

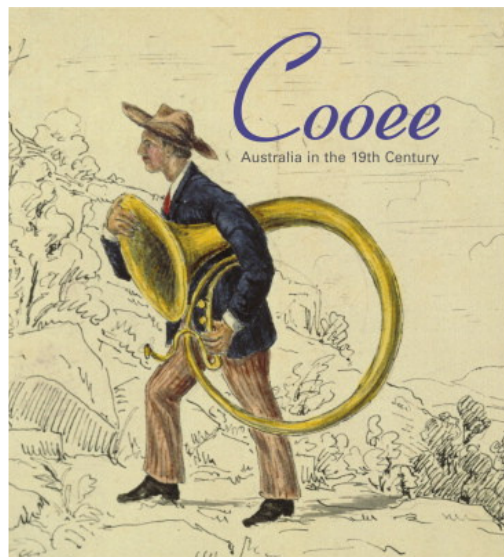
July 2007

Cooee: Australia in the 19th Century

A marvellous new exhibition has opened at the National Library dealing with the way Australians lived their lives during the colonial period. Curated by Martin Terry, "Cooee - Australia in the Nineteenth Century", runs from 14 June to 9 September 2007.

In the words of the Director-General of the National Library, Jan Fullerton, the purpose of 'Cooee' is to examine 'who we were, how we worked, where we lived and how we amused ourselves in a seemingly faraway world before radio, television, or the Internet.'

'Cooee' fulfils this objective in every way. It is a very evocative depiction of the many faceted lives of our grandparents, great grandparents and beyond. The treasures on display are a veritable cornucopia of detail about the domestic, commercial, cultural, sporting and other pursuits of Australians during the colonial period. The exhibition features drawings, watercolours and photographs from the National Library's magnificent collection of images and is an excellent demonstration of the sheer range and depth of the Library's pictorial collection.



As one who was familiar with the 'Cooee' recruitment march of the First World War, I was not aware that this cry has a much longer history than that. In his introduction to the excellent catalogue published to accompany the exhibition, Terry explains that 'Cooee' was adopted by white settlers from the aborigines. As the explorer Thomas Mitchell wrote, 'It is so much more convenient than our own holla, or halloo, that is universally adopted by the colonists of New South Wales.'

Those Friends who do not have the opportunity to view 'Cooee' first-hand, and even those who do, should purchase a copy of the catalogue, which lists and illustrates the 150 exhibits that have been carefully chosen from the many thousands of relevant items in the Library's collections to provide as representative a view as possible of life in the 1800s.

Friends will take away with them different impressions of the exhibition based on their own interests and experiences. As a keen genealogist, I was fascinated by the way 'Cooee' illuminates the faces and day to day lives of our forebears.

Some of the highlights for me included the photograph of children, trying hard to be cheerful, during their recuperation from diphtheria at the Melbourne Hospital at Christmas, 1900; the 1878 painting of a sitting room in Warwick in 1878, revealing the contemporary décor in a modestly furnished country home; and the photographic montage by the photographer Thomas Chuck of *The Explorers and Early Colonists of Victoria*, a generation even then beginning to assume legendary status for their pioneering endeavours.

'Cooee' paints a fascinating and colorful panorama of Australia in its formative years and should not be missed by anyone interested in how the not so long ago past has shaped our present and our future.

Weston - A life of horticulture

Charles Weston, Charles Scrivener and Walter and Marion Griffin left us a spectacular city legacy; a garden city. Charles Weston worked in Canberra between 1911 and 1926 and in this time was responsible for greening an open, windswept, and largely treeless, plain. He is the person primarily responsible for planting two million trees and shrubs to create the garden city. What background did he have as a foundation to achieve this substantial landscape success?

This month the Friends committee, in conjunction with the Australian Garden History Society, will present the lecture '*Weston – a life of horticulture*'. This lecture will be given by Dr John Gray OAM, a retired landscape architect who spent much of his professional career in Canberra. His last appointment was as the Director of Landscape Architecture for the National Capital Development Commission. Dr Gray has been researching Canberra's landscape history for many years and has lectured and published books and articles on the subject, as well as completing a doctoral thesis on horticulturist Charles Weston.

The lecture will be held at 6pm on Thursday 19 July in the Conference Room at the National Library. Entry fee is \$10 for Friends and Garden History Society members and \$15 for non-members, payable at the door, which includes light refreshments after the lecture. To book, please contact the Friends office on (02) 6262 1698 or email friends@nla.gov.au.



The 2007 Kenneth Myer lecture

This year's lecture with Michelle Grattan on 9 August 2007 has been extremely popular and the seating in the theatre is now booked out. In order to accommodate an extra 100 guests, the Library has decided to run a live video link to the conference room.

To book a seat in the conference room please call the Friends office on (02) 6262 1698. Any seats that may become available in the theatre will be first filled from the conference room bookings.

The Libraries of Alexandria

(This is the second in a series of articles about national libraries of the world)

One of the greatest cultural tragedies in history was the great conflagration that destroyed the Library of Alexandria in 47 BC. Or at least this was the conventional wisdom for centuries. The evidence suggests, however, that the Library survived the fires, lit by Julius Caesar to destroy his own ships in a battle against the native Macedonians, the flames subsequently spreading to buildings on the waterfront.

It is likely that the Library survived for several centuries but that by the eighth century it had ceased to exist in any meaningful way. The exact fate of its physical structure and collection is unknown.

Nevertheless, the Library has a deserved reputation for its vital contribution to the intellectual life of the ancient world. In his book on the *History of Ideas*, Peter Watson wrote that "By the beginning of the common era, Alexandria was a place where what could be known of Babylonian, Egyptian, Jewish and Greek thought was strenuously collected, codified, systematised, and contained. Alexandria became the foundation of the text-centred culture of the western tradition."

Many of the great scholars of the ancient world developed their reputations at or had connections to Alexandria, including Archimedes, Euclid, Eratosthenes, Heron, Herophilus, Antiochus, and Apollonius. Their works were of course held by the Library, although many are now lost.

Alexandria was founded by Alexander the Great in 331 BC and, according to tradition, it was Alexander himself that decided that a library should be erected there. About 295 BC, King Ptolemy I Soter empowered Demetrios Phalerus, a former Governor of Athens, to 'collect, if he could, all the books in the inhabited world'. To support his efforts, the king sent letters to 'all sovereigns and governors on earth', requesting that they furnish works by 'poets and prose-writers, rhetoricians and sophists, doctors and soothsayers, historians, and all others too'. "Agents were sent out to scout the cities of Asia, North Africa, and Europe, and were authorised to spend whatever was necessary."

The total number of works in the Library's collection is unknown and estimates vary to as high as one million by Carl Sagan in his series *Cosmos*. It seems likely that the Library had several hundred thousand scrolls, possibly between 500,000 and 700,000 in total.



Although the Library itself has vanished from history, it represented an idea about the pursuit of knowledge that survived the centuries. In 1974 a committee formed by the University of Alexandria decided to locate a reborn library on a plot of land along the seaside boulevard on the Mediterranean, a site near the probable location of the original library.

This proposal was taken up enthusiastically by the Egyptian Government, which conducted an international exhibition to design the Library. This was won by a Norwegian firm. The winning design features a cylindrical building 160 metres in diameter, set in a pool, which echoes the hieroglyph meaning 'sun'. The cylinder's glass-studded roof stands downward until part of it disappears below ground level.

Work commenced on constructing the Library in 1988, on a 35,000 hectare site. The magnificent new building was opened by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarek on 16 October 2002. The total cost was US\$220 million.



The Bibliotheca Alexandrina

The mission of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina is “To be a centre of excellence in the production and dissemination of knowledge and to be a place of dialogue, learning and understanding between cultures and peoples.” Its objectives are to be:

- the world's window on Egypt;
- Egypt's window on the world;
- a leading institution of the digital age; and, above all,
- a center for learning, tolerance, dialogue and understanding.

The dimensions of the Library certainly reflect its grand purpose. The main library building covers eleven levels with a total area of 85.405 m². The main reading area occupies seven levels, with a total size of 13.625 m², and can accommodate 2,000 readers. Other facilities include a rare books and young people's libraries, a library for the blind and visually impaired, a planetarium science centre, manuscripts and antiquities museums, and an auditorium and conference centre.

The most recent estimate is that the Library has nearly 266,000 books in its open and closed stacks, in excess of 15,000 multimedia items, plus an additional 131,000 items under processing. The Library's main means of acquisition is through donation and some critics of the Library claim that it will take 80 years before the Library reaches its full capacity of eight million volumes.

The Library is governed by a Board of trustees, including a number of international scholars, chaired by Mrs Mubarek, wife of the President. There is a Council of Patrons, which includes amongst its members the French President, the Queen of Spain, the Director-General of the UNESCO, as well as other international dignitaries. The Council is chaired by the Egyptian President or his nominee.

Like the National Library, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina has an active Friends group. They are described as a group of people from all over the world who share their humanity, love of libraries and learning, and a common vision of a superior and greater 21 century Moseion. The BA Friends support the library in its programs and services to become the cultural, educational, and artistic epicenter it aims to be." The Friends website is <http://www.bibalex.org/bafriends/index.aspx>

Although the Bibliotheca Alexandrina is quite obviously intended to be a successor to the great library of antiquity, it is certainly not the intention to simply revive the original institution. As a former project manager of the new structure said, "We are reviving the idea of the pursuit of knowledge that thrived in the ancient library. The old library encouraged the public to debate, create and invent. The new library is carrying that legacy forward."

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 July meeting will be held on 31 July and the book for discussion will be *Mr Pip* by Lloyd Jones.

If you would like to participate in the July Friends Book Club, please RSVP to Sharyn in the Friends Office on (02) 6262 1551 or sobrien@nla.gov.au. The National Library bookshop has copies of *Mr Pip* 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:

28 August - *The Memory Keeper's Daughter* by Kim Edwards

25 September – *Be Near Me* by Andrew O'Hagen

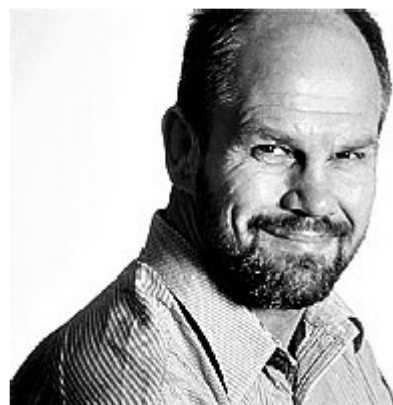
30 October – instead of the regular book club, this month we will host a talk by Dr Kim Huynh on *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini, followed by group discussion of the book.



Books Alive - Peter FitzSimons

As the 2007 ambassador for Books Alive, Peter FitzSimons will spearhead a month-long celebration of books and reading in the fifth national campaign. Peter will speak at the National Library of Australia on Saturday 4 August at 3pm.

Peter FitzSimons is one of Australia's best-loved authors. He is also one of the *Sydney Morning Herald's* and *Sun-Herald's* most popular columnists. In 2001, Peter was Australia's leading non-fiction author with biographies of Nancy Wake and Wallabies Captain John Eales. He is the author of seventeen books, including biographies of Nene King, Kim Beazley, Steve Waugh and Nick Farr-Jones. His new book, *The Ballad of Les Darcy*, is a biography of the legendary Australian boxer.



Books Alive is an Australian Government initiative that aims to encourage all Australians to experience the joys of reading. Every year, Books Alive runs a nationwide campaign to ignite the country's passion for books and make it easier to choose a really great 'read'. The Books Alive website is www.booksalive.com.au/

Bookings: (02) 6262 1271

Benefits of Membership

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Friends of the National Library of Australia Inc. Canberra ACT 2600
Telephone: 02 6262 1698 Fax: 02 6273 4493 Email: friends@nla.gov.au

Special Offers

ONLY IN AMERICA

Art Song Canberra's next concert, entitled ONLY IN AMERICA, will be given by two renowned Canberra artists, Louise Page, soprano, and Phillipa Candy, piano on Sunday 29th July at 3pm, at the Wesley Music Centre, National Circuit, Forrest

Songs by quintessential American composers and others who made their home there (including spirituals and songs by Foster, Barber, Ives, Gershwin and Rorem). The program will present the songs that were being sung as America was shaped – through the early days of British rule, Stephen Foster and the American Civil War, spirituals, the influence of immigration on classical song and the establishment of an American identity.

Friends of the National Library of Australia are entitled to admission at the discounted price of \$22. This includes program and refreshments. Tickets at the door ONLY. Enquiries: Oliver Raymond, 02 6295 9613 or artsong@cyberone.com.au

Coming Events July 2007

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

Weston – a life of horticulture Thursday 19 July 6:00-7:00pm Conference Room	Dr John Gray OAM will speak about the contribution of Charles Weston to the landscape of Canberra. Entry fee: \$10 Friends and Australian Garden History Society members, \$15 non-members Bookings: (02) 6262 1698 or friends@nla.gov.au
Friends Book Club Tuesday, 31 July 7:00-8:30 pm Friends Lounge	The Friends Book Club meet on the last Tuesday of each month at 7pm. This is a free event but attendees must be financial members of the Friends of the NLA. The book for discussion at the June meeting will be <i>Mr Pip</i> by Lloyd Jones. Bookings required on (02) 6262 1551 or friends@nla.gov.au

NLA talks and events

School Holiday Film - Peter and Pompey (1988) Monday 9 July 11:00am - 1:00pm Theatre Gold Coin Donation	DVD, 117 min, G rated The fate of a young Australian boy is somehow linked with that of a young Roman boy who had travelled to Australia by ship during the time of the Roman Emperor, Nero. Courtesy of the Australia Children's Television Foundation.
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<p>NAIDOC Week Film - The Tracker (2002) Tuesday 10 July 10 6:00 - 7:30pm Theatre Gold Coin Donation</p>	<p>DVD, 90 mins An Indigenous tracker guides three police troopers in search of an accused Aboriginal man. Staring award winning Actor David Gulpilil</p>
<p>School Holiday Film - Captain Johnno (1988) Tuesday 10 July 11:00am - 12:30pm Theatre Gold Coin Donation</p>	<p>DVD, 96mins, G Rated Captain Johnno is a young deaf boy who befriends Tony, an Italian fisherman in the small Australian fishing town they live in. Both feel outcast by the town and both share a great love of the sea, but when town is thrown into panic when Johnno goes missing, the only person who may be able to find him is Tony.</p>
<p>NAIDOC Week Film - Yolngu Boy (2001) Wednesday 11 July 6:00 - 7:30pm Theatre Gold Coin donation</p>	<p>DVD, 88min, M Rated An award winning movie about three Yolngu (Aboriginal) teenagers who as children share a dream of becoming great hunters. But as teenagers, life takes a different turn.</p>
<p>Winter Tales - Salvaging Archaeological Research Collections Sunday 29 July 2:30 - 4:00pm Conference Room</p>	<p>Archaeologist Mary Clare Swete Kelly talks about recording the prehistory of Australia and the Pacific and salvaging collections destroyed in the 2003 Canberra bushfires. In association with the Australian Women's Archives Project. Fee: \$15, afternoon tea included Bookings: (02) 6262 1161</p>
<p>Mozart at the Library Wednesday 1 August 6:00 - 8:00pm Theatre Free</p>	<p>An evening of music and discussion of Mozart's <i>Magic Flute (Die Zauberflote)</i> with renowned German conductor Barbara Rucha. Unique facets of this delightful opera are explored, combined with performances by soloists from ANU Opera's 2007 production. Bookings: (02) 6262 1271</p>
<p>Books Alive - Peter FitzSimons Saturday 4 August 3:00 - 4:00 pm Theatre</p>	<p>As the 2007 ambassador for Books Alive, Peter FitzSimons will spearhead a month-long celebration of books and reading in the fifth national campaign. Peter will speak at the National Library at 3pm, followed by a book signing. Bookings: (02) 6262 1271</p>

NLA exhibitions

<p>Cooee: Australia in the 19th Century Thursday 14 June to Sunday 9 September Exhibition Gallery</p>	<p>Evoking an era that saw the establishment of towns, the expansion into the countryside and the changes wrought by the discovery of gold in the middle of the century, Cooee uses drawings, watercolours and photographs to tell the story of who we were and how we lived then. The exhibition concentrates on everyday happenings - ordinary people working, shopping, going to church, travelling and spending their leisure time. It demonstrates the growth of the colonies and the hardships and successes of those who came to a new land hoping to build a better life for themselves.</p> <p>Drawn entirely from the National Library's pictorial collection, the exhibition gives a tantalising glimpse of the 19th century</p>
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	riches it holds.
<p>Mr Gilbert's Beautiful Parrakeet Friday 22 June to Sunday 14 October Visitor Centre</p>	<p>John Gilbert (1812–1845) was an English naturalist and explorer who met John Gould and travelled to Australia with him in 1838. While visiting the Darling Downs he discovered a parrot which he described in a letter to Gould as 'without exception the most beautiful of the whole tribe I have seen in Australia'. Sadly, there have been no confirmed sightings of Gilbert's 'beautiful parrakeet', later known as the paradise parrot, since 1927.</p> <p>This display, curated by Dr Penny Olsen of the School of Botany and Zoology at the ANU, focuses on the almost certainly extinct paradise parrot as a symbol of all those birds and animals which have ceased to exist due to hunting or habitat destruction. Visitors will have the opportunity to view some special items from the Library's collections such as the work of John Gould, Gregory Macalister Mathews and Gracius Broinowski and the watercolours of William Cooper, E.E. Gostelow and Neville Cayley.</p>
<p>a preponderance of aboriginal blood Friday 22 June to Sunday 14 October Visitor Centre</p>	<p>This exhibition by Judy Watson is an unbound artist's book of 16 etchings based on letters and documents, 'so potent and so oppressive', found in the Queensland State Archives. They have as their themes the exclusion of Indigenous Australians from the vote because they were 'predominantly' Aboriginal, hence the title. Constitutional Referendum in 1967 overwhelmingly approved a proposal to end constitutional discrimination against Aboriginal people.</p> <p>The artist has dedicated the suite of works to 'all those writers, artists, researchers, educators and librarians who have helped reveal the whitewash of our history'.</p> <p>This collection of prints, recently acquired by the National Library, is exhibited as a contribution to NAIDOC week, an annual Australia-wide celebration of Indigenous culture, organised by the National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee. The National NAIDOC Committee marks the 50th anniversary of NAIDOC this year with the theme: 50 Years: Looking Forward, Looking Blak.</p>