



Royal Australian Historical Society

Knowing your history

30 May 2024

[View this RAHS email in your browser](#)



The Majestic, Katoomba (RAHS Photograph Collection)





Resuming the journey: RAHS reopens its doors

The RAHS is pleased to share that we have reopened our doors and staging events in the building again! Last week we hosted Abi Cryerhall for National Archaeology Week — our first in-person event at History House since 2020. The RAHS is currently working through a detailed schedule of maintenance and conservation works and will provide an update in the second half of the year.

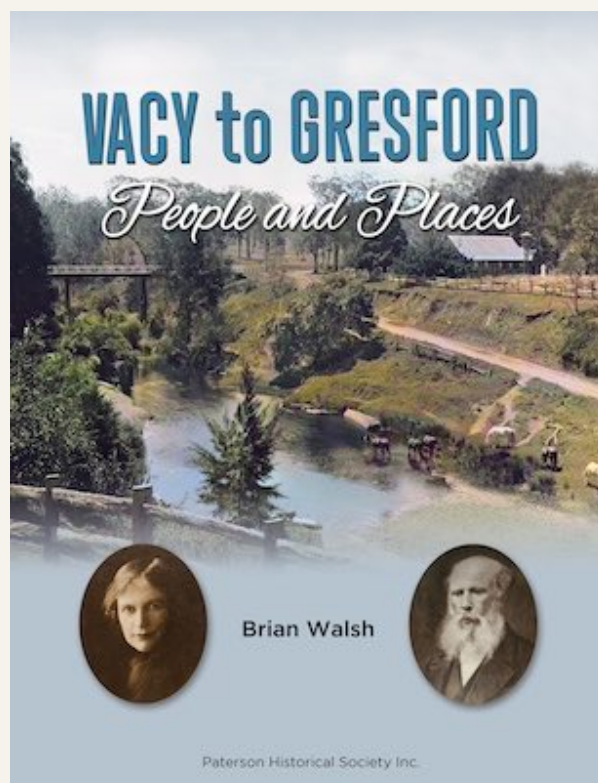
Check out our [upcoming events page](#) to learn about events at History House in the coming weeks and months. Some events will still be streamed online, and we are progressing towards being able to host hybrid events in the future.

We are also now taking venue hire bookings. Visit our new [venue hire website](#) to learn about hosting your event at History House. On the page you will find our new brochures, booking forms, and updated prices for 2024.

Members visiting the building will also start noticing some of the updates we have implemented in the previous months, including a new plaque at the front of the building (pictured above) and refurbished furniture (pictured below).

Contact us if you want to arrange a visit or have questions about venue hire.

We look forward to hosting your lecture, book launch or cocktail evening in 2024!



A successful 2023 Cultural Grants project by the Paterson Historical Society.

2024 Cultural Grants Program

We are pleased to share that the 2024 Cultural Grants Program is now open!

The Cultural Grants Program is a Create NSW devolved funding program administered by the Royal Australian Historical Society on behalf of the NSW Government. This Cultural Grants program assists historical research and publication of local, community and regional history projects.

Last year, eighteen projects were recommended for funding to the value of \$60,668. Fifty per cent of projects focused on regional areas, thirty-three per cent on metropolitan Sydney, and seventeen per cent on Western Sydney. You can learn more about last year's program from the [2023 Assessment Report](#).

Paterson Historical Society was one of last year's successful projects. They were awarded \$2,000 to publish a history about the communities along the Paterson and Allyn Rivers from Vacy to Gresford. The book was recently published as *Vacy to Gresford: People and Places* (2024). You can learn about other successful projects on our [Cultural Grants website](#).

We want to thank Create NSW for providing funding for the cultural grants program that supports local history and heritage projects, facilitating an understanding of the history of the people and places of NSW.

The 2024 Cultural Grants Program closes at midnight on 2 July. Learn more about the 2024 Cultural Grants Program by [visiting our website](#).





National Reconciliation Week 2024

Many RAHS members and friends have attended National Reconciliation Week events. Phillip Jaworski (RAHS Digital Media and Membership Services) attended the Professional Historians Association (NSW-ACT) event on Monday evening, which featured speakers from history and heritage organisations talking about their experiences of developing a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). Past RAHS Councillor Dr Peter Hobbins joined the panel to discuss the RAHS's first Reflect RAP, [launched during National Reconciliation Week in 2023](#). Dr Hobbins emphasised how relatively straightforward the process of implementing a RAP can be and encouraged organisations that care about truth-telling and reconciliation to give it a go. The other panellists were Sharon Veale (CEO, GML Heritage) and Brett Adlington (CEO, Museums & Galleries NSW). This year's theme is *Now More Than Ever*, which aims to remind us of the importance of working together to advance reconciliation.

As well as participating in events, we recommend you look at the Reconciliation Australia [website](#) and two useful resources that encourage us to work together.

Reconciliation News magazine

This free magazine is produced twice a year. May 2024 is available for free online. It features articles highlighting the principles and motivations behind

the National Reconciliation Week 2024 theme, *Now More Than Ever*. You can download this edition and past editions [here](#).

Reconciliation Film Club

The Reconciliation Film Club provides information and resources on how to host a screening of documentaries and films that bring people together to develop a deeper understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' perspectives and histories. The Film Club's [website](#) includes screening kits, discussion guides and feature articles.

RAHS Events



Source: Hunter Living Histories

RAHS Day Lecture Awabakal and Nikkin: Reconnecting histories of First Peoples, coal and colonists

Speaker: Julie McIntyre.

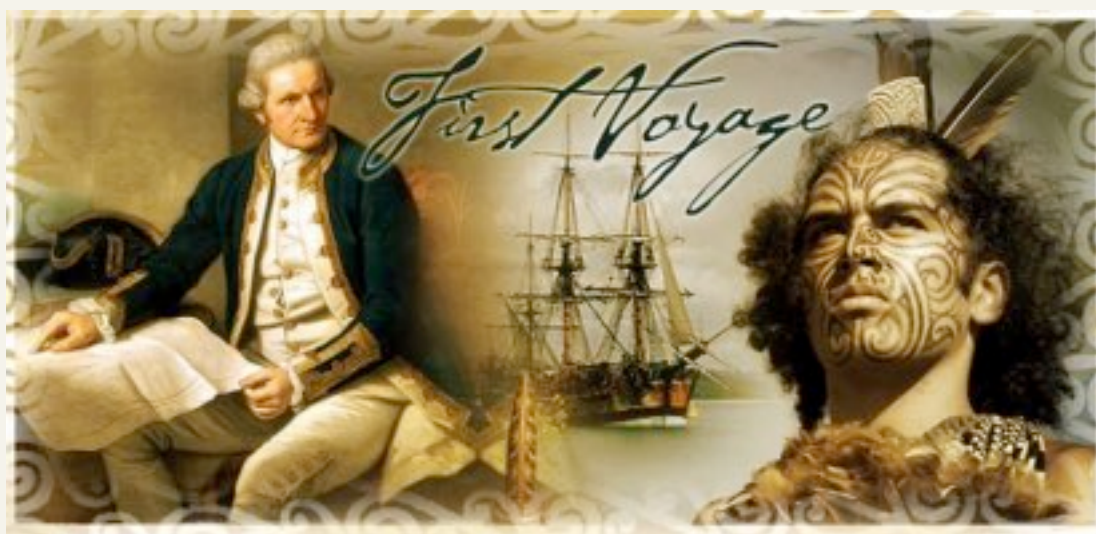
When: Wednesday, 5 June 2024 at 1.00 pm.

Where: Online via Zoom.

Cost: Free.

In the late 1790s colonists encountered exposed coal measures along the 35-kilometre stretch of coastal cliffs from Newcastle's Nobby's Head to Catherine Hill Bay near Lake Macquarie. Geologist Edgeworth David later declared this extensive carbon-rich strata to be 'probably the finest of its kind in the whole world.' As this paper discusses, the prevalence of visible coal seams means it is no surprise that Awabakal people of the region named, used and traded bituminous, heat-softened, tar-like nikkin (coal).

[RESERVE TICKETS](#)



RAHS Special Lecture
Joseph Banks and the Endeavour:
The Unauthorised Biography

Speaker: Ian Burnet.

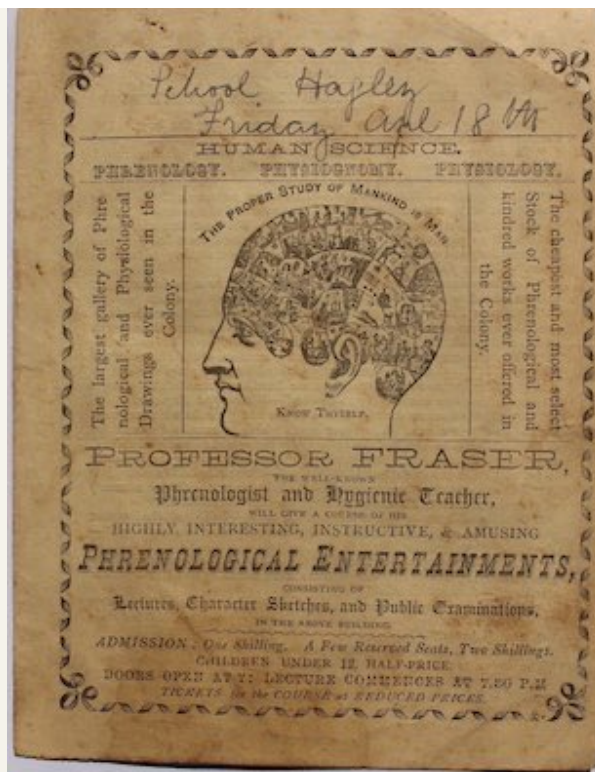
When: Wednesday, 19 June 2024 at 1.00 pm.

Where: History House, 133 Macquarie St, Sydney NSW 2000.

Cost: Free.

Joseph Banks together with Daniel Solander collected hundreds of botanical specimens and were the first trained naturalists to describe the unique flora and fauna of Continent Australia that had evolved during its 30 million years of isolation. They returned to England with over 3,000 specimens which went into Joseph Banks's private collection. All the work was done to draw and describe the specimens which were to be published in a massive volume. But this never happened. Why?

[RESERVE TICKETS](#)



Handbill for a lecture in Tasmania by Prof. Joseph Fraser, 1884

RAHS Day Lecture

The Power to Read Others: Popular Phrenology in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand

Speaker: Alexandra Roginski.

When: Wednesday, 3 July 2024 at 1.00 pm.

Where: Online via Zoom.

Cost: Free.

The contentious science of phrenology once promised insight into character and intellect through external ‘reading’ of the head. In the transforming settler-colonial landscapes of Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand, and well into the twentieth century, popular phrenologists performed their science of touch and cranial jargon everywhere, from mechanics’ institutions to public houses. Alexandra Roginski invites us into a history of this everyday practice and to reflect on the enduring appeal of a shortcut to knowing who we can trust.

[RESERVE TICKETS](#)

Affiliated Societies News

Military History Society of NSW



The Military History Society of NSW presents
2024 Annual Patron's Lecture
THE SWORD AND THE SCALES
The Military and the Administration of Justice in
NSW Since Colonial Times
Major General the Hon Paul Brereton AM RFD SC
10:30AM Saturday 1 June 2024
Anzac Memorial Hyde Park, Sydney CBD

The Sword and the Scales: The Military and the Administration of Justice in NSW Since Colonial Times

The next MHSNSW lecture is the Annual Patron's Lecture, to be delivered by Major General the Hon Paul Brereton AM RFD SC.

Under the First Charter of Justice of 1788, the military played a central role in the administration of justice in NSW. The first judicial officer in the colony was not a lawyer, but an Army Officer – the Deputy Judge-Advocate, Captain David Collins (pictured). This lecture will draw on the story of his life and work, told by the late Hon. J.F. Nagle – a distinguished judge of the Supreme Court and Commando officer – in *Collins, The Courts & The Colony* (1996), to cover his manifold responsibilities, including convening and presiding over the criminal and civil courts of the colony. The criminal court was constituted by him and six naval or military officers. This unique court administered the criminal law in NSW until the present Supreme Court commenced on 17 May 1824. The original civil court was constituted by the deputy judge-advocate and two 'fit and proper' persons being resident in the colony, appointed by the Governor. It was superseded, under the Second Charter of 1814, by the first Supreme Court, presided over by a judge with two magistrates.

When: Saturday, 1 June 2024 at 10.30 am.

Where: The Auditorium, Anzac Memorial Hyde Park.

Admission: Free, but a donation is appreciated. More info.

St George Historical Society



Lydham Hall Historic House and Museum Reopens

One of the oldest homes in the St George area has reopened to the public. The NSW State Heritage-listed Lydham Hall is a sandstone villa built in the Victorian era. The home contains a unique collection of heritage items.

After a stroll through the museum, relax on the verandah with freshly baked scones and a pot of Twinings tea in vintage cups and saucers, whilst the kids play old fashioned games on the lawn.

The museum is open on the first Sunday of the month from 10 am to 4 pm. Lydham Hall is also open for group tours and venue hire.

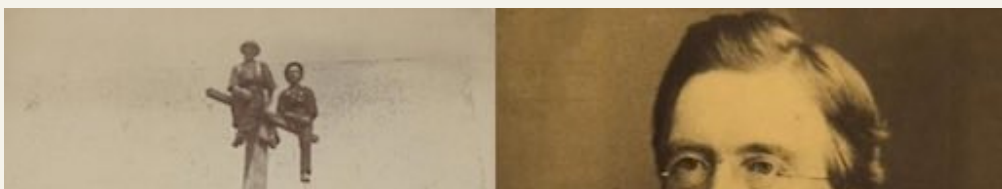
When: Sunday, 2 June 2024 from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm.

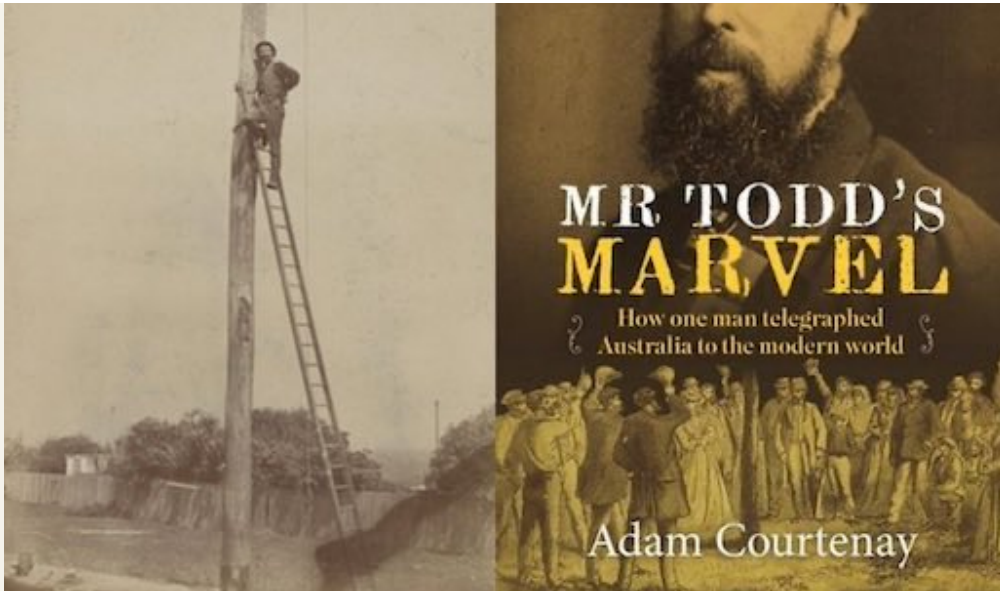
Where: Lydham Hall, 18 Lydham Ave, Rockdale.

Admission: Members and Children under 10 Free. Adults \$8.

Concession/Seniors \$5. [More information.](#)

City of Sydney Historical Association





Mr Todd's Marvel:

How one man telegraphed Australia to the modern world

In the early days of Sydney, people were lucky if they ever heard news of their family again. Every ship arriving in port was rushed as people clustered hoping to hear news from home. And then came ... the telegraph. In 1855, talented astronomer and scientist Charles Todd dreamed of building a telegraph line across Australia to connect it to the world. This dream was bold, and he would have to wait for technological advances to catch up with his ideas. Todd and his men would have to erect thousands of telegraph poles across the entire expanse of the country, from Adelaide to the northern coast – one pole every 80 metres – across land that was relentlessly inhospitable and largely unknown to them. They overcame every obstacle and, as well as reducing the transmission of information to the country from months to hours, revealed the splendour of the continent's interior to its rapidly growing population.

Speaker: Adam Courtenay.

When: Saturday, 15 June 2024 at 2 pm.

Where: Henry Carmichael Theatre, SMSA, 280 Pitt St.

Admission: Members \$5. Visitors \$10. More info.

Dural and District Historical Society





The 2024 June Roughley Memorial Lecture

Professor Grace Karskens' highly acclaimed book, *People of the River: Lost Worlds of Early Australia*, is a history of both the Aboriginal people and the settlers on Dyarubbin, the Hawkesbury/Nepean River, from deep time to the nineteenth century. Grace will also speak about her collaborative work with the Dharug and Darkinjung people of the Real Secret River: a Dyarubbin project.

When: Saturday, 10 August at 2 pm.

Where: The Arcadia Community Centre, 136 Arcadia Road, Arcadia NSW.

Entrance: Free with a gold coin for afternoon tea. Homemade marmalade and jams on sale. A pleasant afternoon in a rural setting. All welcome!

Enquiries: Michael Bell, 02 9653 1365 or 0466 341 729.

Woollahra History and Heritage Society



New Website and Events Calendar

The Woollahra History and Heritage Society has launched a new-look website.
Visit the site to register your interest in upcoming events and much more!

<https://heritagewoollahra.org.au/>

City of Canada Bay Heritage Society



Talking Tombstones

This is the first in a series of standalone presentations "Talking Tombstones" which demonstrates that cemeteries are not "Dead centres" and echo the importance of keeping our cemeteries and their stories alive for future generations.

Symbolism, unusual words and mistakes are just a few of the topics discussed. Moving from cemetery to cemetery as you view the humblest of tombstones to

the most lavish and meet some of their residents you will learn that behind a few common words on a tombstone can be an amazing story

Some will have you in laughter, others may bring a tear to your eye.

The City of Canada Bay Heritage Society

invites you to join us to hear a talk by

Kerrima-Gae Topp

on

Talking Tombstones One

Keeping our cemeteries and stories alive

at the

City of Canada Bay Museum

1 Bent St, Concord

on

Saturday 1st June 2024

at

1.30pm for a 2.00pm sharp start

The talk will be followed by light refreshments and a chance to chat with the speaker and our wonderful volunteers

Admission: Free

(donations always welcome)

Come early and look around our new displays.

The museum opens at 10am.

For more information:

www.canadabayheritage.asn.au or email: heritage@canadabayheritage.asn.au
Telephone: 9743 3034(Museum hours) or 9744 8528(Secretary)

Inverell District Family History Group

Inverell District Family History Group

Celebrates 40 Years!

JOIN US

FOR
MORNING
TEA



Help us celebrate
this important
milestone

25
JUNE
2024

10.30am
Inverell
Library

The Inverell District Family History Group held its inaugural meeting on 20th May 1984. Since that meeting it has continued to foster the study of local & family history, carried out countless research projects and amassed a large collection of resources which are available to the public.

RSVP 21st June 2024
0428 214 272

History News



Sydney Station looking west (Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW)

New Digitised Photo Album: The Railways of NSW

Ever wondered what Central Station looked like in 1875?

The State Library of NSW has just digitised an amazing album of 'Photographic Views: The Railways of New South Wales' for Transport for NSW.

The photo album documents John Rae's efforts as NSW Railway Commissioner to record and preserve the legacy of his 'esteemed friend' and Engineer-in-Chief John Whitton.

It provides rare and important insights into the early establishment and construction of NSW railways, from the first opening in 1855 to 1875.

[View the full album in their catalogue.](#)





2024 Wilson History Oration

Out of the Straight-Jacket: The art of anti-colonial history An oration by Dr Rachel Buchanan

From swamp to chateau to the House of Lords, as Dr Rachel Buchanan researched the wild, globetrotting journey of five magnificent 17th-century carvings made by ancestors in Taranaki, she also received an education in the art of anti-colonial history. Through wānanga and discussions with the Hon. Mahara Okeroa and other mentors, Rachel learned how to escape the straight-jacket of historical facts and write a story that is closer to the truth of ongoing tino rangatiratanga – or sovereignty – for Taranaki.

Dr Rachel Buchanan (Taranaki, Te Ātiawa) is a Māori historian who is a manuhiri (guest) on Bunurong land in Naarm-Melbourne. Rachel's most recent book, *Te Motunui Epa* was a co-winner of the 2023 Ernest Scott Prize for History for distinguished historical writing that contributes to the history of Australia or New Zealand and the 2023 W H Oliver Prize for the best book on any aspect of New Zealand history.

When: Thursday, 13 June 2024 at 6 pm AEST.

Where: Online. [More info.](#)





History Council of NSW: 2024 Annual History Awards

The HCNSW offer a number of prestigious annual awards and prizes across different fields of historical practice, totalling \$5,500 in prize money.

Students, early career researchers, continuing historians, and those who produce digital histories are encouraged to apply. Winners will be announced and prize presentations made during History Week 2024.

Further details, such as the criteria for each award and prize, [can be found here](#). Applications close on **9 July 2024, at 5 pm**.

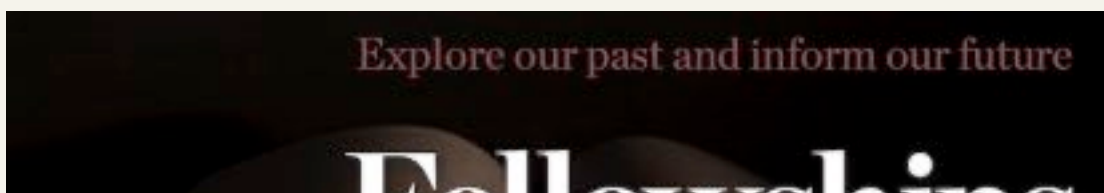


Curatorial Opportunity at the Museum of Chinese in Australia (MOCA)

The Museum of Chinese in Australia (MOCA) is seeking an experienced social history curator to lead the development of one of our inaugural exhibitions, focusing on the history of Chinatown in Sydney. This is a unique opportunity to work with a new museum located in the heart of Sydney's Chinatown district. If your professional experience focuses on Chinese Australian history, we would love to hear from you. The curatorial brief is available [here](#). The deadline for proposals is **28 June 2024**.

For more details, please contact Tony Stephens at tony.stephens@moca.com.au.

Other News





State Library of NSW Fellowships

The State Library offers several prestigious fellowships to support the research, writing, and teaching of Australian history and culture. The fellowships provide money, a room, and behind-the-scenes access to Library staff. Topics have ranged from early colonisation to investigating contemporary life.

Nominations are now open for the 2025 Fellowships and Scholars Program, with \$186,000 on offer.

- Imago Creative Writing Fellowship (\$50,000)
- Australian Religious History Fellowship (\$20,000)
- Dr AM Hertzberg AO Fellowship (\$25,000)
- CH Currey Fellowship (\$20,000)
- Nancy Keesing AM Fellowship (\$25,000)
- David Scott Mitchell Memorial Fellowship (\$12,000)
- Merewether Fellowship (\$12,000)
- Ross Steele Fellowship AM (\$12,000)
- Summer Scholar, 10 positions (\$1000)
- Visiting Scholar (unfunded)

Applications close **5 pm, Friday 12 July**. For more information and to apply, visit: www.sl.nsw.gov.au/fellowships

Contact:

Dr Rachel Franks, Coordinator, Scholarships

scholarship@sl.nsw.gov.au





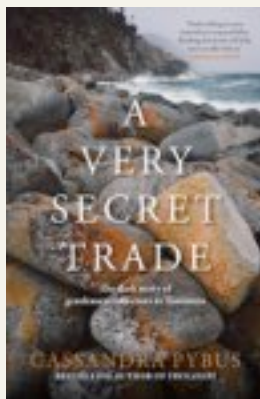
National Library of Australia 2024 Appeal: Election Ephemera

The National Library of Australia's election ephemera collection tells the rich story of Australia's democracy – from the first federal election in 1901, to the first female parliamentarians in 1943, to the Dismissal election of 1975, and beyond. The National Library needs your help to raise \$300,000 to share the election ephemera collection on Trove.

The appeal runs to **30 June 2024**.

For more information or to donate, see the Library's website:

<https://nla.gov.au/support-us/2024-appeal>



A Very Secret Trade, Allen & Unwin

Thank you to everyone who participated in our [A Very Secret Trade](#) book giveaway in our last e-news. Below is the correct answer. Congratulations to the winner!

Question:

What was the name of the historian who wrote about the Tasmanian Black War in 1870? Hint: He transcribed early Australian source material for the NSW government between 1887 and 1902.

Answer:

James Bonwick, who wrote *The Last of the Tasmanians, or, The Black War of Van Diemen's Land* in 1870.

A blank, aged, cream-colored page, likely an endpaper or flyleaf from an old book, showing signs of wear and discoloration.



Kiama (RAHS Photograph Collection)



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