



THE
MELBOURNE
ATHENÆUM



FEBRUARY NEWS FROM YOUR LIBRARY

Library closure

The library will be closed for the Australia Day public holiday on Monday 26th January. It will reopen at 10am on Tuesday 27th January.

Music Event: Wattleseed Ensemble

Join the Wattleseed Ensemble of Meg Cohen (violin), Katie Yap (viola) and David Moran (cello) for a celebration of nature's beauty.

Wattleseed Ensemble weaves together music of the baroque period with folk music and contemporary Australian music in a confluence of styles, finding cohesion in the telling of a story.

Their stories take you back to our scrappy, beautiful, astonishing Aussie environment, and combine a celebration of local South Australian composers with their unique melding of styles.



Details

Friday 13th February
Doors open at 5.40pm
Performance begins 6.00pm
Free for members, \$25 non-members
Book [here](#).



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FEBRUARY NEWS FROM YOUR LIBRARY

Talk: the Fascinating History of Scholartis Press

Author John Arnold will be in conversation with Simon Farley about his book *Eric Partridge and the Scholartis Press* on Thursday 19th February – and members are invited to attend.

The Scholartis Press was founded in London in 1927 by future lexicographer Eric Partridge (pictured). During its eight-year existence, the press published 126 titles, including contemporary fiction, the scholarly translation of classic texts and edited editions of pre-19th century English literature.



Scholartis also published several titles edited by Eric Partridge, being the catalyst for his latter distinguished career as the chronicler of slang and compiler of various dictionaries and word-related books.

Simon Farley is the immediate past president of the Bibliographical Society of Australia and New Zealand, and is the University of Queensland's Fryer Librarian. John Arnold is an author and also a former president of the Bibliographical Society.

Details

Thursday 19th February
Doors open 6.00pm
Event from 6.30pm
Free for members and non-members
Book [here](#).



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FEBRUARY NEWS FROM YOUR LIBRARY

Music Event: Bohemian Nights

Ernie Gruner (violin, mandolin, vocals) and Phil Carroll (accordion, vocals, ney) play Gypsy, Klezmer, Turkish, French, Italian, Russian, jazz and tango music, which ranges from soulful to wild.

They have both played and recorded together in larger bands, and have studied overseas in Montreal, Istanbul, New York, Cracow and Budapest. As well as recording two CDs (*Bohemian Nights* in 2005 and *Brothers in Borscht* in 2010), they have performed at various festivals, including the National Multicultural Festival, the Wellington and Dunedin folk festivals, and the Christchurch Jazz Festival.

Ernie specialises in Jewish music and Phil specialises in Middle Eastern music. They have worked together with theatre and dance events for Russian, Armenian, Jewish, Turkish, French and Italian and other productions and communities since 1999.

Details

Friday 27th February
Doors open at 5.40pm
Performance begins 6.00pm
Free for members, \$25 non-members
Book [here](#).





FEBRUARY NEWS FROM YOUR LIBRARY

Gary Morgan Oration: Two Great Showmen

George Coppin and Barry Humphries: How two great showmen made Melbourne marvellous is the title for the 2026 Gary Morgan Oration, a Rare Books Melbourne event being held in the library on March 5.

Members are warmly invited to attend the oration, which will be delivered by Simon Plant, a Melbourne writer and researcher with a special interest in Australian performing arts history. Simon holds a Masters Degree in



Australian History and his first book is titled *Entertaining Mr Coppin: An Antipodean Showman in Civil War America* (Theatre Heritage Australia, 2025).

Simon's journalism career spanned 30 years, during which he covered every facet of arts and entertainment. He has also co-curated three exhibitions including *Making a Song and Dance: The History of the Australian Musical* at Arts Centre Melbourne.

Simon has written two plays, acted with the Goodfa Business Theatre Company (with speechmaker Campbell McComas) and is a long-standing member of the Melbourne Savage Club.

Details

Thursday 5th March 2026

Doors open at 6.00pm

Oration from 6.30pm

Free for members and non-members

Book [here](#).



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FEBRUARY NEWS FROM YOUR LIBRARY

Digitising our Archives

We have been fortunate to receive a grant from the Stuart Leslie Foundation towards our project to catalogue and digitise the Archives. This grant has enabled us to employ two catalogue and digitising specialists for a total of 17 days to continue working through our fascinating Archives collection.

As part of this overall project we will also be redesigning the history section of the Melbourne Athenaeum website to provide users with a search function to access items from the Archives, drawing on catalogue records and images held in the eHive catalogue management system.

The history of the institution will also be revised to incorporate new research and stories. The website project is being funded by the digitisation grant from the Public Record Office Victoria and a generous donation from the estate of Marjorie Dalvean, our much-loved, long-time archives co-ordinator.

Pictured: Silk Program, Fundraising Concert, Melbourne Athenaeum Hall, 1884, Melbourne Athenaeum Archive



Reading Ideas

Seeking inspiration on what to add to your reading list?

A good place to start is to check out the library's book club lists for 2026.

A full list of 2026 titles for all of these clubs can be found on our website [here](#). There are also some viewing ideas with titles to be discussed by our screen clubs.

We are also calling for expressions of interest for a Tuesday evening book club and a Saturday BYO book club. If you are interested, or are keen to join the new Tuesday evening screen club, please speak to the library staff.





FEBRUARY NEWS FROM YOUR LIBRARY

Upcoming Events

The 2026 calendar is already brimming with events. Here are a few dates to add to your diaries. Check upcoming eNews for details and booking links.

- Friday 13th March, Connie Chamber (classical)
- Thursday 19th March, book launch: IDES by Margaret Malloch and Joe Pascoe
- Friday 20th March, Catherine McQuade (pictured, contemporary) *Photo credit: L.J.Spruyt Photography*
- Thursday 23rd April, talk by author Samuel Thawley.
- Friday 1st May, Tulliah Goldsworthy (contemporary).



Help the Melbourne Athenaeum continue to live up to its position as Melbourne's first and finest cultural institution by supporting our Giving Appeal at
<https://www.givenow.com.au/annualgivingappeal>



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