

Editors' page

In this issue of *Historical Records of Australian Science* we are pleased to publish five historical articles and two biographical memoirs.

We had planned to dedicate this issue of the journal to histories of archaeology in Australia and the Pacific, an initiative of the ARC Laureate project 'The collective biography of archaeology in the Pacific: a hidden history' but the Covid-19 virus disrupted our planning. Archaeology has its roots in the social sciences and humanities, but its emergence as a modern university discipline has been closely associated with its embrace of new technologies and scientific approaches.

In the interests of making the work available, the first two articles on the history of archaeology in Australia and New Zealand appear here, but others will be published as they are processed. They will appear online early, of course, and we will gather them into a virtual issue when the set is complete. Guest editors Hilary Howes and Matthew Spriggs have overseen the review process of these articles.

The interest shown by our contributors in the nineteenth-century work of botanists and collectors, many of them with connections to Ferdinand von Mueller, is continued with two articles about the work of John Dallachy (1804–71). Dallachy, a 'super collector' settled in the highly species diverse Wet Tropics Bioregion of north-east Queensland, during a period now known in Australian history as 'the frontier wars' when settlers clashed with Aboriginal people.

Australia's participation in scientific organizations at international level forms the background to Nick Lomb's account of how

the 1973 general assembly of the International Astronomical Union came to be held in Sydney. In these times of financial stress, it is interesting to read that although Australia became an adhering country to the union in 1922, it had to withdraw during the years of the great depression due to financial exigency, but was able to rejoin in 1939.

The lives and scientific careers of two Fellows of the Australian Academy of Science, David Curtis and Bruce Fraser, are described in biographical memoirs prepared by former colleagues and experts in their respective fields. Curtis was a neurophysiologist who studied the transmission of signals in the central nervous system and held senior appointments in the John Curtin School of Medical Research at ANU. Fraser was a biophysicist who worked with fibrous proteins, for most of his career in the Wool Textile Research Laboratories of CSIRO. Curtis was also a Fellow of the Royal Society, that will also publish his biographical memoir, under a long-standing agreement between the two learned academies.

The eight book reviews compiled under Peter Hobbins' guidance show, as usual, the breadth of interest in Australian science, and we are pleased to note that two of the authors whose books are reviewed here, John Dowe and Pete Minard, have published with us in *Historical Records of Australian Science*.

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