

# Fryer Bulletin

August 2008

*Welcome to the Fryer Bulletin. The purpose of this bulletin is to highlight significant events on the Fryer Library calendar and to let you know about library collections, resources and projects. The intention is to inform you, the researcher, about the richness of our collection and its potential for use. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly if there is something you would like to know about Fryer's services or collections. I would be pleased to hear from you.*

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## Events

### *Refugee Narratives*

On 19 June The University of Queensland Library recognised Refugee Week with a seminar intended to promote and encourage discussion of refugee issues. Inspired by the Fryer Library's Burnside/Durham collection, which contains correspondence between Australian activists and refugees detained on Nauru, the discussion brought together academics and community members. It was the first time this type of event had been held and it proved to be a great success. The event was an opportunity to showcase the significant collection of material on the topic held in the Fryer Library and to provide a forum for academics and researchers to mix with members of the community to discuss refugee issues. Significant learning and community value derives from the narratives of real people and their experiences. The Burnside/Durham collection is an important example of the work Fryer Library does to preserve these narratives for the research community and the general community.

The four-hour seminar included presentations by Professor Gillian Whitlock of the School of English, Media Studies and Art History at The University of Queensland; Dr Jeff Rickertt, Librarian at the Fryer Library; Dr Karen Dooley of the School of Cultural and Language Studies in Education at Queensland University of Technology; and Bruce Henry, an immigration lawyer who was formerly a member of the Immigration Review Tribunal. (Note: Gillian Whitlock has just written a new book about life narrative and the war on terror, called *Soft Weapons: Autobiography in Transit*.)

A panel discussion chaired by Adele Rice followed the presentations. Adele is a prominent refugee activist and Principal of Milpera State High School. The panel consisted of four community leaders from communities with significant numbers of people who came to Australia originally as refugees. Some are relatively recent arrivals while others have been here for many decades. Mr Trung Nguyen (originally from Vietnam), Ms Magdalena Kuyang (originally from Sudan), Mr Rafael Pacheco (originally from El Salvador) and Mr Ali Karimi (originally from Afghanistan) were invited to form the panel. Each has had a personal experience of living in and fleeing repressive regimes. They are respected leaders of their communities in Australia and were able to inspire passionate discussion at the seminar.

*Refugee Narratives* encouraged debate and inspired people to document and preserve the remarkable narratives of refugees and the activists and advocates who supported them. The seminar was very well attended and has generated interest both within and outside of the University.

### *All the fun of the fair: Reflections on the history of the Brisbane Exhibition*

On Tuesday 22 August 1876 bugles sounded, bands played, steam engines whistled and an artillery salute thundered across the show grounds. The first Brisbane Exhibition had begun. More than 130 years later, the Ekka, as it is affectionately known, is still the largest annual event in Queensland. On Wednesday 27 August Fryer Library is hosting a talk by Dr Ross Laurie and Dr Joanne Scott based on their book *Showtime: A History of the Brisbane Exhibition* which was published in July this year. (The event will start at 5:30pm in the Library Conference Room. The cost is \$15 for Friends of Fryer \$20 for non-members.) Throughout its history the Exhibition has presented, endorsed and celebrated particular versions of Queensland, providing a snapshot of our community, its values and its aspirations. Drawing on a wealth of primary source material, including images, interviews and the 'yards and yards of description' in newspapers, this presentation explores the history and significance of the Brisbane Exhibition.

### *Australia Doesn't Have to Rhyme With Failure: Carter Brown as Cultural Export*

On 30 April Dr Toni Johnson-Woods gave an informative talk at the Library on Carter Brown. The recording and slides from Toni's presentation are available from the Fryer Library website (<http://www.library.uq.edu.au/fryer/podcasts/podcasts.html>).

### *Performing Arts Special Interest Group Conference*

Mark Cryle presented a paper entitled "A Mighty Livening Effect": *Pete Seeger Comes to Brisbane, 1963* at the Museums Australia Performing Arts Special Interest Group Conference at QPAC on 30 June. The paper was based on sources on the history of the Queensland Folklore Society in the Robert Michell Papers UQFL78 and was well received.

### *Indigenous Librarianship*

The current July 2008 issue of *InCite*, the magazine of the Australian Library and Information Association, features an article called 'UQ Library: enriching the experience of Indigenous students', written by Helen Cooke, Ros Follett and Joanne Rutherford of The University of Queensland Library. A Higher Education Equity Support Program (HEESP) gave The University of Queensland Library the opportunity to enrich the experience of Indigenous Australian students by enhancing the existing liaison and information skills program and also the library staff development programs. The article talks about the drivers underlying the extension of the library programs and discusses initiatives including: the 'First steps' training opportunity that was scheduled during the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit Orientation camp; the *AskMe, TellMe* program which aimed to support the existing liaison librarian structure and enhance relationship building by engaging in two-way conversations with students about how the library can add value to their learning; and updates for Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ITAS) tutors. The article also mentions initiatives for staff including a November 2007 Future Focus session on Indigenous knowledge that was presented by Director of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit, Mr Michael Williams; a workshop called *Sharing spaces and stories: indigenous culture and libraries* that was developed to raise awareness among library staff of indigenous Issues; and library staff induction materials that will emphasise the importance the Library places on diversity and the services it provides to Indigenous students.

*In print*

Congratulations to Fryer staff member Dr Jeff Rickertt whose book *Resistance on the Line: a History of Australian telephonists and their Trade Unions, 1880-1988* has been published by VDM Verlag.

## Spotlight on the Collections

*Making Peace in a Cold War: the Contested History of the Australian Peace Council*

The cause of peace has a long history in Australia. Some of it has been thoroughly researched, other parts less so. The peace movement of the 1950s and early 1960s definitely falls into the second category, despite its well-publicised and well-attended public events.

The historical commentary that has appeared invariably focuses on the movement's association with Communism. For conservatives, the movement was simply a Communist stalking horse. Nick Fischer, for instance, claims in the *API Review of Books* that the movement's main body, the Australia Peace Council (APC), was formed by the Communist Party and sympathisers. Against this, Barbara Carter makes the case that within the CPA, "interest in the peace movement remained the preserve of some party intellectuals, who were not controlled by the party to any marked extent." Similarly, Malcolm Saunders and Ralph Summy, while acknowledging that the Communist Party was the "driving force behind the Council," argue that it was the beginning of a new era in the history of the peace movement in Australia, because it brought together pacifists, Christians, Laborites and secular radicals in a single anti-war organisation for the first time since World War 1.

John McLaren takes yet another position, arguing that there were indeed many factions within the movement, but the failure of the church leaders "to contest effectively the leadership of the Communist Party" ensured that in practice the movement was under Communist control. For McLaren, the movement's unwillingness to face uncomfortable truths about the Soviet bloc undermined the opportunity to build a new, non-partisan consensus against war and militarism. This situation would not begin to change until the emergence of new peace forces in the 1960s, beginning with the formation of the first Australian branch of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) in 1960. The Australian CND, like its British counterpart, attracted radicals who had broken from Stalinised Communism and were not hamstrung by illusions in the Soviet bureaucracy. Saunders and Summy claim it was "a harbinger of a new era."

Fryer Library offers a rich vein of primary source material that could be used to test these claims and counter-claims, and piece together a detailed history of these events. Some of the key collections are:

**Bill Morrow Papers (UQFL30).** Bill Morrow was a member of the ALP, and Senator for Tasmania from 1946 until 1953. He worked in the peace movement, and in 1961 was awarded the Lenin Peace Prize for his contribution to the World Peace Council.

**Joy Guyatt Papers (F2462).** Joy Guyatt was the Vice-Chairman of the Queensland Sponsoring Committee of the Australian and New Zealand Congress for International Co-operation and Disarmament, held in Melbourne in 1959.

**Salvatore D'Urso Papers (UQFL72).** Salvatore (Ted) D'Urso was a founding member of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in Australia.

*Xavier Herbert:*

Australian author Xavier Herbert was born in Western Australia in 1901. Growing up in Geraldton and Fremantle, he trained as a pharmacist, before working in Melbourne, Sydney and Darwin. While living in England Herbert married Sadie Norden, and wrote *Capricornia: a novel* which he completed in 1932. English publishers rejected it as too long. It was not published until 1938, after his return to Australia and not without

significant revision of the original manuscript. In 1938 *Capricornia* won Herbert both the Sesquicentenary Literature Prize and the Australian Literature Society Gold Medal. Other novels and short stories followed, but it was not until 1975 that he published the Miles Franklin Award winning *Poor Fellow My Country*. There are several manuscripts relating to Xavier and Sadie Herbert in the Fryer Library. The two main collections are **UQFL83** and **UQFL203**, both of which contain drafts and logbooks relating to Xavier's novels, correspondence, photographs and newspaper cuttings amongst other material. There are also several smaller collections, which are mainly correspondence. An additional box of material, containing logbooks (Xavier's term for the notebooks he kept) covering the period after the publication of *Poor Fellow* until his death in 1984, has recently been received and will be added to the collection listing shortly.



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*Exquisite artworks accompany the maps in Freycinet's atlas [above]*