

ANGUS & ROBERTSON

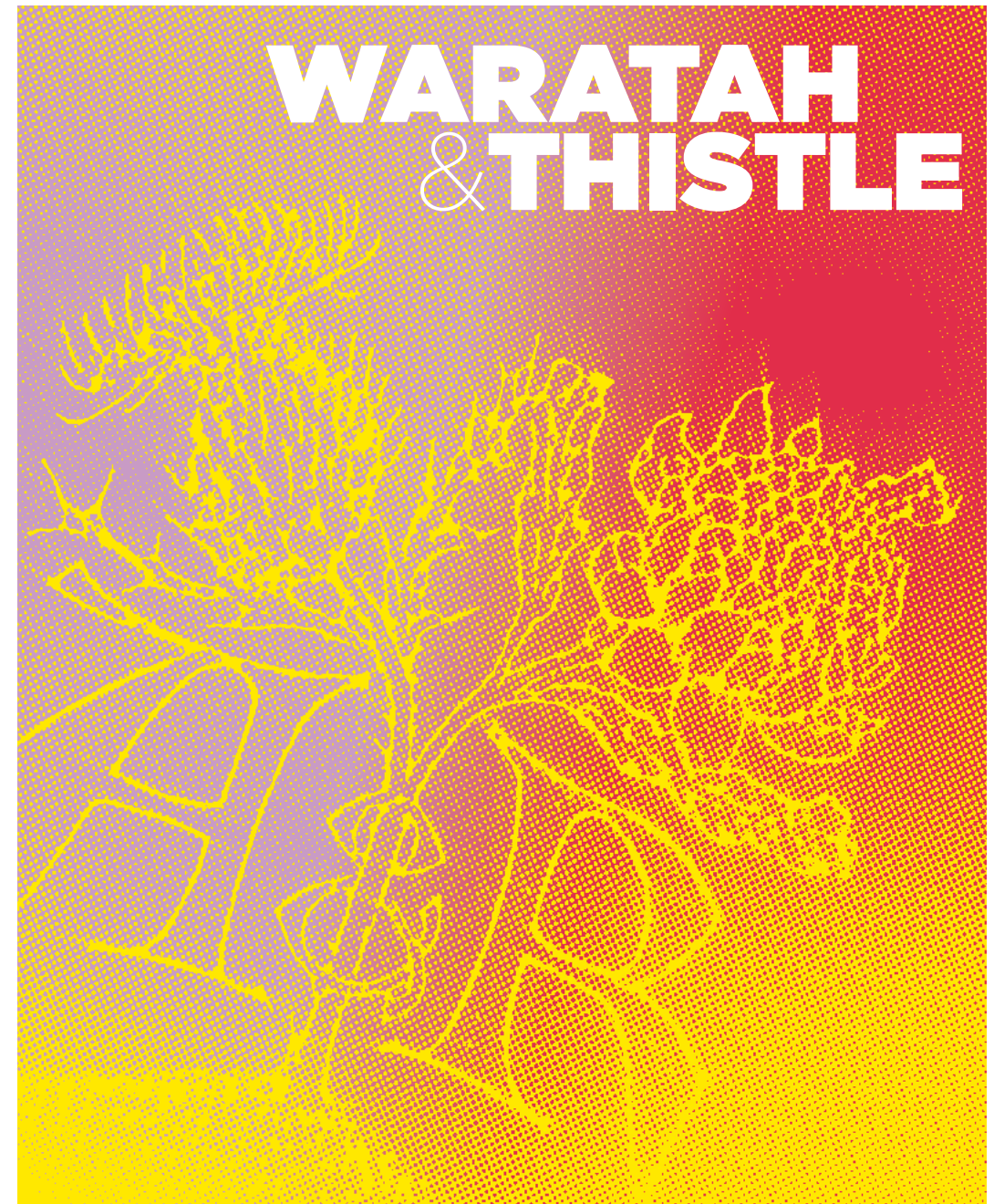
@statelibrarynsw

The State Library's Angus & Robertson (A&R) archive houses almost 1000 boxes of business records, publishing files, author and publisher's correspondence, and original manuscripts by Australian writers. There is also an array of original artwork, comprising more than 7500 photographs, paintings and drawings, and 134 volumes of press reviews of A&R publications. The archive came into the Library over time, in several consignments:

- Collection 01: A&R records, 1888-1932. The bulk of this collection, assembled by George Robertson as a record of the firm, came into the Library in April 1933.
- Collection 02: A&R original drawings and jacket designs by Australian artists to illustrate publications by Australian authors, c 1896-1920. Purchased from A&R in 1960.

- Collection 03: A&R further records, 1880-1979, including business records of subsidiary companies. Purchased from A&R in 1977.
- Collection 04: A&R estrays, 1854-1971. These records, previously held by others, were acquired between 1995 and 1998.

The State Library is currently in the process of making the collection more available to the public by creating online catalogue records for the entire collection, arranging and describing unprocessed materials, and rehousing many items, which will enable the eventual digitisation of selected parts of the collection.



8.30 am – 9 am
Macquarie Room

Registration

9 am – 9.15 am
Metcalfe Auditorium

Welcome to Country
UNCLE ALLEN MADDEN

9.15 am – 10 am
Metcalfe Auditorium

Opening remarks
JASON ENSOR
RICHARD NEVILLE

Revealing the Records:
A&R in the Library
ANN PECK

10 am – 10.30 am
Metcalfe Auditorium

KEYNOTE
Lines of Enquiry
NEIL JAMES

10.30 am – 11 am
Macquarie Room

Morning tea
(self-catered)

A&R display
(State Library)

11 am – 11.30 am
Metcalfe Auditorium

Henry Lawson's
Anzac Boots
DR CHRIS LEE

11.30 am – 12 noon
Metcalfe Auditorium

Zora Cross
CATHY PERKINS

12 noon – 12.30 pm
Metcalfe Auditorium

Beatrice Davis
JACQUELINE KENT

12.30 pm – 1 pm
Metcalfe Auditorium

Sir Frank Packer's Bid
for A&R

CRAIG MUNRO AND
BRIDGET GRIFFEN-FOLEY

1 pm – 2 pm
Macquarie Room

Lunch

2 pm – 2.30 pm
Metcalfe Auditorium

Publisher with a Cause
JASON ENSOR

2.30 pm – 3 pm
Metcalfe Auditorium

ARCHiver Project
HELEN BONES

3 pm – 3.30 pm
Macquarie Room

Afternoon tea
(self-catered)

Digital Humanities
display (WSU)

3.30 pm – 4.30 pm
Metcalfe Auditorium

Panel discussion
CHAIR: RACHEL FRANKS

4.30 pm – 5 pm
Metcalfe Auditorium

Closing remarks
JASON ENSOR

Thanks
RICHARD NEVILLE

WARATAH & THISTLE

ANGUS & ROBERTSON | AUSTRALIAN PUBLISHING HISTORY

#AustPublishingHistory

A one-day symposium

Monday 10 April 2017

Macquarie Room & Metcalfe Auditorium

State Library of New South Wales

Scotsmen David Angus (1855–1901) and George Robertson (1860–1933) chose two flowers as the emblem of Angus & Robertson (A&R), their Sydney-based publishing house, founded in 1886. Producing their first publication in 1888, the partnership grew into a successful company which championed Australian writers, marketed alongside established international authors.

George Robertson actively encouraged David Scott Mitchell in his desire to build an unparalleled collection of Australian literature, and in the subsequent establishment of the Mitchell Library — now the custodian of the A&R archive. It remains the single most valuable resource for studying Australian writing and publishing.

This symposium brings together contemporary researchers working on various aspects of Australian literature, publishing history, print culture and the digital humanities.



KEYNOTE

DR NEIL JAMES

DR NEIL JAMES CREATED THE ANGUS & ROBERTSON ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION. HE HAS PUBLISHED FOUR BOOKS AND MORE THAN 90 ARTICLES, ESSAYS AND REVIEWS ON LITERATURE AND LANGUAGE.



Lines of Enquiry: Reading a Publisher's Archive

The Angus & Robertson collection preserves the history of the most influential publisher in Australian literary history. The collection has already yielded valuable insights into Australian literature and the lives of individual writers. Yet in some ways, we have barely begun to mine its files. Dr Neil James will outline the lines of enquiry we should consider when approaching this collection.

He will argue that the A&R files have as much to offer social history as literary history, Australian art and design as fiction and poetry. Neil will celebrate some gems that have emerged from the collection, and challenge the next generation of writers and researchers to unearth more.



ANN PECK

ANN PECK, A LIBRARIAN AT THE STATE LIBRARY, RECENTLY COMPLETED A YEAR-LONG PROJECT WHICH IMPROVED ACCESS TO THE ANGUS & ROBERTSON ARCHIVE.

Revealing the Records:

Angus & Robertson in the Library

The A&R archive was acquired by the State Library in various consignments from the 1930s to the 1970s. It contains the original manuscripts of AB 'Banjo' Paterson, Henry Lawson, May Gibbs, Miles Franklin, Norman Lindsay, CJ Dennis and CW Bean, among others, along with correspondence and other papers.

Traditionally, researchers had access to the archive via aids such as printed guides only available onsite, with later consignments listed online. This paper will focus on how the Library is working to improve access to this highly complex collection, revealing its rich mix of textual and graphic materials.



CATHY PERKINS

CATHY PERKINS, AN EDITOR AT THE STATE LIBRARY, IS RESEARCHING THE LIFE OF AUSTRALIAN WRITER ZORA CROSS.

Zora Cross: A Household Name

In 30 years of publishing, George Robertson had never met an author as astonishing as Zora Cross. Her book *Songs of Love and Life* was a publishing event in 1917: a young woman with literary talent writing about sex. Soldiers took it to the trenches and many newspaper inches were devoted to the author's genius and daring. Robertson believed Zora Cross would endure as a household name alongside Shakespeare and Rossetti. The story of her experience with Angus & Robertson has a cast of characters including Norman Lindsay, Rebecca Wiley and Christopher Brennan.



DR CHRIS LEE

CHRISTOPHER LEE IS A PROFESSOR OF LITERARY STUDIES AT GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY, QUEENSLAND.

Henry Lawson's Anzac Boots

This paper reflects upon the role of

Angus & Robertson in curating a sense of Australian culture by looking at the publication of Henry Lawson's writing and Charles Bean's *Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918*. It is especially interested in the role a publisher might play in establishing an appropriate level of culture for a young, egalitarian society.



JACQUELINE KENT

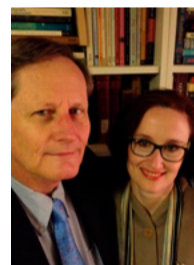
JACQUELINE KENT IS THE AUTHOR OF *A CERTAIN STYLE: BEATRICE DAVIS, A LITERARY LIFE* (2001).

'There goes a gentlewoman ... and she's a little beaut, too!' Beatrice Davis

at Angus & Robertson

Beatrice Davis was the chief editor and arbiter of literary taste at A&R from 1937 until 1973. She nurtured the talents of many well-known Australian writers, including Thea Astley, Miles Franklin, Xavier Herbert, Ruth Park, Hal Porter and Patricia Wrightson. Her position as a judge of several major prizes, including the Miles Franklin Award, reinforced her pivotal role in Australia's literary culture.

Biographer Jacqueline Kent has drawn on Davis's frank editorial correspondence to present a portrait not only of an elegant, bohemian and forthright woman, but of an era in Australian book publishing when a writer's passion for living was as great as their passion for literature.



DR CRAIG MUNRO & PROFESSOR BRIDGET GRIFFEN- FOLEY

DR CRAIG MUNRO IS A BIOGRAPHER AND THE FORMER PUBLISHER AT UQP. HIS BOOKS INCLUDE THE 2015 MEMOIR *UNDER COVER: ADVENTURES IN THE ART OF EDITING*.

BRIDGET GRIFFEN-FOLEY IS PROFESSOR OF MEDIA, AND DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRE FOR MEDIA HISTORY, AT MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY. HER BOOKS INCLUDE *THE HOUSE OF PACKER* (1999).

Sydney Media Mogul Stalks the Old Firm: Sir Frank Packer's Bid for A&R

In 1960, Angus & Robertson was Australia's pre-eminent bookseller-publisher, with 600 staff globally. New Zealand corporate raider Walter Vincent Burns became A&R's managing director, shutting down publishing and buying bookshops in prime locations.

This was all too much for the A&R board, so Burns offered to sell his shares to media tycoon Sir Frank Packer. Having just acquired the *Bulletin*, Sir Frank launched a full-scale takeover bid for the equally venerable Angus & Robertson Ltd. Though his bid stalled, the pugnacious Packer was able to buy up three-quarters of a million shares, mounting a vitriolic newspaper campaign against the A&R board before selling his holding for a cool £120,000 profit.



DR JASON ENSOR

DR JASON ENSOR IS A RESEARCHER AND MANAGER OF DIGITAL HUMANITIES AT WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY, AND A VISITING PROFESSOR AT THE ELECTRONIC TEXTUAL CULTURES LAB, UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA, CANADA.

Publisher with a Cause:

The Angus & Robertson Legacy

A reasonable question to ask is why Angus & Robertson? Landmark publications like *The Man from Snowy River*, canonical children's books *The Magic Pudding* and *Blinky Bill*, and A&R's post-war effort to build up distinctly Australian educational publishing have consolidated their reputation as one of Australia's most culturally significant publishers of Australian writing.

During the 20th century, it also became one of the largest copyright holders in Australian literature and has continued to be the focus of scholarly inquiry. What made this company such a primary contributor to Australian culture?



DR HELEN BONES

DR HELEN BONES IS A RESEARCH ASSOCIATE WITH THE DIGITAL HUMANITIES RESEARCH GROUP AT WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY, WITH AN INTEREST IN TRANS-TASMAN AND COLONIAL PUBLISHING AND WRITING NETWORKS.

Using the Angus & Robertson

Collection for Humanities and Education Research (ARCHiver)

The ARCHiver project is funded by the Australian National Database Service and led by Dr Jason Ensor from Western Sydney University. It uses the State Library's archive of the A&R business papers to showcase how we can make better use of paper-based, high-value historical collections through digital technologies. It also looks at ways to do this that sustain and enhance archival practice and principles, while leading Australian humanities research in new directions.

Dr Helen Bones will use her own research questions about the rise and fall of trans-Tasman publishing networks to illustrate the benefits and possibilities of the digital tool being created.



RIGHT: GEORGE ROBERTSON AND OTHER LITERARY IDENTITIES, C 1915
PRINT BY DAVID LOW
PXD 387/4

COPPER PRINTING PLATE, C 1915
ETCHED BY DAVID LOW
R 752

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