



***‘Going Platinum: Australian responses to the
reign of Queen Elizabeth II, 1952-2022’***

International online conference

**Modern Monarchy in Global Perspective
Research Hub**

Abstract Booklet



Where the exploited group is not physically distinguishable, the ruling group instead uses all sorts of cultural, social, and similar characteristics to justify its position.

Going Platinum Conference Paper Abstracts and Notes on Speakers (in order of the conference schedule)

Monday 20 June 9.45 a.m.

Panel 1 The Monarchy and Australia's Changing Civic Order

This panel will explore both the changing place of the monarchy in Australian civic life and its role as a source of continuity. The period between Queen Elizabeth's accession in 1952 and the republican debate of the 1990s saw minimal formal change in the place of the monarchy in the Australian political system and yet a profound shift in its informal place in the nation's civic life. These three presentations will explore this paradox and its wider implications for an understanding of modern Australia.

Queen Elizabeth II and the Official Honours System

Dr. Karen Fox, The Australian National University

From the Order of the British Empire to the Order of Australia, Australians have received a variety of distinctions from their monarch. The Queen's role in the country's official honours system, however, has received relatively little attention, and is frequently misunderstood. Yet as this paper will demonstrate, Queen Elizabeth II remains at the heart of Australia's honours system in 2022, despite the significant changes that have taken place in that system since the beginning of her reign. I will explore the Queen's role in the honours system through focusing on three aspects of that role: the conception of the Queen as the fount of honour, the Queen's involvement in investitures, and the Queen's responsibility in approving changes and amendments to the system.

Dr. Karen Fox is Senior Research Fellow in the National Centre of Biography and a research editor for the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. Karen joined the National Centre of Biography after completing her PhD at the ANU and her MA at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand. She is the author of *Māori and Aboriginal Women in the Public Eye: Representing Difference, 1950–2000* (2011) and *Honouring a Nation: A History of Australia's Honours System* (2022).

Royal Visits of the Hawke Era

Prof. Frank Bongiorno, The Australian National University

The period between the victory of the Hawke Government in March 1983 and Hawke's replacement by Paul Keating in December 1991 has been widely recognised as a period of both assertive nationalism and growing introspection – the former connected especially with sporting success, the latter with significant policy transformation and the debates over the Bicentenary. There was debate over a new flag and the Australia Acts sought to modernise the constitutional relationship between the United Kingdom and Australia, but limited discussion of a republic. What role did royal visits play during this decade of transformation? Members of Britain's royal family visited Australia during several of the era's critical moments, including in the Bicentennial year of 1988. How are we to interpret the cultural meanings of these occasions? The paper will suggest that despite the appearance of continuity, the Hawke era saw a significant decline in the salience of the monarchy in Australian civic life that was a precondition for the republican debate that followed in the 1990s.

Dr. Frank Bongiorno is Professor of History at the Australian National University, of which he is also a PhD graduate, and the author of *The Sex Lives of Australians: A History* (2012) and *The Eighties: The Decade That Transformed Australia* (2015). His *Schemers and Dreamers: A Political History of Australia* appears in November 2022 (La Trobe University Press/Black Inc.).

‘The unpleasant errand’: Paul Keating and the Queen at Balmoral, 1993
Prof. James Curran, *The University of Sydney*

On the evening of 18 September 1993 Paul Keating sat down in London to write a note for file on his meeting with the Queen at Balmoral that day. No Australian prime minister had ever arrived in the British capital with the express purpose of telling the Queen that the monarchy’s place in Australian national life was no longer relevant. Keating did. ‘In the poignancy of this moment’, he wrote, ‘the Queen sat with her dignity and the long history of her family and I with the aspirations and live mandate of a people’. The paper argues that Keating’s note offers an intriguing and surprisingly little noticed insight into his view of history, decoration and architecture, the monarchy and Australian aspirations for its place in the world. It also explores how Keating’s visit to the UK for this meeting witnessed a major shift in his public rhetoric about the republic. Putting aside his fiery narrative about British ‘betrayal’ at Singapore in 1942, he began to sketch a more inclusive, even at times affectionate, portrait of Britain’s wartime role and Australia’s British heritage.

Dr. James Curran is Professor of Modern History at Sydney University. He is the author of *Australia’s China Odyssey: From Euphoria to Fear* (NewSouth, 2022)



Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Medal 1953 given to Sir Robert Menzies. National Museum of Australia 1998.0010.0003

Monday 20 June 11.45 a.m.

Panel 2 The Queen and Country: Indigenous and rural Australians meet the British monarch

A uniquely intimate connection? the Queen and Central Australia
Megg Kelham, *Professional historian, Alice Springs*

This paper explores the character of ‘Centralian’ relationships with Queen Elizabeth II as revealed in several separate but inter-connected royal moments.

The first moment began when one of the Queen’s male relatives allegedly fathered a child who grew up on a central Australian cattle station. Claims that this “bastard king” (as one newspaper once put it) fathered two more illegitimate children are known to have fanned the flames of Centralian conversations about the Queen and her family well into the twenty-first century. That Indigenous Centralians have long believed in the veracity of this local kin connection may help explain local leaders’ intimately personal response to the Queen during her last visit, a response which positioned the Queen as an ally to, rather than an opponent of, Indigenous political interests.

That Centralian responses to the Queen are often different from those of non-Centralians can also be seen in the very different ways Centralians and non-Centralians have remembered (and not remembered) a Centralian inspired ballet performed for the Queen during her 1954 visit. All but forgotten in Central Australia, this ballet has attracted increasing interest amongst non-Centralians critical of the racial politics on which they claim the performance was based.

The sense that Centralian relationships with the Queen are different from those of other Australians is also evident in Centralian responses to the recent “re-discovery” and “re-broadcast” of one of the speeches the Queen made when she first visited the Northern Territory in 1963. As even die-hard anti-royalists have been

heard to observe, the Queen appears to know Centralians better than the vast majority of Australians who live elsewhere. The question remains, is this because her connection is personal?

Megg Kelham is a professional historian based in Alice Springs who has worked in the field of public history for twenty odd years.

Remembering Assimilation: Queen Elizabeth II's 1954 visit to Shepparton, Victoria *Dr. Samuel Furphy, The Australian National University*

In March 1954 Queen Elizabeth II visited the northern Victorian town of Shepparton as part of her Australian tour. After a short ceremony she was driven across the Goulburn River floodplains to Mooroopna to continue her tour. As the river was then in flood, a group of local Aboriginal people had moved their fringe camp on the river flats to higher ground adjacent to the causeway. When local authorities realised that the Queen would have a clear view of the makeshift camp from her vehicle, efforts were made to remove the Aboriginal residents to a discreet site nearby and to conceal the camp. One Aboriginal woman who grew up on the river flats later recalled that 'they hid the Koori camp behind a screen of vines and suckers so she wouldn't have to look at it'; according to other accounts a hessian bag fence was erected along the side of the road. The Queen's brief visit to the town subsequently became a focal point for campaigns by both Indigenous activists and concerned white citizens to improve the living conditions of Aboriginal people.

In this paper, I will explore the events surrounding the Queen's visit, considering its role in the origins of the Rumbalara Aboriginal housing project and more broadly in the reinvigoration of the Victoria Government's moribund assimilation policy. Drawing on local newspapers and Aboriginal oral histories, as well as broader scholarship on the Royal Tour and Aboriginal historical memory, I will argue that while the Queen's visit had some impact on campaigns to reform Aboriginal policy, it had a particular salience in Aboriginal activism and storytelling, in which context appeals to the higher authority of the British monarch had a long history.

Dr Samuel Furphy is a historian based at the Australian National University and a research editor for the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. His interests include Australian colonial and Aboriginal history, British Imperial history, and biography. He is the author of *Edward M. Curr and the Tide of History* (ANU Press, 2013) and co-editor of *Aboriginal Protection and Its Intermediaries in Britain's Antipodean Colonies* (Routledge, 2019).

Mon. 20 June 1.30 p.m.

Panel 3 The University of Sydney History Honours Student Presentations I

Tibby Aslund, Thomas Fotiou, Alexie Hamilton, Reilly O'Hagan, Javiera Scarratt and Emma Slee are fourth-year students in the History Honours programme at The University of Sydney. They are presenting individual "Object Histories" from their Semester 1, 2022 History Honours seminar, **Modern Monarchy and Material Culture: Global Perspectives**. All of these object histories relate to 'modern monarchy', but not all relate specifically to Queen Elizabeth II.



*Pennant commemorating the Royal Visit 1954
National Museum of Australia 2006.0031.0056*

Mon. 20 June 4 p.m.

Panel 4 Homes Away from Home: the Houses of Windsor

Professor Stuart Ward, University of Copenhagen

In April 1947, Princess Elizabeth broadcast her 21st birthday speech from South Africa to a worldwide audience, opening with a remark that carried special significance for overseas listeners: ‘As I speak to you today from Cape Town I am six thousand miles from the country where I was born. But I am certainly not six thousand miles from home’. Her words invoked Greater Britain in the nineteenth century tradition of Dilke and Seeley, unbounded by geography or statehood. The image of royalty equally ‘at home’ in each of the Monarchy’s many realms was fundamental to upholding the romance of empire in the post-World War II world, evoking a vast extended family simultaneously tuning in to their sovereign-in-waiting. Within a matter of a few short months, Elizabeth’s message was put literally into effect when the Kenyan colonial government offered her a home of her own in the foothills of Mt Kenya. Sagana Lodge was undoubtedly one of the more elaborate wedding gifts to Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip, presenting a striking contrast to Balmoral in its frontier simplicity and romantic log-cabin ambience. Although it is well known that the royal couple was in residence at Sagana at the time of George VI’s death in February 1952, historians have shown remarkably little curiosity about the circumstances that made them landowners in this improbable part of the world. The gift reveals much, not just about the Monarchy as a symbol of the enduring purchase of Greater Britain in the post-war era, but also about the (in)security of tenure of Kenyan settlers during the early onset of decolonization. With Kenyan independence in 1963, Sagana was handed back to the people of Kenya as an official Royal independence gift in December 1963. But that did not extinguish the dream of a peripatetic Monarchy. Into the 1960s, the British High Commission in Canada repeatedly lobbied Whitehall to facilitate an official Canadian Royal residence to counteract mounting public indifference; and in 1968, a similar obsession of Australia’s High Commissioner in London resulted in the (short-lived) selection of a sheep station, ‘Bolaro’, in the New South Wales Southern Highlands as a prospective Royal Household in the antipodes – and one which evidently met with the satisfaction of the Duke of Edinburgh. This paper examines the intersecting story of Sagana Lodge and the symbolic projection of a royal home as an index of the reach and resonance of the idea of Greater Britain in the decades of global decolonization.

Professor Stuart Ward is Professor of British imperial history and head of department at the Saxo Institute at the University of Copenhagen. His most recent book is *Embers of Empire in Brexit Britain* (with Astrid Rasch, eds, 2019).

Tuesday 21 June

9.45 a.m. Keynote Address 1

Royal secrets, the dismissal, and historical fictions: How the *Palace letters* case ended the Queen’s embargo and transformed history

Emeritus Professor Jenny Hocking, Monash University and Western Sydney University

In 2015, I commenced action in the Federal Court of Australia against the National Archives of Australia seeking the release of the secret letters between the Queen and the Governor-General, Sir John Kerr, relating to Kerr’s dismissal of the Whitlam government. After a five-year legal battle, the High Court of Australia found against the Archives in May 2020 in an emphatic 6:1 decision, leading to the full release of the letters against the wishes of the Queen, Government House, and the Morrison government. This landmark decision was a tremendous victory for history, for transparency, and for the right to public access to our own historical archives.

The Palace letters case and the letters themselves, provide an exceptional window on the vice-regal relationship - in which the Queen as a constitutional monarch must remain '[strictly neutral with respect to political matters](#)' at all times - during one of the most controversial episodes in our political history. Beyond the release of the letters, a more fundamental and far-reaching aspect of the Court's decision was that it explicitly overturned the longstanding 'convention of royal secrecy' which has routinely kept royal archives from public view.

This paper will explore the 'Palace letters' as a transformational political, legal and archival moment in the history of the dismissal of the Whitlam government in three key respects:

1. *The letters themselves*

The release of the letters dramatically recast the history of the dismissal, dispelling Buckingham Palace's denial that it 'had any part to play' in Kerr's decision to dismiss the government. This is now simply unsustainable. The letters reveal their extensive political discussions, including the use of the reserve powers to dismiss the government against the advice of the chief legal advisors the solicitor-general and the attorney-general. Just days before he dismissed Whitlam, the Queen assured Kerr that 'you have the power' and the letters, as Malcolm Turnbull has written, 'can be read as encouraging' Kerr to do so.

2. *The role of Archives*

The National Archives spent \$1.7 million unsuccessfully contesting the case, raising significant questions about its role in fighting efforts to secure public access to such important historic records; its adherence to the contentious 'convention of royal secrecy'; and its funding priorities at a time of intolerable delays in requests for access and the disintegration of irreplaceable records.

3. *'Royal secrecy' and the erasure of history*

The claimed 'convention of royal secrecy' has long been the signal means through which Buckingham Palace maintains control over its own history across the Commonwealth. The High Court's rejection of this powerful non-disclosure mechanism is an immensely significant part of the Court's judgement, yet it has been little remarked upon. It creates a fundamental distortion of history entirely antithetical to a modern parliamentary democracy. Australia is alone in having successfully challenged that arcane notion, bringing the actions of the monarch into the public domain, as they should be.

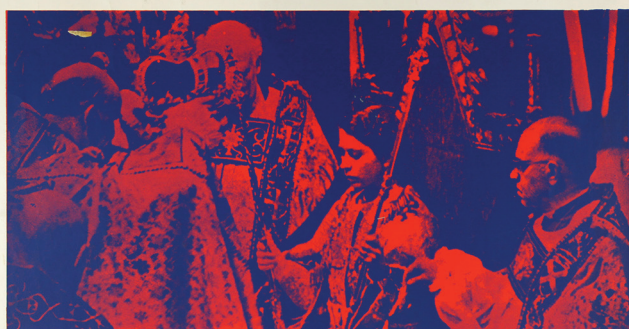
Professor Jenny Hocking is an award-winning author, Emeritus Professor at Monash University and inaugural Distinguished Whitlam Fellow at the Whitlam Institute, Western Sydney University. She is the author of several books including the acclaimed two-volume biography of Gough Whitlam, short-listed for numerous literary awards including the Prime Minister's Literary Awards, *The Age Book of the Year* and the National Biography Award, and winner of the Fellowship of Australian Writers' Barbara Ramsden Award.

Unknown artist

Screen print on paper

56cm x 76cm

Chau Chak Wing Museum UA2014.322



Where the exploited group is not physically distinguishable, the ruling group instead uses all sorts of cultural, social, and similar characteristics to justify its position.

Jenny's latest book *The Palace Letters: The Queen, the governor-general, and the plot to dismiss Gough Whitlam* tells the story of this remarkable archival research journey and legal battle to secure the release of the Palace letters, and their impact on the history of the dismissal of the Whitlam government. It was published in November 2020 with a foreword by Malcolm Turnbull and has been described as 'a political thriller', an 'absorbing courtroom drama', and 'vital Australian history'. *The Palace Letters* was awarded a commendation in the Mander Jones Awards and a Special Commendation in the 2020 Henry Mayer Award for best book on Australian politics.

Tues. 21 June 11.45 a.m.

Panel 5 Royal visits, community and memory

Crown and Commonwealth: Robert Randolph Garran and the 1954 Royal Visit

Colin Milner, *The Australian National University*

This paper draws on research towards a biographical study of the constitutional lawyer and public servant Robert Randolph Garran (1867-1957). Garran was an important figure during the early decades of the Australian Commonwealth, from its establishment in 1901, and remained active in public affairs until the end of his long life. His response to Queen Elizabeth II's first visit to Australia, in 1954, offers us a distinctive perspective from that older generation of Australians who had also experienced the creation of the British Commonwealth of Nations during their lifetimes. Garran spoke and wrote publicly about the significance of the visit; it was a 'spectacular climax to the development of Dominion status' in his opinion. He saw a connection between 'the enthusiasm and affection shown' to 'the Queen and her gallant husband', and the Balfour Declaration at the 1926 Imperial Conference and the Statute of Westminster of 1931. The paper will explore Garran's view of the Crown in the context of those two Commonwealths, Australian and British, and reflect on the tradition he represents, one which reaches back to the time of the American Revolution and is an element in the contemporary republican debate in Australia.

Colin Milner is a PhD candidate in ANU's School of History, preparing a thesis on Robert Randolph Garran. He holds degrees in Arts (Honours in History) and Law from the University of Sydney and is admitted as a Barrister of the Supreme Court of New South Wales. Colin has authored three published history chapters and was a contributor to WildBear Entertainment's documentary series *Rise and Fall: The Turning Points of World War II*. He is also involved in the editing of a volume on 'Australia and Nauru: 1945-68' for the *Documents on Australian Foreign Policy* series published by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Planning, staging and remembering 'that glorious day': The Queen's visit to Bondi 1954

Emeritus Professor Donna Lee Brien, *Central Queensland University and Australian Catholic University*

This presentation is prompted by the commemorative medal given to children of Sydney's Waverley Council upon the visit of the Queen and Prince Phillip to the Municipality on the afternoon of Saturday 6 February 1954. While the specially staged Royal Surf Carnival at Bondi Beach the Royal couple attended has received some attention from historians, less consideration has been paid to the careful planning for the day, the controversies stirred by the seaside pageant and how the Royals' visit has been remembered. This presentation discusses how, although considerable boosterism was evident in the planning for this event and its descriptions in the press, the occasion exposed the environmental pollution of the beach, the physical decay of the Bondi Pavilion and the dirty decrepitude of the surrounding suburb, all of which it was suggested would be an "affront" to the Queen. The lead up to this visit also reanimated the long-lived battle between Manly and Bondi for recognition as Sydney's best beach, as well as allowing some party-political squabbling to be widely aired. Using contemporary press reports and photographs, archival material and examples of material culture, including the children's medal, this presentation reflects on the planning and

preparation for the visit, what transpired on that afternoon and how this event has been reported, celebrated, commemorated, memorialised, remembered and revisited in the intervening decades. Brief comparisons with later visits to Bondi Beach by other members of the Royal family across the next six decades assist in illuminating not only Australians' changing attitudes to the Queen and her consort and the monarchy itself, but also in revealing lesser-known aspects of Waverley and Bondi Beach's history.

Dr. Donna Lee Brien, BEd (Deakin), GCHed (UNE), MA(Prelim) (USyd), MA (Writing) (Research) (UTS), PhD (QUT) is Emeritus Professor of Creative Industries at Central Queensland University, Australia, and currently undertaking a second PhD at the Australian Catholic University. Donna's latest books are *Speculative Biography: Experiments, Opportunities and Provocations*, edited with Kiera Lindsey (Routledge, 2022), *Writing the Australian Beach: Local Site, Global Idea*, edited with Elizabeth Ellison (Palgrave, 2021) and *The Shadow Side of Nursing: Paradox, Image and Identity*, authored with Margaret McAllister (Routledge, 2020). Donna is the co-editor of the *Australasian Journal of Popular Culture*.

The British monarchy, celebrity, and settler colonialism

Dr. Holly Randell-Moon, *Charles Sturt University*

This presentation considers how the treatment of the British Royal Family as celebrities simultaneously maintains and displaces the white diasporic ties between Commonwealth settler nations. The media production and consumption of the House of Windsor in terms of celebrity culture is a crucial way in which the British monarchy is legitimised as an important part of civil and public life in settler countries such as Australia and New Zealand. This presentation focuses on print news reporting of two state visits by Prince William to Australia and New Zealand in 2010 and 2011. I examine how this Royal visit mediates perceptions of the monarch and Crown. As part of this reporting, I consider the media representation of protocols of sovereign welcome and recognition by and for the Royal Family and Gadigal and Māori peoples in terms of their contribution to a civic polity that normalises settler durability. Although Royal visits are enabled by white diasporic links between settler countries and the United Kingdom, I argue that media tropes of celebrity aura and divine charisma function to ex-nominate whiteness and race from media reporting on the British Royal Family. The celebritisation of constitutional monarchy has the effect of obscuring the racial and religious power that authorises constitutional monarchy as well as these states' settler colonial histories.

Dr. Holly Randell-Moon is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Indigenous Australian Studies, Charles Sturt University, Australia. Her research focuses on cultural geography, settler colonisation, and media biopower. With Ryan Tippet, she is coeditor of *Security, Race, Biopower: Essays on Technology and Corporeality* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016). She co-edits the *Somatechnics* journal.

Eliza Campbell & Judith Lodwick
Queen Drops In: Lands Right!
Work on paper - printed in colour,
from three stencils
75.7cm x 50.8cm
Chau Chak Wing Museum
UA2014.212



Tuesday 2 p.m.

Keynote Address 2

Popular Royalism, The Republican Debate and Emotional Politics

Professor Jane Lydon, University of Western Australia

Debates about relations between Britain and Australia inevitably lead towards proposals for an Australian Republic, constituting a vision of independence from Britain. As historian Mark McKenna suggested in his 1996 book *The Captive Republic*, a republic has always been considered ‘the end point of the colonies’ political development – an ideal that would be fully realised when Australia finally matured into an independent nation’. Yet for more than two centuries the notion of inevitability has been used to delay the coming of a republic as much as to urge its arrival. While the notion of a republic has been elastic and emotional, it has not always entailed anti-British feeling- on the contrary, Australian nationalism and imperialism have most usually been intertwined and mutually supportive. This paper explores these emotional ties and particularly the affective power of the Royal Family, representing a domestic ideal that continues to evoke loyalty, admiration and love. But popular royalism and the deeply gendered meanings of the monarchy are overlooked and disparaged within the Australian political sphere. This emotional configuration highlights a broader challenge or ‘double bind’ for women who wish to contest the masculine sphere but are expected to behave in stereotypically female ways to do so. Serious consideration of such cultural meanings is a glaring absence in the present debate, severely limiting the republican movement’s capacity to engage those Australians who remain attached to the monarchy. This binary also undermines Indigenous claims, which are often dismissed for being ‘too emotional’. Today many consider that visions of a national future must begin with reconciliation with Indigenous people, and that the Australian nation must recognize and address Indigenous views regarding constitutional change. Such relations and identities have been defined by emotions, and the movement of empathy between important emotional communities – the imperial relationship represented by the Queen, the Australian nation, and Aboriginal people – continue to structure debates about identity and the future.

Professor Jane Lydon is the Wesfarmers Chair of Australian History at The University of Western Australia. Her most recent books include [Antislavery and Australia: No Slavery in a Free Land? \(Routledge, 2021\)](#) and [Imperial Emotions: The Politics of Empathy across the British Empire \(Cambridge University Press, 2020\)](#).

4 p.m. Film Discussion: Professor Emeritus Robert Aldrich interviews Dr. Trevor Graham about his 2010 film ‘A Royal Romance’

Film trailer available here: <https://vimeo.com/713586877>

Professor Emeritus Robert Aldrich recently retired as Professor of European History at The University of Sydney. He has published widely in the fields of French, colonial, and gay history as well as, most recently, on monarchy and colonialism. His new book *The Colonial World: A History of European Empires, 1780s to the Present*, co-authored with Andreas Stucki, will be published by Bloomsbury in January 2023

Dr. Trevor Graham is a Sydney-based filmmaker and former Commissioning Editor for Documentary at SBS TV who has been making films since 1983. He earned a Doctorate in Creative Arts at the University of Technology Sydney and in 1997 won the Australian Film Institute’s award for Best Documentary. His many films include documentaries of Indigenous Australia such as *Ceremony*, *Mabo: Life of an Island Man* and *The First Australians* as well as films with a culinary ‘flavour’ such as *Make Hummus Not War* and *Monsieur Mayonnaise*. He is currently touring Europe promoting his latest film *Chef Antonio’s Recipes for Revolution*.

Wednesday 22 June 9.30 a.m.

Panel 6 Material Culture and the Queen: Symbols and Objects from Australia's National Collections

Coronation fever: Australian experiences of the crowning of Queen Elizabeth II

Emily Catt, National Archives of Australia

Dr. Laura Cook, National Museum of Australia

Drawing on the collections of the National Archives of Australia and the National Museum of Australia, this paper will examine Australian engagement with the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in Westminster Abbey in 1953. What do a selection of records and objects reveal about the Commonwealth's government's selection of official attendees, conveyance of information, and initiatives surrounding the distribution of souvenirs? Illustrated by photographs of seldom-seen archives and objects from the NMA's Daphne Mabbott and Cecil Ballard collections, and the ABC and Prime Minister & Cabinet office records held by the NAA, the authors will examine how Australians engaged with the festivities, both at home and in England.

Emily Catt has been a staff member at the National Archives of Australia since 2012 and a member of the curatorial team since 2015. She has curated *Spy: Espionage in Australia*, *Marion: the other Griffin*, as well as working on many other projects. She is also a PhD candidate at the Australian National University.

Dr. Laura Cook is the Australian diplomatic collection curator at the National Museum of Australia. Her interests lie in national identity as reflected in material and visual culture relating to Australians and the monarchy, and Australia's transnational histories and collections.

Queen Elizabeth II in the Rare Books and Music collections of the National Library of Australia

Dr Susannah Helman, National Library of Australia

The National Library of Australia maintains and develops a comprehensive collection that documents Australian life and society. It holds approximately 10.25 million physical collection items and 2.4 petabytes of digital material. Among these collections are many items relating to Queen Elizabeth II.

The Library has 60 separate music catalogue records relating to the Queen, dating from 1927 to c.2005. The earliest holdings are sheet music, copies of the lullaby *Princess Betty's Lullaby* by Australian composer Reginald A.A. Stoneham, published in the year of both Princess Elizabeth's first birthday in 1927, and the visit of the Duke and Duchess of York to Australia to open Parliament House in Canberra. Some record music performed at ceremonies and events, while others were published for commercial release, overseas and in Australia, reflecting popular interest in the monarch and her life and family. Holdings include music featured in and celebrating the Coronation in 1953, the Royal Visit to Australia in 1954 and William Lovelock's *Royal Fanfare* (1973) written to be performed 'For the arrival of Her Majesty to open the Sydney Opera House'. The music had different audiences—the amateur at home, and the audiences of showbands and orchestras. The Library also holds a number of rare books associated with the Queen. One example is a miniature copy of the New Testament, published



A crowd of schoolgirls greet Queen Elizabeth II at the MCG in 18 April 1970, Royal Collection Trust RCIN 2006983.

in 2000, and thought to be the only King James Version issued by licence of the Queen in Scotland. It is one of the 300-strong miniature book collection of former librarian Gerrit Stafford.

In her paper Susannah will explore how these collections and their contexts suggest evolving and different Australian audiences and attitudes to Queen Elizabeth II throughout her life and reign.

Dr Susannah Helman is Rare Books and Music Curator at the National Library of Australia. She has worked at the National Library of Australia since 2009, until 2021 in the Exhibitions Section. She has a PhD in History from the University of Queensland.

Seal of Approval: The Queen and her role as seen through the Great Seal of the Commonwealth of Australia

Patrick Ferry, National Archives of Australia

The National Archives of Australia holds many documents sealed with the Great Seal of the Commonwealth of Australia. This is one of the most significant ceremonial objects in Australia associated with the reign of Queen Elizabeth II. Drawing on ancient precedents and devices stretching back to Anglo-Saxon England and earlier, the Great Seal is still used to authenticate some of the most significant documents relating to the exercise of royal power in Australia, including the appointment of governors general, proclamations issued by the Governor General; and the establishment of royal commissions. Whereas British Great Seals have traditionally borne iconography originating in feudal times to invoke the monarch's majesty and power, the Queen's first Australian Great Seal presented a particular image of the monarch's role derived from the Australian Constitution. The Great Seal was redesigned in 1973 to reflect fundamentally changed conceptions of and responses to the Queen and her role in Australia, in particular, to re-imagine her as the 'Queen of Australia', distinct from her role as 'Queen of England'. Although other symbols of the Queen and her role in Australia have diminished in importance over the past seventy years, the Great Seal has nonetheless retained its legal function and purpose. In recent years though, it has become the basis of a conspiracy theory: with groups as diverse as anti-taxation campaigners and right-wing micro-parties arguing that the changes to the Queen's title and the Great Seal in 1973 rendered invalid all subsequent Federal government laws and actions.

Patrick Ferry is the State Manager, Victoria at the National Archives of Australia in Melbourne. Patrick is a graduate of the University of Sydney; his Honours thesis was awarded the University medal. In 2020, the Royal Historical Society of Victoria and Public Record Office awarded Patrick the Victorian Community History Award for Best Local History Project for his most recent publication: *Blood, Toil, Tears and Sweat: Remembering the Pakenham District's WW2 Service Personnel, 1939 – 1945*.

Wed. 22 June 2022 11.30 a.m.

Panel 7 The University of Sydney History Honours Student Presentations II

Alexandra Frost and Jim Medcalf are fourth-year students in the History Honours programme at The University of Sydney. They are presenting individual "Object Histories" from their Semester 1, 2022 History Honours seminar, **Modern Monarchy and Material Culture: Global Perspectives**. These object histories relate to 'modern monarchy', but not all relate specifically to Queen Elizabeth II.



Cover feature image: Souvenir flag of the Royal visit to Australia, 1954, National Museum of Australia 2006.0031.0060