

## January 2008

### Message from the Chair

Welcome to our first Friends newsletter for 2008.

It was marvellous to meet so many friends at our recent Annual General Meeting and Christmas Party. A highlight of the evening was the announcement of the award of the 2007 Friends Medal to Bob Parker and the 2008 Friends Travelling Fellowship to Basil Dewhurst. Further details follow below.

If the comments I received at the Christmas Party are any guide, Friends enjoyed the many marvellous events that featured in the Friends' calendar during the past year. I would like to express appreciation on your behalf to the retiring members of the Friends Committee for their efforts in organising this exciting program.

Thanks to retiring Chairman Terence Birtles, Deputy Chair Joan Kennedy, Chair of the Events Committee Dr Geoff Burkhardt, John Thompson and Gabrielle Tramby. Terry's bus tours have been synonymous with the Friends and we are delighted he is going to remain actively involved in assisting the Committee with these endeavours.

The new Committee (full details below) has already met and will be working hard to ensure that next year's program of Friends' activities maintains the high standard of earlier years.

If you have any thoughts on what you would like to see included in the Friends' program, please do not hesitate to email the Committee on [friends@nla.gov.au](mailto:friends@nla.gov.au) or write to the Executive Officer, Friends of the National Library of Australia, Canberra, ACT 2600, Australia. We would love to hear from you.

Finally, I would like to express thanks to the National Library for the assistance it provides to the Friends. The Library's Director-General, Jan Fullerton and her staff are pillars of support and the Committee is most grateful for their continued encouragement and advice.

Best wishes to you all for the year ahead.

Gary Kent  
Chair

### Friends Committee 2008

The 2008 Committee was elected at the Annual General Meeting on 10 December 2007. The new committee is comprised of Gary Kent, Greg Cornwell, Thomas Abhayaratna, Barbara Coe, Yvonne Cramer, Bill Geering, John Graham, Bryan Hanley,



Alan Ives, Elizabeth Kennedy, Dr Jakelin Troy, and the Reverend Robert Willson.  
Further information about each Board member is enclosed.

At the subsequent Committee meeting on 18 December the following positions were filled:

*Chair* - Gary Kent  
*Deputy Chair* - Greg Cornwell  
*Treasurer* - Thomas Abhayaratna  
*Newsletter Editor* - Bill Geering

## **2007 Friends Medal**

The 2007 Friends Medal has been awarded to Bob Parker, Library Volunteer, for his significant contribution to the Pictures Branch, particularly his work in sorting and indexing the photographs in the Buckland Collection. The Medal also recognises Bob's work in researching and curating a highly successful two-part exhibition, which commenced in July 2005, on the 150th anniversary of NSW railways. The exhibition's success was reflected in a vast increase in the number of original items viewed in the Pictures Reading Room in 2005-06. This is affectionately known throughout the Library as the 'Buckland Effect'.

## **Friends Travelling Fellowship 2008 - Basil Dewhurst**

Basil Dewhurst has been awarded the Friends Travelling Fellowship for 2008. In May he will travel to Europe, the outcome of which will inform the development of People Australia, a new online service being created by the National Library.

Basil will visit the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek, the Bibliothèque Nationale de France and the University of Manchester to examine the practices and procedures developed by these institutions for managing and sharing the information in their catalogues about people and organisations. He will also attend a meeting of a Working Group in Bologna, Italy, relevant to the standard to be used by People Australia for descriptive purposes.

We look forward to Basil's report on his visit in a subsequent edition of this newsletter.

## **New Members Evening**

Did you join the Friends of the National Library in 2007? Would you like to come along to meet some other new Friends and take a behind-the-scenes tour with our irrepressible Events and Education Manager, Heidi Pritchard? Then come along to our New Members Evening on Tuesday, 12 February, 5:30-7:30pm in the Library foyer. Light refreshments will be served and there will be some great live music too.

Bookings essential by Tuesday 5 February January to (02) 6262 1698 or friends@nla.gov.au



## The Scattered Children of St Patrick

How to tell the story of the Irish in Australia in just one hour was the next to impossible task asked of Dr Richard Reid in his recent Friends' Canberra Series lecture. His talk, given at the National Library on 29 November 2007, attracted a large audience who listened intently to Dr Reid's presentation on a subject about which he is obviously very passionate.

The title of Dr Reid's lecture was "the Scattered Children of St Patrick" - a delightful description of the Irish diaspora which appeared in an obituary published in a Singleton newspaper at the turn of the last century to mark the passing of Mother Mary Stanislaus Kenny of the Sisters of Mercy. She had come to Australia, it was written, "to bring civilisation to the scattered children of St Patrick."

Dr Reid is of course himself Irish, having arrived here from Northern Ireland in 1972 as a ten pound immigrant. He was quick to dispel the illusion that the Irish are one homogenous race, and quipped that, with his Presbyterian background, what would he know of the great Irish Catholic migration from the southern part of the island. Indeed, as he remarked, the Irish themselves did not really appreciate who they were until they met people of other races, including the English, often for the first time, on the long voyage out to Australia.

Of course Dr Reid does know an awful lot. His post-graduate work was about assisted Irish emigration to Sydney in the period 1848 to 1870, and as a Fellow of the Society of Australian Genealogists he has conducted a number of historical tours to Ireland. He is currently attached to the National Museum of Australia where he is working on a book about fifty Irish-Australian localities throughout Australia and a proposed exhibition with the theme of the Irish in Australia since 1788.



*Dr Richard Reid pictured at the reputed burial place of St Patrick at Downpatrick in County Down*

Richard's many books include *Echoes of Irish Australia: rebellion to republic: a collection of essays*, of which he was a co-editor, and *Decent set of girls: the Irish famine orphans of the Thomas Arbuthnot 1849-1850*, which he jointly authored with Cheryl Mongan.

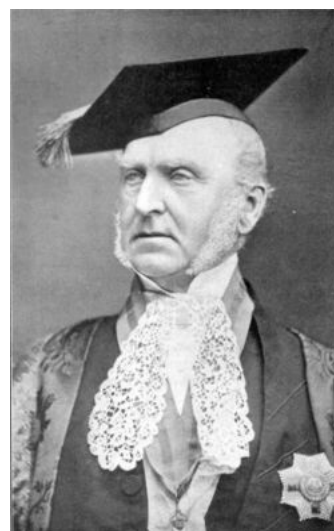
Australia has, other than Ireland, the highest proportion of its citizens with Irish ancestry than any other country. About half a million Irish immigrants arrived between 1788-1914, of whom only roughly one in ten were convicts, most of whom

were transported for petty crimes, dispelling a widely-held view that the majority of Irish emigrants to Australia were hardened criminals. Amazingly, two thirds of Irish emigrants to Australia hailed from within 60 to 70 kilometres of the Rock of Cashel in County Tipperary.

Not all colonial Australians welcomed the incoming Catholic Irish and Dr Reid referred to the opposition to Irish immigration fostered in the community by such luminaries as the Reverend John Dunmore Lang and Sir Henry Parkes. This was reflected in the latter's famous Kiama speech following the attempted assassination of Queen Victoria's second son by an Irish nationalist in Sydney in 1868.

Dr Reid provided some wonderful anecdotes during his presentation and it is a great shame that there is not space to recount them all here. One which I found particularly delightful was the remark made to Dr Reid by the local Roman Catholic Bishop when showing him the entry in a Tipperary parish register for the baptism of Ned Kelly's father, Red Kelly: "And we all know what happened to the son, don't we!"

Of course, as Dr Reid told the gathering, it was ironic that it was another Irishman, this one a Protestant, Sir Redmond Barry, who presided over the trial that led to the conviction and execution of Ned Kelly in 1880. But according to Dr Reid, Sir Redmond should be remembered for far more than that and his contribution to the development of the arts, education and the law in Victoria, including the founding of the Melbourne Public Library (now the State Library of Victoria) was unsurpassed.



*Sir Redmond Barry*

The Irish have played a pivotal and sustained role in the development of the Australian nation and Dr Reid's talk illuminated the myriad of ways this has occurred, including the Castle Hill Rising of 1804, the Eureka Stockade, the Burke and Wills expedition and in so many fields of professional endeavour. The unparalleled contribution of the Irish to Australian politics is particularly significant, and includes the beginnings and growth of the Australian Labor Party and the contribution of Irishmen in the writing of the Australian Constitution.

According to Dr Reid, the story of the Irish in Australia is so vast and complex that it is almost impossible to tell. But he made a remarkable effort for the Friends in outlining the key themes that have underpinned their legacy. We look forward to his forthcoming book and exhibition at the National Museum.

*Gary Kent*

### **Occasional Notes on Book Collecting**

I began collecting books in December 1962. My parents gave me five pounds for passing the Victorian Intermediate Examination in ten subjects. We were living in Melbourne so I went into the city. I visited Robertson & Mullens (R&M) in Elizabeth Street and H A Evans & Son in Swanston Street. At R&M I met John Holroyd, whom I

knew on and off for most of the rest of his long life of bookselling. He was always very kind to me and taught me many things.

In her last year at school (PLC Burwood, Melbourne) I even convinced my then somewhat recalcitrant and younger sister, Elisabeth, to take her extraordinary number of school-prize book vouchers to John Holroyd to create her prize 'booty pile', duly presented to her on our final school speech night. Having won so many prizes, her 'pile' was enormous.

I have to say forty-five years on that I do not recall what it was I first bought from John Holroyd, but I revisited him so often that the later list of purchases, many of which I still own, is a long one.

However, from early December 1962, I do have recollections of some of the items I bought from Bruce Evans in Swanston Street. I also own an item about which I laughed at the time but which I went back and bought ten years later. By then I knew the identity of the fellow whose name was written on the book's fly leaf. The item cost 7/6, or seventy-five cents by then.

The book is on the sewerage system of Liverpool; however, it is signed 'Geo. Russell, Golf Hill'. By 1972 I knew about Golf Hill (in the Western District of Victoria) and the seven Oxford University Press volumes of the 'Clyde Company Papers', edited by P.L. Brown, as well as his biography of George Russell.

The other volumes I bought from Bruce Evans were mainly botanical, due to the influence of our family friend, R D Croll. Amongst his other abilities, Croll was a wonderful botanist who did a great deal of work on the Acacias.

One volume I acquired was by James Lindley whose famous botanical library nearly came to Sydney. However, indecision by the New South Wales' Government of the day meant that it stayed in London where it is still extant. There is a NSW Parliamentary Paper about the possible acquisition of the library.

Other botanical books I acquired included an 1880s volume by Kirk on the flora of New Zealand and a book, with beautiful steel engravings of grasses, written/compiled by a man named Sutton. I also bought a volume - a text book - by William Guilfoyle on botany for schools. Other than the 'Kirk' I no longer have these volumes. The 'Kirk' I gave to a friend in Melbourne in 1973; last year I was given it back and this time I am keeping it.

*Alan Ives, Friends Committee*  
*(Occasional Notes on Book Collecting' will be written by various contributors)*

### **Friends of the NLA Book Club**

The Friends Book Club is held on the last Tuesday of each month, from 7-8.30pm in the Friends Lounge at the National Library. The January meeting will be held on **Tuesday, 29 January** and the book for discussion will be *The Broken Shore* by Peter Temple.



If you would like to participate in the January Friends Book Club, please RSVP to Sharyn in the Friends Office on (02) 6262 1551 or [sobrien@nla.gov.au](mailto:sobrien@nla.gov.au). The National Library bookshop has copies of *The Broken Shore* available for sale, and don't forget that as a Friend of the NLA you receive a 15% discount on all purchases at the bookshop.

**NLA Book Club - Advance Notice:**

26 February - *Restless* by William Boyd

25 March - *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini

## Coming Events

The full programme of events can be consulted in the 'What's On' section of the National Library's website at <http://www.nla.gov.au/apps/events/>

### Friends Events

<p><b>Friends Book Club</b> Tuesday, 29 January 7:00-8:30 pm Friends Lounge</p>	<p>The book for discussion at this month's meeting will be <i>The Broken Shore</i> by Peter Temple. Bookings required on (02) 6262 1551 or <a href="mailto:friends@nla.gov.au">friends@nla.gov.au</a></p>
<p><b>New Members Evening.</b> Tuesday 12 February 5:30-7:30pm Foyer</p>	<p>A welcome event for all those who joined the Friends of the National Library in 2007. Bookings essential: 02 6262 1698 or <a href="mailto:friends@nla.gov.au">friends@nla.gov.au</a>. Free event.</p>

### NLA talks and events

<p><b>Reader Education - Ancestry.com</b> Tuesday 15 January 12:30 - 2:00 pm IT Training Rooms 1 &amp; 2, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor</p>	<p>Learn about the vast array of resources offered by Ancestry.com, including records for Britain, the US and Australia. This hands-on session will cover the UK census, BDM indexes, wills, historic British directories and much more! Bookings: (02) 6262 1266 or email <a href="mailto:info@nla.gov.au">info@nla.gov.au</a></p>
<p><b>Australian Youth Orchestra</b> Thursday 17 January 5:30 - 6:30 pm Foyer Free</p>	<p>The Australian Youth Orchestra's National Music Camp Harp Ensemble led by renowned harpists, Louise Johnson and Marshall McGuire, will perform a twilight concert. It will feature the Australian premiere of a new work for six harps, commissioned by British Composer, Joby Talbot, specially written for the Royal Academy of Music, London, and the National Music Camp Harp Ensemble. Bookings essential: (02) 6262 1271</p>
<p><b>Film - The Flight of the Gossamer Condor (1978)</b> Wednesday 23 January 12:30 - 1:30 pm Theatre Gold coin donation</p>	<p>16mm, 27min The story of how Dr. Paul MacCready won the Kemer Prize for the first man-powered aircraft that could fly a mile long figure of eight course. Follows the inventor through twelve months of planning and disappointments as he develops his idea from the first crude wing into a sophisticated craft that flies the course.</p>



<p><b>Film - The Weeping Camel (2004)</b>  Thursday 24 January  6:00 - 7:30 pm  Theatre  Gold coin donation</p>	<p>DVD, 90mins  Springtime in the Gobi Desert, South Mongolia. A family of nomadic shepherds assists the births of their camel herd, one of them a rare white colt. Despite the efforts of the shepherds, the mother rejects the newborn. When any hope for the colts survival has vanished, the nomads send their two young boys on a journey through the desert, to a backwater town in search of a musician who is their only hope for saving the colt's life. Nominated for 2005 Academy Award (documentary). English Subtitles.</p>
<p><b>Film - Eternity (1994)</b>  Wednesday 30 January  12:30 pm - 1:30 pm  Theatre  Gold coin donation</p>	<p>VHS, 60 mins  For forty years in one city a word appears written on the street, this word was 'Eternity'. Always the same, written in chalk in elegant copperplate script, appearing like frost overnight on the streets of Sydney. Director Lawrence Johnston's internationally award-winning documentary succeeds in including the audience amongst those whose lives have been touched by Arthur Stace's lonely and mysterious mission.</p>

#### NLA exhibitions

<p><b>Pioneers of the Inland: Australia's Muslim Cameleers 1860's - 1930's</b>  Until 17 February 2008  Exhibition Gallery</p>	<p>This exhibition reveals the remarkable contribution which Australia's first Muslim community made to the exploration and settlement of Australia's arid interior. The stories of Muslim explorers and pioneers provide an intriguing counterbalance to dominant white explorer legends of Central Australia.</p> <p>Muslims have been part of Australian society since the Burke and Wills expedition (1860) and have contributed significantly to Australia's economic and cultural development. Muslim cameleers were brought to Australia to enable exploration of the uncharted interior, and assisted all major expeditions of the late 19th century. Subsequently these Muslim pioneers provided lifeblood for many inland settlements, isolated stations and mines, and forged communication routes through remote Australia. The exhibition tells this compelling story, using new research and previously unseen objects and images, drawing upon diverse collection sources. The exhibition also investigates this story's continuing resonance with descendants, involving new collaborations with Australia's Muslim communities.</p>
<p><b>The System of Nature: Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778)</b>  Until 6 April 2008  Visitor Centre</p>	<p>Carl Linnaeus is often referred to as 'the father of taxonomy', that particular branch of science concerned with the systematic classification of living organisms. He was arguably the most influential natural scientist of the 18th century and two of his 'disciples' were prominent in the early documentation of the flora and fauna of Australia - Joseph Banks and Daniel Solander who were on board the <i>Endeavour</i> with James Cook when it arrived in Botany Bay in 1770. This display will reveal a selection of the little-known treasures in the Library's collections.</p>