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National
University

BIOGRAPHY FOOTNOTES

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Director of the National Centre of Biography, Professor Melanie Nolan, with NCB graduates, Drs Chris Wallace (left) and Jacqui Donegan (right) and ANU Chancellor, Professor the Hon Gareth Evans AC QC, 12 December 2015

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK



Welcome to Issue 15 of *Biography Footnotes*

There is unanimous agreement that a thorough revision of the early volumes of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* is required. Some of the articles were written in 1959. We are on the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of volume I.

The *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* attracted £22.5 million over a decade, c1994-2004, to systematically revise the *Dictionary of National Biography* and add missing persons. Oxford University Press and the UK Lotteries provided the funding. The New Zealand government allocated \$10 million in the 1990s for the publication of the *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*.

We estimate it would cost \$20 million, over ten years, to revise the early volumes of the *ADB*. The Australian National University, which has provided a home for the *ADB* for almost sixty years, does not have the resources to fund such an undertaking.

There are some other options. One is to complete the current task of publishing entries for those who died in 1991-2000 — and then start again at volume 1 by revising entries and adding missing persons.

Meanwhile, at the NSW Working Party's suggestion, we have begun a limited revisions project. It will focus on acquiring birth, death and marriage certificates for entries in the first two volumes of the *ADB* and correcting minor errors. Volumes 1 and 2 are the subject of most corrigenda

inquiries. These entries were published at a time when it was operationally difficult and too expensive to obtain BDM certificates, and other biographical sources were difficult to source.

Dr Chris Cunneen of the NSW Working Party has been awarded a three year honorary position at the University of Macquarie to manage the project. We are very grateful to him for taking this on.

The *ADB*'s managing editor, Malcolm Allbrook, and I met with Chris, Darryl Bennet and Bev Kingston in May in Sydney to discuss the project. Several other working parties have established revisions sub-committees.

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The *ADB*, and the wider historical community, is dealing with the loss of Emeritus Professor Geoffrey Bolton AO (see page 6 for an obituary by Malcolm Allbrook). Geoffrey was a long-serving and dedicated member of the *ADB*'s Editorial Board, chair of the Western Australia Working Party (1967-1982 and 1996-2011) and author of 85 *ADB* entries. He last joined us in July this year in Canberra for a workshop on 'Biographies and Autobiographies of Historians' at which he presented a fine paper on 'Australian Historians Networking, 1914-1973' which will appear in a forthcoming collection of essays being edited by John Reid and Doug Munro. We will miss Geoffrey very much.

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NCB graduates

Three NCB PhD students graduated this year. Sophie Scott-Brown joined us from England to work on her thesis, 'The Histories of Raphael Samuel: A Portrait of a People's Historian'. She has now returned to the UK and is working as a manager at the Writers' Centre Norwich.

Chris Wallace and Jacqui Donegan graduated in December (see front cover for photo).

Chris Wallace has a background in political journalism and is currently a visiting fellow at the NCB where she is developing her thesis, 'The Silken Cord: 20th Century Prime Ministerial Biography in Australia and Its Meaning', into a book. She is also a fellow at the Australian Prime Ministers Centre at the Museum of Australian Democracy in Canberra, where she is working on a project about Australia's earliest prime ministers, their family contexts and their significance to the nation.

Jacqui Donegan transferred from the University of Queensland to complete her thesis, 'The Confectionery Kings: Robertson, Allen and Hoadley, 1875-1945' at the NCB. She is currently reworking her Honours thesis, about the champion swimmer, Annette Kellerman, into a full-scale biography. She is also assisting the Powerhouse Museum with their forthcoming exhibition about her.

Kellerman is famous for pioneering the one-piece bathing swimsuit for women and for being arrested after wearing it on a beach in Boston, USA, in 1907. She then travelled the world with her scantily-clad vaudeville routine, and was one of the first women to appear in silent film. She also created water ballet (the forerunner to synchronised swimming), authored several popular books on beauty and physical culture, and opened one of America's first healthfood stores.

You can read Kellerman's *ADB* entry at <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/kellermann-annette-marie-sarah-6911>

ADB Volume 1 turns fifty

The NCB will celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of volume 1 of the *ADB* in 2016. Former Prime Minister, Sir Robert Menzies, launched the volume in the Great Hall at University House, ANU, on 3 March 1966. Unfortunately we do not have any photographs of the event or transcripts of speeches made on the occasion.

But we do have copies of the exuberant book reviews. W. G. Buick pronounced, in the *Australian Book Review*, 'Let us celebrate the birth of a giant: The *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. Only once does a nation undertake so prodigious a task'. Stephen Murray Smith described the *ADB*, in the *Australian Historical Studies*, as 'a remarkable gift to the nation', while Eric Richards, writing in the *Journal of the Historical Society of South Australia*, proclaimed that the *Dictionary* was a 'gift of scholarship to the nation and the world'.

On 30 June 2016 we will be holding a reception in the Great Hall of University House to celebrate the publication of volume 1 — and all the volumes that have followed — and to remember all the people who have helped to make the *ADB* the great success that it is. We are hoping the current prime minister may be able to attend.

The reception will also be the preliminary event in the NCB's conference, 'True Biographies of Nations? Tracking the Cultural Journeys of Dictionaries of National Biography' to be held at the National Library of Australia, 1-2 July.

Day one of the conference will consist of papers and panels relating to national dictionary projects. The second day will be devoted to biographical dictionary projects in Australia. The conference will focus particularly on the impact of online technology and the opportunities it offers to transform biographical dictionaries.

Professor Sir David Cannadine, editor

of the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, will give the keynote address.

A program and registration form will be available on the NCB's website early next year at <http://ncb.anu.edu.au/biographies-of-nations>.

PMs convict heritage

The NCB was visited this year by Paddy Manning during his research for his recently published biography of Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull. Paddy was keen to chat with us about our rather complicated family tree of the Turnbull family (among other things it contains an intergenerational marriage between cousins).

We had undertaken some research on the Turnbull family as part of an intended project on the free settlers who came to New South Wales on the *Coromandel* in 1802. So we knew that Malcolm's ancestors go back to the First (and Second and Third) Fleet and included convicts. But we'd never actually counted the number of his direct convict ancestors. Eleven! And we're not sure we have listed them all yet. This seems an extraordinary number. But perhaps it is not surprising given that the fledgling colony was dominated by convicts for many decades.

Turnbull is not the only prime minister with convict ancestors. In 2008 the Church of Latter-day Saints presented then PM, Kevin Rudd, with two leather-bound volumes of his family history. Five convicts are listed in the document, including Mary Ann Wade who arrived as an 11-year-old in the Second Fleet. She had originally been sentenced to death for stealing the clothes of an eight-year-old girl. The sentence was later commuted to transportation for life. Mary apparently had 21 children, the first born when she was just 14 years old.

Former prime minister, John Howard, also has two convicts in his family. Malcolm Fraser had one (see page 10).

First, Second and Third Fleets

Speaking of convicts, the NCB will be working on a major prosopographical project next year aimed at tracing the fates of all the people (convicts, crew, marine etc.) who set off from England in the first three fleets to New South Wales in 1787-1791. As well as mapping the fortunes of the 'fleeters' themselves, we will be documenting the lives of all their children and grandchildren who were born or settled in the colonies.

We have estimated that a maximum of 5000 people made the journey in the first three fleets. A significant number died during the trip or shortly after landing. Many convicts married each other while the gender imbalance meant that many men never married. So the actual number of families we need to trace in the initial stage may be as low as 1500.

We will also be able to draw on the vast amount of research — including family histories — that has been done on the first three fleets.

Our aim is to record all the names of individuals in our relevant databases, and collect as much biographical data about them as we can. As well as looking at the prosperity of families, we are particularly interested in how people were finding their marriage partners, and tracing the movement of people between colonies and in recording voyages they made between colonies and to England, New Zealand and elsewhere.

Online Biographical Register of WA MPs

The Western Australia Parliamentary Library has recently launched an online Biographical Register of Members of the Parliament of Western Australia <http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/parliament/library/MPHistoricalData.nsf/LookupBios?Openview>

The Register includes both past and present MPs. Researchers will find a wealth of information, including details

about MPs birth and death dates, parents' occupation, MPs early life, education, employment before their election to parliament, and the year they arrived in the state if they were born elsewhere. Very usefully, MPs inaugural and valedictory speeches as well as condolence motions are included as pdf attachments. Links to relevant ADB entries of MPs are also being made.

ADB Oceania Working Party

An ADB Oceania Working Party has been formed to select biographical subjects from the Pacific region who have an association with Australia — and those from Australia who have an association with the region — for entries in the ADB and to identify any missing persons, particularly in the colonial period.

Katerina Teaiwa, Convener of Pacific Studies in the College of Asia and the Pacific at the ANU, has agreed to chair the Working Party. She has also been nominated to the Editorial Board. Patricia O'Brien, an ARC Future Fellow at the ANU's School of History, is the deputy chair. Other members of the Working Party are Chris Ballard, Stephanie Lawson, Jonathan Ritchie, Deveni Temu, Bill Standish and Stewart Firth.

In the past, Pacific historian, Jim Davidson, chaired a Pacific Working Party from 1959 until his death in 1973. An informal PNG Working Party led by Di Langmore, Bill Gammage, Ken Inglis and Hank Nelson, who had all previously lived in PNG, met for about twenty years until 2007.

Seven Dwarfs

It is good to see political journalists are consulting NCB publications.

Political journalist, Laura Tingle's recent acclaimed Quarterly Essay, *Political Amnesia: How We Forgot To Govern*, has a number of quotes from Nicholas Brown's chapter, 'The Seven Dwarfs: A Team of Rivals' in

The Seven Dwarfs and the Age of the Mandarins, edited by Samuel Furphy and published by the NCB's ANU.Lives imprint.

Laura was quick off the mark. The book isn't being officially launched, by the ANU's Chancellor, Professor the Hon Gareth Evans AC QC, until 17 December.

Congratulations

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

Australia Day Honours

Member (AM) in the General Division
Mr Bohdan Bilinsky
Mr Paul Arthur Richards

Medal (OAM) in the General Division
Dr David Hilliard

Queen's Birthday Honours

Officer (AO)
Mr Peter Coleman

Member (AM)
Professor Stuart Cunningham
Ms Valmai Hankel
Emeritus Professor Dennis Haskell
Professor Ross Holland
Ms Lesley Reece

Medal (OAM)
Dr Patricia Kotai-Ewers
Mrs Helen Musa
Dr John Yiannakis

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:

John Bannon
Leslie Bodi
Geoffrey Bolton
John Brodie
Ross Curnow
R. M. Gibbs
Lionel Gilbert
Harry Gordon
Joan Hancock
Margaret Henry
Stuart Inder
Amirah Inglis
F. B. (Barry) Smith
Hugh Stretton



Congratulations to the ADB's managing editor, Dr Malcolm Allbrook, who recently received a well-deserved academic promotion.

As well as running the ADB office, and handling the many inquiries that we receive from the public, Malcolm is working with Dr Shino Kinoshi of the University of Western Australia and Steve Kinnane from the University of Notre Dame at Broome, in developing a grant application for a major project on Indigenous biography.

In the spare time he has left he is writing a book about the Pilbara and has two books in press: on the Kimberley coast and on childhood in colonial Perth. His book, *Henry Prinsep's Empire* was published by ANU Press last year.

Dr Kylie Carman-Brown joined the ADB in October as a research editor. After gaining her PhD in environmental history from the ANU, Kylie worked as a curator at the National Archives of Australia and at the National Museum of Australia.

One of her major projects at the National Museum was creating the permanent exhibition on Governor Lachlan Macquarie, commissioned by the Macquarie Bank for their new premises at Martin Place in Sydney.

She also worked on the Museum's Defining Moments in Australian History online project. In consultation with an advisory panel of leading historians, one hundred defining moments were compiled by National Museum staff. Kylie then researched and wrote up many of the online entries. All very good training for working at the ADB.

The exhibition she worked on for the National Archives' Forced Adoptions History Project is currently touring the country.

Kylie is responsible for editing South Australian and Tasmanian ADB entries.



Geoff Hunt has been employed as the NCB's copy editor since August last year. He checks ADB entries for consistency and conformity to ADB style before they are added to the website in yearly batches. He also copy edits NCB ANU.Lives imprints.

Geoff has a wealth of experience. He is a contracted copy editor with ANU Press and edits the *Aboriginal History* journal, and the defence journal *Security Challenges*, and is one of three copy editors for the State, Society and Governance in Melanesia program at the ANU.

Geoff says it is fascinating to read ADB entries, 'every person dies in the same year, yet their beginning points and life pathways can be so very similar or completely different and dependent upon random influences of choice and the global politics of the time'.



GEOFFREY BOLTON (1931-2015)

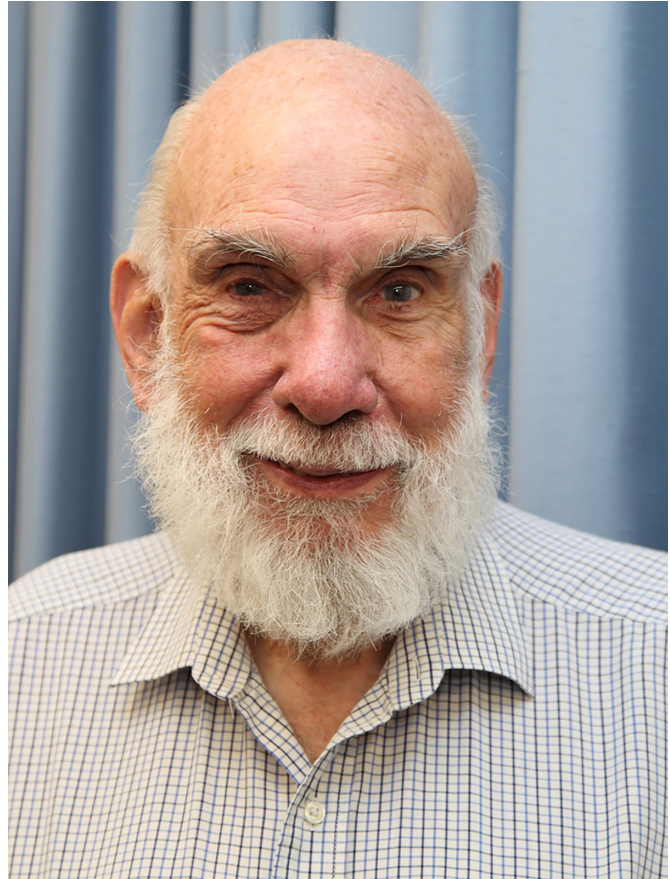
by Malcolm Allbrook

Geoffrey Curgenven Bolton (1931–2015), AO, who died in September after a short illness, was closely associated with the Australian Dictionary of Biography throughout much of his life. Indeed, it was only in July that he made the long trek across the Nullarbor to attend a week-end conference at the ANU on the subject of historians' biography and autobiography, at which he presented a typically lucid paper on the networks emanating from Balliol, the Oxford College from which he gained his doctorate in 1957. Geoffrey was far from well at the time; yet he was an alert and stimulating presence, interjecting with authority and humour, and able to draw upon his vast store of memory and experience to contribute in a wonderful way to a lively week-end. A few months before, in December 2014, the National Centre of Biography had the pleasure of hosting the launch, by the Governor-General Sir Peter Cosgrove, of Geoffrey's authoritative biography of Sir Paul Hasluck (UWAP, 2014), Australia's seventeenth Governor-General (Cosgrove had served as his aide-de-camp), cabinet minister in the Menzies, Holt and Gorton governments, public servant, historian and memorialist. This was a fine book, yet at the time we had no idea that it would be his last. Indeed, right up until the last few weeks of his life, Geoffrey was talking about new projects, such as a memoir of his time in the Kimberley as a young man, an episode that had a profound impact on his personal and intellectual development, and which continued to exercise his imagination over the course of his life.

Bolton's contribution to the ADB from 1959 until his death was wide-ranging. He became a member of the national committee (now the Editorial Board) from its inception in the late 1950s until his retirement in mid-2011. At the same time, he served for many years as Western Australian section editor, and as chair of the WA working party (1967-1982 and 1996-2011). Even following his so-called 'retirement', he continued to attend working party meetings, offering counsel and advice to his successor, Patrick Cornish and to the members, most of whom he had previously mentored as a teacher and a colleague.

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 and returned to Australia in 1957 as a Research Fellow at the Australian National University where, in partnership with Ann Mozley (Moyal), he compiled *The Western Australian Legislature (1870-1930): Biographical Notes* (1961).

In an eminent academic career, Geoffrey Bolton has contributed to the initiatives of the history departments of major and fledgling Australian institutions including the Australian National University, Monash University (1962-1965), the University of Western Australia (1966-1973), Murdoch University (1973-1989), the University of Queensland (1989-1993) and Edith Cowan University (1993-1996). He was also the foundation director of the Australian Studies Centre at the University of London from 1982 until 1985. All along he consistently served



Geoffrey Bolton, 2012

photo by Natalie Azzopardi

the ADB, encouraging colleagues in each place to support the Dictionary.

His tally of *ADB* entries kept increasing over the years, notwithstanding an always full diary, and other commitments such as his period as Chancellor of Murdoch University (2002-2006). He wrote *ADB* entries on the prominent, the earnest and the scoundrels: politicians such as Sir James Steere and Sir Edward Wittenoom (vol 12); premier and agent general, Sir Cornthwaite Rason (vol 11); pearlers and investors, and politicians, Sholl brothers (vol 11); archdeacon John Wollaston (vol 2); cartoonist Benjamin Strange (vol 12); outlaw, Thomas Hughes, (supplement) and many more.

Geoffrey was known as a master of anecdote, and his articles suggest a familiarity with his subjects. Often the familiarity was well-founded. One could rarely mention a figure in Western Australian history without Geoffrey letting it be known that he, or his father, or someone he knew well, had been acquainted with the person. I recall a recent conversation when he was marvelling at how easily, in a place such as Western Australia, memory could transcend the entire period of colonization. One only had to be of a certain age, and to have listened to old people as youngsters, who had in turn talked to their elders, and we were back in 1829.

GEOFFREY BOLTON (cont'd)

He had a phenomenal memory and his oracular presence served him well. Almost all of his *ADB* articles have at least one perfect turn of phrase. He was a master at finding an unsurpassable way of expressing or summing up a life, one which alluded to strengths as well as to frailties and oddities. Thus, the Anglican archdeacon John Wollaston (1791-1856) was 'diffident, pessimistic and often censorious'; Frederick Wittenoom (1859-1939) was 'heavier in the jowls' and 'more thick-set and portly' than his brother Edward (1854-1936) who, had a 'heart-shaped face' and hair which 'as it greyed, gave him a distinguished demeanour'. Of the former Western Australian premier Sir James Mitchell (1866-1951), Geoffrey wrote:

Daily he strolled along St George's Terrace with the slightly old-fashioned formality of a successful country banker—striped trousers, bowler hat, pince-nez and a silver-mounted stick—greeting acquaintances and tipping children with threepences for ice-cream. He enjoyed urging young men to go on the land and women to become farmers' wives and mothers. He was perhaps happiest in the country districts, though the punctilious deplored his reputed habit of keeping fishhooks and bait in the pockets of his formal clothes. Courteous, florid, ample in paunch and jowl, he said: 'I have lived in the world's best climate and done justice to the world's best food'.

For most people, Geoffrey's role with the ADB would leave them breathless and unable to imagine how he could have found the time to do anything else. But, of course, he was also a teacher and a mentor who helped generations of undergraduates and postgraduates at the many universities he was attached to. When I first met him in 1973 as a not entirely dedicated undergraduate at the University of Western Australia he seemed venerable although he was actually only just over 40. He strode into the lecture hall, not an athletic walk, but one which oozed academia and knowledge as, without the aid of notes and without stumbling or faltering, he declaimed for an hour on the maritime history of Western Australia. This was a teacher who could make history interesting and relevant; in his hands it became a fascinating pastiche of colour and action, and to his unerring historical eye, it was the idiosyncratic and unusual that gave history its unpredictability. History in his mind was far from teleological and there were so many points at which it could go wrong, most often at the hands of humankind with its endless variety, talent and strangeness.

As well as a teacher, Geoffrey was a writer of fine histories and, with his eye for the unusual and the obscure, a liking for what made people unorthodox or unpredictable, a natural biographer. He wrote a series of award-winning biographies including *Alexander Forrest* (1958), *Edmund Barton* (2000), *Dick Boyer* (1967), *Augustus Charles Gregory* (1972, with Wendy Birman), *Richard Daintree* (1965) and the aforementioned *Paul Hasluck* (2014). The National Library of Australia catalogue has him authoring, editing, or contributing in some way to 46 books,



Geoffrey Bolton receiving his ADB Medal from ANU Vice-Chancellor, Ian Young, 2012.

ADB Council chair, Tom Griffiths, is in the background.

photo by Natalie Azzopardi

including local histories, histories of institutions and professions, environmental, and general histories such as volume 5 of the *Oxford History of Australia* (1993). As with his biographies, Bolton had a fine eye for detail and the unusual, and a capacity to find the perfect angle. Who wouldn't envy a title such as *A Fine Country to Starve In* (1972), *Land of Vision and Mirage* (2008), or *Spoils and Spoilers* (1981)?

Geoffrey has been widely recognised and much honoured for his contribution to Australian and, in particular, Western Australian, history and biography. In 1984 he was awarded an AO, in 1991 an OAM, in 2001 a Centenary Medal and, in 2006, he was named WA Australian of the Year. In 2012 he became the nineteenth person to be recognised for his long and meritorious contribution with the award of an ADB medal. On his death, Geoffrey had lined up historical projects that would have kept him occupied for a long time, not least the ADB, for which he had an 85th article ready to published, and had undertaken to write the short biographies of Paul Hasluck, Mary Durack, Charles Bunning and Sir James McCusker, as well as to co-author entries on Alexandra Hasluck and Professor Gordon King. He had a book forthcoming, a forty-year history of Murdoch University, where he had been Professor of History and later Chancellor, and a galaxy of other projects in the pipeline.

For more than half a century, Geoffrey Bolton had continued his interest and given generous, well-informed support to all aspects of the ADB, its work and its ethos. The ADB community of working parties, authors and staff remember a man of grace, charm and knowledge, a colleague who was always there to advise and assist, and whose talents as a historian are irreplaceable. We are honoured to have known him. To Carol and his family go our heartfelt condolences.

VISITING FELLOWS

The NCB is welcoming four overseas visiting fellows next year, three associated with our major conference, 'True Biographies of Nations?' to be held on 1-2 July at the National Library of Australia.

Professor Ira Nadel, from the University of British Columbia in Canada, will be visiting the NCB from 1 June to 31 July.

Nadel has co-edited four volumes of the *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, written nine major biographies, including *Leon Uris: Life of a Bestseller* (2010), and is currently completing a critical life of Virginia Woolf.

He has a particular interest in the cultural significance of biographical dictionaries and is undertaking a comparative analysis of the Australian and Canadian dictionaries. While in Australia he will be interviewing editors and contributors to the *ADB*. He is interested in finding out if there is a standard format and length for entries and will be looking at the principles behind deciding who warrants entries.

He will also be examining the history of the *ADB* in relation to the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (both dictionaries have their origins in the 1950s and published their first volume in 1966) and will consider the theoretical and national implications of each enterprise.

Professor Sir David Cannadine, Editor of the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* and Director of the Institute of Historical Research, London, will be visiting the NCB from 1 July to 31 July.

Cannadine is a leading British historian and biographer.

His works include *G. M. Trevelyan: A Life in History* (1992), *Mellon: An American Life* (2006) and *King George V* (2014).

The NCB has a longstanding association with the *ODNB* and its predecessor the *Dictionary of National Biography*. Indeed, the *ADB* is modelled on the *DNB* and it was to the *ODNB* website that we looked when we prepared for the *ADB*'s move online in the early 2000s.

While in Canberra, Cannadine will be discussing ways to interconnect the metadata of national biographies, allowing scholars to search for people with common interests and experiences beyond national boundaries.

Professor Elizabeth Ewan from the University of Guelph, Ontario, Canada, will be visiting the NCB from 20 June to 15 July.

Ewan is the co-editor of the *Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Women*, published in hardcopy in 2006. With her colleagues, she is currently working on an online version of the Dictionary.

Professor Elleke Boehmer, Deputy Director of the Oxford Life Writing Centre at Wolfson, University of Oxford, will be visiting the NCB from 16 September to 16 October.

Boehmer has a particular interest in the narrative form and rhetoric of 20th century political autobiography, and the different modes and terms of address used in political and celebrity life-writing.

While at the NCB she will present a paper and hold a master class for postgraduate students.

Australia's Foresters

NCB staff have been working with the Australian Forest History Society and the Institute of Foresters of Australia over the last two years in a special project which saw us add over 200 obituaries and biographical profiles of foresters to our Obituaries Australia and People Australia websites. It has been a true partnership project, helped by grants and volunteers from both organisations.

We are particularly grateful to Geoff Dean, from the Institute of Foresters, who searched the institute's journals and newsletters for obituaries and biographical records and turned them into digital form. John Dargavel from the Forest History Society, and the ANU's Fenner School of Environment and Society searched Trove's digitised newspapers for records of deceased foresters. He wrote an essay on Australia's Foresters <http://peopleaustralia.anu.edu.au/essay/17> as well as many descriptors for entities associated with forestry.

Geoff and John were also able to search the records of the Institute of Foresters, enrolment records in the ANU Archives and genealogical records to obtain crucial birth, employment and education data, which are often missing in obituaries and that we wouldn't have been able to obtain elsewhere. They helped us determine when we needed to create new



Foresters, T. Bailes and B. Shalders, with their tools of trade, n.d.

occupation headings. It was a great relief to have forestry experts on hand.

The completion of the project coincided with the Institute of Foresters' 80th anniversary. We were invited to the celebrations in Canberra in November and demonstrated our websites to show how they can be interrogated with faceted browse and other facilities to reveal information about foresters' lives.

1992 ADB ENTRIES

Entries for those who died in 1992 will be added to the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* website early next year. As usual they include a diverse range of people:

Torres Strait Islander leader Eddie Mabo (1936-1992) often spent his lunch hours, while working as a gardener at James Cook University from 1967 to 1975, reading A. C. Haddon's six-volume *Reports of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Straits*. When he later learnt that he and other Murray Islanders were not the legal owners of land inherited under custom and tradition he was spurred into action and began a campaign which culminated in the landmark High Court Mabo judgements. The second ruling, handed down a few months after Mabo's death, overturned the doctrine known as terra nullius (land belonging to no-one), and paved the way for the Commonwealth Native Title Act 1993.

Teacher and author Dora Birtles (1903-1992) and her husband, author and journalist Victor (Bert) Birtles (1900-1994), share an entry. The couple met while studying at the University of Sydney. Bert's erotic poem, dedicated to 'D', and published in the student newspaper, *Hermes*, led to his expulsion for 'misconduct in writing a poem'. After graduating, Dora taught at a high school for a few years and then set off for London with four other people in a 10-metre boat. They got as far as Singapore. Dora continued on with her travels through China, Japan and Europe before settling in London. The story of her adventures was published as *North-West by North* in 1935. Bert remained at home in Newcastle, working as Dora's agent and establishing his career as a political journalist. Dora later worked as an assistant writer and talent scout on the film, *The Overlanders*, set in the Northern Territory, and wrote the novel of the film. A substantial inheritance in 1958 gave her the freedom to travel again, this time to Afghanistan, the Soviet Union, China and South America. Following his retirement as a journalist in 1972, Bert devoted his life to writing poetry.

Singer and songwriter Peter Allen (1944-1992) began his performing career at the age of 11 in the ladies' lounge of the New England Hotel at Armidale. Four years later he was part of the Allen Brothers, and was regularly appearing on the popular TV program, *Bandstand*. By 1964 he was performing with American singer and actor, Judy Garland, and married her daughter, Liza Minnelli, in 1967. The couple divorced after Allen acknowledged his homosexuality in 1970. In that same year Allen began a successful solo career, writing songs, and performing on stage with great energy and in trademark Hawaiian shirts. He is best remembered for his song, 'I Still Call Australia Home'.

Beatrice Davis (1909-1992), was book publisher Angus and Robertson's first full-time editor. Starting as a proof reader in 1937, within four years she was hosting functions and meetings of authors. She encouraged A&R to take over the publication of the literary magazine *Southerly* and from 1957 was a member of the judging panel of the prestigious Miles Franklin award. She was sacked by Richard Walsh in 1973 after he had been brought in by A&R's new owner, Gordon Bryant, to modernise the publishing department. Davis went

on to work for Thomas Nelson (Australia), taking with her several authors, including Thea Astley.

Mining magnate Lang Hancock (1909-1992) never actually owned any iron ore mines. The astute agreements he and his business partner, Peter Wright, signed saw them secure 2.5% of the royalties of the value of ore mined by Hamersley Iron Pty Ltd on their claim in the Pilbara region. Following his wife Hope's death in 1983, Hancock married his flamboyant housemaid, Rose Porteous, whose many whims he indulged, to the chagrin of his daughter, Gina Reinhart, who had been involved in her father's business from an early age. Following Lang's death, his daughter and wife spent 11 years in an acrimonious legal dispute over his estate.

Sculptor Margel Hinder (1906-1995) shares an entry with her artist husband, Frank Hinder (1906-1992). The couple met in New York, where they were studying, and in 1934 moved to Sydney. Margel taught sculpture from the 1940s and in 1953 began to work with metal. She was one of the few women artists in Australia involved in large public commissions. Like many artists, Frank worked in the directorate of camouflage during World War II, developing methods to disguise and conceal equipment and structures. After the war he returned to teaching and became interested in theatrical design, creating 17 sets and 11 costume designs between 1957 and 1965. The couple worked together, inspiring each other, for more than fifty years.

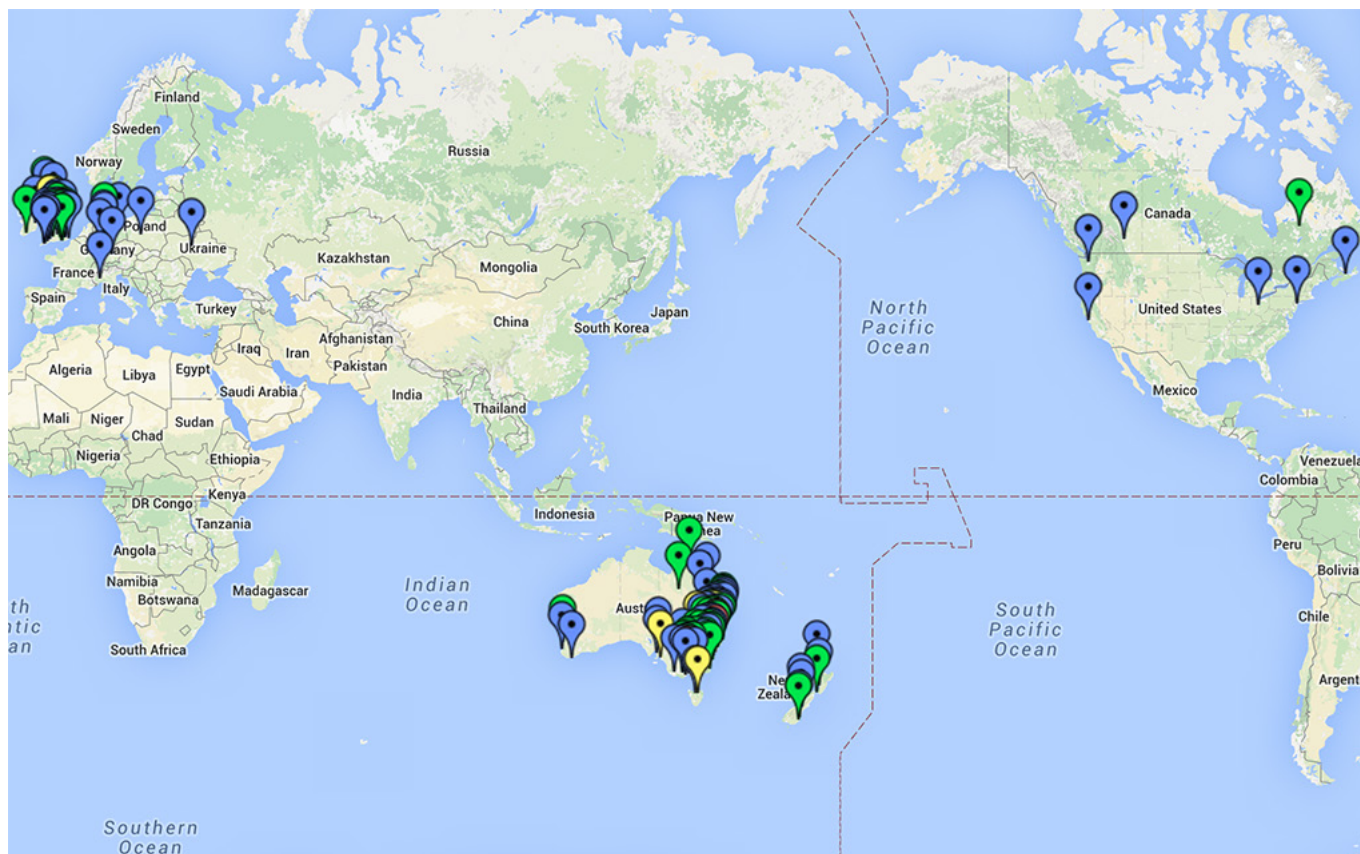
Brett Whiteley (1939-1992) started his career as a commercial artist in 1956. In 1960 he was awarded a travelling art scholarship and moved to London with his future wife, Wendy Julius, and then on to New York in 1967. Whiteley began experimenting with various mediums – in one instance, rice and a hand grenade – and with drugs and alcohol. The couple returned to Sydney in 1969 with their young daughter and bought a house at Lavender Bay. The views from there inspired some of Brett's most elegant seascapes and landscapes. In 1985 Brett and Wendy booked into a London clinic to beat their drug addiction; only Wendy succeeded and they later divorced. Brett died in a hotel room from the effects of alcohol and drugs.

Australia's first air hostess Hazel Holyman (1899-1992) described her job as 'literally pushing' passengers into cramped small planes that flew between Launceston and Maria Island in Tasmania. The wife of Victor Holyman, who operated the twice weekly service in the 1930s, Hazel drove passengers to the airport, and provided them with blankets, biscuits and coffee for their trip across Bass Strait. Following her husband's death in a plane accident in 1934, she retired from work, but was persuaded to join Australian National Airways as superintendent of air hostesses in 1939. Affectionately known as Matron, her duties included taking charge of stores, designing uniforms and spotting 'crooked stocking seams and soiled unpressed uniforms at fifty paces!' She retired in 1955. Her portrait hangs in the Sir Reginald Ansett Transport Museum.

MORE ON THE FRASERS

In the last issue of *Biography Footnotes* we reported on former Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser's Jewish ancestry about which he had little knowledge. Since then we have been working on a family history project focusing on his ancestors.

by Christine Fernon



This map shows the birth locations of Malcolm Fraser's ancestors. It has been drawn using Google Maps.

Malcolm Fraser was descended, on his father's side, from the Nova Scotian-born Scottish migrant, Sir Simon Fraser, who arrived on the Bendigo goldfields in 1853. On his mother's side he has a very significant Jewish ancestry, beginning, in Australia, with the convict, Samuel Solomon, who was sent to Sydney in 1833 aboard the *Mangles*. Solomon's wife and eight children came to the colony as free settlers two years later.

We had been planning to undertake a pilot project to see how much we could find out about a family over the generations using both our own resources and the assistance of genealogists. Our initial intention was to select a first fleet family but Fraser's ancestors seemed ideal. On one side he had Presbyterian, Scottish rural ancestry; on the other a mainly urban, mercantile Jewish ancestry. We thought the two distinct groupings might make an interesting comparison.

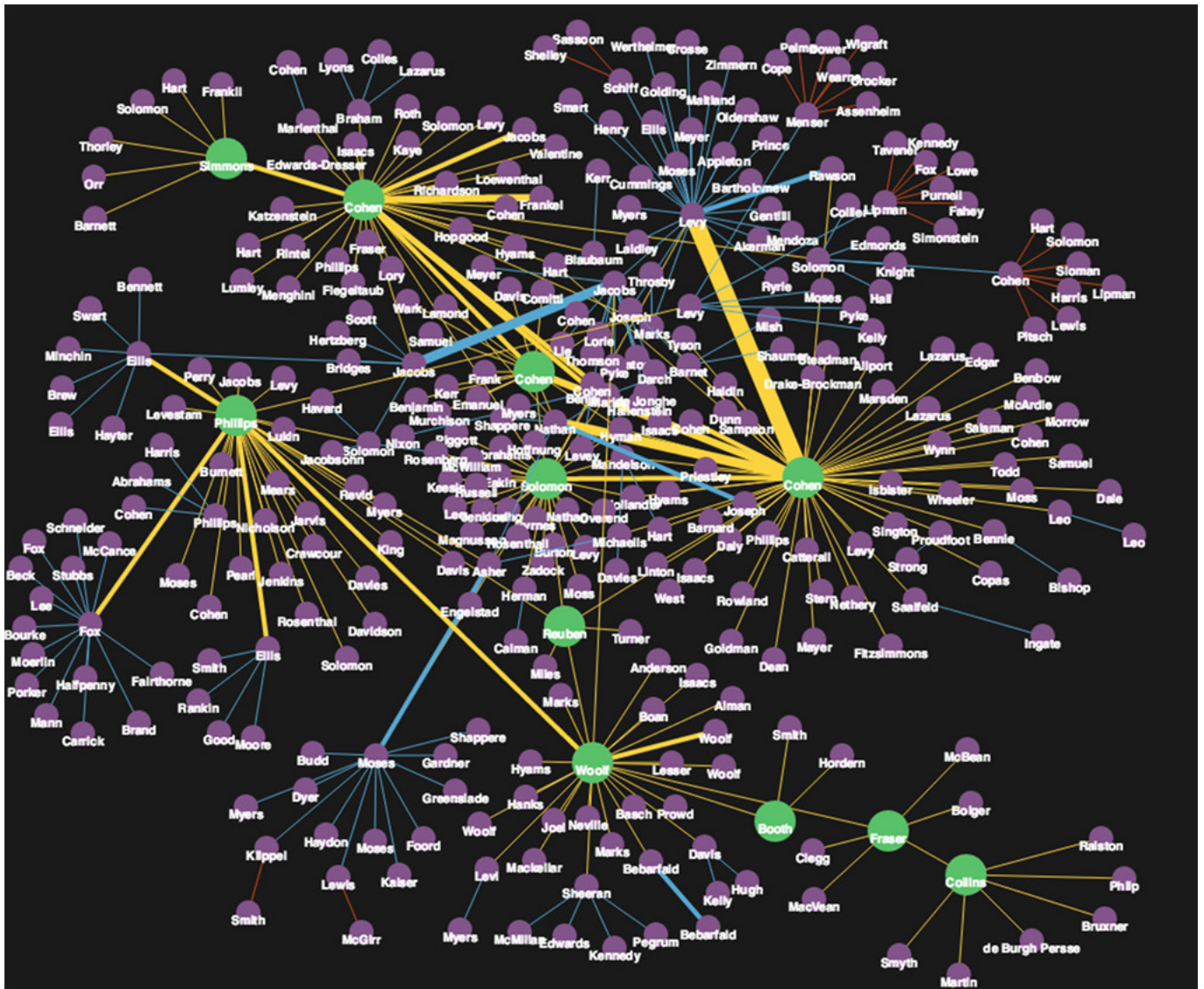
So far we have added about 1200 members of Fraser's family to our biographical websites. Obituaries are added to Obituaries Australia. Information about remaining family members is added to their entries in People Australia. At the end of the project we expect to have created records for about

2000 family members.

It has been a fascinating project – and an overwhelming success. And one that could probably only be done in Australia. Like many researchers we are indebted to the National Library of Australia for their initiative in digitising so many of Australia's newspapers and making them freely and easily accessible on the web. It has enabled us to discover many details about the births, marriages, deaths and other milestones in the lives of many of Fraser's relatives. Thanks also must go to the National Archives for their mammoth undertaking of digitising the records of World War I soldiers and making them freely available. Not all countries' institutions have the same attitude towards making their digitised archival and newspaper files freely accessible to researchers.

Family historians have also been very generous in sharing their records with us, including unpublished family histories written by various members, which we have added to our websites. We have found that they are proud to have their family recognised in our national project and eager to help in any way they can.

MORE ON THE FRASERS (cont'd)



Fraser family relationship graph. 351 distinct families are represented. The thick lines indicate multiple marriages between families.

We still have some way to go with the project, particularly in finding people's educational and occupational backgrounds, but expect to be able to report on our preliminary findings at the 'True Biographies of Nations?' conference next July.

The NCB's computer programmer, Scott Yeadon, has isolated the Fraser family records from the rest of our database and has been experimenting with various ways of visualising the data we have collected.

Using Google Maps, one of the graphs he has created shows the birth location of all family members (see page 10). You can also view the map at <http://peopleaustralia.anu.edu.au/group/19633/bloc>

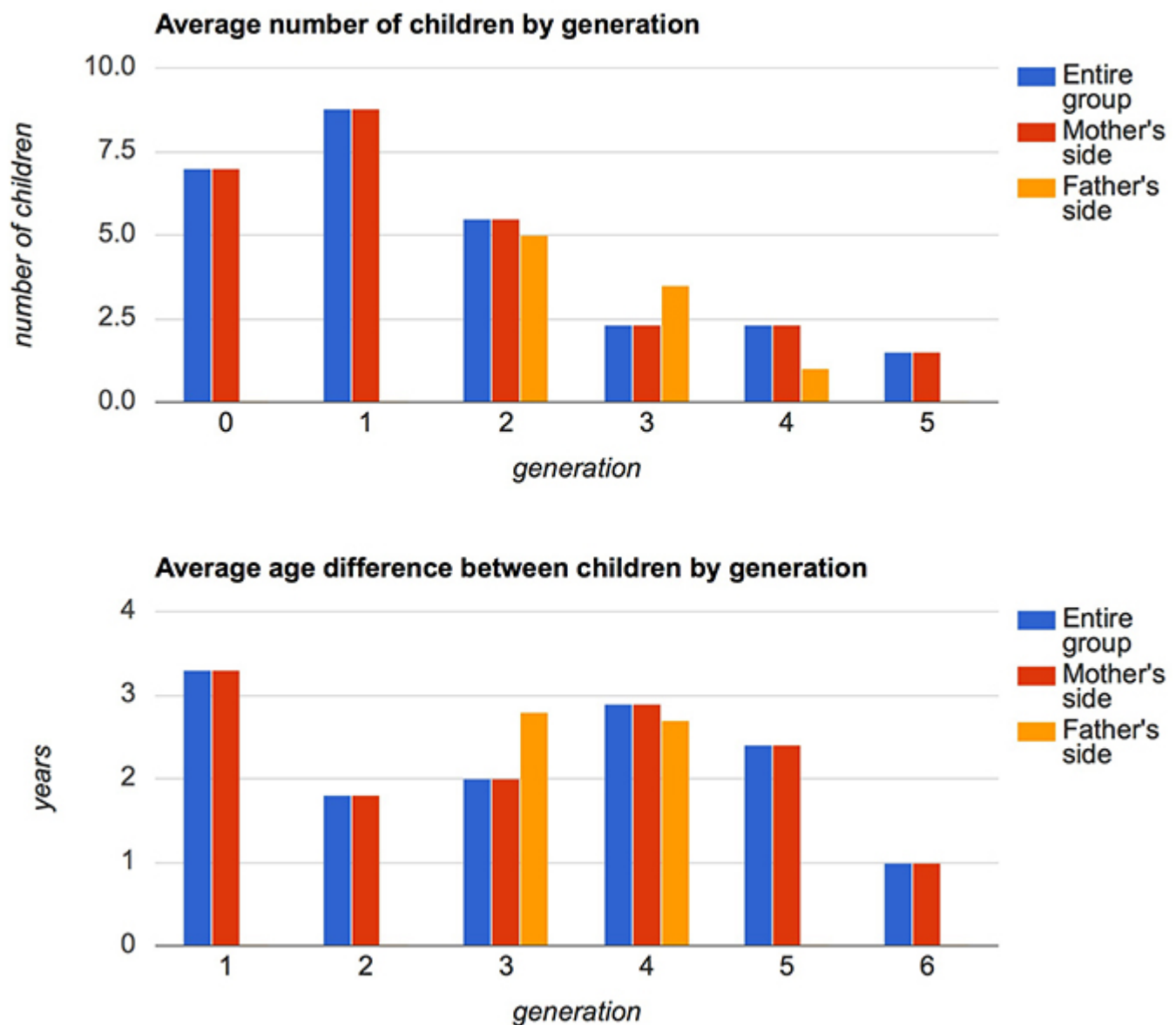
The family can be displayed as a whole. Or you can trace the birth places of either side (mother's or father's) of the family. You can also build up the graph generation by generation to get a better idea of the gradual spread of the family across the country and continents. Clicking on a pointer in the graph

reveals the name of the birth place and the number of births that occurred at that place.

As part of our indexing we have been recording people's movement between colonies and their visits overseas and have been noting the reasons for those movements. We will be looking to see if there is some way of visualising that data.

The family relationships graph (above) and at <http://peopleaustralia.anu.edu.au/group/19633/families> can also be built up generation by generation (right click in the graph and then click on the generation option). The really fascinating revelation of this graph is the extent to which Fraser's Jewish ancestry (on his mother's side) overshadows his Presbyterian paternal ancestry. We have not yet registered all families on either side of his family but it is obvious that his paternal ancestry (showing in the lower right hand corner of the graph, emanating from the ringed circles of Fraser and Collins) is much less numerically significant than his maternal ancestry.

MORE ON THE FRASERS (cont'd)



Scott has also been experimenting with graphs. The first graph (above) shows the average number of children born to families in each generation. We have broken the columns up into 'Entire group', 'Mother's side' and 'Father's side' to see if there are any noticeable differences between the sides.

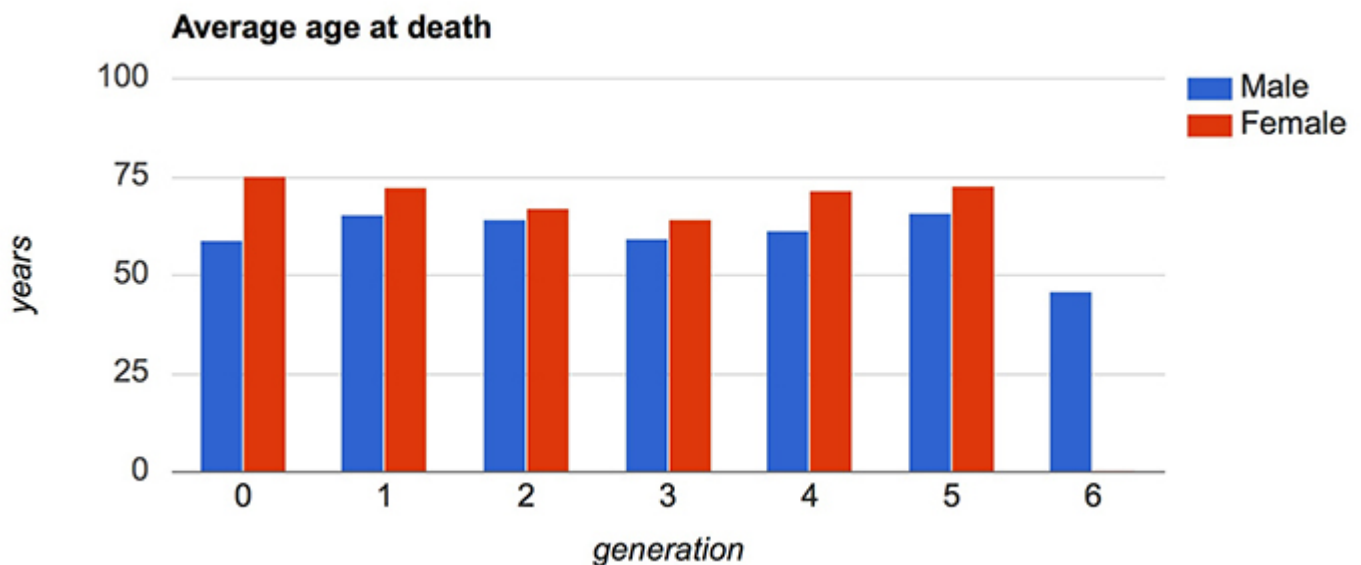
Note. The father's side does not appear in the graph until generation 2 as that is when the family arrived in Australia.

The graph shows that there was very little difference in the birth rate between the two sides of Fraser's family in generation 2. The maternal line had an average of 5.5 children and the paternal line 5 children. The birth rate declined sharply in generation 3 with the mothers' side having

2.3 children and the father's 3.5. In the next generation it was the mother's side that had more children, 2.3 as opposed to the father's one child per family.

The second graph shows the spacing of children. The only real difference in the families is in generation 3. The mother's side were having their children every two years; the father's side every 2.8 years. Interestingly, if you compare generation 3, in both graphs the father's side were having more children and were spacing them further apart than were the mother's side. As we have not yet obtained all our data we have not tried to understand this seeming anomaly.

MORE ON THE FRASERS (cont'd)



The average age at death graph has thrown up perhaps the most interesting results. One would expect to see a gradual improvement in longevity. Surprisingly, generations 1 and 5 have almost identical average age of deaths. And while life expectancy went down slightly in generation 2, a bit more in the next generation and then started to rise, overall the average age at death remained stable.

Child mortality undoubtedly played a role in reducing life expectancy. Nine children died before the age of ten in generation 2. They accounted for 3.8 per cent of all deaths in that generation. 51 children died in generation 3 (9.9 per cent of all deaths); 13 in generation 4 (4.4 per cent of all deaths) and one child in generation 5 (1.4 per cent of all deaths).

We were expecting that maternal mortality would have played a role in reducing women's life expectancy but so far we have recorded only three deaths due to childbirth complications.

As to be anticipated the men of the family have had a shorter life expectancy than the women, 16 years less in generation 0, the founding families on the maternal side.

If possible we will be comparing our data to general population statistics collected by the ABS to see how our family 'stacks' up. We will also be talking with ANU demographers next year about what other data might be worth examining and how we might display it.

So far we have been concentrating on simply locating and recording the basic birth, death and marriage information about family members in our database. Next year we hope

to spend more time finding out about their occupations and education, and involvement in organisations and events, as well as trends in particular families – towards sending children to the same schools as their parents, for children to follow their parents' occupations and to be involved in their charitable and social organisations. What we are particularly interested in – and what is not easy to find out – is mapping the religious convictions of subjects and noting when individuals/families lose/change their faith.

But we do know some things about Malcolm Fraser's wider family. They were a patriotic lot. About 50 per cent of the men aged 18 to 35 in 1915-18 served in the Australian and British armed forces during World War I. At least 40 of the 67 men aged 18 to 35 in 1939-45 served in World War II. Eight of his relatives were killed in action during the wars and three died later of their wounds. Outside of warfare heart disease was by far the most common cause of death. Surprisingly, kidney disease rather than stroke (which is at number four, behind pneumonia) is the second highest cause of death. Although these statistics may change when we have obtained all death certificates.

As interesting as all the results are they are about only one family group. We cannot generalise from them to a wider population. What the project does demonstrate, though, is the significant research potential of the data we collect as part of our routine indexing of entries. Just imagine what the possibilities will be when we have indexed tens of thousands of records.

ALEXANDER MARKS

by Brian Wimborne

In the mid-nineteenth century little was known about Japan. Its borders had been deliberately closed to the outside world since 1639 and were not reopened to trade and foreign residents until Commodore Matthew Perry sailed into Tokyo Bay in 1853. Alexander Marks was one of the earliest people to see the benefits from the trading possibilities that this offered.

Although he was born in New York in 1838 Marks was an Australian. His father, Caspar Marks, was a Jewish merchant, and an early pioneer in Sydney. Little is known about Alexander's early life. In 1859 he went to China in search of adventure and commercial opportunities. At the time, the Taiping Rebellion was in full force and he joined the Ever Victorious Army that was under the command of Major-General Charles ('Chinese') Gordon, later to be known as 'Gordon of Khartoum'. Marks saw action on the Yangtze River and, in the following year, made his way to Japan where he set up a trading business in Yokohama.

He realised that, unlike much of Europe where Jews were excluded from trading, Japan had no history of anti-Semitism. His enterprise there was welcomed and he lived in Japan until 1875 and learnt to speak fluent Japanese.

Together with his father and two brothers he established a successful trading business. With headquarters based in Melbourne, the company exported wheat, flour, wine, wool, bark and preserved fruits to Japan and imported Japanese antiques, porcelain, cabinets and fancy goods which Caspar Marks sold in his store in Sydney. Alexander spent several months each year in Japan and was considered an authority on all matters pertaining to the country and its culture. In 1879 he was appointed the first honorary consul-general for Japan for the Australian colonies.

This was no sinecure, much of his time being spent handling dispatches to and from Japan, travelling extensively on consular matters and acting as court interpreter. His regular consular reports contained trade statistics, lists of import/export merchants; information on shipping, commerce, living standards, wages, house and shop rents, bankruptcies in Victoria, etc. They proved valuable information for Japanese merchants and manufacturers, most of whom knew little about Australia.

In 1872 while on a trading voyage between Yokohama and the Marianas aboard the trading steamer, *Julia*, his two brothers, Henry and Laurence, were lost overboard during a typhoon. In the same year, in Melbourne, Alexander married Miriam Cohen, the daughter of the Hon. Edward Aaron Cohen, MLA. The couple were to have two children: Gwendoline (1873-1960) and Reginald Henry (1874-1962).

Marks continued his advocacy for Japan and argued for the development of the Northern Territory using Japanese labour to grow sugar, rice, cotton, and tobacco. Believing the country suitable for Japanese enterprise, he said prophetically, 'My advice to Australians after many years of



Alexander Marks wearing his Order of the Rising Sun medal awarded to him by the Emperor of Japan.

experience is knock the white Australia policy on the head, otherwise it will lead you into trouble.' He added with less foresight, 'It is not a white man's land' (*Register* (Adelaide), 1905, 8). He was one of the few people to speak out against the white Australia policy and soon after federation had, on several occasions, discussed the Immigration Restriction Bill with Prime Minister

Andrew Barton. Marks considered the Bill 'would be suicidal to Australia' (*Week* (Brisbane), 1902, 12).

Marks remained honorary consul-general for Japan until 1896 when a career diplomat replaced him. He then became honorary consul for Japan in Victoria; a position he held until his retirement in 1902. For outstanding service, the Emperor of Japan awarded him the Order of the Rising Sun.

As well as favouring land development by imported Japanese workers, Marks represented London interests that were seeking the settlement of Jews who had fled from pogroms in Russia. In 1907 he met Western Australia's premier and minister for lands to discuss a plan to settle the refugees on land between Albany and Denmark. Although the Lands Department prepared a development plan, the scheme did not proceed.

His business acumen led to George ('Chinese') Morrison describing him as 'worth £80,000 in Melbourne and having much property in Yokohama' (Marks, 1). Although not very active in communal affairs, he sat on the committee of the *Jewish Herald* Association, served as vice-president of the Melbourne Hospital and was a commissioner for the Melbourne Centennial Exhibition of 1888.

Predeceased by his wife (d. 1884) and survived by their two children, Marks died in Melbourne on 22 May 1919 and was buried in the Jewish section of the Melbourne General Cemetery.

His daughter, Gwendoline, was the wife of Septimus Levy who was chairman of directors of Tooth and Co. Ltd., Nestle and Anglo-Swiss Condensed Milk Co. (Australasia), and the Newcastle and Hunter River Steamship Co. Ltd; and a director of several other companies. Their eldest son, Maitland Benn Levy, was a captain in the Irish Guards. At the battle of Passchendaele in 1917 he won the Military

ALEXANDER MARKS (cont'd)

Cross for conspicuous bravery but was killed in action in the following year.

Alexander's son, Reginald, married Irene Cohen, the daughter of George Judah Cohen, a leading Sydney banker and financier. In 1926 their daughter, Gwendoline Miriam Marks, married John P. Throsby whose distant relative, Charles Throsby, in the early nineteenth century, had explored areas around Camden, Bathurst, Goulburn and the future Australian Capital Territory.

* Alexander Mark's obituary can be accessed on our Obituaries Australia website at <http://oa.anu.edu.au/obituary/marks-alexander-19441/text30850> From there you can access the obituaries and biographical records of other family members.

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