

A MOMENT IN ETERNITY

This year has seen quite a few changes in the Eternity gallery as we continue to reveal extraordinary stories of the Australian experience. Here is just a small sampling of what you can expect to see.



photo: courtesy of La Trobe Picture Collection (H22293), State Library of Victoria

JANE FRANKLIN

The constant excitement in which we live is something which must be seen and felt to be understood. If it were not that the excitement of to-day cures that of yesterday, so that no impression however vivid has time to eat its way into the soul, we should die under excessive stimulus.

Jane Franklin, 1842

As the wife of the Governor of Van Diemen's Land (Sir John Franklin, Governor 1837–43), Lady Jane Franklin's interests in science, collecting and exploring attracted considerable public interest. In 1842, Franklin took part in an expedition led by her husband to explore the possibility of establishing overland access to Macquarie Harbour for the purpose of reopening the convict settlement on Sarah Island. It is believed that Franklin became the first colonial woman to travel overland from Hobart to Macquarie Harbour. Her accounts of the journey reflect the depth of her response to the landscape in which she found herself and the thrill of her experience. For the first part of the journey, Franklin was carried on a modified timber chair, until another member of the party fell ill and Franklin relinquished her transport.

Lady Jane Franklin's chair is now held in the collection of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, who have kindly lent it for display in Eternity.

EDDIE GILBERT

...he came at you with a blinding flash of arm and hand that let the ball go like a bullet, and to play against him was to know real fear.

Alan McGilvray, 1987

Eddie Gilbert's most famous victory in cricket was to dismiss Don Bradman for a duck (no score), however it was his fast and furious bowling style which made him a household name in the early 1930s. At three years of age, Gilbert was taken from his home and placed in the Barambah Aboriginal settlement where he began playing cricket. He was selected for Queensland's Sheffield Shield side in 1930 and at that time, he was the only Aboriginal player in the competition. Due to illness, Gilbert's first class career ended after only five seasons, however he remains Australia's best known Aboriginal cricketer. The cricket ball used by Eddie Gilbert to dismiss 'the Don' was recently acquired by the National Museum of Australia.



photo: courtesy of John Oxley Library, Brisbane



photo: courtesy of Justice and Police Museum

LINDA AGOSTINI, THE 'PYJAMA GIRL'

Is she to go to her grave unknown?...For nearly three weeks detectives have pursued almost every line of investigation in an endeavour to find out her name. Someone must know her!

Border Morning Mail, 21 September 1934

The 'Pyjama Girl' case was one of Australia's most prominent murder mysteries. Her charred body, dressed in yellow silk pyjamas, remained unidentified for 10 years. Investigations revealed nothing about the victim's identity nor the identity of her killer. Authorities preserved and placed her body on display at the University of Sydney in the hope that someone would recognise her. The dental records of the deceased were finally matched to Linda Agostini and her husband Antonio was convicted of manslaughter. It took a decade of investigation, but the mystery of the 'Pyjama Girl' had finally been solved. On display in Eternity is an exact replica of the death mask of the 'Pyjama Girl', the original of which is held in the collection of the Justice and Police Museum, Sydney.

OTHER PEOPLE NOW FEATURING IN ETERNITY ARE:

- Steven Bradbury – Olympic speed skater
- Albert Facey – author of *A Fortunate Life*
- Austin Byrne – Charles Kingsford-Smith's greatest admirer
- Gilbert Cullen Dyett – founder of the Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League of Australia (now the Returned and Services League)
- Jane Walker – convict
- Victor Trumper – legendary cricketer
- Harold Wright – tinker
- Graeme Clark – inventor of the bionic ear
- Tilly Aston – founder of the Association for the Advancement of the Blind (now the Vision Australia Foundation)
- Geoff Hazel – East Timor peacekeeper.

Visit Eternity for these and more stories from the emotional heart of Australia.

Jane Carter
Land and People program