

National Centre of Biography News

April 2024

In this newsletter we share everything that has been happening at the NCB of late, from new publications to upcoming events. Got biographical news to share? Send us an email at ncb@anu.edu.au.



A research tool with endless possibilities

The ADB receives in the region of 70 million hits each year, most of which are from people seeking information about one of the 35,000 individuals whose biographies we have published.

Behind the scenes, the ADB has been steadily indexing these entries to expand its research potential. Since 2012, the year volume 18 launched the ADB into the digital realm, the ADB's value has extended into the field of collective biography. That year, the editorial board agreed to convert two full-time research editorial positions to manage and oversee our digital footprint; Christine Fernon was appointed online and outreach manager, and Scott Yeadon took the role of programmer and web developer. These two crucial positions are now in the capable hands of Dr Michelle Staff and Shenhai Chen. A substantial investment has been made in the forbidding task of indexing ADB entries to expand the potential study of groups, collectives, and connections, in addition to the study of family history and microhistory.

The use of the ADB as a collective biographical endeavour can be very straightforward. For example, by using the 'Life Summary' and 'Life Details' boxes I can quickly find that I share my birthday with 24 ADB subjects, including Azaria Chamberlain (the youngest of all ADB subjects), and that six (including the progenitor of the ADB Sir Keith Hancock, and the esteemed anthropologist Bill Stanner) spent time working in Uganda, my country of birth. But there is far more to the ADB than these simple tasks, and our site now has an array of tools designed to assist researchers.

Over the last two years, we have run well-attended workshops in Hobart and Adelaide to alert users to the research potential of the ADB and we are available to do so again at the ANU. If you would like to arrange a workshop, please contact either me or Michelle in the National Centre of Biography.

- Dr Malcolm Allbrook, ADB managing editor

Coming up this month



Talks on convict history

In the coming weeks NCB PhD student Matt Cunneen will be giving two talks drawing on his doctoral research on convicts who left the Australian colonies.

- [How Well Do You Know Your Convict?](#) conference, hosted by the Society of Australian Genealogists. Saturday 13 April 3:15pm-3:45pm
- [Freedom: Time Served, Moving On](#) seminar, hosted by the Female Convict Research Centre & School of Humanities, University of Tasmania. Sunday 5 May 11:00am -11:15am



NLA fellow talk

On 18 April NLA Fellow Dr Melanie Duckworth (Østfold University College, Norway) will speak about her biographical research on award-winning Australian children's author Christobel Mattingley. Register [here](#) to attend in person; also available to watch live online.



Biography workshop

Thea Gardiner will speak about her book *Mab: The World of Mab Grimwade* on 2 May for this month's Biography Workshop. More info [here](#).



New faces & changes at the NCB

Dr Allison Cadzow has joined the NCB as a school visitor. She will be working on the development of our Aboriginal Missions and Reserves Mapping Project, which aims to connect biographical and land tenure information with digital maps.

Megan Graham will be with us as a school visitor from June until early 2025. A University of Leeds (UK) PhD student, Megan's thesis will explore Aboriginal health activism in post-WW2 Australia.

Tim Adams has upgraded his HDR status from MPhil to PhD, which signals an expanded study of colonial era cemeteries and graveyards in the Limestone Plains and Queanbeyan-Palerang Local Government Area.

There are several new people joining our eleven working parties. For updates on who is taking on the task of helping add to the ADB now and into the future, visit our website [here](#).

For your reading list



In memoriam Katerina Clark

In the April edition of the *Australian Book Review* Professor Sheila Fitzpatrick writes about her friendship with Professor Katerina Clark in a piece that is part obituary, part memoir. Read it [here](#).



Biographies of slavery

The team at the Western Australian Legacies of Slavery project have now published 15 biographical entries on people with links to British slavery. Read them all [here](#).



AJBH no. 9

The next edition of the *Australian Journal of Biography and History* is well underway. Guest-edited by Professor Katerina Teaiwa, Dr Nicholas Hoare, and PhD student Talei Lucia Mangioni, all from the College of Asia & the Pacific, the volume will focus on Pacific lives.

ADB feature entry

Each month we highlight a new addition to the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*.

Alick Jackomos was a community leader, historian, and wrestler. Born in Carlton to Greek parents, Jackomos served in WWII and was greatly involved in Aboriginal rights activism, especially after his marriage to Yorta Yorta woman Merle Robertha Morgan. Read more about his fascinating story as told by Prof. Richard Broome in the ADB [here](#).



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