

Friends

NEWS | AUTUMN 2023



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Friends

It's March already! I hope everyone has settled into a safe 2023.

The draft minutes for the 2022 Annual General Meeting are on the National Library website under 'Friends corporate documents', with a brief summary in this newsletter. Two vacancies on the 2023 Committee remain if you would like to join us—contact the Friends Office on 02 6262 1698.

Our first event for 2023 has already happened! Dervla McTiernan was our guest for Meet the Author in February. The online Weekly News will keep you informed of forthcoming events. The Library exhibition *Viewfinder: Photography from the 1970s to Now* has been extended until 30 April. Please visit and dive into nostalgia.

You may have seen media reports concerning the Library and the flagship online information system Trove. The Australian Government has recently announced a new National Cultural Policy, Revive, and indicated that heritage institutions' funding will be addressed in the May budget.

Over the last five years, Government funding for Trove has been for short-term periods, with current funding due to end in June 2023. While Trove draws some revenue from external sources including other libraries and cultural institutions who share their collections through Trove, and the Library has digitised some of its most important collections through philanthropic donations, Government funding is essential to maintain it.

The Australian public uses Trove for free—a commitment the Library will continue. The Library's vision for Trove can be found by entering 'Trove Strategy' in the search box on the NLA website front page.

You may be interested, as I was, to read the article by the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA), the library sector's peak body, about its concerns for the future of Trove and how we, as individuals and groups, can advocate for its continuation. Enter 'Speak up for Trove' in your search engine to read more.

Margaret Nichols | Chair



PANDANUS FISH TRAP: FRIENDS' GIFT ON DISPLAY

Pandanus Fish Trap, the Friends' gift to the Library to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the building's opening, is now on permanent display inside the entrance to the Main Reading Room.

The 75-centimetre glass sculpture is by internationally recognised artist, writer, poet, academic and advocate Jenni Kemarre Martiniello OAM who is of Arrernte, Chinese and Anglo-Celtic descent. In reflecting First Nations woven forms, Jenni pays tribute to the oldest living weaving tradition in the world.

Visiting museums and art galleries, Jenni saw Indigenous woven objects presented 'as if they belonged to a dead culture'. Yet she knew, through her Arrernte (Australian Central Desert) grandmother, that weaving continued as a living practice.

During a residency at Canberra Glassworks in 2008, Jenni saw the possibility of evoking traditional weaving within glass, adapting the Zanfirico glass technique invented centuries ago by glass makers on the Venetian island of Murano, Italy.

Indigenous woven fish and eel traps and dilly bags are the inspiration for her works but she uses the 'caneworking' technique to recreate the beautiful form, light and colours of traditional First Nations weavings. Jenni chooses not to depict ▶

Jenni Kemarre Martiniello, *Pandanus Fish Trap*, 2019

specific clan weaves out of respect for traditional Aboriginal law and copyright, and intellectual property and communal property rights laws. She reimagines their essence and complexity in her intricate patterns. In *Pandanus Fish Trap*, like others of her works, Jenni demonstrates that a cultural tradition can be continued through the non-traditional medium of glass.

Jenni grew up in Adelaide, her father an Arrernte-Chinese man with a strong connection to Country, and her mother the daughter of English migrants. She joined the navy, where she qualified as a radar plotter and weapons assessor, and married and had children. Encouraged by her parents, she then returned to her love of art, graduating from the Canberra School of Art (now the ANU School of Art) in 1985 with a major in sculpture. Double honours in philosophy and art history at the ANU followed, then teaching at the University of Canberra, painting and photography before her interest turned to glass.

Her stunning hot blown and coldworked glass sculptures have received multiple accolades—NAIDOC Artist of the Year and an ACT international Women's Day Award in 2010, the prestigious Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award and a Creative Arts Fellowship at the National Indigenous Art Awards, Australia Council for the Arts in 2013, and she has won and been shortlisted for multiple national art prizes. Jenni is listed on the ACT's Honour Roll 2010 and 2013; in 2018 she was the ACT Senior Australian of the Year nominee. In 2022 she was awarded an OAM for her services to the creative and visual arts.

Her works have featured in solo and other exhibitions and are held in public and private collections in Australia and overseas—among them the National Gallery of Australia, Australian Parliament House, British Museum, cultural institutions in the Solomon Islands and Palau, and the prestigious Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection of the University of Virginia and Corning Museum of Glass, New York.

In First Nations communities, knowledge and cultural practices are shared and passed to younger generations. Jenni's Lower Southern Arrernte heritage through her Grandmother is matriarchal. This is enshrined in Grandmothers Law where senior women hold cultural knowledge and keep the genealogies which they pass on to successive generations. This is mirrored in Jenni's approach to her own creative practices. She recognises that the nature of glassblowing requires a collective and most importantly that she has an intergenerational role. She has been active in the wider arts community for many years and in 2006 established Kemarre Arts, the ACT's first independent Indigenous-run social enterprise to support fellow Indigenous artists.

A Canberra resident for more than 50 years, Jenni works from her studio at Canberra Glassworks.

In *Pandanus Fish Trap*, she brings together a work inspired by ancient cultural practice and interpreted through the contemporary medium of glass. In her words: 'What I learned early was that you have things that belong to your spirit—the way that you express yourself. These are the abiding things.'

All Friends should visit the Library to see their wonderful addition to the Library's collections.

Kerry Blackburn | Friends Committee member,
Newsletter editor



INTO THE FUTURE: A NEW LIBRARY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Have you wondered how the National Library manages the 11 million items in its collection, functions such as acquisitions, cataloguing, circulation, stack access, reporting and more? The answer is an Integrated Library Management System (ILMS).

The Voyager® system, used by the Library since 2003, is now reaching the end of its life. As a user, if you 'Search our collection' on the Library's website home page, your request will be submitted to Voyager which searches and returns the results for you to look at, copy and request. The supporting software to handle the display of search results is called VuFind®. These systems handle approximately 6.2 million online visits a year.

The Library has chosen a new system to replace Voyager. FOLIO (an acronym for Future Of Libraries Is Open), a modern web-based system launched in 2016, is based on open-source software. Unlike proprietary systems such as Voyager, where the vendor 'owns' the software and all changes and upgrades are made by the vendor, open-source software is free and provides the source code to the recipient, allowing each FOLIO organisation to change how it looks and feels to suit its needs. The power of FOLIO is that member libraries can collaborate and make changes available to any participating FOLIO library. FOLIO is used by major academic libraries around the world and the Library of Congress announced the acquisition of FOLIO in September 2022.

Installation and customisation of FOLIO at the National Library is happening now. The project team, with Library IT programming and librarian staff and contractors, is aiming for an install date in mid-August 2023.

FOLIO will also have a public face, Blacklight. A Beta version will be made available in the second quarter of 2023 for public comment. We will let you know through the online Friends Weekly News when this happens.

Margaret Nichols | Friends Committee Chair



YOUR FRIENDS MEMBERSHIP HELPS THE NATIONAL LIBRARY

Through Friends' membership, you are part of a community of passionate National Library supporters and advocates. Friends benefit from on-site and online events and presentations that promote scholarship and awareness of our cultural heritage. In turn, Friends support fellowship programs, digitisation projects and have gifted art to the Library.

When reminded, please renew at nla.gov.au/friends/join-the-friends-online and encourage others to join.

NATURAL MAGICK: EMBRACED BY 'EXCELLENT WISE MEN'

Rare Books and Music Curator Dr Susannah Helman explores Giambattista della Porta's *Natural Magick* (1669)

'are not you a fo[o]lish ass that cannot reed without a glass'

It's not every day you see a rare book inscribed with a mild insult in reverse. The writer taunts a future reader who needs a mirror to read their words. The inscription is in an early hand, from a time—the 19th century at the latest—when writers used the 'long s', what looks like 'fs' to us, for a double 's'.

This happened to this foolish ass recently, when looking at the endpapers of *Natural Magick* by John Baptista Porta, a *Neopolitane in twenty books ... Wherein are set forth All the Riches and Delights of the Natural Sciences*, London: Printed for John Wright next to the Sign of the Globe in Little-Britain, 1669. The book is part of the Jamie and Michael Kassler Collection.

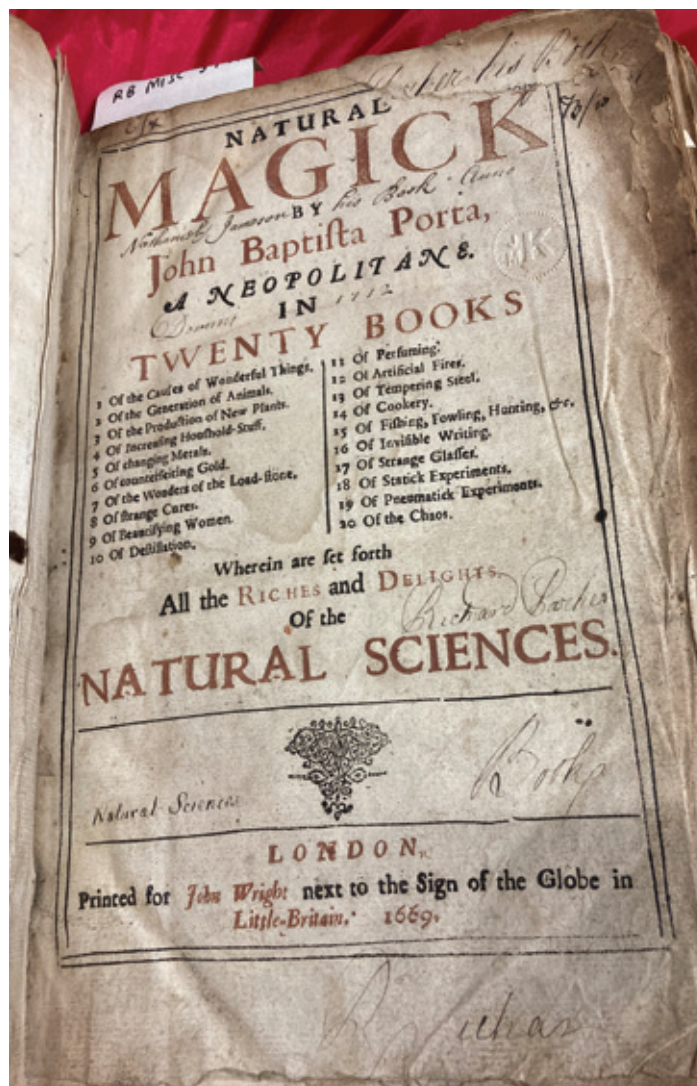
The book was first published in Naples, in Latin as *Magia Naturalis* (1558), (*Natural Magic*) for a scholarly audience. It became very popular and the author released an expanded edition in 1589, the basis of this 1669 English edition.

Its 409-odd pages are divided into 20 books, on a tantalising range of topics: 'Of the Causes of Wonderful Things', 'Of the Generation of Animals', 'Of the Production of New Plants', 'Of Increasing Houshold-Stuff', 'Of changing Metals', 'Of counterfeiting Gold', 'Of the Wonders of the Load-stone', 'Of strange Cures', 'Of Beautifying Women', 'Of Destillation', 'Of Perfuming', 'Of Artificial Fires', 'Of Tempering Steel', 'Of Cookery', 'Of Fishing, Fowling, Hunting, &c.', 'Of Invisible Writing', 'Of Strange Glasses', 'Of Statick Experiments', 'Of Pneumatick Experiments' and 'Of the Chaos'.

The book's subject is natural magic, from a medieval and early modern tradition of 'books of secrets', practical guides to mysteries and curiosities of nature. The author argues that there are two kinds of magic: 'the one is infamous, and unhappie, because it hath to do with foul spirits, and consists of Inchantments and wicked Curiosity; and this is called Sorcery ... The other Magick is natural; which all excellent wise men do admit and embrace, and worship with great applause.'

The author Giambattista della Porta (c. 1535–1615) was a polymath from Naples. He wrote on optics, physiognomy, music and cryptography and many comic plays. He was a founder of Naples' *Accademia dei Segreti* (Academy of Secrets) in 1560. His ideas attracted the attention of various arms of the Inquisition.

The Library's book was clearly in demand—it is rich in doodles, inscriptions, and marks of ownership. It changed hands frequently in the early 18th century. Some inscribed names appear several times, somewhat excessively, as if in competition with former owners. They include Felix Singleton in 1712, Nathaniel Jameson in 1712, Richard Parker in 1746, John Hudleston in 1756, and a P. Burnyeat. More recently, it was owned by Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt (1882–1963), the American bookbinder and collector of botanical books. It also has two instances of the inscription: 'Forte dux fel flat in gutture', Latin for 'By chance the leader inhales poison in his throat', which sounds like the English words 'forty ducks fell flat in gutter', an example of Latin student humour.



A late 17th-century reader has summarised sections of the book's text in an abbreviated hand. One reader has thoroughly inked out references to sexual activity. The haloing effect the ink has created over centuries tells us that they used iron gall ink, as would be expected.

The book is in a typical English calf-skin binding, contemporaneous with the printing, with tooling on the edges and corners. It was common for binders to reuse old books when making a binding. In this case, it is exciting that some of the binders' waste used in the construction of the binding can be identified as text from a printed, red letter, likely 16th-century edition of the *Decretum Gratiani*, a popular legal text book of church (canon) law, first compiled in the 12th century.

Looking closely can reveal fascinating secrets about the making and history of a book. With thanks to the Library's Collection Care team for examining the binding.

Read more of Susannah's discoveries in Rare Books and Music by visiting the Library's website and searching 'Stories' then 'Blog'.

JOYCE EVANS: COLLECTION-IN-FOCUS

The National Library of Australia is home to the Joyce Evans Archive, one of the largest archives by a contemporary Australian photographer. It comprises over 70,000 analogue images and 80,000 digital files, as well as over 100 manuscripts boxes. Through this archive, you can view striking images of places such as the Menindee Dam, look at images of community sporting events, observe portraits of Barbara Blackman, Faith Bandler and many others. A selection of these images, together with archival material, feature in the collection-in-focus display, *Joyce Evans*, which opens in the Library on 4 April 2023.

Joyce Evans OAM (1929–2019) was an important figure in Australian photographic history who enjoyed an eclectic career. Drawn to the medium from an early age, Melbourne-born Evans was an avid amateur photographer who documented demonstrations and marches with her Leica camera. Living in Sydney, Evans studied visual art with John Olsen in the 1960s and enrolled in the first fine art (art history) course with Bernard Smith at the University of Sydney in 1969.

In 1977 Evans established one of Australia's earliest commercial photographic galleries, the Church Street Photographic Centre in Richmond, Victoria. This was one of her most significant contributions to Australian photography. There she exhibited works by prominent Australian artists and sold prints by nineteenth and twentieth-century masters. The gallery also had a bookshop, hosted lectures and ran workshops. Evans developed a specialist understanding of the photographic medium. She used this knowledge to continue to deal prints in a private capacity after her gallery closed, and she also valued photographs and was an advisor for the development of public and private collections.

Upon closing Church Street in the early 1980s, Evans, aged in her fifties, completed formal studies in photography at a private college in Melbourne. Being an avid traveller, she went on to tour Australia on photography excursions. These excursions



enabled her to document issues such as social inequality, environmental degradation and racism, whilst also exploring art, portrait and landscape photography. Her images offer a window into Australia—particularly regional and remote areas—in the 1980s and 1990s. In 1991, the Library commissioned Evans to take documentary photographs of major writers and artists of Australia, country towns and community events. These images are also preserved at the Library, and some feature in the collection-in-focus display.

We hope you can visit the Library's *Joyce Evans* collection-in-focus display, opening on 4 April. Perhaps, like us, your appreciation and respect for her eclectic photographic career will increase through seeing highlights from the Joyce Evans Archive. You can also read more about Evans' life and photography in *Joyce Evans*, written by Sasha Grishin AM FAHA, recently released by NLA Publishing and available in the National Library of Australia Bookshop.

Dr Grace Blakeley-Carroll and Shelly McGuire | Exhibition curators

Joyce Evans, Uluru, Northern Territory, c.1977–81

NOT TO BE MISSED ...

Bookmark This is the podcast channel from the National Library. Coming soon is season two, *Bold Types*.

Taking inspiration from the new NLA Publishing title, the series features the book's author—writer, historian, editor and former journalist Dr Patricia Clarke, and *Guardian Australia* political reporter Amy Remeikis. Special guests will reflect on the experiences of their early counterparts as well as the current working environment for women journalists.

Subscribe at www.nla.gov.au/stories/podcast or wherever you get your podcasts.



LIBRARY TOURS

Curious about the Library's architecture and art, its history, collections and treasures on display in the galleries? Do you want to know how to access the fascinating range of information that is available?

Join one of the tours with our trained volunteer guides. These take place at **11am each day** (except for Christmas Day and Good Friday). Tours are free but bookings are strongly recommended.

Go to nla.gov.au/visit/tours to book your place. Tours are subject to guide availability.



READ THE LATEST
FRIENDS BLOG POSTS
AT NLA.GOV.AU/FRIENDS



SAM WALLMAN, VISUAL ARTIST: 2023 CREATIVE ARTS FELLOW

Sam Wallman's interest in environmental politics and Green Bans was piqued when he came across independent filmmaker Pat Fiske's documentary *Rocking the Foundations* (1985) at the National Film and Sound Archive in Canberra some 15 years ago. Her personal account of the controversial, once-powerful New South Wales Builders Labourers Federation (BLF) and especially its 1970s environmental and social activism—ordinary people effecting change—resonated with Sam.

A committed unionist, lover of history, comics-journalist, cartoonist and arts editor, Sam delved further into the stories of Green Bans, many more than the well-documented story of The Rocks in Sydney. He produced intricate, eye-catching illustrations; a comic about the Green Bans for *The Guardian* (Australia) and *Internazionale* (Italy); an animated video for the Victorian Trades Hall and Workers Museum; and a commissioned illustrated obituary of BLF leader Jack Munday that was gifted to his widow. Along the way, Sam became aware of the lesser-known Pink Bans, actions by unionised construction workers in the 1970s in defence of persecuted LGBTQIA+ people before the emergence of the Gay Rights movement. His large-scale Pink Bans artwork is on permanent display at the University of Melbourne.

Sam's research into the National Library's collections, as the 2023 Friends Creative Arts Fellow, will uncover much more about the genesis of the Green and Pink Bans and the part played by unions in broader public and social issues. Original source materials, personal archives of people directly involved in the bans, audio recordings, graphics, manuscripts, newspapers and ephemera will all inform his research.

What new work will Sam create? He plans a series of illustrations and a large-scale banner in the highly ornate style of trade union banners of the early 1900s. The banner will feature illustrations and text adapted directly from material he discovers in the Library's collections. An article on his Green and Pink Bans art project will be published in *Overland* literary journal and he has secured support for the works to be exhibited at several galleries, Trades Halls and a labour history conference.

Through his fellowship, Sam's intention is 'to celebrate unlikely coalitions of people, to highlight what we have in common in a

Sam Wallman, Banner to mark the 50th anniversary of the deaths of 35 construction workers in Australia's worst industrial accident, 2020



time of great fracturing and division' and for his project to advance 'politically engaged and historically informed creative arts'.

Sam's home base is a small room (the repurposed Art Studio of the former Operative Painters & Decorators Union) in the Victorian Trades Hall, Narm/Melbourne. However, his diverse works have reached far beyond unceded Wurundjeri country.

His illustrations have been published in *The Guardian* (Australia and Britain), *New York Times*, and by the ABC and SBS. His drawings of the 2015 refugee crisis in Eastern Europe and of everyday people's responses to the 2016 US Presidential Election were published in American, Australian and Italian media. He has produced animations for the ACTU and La Trobe University and works for the National Gallery of Victoria, Sydney Opera House and Dark Mofo among others. Sam is a former Art Editor and Contributing Editor at *Overland*. And he is an award winner—in the 2014 Human Rights Award Media category for 'At Work in Our Detention Centres: A Guard's Story'. This long-form comic journalism is one of three pieces for which he was nominated for Walkley awards; the others, the end of the Australian automotive industry and the Eastern European border crisis. Sam's first graphic novel, *Our Members be Unlimited: A Comic about Workers and Their Unions*, was published last year and shortlisted in the 2023 Victorian Premier's Literary Awards non-fiction category.

He is generous; his downloadable art largely available for workers, unions (world-wide) and volunteer-based groups and social movements although most of his work is funded by a small group of supporters through 'patreon', a platform for creative artists.

Sam will take up his fellowship in the Library in November this year. Friends can look forward to a fascinating presentation at a later date—we will keep you posted.

Creative Arts Fellowships are highly sought after, rewarding both artists and the Library. The Friends provide \$10,000 funding each year to enable an artist from fields such as the visual arts, theatre, music and dance to undertake a four-week residency in the Library where they immerse themselves in the collections and develop new work inspired by the collections. Applications for the 2024 fellowship will open soon. Check the Library website for further information.

Kerry Blackburn | Friends Committee member, Newsletter editor

Sam Wallman at work in his studio, Victorian Trades Hall, 2022

MEET MATTHEW FROM BOOKPLATE

If you have a teenage dream to own a book café where can that lead? For Matthew Robinson it is Bookplate at the National Library.

Matthew took over Bookplate a few days before Christmas 2021, and immediately faced challenges, anticipated and unanticipated. Visitor numbers to the Library were low; COVID-related restrictions were continuing; and the ‘Convoy to Canberra’ demonstrators blocked access to the Parliamentary Triangle early in the year. Since then, Matthew has re-established Bookplate as a ‘go-to’ destination in Canberra for brunch and lunch, or coffee, tea, a glass of wine, in lovely surrounds. Bookplate is readily identified as ‘that place with the beautiful [Leonard French] windows’ or, sitting outside, where you can relax and enjoy the lake views.

A graduate in Psychology and Arts from the University of Canberra, Matthew’s career path has been in hospitality—from barista to casual waiter in embassies, and in catering, event and functions management at other cultural institutions. In each, Matthew recognised the importance of a great team—and he is immensely proud of the team at Bookplate.

What are Matthew’s interests outside Bookplate? Eclectic tastes in reading; Canberra history; family histories, especially of those who have long-farmed on the Monaro Plains as well as the non-English-speaking forebears who arrived in country New South Wales in the 1890s. However, his greatest passion is the history of food and beverages! It was during the extended COVID lockdowns before Matthew acquired Bookplate, and when the hospitality industry was largely closed down, that he delved deeper into this subject. He set himself a goal to post each day on Instagram, some 350 words, on whatever captured his imagination. Unsurprisingly many were to uncover the little-known and quirky stories of food and drink. Do you know that Camembert, a variant of Brie, was named by Napoleon III after the village to which a monk from the Brie region fled during the



French Revolution and there learned how to make cheese using the local, different milk? Or that at a reunion dinner in 1937, the illustrious patentees began with a cocktail for which Friedrich Müller had been granted Letters Patent for a ‘new and useful Hair-Tonic’ (including 40% whisky, best corn, and 20% port wine) by the US Patent Office in 1909?

Perhaps, thanks to Matthew’s research and blogs, we will be fortunate to find Mrs Beeton’s lemon biscuits, or one of the food treats he has found in newspapers since the 1880s on Trove, at Bookplate at some stage. In the meantime, come in and enjoy the brunch or lunch from the menu that evolves with the seasons. Or indulge in cake with excellent coffee or a pot of tea (made with real tea leaves). You can book online at bookplate.com.au or phone 6262 1154.

Kerry Blackburn | Friends Committee member, Newsletter editor

Matthew Robinson of Bookplate, in front of one of the Leonard French windows



PHILANTHROPY: HELPING DELIVER THE VISION

Philanthropic donations help the Library to deliver our vision of transforming access to Australian history and culture by making the most unique parts of our national collections available to everyone, everywhere. Contributions from our generous supporters also allow us to host academics and creatives for research residencies in our Fellowships and Scholarships programs, assist in the purchase of works of important figures in the Australian arts, and so much more.

In 2022, the Library undertook an incredibly diverse array of donor-funded projects, from the digitisation of the papers of women leaders, ground-breaking literature from remote First Nations communities in the Northern Territory, and newspapers from regional Victoria from the mid-nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries, among many others. The Library’s 2022 Donor Report tells the story of these projects and so many more besides—all of which were made possible by the generous support of our donors.

Some of you will have received a copy of this report in the mail or via email late last year. If you visit the Library, copies of the report can also be found at the Honour Wall in the entranceway to the Main Reading Room. You can request a copy by emailing philanthropy@nla.gov.au or find this report and ones from years past on the Library’s website www.nla.gov.au/support-us/thank-you.

The Library gratefully acknowledges all of the incredible support that we receive from our Patrons and donors.



CAPTAIN MERVYN BOURNES HIGGINS: IN COMMEMORATION

Henry Bournes Higgins, politician and judge, is best remembered for his 1907 Harvester Judgement where he determined 'fair and reasonable' wages for an unskilled labourer. However, among his professional papers held in the Library are personal items that reflect a father mourning the death of his only child in the Great War. In correspondence with the AIF, Higgins sought information concerning his son's death and his grave at Kantara War Cemetery, Egypt. And we also find the 'Dead Man's Penny', Memorial Scroll and tribute message from King George V that he received as his son's next of kin. Justice Higgins wrote that he would grieve 'for the rest of his life'.

Captain Mervyn Bournes Higgins (1887–1916)—Oxford graduate, barrister, survivor from the Gallipoli campaign, and Mentioned in Despatches for 'gallant or distinguished service in the field' on the Sinai Peninsula—was killed on 23 December 1916 during the Battle of Magdhaba, Sinai.

Faced with devastating wartime losses and grieving families, in 1916 the British Government proposed a design competition to provide a commemorative memorial plaque to the next of kin of British and Empire servicemen and women whose deaths were attributable to the war. The winning design, by Edward Carter Preston, was revealed in 1918. A commemorative scroll would be issued together with the plaque.

The bronze plaque soon became known as the 'Dead Man's Penny', 'Death Penny' or 'Widow's Penny'. On the obverse is Britannia holding a laurel wreath over the rectangular box where the deceased's name is embossed. There is no rank, unit or decoration. Two dolphins (Britain's sea power) are either side of Britannia and, at her feet, two lions (Britain) with the designer's initials E. CR. P. engraved near the paw of one. The other lion stands over a German Imperial eagle. 'He Died for Freedom and Honour' is inscribed around the margin. The reverse is blank apart from 'WA' on plaques produced at the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich.

The next of kin also received a Memorial Scroll, a letter from the King and, in Australia, a letter from the AIF noting that the plaque was being sent as 'second-class mail matter'.

More than one million plaques and scrolls were presented in commemoration of Allied sailors, soldiers, airmen and women. The 600 plaques issued to the next of kin of women who died were amended to 'She Died for Freedom and Honour'.

Kerry Blackburn | Friends Committee member, Newsletter editor



Correspondence between AIF and Justice H. B. Higgins, 1921; and Matthew Bournes Higgins' Commemorative Memorial Plaque, issued c. 1922

2022 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 2022 Friends AGM was held on 10 November, with Friends Committee Chair Margaret Nichols welcoming members in person and online.

Margaret noted that as the COVID pandemic continued to affect people's lives during the year, the Friends Committee was guided by the Library in its conduct of an events program. Twelve successful events were held, a mix of in-house, online and hybrid events.

Treasurer Jo Schumann presented the financial report. The pandemic and lower membership income both affected the financial outcome; however, a small surplus was recorded and the organisation remains in a healthy financial position. The Auditor issued an unqualified opinion.

Margaret announced the award of the 2023 Creative Arts Fellowship to Sam Wallman, and Sam thanked the Friends in an online video which is available on the Friends Facebook page. Margaret also announced the award of the Friends Medal to Kerry Blackburn and noted that the Staff Travelling Fellowship was not yet awarded for 2023. Margaret thanked Library staff for their support, along with retiring Committee members Ken Douglas, Larissa Karpish, Nivi Nair, Jo Schumann and Karin Oldfield. Draft minutes of the meeting are available on the Friends Corporate Documents section of the website.

YOUR 2023 FRIENDS COMMITTEE

Elected members:

Margaret Nichols
—Chair
Gary Kent
—Deputy Chair
Michalina Stawyskyj
—Treasurer
Kerry Blackburn
Nancy Clarke
Sue Gage
Peggy Horn

NLA representatives:

Dr Marie-Louise Ayres
—Director-General
Stuart Baines
—Acting Director,
Community Engagement
Dr Grace Blakeley-Carroll
—Program Manager,
Curatorial
Lauren Conron
—Friends Executive Officer

Co-opted members:

Catherine Anderson
Amanda Lynch
Grahame Thom

2022 FRIENDS MEDAL RECIPIENT

The Friends Medal was awarded to Kerry Blackburn. Each year since 2006 the medal has been presented to recognise a valuable contribution to the work of the Library by Friends members, Library staff and volunteers.

Kerry's work as a volunteer and member of the Friends Committee has been wide ranging. As Chair of the Committee in 2021, she initiated the development of Memoranda of Understanding between the Friends and the Library to provide clear guidelines around the Creative Arts Fellowship and the Travelling Staff Fellowship which comprise the Friends' major annual expenditure.

She has been a volunteer tour guide for 10 years and member of working groups that develop tour guides' guides. Kerry is also part of the small group of volunteers contributing to AusStage, the wonderful digital database hosted by Flinders University that is preserving the history of live performance in Australia from 1789 until the present and is recognised in the Australian Memory of the World Register.

And of course, Kerry is well known to regular readers of this newsletter, as managing editor. Kerry also researches and writes many of the articles in the quarterly newsletters. She approaches the task with ingenuity, with the Friends' interests and Library's promotion in mind. Thank you, and congratulations Kerry.

Lauren Conron | Friends Executive Officer

FRIENDS EVENTS

For more details, dates and bookings for Friends-exclusive events, see the online Friends Weekly News emailed to members or search 'What's on' on the Library website.

March: Meet the Author—Allen Mawer will discuss his latest book *East by West: The New Navigation of Ferdinand Magellan* with Dr Martin Woods, the former Director of Curatorial and Collections Research, and Curator of Maps, at the Library. Join them at the Library or online via Zoom.

March: Poetry Lounge—UNESCO's World Poetry Day is celebrated on 21 March each year. Join our online event via Zoom to celebrate some of Australia's wonderful women poets.

April: Smart phone photography—Enjoy the special exhibition *Viewfinder: Australian Photography from the 1970s*, then join the workshop with a professional photographer and be encouraged to enter the Friends competition with the theme 'the National Library building'.

May: Talk by the Artist—Hear textile artist Julie Ryder talk about her creation of embroidered maps and her inspiration from the Library's Maps Collection. Join us in the Library Theatre or online via Zoom.

May: Coffee with the Curators—View the new Collection-in-Focus exhibition of works by renowned photographer Joyce Evans OAM with Dr Grace Blakeley-Carroll and Shelly McGuire, followed by coffee and scones in the Friends Lounge.

June: Join curator Guy Hanson to preview the new special exhibition on Australian sport.

July: Coffee with the Curator—Explore the latest iteration of the Treasures Gallery, showing more of the Library's wonderful Collection items, with the curator.

Friends are also welcome at events conducted by the Library. Check the Library website for details.

You can visit the *Kenneth Rowell: Designer for the Stage* exhibition in the Collection-in-Focus space until 2 April and the *Viewfinder: Australian Photography from the 1970s* exhibition, extended to 30 April.

FRANK HURLEY: IN POETRY

Poetry is found in every culture and nation. Each year, on 21 March, UNESCO World Poetry Day draws our attention to the power and beauty of language expressed through this genre.

In selecting poet Jordie Albiston's *Frank* as the special offer for Friends in this newsletter, we can appreciate her finely crafted words and a different portrayal of Frank Hurley through his evocative Antarctic diaries and images.

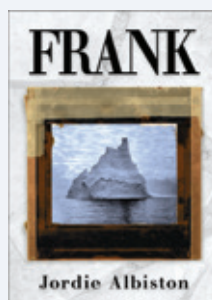
Dr Jordie Albiston was the Library's 2021 Creative Arts Fellow in Australian Writing. Drawn to documentary poetry, poetry based on historical sources transformed by poetic imagination, she immersed herself in the Library's Hurley Collection and his journeys to Antarctica with Douglas Mawson and Ernest Shackleton in the early years of the twentieth century. She wrote more than 130 poems to bring Hurley to life in a new light.

A flautist with a PhD in English Literature, Jordie published 14 poetry collections, three books of children's poetry and a handbook on poetic form. Her poetry lent itself to other genres; with two collections adapted for music-theatre and performed at the Sydney Opera House. Others of her works have been set to music by Australian and North American composers.

She has received many accolades for her writing, including the Mary Gilmore Award, Patrick White Literary Award, Wesley Michel Wright Prize, NSW Premier's Prize and John Bray Award in the Adelaide Festival Awards for Literature; and been shortlisted for the Prime Minister's Literary Award, multiple Premiers' Literary Awards and four times in the Kenneth Slessor Prize for Poetry.

After her death last year, aged 60, Jordie was described by fellow poets as a 'brilliant, incandescent poet' who was 'a mentor and a guiding light for so many'. Whether your interest is in beautiful writing, Frank Hurley's papers or Antarctica, *Frank* makes fascinating reading.

Kerry Blackburn | Friends Committee member, Newsletter editor



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Friends will receive a 20% discount on copies of *Frank* by Jordie Albiston when purchased between 1 March and 31 May, online and in-store.

To claim your 20% discount on *Frank*, use the promotional code **FRANK** at checkout. You can also use this code to apply the usual Friends 15% discount* to other eligible online purchases.

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