

## Dick Barwick: An appreciation from the Aboriginal History Board

*Richard Essex (Dick) Barwick*, foundation friend of *Aboriginal History*, vertebrate zoologist, palaeontologist, Antarctic explorer and Aboriginal-rights activist, died peacefully in Canberra on 10 November 2012. He was born in Christchurch, New Zealand on 1 September 1929, attended Christchurch Boys High School and, after a variety of work experiences, attended Victoria University College (Victoria University of Wellington) where he took a Bachelor's degree in 1956, followed by a MSc (Hons) in 1957. Richard then accepted a job as a Junior Lecturer, Zoology, at Victoria University of Wellington. In 1959 he applied for a lectureship at Canberra University College soon to be part of The Australian National University where he enrolled for a PhD. Shortly after he was appointed to the Zoology Department at ANU. In 1961 his soon-to-be wife Diane came to Australia from Canada to study for her PhD in Anthropology and on her first day at ANU Richard glanced down the communal breakfast table at University House and asked 'Who is that attractive new student?' After their marriage, due to commitments of study, they spent most of their early life apart, with Diane in Victoria and Richard in Canberra. Richard would drive to see Diane every weekend he could. Diane completed her PhD in 1964, and Richard in 1965.

The Zoology Department meanwhile had expanded, with Richard's interests in vertebrate biology invaluable supporting both teaching and research in this core area of animal biology. Richard retired as a Reader in Zoology at ANU in 1992, continuing on as a Visiting Fellow in the Research School of Earth Sciences. Since his first days at Victoria University Richard had had a keen interest in History, Archaeology and Anthropology. Indeed, he was a founding member of the New Zealand Archaeological Society. This, and his interest in ethnographic art, led to a number of collaborations with Diane. Diane's role as editor was instrumental in establishing the international reputation of the journal *Aboriginal History* and Richard contributed more than 30 journal and monograph covers. When Diane died in 1986, over the next few years Richard and his daughter Laura edited, and published a number of Diane's unfinished manuscripts, including the major work *Rebellion at Coranderrk* (1996).

Richard's contribution to the life of the University was extraordinary. His diverse roles included service on a number of key management committees including the ANU Press, Buildings and Grounds, the Northern Australia Research Unit, and The Edith and Joy London Foundation (the University's coastal campus). Richard also served as the Bailiff of the Edith and Joy London Foundation and as Master of the Cellars at University House. The logo he designed for the House in the 1970s is still in use. Although he had initially viewed science as something to fall back on if he failed to make it as a working artist, he quickly discovered that his real calling was the seamless marriage of the two. Richard had a great passion for education and anything he set his sights on received every ounce of his considerable mind. He had a vision of life that can only be described as panoramic.

Thanks to Laura Barwick for these details of her father's life

Dick Barwick was there from the beginning. He was there to support our first editor, his loving partner Diane Barwick, and the journal simultaneously. It was his logo that we used first, and continue to use, as the journal's icon. He designed the first cover, and nearly all the subsequent covers, of the annual volume, and most of the monographs. He gave expert advice on linguistic and other typefaces that were hard to reproduce. When we asked him to design a letterhead – back it came within days. When we asked him to design individual letterheads for the office bearers, back they came too, within days.

Helping push along the major monograph, Diane Barwick's *Rebellion at Coranderrk*, seemed so simple when he took control of the massive manuscript after Diane's sudden death. We consulted him on printers, typefaces, illustrations and cost. He came with us to Capital Territory Printers to make sure everything was in order, and helped to load them into the Land Rover ute for distribution, remarking, 'I drove across Australia in one of these'. Of course, he was there at the launch of *Rebellion*, at Healesville, and was working, with Laura Barwick on a new edition at the time of his death.

Adventurer, intellectual, friend, we mourn his passing deeply. And we hope that, whoever holds the authority in the place he is now, that he or she exercises that power wisely. Otherwise Dick will soon be cheeking the establishment in the way that he always rejoiced in doing.

Peter Read, Chair, Aboriginal History Board

Dick was all those things, zoologist, geographer, Antarctic medallist, natural history and heraldic artist, designer of books and bookplates – a virtual polymath – and these skills all came together in his support of Aboriginal issues and his unselfish unpaid work for Aboriginal History. He once thanked Aboriginal History for providing a career for Diane and he was dedicated to keeping her memory alive. In his last years he carried out two projects of significance to Aboriginal scholarship. With the assistance of his daughter Laura he made an inventory and prepared the valuable Papers of Diane Barwick, sorted into 45 series containing hundreds of folders and other items (37.05 m), for permanent deposit in the State Library of Victoria. The transfer was made in 2006.

In 2009 he graciously agreed to do all the art work for '*I Succeeded Once*': *The Aboriginal Protectorate on the Mornington Peninsula, 1839-1840* by Marie Hansen Fels, number 22 in the Aboriginal History Monograph series. He designed the cover and prepared 45 illustrations which involved redrawing maps, cleaning textual images from the papers of Protector William Thomas and enhancing photographs. Needless to say this involved countless hours of painstaking work and dedicated attention to detail. A commercial publisher would have been charged thousands of dollars for this work but Dick did it in memory of Diane and out of regard for Aboriginal History.

Diane and Dick were my friends from University House days. When Diane produced the first volume of *Aboriginal History* I gave her a bottle of 1930

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Para port for Christmas. At board meetings whenever it looked as if we might be stuck for funds Diane would say 'We can always sell the Para port'. Dick apparently kept it as a symbol of the journal's success so, without drinking it, we can symbolically toast to the successful Barwick partnership.

Niel Gunson, Founding Chair