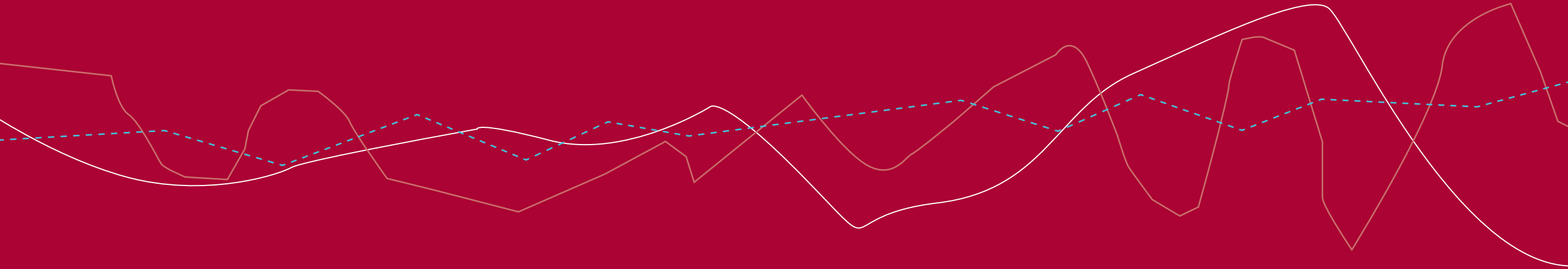
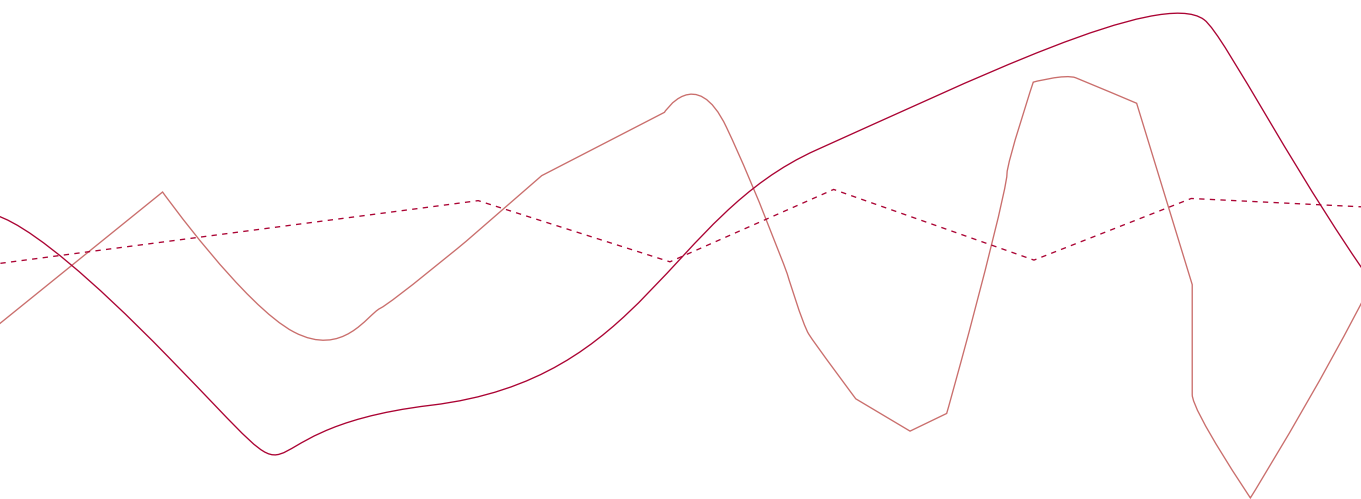


NSW PREMIER'S
HISTORY AWARDS 2011
PROGRAM



NSW PREMIER'S HISTORY AWARDS 2011 PROGRAM



Monday, 5 September 2011
CarriageWorks, 245 Wilson Street, Eveleigh

MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER OF NSW



Welcome to the 2011 NSW Premier's History Awards Presentation Dinner.

The NSW Premier's History Awards recognise and promote excellence in historical research, writing and presentation.

The Awards celebrate our historians' passionate commitment to promoting a better understanding of the experiences that comprise our shared history.

The NSW Government continues to support the historical research, analysis and writing of NSW historians through its Fellowships. Both the annual NSW History Fellowship and the NSW Archival Research Fellowship are being awarded tonight.

I congratulate the winners and the shortlisted authors, and extend the NSW Government's good wishes to all of our historians.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which reads "Barry O'Farrell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

The Hon. Barry O'Farrell, MP
Premier of NSW

ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS

COMMENCEMENT OF FORMAL PROCEEDINGS

Annette Shun Wah

WELCOME TO COUNTRY

Aunty Norma Ingram

PREMIER'S MESSAGE OF WELCOME

The Hon. Barry O'Farrell, MP

Entree served

2011 NSW PREMIER'S HISTORY AWARDS ADDRESS

Cherry Ripe

PRESENTATION OF THE 2011 NSW FELLOWSHIPS

The Hon. Barry O'Farrell, MP

2011 NSW Archival Research Fellowship (\$15,000)

Awarded to Matthew Allen

2011 NSW History Fellowship (\$20,000)

Awarded to Rachel Landers

Main course served

PRESENTATION OF THE 2011 NSW HISTORY AWARDS

The Hon. Barry O'Farrell, MP

Young People's History Prize

Multimedia History Prize

NSW Community and Regional History Prize

General History Prize

Australian History Prize

Dessert and coffee served

END OF FORMALITIES

2011 NSW PREMIER'S HISTORY AWARDS ADDRESS

Cherry Ripe is an awarded food writer, journalist, broadcaster and author of five books including *Goodbye Culinary Cringe*, *Australia – The Beautiful Cookbook* and *Ripe Enough?*

She has written for *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Observer*, and over two decades was the food columnist for *The Australian*.

Her keynote address at the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery, which had as its theme *Going Today, Gone Tomorrow – Endangered Foods and Cuisines* on disappearing agricultural biodiversity, is credited by Carlo Petrini, the founder of the Slow Food movement, for the establishment of the Slow Food Foundation for Biodiversity.

She is currently the Australian Chair of Slow Food's *Ark of Taste*.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S HISTORY PRIZE (\$15,000)

SHORTLISTED TITLES AND JUDGES' COMMENTS

Sherryl Clark

Our Australian Girl: Meet Rose

Penguin Group (Australia)

Written primarily for pre-teen girls, *Our Australian Girl: Meet Rose* is the first episode in a series of four books that will not only be an enjoyable experience for readers, but which also aims to provide an artful introduction to the history of the Federation period, in particular to women's history, including that of first wave feminism. At its centre is eleven year old Rose, a middle class girl, educated at home in Melbourne in 1900 just as the British Parliament is considering the Federation proposal. Rose longs for a more active and adventurous life than the restrictive one for which she is being groomed. This desire for more freedom is given a boost by the arrival of her father's sister, a blue stocking suffragette and 'new woman' who opens Rose's eyes to the enticing possibilities of education.

Rare amongst the entries for depicting a middle class child with two living parents, *Meet Rose* is a charming, accessible historical novel. It emphasises the limited educational and social opportunities for girls in 1900 whilst hinting at the bigger changes on the horizon, set against the backdrop of Federation. It includes a short essay at the back entitled 'What life was like in 1900', a list of interesting facts under the heading 'Did you know that in 1900...' and a contemporary poster of a suffragette. There is also a teaser for the next book, biographies of the author and illustrator, and a list of books to tick off as you read them, and finally, a website that readers can visit to pursue other activities in the *Our Australian Girl* series of books. This may be clever marketing but it's also good historical fiction that will, it is hoped, bring more younger readers to history and to a greater understanding of this seminal period in the nation's life.

Kirsty Murray

India Dark

Allen & Unwin

India Dark by Kirsty Murray is an excellent historical novel for older teenagers. Through its two narrators, 15 year old Tilly Sweetrick and 13 year old Poesy Swift, the novel tells the extraordinary story of a troupe of child performers aged seven to 18 years, touring with Percival's Lilliputian Opera Company through South East Asia and India in the first decade after Federation. Murray captures the voices of her young protagonists very clearly and moves with all speed to the absorbing crisis that envelops the troupe. The novel does not shy away from issues of sexuality, bullying and abuse by peers and adults, of the pitfalls of lying, and the perils of adolescent friendships. This dark, ambiguous tale told through the unreliable voices of its adolescent narrators sheds new light on Australian history.

In her fast paced narrative Murray breathes new life into the true story of Pollard's Lilliputian Opera Company which set out on a tour of India in July 1909, and ended in the Indian courts after the children left the company, refusing to travel any longer with their manager. The novel thus tells a little-known story, and its emphasis on children as transnational workers adds a neglected perspective on the Australian past. Murray generates this perspective by entwining the history of childhood with Australian theatrical culture, highlighting that children were active agents in the historical process. The novel underscores the very different view of childhood and parenthood that existed in Australia in the early 20th century.

MULTIMEDIA HISTORY PRIZE (\$15,000) SHORTLISTED TITLES AND JUDGES' COMMENTS

Nicole Pluss

Scout

Penguin Group (Australia)

With the contemporary contestation of immigration, this book is a timely examination of the perils and discomforts endured by a much earlier group of immigrants to Australia in the Age of Sail. *Scout* is a sensitive novel set sometime in the mid 1800s. It tells the story of Kit Lovell, whose mother is planning to marry a lighthouse keeper in South Australia. The journey starts out badly when mother and daughter are placed in steerage. The young adult reader, for whom the book is written, would learn of the arduous conditions endured by ship's passengers at this time. When they are moved into the first class cuddy deck, mother and daughter have endured great hardships, privations and illness. *Scout* is full of evocative detail about shipboard life, especially the fraught gender and class relationships onboard.

This book is beautifully written. It does not attempt to romanticise or soften accounts of the disease, discomforts, poor diet, and death that were, as numerous histories attest, almost certain accompaniments to any journey to Australia in the first periods of free immigration. Though, to add to its appeal to its teenage readers, *Scout* does have that certain other accompaniment to a journey by sea – a shipboard romance.

Sonia Bible

Recipe for Murder

Stray Dog Pictures Pty Ltd for Jumping Dog Productions Pty Ltd

This original, beautifully presented film offers an insightful analysis of the place of women in Sydney society in the postwar period as well as the role of place in generating unique historical conditions. In particular, it tells the story of three Sydney women – Yvonne Fletcher, Caroline Grills and Veronica Monty – who all poisoned members of their immediate families by concealing the rat poison, thallium, in food that they prepared. This site of food preparation, the focus of so much of women's daily domestic labour, situates these thallium murders as gendered crimes. The filmmakers tellingly explore this chilling terrain in ways that are startling, historically intriguing and highly entertaining.

The immediate postwar period is a neglected area of study and this film fleshes out the period as one of uncertainty over gender roles where the power dynamics of domestic life had been destabilized by the war. Add to this the specific conditions of a rat plague in Sydney; a readily obtainable, clear and undetectable rat poison in thallium, only available in Sydney at the time; and a scandal-loving tabloid press; and, the film argues, you had an explosive situation where dozens of people were poisoned by family members and many people were killed in the space of a few years.

Sharon Davis and Timothy Nicastri

The Aarons Family Files

ABC Radio National

This gripping radio documentary approaches family history via the intersection of genealogy, radical politics and the history of the cold war in Australia. The Aarons family were prominent members of the Communist Party of Australia (CPA) and the program presents a fascinating look at the operations of the CPA through the prism of the massive Aarons family files held by Australian Security and Intelligence Organisation (ASIO). The files, which consist of over 200 volumes, were collected from the late 1920s until 1979 when the 30-year rule under the Archives Act of Australia became operational.

The program is artfully constructed. Aside from the voice of investigative journalist and former communist, Mark Aarons, who researched his family's history through the files, other voices include those of Brian and Eric Aarons, vintage postwar newsreel voices, an actor reading from ASIO reports, and the voice of Menzies during his campaign against Communism. At its centre is a remarkable piece of oral history, secretly recorded by one former communist insider, Laurie Aarons, of another, former Russian spy Wally Clayton, who was in charge of the 'illegal apparatus' of the CPA. Clayton's still cagey responses include a confession that he had indeed supplied the KGB with some 'high level' information from the United States. Careful and interesting use of music and sound effects help to evoke the changing climate of the decades covered. *The Aarons Family Files* is a fine use of the radio medium to create intimate and nuanced historical programming and its creators are to be congratulated for their research and writing.

Dan Fill and Frank Verheggen

Immigration Nation: Building Multicultural Australia
website: sbs.com.au/immigrationnation/interactive

Chocolate Liberation Front

This is a richly textured and layered resource that takes full advantage of the interactive possibilities of the internet. The *Immigration Nation* website features personal experiences as it traces Australia's transformation from 'White Australia' to one of the most culturally diverse nations on earth. It presents galleries of primary sources in a virtual landscape arranged in a range of content areas including water, food, communication, politics and sport. For each topic there is an introduction, a number of personal stories and a variety of clickable items such as archival video, photographs and newspaper articles. The website allows users to navigate their own path through the content and provides guidance for those wanting to draw on the material to make their own documentaries.

This is a highly valuable resource for all manner of students, and provides a window into Australian immigration history for the general public. The information panels, timeline, video and use of interactive features make it a rich and engaging resource. The moderated comments section makes for fascinating reading, representing multiple perspectives and opinions on immigration experiences in Australia. The site presents an interesting and complex rather than celebratory history of multicultural Australia. The website complements the *Immigration Nation* documentary series but it also stands alone as an outstanding example of multimedia and interactive history.

NSW COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL HISTORY PRIZE (\$15,000)

SHORTLISTED TITLES AND JUDGES' COMMENTS

Laila Ellmoos

Beneath the Pines: A history of the Stockton Centre

Ageing, Disability and Home Care, Department of Family and Community Services

Celebrating the 2010 centenary of the Stockton Centre, north of Newcastle, *Beneath the Pines* is a model commissioned history. A nicely balanced work, it provides an insight into how this Centre operated from its inception as a place of purely custodial care to the 'more home-like environment' of today. Ellmoos situates her work in the context of changing philosophies of care from 'moral therapy' concepts to current policies of integration, arising from the 1983 *Richmond Report*. She demonstrates a nice balance in her portrayal of the Centre's undoubted achievements in caring for those with intellectual disabilities and, for many years, mental health issues, while also casting a critical eye on its obvious shortcomings. One of the most moving cases is the admission to the Stockton Centre in the 1930s of orphans without intellectual disabilities. After incarceration for 30 years many left, illiterate and innumerate, to be integrated into the community.

This well designed book, with its wealth of historical and contemporary images, provides the reader with a keen sense of the physical isolation of the Stockton Centre on a narrow isthmus amidst 'sand, scrub and sea', with buildings flanked by Norfolk Island pine trees. The author's judicious use of oral history and reminiscences, some dating back to the 1920s, enhances the extensive documentary research she draws on to produce this excellent history.

Delia Falconer

Sydney

UNSW Press

Like the city itself, Delia Falconer's *Sydney* is playful and melancholy, light and dark, beautiful and unwieldy. Eschewing a sweeping narrative history, Falconer instead uses her writer's flair and feel for language and eye for detail to draw out and contemplate the smaller cities within the city, including her own. She makes no claims to a definitive history; rather Falconer goes where her feet, memories and curiosity take her. Her *Sydney* is populated with eccentrics, 'penetrated by remnant wilderness' and sometimes shocking to the senses. Iconic landmarks such as Luna Park, The Strand Arcade and of course the Harbour Bridge are approached from different vantage points – temporal, physical and personal – and it is these intersections that give her work its impressive heft and originality.

Falconer's historical materials are eclectic. Not surprisingly she is drawn to writers, both well-known and otherwise, but she is also attentive to Indigenous culture, land and street scapes, urban legends and subcultures. A Sydneysider by birth, she retraces her own movements through the city and in doing so invites her readers to do the same. Her book is part of a series of city histories written by leading Australian authors, a publishing initiative that on the strength of Falconer's full-bodied history is to be applauded.

GENERAL HISTORY PRIZE (\$15,000) SHORTLISTED TITLES AND JUDGES' COMMENTS

Stephen Gapps

Cabrogal to Fairfield City: A History of a Multicultural Community

Fairfield City Council

Fairfield City Council over the past 30 years has given distinguished patronage to the history of its area and its people. First in 1982 there was *A History of the District* by Vance George, then in 1988 there was a more explicit recognition of *The Fairfield Community* by Geoffrey Caban, with a preface in 21 relevant languages. Now Stephen Gapps has produced a magisterial history, modestly entitled *A History* (not *The History*) of a *Multicultural Community*. Despite his modesty, here at last is a study of the contributions and perceptions of all the people of Fairfield.

Stephen Gapps gives due weight to Aboriginal people, both before and alongside the newcomers of the last 200 years, and at the same time he gives due weight to the worldwide connections of those who have come in the last century. As Heather Goodall says in her foreword, so many of today's Fairfield folk 'bring with them a deep commitment to their new home and a sustained connection to their old one'. The globalisation of Fairfield no less than its multiculturalism is the thematic achievement of this lavishly documented book, full of unhackneyed and thought-provoking images.

Emma Christopher

A Merciless Place

Allen & Unwin

Emma Christopher's *A Merciless Place* fleshes out the story of what happened to British convicts after the American War of Independence but before the First Fleet was sent to New South Wales. In between lies an extraordinary lost saga of British convicts being sent to West Africa to guard slave posts.

Barely more than slaves themselves, they were ravaged by disease and subjected to brutality, corruption and violence of a blood-curdling kind. Emma Christopher demonstrates how two terrible forms of 18th century bondage became entangled in a mesh that continued into the world of the Australian colonies. She has uncovered rare and difficult sources, to tell a harrowing tale of Britain's many ruthless efforts to rid itself of its demobbed criminal detritus, a story that takes us across the world from Britain, America, West Africa, South America and South Africa to Australia. Told with passion and compassion, this work of transnational scholarship traces for the first time the fascinatingly interconnected worlds of many fatal shores.

Sean Scalmer

Gandhi in the West: The Mahatma and the Rise of Radical Protest

Cambridge University Press

Sean Scalmer does the impossible in *Gandhi in the West: The Mahatma and the Rise of Radical Protest* – he takes a figure about whom it seems nothing more can be said, and galvanizes the reader with his insights, arguments and brilliant writing. Indeed, the book is, in places, as gripping as any thriller. From his opening evocation of Frank Moorehouse's *The Girl from the Family of Man*, with its fashionable 70s Gandhiana, Scalmer draws us into the West's fascination with the Mahatma – first with the man, then with his teachings. In striking prose, he evokes the 'extraordinary being' whose 'tremendous and troubling appearance' engrossed Western observers, from journalists to poets. Then with deft argument he traces the emergence of what he calls a 'transnational Gandhism' from the interpretation and dissemination of Gandhi's concept of 'satyagraha' by a small group of cosmopolitan intellectuals, through 'the false prophecies' of the 1930s and the 'timid experiments' of the mid-century, the movements for civil rights and against nuclear arms that, Scalmer argues, perfected non-violence as a form of mass politics for the West, to its disintegration into mere 'newsworthiness'.

Scalmer sets out to give us a new, transnational political history that focuses on 'a way of acting' – radical protest – rather than on individuals or organisations. He brings what could be an abstract discussion to life with his vivid evocation of Gandhi and Gandhism, compelling our attention with precise bold argument, crisp well-chosen words, and convincing evidence. This is a book that will bring Gandhi and his legacy to a new generation of readers.

Shane White, Stephen Garton, Stephen Robertson and Graham White

Playing the Numbers: Gambling in Harlem Between the Wars

Harvard University Press

Playing the Numbers: Gambling in Harlem Between the Wars is a brilliant work of recuperative cultural history. It has taken a forgotten aspect of New York gambling history, contemptuously dismissed as 'nigger pool', to recreate a complete social underworld – a dynamic, insouciant Black American cultural and urban topography of the streets.

Gambling a few pennies or shillings on numbers was the black economy of the interwar years; it enabled some black people to make themselves millionaires, and many more ordinary black folk to ease the psychic pains of the worst economic depression in history. The success of the numbers system meant, too, that they had to fight to defend their business from being taken over by white racketeers using political influence and the machinery of violence. Digging into forgotten archives the authors have recovered the lost worlds of the poor, the fugitive, the illiterate and the criminal. This is a work of scholarship that conveys the excitement and flair of a thriller. It tells a wholly original story based on research that has long been thought impossible to find.

AUSTRALIAN HISTORY PRIZE (\$15,000) SHORTLISTED TITLES AND JUDGES' COMMENTS

Joy Damousi

Colonial Voices: A Cultural History of English in Australia 1840 – 1940

Cambridge University Press

The 'Aussie' accent continues to be an object of fascination for most Australians. Joy Damousi's *Colonial Voices: A Cultural History of English in Australia 1840 – 1940* provides us with a detailed and meticulously researched history of its evolution and cultural significance. Arguing that language was an important part of the 'civilising' project of the British Empire, Damousi traces the relationship between language and empire from dependency to independence. Among the book's intellectual treats are accounts of Aborigines learning to speak English – which they pronounced, according to one observer, 'far better than half the Scotch or Irish emigrants'; the centrality of elocution in forming the 'civilised', politically effective man and the genteel woman, and its widespread diffusion through the education system; and the importance of the radio in legitimating a distinctive Australian way of speech as against the historic claims of British English and the newly influential American 'twang' disseminated through the 'talkies'.

Colonial Voices is part of the exciting new history that brings us the sounds as well as the texts of the past, and Damousi conveys those sounds with all their richness, complexity and meaning. The book is packed with the voices of school teachers, parents (including those of the Aboriginal school at Ramahyuck), journalists, politicians, lawyers, suffragists, hecklers, members of debating societies, elocution teachers, writers on etiquette, poetry societies, radio broadcasters and movie distributors. The research is so comprehensive and the various sub-themes so suggestive that the book will be the authoritative source and a catalyst for further research for many years.

Jim Davidson

A Three-Cornered Life: The Historian W.K. Hancock

UNSW Press

To write a biography of a historian who believed in and practiced the art of 'span', an author needs the same quality, and Jim Davidson has it in high order. Tracing the life of historian, man of letters, and social policy maker W.K. Hancock, has entailed mastering an oeuvre that includes Renaissance history, the Risorgimento, a history of Australia, a two-volume survey of British Commonwealth Affairs, multiple works on the British Second World War economy, a massive biography of the South African general, Jan Smuts, and a pioneering study of Australian environmental history. Davidson has also deftly sketched Hancock's policy achievements among the kingmaker dons at All Souls, the founders of the Australian National University, the heads of the Cabinet Office at Whitehall, and among British bwanas in Uganda on the brink of Independence.

The aptly titled *A Three-Cornered Life* achieves all this with elegance, erudition, wit and subtlety. Always alive to paradox, Davidson brings to life the inner complexities of the man and his remarkable wife, Theaden, as well the intellectual contours of a world that has passed, where men and women struggled to manage triple identities as Australians, Britons and members of the Commonwealth. Once world famous, Keith Hancock has left us legacies that deserve to be remembered. Jim Davidson has told us why.

Penny Russell

Savage or Civilised?: Manners in Colonial Australia

UNSW Press

Penny Russell is the first historian to make manners central to our historical understanding of colonial Australia. In doing so, she has produced a career-defining book; a wonderfully lively, richly textured and important history that is destined to become essential reading for specialists and enthusiasts alike. Without making grand claims that manners mattered for all colonial Australians, Russell convincingly debunks the myth of a ready-made egalitarian society by casting right back to early 'unrehearsed, unpredictable' encounters between the colonisers and the colonised, embodied in the politics of the handshake. As she perceptively demonstrates, colonial boasts of importing civilisation to a savage world were often undermined by the rude and violent behaviour of the settlers, and the evident civility of the Aborigines.

Russell skilfully draws out a history of improvised codes of conduct among social climbing ex-convicts and those who sought to stop them. The painstaking work of erecting and policing new social borders was typically deputised to 'respectable' women, with female ex-convicts usually their principal target. Rather belatedly, etiquette books directed at an Australian audience began to appear at the end of the 19th century to aid the new local aristocracy in their civilising mission, both inside and outside the home. Yet as Russell takes her readers through the makeshift gold mining towns and the new booming cities, the limited utility and fleeting authority of designated experts on manners is revealed. Still Russell is too attentive a historian to dwell solely on public attempts to manage social behaviour; she is at her strongest when contemplating personal accounts of social anxiety and approbation.

Martin Thomas

The Many Worlds of R.H. Mathews: In Search of an Australian Anthropologist

Allen & Unwin

In *The Many Worlds of R.H. Mathews: In Search of an Australian Anthropologist* Martin Thomas evokes the 'ethnomania' of amateur anthropologist, R.H. Mathews. Seeking to tell another side of the fatal meeting of cultures that was colonisation – one that included affection, empathy, curiosity and admiration – Thomas searches out the story of Mathews's 'magnificent obsession', his close empirical study of Aboriginal Australians. After a career as a surveyor, Mathews began his studies in 1892, when he was 50, visiting places he knew, conversing with Aboriginal elders and corresponding with settlers who had close contact with their land's original inhabitants. This 'quiet worker' whose 'tone is so penetrating in its warmth' was disparaged by his more established colleagues, but his careful work was widely published in scientific journals and he is now widely recognised as 'our greatest recorder of primary anthropological data'.

Rather than attempting a traditional biography, Thomas sets out to capture the 'confluence of voices' that shaped Mathews's historical world and defined the tone of his writing. These include his fellow ethnomaniacs such as Daisy Bates, family historians, with their aggrandisement and evasions, his childhood Aboriginal playmates, his fellow surveyors, his rivals such as Baldwin Spencer, Emma Timbery, who tutored Mathews in Dharawal, Kamilaroi men, Billy Whiteman and Jimmy Gular, members of the Wreck Bay community who recalled stories of Mathews, and contemporary scholars of indigenous descent who draw on Mathews's work. This is a charming, thoughtful and imaginative book that shows a gentler side of race relations and wears its comprehensive scholarship lightly.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

2011 NSW PREMIER'S HISTORY AWARDS

Judges

Associate Professor Ian Jack (Chair)

Dr Michelle Arrow

Ms Kate Cameron

Ms Pauline Curby

Emeritus Professor Desley Deacon

Professor Iain McCalman, AO

Dr Josephine May

Dr Zora Simic

2011 NSW ARCHIVAL RESEARCH AND HISTORY FELLOWSHIPS

Judges

Emeritus Professor Desley Deacon (Chair, History Fellowship)

Ms Pauline Curby

Associate Professor Ian Jack

Dr Josephine May

Dr Zora Simic

Ms Christine Yeats (Chair, Archival Research Fellowship)



The NSW Premier's History Awards are presented by the NSW Government through Arts NSW with support from State Records NSW and the History Council of NSW.