



Contents

O'CONNOR, Charles Yelverton (1843-1902)	2
O'GRADY, John Patrick (1907-81)	2
O'HARRIS, Pixie (1903-).....	2
O'KEEFE, John Michael (1935-78)	3
O'MALLEY, King (1858-1953)	3
O'REILLY, William Joseph (1905-)	4
O'SHANE, Patricia June (1941-).....	4
OAKLEY, Barry Kingham (1931-)	5
OBERON, Merle (1914-)	6
OLDFIELD, William Albert Stanley (1897-76)	6
OLIPHANT, Patrick (1935-)	7
OLIPHANT, Sir Mark Laurence Elwin (1901-).....	7
OLSEN, John (1928-)	8
OSBURN, Lucy (1835-91)	8
OVENS, John (1788-1825)	9
OWEN, Earl (1933-).....	9
OWEN, Evelyn Ernest (1915-49)	10
OXLEY, John Joseph William Molesworth (1783-1828)	10

O'CONNOR, Charles Yelverton (1843-1902)

Of Irish descent, O'Connor studied in Ireland at Dublin University, his studies focused on engineering. His migration to New Zealand in 1865 led to his appointment to several engineering positions within the colony. In the early 1890s, O'Connor was engineer-in-chief of Western Australia and was subsequently in charge of Perth's harbour construction and the extension of the railways in the State. His most notable achievement was the construction of a pipeline between the Darling Range and Coolgardie O'Connor was never to see his program of works completed, as he committed suicide in 1902. His fateful decision was attributed to severe criticisms he had received about the pipeline, which was completed within a year of his death.

O'GRADY, John Patrick (1907-81)

Although O'Grady was born in Sydney, he spent most of his childhood on a farm in New England. Unsatisfied with his chosen profession of Pharmacy, O'Grady decided to work in other occupations such as builder's labourer and fisherman. During this time, he began to write poetry and short stories, of which a number were published. It was his novel *They're a Wierd Mob* (1957), written from the perspective of an Italian migrant, that brought O'Grady huge success. Further books had similar success, and in 1966 *They're a Wierd Mob* was adapted to the screen.

O'HARRIS, Pixie (1903-)

One of nine children of noted portrait artist George F. Harris, she was born in

Wales. At 14 she became the youngest person ever to be accepted to the South Wales Royal Art Society and soon began to sell many of her pictures. She arrived in Sydney in 1920 and soon began to find work illustrating children's books, completing drawings for authors such as C. J. Dennis and Frank Dally Davidson. Many of her children's paintings have been exhibited in Sydney and Melbourne and are hung in such diverse places as school, orphanages, the National Gallery in Canberra and in private collections. O'Harris publications include titles such as *The Fortunes of Poppy Treloar* (1941) and *Marmaduke the Possum* (1943). She was awarded both the Coronation and Jubilee Medals and an MBE in 1976.

O'KEEFE, John Michael (1935-78)

Widely regarded as Australia's first rock'n'roll singer, Sydney-born O'Keefe was encouraged in his musical interests by his father, Ray O'Keefe, who had his own club band. Working on amateur radio and in clubs during the early 1950s, he became recognised as a rock singer in 1956. Bill Hayley, when touring in 1957, added to O'Keefe's career momentum when he nominated him as an outstanding local act. In 1958 he began his recording career with "Wild One" and released records through to 1974, making five No. 1 hits and eight other Top 10 singles. It is notable that "Shout", the song most commonly associated with him, only reached No. 11. O'Keefe died of a sudden heart attack in 1978 after struggling with depression and alcohol abuse.

O'MALLEY, King (1858-1953)

O'Malley was educated in the United States and came to Australia in the late

1880s. On an unusual platform which included the proposal to legitimise children born out of wedlock if parents later married, O'Malley was elected to the South Australian House of Assembly in 1896. He entered the first federal parliament in 1901 as an independent in Tasmania, giving his support to Labor. O'Malley was the Minister for Home Affairs under Fisher (1910-13) and Hughes (1915-16). During this time O'Malley founded the Commonwealth Bank of Australia and chose the site for Canberra, with ideas for the planning and layout of the future capital. In 1917 he exited politics after losing his seat in the Federal election, but not without leaving his mark as a forward thinking, atypical politician who helped to shape Australia's early life as a federation.

O'REILLY, William Joseph (1905-)

Born in country NSW, Bill O'Reilly represented Australia in cricket between 1932 and 1946. Throughout his career as an unconventional spin bowler he took 144 wickets in 27 Test matches, gaining the nickname "Tiger". During the "Bodyline" Test series he was Australia's best and most consistent bowler, taking 27 wickets, including an excellent 10 for 129 in the second Test. O'Reilly became a cricket journalist following his decision to retire, and continued to write a widely read column into his eighties. His writings often lamented the decline of slow bowling in modern cricket.

O'SHANE, Patricia June (1941-)

Born in 1941 in northern Queensland, she studied at the University of Queensland. After working as a schoolteacher she decided to commence law stud-

ies at the University of NSW, and in 1976 was admitted to the NSW bar. By doing so, O'Shane became the first Aboriginal barrister, an achievement awarded by her appointment as inaugural secretary of the NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs. O'Shane left this position in 1986 after having been labelled both "radical" and also too ready to compromise on Land Rights Legislation. Since this time she has been a magistrate for the NSW Government. O'Shane has also been heavily involved with many voluntary groups, including the Australian Legal Workers Group and the Aboriginal Land Rights Task Force, and was awarded the Alumni Award from the University of NSW in 1982.

OAKLEY, Barry Kingham (1931-)

Born in Victoria in 1931, he was educated at the Christian Brothers College, St Kilda and the University of Melbourne, prior to taking a teaching position with the Victorian Education Department from 1955-62. Oakley also worked for the Department of Overseas Trade from 1965-73, and it was during this time that he began to publish stories and novels. The hilarious and torrid narratives of his books and plays allowed Oakley to find a unique role within Australian literary culture. His published oeuvre includes *A Wild Ass of a Man* (1967), and the plays *The Feet of Daniel Mannix* (1975) and *A Lesson in English* (1976). Following the productions of a number of his plays in Melbourne, Oakley moved to Sydney, where he has worked both as a journalist and reviewer.

OBERON, Merle (1914-)

Born in 1914 as Estelle Merle O'Brien Thompson, Oberon was taken from Tasmania to India when she was seven years old. It was Bombay and Calcutta where she received her education and was involved in amateur acting. In 1931 she travelled to England where she gained a contract with London Film Production for a five year period. Starring as Anne Boleyn in *The Private Lives of Henry VIII* with actor Charles Laughton, Oberon found success, which allowed her to later star in many Hollywood films such as *Wuthering Heights* and *Hotel*. Oberon retired for a while but returned to appear in *Of Love and Desire* in 1963. Oberon married four times and settled in California.

OLDFIELD, William Albert Stanley (1897-76)

Born in Sydney, Oldfield was educated at Cleveland St School. He began his cricket career playing as a junior in the NSW Churches Cricket Union as a batsman and bowler. He later played for the AIF cricket team where selectors decided to try him in the Australian team. By this stage, Oldfield had found his true place behind the stumps, and during his 16 year career as wicket-keeper for Australia, played in 38 Tests against England with an aggregate of 90 wickets. Oldfield figured in the contentious "bodyline" incidents at the Adelaide oval 1932. Oldfield's efficient wicket-keeping and silent determination led to the dismissal of 130 batsmen in the total 54 tests that he played. In 1970 he was awarded an MBE.

OLIPHANT, Patrick (1935-)

Born and educated in Adelaide, Oliphant's newspaper career started as a copyboy for the *News*. From this point he took up an *Advertiser* cadetship and in 1955 became the paper's cartoonist. Oliphant travelled to the USA in 1964 to cover the American Presidential Election for the *Denver Post*. His work being received with great enthusiasm, Oliphant decided to remain in the USA, working for papers such as the *Washington Star*. Oliphant's many art awards include a Pulitzer prize for a cartoon depicting peace. His work has been published in *Time* magazine and in numerous Australian papers. He currently resides in Sydney.

OLIPHANT, Sir Mark Laurence Elwin (1901-)

Born in 1901 in Adelaide, Oliphant won a scholarship to Cambridge in 1927. He became part of Rutherford's research group at Cavendish Laboratory, where the focus was mainly on atomic nucleus disintegration, leading to the development of the hydrogen bomb. In the late 1930s, Oliphant held the positions of Assistant Research Director at Cavendish and Fellow of the Royal Society. As Professor of Physics at Birmingham University from 1937-50, he led studies into microwave radar and became an outspoken advocate for nuclear disarmament. Oliphant returned to Australia in 1950 and directed physics research at the Australian National University, retiring as an emeritus professor in 1966. He was knighted in 1959, and was Governor of SA from 1971-76.

OLSEN, John (1928-)

Born in Newcastle in 1928, Olsen moved to Sydney as a child, his artistic education undertaken at the Julian Ashton Art School and the Orban School. His works were featured in a 1956 exhibition introducing abstract expression into Australia. In 1957, Sydney art critic Paul Maefliger raised a public subscription, which enabled Olsen to study in Paris from 1957-1960. Olsen's work, upon returning to Australia contained a melting pot of European influences, "naïf" style and the Australian environment. During the 1960s his work extended into tapestries and Olsen again travelled to Europe to study. His mural *Salute to Five Bells* is featured in the Sydney Opera House, inspired by the poem by Kenneth Slessor. Examples of Olsen's work are held in galleries in both Australia and overseas.

OSBURN, Lucy (1835-91)

Born in England, Osburn trained at the Nightingale Training School at St Thomas' Hospital and completed a midwifery course at King's College Hospital. In 1867, Florence Nightingale received a request from Henry Parkes to send trained nurses to NSW. Along with five other nurses, Osburn, as their superintendent, arrived in Sydney in 1868, only to find the hospital conditions appalling. The old "Rum Hospital" was insect infested and the buildings rundown and ill-equipped. Osburn attempted to reform the infirmary, much to the chagrin of the resident doctors and management board. After a Royal Commission in 1873, Osburn was vindicated, and by 1880 the Sydney Hospital Act had allowed her to establish new conditions for the institution. Resigning her position in 1884, Osburn returned to London where she worked

with the poor and was superintendent of a district nursing association up to the time of her death.

OVENS, John (1788-1825)

Trained as an engineer, Irish-born Ovens entered the 73rd Regiment as an ensign and was sent to NSW in 1810. For a short time he served as an engineer, supervising public works. When Ovens returned to England in 1811, he became Sir Thomas Brisbane's aide-de-camp. When Brisbane was appointed Governor of NSW in 1821 Ovens accompanied him, Brisbane subsequently assigning him the position of Chief Engineer of the colony. In 1823, Ovens was an expedition member of a journey to the Murrumbidgee and Monaro district in NSW and in 1825 also accompanied John Oxley on a survey trip to Twofold Bay. Ovens, however, was unable to fulfill his dream of retiring on his land grant at Concord, dying one week after Governor Brisbane's term ended. Ovens' name is commemorated by the Ovens River, Victoria, and Mount Ovens, NSW.

OWEN, Earl (1933-)

Born in Sydney in 1933, Owen graduated from the University of Sydney in Medicine and Surgery. In 1968 he successfully replaced the amputated finger of a two year old child, creating a world first in surgery. Owen's passion for pioneering surgical work continued throughout his career, as he designed award-winning precision instruments, developed procedures to replace severed limbs and digits, to reverse vasectomies and perform foetal surgery. Owen founded the International Microsurgery Society in 1970, and was ap-

pointed medical director of the Microsearch Foundation of Australia. Owen has also lectured extensively, conducting courses in over 30 countries which included training in microsurgery. His recognition by the 1978 World Microsurgical Congress as Microsurgeon of the Year was further reinforced by the public recognition afforded him with his appointment as AO in 1980.

OWEN, Evelyn Ernest (1915-49)

Born in Wollongong, he trained as a motor mechanic and held an early interest in firearms. He developed a submachine gun in the late 1930s, which he patented a few years later. This invention could fire single shots, bursts of ten shots per second and weighed just 5 kilograms when loaded. Owen's design proved to be simple, robust and dependable. It was inexpensive to produce, and Owen set about convincing the Army Central Inventions Board of the worthiness of his gun. Eventually more than 45 000 Owen machine guns were manufactured for the Australian Defence Forces in World War II. After the war, he sold the rights for the submachine gun and founded a timber mill in country NSW.

OXLEY, John Joseph William Molesworth (1783-1828)

Oxley was born in England and after joining the British Navy he came to NSW in 1802. When appointed Surveyor-General in 1812, Oxley decided to explore the Lachlan and Macquarie Rivers in 1817-18. Oxley also made several surveys of the coast, during which he found the Tweed River and Moreton Bay, leading to the establishment of a colony at the latter location in 1824. He also had a political career, being a member of the first Legislative Council

in 1824-25 under Governor Macquarie. In this role he developed banking in the colony and founded the first subscription library. Oxley's land grants at Camden in 1810 and at Bowral in 1815 are parts of the modern settlements founded in these places.