

# Editorial: A history<sup>1</sup>

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We did it to give a voice, there was not a moment in our heads that we thought we had a lion.<sup>2</sup> (Alastair Davidson, 2017)

In 1964, Alastair Davidson, Ron Fraser and Anne Kingston edited the first issue of the *ANU Historical Journal* (1964–87) (*ANUHJ*). Modelled on the *Melbourne Historical Journal* (1961– ), the *ANUHJ* was an academic journal of the ANU Historical Society—a group formed in 1964 by a small number of postgraduate and undergraduate students of the then History Department at The Australian National University (ANU).<sup>3</sup> Brought together in the burgeoning culture of Manning Clark’s department in the early 1960s, Alastair, Ron and Anne were among the literary gurus on campus, having first met during their undergraduate studies at Canberra University College (CUC). They were now some of the university’s first undergraduate students after CUC amalgamated with ANU in 1960. Alastair, Ron and Anne launched the *ANUHJ* on 3 December 1964 in the Haydon-Allen Building and it flourished in the late 1960s and 1970s.<sup>4</sup>

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1 I would like to offer my thanks to those who shared their memories and mementoes of the Journal and Society, including Ron Fraser, Alastair Davidson, Ian Britain, Jeremy Madin, Caroline Turner, Doug Munro, Rosemary Auchmuty, Jill Waterhouse, Michael McKernan, Peter Blanchard, Penelope Joy, Michael Thawley, Gordon Bunyan, Barbara Dawson and Campbell Macknight. I am especially grateful to Ron and Ian for going through this editorial with a fine-tooth comb.

2 Alastair Davidson during a phone conversation with Emily Gallagher in February 2017.

3 The Society was formed in mid-1964 with Scott Bennett as president and was active in the late 1960s and 1970s, organising a range of social activities, including sherry parties, film nights, dinners, lectures and seminars (often in Haydon-Allen), staff–student softball, hockey, soccer and cricket matches, and supporting students to attend the Inter-Varsity History Student’s Conference. For more information, see *ANU Orientation Handbook 1965*, ed. Tony Hartnell (Canberra: ANU Students’ Representative Council, 1965), 34; *ANU 1966 Orientation Handbook*, ed. Clive Scollay (Canberra: ANU Students’ Representative Council, 1966), 42; ‘Historical Society publishes first issue of new journal’, *Australian National University News*, vol. 3, no. 2 (May 1965), 9; ‘New source of history’, *Woroni*, 23 July 1964, 4; Minutes of History Department Meeting no. 6, 10 September 1976, University Archives, ANUA 50/14/107.

4 ‘Student-edited Journal Earns Warm Praise’, *Canberra Times*, 4 December 1964, 8.

The Journal was envisaged as an annual publication and it was intended to offer recent 'graduates and undergraduates an opportunity to make their work public'.<sup>5</sup> In fact, it did much more. The influence of the *ANUHJ* is signified in the totemic name bestowed on it by its surviving editors and authors: '*the Journal*'. Those involved with the Journal remember it with a remarkable degree of fondness; it was a document that marked their 'first step' into the academy, offering them their earliest taste of editing and publishing. It helped to demystify the practice of history and fostered a strong sense of collegiality among history students and staff.

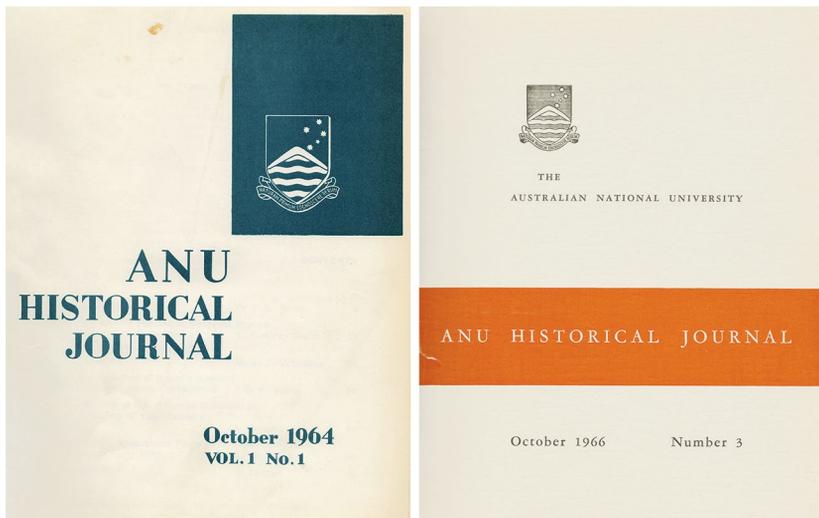


Figure 1: Front covers of the *ANU Historical Journal* in 1964 (left) and 1966 (right).

Collection: National Library of Australia.

While several ANU historians were vital in helping solicit submissions for the Journal, they appear to have remained largely detached from its organisational and editorial processes, allowing the young editors to take charge.<sup>6</sup> The *ANUHJ*'s independence of the department was somewhat unusual for the 1960s and early 1970s, an era when history students and staff were so often socialising and researching together. Yet the Society and Journal were clearly a student initiative. Even in 1976, there was

5 Editorial, *ANU Historical Journal*, no. 1 (1964), 3.

6 Many of the *ANUHJ*'s articles were solicited from top-performing students in ANU history courses, but calls for submissions were also regularly distributed to other universities and circulated via campus newspapers and bulletins.

a strong sense that ‘basically the Society belonged to the students, and staff should not intrude with more than support for its activities’.<sup>7</sup> Giving over the reins could go awry—printing or typing errors occasionally leaving readers wondering where the last pages of an article or book review had disappeared to—but, mishaps aside, the Journal was immensely successful, garnering the support of undergraduates, postgraduates and academics alike. In the late 1960s, a system of mentorship flourished with new authors and committee members subsequently taking up editorial positions.

In 1967, the Journal numbered among at least five other student publications on campus—*Crucible* (Labor Club), *Econoclast* (Economics Society), *Limbec* (Science Society), *Milpera* (Overseas Student’s Association) and *East Wind* (Oriental Studies Society).<sup>8</sup> Only the *ANUHIJ* and *East Wind* received financial support from the Students’ Representative Council (SRC), and even so the Journal reportedly had a deficit ‘in the vicinity of \$370’.<sup>9</sup> In an effort to delegate further the administration of these two initiatives, a Journal Committee formed separately to the Society’s Executive Committee.<sup>10</sup> That same year, and probably on the initiative of the 1966 editor John Iremonger<sup>11</sup>—later a highly enterprising publisher—the Journal published advertisements, expanded its publicity portfolio and ‘jazzed up’ its formatting. These initiatives appear to have been largely successful in securing the Journal’s financial future,<sup>12</sup> but

7 Report of survey responses circulated by Subcommittee D—Administration and Foreign Affairs in 1976, University Archives, ANUA 50/14/107.

8 According to the *ANU Orientation Handbook*, there were only three departmental publications in 1965: *Econoclast*, *Limbec* and the *ANU Historical Journal*. See *ANU Orientation Handbook 1965*, 25. On ANU student publications in 1968, see letter from Colin G. Plowman, Academic Registrar, to the Vice-Chancellor regarding ‘Request for grant to A.N.U. Historical Journal’, 31 May 1968, in *ANU Historical Journal II* Archives.

9 See Ron Fraser’s memoir chapter in this issue for further information on the financial position of the Journal. According to SRC annual records, the Society received \$190 in 1969 and \$174 in 1970, the second-largest grant by the SRC in both years. See ‘Report of the A.G.M. of the Historical Society’, *Woroni*, 13 April 1967, 3; Students’ Representative Council’s balance sheet as at 28 February 1967, University Archives, ANUA 340/1/3, 93; Australian National University Students’ Association, Details of grants for the year ended 28 February 1971, University Archives, ANUA 340/1/4.

10 By 1970, there was also an official ANU joint staff/student ‘History Liaison Committee’ that resulted from university-wide student pressure for student participation at all levels of the university. This committee included a representative from first-, second-, third- and fourth-year, MA qualifier, and postgraduate-level students. See *Footnote: ANU Historical Society Newsletter*, no. 1 (1970); ‘The [SRC] Submission’, *Woroni*, 7 May 1969, 8.

11 Iremonger was also a member of the editorial committee in 1967.

12 It is worth noting that the 1971 issue (number 8) was typewritten rather than printed, suggesting that the editors might have had some financial difficulties that year. Michael McKernan, then coeditor with Michael Birch, remembers liaising with the ANU Historical Society for financial support.

the shortage of funding in those early years might help explain why the Society positioned itself as a student initiative rather than a departmental one (clubs and societies were eligible to apply for funding from the SRC).

At the same time that the *ANUHIJ* was beset with financial concerns, it was being recognised as one of the most distinguished student history journals in Australia, selling, according to one report, over 600 copies a year and attracting a growing list of overseas subscribers.<sup>13</sup> These numbers seem unusually high, but the Journal might have gained special attention by publishing articles of eminent historians. In the late 1960s and 1970s, the Journal published the work of Ken Inglis, Manning Clark, Bill Mandle, FB Smith, John Molony and Coral Bell. These were widely recognised scholars. As history student Mark Lyons concluded in his review of the 1966 issue, the Journal ‘contains a lot more of value than the title “A.N.U. Historical Journal” suggests’.<sup>14</sup> Stewart Firth even considered it ‘worth more than an indulgent smile’.<sup>15</sup>

The Journal’s success accompanied that of the ANU Historical Society. Film screenings were popular and public lectures by postgraduate students and academics were well attended. In April 1967, about 100 students and staff attended a talk by Henry Mayer, Associate Professor of Government at the University of Sydney, on ‘Australian Intellectuals and Politics’.<sup>16</sup> Only a year earlier, the Society had organised a farewell cocktail party for Ken Inglis, presenting him with a cheque of \$300 for books for the history department at the University of Papua New Guinea—Inglis spent six months (June–December 1966) in the University’s Institute of Advanced Studies before taking up his appointment as the first Professor of History at the University of Papua New Guinea.<sup>17</sup> In 1976, the Society was still attracting crowds. Hundreds gathered for a public talk delivered by Wang Gungwu after the death of Mao Zedong, and one history student of that period, Peter Blanchard, distinctly recalls two lectures organised

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13 *ANU Almanac*, ed. John Iremonger and Jon Stephens (Canberra: Students Representative Council, 1968), 37 & 47. See also Faculty of Arts, Department of History, Annual Report 1973, 1974, 3, University Archives, ANUA 50/21/225. Copies of the *ANUHIJ* are held in a number of local, museum and university libraries in Australia, supporting claims that it had a substantial subscription list.

14 Mark Lyons, review of the *ANU Historical Journal*, no. 3 (1966) in *Tharunka*, 26 April 1967, 16.

15 Stewart Firth, review of the *ANU Historical Journal*, no. 3 (1966) in *Woroni*, 7 October 1966, 6.

16 ‘Around Canberra’, *Woroni*, 11 May 1967, 15.

17 ‘Gift for NG University’, *Canberra Times*, 17 June 1966, 3. An event was also organised by the Society in 1975 to mark Manning Clark’s retirement. See ‘Public Notices’, *Canberra Times*, 14 July 1975, 9.

by the Society: one by Barry Jones on how the introduction of bananas influenced birth rates in Britain and another by John Ritchie on *The Wind in the Willows*.<sup>18</sup>

While a small number of these lectures appeared in the Journal as articles, including Ken Inglis's 'Return to Gallipoli' in 1966, most did not.<sup>19</sup> Even with the regular change of Society office bearers and editors (normally annually or biennially), each generation of student editors maintained a view towards publishing 'the original work of undergraduates and recent graduates'.<sup>20</sup> For the 1973–74 double issue, the editors—Doug Munro, Kim Jackson and Phil Carpenter<sup>21</sup>—even decided to safeguard the Journal's 'student' content by rejecting at least two articles 'solely on the grounds that their authors were academics'.<sup>22</sup> Incredibly, the decision was made at the same time the Journal was struggling to encourage student submissions.<sup>23</sup> In the end, of the 18 contributions to the 1973–74 double issue—including six articles, two review articles and 11 book reviews—only five were attributed to students (one undergraduate and four postgraduates). It is a revealing incident: student editors were granted significant discretionary power over the content of the Journal and, even if they were unsuccessful, they sought to uphold the ambitions of the first three editors to *primarily* publish student research.

Until 1981, the Journal continued largely uninterrupted. In 1979, one annual report even claimed that the Society was providing a 'very precious contribution to the general harmony prevailing within the Department'.<sup>24</sup> Yet, the Journal appears to have suddenly lost momentum in 1982.<sup>25</sup> Society president and later editor Gordon Bunyan recalls that even in the late 1970s the Committee was having difficulties attracting new history

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18 Peter Blanchard during a phone conversation with Emily Gallagher in October 2018. Peter was treasurer of the ANU Historical Society in 1976.

19 KS Inglis, script for a lecture organised by the ANU Historical Society, c. 1965, in the Papers of Ken Inglis, NLA, MS Acc98.147, box 8.

20 Leaflet insert in *ANU Historical Journal*, no. 5 (1968).

21 Phillipa Weeks might have been involved in this decision as it appears to have been made by the 1972 editors (Kim Jackson, Phillipa Weeks and Doug Munro) in anticipation of the 1973–74 double issue.

22 *ANU Historical Journal*, nos 10–11 (1973–74), 2.

23 Michael Thawley recalls that even for the 1968 and 1969 issues, the Journal was not deluged with submissions.

24 Faculty of Arts, Department of History, Annual Report 1979, University Archives, ANUA 50/21/225.

25 Doug Munro recalls that, when inquiring about the Society and the Journal in 1984, Eric Fry reported that the Society was in a troubling position.

students to join the Society.<sup>26</sup> The problem seems to have continued and in a staff meeting in 1985, the department recognised one student's 'valiant' efforts to try and publish the Journal single-handedly but decided that it would produce one final issue to keep faith with subscribers before ceasing publication.<sup>27</sup> The last issue was published in 1987.

Despite the success of the Journal throughout the late 1960s and 1970s, it is not widely remembered by Australian historians. For a publication that made such an impression on so many emerging Australian editors, writers and academics, it is remarkable that it proved so ephemeral. Rosemary Auchmuty 'had a trip down memory lane' when she saw the Journal's contents last year, and others have no immediate memory of their involvement in the Society.<sup>28</sup> Surviving *ANUHJ* editors and contributors from the first series are often surprised to hear of their involvement, and while they remain positive about their experiences, they are mindful of the fallibility of memory. As Michael Thawley—later a distinguished public servant—explained, 'it does indeed feel like a lifetime ago!'<sup>29</sup> Archival records of the Journal are especially elusive. All 15 volumes are held by the National Library of Australia and occasional references appear in university records, newspapers and personal collections, but otherwise very little has survived the passage of time.

In the first issue of the revived *ANUHJ*, we have tried to 'remember' some of the forgotten history of the Journal by inviting seven surviving editors and contributors of the original journal to offer their reflections. These contributors are careful not to overstate the significance of the *ANUHJ* in disciplinary terms, but they emphasise that it was formative for a number of then emerging scholars at ANU. As Ron Fraser observes in his chapter, many 'seized the opportunities offered by the Journal'. Ian Britain credits his experiences with preparing him for his editorship at *Meanjin* and Doug Munro reports on how the *ANUHJ* inspired a similar student journal at Flinders University—the *Flinders Journal of History and Politics*

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26 Gordon Bunyan during a phone conversation with Emily Gallagher in October 2018.

27 Minutes of staff meeting held on Friday 13 September at 1 pm in the Geoffrey Fairbairn Room, 13 September 1985, University Archives, ANUA 50/15/115. See also Minutes of staff meeting, c. 1964, University Archives, ANUA 50/115. 'Mick' Williams and Campbell Macknight were assigned to organise the publication of the last issue. History student Jack Grundy, who appeared to have been the next editor after Gordon Bunyan in 1980–81, had been suffering from a brain haemorrhage since 1970, which caused him a number of setbacks during his studies and might have impacted on the Journal's momentum.

28 Rosemary Auchmuty in email correspondence with Emily Gallagher in December 2017.

29 Michael Thawley in email correspondence to Emily Gallagher in October 2018.

(1969–2015). Beyond academic and professional careers, the Journal was an initiative that involved great companionship. As Caroline Turner remembers, the Society not only fostered new friendships but also helped first-year history students connect with older students and mentors.

For the history of ANU, the Journal is important. Its editors and contributors were active throughout the university, especially in literary and administrative circles in the 1960s. They were representatives on the SRC, and editors of the student newspaper *Woroni*, the literary magazine *Prometheus* and the annual *Orientation Handbook*.<sup>30</sup> They lived in university residences, ‘hung out’ in the Childers Street ‘huts’, played university sport and were sometimes actively involved in campus politics. The Society and the Journal were part of the fabric of social and academic life at ANU and they offer a window onto the student history of ANU at a time when the university was negotiating its role and responsibility as Australia’s ‘national’ university. These were students who, as 1967–68 editor Jeremy Madin recalls, were not just politically ‘alive’, but felt that ‘history really could change the world’.<sup>31</sup> Such optimism did not always survive the test of time, but it is difficult to imagine that those involved with the Journal did not find themselves better equipped for life after university.

We have dedicated this issue of the *ANUJ II* to Anne Kingston, the driving force behind the first journal, and an inspiration to me and the two other young editors of this issue. As Ron explains in his chapter, Anne discovered her passion for history during her undergraduate study at ANU. Fellow editor Alastair Davidson describes her as a ‘dynamo, full of energy and enthusiasm’.<sup>32</sup> Ken Inglis considered her a scholar of ‘clear and intense mind, who had found in herself the determination and the talent to study history’.<sup>33</sup> Anne went on to coedit the second issue of the *ANUJ* in 1965, but after commencing her MA thesis at ANU with American history lecturer Hector Kinloch in 1967, she became unwell. She died in 1968, only 25.

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30 Letter from CG Plowman (Academic Registrar) to the Vice-Chancellor, 31 May 1968, *ANU Historical Journal* Archives; Adrian Falk, ‘Prometheus’, *Woroni*, 7 October 1966, 5.

31 Jeremy Madin during a phone conversation with Emily Gallagher in October 2018. Michael McKernan made the same comment during a conversation with Emily Gallagher in November 2018.

32 Alastair Davidson during a phone conversation with Emily Gallagher in February 2017.

33 KS Inglis, ‘Anne Fraser’, *ANU Historical Journal*, no. 5 (1968), 6.

The Journal is a tribute to Anne's memory. For the profession's youngest historians, her story reminds us of the urgency of our work. Indeed, the student authors publishing in this issue have boldly forsaken the comfort and perspective that are afforded by years of scholarly experience and struck out on strange adventures into archives and new fields of knowledge.

In this issue, contributors consider the symbolism of the early Aboriginal Tent Embassy; Louisa Lawson's involvement in Australia's suffrage movement through her magazine *The Dawn*; the changing meanings of barn swallow migration in Europe; how the sexuality of Frederick the Great can shine further light on our understanding of Prussian masculinity; the recent public apologies of two prominent leaders of the Lebanese Civil War: Assad Shaftari and Samir Geagea; evangelical humanitarian discourse in the Australian colonies; and the cultural and religious diversity engraved on one Sicilian tombstone. Elsewhere, they contemplate the place of national history amid the rise of transnational and global history, and review some of the leading Australian titles that were published last year. Finally, we have concluded this inaugural issue in Ken Inglis's own words—a historian whom I never met, but who has remained a larger-than-life personality for many of the contributors.

The revival of the *ANUJ* has been a far bigger project than any of us ever anticipated. At the very least, we hope that this first issue reflects the same 'bold' ambitions of the first Journal: not only to empower students and recent graduates to gain editing and publishing experience, but also to assure them of the worthiness of their research. By tapping into the vast and impressive research being undertaken by some of Australia's youngest historians, many of whom are strangers to the academy, we hope that the Journal will enrich the study of history at ANU and elsewhere.

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