

Friends

NEWS | WINTER 2024



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

The Committee of the Friends of the National Library of Australia have all been delighted with the strong public support for our 2024 program so far. The theatre at the Library had few spare seats for May and June events. What made these sessions so memorable for all those who were present was the deep engagement of the audience, evidenced by the range and thoughtfulness of the discussion. Most of those who attended came away impressed and excited.

This and other events on our calendar show the importance of the Friends to the Library. The Friends range widely in putting together our events, always, of course, in areas of significance to the Library.

We would like to continue to build our events to cater for all tastes among the Friends. We are always looking for suggestions for possible future events. If something does especially appeal to you, and you think it might have broader appeal to the Friends, please do mention your idea to a member of the Committee, or write to the Committee about it. We want to be relevant to Friends' interests, to engage closely with all Friends and to create an atmosphere that is full of excitement and interest.

The Committee would also like to invite Friends to contribute to our Newsletter. An article does not have to be long. It could relate to research you may have conducted in the Library or any other matter you believe may be of broader interest to the Friends. You may choose to comment on one of the events that you have attended at the Library or you may seek to muster support for a keen personal interest. Please consider writing for the Newsletter to add to the enjoyment of all.

We sincerely hope that you will attend forthcoming Friends events and participate in Friends activities.

Please encourage your friends to attend and join the Friends. As we noted recently a large attendance always produces a buzz of its own.

Finally, we are excited to note the return of the Library's Exhibition Galleries scheduled for re-opening in July.

Michalina Stawyskyj | Co-Chair



HOPES AND FEARS: AUSTRALIAN MIGRATION STORIES

Debates over the recent Federal budget put a spotlight on the issue of migration to Australia. What is the right number of migrants? What skills should they have? How many overseas students should be allowed to come and study? What proportion of the intake should be devoted to refugees and family reunions? These questions have fuelled political debates from before Federation. This reflects how migration stories are very much at the heart of Australian history.

Australia House (London), £10 Takes You to Australia: Children Under 19 Go Free!, c.1960, nla.gov.au/nla.obj-1107337919



The Library's new temporary exhibition, *Hopes and Fears: Australian Migration Stories*, explores Australian migration history through the lens of the Library's collections. The Library holds an amazing range of material including letters, drawings, photographs, books, magazines and posters which date from the arrival of the First Fleet through to the creation of the White Australia policy; and the later growth of a modern multicultural society. There are papers of politicians and migration officials as well as the advertising material used by governments to promote migration. There is also material documenting the many individual stories of those who made the journey to Australia and their struggle to start a new life. *The Hopes and Fears* exhibition showcases a fascinating selection of these many and varied records from Australia's migration history.

Exploring the history of migration to Australia starts with an important fact. First Australians have lived on the Australian continent for at least 65,000 years. They did not cede the land that the British claimed, and they continue to assert their sovereignty. When Governor Arthur Phillip arrived on Gadigal Country with the First Fleet on 26 January 1788, he did not have their, or any other peoples of the Eora Nation's, permission to build a settlement at Sydney Cove. The process of colonisation, which has unfolded ever since, resulted in the dispossession of the traditional owners from their land. First Australians resisted the British but were in most instances pushed off their Country. Competition for resources, disease, violence and coercion wrought terrible damage but Indigenous nations survived to reclaim lands and waterways, and their cultures and languages are today often resurgent.

The Library holds an extensive collection of material relating to the administration of the colonies and the convict system. This includes First Fleet journals, drawings, paintings and photographs of convict life along with official documents. Colonial governors had the power to issue tickets of leave and pardons which allowed convicts varying degrees of freedom. Emancipated convicts could receive a land grant, purchase land and start businesses. Other convicts, who were not serving life sentences, could gain these freedoms by completing their sentence.

The Library also holds material documenting the development of the White Australia policy. For example Arthur Calwell, Australia's

first immigration minister, produced pamphlets intended to explain migration schemes to the general public. In publications such as the pamphlet *I Stand by White Australia*, published in 1949, Calwell reiterated the policy. Sometimes migrants produced their own publications; for example, Wong Loy-Wong (aka Samuel Wong) published *Arrogant White Australia: The Case for a Quota for Coloured Migrants* in 1949:

This White Australia Question leads us to a very illogical and strange conclusion, because according to missionary propaganda in Asia we are told that we, the people in Asia, are good enough to enter the Pearly Gate[s] ... but not good enough to live a short life on the Australian continent with Messers Chifley, Menzies, Calwell, Fadden and their followers.

Non-English language newspapers, produced by, and for, migrant communities and their descendants, are another important part of the Library's collections. These papers enable people to keep up to date with news from their places of origin and learn about their new country. They are produced in a range of languages and cater to an audience who understand varying levels of English. Many of these newspapers have now been digitised and are available on Trove.

More personal accounts of the migration experience can be found in the Library's Oral History and Folklore Collection which comprises more than 55,000 hours of recordings. Australians from diverse backgrounds are featured in this collection. Migrants and refugees describe their journeys via plane, ship or fishing boat. They explain how they adapted to a new culture, while keeping their own traditions alive. Second and subsequent generations also explain their experiences. They also express feelings of loneliness and belonging, and explain how migration has shaped their identity.

The National Library continues to collect material relating to Australia's migration history. The Library works with culturally and linguistically diverse communities to create a record of their experiences in Australia.

Hopes and Fears: Australian Migration Stories, opens on 26 July 2024

Guy Hansen | Director, Exhibitions

ALL ROADS LEAD TO THE NATIONAL LIBRARY

Canberra is still a small country town in many ways, despite being an actual city it is still easy to navigate and impossible to escape knowing everyone's business and having everyone know yours, just like a country town.

I've recently come to the National Library of Australia to run its Bookshop after a career in audience engagement at a handful of the other cultural institutions, and the building immediately felt like home because of what I call 'The Canberra Effect.'

By that, I mean there is a strong interconnectedness that has attached the Library to the growing Canberra community since its doors opened in 1968 and I'm only just finding out, in 2024, all the parts of my own work and my own community connected through it.

As a writer and film critic for twenty years for *Fairfax* and *The Canberra Times*, Trove and the physical collection are

sometimes the only place I can find some of the earlier pieces I wrote before Canberra Times published its arts writing online, and especially older pieces I have lost to broken hard drives and bad personal archiving.

Back when I was younger and full of energy, I ran a series of arts residencies for the CSIRO and the publication **SPECTRA** that I co-edited with the artist Mary Rosengren is available in the Library catalogue.

I used to spend my nights here across two degrees in my poor student days, studying in the Reading Room where there was good heating (and good books).

I started my career in film with a week of work experience in the offices of *Ronin Films* in 1986, and I worked for *Ronin* into my late 20s. *Ronin* was started by **Andrew Pike**, author of the **definitive history of Australian film**, who himself worked here at the Library in the film collection in the 1970s, and who tirelessly (still) distributes educational documentary, and the occasional hit narrative film [he released *Strictly Ballroom* (1992) and *Shine* (1996)].

Andrew's programming of arthouse film nights led to him running his own cinema, ***Electric Shadows*** – which was a formative cultural home for so many Canberrans growing up or attending university here in the 1980s and 90s – and it imprinted a love of film on me.

Andrew's friend **Karen Foley**, a colleague from his National Library Film Collection days, launched *Electric Shadows Bookshop* in the cinema foyer in the late 80s and I used to give the shop staff their lunch breaks for many years.

All these decades later, some of those *ESB* bookshop staff have grown up into renowned authors and I'm selling their books in our Bookshop – including **Christos Tsiolkas**, **Kate Fullagar** and **Kate Crawford**. One of my favourite things about working in the NLA's beautiful bookshop is that, even though decades have passed, I see so many of those faces that used to come to the *Electric Shadows* late shows and Sunday Double features I used to program in the early 1990s. We're all looking a little bit older and greyer, but the Library Foyer sometimes has that 'village green' feel, where you get to catch up with old friends and re-make acquaintanceships after so many years.

I also run into scientists from my CSIRO days, retired and working on their family histories, or like my pal Dr Sarah Ryan, meeting to help build the Library's collections on women in STEM. My career took me in the mid-2010s to work for the **National Film and Sound Archive** which, of course, grew from the **National Historical Film and Speaking Record Library** collection once housed within the National Library collection, and created as its own separate collecting institution after an announcement in Parliament in April 1984, and given its own building in the old **Institute of Anatomy** building on McCoy Circuit in Acton.

Many of the NFSA staff, and its own **Friends** association, were part of the cohort of Library staff who moved with the collection from the Library to the NFSA, and having been a long-time public servant myself I can appreciate the work that went into the establishment of this separate entity, and some of the frustrations (**well documented in Trove**) that both NFSA and National Library staff had to work through as the separation occurred.



The fingerprints of the Library were and still are throughout the NFSA collection. I would often find Andrew or Karen's handwriting amongst papers, or my own handwriting on film trunk labels of 35mm prints of *Strictly Ballroom*.

The National Library of Australia features quite prominently in one of my favourite vintage Australian films, ***The Demonstrator***, filmed in 1971 and featuring a cocktail party scene shot in the NLA Foyer. We Canberrans are used to seeing our city looking glamorous on productions like *Secret City*, *Total Control* and *The Code*, but in 1971 the government of the day was so excited to have a feature film shooting in town they instructed government departments to give the production their full support and the Library and parts of the military provided locations and staff at no cost to the filmmakers.

Back here in 2024, and in the Library foyer, I'm very much enjoying working with the greater Library staff and meeting the members of the Friends of the National Library.

Drop in and say hello next time you're visiting the building.

Cris Kennedy | Program Manager, Retail

Cris Kennedy holds the Oscar awarded to Cinesound Review's Ken G Hall (1901–1994) for the documentary *Kokoda Front Line!* (1942). Hall dedicated the Oscar to its cameraman Damien Parer who filmed the winning piece but was subsequently killed in action in 1944.



LIBRARIES VS. ARCHIVES

Sometimes visitors on tours of the National Library ask about the difference between libraries and archives.

It's an understandable question with a straightforward answer but many qualifications too, and being asked it in the one-of-a-kind National Library wouldn't help. There are over 12,000 libraries in Australia, overwhelmingly school libraries, and also thousands of special and community and state public libraries.

In general, an archives builds, manages and controls use of archival records (analogue and digital), sometimes also coordinating a system of complementary records held elsewhere. In general, libraries provide access to recorded information, usually by managing collections but often also by offering gateways to information and collections held by others. Confusingly, the collections libraries manage occasionally include archives they've acquired or copies of original archives held elsewhere. Sometimes too, libraries run archives as part of their overall operations, e.g. in universities and local government.

What then is the difference between the sources of recorded information libraries make accessible and the archives that archives manage?

First, libraries. The material in a school library would differ from, say, the technical reports in a mining company's library, but let's just say that usually, library holdings comprise a variety of printed and unpublished textual, multi-media, digital and other sources.

Second, archives. They can be just as varied, but their origins are different. Archives are records which, by a deliberate or other process, are retained for posterity – hence, archival records. A record is something uniquely created and kept fixed as evidence

to denote or memorialise that something happened, i.e. occurrences of infinite variety ranging from a shopper filing a receipt and a business raising a purchase order to a social club creating minutes of a meeting. Individuals, families, churches, political parties, business firms, governments and others all create records, usually managing them within record-keeping systems. Thus, all archives are records and must be maintained, even in libraries, according to appropriate methods and principles. Still, most records don't achieve archival status nor need to; most, for example photos taken with a smartphone, don't survive a day; personal finance records perhaps 5–7 years, while a few such as some criminal records might need to be kept for decades. Paradoxically, some records – like Cabinet papers and birth certificates – have predetermined enduring value.

The collections of Australia's nearly 500 archival organisations still are mostly in paper format but are increasingly digitised or born digital. However any and every format is possible; the CSIRO has an air archive at Cape Grim, Tasmania, and the National Film and Sound Archive's name explains itself. There are "archives" of copied archives as well; the ANU's Pacific Manuscripts Bureau holdings are entirely copies.

Today the words "library" and "archive/s" are used indiscriminately, interchangeably, and creatively: a community hub will advertise a tool and equipment library and a magazine publisher offer access to an archive of back copies. The Internet Archive self-describes as a digital library. In Brisbane there's a second-hand bookshop called Archives Fine Books and an entertainment venue called Archive Beer Boutique. In Berlin, Archivist Studio makes shirts from upcycled luxury hotel sheets. And none of these uses match the sense philosophers such as Derrida and Foucault ascribe to *l'archive*. The Library's tour guides are truly challenged.

Michael Piggott | Former staff member & retired archivist

FAWKNER'S FIRSTHAND ACCOUNT OF EARLY MELBOURNE

The Winter 2023 edition of the *Friends Newsletter* featured an article on a broadside published by John Pascoe Fawcner in 1851 to commemorate the separation of the Port Phillip District from New South Wales, as the new colony of Victoria.

Fawcner, having arrived aboard the ship *Enterprise* in the new settlement atop Port Phillip Bay on the Yarra River in October 1835 (along with John Batman who had first ventured there a few months earlier), is regarded as one of the founders of what is now Australia's second largest city.

Thanks to the collecting endeavours of Sir John Ferguson, the National Library of Australia holds Fawcner's account of the early months of the nascent settlement.

The Papers of John Pascoe Fawcner (1803–1867), which came to the Library with the rest of the Ferguson collection, include Fawcner's '*Journal of preparations for departure to and proceedings at Port Phillip*', covering the period 18 July 1835 to 3 August 1836.

Librarian Pam Ray, formerly of the National Library, described the journal as 'undoubtedly of greatest interest to scholars studying the foundation of Port Phillip'*.

Sir John purchased the journal around 1923 from Elizabeth Ann Walsh, widow of the Melbourne political activist John Joseph Walsh. Walsh had acquired the journal through his marriage in 1870 to Fawcner's widow Eliza. Elizabeth, who was Walsh's fourth wife, was herself a grandniece of Fawcner. Her grandmother was sister to Fawcner's father.

The journal was published in 1982 in an annotated edition edited by the biographer of Batman and Fawcner, the late Cecil Billot. ** In his introduction, Professor Manning Clark wrote that upon its acquisition by the Library, the journal:

became part of that rich collection in the history of Australia. Historians and readers interested in the pioneer days in Port Phillip strangely made no use of it. We assumed that the treasures on early Victoria were held either by the Mitchell or the [State Library Victoria].

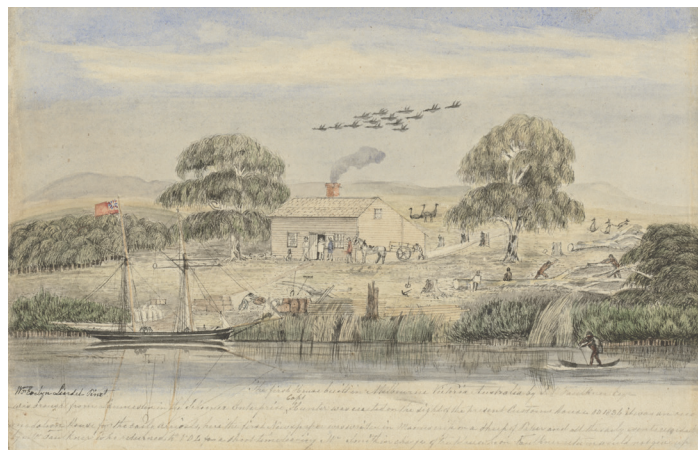
The journal is an astonishingly detailed and candid record of the early days of Melbourne, of which a few example entries must suffice:

'Made Port Phillip and entd. The Heads at 4 P.M. Flood tide & very smooth water and brought up' (10 Oct 1835).

'Went out surveying the country, me & Chas on Horseback and Derra-mert. Saw several Kangaroos, found the Soil poor and feathery, shot a Goose a teal and Pigeon – returned home about 5 P.M' (17 Jan 1836).

'Mr Hy Batman went down to the Mary Anne with his Friend, Lancy. Brought back some spirits, had from Lancy or Hesketh. He also had some rum from the Caledonia as did Mr Edmund Ferguson likewise. This morning, Capt'n. Symors, Dr Cottar & Mr Gardiner returned from their excursion, they looked fagged and very wet' (12 Feb 1836).

'A quantity of Wattle Trees yet in Bloom. This Commences a New Year, It is to be hoped it will prove fortunate' (31 Dec 1836).



The journal also features numerous references to the Indigenous people of Melbourne and surrounds; however it would only be a few short years until they were entirely dispossessed of their lands.

* Manuscripts in the National Library of Australia relating to the Settlement of Port Phillip, *The La Trobe Journal*, Oct. 1984.

** *Melbourne's missing chronicle: being the Journal of preparations for departure to and proceedings at Port Phillip*, by John Pascoe Fawcner; edited by C.P. Billot (Quartet Books, Melbourne, 1982).

Gary Kent | Friends Member

W.F.E. Liardet, *First House Built in Melbourne by J.P. Fawcner*, 1836, nla.gov.au/nla.obj-134635895

W.T. Smedley, *The Enterprise, and Fawcner's House on the Yarra; Captain Lonsdale's House*, 1887, nla.gov.au/nla.obj-135236956



CREATIVE ARTS FELLOW UPDATE

Late last year, I was fortunate enough to undertake a Creative Fellowship at the NLA, thanks to the generous support of the Friends of the National Library of Australia.



Top: Image credit: Lindi Heap

Left: Artwork, Sam Wallman, *Pink Bans*, 2023

I spent my days researching the Pink Bans, which were industrial work stoppages carried out by unionised construction workers in support of persecuted queer people, over 50 years ago. These industrial actions are significant because they took place prior to the emergence of the mainstream gay rights movement. I am interested in this chapter of history because of my political orientation, my sexuality, my day job, and the focus of my art practice. I also think the Pink Bans are worth reflecting upon because they subvert the unthinking, incorrect stereotype of blue-collar workers as inherently backward, uncaring or reactionary.

I was researching a topic about which quite little has been recorded, so the fact that the NLA holds such diverse Collections made the Fellowship very exciting to me. I felt as if I might be able to uncover new information in the Collections, to join some dots. As anyone reading this will know, the NLA does not just hold formal publications, but also personal letters, diaries, artworks, oral histories, and all matter of ephemera.

It was pretty profound to look through, for example, the personal papers of Bob Pringle, a central figure in the Pink Bans – I felt as if I was almost in dialogue with him through space and time. I also loved reading about how the solidarity between the different marginalised groups flowed back and forth, zig-zagging and criss-crossing.

Access to the Collections of the NLA is obviously the main benefit of the Fellowship. But equally, the luxury of having time, space and pro-active support from the librarians, to go deep down a portal of your choosing – it is all very special.

I would encourage everyone to apply for the Fellowship. You don't have to be an academic or an established artist or writer. The Library wants to bring different kinds of people into the fold – the institution belongs to all of us, quite literally.

I am currently adapting the research into a 120+ page comic, attempting to tell the history of the Bans in an accessible format, and vitally, reflecting on what lessons we might be able to take from them today. This forthcoming book absolutely would not exist without the Fellowship, and the Friends of the NLA. Sincere thanks for making the library that little bit more open and inclusive.

Sam Wallman | 2023 Creative Arts Fellow

2024 APPEAL: ELECTION EPHEMERA

The National Library's election ephemera collection is the largest collection of political memorabilia in Australia.

This collection tells the rich story of our democracy – from the first federal election in 1901, to the first female Parliamentarians in 1943, to the Dismissal election of 1975, and beyond.

Among the huge array of items in the material are a "how to vote" card for Edmund Barton in 1901, an election poster for pioneering suffragist Vida Goldstein in 1917, all the way to hats, stickers and confluents from our most recent federal elections.

But democracy is made by citizens as well as politicians, and this is a collection created by everyday Australians: much of this material was donated to the National Library by citizen collectors.

Now, with your help, we want to digitise these rare, fragile, and important materials so we can share them with all Australians online.

By helping us raise \$300,000 this year, you can help us bring the story of Australian democracy to life on Trove.

To find out more and to donate, please visit: nla.gov.au/support-us/2024-appeal



PROVOCATIONS: ARGUING ABOUT HISTORY

May 8 saw a Friends event almost pack out the NLA Theatre and present true intellectual stimulation. Forget the ABC's Q & A this was food for the mind, truly.

Former D-G of the Library, now Doctor, Anne-Marie Schwirtlich, proved a wonderful host/moderator to two of Australia's leading history intellectuals, Professors Peter Stanley and Frank Bongiorno.

Under the rubric of "Provocations – Arguing About History" the audience was treated to two punchy ten minute summaries of military history and political history-making today by Stanley and Bongiorno.

This was followed by a moderated discussion led by Dr Schwirtlich and finally a good 25 minutes of questions from a very focussed audience.

Peter Stanley observed that he felt "military history has changed" and the "long boom in military history might be fading". Though he also observed it was precisely 50 years since the seminal work, "The Broken Years" by one of Canberra's most distinguished historians Bill Gammage (who was in the audience).

Frank Bongiorno's assessment of current political history writing was that it was much more diverse in approaches now as evidenced by the rise of the "Democracy sausage" and its meaning. He was not sure now whether the fabled sausage should be eaten before or after voting, was it a reward for doing one's civic duty.

Provoked to think about the question "what is the point of history" both authors had different takes. Bongiorno felt his students found it to be a form of storytelling, albeit hopefully well documented. While Stanley threw up the interesting concept that "it is the way we connect with cultures and characters that are different to us, both in time and place".

From the enthusiasm and size of the audience this was a highly successful event.

Max Bourke | Newsletter Editor



YOUR FRIENDS MEMBERSHIP HELPS THE NATIONAL LIBRARY

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

When reminded, please [renew your membership online](#) and encourage others to join.

DEAR MUTZI

Dear Mutzi is a story that has been with me for a long time. It came from a curiosity I had about my grandfather, Harry, where he came from and how his early life shaped the man he was. It also came from a deep yearning I felt to know my great-grandparents, Max and Edith Pollnow, who perished during the Holocaust. I knew little more than a few scant facts about Max and Edith until the day I found a box of their letters written to their son, my grandfather, who was known to his parents as Mutzi.

This discovery was one I'll never forget. They were hidden in plain sight, in a box in my mother's study. I remember my heart racing as I scanned the wisp-thin papers, some type-written, some hand-written, all stained and weakened by time and, crucially, all written in German. I knew these letters contained important information – all dated between 1938 and 1940 – but I was yet to find out just how significant they would be.

Harry was a different man to many different people. To me he was an old man, doting and quick-witted, who for most of my childhood years gave me a pickle jar full of silver coins for my birthday, who wore his Canon DSLR around his neck at every family get together and was always interested in knowing about my life, even if he couldn't quite remember who I was. He was beloved by his many colleagues and friends, a revered member of the medical community. Charming, fiercely intelligent, almost supernaturally fit. But in Harry I always sensed an old, secret despair for what happened to him and his parents all those years ago.

I wrote this book as a way into this story of Harry's early life, when he was a young boy growing up in Berlin in the early 1930s and was tragically caught up in the persecution of the Third Reich. While I was writing, Harry entered his 100th year of life. He remembered certain aspects of his early life with starting clarity, while other parts were erased. *Dear Mutzi* had been a way for me, as both writer and granddaughter, to convene with this history, these people, events and memories, to bring to light this part of my family's story.

Tess Scholfield-Peters | Author, *Dear Mutzi*

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

As this is the Friends' Newsletter we are hoping that some of you will have some thoughts you would like to share.

We are asking for contributions of up to 400 words on any topic that you think might be worth sharing especially about the Library, matters biblio or any of the topics thrown up by the Newsletter.

We will only edit for clarity where necessary.

Please address your thoughts to: **The editor** via friends@nla.gov.au. We are very keen to hear from you!

FRIENDS EVENTS

For further details keep an eye on the weekly eNews or go to the Library's **What's On** page.

July

Complete Accord: Miriam Hyde
2024 Creative Arts Fellowship Presentation
With oboist Celia Craig

Hopes & Fears: Australian Migration Stories
Exhibition opening

August

Coffee with the Curator
The photography of William Yang
With Allister Mills

September

Indigenous Perspectives on Landscape
Presentation by Professor Margo Neale
In partnership with the Australian Garden History Society

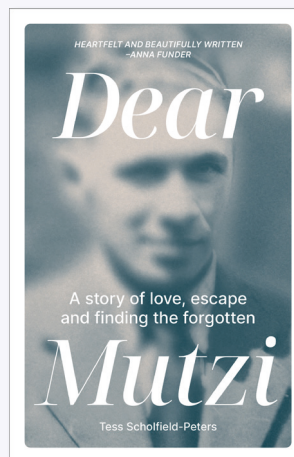
October

White Gloves
One-night-only collection viewing

November

Annual General Meeting

NATIONAL LIBRARY BOOKSHOP OFFER FOR FRIENDS



Friends will receive a 20% discount on copies of *Dear Mutzi* by Tess Scholfield-Peters when purchased before 31 August 2024, online and in-store.

To claim your 20% discount, use the promotional code **MUTZI** at checkout.

You can also use this code to receive your usual Friends 15% discount* on other purchases.

** Discount does not apply to limited edition prints, discounted and remaindered stock, newspapers, stamps, copy cards, magazines or vouchers.*