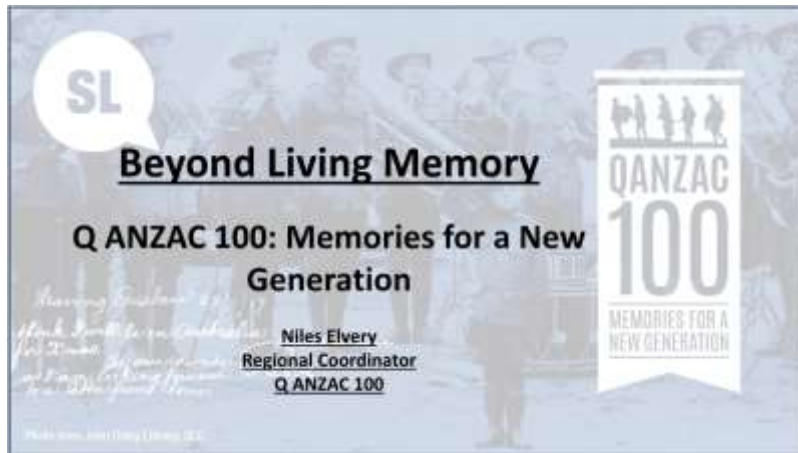


Beyond Living Memory: Q ANZAC 100 Memories for a New Generation

Niles Elvery, Regional Coordinator, Q ANZAC 100, State Library of Queensland



Thank you for that introduction and thank you to the organising committee for inviting me to speak at the conference today.

It is an absolute pleasure to be here this morning to talk about the Q ANZAC 100: *Memories for a new generation* project currently being undertaken by State Library of Queensland.

Q ANZAC 100: *Memories for a new generation* is one of the 3 legacy projects of the Queensland Government to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the First World War and other conflicts that followed. State Library is concentrating its efforts on the First World War.

The main purpose of the Q ANZAC 100 project is to commemorate WWI and one hundred years of the continuing momentum of the Anzac spirit by delivering several legacy initiatives to Queensland public.

I have called my paper *Beyond Living Memory: Q ANZAC 100 Memories for a New Generation* because it is about those who have gone before us that have left those footsteps in time. I hark back to the early planning of this project, a meeting for the first Heritage Leaders Workshop which was held in May 2014, I had one of those lightbulb moments when it all just made sense. I understood why it was so important to unearth, research, record, tell and share the stories of the soldiers, nurses, ambulance bearers, miners and tunnellers, etc. who served and many gave their lives for our country.

No one is of course alive today who lived through the conflict and can tell us about it. It is only through their first person accounts that we can gain some understanding of their experiences.

I probably should have called my paper *Uncovering stories* because that is what it is all about.



It is so important that their personal accounts, their personal experiences and their personal documents are preserved to make sure last that there is a legacy for future generations.

I can't underestimate the importance of having these collections available – but I am probably not telling you anything new there.

Using the digital technologies that are available to us now, we are able to create the memories for the generations that come after us.



During this 5 year project we are undertaking a number of activities, all focussed on creating a legacy. This slide summarises the major areas of activity. And I will give you a brief outline of each of the major areas of the project.

1. Content Curation and Development

We are spending a lot of time describing and making the First World War collections held at State Library of Queensland accessible, we are acquiring undiscovered content and commissioning new material in order to build new knowledge of the Queensland First World War experience.



State Library is currently identifying, uncovering and digitising material from the John Oxley Library (JOL) including:

- Letters, diaries, photographs, and personal papers from over 100 soldiers collections; Guides to these are available on the website.
- Also being digitised are significant organisational and historical records, such as records from the Queensland Recruiting Committee, the Anzac Day Commemoration Committee, and the Queensland branch of the Red Cross Society
- We are also creating digital stories – 30 contemporary short films will be made which mark the commemoration of the First World War for future generations.

2. The **WWI Centenary blog** has been established to share research, stories



and new knowledge about the First World War and its impact on Queensland. Constantly being added to, the blog had almost 50,000 page views during 2016, and we are actively encouraging guest blog posts. If you have a story to share, please let me know.

The blog is becoming a huge resource of information about the collections

3. SLQ has also developed **A State of War**



which is an interactive, online portal and hands-on experience onsite at SLQ. It is a great way to present the collection content and through this you can uncover the key moments, stories, and never-before-seen photographs which reveal how Queenslanders experienced the First World War. A State of War enables individuals to navigate through thousands of personal photographs, letters, diaries, and newspaper articles from SLQ's collection, creating an immense, visually rich documentary heritage which forms our collective memory of the war years.

4. You are probably aware that nearly 30,000 portraits of **Queensland soldiers** published in *The Queenslander* newspaper



have been digitised and a record created for each portrait. These are available through our One Search catalogue.

Where possible, soldier portraits are linked to the National Archives of Australia *Discovering Anzacs* record providing more information about each soldier. Volunteers have enhanced the information available on individual soldiers using resources such as the Australian War Memorial embarkation details and newspaper articles.

5. We are running a annual **Q ANZAC 100 symposium**



program which uncovers stories about Queensland and the First World War from a range of unique perspectives. Each symposium focuses on a central theme within the context of the First World War and features prominent keynote speakers as well as panel discussions with renowned social and historical commentators. The next symposium is scheduled for September 2017. I understand this one will be on and indigenous theme. Keep your eyes out to information about it.

Through *Q ANZAC 100*, State Library also awards a range of fellowships during the project period that will focus on new insights into the Queensland experience of the First World War and its aftermath. The fellowship program aims to uncover and explore lesser known or untold stories, and foster new research, interpretations, and knowledge about the war and its impact on Queenslanders both at home and abroad. Topics such as identity, conscription and women's roles and deserters are being researched by the fellows.

6. **Historypin.** HistoryPin is tool which offers an online *Q ANZAC 100* discovery and participation space for organisations and individuals to tell First World War stories about places and people, both historic and contemporary.



State Library has developed the *Q ANZAC 100* Historypin collection within the Historypin's wider First World War Centenary collection.

Almost 90 collections have been added to the Historypin collection and, to date, there are nearly 1900 items; a number which continues to grow each week as more items and more collections are added. We invite you to explore and to contribute your own story. The Historypin collection is also a great way for Queensland schools and regions to get involved in *Q ANZAC 100*.

7. The two *Q ANZAC 100* **Heritage Leaders Workshops** were intensive two or three-day



workshop programs which provided the opportunity for heritage workers and volunteers to come together to learn new skills, collaborate on ideas and share their insights and plans for creating a legacy and commemorating the First World War.

Held in April 2014 and May 2016, the learning resources including videos, presentations, images, and illustrations are available on the *Q ANZAC 100* website.

The first workshop was all about uncovering stories and the second focussed on the ways to share those stories.

8. Throughout the Q ANZAC 100 project, regional communities across



Queensland have the opportunity to get up close and personal with First World War treasures from State Library's collections. The regional programs includes white gloves experiences, caring for your First World War collections conservation clinics, and online engagement workshops to assist regional cultural and heritage sector organisations promote and share their First World War collections online.



One of my favourite images from the regional workshops – Wyandra between Charleville and Cunnamulla – population of about 120 – we had 30 people at our White Gloves event last year.

From Cairns to Barcaldine, Mount Isa to the Gold Coast, we are doing 20 of these throughout the commemorative period. Plus a more intense White Gloves experiences in an additional 20 locations.

Terrific response from participants all over the state. By providing the opportunity to handle original artefacts from the First World War period, this program has allowed people to connect with the Anzac story.



In addition to these activities, there is also an online toolkit tool kit available which is contains information guides and digital resources full of helpful hints on caring for and digitising your collection. These are there to assist community to look after and share their First World War stories and artefacts.

And there is also a collection of learning programs and resources to support teachers and inspire students to engage with stories from the First World War. These are all available on the Q ANZAC 100 website:

<http://qanzac100.slq.qld.gov.au/>

That is a very brief overview of the Q ANZAC 100 project and there is information in the red brochure in your conference satchel. On the reverse side is the web address and contact email.

State Library has collected First World War stories from the 1930s when the John Oxley Library was established. Many collections have been exposed to the world through the curation and digitisation of content which has long been buried in the repositories. The curation of known First World War's collections is very exciting to be involved in – uncovering and setting content free on the internet for researchers to find and use.

During this process we have uncovered a number of stories both from the SLQ collection and from new donations of material. Some of these relate to Queensland nurses including nurses such as Annie Sim: Great to see the women's stories coming to light.



Here we see Nurse Annie Sim, outside tent accommodation at No 34 Welsh Hospital, Deolali, Maharashtra, India (4934, Peirce Collection, John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland, Australia.) and the Welsh Hospital

Twenty-six year old, Ipswich born nurse Annie Sim enlisted in the Australian Army Nursing Service on 19 May 1917. (100 years ago yesterday) A week later she sailed from Sydney for service in India, along with 53 other nurses including 14 Queenslanders. Annie was assigned to No 34 Welsh Hospital, Deolali, which was situated 260 km north east of Bombay [Mumbai]. It was a huge complex of old barracks, bungalows and huts, spread over 2.5 km and could house over 2,000 patients.

They nursed British and Indian soldiers and Turkish prisoners of war, with diseases such as malaria, smallpox, Spanish influenza and cholera. And of course some nurses succumbed to these illnesses. A photograph album documenting her time in India is held by State Library. You can find more about Annie Sim's story on our [Queensland World War 1 Centenary blog](#).

Or there is Sister Constance Keys



The story of Sister Constance Keys is just one of the many that have uncovered and recently donated. We are processing the collection in order to describe and digitise and share it.



Constance Mabel Keys (1886-1964), nurse, was born on 30 October 1886 at Mount Perry, Queensland, seventh child of Irish-born James Keys, schoolteacher, and his wife Margaret, née Pelham, who was English.

She trained at the Brisbane General Hospital and enlisted as a staff nurse in the Australian Army Nursing Service, Australian Imperial Force, on 21 September 1914; she embarked three days later.

Constance served at a number of hospitals and at the 1st Australian General Hospital at Heliopolis where she treated casualties from Gallipoli. For most of 1918 Constance Keys was seldom far from the front line.

Constance writes about her experiences in the hospitals, other nurses and many of the soldiers that she nursed.

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In one of her letters she writes about the soldiers arriving after the Gallipoli landing:

Constance Mabel Keys

...I'll never forget the sight of those hundreds of men walking & being carried in one after the other in endless procession...

We did not get any wounded till Thursday April 29th. The hospital train came right behind the Palace – nine long white carriages with the Egyptian star & crescent on the side. Then the unloading commenced. Those who could walk were shown the way in & those on stretchers were carried over in the motor ambulances. I'll never forget the sight of those hundreds of men walking & being carried in one after the other in endless procession. There wasn't a sound except footfalls then the wards commenced to fill up. The work of getting those weary men washed, wounds dressed & fed was a big undertaking, but it was done. Next day we heard we had to make room for more cases so those who were fit were got ready & moved on to another hospital. More trains in that day (Friday) with even more cases, fewer walking & more carried. Saturday the same again & forget about Sunday.

Sister Keys was one of the most highly decorated nurses in the Australian Army Nursing Service. After her return to Queensland she became matron of a convalescent hospital for returned soldiers at Broadwater, Brisbane. While there she met and married Lionel Hugh Kemp-Pennefather in December 1921. Pennyfather was a Gallipoli veteran, who was in charge of the farm section at the hospital.



See her story as told by her daughter in the digital story: [Margaret Thorsborne](#).

These are wonderful stories which need to be preserved and shared with the wider community.

How many of you here today have First World War connections?

How many of you know the story of that serviceperson?

How many of you have shared that story with family etc?

I would encourage each and every one of you to ensure that that story is documented and help in the creation of the legacy for those future generations.

My daughter said to me the other day that all through school when they did First World War – it was the story of Simpson and his donkey. There is so much more that is now available for use by all sectors of the community.

The curation of content has allowed us to do several things with the content itself.

One is the development of **A State of War**, referred to earlier.



Listen to audio of a selection of letters and diaries while you browse the digitised original item or its transcript. All the content sits in the catalogue, but this provides a visual portal to the collections.

Another use of the content was in the wonderful **Distant Lines Exhibition** which was featured in the SLQ Gallery in 2015.



The broader narrative of the First World War was told through the experiences of individuals - 25 diverse Queenslanders who served in the First World War using the personal stories from the collections - original letters and diaries etc. Distant Lines was designed to connect visitors with the intimate and untold stories of Queenslanders as we commemorate 100 years since the First World War.



People were able to discover the untold war front experiences through these personal letters, diaries, belongings and digital stories against a towering backdrop of striking imagery.

Also featured in the exhibition were those **soldier portraits** from the Queenslander.



Nearly 30,000 photographs of young men, off to war, photographed at the Enoggera Army Camp and published in the Queenslander newspaper. This was also only around half of the number of Queenslanders who served, as not every soldier was photographed before embarkation.

These have all been individually digitised and described in State Library's catalogue and are available for you to download.

In my travelling around the state and seeing numerous publications, displays and websites etc, it is very heartening to see these soldier portraits turning up in numerous commemorative products. A well-used resource already and in some cases, especially for aboriginal servicemen, the only surviving image which can now be accessed by the family.

Another collection which was brought out into the light is that of my friend Cyril Brett of the 25th Battalion from Beaufort Station near Alpha in Central Queensland. His considerable collection at State Library of Queensland includes photographs, albums, diaries and log-books, which reveal his life as a motor-car driver, mechanic, infantryman, station manager and aircraft pilot.



(Basil Beaufort Brett and his brother Robert Cyril Palmer Brett, Egypt, 1915 (Cyril is standing))

As a young man in 1914 Cyril describes his life as a mechanic and driver in Longreach, when motor cars were a novelty outside capital cities. He offered his services to ferry customers to appointments, events and to meet them at the Railway station.

His early life on an isolated cattle property would have provided him with an abundance of skills for survival and resilience. His brothers Basil and Leslie also enlisted and his diaries and letters record their news and movements for the family back at home.

Cyril was also a keen amateur photographer,



his collection of images brings alive his war service, life in Central/Western Queensland and his adventures as a pilot in the fledgling air services in Australia.

Sergeant Brett arrived in Gallipoli in October 1915, after recovering from measles in Cairo; here he remained until the troops were evacuated to the island of Lemnos on 17th December. By March the next year, Brett was serving in the trenches of the Somme.

Significantly wounded in the arm and shoulder in July, he was evacuated to England for treatment, and then returned home, no longer fit for active service with the AIF.

Initially he took up a position managing Lammermoor station in the Hughenden district, before re-enlisting in 1918 where he was employed in the Army's Area Office in Brisbane, Townsville, and later Warwick.

It was here in Warwick that he put to work his skills as a mechanic and driver and opened Brett's Garage in partnership with his brother Leslie.

His diaries tell the story of Cyril and his life before during and after the war.

His diaries and photographs are in the process of being digitised, the diaries have been transcribed and will be added to the catalogue.

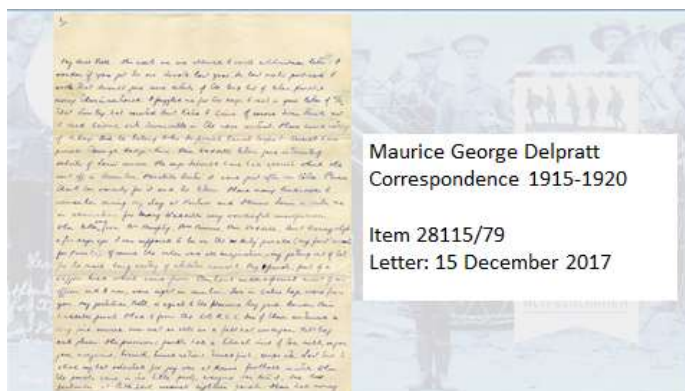
What better way to share the story of the adventurous Mr Cyril Brett from western Queensland?

I referred to Cyril as my old friend. This is because he is a regular on our White Gloves Experiences. One of Cyril's diaries and an album of images have been touring Queensland with our Regional workshop program, along with 12 other items from State Library collections.



As part of the commemorations we have been showcasing First World War content by presenting a series of White Gloves Experiences throughout the state. A team from SLQ are undertaking an extensive program which covers Cooktown to St George and Maryborough to Longreach and many places in between.

Our recent visit to the Gold Coast earlier this month to present the White Gloves Experience we showcased an item from the Delpratt collection.



Letters and postcards written by Sergeant Maurice George Delpratt of the 5th Light Horse regiment while held as a prisoner of war in Turkey during World War One. Most of the letters were written to Maurice George Delpratt's eldest sister Elinor (Nell), Mrs F.L. White of "Brooklands", Woodhill, Queensland. The collection also contains other letters written by his family and friends and some items of ephemera. The collection was generously donated to the State Library in 2012 by Delpratt's three daughters who had lovingly preserved almost 200 letters and postcards which their father had written to his family.

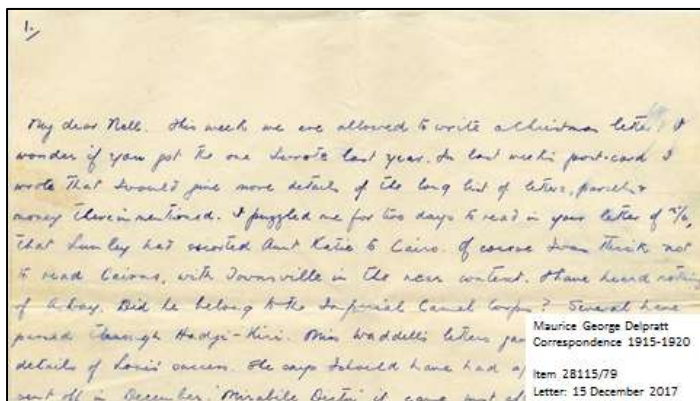
Maurice was one of the first pupils to attend the Southport School and was later employed there as a housemaster and teacher. To this day, Delpratt House, at the Southport School,

is named in his honour. In 1910 he left teaching and took up pastoral interests in Western Queensland.

At the outbreak of war Maurice enlisted in the 5th Light Horse Regiment and embarked from Sydney on the transport ship A34 Persic on 21st December 1914. Sadly, his mother died while he was on the journey to Egypt and it is to his eldest sister, Nell, to whom he addresses most of his letters. Sadly, his mother died while he was on the journey to Egypt and it is to his eldest sister, Nell, to whom he addresses most of his letters.

After training, Maurice arrived at Gallipoli in May 1915. He was captured by the Turks on the 28th June when he was sent out to order the return of a squadron which had ventured too close to the enemy lines.

Maurice spent three and a half years in a prisoner of war camp at Hadji-Kiri, near Belemelik, Turkey, in the Taurus Mountains, where he was set to work on the construction of tunnels for the Baghdad to Berlin Railway. Conditions in the camp were difficult with many of the prisoners suffering from malaria and other illnesses. In a detailed letter composed on Christmas day 1917 Maurice writes:



My dear Nell

This week we are allowed to write a Christmas letter. I wonder if you got the one I wrote last year. In last week's post-card I wrote that I would give more details of the long list of letters, parcels & money there in mentioned. It puzzled me for a few days to read in your letter of 15/6, that Lumley had escorted Aunt Katie to Cairo. Of course I was thick not to read Cairns, with Townsville in the near context. I have heard nothing of A. Day. Did he belong to the Imperial Camel Corps?

He discusses the difficulty of getting the parcels from Belmedik to Haji-Kiri in time for Christmas day and conditions in camp.

The prisoners were released after the Armistice in November 1918 and after making their way to Alexandria in Egypt, and later France, were repatriated to England.

There is a great blog story about the Delpratt collection and a digital story created by State Library to interpret some of his story.



Along with the White Gloves we are undertaking Conservation Clinics to provide information to individuals and heritage organisations on looking after their First World War memorabilia. We want to encourage good conservation practices to ensure physical items live a longer life.



We are also encouraging the GLAM sector to share stories through a range of social media platforms. One of these is Historypin which is a place based online product where content relating to specific localities can be pinned and accessed by others.

One amazing story to come out of this is the story of Sister Greta Towner from Blackall. Extensive research undertaken by the Blackall Historical Society and students of the Blackall State School into the life of Sister Greta Towner little known and overshadowed by her VC awarded brother Edgar Thomas Towner which is well documented in the public domain. Very little was known about Greta. That has now changed.



Research to date has established Sister Greta Norman Towner as being born at “Glencoe” station, Blackall in 1891, she attended Blackall State School and continued her education in Rockhampton. Greta Towner trained as nurse at the Rockhampton Children’s Hospital. She

enlisted in 1915. Sister Towner served with the Australian Army Nursing Service in Egypt (Heliopolis, Cairo), Lemnos Island from September 1915 during the Gallipoli Campaign and on Sea Transport ships. In 1917 she saw service in England at the Southall Hospital which specialised in amputations and artificial limbs. In March 1917 she arrived in France and was posted to the 8th Stationary Hospital in Rouen. On 27 September 1917 she was posted to the 1st Australian General Hospital in Rouen and served there for the remainder of the First World War.

As part of the research undertaken by students at Blackall State School are a number of video stories that have been loaded to Historypin.

The whole process of the discovery, documenting and sharing of the Sister Greta Towner story has been documented through a number of blog posts on the Queensland's World War 1 Centenary blog managed by State Library. This is another avenue for sharing those uncovered stories and allowing others to find them.



A recent post [MATES FOR LIFE](#) highlights the story of Private George Brigham who described his experiences of World War One in a ten-part diary, in the form of letters to his mother. It is a beautifully written account from a man who obviously delighted in life and those he met along the way. George Brigham, William Fahey, Leslie Cutler and George Simpson, cemented their relationships whilst at sea, on duty, performing in a concert held by their battalion, and while in the training camp in England. They were deployed to France and In 1917 the 42nd Infantry Battalion was engaged in the major battles of Messines, Warneton, Broodseide and Passchendaele, where Private Brigham was wounded, and evacuated to Birmingham Hospital, England. George's diary has been digitised and transcribed and available.

These and many more individual accounts have been uncovered and released in order to create the memories for a new generation.

I have tried to show here that every story is different. Every recorded account is important to understanding the events of the period and the impact on individuals.

If you have narratives that you would like us to share, please let me know. We would love to be able to share them with the wider community. We welcome contributions from researchers so that their stories can not only be told but developed into a new collective memory.

We can help you share previously untold stories with the wider community through avenues such as the World War I Centenary blog. Mentioned several times already.



And through the Q ANZAC 100 collection on Historypin but there is the opportunity for every one of you to contribute stories and also use facebook as well.

State Library is actively seeking donations of First World War heritage collections and I encourage you all to consider the future of First World War collections in private collections and help in preserving and sharing these memories.

I am extremely proud and humbled at being able to participate in this extraordinary Q ANZAC 100 project which State Library of Queensland is managing.

It is an amazing experience being part of the Q ANZAC 100 project team. It is a real privilege to be able to travel the state, circulating the first person narratives from the collection and connecting Queenslanders with the Anzac Story.

To quote my Executive Manager, Gavin Bannerman, "We make a place for a story to live, so a broader community can not only experience the past, but make new things from it."



That is what Q ANZAC 100 is about. We can walk in the footsteps of these and many other people who have shared their First World War experiences with us and create that lasting legacy for future generations.

Thank you.