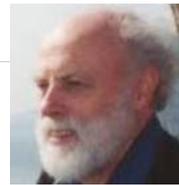




NEWSLETTER NO. 51 OCTOBER 2021

PRESIDENT RAY EDMONDSON'S MESSAGE:



As we approach the easing of covid lockdowns in NSW, Victoria and the ACT we can anticipate the resumption of live events for Friends members in Canberra and Melbourne. But during the last 12 months or so we have learned to explore the possibilities of webinars, and this is an aspect of our activities that we expect to retain in future. What's more, these can be recorded and retained on our website:
<http://www.archivefriends.org.au/index.php/events-news/webinars> and I invite you to check the current list and catch up on any you may have missed.

With this issue we welcome Patrick McIntyre to the NFSA as its new CEO. Patrick's bio can be found elsewhere in this issue. We look forward to a productive relationship with Patrick as he takes the helm, and hope there will be an early opportunity for Friends to meet him in person.

Ray Edmondson
President

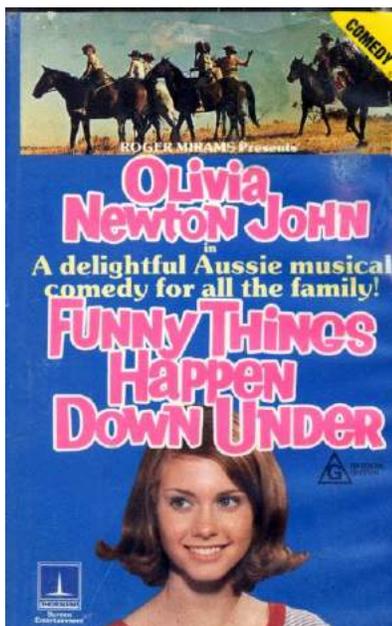
**What's the next
event for the
Friends??**



For the diary:

**Friends of the
NFSA
Annual General
Meeting to be
held via Zoom on
Monday 6th
December.
Details to follow.**

FUNNY THINGS HAPPEN DOWN UNDER (1965) - Webinar on Sunday 28 November at 2pm



This light hearted musical comedy, featuring Olivia Newton-John and set in the Australian countryside, is still a breath of fresh air! It was actually made by a New Zealand-based company, Pacific Films, and prophetically it exudes an optimism for better days to come. The teenage singing star makes her first venture into the movies, and shares the limelight with the "Terrible Ten" and Maori singer Howard Morrison. Music is from the irrepressible Horrie Dargie Quintet, and a flock of multi-coloured sheep complete the dramatis personae. It is enough to get you intrigued!

Historically, the film comes at a turning point for the Australian film industry. It was made after the creation of the children's television series *The Terrific Adventures of the Terrible Ten*, and the "gang" from the series provide the basic cast for the film, so there was already audience familiarity with the characters. It pre-dated the release of *They're a Weird Mob* the following year, which fed on the same family audience, and presaged the re-establishment of regular feature film production in Australia. From this point on, a range of local feature films - such as *You Can't See Round Corners*, *2000 Weeks*, *The Naked Bunyip*, *Jack and Jill: a Postscript*, *Skippy and the Intruders* - start to appear with regularity. They are disparate, but deal with an emerging understanding of Australian culture and society. They lead us into the feature film "renaissance" of the 1970s and thereafter.

You're invited to view the film beforehand, and then join in the webinar, coordinated by film critic Peter Krausz, which will discuss the making of *Funny Things Happen Down Under*, the audience it attracted, and whether it led to more films for children as a prime audience. It will also look generally at the pre-renaissance years of 1965 to 1971 and the films that defined a re-emerging industry, finding its stride again after two decades of sporadic production.

View *Funny Things Happen Down Under* at your leisure, free on YouTube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CqrDoNGBF5s&ab_channel=MIG-Music22

Join the webinar on 28 November at <http://www.archivefriends.org.au/index.php/events-news/webinars/308-friends-at-cmag-friday-26-nov-2pm-tba>



Welcome to our new CEO – Patrick McIntyre.



Patrick has over twenty years' experience in arts management and is the incoming CEO of the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia. Prior to that, for more than eleven years Patrick served as Executive Director of Sydney Theatre Company. His earlier roles include Associate Executive Director of The Australian Ballet, General Manager of Sydney Film Festival, and Marketing Manager of Sydney Dance Company and Sydney Opera House Trust.

Patrick is a member of the Executive Council of industry body Live Performance Australia and of the advisory board of the CREATE Centre at The University of Sydney, was on the advisory boards of SCOPE for Artists, ArtsReady and the Deakin University arts management program, and Chaired Streetwise Communications, a non-profit community publishing enterprise. He was also a member of the New South Wales State Creative Industries Task Force.

Holding a BA (Communications) from UTS, Patrick has also worked extensively as a freelance music and entertainment writer, and has presented on arts management, audience development and cultural value at conferences and events in Australia, the US and Hong Kong.

As a producer, he has worked on a variety of projects including the world premiere of Muriel's Wedding the Musical; The Present on Broadway starring Cate Blanchett and Richard Roxburgh; a filmed capture of the theatre production Wonnangatta starring Hugo Weaving and Wayne Blair; and The Nutcracker Live, the first live via satellite broadcast in Australia of a performing arts event into cinemas in 2007.

In the New Year we hope to hold a special Friends' Welcome to Patrick.

Also in the New Year we hope to reschedule our live Friends event with Barry York .

Barry York Presents:

We return to the **NFSA Theatrette to meet Barry York and hear about his wonderful (postal!) journeys into the world of celebrity. Details TBA.**



NEWS FROM THE MELBOURNE FRIENDS:

Palace Letters

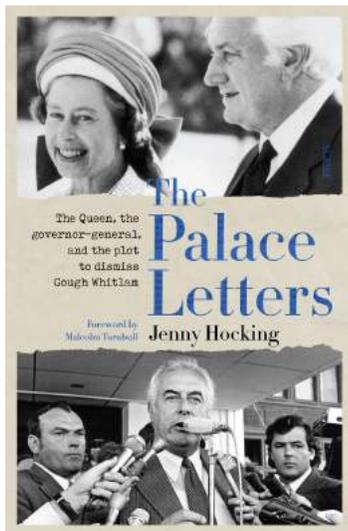
On the 12th September, Professor Jenny Hocking presented a talk to the NFSA friends group and the invited public. Around 100 people zoomed in to hear Jenny's insights into the story of her legal campaign and subsequent court case. The story arouses passion and no more than for Hocking.

The legal case 'Hocking vs Director General' continues to have ramifications both here and in the UK for both access to Palace correspondence that impacts Commonwealth countries and the influence of the Palace. Despite previous denials the Palace was involved in discussions with Kerr about the dismissal of the Whitlam government.

It will be interesting to see the flow-on-effect on this forced outing of correspondence between the Palace and Sir John Kerr. One of these effects might be that the National Australian Archive (NAA) changes the way it handles so called "personal" material.



In the correspondence between the Palace (via Sir John Charteris) and Kerr the "personal" nature of this correspondence was questioned. The outcome of Kerr's behaviour was defining for Australia. Hocking argues that any material held by the NAA, a publicly funded institution, should by its nature (being given to an archive belonging to Australians) not be personal and open access should be made for any Australian to access. The question is who decides what the institution should be paid to retain, if not for the interests of Australian heritage? Should the NAA be a pro-disclosure organisation and release all the Governors General's correspondence?



The audience had several questions for Jenny copied here: Has the Palace responded to your book? Do you think having the head of the Archives a political appointment is relevant? Do you think conspiracy is a reasonable description of the engagement between Kerr and the Palace? The mechanics of the dismissal are known. Is there any indication at all in the letters that the opposition was unable to accept that an alternate government was acceptable in Australia after 23 years of Liberal government? What is the definition of personal vs political communications on documents? There have been some revelations about Hawke and the CIA, have you found any evidence of white anting by him of the Whitlam Govt in the run up to the dismissal. Were you surprised when the Director of the Archives presented the letters himself in a press conference as if it had been his idea to release them?

A query was made whether the 1983 mini-series The Dismissal (with John Meillon as John Kerr!) which had writers such as Phillip Noyce, George Miller, Sally Gibson, Terry Hayes, touched on this at all, or played it straight based on publicly known information? Jenny responded that they likely had no idea to the extent of Kerr's involvement. Did Malcolm Fraser know before the 11.11.75 what Kerr might do?

Jenny remains outraged at their writing of history where the Head of the NAA released the letters saying they had decided to release the letters without notifying Jenny or acknowledging the case leading to the release and implying it was their decision (not a legal decision)

We were left wondering what the impact would have been if the letters had been released at the time and how Gough Whitlam would have responded.

Regards,

Jo Wellington

Secretary Melbourne NFSA

Past and future events in Melbourne and for Melbourne Friends:

In July 2021 the Thornbury Picture House celebrated NAIDOC WEEK with a showing of Rolf de Heer's film *Ten Canoes*, jointly sponsored by the Melbourne Branch of the Friends of the NFSA. This was to be our last live event as Melbourne went into lockdown again, as a result of the Covid pandemic.

Fortunately, as Ray Edmondson points out in his discussion about *The Edge of the Possible* (see next newsletter article), we have learned a great deal about the possibilities of webinar discussion. These possibilities included sharing webinars organised by both Melbourne and National Committees of Friends, and enabling some attendees to come from overseas and interstate.

In August 2021 Melbourne joined in the webinar on the McDonagh sisters' 1930 film *The Cheaters*, arranged from Canberra with Graham Shirley conducting the Q&A discussion.

September 2021 was a very well attended Zoom address by Emeritus Professor Jenny Hocking about her campaign for the National Archives of Australia to release *The Palace Papers* and her eventual victory in the High Court.

October 2021 was a webinar concerning Daryl Dellora's documentary film *The Edge of the Possible*. The Q&A was conducted by Daryl Dellora and Ian Wansbrough, who jointly wrote the scripts for the film. Ian Wansbrough joined us from Perth.

Melbourne's continued lockdown led to a disappointment that David Donaldson's visit to Melbourne in November had to be cancelled due to Covid. David was to have spoken at ACMI on *Captain Thunderbolt* and to have shown the film *Reg Perry Remembers* to the Melbourne Friends.

November 2021 will involve a webinar about Olivia Newton-John's first feature film, *Funny Things Happen Down Under*. The event is organised by Canberra Friends, with the Q&A discussion on November 28th featuring Peter Krausz from Melbourne.

December 2021 will be a gala event with refreshments at the Thornbury Picture House. On Sunday 5th The TPH will show the latest restoration of *The Sentimental Bloke*, together with Melfriendsnfsa. This will be Melbourne's last event for 2021.

MELBOURNE – PLANS AND HOPES FOR 2022

- Field trips to the Limelight Studios in the Salvation Army Heritage Centre.
- Live talk by Susan-Gaye Anderson about Melbourne's first years of television.
- Live talk (or online) by film critic and broadcaster Peter Krausz about his life and times.
- Field trip to Ripponlea Historic House (National Trust) with live talk on family music, including the piano and the pianola.
- Community music and choirs. Melfriendsnfsa to join with community groups for live or online presentations.
- Film webinars to be selected from NFSA RESTORES or other sources.

Further activities will be advised.

For all inquiries, please email melfriendsnfsa@gmail.com

Gwenda Beed Davey, Chair Melbourne Branch Friends of National Film and Sound Archive

In this time of COVID we have discovered the world of zoom and online webinars! Recently, Friends were invited to a fascinating online Q & A with Daryl Dellora, discussing his film 'The Edge of the Possible'.

Daryl Dellora's documentary unpacks the history of the building of the Sydney Opera House, an astonishing architectural achievement, but one with a sadly flawed outcome. While architect Jorn Utzon's vision for the exterior shape of the building was realised, his stunning designs for its interior were dropped by the NSW Government in favour of a more conventional approach. This triggered Utzon's resignation from the project and his departure from Australia, never to return. And it meant that the Opera House remains incapable of staging grand opera, such as *Aida*, because of choices that were made at that time.

The webinar on 17 October, following a viewing of the film, laid out the story behind its production, including the challenge of gaining an on-camera interview with the reclusive Utzon himself. The discussion compared Utzon's experience with that of Walter Burley Griffin in designing Canberra, another architect who walked away from his project when he could no longer accept the level of bureaucratic interference with his plans. Among other things, the webinar considered whether this kind of resistance to visionary ideas said something about Australian culture. If you weren't part of the discussion, it's still a question you can ponder by watching the webinar recording, now available on the Friends website.

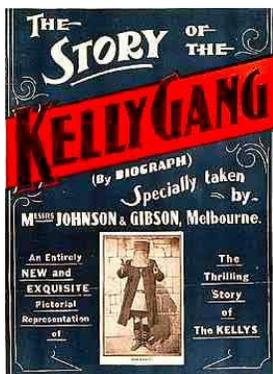
During the long Covid-19 lockdown, which forced us to cancel "live" events, we've learned a great deal about the possibilities of webinar discussion, which has the advantage of being without geographic limitations - we've even had participants logging in from overseas. And unlike live events, we can capture them for later reference. They'll continue alongside more traditional events in future.

You may be interested in catching up with this excellent presentation.

<http://www.archivefriends.org.au/index.php/events-news/webinars>

Daryl, an award winning documentary maker, film producer, writer, director and author is also a member of our Melbourne Friends' Committee. Recently Daryl penned a thought-provoking article that will be of great interest to Friends of the NFSA.

'Changes to federal government film funding could cripple production of historical documentaries.'



Without government support, some iconic Australian films would never have been made. But less glamorous documentaries are often forgotten. They, perhaps even more than their feature film cousins, need investment to survive.

When the Department of Finance is asked to judge the competing merits of different creative practices you know there will be trouble. Since the Whitlam government reinvigorated the arts in the early 1970s, the federal government has invested heavily in the film industry. Indeed, *The Dressmaker*, which I was executive producer of, could never have been made without government

support.

This week a host of changes were presented to parliament by the Morrison government dealing with how our film industry is funded.

Unfortunately documentaries have fared poorly in two respects. Firstly, most feature documentaries will no longer be eligible for the same level of generous tax rebates that the rest of the film industry still enjoys. The Documentary Australia Foundation has been vocal about this already, saying, “[t]here is a significant risk that the 58 per cent of Australian documentaries being made with budgets less than \$1 million will not be made at all, if these proposed changes ... are brought in. To put this in perspective, the award-winning documentaries *Backtrack Boys*, *Gurrumul* and *In My Blood It Runs* would not have been able to be made” under the proposed legislation.

To continue reading this article you can follow this link:

<https://johnmenadue.com/changes-to-federal-government-film-funding-could-cripple-production-of-historical-documentaries>

Welcome to our new Friends patron Phillip Noyce.



Phillip Noyce is a director, producer, and screenwriter of film and television. Since 1977, he has directed over 19 feature films in various genres, including (*Newsfront*, *Rabbit-Proof Fence*, *Dead Calm*) He has also directed the Jack Ryan adaptations *Patriot Games* (1992) and *Clear and Present Danger* (1994) and the 2014 adaptation of Lois Lowry's *The Giver*.

He has directed, written, and executive-produced television programmes in both Australia and North America, including *The Cowra Breakout*, *Vietnam*, *Revenge* and *Roots*.

Noyce's work has won him several accolades, including AACTA Awards for Best Film, Best Director, and a special Longford Lyell lifetime achievement award.

We are thrilled that Phillip has agreed to become a Patron of the Friends and we hope that his presence will strengthen our advocacy and support of the NFSA.

Advocacy for the NFSA in its role of preserving our nation's aural, oral and visual histories has always been a fundamental aim of the Friends.

In a now famous quote on 27 May 2021, Senator Amanda Stoker commented on the survival of deteriorating records at the National Archives of Australia (NAA) by noting that *"time marches on - the degradation of records over time is part of the ageing process. I don't think it's a risk you can ever completely reverse"*.

In a different forum, Marjorie Coleman AO, the first woman to head an Australian national statutory authority, commented on ABC's *The Drum* on 6 July 2021:

In terms of our national institutions, it's not that the Philistines are at the gates, they're lurching around inside with a total disregard for things like tertiary education and the future of... the National Archives, National Library, National Film and Sound Archive and others. We have a problem about the lack of value being placed, at the moment, on national cultural institutions, and I think it's extremely valuable that in this particular instance the government has [been]...forced to act. I'm not convinced...that this government has really taken this lesson to heart. I think we have a big problem here.

As can be seen from the articles in this issue, the financial crunch facing the NFSA (and other memory institutions) is all too real.

President Ray Edmondson recently submitted this article, published in Inside Story in the Canberra Times 23 July 2021

Time for another visionary moment:

It's crunch time for the National Film and Sound Archive and Australia's audiovisual heritage, says Ray Edmondson. There's an unlikely connection between the Salvation Army, Ned Kelly and a giant film corporation. It starts in Sydney's Centennial Park on 1 January 1901.

With the several colonies about to federate as the Commonwealth of Australia, the dignitaries move in solemn procession towards the rotunda for the swearing-in of the first governor-general of the first federal ministry. But there's a larrikin moment: the elegantly togged governor-general, the Earl of Hopetoun, holds up the show ducking aside to say g'day to a mate. This instant isn't caught in the official photographs. So how do we know it happened?

Because it's in the film. Australia was the first country to be born in front of a movie camera. The Federation ceremonies and procession were captured as a living documentary record — by the Salvation Army, no less, which was already expert in the new technology. Its Limelight Department, led by Major Joseph Perry, had been contracted to make the first-ever motion picture film using multi-camera positions: all thirty-five minutes of it. It is preserved at the National Film and Sound Archive, or NFSA.

One first led to another. Australia invented the feature film in 1906 when Joseph Perry's sons, Orrie and Reg, filmed *The Story of the Kelly Gang*. The footage was processed by a chemist named William

Gibson, who went on to found the film production and exhibition conglomerate known today as Event Hospitality and Entertainment. It's a sequence of pioneering, mentoring and building.

The arrival of the movie camera, along with mechanical recordings such as phonograph cylinders, discs and piano rolls — to be followed by radio and television— opened up previously unimaginable ways of understanding the world. But preserving these new, constantly evolving formats meant rethinking how we store, organise, curate and exhibit. It required a new kind of institution — the audiovisual archive — along with a new breed of people to run it. These archives were pioneered, naturally, in Europe and North America — but also, surprisingly, in Australia.

Federal cabinet created the National Historical Film and Speaking Record Library in December 1935. Administratively linked to what was then the Commonwealth National Library, it was arguably the first such entity to perceive the logic of preserving moving images and recorded sound together rather than separately.

That's eighty-six years ago. It was a tortuous journey from 1935 to 1984, when what became the NFSA was unhooked from the National Library (although it had to wait another twenty-four years to gain statutory status). On the way it was often a case of too little, too late, which is why far too much of our audiovisual heritage has been lost or imperfectly preserved.

But from 1984 onwards the NFSA quickly made its mark as a pacesetter, not only enlarging the national collection and technical expertise at home, but also serving as the go-to reference point for emerging archives across Southeast Asia and the Pacific. Its innovative collection-management software was adopted by the US Library of Congress. It launched the first (and currently still the only) online postgraduate training course in audiovisual archiving, now offered through Charles Sturt University. It developed the foundational UNESCO textbook on the philosophy and principles of audiovisual archiving that now, in multiple languages, underpins the global profession.

Domestically, the NFSA's collections have served as a resource for creators in the burgeoning film, television, radio, recorded sound and games industries. Without knowing it, every week millions of Australians watch or hear something from the NFSA collection — perhaps in a documentary or feature film, or on TV news or radio.

Screenings and exhibitions at the NFSA's Canberra headquarters have been a tourist magnet; travelling festivals have toured the countryside and overseas. Its five-year Operation Newsreel project, launched in 1988 with \$4 million in corporate sponsorship, worked to safeguard seven decades of Australian cinema newsreels. Along succession of feature films, television and radio series, and web resources have relied on individual staff members' intimate knowledge of the NFSA's collections.

Over the years, the NFSA has produced its full share of internationally recognised experts who have led a staff of passionate and technically adept people. It is fulfilling work: seeking, finding and restoring what has been lost — some of the missing episodes of Blue Hills, say, or an early Cinesound newsreel — offers a satisfaction that can't be put into words. Keeping obsolete technology functioning requires specialised knowledge and inventiveness; so does anticipating the next phase of technological evolution. And recalling the context and significance of undocumented collection items relies on living corporate memory.

But audiovisual archiving also operates in a public service environment where managerialism trumps curatorial expertise. You don't do it for the money or the fame, and the commitment and passion doesn't end when people retire or leave: an individual's curatorial memory, contacts and knowledge are unique, and therein lies a dilemma.

Each departing expert is a piece removed from the corporate memory bank. Newer staff are ever more distant from the worldview, knowledge and historical experience of those who built and know the collections they inherit. Memory loss starts to endanger the performance of the institution and the integrity of its collections. Policies and practices evolve without reference to wider curatorial memory. And unless staff already recognise what they don't know, and therefore need to seek out, it can happen unconsciously.

Recently the NFSA put out to tender seventy-seven pallets of collection items judged surplus to requirements. They included a unique and precious collection of Australian piano rolls — the in-house archive of the eighty-eight-year-old Mastertouch company, which closed in 2005. The media treated it all as a novelty item, a collector's dream of old curios now up for grabs. But some former senior staff members, acknowledged specialists in Australia's sound recording history, were blindsided by the announcement and alarmed at the prospective cultural vandalism— arising, apparently, from insufficient knowledge of the central place piano rolls have in our musical and social history.

The chair of the NFSA board defended the move as “the culmination of many years of work by our senior executive, curatorial, preservation and collection management teams.” After a “rigorous selection process” and “very careful consideration” it had been determined that the material fell outside the scope of the 2020 Collecting Policy. Four retired NFSA staff members sought an urgent meeting with NFSA executives to urge a rethink. The outcome is pending.

While the National Film and Sound Archive Act requires the institution to “work to the highest curatorial standards,” this incident illustrates how standards are affected by generational memory loss. It is a serious problem for audiovisual archives globally, and is currently the focus of Share That Knowledge, a three-year international study helmed by the Austrian Film Museum in Vienna, with twelve partners including the NFSA. While the study's outcome won't be known until the end of 2022, some preliminary findings are clear.

By its very nature, curatorial knowledge is often not formally recorded. But it remains in the memory of former staff and board members who want to keep it available —as volunteer mentors, trainers, consultants and advisers. They want to stay connected to the institution that, for so many of them, has been an integral part of their life's work. To do this, they need to be invited back into the tent.

The analogy of the apprentice or the football coach is not out of place here. It takes many years to become familiar with a complex collection, to develop technical skills and knowledge, to build relationships with collectors, creators and users, to grow in the scholarship of the audiovisual media — and to imbibe the enthusiasm and passion that have impelled others into the profession.

Like other federally funded institutions, the NFSA has suffered years of compounding “efficiency dividends.” These have translated into early retirements and redundancies for staff who, in some cases, were global leaders in the profession. Instead of growing, the NFSA has been hollowed out and

squeezed to the point that it now employs one-fifth fewer staff than it did a decade ago, despite a vast increase in its workload.

Attention and resources have had to be increasingly focused on large-scale digitisation: the NFSA holds by far Australia's largest collection of at-risk magnetic tape formats but also needs to make the wider collection accessible in the digital form that is now expected. Nor is this a one-off: with standards constantly evolving, digitisation and file maintenance is an unending process. Collections are permanently on life support.

So the circle keeps getting smaller. The visitor shop has closed; fellowships and research have faltered; the library has been shut; public programs have been trimmed; travelling festivals have ended; school visits have been curtailed; public lectures and award systems have been dropped; interaction with professional communities has shrunk. Keeping the remaining balls in the air has become ever harder. Volunteers, whether former staff or not, can help. But unlike the other national memory institutions, the NFSA has not yet developed an integrated volunteer culture.

When the NFSA gained statutory status in 2008, members of its first governing board were chosen from the advocacy bodies and stirrers who had worked long and hard for this outcome. They brought to the task their shared knowledge and vision for the organisation, their relevant professional disciplines, and their connections to stakeholder communities and sponsors. At the time, board chair Chris Puplick noted that "the poachers [stirrers] had been appointed as the gamekeepers and had to deliver on the claims they had made about the benefits of their preferred course of action."

Like its international peers, the NFSA — and therefore Australia's audiovisual heritage — had, at long last, achieved the same status as the other national memory institutions, and now had the ability to chart its own professional course.

Now the original stirrers and poachers, with their professional disciplines, have gone. Along with diminishing corporate memory, the board has lost close contact with, as well as the confidence of, important contributors and users in the audiovisual industries. After nearly a decade of virtually ignoring its voluntary Friends association, the board has recently rediscovered it, though it is unclear whether it also comprehends the character of the NFSA's generational problem. It will shortly gain a new chair who will find ways, it's to be hoped, of enlarging the circle of engagement.

Australia's opaque system of ministerial appointments to public authorities tends to mould boards into quiescent extensions of the government of the day rather than independent advocates, stakeholders or experts. But the board has the responsibility to lead the institution to the standards required by the National Film and Sound Archive Act for the benefit of present and future generations.

Persuading the government to provide adequate funding isn't easy, of course, as the recent campaign for the National Archives of Australia shows. Only under immense pressure did the government agree to provide an emergency allocation to the NAA of just \$67 million over four years.

The NFSA's board is also responsible for appointing and guiding the organisation's chief executive. Over the past decade it could have undertaken succession planning, nurturing the institution's potential leadership pool within the national profession. Instead it chose to succeed one leader from overseas with another. Although they came with impeccable credentials, made a significant

contribution and did the best job they could, they faced the obvious disadvantage of building new relationships in a new country and adapting to a new bureaucratic system. They have since returned home and taken their memory with them.

The NFSA's next chief executive, Patrick McIntyre, is an Australian and comes with a broad arts administration background, most recently with the Sydney Theatre Company. When he begins settling into the milieu of the national memory institutions in October he will potentially have the support of the NFSA's stakeholders in establishing partnerships with industry, philanthropists and sponsors who can financially support major projects and activities, as the institution had done so successfully in the now-distant past.

The baseload cost of sustaining the NFSA's physical establishment and services, and its roster of permanent staff, falls where it belongs: on the government. It is unreasonable to expect a shrinking institution to manage the ever-expanding demands of access and collection growth. To restore its budget and staffing to real2008 levels would take an extra \$6 million or so each year: not much to ask in the great scheme of things. The recent special allocation of \$5.5 million over four years to increase the rate of digitisation, welcome as it is, hardly changes the bigger picture. Rebuilding won't happen overnight, but it is the board's responsibility to advocate for it. Otherwise the closures and retreats of the last decade cannot be reversed.

Paradoxically, the most immediately essential part of the resource equation has little financial cost, but requires time and attention by the board and management. Television, film and game producers; radio stations; podcasters; musicians; new-media pioneers; writers and academics; advocacy groups; donors; the NFSA's various publics; those who need the institution for their creative and research output— all of these stakeholders need to be brought back formally into the NFSA's orbit via workshops, advisory committees, surveys, interviews and mentoring. They deserve a voice in policymaking, collection development and service provision: their knowledge and wisdom needs to be taken seriously and the institution will be the stronger for it.

And this brings us to connecting today's NFSA custodians with the fund of curatorial knowledge held by the NFSA's wider community. Collectively, all are part of a remarkable institution of which the nation can be justly proud. Nothing is more important to an audiovisual archive than the depth of the relationships and knowledge that sustain it.

With every acknowledgement of Country and honouring of Indigenous elders, the NFSA should be reminded of the efforts of its own elders to volunteer their services in a structured way, working alongside the current knowledge- and memory-maker in the audiovisual field, and its emerging leaders. And we need to remember why the NFSA is as essential now as it was in that visionary moment of creation in 1935. •

VISIT NFSA ON YOUTUBE

Have you seen [the NFSA's YouTube page](#)? With over 600 items to choose from, there are film clips, talks, interviews and much more to explore, taking you inside the work of the Archive.

2021 Committee:

President: Ray Edmondson

Vice-President: David Kilby

Secretary: Sue Terry

Treasurer: Chris Emery

Committee Members: Jill Matthews, Tony Briscoe, and Lindy Ross

Public Officer: Sue Terry



The Friends would like to acknowledge the support of the IT firm, Blue Packets, in hosting our website.



Find the Friends on Facebook

<http://www.facebook.com/NFSAFriends/>

or on our website www.archivefriends.org.au

[Check the Friends' website and Facebook page to keep up with what's happening!](#)

Friends of the National Film and Sound Archive Inc.

PO Box 9618 Deakin ACT 2600.

E: archivefriends@gmail.com Website: www.archivefriends.org.au