

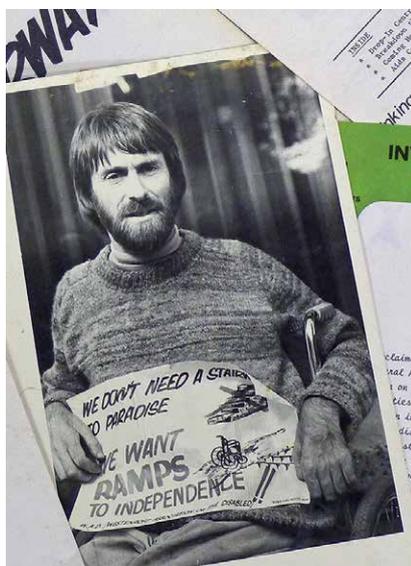
News from the collections

Geoffrey Bell: disability rights advocate

University of Melbourne Archives recently acquired the papers of disability rights advocate Geoffrey Bell (1944–2008), who for 43 years lived with a high-level spinal-cord injury. Bell was an important figure in the development of the disability rights movement in Australia, which sought self-determination, independence and equality for people with disabilities.

The collection is made up of materials from the 1960s to 2000s, and largely documents the social and political history of the movement during that period. Along with formal records documenting Bell's involvement in various committees, organisations and self-help groups, there is also evidence of his personal experience, including private correspondence, care records, and instruction booklets for the various aids and equipment that he used. The collection also contains his extensive library of third-party publications. Steadily collected between 1970 and 2001, these track the development of disability rights in Australia and thus form an important component of this collection.

The Geoffrey Bell Collection will be a rich resource for researchers interested in the history of the



disability rights movement in Australia, and may prove a useful aid for future debates and discussions on disability rights issues.

Further information about the **Geoffrey Bell Collection** is available in the University of Melbourne Archives catalogue: archives.unimelb.edu.au. Researchers are welcome to request collection items, for viewing in the Cultural Collections Reading Room on Level 3 of the Baillieu Library.

Professor Keith McVilly, the university's professor of disability and inclusion, is also interested in hearing from people who might like to use the archive for research purposes. Please contact him on keith.mcvilly@unimelb.edu.au.

Objects of fame: Nellie Melba and Percy Grainger

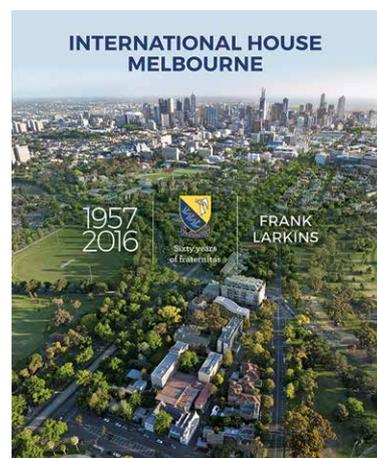
In the decades surrounding Australian Federation, Melbourne produced two international stars of classical music: Nellie Melba and Percy Grainger. Adopting a name in honour of her home town, Nellie Melba made her professional debut in 1887 and would be hailed as the greatest opera singer of her time. Percy Grainger was a child prodigy who forged a career of pianistic brilliance and musical innovation as the new century unfolded. Each conquered the world's great stages, enjoying royal approbation and public fascination. The musical talents of Melba and Grainger, who shared family and professional connections, were matched only by the fame they engendered. Stamping their way into popular consciousness as early media-assisted celebrities, they created rich intellectual and material legacies. The exhibition *Objects of fame* will showcase these two extraordinary Australians, drawing on material from Arts Centre Melbourne's Australian Performing Arts Collection, and the Grainger Museum.

Objects of fame: Nellie Melba and Percy Grainger will be at the Grainger Museum from 21 September 2018 to 17 February 2019: grainger.unimelb.edu.au/whats-on.

Opposite: Materials from the Geoffrey Bell Collection. 2018.0072, 2018.0075, University of Melbourne Archives.

Right: Frank Larkins, *International House Melbourne 1957–2016: Sixty years of fraternitas*, Melbourne University Publishing, 2018.

Below: Nicolas-Martin Petit, Aboriginal warrior in profile, Port Jackson (detail), c. 1802, black crayon on paper, 31.2 × 21.3 cm. 2017.0386, purchased 2017, the Russell and Mab Grimwade Miegunyah Fund, University of Melbourne Art Collection.



Acquisition for the Russell and Mab Grimwade Miegunyah Collection

In 2017 the university acquired an important drawing depicting an Aboriginal warrior bearing a shield and club, made by the young French artist Nicolas-Martin Petit (1777–1804). Petit was one of two artists on board the French expedition led by Nicolas Baudin that explored Australia between 1800 and 1804. In 1802 the party camped for five months on Bennelong Point, facing Sydney Cove, during which time Petit made numerous drawings of local Aboriginal people whom he met. These ranged from quick sketches, to finished watercolours, to drawings prepared upon his return to Paris, many of which were translated into meticulous engravings to illustrate the official publication of the voyage.¹

The large majority of the art produced by Petit and fellow artist Charles-Alexandre Lesueur (1778–1846) is now in the Muséum d'histoire naturelle in Le Havre, France. This previously unknown study was among a group of drawings and watercolours relating to the Baudin and later Freycinet expeditions (1817–20) that came onto the market in late 2017. The Ian Potter Museum of Art was able to buy this rare portrait, which is

the first drawing by Petit to enter an Australian institutional collection. Its purchase was generously funded by the Miegunyah Fund, to add to the Russell and Mab Grimwade Miegunyah Collection.



New history of International House

The book *International House Melbourne 1957–2016: Sixty years of fraternitas* was launched on 10 May 2018. The publication commemorates the 60th anniversary of Australia's first International House, which was founded with two main aims: to provide practical assistance to overseas students studying at the University of Melbourne, and to foster international understanding through personal friendships. The book was written by distinguished academic and former deputy vice-chancellor (research) Professor Emeritus Frank Larkins, AM, who came to International House as a chemistry tutor in 1962, later serving on its council for many years, and eventually becoming its chair until his retirement in 2015.

The book draws heavily on the International House Archives,² as well as on material held at University of Melbourne Archives. It tells the story not just of International House itself, but also of the broader social and political context, from the arrival of the first residents in 1957 to the present. Published by Melbourne University Publishing, the book can now be purchased from International House.



New curator of anatomy and pathology museum

In March 2018 Mr Rohan Long was appointed as the new curator of the Harry Brookes Allen Museum of Anatomy and Pathology. Holding one of Australia's largest collections of human-tissue specimens and historical anatomical models, the museum provides valuable educational resources for University of Melbourne students in the medical and related anatomical disciplines.

For the preceding five years, Rohan was the collection manager of the Tiegs Zoology Museum in the School of BioSciences. During his time managing that collection, specimens were made more accessible and many collaborations and research projects resulted. Rohan was involved in selecting zoological items for a number of exhibitions in the university, including specimens for *My learned object*, held at the Ian Potter Museum of Art in 2015.

University of Melbourne Archives appoints digital archivist

University of Melbourne Archives has appointed Mr Lachlan Glanville as its first full-time continuing digital archivist. This new role combines knowledge of archival theory and

systems with hands-on digital preservation and problem-solving.

Recently Lachlan worked as one of the team of project archivists cataloguing the Germaine Greer Collection at University of Melbourne Archives. Digital archiving is a nascent practice, and Lachlan's work with the Greer Collection led to various publications and presentations, including work on the preservation of born-digital records on removable media such as floppy disks from the early days of personal computers.³ Lachlan has also worked in the pictures and manuscripts branch of the National Library of Australia in Canberra, and as assistant archivist at RMIT University. He holds a Master of Information Technology in library and information science.

Inaugural director of Buxton Contemporary

In February 2018 the University of Melbourne announced the appointment of Mr Ryan Johnston as inaugural director of Buxton Contemporary, the new purpose-built home for the Michael Buxton Collection at the University of Melbourne's Victorian College of the Arts.

Mr Johnston has more than 15 years' experience as a director, curator and University of Melbourne lecturer.

He has worked in education at Tate Modern in London, was curator at La Trobe University, acting director of Shepparton Art Museum, and head of art at the Australian War Memorial. His experience in arts management and leadership includes managing Australia's Official War Art Scheme at the Memorial, commissioning artists such as Mike Parr, Daniel Boyd and Angelica Mesiti to create art that reveals the reality of war. He holds a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Melbourne, as well as postgraduate qualifications in art history.

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- 1 François Péron, *Voyage de découvertes aux terres australes* (3 vols plus atlas), Paris: L'Imprimerie Impériale, 1807–17. A full set of these volumes is held in the Rare Books Collection of the Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne.
 - 2 For a discussion of this collection, see Caitlin Stone, "This experiment in international living": International House Melbourne and its collection', *University of Melbourne Collections*, issue 21, December 2017, pp. 33–7.
 - 3 See for instance Lachlan Glanville, 'Hexed: Discoveries and challenges in archiving born-digital records', University of Melbourne Archives blog, 28 November 2017, blogs.unimelb.edu.au/archives/hexed-discoveries-and-challenges-in-archiving-born-digital-records; and 'Friday essay: Reading Germaine Greer's mail', *The Conversation*, 24 March 2017, theconversation.com/friday-essay-reading-germaine-greers-mail-74693.