

EDITORIAL

Collecting and Commemorating focuses on State Library Victoria's World War I collections, with several of the articles being by current or former State Library staff, Creative Fellows and volunteers. It complements the *Victoria and the Great War* special issue (no. 96) published in September 2015.

Kevin Molloy, the Library's Manuscripts Collection Manager, introduces this issue with an overview of the then Melbourne Public Library during World War I. At the time, the Library, the National Museum and the National Gallery of Victoria were housed on the same site, and were governed by a single board of trustees. His second essay is on JG Roberts and his mourning and memorialising, through an extraordinary collection of scrapbooks, of his only son who was killed in France at Mont St Quentin in September 1918.

Bronwyn Hughes provides a moving selection of extracts from the letters home of William Montgomery, who saw action at both Gallipoli and the Western Front, and was killed less than a month before the armistice.

Jim Claven facilitated the 2015 donation to the Library of the Sister Evelyn Hutt World War I Collection. His account of Hutt's nursing on Lemnos, Greece, and elsewhere is illustrated by some of her wonderful photographs.

Ann Carew's two articles build on the work she did as exhibition curator of *Writing the War: personal stories from World War I* at State Library Victoria. The first is on the Sharman Collection and covers Matthew S Sharman's close interaction, as principal of University High School in Melbourne, with staff and students who served in the war. Her second highlights relics that belonged to Eric Chinner that were found in the mass grave of Australians buried in France at Fromelles. Discovered only in the last decade the items were identified through Chinner's DNA matching. Some of these items were recently donated to the Library by Chinner's descendents.

Olga Tsara, another Library staff member, writes about the Library's collection of World War I posters. In 'A universal collection of literature on the

H Septimus Power, mural war memorial (detail) over entrance to the Queen's Hall, State Library Victoria, 1923, oil on canvas. Digital panorama (Peter Mappin, 2016) from original photography (Adrian Flint, 1996)



European war?’ historian John Lack and Library staff members Steven Kafkaris and Walter Struve survey the European war pamphlet collection and assess its overall importance and the role of print and propaganda during the war.

Next, Lucy Bracey, who worked with Ann Carew on the Library’s centenary of World War I exhibitions, examines 15 personal items from the Library’s World War I collections. Artist Jessie Traill gave up life as a full-time artist in Melbourne to become a Voluntary Aid Detachment nurse. Jo Oliver’s detailed account of Jessie Traill’s war is based on the Traill Papers in the Library.

The names of the 13 Library and Museum staff who served in the Great War are remembered in an honour board at the Library. John Arnold provides a brief account of the five of these individuals who made the supreme sacrifice. After the war, the trustees held a public competition for the design of a commemorative mural. In ‘Conflict on the home front’ art historian Gwen Rankin discusses the controversy behind the awarding of the commission for the mural (over the entrance of the Queen’s Hall) to Septimus Power, despite the competition prize having been awarded to George Lambert.

To conclude the issue, Shona Dewar, a Manuscripts Collection librarian, provides a detailed account of the Library’s collecting of World War I soldiers’ diaries and letters, focusing on the wonderful work of Patsy Adam-Smith, the Library’s inaugural Field Officer, and also her own role in cataloguing and describing World War I material. The centenary of the war has prompted further donations of manuscript and pictorial material, of which Shona is one of many passionate custodians.

The editors would like to thank Lucy Bracey, Kevin Molloy and Shona Dewar for their involvement and assistance in the preparation of this special issue of the *Journal*.

John Arnold and Ann Carew

EDITORS