

Introduction - inscription ceremony

Welcome to everyone - we are here to celebrate the inscription of 7 new items and collections of documentary heritage of significance to Australia on the UNESCO Memory of the World Australian Register. Welcome back to AIATSIS, NLA and NFSA, the State Library of NSW, Queensland State Archives and the State Library of Queensland.

And welcome to some new entrants - including our first inscription from a local historical society, the Deniliquin & District Historical Society; the first inscription from Sydney University Archives and the Macleay Museum; the first from the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery and the first from the Westpac Archives. It is wonderful not only to have new inscriptions from our great national and state collections, and also to be able to welcome those from more diverse institutions.

And it is a double pleasure to be able to hold this ceremony here in Canberra's own museum and gallery, in conjunction with the exhibition, 'Memory of the World in Canberra'. If you have not already done so, I urge you to take the opportunity to see this exhibition that showcases the inscriptions from Canberra institutions that are already on the Australian Register.

Documentary heritage matters - in an age where such infelicitous constructions as 'post-truth' and 'alternative facts' have elbowed their way into public discourse, the existence of documents that act as reliable sources for historians and others seeking to find out what has happened in the past is critical. The Memory of the World Programme exists to ensure that our collective memory captured in documents is preserved and made accessible to as many people as possible

So, before I hand over to our speaker, Dr Adrian Caesar, I want to outline, very briefly, the 7 new entries that we are inscribing today. You will have the opportunity to read more about these on our website.

First of all, there are three inscriptions relating to Australia's Indigenous people - the Warlpiri Drawings 1953-1954 from AIATSIS, including works by artists such as Abe Jangala whose work is represented in national and international collections; the Fanny Cochrane Smith recordings that capture the voice of the last fluent speaker of a Tasmanian Aboriginal language - held in TMAG and preserved by NFSA; and the

records of the pioneering years of Anthropology Department of the University of Sydney, relating to a number of Australia's most notable anthropologists.

Business records have not featured prominently on our Register to date, with the exception of the Australian Agricultural Company, some of whose records you can see in the exhibition. Now we have two more significant entries - the Bank of NSW records from the foundational years of Australia's first bank - now Westpac; and the records of the 'billycan millionaire', James Tyson, whose papers reflect his wandering existence, as they are found in Deniliquin, Canberra and Queensland. The inclusion of these two sets of records addresses a major gap in the Australian Register.

The centenary of World War I has been a theme for us over these years, and this time we have a collection with a very different focus to the stories told in diaries of Australian soldiers, or in the film and Murdoch letter on the Gallipoli campaign (you can see these in the exhibition too). The records created by enemy aliens - mostly of German extraction - interned in Holsworthy Camp provide another perspective on Australia in wartime, from the point of view of those who Australian society turned upon and treated as the enemy in the midst.

Finally, we have the first inscription of a literary work on our Register - Dorothea Mackellar's 'Core of my heart' (My Country) in her poetry notebook, Verses 1907-1908. Many Australians would at least recognise some of the poem's phrases - 'a sunburnt country', 'droughts and flooding rains', and 'the wide brown land for me', if not be able to recite whole stanzas. Mackellar, and Fanny Cochrane Smith, are also the first two individual women to have records inscribed on our Register. Dorothea Mackellar's father was a Director of the Bank of NSW - another connection between our newest inscriptions.

(Introducing guest speaker) Dr Adrian Caesar is an Australian author and poet. He was born in Manchester, United Kingdom and emigrated to Australia in 1982. He has held appointments at Australian universities, including the Australian National University and the University of New South Wales' School of Humanities and Social Sciences. He is the author of several books, including the prize-winning non-fiction novel *The White* based on the Antarctic exploration of Robert F. Scott and Douglas Mawson from 1911 to 1913. His poems have been widely published and his 2005

poetry collection, *High Wire*, was shortlisted for the 2007 Judith Wright Prize. He is currently working on a novel and his next book of poems.

After the address, an audio recording of Dorothea Mackellar reading 'Core of my heart' (My Country) was played.

Concluding remarks

Thanks especially to our speaker, Dr Adrian Caesar (and make presentation)

And a very big thanks to two groups of people - firstly, those who made the nominations that have been inscribed today. It is a lot of work, but I hope that the inclusion of your documentary heritage on the UNESCO Memory of the World Australian Register will be of lasting benefit to your institutions.

Second, the members of the Assessment Sub-Committee, chaired by Christine Yeats, most of whom cannot be here today. Their careful and highly professional work is something in which our Committee can take great pride, and I would personally like to thank them all most sincerely.

Thanks to Shane Breynard and CMAG for providing the venue and for staging the *Memory of the World in Canberra* exhibition that has helped to raise the profile of the MoW Programme in this city in which so many institutions preserve and make our documentary heritage accessible. Special thanks to Claire Conti, Sophie Chessell, Paul Webb, Danyka van Buuren, Cath Moran and exhibition curator Dale Middleby,

Finally, thanks to our social media coordinator, Rachel Watson, who will be making sure that this ceremony is sent out to the world on Facebook - check it out and share, please.

Now, please join us for morning tea.