



ISSUE

01

August
2020

ISFAR Newsletter



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Membership

To join or renew:

<https://www.isfar.org.au/membership/>

Membership includes subscription to the French Australian Review journal.

Follow us

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/FrenchAustralianRelations

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/theISFAR>

Useful links

Alliance Française de Melbourne

www.afmelbourne.com.au

Association of French Teachers in Victoria (AFTV)

www.aftv.vic.edu.au

Australian-French Association for Research and

Innovation (AFRAN) www.afran.org.au

Australian French Association for Science and

Technology <https://afas.org.au>

Australian Historical Association

www.theaha.org.au

Bastille Day French Festival Melbourne

www.bastilledaymelbourne.com

Bleu Blanc Rouge (Consular newsletter)

www.bbrvic.com/en

French Assist Melbourne

www.frenchassistmelbourne.org.au

French Australian Chamber of Commerce

www.facci.com.au

Message from the president

Dear ISFAR members and friends,

Hoping this finds you all well, I am delighted to welcome you all to this inaugural issue of the ISFAR quarterly newsletter. Some might say it has been a long time coming (ISFAR turns 35 this year!), but we are proud of our new initiative now it is finally here and we hope you enjoy it.

There have been some changes to ISFAR this year following the stepping down of Emeritus Professor Colin Nettelbeck (University of Melbourne) from both the ISFAR general committee and the ISFAR research committee. Colin not only founded the research committee in 2016 and chaired it until March 2020, but he co-founded ISFAR itself in 1985, carrying out two terms as President, the most recent of which was 2011–2018. We would like to express our profound gratitude to Colin for his longstanding leadership of all things ISFAR, and we look forward to continuing to collaborate with him in a more informal way.

The new research committee members were approved by the Research Policy and Programs Branch (Higher Education Group) of the Department of Education and Training on 12 June 2020 (this is a requirement for deductible gift recipients such as ISFAR). The new research committee is chaired by Dr Alexis Bergantz and Dr Elizabeth Rechniewski. Their profiles and those of the other research committee members can be seen [here](#).

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Alexis and Liz have embraced their new roles with great enthusiasm and have already begun work on a number of exciting initiatives (see below and future editions of the newsletter for more on this). You can see details of some of these current research projects [here](#), as well as details of how to make a tax-deductible donation to the ISFAR Research Fund to enable us to carry out such work.

One of the initiatives being overseen by Alexis and Liz is the 35th Anniversary Symposium of ISFAR, *Australia and France in a Regional and Global Context: Past Engagements and Future Research Directions*, to be held 8–9 April 2021. All going well, this will be a physical gathering at RMIT University in Melbourne, but like all current projects, contingency plans will be put in place closer to the time, if required. Please see the Call for Papers on page 4 below. We invite you to pencil in the dates and/or to submit an abstract and look forward to seeing you there to celebrate ISFAR turning 35.

Without further ado, I invite you to peruse the rest of this newsletter and our [website](#). If you have any feedback or suggestions for future topics or items for inclusion, please contact us at isfarinc@gmail.com.

Bonne lecture!

Kerry Mullan, President

Sincere thanks go to Robyn Stern and Graham Neilson for the layout of this newsletter and to all the contributors to this first issue.

Report on ISFAR's Submission to the Senate Inquiry

In February this year the Senate set up an inquiry into 'Opportunities for strengthening Australia's relations with the Republic of France'.

The Senate Committee's terms of reference and membership can be found [here](#).

ISFAR made a submission to the inquiry drafted by Alexis Bergantz and Elizabeth Rechniewski, as did a score of other associations, university departments, individuals and state and federal bodies. The submissions are posted on the [Committee's website](#). ISFAR's submission seeks to facilitate student mobility and exchange, and research collaboration, between Australian and French universities in the Indo-Pacific region, and argues that a system of grants to promote extended undergraduate in-country study and postgraduate and academic research collaboration would provide the stability necessary for long term cooperation in priority areas such as the climatic, ecological, health and security challenges facing the region.

Other submissions also emphasise the importance of fostering people-to-people contacts and scientific and cultural exchange in this region, the AFRAN submission for example. We were struck, however, by the lack of specific recommendations in many of the submissions to the inquiry.

The Committee held hearings at the end of June (by phone) and on 24 June Alexis and Liz were invited to present ISFAR's submission in more detail and to answer the Committee's questions. There are four members of the Committee, Senators Kitching (chair), Abetz, Antic and Ayres, but only Senators Abetz and Kitching were present throughout our interview.

We presented ourselves and explained the role of ISFAR and its activities at some length.

We were invited to give a five-minute opening statement in which we identified our submission as relevant to the following terms of reference of the inquiry:

c)- options for enhancing strategic cooperation, including in the Indo-Pacific region and through multilateral fora; and

e)- opportunities to build on shared historical and cultural values and promote tourism, cultural exchanges and people-to-people ties.

We explained that our submission focuses on a particular problem that we had identified through discussion with ISFAR members, on oz-french and other fora: how to enhance Australia's engagement with French universities in the Indo-Pacific region, in New Caledonia, French Polynesia and La Réunion. The Indo-Pacific region has been identified as a priority by both the Australian and French governments.

The 2017 'Joint Statement of Enhanced Strategic Partnership between France and Australia' lists amongst its priority areas 'Cooperation in the Indian and Pacific Oceans' and 'Cooperation in Education, Science, Technology and Culture'. France has named the Indo-Pacific region as 'at the heart of France's vision of a stable, law-based, multipolar order' and Australia as an essential strategic partner in this goal.

In presenting our submission we identified the existing schemes and explained some of the current problems and obstacles that need to be overcome to foster exchanges and research collaboration. The arguments regarding the lacunae in the existing schemes can be found in our [written submission](#). To address these issues we argued that it is not necessary to set up new schemes, but to target funding within existing ones or use the new bilateral partnerships.

The Joint Cooperation Plan between New Caledonia and Australia, which is currently being drafted between the recently installed New Caledonia delegation in Australia and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade would seem to represent the ideal opportunity and context to explore what can be done in this area. The possibility—however remote—of a vote for independence in New Caledonia in October would constitute all the more reason to establish country-to-country ties. Noumea is the home of the Pacific Community (Pacific Community Strategic Plan 2016–2020: Sustainable Pacific development through science, knowledge and innovation).

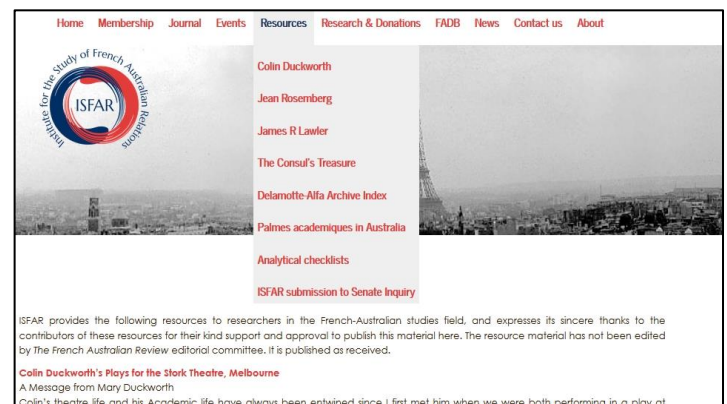
We concluded by saying that we have been contacted by academics in both Australian and French territory universities who are keen to set up exchanges and develop research collaboration if there is some support such as seed funding.

Other submissions can be viewed in the Australian Senate website [here](#).

The inquiry is due to report by 13 August 2020.

Alexis Bergantz, Elizabeth Rechniewski

ISFAR resources



ISFAR provides resources to researchers in the field of French-Australian studies, with the support of the authors or contributors who give their approval to publish this material.

ISFAR's full submission can be seen [here](#).

Access all ISFAR resources [here](#).

The French Australian Review, Number 68, Australian Winter 2020

Refereed articles:

“‘A Gift for France’: the Australian *Bluebird* Nurses of the Great War’ by Irene Rogers

‘Dr Helen Sexton’s Hôpital Australien de Paris, 28 July–December 1915’ by Hannah Steel

Documents, Notes and Reviews:

‘French-Australian Dictionary of Biography’ by Colin Nettelbeck

‘Jacqueline Dwyer (1925–2020): A Tribute’ by Peter Brown

‘French-Australian Encounters Number 4’ by John Presley

‘Speech at the Book Launch of Stan Scott’s “Chis: The Life and Work of Alan Rowland Chisholm (1888–1981)”’ by Patricia Clancy

Book Review: ‘Robert Macklin, *Castaway*: The extraordinary survival story of Narcisse Pelletier, a young French cabin boy shipwrecked on Cape York in 1858’ by Kerry Mullan

Book Review: ‘Christine Mathieu, *Voyages Syntastiques: A Comparative-narrative Method for Teaching French Grammar to English speakers*’ by Chantal Crozet

Book Review: ‘Jayne Tuttle, *Paris or Die: a Memoir*’ by Jane Gilmour

Book Note: ‘François Vantomme & Bernard Le Boursicot eds, *Le Courier Australien, 1892–1945: Creating the French-Australian Connection since 1892*’ by Alexis Bergantz

French-Australian Bibliographical Notes by Elaine Lewis

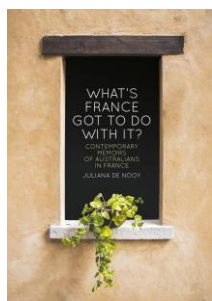
‘Call for Papers: ISFAR 35th Anniversary Symposium, 8–9 April 2021’ by Alexis Bergantz & Elizabeth Rechniewski

The *French Australian Review* is published by The Institute for the Study of French-Australian Relations (ISFAR). The Journal index and online issues (all issues up to the last six) can be consulted on the ISFAR website. The refereed article by Irene Rogers is available free-of-charge at <https://www.isfar.org.au>.

If you would like to submit an article for consideration, or purchase a copy of the review or a pdf, please contact the editors: Elaine Lewis, Jane Gilmour (Eds) Phoebe Weston-Evans (Ass.Ed.) french.australian.review@gmail.com

Other recent publications

What’s France got to do with it? Contemporary memoirs of Australians in France, by ISFAR member Juliana de Nooy
<https://press.anu.edu.au/publications/whats-france-got-to-do-with-it>



Recent publications by ISFAR Research Committee Chair, Elizabeth Rechniewski:

[Elizabeth Rechniewski analyse la "renaissance précaire de Scott Morrison"](#) *France Culture*, 4 June 2020

[Old and New Fears of Invasion in the South West Pacific: Australia and Vanuatu](#) *OREMA*, 23 December 2019



Australia and France in a Regional and Global Context: Past Engagements and Future Research
Directions
35th Anniversary Symposium of the Institute for the Study of French Australian Relations
(ISFAR)
8–9 April 2021, RMIT University

Call for Papers

As two neighbouring middle-powers in the Pacific, France and Australia share a fruitful and complex relationship, rooted in a long history of engagement at local, regional and global levels. The 35th anniversary of ISFAR provides an opportunity to reflect on the evolution of the study of that relationship over the last few decades. In a rapidly changing world, it is also an opportunity to discuss its future and, notably, the shift of focus to the study of French-Australian relations in the Indo-Pacific region.

In recent years, the idea of the Indo-Pacific has gained wide currency. Diplomats, politicians and journalists refer to it as a self-evident geopolitical space, but it is also a powerful concept that is changing and influencing the ways in which states and non-state actors relate to one another. Papers that directly engage with the idea of the Indo-Pacific are particularly encouraged but we welcome abstracts on any aspects of Franco-Australian history and engagement, in any geographical area, time period and field of inquiry.

The session topics might include:

- Commemorative agendas.
- Language and/or cross- and intercultural communication.
- The 'imperial turn' in the study of French-Australian relations.
- France and Australia in the Indo-Pacific: past engagements and present challenges.
- Cultural exchange today: institutional (exhibitions, festivals, museums) and popular.
- Researching the impact of study tours and exchanges.
- Mis/Representations of French and Australian life in art and literature.
- Diplomatic, political and scientific rapprochements in the new world order.

Keynote speaker

Professor Rory Medcalf, Head of the National Security College at the Australian National University, has agreed to be guest speaker. He is the founding convenor of the Australia-France Strategic Dialogue and the author of several recent publications on the Indo-Pacific region, including *The Contest for the Indo-Pacific: Why China Won't Map the Future* (2020).

Funding

We intend to offer a bursary, in honour of the late Tasman George Parsons, to support one or two PhD students wishing to attend.

Publication

Subject to the usual review, we intend to publish articles from the conference, both in the *French-Australian Review* and in an edited volume.

Abstracts

Send abstracts of 150-200 words and a brief bio (150-200 words) to elizabeth.rechniewski@sydney.edu.au and alexis.bergantz@rmit.edu.au by 30 September 2020. Acceptance by 30 October 2020.



Tasman George Parsons (16 April 1942 – 20 June 2020)

The historian Tasman George Parsons, adjunct professor at Macquarie University, died in June after a long illness. Although primarily a specialist in Australian economic history, he displayed a keen interest in French and French-Australian history from early in his career to his final years. As a materialist historian who maintained a close relationship and a long correspondence with Eric Hobsbawm, he had a particular interest in the French Revolution and its historians (his email was 'soboul93').

He was one of the first to research the convict past of New Caledonia in the context of the strained French-Australian relations provoked by the presence of the penal colony there. In a 1966 article he recounted the reaction of the press and parliaments of NSW and Queensland to the possible arrival of pardoned communards and prisoners whose sentence had expired, as well as the ongoing threat of escapees from the penal colony.

From the mid 1870s, wrote Parsons, this issue provoked 'a diplomatic quarrel between Great Britain and France, and 'arous[ed] intense feeling in the Australian colonies'.

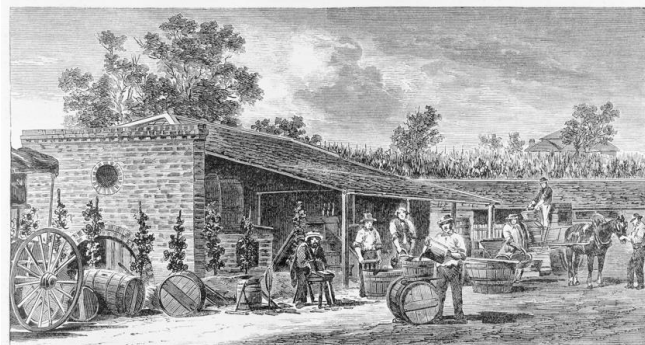
Later in his career he wrote about Australian participation in the battles of World War One on the Western Front, bypassing the dominant Gallipoli legend. Of a projected book on Australian troops in France, however, only a couple of articles remain. In his final years he began to write on French current affairs, aiming for a wide audience and publishing regularly in the *Australian Quarterly*. He shared with readers his love of Paris, especially the quartier of Belleville with its long working class and dissident history, and even the name of his favourite restaurant: Le Clown, rue Amelot, 11e.

George was a committed unionist who fought to improve conditions for university staff and students. His teaching too was a central focus of his activity. It is in recognition of his commitment to his students that the travel bursary to attend the ISFAR symposium next April is offered.

Elizabeth Rechniewski
The University of Sydney

French-Australian relations wine project

France was seen as the model for the early Australian wine industry. Early vigneron in Australia visited France to study French vineyards and winemaking practices, and often returned with cuttings of French vines. French vigneron established vineyards in Australia, and French viticultural techniques were adapted by authors of vineyard management manuals for Australia.



Receiving the Grapes at the Wine-house and Unstalking the Bunches Preparatory to Pressing.

Receiving the Grapes at the Wine-house and Unstalking the Bunches Preparatory to Pressing
(Robert Bruce/State Library Victoria)

In view of their significance, I have initiated the 'Wine Project' for ISFAR. It has two aspects: initially, the research and writing of entries for the [French Australian Dictionary of Biography](#) (FADB) for French nationals who contributed to the development of the wine industry in Australia and Australians who were influenced by French viticulture and winemaking; and, subsequently, using these biographies as the basis for a book highlighting the significance of French and Australian/British individuals who have played an important role in Australian wine. Sponsors will be sought to finance publication of the book, which will also include a diverse range of illustrative material – portraits, maps, labels, extracts from books and other writing – and a short introductory essay giving general background to the beginnings of the wine industry in Australia and drawing attention to the relevance of French viticultural techniques and scientific advances in its development and growth.

The project is still at a very early stage. With the help of colleagues, I am currently completing a list of potential candidates which could exceed 80. It is possible that some will not be sufficiently significant to warrant a FADB entry but can still be mentioned in the book.

Anyone interested in contributing to this project can contact me at barbara.santich@adelaide.edu.au

Professor Emeritus Barbara Santich
The University of Adelaide
ISFAR Research Committee

Bastille Day 2020

Around the world celebrations for the French National Day this year were very subdued. Here in Australia plans for Bastille Day festivals were put on hold as social distancing requirements made any sort of large gathering impossible.

In Melbourne, ISFAR is a partner association of the Bastille Day French Festival. Since the Festival's inception in 2015, we have participated in the event, with a small stand promoting the organisation and explaining what we do to interested festival attendees. We join a number of other French and French-Australian associations in providing a strong community focus for the Festival and supporting this important event celebrating the ties that bind Australia and France across so many different disciplines and areas of interest from food and wine, to history, language, culture, science and technology.

This year, the Festival was to have taken place in the newly renovated State Library of Victoria and we were looking forward to participating once again and catching up with friends and colleagues from the Alliance Française, Melbourne Accueil, the French-Australian Lawyers Society, the Association of French Teachers in Victoria and others. Regrettably COVID-19 intervened and the event was cancelled. Fortunately the French Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FACCI) made it possible for Melbournian francophiles to indulge in some virtual revelry with wine and champagne masterclasses and other events during Bastille Day week.

Similarly, Bastille Day festivals in Brisbane, Canberra and Sydney were cancelled or postponed. Le Festival in Brisbane held a week-long program of talks and masterclasses and we congratulate them on the interesting program they presented. Their festival has been postponed until 16-18 October and you can find out more about their plans on their [website](#). In Sydney, the highly successful [Bastille Festival](#) which takes place over 3-4 days at Circular Quay has also been postponed to October.

In Canberra, the Alliance Française, which has an unbroken record of holding an event to celebrate Bastille Day since it was first established in 1943, held a Bastille Dinner with a limited number of guests all socially isolated from each other. Around the country, with the exception of Melbourne, which was in its second lock-down, the Alliance Française French Film Festival re-launched on 14 July and ran through to 4 August.

We hope that all French people and francophiles, wherever you are, were able to celebrate with *joie de vivre* the spirit and values of the revolution: *liberté, égalité et fraternité!!*

