

FRIENDS OF THE NOEL BUTLIN ARCHIVES CENTRE INC.

NEWSLETTER

No. 54, December 2023

ISSN 1834-0555

Contents

FNBAC patrons, officers & committee members	p.1
Bruce Scates, <i>Chairperson's Report 2023</i>	p.1
Kathryn Dan, <i>ANU Archives Annual Report 2023</i>	p.2
Colleen McEwen, <i>FNBAC Conservation Fund</i>	p.5
<i>Statement by the Friends of the Noel Butlin Archives Centre in support of The Voice</i>	p.7
Note on Presentation at AGM by Katie Wood	p.8

* * *

Chairperson's Report 2023

The Chairperson, Bruce Scates, began the meeting by acknowledging that we gathered on what always was and always will be Ngunnawal/Ngambri land and that sovereignty over this place has never been ceded. He also acknowledged the importance of truth telling and reconciliation in the wake of the Voice referendum, and cited Selina Walker's inspired speech at the recent Labour History Conference inviting all to renew their commitment to the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

Membership: the Friends currently have 81 members, including seven new members since the last AGM: Julie Kimber (Department of Social Science, Swinburne University of Technology and ASSLH Secretary), Michael McIver (Industrial Officer, AEU Victoria), Garrett Purtill (President, Canberra Labor Club), and Dr Peter Woodley (National Centre of Biography); and new three institutional members – the National Office of the Australian Education Union, the Victorian Trades Hall Council and SA Unions.

Sadly, Dr Peter Love, a founding member of the Friends and a stalwart of the Labour History Society for the last 50 years, died earlier this year. The flag at the Melbourne Trades Hall flew at half-mast to mark his passing.

The FNBAC Patrons are Professor Joy Damousi AM, Hon. John Faulkner, Hon. Ros Kelly AO and Professor Simon Ville, whose gracious offers to serve as such were accepted with gratitude at the AGM last year.

The FNBAC committee members in 2023 were: Bruce Scates (President), Anne Piggott (V-P), Ewan Maidment (Secretary), Maggie Shapley (Treasurer), Kathryn Dan (ex-officio), Emma Cupitt (Newsletter Editor), Carol McNally, Debra Leigo, Colleen McEwen and Josh Black. Carol McNally took over from Colleen McEwen as Public Officer in April, and Colleen has continued her magnificent work as Convenor of the Conservation Fund. Bob Crawshaw stepped down from the committee at the last AGM, having served two terms, 2021 & 2022, and is sorely missed. We acknowledge and thank those who served on the Friends' committee in 2023, its officers and committee members and our auditor, Betty Ferguson.

FNBAC patrons, officers and committee members, AGM, 27 November 2023

Patrons of the FNBAC: The following patrons, Professor Joy Damousi AM, FASSA, FAHA, Hon. John Faulkner, Hon. Ros Kelly AO and Professor Simon Ville FASSA, were confirmed with gratitude for their continuing support.

The following officers and committee members were elected at the AGM:

Chair: Professor Bruce Scates

Deputy Chair: Joshua Black

Secretary: Ewan Maidment

Treasurer: Maggie Shapley

Committee members: Anne Piggott, Emma Cupitt, Debra Leigo, Colleen McEwen, Carol McNally and Pierre van der Eng

Ex officio: Kathryn Dan (ANU Archivist)

Public Officer: Carol McNally

Conservation Fund (Standing) Committee: –Professor Mark Wilson and Associate Professor Keturah Whitford, both from the ANU College of Business and Economics, and Carol McNally from the Friends Committee.

Colleen McEwen convenes and manages the business of the Committee.

* * *

Friends of the Noel Butlin Archives Centre Newsletter, December 2023

Committee meetings were held in 2023 on 7 February, 4 April, 27 June, 1 August and 3 October. All were hybrid meetings, *i.e.*, in-person and via Zoom. Next year the committee will try quarterly meetings, rather than meeting every second month. The Friends are very grateful to Kathryn Dan, the University Archivist, who attends every committee meeting *ex-officio*, for kindly hosting all the Friends' meetings held during the year.

The FNBAC Conservation Fund Committee members were Colleen McEwen (Secretary), Carol McNally, Professor Mark Wilson and Associate Professor Keturah Whitford, both from the ANU College of Business and Economics. One Pre-Federation minute book was repaired by Art & Archival in 2023: the Professional Musicians' Association Minute Book, 1904–07 (Ref: T7/1/4), at a cost of \$2,970. Further information on the Fund is available in Colleen's report. The proactive role of the Conservation Fund attracted interest at the recent Labour History conference.

A Special General Meeting was held on 26 September which changed the FNBAC rules: to allow for virtual participation of members in general meetings; to reduce the quorum at general meetings from 15 to 11 members, and to facilitate easier administration of accounts and to allow for electronic transfers of funds. These amendments to the FNBAC constitution were accepted by ACT government Community, Industry and Trader Licensing and placed on the public register in October.

A special event: Following the 2022 AGM, on 22 November last year, Esther Carlin introduced and showed her stylish and informative film, *Critical Mass: The Establishment of Women's Studies at the Australian National University*, on women activists at the ANU and the surprising records that they produced.

The 22nd Noel Butlin Archives Centre Annual Lecture, '*Here to Stay!*' *Militancy and Longevity in Australia's Maritime Labour History*, was well-delivered and brilliantly illustrated by Professor Diane Kirkby in-person in the RSSS Auditorium to an audience of 50–60 people who enjoyed refreshments and conversation in the foyer after the lecture. In an innovative move, the Lecture was held earlier in the year than usual, on 21st March, in order to coincide with the Archives' superb exhibition, *Struggle, Solidarity and Unity: Celebrating 150 years of maritime unions in Australia*.

Membership/donation campaign: A 3rd round of 9 letters were sent out in early December last year seeking FNBAC institutional membership and/or donations to the Conservation Fund. As a result, the SA Unions, the Victorian Trades Hall Council and the National Office of the Australian Education Union joined the Friends. The latter two gave substantial donations to the Conservation Fund, for which we are very grateful. Thanks to Bob Crawshaw and Ewan Maidment for

driving the campaign. The committee is planning for a 4th round in the New Year.

The FNBAC Newsletter: Emma Cupitt has kindly taken over editing, steering the newsletter in new directions.

- No. 52, December 2022, included three fine articles: Emma Cupitt's interview with Esther Carlin re her film *Critical Mass*; Bruce Smith, on the 20th Anniversary of the Australian Trade Union Archives web resource; and Hugo Ottesen's 'From the Battlefields of Spain', on the Amirah Inglis Collection.
- No. 53, June 2023, included reports from the 2022 AGM, a Vote of Thanks to Diane Kirkby for her Archives Annual Lecture by Bruce Scates, Bob Crawshaw's review of the NBAC's exhibition marking the 150th anniversary of Maritime Unions in Australia, and a note marking Colleen McEwen's lamented departure from Canberra.
- No. 54, which will be published in December, will include reports from this 2023 AGM and other articles.

FNBAC Statement in Support of the Voice, 7 October 2023, drafted with Kathryn's assistance, citing in support of the argument records in the NBAC that show the history of dispossession, was distributed as widely as possible and received well, but unfortunately failed to swing the miserable outcome of the referendum.

Labour History Conference, Canberra, November 2023, to which the NBAC Archivists are to be congratulated for their contributions.

Professor Bruce Scates, Chair FNBAC

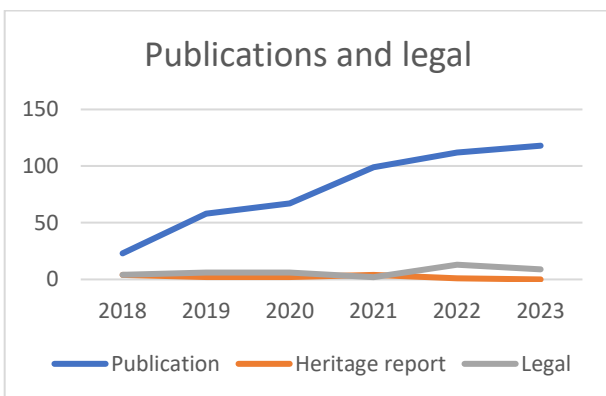
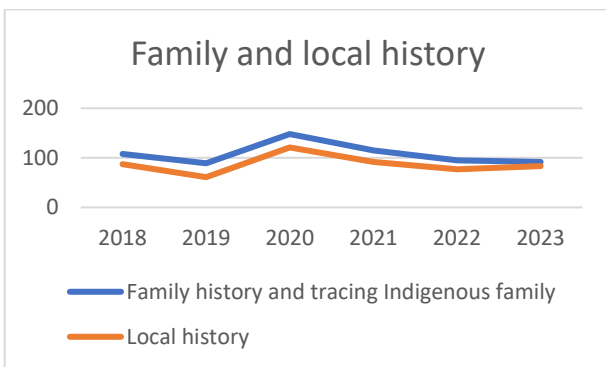
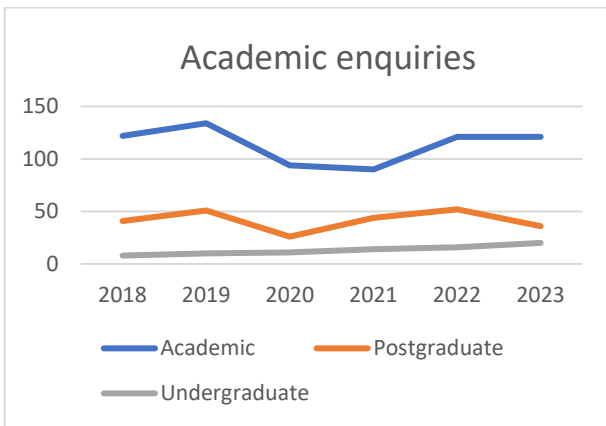
* * *

ANU Archives Annual Report 2023

Highlights: The ANU Archives continues to build and make available collections of national research significance. Important records from our holdings have been made accessible and the Archives continues to provide services to researchers and promote the archives through exhibitions and increased engagement with student cohorts. It is thanks to the professionalism and commitment of our staff that we are able to achieve this. Building works and repository management have brought challenges particularly in the second half of 2023 and there have been some staffing changes during the year.

Research use: As at 31 October 2023, the number of archives users was 1,068 and the items used was 25,685. The following charts indicate trends from the last 5 years up to October 2023 in purpose of the research as stated by the researcher or discernible from the enquiry.

Friends of the Noel Butlin Archives Centre Newsletter, December 2023



Reference enquiries included steady numbers of local and family history researchers, and academic researchers, with a small but steady increase in undergraduate students. Reparations schemes and stolen wages cases led to a few enquiries of a legal nature and led to a project to digitise a number of pastoral station records relating to Indigenous people. A number of requests were for permission to use material in publications, exhibitions, documentary films and TV series. An Australian Agricultural Company map was requested by the Murrook Culture Centre, Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council for display; while ABC journalist Craig Allan broadcast a [story on Stephen Wurm and Helen Groger-Wurm using their extensive records](#). This led to digitisation of an 8mm film of the Lardil People of Kunhanhaa/Mornington Island and taking of a copy to Mornington Island.

Archives staff have added subject guides to assist researchers to find relevant records:

[Weather and climate change](#)

[Australian opposition to apartheid in South Africa](#)

[Australia in the First World War, 1914–1918](#)

[Australia and the War in South Vietnam, 1962–1975](#)

[Australian-Indonesian relations, 1945–1949](#)

[Indigenous Australians](#)

[Green Bans](#)

[Peace Movement](#)

Seeking to support new audiences, the Archives has contributed to the Adam Mathew resource ‘Shopping and Department Stores,’ which will be published in 2024. Using contextualised digitised resources from a range of archives and libraries including the British Library, Selfridges Brand Archives, Bibliotheque Nationale de France and State Library of NSW, this publication will provide study resources for an international audience. Records from James McEwan and Co., McDowell’s Ltd, Marcus Clark and Co. and the Shop Assistants’ and Warehouse Employees Federation of Australia are included.

Learning and teaching support and engagement:

Archives staff provide support for learning and teaching through presentations on archival literacy and sources for study.

This year staff presented to students in:

- ECHI1006 The Australian Economy past and Present
- SOCY4010 Sociology Honours Methods
- PASI3002 Gender and Sexuality in the Pacific
- HIST3007 Making History
- HIST8027 Seminar in Advanced Historical Research

Together with colleagues from the Menzies library Asia and Pacific specialist, PARADESIC and the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau, staff provided an introductory session for higher degree research students in August.

This year Archives staff delivered papers at and participated in conferences aligned with key research areas of relevance to our users: Pacific studies and labour history.

‘To Hell With Drowning’ the Australian Association for Pacific Studies 2023 conference was held at ANU in April. The ANU Archives was part of a research collections showcase throughout the conference and Catherine Ziegler and Kathryn Dan spoke at the panel session ‘Navigating the Archives’.

At the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History conference, with the theme ‘(Re)Sources: Historical inquiry and Labour History Archives’, Sarah Lethbridge presented Rachel Armstrong’s paper ‘On

Friends of the Noel Butlin Archives Centre Newsletter, December 2023

Display: Exposing labour history archives through exhibitions' and Kathryn Dan spoke on 'Collecting Trends: what will future research archives hold?'

The ANU Archives website was upgraded in July and staff will continue to work on improvements.

Collection management: Archives staff completed processing the following collections, making them accessible via the AtoM database.

- Federated Engine Drivers and Fireman's Association NSW
- Business and Professional Women
- Patrick Troy papers on urban and regional development
- Forestry Australia

New accessions: In 2023 the Archives received records in the following collecting streams:

Noel Butlin Archives Centre

- Forestry Australia
- The Australian Education Union, ACT Branch

Pacific Research Archive

- Dr Roy Scragg papers relating to his medical work in Papua New Guinea
- Additions to the Harold Brookfield papers, field diaries and photographs
- Papers of Rhys Gardner, New Zealand botanist

University Archives

- Papers of ANU academic, Graeme Snooks
- James Grieve papers
- Records from PARSA, the postgraduate student association, which folded this year
- Records from Bruce Hall, which had been in the possession of ANU Collections

Temporary records from the old Fenner Hall, which had been moved to the Archives in recent years, were examined in conjunction with Fenner Hall management and disposed of under applicable records disposal authorities.

Storage space continues to be under pressure with natural annual growth in the Archives.

Public events and exhibitions: Professor Diane Kirkby from University Technology Sydney and La Trobe University delivered the 2023 ANU Archives Annual Lecture on 21 March. The Friends of the Noel Butlin Archives Centre have long supported the event and this year one of the FNBAC Patrons, Professor Joy Damousi, was able to join the audience for the lecture. Professor Kirkby spoke on '*Here to Stay!*' – *Militancy and Longevity in Australia's Maritime Labour History*.

The event linked strongly with the exhibition curated by Rachel Armstrong *Struggle, Solidarity and Unity: 150 years of maritime unions in Australia*, installed in the Menzies library from December 2022 to 31 March 2023 and commemorating the rich history of waterside

workers, seamen's and maritime unions held in the Archives.

Pacific Studies students curated an exhibition 'Citing Ourselves' in conjunction with the AAPS conference and with support from Archivist Catherine Ziegler.

Exhibitions 'For the Record' on changing formats and 'Voice of the People' on referendums, plebiscites and surveys were truncated due to building works.

Staff continue to advise the Australian Agricultural Company about possible sources for the commemoration of their 200th anniversary in 2024. The Archives will mount an exhibition of these significant holdings in 2024.

The Archives participated in Alumni Week in March by again hosting Tunnel tours (Acton Underhill).

Projects: The Archives continues to work with the Digital Scholarship team on digitisation projects. Significant resources added to the Open Research repository included:

- records from pastoral stations of significance for Indigenous Peoples tracing connection with family and land, and for wages and reparations cases
- Almost 20,000 CSR photographs
- Photographs from the Dunlop Rubber Company (<https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/handle/1885/272492>)
- Diana Howlett's slides of field work in the Pacific, especially Papua New Guinea, documenting people, agriculture and landscape (<https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/handle/1885/303904>)
- Photographs of Pari, Papua New Guinea taken by Dr Ian Maddocks in the 1960s and 1970s (<https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/handle/1885/301832>)

Significant work was done to identify audio-visual format material for priority copying as part of the broader Library project. The first batch of material has been sent to external experts for copying.

Staff and operations: The ANU Archives has had several staff changes during the year. Archives Assistant Louise Mayoh is working in the indexing team at the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, seconded from mid-2023 to mid-2024. This position is filled temporarily by James Spence, with tasks from his Repository Assistant role being absorbed by the team until his role can be replaced.

Archivist Beth Lonergan moved to the Territory Records Office/Archives ACT in July. We congratulate Beth and welcome to the team Abbey Turrell, who most recently was working at the National Library of Australia.

While volunteers have been fewer in number during 2023, the Archives has benefitted greatly from name indexing work being undertaken by Paula Waring on Australian Agricultural Company records. This is very valuable for accessibility and would not be possible without this voluntary contribution.

The ANU is undertaking numerous roof repairs across the campus as insurance work following the major storm cell in 2020. This affects the Menzies building and DA Brown building where the Archives has a secondary repository for around 3,000 shelf metres of records. The greatest impact has been on the Menzies building where the roof is being replaced to meet the original design using copper sheets. This work requires specialised tradespeople and is taking place over several months. The work has progressed well with the higher part of the roof completed and the lower roof works commencing in late November.

From 27 November to 15 December the Archives is operating a scaled down reading room on the lower level of the Menzies building as parts of the building will be inaccessible during this period. From close of business on 15 December the Menzies building will be closed to enable re-carpeting of areas damaged by water as a result of the hail storm and subsequent leaks. The Archives will reopen for researchers in our re-carpeted reading room in Menzies building from 15 January 2024.

As has been mentioned in earlier meetings, the ANU Library and Archives are facing increasing storage pressures. While plans for a research facility including repository have been discussed over several years, this is unlikely to proceed for some time. Working with Facilities and Services, the University Librarian has advocated for an interim solution to cater for the present urgent need. This resulted in a lease for space at Symonston in what was the Therapeutic Goods Administration complex. A small amount of low use archival material (around 350 shelf metres) was moved to Symonston from Acton Underhill in early November. The Library and Drill Hall Gallery are also arranging for material to move to the facility. Recently, the University has arranged to end the lease for the Hume Print Repository and move the contents to an expanded area of lease at Symonston. There are no archives collections at Hume but it does contain a significant quantity (around 3,000 shelf metres) of University records some of which will be required to be retained as University archives. This major relocation is underway and will impact services in the Records area until at least February 2024.

Kathryn Dan, University Archivist

FNBAC Conservation Fund

The establishment of the Friends of the Noel Butlin Archives Centre (FNBAC) dates to October 1997 when 17 people met with a view to forming a group to actively lobby against the proposed closure of the Archives. Over the next 4 years a sustained fight was waged by the Friends and other supports for the survival of the Archives, reaching a successful conclusion when a new Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ian Chubb, in August 2001 established an Archives Program under the University Archivist, with assured staffing and funding.

As a result of this decision the principal focus of the Friends ceased, although the group continued to keep a watching brief over the operations of the Archives. In 2006/07 a review examining its continuation, functions and operations was undertaken. There was strong support for the Friends to continue and several suggestions were made on future possible activities including 'fund raising for collection and/or preservation of particular archival items'.¹

In February 2009 a Conservation Fund was established and over the next several years the Committee worked to put the Fund on a sound legal footing. The Constitution was altered to formally establish the Conservation Fund to support '... the restoration, repair, stabilisation and copying of records in the Noel Butlin collection'.² A separate Committee was established to oversee its administration and it was entered on the Register of Cultural Organisations (ROCO). In 2011 the Conservation Fund was endorsed as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) by the Australian Tax Office allowing donors to receive an income tax deduction for donations over \$2.

A further administrative change was required when organisations with DGR status were required to register as a charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission. Registration was granted in March 2022.

Recommendations for restoration are made by the ANU Archivist to the FNABAC Committee, which are then sent to the Conservation Fund Committee for approval. Since 2011 members of the Fund Committee have been Professor Mark Wilson and Associate Professor Keturah Whitford from the ANU College of Business and Economics, Carol McNally, a member of the FNABAC Committee, and Colleen McEwen who acts as the administrator.

Since its inception the Conservation Fund has allocated \$34,216.70 for the restoration of 33 archival

¹ Friends of the Noel Butlin Archives Centre Report of Review Working Party, 17 September 2007.

² Constitution of the Friends of the Noel Butlin Archives Centre, Inc. Part VII, Section 40.

items. Most of the funds raised have come from members adding a donation to their annual subscription or by specific one-off donations. Last year a campaign was launched to raise funds from trade unions who had their records, or predecessor union records, deposited with the Archives. The project was led by Committee members Ewan Maidment and Bob Crawshaw and raised \$4,000. The campaign will continue in the new year and broaden to include businesses.

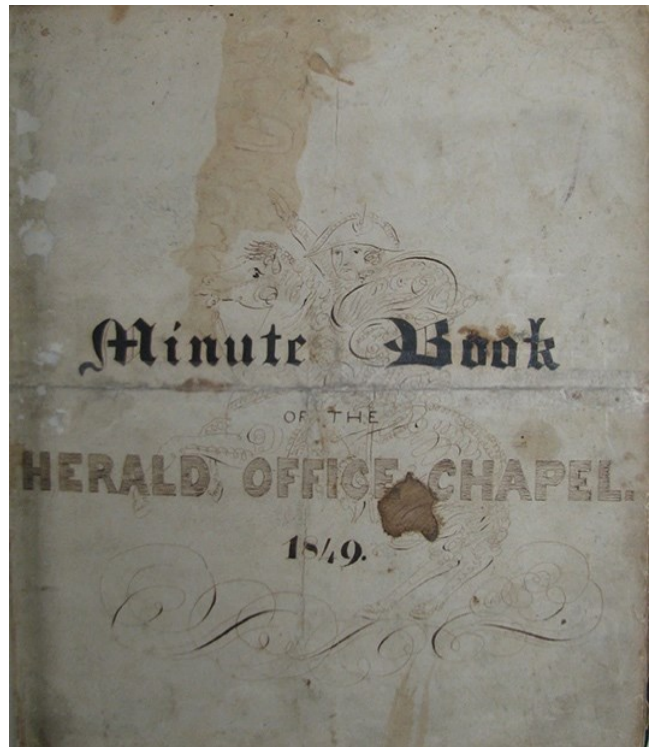
Since 2011 the focus for restoration has been on pre-Federation trade union minute books listed on the UNESCO Memory of the World Register. This entry comprises 317 volumes held in 11 Australian archival institutions, with 213 coming from the Noel Butlin Archives. The UNESCO Register website notes that the minute books:

‘... record collective decision-making by Australian workers in the nineteenth century. They are a record of democracy for workers – both men and women. They document the early formulation of Australia’s current industrial relations system, the beginnings of the social welfare system, the early history of communities and industries, and working lives that are no longer assessable today. They record events and achievements as they happen, local issues and disputes that developed into general strikes and became the first steps in broader campaigns such as they for the 8-Hour Day and the impetus for political representation of workers through the formation of the Australian Labor Party’.³

To date, 29 volumes of these minute books held by the Noel Butlin Archives have been restored by the Conservation Fund. All the Noel Butlin entries have been digitised and are available on ANU Open Research <https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/handle/1885/272550>.

In prioritising the minutes for restoration, the following criteria is used: oldest; linked to an historic event; state, and trade coverage; most used and most in need of repair.

The oldest volume that has been restored by the Conservation Fund is from the Sydney Herald Office Chapel of the Sydney Typographical Association dating from 1848–1866 (NBAC E216/1). It is the earliest extant Australian trade union minute book, covering workers of the Sydney Herald, the oldest continuously published newspaper in Australia.⁴



Sydney Herald Chapel Office Minute Book 1848-1866. The illustration on the open page appears to replicate Jacques-Louis David's painting Napoleon Crossing the Alps. (NBAC T39/84).

Historic events are well documented in these volumes. For example, insights into the bitter shearers’ dispute of 1891 can be found in the restored minutes of the Queensland Shearers Union 1887–1892 (NBAC N117/1470) and the Queensland Shearers’ Union and Labourers Union, Barcaldine and Longreach Branch 1891–1892 (NBAC E161A/4). The strike is credited as being one of the motivating events leading to the formation of the Australian Labor Party.⁵

The trade union minute books that have so far been selected for restoration cover a broad range of 19th century trades including engineers, seamen, shearers, stonemasons, teachers, shipwrights, bootmakers, tailors and tailoresses, glass bottle makers, felt hatters, confectioners, tinsmiths and sheet iron workers, lumpers, and plasters. These unions were geographically dispersed — located in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, and Western Australia.

Collectively, the minutes record meetings held over 100–120 years ago. They have passed through the hands of many union officials and have been kept in

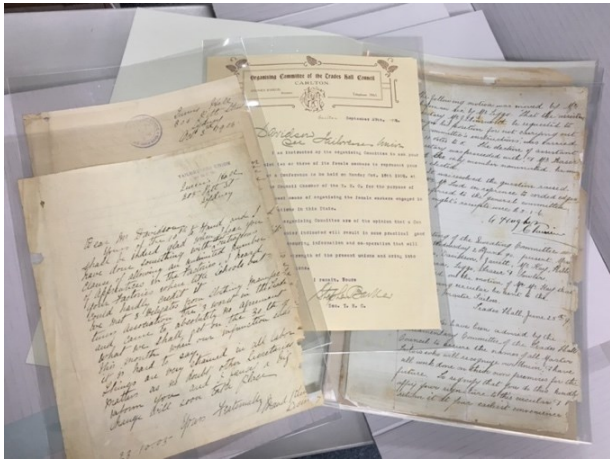
³ The Australian Register, UNESCO Memory of the World Program, The Minute Books of Pre-Federation Australian Trade Unions, https://www.amw.org.au/sites/default/files/memory_of_the_world/workers-and-trade-unions/minute-books-pre-federation-australian-trade-unions.html

⁴ Victor Isaacs, ‘Early Printing Union records restored’, *FNBC Newsletter*, No.30 June 2012, pp. 2–3.

⁵ Victor Isaacs, ‘Restoration Report’, *FNBC Newsletter*, No.34, June 2014, p.8

Friends of the Noel Butlin Archives Centre Newsletter, December 2023

various locations and environmental conditions before they made their way into archival custody, usually in quite poor physical condition. The Amalgamated Society of Engineers minute book dating from 8 October 1852–20 February 1860 (NBAC Z102 Box 25) was the first volume to be restored. The minute book records the establishment of a Sydney Branch of the British union by a group of 26 members at a meeting held on-board the *Frances Walker* before the ship reached Sydney. The condition report noted spine damage resulting in the front section becoming loose and described the pages' edges as worn and soiled. A brown paper dust cover was in poor condition. Restoration included replacing the dust cover with a mylar jacket, repair of the spine with loose pages being secured, tears repaired, and page margins brushed clean.⁶



Victorian Tailoresses Union Minute Book 1897-1906 NBAC N84/1.

Other restoration projects carried out on the trade union minutes have included repairing and stabilising volumes that have been subject to insect and rodent infestations and mould growth, removal of sticky and masking tape, complete rebinding where the spine has totally collapsed, and housing loose insert pages in separate mylar sleeves. Preservation storage boxes are custom made for each restored volume.

While the focus for restoration has been on the 19th century trade union minutes, Fund money will be used for other records if requested by the Archives. The allocation of money for the repair of a ledger from the Squire Brewery, 1828–1829 (NBAC N147/677), was recently approved. James Squire was Australia's first brewer, coming to the colony as a convict on the First Fleet. He ran a brewery in Sydney until he died in 1822, after which his son continued operating the business until his death in 1826. Thomas Farnell, the

husband of James' daughter Mary-Ann, reopened the brewery in 1828 and ran it until 1834.

Another volume of notes restored by the Conservation Fund is a Wave Hill Station Improvements Book (NBAC N182) — a loose-leaf register providing details about every structure on this Vestey-owned Northern Territory station from the 1950s to the early 1970s. This property is best known for the Wave Hill walk-off, a nine-year strike beginning in 1966 by 200 Gurindji stockman, domestic workers and their families for better pay and conditions, which in turn was an important influence on the Aboriginal land rights movement and the push for equal wages for Aboriginal workers.⁷

A fundamental activity of any archives is the physical care of the records in its custody. Neglecting collection preservation compromises all other archival activities. Please consider supporting the Fund by making a tax-deductible donation using the form available at archives.anu.edu.au/events/friends-noel-butlin-archives-centre

Colleen McEwen, FNAC Committee Member and Conservation Fund Manager

* * *

Statement by the Friends of the Noel Butlin Archives Centre in support of The Voice



Aboriginal rights rally, MUA archives, NBAC N409-124-01.

We, the Friends of the Noel Butlin Archives Centre, add our collective voice to the myriad other voices supporting constitutional change in this country. We affirm the Uluru Statement from the Heart, we embrace its call for truth telling and reconciliation, and we support the call by Indigenous communities for a First Nations Voice enshrined in the Constitution. We do this

⁶ 'FNAC Conservation Fund', *FNAC Newsletter*, No.24, July 2009, pp.5–8.

⁷ Mick Fogarty, 'Wave Hill Station Improvements Book: a snapshot of pastoral Australia', *FNAC Newsletter*, No.26, pp.6–8.

mindful of the Archives that the Friends of the Noel Butlin Archives Centre are pledged to protect. A national archive, including business and labour records from all the states and territories, this vast deposit holds up a mirror to history. It contains the evidence that pastoral companies dispossessed Aboriginal peoples from their lands and accumulated enormous wealth by the exploitation of an often unpaid Aboriginal workforce; it highlights systematic discrimination against First Nations peoples by laws, customs and cultural practices that effectively disenfranchised them; it demonstrates the way that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people faced and still face disadvantage and injustice. At the same time, the archival record held by the Noel Butlin Archives Centre chronicles First Nations connection with land, place and language. The records of colonisation are also a source for reclaiming familial and cultural links. They attest to struggle and resilience. Struggles for justice and recognition in the past, including the successful referendum in 1967, were supported by a wide cross section of Australians. They suggest the way a nation can move beyond its painful and divisive past and hold up an example we might follow today.

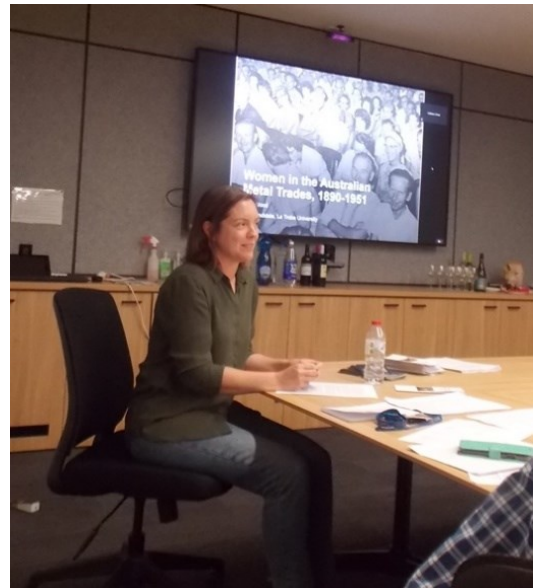
In 1901, the Australian Constitution was founded on principles that silenced First Nations Australians and excluded them from the Commonwealth. That great wrong has left a terrible legacy, as history – and the archival record – has shown time and again. This referendum offers a chance to change the Constitution to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It will enshrine a constitutionally protected Voice – a voice that will offer First Nations communities a meaningful say in the laws that affect them. The Friends of the Noel Butlin Archives Centre believe we must heed the lessons of history. We believe now is the time for change.

Professor Bruce Scates, FASSA
FNBAC President
7 October 2023

* * *

Women in the Australian Metal Trades, 1891-1951:
presentation by Katie Woods at the FNBAC AGM

We are very grateful to Katie Wood for her presentation at the AGM on 27 November. Katie, an archivist at the University of Melbourne Archives and a doctoral candidate at La Trobe University, received the 2023 Eric Fry Labour History Research Grant. Established in 2004, the Grant provides an opportunity for students undertaking an honours or postgraduate thesis on a labour or social history related theme, to carry out research at the Noel Butlin Archives Centre. It is sponsored by the ANU Australian Studies Institute (AuSI) and the Canberra Region Branch of the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History.



Katie Wood speaking after the FNBAC AGM.

Announcing the award of the Grant to Katie, Professor Paul Pickering, AuSI Director, commented, ‘I’d like to warmly congratulate Katie on behalf of the AuSI team and wish her well throughout her research on the history of women in the Australian metal trades from 1888 to 1951. As Australia’s premier trade union archive, the Noel Butlin Archives Centre is the perfect place to research records from dozens of historically important unions inclusive of the Australian metal trades’.

Katie confirmed the importance of NBAC to her research work, ‘With such an incredible business and labour movement collection, it would be nearly impossible to undertake a PhD in Australian labour history without a visit to the Noel Butlin Archive. That’s certainly the case for my PhD, and I have been using the huge collections from the metal unions already. ... The numerous metal union collections have been wonderful resources, especially those deposits covering the Federated Ironworkers, Sheetmetal Workers, the Amalgamated Engineering Union and the Munitions Workers Federation. I’ve found the transcript and report of the 1927 Iron Trades Inquiry, helpfully indexed transcripts of numerous metal trades award hearings and sets of correspondence from women metal workers to the metal unions. These are all documents that are not available elsewhere’ (<https://ausi.anu.edu.au/news/2023-eric-fry-labour-history-research-grant>).

**Friends of the Noel Butlin Archives
Centre Inc. Contact Details**

Postal address: c/o ANU Archives,
R.G. Menzies Building, 2 Fellows Road, Australian
National University, Canberra ACT 2600, Australia.
Phone: c/o NBAC (02) 6125 2219
Email: <nbac.friends@gmail.com>