

OLD STORIES, NEW WAYS



ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA
JOURNAL No. 29, 2007

Oral History Association of Australia Journal
Number 29, 2007
Old Stories, New Ways

Editor: Francis Good,
PO Box 797, Castlemaine, VIC, 3450

Cover & content design: Francis Good
Printed by BMP Total Image Management, Box 2020, Bendigo DC, VIC, 3554

ISSN: 0158 7366

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Editor's notes

The end of this year will see the culmination of an eventful period for the OHAA. This issue of the *Journal* is being released, in a return to our tradition, at the time of the National Conference in September, this year in Brisbane, from which the *Journal* takes its title. In lieu of the last time a biennial conference was due in 2005, members participated in the CISH conference in Sydney that year. Then in 2006 OHAA combined forces with the International Oral History Association to present the resoundingly successful 14th International Oral History Conference: *Dancing with Memory: Oral History and its Audiences*, at the University of Technology Sydney. Among many highlights were the keynote address by Peter Read and a plenary session presentation by Alistair Thomson, who gave a benchmark overview of the history of oral history to date. Both these essays have since been published in overseas journals, and reviews of each are presented in our Reviews and Book Notes section in this year's *Journal*.

Several congratulations are due. Alistair Thomson was elected as the new President of IOHA, and Beth Robertson was presented with the inaugural Hazel de Berg Award for Excellence in Oral History. Beth has made outstanding contributions to oral history in Australia since joining the Committee of the South Australian Branch of OHAA in 1981. The fifth edition of her remarkable *Oral History Handbook* was published by the Branch in 2006. A review of this essential manual is also included in this year's reviews.

The organising committee of the International Conference certainly deserves strong praise for what experienced IOHA members have termed 'the best ever' (shades of the Sydney Olympics!): Rosemary Block (National President of OHAA), Paula Hamilton (UTS) and Janis Wilton (UNE, and a long-term member of the OHAA National Executive) were truly Olympian in their efforts. News was also received in 2006 that Janis has been awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for service to the community as an historian, researcher and author, to history organisations, and through the preservation of Chinese heritage in New South Wales.

I would also like to personally thank Beth Robertson and Janis Wilton for their willing and expert participation with me in the Publication Committee which was responsible for initial appraisal of six papers that were offered for peer review this year. It will not escape notice that no reviewed papers are presented in this issue; however, several are in the process of being developed for further review after feedback on initial drafts, and it is hoped these will be included in later issues of the *Journal*.

Authors of three of this year's offers in this category responded to input from the Committee and reviewers with partly revised versions of their work, and accepted our offer to include their papers in this issue as non-refereed articles.

Offers of papers for peer-review are still welcome, but the call for papers for the 2008 issue has yet to be compiled, and awaits the appointment of a new editor. Following this issue, I will be stepping down after five years of intensely interesting and challenging work on the *Journal*. Although I look forward to relief from the responsibility (and the workload!), I must congratulate all contributors over these years for their splendid input—I have learned much and have enjoyed facilitating presentation of your work to our broad readership.

Recently Jill Cassidy and the Tasmanian Branch bravely put up their collective hands to mount the next OHAA Biennial National Conference in Launceston, where we have happy memories of the last time we met there in 1995. It will be held on 27–30 August 2009. The call for papers for the conference will be posted on the OHAA's web-site shortly, as will also a separate call for the 2008 *Journal*.

Sad news of the passing of two long-term OHAA members is included in this issue. Wendy Lowenstein, celebrated author of *Weevils in the Flour* and *Weevils at Work* and a Victorian Branch member of OHAA who had achieved iconic status in Australian oral history, died in October 2006. She is fondly remembered in two obituaries in this issue. Another Victorian member, Rod Lacey, died in February 2007. He was an enthusiastic participant in OHAA since 1979 and practitioner since 1966, and is remembered with affection by an obituary from the Victorian Branch.

On a personal note, I retired from full-time work with the Northern Territory Archives Service in Darwin in September 2006 after 21 years managing oral history operations there. The NTAS was always very supportive of OHAA in general, and my work on the *Journal* in particular. On behalf of OHAA I would like to thank them for this assistance, both in spirit and in kind, and Greg Coleman the Director NTAS in particular.

Meanwhile, I look forward to many more enjoyable and rewarding years of involvement in oral history and the OHAA.

Francis Good
Castlemaine, Victoria
August 2007
