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# BIOGRAPHY FOOTNOTES

The Newsletter of the National Centre of Biography

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National Centre of  
Biography  
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# FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK



## Welcome to Issue 11 of Biography Footnotes

Volume 18 of the ADB has been launched by both a vicereine and a vice chancellor. The Governor of Queensland, Ms Penelope Wensley, hosted the launch of the hardcopy volume at Government House in Brisbane on 6 December. The ADB hosted the launch of volume 18 online at the ANU on 11 December; the ANU's Vice Chancellor, Professor Ian Young, also presented ADB Medals to retiring Editorial Board members, Professor Geoffrey Bolton, Dr. John Lack and Professor Michael Roe.

Book launches are usually a way to drum up excitement and sales for a new book, however there were no books on sale at either ADB function. Our launches serve another purpose. They substantiate the partnership we have with our communities as well as the national collaboration between the ANU and the rest of Australia. In particular, they allow us to recognise our authors, and our Working Party and Editorial Board members, and to extend our gratitude for their collective contributions.

The launches allow us to bring our ADB 'family' together to celebrate our achievement. The ADB is conspicuous amongst contemporary national dictionary projects in the English-speaking world in that our authors, and Working Party and Editorial Board members, have never received any remuneration. Our warmest thanks go to them for the free gift of their time and talents to this important national project.

The ADB also has a group of paid employees. For us, the appearance of volume 18 appears, in some ways, to be a small miracle. We have had a 70 per cent turnover in staff since 2008. The need to restructure in the wake of budget cutbacks and digital developments has also resulted in downsizing and several job reclassifications.

Change creates opportunities for new ideas and renewal. You can read about some of our exciting new developments in this newsletter.

## Melanie Nolan

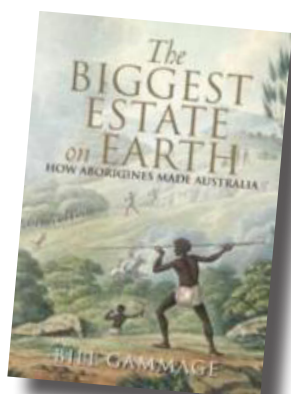
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Cover: (L-R) ADB editors Drs Sam Furphy, Karen Fox and Rani Kerin  
with General Editor Professor Melanie Nolan (holding book)  
Photo: Christine Fernon

## ADB Authors Win Book Awards

ADB author and adjunct professor in the Humanities Research Centre at the ANU, Bill Gammage, has won the Prime Minister's Prize for Australian history for his book, *The Biggest Estate on Earth: How Aborigines Made Australia*.



Bill also won the Manning Clark House National Cultural Award (Individual), the Victorian Premier's Prize for Literature, the Victorian Premier's Prize for Non-Fiction, the Queensland History Book Award, and the ACT Book of the Year Award. He has written 14 ADB entries.

Associate Professor Mark McKenna added the NSW Premier's Literary Award (Douglas Stewart Prize for Non-Fiction) to the list of awards received for his book, *An Eye for Eternity: The Life of Manning Clark*. Mark is writing the ADB entry for Clark.

## Obituaries Australia

Some amusing errors can creep into the OCR'd text of digitised newspapers available on Trove. Some recent examples that we've come across when looking for obituaries are a man described as 'honourable and uptight' (upright) and one who, the obituarist proclaimed, deserved more than 'a pissing (passing) notice'.

Then there are the archaic terms in obituaries written over a century ago that send us off looking for a dictionary. 'Kicking against the pricks', we've learnt, is a Biblical reference meaning being stubborn to your own detriment.

## Check out the NCB's new websites

Astute observers may have noticed an increasing number of names being added to the header of the ADB and Obituaries Australia websites. They are the names of new websites created by the NCB during the year: Labour Australia, Women Australia and People Australia. We are also in discussion about creating an Indigenous Australia site.

All the sites use the same template and indexing terms so that users can move easily between them. People Australia is the NCB's overarching site. It searches all of the websites and also serves as a Biographical Register.

## NCB part of HuNI project



The NCB joined forces with 12 other institutions in a successful \$1.5m bid for funding from the federal government's Nectar (National eResearch Collaboration Tools and Resources) project to create a Humanities Networked Infrastructure virtual laboratory. Led by Deakin University, the two-year HuNI project aims to provide researchers around the world with access to the combined resources of Australia's major cultural datasets and information assets.

The NCB will provide a feed of biographical metadata from the ADB and Obituaries Australia websites to the project.

For further information about HuNI see <http://huni.net.au/>

## Digitised Compendiums of Biography

Out of copyright compendiums of biography, digitised by the NCB, are being uploaded to the NCB's website at <http://ncb.anu.edu.au/NCB-digitised-biographies>



Lieutenant Gordon Alford worked in a number of the bank's branches. He died in 1916 from war wounds sustained at Pozieres

*The Bank of New South Wales Roll of Honour* is one of the more interesting books added recently to the site. Published in 1921, the book has photos and short profiles of about 300 members of the bank's staff who

served in World War I.

Over the next year we will be adding the individual profiles from all the digitised books to People Australia. For the men in the *Roll of Honour*, we will also include a link to their war service record in the National Archives.

We believe that there are hundreds of out-of-copyright compendiums of Australian biography and aim to digitise a good many of them next year, starting with the very useful state encyclopedias published at the turn of the 20th Century.

Please let us know of any biographical compendias that you believe should be digitised.

## Living Archive of Aboriginal Languages

The NCB's digitisation officer, Max Korolev, has also been busy during the year scanning children's books for the Living Archive of Aboriginal Languages project, managed by Charles Darwin University. The project aims to digitise the hundreds of children's books that were produced in more than 16 Indigenous languages by Northern Territory Literature Production Centres in 1973-2000. The income from Max's work will be used on NCB projects.

## What the Stats Say

The number of people consulting Obituaries Australia continues to rise steadily.



# NEWS (cont'd)

As expected, a large percentage of the traffic is being referred from ADB entries. Less expected is the continuing interest in the obituaries of the 1920s Razor Gang criminals popularised by the *Underbelly* TV series last year. The OA's top four search terms for November were criminals featured in the series.

Over at the ADB, Ned Kelly continues to fight it out with Caroline Chisholm for the title of most searched term. Those two iconic Australian figures have been tussling over the top place since the ADB went online in 2006.

The star of the next *Underbelly* series, Melbourne criminal Squizzy Taylor, has made his first appearance in the ADB's top 20 search terms. It will be interesting to see if he supplants Ned and Caroline for the top place when the series is televised next year.

## Biography Reading Group

The NCB is reviving its popular Biography Reading Group next year. The group meets at the ANU during lunch-time on the last Thursday of each month. Different biographers are invited along each month to discuss their work processes with BRG members. If you would like to attend the meetings or have suggestions about possible guest speakers please contact Karen Fox at [karen.fox@anu.edu.au](mailto:karen.fox@anu.edu.au). The first meeting will be held in March.

## Australian Honours

Congratulations to ADB authors and members of Working Parties who received Australian honours this year:

### Australian Day Honours

Officer (AO) in the General Division  
Professor Stuart Macintyre

Member (AM) in the General Division  
Associate Professor Renate Howe  
Mr Bryan Keon-Cohen QC  
The Honourable Kevin Lindgren QC  
Emeritus Professor Roslyn Pesman

Medal (OAM) in the General Division  
Mr Paul Brunton  
Emeritus Professor Brian Fletcher

Dr Dorothy Gibson-Wilde  
Dr Frank Hurley  
Mrs Barbara Valentine

### Queen's Birthday Honours

Officer (AO) in the General Division  
Vice Admiral Peter David Jones

Member (AM) in the General Division  
Dr James Hector (Jim) Davidson  
Dr Neville James Green  
Emeritus Professor Graham Jon Macdonald  
Professor Alanna Maree Nobbs  
Emeritus Professor Peter Daniel Steele

Medal (OAM) in the General Division  
Dr Roger Freeman  
Mr John Carlisle Low  
Mr Leslie Arnold Reedman

## Study at NCB

Two students successfully completed the NCB's Master of Biographical Research and Writing, offered for the first time this year.

The Masters aims to equip students with a thorough theoretical and critical grounding in biography, and with the skills and opportunity to undertake their own biographical projects.

Subjects include Writing Biography, Reading and Writing History, Biographical Practices and an ADB Internship.

The course will be offered again next year and in 2014 will be integrated into the Master of Liberal Arts as a specialism in Biographical Research and Writing.

For further information visit <http://ncb.anu.edu.au/studynccb/masters>

## Purchasing ADB vol 18

Copies of volume 18 of the ADB can be purchased through the Library Shop at the State Library of NSW. The cost is \$120 (\$90 for ADB authors).

Copies of most of the earlier volumes can also be purchased. An order form is attached on the back page of the newsletter.

## Thematic Essays

Five thematic essays have been added to the NCB's websites this year. They cover a diverse range of subjects, including colonial women in the ADB, the first Melbourne Cup and the infamous 'Seven Dwarfs' of the federal public service.

The essays can be accessed through the 'Browse' feature on all the NCB's websites and are also linked to relevant entries.

If you would like to write a thematic essay please contact us at [ncb@anu.edu.au](mailto:ncb@anu.edu.au)

We are also seeking people interested in writing 500-1000 word potted histories of the 7,500 entity names — the names of organisations, events, clubs, schools and awards — registered in our database in the past two years.

## Surely a Record?

We were astonished last year at finding the obituary of a woman who had 14 children and 115 grandchildren. That, it seems, was nothing. Francis Baulch, who died at the age of 77 in 1882, had 15 children, 160 grandchildren and 22 great grandchildren.

## Deaths of ADB Authors

It is with sadness that we note the deaths, that were reported to us during the year, of the following ADB authors:

Bruce Bennett  
Keith Cole  
Joyce Gibberd  
Richard Kingsland  
Perdita McCarthy  
Patricia Mather  
Hank Nelson  
Gordon Richardson  
Tom Stannage  
Peter Steele  
Jack Smart

Obituaries for Richard Kingsland, Perdita McCarthy and Hank Nelson have been added to the Obituaries Australia website. We welcome obituaries for our other authors.

# ADB VOLUME 18 LAUNCHED

**Volume 18 of the ADB, which includes entries for people who died in 1981-1990, with surnames beginning L-Z, was launched by Qld Governor, Penelope Wensley AC, in Brisbane on 6 December. The online version was launched by ANU Vice Chancellor, Professor Ian Young AO, in Canberra on 11 December.**

The two launches were held to celebrate the different forms in which the Dictionary is available. Many people continue to read the book from beginning to end as a literary and historical work; others see the Dictionary as a reference work which is more easily consulted online. While the ADB will continue to be produced in hardcopy, our focus will be on developing the online version which receives 70 million hits a year.



L-R: Professor Pat Buckridge, chair of the Qld Working Party, Professor Melanie Nolan, General Editor of the ADB, Ms Penelope Wensley, Qld Governor, Professor Tom Griffiths, Chair of the ADB Editorial Board  
photo by Cathy Jenkins

At the launch in Brisbane, Governor Penelope Wensley warmly congratulated fellow Queenslanders on their contribution to the great enterprise that is the ADB.

She also praised the collaborative nature of the project and the very many people who have contributed to its success over the years. She made mention, particularly, of the hundreds of organisations mentioned in the 'Acknowledgements' pages of the volume who have willingly - and most often without pay - given assistance to the project.

The Governor's speech will be published on her website early next year.



The celebratory function for the online version of volume 18 was held at University House, ANU. It was at this venue that the ADB Online was first launched in 2006.

In his speech, Vice Chancellor Professor Ian Young emphasised the potential research possibilities of the biographical data being amassed through the comprehensive indexing of entries.

Those wishing to take an online browse through volume 18 can find a list of all entries at <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biographies/search/?query=volume:18>

ANU Vice Chancellor, Ian Young  
photo by Natalie Azzopardi.

# ADB QLD WORKING PARTY

## Professor PAT BUCKRIDGE reveals how the Queensland Working Party choose entries for the ADB.

Like the other ADB working parties, the Queensland Working Party has just two primary responsibilities: to provide, for each successive period, a list of recommended Queensland subjects, together with recommended word-lengths; and to provide a corresponding list of recommended authors to write articles about those subjects. It's not quite that simple: decisions have to be made, or un-made, about the State to which particular subjects belong; tardy authors have to be chased up; last-minute replacements have to be found; 'blues' have to be returned with comments. But broadly speaking, once those recommendations have been approved by the Editorial Board, our work is done, and the party begins! (Or rather, the cycle begins again.)

The first part of the cycle, the selection of subjects, is always the most sensitive. Inclusion represents significant public recognition for an individual, and is often a source of family pride — there is, after all, only one ADB! — so there's a lot at stake in getting the subject list right, or at least reasonable and defensible. The first question most 'outsiders' to the ADB tend to ask is 'How do you choose?' It's a difficult question to answer because it has more to do, finally, with a holistic judgment about a person's 'importance' to Australia than with any explicit grid of selection criteria. But individual judgments are certainly informed by factors like a person's public profile, and the scale, impact, distinctiveness, originality, diversity or (occasionally) notoriety of their achievements. 'Representative' qualifications based on occupation, gender, ethnicity and culture are also taken into consideration, not by way of formulas or quotas, but by collective agreement on what constitutes a 'balanced' list.

Agreement is not always easily or quickly arrived at, on either proportionalities or individuals, but debates about proportions tend to happen more often, perhaps because no-one can claim any particular authority on such questions: competing interests and specializations have been known to generate heated disagreement, resolved, on one memorable occasion, by agreeing to include another female poet as the price of keeping two out of three stud breeders from the list. Disagreements over individuals are less common, and when they do arise are usually settled by deferring to the member most knowledgeable about the person in question.



Queensland Working Party

L-R: Darryl Bennet, Brian Stevenson, Libby Connors (front), Jennifer Harrison (rear), Pat Buckridge (chair), Spencer Routh, Geoff Ginn missing: Manfred Cross, Betty Cosgrove, Mark Cryle  
photo by Cathy Jenkins

The second part of the cycle, recruitment of authors, is not sensitive at all, but can be fiendishly difficult and prolonged. As the pace and sequence of editing and online publication has changed in recent times, so our rhythm of recruitment must also change so as not to be offering potential authors ridiculously long lead-times. Ultimately this phase of the work is likely to be less rather than more intensive than it used to be: good news for the Working Parties! Successful recruitment of 'talent', especially new talent, will remain a challenge, however, dependent as ever on our ability to exploit our collective personal and academic

networks to the full.

Much depends, then, on the composition of the working party which of course changes from time to time, as members leave and are replaced, thereby altering slightly the balance of knowledge and expertise in the group. Fortunately we have a stable core of older members — Manfred Cross AM (historian and former Labor member for the federal seat of Brisbane), Spencer Routh OAM (former Reference Librarian at the University of Queensland), and Jenny Harrison (long-time member of the UQ history department). Together they represent a huge fund of knowledge and expertise across social, political and labour history, sport, primary production, immigration, the professions, music, the arts and much else. Their established networks also produce dozens of willing and suitable authors, though in this respect the younger members in current academic employment more than pull their weight, recruiting new and younger authors who will be around to write for coming volumes. The young guns include Mark Cryle (former Fryer Librarian), Geoff Ginn (UQ Australian history academic), Libby Connors (Australian history academic at USQ Toowoomba) and Brian Stevenson, librarian and North Queensland rep, who manages to appear at our Brisbane meetings with gratifying frequency, perhaps lured from Townsville by the glow of wine and conviviality that awaits those who, at 6.00pm on a Tuesday night, can penetrate the dark labyrinth of the permanent building site which is Griffith's Nathan campus. Last but not least, Darryl Bennet, our official Secretary, has brought new purpose and organisation to the Working Party in recent years. His competence and unparalleled familiarity with the ADB from his years on the Canberra staff have made our work easier, more efficient and better informed.



# A DIFFERENT VIEW OF THE ADB

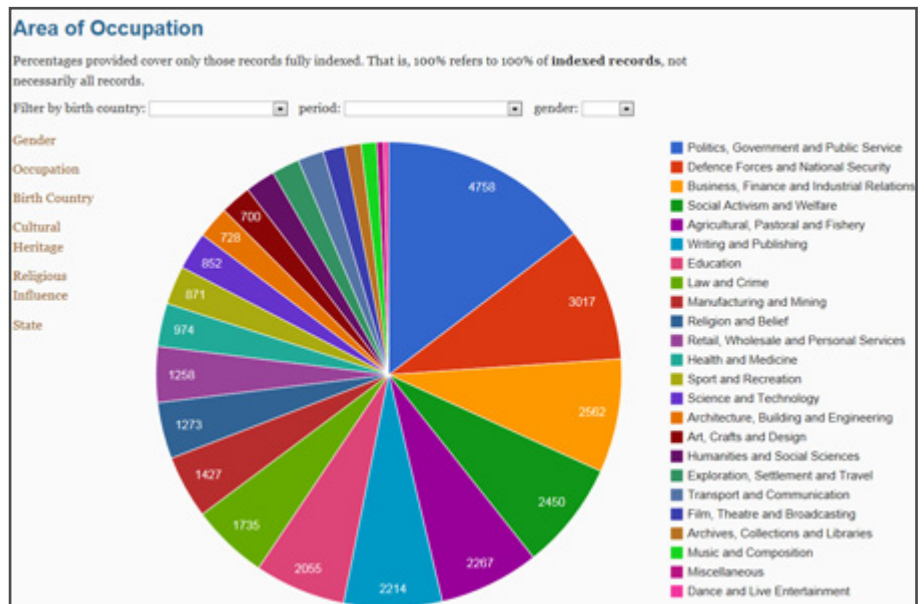
A set of pie charts developed by the NCB provide a unique view of the ADB

by Christine Fernon

Many researchers (and reviewers) are interested in issues of representativeness in the ADB. Now, thanks to a set of pie charts developed by the NCB's computer programmer, Scott Yeadon, it is possible, for the first time, to show graphical representations of the ADB's records. The charts are generated from the indexed data of ADB entries and can be accessed at <http://adb.anu.edu.au/stats/site>. As well as giving an overall view of the ADB, the charts can be broken into four periods: 1788-1856 (settler society period); 1857-1901 (nationalist period); 1901-1945 (war and depression period) and 1946-1990 (modern period) to show changes in representation over time.

The statistics show that men account for 88% of ADB entries. This is not a surprising revelation. The ADB has been criticised, since the publication of volume 1, for its male-centricity. Given that the Dictionary's main function is to include entries on the lives of eminent and infamous Australians this bias is unavoidable. The percentage of women has increased over time, though, from a woeful 5% of the entries of people who were alive in 1788-1856, to 12% of those who were alive in 1857-1901, 11% of those alive in 1901-1945 and 19% of those alive in 1946-1990.

Politics, Government and Public Service (4758 entries), followed by Law and Crime (3017 entries) and Business, Finance and Industrial Relations (2562 entries) are the top three broad occupation categories of people in the ADB. These figures need to be read with some caution. They are taken from our indexing so are not a reflection of the major reason why a person was



chosen for an entry. Most entries are also indexed under more than one occupation field. For example, a police officer who became a pastoralist and wrote books will be indexed under 'Law and Order', 'Agricultural, Pastoral and Fishery' and 'Writing and Publishing'.

The top three occupation groups have changed over time in not unexpected ways. Politics, Government and Public Service (555 entries) is the dominant occupation group in the settler society period, followed by Law and Crime (503 entries) — unsurprising given the preponderance of convicts in this era — and Agricultural, Pastoral and Fishery (496 entries). Politics, Government and Public Service (1518 entries) remained the dominant occupation during the nationalist (1857-1901) period with Writing and Publishing coming in at second place (503 entries) — perhaps reflecting the rise in political discourse. Business, Finance and Industrial Relations (451 entries) replaced agriculture as the third largest occupation group.

Defence Forces and National Security (2059 entries) heads the occupation categories during the period of war and depression (1901-1945), a reflection of the large number of men who fought in the armed forces in World Wars I and II. Politics, Government and Public Service (1617 entries), followed by Education (759) are the second and third most prominent occupation categories in this period.

Politics, Government and Public Service (682) resumes its place as the top occupation group in the modern period, followed by Writing and Publishing (413 entries) and Education (397 entries).

The pre-eminence of Writing and Publishing (2214 entries) in the statistics can be explained, partly, by the fact that this category includes both fiction and non-fiction writers, such as journalists and critics, as well as newspaper owners and editors, and those involved in the publishing industry.

At first glance the arts seem to be underrepresented in the ADB. Only

# A DIFFERENT VIEW (cont'd)

700 entries are listed under the Art, Crafts and Design occupation category; 486 are listed under Film, Theatre and Broadcasting; 349 are listed under Music and Entertainment and 112 under Dance and Live Entertainment. (Dance and Live Entertainment has the added distinction of being at the bottom of the occupation group overall, beaten even by the category 'Miscellaneous'.) When grouped as a whole, though, the arts (including Writing and Publishing) are represented in 3861 entries, making them the second largest occupational grouping in the ADB overall. It's actually 'Sport and Recreation' (871 entries), which seems to be under-represented – given that Australia is supposedly a sports-mad nation and that as well as sportsmen and women, this category includes sports writers, administrators and coaches.

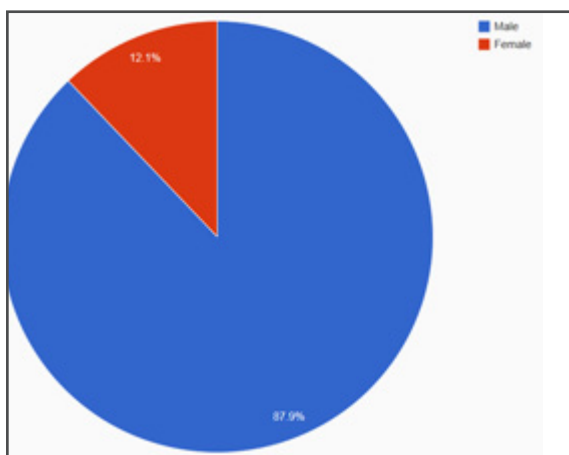
51% of people in the ADB were born in Australia, 22.5% in England, 6.6% in Scotland, 5.5% in Ireland and 1.4% in New Zealand. The percentage of Australian-born entries has increased in each period from 16% in 1788-1856 to 55% in 1857-1901, 56% in 1901-45 and 75% in 1946-90. It is likely that the percentage of Australian-born will stabilise, or even fall in the future, as the effect of the huge increase in migration post World War II starts percolating into the ADB.

Anglicanism is the dominant religion in the ADB both overall and within each period. The statistics for this category should be read with some caution as we do not have 100% coverage of this indexed field simply because religious influence is not apparent in many entries. We have also made educated guesses about religious influence based on the church in which the person's burial service was held or the section of a cemetery in which she/he was buried. The Catholic Church is the second most prominent religion

of people in the ADB, followed by Presbyterianism. It is interesting to note the prominence, at fifth place overall, of the Congregational Church in the ADB.

## Men Versus Women

As already stated, men account for 88% of ADB entries. There are some interesting differences when the statistics are broken down further by gender.



48.5% of the men in the ADB were born in Australia, 23.6% in England, 7.1% in Scotland and 5.9% in Ireland. For women the percentages are 70% born in Australia, 14.1% in England, 3% in Ireland and 2.6% in Scotland. It is amongst those alive in 1857-1901 that the greatest difference between the sexes in birth place is apparent, with 75% of women and only 52% of men being born in Australia. Women activists, in particular women's suffragists and women entering the professions for the first time, make up the single largest category of women in this period. It seems that most of them came from families already established in Australia. For men, on the other hand, it was a period of high migration, with many men coming to try their luck on the Australian goldfields and remaining to take up other occupations.

Unsurprisingly the major occupation fields for women are Social Activism and Welfare (531 entries), Education (355 entries), Writing and Publishing (311 entries), Health and Medicine (229 entries) and Politics, Government and Public Service (163 entries). For men the major occupations are Politics, Government and Public Service (4595 entries), Defence Forces and National Security (2867 entries), Business, Finance and Industrial Relations (2479 entries),

Agricultural, Pastoral and Fishery (2215 entries), and Social Activism and Welfare (1919 entries). It is interesting to note that the first and fifth ranked occupations are inverted for the sexes.

What do the statistics say overall about the ADB? Generalising somewhat, the most common type of person in the ADB is a white Anglican male, who was born in Australia and had

some involvement with the defence forces either in the colonial militia, or the AIF during World Wars I and II, and has worked in the public service and been involved in politics at either the local, state or federal level. The most common type of woman in the ADB is also white, Anglican, and born in Australia. She is likely to have worked in the community sector as an activist or (often unpaid) worker in community and welfare groups.



**ANU Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ian Young, presented ADB medals to Geoffrey Bolton, John Lack and Michael Roe at the launch of volume 18 in Canberra on December 11. The medals were introduced in 2002 to honour people who have given long and distinguished service to the ADB. The citation for the awards are reproduced below.**

## **Geoffrey Curgenvan Bolton**

AO, was a member of the Australian Dictionary of Biography's national committee from its establishment in 1959 through its various formations until his retirement from the Editorial Board in mid-2011. He has shown exceptional dedication in honouring his early commitment to this remarkable national enterprise in roles as period editor, Chair of the Western Australian Working Party (1967–1982 and 1996–2011) and prodigious contributor of articles from volume 1 onwards.

Born and educated in Perth, Geoffrey took Honours (1952) and Master of Arts (1954) degrees at the University of Western Australia, gaining a Hackett Research Scholarship to Balliol College at Oxford. He completed his PhD at Oxford University and returned to Australia in 1957 as a Research Fellow at the ANU. In 1961, in partnership with Ann Mozley (Moyal), he compiled a biographical register of the Western Australian Legislative Assembly, 1870–1930. During an eminent academic career, Geoffrey Bolton has contributed to the initiatives of major and fledgling Australian institutions including the Australian National University, Monash University (1962–65), University of Western Australia (1966–73), Murdoch University (1973–89), University of Queensland (1989–93) and Edith Cowan University (1993–96). Geoffrey was foundation director of the Australian Studies Centre at the University of London from 1982 until 1985. All along he has consistently served the ADB, encouraging colleagues in each place to support the Dictionary.

Geoffrey Bolton's tally of ADB articles, currently totalling 85, kept on increasing over the years, notwithstanding growing administrative commitments including as Chancellor of Murdoch University



L-R Michael Roe, Geoffrey Bolton, John Lack, photo by Natalie Azzopardi

(2002–06). His authoritative set of ADB entries includes articles on: politicians such as Sir James Steere (vol 12) and Sir Edward Wittenoom (vol 12); premier and agent general, Sir Cornthwaite Hector Rason (vol 11); pearls and investors, and politicians, Sholl brothers (vol 11); archdeacon John Ramsden Wollaston (vol 2); cartoonist Benjamin Edward Strange (vol 12); outlaw, Thomas Hughes (supplement) and many more. Geoffrey is known as a master of anecdote, and his articles show an engaging familiarity with his subjects; he has a phenomenal memory and his oracular presence serves him well. As Chair of the Western Australian Working Party, he used all these attributes to much advantage – more often than not he shared an anecdote about a prospective candidate for inclusion. For example, in his piece on P. C. Anderson, headmaster of Scotch College, Perth (vol 7), generational legend suggests that 'he once caned the entire school in an attempt to put down smoking.' Of his personal experience he tells of the grant he received as a young graduate when told to 'travel north young man, see the

country and meet the people.' Names of people associated with the Kimberley, such as Alexander Forrest, Michael Patrick Durack and Lindsay Gordon Blythe, now feature in the ADB. A great fixer, when the working party debate seemed to be non-ending, Geoffrey simply said 'Leave it with me.'

Geoffrey has written major and award-winning biographies of prominent persons including Alexander Forrest, Dick Boyer, John Ramsden Wollaston, Edmund Barton and Paul Hasluck (forthcoming) and produced many further books, including most recently the acclaimed short history of Western Australia, *Land of Vision and Mirage* (2008).

**John Lack** has been associated with the Australian Dictionary of Biography since the early 1970s when the late Dr Geoffrey Serle recruited him as an author and researcher. At the time the Victorian Working Party consisted of three people (Geoffrey Blainey, Allan Martin and Geoffrey Serle). John was a doctoral student in History

# ADB MEDALS (cont'd)

at Monash University, undertaking pioneering research in Australian urban history and taking as his subject the place of his birth and boyhood, the industrial working-class suburb of Footscray in Melbourne's west. His first entry, on the Melbourne industrialist and businessman, Thomas Loader, was published in Volume 5 in 1974. Since then he has written 44 entries and has edited innumerable others in his capacity as a Section Editor. John's biographical subjects for the Dictionary have reflected his broad scholarly interests in regional and labour history, in working-class and popular culture, immigration, literature and the complex psychology and motivations of community and business leaders such as Hugh Victor McKay and Sir John Storey. Entries like these helped set standards of scholarship for which the Dictionary is renowned. As with many others who have developed a life-long association with 'the ADB' John also worked as a researcher. His task was the lists for the 1891-1939 period undertaken in the summer of 1974. John joined the University of Melbourne as a Lecturer in History in 1978 and retired as an Associate Professor in 2003. Throughout this time he was associated with the ADB as a contributor and frequent consultant. He joined the Victorian Working Party in 1983 and upon Geoff Serle's death in 1998 was the logical choice as his successor both as Chair and as Section Editor. He joined the Editorial Board in 1998, serving with three General Editors.

For many Australian university teachers and researchers of History, working for the ADB in a voluntary capacity has been a welcome occasional responsibility and a source of pride upon publication. For John Lack it was much more than this in the decade and more after Geoff Serle's death. The Dictionary had been a personal mission for Serle and he had taken a much greater degree of responsibility than most working party chairs. Inevitably, this responsibility fell on John's shoulders at a time when Dictionary resources were diminishing and his university responsibilities increasing. It

is a credit to him that he not only took on this extra responsibility, but did so with meticulous attention to detail and characteristic good humour. John refashioned the Victorian Working Party, bringing in younger scholars and, at a time when other indications of and avenues for scholarship were coming into vogue, defending the ADB as a great Australian national institution worthy of the attention of scholars. His personal contribution is a living testament to that belief. John Lack's involvement with the ADB spans

## ADB Medal Recipients

Martha Campbell	Oct 2002
Bede Nairn	Oct 2002
John Ritchie	Oct 2002
Gerald Walsh	Oct 2002
Joyce Gibberd	Nov 2002
John Love	Nov 2002
A.G.L. Shaw	Dec 2002
Ken Cable	March 2003
Spencer Routh	Dec 2003
Frank Strahan	Dec 2003
Alec Hill	July 2004
Wendy Birman	Aug 2004
John Poynter	Sept 2004
Jennifer Harrison	Nov 2008
Darryl Bennet	May 2009
Diane Langmore	May 2009
Helen Jones	Dec 2009
Anne Rand	Dec 2009

nearly forty years and is continuing. He is placed honourably among the group of scholars whose work has ensured that the Australian Dictionary of Biography became and has remained a major national achievement. This medal is a symbolic recognition of that achievement.

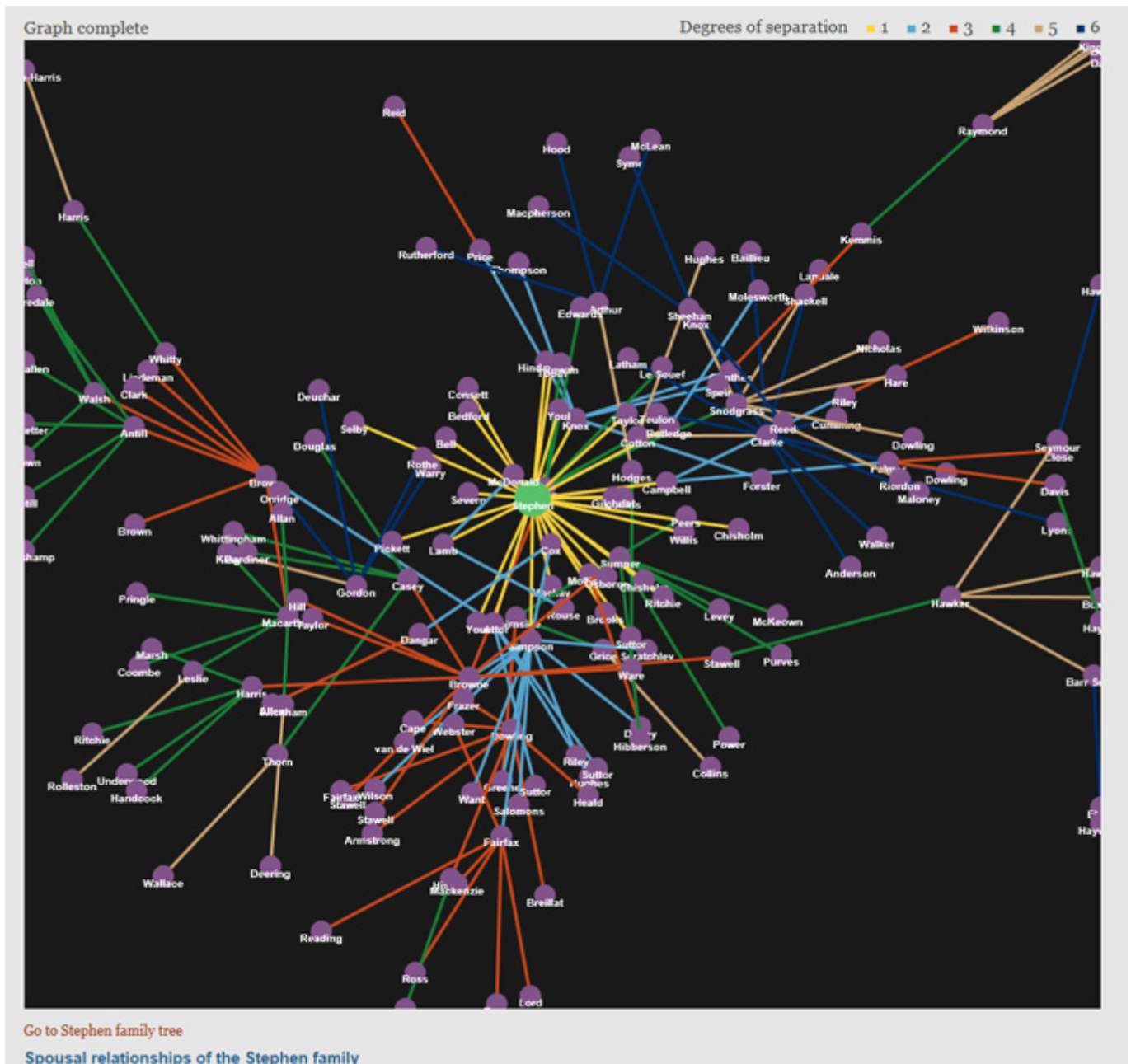
**Michael Roe** has had a long and distinguished association with the Australian Dictionary of Biography dating back to its first volume. He was a member of the Tasmanian Working Party for volumes 1, 2 and 4 to 10, Chair of the Working Party for volumes 11 to 18 (and the supplementary volume), Section Editor for volumes 13

to 18, and a member of the Editorial Board for volumes 8 to 18. Reflecting his profound scholarship in different areas of Australian and Tasmanian history, he has written 33 articles for the ADB on individuals as diverse as doctors, photographers, traders, academics, thinkers, journalists, public servants, politicians, governors, clergymen, educationalists, judges, librarians, writers, rebels, Aboriginal leaders and his beloved eccentrics. Most, but certainly not all, lived in his equally beloved Tasmania.

As an ADB author Michael Roe has provided penetrating insights into the character of his subjects and honest appraisals of their achievements and foibles based on thorough research, making every word count. As Chair of the Tasmanian Working Party, his vast knowledge of Tasmanian history, wonderful memory, superb organisational abilities and capacity to make significant connections have been of inestimable value. He has been scrupulous in assisting the Working Party to find the best possible author after careful weighing of the possibilities, in apportioning word lengths that reflect the importance of the subject and in ensuring that Tasmanians from all parts of the island are represented. His commitment to biography is also reflected in his two articles for the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, numerous articles in scholarly journals and in his books, most notably in *Kenealy and the Tichborne Cause* (1974) and *Nine Australian Progressives* (1984).

Professor Roe's contribution to the historical profession at a state and national level since his first academic appointment in 1960 has been recognised in a number of ways including the Royal Society of Tasmania medal in 2010 and life membership of the Australian Historical Association in 2011. Prominent among his achievements is his sustained commitment as author and editor to maintaining the high standards of the Australian Dictionary of Biography and his outstanding contribution richly deserves the recognition of an ADB medal.

# VISUALISING FAMILIES



The NCB's computer programmer, Scott Yeadon, has been investigating ways of displaying family connections.

As well as developing a family tree to show relationships within a family, he has adapted an open source visualisation tool to depict the connections — up to six degrees of separation — **between** families in the NCB's biographical websites.

The graph above shows the connections emanating from the family of Sir Alfred Stephen, chief justice of NSW in 1844-73. It is a fairly complex graph as Sir Alfred had 18 children. We have entries for them all — and his two wives — in the NCB's websites; some are in the ADB, others are in Obituaries

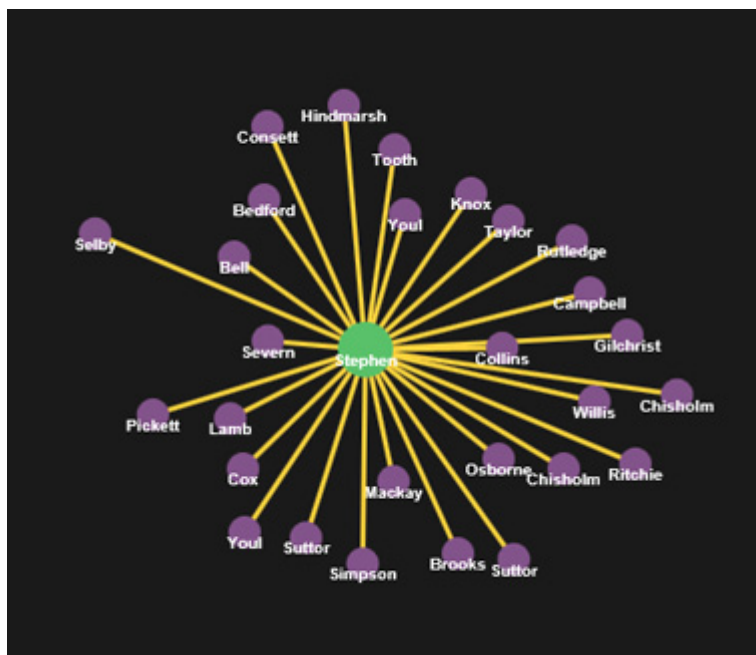
Australia. The three children who died in infancy, including one who was still stillborn, are included in the Biographical Register accessed through People Australia. We are keen to register even these lives and to place them in their families as their records are useful for those studying family formation and cause of death.

The extent of the connections is impressive given that, at this stage, the graphs are based on the indexed data from about 4000 entries (mostly obituaries).

The graphs can be accessed from the Family Tree graph pages attached to entries in NCB websites.



# VISUALISING FAMILIES (cont'd)



The family connections graphs can be complex. To counteract this, Scott has developed a tool that shows the connections level by level. The graph on the left shows the first level connections of Sir Alfred Stephen's family.

They were clearly marrying into the elite families of New South Wales including: Collins (David Collins, deputy judge advocate and lieutenant-governor of NSW), Rutledge (grazier, owner of Gidleigh), Campbell (prominent merchant), Suttor (squatter and politician), Simpson (legal family), Cox (William Cox, who built the first road across the Blue Mountains), Bell (Archibald Bell, an early landowner and police magistrate), Lamb (John Lamb, naval officer, politician and merchant); Knox (industrialist and founder of CSR) and the Tothos (brewers).

The links between these families are often not apparent in ADB entries or are difficult to comprehend. The graphs enable them to be easily depicted and understood.

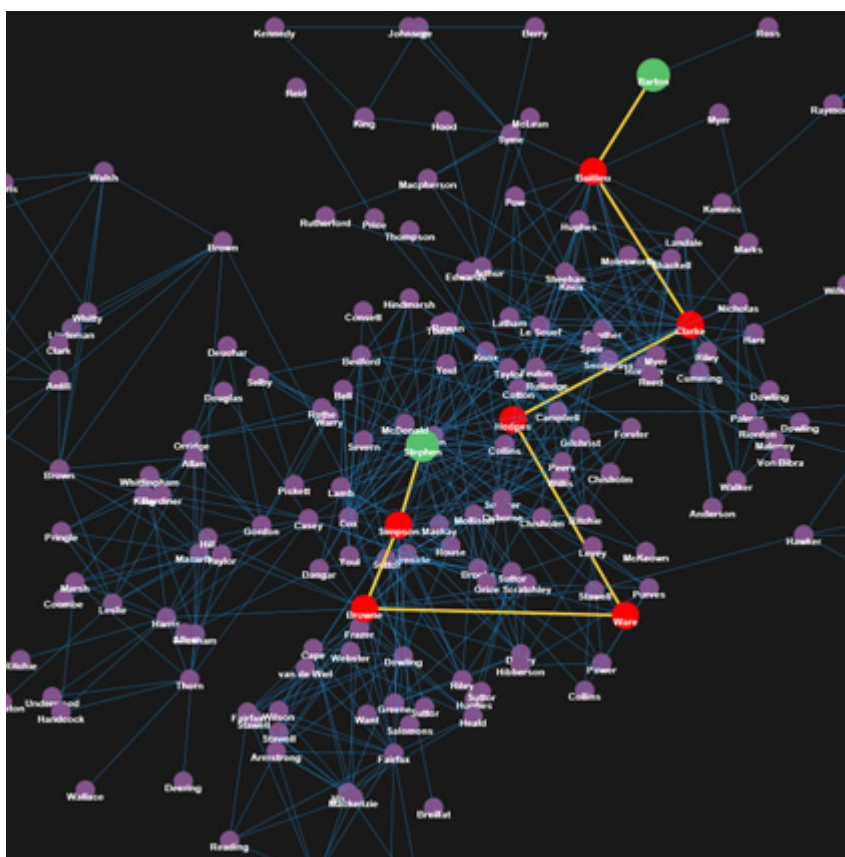
Scott has also developed a tool to show the route by which two families are connected. The graph on the right shows the connections between the families of Sir Alfred Stephen and Sir Edmund Barton, Australia's first prime minister.

The family of Thomas Alexander Browne, better known as the writer Rolf Boldrewood, is one of the important connecting families. The Brownes married into many prominent families in New South Wales and Victoria including the Fairfaxes, Chirnsides and Caseys.

The NCB is preparing an ARC application for funding to add a lot more records of Australia's 'founding' families to our database with a view to understanding the various networks (business, school, social ...) between families and how they were maintained over time.

Except for the favoured few, these family networks have been barely visible. We know more about social movements over time than we do about family networks.

Using biographies, obituaries and records which the ADB has accrued over five decades, connections can be drawn, mapped and visualised. Computational methodology will allow us to establish the importance of family webs in Australian history.



## The NCB is committed to working with others on biographical projects of national significance.

### Pacific Islander Biography

The NCB and the School of Culture, History & Language in the College of Asia and Pacific (CAP) at the ANU are working together to create a Pacific Islander Biography (PIB) website.



L-R: Scott Yeadon, Brij Lal, Vicki Luker, Jack Corbett and Melanie Nolan at the first meeting of the PIB Steering Committee

The site will use the NCB's Biographical Information Management System as its software platform. This will not only ensure PIB's continued development but means that relevant links between it and the NCB's sites will be automatically generated. Those reading the ADB's entry on Captain Cook, for example, will be able to click on a link that takes them to PIB to learn about Cook's exploits in the Pacific.

The project unites two core strengths of the ANU – the skills developed over 53 years by the ADB in producing biographical compendiums, aligned with the subject expertise of CAP, one of the world's leading research centres on Asia and the Pacific. The project also meets the strategic objective, of both the ANU and the federal government, of engaging with our Pacific neighbours.

The ADB has many entries relating to Papua New Guinea and, until recently, had an informal Pacific Working Party, which included former General Editor Di Langmore, who lived and taught in PNG for a number of years. The histories of South Sea Islanders, Indonesian pearlers and Australians are also intertwined. Current estimates of the number of Australians of Pacific Islander descent range from 300,000 to 500,000 making them over 2 per cent of the population.

Professor Brij Lal from the School of Culture, History & Language, is leading CAP's contribution to the project. He has a longstanding interest in biography and mooted the possibility of creating a biographical dictionary on the Pacific many years ago. Biographical entries from his book, *The Pacific Islands: An Encyclopedia*, co-edited with Kate Fortune in 2000, will be added to PIB as the first stage in its development. We will also be seeking to digitise relevant unpublished material in the ANU's Pacific Research Archives. Funding will also be sought to commission original entries.

### Serving Our Country

The NCB is pleased to be involved in a major Australian Research Council linkage project investigating the war service of Australia's Indigenous people.

*Serving Our Country: A History of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People in the Defence of Australia* is a collaborative project led by Professor Ann McGrath from the Australian Centre for Indigenous History, and Professor Mick Dodson from the ANU's National Centre for Indigenous Studies. Industry partners include the departments of Veterans Affairs and Defence, the Australian War Memorial, the National Archives of Australia and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies.

Dr Samuel Furphy, a Research Fellow with the NCB, is one of six chief investigators on the project and will coordinate the NCB's role in it.

The project promises to produce a large amount of biographical data, including interview transcripts, obituaries, images, and formal biographies, all of which will feed into the NCB's People Australia initiative.

The NCB is able to provide a sustainable online platform for this material, ensuring that it will be readily accessible well beyond the life of the *Serving Our Country* project. Furthermore, the People Australia database will enable webs of association, both within and beyond Indigenous communities, to be traced across all the NCB's sites, including the Australian Dictionary of Biography, Obituaries Australia, Women Australia and Labour Australia.



# STAFF ACTIVITIES

## Past and Present ADB Staff at the Launch of Volume 18 in Canberra



**Back Row:** Max Korolev, Scott Yeadon, Chris Clark, Nicole McLennan, Karen Fox (hidden), Chris Cunneen, Di Langmore, Nicholas Brown, Samuel Furphy

**Middle:** Rani Kerin, Christine Fernon, Anthea Bundock (hidden), Janet Doust, Barry McGowan, Rosemary Jennings, Paul Arthur, Darryl Bennet

**Front:** Brian Wimborne, Edna Kauffman, Melanie Nolan, Niki Francis, Barbara Dawson, Gail Clements, Chris Wallace, Suzanne Edgar, photo by Natalie Azzopardi

### TUNE IN TO THE ABC

The ADB's Victorian desk editor, Dr Samuel Furphy, is to talk about some of the people in volume 18 of the ADB in a series of radio interviews to be broadcast nationally during summer by the ABC in its 'ABC Overnights' program.

Ethel (Monte) Punshon who, in the 1980s, was described as the world's oldest lesbian – she died in 1989 aged 106 – is to be the focus of one of the interviews. A school teacher, Ethel also worked for J. C. Williamson, had her own art and design studio, presented a fashion show on the radio, was a warden at an internment camp during World War II and an instructor at a migrant camp after the war, taught English in Tokyo and in 1988 was appointed to the Japanese Order of the Sacred Treasure.

### NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY AWARD

The NCB's director, Professor Melanie Nolan has been invited to be a judge of the National Biography Award to be announced in April next year.

The award was established in 1996 and is open to Australian citizens and permanent residents who have published a work of biography or autobiography. The award, worth \$25,000, has been administered by the State Library of New South Wales since 1998 on behalf of its benefactors, Dr Geoffrey Cains and Michael Crouch.

Melanie Nolan with a selection of the books entered in the 2013 National Biography Award







## ADB General Editor MELANIE NOLAN discusses the latest volume of the ADB and the NCB's plans for the future

The Australian Dictionary of Biography (ADB) is the largest and longest-running collaborative project in the arts and social sciences in Australia. Since it started in 1959, over 4,000 authors have written the 11,500 entries which comprise the Dictionary. Hundreds of academics throughout Australia have also given freely of their time over the years to sit on the ADB's working parties and editorial board.

On 6 December, Queensland Governor Penelope Wensley will launch volume 18 of the ADB, which includes articles on 669 individuals with surnames beginning from L to Z who died during the 1980s. Author Patrick White, whose centenary was celebrated this year, has an entry, as do artist Fred Williams and patrons of the arts, John and Sunday Reed, who established an influential art commune at their rural home, Heide, near Melbourne, in the 1930s. Politicians William McMahon, Billy Sneddon, Enid Lyons and Dorothy Tangney are also included, as is former Governor-General William McKell, scientist Julius Sumner Miller (famous for his TV show *Why is it so?*), the

first aboriginal commissioned officer, Reg Saunders, war historian Alan Moorehead and prominent feminist Ruby Rich.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Ian Young will launch the online version of volume 18 at University House on 11 December. The online version allows users to search for people associated with particular groups or organisations, such as ANU. One will find in this volume many ANU academics, including physiologist Walter MacFarlane, physicists Leslie Martin and Ernest Titterton, pathologist Morris Bede, chemist Alan Parker, philosopher Percy Patridge, anthropologist Bill Stanner, economist Trevor Swan and historian John La Nauze. Many others have an ANU connection as students or as recipients of honorary degrees from the University. One can also do a search for 'Canberrans', 'Canberra in 1913', or view the family trees ('tree view') of local families such as the Campbells of Duntroon and explore their networks with the Stephens, the Knoxes, the Fairfaxes, the Baillieus and beyond.

The editor of the *ANU Reporter* invited the National Centre of Biography to contribute a series of columns on subjects in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* which would be of interest to its readers.

This is the most recent of the columns appearing in the series 'Life Sentences'.

Our long-term plan is to develop innovative biographical websites and to undertake e-research based on our data. Approximately nine million Australians died between 1788 and 1990 and it is only by building up a critical mass of data on individuals that e-research can be undertaken. The ADB has established an Obituaries Australia website ([oa.anu.edu.au](http://oa.anu.edu.au)) which aims to publish and comprehensively index every obituary of Australians published, and a People Australia website ([peopleaustralia.anu.edu.au](http://peopleaustralia.anu.edu.au)) which, among other things, links biographical data that other groups are donating to the ADB. The websites are open and free to access. Not surprisingly, they are attracting 70 million hits a year. Look us up and find out more.

### KEEPING IN TOUCH

Please remember to let us know if you are moving house, or change your email address, so that we can update our records.

*Illustration from cover of ADB, vol 18: Charles Blackman, Suite 1, 1960 (CBE Collection: Queensland Art Gallery © Charles Blackman/Licensed by Viscopy, 2012)*

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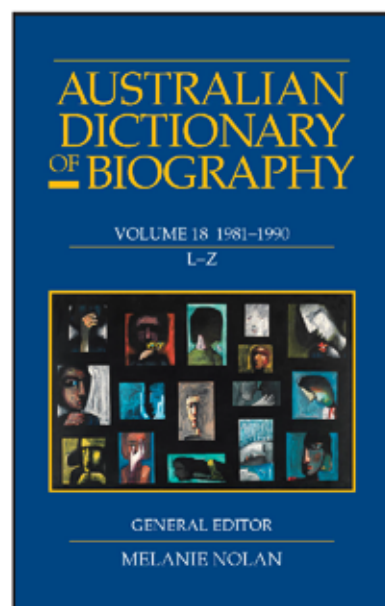
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