Collecting since 1826

As Australia’s oldest library, we’ve been collecting the stories of our state and nation since 1826.

The Library now has over six million items in its collection. Here are some of them.

You may see some of these advertised in bus shelters, in your local shopping precincts or on social media. This is just one of the ways we’re connecting stories from our collections with the communities they relate to.

If you see one of our adverts and have a story to share about the item featured, we’d love to hear from you.

Unknown artist, *Quong Tart, c 1880s*

Mei Quong Tart was born at Hsinning (Sun-Ning), China, in 1850.

110325885

[1]

Chatswood subdivision plan, ca. 1918

Subdivision plan from 1918 showing land for sale in Chatswood.

3525468

[2]
**Drawing of Aboriginal carvings at Middle Head, ca. 1839-1871**

This is a drawing of Aboriginal carvings at Middle Head in Sydney.

823642

[3]  

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**Mina Wylie, Coogee, 1913**

Wilhelmina (Mina) Wylie, (1891-1984), and Fanny Durack were Australia's first two female Olympic swimming
Parramatta suburban map, ca. 1890
**Berlei Figure Type Indicator, ca. 1950**

In 1926 Berlei, a leading designer of undergarments, in conjunction with the University of Sydney, measured the body. 

a735002

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*by unknown artist, Ancestral portrait of Quong Tart’s mother, c 1888*
Mei Quong Tart was a well-known Sydney identity.

Invitation to the official opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, 1932

On Saturday 19 March 1932 the Sydney Harbour Bridge was open.

Henry Grace, Bird whistles, c 1960

Henry Grace (1884–1966) was a passionate bird watcher and listener.
Dorothea Mackellar, 20 June 1918

“I love a sunburnt country,

A land of sweeping plains

a928963

[10]
'Where to live: ABC guide to Sydney and suburbs', 1917

Where to live: A.B.C.

Q981.1/H

[11]

Cartier hairpin box belonging to Nellie Melba, ca. 1918

Dame Nellie Melba (1861–1931) was Australia’s first internationally successful opera singer.
568733

[12]
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Diary of Eric Harford Ward, 1918

Eric Harford Ward, a tailor's cutter of Bathurst, New South Wales embarked from Sydney on Transport A19 Afric, 18 Oct

IE1114537

[13]
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Glass negatives of the Woy Woy area, ca 1890-1910

This image is from a collection of 400 glass plate negatives taken by William Joseph Macpherson (1866-1923)
Ocean Baths, Newcastle, 1915

This poster is from 1915 when Duke Kahanamoku, 'world's greatest swimmer,' visited Newcastle.
William Thomas Clark, NSW servicemen portrait, 1918

This is a portrait of William Thomas Clark who lived in Thirroul.

IE1487788


Links