Front cover: Harvesting strawberries in Cleveland, Queensland. The National Archives’ collection contains a feast of information about food. NAA: A1200, L9546

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Digging for victory

During World War II, governments turned their attention to Australia’s suburban backyards in an effort to solve food shortages. The humble vegie patch and chook run became weapons in the war, as historian Andrea Gaynor explains. Her research draws on a range of records, including many from the National Archives’ collection.

Australia’s suburban backyards have been home to an assortment of agricultural enterprises over the years: poultry coops, vegetable patches, lemon trees reaching over eaves, passionfruit draping over side fences. Australians have grown their own food for a variety of reasons, including thrift, leisure, enjoyment and food quality. In a time of war, the production of food in suburbs from North Perth to South Melbourne became an activity of national importance.

The impact of war

During the early years of World War II, there was actually a surplus of commercially produced food in Australia due to reduced shipping spaces and export markets. However, after Japan entered the war and American food supplies were diverted to Russia, Australia began to change its food production and consumption patterns in order to supply other countries (primarily the UK) and the increasing number of Allied personnel in the region. From 1942, the number of farm labourers decreased due to war enlistments. Meat rationing reduced the availability of an important component of Australian diets, and civilian food supplies were diverted to meet the needs of the influx of servicemen into Australia.

By 1942 Australia was facing significant shortfalls of milk (by 180 million gallons), meat (by 150,000 tonnes, with civilian rationing), eggs (by 29 million dozen), and canned fruit (by 1.22 million cases). The nation’s larders were looking altogether too bare for comfort.

As commercial producers struggled with shortages, efforts to improve the health and efficiency of the population were stepped up. The demands of war required that citizens be fit not only to increase the rate of production but also to defend the nation, should it come to that. Drawing on the increasingly commonplace language of nutritional science, manufacturers placed advertisements declaring that ‘Never in the history of this free land has a well-balanced diet been so vitally important to all of us,’ and urging people to ‘Eat foods that help make Australia strong.’

Grow Your Own campaign

Britain, facing serious food shortages, started using the Dig for Victory slogan in 1939. In Australia, sporadic and informal efforts at encouraging home food production began in 1941. By 1943, the situation was grave enough for the Commonwealth Department of Commerce and Agriculture (working with

[above] These Australian Women’s Land Army recruits bring home the vegetables. During the war, women were encouraged to take a more active role in food production.
state departments of agriculture) to take more serious steps. The Grow Your Own campaign was launched in Canberra in August that year.

Although the government did not generally expect civilians to make up the shortfall in milk or meat, it encouraged them to grow their own vegetables, keep poultry for eggs, and eat more of these foods than those in greater demand. Civilian production was also seen as insurance against a ‘change in the season, onset of pests, unexpected interruptions to transport, manpower difficulties and other interventions.’ It was clear to the government that home food production could help conserve scarce resources and it was better to have too much food than not enough.

The Grow Your Own campaign was promoted as a patriotic duty, and emphasised that both health and bank balances would benefit. A campaign film informed viewers about the far-reaching benefits of producing their own cabbages and carrots while Australia was at war:

The average citizen imagines that when he grows some vegetables in his back garden it is only a saving in manpower – but it is much more than that.

If a farmer has to produce more foodstuffs it means he has to have more petrol to carry the foodstuffs to the railhead or the city, and he is using valuable rubber so difficult to replace now the Dutch East Indies are in Japanese hands.

More coal has to be consumed in freight trains, more men engaged on servicing freight engines and trucks, more men to handle the distribution and selling of the produce, more man and womanpower to retail the produce to the public.

Radio broadcasts, public demonstrations, school and local government competitions, posters, newspaper advertisements, brochures, and even stickers on correspondence from gas and power companies were used to get the Grow Your Own message across to Australians.

Although the campaign motivated many, it also encountered resistance, particularly as it failed to take regional variations into account. Citing the difficulty Perth gardeners faced in growing vegetables during harsh summers as well as shortages of gardening necessities, Western Australian Minister for Agriculture, Frank Wise, asked his Commonwealth counterpart to delay the campaign in Perth until the following April. The Fremantle City Council refused to support the campaign on similar grounds.

Gender roles in the vegie patch

In addition to its patriotic appeal, the Grow Your Own campaign reflected and reinforced the notion of ‘manly independence.’ Popular representations of backyard food production, including the wartime campaign, emphasised that it provided a way for men to be independent by producing food for their families and performing physical labour that demonstrated their manliness. The idea that food production should be carried out by the independent, breadwinning male was clearly conveyed in a billboard advertisement depicting a man offering up freshly harvested vegetables to Claude L Piesse of the Perth suburb of Bassendean wrote to the Ministry of Agriculture to point out that the sulphate of ammonia and derris dust recommended in the ads were unavailable. Furthermore, he added, as the advertisement ‘tells us to use sandy loam in some cases while the metropolitan area … is sand – one wonders if the whole thing is a joke.’ Piesse also observed that, in Perth, it was necessary to water artificially for about eight months of the year, and asked how it was going to be possible to replace his hose. Willing gardeners clearly faced some practical difficulties in taking up the government’s call.
his grateful wife while his son looks on, shovel in hand, awaiting his turn to be the provider.

This understanding was also reflected in non-government material produced at the time. In Murray Tonkin’s novel Mr Dimblebury Digs for Victory – a practical guide to Victory Gardening and wartime romance rolled into one – the middle-aged, middle-class Mr Dimblebury decides to do his patriotic duty and plant a Victory Garden. His wife observes her husband ‘digging … so manfully at his new project.’ Apart from providing the household with fresh vegetables, the novel’s hero gains the respect of his office colleagues as the Victory Garden expert.

The association of food production with manly independence was gradually challenged by the increasing involvement of women. Australian Women’s Land Army campaigns recruited volunteers to carry out rural agricultural labour. In the suburbs, women were already actively involved in food production, and their ranks probably swelled during the war years as more went to work on the garden front. The Young Women’s Christian Association established a Garden Army of women who worked community plots on land set aside by private householders. The Garden Army gave the vegetables it grew to military hospitals and services hostels, and sold them to civilians, donating profits to the Red Cross and Australian Comforts Fund.

In 1942, Women’s Weekly readers were advised that ‘Every woman who owns a garden plot and can use a spade or wield a hoe should cultivate a vegetable patch for the sake of her family.’ Similarly, in the ABC’s Women Talking radio series, the women broadcasting a segment entitled ‘Make your garden do war work’ continually linked vegetable gardening with their primary responsibility as mothers. One presenter, for example, explained that she grew vegetables because:

Prices are prohibitive, and yet I must have some fresh vegetables to give my young baby. He is just weaned and the clinic says he must have three kinds of vegetables every day.

During the war, vegetable gardening was acceptable work for women in a patriotic context when portrayed as either a national service, or an extension of the work of cooking and a commendable duty to family. The fruit tree, vegetable patch and chook run have had a place in many Australian backyards over the years. During World War II, with the government’s encouragement, men and women did their bit to support the war effort by digging for victory.

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[above] Grow Your Own campaign billboard.

[far left] Behind the neat fences and front gardens of many suburban homes were vegie patches, fruit trees and chook pens.

[left] Australian families grew their own fruit and vegetables, but often still relied on produce from farms and market gardens. This photograph of a stall at Queen Victoria Markets in Melbourne was taken in 1945.
On 12 March 1913, the foundation stones of the new capital, Canberra, were laid. A luncheon was held to mark the occasion. The menu reflected Australia’s British heritage, with roast turkey; ox tongue; beetroot, cucumber and tomato salad; iced asparagus; and fruit salad. The drinks list, however, was proudly Australian, including local champagne, chablis, port, lager and Colonial ale.

As this example shows, food is more than a necessity for basic survival. It helps us celebrate significant events, defines an Australian cultural identity, and reflects social and economic changes. Records in the National Archives help tell this history.

**Drastic diets and reviving recipes**

The search for the secrets to slimming and the quest for nutritional balance are not new. The National Archives has a range of diets and recipe books submitted for copyright registration over the 20th century. In 1937, the Queensland Nutrition Council registered the ‘Guide to modern menu planning’, which argued that the average Australian’s diet was inadequate, with too much sweet food and cake and not enough fresh produce. The guide urged that meals have ingredients from each of four food groups: protein, carbohydrates, dairy, and fruits and vegetables. Of course, nutritionists are still trying to get Australians to eat less cake and more fruit.

Also in the copyright collection is the 1934 De Chantli Reducing Diet, which promised to reduce weight and increase health by expelling impurities and allowing the body’s organs to ‘vibrate’ and function normally. It also claimed to cure rheumatism, neuritis and arthritis. A sample day from the diet entailed consuming castor oil, lemon juice, carbonate soda and coffee before going to bed; lemon juice, water and paraffin oil in the morning, followed by porridge and tea; as well as paraffin oil at lunch and dinner.

A recipe book submitted in 1924 provided recipes to cure all manner of ailments, from bronchitis to indigestion to heart disease, using common household ingredients. It even offered a cure for those hit by lightning: ‘When the person struck by lightning exhibits little or no sign of life, remove clothing and subject the body to a dashing of cold water. Dry. Place in bed, and apply warmth, especially to the pit of the stomach. Apply artificial respiration. Administer Brandy.’

The author of ‘Australian meals: a household guide of seasonal recipes including suggested menus indexed by months and arranged for Australian seasons’, submitted in 1932, took a more poetic approach. The introduction for the month of October, however, perhaps showed that vegetables and poetry don’t mix:
It is almost more than warm, now. The little globes on the fruit trees are expanding with exuberance.

Crisp lettuces hold themselves with an air of conscious virtue, as martyrs who know they must go to make a Roman holiday.

**Feeding the fighters**

The nutritional needs of the nation’s military became an important issue during World War II and beyond. During the war, the Royal Australian Air Force expressed concern about the quality of meals served up to its members. New menus were trialled to increase palatability and reduce wastage, and ration scales for the Women’s Auxiliary Australian Air Force Services (WAAAF) were altered to take into account women’s different nutritional needs. In 1942, a specially-formed committee examined the specific nutritional requirements of aircrews and how diet could increase efficiency and reduce mental fatigue. However, there were a number of practical difficulties that had to be overcome, such as keeping food hot and eating while wearing a mask.

The Department of Air publicised its efforts to improve staff diets, perhaps in an attempt to inspire the general public to be more creative with war-restricted ingredients. In September 1942, it reported that two members of the WAAAF had ‘begun to search for dishes which would disguise nutritious but unpopular items in the scale of issue, and present them as palate-titivating “specials”’. A press release later that year suggested that ‘dehydrated eggs and peas can be made into tasty dishes for service men and women.’

In 1954, a sample menu was proposed for air crew. The day before a flight, the menu included fresh orange juice, porridge, eggs, toast with jam, coffee for breakfast; a morning tea of an egg flip and sandwiches; lunch of meat, vegetables, custards, preserved peaches and coffee; afternoon tea of reinforced milk drink and biscuits; dinner of soup, grilled lean chops, mashed potato, bread, vegemite, cheese, jelly and boiled custard, and tea. Supper was a reinforced milk drink with one egg and two biscuits. There is no record of how such well-fed pilots performed in the skies.

**Food and assimilation**

After World War II, Australia welcomed many migrants, including many non-British arrivals. The government promoted their assimilation into the community – this implied that they would adopt ‘Australian’ attitudes, behaviours and culture, including food.

The food served in migrant hostels, where newcomers stayed upon their arrival in Australia, thus became part of the assimilation of what were referred to as New Australians. A nutritionist from the Institute of Anatomy criticised the practice of preparing meals that catered to the migrants’ national preferences, because the rations were designed for ‘Australian’ food.

A survey of waste in hostels in 1953 examined food left on plates. The results showed that people of similar nationalities left similar foods uneaten. British families, it found, showed ‘a general dislike of vegetables’, with the exception of potato, which ‘whether boiled, baked, roasted or chipped is always well received.’ The report noted that the British were a ‘conservative race’ and showed the ‘same tendency with regard to their food habits.’ Europeans, on the other hand, showed a preference for highly seasoned and spiced dishes, such as potato goulash and continental meat loaf. The report regretfully concluded that ‘migrants could not be assimilated through their stomachs’, but noted that young children were adopting a ‘more broad-minded outlook and appreciation for unaccustomed dishes.’

All migrant hostels marked Christmas with a special meal, to give residents the opportunity of celebrating ‘in an appropriate
several occasions he instructed companies to make the word ‘Australia’ more prominent on the label. Some companies, like Clemens, sold the virtues of their Australian origin: ‘Clemens cherries are grown on the sunny hills overlooking the garden city of Adelaide.’

The labels give insight into past culinary habits and tastes. Clemens offered a serving suggestion for its dark plums: ‘If served either in or with jellies they make a very attractive and appealing dish.’ QTF tropical fruit salad was a ‘tropical combination’ of pineapple, pawpaw, banana, passionfruit and orange. Sounds healthy… except for the 45 per cent sugar syrup these fruits were packed in. Perhaps they were 97 per cent fat free? The 2006 Queensland banana shortage was bad, but would you have tucked into a tin of Golden Treat bananas?

These records also attest to the versatility of tinned pineapple. The label for Enchanted Isle brand pineapple slices claimed they were ‘Delicious chilled and served as a dessert, in pineapple upside-down cake, in pineapple and cottage cheese salads, thrilling as a garnish for corned beef hash patties, baked ham or other meats.’ The sweetened crushed pineapple

In the 1940s and 1950s, Australian producers exported tropical fruit salad to Italy, pineapple to Germany and Holland, canned pawpaw to Canada, and fruit mince for an English favourite – fruit mince pies. One department had responsibility for ensuring that the labels for these tins conformed to Australian food description standards and those of their destination. It also ensured that manufacturers maintained a high standard for food labels and used the correct measures for the intended country. The Department of Commerce and Agriculture in Perth kept the labels on file, and they have become part of the archival records of the nation.

The department's Chief Fruit Inspector was keen to ensure that overseas consumers knew where their fruit was coming from. On

Eagle-eyed government officials ensured Australia's fruits reached the world – and left a colourful legacy in the National Archives.
promised a ‘taste-thrill in pineapple pies, salads, home-made sherbet, and ice cream.’

For some, these labels might evoke nostalgia for the desserts mum or grandma used to make. Others may be thankful they have the choice of fresh fruit at their local markets. However, these bright and sometimes beautiful labels serve as a lasting record of how Australia sold its fruits to the world.

By Kellie Abbott, National Archives editor.

Various fruit labels from NAA PP127/1, M2/4/2 PART 1 & PP127/1, M2/4/3 PART 1

cont’d from p.7

manner.’ In 1962, the Bonegilla Christmas menu included noodle soup, roast chicken with seasoning and gravy, roast potatoes, roast pumpkin, peas, carrots, ice cream with chocolate sauce, and fresh fruit.

There is some evidence that hostel residents resisted the food served to them. In 1952, hostels were instructed to use up reserve stocks, and a menu was suggested for this purpose. Friday’s offerings included dehydrated mixed soup and dehydrated potato puree for lunch and dehydrated potatoes for dinner. Unsurprisingly, these meals were not well-received. The director of the centre at Cowra in New South Wales stated that dehydrated vegetables ‘with the exception of potatoes and onions are most unacceptable to the New Australians in this Centre.’ He reported that ‘even when no other vegetable is available and the dehydrated vegetable is cooked, 90% is wasted and goes into the … bin.’

Rabbit stew

One of the more unusual items in the National Archives’ collection is a 1959 letter from an American school boy, Larry from Pennsylvania, to the ‘Secretary of Internal Affairs’ in Canberra (the letter was forwarded to External Affairs), proposing both a tasty recipe and a solution to one of Australia’s most pressing problems. He had heard about Australia’s rabbit problem at school, and offered a suggestion: ‘Processing plants can be built to cook and can the rabbits for shipment through out the world.’ Larry even included a recipe: ‘Cut rabbits into parts, dip into flour and fry to a golden brown on both sides. Add enough water to simmer until tender, add seasoning such as onion salt and pepper.’

These are just some appetisers from the National Archives’ collection. For more diets, recipes and insights into the history of Australians and food, explore the collection for yourself at www.naa.gov.au.

By Catherine Mann, 2005 National Archives summer scholar, and Kellie Abbott, National Archives editor. Catherine completed a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Laws at the University of Sydney in 2007.
Chinese restaurants emerged as a commercial enterprise on the Victorian goldfields. By the late 19th century, despite restrictive immigration policies and a declining Chinese population, many were operating in major centres. They were initially known as cookshops and were often associated with other Chinese businesses. In Melbourne these were concentrated in and around the eastern end of Little Bourke Street. Hie Yick, for instance, was a tea merchant who also operated a cookshop at 209 Little Bourke Street in the late 1880s.

The overwhelming majority of Australia’s original Chinese community came from Kwangtung Province in Southern China, with its distinctive Cantonese cooking style based on fresh fruit and vegetables, fish, poultry and pork. Rice was grown in abundance and served as an ideal and nutritious base for a variety of food combinations, with herbs and spices.

The number of Chinese restaurants in Melbourne grew steadily over the first two decades of the 20th century. Eighteen were listed in trade directories in 1920. By the 1930s, they included among their customers city workers, students, recently arrived refugees from Europe, and Melbourne’s bohemian community of artists and writers.

By the eve of World War II, eight Chinese restaurants had spread beyond the Chinatown precinct around Little Bourke Street. They were operating in the inner suburbs of Brunswick and Fitzroy and the culturally diverse bayside suburb of St Kilda.
Melbourne’s restaurant sector flourished during the war years as the city filled with thousands of Australian and Allied troops, as well as people employed in war-related jobs. Melbourne’s Chinese restaurants gained a reputation among American servicemen for their tasty dim sims. By 1945, some 300 restaurants were open for business in the city and suburbs; 23 were Chinese. On Friday nights all over Melbourne, people could be seen carrying saucepans into their local Chinese for takeaway sweet and sour and dim sims. By 1970, 150 Chinese restaurants were operating in the city and suburbs.

Restrictions and regulations

The Australian Chinese restaurant sector is certainly a success story, but for many early restaurateurs who built their businesses in Australia while supporting families in China during the time of the White Australia Policy, life could be very lonely. The intent of the Immigration Restriction Act 1901 was not just to halt immigration of non-Europeans, but also to limit the settlement of those who were already living in Australia. The Act’s administration also subjected Chinese businesses to considerable regulation and contact with government officials.

Total exclusion of Chinese people was never going to be a reality. From the outset, some businesses with a need for staff not available locally were allowed to bring workers into the country under a Certificate of Exemption from the Dictation Test, provided the government did not consider the business to be competing unfairly with similar European enterprises. A manager of a successful restaurant wishing to pay a visit to family in China, for instance, could apply for permission to bring in a close relative to look after his business affairs in his absence. From 1934, cooks and café workers were officially admitted for limited periods, provided the restaurant met certain requirements. For restaurants established before 1947, businesses required a turnover of £2500 for each application, up to a maximum of eight staff. For those opened after 1947, the turnover requirement was doubled. Small businesses had little hope of reaching the required target.

Businesses were responsible for the welfare of staff under exemption and were required to pay a bond each time a Certificate of Exemption was issued (generally valid for one year) or a renewal approved. Applications were made through the Consul-General for China and were subject to close scrutiny. Government officials inspected restaurants each time an application or request to renew a certificate was made. These inspections were frequently unannounced in order to catch staff who did not appear to be working in their approved occupation.

A restaurant’s customer base and the kind of food it served also had a significant bearing on the success of applications – Chinese food and European customers being a combination regarded favourably. For example, the Tientsin Restaurant in Acland Street in St Kilda began life as the Tientsin Café in 1934. It was a very successful business which operated over many decades, attracting an almost exclusively European clientele. Unlike many smaller restaurants that offered a mixture of European and ‘Australian’ Chinese dishes, the Tientsin’s menu contained no European dishes. By comparison, a smaller business in Little Bourke Street was refused permission to bring in staff from China because government officials determined that the business came into direct competition with European restaurants, as half of its customers appeared to be ‘Europeans who mostly did not indulge in special Chinese dishes.’

On the whole, Chinese restaurateurs were astute businessmen who knew the law and were prepared to test the boundaries of the Act to further their business interests in Australia and support families in China. How much the government would concede often depended on how vigorously businessmen were prepared to push their case. In 1934, for instance, when the government officially sanctioned the introduction of cooks and café workers from China, restaurateurs frequently used these provisions to bring male family members into the country. The following story provides one example. It has been reconstructed from records in the National Archives, which help open a window onto the world of one of Melbourne’s early Chinese restaurants.

The case of the Canton Tower Café

The Canton Tower Café near the old Eastern Market in Bourke Street served the community from 1925 until the late 1940s. Louey You Hing was one of three business partners and had lived most of his adult life in Victoria. Over the years, he made four journeys back to China – the
last undertaken in 1941 when he was 73 to spend the remainder of his life there. During his visits to China, a son, Louey Park Sun, and later a grandson, came from China to manage the business.

The Canton Tower was a busy café of moderate size with a seating capacity for 30 diners upstairs and 30 downstairs, catering ‘principally for European custom of a good class.’ By 1940, the business was employing eight staff and had a turnover of about £5000 a year. Service was available from 10 am to well into the evening. To quote one inspection report, the café was ‘plainly furnished but clean.’ The inspector noted that the café created ‘a favourable impression.’

In April 1934, Louey Park Sun applied to replace his ageing cook who, he claimed, wished to return to China. He said it was not possible to obtain the services of a local man, and the café was expecting increased patronage during the centenary of Melbourne celebrations the following year. The request was approved in May, subject to the old cook leaving for China within three months of the new cook’s arrival. Matters became complicated when it was discovered that the old cook was domiciled in Australia; that is, he was in effect a permanent resident. The Consul-General for China pleaded the café’s case with the Department of the Interior in Canberra, reassuring officials that the new man would be in charge of the kitchen and that it was desired that the old man be kept on to do light duties rather than be forced into unemployment, a sensitive issue during the Depression.

Approval was granted in June and 24-year-old Louey Fat arrived in August. In October, Canberra officials received a memo from the Collector of Customs in Melbourne, cautioning that, ‘This youth’s appearance would indicate a studious nature rather than that usually associated with that of a cook.’ Unannounced inspections at various hours were made, and on each occasion the inspector found Louey Fat employed as a waiter.

The Consul-General made further representations on behalf of the café. Support was also offered from a local advocate for the Chinese community, the Reverend Farquhar Chisholm, who claimed that over the period of the inspections, the café’s waiter had been ill and attending hospital, requiring Louey Fat to assist with table service.

Officials in Canberra remained unconvinced and cautioned the Consul-General and Rev. Chisholm that it viewed misrepresentations very seriously. Officials ordered checks to ascertain whether the times the waiter was attending the hospital coincided with times Louey Fat was observed waiting on tables. The case dragged on. Inspectors claimed to have received conflicting statements from café staff about Louey Fat’s cooking expertise. Despite further representation on behalf of the young man, his Certificate of Exemption was cancelled in July 1935, and he sailed for home in August.

The Canton Tower’s story is typical. We can’t know how adept Louey Fat was with a wok, but it is known that many young men made the trip to Australia to work in family restaurants where they developed their cooking skills ‘working from the bottom up’, as one retired restaurateur put it. While official restrictions affected business operations and personal lives, the restaurants had become an integral part of Melbourne’s changing cultural landscape by the late 1930s.

As immigration restrictions eased in the postwar years, many young cooks and café workers managed to remain in Australia, establishing families and founding restaurant dynasties which have enriched our lives, and tastebuds, over many decades.

Barbara Nichol is studying for a PhD in History at the University of Melbourne.
Max Dupain on assignment

The National Archives recently launched a new exhibition, *Max Dupain on Assignment*, showcasing Dupain’s work as a commissioned photographer for the Australian Government and industry. The exhibition features many previously unseen images.

Max Dupain (1911–92) is best known for his iconic image *Sunbaker* and for his photographs of the beaches and urban landscape of Sydney. While his works are a regular feature on the walls of art galleries and museums, many people would be surprised to know that the National Archives of Australia holds a large collection of Dupain’s photographs, spanning several decades.

Throughout his career, Dupain ran a commercial photography business, working for some of the largest organisations in Australia, including the Australian Government. From the 1950s to the 1970s, his clients included the Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC) and the Department of Trade. He also accepted commissions for the Department of Information in the years following World War II. The photographic archives of these agencies are now part of the National Archives’ collection.

Many of the photographs in the exhibition have not been published or exhibited previously. They are an important archival record of Australia’s postwar development, depicting a society undergoing rapid modernisation. The photographs also provide an insight into Dupain’s artistic sensibilities, showing his interest in documentary photography and in the possibilities of the medium to explore line, light and form.

**A big and exciting job**

The exhibition follows Dupain’s photography across a range of subjects. The earliest photographs were taken from 1945 to 1947, while Dupain was working for the Department of Information. He was transferred to the department following a stint as a camouflage photographer for the Royal Australian Air Force during World War II. After the war, the Australian Government embarked on a large-scale campaign to increase migration to Australia, and the Department of Information sent Dupain and its other photographers around the country to photograph daily life for promotional material. Dupain’s images show a nation with a healthy outdoor lifestyle, vibrant cities, and educational and recreational opportunities. He described his Department of Information work as a “big and exciting job”, as he travelled widely to photograph Australia’s way of life.

The exhibition also highlights Dupain’s engagement with architecture and industry. His work for the Department of Trade was used to attract international trade and investment. His interests as an artist and a commercial photographer intersected in these assignments, as the photographs explored the impact of technology, industry and machines on society.

Discovering Dupain in the Archives

Finding and identifying the Max Dupain images in the National Archives was no easy task. Photographs are registered by the subject matter or the government department that commissioned them, rather than the name of the photographer. And with more than three million photographs in the Archives’ collection, there wasn’t the option of going through them one by one.

Photographic services manager John Schilling first realised the potential for a Dupain exhibition when he came across a Max Dupain photograph in the files of the Australian News and Information Bureau (which succeeded the Department of Information). He then recognised other Dupain images in the collection and trawled through handwritten registers searching for the name Dupain written next to the subject.

His perseverance paid off and before long he had uncovered a rich vein of Australian photographic history in the Archives’ collections in Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne.

Documenting an iconic company

Max Dupain on Assignment also features photographs Dupain took for the Colonial Sugar Refining Company Limited (CSR), held in the collection of the Noel Butlin Archives Centre at the Australian National University. CSR was one of Dupain’s earliest clients and their commercial relationship lasted for more than 40 years. Dupain’s photographs document the activities of this iconic Australian company, focusing on its sugar production business from the harvesting of sugar cane to the marketing of sugar products.

This exhibition showcases the diversity and longevity of Dupain’s commercial career, tracing his development as a photographer and artist. The National Archives of Australia and the Noel Butlin Archives Centre are excited to present these images, together for the first time in an exhibition dedicated to the commissioned work of Max Dupain.

Max Dupain on Assignment will be on display at the National Archives in Canberra until 18 May. It is expected to tour nationally.

By Johanna Parker, curator, and Alva Maguire, assistant curator, of the Max Dupain exhibition.

The National Archives has also published a catalogue, featuring all of the exhibition images and an essay about Jill White, who worked with Dupain for 25 years. It is available for $20.00 from National Archives offices and the online shop at www.naa.gov.au.

[top] Man roofing at the Coca-Cola plant in Northmead in New South Wales, 1971. Dupain treated all of his industry assignments as both an artist and photographer: ‘All industry has an aesthetic and it is up to the photographer to find it.’

Researching your family history can be an exciting, surprising and sometimes frustrating journey. Our new book, *Family Journeys: Stories in the National Archives of Australia*, introduces readers to family history research in the National Archives’ collection by telling the stories of nine Australian families. The stories reveal the diverse range of records held in the National Archives – from war service to immigration files, and from letters to prime ministers to surveillance files.

The book features the story of scientist and author Dr Karl Kruszelnicki, whose Polish parents came to Australia as displaced persons after World War II. It includes the family history of Noni Hazlehurst, one of Australia’s favourite actors, which reveals that talent ran in the family. Her parents, George and Eileen (Lee) Hazlehurst, were theatre and radio performers in England before they came to Australia as “ten-pound poms” in the early 1950s. Readers learn that gardening guru Jamie Durie has family roots in Sri Lanka and England, and a great-uncle who served in a secret Army unit in northern Australia during World War II.

The book includes a story by television producer and presenter Annette Shun Wah, who embarked on her own research at the National Archives to answer the questions raised by an old family photograph. She traced family back to China and Hong Kong.

The book also includes the tragic story of war hero Hugo Throssell and his wife, the writer Katharine Susannah Prichard; an account of marathon cyclist and inventor, Ernie Old; and intriguing stories about an English war bride and her Australian husband, Italian and Filipino-Aboriginal families.

**Dr Karl’s story**

The family history of scientist Dr Karl Kruszelnicki is one of persecution, survival and hope. Before World War II, Karl’s father, Ludwik Kruszelnicki, was a journalist and scriptwriter in the city of Lwow, then under Polish control. When the city was occupied by Soviet forces in 1939, he was arrested by the secret police and gaoled in Grodno prison. He managed to escape from the prison in 1941 on the first day of fighting between German and Russian forces, but he was later imprisoned in German concentration camps, including Auschwitz, where his arm was branded with a number. At the end of the war, Lwow came under Soviet control. Ludwik, who had been transferred by the Red Cross from Germany to a displaced persons camp in Sweden, feared persecution if he returned to his former home.

Karl’s mother, Rina Szurek, was only 17 years old when her home city of Gdynia, a seaport near Danzig (now Gdansk) in Poland, was occupied by German forces in September 1939. Rina, who was Jewish, was sent to the Lodz Ghetto in central Poland, where she spent almost five years. The occupants of the ghetto were forced to work in factories, received little food, and some were deported to concentration camps. Rina helped smuggle food into the ghetto. When the Germans shut down the ghetto in 1944, its occupants, including Rina, were sent to Auschwitz. She spent the rest of the war in Auschwitz and other camps, and was fortunate to survive. Her sister died just after the liberation of the concentration camps, and her brother went from a German concentration camp to a Russian camp. He was never heard from again.

Like Karl’s father, Rina was transferred to Sweden after the war. There she learned millinery and attended English classes. Her English teacher was Ludwik Kruszelnicki.

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[LEFT] Dr Karl Kruszelnicki

[RIGHT] Noni Hazlehurst
Turning down a scholarship to learn millinery with fashion house Dior in Paris, Rina married Ludwik in November 1946. Their son Karl was born in Sweden in 1948.

The Kruszelnickis were among the 170,000 displaced persons who came to Australia between 1947 and 1953 under an agreement between the Australian Government and the International Refugee Organization. Their application for resettlement, which is held by the National Archives, indicated that they wanted to live in Canada. The family was waiting to board a ship when young Karl suffered a reaction to a vaccination. The next available ship was bound for Australia and so, in November 1950, the Kruszelnicki family arrived in Sydney on the MS Goya to begin new lives. Their story has some remarkable twists, which are revealed in the book.

Tips for family historians
In addition to telling the family journeys of others, the book highlights archival records that can help researchers find their own stories. It includes tips on searching for records in the National Archives’ collection, and how to access them, as well as information on resources in other archives, libraries and registries. We hope that it will inspire prospective family historians to begin their own research journeys.

Family Journeys can be purchased from National Archives offices in each state and territory and from the online shop at www.naa.gov.au.

By Kellie Abbott, National Archives editor.

Archives on TV
Records from the National Archives feature in a landmark new documentary series. On SBS’s new program, Who Do You Think You Are?, six prominent Australians, including Olympian Catherine Freeman and actor Jack Thompson, trace their family histories. Their stories are being shown on Sunday nights, since January 2008.

Go online to start your family search
The National Archives has added new information to its website specifically for family historians. The website includes hints on how and where to begin your family history research, as well as more detailed information to really get you into the collection.

There are case studies of both famous and everyday Australian families, highlighting some of the Archives’ most useful records, and expert advice on how to look after your own precious family archives.


[left] Noni Hazlehurst with her brother Cameron and her parents, George and Lee, 1957.
[top right] Karl Kruszelnicki stayed at Bonegilla Migrant Reception Centre in Victoria after arriving with his parents in late 1950. The National Archives holds similar cards for other migrants who stayed at Bonegilla.
[bottom left and right] Karl’s parents, Ludwik and Rina Kruszelnicki, photographed before their departure for Australia in 1950.
The instrument of surrender of Japanese forces in New Guinea, New Britain, New Ireland, Bougainville and adjacent Islands was signed at Rabaul on 6 September 1945.

Conflict between Allied and Japanese forces was waged in treacherous conditions in the mountains and jungles of New Guinea and Bougainville from 1942 to 1945. Towards the end, Japanese forces were demoralised and suffering from lack of food and supplies.

Allied Forces used all available means to persuade Japanese forces to surrender in the months prior to September. Printed leaflets, with an Allied Forces message, were loaded into 25-pounder shells and fired towards Japanese positions.

The message on one side was intended for Allied soldiers to ensure correct treatment of the enemy. Written in English, it read, ‘The bearer has ceased resistance. Treat him well in accordance with international law. Take him to the nearest Commanding Officer.’

On the other side of the leaflet was a message in Japanese, aimed at reassuring enemy soldiers that they would be treated with respect. A translation of the message reads:

To all soldiers of the Japanese Army –
We need not explain the situation. Any further bloodshed is useless. We wish to treat you kindly. There is no shame in coming to our lines and receiving emergency medical treatment under the Geneva Convention. You will be taken to join the several hundred Japanese soldiers already accommodated in Australia.

Photographs showing Japanese soldiers in good health and receiving water from Australian army personnel illustrated this message.

This surrender leaflet is one of two on a file in the National Archives’ collection which have survived due to the actions of a court-martialled Australian soldier. The leaflet was recently rediscovered amongst the records of the Attorney-General’s Department.

Treasures of a ‘bower-bird’

In August 1945, an Australian soldier with the 4th Australian Field Regiment (Jungle Division) in Bougainville was court-martialled for having prejudiced ‘good order and military discipline’ by including a Japanese note book, two propaganda leaflets (the surrender leaflets), six official maps, three intelligence summaries, a patrol report and a prisoner of war report in a parcel destined for Australia.

A month earlier, the soldier had prepared to visit his fiancée in Victoria while on leave. He bundled up various souvenirs he had gathered over the previous 18 months while on active service in New Guinea and Bougainville. To lighten his load, he made three parcels with these souvenirs and other documents and books, wrapped them in brown paper and addressed them to his sweetheart.

Souvenirs sent home to his sweetheart meant trouble for one Australian soldier in the months before the Japanese surrender during World War II, as revealed in court martial records held by the National Archives.
sweetheart. He posted them after checking with his senior officer.

However, his souvenirs were subject to wartime censorship rules that disallowed any restricted material being sent through the post in case it fell into enemy hands. Army regulations also prohibited disclosure of the contents of army document to civilians. The soldier was duly reprimanded, charged and held in detention for 29 days until trial.

The soldier pleaded guilty at the court martial, which was held in the field on 21 August 1945. He had kept two of the surrender leaflets distributed by his regiment as well as maps and copies of reports from past activities and conflicts. As the Japanese retreated, records, personal belongings and equipment were dumped, and it was common practice for Allied soldiers to souvenir scavenged items. This was how the Japanese notebook came to be in the soldier’s possession.

His defending officer referred to him as a ‘bower-bird’ who liked to collect ‘momentos’. He argued that the documents no longer posed a security risk and suggested leniency.

On 21 August 1945, the soldier was sentenced to ‘field punishment for ninety days and to forfeit all ordinary pay for a period of ninety days.’ The next day, Lieutenant-General SC Savige, Commander of the 2nd Australian Corps (AIF), ordered that the soldier’s punishment be commuted to a fine of five pounds.

Most of the wartime souvenirs which had caused so much trouble for the soldier remained as evidence on his court martial file. This file and thousands of other court martial files were later transferred to the custody of the National Archives, where the treasures of this “bower-bird” can now be shared.

By Jane Ellis, assistant curator, National Archives of Australia.

A team of volunteers

This soldier’s war souvenirs were found by a dedicated team of volunteers from the Heraldry and Genealogy Society of Canberra (HAGSOC) as part of project work on court martial records in the National Archives.

The HAGSOC volunteers meet weekly to repackage files into acid-free folders and boxes, remove staples and pins which can damage paper records, and find additional information that may be useful to researchers. The volunteers apply their research skills and knowledge of Commonwealth records to series that are of particular interest to family historians.

Since 1999, they have worked on World War I records and court martial records, and are currently working on World War II casualty files of members of the Royal Australian Air Force.

HAGSOC can be contacted online at www.hagsoc.org.au.
A building with history

The National Archives makes its home in Canberra in East Block, one of the oldest buildings in the young capital. The 2007 National Archives Summer Scholar, Troy Stone, researched the sometimes surprising history of this landmark building – a history featuring artists, princes, spies and secret doors.

On 9 May 1927, the opening of Provisional Parliament House was attended by the Duke of York, Prime Minister Stanley Melbourne Bruce, Governor-General John Baird, singer Dame Nellie Melba, and a detachment of the New South Wales Mounted Police. The Duke threw back the building’s front doors to the sound of thunderous applause. Yet only a few hundred metres to the southeast, largely unnoticed and little remarked upon in the excitement, there was a building of less spectacular beginnings, but which was also to play an important role in governing the nation. That building was East Block.

Building East Block

East Block was originally planned as temporary accommodation for a skeleton staff of government departments relocating to the new capital. With a crippling war debt, the vision for East Block was modest. Approved in 1924, the building was designed to be a simple but pleasing structure. Architect John Smith Murdoch described it as ‘restful and reposeful’, in a style typified by simple lines, balanced symmetry and massed geometric shapes. Its red brick base and white rendered walls exaggerated the building’s length. Its wall surfaces were sparse, broken only by repeated archways, windows and minimally patterned railings.

Workmen applied East Block’s final fittings in early 1927, some six months before Parliament was due to sit. No sooner was the building finished than government departments began to take up residence within its walls. As well as the everyday work of the public service, some significant events have echoed through the long corridors of East Block.

Moving in

The longest-serving tenant of East Block was the Postmaster-General’s Department. East Block was the site of Canberra’s Telephone Exchange and Post Office from 1927 to 1988 and 1996 respectively, and was the point from which all distances in Canberra were measured. A regular client of the Postmaster-General’s Department was historian Manning Clark, whose six-volume epic, *A History of Australia*, was posted from the department’s offices in the 1960s to 1980s.

Among the other early tenants of East Block was the Investigation Branch of the Attorney-General’s Department, which was responsible for Australia’s internal security in the pre-World War II years. Its activities included the surveillance of those thought to be communists, fascists and Nazis. The paramilitary organisation, the New Guard, was considered one of the biggest threats...
to internal security. In a secret memorandum dated February 1932, the Director of Investigation Branch received the alarming news that an informant had learnt that the New Guard ‘were making preparations for a sudden stroke, in the nature of a coup d'état, against the Lang Government, to be carried out in the immediate future.’ The government of controversial Premier Jack Lang subsequently lost the New South Wales election and the New Guard lost momentum.

East Block also played a role in Australia’s national security during World War II. The Secretaries of the Departments of Navy, Army and Air, as well as the Department of Home Security, were housed in East Block, although the departments occupied offices throughout the country. In a very real sense, an important part of the war was fought from within East Block’s walls.

In 1950, the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) took up residence, continuing the building’s link with Australia’s security. Euphemistically referred to as D-Branch, ASIO was highly secretive about its business. For many years the organisation’s only official address was PO Box 36. Rumours persist of a famous green door through which ASIO staff entered and exited the building.

Some very different tenants briefly made East Block home in 1946. A room on the building’s upper floor was used as an art studio. The artists were multiple Archibald Prize winners Ivor Hele and William Dargie, and their subject none other than Duke of Gloucester and Australia’s Governor-General, His Royal Highness Prince Henry. Hele had been commissioned to paint the Governor-General but was unable to complete the portrait. He nonetheless advised the Prime Minister’s Department that the room provided was ‘exceptionally good and lighting entirely satisfactory’, and when Dargie took over the commission, he painted the prince in the same East Block room.

**Working at East Block**

A major theme in the building’s history is overcrowding, as departments have jostled for inches of available space in the building. The Australian Government and its staff expanded beyond East Block’s capacity, and attempts to accommodate departments in more permanent premises were impaired by the effects of war and depression.

As a result, departments occupied the building for much longer than originally planned, and routinely petitioned the Department of the Interior for more space. One such applicant was the Postmaster-General’s Department. In the postwar years, the department faced persistent complaints from staff about excessive noise, poor lighting, congestion in the Telegraph Operating Room, and ‘serious discomfort’ in summer from excessive heat. The Telegraphists’ and Postal Clerks’ Union warned that “unless something is accomplished very soon, a position will surely arise which will result in a state of affairs resulting in chaos.” The union pointed out that foreign diplomats sometimes had to stand in the doorway of the men’s toilets while waiting for attention.

Today, of course, East Block is home to the National Archives and its Canberra reading room, exhibition galleries and offices. Ironically, after World War II, the basement was used to temporarily store a large number of books because it was ‘found impossible to obtain the necessary accommodation from the Archival authority.’

You can visit East Block on Queen Victoria Terrace, Parkes ACT, 9.00 am to 5.00 pm, seven days a week.

Troy Stone is undertaking Honours in History and will complete his Bachelor of Education at the University of Adelaide in 2008.
Volunteering has been, and continues to be, a very important part of our lives. According to data released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, more than 34 per cent of Australians over the age of 18 volunteer, and they can be found in all walks of life – from coaching to counselling and from baking cakes for a school fete to planting trees.

Unfortunately, the roles played by volunteers have been largely unrecognised in Australian history. Assisted by a National Archives award, I have researched them for a forthcoming book, *Volunteering: The Australian Experience*. I examined how volunteering and voluntary organisations developed, and how they shaped economic, social, cultural and political aspects of Australian society after World War II.

Governments have been integral to the voluntary sector, and volunteers have been essential to governments. During the 20th century, a close relationship existed between them. This relationship, or ‘moving frontier’, has shifted over time, and is one of the key themes of my research.

Records in the National Archives of Australia reveal the developing relationship between the Australian Government and voluntary organisations, especially in the area of community welfare, where a large proportion of volunteers are found.

**Meals on Wheels gears up**

An excellent example of the slow and subtle shift in the relationship between the Australian Government and voluntary organisations concerns that iconic organisation, Meals on Wheels. With its roots in Britain, Meals on Wheels was modelled on a World War II initiative of providing meals to citizens whose homes were destroyed in the Blitz. In 1949, the idea was brought to Australia by Mrs Nancy Dobson, the honorary secretary of the Ladies Auxiliary of the South Melbourne Council. By 1953, Doris Taylor had founded Meals on Wheels Inc in South Australia with the first kitchen opening in Port Adelaide the following year. Four years later, the Sydney City Council established the first program in New South Wales.

Funding of Meals on Wheels was
ad hoc and varied from state to state, with some state and local governments assisting. The scheme was most developed in South Australia where there was generous state government support and volunteers delivered 1300 hot meals daily to the aged. In Victoria, the state Department of Health subsidised the activity through local government, Senior Citizens’ Clubs and the Red Cross, while in Western Australia, the League of Home Help for Sick and Aged Inc and some local councils provided subsidies. In Tasmania, hospital kitchens provided the meals and two voluntary organisations delivered them. In New South Wales and Queensland, there was no state subsidy at all, and it was largely left up to local government, service clubs and other community groups.

The Australian Government steps in
In a Cabinet submission in December 1969, the Minister for Social Services, WC Wentworth, argued that voluntary organisations providing Meals on Wheels services should be allocated a $1 subsidy for every 10 meals served. Although he noted that ‘the valuable service rendered by many voluntary organisations throughout Australia providing meals to aged and invalid persons in their homes’ was widely recognised, it was hoped that the proposed Commonwealth assistance would encourage the extension of the program and help keep the elderly in their own homes by providing a range of services.

This proposed financial support for Meals on Wheels can be seen as part of the broader changes under way in aged care in the late 1960s. It is also symbolic of the shifting relationship between state and federal governments in this area. The original Home Nursing Subsidy Scheme, introduced by the Commonwealth Government in 1957, promoted the expansion and development of aged care homes to ease pressure off public hospitals. Its initiatives included home nursing services, housekeeper and home-help services, home visiting, senior citizens’ centres and other services.

The Meals on Wheels subsidy initiative emerged from the 1967 and 1968 Australian Health Ministers’ Conferences, and was part of the Commonwealth’s response to build a new state/federal funding agreement for home and nursing care for the aged.

Through the Delivered Meals Subsidy Act 1970, the Commonwealth subsidy encouraged a more equitable system nationwide. It allowed the voluntary organisations already delivering meals on wheels to expand and new ones to be created in states like Queensland, where there was no program. The scheme was so successful that within two years it was increased from 10 to 15 cents per meal. It assisted organisations and volunteers across the country to deliver hot meals to elderly residents.

Through the 1950s and 1960s, the frontiers of the Australian Government slowly expanded through subsidies and shared programs with the voluntary sector. Volunteering and voluntary action plays an important role in the Australian community. As the Meals on Wheels example shows, the evidence is everywhere when you look for it, including in the National Archives of Australia.

Associate Professor Melanie Oppenheimer is in the School of Humanities and Languages at the University of Western Sydney. She has written extensively on various aspects of volunteering in Australia from both a historical and contemporary perspective.
1977 Cabinet records released

On 1 January 2008, the National Archives released the 30-year-old documents of the 1977 Fraser Cabinet. Historian Jim Stokes discusses some of the key issues of that year.

1977 was an election year. Despite polls in the first half of the year which indicated that the Fraser Government trailed the Australian Labor Party, the December election saw the Coalition retain its majority in both houses of Parliament. However, the election of two senators from the recently established Australian Democrats, which former Liberal minister Don Chipp had founded in May, was a sign of things to come.

The Sydney Morning Herald had called the election campaign lacklustre, although the resignation of Phillip Lynch as Treasurer, pending resolution of personal financial issues, was a major upset for the Government. He was replaced by John Howard.

The economy and the budget

During the election year, Lynch and his departments of Treasury and Finance waged a constant campaign to rein in the budget deficit. This inevitably brought them into conflict with the big-spending and constituency-aware industry, defence and welfare departments. Treasury submissions repeatedly urged Cabinet to hold its nerve on unemployment levels and to restore prosperity by holding the line on expenditure, wage increases and the value of the dollar.

Lynch presented the 1977–78 Budget on 16 August, with a predicted deficit of $2.21 billion. Despite a large deficit, the Government cut personal tax, effective in February 1978, and reduced personal income tax scales from seven to three (32%, 46% and 60%).

Further economic problems challenged the Government. Australian short-term interest rates ranged from 9 to 11% and the current account deficit rose from $1.1 billion in 1975–76 to $2.5 billion in 1977–78. On a positive note, the inflation rate dropped from 13% in 1975–76 to 9.5% in 1977–78.

Unemployment remained a major concern. In May 1977, 314,000 people (5.1% of the workforce) were unemployed, and a year later the total had risen to 395,000 (6.2%). The Government saw wage restraint as crucial to attacking inflation and unemployment. Indexation had reduced the level of increases, but they were still running at 14.3% for the year ending February 1977. In January, Cabinet decided that it would not legislate to control wages and instead concentrated on attempts to persuade the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission to minimise increases granted at its quarterly national wage case hearings.

1977 saw a number of significant strikes and work bans. Strikes by Commonwealth air traffic controllers and postal workers led to the enactment of the Commonwealth Employees (Employment Provisions) Act to enable Commonwealth employees to be stood down, although it was not proclaimed until a Telecom strike in 1979. In the private sector, there was an 11-week strike by Victorian power workers that put around 500,000 people out of work. There were disputes in the oil, building and iron ore...
industries, while work bans affected the export of uranium, merino rams, and live cattle and sheep.

In January, Cabinet agreed to a series of amendments to the Conciliation and Arbitration Act. They included the establishment of a general right of conscientious objection to compulsory union membership and the creation of an Industrial Relations Bureau to investigate breaches of the Act, unfair labour practices and irregularities in union administration.

Uranium

The Government had delayed decisions on the mining and export of uranium until the second report of the Fox inquiry on the proposed Ranger mine in the Northern Territory was received in May. On 23 May, Cabinet agreed on the basic elements of safeguards policy to ensure that Australian uranium, if it were to be exported, would be used only for peaceful purposes within the framework of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty. On 15 August, Cabinet decided that Australia would negotiate bilateral safeguards agreements with purchasers covering both present and future use of the uranium. Australia would seek an understanding with other exporters on the application and enforcement of safeguards, but this would not constitute a commercial cartel to control price or quantity.

Cabinet made its final decisions on uranium on 23 August, endorsing the main findings of the Fox inquiry unless there were ‘compelling reasons’ for departing from them. It was agreed that mining could proceed, subject to environmental controls and a stringent nuclear safeguards regime. The Ranger mine could be developed without further environmental assessment, but the other two mines in the Alligator River region – Jabiru and Koongarra – would not be approved for a considerable time.

Refugees and Indigenous issues

In May, Cabinet considered the plight of Indo-Chinese refugees, noting that there had been some criticism of Australia’s ‘inadequate’ and ‘ad hoc’ response to the issue. Fraser believed strongly that the Government had an obligation to assist refugees, and Cabinet affirmed that Australia recognised a humanitarian commitment to assist refugees to resettle in Australia or elsewhere. By 17 November, boats had arrived with 647 people, and it was believed that another 4,000 were at sea.

In April, Cabinet addressed the ‘increasing concern in the Australian community and internationally for the social and economic welfare of Aboriginals.’ More than one-third of the Aboriginal labour force was registered as unemployed, making them the most disadvantaged group in Australia. Cabinet decided that in remote areas community development projects would become an alternative to unemployment benefits, supported by education and training programs. A pilot scheme of what became the Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) program was established in the Northern Territory.

Royalty and records

1977 was the Queen’s Silver Jubilee year. Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip visited Australia in March, followed by Prince Charles in November. Trainer Colin Hayes agreed to mate his horse Without Fear with six mares and to select the best foal as the nation’s gift to the Queen. Cabinet directed that short black coats and striped trousers were to be worn at the Queen’s opening of Parliament on 8 March, but that kilts or other forms of national dress were an acceptable alternative to normal evening dress for the subsequent reception. A Gallup poll in April found that 62% of Australians supported the monarchy.

In 1977, Cabinet also approved construction of a new repository for the Australian Archives (now the National Archives of Australia) in Canberra to replace the notoriously ill-suited Romney huts beside Lake Burley Griffin. The huts were not only a hazard to the records, but were hindering completion of the High Court and National Gallery of Australia.

You can read more about these and other issues, and view selected 1977 Cabinet documents, at www.naa.gov.au.

Dr Jim Stokes is a historian and archivist.


[bottom right] The Queen speaks to well-wishers during the Royal Tour, March 1977.
Historian Hanifa Deen at the launch of the new Uncommon Lives website feature, Muslim Journeys. The website, produced with support from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, tells the surprising stories of adventure and adversity for Muslim settlers in Australia. Visit uncommonlives.naa.gov.au.

The National Archives recently launched the Pacific Recordkeeping for Good Governance Toolkit at a function hosted by the Australian Consul-General to New Caledonia in Noumea. The toolkit is designed to assist Pacific Islands governments to improve recordkeeping. Setareki Tale (left), President of the Pacific Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (PARBICA) and Government Archivist for the National Archives of Fiji, and Harold Martin (right), President of the Government of New Caledonia, attended the launch.

Archivally Sound, the National Archives choir, delivered Christmas cheer when they performed songs from the collection in a concert in Canberra in December 2007.

Australian Statistician Brian Pink handed over the 2006 Census Time Capsule to Ross Gibbs, Director-General of the National Archives. The time capsule comprises microfilm copies of the census information provided by the people who chose to have their personally-identified census information kept on microfilm by the National Archives of Australia. It will be made publicly available in the year 2105.
Sam Holt, son of former Prime Minister Harold Holt, presented a selection of films belonging to his late father to the National Archives. The film includes footage of the prime minister enjoying a picnic, collecting plants for his wife Zara, spearfishing, and risking his life to save a trapped speargun given to him as a gift by American President Lyndon B Johnson.

In December 2007, former Prime Minister Gough Whitlam presented Ross Gibbs, Director-General of the National Archives, with a handwritten notice of motion drafted in the hour following his dismissal in 1975 by Governor-General Sir John Kerr. Mr Whitlam drafted the motion to read to the House of Representatives that afternoon in an attempt to overturn his dismissal. It will now be preserved in the National Archives.

In November 2007, the National Archives invited guests to Canberra for a soirée to announce the official program of events for Constitution Day 2008. The National Archives is proposing that 9 July be celebrated as Constitution Day. Speakers at the event included Professor Mick Dodson AM, Chair of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies and Director of the National Centre for Indigenous Studies at ANU.
NATIONAL ARCHIVES AWARDS AND GRANTS

The National Archives is pleased to announce its latest award and grant winners.

Darwin historian Dr Mickey Dewar was awarded the 2007 Frederick Watson Fellowship. She will use the fellowship to research a history of post-World War II Darwin through a study of Commonwealth public housing policy in the 1950s.

The 2007 Margaret George Award recipient is Dr Craig Stocking, a lecturer from the University of New South Wales with the Australian Defence Force Academy. He will undertake a groundbreaking investigation into the neglected Battle of Bardia, which was the first engagement of the 2nd AIF during World War II.

Gavan McCarthy, winner of the 2007 Ian Maclean Award, will study the archival and research implications of the digitisation of 75,000 Tasmanian convict records. He will review how the resultant records can be stored and made easily accessible to meet the needs of researchers and the community for generations to come.

Applications for the 2008 Frederick Watson Fellowship and Margaret George Award will open in January 2008. Applications for the Ian Maclean Award are being accepted until 7 March 2008.

Previous award recipients have explored topics as diverse as censorship and volunteering.

The principal benefit of an award for the recipient is the opportunity to complete an innovative research project that may require travel or time away from their regular employment. Successful applicants are expected to actively promote the results of their research.

For further details, check the National Archives website, www.naa.gov.au. Go to the ‘About us’ tab and click on ‘Research grants’.

ARCHIVES BOOK WINS NSW PREMIER’S HISTORY PRIZE

A book on civilian internment in Australia during World War II, published by the National Archives last February, was awarded a 2007 NSW Premier’s History Prize.

The author, Dr Klaus Neumann, received the $15,000 John and Patricia Ward prize for the use of archives in writing history for his book, In the Interest of National Security. It was commissioned by the National Archives to highlight records in the collection.

The book tells the stories of seven men and three women who were considered a security risk and interned in Australian camps during the war. It details the impact the traumatic event had on their lives and supplies advice on locating relevant archival records.

Some 15,000 civilians were interned, including fascists and anti-Fascists and Nazi supporters and resisters.

‘This book sheds light on a compelling Australian story with the help of the Archives’ extensive collection,’ said Ross Gibbs, Director-General of the National Archives.

‘We are proud that it has been selected for this prestigious award and congratulate Dr Neumann on his achievement.’

In the Interest of National Security can be purchased for $24.95 and is available from National Archives offices or from the online shop at www.naa.gov.au.

KEEP IT FOR THE FUTURE

Community groups wishing to preserve photographs and papers that document their own history now have an easy-to-use guide prepared by the National Archives.

Keep It for the Future! was written by National Archives staff keen to share their expertise with the thousands of volunteers who care for the nation’s heritage.

The book, produced with support from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, was launched by Senator Gary Humphries at the National Archives.

‘It provides a wealth of information and will be of great value to local history groups, genealogical societies, sporting or religious groups, ethnic groups, schools and other volunteer organisations,’ said Ross Gibbs, National Archives Director-General.

‘We identified the need for a small book that covered these things in a simple manner to help community groups. We see it as part of our leadership role in the archival field to encourage everyone to know how to preserve records for future generations.’

The book covers everything an aspiring archivist might want to know, including how to identify which records a group should keep, as well as how to register, store and preserve them. It provides tips on keeping textiles, film and electronic records, as well as preparing a disaster recovery plan in case the worst happens.

The book, for sale at $4.95, is available from the National Archives or from the online shop at www.naa.gov.au.

News in brief

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HANDOVER OF HISTORIC TOP END PHOTOGRAPHS

The National Archives of Australia has handed over reference copies of more than 700 historic photographs of the Northern Territory to the National Trust (NT).

The photographs, taken by David Douglas (DD) Smith during the 1930s, portray aspects of a Territory that has now vanished forever. They capture a frontier in the days when camel trains, donkey teams and draught horses were still major forms of transport. But the images also include the early Flying Doctor Service as well as Model T Fords and other motor vehicles – on and off the road. One impressive shot is of Smith’s own vehicle which had flipped onto its roof in the outback. Another shows a vehicle bogged up to its axles in mud.

Other photographs depict Aboriginal men, women and children, outback homesteads and staff quarters, barramundi fishermen, stockmen, road gangs carving out highways, waterholes and town life.

DD Smith was widely respected as a photographer but in his ‘day job’ was the first Resident Engineer for Central Australia with the Commonwealth Department of Public Works from 1928 to 1957. He initially lived in a tent in Hartley Street, Alice Springs. As an engineer, he was appointed to the Pastoral Lease Investigation Committee, which investigated whether lessees complied with the conditions of their lease. The committee members covered thousands of kilometres over a number of years, visiting properties across the Territory.

Smith was awarded an Order of Australia in 1981 in recognition of his services to the Northern Territory. He died in 1984, aged 87.

Ted Egan AO, Patron of the National Trust (NT), accepted the photographs on behalf of the National Trust.

The photographs can be viewed online at www.naa.gov.au through PhotoSearch (search by series number and enter M4435) or as hard copies in the National Archives reading room in Darwin.

[above] On the Daly River, Northern Territory.
[below] Bogged on Kapalogo Flat, Northern Territory.
Digital futures across borders

Just as you might struggle to remember where you saved all those holiday photos taken with your digital camera or what happened to that email from a friend several months ago, so are archives around the world having to adapt to more and more information being stored electronically – but on a much larger scale.

The National Archives of Australia’s landmark Digital Futures International Forum, held at Parliament House in Canberra on 18 and 19 September 2007, attracted 200 participants from nine countries, including Germany, Malaysia and Sweden. Twenty speakers and panelists addressed a wide range of issues related to making, keeping and using digital records in the 21st century. Keynote speakers included Natalie Ceeney, Chief Executive, National Archives of the United Kingdom, and James Hastings, Director of Access Programs at the United States National Archives and Records Administration.

A key theme of the forum was the vital importance of partnerships and convergence across sectors and international borders to make best use of technology. The need to increase investment in skills and infrastructure to support digital preservation and access was also highlighted.

In an environment of rapidly evolving technology and changing community expectations of online access to information, it is vital for archives and libraries across the world to collaborate to deliver services and implement advances. More importantly, archives and libraries need to forge closer working partnerships with digital content creators such as researchers, government, publishers and business – at corporate, regional and community levels. The forum also recognised that more work needs to be done to bridge the gap between the public and private sectors, as both will significantly benefit by learning from, and working with, each other.

Read more about the Forum online at www.naa.gov.au under ‘What’s on’.

Reports by Louise Greig, government communications manager.

A check-up for government recordkeeping

In August 2007, the National Archives hosted the launch of Note for File, a report into the state of recordkeeping in the Australian Public Service by the Management Advisory Committee (MAC) of the Australian Government. Dr Peter Shergold, Secretary of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, launched the report in a most appropriate venue – the Memory of a Nation exhibition gallery in Canberra, which showcases the important historical records kept by previous generations of public servants.

The National Archives had worked closely with the advisory committee to develop the report. Note for File emphasises that recordkeeping supports good business and accountability in government. It dispels some common myths about recordkeeping and guides agencies on which records do not need to be kept and how recordkeeping interacts with privacy legislation and other obligations. The report also offers some better practice examples and case studies.

When the report was launched, the National Archives also announced the release of several new products designed to help government agencies implement the messages in the MAC report. Among these is Check-up, a tool for Australian Government agencies to assess the current state of their information and records management practices.

The National Archives will continue working with government departments and agencies to improve their recordkeeping and to ensure that important records, like those in Memory of a Nation, are preserved for the future.

For more information about Check-up, go to the ‘Records management’ tab at www.naa.gov.au.
EXHIBITIONS

Memory of a Nation: Discover the National Archives of Australia
National Archives, Canberra
Now showing

Max Dupain on Assignment
National Archives, Canberra
Now showing until 25 May 2008

Just Add Water: Schemes and Dreams for a Sunburnt Country
Western Australian Museum, Geraldton
13 December 2007 to 24 February 2008
Australian Prospectors and Miners Hall of Fame, Kalgoorlie
7 March to 18 May 2008
Western Australian Museum, Perth
29 May to 27 July 2008

It’s a Dog’s Life! Animals in the Public Service
Queensland Museum, South Bank
17 December 2007 to 16 March 2008
Harvey Bay Regional Gallery
2 May to 16 June 2008

Lady Denman Maritime Museum, Huskisson
7 February to 30 March 2008
Australian National Maritime Museum, Sydney
10 April to 29 June 2008

EVENTS

SHAKE YOUR FAMILY TREE DAY
27 February, 10am–4pm, all offices of the National Archives
Begin your journey to find family history in the Archives – with talks, RecordSearch demonstrations, and much more for budding family historians and experienced genealogists.

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY
National Archives workshops, Canberra:
• Speakers Corner: 1977 Cabinet release records, Sunday 10 February, 2–3pm
  Journalist Peter Manning will summarise the 1977 Cabinet records.
• Discovering Archives: War records, Tuesday 29 April, 4–5pm
• Discovering Archives: Migration, Tuesday 17 June, 4–5pm
  Bookings essential: events@naa.gov.au or (02) 6212 3956.

QUEENSLAND
National Archives seminars, Brisbane, 9-10am.
• Making Australia home: Saturday 16 and Wednesday 20 February
• Nuclear Australia: Saturday 15 and Wednesday 19 March
• Behind the wire: Wednesday 16 and Saturday 19 April
• The power of water: Saturday 17 and Wednesday 21 May
• The war we had to have: Wednesday 18 and Saturday 21 June
  Bookings: (07) 3249 4226.

NORTHERN TERRITORY
Seminar: Patrol officer records, Wednesday 12 March, 10am,
National Archives, Darwin.
  Bookings essential: (08) 8985 0300.

TASMANIA
• Midwinter Festival events, June, at National Archives, Hobart.
  Contact: (03) 6230 6111.

NEW SOUTH WALES
Saturday reading room openings 23 February, 29 March,
Saturday, 19 April, 31 May, 28 June.
Seminars at National Archives, Sydney:
• National Archives records about disasters, Saturday 29 March, 10–11am
• Our house, our land, our town: local history records in the National Archives,
  NSW National Trust Festival seminar, Wednesday 16 April, 10–11.30am
• National Archives records about celebrations, Saturday 28 June, 10–11am
  Bookings essential: contact Fiona Burn (02) 9645 0141.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA
Saturday reading room openings 9am–1pm, 15 March, 10 May.
Records must be pre-ordered.
• SA History Week seminar, at National Archives, Adelaide, 20 May.
  Contact: (08) 8409 8400.

VICTORIA
Saturday reading room openings 9 and 23 February, 29 March,
Saturday, 12 April, 10 and 31 May, 14 and 28 June.
• Digitisation in the National Archives of Australia, at the 6th Victorian Family

WESTERN AUSTRALIA
Seminars at National Archives, Perth:
• Introductory talk and tour, 20 February, 10.30am
• Land and property records: talk and tour, 14 May, 10.30am
  Bookings: (08) 9470 7500.

For the latest information on events at the National Archives around Australia, visit www.naa.gov.au/whats-on/events.
This colourful label from 1951 was filed by the Department of Commerce and Agriculture as a record of tinned fruit destined for overseas markets. The National Archives holds many records about food – from fruit labels to fad diets.