

ASRA 2023 Conference

Canberra, Ngunnawal and Ngambri Country, and online.

2-3 November 2023

'A Century of Radio Broadcasting'

Developments in legislation and licensing regulations for radio broadcasters that came into effect in 1923 led to a proliferation of broadcast radio stations in Australia and New Zealand. One hundred years on, ASRA's 2023 conference will consider the many facets of radio's development and history and its impact on society and culture from those early beginnings up to the present day.

There is much to discuss on this topic, and we look forward to hearing from broadcasters and radio professionals both current and retired, academics, radio historians, artists, activists, archivists, technical experts and preservation specialists from across the bandwidth.

Topics include early days, technology, personalities, the business of radio, impacts of regulation, the social impact of radio; and radio as cultural content such as news, music, drama, documentary, oral history, sound art, commentary, and public discourse.

The Venue

We are most grateful to our venue partner, the National Film & Sound Archive of Australia, for providing us with access to their beautiful Art Deco Theatrette as conference venue. The theatrette can accommodate all standard presentation formats including remote presentations.

The Conference will also have options for online attendees to participate in discussions.



National Film and Sound
Archive
Venue Partner

Contact

For further information please contact us by email at

conference2023@asra.asn.au

For more information about ASRA or the NFSA visit our websites at

asra.asn.au

Program Overview

Thursday, 2 November 2023

8:30 Conference Registration

9:30 Welcome

9:45 Mai Katona, **The Alice Moyle Lecture**

Morning Tea

11:15 Johanna McMahon, National Film and Sound Archive of Australia

Don't forget to save! An introduction to podcasts and their preservation

11:45 Rahnee Alvarez & Jon Steiner, ABC

There Are Many Paths but Only One Journey: Radio Archiving at the ABC

12:15 Guy Tranter, ABC

Filling in the gaps of a century: the ABC's written archive

Lunch

13:30 **Community Radio Panel**

Warren Barnett, Broadcast and Production Manager of Highland-FM 107.1, ex Sony/Festival

Matthew Hopkins, National Archives of Australia, Eastside 89.7 FM

Michelle O'Connor, Charles Sturt University and ex station manager 2MCE

Crispian Winsor, National Film & Sound Archive of Australia, PBSFM

Chaired by **Matthew Davies**, ASRA, ex NFSA and ABC

2:30 Michelle O'Connor, Charles Sturt University

Beyond Time Calls and Weather - What Does Community Radio Sound Like?

Afternoon Tea

3:30 Crispian Winsor, PBS FM & National Film and Sound Archive of Australia

How a community radio announcer merged into an archivist

4:00 John Lanser

Voice of the Mountains

4:30 Marilyn Sue Dooley

Historic Australian Radio as Community Education and Curated Product

Our conference dinner will be held on Thursday night at First Edition restaurant, located on the first floor of Novotel Canberra. Dinner will be a two-course set menu with dietary options available including Gluten Free, Halal, Vegan and Vegetarian.

www.firsteditioncanberra.com.au

The conference dinner is not included in the cost of registration. See our website to purchase your seat at the conference dinner.

Friday, 3 November 2023

8:30 Conference Registration

9:15 Heather Gill, National Film and Sound Archive of Australia

Max Afford

9:45 Brendan Somes, State Library of New South Wales

John Henry Austral

10:15 Matthew Hopkins, National Archives of Australia

The Listening Room

Morning Tea

11:05 Peter Kolomitsev, State Library of South Australia

Dulwich Calling: The Harry Kauper Story

11:35 James Aitchison

More Drama Than You Heard on Air

12:05 Sarah Johnston, Ngā Taonga Sound & Vision & University of Canterbury

Aotearoa on the Air: New Zealand's first experiences of radio broadcasting

Lunch Including National Film and Sound Archives facility tours.

1:50 Dr Ros Bandt

The gift of radio and how it has facilitated her experimental soundart career over four decades

2:20 Natalie Cassaniti, Alysha Connor and Chris Redman, Powerhouse

Broadcasting Stories: Exploring the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, and its Link to Australian Radio Broadcasting History

2:50 Dr Jennifer Bowen, ABC Friends

100 years of radio in 100 seconds: listening back, looking forward

Afternoon Tea

3:40 Natalie Cassaniti

ISSI Fellowship

4:10 **ASRA Awards Presentations**

16:40 Conference close

- Freshly brewed coffee, a variety of teas, hot chocolate and light refreshments will be served for morning and afternoon teas.
- Lunch is not provided but there are several options very close by.

Day 1

Thursday, 2 November 2023

8:30 Conference Registration

9:30 Welcome

9:45 Mai Katona

Alice Moyle Lecture



Mai Katona, a Djok woman and member of the Stolen Generation, has been instrumental in establishing an Indigenous radio presence across Australia, beginning with Wayee Radio in Hobart, in 1979.

Mai will talk about her experiences of setting up the first Indigenous radio presence in Australia. From the early days of requesting a fifteen-minute timeslot on a local Hobart radio station, to working with staff at the Top End Aboriginal Broadcasting to help them plan for programming, and develop interview skills, through to touring the Torres Strait in a tinie to help set up support for the establishment of

an Indigenous radio station on Thursday Island.

Her work has had a lasting impact. Radio has proven an ideal way for Aboriginal people to be heard, and to raise issues such as the need for better health, housing and education. A special journalism course was set up at the Batchelor Institute to develop skills of Aboriginal radio presenters, and the radio station on Thursday Island is now going to expand to five other islands.

Mai Katona, a Djok woman, was born in Kakadu in 1942. She has led a truly remarkable life. She describes it as a journey from the bush to the city. A child of the Stolen Generation, she was taken away from her family at the age of ten, to be brought up in the Retta Dixon Home near Darwin, NT.

Mai went on to make what, by any standard of measurement, has been an impressive contribution for Indigenous Australians. She helped establish an Indigenous radio presence across Australia, she was instrumental in beginning two Indigenous health centres in Hobart and Darwin, and she travelled to many third World countries to help women set up their own businesses through Credit Unions. She travelled to South Africa as one of Australia's official observers at the South African election where Nelson Mandela was elected president.

11:15 Johanna McMahon, National Film and Sound Archive of Australia

Don't forget to save! An introduction to podcasts and their preservation

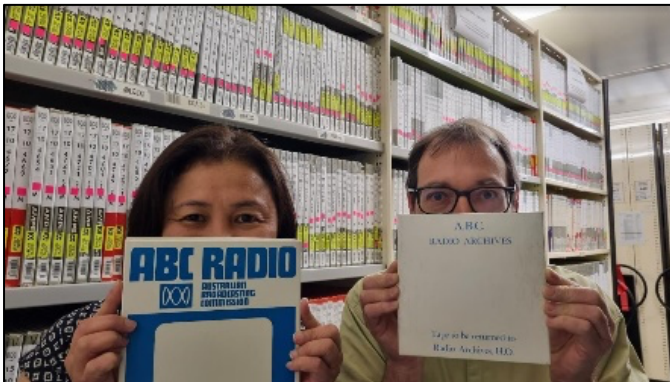


Recently, many cultural institutions have produced podcasts for their audiences, however few are preserving podcasts. Where did podcasts come from? Why should we care about them? And what can be done to preserve them? This paper will begin to answer these questions, providing an overview as to the cultural significance of podcasting, examining why podcasts are particularly at risk as a fully born-digital online format, and delving into how podcasts can be incorporated into audiovisual collections, using the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia as an example.

Johanna McMahon is an archivist and curator at the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia, where she works across the acquisition, cataloguing and interpretation of a range of audiovisual material. Her recent collection development work has focussed on video games and podcasts. Johanna has a background in art history, and she has previously worked with the Australian prints and drawings collection at the National Gallery of Australia.

11:45 Rahnee Alvarez & Jon Steiner, ABC

There Are Many Paths but Only One Journey: Radio Archiving at the ABC



Archiving radio at the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) has continually evolved to adapt to changing technologies and production workflows. With 95% of the physical collection now digitised and the automated capture of new content via a MAM on the horizon, Rahnee and Jon will look back at how things have changed over the last couple of decades, the challenges encountered along the way, and where things currently stand.

At the turn of the millennium, ABC Archives was creating its own copies of broadcast content for the collection. Now, radio production units have handed over all their physical media. In 2001, the Netia system was introduced, making ABC Radio an early adopter of digital-born production but adding another layer to the whole shebang. An enormous digitisation project in 2021 included the relocation of many thousands of audio items from other states to Sydney for appraisal and possible inclusion in the collection. Mass digitisation of the audio collection has enabled the downscaling of in-house digitisation resources, facilitated the bulk transfer of

assets to the National Archives, triggered the disposal of thousands of excess copies, and most importantly, made a wealth of audio material readily available for ABC program making. A lot has been achieved, but it's been a complicated road!

Rahnee Alvarez is the Digitisation and Preservation Manager for ABC Archives. She has previously spent 18 years at the National Archives of Australia, working in a wide variety of roles and has also worked at the NFSA in Sydney.

Jon Steiner is the Digitisation and Preservation Team Lead for ABC Archives. He has been working with the ABC's collections for 21 years.

12:15 Guy Tranter, ABC

Filling in the gaps of a century: the ABC's written archives



Before public ownership, right from the opening of 2SB (2BL), the ABC's history covers the whole radio century. Recorded sound is almost absent for the start of that century, but we have written archives to fill in the gaps. This gives us a good picture of what daily radio was like from the 1930's. The ABC has also been covered by Commonwealth archives legislation. As the volume of recorded sound increases exponentially over time, the written and photographic record supports this content as well as illustrating it. The variety of archival records provides views of many

aspects of ABC output and activities. This will be illustrated with examples from the ABC's collection.

Guy Tranter is the Documents Officer in ABC Archives Metadata and Content Information Policy team. He specialises in records in document and image format as opposed to recordings of program output. His 32 years at ABC Archives have included the transition from paper to electronic recordkeeping, and major digitisation projects for both paper records and images.

1:30 Community Radio Panel

- **Warren Barnett**
Broadcast and Production Manager of Highland-FM 107.1, ex Sony/Festival
- **Matthew Hopkins**
National Archives of Australia, Eastside 89.7 FM
- **Michelle O'Connor**
Charles Sturt University and ex station manager 2MCE
- **Crispian Winsor**
National Film & Sound Archive of Australia, PBSFM

Chaired by Matthew Davies

ASRA, ex NFSA and ABC

Our panel brings a wealth and diversity of experience to a discussion of community radio. We will explore how our panel's professional interests and personal passions inform and influence their broadcasting activities and consider the history and evolution of community radio and how it connects with and creates communities of listeners.

2:30 Michelle O'Connor, Charles Sturt University

Beyond Time Calls and Weather – What Does Community Radio Sound Like?

In 2018, the Australian Federal Government approved changes to the Broadcasting Services Act 1992 s84, to include a requirement for community radio stations to broadcast material of local significance as a condition of their licence allocation. The changes occurred in the context of wider media law reforms to reorganise the conditions for media ownership in Australia. Amongst this backdrop and with communities at risk of reduced local news content, the changes to the Act were drafted to ensure that communities continue to be serviced with locally relevant content. The notion of local significance in the Act is broadly defined as content that is (a) hosted, (b) produced, or (c) related to the licence area. The first two of these classifications are straightforward to interpret, however the third classification and understanding of how content 'relates' to a licence area is somewhat more ambiguous. In practice, broadcast material about local people, events and issues is relevant to a community, however further interrogation is required to understand the extent to which this content can be considered as being locally significant. This paper will present early findings from PhD research to investigate what local significance sounds like on the radio and will include themes to emerge from an analysis of programs from community radio station 2MCE on Wiradjuri

Country in Bathurst, in regional New South Wales. 2MCE has been on the air since 1975 and this presentation will include a sound mix of archival recordings and excerpts from current programs to help convey a sense of the sound of the station.

Michelle O'Connor is Lecturer in Communication at Charles Sturt University. Her research interests draw from radio, listening, soundscape and radio art to explore notions of sound and place. Michelle has a background working in radio and was previously the station manager at community radio station 2MCE in Bathurst, New South Wales. She has received commissions as a freelance audio producer and is currently progressing through a PhD investigating radio as a sound medium and the ways in which radio may be able to reflect the sounds of place and community.

3:30 Crispian Winsor, PBS FM & National Film and Sound Archive of Australia

How a community radio announcer merged into an archivist



Crispian will be giving an overview of his experience as a radio announcer on PBS FM in Melbourne and how this has influenced his role as a Curatorial Officer at the National Film and Sound Archive (NFSA).

Crispian Winsor has been an on-air announcer on PBS FM since 2008. His show, Radio City, is on Thursday afternoons from 1-3pm and he has presented over 500 episodes. During that time, he also co-presented the station's breakfast show, The Breakfast Spread, for 5 years from 2011-2015. Since 2019, he has worked at the NFSA, focusing on projects such as their off-air radio capture program and the Radio 100 online exhibition which will go live later in November.

4:00 John Lanser

Voice of the Mountains



2KA Medlow Bath studio in 1936
[courtesy of Ian Maddock]

2KA was one of a rash of regional 'wireless' stations which came on air in the 1930s, but its ambitions were compromised from commencement by a terrain hostile to transmission technology. Political opportunism would make 2KA less the "Voice of the Mountains" (as it was badged) than the voice of factional interests seeking to access Sydney metropolitan audiences. Yet the power struggle which runs through 2KA's history was more technical than political ... a persistent pursuit of increased authorised watts

"into the aerial" to counter what one PMG engineer described as "the worst earth conductivity in the Commonwealth."

John Lanser is a retired lawyer, member of the Blue Mountains Historical Society, the Royal Australian Historical Society, the National Trust and holder of an Amateur Operator's Certificate of Proficiency.

4:30 Marilyn Sue Dooley

Historic Australian Radio as Community Education and Curated Product



This presentation will consider the uses and value of radio in the context of archiving, curating, preserving and presenting historic radio programs as an adjunct to education and community groups. Also, the selection and production of a series of CD's of radio recordings for public sale as archival outreach, will be discussed.

Marilyn Sue Dooley was with NFSA from opening in 1984 till November 2007; as the Archive's first Education and Public Activities Officer, then

Manager of Public Programs, and later, operating a Research & Academic Outreach Program.

During her time at NFSA, Marilyn created a schools' program and kit for the Radio Exhibition "On Air", as well as community presentation of historic radio programs from Soapies to Serials, News and Drama.

From 1989-2004, Marilyn was a regular radio broadcaster of film reviews on ABC radio in Canberra and Capricornia.

In August this year, Marilyn presented NFSA Alumni sessions for

Day 2

Friday, 3 November 2023

9:15 Heather Gill, National Film and Sound Archive of Australia

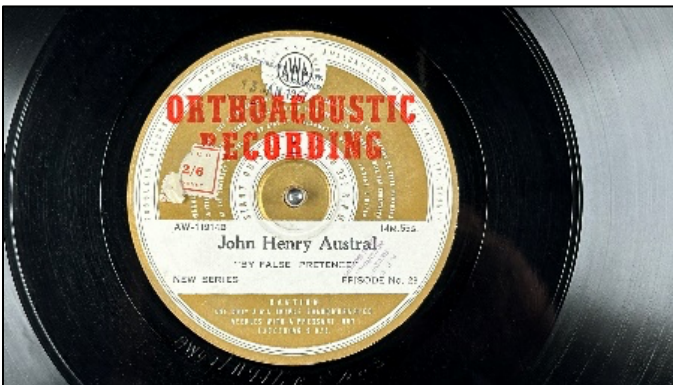
Max Afford

In the 1930-40s, Max Afford was known for writing radio serials, particularly the Jeffrey Blackburn detective series and Hagen's Circus. Join Senior Curatorial Officer Heather Gill as we explore the world of Max Afford (1906-1954), including clips from his home movies.

Heather Gill works in the Curatorial and Accessioning Team at the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia (NFSA) and has worked in the arts and cultural sector for almost 20 years. Passionate about social history, she finds working with audiovisual archives offers wonderful opportunities for exploring Australia's society, culture and the stories we tell.

9:45 Brendan Somes, State Library of New South Wales

John Henry Austral



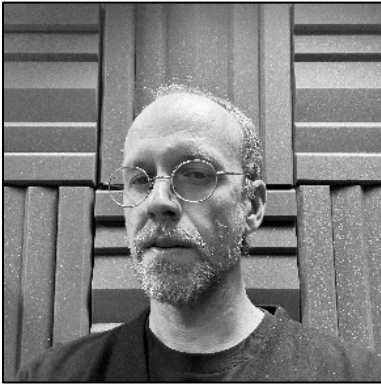
In the twenty months prior to their December 1949 Federal Election victory, the Liberal Party funded over 200 episodes of a radio program featuring the fictional character 'John Henry Austral'. The program played twice weekly over 80 stations around Australia. The program, created by the Liberal Party advertising agency Hansen-Rubensohn, is now viewed as a seminal work in political advertising. The State Library of New

South Wales has the largest collection of John Henry Austral programs with over 200 gramophones that are currently being digitised.

The library also holds scripts for the program. This presentation will tell the story of the creation of John Henry Austral, the gramophones that have carried the program for over 60 years and the broader context of the library's program to review and preserve our audiovisual collections.

Brendan Somes works at the State Library of New South Wales

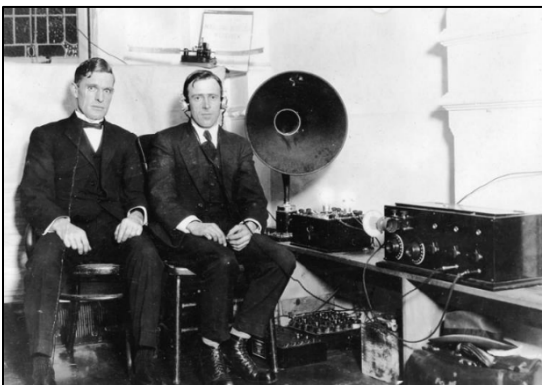
10:15 Matthew Hopkins, National Archives of Australia
The Listening Room



Matthew's presentation is on The Listening Room; an acoustic art program broadcast on ABC's Classic FM from 1989 to 2003. This program produced radiophonic works in conjunction with critically acclaimed composers, writers, performance artists, electronic media artists and environmental sound recordists. Matthew will discuss a selection of works made for The Listening Room that are part of the National Archives of Australia's audio collection, examining how these works explore radio as an artistic medium; a unique technological and conceptual sonic space that artists have experimented with over the course of Australia's broadcast history.

Matthew Hopkins is an audio preservation officer at the National Archives of Australia (NAA), a community radio presenter/producer for the Listening Space program on Sydney's Eastside Radio (89.7FM), and an independent sound artist that has created radiophonic works for Radiophrenia (Glasgow), Kunst Radio (Vienna), Resonance FM (London), and the international Radia network.

11:05 Peter Kolomitsev, State Library of South Australia
Dulwich Calling: The Harry Kauper Story



Two Wireless Technicians, Harry Kauper, (left), and Lancelot Jones (right) sitting beside a wireless receiver providing the music for the first Radio Dance in South Australia on Thursday 28 June 1923. Photograph by D. Darian Smith, (State Library of South Australia PRG 280/1/36/129).

The life of Melbourne born Henry Alexis (Harry) Kauper, 1888–1942, was one of adventure and innovation. Moving to England in 1911 to pursue a passion for aviation, he competed in an air race around the United Kingdom and designed the interrupting machine gun mechanism for Sopwith aeroplanes during World War I.

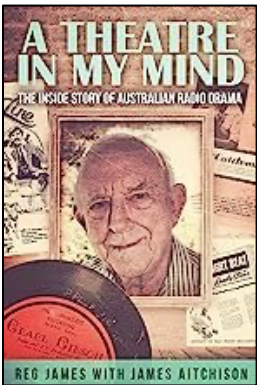
Returning to Australia after the war, he was at the forefront of radio technology with nascent wireless broadcasts under experimental licence S643 in 1919. Crystal sets across Adelaide tuned in to his popular "Dulwich Calling" program. As chief engineer for radio stations across the country, he was called the engineer's engineer. He pioneered film sound for Australian news reels, and radio communications for the Australian Air Force.

Despite his unassuming nature, Harry Kauper's contribution to Australian radio, sound recording, film, and national security, cannot be underestimated. This is the story of a true Australian legend.

Peter Kolomitsev is an Audio-Visual Preservation Coordinator at the State Library of South Australia.

11:35 James Aitchison

More Drama Than You Heard on Air



From 1940, hundreds of radio serials and dramas were recorded every week by ten production houses in Sydney, and five in Melbourne.

But who wrote the scripts?

Answer: only a handful of writers!

Jim Aitchison takes you behind the scenes at Grace Gibson Radio Productions. Writing for the legendary Grace was tough. What were her unique demands and restrictions? Why did every serial need a "bitch"? What did a young writer learn from sales manager Reg James and producer John Woodward? Every episode called for 8 pages of dialogue – that's 800 pages per 100 episodes – how did writers keep track of the plot and maintain the standard despite the deadlines? What happened when major characters needed "time off"? There was more drama than you heard on air as scripts were rushed into the studio – just in time!

Jim Aitchison wrote for Grace Gibson, ABC school broadcasts, Channel 7's Mavis Bramston Show, and Don Lane. His children's books have sold over 3 million copies and are now a Netflix series titled MR MIDNIGHT: BEWARE THE MONSTERS. He wrote two books with Reg James: YES, MISS GIBSON and A THEATRE IN MY MIND. He also made time to work in advertising.

12:05 Sarah Johnston

Aotearoa on the air: New Zealand's first experiences of radio broadcasting



On the evening of 17 November 1921, an experimental broadcast of voice and music was made from Otago University in Dunedin, New Zealand. It marked the beginning of radio broadcasting in Aotearoa, a nation which was to become one of the world's most enthusiastic early adopters of the new medium. By the end of the following year, there were 10 radio stations established throughout the country, and soon, government legislation would organise and regulate the infant industry. Sound history researcher Sarah Johnston will present recordings and oral history memories of New Zealand's first broadcasts and early radio stations, with archival audio courtesy of Radio New Zealand and Ngā Taonga Sound & Vision.

Sarah Johnston is a former radio broadcaster, journalist, and sound archivist. For five years she presented a weekly Sound Archives programme on Radio New Zealand National, exploring aspects of the country's history through archival broadcast recordings. She is now an independent sound history researcher, currently investigating the work of New Zealand's World War II mobile broadcasting units. When not listening to the war, she is co-ordinator at the Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury, in Ōtautahi Christchurch.

1:50 Dr Ros Bandt

The gift of Radio and how it has facilitated her experimental soundart career over four decades



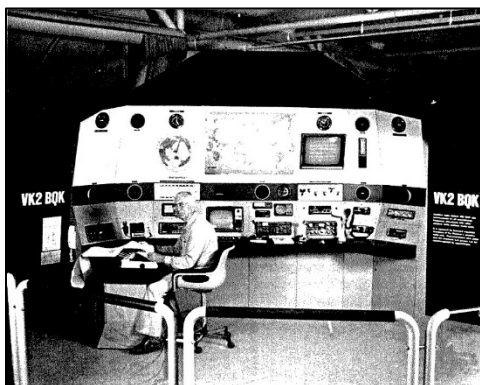
In this paper Ros looks at how the wonderful worlds of Radio have sourced every aspect of her diverse and continually evolving career. From early experimental music programs, live to air concerts, international commissions, airplay and interviews, major residencies, international live to air performances, the innovative and daring producers and engineers helped her to realise her audible dreams: flying spatial sounding artworks and swimming in a sea of sound. Together they made the impossible happen. Audible highlights will be played, including MIRAGE and STACK.

Dr Ros Bandt is an International Australian Sound Artist. Her bio can be listened to [here](#).
2020 Richard Gill award for distinguished services to Australian Music
2021-22 she was awarded the Fellowship for Emerging and experimental music, Australia Council

Her full bio can be heard here www.rosbandt.com/bio

2:20 Natalie Cassaniti, Alysha Connor and Chris Redman, MAAS

Broadcasting Stories: Exploring the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Sydney and its Link to Australian Radio Broadcasting History



Power House Museum Station VK2BQK from Amateur Radio [magazine] September 2011. Photo courtesy of MAAS and Ian O'Toole.

This presentation aims to underscore the importance of the Powerhouse in preserving Australian radio broadcasting history and engaging the public with its rich heritage. It delves into the history of the Powerhouse amateur radio station VK2BQK and explores its influence on the museum, technological innovations, and community engagement. The presentation will

also showcase the Ron Cameron archive of radio hardware which offers valuable insights into the evolution of Australian radio broadcasting technology, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of radio's historical development. The presentation will conclude with examples of the Powerhouse's contemporary broadcast initiatives such as the recent Powerhouse Late: AI (radio play) event and the 100 Climate Conversations podcast.

Natalie Rose Cassaniti is the Digitisation Registrar Team Lead at the Powerhouse, Sydney. Her work involves developing and coordinating projects and workflows centred on the digitisation of Powerhouse's unique collection objects. She has an extensive background in cultural collections management, with particular interest in film and sound collections and has just completed an International Specialised Skills Institute Fellowship focussed on AV Archiving. She is also a Vice President of ASRA.

Alysha Rose Connor is the Variable Media Archivist for the Powerhouse Museum, Sydney. Her work involves the documentation, conservation, digitisation, and storage of the museum's complex institutional variable media collection, for long term preservation and future use. Alysha is also completing her PhD, which explores the relationship between Museums, video games and the gaming community.

Chris Redman is the Variable Media Conservator at Sydney's Powerhouse Museum. With a background in digital preservation Chris has helped identify, catalogue, and digitise thousands of Variable Media objects within the collection during his tenure at the museum. Chris is an emerging professional in the digital conservation and preservation fields and is committed to building the reputation of Powerhouse as digital leaders in the industry, focusing on preservation, emulation, and access.

2:50 Dr Jennifer Bowen, ABC Friends

100 years of radio in 100 seconds: listening back, looking forward

Radio has been a hugely popular medium throughout its one hundred years in Australia, but recent developments in digital technology and audience behaviour have led many to wonder if



broadcasting's future may not last as long. To mark 100 years of radio, the organisation, ABC Friends, is partnering with the Eureka Centre Ballarat in late November to stage a frank discussion on the past, present, and future of the medium. The event is planned to open with a montage of radio's history in sound and image. Many histories of radio are words on a page – how effectively might sound take on the task? In this talk, I will discuss the selection of clips for the centenary montage, which are chosen to set an agenda for discussion of the future as much as revel in nostalgia for the past.

Dr Jennifer Bowen worked for many years as a radio producer at the BBC World Service and more recently, as a freelance producer for ABC Radio National. In 2018, she completed a PhD in radio history at Melbourne University, 'A Clamour of Voices: negotiations of power and purpose in spoken-word radio 1923–42'. She has been a lecturer in audio production and journalism studies at Monash University's School of Film, Media and Journalism.

3:40 Natalie Cassaniti

ISSI Fellowship

In 2020, Natalie was awarded the Italian Australian Foundation Fellowship by the International Specialised Skills Institute, which supports Italian Australians with professional development, to become a leader in their field of interest. The Fellowship was awarded on the basis that there was a genuine need of skills in Australia and that learnings would be disseminated within the relevant industry. The Fellowship was conducted in the United States of America for 2.5 months, where she visited leading AV archives in 2022. The purpose was to enhance her collection management, conservation & restoration and digitisation skills through practical experience, observation and discussions, and foster connections with overseas AV institutions and experts. By sharing her knowledge, skills, and experience with the AV community in Australia, Natalie hopes to inspire other archivists, increase knowledge and awareness, and strengthen collaboration and networking across institutions.

Natalie is currently the Registrar Team Lead for the Digitisation Team at the Powerhouse, where establishes digitisation workflows and projects and manages a team of seven registrars who assist the photographers with object handling and administration. Previously she managed City of Parramatta's Cultural Collections for three years. Before that, she worked as an Assistant Conservator at the State Library of NSW where she developed her AV conservation and preservation knowledge and skills. During this time, she undertook a short contract as a Preservation Officer at the ABC, digitising, inspecting and cataloguing film and sound collections.

4:10 ASRA Awards Presentations

Each year ASRA presents an award for dedication, excellence, and outstanding contributions to Australasian recording heritage.