Commission on Intelligence and Security was housed amid tight security in West Block offices, close to Parliament House in Canberra, although its only publicly identified contact points were a telephone number and a post box at the nearby Queen Victoria Terrace post office (now home to the National Archives).

The Royal Commissioner conducted extensive public and private hearings and visited many countries with which Australia had intelligence contacts. He gathered a mass of information from, and relating to, the security and intelligence agencies and spoke with many present and former employees. He also heard from people and organisations with a range of concerns, including some who felt that their lives had been seriously affected by security decisions. Hope was also given custody of the records of the Petrov Royal Commission.

The findings

Hope found many deficiencies in the status, control and performance of the

Intelligence and security records released

On 27 May 2008, the National Archives released selected records of the Royal Commission on Intelligence and Security (1974–77) to the public. Dr Jim Stokes discusses the origins and outcomes of this influential inquiry.
intelligence function. The agencies did not have an assured place in government, ministers showed little interest in them and they lacked clear direction on targets and priorities. Hope recommended that committees of ministers and senior public servants be established to set and oversee priorities. He also recommended that much of JIO be transferred to a new national intelligence assessment agency located within the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Hope’s criticisms of ASIO were scathing, although he noted that the situation had improved since the appointment of Justice Edward Woodward as Director-General in March 1976. Hope’s relationship with ASIO began badly when it became apparent that some senior staff were deliberately withholding information and discouraging other staff from talking to him. He found that ASIO lacked effective leadership and its management was capricious, hierarchical and driven by the views and prejudices of senior staff. Some staff were too close to political groups. Morale, communications and staff conditions were poor and gossip and cliques thrived. There were many capable junior and middle ranking officers, but they were frustrated by their working environment and by the failings of those above them.

Operationally, ASIO’s priorities were misdirected. Most of its resources were devoted to counter-subversion, targeting the various communist parties and other radical and protest groups to a point beyond what Hope believed was justified. Conversely, ASIO had devoted meagre and unsophisticated resources to counter-espionage, in particular to the strong and growing presence of Soviet bloc intelligence officers in Australia.

Hope and his staff examined hundreds of ASIO files relating to individuals who had received qualified or adverse security assessments and found that in some cases the assessment may have been wrong. He recommended the establishment of a Security Appeals Tribunal to provide a right of review.

Hope was kinder to the other agencies. He found that ASIS was ‘a singularly well-run and well-managed agency’ with good internal morale and a high sense of professionalism. However, ASIS suffered from the restrictions of a 1958 ministerial directive, which imposed ‘a bizarre mixture of great and small constraints’ and subjected it to the control of the Department of Foreign Affairs rather than its minister. In consequence, ASIS had become too cautious in exploiting intelligence opportunities. The problem was compounded by mutual antagonism and mistrust between ASIS and Foreign Affairs staff. Hope recommended that the Government acknowledge the existence of ASIS and give it a statutory basis.

Hope also reported favourably on DSD, which he found to be a very capably managed agency with a strong team spirit. He found that DSD’s signals intelligence and communications security functions were valuable but believed that DSD was too subordinate to the overall Defence management structure, which left it open to arbitrary budget restraints and administrative interference.

Hope’s legacy

Hope completed his work when he delivered his final group of reports to the Governor-General on 21 April 1977. The Fraser Government moved quite quickly to implement many of Hope’s recommendations, if in some cases in modified form. The Office of National Assessments was established in 1977 and the Security Appeals Tribunal in 1980. Fraser officially acknowledged the existence of ASIS in 1977 and legislation defining ASIO’s powers and obligations was strengthened. Auditing arrangements for the agencies were improved and committees of ministers, senior officials and eventually the Parliament were established to oversee their work.

Subsequent governments continued the reforms. Hope conducted a second royal commission on the security and intelligence agencies for the Hawke Government in 1983–84. The office of Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security was established in 1987, and ASIS and DSD finally received statutory recognition with the passage of the Intelligence Services Act in 2001. The present Australian security and intelligence community is very much a product of Hope’s vision.

You can read more about the Royal Commission on Intelligence and Security and view selected documents online at www.naa.gov.au.

Dr Jim Stokes is a historian and archivist.

Faces at the Archives

[top] Actor Noni Hazlehurst launched *Family Journeys: Stories in the National Archives of Australia* in Melbourne in March. The book features the stories of nine Australian families, including that of George and Eileen Hazlehurst, Noni’s parents.

[left] At the launch of *Family Journeys* were Maria Ang (centre) and other descendants of Marino and Rosina Casamento, Italian migrants who settled in Melbourne and whose story is featured in the book.

[bottom left] The Director-General of the National Archives, Ross Gibbs (centre), examines one of the top secret reports prepared by Justice Robert Hope for the Royal Commission on Intelligence and Security in 1974. With him are (left) the current Director-General of ASIO,
Paul O’Sullivan, and (right) George Brownbill, who worked closely with Justice Hope as Secretary to the Royal Commission.

[opposite page bottom right] Tony Press, Director of the Australian Antarctic Division, holding a map of the cold continent at the July launch of an exhibition of Antarctic maps at the National Archives in Hobart.

[top left] Christopher Koch, acclaimed author of The Year of Living Dangerously, spoke at the National Archives in Canberra in June and signed copies of his latest book, The Memory Room.

[top right] Senator John Faulkner, Special Minister of State and Minister responsible for the National Archives, launched Shake Your Family Tree Day in February in Canberra. This event, held nationwide in all National Archives offices, encouraged visitors to search for family records in the collection and offered advice on preserving family treasures.

[bottom left] In Sydney, long-time National Archives staff member Eddie Rutlidge (centre) showed visitors to Shake Your Family Tree copies of photographs from the collection.

[bottom right] Kate Grenville spoke about the archival research she did for her novel The Secret River, at Shake Your Family Tree Day in Canberra.
Keeping good records helps public servants perform their duties efficiently, effectively and ethically. It also maintains audit trails necessary for public accountability, transparency, and protecting the rights and entitlements of Australia’s citizens.

In early 2008 the National Archives released Check-up, a program for Australian Government agencies to assess the current state of their information and records management and ensure that vital records are being created and kept.

Check-up is available to Government agencies in an interactive electronic format and as an MS Word document. It contains questions which assess the adequacy of an agency’s recordkeeping system. They are based on the Australian Standard for Records Management, AS ISO 15489–2002, and the National Archives’ own standards, policies and guidelines.

Agencies can use Check-up to find out if they meet the National Archives’ minimum requirements for basic records management and the higher standards needed for records of high-risk business activities. They can also use it to determine where to put their resources to improve records management.

For more information about Check-up, see ‘Records management’ at www.naa.gov.au
Remember typewriters? Roneographs? Spirit duplicators? In a new book, National Archives conservator Ian Batterham explores the history of office copying over the 20th century – from typewriters to facsimile machines, laser printers and digital files. He also describes how to preserve the myriad of copies produced using these technologies.

The Office Copying Revolution: History, Identification and Preservation is an essential reference for anyone involved in paper conservation and those interested in the history of office technology. The book is generously illustrated with over 200 historical and contemporary images, including early advertisements, photographs, and technical drawings.

Mr Batterham drew extensively on the diverse material held in the National Archives, as well as many other sources. Published by the National Archives, The Office Copying Revolution was launched at a symposium of the Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Material in late July by ACT Senator Kate Lundy.

It can be purchased for $59.95 from the online shop at www.naa.gov.au.

FROM ARNHEM LAND TO THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Nine senior Arnhem Land men came to Canberra in June to help build links between their communities and major cultural institutions.

Canberra’s cultural institutions collaborated in bringing the group of Aboriginal elders to the national capital, Dr Joe Gumbula, an elder from Elcho Island who is currently an Australian Research Council Indigenous Research Fellow at the University of Sydney, led the group.

The elders wanted to learn what materials of cultural significance to their people are held by the institutions and offered assistance in describing them. They also advised on cultural sensitivities related to the material.

The various regions of Arnhem Land were represented by the group, which included Wukun Wanambi from Yirrkala, Joe Dhamanydj from Milimgimb, Steven Bara from Groote Eylandt, Dr Joe Gumbula and Don Winimba from Elcho Island, Samson Henry from Kakadu, Bobby Bunungurr from Ramingining, and Isaiah Nagurrurba from Denpeli.

While at the National Archives, the elders participated in a cultural awareness training session for cultural institution staff, which was led by Dr Gumbula. They also examined photographs from the National Archives’ collection, identifying some for copying to share with their communities and help younger generations understand their history.

Other venues visited by the group were the National Film and Sound Archive, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, National Museum, National Library, National Gallery, and the Australian National University Research School of Humanities.

[Top] Arnhem Land elders, Isaiah Nagurrurba, Bobby Bunungurr and Don Winimba at the National Archives.

[Bottom] Dr Joe Gumbula led a cultural awareness training session at the National Archives.
FOOTPRINTS – AN ABORIGINAL FAMILY’S STRUGGLE

A new archives publication, Footprints: The Journey of Lucy and Percy Pepper, reveals the struggles of a Victorian Aboriginal family in the early 20th century who were classified under government policy of the time as ‘half-castes’.

The book follows the lives of the Peppers from Gippsland through letters and documents held in the collections of the National Archives of Australia and Public Record Office Victoria. They show how the family coped with poverty, ill-health and the needs of seven children while forbidden by authorities from living with extended family on an Aboriginal mission at Lake Tyers. Percy Pepper moved his family around Victoria seeking work, served in World War I, and was granted a soldier settlement block on marginal land that he struggled to farm.

Footprints is a valuable resource for Aboriginal people who want to find archival records. Simon Flagg, from the Koorie Records Unit of Public Record Office Victoria, who co-authored the book with Sebastian Gurciullo, hopes it will motivate other Aboriginal people to trace their family history by showing the sorts of records that can be found in national and state archives.

‘A lot of people are unaware of the different policies that were in place for Aboriginal people in the 20th century,’ said Mr Flagg. ‘Footprints tells the story of a family battling their way through government policies and the impact of being defined as “half-castes” at the time.’

Footprints will interest anyone who wants to know more about the impact of Aboriginal policy in early 20th century Victoria and the effects of past legislation and practices on individuals and families.

Co-published by the National Archives of Australia and Public Record Office Victoria, the book was launched in May by the Victorian Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, the Hon. Richard Wynne, MP.

Footprints can be purchased for $10.00 from the online shop at www.naa.gov.au or from the Victorian Archives Centre in North Melbourne.

[above] Co-authors Simon Flagg (left) and Sebastian Gurciullo with Rita Watkins, granddaughter of Lucy and Percy Pepper, at the launch of Footprints.

DUPAIN VIOLINIST FOUND

During the Max Dupain on Assignment exhibition in Canberra, the National Archives was delighted to receive a call from Robyn Davies – the subject of the photograph that featured on the promotional material and catalogue cover for the exhibition.

The photograph, taken by Dupain in 1971, has the silhouette of a young violinist rehearsing at the Methodist Ladies’ College (MLC) in Burwood, Sydney. The National Archives did not have any information to identify the musician captured in it.

Robyn Davies learnt her image was part of the exhibition when her brother saw it promoted in the Qantas inflight magazine. ‘I remember the day well,’ said Robyn, who was in year 7 at MLC at the time. ‘The photograph was taken outside the library in front of yellow glass windows. I was in my sports uniform and had to rush to a distant part of the school to change. I was in such a rush I didn’t change out of my sports socks, so you’ll notice I’m the only girl in the photograph with long socks.’

Robyn continued to play the violin in school, in the MLC orchestra and with the Strathfield Youth Orchestra. In 1987, she moved to Papua New Guinea, where she still lives and works with local people translating the Bible into one of the 850 languages in that country.

Unfortunately, playing the violin is no longer part of her life. ‘I took my violin with me to PNG but the climate damaged it,’ she said ruefully. ‘Although I don’t play any more, I’ll never regret that I learnt.’
EXHIBITIONS

Strike a Pose ... with Lee Lin Chin
(see article on page 7)
National Archives, Canberra
Now showing until 12 October 2008

Armistice 1918
National Archives, Canberra
7 November 2008 to 26 April 2009

It's a Dogs Life! Animals in the Public Service
Ipswich Art Gallery, QLD
15 November 2008 to 26 January 2009

Just Add Water: Schemes and Dreams for a Sunburnt Country
Shear Outback – The Australian Shearers' Hall of Fame, Hay, NSW
8 August to 26 October 2008

Western Plains Cultural Centre, Dubbo, NSW
10 July to 28 September 2008
Bathurst Regional Art Gallery, NSW
5 December 2008 to 18 January 2009

National touring programs for It’s a dog’s Life, Just Add Water and Summers Past are supported by Visions of Australia, an Australian Government Program.

EVENTS

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY
Speakers Corner, National Archives Canberra
- Craig Stockings, The Battle of Bardia, 16 September, 12.30 pm
- Mickey Dewar, Darwin - no place like home, 28 October, 12.30 pm
Workshops and seminars, National Archives Canberra
- Identifying family photographs, 9 September, 4–5 pm
- Discovering archives: Records about the building of Canberra, 14 October, 4–5 pm
- Discovering archives: A digger in the family, 12 November, 3.30–4.30 pm
Free, but bookings essential: (02) 6212 3956 or events@naa.gov.au

NEW SOUTH WALES
Accessing archives online – workshops on using the National Archives’ website,
City of Sydney ‘The Water’s Edge Open Day’, Circular Quay, 6 September, 12.30–1.30 pm and 3–4 pm
Bookings and more information: Liz Wilson, City of Sydney Council on (02) 9265 9102
At the water’s edge: Customs and quarantine records at the National Archives, seminar at National Archives Sydney Office, 9 September, 10–11.30 am
Free, but bookings essential: (02) 9645 0141
National Archives records relating to European migration, Family History Group of Bathurst seminar, Kelso, 20 September, 9 am–4 pm
Bookings and more information: janeb@ceinternet.com.au
National Archives records relating to post offices, Royal Australian Historical Society 2008 Conference ‘History in the Heritage Landscape’, Forbes, 18–19 October, 9 am–4 pm
Bookings and more information: (02) 9247 8001 or outreach@rahs.org.au

NORTHERN TERRITORY
Territory World Heritage Parks: Kakadu and Uluru, seminar at National Archives Darwin Office, 17 September, 10 am–12 pm
Free, but bookings essential: (08) 8985 0334 or duncan.mackenzie@naa.gov.au

QUEENSLAND
Seminars at National Archives Brisbane Office:
- Just add water: Schemes and dreams for a sunburnt country, 16 and 20 August, 9–10 am
- Compulsory acquisition: Commonwealth property in Queensland, 17 and 20 September, 9–10 am
- Our daily bread: Food and drink in the National Archives, 15 and 18 October, 9–10 am
- Armistice Day: Remembering 1918, 15 and 19 November, 9–10 am
- Morning tea with the State Director, 17 and 20 December, 9–10 am
Free, but bookings essential: (07) 3249 4226

TASMANIA
Adult Education research seminar: How to use the National Archives, National Archives Hobart Office, 8 November, 10 am–12.30 pm
Cost: $44.00 or $39.60 concession through Adult Education
Enrolments and inquiries: (03) 6233 7237 or visit www.adulteducation.tas.gov.au

VICTORIA
Finding defence service records in the National Archives of Australia,
Shrine of Remembrance, South Yarra, 9 October, 2–3 pm
Entry, including refreshments, by gold coin donation
Bookings essential: programs@shrine.org.au or (03) 9661 8100

WESTERN AUSTRALIA
Seminars at National Archives Perth Office:
- Introductory talk and tour, 20 August, 10.30 am
- Defence records in the collection – seminar and tour, 8 October, 10.30 am–12 pm
Free, but bookings essential: (08) 9470 7500

For the latest information on events at the National Archives around Australia, go to ‘What’s on / Public events’ at www.naa.gov.au.
The National Archives’ exhibition Strike a Pose showcases photographs of Australian fashion from the 1960s and '70s including these 1975 granny dresses from House of Osti.

NAA: A6135, K25/8/75/47