

# FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETIES INC

G.P.O. Box 1440, Canberra ACT 2601

Website: <http://www.history.org.au/>

## *E-BULLETIN* No. 47 – 4 March 2009

Hon Editor, Dr Ruth S. Kerr

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## 1) Memory of the World Program Ceremony

A general survey on the state of awareness of the Memory of the World Program has been launched in cooperation with InterPARES in Vancouver, Canada. This survey is intended for library, archives and museum specialists as well as anyone with an interest in preserving documentary heritage.

The purpose of this survey is to increase and assess awareness of the Program and to encourage nominations to the Memory of the World Registers. UNESCO will use the results to further develop the Memory of the World Program.

The form, which takes just a few minutes to complete, can either be filled in online, in English or French, at: [http://www.interpares.org/unesco/awareness\\_survey.cfm](http://www.interpares.org/unesco/awareness_survey.cfm)

It can also be downloaded from the UNESCO website:

<http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php->

[URL\\_ID=28296&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=28296&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

to be filled in and returned to: [j.springer@unesco.org](mailto:j.springer@unesco.org)

The deadline for the survey is 30 April 2009.

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## 2) New Zealand – library lay-offs ‘sign of things to come’

‘Heritage protection issues need to be considered in light of possible job lay-offs at the National Library, Labour's state services spokesman Grant Robertson says. A document sent to library staff revealed a proposal to "disestablish" 32 positions within National Library services in Wellington, The Dominion Post reported today. While some of those positions could involve job transfers under the proposal, others would disappear, the document said. Mr Robertson said the possible lay-offs were "a sign of things to come" in the public service and called for careful consideration to be given to potential effects of cuts at the library.

"It's vital the National Library has the skills and resources to protect New Zealand's heritage through its work collecting and maintaining the millions of items in its collection," he said.

Mr Robertson said the National Library could be the tip of the iceberg in terms of cuts in the public service and understood the Tertiary Education Commission and Ministry of Social Development were under instruction to slash staff.’

(Source: *Dominion Post* (Wellington) Monday, 16 February 2009)

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### 3) Privacy and the Internet

Reuters UK reports today that the social networking website Facebook has reversed recent decisions about the ownership of personal data shared on the online site, after changes to service agreements appeared to give the company a perpetual right to content that users post on the network. This policy reversal came in as a result of pressure from "People Against the new Terms of Service," a Facebook group of close to 100,000 users created to oppose the changes, which were seen as a violation of the personal privacy of Facebook users.

The protection of personal information in the 21st century, at a time when census records are subject to privacy and at the same time individuals reveal so much about themselves on Facebook, MySpace, and YouTube, will be explored during the ACA conference in Calgary, Alberta, from May 14-17, at a session called "Give Me Back MySpace: Access and Privacy in the 21st Century."

More on the conference program and local events are available at <http://www.archivists.ca>

For more on the Reuters news story, go to <http://uk.reuters.com/article/technologyNewsMolt/idUKTRE51H6V820090218?pageNumber=3>

(Source: [aus-archivists@archivists.org.au](mailto:aus-archivists@archivists.org.au) 20 February 2009)

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### 4) Breastplate given by Burke and Wills to Yandruwandha people of Cooper's Creek

The breastplate bought for South Australia by Kerry Stokes for \$219,600 in May 2008 has declined in value. On 15 February 2009 one of the other two breastplates was sold to the National Museum of Australia for \$96,000.

(Source: *Australian Financial Review* 19 February 2009 p.22)

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### 5) New South Wales Heritage Act

The recent review of the New South Wales Heritage Act recommended that the Heritage Council set "thematically based forward program" to provide a strategic and systematic framework for managing the State Heritage Register listing processes.

The Heritage Council has commenced implementing this recommendation at a policy level and the Minister has endorsed a set of four themes that will be targeted between 2009 and 2010."

The themes include the somewhat predictable ones of "Convicts", and "Governor Macquarie" - we love this sort of stuff in NSW plus "Aboriginal Heritage" and World Wars I & II.'

(Source: [ticcih-in-oz@googlegroups.com](mailto:ticcih-in-oz@googlegroups.com) – 3 March 2009)

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## 6) Community groups involved in industrial heritage

Gary Vines of Gary Vines (Email: [GVines@biosisresearch.com.au](mailto:GVines@biosisresearch.com.au)) observed that 'there are a large number of small and pretty quiet enthusiastic, amateur, local groups, which have badgered away at industrial archaeology issues for many decades, but have little prominence beyond their own turf or specialist fields. Apart from the few organised groups like the Light Railways Research Society and Railway History Societies, other general railway and engine preservation groups, steam traction engine clubs, etc. There are lots of small specific interest groups around, many of whom do excellent research and preservation works - for example the Dunmunkle Sump Oilers, Save the Brickworks in Brunswick, Friends of the W Class Trams, Friends of Kurth Kiln, and the like.

A great deal is done by these small community based groups - usually with one or two active motivators taking most of the load. In addition the local historical societies and national trust committees have been the vanguard of preservation, research and promoting public awareness of industrial heritage issues, but the larger heritage industry still mostly sees these efforts as peripheral, despite post colonial Australia being perhaps uniquely a society and economy predicated on the industrial revolution.'

(Source: [ticcih-in-oz@googlegroups.com](mailto:ticcih-in-oz@googlegroups.com) – 23 February 2009)

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## 7) Agricultural & machinery catalogues

British agricultural and machinery catalogues have been scanned and placed on-line at the Museum of English Rural Life (<http://www.rhc.rdg.ac.uk/webview?webviewinterface=21>) (Use "catalogue" as a keyword).

The format is awkward - jpgs of each individual page – each page has to be downloaded individually, and the resolution is not high. The variety of equipment makes it valuable. The objects include: portable engines, traction engines, ploughs, harrows, etc, cast-iron ornamental fences and gates, fences, tree guards, seats, etc.

Many manufacturers are included, with some well-known names well represented: Albion Mowers; Alexander Anderson; Allchin Steam Wagons; Aveling & Porter; Barnard, Bishop & Barnard; Barratt, Exall & Andrews; Bayliss, Bayliss & Jones; Boulton & Paul, Charles Burrell & Sons; Charles D Young & Co; Hill & Smith Brierley Hill Ironworks; John Bruce; JC Grant; P&HP Gibbons; Ransomes; WN

Nicholson; plus many others. Large amounts of this equipment were imported to Australia for the agricultural and mining and transport industries.

It is an extraordinarily valuable resource and worth researching if trying to identify machine or implement.

(Source: [ticcih-in-oz@googlegroups.com](mailto:ticcih-in-oz@googlegroups.com); ASHA list – 2 March 2009)

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## 8) Collapse of Cologne archives building

Rescue workers tried to determine whether anyone had been trapped after the four-story, archive building suddenly collapsed in Cologne, Germany on 3 March 2009. Authorities are also investigating the possible causes. ...

Initial reports said that some 30 people had been trapped in the rubble, but miraculously most of the people inside the buildings seemed to have escaped unharmed. Authorities said the whereabouts of at least two people remained unknown.

Some 200 emergency workers arrived on the scene shortly after the collapse, cutting off water and gas mains.

The archive was built in the 1970s, and there was initially no clear answer to the question of why it would suddenly collapse.

Eberhard Illner, a former archive employee, told German radio station Deutschlandfunk the collapse was a “foreseeable catastrophe” and that he had noticed cracks in the building’s basement walls.

There was considerable speculation in the media that nearby construction on a subway may have caused the destruction, with some unconfirmed reports that subway tunnels had been filled with massive amounts of water. Work on underground rail tunnels was blamed for the near-collapse of a church in 2004.

The local subway company denied that the building work in the archive could have been at fault. It said that work on tunnels under the site had already been completed and that there was construction going on in the building itself. ...

Cologne’s archive contains some 65,000 documents connected to the city’s history. Some material in the archive dates back to 922.’

(Source: Duetsche Welle (DW -World.DE) website <http://www.dw-world.de/aus-archivists@archivists.org.au> – 4 March 2009)

## 9) Local history collections - Marysville

The Association of Eastern Historical Societies Inc *Newsletter* for February 2009 focuses on the Marysville Historical Society's loss of their records and objects in the bushfire on 7 February 2009.

A copy of the Newsletter can be located on the website <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~aehsoc/members.html> and following the links.

The Association is seeking to obtain information on Marysville held in other historical societies and archives, libraries and the public to rebuild the historical archive for Marysville. That will be made easier where records and photographs are digitised.

(Source: Internet site: <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~aehsoc/members.html> - 4 March 2009)

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## 10) Opportunity for historian in Western Australia

### **CENTRE FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIAN HISTORY UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY FOR HISTORIAN**

A short centenary history of the **Royal Life Saving Society Western Australian Branch** has been commissioned through the Centre for Western Australian History at The University of Western Australia.

The Centre is seeking applications from suitably qualified historians to take up this very interesting opportunity.

A well-illustrated manuscript of 30,000 to 40,000 words, written in a lively, engaging and informative way suitable for a general reader, is anticipated. The project is expected to take six months to research and write.

The remuneration for the project is negotiable depending on qualifications, skills and experience.

Guidelines for the position are available from the Centre for Western Australian History. The closing date for applications is **Monday 16 March 2009**. For further information or to request a copy of the guidelines, please contact Dr Jean Chetkovich by email at [jchetkov@arts.uwa.edu.au](mailto:jchetkov@arts.uwa.edu.au) or call (08) 6488 2143.

(Source: Director, Centre for Western Australian History - 4 March 2009)