



ROYAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY WINTER/SPRING 2020 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Book online at <https://www.rahs.org.au/events/> or call us on (02) 9247 8001

Date	Time	Event	Presenter	Member	Friend
AUGUST					
Wed 5	1pm – 2pm	RAHS Day Lecture – <i>Pathfinder: A History of NSW Aboriginal Trackers, 1862-1973</i>	Michael Bennett	Free	Free
Tue 18	7pm – 8pm	Finding Your Ancestors – Researching Aboriginal Family History in NSW #1	Various	Free	Free
Tue 25	7pm – 8pm	Finding Your Ancestors – Researching Aboriginal Family History in NSW #2	Various	Free	Free
SEPTEMBER					
Tue 1	7pm – 8pm	Finding Your Ancestors – Researching Aboriginal Family History in NSW #3	Various	Free	Free
Wed 2	1pm – 2pm	RAHS Day Lecture – <i>The Enchantment of the Long-haired Rat</i>	Tim Bonyhady	Free	Free
Thu 3	12.30pm – 1.30pm	Finding Your Ancestors – Researching Aboriginal Family History in NSW #4	Various	Free	Free
Tue 8	7pm – 8pm	Finding Your Ancestors – Researching Aboriginal Family History in NSW #5	Various	Free	Free
OCTOBER					
Wed 7	1pm – 2pm	RAHS Day Lecture – <i>Idling in Green Places: A Life of Alec Chisholm</i>	Russell McGregor	Free	Free
Wed 21	1pm – 2pm	RAHS Special Event – <i>Suburban Noir</i>	Peter Doyle	Free	Free
Wed 28	2pm – 3.30pm	RAHS/HHA Seminar – <i>Playing Their Part: Vice-Regal Consorts of NSW</i>	Various	\$10	\$10
NOVEMBER					
Wed 4	1pm – 2pm	RAHS Day Lecture – <i>The Adventures of 'Waltzing Matilda': The First Civilian Aircraft to Reach Australia From Britain After the Second World War</i>	David Carment	Free	Free
Tue 10	10.30am – 12pm	RAHS/Create NSW Western Sydney Seminar – <i>Land and Community Life Pt.1</i>	Carol Liston & Judith Dunn	Free	Free
Tue 17	10.30am – 12pm	RAHS/Create NSW Western Sydney Seminar – <i>Land and Community Life Pt.2</i>	Carol Liston & Christine Yeats	Free	Free
Wed 25	11am – 1pm	RAHS/WEA Workshop – <i>Getting to know the Australian Joint Copying Project</i>	Christine Yeats	\$32	\$35
DECEMBER					
Wed 2	1pm – 2pm	RAHS Day Lecture – <i>Home Talent: Australia's Itinerant Filmmakers</i>	Graham Shirley	Free	Free

Unless otherwise indicated, events take place at History House 133 Macquarie Street. Joint RAHS/HHA events must be booked through HHA (02) 9252 5554 or <http://www.hha.net.au/buy-tickets> and joint RAHS/WEA events must be booked through WEA (02) 9264 2781 or <https://www.weasydney.com.au>

RAHS Day Lecture – *Pathfinders: A History of NSW Aboriginal Trackers, 1862-1973*

Wednesday 5 August 2020, 1pm – 2pm online via Zoom. Cost: Free

Aboriginal trackers were an indispensable cog in the NSW justice system from 1862 to 1973. Both men and women, utilising traditional bush skills handed down from generation to generation, were employed by the police to perform a variety of tasks from pursuing and arresting bushrangers, solving murders, breaking police horses and finding lost souls in the bush. Thousands performed with distinction although only a few gained the recognition they deserved. In this talk, I will retell the life stories of several trackers including Billy Dargin (who played an instrumental role in the pursuit of Ben Hall), Mayella (a superb female tracker from Brewarrina), Whyman McLean, a tracker and missionary from southern NSW, and Alec Riley, the doyen of NSW trackers from Dubbo. And I will let listeners in on a few recently discovered secret stories from Sydney where surprisingly, trackers were employed until the 1950s.

About the speaker: Michael Bennett is a Sydney-based historian specialising in native title, oral history and Aboriginal genealogy. He recently worked in communications for the NSW Aboriginal Land Council. Michael's passion for tracker history developed when growing up in Dubbo and hearing stories about local trackers such as Alec Riley. His book *Pathfinders – A History of Aboriginal Trackers in NSW* was recently published.

Finding Your Ancestors: Researching Aboriginal Family History in NSW

Tuesdays between 18 August-8 September, 7pm – 8pm and Thursday 3 September, 12.30pm – 1.30pm

Join Paul Irish and Michael Bennett for a series of online Q&As as they help you research your Aboriginal family history. Each week they will be joined by special guests who have expertise in collections that could shed light on your family's past.

Paul Irish is a historian and archaeologist with Sydney firm Coast History & Heritage. For over ten years he has been piecing together the history of Aboriginal families from coastal Sydney with researchers from the La Perouse Aboriginal community, including the 2015 NSW History Fellowship exhibition *This Is Where They Travelled: Historical Aboriginal Lives in Sydney* and his 2017 book *Hidden in Plain View: The Aboriginal people of Coastal Sydney*.

Michael Bennett is a Sydney-based historian who for the last 20 years has worked with Aboriginal communities throughout NSW on native title claims, heritage projects, genealogical research and oral history recordings. He manages the *Pathfinders* website which explores the history of NSW Aboriginal trackers. The book of the same name was published earlier in 2020.

Special guests:

- Melissa Jackson (Tue 18 Aug)
- Ronald Briggs (Tue 25 Aug)
- Ray Ingrey (Tue 1 Sept)
- Bronwyn Gerry (Thur 3 Sept)
- Michael Bell (Tue 8 Sept)

Visit the RAHS website for more details about the speakers and sessions.

RAHS Day Lecture – *The Enchantment of the Long-haired Rat: A Rodent History of Australia*

Wednesday 2 September 2020, 1pm – 2pm online via Zoom. Cost: Free

Tim Bonyhady's latest book is much more than a history of one of Australia's most extraordinary native species. It takes readers on a remarkable course through Australia's natural and human history. In this lecture, Tim will discuss how and why he came to write this book and what it illuminates.

About the speaker: Professor Tim Bonyhady is one of Australia's foremost environmental and cultural historians. His many books include *Images in Opposition: Australian Landscape Painting 1801-1890*, *Burke and Wills: From Melbourne to Myth*, *Places Worth Keeping: Conservationists, Politics and Law* and award winning *The Colonial Earth*.

RAHS Day Lecture – *Idling in Green Places***Wednesday 7 October 2020, 1pm – 2pm online via Zoom. Cost: Free**

Russell McGregor will talk about his latest book, *Idling in Green Places*, which tells the story of Alec Chisholm, a pioneer conservationist who inspired Australians to see nature anew. Chisholm also won fame as a journalist, biographer, encyclopaedia editor and historian. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Australian Historical Society in 1961 and served two terms as president.

About the speaker: Russell McGregor is an award-winning historian and adjunct professor at James Cook University. He writes mainly on Australian environmental history, nationalism and race relations. Like Chisholm, he is a keen birder. His most recent book is *Idling in Green Places: A Life of Alec Chisholm*, which tells the story of a pioneer conservationist who once ranked among Australia's most popular nature writers.

RAHS Special Event – *Suburban Noir***Wednesday 21 October 2020, 1pm – 2pm online via Zoom. Cost: Free**

Forensic records constitute a special class of material culture. As the by-products of detailed observation, as mappings of domestic relationships, and the often circuitous enactments of human desires they present as a kind of accidental historical ethnography. The researcher into the forensic past (in my case, the 1950s and 60s) is confronted with masses of extraordinarily revealing, but often ethically complicated material culture. The forensic archive seems to offer so much evidence, so many answers, the research problem becomes, at least in part, find to the question that the archive answers.

About the speaker: Peter Doyle has curated major exhibitions on forensic material culture, police photography and Australian pulp publishing. His books include *City of Shadows*, (2005) and *Crooks Like Us*, (2009), and the novel *The Big Whatever* (2015). He is an Associate Professor of Media at Macquarie University, Sydney.

RAHS/Historic Houses Association of Australia joint event – *Playing Their Part: Vice-Regal Consorts of NSW***Wednesday 28 October 2020, 2pm – 3.30pm online via Zoom.****Cost: Members \$10 | Non-Members \$10****Bookings through the HHA website: <https://hhaoa.wildapricot.org/event-3991443>**

Join the RAHS and the HHA for a special online seminar about the vice-regal consorts of NSW. In this seminar presenters will discuss the consorts' contributions to the history of NSW and stories about their historic residence, Government House. Carol Liston will discuss what was expected of the vice-regal consort in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with a brief look at the official residences. Bruce Baskerville will talk about scandals at Government House and what they can reveal. Joy Hughes will talk about consorts who have held the role since 1945 – when the NSW Government insisted on the appointment of Australian-born governors. Joy will also discuss the VRC Oral History Project.

Participants will have a brief opportunity to purchase the book at a discounted price. Please contact History House on (02) 9247 8001 or admin@rahs.org.au with proof of ticket to arrange a purchase.

RAHS Day Lecture – *The Adventures of 'Waltzing Matilda': The First Civilian Aircraft to Reach Australia From Britain after the Second World War***Wednesday, 4 November 2020, 1pm – 2pm online via Zoom. Cost: Free**

David discusses the adventurous and dangerous flight of 'Waltzing Matilda', a converted Halifax bomber that reached Sydney from Britain in June 1946. It had on board men, women and children who all wished to travel to Australia as quickly as possible at a time when commercial transportation links for civilians were almost non-existent. It was perhaps the most unusual flight made along the Britain-Australia air highway.

About the speaker:

David Carment AM is Emeritus Professor of History at Charles Darwin University, an *Australian Dictionary of Biography* Editorial Fellow at the Australian National University and the author of many historical publications. Active over a long period in community history organisations, he is a former President of the RAHS.

RAHS/Create NSW Western Sydney Seminar – *Land and Community Life, Part 1*

Part 1 – Tuesday November 10, 10.30am – 12pm online via Zoom

Cost: Free

Associate Professor Carol Liston will provide an overview of the history of land in Western Sydney. It will consider how land records can provide rich detail about the histories of cities, towns, rural areas, rivers, roads, beaches, parks and reserves, as well as unique insights into the people and organisations of an area. RAHS Councillor Judith Dunn will discuss the Parramatta cemeteries and what we can learn from them.

RAHS/Create NSW Western Sydney Seminar – *Land and Community Life, Part 2*

Part 2 – Tuesday November 17, 10.30am – 12pm online via Zoom

Cost: Free

Associate Professor Carol Liston will show you how to access land title records from home and understand what they mean. RAHS President Christine Yeats will show you how to get to know a person by exploring their lives and considering when, where and how they lived through official records and online resources.

RAHS/WEA Workshop – *Getting to Know the Australian Joint Copying Project*

Wednesday 25 November 2020, 11am – 1pm online via Zoom

Cost: RAHS/WEA Members \$32 | Non-Members \$35

Bookings through WEA (02) 9264 2781 or online at <https://www.weasydney.com.au/course/GKAJCP>

The aim of the Australian Joint Copying Project, which began in 1948, was to microfilm records from The National Archives (UK), County Record Offices and personal archives and manuscripts collections in the UK relating to Australia, New Zealand and elsewhere in the Pacific. When the project concluded in 1997, there were 10,419 reels of microfilm. The National Library of Australia has now digitised this collection and has made it available on Trove. Christine Yeats will explain how to make the best use of this invaluable resource for all areas of historical research, with special focus on family history and biographical research.

About the speaker:

Christine Yeats is the President of the Royal Australian Historical Society, President of the National Council of the Independent Scholars Association of Australia (ISAA) and the Chair of the NSW Chapter of ISAA.

RAHS Day Lecture – *Home Talent: Australia's Itinerant Filmmakers*

Wednesday 2 December 2020, 1pm – 2pm online via Zoom. Cost: Free

From the earliest days of film in Australia, travelling film exhibitors brought entertainment and news to even the smallest communities. Graham Shirley will follow a brief overview of Australia's travelling film exhibitors with a more detailed look at the home talent films made across the continent. The presentation will look at how a stock standard script called *The Adventures of Dot* was repeatedly filmed as its itinerant directors and cameramen visited town after town.

About the speaker: Graham Shirley has worked as a director, writer and researcher on Australian historical documentaries. He has conducted numerous oral histories and is co-author of *Australian Cinema: The First 80 Years* (Currency Press, 1983 & 1989). From 2006 to 2014 he worked for the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia, initially as a senior curator and subsequently as NFSA Historian. In mid-2014 he returned to freelance researching, writing and consulting. He is an RAHS councillor and a member of the Professional Historians Association (NSW & ACT).

Updated 20 October 2020