

# MEMENTO

NEWS FROM THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES



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AUTUMN 2005

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# MEMENTO



NAA: A1500, K1220

More than half a century ago, finalists in the 1952 Miss Pacific contest, Mary Clifton Smith, Pamela Jansen and Judy Worrall posed on Bondi Beach. This iconic image will feature in our photographic exhibition, *Summers Past*, in December 2005. See story on p. 18.

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The National Archives is an Australian government agency.



## A man of

The latest addition to our series of research guides is *John Curtin: Guide to Archives of Australia's Prime Ministers*, by David Black and Lesley Wallace. A collaborative work between the National Archives and the John Curtin Prime Ministerial Library, this guide draws on the substantial records held by both organisations and other archival institutions. The guide reveals much about John Curtin, the man, as well as John Curtin, Prime Minister of Australia for most of World War II.

Although deservedly admired for his courage and leadership during World War II, John Joseph Ambrose Curtin was much more than Australia's wartime Prime Minister. Long before his pivotal role in guiding Australia through its darkest times, John Curtin was fired by a sense of justice for all. His keen social conscience led him first into the labour movement of the early Federation years and then into politics.

In many ways Curtin's greatest battles were fought long before he found himself, a pacifist, leading Australia

through its most perilous times. Poverty, depression, self-doubt and addiction were no strangers to him. It took courage, determination, and the help of friends and family for John Curtin to remake himself into a hero for all Australians.

From the idealistic socialist of the early years of the 20th century to a political pragmatist who understood ordinary working folk, Curtin became a leader of unexpected depth and resolve. A passionate anti-conscriptionist, Curtin sacrificed his own ideals in 1943 to introduce limited conscription. His grief over the terrible losses of war, his determination to protect and preserve Australia and the decline in his own health under the pressure of leadership made him a very human and caring figure. He was the antithesis of the more aggressive figures strutting the war-torn stages of the world from 1939 to 1945.

Curtin's battle with Winston Churchill to bring Australian troops back to defend their homeland, his call to the US and his relationship with General Douglas MacArthur in the battle to save Australia

His actions in 1942–43 signalled a fundamental shift in the way Australians regarded themselves and their country



# peace in wartime



(above left opposite) Prime Minister John Curtin, 1944. NAA: A5954, 661/12

(above left) Prime Minister John Curtin shaking hands with General Douglas MacArthur, Sydney, 8 June 1943. JCPML00376/69

(above right) The Curtin family, 1938. JCPML00376/18

(left) John Curtin wrote 'Have Ye Answered O My People' on the front of this postcard of crowds at an anti-conscription rally, 21 October 1916. On the back he noted, 'Not a bad crowd to bang at'. JCPML00687/15/7

from invasion by the Japanese have become the stuff of legend. His actions in 1942–43 signalled a fundamental shift in the way Australians regarded themselves and their country. Australia began, under Curtin's guidance, to become more self-reliant and more capable of defending itself – a nation rather than a vassal state of Great Britain.

Curtin's vision for the postwar future of Australia was of a nation capable

of resolving problems of unemployment and social inequity, and meeting the great challenges of a changing world. Cooperative and inclusionist in his beliefs, Curtin's legacy rests not only in his nation's survival during World War II, but also in its growth and stability in the years of peace that followed the end of hostilities.

The records about John Curtin, his wife Elsie, their lives and the perils of wartime

are described brilliantly in this latest guide, which will be a valuable research tool for all students of Australian history.

*John Curtin: Guide to Archives of Australia's Prime Ministers* retails for \$19.95. It can be purchased through our website at [www.naa.gov.au](http://www.naa.gov.au), by phoning (02) 6212 3609 or emailing [naasales@naa.gov.au](mailto:naasales@naa.gov.au).



# The year that was 1974

Each January the National Archives releases Cabinet documents that have reached 30 years of age. In an embargoed release last December, our consultant historian Ian Hancock briefed the media on the 1974 Cabinet records. Here are excerpts of his talk on the political, social and economic activities and debates of the time.

## Australia and beyond

Working Australians earned more and spent more in 1974 but probably thought they lived in 'tough times'. Rising prices and increasing unemployment at home, and escalating oil prices and retracting Western economies abroad, all created a feeling of insecurity which had supplanted the general optimism of the long post-war boom. An unsettled political environment and increasing challenges to traditional practices and values, contributed to the uncertainty.

Parts of the world beyond Australia looked to be even more unstable. The United States continued to be burnt by Watergate and Vietnam although President's Nixon's departure from office proffered some relief. Edward Heath, the British Prime Minister, lost an election he did not need to hold and fought it on terms he could

have avoided. And Northern Ireland once more hovered on the edge.

## Domestic politics and foreign relations

Convinced by the beginning of 1974 that the 'It's Time' theme had run its course, and that the Whitlam government was bent on turning Australia into a socialist republic – or, at best, on undermining its social framework and economic stability – the Opposition parties were keen to force and win an early election. In that, they failed. Perhaps if Billy Snedden, the Liberal Party leader, had held off for two or three months, he might have become Prime Minister in a rapidly deteriorating economic situation. Instead, summoning his gift for self-parody, he announced: 'We were not defeated. But we did not win enough seats to form a government'.

The Whitlam government went through 1974 determined so far as possible to implement its reform program; hence some of the big winners in the 1974–75 budget were Aboriginal affairs, education and urban and regional development.

Under Whitlam, the rhetoric and substance of Australian foreign policy became increasingly detached from the solid pro-American, pro-Western stance of the previous Coalition governments. This independent stand was not, however, matched by any corresponding improvement in Australia's defence capacity. Nor did it necessarily make the country more influential. Despite protests, the French launched another nuclear program in the Pacific, and Australia's new best friend – China – conducted a test the following day.



### Other domestic matters

Throughout 1974, Bill Hayden, Minister for Social Security, proceeded to negotiate for the introduction of Medibank. Despite continued opposition from health funds, the coalition and the medical profession, he had achieved sufficient progress by the end of the year to be confident of a new beginning in the provision and funding of health services. Meanwhile, Attorney-General Lionel Murphy proceeded with two landmark pieces of legislation. The new Trade Practices Act imposed tougher sanctions for breaches and provided greater consumer protection to tackle unfair or dishonest advertising. The Family Law Bill introduced a single no-fault ground for divorce, namely, the irretrievable breakdown of a marriage, and recognised the non-financial contribution of women to the home in making a property settlement.

### The economy

Australian politics in 1974 were conducted against a background of an economy in strife. The economists, politicians, soothsayers and jeremiahs who contributed to a confusing debate were operating in unfamiliar territory. They were confronted with the supposedly

unthinkable: a simultaneous increase in the rates of inflation and unemployment. In December 1972 the annual rate of inflation stood at 4.5 per cent. Within 10 months it had reached 10 per cent. By June 1974 it had blown out to 14.4 per cent. At the same time, the numbers of unemployed had risen from 71,000 in June to 111,000 in August.

If, during the first half of 1974, the Whitlam government looked to be in control of itself and – more or less – the economy, it failed on both counts in the second. By the end of the year, Labor was in deep trouble, especially after being trounced in the Queensland State election on 7 December. A week later, the ‘loans affair’ all but sealed its fate. On 13–14 December four ministers – Gough Whitlam, Jim Cairns, Rex Connor and Lionel Murphy – agreed to borrow \$4 billion ‘for temporary purposes’. A mid-1974 fall-out between Treasury and the government and continuing suspicions between the two were important components in this secretive enterprise. This bizarre excursion into the world of ‘funny money’ and unconventional contacts eventually helped to bring down the Whitlam government in 1975.

### Other memorable events

1974 was also the year the ABC launched *Countdown* (and Molly Meldrum). Olivia Newton-John won two Grammy awards and was declared Country Music Female Vocalist of the Year for *I Honestly Love You*.

Denis Lillee and Jeff Thomson in Brisbane set Ian Chappell’s team on the path to cricket domination. And Alan McGilvray confessed that he simplified his Monday and Tuesday cricket commentaries to help out the housewives who were listening whilst doing the laundry.

It was the year that tertiary education fees, and broadcasting and television licence fees, were abolished. And, tragically, it was the year that Cyclone Tracy hit Darwin on Christmas morning, killing 65 people.

To read Ian Hancock’s paper in full, or to view the 1974 Cabinet records online, visit The Collection section of our website at [www.naa.gov.au](http://www.naa.gov.au).

(opposite) Aboriginal demonstration outside Parliament House, 1974. NAA: A6180, 14/3/74/338

(above left) Gough Whitlam addresses a stellar audience at the United Nations in New York in 1974. NAA: A6180, 21/10/74/3

(above right) Aerial view of Darwin after Cyclone Tracy. NAA: A8746, KN29/1/75/16

# too cool for school



At the National Archives we have an active and growing program for schools. There are over 3.5 million primary and secondary students in Australian schools and we believe they deserve the chance to find out more about our past.

Primary school students in Australia learn about democracy, federation, government and what makes a good citizen. In secondary curricula, students consider the major events and subtle influences that shape society. These topics are richly represented in our collection and we encourage the use of our resources by students and teachers.

Our 'founding documents' – the original charters that propelled Australia to nationhood – are a 'must see' for students visiting Canberra. Students can also become 'document detectives' in our Treasures Gallery. And our changing exhibition program inspires learning through its creative portrayal of intriguing stories from our past, all based on records held in our collection.

We are piloting a new education website, *Vrroom* ([vrroom.naa.gov.au](http://vrroom.naa.gov.au)), which offers an interactive online experience like no other. It provides an inspirational learning environment for students and offers

teachers a ready source of downloadable documents directly linked to their curricula.

It's great to think that the students who get hooked on research now will become the researchers, historians, archivists and genealogists of the future.

Junior and senior winners in last year's National History Challenge, Georgina Fox (left), of Melbourne Girls Grammar School and Tahlia Hennessy (right), of Lake Joondalup Baptist College (Perth). Georgina and Tahlia won the Archives' sponsored category for best use of primary sources. Their winning essays are online at [www.naa.gov.au/education/challenge.html](http://www.naa.gov.au/education/challenge.html).



NAA: A12111, 49/22/20

## Archives listed on heritage register

The Archives' displaced persons collection has been added to the Australian register for UNESCO's Memory of the World Program.

The Memory of the World Program is a register of significant heritage documents. It preserves valuable archival holdings and library collections around the world and ensures their wide availability.

Our displaced persons collection contains over 170,000 personal dossiers of migrants

who came to Australia between 1947 and 1953 under the post-WW II displaced persons scheme. It documents a major shift in Australia's immigration priorities and is a valuable resource for family historians and researchers.

In recent years, the collection has benefited from significant descriptive and preservation work and can now be searched by item on our RecordSearch database online at [naa.gov.au](http://naa.gov.au).

# Grants and award winners

Dr Nicole Moore, winner of the 2005 Margaret George Award



Dr Christina Twomey, winner of the 2005 Margaret George Award



Frank Moorhouse, winner of the 2005 Frederick Watson Fellowship



The National Archives is pleased to announce this year's winners of the Frederick Watson Fellowship and the Margaret George Award.

The 2005 Frederick Watson Fellowship was awarded to Frank Moorhouse, an internationally renowned novelist and essayist, whose most recent novel, *Dark Palace*, won the 2001 Miles Franklin Prize for Australian literature. Moorhouse will use the fellowship to develop a book about writers and their interaction

with the state. Many famous Australian authors, including Peter Carey, David Williamson and Barry Humphries, applied to the Commonwealth Literary Fund as young emerging writers. Records relating to their interaction with the government are held in the Archives' collection.

This year we awarded two Margaret George Awards. Dr Christina Twomey, a lecturer in the school of Historical Studies at Monash University, will use the award to complete research for her book on Australian civilians interned by the Japanese in World War II. The Japanese arrested and detained an estimated 1,500

Australian civilians, one quarter of whom died in captivity. We hold extensive records about civilian internees in the Asia-Pacific region and the Australian Government response to their plight.

Dr Nicole Moore, a lecturer in English at Macquarie University, will use her award to further her research on censorship in 20th century Australian literature. She will examine the records of federal agencies responsible for censorship and expects to complete a monograph about material banned in the 20th century and the reasons it was banned.

# Keeping it digital



These days an ever-increasing quantity of information is created, stored, disseminated and accessed in digital form. It is vital that the organisations responsible for preserving and making available cultural and intellectual heritage – such as archives, libraries, museums and galleries – develop strategies to ensure the preservation of, and access to, digital material.

In September 2004, as part of the Digital Recordkeeping Initiative, the National Archives held a one-day conference entitled 'Advances in Digital Preservation' in Canberra. Launched in May last year, the initiative aims to develop and promote a single Australasian approach to digital public recordkeeping and to encourage communication and information sharing between members.

The conference brought together speakers and practitioners from the UK, the USA, New Zealand and Australia, to discuss recent developments and approaches to preserving digital material. Delegates represented government agencies, academic institutions and research bodies, commercial software vendors, and professional organisations from the recordkeeping, archival, and information management sectors.

The conference was opened by National Archives Director-General Ross Gibbs

who spoke of the importance of preserving digital material around the world. Andrew McDonald, from the UK and the retiring chair of the International Council on Archives Committee on Current Records in Electronic Form, gave an excellent overview of the work of the committee and an entertaining view of the progress of digital preservation. Fynette Eaton, from the US National Archives and Records Administration, talked about their complex Electronic Records Archives project. National Archives of Australia's Assistant Director-General Stephen Ellis discussed the establishment, scope and aims of our Digital Recordkeeping Initiative. The final speaker before lunch was Richard Marciano from the San Diego Supercomputer Center in the US, who spoke about a number of thought-provoking digital preservation projects they were undertaking in conjunction with a number of US archival and academic institutions.

The afternoon session had a particularly Australian flavour. Liz Reuben gave an account of the digital preservation work being undertaken by the Department of Family and Community Services. Howard Quenault provided delegates with an update on the Victorian Electronic Records Strategy and urged greater global cooperation and collaboration to provide solutions to digital preservation issues. Finally, Cornel Platzer and Andrew Wilson discussed the National Archives' approach to digital preservation and demonstrated Xena, a revolutionary software application the Archives has developed to migrate digital records into archival data formats.

The conference closed with a lively question and answer session which touched on a number of significant issues for those working in the area of digital preservation, such as authenticity, integrity, scalability and metadata requirements. It provided a valuable opportunity for colleagues and experts in the digital preservation field to share their experiences and to identify issues for further discussion and collaborative action.

Attending the 'Advances in Digital Preservation' conference (left to right above) Dr Andrew Wilson (National Archives of Australia), Justine Heazlewood (Public Record Office of Victoria), Dianne Macaskill (NZ), Janet Prowse (Queensland State Archives), Dr Andrew McDonald (UK), Fynette Eaton (USA), Ross Gibbs (National Archives of Australia), Dr Stephen Ellis (National Archives of Australia), Dr Richard Marciano (USA), Liz Reuben (Family and Community Services).





It's all  
in the system!

## Good digital records require good software.

Government agencies need to consider many complex requirements when deciding which electronic records management software to purchase. To help them do so, the National Archives has released *Functional Specifications for Records and Information Management Systems*. This latest addition to our e-permanence suite of standards and guidelines is currently available as a draft on our website and we are seeking comments on it until January 2006.

The *Functional Specifications for Records and Information Management Systems* comprises a set of technical instructions to help government agency staff select and implement the most suitable systems. It identifies the requirements that an information management system must meet in order to achieve a satisfactory standard of recordkeeping. Staff can incorporate the specifications in their tender documentation, with little or no modification, or use them as a starting point to develop their own specifications to meet their agency's needs. They can also use the specifications when auditing the recordkeeping functionality of their existing systems or when they wish to upgrade an existing system.

The specifications are designed to meet the particular recordkeeping requirements of the Australian government and are fully compliant with the *Australian Standard for Records Management*, AS ISO 14589. They apply specifically to records management software but can also be used to specify minimum recordkeeping functionality for business systems.

## Recordkeeping news

### New customer service centre

The National Archives has a new customer service centre for those seeking our advice and assistance. The centre is designed to handle requests centrally and gather business intelligence at the same time. One of the ways the Archives hopes to help government agencies is by building a comprehensive picture of our interactions with them. This will

allow us to be better informed and proactive about the advice we provide.

We are maintaining our current hotlines so the changes should be invisible. Agencies should use the hotlines below for all recordkeeping advice and assistance including disposal, training and transfer.

Tel: (02) 6212 3610

Email: [recordkeeping@naa.gov.au](mailto:recordkeeping@naa.gov.au)

## Recordkeeping training

The National Archives offers a range of recordkeeping training to people working for Australian government agencies. Designing and Implementing Recordkeeping Systems (DIRKS) training dates are listed below.

### Introduction to DIRKS

23 Feb, 20 Jul, 22 Nov, Canberra

### DIRKS workshops

Step A 15 Mar, 16 Aug, Canberra

Step B 3 May, 20 Sep, Canberra

Step C 31 May, 18 Oct, Canberra

For more information, please look under Recordkeeping – Training on our website at [www.naa.gov.au](http://www.naa.gov.au) or ring (02) 6212 3764 to discuss your needs.

## Recordkeeping contacts

For advice on recordkeeping standards and guidelines, including DIRKS, appraisal and metadata

Tel: (02) 6212 3610

Fax: (02) 6212 3989

Email: [recordkeeping@naa.gov.au](mailto:recordkeeping@naa.gov.au)

Web: [www.naa.gov.au/recordkeeping](http://www.naa.gov.au/recordkeeping)

### Preservation and disaster recovery

Tel: (02) 6212 3424

### Audiovisual preservation

Tel: (02) 9645 0104

# Just Add Water: a curator's story

Jay Arthur is the curator of *Just Add Water: Schemes and Dreams for a Sunburnt Country* which opens in March 2005 in Canberra and begins its national tour later in the year.



As an exhibition curator at the National Archives, I often find myself searching for a document in our collection that truly represents the exhibition I am currently working on. Our forthcoming exhibition, *Just Add Water, Schemes and Dreams for a Sunburnt Country*, has proved no exception. When I began searching, I didn't know precisely what I was looking for, although from experience I knew I would know when I found it. My search ended high on a shelf in the Archives' repository with an unassuming brown paper parcel, nearly a metre long. Inside the parcel were rolled documents, neatly tied with string. When our conservator carefully unwrapped the bundles, she was probably the first person to do so since a long-ago clerk tied those precise knots. The documents were a series of maps and graphs related to planned work on the Murray River.

One document in particular spoke to me. It looked fairly ordinary – just two bar graphs, one above the other. The first graph showed the heights of the Murray River in the first two decades of the 20th century. It looked like a cross-section of the Himalayas – towering peaks and deep valleys. The other graph was of an imagined future, showing the projected heights of the Murray River after a planned series of weirs and locks had been built. It looked like a picket fence – a neat row of bars all the same size, with a few missing pickets and only one very high point.

That 100-year old graph in the Archives' collection embodied for me exactly what *Just Add Water* is about.

The exhibition looks at how, over the last 100 years, Australians have been very busy replumbing Australia. We've caught vast



The predicted effect of the Hume Dam on the flow of the Murray River, c1920. NAA: MP146/4, 7

amounts of water in dams, piped it long distances across the country, pumped it from below the ground and even dragged it down from the clouds. Water management in Australia is generally understood to be a state function yet the Commonwealth has had its spanner in the waterworks since Federation. In fact, the waters of the mighty Murray River were so important they were included in Federation arguments.

This exhibition follows the journey of water through the Australian landscape – falling as rain, caught in dams, flowing through rivers and pipes, and rising as groundwater. In Australia, we store more water per person than any other country in the world and have made the windmill a landscape icon. By following paper trails in our collection we have been able to map the journey of Australia's most precious resource over time.

One such trail reveals the social history of our water management – and mismanagement. In times of drought,

desperate farmers wrote letters to the Prime Minister begging for a 'Day of Prayer' to bring the rain. Photographs show happy soldier settlers on irrigation blocks but letters from disgruntled settlers give another view.

The trail reveals how old some of Australia's seemingly 'new' problems are. Our documents show that salination and the problem of continuously flowing artesian bores, seen by many people as contemporary issues, were recognised in the 1920s. Vast infrastructure propositions and big ideas about 'turning the rivers inland' also appear in our records from early last century. Suggestions to help Australia manage its water came from all over the world. From Italy, Enzo Tortolina sent us a helpful diagram showing how we could build a canal to flood Lake Eyre.

Schemes and dreams – some implemented and some not. Some have brought huge economic benefits to Australia and others have exacted a price we have only begun to pay.

The graphs of Australia's mightiest river, the Murray, capture on just one piece of paper so much of what the exhibition is about – the dreams of water management that became working schemes and changed the face of Australia. The graphs also illustrate how determined we have sometimes been to work against the natural flows of Australian rivers. Australian rivers naturally flow with the high peaks and deep troughs of the first graph, not the regular streams of the second, which resembles the flow of a European river. This document, preserved in its brown-paper bundle, reminds me once again of how central our collection is to understanding Australia and Australians – our dreams, our illusions, our plans – and in this case, our changing understanding of Australia's unique environment.

Australia's new water ski lake, Queensland, 1971. NAA: A1500, K28405  
(opposite) Sign pointing to water, Murray River, 1946. NAA: A1200, L7328



## *Shoe still missing but **Petrov***

### *letters found*

*‘Under the floodlights of the airport I saw the milling crowd like a roaring sea around us. I lost my right shoe, and asked my escorts to get it back for me, but they would not stop.’*

Edvokia Petrov, 20 April 1954.



Evdokia and Vladimir Petrov inside the safe house where they were held following their defection to Australia. NAA: A6285, 11

This year marks the 50th anniversary of one of Australia's greatest political stories of the Cold War era – the Petrov Affair.

The National Archives has recently taken into custody the original letters granting Vladimir and Evdokia Petrov political asylum in Australia. These letters from Prime Minister Robert Menzies were acquired from the estate of Mrs Evdokia Petrov, with the assistance of the Australia Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO).

Vladimir Mikhaïlovich Petrov defected to Australia under top-secret conditions on 3 April 1954. He had been the Third Secretary of the Soviet Embassy in Canberra from February 1951. Just

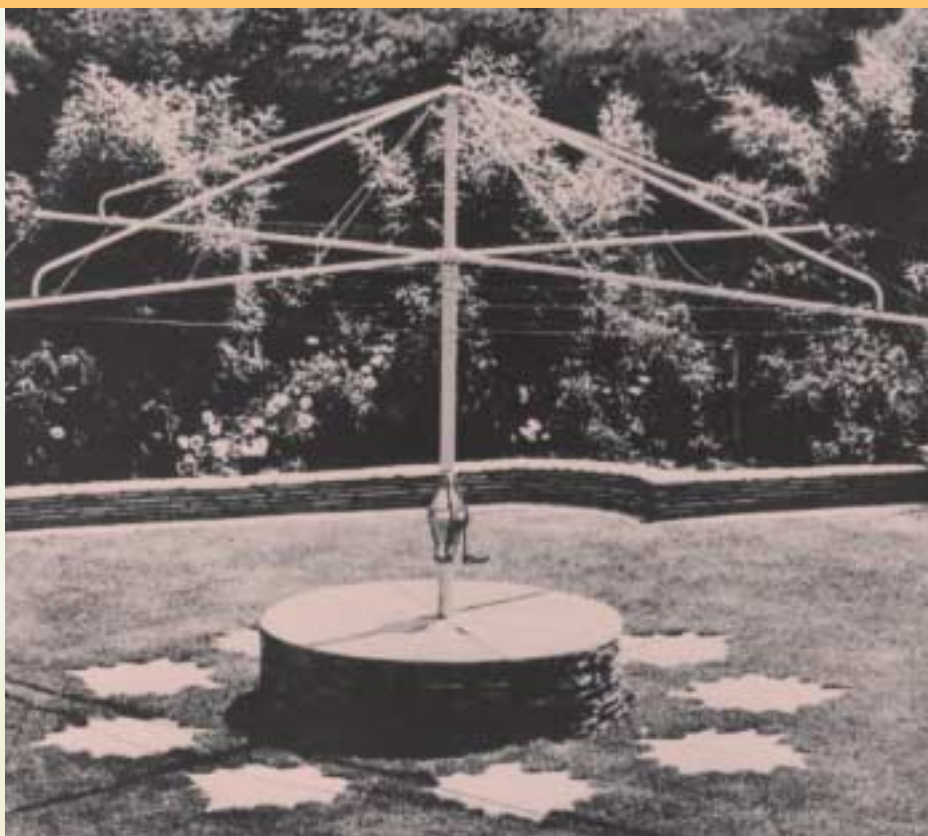
over two weeks later, on 20 April, his wife Evdokia Alexseyevna Petrov, also requested political asylum after she was freed from Soviet couriers by Australian authorities during a fuelling stop at Darwin airport. She had worked at the Embassy as an accountant and secretary to the Ambassador.

The Petrov defections resulted in the withdrawal of the Soviet Embassy from Australia and the expulsion of the Australian Embassy from Moscow. It also led to an extensive inquiry into Soviet espionage in Australia, including a Royal Commission. The Petrov Affair, as it came to be known, had a profound impact on the political landscape of Australia.

The letters the Archives has taken into custody will complement records already in our collection that relate to the Petrov Affair and the Royal Commission on Espionage. They have been digitised and can be viewed on our website at [www.naa.gov.au](http://www.naa.gov.au). Click on RecordSearch and in the 'reference number' field, key in 'A12994, 1' (for Vladimir Petrov's letter) or 'A12994, 2' (for Evdokia Petrov's letter). Click on the 'View digital copy' icon to see each letter.

For more information about our records on the Petrov Affair, please see Fact Sheet 130 'The Royal Commission on Espionage, 1954-55'. It is available from the Publications section of our website.

# Hoisting the find of the month!



NAA: A2880, 18/1/304

As you would expect, staff at the National Archives handle hundreds of different documents and files every day of the week. What may surprise you is just how often we come across intriguing and unexpected items.

Because we are constantly unearthing these delicious discoveries in our collection, we thought it only fair that we share the spoils by showing off the best of these finds.

In our Canberra building, under the banner 'Find of the Month', we will display a different document or photograph discovered in the collection.

These finds will rarely be of national or political importance, but rather an unusual, quirky or nostalgic item that

reveals something about prevailing attitudes of the day or a seemingly inconsequential matter.

Our January find is a letter from South Australian company, Hills Hoists Limited, offering to donate a rotary clothes hoist to Buckingham Palace.

The original letter was sent to the Premier of South Australia in February 1959. He obviously saw merit in the Palace having an Australian invention in its backyard because by early March the offer had found its way into the Governor-General's in-tray.

Sadly, despite Hills Hoists saying it didn't want any commercial gain from the gift, the request was officially denied because of 'the rules governing

the acceptance of presents of value from commercial houses'.

You can see the Governor-General's handwritten response on the bottom right-hand corner of the letter he received about the offer. It would appear he was less than impressed with the suggestion. Or perhaps he just wisely anticipated the company might try to capitalise on its philanthropy by announcing they were 'clothesline suppliers to the Royal household'!

So if you are in Canberra, drop by and see the 'Find of the Month'. It also features on our website each month at [www.naa.gov.au](http://www.naa.gov.au). You never know what the latest little gem from our collection may be.

# faces at the Archives faces at the Archives faces



The most recent addition to our *Uncommon Lives* website – **Dhakiyarr Wirrpanda** – was launched in Canberra on 8 November 2004. The website was officially launched by Dhukul and Wuyal Wirrpanda, grandsons of Dhakiyarr. They hope those who read Dhakiyarr's story will work as he did, towards reconciliation between Aboriginal people and other Australians. Dhukul (above) reflected on Dhakiyarr, the warrior and leader, as 'a real man of knowledge and wisdom'. Visit the website at [uncommonlives.naa.gov.au](http://uncommonlives.naa.gov.au) to find out more about Dhakiyarr.



As part of the weekend celebrations for the re-opening of the historic and stately rose gardens at Old Parliament House in Canberra last December, the **Rosettes** – a specially formed National Archives' choir – performed for visitors in the Treasures Gallery.



Dr James Curran spoke about his book *The Power of Speech: Australian Prime Ministers Defining the National Image* at the Archives' Speaker's Corner in Canberra last September.



Travel Editor of *The Australian*, **Susan Kurosawa** entertained her Speaker's Corner audience in November with stories about packing, travel companions, favourite destinations and her irrational obsession with India. Author of seven non-fiction travel books, Susan recently published her first novel, *Coronation Talkies*, set in 1930s India.



Detlev Lueth (left), Manager of Preservation in the Archives' Melbourne office with Director Ross Latham. Detlev was awarded the **2004 Conservator of the Year Award** by the Australian Institute of Cultural Materials. He won the prestigious award in recognition of the work he has done as coordinator of PHOTON, a group interested in the conservation of photographic materials.

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Celebrating the launch of the Archives' *Our history website* launch were Assistant Director-General Anne Lyons and Jen Ford, Assistant Director, Access and Communication, from our Perth office.



**Don Watson**, former prime ministerial speechwriter, talked about the decay of public language to an interested Speaker's Corner audience at the Archives in Canberra last October.



Curator Philip Jones and Chair of Visions Australia Bill Bleathman spoke at the Archives' exhibition opening of *The Policeman's Eye: Frontier Photography of Paul Foelsche* in November. The exhibition is open in Canberra until 6 February.



Gardening expert, ABC radio personality and natural showman, **Mark Carmody**, spoke about 'veggie gardening' to a full house at the Archives in September. Mark had been so popular in 2003, we immediately booked him for Speaker's Corner in 2004.



Attending the launch of our most recent co-publication, *John Curtin: Guide to Archives of Australia's Prime Ministers*, at the John Curtin Prime Ministerial Library in Perth (left to right) Professor Geoffrey Bolton, JCMPL Collections Librarian Lesley Wallace (co-author), National Archives Director-General Ross Gibbs, JCMPL Historical Consultant David Black (co-author), JCPML Director Imogen Galner, Vice-Chancellor of Curtin University of Technology Professor Lance Twomey. Photographer: Hans Versluis.

# The arrival of the Dutch

Dr Nonja Peters is Director of the Migration, Ethnicity, Refugees and Citizenship Research Unit, Curtin University of Technology, Western Australia. Dr Peters has published widely on issues relating to migration. Her book *Milk and Honey but No Gold: Postwar Migration to Western Australia from 1945-64* was short-listed for a number of literary and history awards.

Using the extensive archival material she has uncovered in the National Archives collection, Dr Peters is currently researching Dutch migration and the evacuations of the Dutch out of the Netherlands East Indies. Below Dr Peters shares some of her findings.

In 2006 Australia will celebrate 400 years of Dutch contact. The mariners, merchants and passengers on ships belonging to the Dutch East Indies Company (*Verenigde Oost Indische Compagnie*) were the first recorded Europeans to set foot on Australian soil. Their arrival in Australia happened mainly by chance at a time when the instruments used to determine longitude were still in their infancy. It was not uncommon for ships that left Cape Town for the East Indies to travel too far east before turning north-east to Batavia (present day Jakarta), the capital of the Netherlands East Indies (now Indonesia). Many ships came to grief on the Western Australian coast. Some survivors were rescued but many were not. Aboriginal oral history has it that the fortunate ones cohabited with Aborigines. Dutch East Indies Company ships stopped visiting Western Australian shores in 1796 after the collapse of the company.

Over a century later, there were only 600 Dutch-born people living in Australia. It was not until 1942-45 that Dutch numbers increased significantly when Dutch military personnel arrived in Australia to help with its defence and the evacuation of Dutch residents of the Netherlands East Indies. These evacuees had fled to Broome because it was one of the closest points to Java on the Australian coast and could





Many Dutch women recall feeling especially overwhelmed by the transition from a well-appointed cabin aboard the *Johan van Oldenbarnevelt* or the *Himalaya* to a bare cubicle in one of the accommodation centres scattered around the country.

take both land-based aircraft and flying boats. During this period as many as 57 aircraft arrived in Broome on any one day and 7,000–8,000 passengers passed through the base in a fortnight. Broome was not, however, a safe haven. On 3 March 1942, nine Japanese Zero fighter planes attacked a squadron of 15 flying boats in Roebuck Bay. Fourteen of the boats were crammed with Dutch women and children who had fled Java the night before and were waiting to refuel before going on to their final destination. Those who died in the attack are buried at Karrakatta Cemetery in Western Australia.

On 19 January 1942, the Netherlands East Indies and Australian governments reached an agreement that all financial responsibilities for Dutch women and children evacuated to Australia would fall on the Netherlands East Indies Administration. After this, evacuations started in earnest.

During this period the Netherlands East Indies became the only foreign government in exile on Australian soil. Towards the end of the war, however, the relationship between the two governments shifted from amicable to antagonistic when Australian waterside workers unions and the Communist Party supported the Indonesian Nationalist Movement by boycotting Dutch shipping in 1944–45.

In the years following WW II, the federal government began to actively recruit European-born migrants to reverse population stagnation, overcome crucial labour shortages and maintain the war-boostered economy. Between 1951 and 1970, about 160,000 Dutch nationals migrated to Australia, enticed by passage assistance and images of wealth unheard of in the postwar Netherlands – booming industry, boundless opportunity, full employment, good working conditions, a home of one's own, whitegoods and a motor vehicle. All that was required of prospective emigrants was that they meet health, security, and age criteria

and remain in the employment for which they were selected for a period of two years or agree to repay their fare. Unlike arrangements made with other governments, where migrants paid a flat rate of £10 each, the amount a Dutch migrant paid depended on their earning capacity at the time. Many Dutch migrants had to pay a significant amount of money and consequently arrived at their destination virtually destitute, with only landing money and a small packing crate of household possessions. Few had the collateral to secure bank loans to help establish themselves. Their plight was exacerbated by Australia's building material and labour shortage which forced larger families to start their new life at one of the Department of Immigration Accommodation Centres. Many Dutch women recall feeling especially overwhelmed by the transition from a well-appointed cabin aboard the *Johan van Oldenbarnevelt* or the *Himalaya* to a bare cubicle in one of the accommodation centres scattered around the country.

Housing was particularly problematic for larger families. These families had to make tents or old tram carriages *gezellig*, or homely, until they could

afford a deposit on a second-hand house or a block of land. After work or school and on weekends, the whole family was expected to clean old bricks or make new bricks from their meagre cement allocation. When the family had enough bricks to build a garage or the back verandah of their future home, they then had to find innovative ways to cram many bodies into the smallest of spaces.

*Aanpassen*, or 'fitting in' was a distinctive aspect of Dutch resettlement. In public, most Dutch people seemed willing to get rid of, or at least cover up, any social characteristics defined as 'ethnic' by Australians. Anglo-conformity became the hallmark of Dutch identity in Australia. These assimilation patterns made the Dutch somewhat 'invisible' and saw them labelled 'model migrants'.

Today, due to natural attrition and return migration, there are close to 95,000 residents in Australia who were born in the Netherlands. A further 240,000 Australians claim Dutch ancestry. Over the last 50 years, the Dutch have had a huge impact on the building and construction industry in Australia and have contributed significantly to the scientific, artistic and economic development of the country they now call home.



(opposite) Two Dutch families with their 20 children arrive in Melbourne aboard the *Fairsea* in 1955. Simonis family (left) and Vesteegens family (right).  
NAA: 12111, 55/4/113

(left) In 1958, Australia's 100,000th migrant, Mrs Adriana Zevenbergen arrived in Melbourne aboard the *Johan van Oldenbarnevelt* with her husband, Cornelis, and their two sons.  
NAA: A12111, 58/4/80

# Memories of summers past

To many Australians, memories of childhood summers conjure up fond images of carefree sunny days by the sea, cricket on the beach and body surfing between the flags.

In those innocent times, often the hardest decision was deciding which flavoured paddle pop to buy! They were wonderful, lazy days.

To tap into that vein of nostalgia, we're presently researching images for a photographic exhibition recalling the Australian summer lifestyle of the 1950s and 1960s. Tentatively titled *Summers Past*, the exhibition will feature a host of memorable images such as our cover

photograph of the finalists in the 1952 *Miss Pacific* contest.

Already we've discovered a colourful array of pictures – men and women baring and baking their bodies on packed beaches, crowds at the NSW Open Tennis tournament at White City, guests lazing by motel pools and in seaside caravan parks, and toddlers skinny-dipping in the shallows.

Some of the photographs disclose the popular fashions of the day including the skimpy mini-skirts, sling-back shoes and curious hairstyles favoured by many women and the rather daggy shirts and plain trousers sported by the men. And it's quite evident that terry towelling hats were a big hit all those years ago too!

One particularly interesting picture we unearthed shows the *Sea Breeze* sandwich bar in Surfer's Paradise – a 1960s beachside kiosk open on three sides and complete with wooden stools for customers who liked to linger over their milkshakes. The *Sea Breeze* menu board offers an enticing selection of sandwiches including cheese, sardine or tomato for the princely sum of 15 cents each and pure fruit pineapple crush for just 12 cents! Those were the days.

*Summers Past* is planned to open in our Canberra building from December 2005, providing visitors with a gentle reminder of a time when the sun held no fears and there wasn't a mobile phone in sight. Watch for precise dates on our website.



NAA: A1500, K11006

# Exhibitions

## The Policeman's Eye: Paul Foelsche Photography

National Archives, Canberra  
25 November 2004 to 6 February 2005



## Just Add Water: Schemes and Dreams for a Sunburnt Country

National Archives, Canberra  
22 March to 31 July 2005



## Charters of Our Nation

National Archives, Canberra  
Permanent exhibition



## 'No Common Creation': The High Court of Australia

National Archives, Canberra  
Permanent exhibition



## It's a Dog's Life: Animals in the Public Service

Museum of the Riverina,  
Wagga Wagga, NSW  
3 December 2004 to 6 March 2005  
Australian Museum  
18 March to 24 July 2005



## Beacons by the Sea: Stories of Australian Lighthouses

Burnie Regional Art Gallery, Burnie, Tas  
10 December 2004 to 30 January 2005



## Unexpected Archives: Introduced by Robyn Archer

Mildura Arts Centre, Mildura, NSW  
14 December 2004 to 30 January 2005



[www.naa.gov.au/exhibitions/exhibitions.html](http://www.naa.gov.au/exhibitions/exhibitions.html)

# Events

## AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

**Grandkids Day**, 19 January, 10 am – 4 pm. Our annual day for grandparents and their grandkids.

**Frederick Watson Fellow public lecture**, 8 February, 12.30 pm. Frank Moorhouse on the evolution of post-WW II writing.

**Multicultural Family History Fair**, 20 February, 10 am – 3 pm.

**Margaret George Award public lectures**, 6 April, 12.30 pm, Dr Christina Twomey on Australian civilians interned by the Japanese during WW II; 4 May, 12.30 pm, Dr Nicole Moore on 20th century literary censorship.

## NEW SOUTH WALES

**Regional tour**, 9–17 April. Joint tour with State Records NSW of various south coast venues. Contact Fiona Burn (02) 9645 0141.

## SOUTH AUSTRALIA

**Archives' reading room**. Open Saturday 15 January, 12 March, 7 May, 10 am – 4 pm.

**Finding Families: Tracing Ancestors in the National Archives**, 9 February, 6–7.30 pm. Seminar at State Library of South Australia, North Terrace, Adelaide. Bookings essential (08) 8207 7269 or [bookings@slsa.sa.gov.au](mailto:bookings@slsa.sa.gov.au).

## QUEENSLAND

**Archives' reading room**. Open Saturday 15 January, 19 February, 19 March, 10 am – 4 pm, 16 Corporate Drive, Cannon Hill.

**Free seminars at our Brisbane Office**. Bookings (07) 3249 4226.

- **What's new to Archives?** 15 January, 10–11 am.
- **Finding Private Brian: Defence Service Records in the Archives**, 19 February, 10–11 am.
- **The Red Flag Riots: Agitators, disloyalists and Brisbane's intelligence agencies during WW I**, 19 March, 10–11 am.

**Documents of War**, 12 March, 1–4.30 pm. Records describing aspects of war from the collections of National Archives of Australia, State Library of Queensland, Heritage Collections and Queensland State Archives. Joint seminar held at QSA, 435 Compton Road, Runcorn. Bookings (07) 3131 7777.

**Brisbane Office Open Day**, 16 April, 10 am – 4 pm. Contact (07) 3249 4226 for further details.

## NORTHERN TERRITORY

**Cyclone Tracy display**, 15 December 2004 to 16 February 2005, Darwin Office, Kelsey Crescent, Millner. Contact (08) 8985 0300.

**Darwin Office Open Day**, 23 April, 10 am – 4 pm. (08) 8985 0300.

**Down the Track: Taking the Archives to Territory Towns**, 21–28 May. Joint information sessions with the Northern Territory Archives Service about Archives' services and products, highlighting regional material held in our collections. Contact (08) 8985 0300.

## TASMANIA

**Tasmanian Lighthouse Trail**, 10 September 2004 – 30 January 2005. Contact (03) 6230 6104.

**Defence seminar**, 21 April. In the lead-up to Anzac Day, a joint seminar with the Archives of Tasmania, the State Library of Tasmania and the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery. Bookings (03) 6230 6111.

[www.naa.gov.au/exhibitions/events/events.html](http://www.naa.gov.au/exhibitions/events/events.html)

At the end of the day, if it's worth keeping,



it's in the Archives

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North Melbourne VIC 3051  
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