

National Centre of Biography News

February 2026

The NCB News is the monthly newsletter of the National Centre of Biography. Got biographical news to share? Send us an email at ncb@anu.edu.au.



The Australian Crowd, by Stephen Baxter (2014)



New Year's Day at Bonville Reserve, 1948. Sawtell Historical Museum.

Hello 2026!

We hope that readers of the NCB News have had a restful and restorative summer break.

2026 is going to be a great year at the NCB. Our editors will be hard at work adding lots of new entries to Volume 20 of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, and our academic staff will also be delivering fantastic courses to undergraduate and postgraduate students alike. Plus everyone is involved in exciting research that they will advance during the next twelve months.

Come along with us for what promises to be a wonderful ride in 2026!

News & notices



Hazel Rowley shortlist

Congratulations to all 9 writers who have been shortlisted for the 2026 Hazel Rowley Literary Fellowship. This is the final year the award will be made. The winner will be announced at the State Library Victoria on Wednesday 11 March following an in-conversation session between Jason Steger and Lance Richardson about his biography *True Nature: The Lives of Peter Matthiessen*. For more details on the shortlist and the event visit the [website](#).



Biography Workshop

The first session of the 2026 Biography Workshop series is coming up on Thursday 26 February. Prof. Kate Fullagar (ACU) will talk about her new project on the Dutch spy agent Marguerite Wolters. Visit our [website](#) for more details.



Sylvia Martin book launch

On Monday 2 March at 6pm acclaimed biographer Dr Sylvia Martin will be launching her new book *Double Act: Eirene Mort and Nora Kate Weston* at the National Library of Australia. Tickets are free; you can [register](#) via the NLA's website now.



Masterclass in Melbourne

Those in Melbourne/Naarm in March may wish to note the upcoming masterclass with award-winning writer and journalist Lance Richardson on 'Going the Distance: Writing Life Through Biography' on Thursday 12 March. Tickets are available through [Writers Victoria](#).



Grandparenting focus group

The team behind the ARC Discovery Project [Grandparenting in Australia: A History](#) (DP250100728) is seeking participants for a focus group in Canberra. For more details, see their message on our [website](#).



Support Writers Victoria

We draw our Victorian readers' attention to [this petition](#) urging the state government to restore funding for Writers Victoria.



Biography Workshop 2026

A new year means a brand new Biography Workshop series! In 2026 we will have 10 biographers speak to some of the questions, puzzles and challenges they are grappling with in their work. Visit our [website](#) to view the full program.

Note: this year sessions will run from 11am to 12pm on the last Thursday of the month

Read, listen, learn



AJBH no. 10

The latest issue of the *Australian Journal of Biography and History* was published late in December 2025. There are a wide range of fascinating articles for your enjoyment, and the best news is: it's open access! [Download](#) your copy now via ANU Press.



New podcast episodes

Season 4 of *Biographers in Conversation* is now live! Visit the [website](#) to listen to new interviews with Frances Wilson, Susan Wyndham, and Clare Wright, hosted by NCB visitor Dr Gabriella Kelly-Davies.



ANUHJ II no. 5

Number 5 of the *ANU Historical Journal II*, edited by School of History PhD candidates Matilda Hatcher and Aaron Marston-Pattison, has just been published. It features work by NCB staff Dr Stephen Wilks and Dr Michelle Staff. Download your open-access copy via [ANU Press](#).



'A key text in an emerging field'

ADB research editor Dr Emily Gallagher's first book, *Playtime*, has received an excellent review in the latest issue of the *Australian Book Review*. Read it [online](#) and in the print magazine now.

ADB feature entry

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

One of the first entries published in 2026 is on Yankunytjatjara-Pitjantjatjara woman Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue, campaigner for Aboriginal rights and nurse.

Read her story in the [piece](#) co-authored by Natalie Harkin, Denise Noack and Deb Edwards now.



Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue by Leanne King

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