

**You are invited to the next Melbourne Salon at the Alliance Française.
Wednesday 16th July 2014, 7pm - 9 pm**

“Somewhere in France”



We all know the horrors of the trenches ... but away from the battlefields, when Australian soldiers had a chance to rest or take some leave, what did they do? How did they spend their time? Did they get along with the French civilian population? How did they cope away from the harsh reality of the war?

“Somewhere in France” is a teaching and research initiative jointly developed by the French Studies program at the University of Melbourne (Diane de Saint Léger) and the University of Melbourne Archives (Katie Wood) that aims to explore these seldom told Australian experiences of the war. This project is based on the rich and diverse WWI collection held at UMA and provides a snapshot of soldiers’ experiences in France.

The UMA collections include the war diaries and other documents and memorabilia of young soldiers and medical students who served on the Western Front. The testimonies of these men and women are captured through a rich and diverse range of memorabilia including post cards, pressed flowers from the battle field, Christmas menus and entertainment guides, photos, letters to loved ones and provide a moving and captivating account of their time abroad.

Diane de Saint Léger and Katie Wood will present and discuss material held in the collection which is, on the occasion of the commemoration of the “Great War”, an opportunity to bring to the fore the long-lasting ties that exist between France and Australia. Excerpts from trench magazines such as “Aussie magazine” (first printed in the battlefields in France in 1918) will also be presented to show how aspects of the French way of life and language were “re-appropriated” by the digger to shape its own distinctive “Aussie” identity.

The presentation will include a segment by John Drury: 'Dernancourt and Adelaide: Madame Mouchette and the Aftermath of the 1st World War'.

Diane de Saint Léger is lecturer in French Studies at the University of Melbourne. She created and developed the “Somewhere in France” project in 2012 with a group of second and third year intermediate students of French. The project has since continued to develop each year as new groups of students have enrolled in the subject.

Katie Wood is the Access and Outreach Archivist and the Curator of the Malcolm Fraser collection at the University of Melbourne Archives. She coordinates UMA’s teaching program.

John Drury is the biographer of Berthe Mouchette, the founder of the Alliance Française in Australia. John was co-founder of the Charles Joseph La Trobe Society and is currently its Manager.

Cover charge payable on the night (includes cheese and wine) – cash only please: \$15
Bookings essential: themelbournesalon@gmail.com; 03 9925 2264 (numbers limited).