



ORAL HISTORY
———NSW———

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Oral History Australia Biennial Conference 2019



Intimate Stories, Challenging Histories

10—13 October 2019

State Library of Queensland, Brisbane



The 2019 Biennial Oral History Australia Conference takes place in our 40th anniversary year. **Oral History Queensland** and **Oral History Australia** are presenting the conference in partnership with the **State Library of Queensland** and **Queensland Memory**.

The four-day event features:

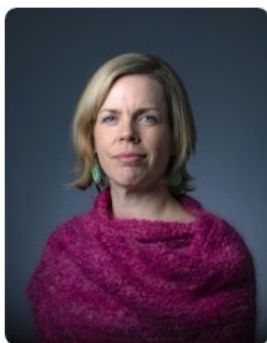
- pre-conference workshops and the welcome reception on Thursday 10 October
- two days of conference presentations and panels, and the conference dinner on Friday and Saturday, 11-12 October
- post-conference excursions in and around Brisbane on Sunday 13 October.

REGISTRATIONS now open

Conference links:

- [Conference home page](#)
- [Keynote themes & speakers](#)
- [Draft program](#)
- [Registration information](#)
- [Registration on Eventbrite](#)

For further information or to join the conference mailing list, email oralhistoryqld@gmail.com



Keynote speakers will include Associate Professor **Katrina Srigley** from **Nipissing University** in Canada, co-editor of *Beyond Women's Words: feminisms and the practices of oral history in the twenty-first century* (2018), and currently co-researching *Gaa Bi Kidwaad Maa Nbisiing: A-Kii Bemaadzijik, E-Niigannwang: The Stories of Nbisiing: the Land, the People, the Future*; and *Nbisiing Anishinabek Biimadiziwin: to understand the past and shape the future*, in partnership with Nipissing First Nation.

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Oral History NSW Annual Lecture: History Week 2019

“Everywhere you look is a loss”: Memories of Bushfire in a Transformed Suburban Landscape

Sunday, **8 September 2019**, 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

As part of **History Week 2019** (31 August – 8 September — see p. 6 below)

In 2003, the Australian Capital Territory experienced a devastating firestorm in which four people were killed and hundreds more injured. The fire burnt across bushland, plantation forests and farms, and reached into the Canberra suburbs, destroying nearly five hundred homes. Rural and suburban landscapes were permanently transformed. In this lecture, **Dr Scott McKinnon** will examine the interweaving of memory, space and recovery in the years after the fire. McKinnon argues for the importance of including slow recovery processes in the recorded history of disaster and for situating understandings of disaster recovery in landscapes imbued with memory.



Dr Scott McKinnon is a Vice-Chancellor’s Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the Australian Centre for Environment, Society and Space (ACCESS), University of Wollongong. He is an oral historian and geographer with a research background in disasters research, geographies of memory, and histories and geographies of sexuality and gender.

Scott is Vice President of Oral History NSW and Sydney’s Pride History Group. He is the author of *Gay Men at the Movies: Cinema, memory and the history of a gay male community* (Intellect, 2016).

Where: History House 133 Macquarie Street Sydney NSW 2000 ([map](#))

Cost: OH-NSW & RAHS members **FREE**. General admission \$10

Please book – tickets available [HERE](#).



Survey on the *Oral History Australia Journal*

Oral History Australia is conducting a short survey to explore the experience of members in accessing the **OHA Journal** since it moved to a digital-only format with the 2017 edition.

The two new journal editors Carla Pascoe Leahy and Skye Krichauff are also interested in broader feedback about the journal’s content and layout.

The survey is available via the SurveyMonkey platform [HERE](#). It is estimated to take less than five minutes to complete.

Oral History Australia published its final printed journal with the 2016 edition. The 2017 and 2018 journals were posted online as PDFs from a members-only section of the OHA website.

Your participation in this survey would be greatly appreciated by OHA, and will directly inform its future plans. **Please respond by mid-September.**

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Capturing Memories: Oral History in the Digital Age

9:30 am — 4:30 pm, **Saturday, 19 October 2019**

History House, 133 Macquarie Street, Sydney ([map](#))

Join Oral History NSW and the Royal Australian Historical Society for a practical workshop for all interested in recording the experiences of family, friends, local communities, history of museum items or any other project incorporating memories of the past.

This popular and informative workshop will equip you to undertake your own oral history interviews. Workshop leaders will be **Janis Wilton**, an experienced oral historian and **Andrew Host**, whose 39 years of experience as a sound engineer can help you get quality recordings that will stand the test of time (*see below*).

See a full list of topics to be covered [HERE](#).

Registration: 9:30 am, workshop commences 9:45 am, concludes approx.. 4:30 pm

Cost: \$105 non-members; \$95 Oral History NSW & RAHS members

For \$135, attend the workshop and become a new member of Oral History NSW

Bookings:

**Book online [HERE](#)
and pay by credit card or PayPal**

Presenters:



Janis Wilton is a public and applied historian who, until her retirement in 2017, was based at the University of New England where she coordinated and taught into the university's courses on local, family and applied history, and supervised research work in these areas.

A Life Member of Oral History NSW, a recipient of the Hazel de Berg Award for Excellence in Oral History, and a past president and council member of the International Oral History Association, Janis shares her passion for oral history through active involvement in community based projects, research supervision, community workshops, and her own research and writing.



Andrew Host has been professionally immersed in audio for 39 years, starting in commercial radio in Sydney, and then working a further 16 years in independent recording studios in the advertising industry. In 1998, Andrew moved into Compact Disc and DVD duplication, which also involved restoration of old audio and video. Since 2010, Andrew's focus has been on audio preservation and enhancement.

Andrew has been a member of Oral History NSW since 2012, and has been on the executive committee since 2013 where he now serves as Treasurer.

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Vale: Ben Morris

By Janis Wilton



Lieutenant **Ben Morris**, Vietnam, 1967
Image: Michael Coleridge, Courtesy
Australian War Memorial

Ben Morris passed away on 14 July 2019. He was a thoughtful and committed oral historian who spent the last fifteen years recording fellow Vietnam veterans. His concern and enthusiasm were contagious, and he bravely spoke out at national and international conferences, in the media and through publications. His most recent publication is a joint article with Noah Riseman for *History Australia*.

His work is an embodiment of oral history's long held status as a means to challenge official histories and to give voice to those whose experiences have been left off the historical record. He tackled the complexities involved in insider interviews including the additional insights, the dangers of assuming a collective narrative, and the intricacies of a past hierarchy impacting on the structure and content of an interview. Ben also directly confronted the challenge of disagreeing with established official narratives about the Vietnam War, and questioned the ways in which published Vietnam War oral histories have not been sufficiently interrogated. He met with resistance and criticism alongside support and recognition.

Significantly, Ben came to oral history after a long career in the Australian Army. Retired as a TPI ex-serviceman, he sought to correct accounts of events during the Vietnam War. He turned to oral history. He recognised the power of oral history, the skills involved, the methodological and conceptual issues that need to be addressed, and the challenges of presenting the results of his research in a variety of forums.

Ben will be missed in the oral history world and among his fellow veterans for his research, his bravery, his commitment to learning and sharing, and his generosity and compassion. He will also be missed, as Rosie Block and Sandra Blamey recall, for his great capacity for friendship and his willingness always to stop and have a chat. I will certainly miss my conversations with him, and our tracking of each other's work and lives.

The following provide a sample of Ben's research output and media appearances:

- With Noah Riseman, 'Volunteers with a legal impediment: Australian national service and the question of overseas service in Vietnam', *History Australia*, 16/2, 2019, pp. 266-286.
- 'Mental scars of Vietnam War healed through multicultural friendship between veteran and restaurateur', ABC Illawarra, 25 April 2019, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-04-25/multicultural-friendship-in-the-wake-of-the-vietnam-war/11037938>
- 'I was confronted with a scene that would haunt me forever', *Insight*, SBS, 16 February 2019, <https://www.sbs.com.au/news/insight/i-was-confronted-with-a-scene-that-will-haunt-me-forever>
- 'Bombshell claims army covered up truth about Aussie massacre at Nui Dat in Vietnam in 1967', *Daily Telegraph*, 12 October 2014, <https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/nsw/bombshell-claims-army-covered-up-truth-about-aussie-massacre-at-nui-dat-in-vietnam-in-1967/news-story/3eacf164bb0fa42790fb66b138922834>
- 'The diggers wish: set the record straight', *OHAA Journal*, 36, 2014, pp. 72–85 [peer-reviewed].
- Australian War Memorial accepts Ben Morris's oral history interviews, University of Wollongong, 24 November 2014, <https://www.uow.edu.au/media/2014/masters-students-interview-tapes-accepted-into-national-collection.php>
- Remembering Vietnam: official history, soldiers' memories and the participant interviewer, Master of Arts thesis, School of Humanities and Social Inquiry – Faculty of Law, Humanities and the Arts, University of Wollongong, 2014, <https://ro.uow.edu.au/theses/4348/>
- 'Permission to speak, sir – official history, whose reality?', *OHAA Journal*, 32, 2010, pp. 3-7.

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MACQUARIE
University

History's Terrain: Locating Memory, Understanding Landscape

9:00 am – 3:30 pm, **Thursday, 5 September 2019**
Dixson Room, State Library of New South Wales
Macquarie Street, Sydney, NSW 2000. [View Map](#)

This public symposium will explore how place and memory shape the way we think about landscapes, the past and the present. Drawing together scholars and practitioners, the symposium showcases new research into encounters with place, collecting cultures, natural history and nature writing, and sites of memory. Speakers will examine what it means to locate memory in landscapes and consider the role of history in a time of environmental crisis.

How does a focus on place shape the way we write history? How are connections to place sustained and invigorated through memory work? Are there tensions between the public engagement with historical sites and the academic study of space, place and the past? How should historians draw on material culture and museum collections? What do humanists bring to our understanding of the Anthropocene and how can we use this concept to build more effective stories about our world?

This is a History Council NSW History Week event (see below)

Keynote: Professor Heather Goodall, UTS

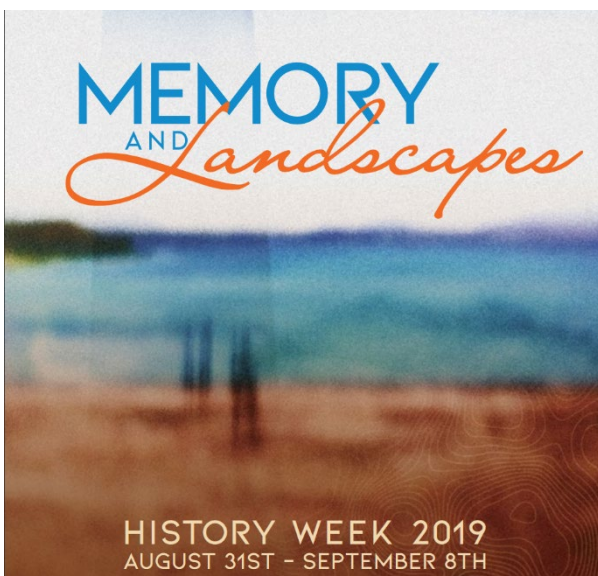
Confirmed Speakers: Ann Elias, Andrew Hurley, Jarrod Hore, Simon Ville, Mariko Smith, Jude Philp, Emily O'Gorman, Rohan Howitt

Convenors: Isobelle Barrett Meyering, MQ & Jarrod Hore, MQ

Contact: Jarrod Hore, jarrod.hore@mq.edu.au

*All tickets include Morning Tea. Tickets including Lunch are available.
Alternatively, you may choose from a number of nearby options or bring your own Lunch.*

See [HERE](#) for full program & timetable, and **BOOKINGS**



History Week 2019 commenced

31st August — 8th September



"History Week is widely recognised as the premier event of the history calendar in New South Wales. Now entering its 22nd year, History Week plays a crucial role in advancing the History Council's objectives. We hope to capture the historical imaginations of young and old, and show why knowledge of history is so essential to understanding the present. ...

"With over 80 events taking place across the state, it's been fabulous to see the wide variety of History Council members celebrating the best in community and professional history, and highlighting its important role in our cultural life."

**— Dr Stephen Gapps, President,
History Council of NSW**

The full program is now available — see [HERE](#).

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Call for Papers:



Oral History Society (UK) 2020 Annual Conference

Oral History and the Media

Bournemouth University, U.K., 3 & 4 July 2020

Extract:



“ Oral history and the media have an important but complex relationship. The media has long been a significant producer of, and outlet for, oral history ... giving voice to those who would otherwise have been excluded from both the media and the historical record. Since the 1980s, there has been growing use of oral history in TV, radio, print and digital media, with oral histories now forming an important and popular dimension of history and factual broadcasting and publishing.

“However, the process by which oral histories are mediated from orality to the media (or “transmediated”, to use Alessandro Portelli’s term), and the methodological, aesthetic, narrative, or ethical decisions behind these productions and outputs – such as who to interview, what questions to ask, and what parts of the interviews end up on the “cutting room floor” – often remain hidden. ... ”

See the full call for papers [HERE](#).

Deadline for proposals: **20 December 2019**



Call for papers:

London Centre for Interdisciplinary Research

International Conference on Oral History

London, UK, 8-9 February 2020

Extract:

“ The conference will focus on the connections between oral history, collective memory, and individual memory. Whether from a historical, social, or even psychological perspective, we wish to engage scholars in a multidimensional and interdisciplinary approach in

order to deeply explore all aspects of this valuable and fascinating area. We are committed to creating a welcoming space for discussion, collaboration, and exploration of oral history’s potential as a tool for local, national and international projects that would enrich and even revise chapters of history.

“The conference will bring together scholars from different fields including history, philosophy, religion, sociology, international relations, literature, art, space studies, peace studies, cultural studies, minority studies, war and/or genocide studies, journalism, immigration studies, psychology and psychiatry, political and social studies, and those working in archives, museums and NGOs.

“We are particularly interested in inviting those with first-hand experiences, amateur archivists and memory collectors to participate in our newly established session ‘Share your memories and change history.’ ”

See the full call for papers [HERE](#)

Deadline for submissions: **15 October 2019**

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5 Questions About: The Tretter Transgender Oral History Project



The [Oral History Review](#) blog asked authors of non-print and media projects reviewed in the pages of the *Review* (published on behalf of the USA's Oral History Association) to answer 5 questions about why we should explore them.

In the current instalment, **Myrl Beam** responds to questions about this project:

- **What's it about and why does it matter?**

(Extract): "The Tretter Transgender Oral History Project (TTOHP) is committed to collecting, preserving, and making available oral histories of gender transgression, broadly understood through a trans framework. The first phase of the TTOHP (2015-2018) was led by Andrea Jenkins—who went on to become the first Black transgender woman serving in elected office in the U.S. ...

"The second phase of the TTOHP (2019-2021) focuses on trans politics, activist movements, and strategy debates. ..."

- **How does oral history contribute to your project?**
- **What do you like about using oral history as a methodology?**
- **Why will fellow oral historians be interested in the project?**
- **What is the one thing that you most want the audience to remember about the project?**

Read Myrl Beam's full responses in the blog post [HERE](#).



Illawarra Stories

Illawarra Stories is an oral history project of Wollongong City Libraries, capturing people's recollections of life in the Illawarra region of south coast NSW. Extracts of recorded interviews can be accessed online [HERE](#).



The project aims to document the social and cultural history of the region through the voices of local residents and visitors. The interviews are facilitated by library staff and volunteers.

Locals bring to life the importance of their community through stories and build a picture that otherwise may be lost. This project will preserve the way people speak through voices, accents and vocabularies, creating a valuable record that can be accessed by educators, researchers, community groups and interested individuals. These are real people, with real stories.

Illawarra Stories is a new and growing collection of local history with new interviews being added continually. If you are interested in taking part in the project by sharing your memories of life in the Illawarra please contact the project [HERE](#).

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**Oral History Australia
2019 Biennial Conference
*Intimate Stories, Challenging Histories***

State Library of Queensland, Brisbane

10–13 October 2019

See [HERE](#) for keynote themes and speakers.

General information about the conference is available on the conference home page [HERE](#).

See also [page 2](#) above

**2019 Royal Australian Historical Society Conference
*Illuminating the Past.***

West Tamworth Leagues Club, **14–15 September 2019**



Image: [Tamworth Historical Society](#)

On 9 November 1888, Tamworth became the first city in Australia to have its streets lit by electric streetlights. So it's fitting that Tamworth is the location of the 2019 RAHS Conference '*Illuminating the Past.*'

What do different historical records reveal about our past? How do we share our history with new audiences in an enlightening and informative way? What must we do to protect and share historical sources so that the vivid insights they provide don't disappear into darkness?

For further information & bookings, see the conference website [HERE](#).



Royal Hotel, Tamworth, 1930

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- **Oral History Association 2019 Annual Meeting:**
*Pathways in the Field: Considerations for those Working In,
On and Around Oral History*

Salt Lake City, Utah, USA, 16–19 October 2019

See details [HERE](#).



**International Oral History Association
XXI Conference**

Singapore, 22–26 June 2020

See the new conference website [HERE](#).

“ At the core of oral history is a desire for a more complex and nuanced understanding of the world around us. While we value each oral account as unique, personal and subjective, bringing together many voices – whether in agreement or disagreement – allows greater meaning to be gleaned, refined and accumulated.

“Oral history teaches us to be considerate and empathetic to different voices and perspectives. What does this mean in the context of oral history taking root in more places and different cultures around the world? Where it is used in more and different contexts and disciplines? Aided and even led by changing technologies? Presented in different forms and bearing multiple uses? This conference invites papers which shed light on the growing diversity, multidimensionality and interdisciplinary applications of oral history.

“As the IOHA conference enters Southeast Asia for the first time, the theme is also an invitation for reflection by the international oral history community to consider how we can help and support one another through friendships, networks and alliances. ”

See more on the website. Enquiries, contact NLB_IOHA2020@nlb.gov.sg

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Oral History Network News is published by **Oral History NSW** for its members and all others in the wider community with an interest in oral history.

*Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of Oral History NSW,
and information on services does not imply endorsement.*

DO YOU HAVE A CONTRIBUTION?

Letters/comments – anecdotes – news items –
links to websites using oral history –
relevant resources for oral historians.

Closing date for items for the next issue (October 2019) is

26 September 2019.

Forward copy to the Editor: networknews@oralhistorynsw.org.au

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What Membership of Oral History NSW Inc. gives you:

- Regular seminars and workshops.
- Opportunities for informal exchange of ideas and experience.
- Biennial National Oral History Conferences.
- Subscription to the annual ***Oral History Australia Journal***.
- ***Oral History Network News***, the monthly email newsletter keeping you in touch with current topics and events of interest to oral historians. Notices received requesting oral historians for particular projects are also published here.
- Awards and Grants – the Oral History Australia **Hazel de Berg Award for Excellence in Oral History** recognises oral historians who have made an outstanding contribution to oral history in Australia over a considerable period of time. See more about the award & past recipients [HERE](#).
From time to time Oral History NSW makes available grants to members undertaking research based on, or concerning oral history, who wish to participate or present papers at an international oral history conference.
- ALSO, as Oral History NSW is an affiliated member of the **Royal Australian Historical Society NSW** all members may attend the RAHS Conference at members' rates. See the RAHS website [HERE](#).

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