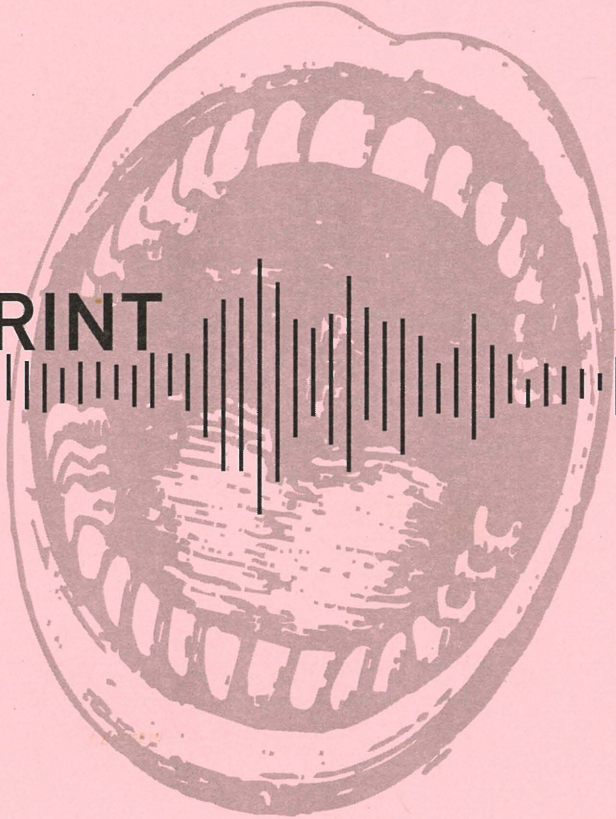


Newsletter of the New South Wales Branch
of the Oral History Association of Australia

VOICEPRINT



40

April 2009

VOICEPRINT

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Editorial



I do hope all our members have been able to keep safe over the summer. The early days of 2009 will be remembered as a time of disaster and despair, not only in Australia but around the world! It will be interesting as time goes by to see how history records this period. Those who were able to attend Alistair Thompson seminar on memory will recall the discussion about the way our memories and stories develop over time and are recalled and influenced as we look back from the present.

This Voiceprint has many examples of stories remembered from times past. I found the article about the Millers Point project written by Frank Heimans, had some very delightful and nostalgic memories. The story about the copper and its use for Christmas cooking, brought my memories flooding back – makes me feel quite old; but then I did grow up in the country and domestic mod-cons took a while to get to us! Perhaps this is just an excuse not to count the passing years!!! Also we have some interesting memories and stories from Broome. Thank you to Deborah Ruiz Wall and Dee Hunt for this article that tells the history of a way of life that many of us, who have always lived in the Eastern States, know nothing about. This story came to us because Rosie attended the Western Australian Conference in Broome last July. As is the way when oral historians meet, the contacts bring further information and rewards.

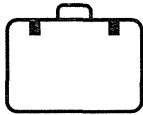
Note how Paula Hamilton enjoyed her time with the American Association; so if you are off to conferences/meetings, do remember to share your impressions with us. Thank you to Paula for telling us how rewarding the connections around the world can be. There are of course many notices included of coming conferences, meetings etc. Note the call for papers for the 2010 International Conference. Do let us know what is going on as we do learn so much from each other.

Thank you to the committee members who have assisted in gathering the words for this VoicePrint. I have had some trouble with my computer and its rather aggressive screening for viruses etc. It locked up my email program. But there is always a positive side to such annoyances, when Son comes to fix my computer, he brings my new little Grandson to see me. What, I wonder, shall we record of all that has happened over this summer so that he may be informed in thirty years time?

Keep the history recorded and do publish in Voiceprint.

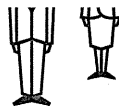
Joyce Cribb

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Membership



Welcome to our new members. Always delighted to have you. Many thanks for your support.

Evie Pikler	writer
Shane Burette	military researcher
Theresa Mason	tutor
Anni Turnbull	curator
Ann Darbyshire	retired – interested in oral history
Tony Caldersmith	interested in oral history
Shar Jones	museums consultant
Anna Kaganer	teacher
Mara Moustafine	doctoral student and author
Alfred Olwa	lecturer
Dianne Taylor	interested in oral history
Colleen Glenn	student
Maggie Roche	retired teacher/librarian
Gabrielle Leahy	interested in oral history
Kirsty McCully	organiser
Judith Godden	historian with particular interest in nursing
Hawkesbury City Council	

Rosie Block, President OHAA NSW

Call for Nominations

Hazel de Berg Award for Excellence in Oral History

The Award

The Oral History Association of Australia (OHAA) has established an award to recognise members who have made an outstanding contribution to the cause of oral history in Australia over a considerable period of time.

To commemorate her pioneering work in oral history, the award has been named the *Hazel de Berg Award for Excellence in Oral History*.

Criteria

The recipient shall be the nominee deemed by the National Committee of the OHAA to have, over a considerable period of time, made an outstanding contribution to oral history in Australia through one or more of the following:

- the raising of awareness of oral history within the profession
- the promotion of oral history within the history community
- the recording and documentation of oral history
- the preservation and archiving of oral history collections
- such other contribution to oral history as the OHAA considers worthy of recognition

The award is open only to members of the OHAA.

Nominations for the Award

- Nominations shall be type-written on the prescribed form.

- Nominations should be brief, but present a persuasive case setting out the achievements and history of the nominee that will enable a comparative assessment to be made; they must be signed and dated by the nominator.
- Nominations may be made by any Branch or member of the OHAA; there is no impediment to members nominating themselves.

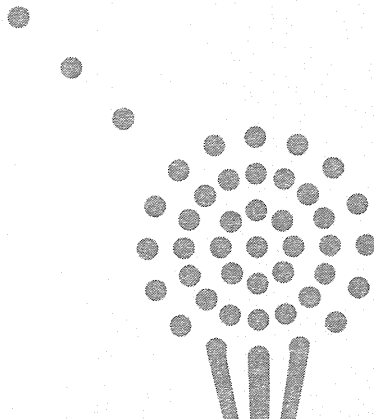
Lodging of nominations

Nomination forms are available from OHAA branches or can be downloaded from the OHAA website at <http://www.ohaa.net.au>

The website also includes OHAA branch addresses.

Nominations marked 'Confidential' must be received by **5 pm on 26 June 2009**.

They should be sent to:
Secretary OHAA
C/- Oral History Program
State Library of New South Wales
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000



www.ohaansw.org.au

Web Site

Remember to look up our website www.ohaansw.org.au for all the latest information and news of what's on. If you have news for circulation through the OHAA NSW web site, please email the OHAA webmaster: Sandra Blamey at sblamey@ozemail.com.au.



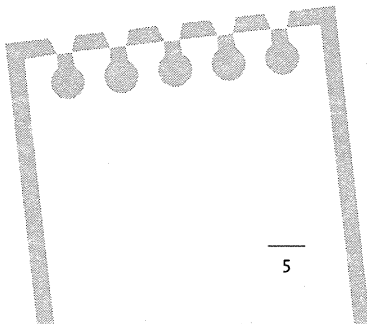
Email List

Important note from Rosie Block and Roslyn Burge.

In the light of our now using an email list for immediate circulation, the first of which went out at the end of February, please would you confirm your current email address to Roslyn Burge. You will have noted that we are sending blind copies so your email address is kept private.

Please note: In your email to Roslyn the Subject should read: OHAA member email address.

Her address is: rburge@ozemail.com.au





Theatre Review

President Rosie and one of our members have been kind enough to report about the theatre performance which was publicised in our last VoicePrint. You may recall that Urban Theatre Projects offered some passes to the performances to people who sent in photos of themselves with something they love. Who wins these prizes – you may wonder?? Bob Mitchell did and has shared some of his impressions and photo with us. Thank you both. Ed.

‘Stories of Love and Hate: where matters of the heart are concerned, there’s always two sides to the story ...’

Olympic Parade Theatre, Bankstown
November 2008

Rosie Block writes.

Many of you will remember the presentation by Urban Theatre Projects of their play based on oral history – Fast Cars and Tractor Engines. Urban Theatre drew on the interviews conducted by our long-standing member and supporter Tim Carroll of Bankstown Youth Development Service. This play was performed at the international oral history conference in 2006 in Sydney. The actors wear headphones and are repeating and acting on voices they are actually hearing from the interviews with real people. Their acting follows the dialogue, accents and all. This is verbatim theatre with a lively and vivid difference.

The latest play, *Stories of Love and Hate*, was more austere – and in my opinion more effectively presented. The music was well chosen and there was no video. There was instead a very funny and rather touching radio phone-in show.

Of the four young actors wearing the headphones we met two last time – Mohammed Ahmad and Katia Molino. The others were Janie Gibson and Roderic Byrnes.

We are watching them on the concrete seating tiers at the beach and the topic is centred round the Cronulla riots. The four actors take several parts across the genders, many of them ‘couples’, young and older. Both speak about their own romances, as well as giving their opinions on what took place at Cronulla.

There were also groups of young men (as you would expect!) discussing blokey pursuits – forcing sand down the wetsuit of a newly arrived surfer in a sort of initiation – which of course the perpetrators thought was amusing. The ‘victim’ is pretty silent, but apparently deemed to be happy with his acceptance into the ranks of his mates in the surf. Young ‘Lebanese’ men canvass with each other (Janie makes a great guy!) their take on life, love and violence.

The performance is slick, beautifully acted and timed, holds the attention throughout and is amusing as well as confronting – and REAL! Superbly crafted and directed by Roslyn Oades, we understand the dilemmas before young people – and also have insight into the relationship of couples

Bob Mitchell with his 'Box of Tricks'



whose hearts have been engaged in a marriage of many years – embracing also those sometimes not so subtle irritations consequent on long familiarity! Humour defuses the seriousness of both love and hate, but never diminishes the threat of violence. Despite this the mood is ultimately optimistic– I hope life will follow art!

And from Bob

I saw the premier performance of the Urban Theatre's production on 22/11/08 and thought you may like feedback. I had seen the group in Indooroopilly at the annual conference last year. This latest performance was very revealing and added greatly to my scant knowledge and understanding of the cultural differences between Muslim youth and Aussie locals, or the Cronulla surfing fraternity in particular. There were four actors, two Lebanese and two Australians – and interestingly all four swapped roles constantly in portraying both cultures. The focus of the play seemed to me to be that we are all Australians living in the same country and will be able

to get along better together if we value differences.

I was lucky to win two free tickets to the show as a result of an image of my 'Box of Tricks'. It now appears on their website.

The audience was 90% youngsters in their 20s and 30s – being in our late 50s we (I am 59 and my wife Pat 56) felt quite old to be attending this type of gig. The language was rather confrontational at first but necessary in the context of the stories being told and we soon got used to it. The whole play was fast moving and the late night radio love request scenes provided a good change of pace. One theme I learnt more about was how much young Lebanese men judge themselves and their manhood by the type of car they drive – the more stylish their vehicle and the louder they play their car stereo the better!

It was a different night.

Bob Mitchell 'Memory Man'
www.memoryman.com.au

Seminar: 1st November 2008

Oral History and Memory Workshop

Conducted by Professor Alistair Thompson

Report by Joyce Cribb

Alistair Thompson is a familiar figure on the world stage of oral history and members will know him as the Immediate Past President of the International Oral History Association. Alistair returned to Melbourne late in 2007, after over twenty years in England to take up a position as Professor of History in the School of Historical Studies at Monash University in Melbourne. We were indeed privileged that Alistair came to Sydney for the day to share his knowledge and his experience with the large audience who gathered in the Metcalfe Auditorium for this most interesting and challenging seminar.

The audience was not allowed to be passive listeners, rather they were active participants in an active workshop. Alistair began by reviewing how the seminar participants viewed what memory was and its role in the recording of history. The white board soon filled with suggestions as to the various ways that memory impacts on personal stories and the formal recording of history. Many interesting points were elaborated and discussed.

One point of particular interest was Alistair's outline of how oral history has been used from ancient times in creating

written historical records. Thucydides back in 400,5 BCE when recording the history of the Peloponnesian War went out and talked to the soldiers who had taken part in the battles. He of course took notes to record what had happened, but the soldiers' memories of the battles were used in the writing of the history. Again at the time of the French Revolution the history was constructed from the information gathered in conversations with those who witnessed the events at the time. In the mid 19th century there was a change in the discipline of the recording of history. Oral records were no longer seen as appropriate for official histories. Alistair went on to say how in many ways it was Charles Bean who wrote the Australian Official History of the 1914 -1918 War, who revived the oral tradition. Bean was a journalist and gathered much of his information from the personal information of the soldiers. He talked with them, and took extensive notes, as well as reading their many personal accounts, in letters or diaries kept by the soldiers. These personal memories were a source of information, and he quite deliberately sought out information from the serving soldiers and did not rely only on official records.



Much information was shared on how we remember and make sense of past events. How memory is shaped by culture and life experience in the years following the original event. Alistair had some interesting examples from some of his oral interviews. One in particular was able to have the same event compared as recorded in a contemporary journal, and then recalled in an interview some 40 years after the

event. These illustrations made interesting examples for discussion between the audience members.

The final suggestion from the seminar was that history is about the past, and we understand the past as it is shaped by the present. Thank you Alistair, for an enjoyable and challenging seminar.

International report *by Associate Professor Paula Hamilton, UTS*

Our grateful thanks to Paula for this report of her experience and impressions of the meeting and conference in Pittsburg. At the end of the report are some web addresses that members may visit for more information. Ed.

The Oral History Association's 42nd Annual Meeting in Pittsburg, USA, 15-19 October 2008
A Convergence of Interests: Oral History in the Digital Age

I thought it was one of the best oral history meetings I had attended in some time. While the quality of papers at any conference varies as always, I found the general standard and the careful way the sessions had been put together to be wonderfully stimulating. I particularly liked the mix of academic and public and community historians at the conference. I also participated in a forum around a new edited collection by Linda Shopes and myself, *Oral History and Public Memories*, which is a new format, and I found this worked very well indeed; as did the session I attended on the book *Asylum Denied* (though it was much smaller and very different in tone). I also thought the sessions where there could be space for

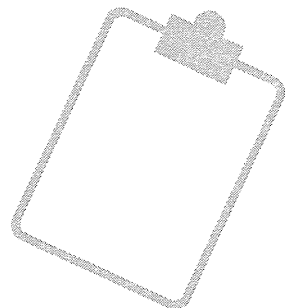
Reports (cont...)

general discussion of very different views about oral history and its future in the digital age were thoroughly enjoyable.

I did not attend all the extra and social activities but the riverboat ride was wonderful (as were the talented musicians like Mike Frisch) and the receptions all had the good effect of creating a 'buzz' for the conference and renewing old friendships. The poster sessions in the big hall worked very well but I cannot quite work out why – was it simply the range of interesting projects? I would certainly like to see a larger range of publishers in the book room in future.

I do find the blend of both local and international perspectives at the OHA to be a very good mix for someone like myself who uses her own much smaller country more as a 'case study' for the bigger picture. Not only are we all grappling with the same broad issues, but their local or national inflections are useful as well. I cannot afford to come to every OHA conference and probably won't be at Kentucky but I am very glad I was able to come to this one. I would urge all oral historians to venture to the OHA conferences when they can.

Oral History Association
Website: www.oralhistory.org
2008 Conference program:
www.oralhistory.org/wpcontent/uploads/2008/11/2008finalprogram.pdf
And check the website for the Kentucky Conference 14-18 October 2009 –
Moving Beyond the Interview.





The Millers Point Oral History Project *by Frank Heimans*

Independent Oral Historian, Cinetel Productions, Sydney

It's not often that an amazing major oral history project comes your way and so we were delighted when in 2005 we were commissioned to take on a project on Millers Point – that part of the city of Sydney on the western side of The Rocks. Our client, the Department of Housing expected us to explore what it was that made this part of the city a community, investigate their aspirations for the future and document how they saw themselves as a part of Sydney.

The project called for the recording of 50 interviews with residents. At the end of March 2005 the community was alerted to the commencement of the project by a letter box leaflet drop to all 600 houses in Millers Point, asking for people who wanted to have their stories recorded to come forward. This resulted in 12 positive replies and the rest of the interviewees were selected by the consultants, Siobhan McHugh and I.

This was truly a project that involved the local community. Four local volunteer community interviewers were selected and trained to conduct interviews. A Steering Committee was set up, made up of representatives of the Dept of Housing, Department of Commerce, State Library of New South Wales, Sydney Harbour

Foreshore Authority, Council of the City of Sydney, The National Trust, Millers Point Estate Advisory Board and an independent heritage consultant to oversee the project.

The first interview was recorded with Harry Lapham, born in 1911, a resident of Darling House who died just 18 months later. He was a former City of Sydney Council employee who spent 55 years sweeping the streets of Millers Point. He gave us incredibly detailed descriptions of life in the precinct from the 1920s onwards. Over a seven months period, the interviews were recorded by the two professional historians and the community volunteer interviewers. Photographs of each interviewee were also taken at the time of recording. All interviews were transcribed in full. A 30,000-word Summary Report was written on the project, which was completed in February 2006. The project was officially launched by the Dept of Housing in November 2008 and materials were handed over to the relevant repositories. The master tapes have now been deposited at the State Library of NSW Oral History Collection where it will add to existing knowledge about Millers Point. Altogether the project consists of 79 digital audiotapes and audiocassettes, representing approximately 64 hours of recordings.

Articles (cont...)

The Millers Point community was generous in their assistance and told their stories with great passion and conviction, creating a real picture of a living precinct over a large timeframe. Many expressed their sense of place, of belonging to Millers Point, but also expressed their anxieties in what was to become of the area and their future in it.

Millers Point is associated with the earliest Sydney settlement. It is named after John Leighton, known as 'Jack the Miller' who in 1826 fell to his death from a ladder when drunk. It's an historic heritage precinct with a distinctive 'village within a big city' feel, a self-contained neighbourhood close to the CBD, but never really part of it.

The residents have a rich reservoir of memories of living at the Point, going, in some cases as far back as four generations. They were born, worked, lived and died in the houses at Millers Point. They also retain a strong sense of its history and heritage. Most of the people of Millers Point are connected through marriage – a boy would normally marry a local girl, and vice versa. Marie Shehady married a Millers Point man in the early 1960s:

I remember when we first came here I met one of the mothers at the school and she said to me, 'Marie, you are new in the area – don't say a word about anybody to anybody else because nearly everybody here is related.' (Marie Shehady, interviewed 1 November 2005)

Millers Point residents, 'Pointers' as they called themselves strongly identified with the area and even groups of streets within the area:

'You had this clear relationship with wherever you lived, whether you were a High St boy, or a Windmill St boy or a Lower Fort St boy or a Trinity Avenue boy – that was important.' (Russell Taylor, 1 August 2005).

The origin of the Millers Point population is mostly Anglo-Celtic. In the 1950s there were a few Chinese families, some Maltese, two Aboriginal families and a smattering of Italians, Lebanese and Greeks:

'I can remember at the local shop, milk bar it was on the corner of Kent Street – I can remember my father saying 'go up to the Dagos and get whatever', and I thought their name was Dago when I was little. It wasn't until years later that I realised that they were Greek.' (Marie Pearson, 11 August 2005)

The two main religions generally got on well together but lived in separate streets of Millers Point, as Beverley Sutton recalls:

'When I was allocated the house in Merriman Street my father was absolutely horrified and he said to me, 'Well I don't want you going around to that street, I don't like that street.' I hope I am not doing him a disservice here, but I think the inference was, 'Well, they are mostly Catholics around there, that's not a Protestant street. The Protestants seemed to live in Lower Fort Street, Windmill Street – there was some sort of demarcation.' (Beverley Sutton, 3 November 2005)



Bill Ford's mother was a Protestant but his father was Catholic:

'I remember very vividly once one of the Catholic priests coming to our house at No. 23A (Dalgety Terrace) – you had to walk up the stairs – he came to tell my father he was living in sin and he should stop it. I remember my mother coming to the door and sort of sending him scuffling down the stairs. He never came back again.' (Bill Ford, 21 December 2005)

For most of its existence, Millers Point did not enjoy a savoury reputation. In the 1950s, everyone, except the Millers Point population considered it as a slum. When Janet Farley first came to live in Millers Point people told her:

'Why would you want to live there, it's nothing but a dump'. Now people are paying millions and millions to move into the dump. (Janet Farley, 9 September 2005).

The one thing residents of Millers Point had in common was poverty. Families were generally large and Bill Ford's family of ten all lived in one small house at 23A Dalgety Terrace:

'We were all just struggling together. Most people didn't have much but the interesting thing about not having much, of course, just in retrospect was that we didn't know that we didn't have much – we were happy with what we had.' (Marie Pearson, 11 August 2005).

Some of our interviewees lived through the Great Depression and recall the hardships suffered by their parents and the strikes on the waterfront while they went barefoot to school. Agnes Phillips recounts that three families shared her house. Unemployed men set up tents and tried to survive in the park at the end of Merriman St where the Eye Hospital, the 'Eye Ozzie', had once been. Phyllis Flynn lived through those times:

'There was a lot of people when the Depression hit who couldn't pay their rents. They had to move so a lot of them went out to what they called 'Happy Valley', out at La Perouse. That is when they built their own little humpies out of tin and all that, I suppose, and that's where they lived.' (Phyllis Flynn, 9 October 2005)

Many 'Pointers' recall the declaration of war in 1939 and watched their lovers and husbands leaving on the troop ships, going to war, as they sang The Maoris' Farewell. They practiced drills in the air raid shelter under the Bridge, boarded up their windows and lived on ration coupons. They also remember the attacks in Sydney Harbour when HMAS Kuttabul was torpedoed by Japanese submarines in 1942 with the loss of 19 lives:

'The night the submarines came up the harbour I'd come up from Manly, could have been there when they were in the harbour, I don't know, but I'm not very long home when the sirens went off. My grandmother wouldn't get off the lounge and you had to open your windows a bit and then I got under the table and there we had to sit until

Articles (cont...)

the siren went off. (Alice Brown, 28 January 2006)

At the end of the war Pointers saw their loved ones return home.

'I can remember the end of the war in Lower Fort St and they were all dancing - they sent us home from school. I remember the American planes after the war did a fly-by and a couple of Spitfires went under the Harbour Bridge.' (John Ross, 22 August 2005)



Joan and Charlie Taylor during the war

Despite its poverty, Millers Point's great attribute is its extraordinary community spirit. Newcomers to the area still discover a strong sense of cohesion, loyalty and belonging. This manifested itself in the way that people would address each other as 'aunty' or 'uncle' even though they might not be related, in the way they would drop into each other's houses for a chat and a cup of tea, shared or bartered food, washed and swept their neighbour's stairs, looked after sick families and fished together:

'In the summer season, down at Dalgety Wharf there'd be easily 60 or 70 people there at dusk each night, throwing a line into the water.' (Frank Hyde, 1 July 2005).

'My father was a good fisherman. Central Steps, which we called the 'Metal Wharf' – he fished off that wharf for many years. I'd come home from school and go down and catch small yellowtail and then when he knocked off work he'd come down and get the yellowtail and he'd fish for the big ones. He'd bring home Jewfish as tall as him, he was five foot three and that is how big these fish were.' (Des Gray, 27 September 2005)

On summer evenings the community would get together:

'The steps up in Munn Street – I can remember there were eighteen stairs and in summer time you'd see the neighbours, they'd all come along and we'd sit on those steps at the bottom, the mothers and the parents on the steps, and it was nice. Everybody would talk and pass the time until about nine o'clock at night.' (Betty Borg, 30 August 2005)



At Christmas, 'Aunt' Bidy, a local lady, would do her good deed:

'Christmas time when Martin Place would have the Christmas tree up Bidy would come and collect all the kids of Millers Point and they'd start at the Village Green, which was in the Argyle Cut, and they'd walk down the Argyle Cut, up George Street to Martin Place, do the circle of the city and then come back up Kent Street. Then she'd deliver them back to all their respective homes. The kids had their Millers Point song and they used to sing 'The Millers Point Mob' as they walked through the city:

*The Millers Point mob are we,
the Millers Point mob are we.
We're always up to mischief,
wherever we might be.*

*One day in the courtyard a copper
said to me,
"If you belong to the Millers Point mob,
well come along with me."*

*He grabbed me by the collar
and tried to run me in,
I lifted up my hairy fist and
hit him in the chin.*

*How many eggs for breakfast,
how many eggs for tea?
A loaf of bread as big as your head
and a lousy cup of tea.*

The kids sang that all the way through the city.' (Judy Taylor, 21 February 2006)

Some of our interviewees have extraordinarily vivid memories of neighbours, shops and places of commerce at the Point. They recall enterprises long gone, such as the blacksmith's shop, the cooperage in Kent Street, Playfair's meat factory and the wool and bond stores. There were little shops where they would buy their groceries, the butcher, chemist, fish shop and the shoemaker. Harry Lapham remembers Asher, the pawnbroker, the Ham and Beef shop and John Holly's milk bar whose foundations sank eighteen inches and was condemned. In addition to the shops there were a variety of colourful hawkers who called and sold milk, bread and other necessities from their carts. The coal man sold coal in winter and ice blocks in summer, the rabbitoh could skin a rabbit in ten to twenty seconds. Rabbit fur was an extra penny. The rabbit man also doubled as the fish man on Fridays. There was a knives and scissors-sharpening man and a clothesline prop man:

'Charlie Wong was a door-to-door salesman and all his wares he carried in like a suitcase, and it would have been about twenty-four inches long, eighteen inches high, and he'd have in that a pair of slacks, a jumper, a nightgown, maybe a pair of towels, something feminine, like a petticoat, or whatever. He would knock on your door and he would show you his wares and if you liked anything - I bought a couple of jumpers from him - you would tell him what size and the next week he'd come back with it wrapped in a brown paper parcel under his arm. You had credit, you would pay it off, you

Articles (cont...)

would give him five shillings here and ten shillings there. That was his little business.' (Marie Shehadie, 1 November 2005).

Housing stock at Millers Point dates back to about the 1850s and living conditions were hard – Warren Cox's sister slept in a cupboard under the staircase and Eileen Pearson's children in the attic. Ron Joseph's gaslight was replaced by electric light only in 1940 and washing day could take all day:

'I can remember when I used to do all the sheets they were washed by copper, you'd light up the old fire and you would throw the sheets in and you would boil and blue the heck out of them. Then you had to be nearly a body-builder to lift them out and into the tub and rinse them in cold water. I had a wringer, one of these things that you sit on the side of the tub and you turned the handle around. Then they were starched.' (Marie Shehadie, 1 November 2005).

The copper would also come in handy at Christmas time:

'The copper would be scrubbed out until it shone and the Christmas puddings would be boiled in it. Then after they were cooked it was cleaned out again and when the ham had to be cooked the ham was put in it, then it had to be cleaned out again.' (Alice Brown, 28 January 2006).

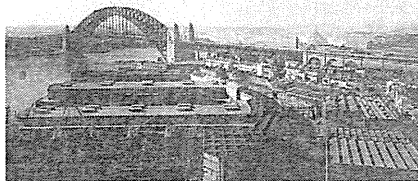
Children enjoyed a way of life that can only be envied today: they spent time at the King George V playground and played football, basketball, netball, racquetball, paddle tennis, vigoro, or swam and fished.

Bill Ford swam at the 'Met':

'We learned to swim off the Metal Wharf and one of the fascinating things is you dive in off the Metal Wharf and you swim about five strokes and you turn directly back onto the steps. There were sharks in this area so you dived in with great bravado, swam your five strokes and turned at right angles. The first school swimming carnival I went to I dived in, swam and turned ninety degrees and ran slap bang into the side wall of the swimming pool and put my hand up as if I had finished. So that's where we learned to swim.' (Bill Ford, 21 December 2005).

Dalgety's Wool store on Dalgety's Wharf was an unlikely place for kids to play:

'It was just a great big store, a monstrous big building with stacks and stacks of wool in it. That was one of our playgrounds, we'd go in there and play. The guys who worked in the wool sheds, I don't know what they were called, if they caught us they used to take our pants off and wipe this red dye on our testicles and send us home. Mum would always know then, 'Ah, you've been to the wool sheds all day.' (Des Gray, 27 September 2005).



Dalgety's Wool Store (photograph taken in 1875)

The rich maritime history of Millers and Dawes Point have given the precinct a special character with particular emphasis on sights, sounds, smells and memories connected with a working harbour. Interviewees mentioned the sounds of the coal lumpers as ships loaded their fuel, the blasts of ship's horns, the sirens that went off in the wool stores when shifts started and ended and the sound of wool wagons coming up Kent Street. They also remember the smell of diesel oil and lanolin that pervaded the district. All these were comforting – it meant that there was work and therefore income.

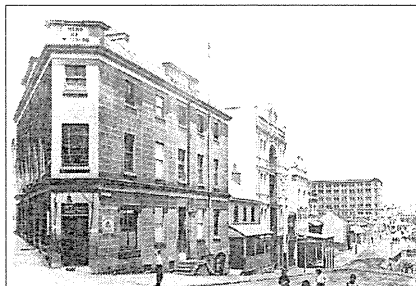
Most Millers Point men and their fathers were traditionally coal lumpers, wharf labourers or tugboat and ferry deck hands. All work was casual. During the Great Depression, men walked 'The Hungry Mile', the stretch of Hickson Road between pick-up points, looking for work. Men did three shifts on the waterfront, the day, twilight and midnight shift. A wharfie had an iron hook, made for him by the blacksmith in Rhodens Lane with which they used to sling the wheat sacks and wool bales over their shoulders in the days before mechanisation. Conditions of work before the 1960s were often atrocious. A lot of people were killed, falling down holds, getting crushed by cranes dropping loads or by falling wool bales. Gaylene Harkin's grandfather died that way:

'His name was Teddy. I was a young child at the time and I remember a lot of people running around and I remember being

chased out of the room. When I got older my grandmother said that it was part of the job. In those days there was no warning if a bale fell.' (Gaylene Harkin, 29 December 2005).

According to Russell Fitchett, there were 27 pubs in Millers Point, measured in a one-kilometre radius from Observatory Hill. Frank Hyde can remember back to the 1920s:

'A common phrase, when I was that high, among my elders was 'What pub do you drink at?' There were no clubs then, there were just pubs. I could tell you which fellows drank at the Palisade Hotel, I could tell you who drank at the Lord Nelson, the Orient Hotel and the Dunbarton.' (Frank Hyde, 1 July 2005).



**Hero of Waterloo Hotel,
Corner Windmill & Lower Fort St, 1901**

Articles (cont...)

Judy Taylor was the publican's daughter and barmaid at the Captain Cook Hotel:

'When the wharfies came for their morning tea – they only had a fifteen minute break – we used to have to watch every car that pulled up and we learned what they drank and we'd have their drink on the bar when they walked in the door.' (Judy Taylor, 21 February 2006)

As expected, every pub had its SP bookie. Russell Taylor was a one-time-bookie:

'SP bookmaking, from a community point of view – apart from a protest against authority was considered to be a legitimate occupation. Everybody on Millers Point had an interest in the races, whether they be the thoroughbred, the greyhounds or the trots. So in every pub there was an SP bookmaker and there were some that were based in some of the houses – you know, you had a choice.' (Russell Taylor, 5 August 2005)

The SP bookies were loyal to their customers:

'There was one in Windmill St who was the most frequented because he had a better set-up than most. At Christmas time, if you had gambled with him, depending on the rate of your gambling there was always an envelope for you – I used to bet as a kid threepence each way and at Christmas time there might be 10 shillings in there and that was your rebate for gambling with him. The bigger gamblers, like the fathers and that, they might get £15, which was a lot of money.' (Russell Fitchett, 20 January 2006)

Millers Point's owners were originally the Maritime Services Board, reputed to be benign landlords. Then on the 1st of January 1986 the housing regime changed with the take-over of Millers Point by the Department of Housing. All former MSB tenants now became Department of Housing tenants. Rents went up and in the case of Betty Borg's house:

'It went up into the hundreds. (Under the MSB) we were paying about \$90 something a week, which was cheap, we admit, but we used to upkeep the house, the place itself. We had altered it, tiled the bathroom, built the kitchen in, everything like that, made the entrance from inside to go into the bathroom and things. But the Housing Commission didn't take that into account, they didn't care about that, they just saw that's how we were and because (my husband) was working and earning a good wage and overtime it went up and we were paying over \$200 to \$300 a week and that's twenty years ago.' (Betty Borg, 30 August 2005)

The increased rents certainly forced some people out into the suburbs and shopkeepers and landladies were concerned that their businesses would become unprofitable to run. But the residents' biggest fear was that the Department of Housing was changing the nature of their precinct by bringing in low-income families, some with severe drug and alcohol problems.



The residents of Millers Point have a long history of protest and defiance. During the Green Bans at the neighbouring The Rocks in the early 1970s, Amanda Barlow chained herself to a bulldozer. She spent the night at Central Police Cells before being released. Gaylene Harkin and friends helped to save a group of houses from demolition by commandeering a semi-trailer and blocking the street off, preventing bulldozers from entering. When the media turned up, the houses were saved and it was all over for the Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority.

But the threat did not end there. In the mid 1970s, houses in Munn and Merriman street were demolished to make way for the MSB tower and wharves were enlarged, causing further loss of housing and amenities. Understandably, residents are worried that one day the State Government will try to sell off their public housing.

In 1982 the Department of Housing and the Millers Point landladies commenced an action that what was to be known as 'The Battle of the Landladies'. It began when Jack Ferguson, the Labor Minister for Ports, Housing and Public Works and Deputy Premier of NSW came to visit:

'Along comes Jack Ferguson one day and says 'Who lives in these places?' and when he learnt who lived here he decided that he had friends who'd like to live here. So of course we marshalled all our landladies, or Shirley Ball marshalled them and we all stood well and truly behind her – I think there was

something like 60 of us when we started to do battle. He wrote to us early in December and he wanted us all out by 23rd December.' (Sally Clough, 29 August 2005).

'They were very stressful times because we had, say, seven people and we were given a week's notice, now what was going to happen to those people? What was going to happen to us as a family? I mean the way they made us feel was that we had no rights, it was illegal to be in a residential.' (Marie Shehady, 1 November 2005)

The landladies raised funds to pay their legal costs, organised a campaign of working bees and painted banners to hang on the balconies of their houses in protest:

'The Department of Housing just couldn't believe that a bunch of little old ladies were fighting them and winning. We understand that they used to take a weekend away in the country and stay in a motel to try and dream up what we'd do next, or how they could try and defeat us.' (Sally Clough, 29 August 2005).

The battle of the landladies stretched over eight years and through seven courts into the Supreme Court of NSW. It was a David and Goliath affair but in the end the astute landladies won. They were granted a 20-year lease on their tenancies, which now expires in 2009.

Current issues in Millers Point are the new policies brought in by the Department of Housing. Public housing residents are fearful that they will not be able to pay the increased rent thresholds and meet the

Articles (cont...)

new criteria for staying at Millers Point. Brian Harrison warns how this fear of change is affecting the older residents:

'It's the characters that still live here, but it's so sad that they're dying out, they're not moving out and as they get older a lot of them live in fear.... they're not really aware of what's going on, all they want to do is just live their life out where they have for many, many years, because they hear rumours that they're going to sell the houses, and people who spread rumours like that, they're totally wrong. We're affecting people's emotions – the worst thing that can happen to anyone as they grow older is to have to move.' (Brian Harrison, 15 July 2005).

'I think (the residents) constantly feel threatened because you just have to stand there, stand on Observatory Hill, and look at the high-rise looming up behind you and then look down at these special little properties in Millers Point and you can see anybody who is looking at it from the point of view of urban real estate is going to want to get their paws on it.' (Shirley Fitzgerald, 15 September 2005)

'I think Millers Point is under threat. I think there'll be a real fight to keep the housing segment that we've got. We've got to learn from The Rocks and we've got to fight hard to keep it as it is – there's no reason why we shouldn't be able to do that – bring back the butcher's shop and bring back that village feeling, so we've got to be eternally vigilant.' (Jack Munday, 16 August 2005)

For many, the close connection that Millers Point has in their lives will never leave them:

'Well someone the other day asked me about Millers Point. You can take a person out of a community, but can you take the community out of the person? No, no, no, no. I can move out of Millers Point but you can't take that part of it out of me. For years I blocked off Millers Point, I didn't go there, I didn't have much to do with there, and it was just like there was something missing in my life.' (Gaylene Harkin, 29 December 2005).

The final statement goes to Shirley Fitzgerald:

'I just think it is so amazing that that little area has remained as intact as it has. They have been chipping away at the edges for the last ten years with what they've done at Walsh Bay and so on, but to have kept that kind of village within a big city that is going high-rise, and to have kept so much of its nineteenth century fabric and its early twentieth century fabric is just something that we should fight very, very hard for to save.' (Shirley Fitzgerald, 15 September 2005).



Emerging Consciousness: Acknowledging the Past and Embracing the Future

by Deborah Ruiz Wall and Dee Hunt

Filipinos' contributions honoured in Broome's 39th Shinju Matsuri Festival

THE PEOPLE, THE TIDES, THE STORIES, this year's Shinju Matsuri (Festival of the Pearl) theme, aptly captured pre-Federation Australian history when many indentured workers from overseas worked in the booming pearling industry in Broome, Thursday Island and Darwin. This year Shinju Matsuri celebrated the contribution of the Filipino people to the wealth and culture of Broome.

We went to Broome not only for the 10 days of festival in August but also to stay a while longer to undertake an oral history project with the descendants of Filipino pearl divers (known as 'Manilamen') who came to Broome from the early 1880s. We knew from our background reading that many of these descendants are of Filipino and Aboriginal ancestry. What we did not know was that about a hundred years later, Broome would be blessed with second and third wave arrivals from the Philippines. In the 1980s, Filipino women migrated as wives of Australian men and from 2006 onwards, Filipino men arrived as skilled workers under temporary 457 visa contracts.

Most Australians are not aware of the 19th and early 20th century Manilamen's contributions to the cultural and economic infrastructure of Broome. Two Catholic churches were built by Manilamen in the early years, as was the now dismantled Old Jetty. Town Beach, the Old Jetty site, is a place where people gather for picnics, dine at the beach restaurant, swim, or observe at full moon from March through to October, the 'Staircase to the Moon' — a visual display of the moon's reflection on the mudflats of Roebuck Bay that beams like a staircase to the sky.

Filipinos are reputed to be musical. Indeed, the Manila Club established by the first Filipino settlers provided entertainment in town. Under the leadership of a devout Filipino Catholic, Thomas Puertollano, and the guidance of a Cistercian Spanish priest, Fr Nicholas Emo, Filipinos were able to buy land and erect a fine hall. The large Rondalla stringed orchestra they formed was described as 'one of the finest in Australia.'

Pearl diving, however, was a high risk occupation, and many deaths and injuries occurred. Some gave up diving and took up fishing. The fish traps that were built along the coast by Manilamen gave them

Articles (cont...)

an alternative livelihood, and the town benefited from the fresh supply of fish and garden vegetables.

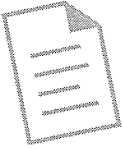
Not only did Filipinos contribute their labour to Broome's economic foundation as captains, divers, tenders, crew, shell openers and sorters in the pearling industry and later as woodcutters, fishermen and market gardeners. A few, albeit even against all odds, turned out to be successful entrepreneurs. Filomeno 'Francis' Rodriguez became a hotelier swiftly rising from his earlier work as crew, diver and pearling master. His descendant, James Frederic Jahan de Lestang told us about the two Broome establishments his great grandfather owned – the Weld Club Hotel and the Continental Hotel.

Another Manilaman, A. Gonzales, became an owner of a pearling fleet but many of his clients seemed to prefer to deal with Rose Gonzales, his Irish wife. Irritated with European attitudes in Broome, Rose was driven to put this statement on public notice in the "Dampier Dispatch":
It would save time if residents in Broome would remember that it is Mr A. Gonzales who is owner of fleet and he is a naturalized British subject and is quite capable of transacting all his business. They would give less annoyance by respecting this position instead of repeatedly calling on me about business matters. Signed Rose Gonzales.

Donatello Costello also succeeded in crossing the colour line. He purchased a town lot in the exclusively white residential area. He would have been able to argue that he should not be classified as 'Asiatic' because at the time his native Philippines was a dependency of the United States (from 1898–1935). Consequently, he could hold pearling licences and own as many luggers as he wished.

While pre-Federation Australia had relatively open borders enabling easy entry of foreign workers such as Manilamen into Broome, specific restrictions based on race made life a challenge. Under the "Immigration Restriction Act, 1901" (commonly known as the White Australia Policy), Asian migration was even more restricted and controlled. After 1902, unnaturalised Asians could not leave and re-enter the country without a Certificate of Domicile (COD). To apply required proof of good character, ownership of property and five years residence in Australia. Certificates of Exemption from Dictation Test (CEDTs) replaced the CODs in 1904 but did not allow families to accompany the certificate holder. Applicants had to correctly write fifty words in a given European language dictated by a policeman or government official.

Historian Julia Martinez writes about the pearling industry's exemption from the 'White Australia Policy':
The pearlshell industry was the only industry to be exempted from the "Immigration Restriction Act of 1901" which prohibited



the immigration of colored labor. Pearl-ling masters were permitted to import Asian divers, tenders, and crew under indenture contracts. ...For the Australian government, the exemption was ultimately a pragmatic concession to the master pearl-lingers who had threatened to leave Australia if they were denied access to Japanese divers.

Segregation and race barriers that existed then are starkly illustrated by stories and photographs featured in the Opening the Common Gate exhibition currently showing at the Western Australian Museum in Perth. The Common Gate served as a metaphor for “the different forms of exclusion imposed on the Aboriginal people, including racial, political, emotional, and social boundaries.” It was actually a wire fence running along the municipal boundary of Broome. Initially erected to keep cattle out, the main gate or ‘Common Gate’, as it became known, was located at the highway entrance to the town. However, it was used as a boundary to “regulate the entry of Aboriginal people without work permits, and enforce the exclusion of those classified as ‘natives in law’.

When we went to the exhibition in Perth, we were struck by the detailed information contained in the “Broome Colour Coded” panel which includes a full-size reproduction of the street map of Broome used by Travelling Inspector Ernest C. Mitchell in 1927. This map had the Inspector’s handwritten notation about the racial categories of the people who lived in the various dwellings:

Dorothea Manilla [sic.] man, (coded yellow for ‘Asiatics only’) married to h/c (half-caste), arrow points at lot 17 corner of Carnarvon and Frederick Streets;

Pedro Manilla [sic.] man, (coded green for ‘Aboriginal & white or half caste’), now in Singapore;

Antonio Perres, (coded red and blue, ‘half caste & Asiatic’, blue for ‘Whites’), married to FBF Lucy (probably indicates full blood female Aborigine);

Puertollano family, (coded red for ‘half caste & Asiatic or FBS & Asiatic’), lot 132, corner of Mary and Robinson Streets, h/c (half-caste) Manilla [sic.] – decent.

Mitchell used this information in his report on 23 October 1928 to his superior, A.O. Neville, Chief Protector of Aborigines.

To put this information into context — laws were enacted in Australia to strengthen the colonial social hierarchy and control based on class and race. The intention was to keep Asians and Aborigines apart as their union was seen as a commercial disadvantage by the white employers. ‘Natives will not work for white men if they can get work from

Articles (cont...)

coloured men. ...Coloured men will spend all their money buying clothes, necklaces and all sorts of finery for black women and girls. White men will not do so. That really explains the difference,' wrote J. Isdell, W.A. Government Travelling Inspector in 1908.

As historian, Christine Choo puts it squarely:

"racial and sexual politics converged with the identification by white men of Asian men and Aboriginal women as the common enemy." Such a relationship was viewed as a 'problem', precipitating a Royal Commission in 1904 headed by Dr Walter Roth, a former Protector from Queensland. In Queensland, Roth had assisted in introducing legislation to 'prevent contact between Aboriginal and Asian labourers, and to remove their progeny to institutions.'

The Western Australian government followed suit. Acting on Roth's recommendation, Western Australia introduced the "Aborigines Act of 1905" giving legal guardianship for all Aboriginal children to the Chief Protector; making cohabitation illegal between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, any marriage between them now requiring approval from the Chief Protector; and forbidding Aboriginal people from entering prohibited areas around creek estuaries and town boundaries as exemplified in Broome by the 'Common Gate'.

Despite this legislation, however, life in Broome was not totally restricted. This may be largely due to the fact that white people were still a minority. During Governor Bradford's visit to Broome in 1904, there were 2000 Asians and only 50 Europeans. Asians and Aboriginal people in Broome today are now a minority in a population of 14,436. Even during 81-year old Magdalene (nee Ybasco) Van Prehn's childhood in the late 1920s and early 1930s, Broome was "a very carefree life", she said. "We used to have Aboriginal friends, Filipino friends, half and half ... I feel sorry for my grandkids. They don't have a free time here (Belmore, Sydney). Those days in Broome, we didn't care about the future."

This sentiment was shared by both Sally Bin Demin and Elsta Regina Foy who were born in 1942 and 1937 respectively. On the question of segregation, Sally said, "I can't think of it directly. It probably happened all the time, I had not noticed. Now I'm seeing it more. At the time, we were the majority. It was our town. If they didn't like us, too bad. It didn't worry me. We didn't care." But she remembers the imposed seating arrangement at the Sun Pictures where she whispered with her friends, "If you're white, you're all right; if you are brown, hang around; if you are black, stand at the back."

The wonderful childhood memories of the Broome people of Aboriginal-Filipino ancestry we interviewed conjured up a picture of playful innocence and a close-knit mixed-race community who



shared their homes, food and songs, and thus felt blessed. However, many of them were evacuated from Broome during the Second World War to Beagle Bay where they experienced another life in an orphanage under the tutelage of nuns and priests within makeshift classrooms where boys were trained for woodwork, carpentry and other job oriented skills and girls for domestic work. Hence, before returning to Broome in 1945, they must have learnt how to survive and adapt to change. Some were separated from their parents when they were moved to Beagle Bay. Their eventual return to Broome engendered a nurturing of a shared community and extended family spirit and a psychological departure from a life that was disrupted and dislocated by the circumstances of war.

And so underneath the tourism glitter of Broome's turquoise ocean and deep red soil is a history with a rich texture that wove the intertwined experiences of Asian, European and Aboriginal cultures. Hence the question of identity — hardly an issue with the natural poly-ethnic mixture in this town — is sometimes forced by those who insist that people must make a choice, perhaps to resolve Native Title disputes.

Reflecting on the identity question, Kevin Puertollano who has a mixed ancestry of Filipino, Aboriginal, English and Irish, when asked who he thought he was, replied: "My father is a Yawuru man and my mother is from Bard people from the Dampier Peninsula. I'm accepted by Aboriginal people; they call me my bush name ... If I feel Aboriginal, if I feel Filipino, that is my right. I can't help myself. I can't be anybody else. You are who you feel you are." If the question comes from an Aboriginal person, Kevin would toss the question back: 'Do you speak your Aboriginal language? Do you dance your dance?' Broome's particular mixed-race history has left its people this heritage. For others who are uncertain about the identity of their father or grandfather, a definitive family tree verification remains elusive.

For Shinju Matsuri's float parade, Kevin constructed a facsimile of a fish trap erected on top of a ten-metre-long truck to remind townspeople that the Manilamen divers of old, some of whom became fishermen, had fed the town with fish picked from the fish traps that they built. Stapled on Kevin's wires were not just colourful floating cardboard fish but also representative pictures from the first, second and third waves of Filipinos who entered Australia during the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Along with the Filipino iconic motif jeepney, nipa hut and boat floats, Kevin's novelty fish trap float design also won a prize from

Articles (cont...)

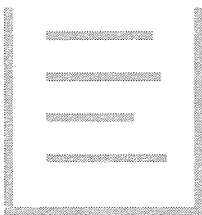
the Shinju committee. Winning the prizes boosted the Filipino community's pride of tradition in a parade that was somehow reminiscent of a historical cultural dance, this time, between the old and the new.

The three 'waves' of people have since met – twice at the Old Jetty site (Town Beach) – to get to know each other, fill in the gaps lost in the memory trail, and hear each other's stories. The Filipinos seemed to be 'in a faction' before this gathering observed Joenna, wife of 3rd wave Filipino Toyota worker, Samuel Fronda, until Kevin Puertollano opened up for them the old history.

Indeed the Filipino story is deeply anchored in Broome's soil so the new arrivals can hold their heads high and connect with the history of the Manilamen and their descendants. Apart from Filipino heritage the contract skilled workers in the 21st century have another thing in common with the indentured workers of the 19th century – the uncertainty of their tenure in Broome. The Manilamen of the past worked as mariners, engineers, cooks, divers, tenders and shell openers in the pearling industry, forestry, agriculture and

construction, while the Filipino contract workers of today are employed as welder, draftsman, chef, landscape designer/ gardener, mechanic and electrician in the automotive industry, hospitality, horticulture and now in the cultured pearl industry – skills required in Broome by today's employers.

Different times, somewhat different jobs, but tides that reached the same shores. After 130 years we have turned a full circle indeed.



History from the Heart

Annie Payne, Personal Historian

Notes by Joyce Cribb

"If you want something said, ask a man.
If you want something done, ask a woman."
Margaret Thatcher,
former Prime Minister, UK

Sometimes your editors hear of interesting ideas and work that form part of the overall history scene. The work of Annie Payne came to our notice, so we contacted Annie in Western Australia and Annie was kind enough to send us one of her newsletters, which I have used to summarize the various ways this very busy lady works with her clients. Ed.

Annie runs a business called *History from the Heart* which centres around helping others to record their personal and family history. She conducts workshops and talks for 'would be historians' to attend, as well as an On-Line Beginners Personal History course. This course is for those, who reply to an invitation such as this one in her newsletter:

'Are you one of those people who would love to get started with your personal history but you keep putting it off, because you are too busy to attend one of my workshops? Perhaps you work fulltime and your weekends are pretty full or maybe you

are a Mum, juggling part-time work and looking after a home and family? Prefer to work alone at your home computer at your own pace? After some requests, I have put together a series of 3 modules (each 4 weeks long) which will provide you with the skills and knowledge you require to get started with this important work.'

Another aspect of Annie's work and this is what really intrigued us was her Espresso Minutes which she describes in this way:

'Many people contact me, especially after radio interviews, about various problems they are having with their personal history and often it is not convenient to give the information by email or phone. On the last Wednesday of each month I am committed to making myself available for a face-to-face meeting with you at a convenient coffee shop/café. For the cost of a cup of coffee I will advise about the problem you are having – be it identifying the main theme of your story, inserting conversation into your document, editing, sorting out which photos to use etc.

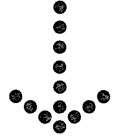
These café meetings provide an informal and inexpensive get together for exchange of views and ideas, the opportunity to learn from the teacher and also others with similar interest or problems. Something that some members might

Articles (cont...)

like to copy! Annie also had hints about recording the history and provenance of family possessions, letters, photos, trinkets or more valuable memorabilia. On reading through Annie's Newsletter, her enthusiasm for recording and collecting family memorabilia and history is very obvious. Thank you to Annie for sharing her ideas with us.

Annie Payne – Personal Historian,
History from the Heart.
annie@historyfromtheheart.com.au
www.historyfromtheheart.com.au

Diary of Events

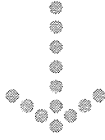


Field Trip Visiting the Caroline Simpson Library and Research Collection Historic Houses Trust

Longtime members might recall the Public History Interest Network (PHIN – an informal network for public historians) which was formed in 2001 under the umbrella of the OHAA (NSW) Inc. Although PHIN lapsed after nearly half a decade, the need remains for those working in different areas of oral history to engage in opportunities to meet and discuss professional issues.

The OHAA (NSW) Inc has decided to arrange a series of Field Trips for members to learn about resources which may be useful for their practice, visit other history groups and organisations, and understand the ways in which oral history is being utilised. How regularly these Field Trips will be depends on the level of interest and support – so please let us know your thoughts – as well as suggestions about places you might be interested in visiting.

The first Field Trip will be held on Saturday, 8 August when we have arranged to visit the Historic Houses Trust's Caroline Simpson Library & Research Collection. Whilst oral history is not the most prominent aspect of this Collection, the Librarian, Megan Martin, has very kindly agreed to show us some of the resources of the Library, discuss the oral history collection and how oral history has been incorporated into the Trust's interpretation of Trust properties.

**Date**

Saturday, 8 August 2009

Meet

on the Verandah at The Mint, Macquarie Street, Sydney

Time

9.45 – please meet promptly - the Library is not open to the public on Saturdays and we will be taken into the Library at 10 o'clock SHARP
10 am – 12 noon

Cost

\$5.00 includes morning tea

Lunch

Afterwards at Hyde Park Barracks - at own expense.

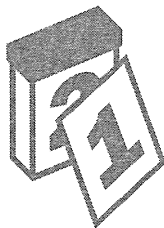
RSVP

Numbers strictly limited so please book early: Rosie Block [rblock@sl.nsw.gov.au]

Please do not contact the Library about this event – RSVP as above.

If you are not able to join the group on this occasion and would like to visit at another time note: Caroline Simpson Library & Research Collection Hours, Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm

Closed weekends and public holidays.
www.hht.net.au

**Conference announcement****The Talk about Town: Urban Lives and Oral Sources in 20th Century Australia**

27-28 August 2009, at the State Library of Victoria and Melbourne Museum

Sponsored by the State Library of Victoria, the Monash University Institute for Public History, Museum Victoria, the University of Melbourne's School of Historical Studies, Macquarie University's Department of Modern History and LaTrobe University's Department of Historical and European Studies.

The Talk about Town: Urban Lives and Oral Sources in Twentieth Century Australia invites researchers and professionals working on life in Australian cities since 1900 to come together and reflect on their projects. It hopes to encourage participants to think about the significance of the urban context, whether or not it is the primary focus of their research. In particular, researchers working with personal sources in fields such as oral history, life history and immigration, are encouraged to look at the way that urban settings have shaped the stories they have been told. Postgraduate students and professionals working with history are particularly encouraged to participate.

We are delighted to welcome two distinguished oral and urban historians as keynote speakers.

Diary of Events (cont...)

Alessandro Portelli, Professor of American literature at the University of Rome 'La Sapienza', is the author of a number of influential studies in oral history and popular memory including *The Order Has Already Been Carried Out: History, Memory and Meaning of a Nazi Massacre in Rome* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2003) and *The Death of Luigi Trastulli: Form and Meaning in Oral History* (State University of New York Press, 1991). From 2002 to 2008, he served as advisor to the mayor of Rome for the preservation and promotion of the city's historical memory, and is currently co-manager of Rome's House of History and Memory.

Professor Janet McCalman is perhaps the most prominent Australian historian to have worked between urban and oral history. 2009 marks the 25th anniversary of the publication of *Struggletown*, her landmark history of the working class Melbourne suburb of Richmond. *Struggletown* blended these two approaches to the past, telling the history of a generation and a place. Professor McCalman holds joint appointments in the History & Philosophy of Science and in the Centre for Health and Society at the University of Melbourne, as Director of the Johnstone-Need Medical History Unit.

This two day conference will feature our two keynote speakers; followed by parallel sessions; workshops on themes relating to the practice of urban and oral history, led by experts in the field. Additional events will

include walking tours of inner Melbourne and a guided tour of 'The Melbourne Story' at Melbourne Museum.

Following the conference, participants are encouraged to submit articles based on their presentations for consideration for publication in a special issue of a refereed journal.

Enquiries or proposals for panels, please contact the organising committee via talkabouttown@gmail.com, for further details visit our website at: <http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/public-history-institute/conferences/2009-talkabout/index.php>

Committee Meeting Dates For 2008

Members are encouraged and welcome to attend meetings held at the State Library at 5.30pm. Please meet at the Mitchell Wing vestibule at 5.25pm. (Staff will direct you if you miss the group)

April 28

June 16

August 15

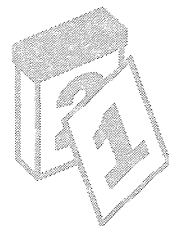
October 20.

Seminar Dates For 2009

May 9

July 25

November 7.



Call for papers

16TH INTERNATIONAL ORAL HISTORY CONFERENCE

Between the Past and the Future: Oral History, Memory and Meaning

7 - 11 July 2010

Clarion Congress Hotel,
PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC
www.ioha2010prague.com

Call for Papers

Papers are invited from around the world for contributions to the XVIth International Oral History Conference hosted by the International Oral History Association in collaboration with the Czech Oral History Association and the Institute of Contemporary History of the Academy of Sciences, Czech Republic.

This year our attention will focus on finding and making meaning of the past and human identity through oral history. We will focus on number of research fields where oral history can contribute to better understanding not only of our past but our lives in general. Also, for the first time our conference will take place in an ex-totalitarian country. This enables us to analyse the specific role of oral history research in societies where other, especially official records about the past have been submitted to censorship or have been discarded.

We encourage scholars all around the world and all those who have worked with oral history in a wide range of settings such as museums, heritage agencies, academic institutions, law courts, radio and television, performing arts and community projects to

participate in XVI International Oral History Conference in Prague, Czech Republic.

Proposals

Proposals may be for a conference paper or a thematic panel. Only those proposals clearly focused on oral history will be given consideration. Proposals will be evaluated according to their oral history focus, methodological and theoretical significance and relevance to the conference theme and sub-themes.

- Individual papers: these will be grouped by the conference organizers into panels or workshops with papers which have a similar focus.
- Thematic panels: proposals for a thematic panel should contain no more than four presenters, representing different countries.
- During the conference Special Interest Groups will take place. These network sessions are intended for oral historians to meet, establish contacts, share resources and ideas. The places and times of SIGs will be announced in the programme of the conference. Suggestions and offers about possible themes are invited (please contact the local organisers).

Specifications

Please submit on-line a 300-word maximum proposal summarizing your presentation, via the Conference Website: www.ioha2010prague.com.

Proposals must be written in English and Spanish.

Deadline for proposals: 10 July 2009



Islands of Memory

Oral History Association of Australia
16th National Conference
17-20 September 2009
Launceston Tasmania

Navigating Personal and Public History

The OHAA National Conference (55 speakers) in Launceston 17–20 September 2009.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Richard Whiteing, research manager/archivist, Robben Island Museum, South Africa
Remembering Nelson Mandela on Robben Island

MAJOR SPEAKERS

Alan Harris Stein, archival oral historian, Chicago State University
Rocking the boat: Studs Terkel's 20th century

Gwenda Beed Davey, AM, Research Fellow, Deakin University
Fish Trout, You're Out: sound recordings of childhood in NLA's Oral History and Folklore Section

Christobel Mattingley, AM, author, DUnivSA
A country postmistress, women artists, Aboriginal people, a tin miner, a Lancaster pilot and a refugee - publishing their stories

OTHER TOPICS INCLUDE:

- Second World War: Greek 'aliens'; the Yolngu people; the Greek campaign
- Indigenous people and place; Oral history and the reconciliation process
- Memories of migrant hostels; Displaced Persons; Hazara refugees
- Response to the Apology
- The Anzac myth and the Vietnam War
- Fact v fiction in oral history; Family photographs from late raj India
- Issues in interviewing; Giving voice to Down syndrome
- Oral history on the web
- Turning the memories into public art

EARLYBIRD REGISTRATION closes June 30 – earlybird fee for members \$295

Further information: www.qvmag.tas.gov.au/oralhistoryconference

Enquiries: OHAA@qvmag.tas.gov.au

Jill Cassidy, President OHAA (Tas) Inc, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, PO Box 403, Launceston Tasmania Australia 7250

OHAA (Tas) gratefully acknowledges the support of the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, the Launceston City Council and the University of Tasmania.

Noticeboard



Website Oral History Association of Australia <www.ohaa.net.au>.

Do bookmark and visit this site from time to time to keep up to date with what is happening around Australia and especially for details and links to the International Conference.

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