

## State Library of NSW announces \$75,000 Coral Thomas Fellowship winner

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A leading historian of colonial NSW, Professor Grace Karskens was last night awarded the prestigious \$75,000 Coral Thomas Fellowship at the State Library of NSW. As the 2018 Fellow, Professor Karskens will use the State Library's vast collections to support her research project *The Real Secret River, Dyarubbin*.

"This is a fascinating project about the history of the Hawkesbury River, developed in partnership with Aboriginal people from the Hawkesbury-Nepean region in Western Sydney," said State Librarian John Vallance.

"Thanks to the support of Rob Thomas AM and his family, who created this important Fellowship, Professor Karskens' research promises to reveal new and important cross-cultural stories about one of Australia's most beautiful and historically significant rivers, the Hawkesbury River or 'Dyarubbin'," said Dr Vallance.

Professor Karskens is a respected authority on early colonial Sydney and Australia, author of the acclaimed book *The Colony, a history of early Sydney*, and a professor of history in the School of Humanities and Languages at the University of NSW.

"I'm absolutely delighted and deeply honoured to be awarded the 2018 Coral Thomas Fellowship. It means I will be able to undertake an exciting and very special new project: the recovery of the Aboriginal names for Dyarubbin, the Hawkesbury River, and the stories of the Aboriginal people and early settlers of that river region.

"This project was inspired by a chance find in the Mitchell Library – a long lost list of Aboriginal names for the river. I'll be working with Aboriginal people to re-connect these names to places, and the places to local ecologies, geographies and cross-cultural histories: new stories for this famous old river," said Professor Karskens

The Coral Thomas Fellowship was first awarded in 2015 to historian and writer Dr Rebe Taylor. It leads the State Library's series of competitive fellowships that support the research, writing, and teaching of Australian history and culture.

This year the State Library has awarded Fellowships totalling \$160,000 to the following scholars:

- 2018 David Scott Mitchell Fellow, Dr James Keating for the project 'Linda Littlejohn: Australia's Forgotten Feminist'.

# *Media Release*



- 2018 Merewether Fellow, Dr Julie McIntyre for the project 'William Macarthur, James King and the Australian Agricultural Modernity'.
- 2018 Australian Religious History Fellow, Dr Timothy Stanley for the project 'Religious Print after the Enlightenment'.
- 2018 CH Currey Fellow, Dr Emma Christopher for the project 'Sugar and Slavery: An Australian Legacy?'
- 2018 Nancy Keesing Fellow, Dr Neil James for the project 'The A&R Century: A History of Angus & Robertson'.

**For more information and interviews please contact:**

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