



ISAA

National Newsletter

Independent Scholars Association of Australia Inc

The Boab tree is self-sustaining; it draws on its own resources.

Upside down it flourishes against the grain.

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MEMBERSHIP

\$100—Full members
\$65—Concessional
\$120—Household
\$80—Concessional Household

President's Report

The 2018 Annual Conference was held on 11 and 12 October. The theme was *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights – 70 Years On*. Although attendance was low feedback from participants was very positive. The Conference Committee, chaired by Christine Jennett, is to be congratulated on developing an excellent program of speakers. Professor Emeritus Trevor Parmenter AM presented the Annual Lecture. Professor Parmenter's topic was *Human Rights and Disability: The Promise and the Reality*. His paper will be available on the ISAA website later this year.

In conjunction with the Conference, National Library staff prepared a display of pamphlets on the French Revolution as part of the Conference program. It complemented the Conference theme perfectly and attendees were full of praise about the documents displayed.

The results of the elections at the Annual General meeting were as follows

- Christine Yeats was re-elected President (for her last year)
- Ingrid Moses was elected Vice President (for her last year on Council)
- Wal Collins was re-elected Treasurer (for his last year),
- Christine Jennett continues as Immediate Past President
- Shirley Randell and Alan Roberts continue as ordinary members. Three positions for ordinary members were left vacant. Rodney Nillsen and Lesley Potter have agreed to be appointed to two of these vacancies.

The highlight of the year was the implementation of the ISAA Research Grants Program. The inaugural grant was awarded to Dr Lesley Potter for her work on the history of maternity services in Glebe in the nineteenth century using data from NSW Births and Deaths Registers. The ISAA Research Grants are an important initiative, aimed at encouraging new members and in engaging with existing members who are undertaking research. There is a call for the next round of grants in this Newsletter.

I wish all ISAA members the best for the festive season and the New Year. I trust that you have a happy and safe break.

Christine Yeats President ISAA National Council

ISAA Chapter Reports

NSW Chapter Report

The NSW Chapter Committee held its last meeting for the year on 15 November. It will next meet on 21 February 2019.

The Open Forum, which was held on 25 September, featured ISAA member Isabel Deeble and former teacher and professional actor Geoffrey Usher. The topic was *Charles Dickens and his performed readings: a new art form*. It was a joint event with the Royal Australian Historical Society.

Upcoming events

The next WIP will be held on 12 March 2019 at History House and will be a joint event with the RAHS. Dr Diane Solomon Westerhuis will speak on *A Walk Through Time and The Archives* focussing on her heritage study on Laurieton, NSW.

The first Open Forum for 2019 will be held on 9 May 2019 at History House – a joint event with the RAHS. Dr Beverley Sherry will be the presenter and her topic will be *Milton in Stained Glass*.

The NSW Chapter's 2017 and 2018 Annual Seminar Proceeding have been published and distributed to NSW members. Work is underway on the next Bulletin. NSW members are encouraged to consider submitting book, film and exhibition reviews. The *Books that Shaped Me* is proving popular with members.

The Public Affairs Reading Group met on 1 November to discuss the September 2017 monograph *Asylum by Boat: Origins of Australia's Refugee Policy* by Claire Higgins. The Chapter's Christmas Party will be held on Wednesday 12 December at History House

Christine Yeats Chair ISAA NSW Chapter

ACT Chapter Report

21 June, Dr Justin Garrick on the challenges and opportunities in contemporary education from the perspective of Canberra Grammar School [of which he is Principal].

11 July, Dr Campbell Macknight on Australian prehistorian FD McCarthy's work in Malaya, 1937–38.

19 July, Dr Anthea Roberts on whether International Law is really international.

8 August, Darren Le Roux on urban parks and how they might be made more attractive to wildlife.

16 August, John Moses on Germany's role in causing the Great War.

12 September, Dr Richard Reid on Writing the history of the Irish National Association, Sydney's 20th-century Irish Republicans, 1915-2015.

20 September, Dr Keith Powell on an Overland trip from India to England in 1959.

25 October, Guided tour led by John Hood of the National Museum of Australia's exhibition 'Rome: City and Empire'.

14 November, Douglas Newton on saving OUR Private Ryan: one shell-shocked ANZAC and the search for peace in the Great War.

28 November, Professor Helmut Bley on the German Social Democratic leader August Bebel's efforts to counter the expansionist influence of the Army on German foreign policy in the lead-up to the Great War.

6 December, the ACT **Christmas party and AGM** at the home of Peronelle and Jim Windeyer, Red Hill. Professor Ingrid Moses organised catering.

ISAA Research Grants

Two research grants at \$500 each are available for current members of ISAA and those taking up membership by 31 January 2019. Applicants must not be in full-time employment.

Applicants are invited to submit an application (1) outlining the research they intend to do; (2) how the grant will assist them in their research, providing a timeline and indication of expenditure; and (3) confirming that this research is not otherwise funded.

Successful applicants must commit to writing a short piece for a future Newsletter (ca 350 words) explaining how the grant has assisted them in their research. It will be expected that the grant funds will be expended within twelve months of their receipt.

Applications to be sent to ISAA's Admin Officer Meredith Hinchliffe (info@isaa.org.au) or by post :

Meredith Hinchliffe
Administrative Officer
Independent Scholars Association of Australia Inc
GPO Box 268
CANBERRA, ACT 2601

Applications close 14 February 2019. The ISAA Council will select successful applicants at its meeting on 28 February 2019 and the funds are available from 1 April 2019.

Rome: City and Empire National Museum of Australia

A number of ISAA members recently visited the *Rome- City and Empire* exhibition to view Roman objects from the British Museum. The exhibition will be featured at the National Museum until February 3rd, 2019. <http://www.nma.gov.au/exhibitions/rome-city-and-empire>. The following is a report by ACT ISAA member John Hood

How do we understand a people and a civilisation that spanned some one thousand years, particularly when our understanding depends on the random survival of artefacts from that era? One answer is that we have an unparalleled body of literature, representing the authentic voices of the ancient Romans. Latin has influenced the modern world in many ways, including the words we use today. This is exemplified at the entrance to the exhibition, where four Latin terms are featured - *IMPERATOR*, *EXERCITVS*, *CIVES*, *DEI* - signifying four aspects of Roman civilization and related English versions of these concepts. The four concepts are each represented by the objects on display and are worthy of careful study. In particular, these terms prompt three particular questions: What was the Roman Empire? How did it change the people who lived within its dominion? How did it change the Romans themselves?

IMPERATOR, derived from *imperium*, usually translated as 'emperor' and 'empire' but better rendered as *authority*, the authority of Roman law and administration, plus *EXERCITVS*, the Latin for 'army', giving us *exercise* in English, meaning *practiced* or *trained*, are fundamental terms for answering the question 'what was the Roman empire?' The Romans called themselves the 'sons of Mars', and it was the Roman army that created the empire, defended that empire and administered it. The exhibition has an illuminated map that illustrates the vast time scale in which the empire grew. The exhibits that relate specifically to the Roman army, now held by the British Museum, date from the fourth century of expansion, when Britain was conquered during the time of Claudius. Note the citizenship diploma, testifying to the military career of Gemellus, who was born in Pannonia, modern Hungary and served for twenty five years in the garrison of Britain. Also note a tile bearing the image of a wild boar and the inscription *Leg XX legio vincensimus*, Twentieth Legion, as well as weapons. Britain, apparently an unsettled and wild province, was garrisoned by four legions, a significant number compared to other provinces.

CIVES, derived from *civitas*, 'city', gives us 'citizen' and an answer to the question 'How did it change the people who lived within its dominion?' The rights and obligations of Roman citizenship were not restricted to a privileged ruling class but were instead extended steadily to the other cities and peoples of the empire, creating the idea of a society united by the rule of law, perhaps too the lasting notion of European unity. The importance of long distance trade is shown by two beautiful glass bowls, both made in Italy but found far apart, one in Syria and the other in Scotland.



A mosaic from the Exhibition

A statue of the maid of Cyrene killing a lion is indicative of the existence in every city of the empire of political organisation paralleling that of the city of Rome itself - with citizen assemblies, elected magistrates, and a senate of former magistrates.

Finally, the Latin *DEI*, giving English the term 'divine,' provides an answer to 'How did the empire change the Romans themselves?' A considerable number of exhibits reveal the original pantheonic nature of Roman religion, particularly where it pertains to death and the afterlife. These beliefs become steadily altered by contact with other belief systems, particularly from the eastern Mediterranean. In particular, the cult of Mithras, represented by a statue of Mithras killing the bull, was derived from Persian Zoroastrianism, and became very popular amongst soldiers. The most fundamental change, however, is shown by items illustrating the rise of Christianity. For example, a number of cabinets contain pairs of spoons, often representing baptismal gifts, with dual inscriptions of 'Saul' and 'Paul' indicating the conversion of St Paul. Above all, however, the adoption of Christianity is shown by the disappearance of funerary urns, testifying to the pagan burial practice of cremation, and the adoption of sarcophagi, indicating the Christian practice of inhumation.

At the very end of the exhibition is a cabinet containing two painted images from Roman Egypt. These images are extremely evocative. We can gaze into the eyes of two individuals who actually lived in Roman times, whose lives were rooted in the existence of empire, and who died centuries before we ourselves stepped forward to live our own lives in a world vastly different than their Roman life.

The National Museum's exhibition is well worth a visit and is enthusiastically recommended.

Members' Presentations and Publications

Sybil Jack

Katerina Jagellonica and Sophie of Mecklenburg-Güstrow: Power, Piety, and Patronage' in Valerie Schutte and Estelle Paranque eds, *Forgotten Queens in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Political Agency, Myth-Making, and Patronage*, Routledge 2018

Ian Keese

Editor and contributor *Caring for Education 1891-2018; Celebrating 125 years of the Teacher's Guild of NSW*. WriteHeart Press, 2018

Ann Moyal

'The Origin of Species Comes to Australia', *Unbound* September 2018

'Alfred Edward (Ted) Ringwood', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, A.N.U..'

<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/ringwood-alfred-edward-ted-857/text>

Douglas Randell

Presentations

'What the Heck is Framboesia Tropica' at the Travel Medicine Alliance 13th Annual Conference, Melbourne, Victoria, 28 July 2018

'Challenges of Working in Remote Areas' at the Australian and New Zealand Society of Occupational Medicine NSW/ACT Chapter, Canberra, ACT, 12 August 2018

'Strategies to Reduce Drug Diversion' at the 9th Annual Correctional Services Healthcare Conference, Melbourne, Victoria, 14 September 2018

'Private Sector Partnerships in Emergency Response' at the Australasian College of Health Service Management, 2018 Health Leadership Congress, Darwin, Northern Territory, 20 September 2018

'Human Rights Principles in Contemporary Disaster Response' at the Independent Scholars Association of Australia 2018 National Conference: The Declaration of Human Rights – 70 Years On, Canberra, ACT, 11 October 2018

Shirley Randell

Presentations

'Why Gender Equality Matters to Achieving all Seventeen Sustainable Development Goals' at the United Nations Association of Australia Annual General Meeting, Sydney, NSW, 11 August 2018

'Living and Learning in Rwanda' at the Sydney Lyceum Club, Sydney, NSW, 17 September 2018

'Human Rights System and Mechanism in Africa' at the Independent Scholars Association of Australia National Conference: The Declaration of Human Rights – 70 Years On, Canberra, ACT, 11 October 2018

'Women on Top in Rwanda: Getting there! Staying there!' at the Women Chiefs of Enterprise National Forum, Hobart, Tasmania, 12 October 2018

'Reflections on Living in Rwanda' at the Older Women's Network, NSW Branch AGM, Sydney, NSW, 25 October 2018

'Report on the UN Commission on the Status of Women, CSW 62' at the Zonta International Sydney Breakfast Club, Sydney, NSW, 6 November 2018

'Dog-Song: Walking the neural pathways' to launch Lyn Connellan's Art Exhibition, Burnie Regional Art Gallery, Tasmania, 9 November 2018

'Lessons in Leadership I have Learned in 60 Years in the Workforce' at Institute of Managers and Leaders Leadership Impact Event for presentation of Sir John Storey Leadership Awards, Sydney, 15 November 2018

Speaker with Dr Babera Chacha on 'Challenges of the Implementation of Human Rights Education in Africa: the case of a common core course at Laikipia University, Kenya' at the Ninth International Conference on Human Rights Education, University of Western Sydney, NSW, 26 November 2018

Christine Yeats

On 27 November Christine Yeats was the speaker at the Morning Tea hosted by the Mayor of Randwick to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the *Women's Legal Status Act 1918*, which was passed by the New South Wales Legislative Assembly on 26 November 1918

News from South Australia

ISAA members will be pleased to know that efforts are continuing to re-form an ISAA Group in South Australia. At a meeting held at the Mitcham Community Centre on Thursday 27 September 2018 Peter Nixon, Paul Kruger and Mike Peitsch were present and there were apologies from Diana Chessell, Dame Roddy, Stuart Hill, Virginia Kenny and Jane Nelson. The group had a free ranging discussion exploring the similarities and differences between their fields of interest. Peter Nixon reported that 'Like the previous meetings, even though there were only three of us we could have continued for much longer than the allocated time!' It is hoped that we can have a report on development of the South Australian Group of Independent Scholars and the activities of its members in the next Newsletter.

ISAA 2018 Conference Report -Day 1

This year's opening address was given by **Kevin Bradley**, Assistant Director-General Australian Collections and Reader Services. Kevin's background has been in collecting oral history and he spoke of the importance of digital preservation of this material, currently in a variety of formats, to keep up with changing technologies.

The Australian Government has recognised the national impact of the Library's digital library and allocated \$16.4 million through the Public Service Modernisation Fund to the Library over the period 2016–17 to 2019–20, to upgrade critical digital infrastructure and increase access to Australian content via Trove. This has included digitisation of maps that can be downloaded in high resolution, and the digitisation of the oral history and folklore collections which are currently on reel-to-reel or cassette tapes.

In February this year Rebecca Bateman was appointed the Indigenous Curator and she has highlighted the library's 'Bringing Them Home' oral history collection, which holds more than 300 spoken-word testimonies from both Indigenous people who were part of the Stolen Generation and administrators of the child-removal policy.

Catriona Bryce, who is the Trove Outreach Officer, showed how searches for Human Rights could be done from various sources: Newspapers; People and Organisations; and Digitised journals including the Bulletin. She admitted that currently finding materials in digitised journals was more difficult than in newspapers, but she gave a variety of hints to help in doing so. Catriona's presentation was circulated to all members on 14th October and I would strongly recommend studying it.

Katrina Fanning from the Winnunga Nimmitjah Aboriginal health and Community Services spoke from her own experience in the ACT on *Human Rights and Indigenous Peoples in Australia*.. Currently Katrina is the Director of Coolamon Advisors, an Indigenous consulting firm based in Canberra. Previously she has held Senior Executive roles in Government agencies but felt limited working within the Public Service, especially during the Federal Intervention.

She began by outlining some of the statistics of Indigenous disadvantage including the far higher rates of heart problems, diabetes and respiratory illness, as well as incarceration rates up to 18 times of the non-Indigenous population.

She stressed the importance of Indigenous Australians being able to take control of their own lives in the phrase; 'Do it with us – not to us.' Addressing the high rates of those in prisons was a high priority: 'Our children, our ways' was the approach followed.



Katrina Fanning

Pera Wells' paper, read by Christine Jennett, was on *The Role of the Commonwealth of Nations in Promoting Human Rights*. Pera is the Vice-President of the Australian Council for Human Rights Education and in 1985 had been appointed as the first director of the Human Rights Unit. This had been initiated during the Melbourne Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in 1981 when Malcolm Fraser was Prime Minister. However there were many difficulties such as establishing a point of contact in each country. The 2011 CHOGM held in Perth revealed some of the problems when the summit failed to reach an agreement on the Eminent Persons Group which made recommendations for reforms in the area of human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

In seeing the role of the Commonwealth today mention was made of the British organisation Interights which aims to provide access to tools and resources needed by human rights advocates

Kate Waterford spoke on *Building a culture of solidarity: the work of Amnesty International*. Kate has been a non-executive Director of Amnesty International Australia since 2014, is a current PhD candidate at the ANU College of Law and is employed as Special Counsel by Maliganis Edwards Johnson, a Canberra law firm.

Kate began by relating the founding of Amnesty in 1961 when two Portuguese students were jailed just for raising a toast to freedom. In response, a British lawyer named Peter Benenson penned the article 'The Forgotten Prisoners', for the UK's *Observer* newspaper. Since then Amnesty has become a global organisation, and in 1977 was awarded the Nobel Peace prize.

Challenges still remain. Nations are turning inwards and, in cases like that of Australia, focus on rights in other countries without looking at routine violations within. Two areas of focus in Australia are Offshore Processing and the rights of refugees, and Youth Justice, particularly among the Indigenous young people, where children as young as ten are being locked up in jail.

Shirley Randell AO is a member of the ISAA Council and an Adjunct Professor in Education at the University of Canberra and a Conjoint Professor in Education at the University of Newcastle. In her paper she reflected on her work in Africa promoting development in education, gender, women's rights and governance.

Shirley began by referring to expressions of human rights in traditional African society, such as the phrase 'I am because you are' or Archbishop Desmond Tutu's belief that one cannot be human in isolation. However these values broke down as tribe versus tribe, and under the impact of colonisation, with disasters such as the mass slaughter of Tutsis in Rwanda in 1994. Post colonial attempts to unite Africa by the Organisation of African Unity (since 2001 the African Union) had to contend with a general policy of non-intervention in other states.

The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child was adopted by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1990 and was entered into force in 1999. Member states believed that the UN Charter on Human Rights missed important socio-cultural and economic realities particular to Africa. However there are many problems in practice. Many member states are unenthusiastic about the Children's Charter, are often unwilling to nominate suitable people to sit on the Committee of Experts or do not report on their own states.

Toni Hassan spoke on 'The impact of screen technology on the human rights and well-being of young people' Toni is a Walkley Award winning journalist who has worked in politics, community development and social services (for Anglicare). She is an Adjunct Scholar at the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture at Charles Sturt University and is writing a book on parenting in the digital age.

The United Nations proclaims that children are entitled to special care, so that they can thrive mentally and physically and electronic devices are a threat to this as they challenge what it means to live well. A child's sense of self is achieved through exploration and learnt over time. It requires listening and responding to others more than just an expression of opinions. In the Online World the 'self' becomes defined by whatever others consider to be necessary – 'likes'.

Some other problems are that the Online World is not open ended but a package – a fixed structure – where feedback is compulsive, and the most susceptible are the most isolated. There is also the exposure to the adult world well before a child is ready for it.

In response to this, parents themselves must model a world not dominated by electronic devices and ensure that there is quality face to face time, time to self-reflect and a protected space where imagination can develop and flourish.

Lesley Vick, Lawyer, long term ISAA Member, President of Dying with Dignity Victoria since 2012 and former co-editor of the magazine *Dissent*, spoke on "'The Right to Choose": dying with dignity.'

Lesley began with a listing of some of the rights associated with the issue of Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD), some of which can be in conflict. These include:

- The inherent right to life
- Freedom from cruel and degrading treatment
Freedom from arbitrary interference
- Physical autonomy
- Freedom to manifest one's beliefs

Lesley outlined the long but successful Victorian experience, which resulted in a Bill being passed in both Houses of Parliament. The process began with a detailed investigation of similar laws overseas and the setting up of a ministerial advisory committee. In May 2015, the Legislative Council agreed to a motion for the Standing Committee on Legal and Social Issues to inquire into, consider, and report on the need for laws in Victoria to allow citizens to make informed decisions regarding their own end of life choices

The eligibility criteria are that the person must:

- be 18 years or older;
- be an Australian citizen or permanent resident who is ordinarily resident in Victoria;
- have decision-making capacity in relation to voluntary assisted dying;
- be diagnosed with a disease, illness or medical condition that is incurable, advanced, progressive and will cause death, and is expected to cause death within less than 12 months; and
- be experiencing suffering that cannot be relieved in a manner that the person considers tolerable.

What this legislation helps to avoid is the situation that existed before it when, to avoid implicating others, one person a week took their own life, isolated from their family.

Lesley stressed that with these safeguards in place the "slippery slope" argument did not apply.

Report prepared by Ian Keese

WEBSITE UPDATE

In a new initiative, the Proceedings for the 2014 and 2015 National ISAA Conferences have been uploaded to the ISAA website - under the dropdown Conference' section menu. This is an opportunity for all ISAA members to read the Proceedings online even if the hard copy is available.

I have also been uploading information about events and members' publications, as well as changes to the National Committee, as they come to hand. I encourage all ISAA members, not only to send details of their publications but also to respond to articles and other material on the ISAA website.

Sue Steggall swal1@bigpond.net.au Website Co-ordinator

CALL FOR PAPERS

'Local Communities, Global Networks': Australian Historical Association 2019 Conference

8-12 July 2019, University of Southern Queensland, Toowoomba

How have the local and the global intersected, inspired and transformed experiences within and from Australia's History? How do the histories of Indigenous, imperial, migrant and the myriad of other communities and networks inform, contest and shape knowledge about Australia today? The conference theme speaks to the centrality of History for engaging with community and family networks. Constructing livelihoods within an empire and a nation that have had a global reach, local communities have responded in diverse ways. The varieties of historical enquiry into this past enrich our understanding of Australian and world history.

We welcome paper and panel proposals on any geographical area, time period, or field of history, on the conference theme 'Local Communities, Global Networks'.

Abstracts due 28 February 2019

Further information

<https://www.theaha.org.au/aha-conference-2019-local-communities-global-networks/>

From the Editor

Day One of the 2018 ISAA Conference is reported on pages 5 and 6. I was not able to complete Day 2 in the time available and hopefully that will be published in the first newsletter for 2019.

You can help making the Newsletter a valuable item and any of the following contributions would be very welcome:

- News of other organisation's Conferences at which ISSA members might contribute (as above)
- Profiles of new members
- Biographies of some of our long term members
- Reports on valuable Conferences you may have attended
- Your own publications and presentations.

Contact: Ian Keese email: keeseian@gmail.com Mobile 0423 536 656

Report of an ACT Chapter Presentation

The following is a summary of a talk presented to the ACT Chapter on November 28 by Professor Helmut Bley, Professor of Modern History at the Leibniz University of Hannover on the German Social Democratic leader August Bebel's efforts to counter the expansionist influence of the Army on German foreign policy in the lead-up to the Great War. It is hoped to have a full version available next year.

Professor Bley's recent work has been focused on the Social Democratic leader August Bebel who was party chairman from 1862 until his death in 1913. Herr Bley has discovered and evaluated Bebel's secret efforts to warn the British government of Germany's war-like intentions through frequent visits to Switzerland from 1904 onwards when Bebel took the opportunity to consult with the then operating honorary consul, Dr Heinrich Angst. Bebel had been well known as an opponent of German expansionist foreign policy and was particularly sensitive to the potentially dangerous influence exerted by the Prussian-German army leadership on both German domestic as well as foreign policy. As the Swiss historian Adolf Gasser used to say, *Germany was not a State with an army, it was an army with a State*. Herr Bley's talk aimed to illuminate precisely this phenomenon by explaining the behaviour of the army leadership in Germany, particularly at the time of the so-called Saverne crisis of 1913