



# Royal Australian Historical Society

Knowing your history

20 March 2025

[View this RAHS email in your browser](#)



Construction of Sydney Harbour Bridge from Lavender Bay c.1931 (RAHS Collection)



Photo courtesy Gary Sturgess

## Convict Colloquium at History House

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History House hosted a gathering of historians on 14–15 March to share their research about the convict system in NSW and early colonial society. The colloquium considered the convict system in legal and archaeological contexts, colonial social history, women convicts, marriage, the military, Commissioner Bigge, departing convicts, the broader Pacific maritime context of the colony, and the use of AI to create spoken debates from the past. Brisk discussions followed each presentation with contributions about sources, methodology and issues arising from gaps in resources.

Drawn from academia, PhD students and independent scholars, the speakers presented their work in progress to an invited audience. The speakers were Deborah Oxley, Martin Gibbs, Paula Jane Byrne, Jan Barkley-Jack, Gary Sturgess, Kathrine Reynolds, Carol Liston, Nicola Garvey, Damian Gleeson, Perry McIntyre, Glen Lambert, Michael Flynn, Mark McLean, David Roberts, Matthew Cunneen, Chris Maxworthy and David Stuart.

With few opportunities in recent years to catch up and learn who was working on what, the two days buzzed with exchanges of ideas. With limited digitisation

used was invaluable and the colloquium dispersed, determined to keep up the network in the future.

Adjunct Associate Professor Carol Liston AO

RAHS Vice-President



Kobi Shetty MP with authors of *Duck the Hassle* at the Sydney Bus Museum

## **Transport Heritage Grant Project: *Duck the Hassle* Book Launch**

The Sydney Bus Museum launched its 2023 Transport Heritage Grant publication, *Duck the Hassle*, this past weekend at the Sydney Bus Museum.

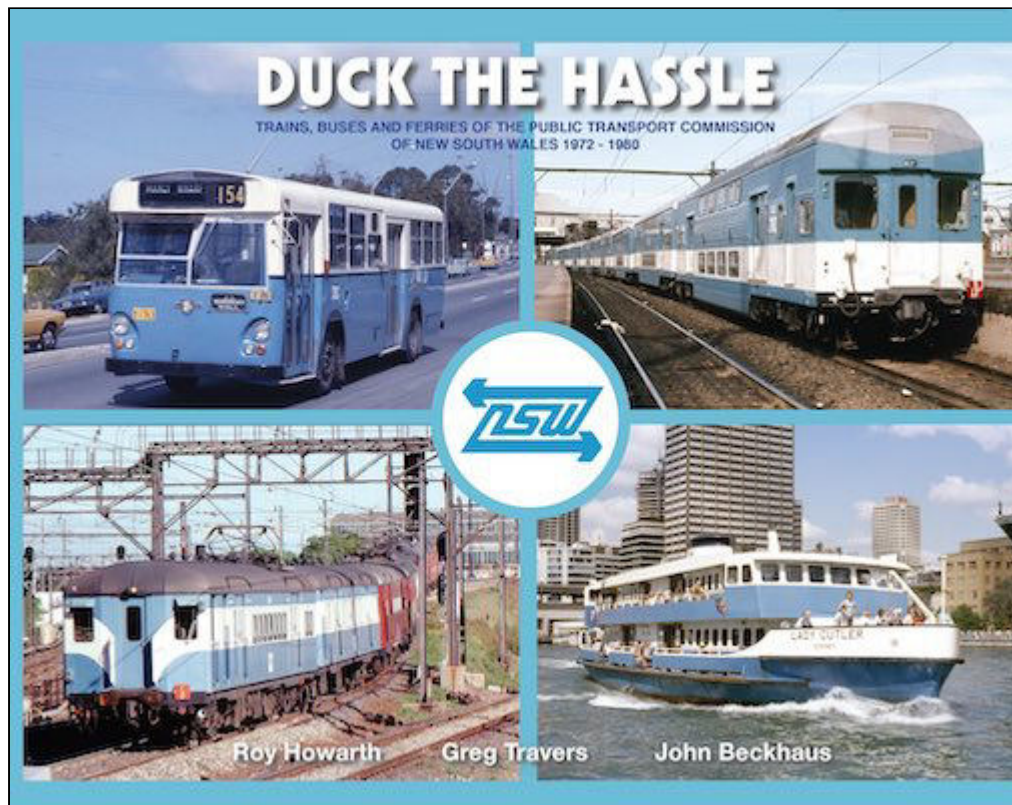
From 1972 to 1980, buses, ferries and trains all operated under the control of the Public Transport Commission (PTC). This Government department brought radical changes to the public transport system in NSW. 'Duck the Hassle' was a marketing slogan used by the PTC featuring the character of Donald Duck to encourage people to leave the car at home and catch public transport.



*Duck the Hassle* is a 320-page hardcover colour book authored by well-known Sydney transport historians Roy Howarth, Greg Travers and John Beckhaus. If you're interested in purchasing this publication, [you can find it here](#).

The 2024 Transport Heritage Grant round saw the largest number of successful applications for the *exhibition, interpretation, education or publication* category. We hope your historical society will be inspired to submit a public transport project for the 2025 round, which will open in the second half of the year.

If you want to discuss a potential 2025 Transport Heritage publication project, please email Maryanne Byrne at [grants@rahs.org.au](mailto:grants@rahs.org.au)





Stuart Read (Photo Courtesy Christine Yeats)

## Exploring Chinese-Australian Heritage Landscapes

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On Wednesday, the RAHS hosted a special evening lecture, 'Chinese Australian Heritage: Sites, Landscapes, and Cultural Legacies,' presented by historian Stuart Read. The talk explored the diverse and lasting impact of Chinese communities on Australia's rural and urban landscapes.

Stuart examined Chinese water management techniques in agriculture, such as dam construction for crop irrigation, and the influence of Chinese businesses, temples, and community spaces in shaping urban streetscapes. He also challenged the audience to reconsider what we define as heritage, highlighting the diversity of sites of Chinese significance on the State Heritage Register.

Stuart spoke of the current efforts to list the Kwong War Chong & Co. premises on the State Heritage Register. Established in 1883 by Philip Lee Chun, the company served as a general store, trading hub, remittance agency, and community centre for Chinese market gardeners, especially those from the Zhongshan region. In 2019, Hector Abrahams Architects – whom the RAHS engaged to work on History House – conducted a heritage assessment of the

and social hub for Sydney's Chinese community. [Read more here.](#)

The talk also touched on Australian garden history, highlighting plant species introduced from China and the deep agricultural knowledge brought by Chinese market gardeners. Stuart even brought plant cuttings from the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney, emphasising this rich legacy. The event was a thought-provoking reminder of the far-reaching contributions of Chinese Australians and the evolving nature of heritage preservation.

## RAHS Events



### 2025 Central Coast Regional Seminar

**Speakers:** Carol Liston and Christine Yeats.

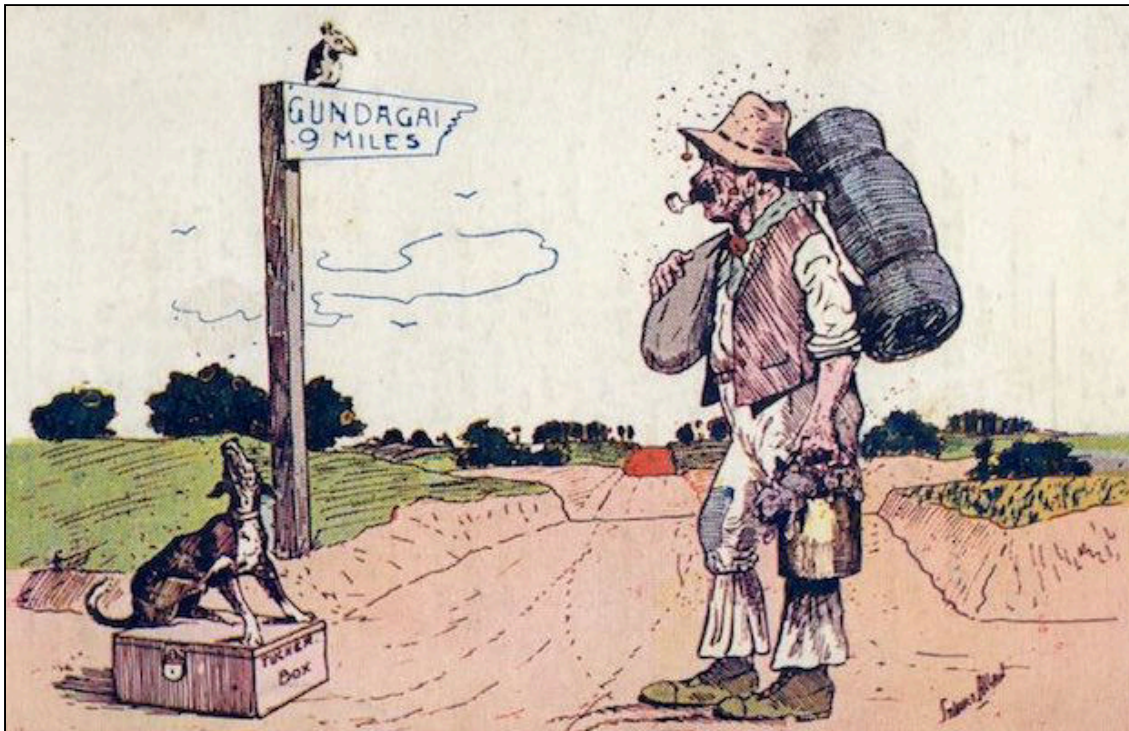
**When:** Saturday, 29 March 2025 at 10 am to 3.30 pm.

**Where:** Gosford Lions Community Hall, 3/8 Russel Drysdale St, East Gosford.

**Cost:** \$20 (includes morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea).

This seminar will cover a range of resources essential for uncovering individuals' connections to historical businesses and institutions. Presenters will discuss how to access records from major archives, including the State Archives Collection, the State Library of NSW, the National Library of Australia, Reserve Bank of Australia and the Noel Butlin Archives Centre. In addition,



[BUY TICKETS](#)

### **RAHS Day Lecture**

### **The True Story of the Dog on the Tuckerbox**

**Speaker:** Richard White.

**When:** Wednesday, 2 April 2025 at 1 pm.

**Where:** History House, 133 Macquarie St, Sydney.

**Cost:** Free.

In 1932, the Australian Prime Minister unveiled the statue of the Dog on the Tuckerbox, in Gundagai, NSW, on the Hume Highway halfway between Sydney and Melbourne. As the town's 'pioneer memorial', it would become arguably the most popular purpose-built tourist attraction until the 'Big Banana' in 1964. To coincide with the opening, Royal Doulton released a collection of souvenir ware; other souvenirs would multiply through the rest of the twentieth century.

The statue celebrated a popular story – told in an 1857 poem, and later poetry and song – about an unlucky bullocky whose team had become bogged 'nine miles from Gundagai'. To cap it all off, his dog sat on his tuckerbox. Or did he?

[RESERVE TICKETS](#)



## RAHS-WEA Workshop Using Maps in Local History Research

**Speaker:** Carol Liston AO.

**When:** Wednesday, 9 April 2025 at 11 am.

**Where:** History House, 133 Macquarie St, Sydney.

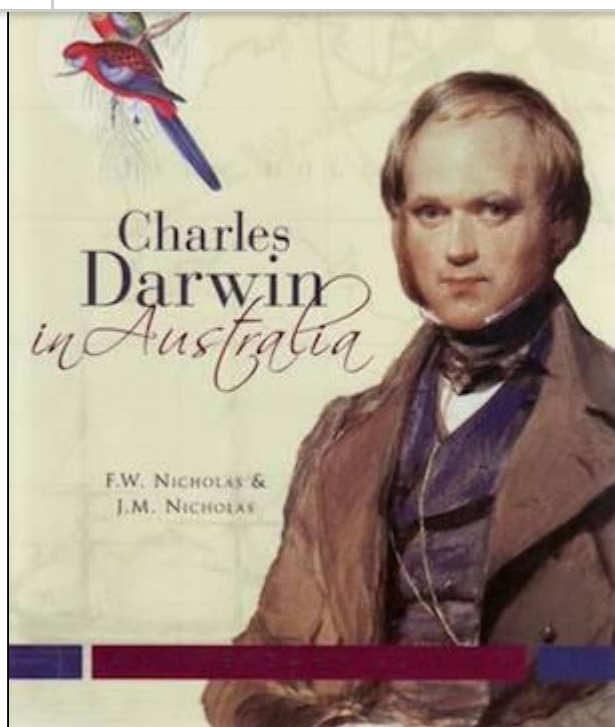
**Cost:** RAHS Members \$35 | Non-members \$39.

Discover how crown plans, parish maps, town maps, subdivision plans and SIX Maps can enhance your research, shed light on local history, and assist in tracing family genealogy. Whether you're a beginner or looking to refine your skills, this workshop is perfect for all levels. Participants will be introduced to the HLRV, the NSW State Archives collection and other resources.

**Please note:** RAHS members should contact WEA first to check if their member number has been added to their student record before they enrol.

**BUY TICKETS**





### RAHS Day Lecture Charles Darwin in Australia

**Speaker:** Frank Nicholas.

**When:** Wednesday, 7 May 2025 at 1 pm.

**Where:** History House, 133 Macquarie St, Sydney.

**Cost:** Free.

Early in 1836, Charles Darwin spent two months in Australia as part of his voyage around the world on HMS *Beagle*. This lecture will be based on Darwin's diary entries, illustrated with contemporary sketches and paintings by former fellow *Beagle* shipmates Conrad Martens and Augustus Earle. The complete story is told in the book *Charles Darwin in Australia*, co-authored by Frank and by his wife Jan, who, having worked in the pictures section of the State Library of NSW, was familiar with the relevant Martens and Earle illustrations.

RESERVE TICKETS



### RAHS-WEA Workshop

#### Making Home: A History of Houses, Interiors and Gardens in NSW

**Speaker:** Matthew Stephens.

**When:** Wednesday, 28 May 2025 at 11 am.

**Where:** History House, 133 Macquarie St, Sydney.

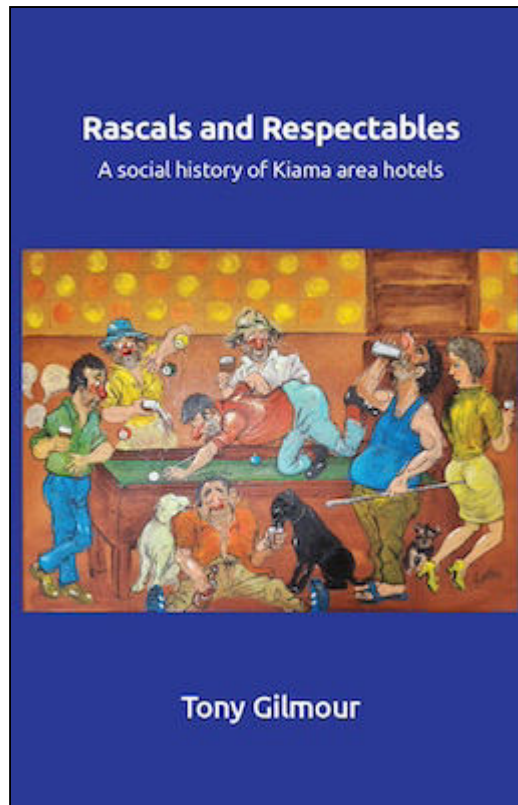
**Cost:** RAHS Members \$35 | Non-members \$39.

This workshop is an introduction to the sources that help us understand the history of houses, interiors and gardens in NSW. The range of research material in terms of architecture and interior and garden design is extensive. You will discover the many tools available to help you interpret the range of housing stock that survives both in urban and country areas. You will be introduced to the historical contents of these houses, ranging from door fittings to kitchen furniture and wallpapers to tiles, using trade literature, pattern books and objects from the collections of the Caroline Simpson Library.

**Please note:** RAHS members should contact WEA first to check if their member number has been added to their student record before they enrol.

[BUY TICKETS](#)

**Affiliated Societies News**



### Launch of 'Rascals and Respectables'

Published by Kiama Historical Society, Dr Tony Gilmour's new book tells the exciting history of the hostelries of Kiama, Jamberoo and Gerringong on the NSW south coast. From the first local hotels licenced in 1837 to the present day, drinking venues have shaped local social life and character.

Kiama was once a place of 'besotted and shameless drunkards', nearby Bombo hosted an illegal 'sly grog' shop and Kiama's 1899 great fire led to mass bingeing on stolen alcohol. Tony will share many of these stories.

The book will be officially launched by The Hon. Gareth Ward, MP for Kiama.

**Speaker:** Tony Gilmour.

**When:** Saturday, 22 March at 2 pm.

**Where:** Kiama Library Auditorium (downstairs), 7 Railway Parade, Kiama.

**Admission:** \$5, includes afternoon tea.

**Enquiries:** [kiamahistory@outlook.com](mailto:kiamahistory@outlook.com)

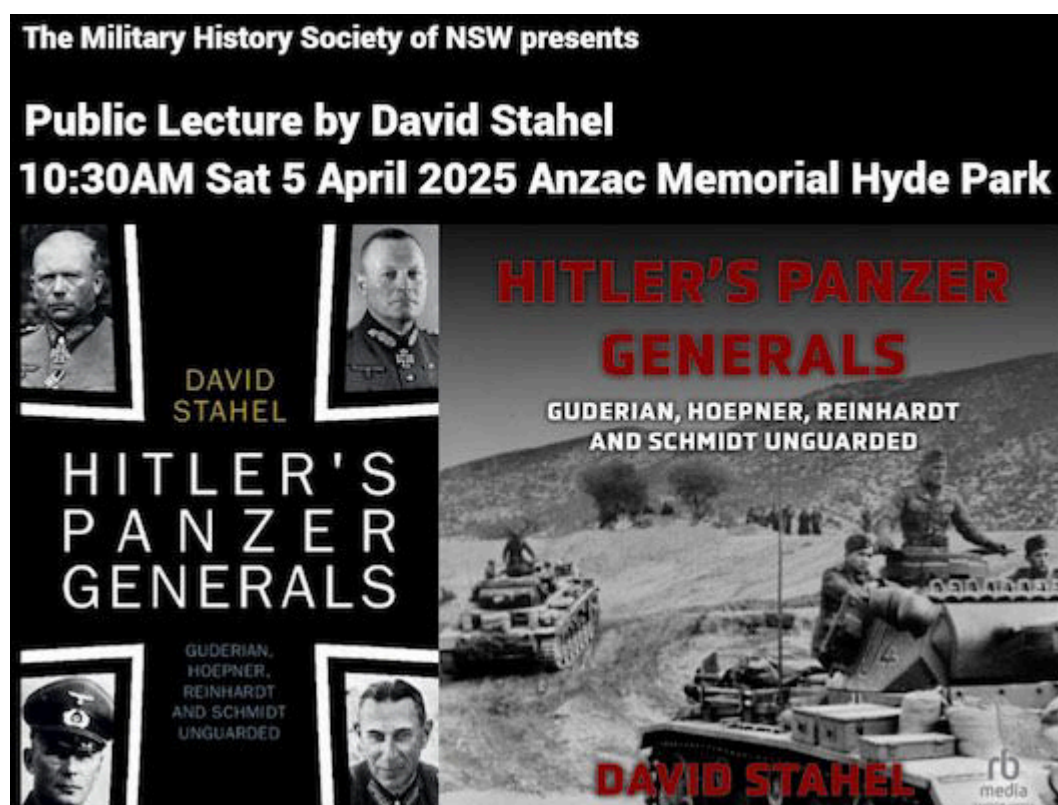
More local anecdotes will be shared at a second (free) event hosted by Tony in the upstairs bar of Kiama Inn, 50 Terralong Street, Kiama from 5 pm.





This project is supported by the Create NSW Cultural Grants Program, a devolved funding program administered by the RAHS on behalf of the NSW Government.

## Military History Society of NSW



### Hitler's Panzer Generals

The German panzer generals of the Second World War have been the subject of great historical interest. Much has been written about their campaigns and military decision making, however we know much less about the men themselves – their private thoughts, personal relationships, and ability to cope with the pressures of command.

This presentation is based on four of Germany's leading panzer commanders in 1941 and draws upon their private wartime correspondence to reconstruct who were the German panzer commanders behind the scenes? What motivated them and what accounted for (or undermined) their success? The research is based on David Stahel's book: *Hitler's Panzer Generals: Guderian, Hoepner,*

**When:** Saturday, 5 April at 10.30 am.

**Where:** The Auditorium, Anzac Memorial Hyde Park, Sydney.

**Admission:** Free, but a donation is appreciated.

**For more information:** [president@militaryhistorynsw.com.au](mailto:president@militaryhistorynsw.com.au)

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## St George Historical Society



## The History of Chocolate in Australia

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Discover the intriguing evolution of chocolate in Australia, our inventive chocolatiers, delightful products, and unique trends.

Take a nostalgic look at the 'Rocky Road' story, the history of Darrell Lea, and its legacy in the St George Area of Sydney.

**Speaker:** Chef Adam Moore.

**When:** Sunday, 6 April at 11 am and 1 pm.

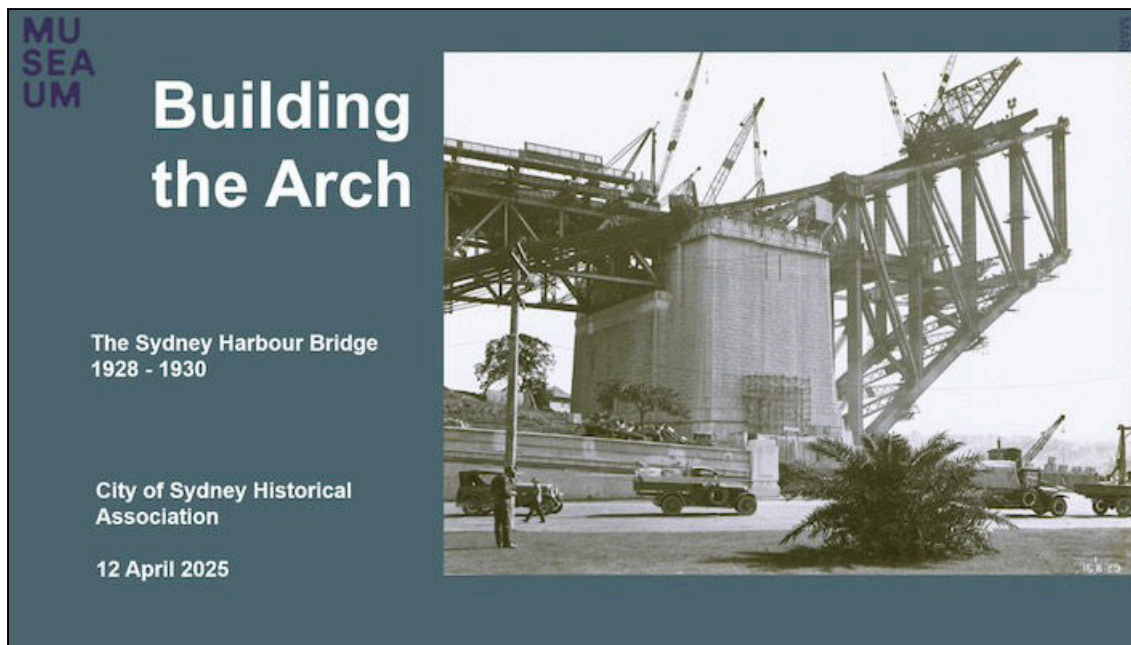
**Where:** Lydham Hall Historic House and Museum, 18 Lydham Avenue, Rockdale NSW 2216.

**Admission:** \$8 adults, \$5 seniors and concession.

**For more information:** <https://stgeorgehistsoc.org.au/lydham-hall/>

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## City of Sydney Historical Association



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### Building the Arch: The Sydney Harbour Bridge 1928–1930

Most people in Sydney would know that the Sydney Harbour Bridge was opened in 1932, but fewer could tell you the years when the arch itself was built. A month of 1928, all of 1929 and most of 1930 were the time when the people of Sydney saw the half arches creeping out and wondered if they would meet.

This presentation looks at the process and reveals the sophisticated details and safety measures built into the erection techniques and equipment to ensure that the work was completed quickly, safely and on budget.

**Speaker:** Bill Phippen.

**When:** Saturday, 12 April at 2 pm.

**Where:** Henry Carmichael Theatre, SMSA, 280 Pitt St, Sydney.

**Admission:** Members \$5. Visitors \$10.

**For more information:** [sydneyhistorical.org.au](http://sydneyhistorical.org.au)

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History Council of NSW



## Australian Perspectives and Global Directions

Peter Hobbins talks to Sophie Loy-Wilson and Yves Rees about Australian perspectives on migration histories in the 21st century. What stories are possible with new and inclusive lenses onto histories of human movements across the seas and across this continent? An event organised by the History Council of NSW for the 2025 Sydney Writers' Festival.

Thursday 22 May 2025 3.30pm

History House, 133 Macquarie Street, Sydney



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### Rethinking Migration Histories

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Australian migration stories have tended to represent specific experiences of coming to Australia over our relatively short national history. But what does rethinking stories about mobility to, from, and within Australia offer historians and fellow story tellers? Leading historians will discuss overlooked narratives to challenge traditional views of what migration means for Australian history. By connecting past and present, the diversity of migration stories and their implications for understanding identities, place, and belonging will offer fresh perspectives for nuanced research and storying of our collective past.

**Chair:** Peter Hobbins. **Speakers:** Sophie Loy-Wilson and Yves Rees.

**When:** Thursday, 22 May at 3.30 pm.

**Where:** History House, 133 Macquarie St, Sydney.

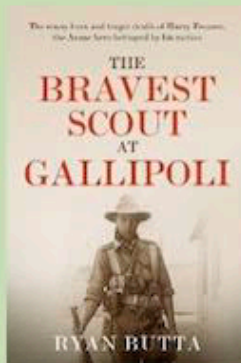
**Admission:** HCNSW Members and Concession \$5. Non-members \$10.

**For registrations:** <https://buff.ly/pL8u0yZ>

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### City of Canada Bay Heritage Society

## The Bravest Scout at Gallipoli



Harry Freame was the first Australian soldier to win the Distinguished Conduct Medal at Gallipoli. He risked his life again and again to scout the battlefield, reporting invaluable intelligence and relieving stranded soldiers. Some say he should have got the VC but didn't because he was half-Japanese, a fact he tried hard to conceal. After the war, Freame became a soldier settler and champion apple grower. But in the lead-up to World War II, he was recruited into Australian intelligence.

The Bravest Scout at Gallipoli is a fascinating and immersive investigation into a grievous historical wrong.

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## The City of Canada Bay Heritage Society

invites you to join us to hear a talk by

### Ryan Butta

(Ryan Butta's first book, *The Ballad of Abdul Wade*, was shortlisted for the South Australian Literary Awards non-fiction book of the year for 2024 and longlisted for the Indie Book Awards nonfiction book of the year for 2023)

on

## The Bravest Scout at Gallipoli

### City of Canada Bay Museum

1 Bent St, Concord

on

**Saturday 5th April 2025**

at

1.30pm for a 2.00pm sharp start

The talk will be followed by light refreshments and a chance to chat with the speaker and our wonderful volunteers

**Admission: Free**

(donations always welcome)

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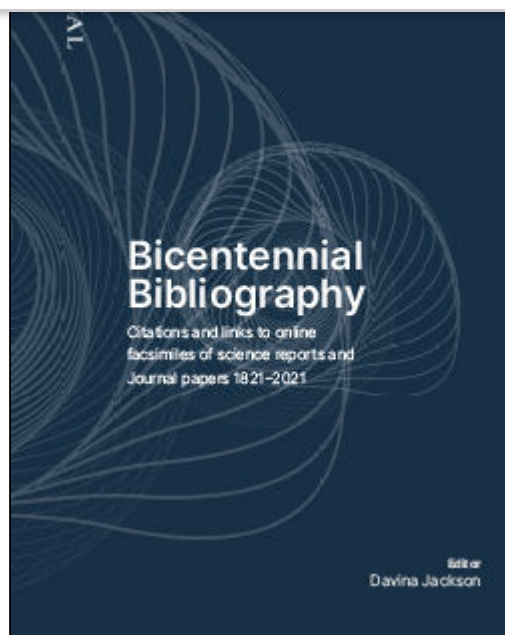
*Come early and look around our displays.*

The museum opens at 10am.

[www.canadabayheritage.asn.au](http://www.canadabayheritage.asn.au) or email: [heritage@canadabayheritage.asn.au](mailto:heritage@canadabayheritage.asn.au)

Telephone: 9743 3034 (Wednesday and Saturday 10am – 4pm)

**History News**



## Royal Society of NSW: New Research Guides

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Australia's colonial and post-colonial history includes many conflicts and controversies. Two new digital reference guides could help modern historians and writers to better understand how many British-European migrant scholars studied, mapped and interpreted Indigenous people, places, animals, plants, geology, chemistry, fossils, weather conditions and astronomical phenomena.

After celebrating 200 years of its intellectual culture in 2021–2022, the Royal Society of NSW (RSNSW) produced two PDF research guides that can be downloaded via its website, [royalsoc.org.au](http://royalsoc.org.au). These are:

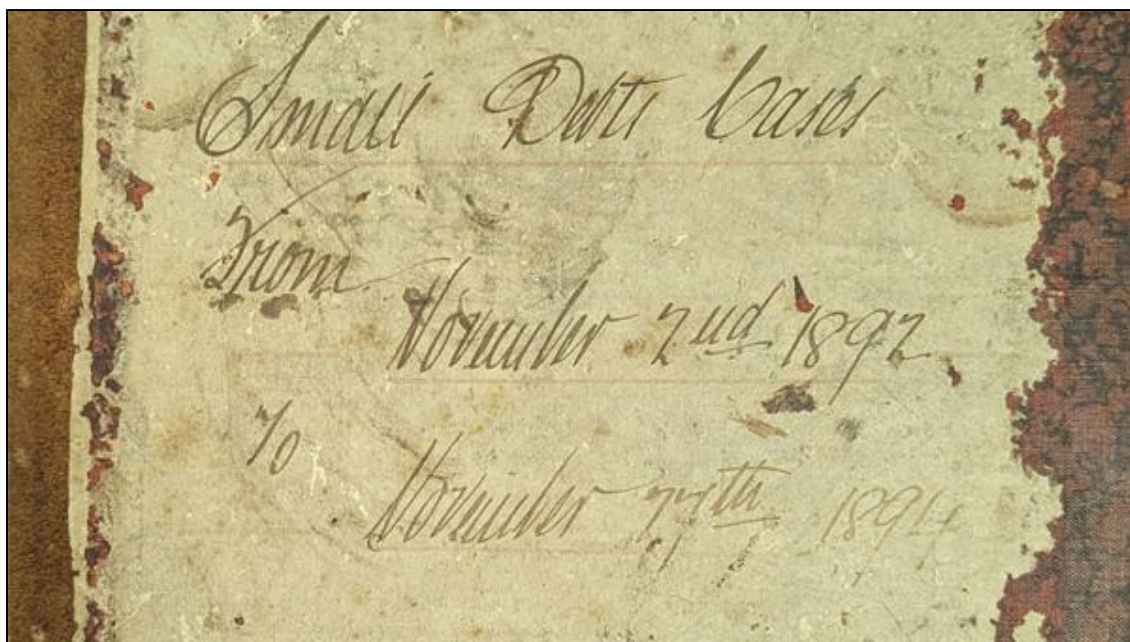
### *Bicentennial Bibliography*

Listing and hotlinking to online scans of several thousand articles that were originally published by the RSNSW, and earlier colonial learned societies, from 1821 to 2021. Links take researchers to digital facsimiles of each article, as archived by the Smithsonian Institution's online Biodiversity Heritage Library. Keyword searches allow historians to quickly search for articles by author, names of particular people, or by keywords such as star, Deniliquin, x-ray, photography, Aborig, longitude, sandstone, or dinosaur.

### *Presidents' Profiles*

Listing 122 Presidents and Vice-Presidents of the RSNSW and its preceding societies since 1821. This PDF includes painted and photographic portraits and biographical summaries of many RSNSW Presidents, including early Governors of NSW (although information about some Presidents has not yet been found). This PDF is also keyword searchable, allowing historians to identify and focus on trailblazers from specific fields of research or professional backgrounds.





Cover of Small Debts Register [Newcastle Court of Petty Sessions]. State Archives Collection, MHNSW

### MHNSW Webinar: Small Debts Register

In 1846, an Act was passed to consolidate the law regarding the recovery of small debts in NSW. Claims for the recovery of debts up to the value of £10 could be heard and decided on in the plaintiff's local Court of Petty Sessions. These courts dealt with a variety of debts, including those relating to goods sold, wages due, money lent, lodgings, and assault or injury.

This webinar will explore the newly indexed and digitised Small Debt Registers held in the NSW State Archives Collection, and how they can highlight the history of NSW local communities.

**When:** Friday, 28 March @ 10.30 am – 11.30 am.

**Cost:** Free. [Register Here!](#)



### **Nominations Open: \$10,000 Maritime History Prizes**

Writers, publishers and readers of maritime history are invited to nominate works for the 2025 Frank Broeze Memorial Maritime History Book Prize and the 2025 Australian Community Maritime History Prize.

Works published in 2023 or 2024 are eligible. For details, criteria and entry forms, [visit the website](#) or email [publications@sea.museum](mailto:publications@sea.museum).

**Nominations close 31 March.**

The awards are co-sponsored by the Australian National Maritime Museum and the Australian Association for Maritime History.

**Telling our stories**

Community Connection Resilience

10 - 12 November • Sydney Masonic Centre • Warrane/Warrang/Sydney

### **Call for Papers: Australian Society of Archivists Conference**

The Australian Society of Archivists is excited to invite your proposals for contributions to its upcoming conference, *Telling Our Stories: Community, Connection, Resilience*, to be held 10–12 November 2025 in Warrane/Sydney.

We invite you to share your experiences, reflections and research by 'telling our

panels, interactive sessions, workshops and more.

[Find full details on website](#)

**Submission Deadline:**

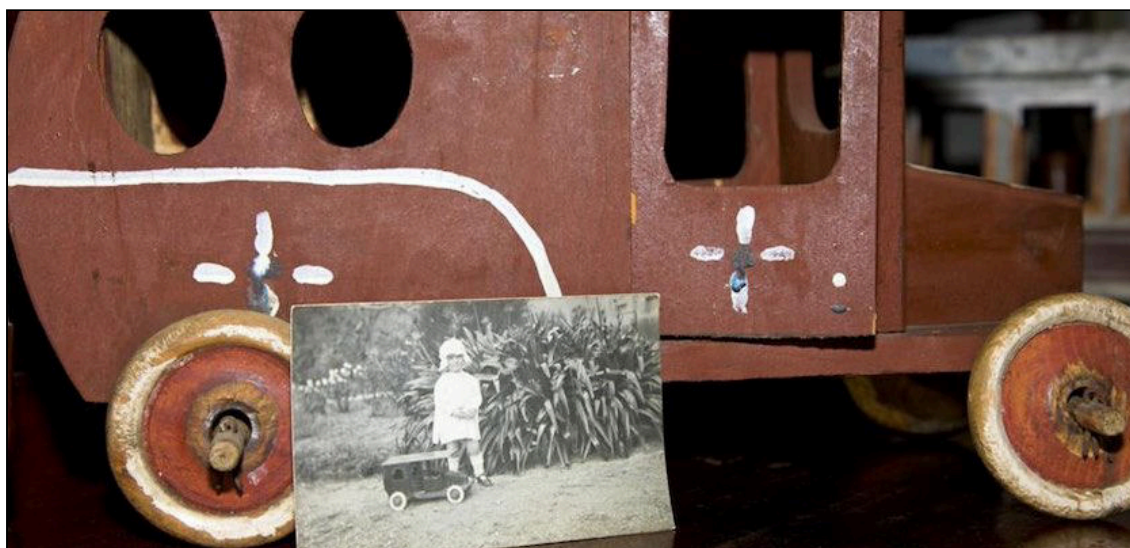
AEST: 9:00 am on Monday 28 April 2025

AWST: 7:00 am on Monday 28 April 2025

ACDT: 8:30 am on Monday 28 April 2025

NZDT: 11:00 am on Monday 28 April 2025

## Other News



### Community Heritage Grants 2025 Round – Now Open

**What are the Community Heritage Grants?**

The Community Heritage Grants (CHG) program supports community-based organisations to identify and care for Australian, moveable cultural heritage collections which are publicly accessible, locally held and nationally significant.

**How we can help**

The CHG supports small, local groups with limited funding and staffing resources, who would benefit from access to professional cultural heritage expertise. Grants of up to \$20,000 are available to help organisations undertake a three-stage journey to assess their collection, identify collection care recommendations and implement practical improvements.

Non-profit, incorporated organisations and some government agencies –



encouraged to apply. For more details visit the [CHG website](#).

### Activities we support

In the first two stages, organisations work with experienced heritage practitioners to produce reports that:

- Explain the meanings and value of their collections (a significance assessment)
- Outline the condition of their collections and provide a conservation and collection management plan (a preservation needs assessment).

In the third stage, funding is available to:

- Undertake conservation and collection management activities, as recommended in the preservation needs assessment. This may include conservation, purchase of collection housing and storage materials, environmental control and monitoring equipment or digitisation.

CHG also offers grants for collection management training projects or cataloguing and collection management system software.

### Applications and guidelines

Applicants should read the 2025 CHG Round Guidelines before applying. The Guidelines and application forms are available on the [CHG website](#).

For queries or to discuss your project, contact [chg@nla.gov.au](mailto:chg@nla.gov.au)

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## History Back in Vogue at Bathurst Heritage Trades Trail

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### Meet over 200 artisans from 12-13 April 2025

Shearers, spinners and knitters will work together to go from 'sheep to sweater' in record time in a Back-to-Back Challenge, just one of many new and unique events at the annual 'Bathurst Heritage Trades Trail' on 12–13 April 2025.

With over 100 exhibitors and 200 artisans attending from across Australia, the event is ideal for anyone seeking creative inspiration and to learn from the makers all in one place. A huge variety of exhibitors includes blacksmiths, bodgers, candle-makers, violin makers, spinners, weavers, upholsterers, furniture makers, brewers, distillers and winemakers.

There are also some great add-ons for visitors seeking to eat, stay and play in Bathurst over the first weekend of the school holidays.

[For more information and tickets](#)

#### Event details:

**Date and time:** 10 am–4 pm on Saturday 12 and Sunday 13 April 2025.

**Tickets:** \$25 for entry over both days. All accompanied children u16 are free. Tickets are valid for entry to both days of the Trail.

**Address:** Bathurst Showground, 28 Kendall Ave, Bathurst. Onsite parking available with gold coin donation to Lions Club parking attendants.

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**LIVERPOOL  
CITY  
COUNCIL**

HAVE YOUR SAY

## Comprehensive Heritage Study Nomination Form

Council is undertaking a review and update of the 2005 Liverpool Heritage Study to ensure we retain and celebrate the unique character of the Liverpool LGA.

As part of this study, we are seeking community nominations for potential heritage items or places.



*Nominate Now*

Scan to access the nomination form

**Nominations close Wednesday 30 April 2025**





## Apply now for 2026 Fellowships at the National Library of Australia



Researchers Ms Younghye Whitney and  
Dr Mei-Fen Kuo



Comics-journalist Sam Wallman

**Applications close  
5 May 2025**

### National Library of Australia Fellowships

- For experienced researchers, from Australia or overseas
- 8 x \$35,000 Fellowships
- Researchers may work in any field or discipline that can be supported by the National Library's collections

### Creative Arts Fellowship in Australian Writing

- For Australian creative writers, working in any literary genre
- 1 x \$35,000 Fellowship
- Develop a new creative work using, or inspired by, the National Library's collections

For more information visit  
[www.library.gov.au](http://www.library.gov.au)







Blue Mountains Inn, Lawson (RAHS Frank Walker Collection)

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## The Royal Australian Historical Society

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