THE A TO Z OF
WHO IS WHO
IN
AUSTRALIA'S HISTORY

OVER 1000 PEOPLE WHO SHAPED OUR NATION
FORREST, Sir John
1847-1918
Born Preston Point, near Bunbury, Western Australia, on 22 August 1847
Explorer and politician

Forrest was educated at Bishop Hale's School, Perth. At the age of eighteen he joined the Western Australia Survey Department. Before he was twenty-one Forrest had been appointed to lead an exploration to try to find Ludwig Leichhardt. The following year he was appointed to lead an expedition from Perth to Adelaide across the Great Australian Bight and in 1874 he successfully led an expedition from Champion Bay across the Carnarvon Range and Gibson Desert to the Overland Telegraph Line.

Forrest's explorations were rewarded by a series of senior government positions. He was appointed Deputy-Surveyor of Western Australia in 1876 and two years later became Acting Surveyor-General and Acting Commissioner of Crown Lands. In 1883 Forrest then became Surveyor-General and Commissioner of Crown Lands. He held both positions until 1890.

When Western Australia was granted responsible government in 1890 Forrest was elected Premier. He held the position for eleven years during which time he saw Western Australia develop rapidly and was active in all the conferences and councils leading up to Federation.

Forrest was elected to the Federal House of Representatives in 1901 and for the next seventeen years held various ministerial posts including Postmaster-General (1901), Minister for Defence (1901-03), Treasurer (1905-07), and Acting Prime Minister from March to June 1907. Forrest retired from politics in 1918 and died at sea on 3 September 1918 while on his way to England.
BARRY

her many travels both within Australia and abroad.

BARTON, Sir Edmund
1849-1920.
Born Glebe, New South Wales, on 18 January 1849.
Australia’s first Prime Minister.

Educated at Sydney Grammar School and Sydney University, Barton was admitted to the Bar in 1871. In the mid-1870s he sought election to the New South Wales Legislative Assembly which he finally won, in 1879, on his third attempt. His parliamentary progress was rapid and by January 1883 he had become the youngest ever Speaker in the New South Wales Parliament. He immediately gained a reputation for his fair-mindedness and firm, clear decisions.

He resigned the position of Speaker in 1887 and was immediately appointed to the Legislative Council. By this time he was gathering forces around him and actively advocating the establishment of a Federal government. In 1889 he allied himself with Henry Parkes and in 1891 he was a delegate to the National Australasian Convention in Sydney.

He re-entered the Legislative Assembly in 1891 as a committed Federalist and within two years was the effective leader of Federalist forces in New South Wales. Between 1893 and 1897 he addressed an estimated three hundred pro-Federation meetings and rallies. When a convention was called to draft a Federal Bill, Barton was made leader of the convention and chairman of the constitutional committee.

When the draft bill was put to a referendum Barton became its most passionate advocate. He finally saw his dream of a Federation of Australian States become a reality and on 1 January 1901 he was commissioned as Australia’s first Prime Minister. He resigned the prime ministership in 1903 and took a seat on the High Court. He served for seventeen years on the High Court and was awarded a knighthood and numerous honorary doctorates. He died suddenly on 7 January 1920.
DE QUIROS

He returned to Mexico and was back in Spain in 1607. He tried to convince the King to outfit a third expedition but the King was reluctant. Finally permission was granted but de Quiros died at sea on the way to Peru in June 1615. He is remembered as one of the first sailors to be convinced of the existence of a great southern continent.

DEAKIN, Alfred
1856-1919
Born Collingwood, Victoria, on 3 August 1856
Prime Minister

Alfred Deakin was educated at Melbourne Church of England Grammar School and the University of Melbourne. In 1878 he became a barrister but he didn't enjoy the work. The following year he won the seat of West Bourke in the Victorian Legislative Assembly. He was the member for West Bourke from 1879 to 1889 and the member for Essendon from 1889 to 1900. During this twenty-one-year period he held a number of posts and sat on numerous committees. However it was the work he did persuading many recalcitrant Victorian politicians of the value of Federation which was so important during this time.

Deakin was truly one of Australia's founding fathers. He actively advocated Federalism, from 1899-1903 he worked closely with Edmund Barton, Australia's first Prime Minister, he ensured that the Federation Bill had a smooth passage through the British Parliament, helped to form the first ministry, and was Australia's first Attorney-General.

When Edmund Barton retired from politics in 1903 Deakin became Prime Minister. Deakin was Prime Minister three times — 1903-04, 1905-08 and 1909-10. During this period he did much to provide the focus and direction for Australia up to World War I.

Deakin retired from politics in 1913 and died in Melbourne on 7 October 1919.

DEAMER, Mary Elizabeth
Kathleen Dulcie
1890-1972
Born Christchurch, New Zealand, on 13 December 1890
Bohemian and writer

Alfred Deakin and Mrs Deakin.
Born Janis Guntis Splavins, John Splavins emigrated to Australia as a child. He was educated at Concordia College, Adelaide, and the University of Adelaide where he graduated with an Economics degree.

Splavins is essentially a very astute accountant. From 1955 to 1973 he was company secretary and a director of the Camelec Group of companies. He attracted little public attention in these positions. In 1973 his career changed dramatically when he joined The Adelaide Steamship Co. Ltd as the assistant general manager. In 1977 he became general manager, in 1979 he was the director and by 1981 he had become managing director.

Splavins joined The Adelaide Steamship Co. Ltd when it was a transport company with no ships and a small fleet of tugboats. He set out to broaden the company’s base and has added David Jones, Clark Rubber, Tooth & Co., and Petersville Sleigh Ltd in the last decade. The result is that the parent company has been one of Australia’s most profitable and successful share market performers in recent times.

Splavins is currently the director of over ten companies.

**SPENCE, Catherine Helen**
1825-1910
Born near Melrose, Scotland, on 31 October 1825
Writer and feminist

Catherine Spence migrated to South Australia with her parents in 1839. In her teens she became a governess and in 1854 she wrote *Clara Morison: A Tale of South Australia During the Gold Fever*. This was the first novel written about Australia by a woman. She followed it by *Tender and True: A Colonial Tale* (1856), *Mr Hogarth’s Will* (1865), *The Author’s Daughter* (1868), *An Agnostic’s Progress from the Known to the Unknown* (1884) and *A Week in the Future* (1889).

Although her fiction output was considerable her real talent lay in journalism. She also worked as a social commentator and literary critic for newspapers in both Australia and England.

In the 1870s Spence became active in social reform. She worked for orphaned children and destitute families and in 1880 wrote *The Laws We Live Under* which became Australia’s first social studies textbook. Around this time she also became an accomplished public speaker.

In the 1890s her political attentions focussed on Federation, proportional representation, and feminism. In 1897 she stood for the Federal Convention, thus becoming Australia’s first female political candidate. In the early 1900s she continued to fight for women’s rights. When she died on 3 April 1910 she was affectionately known as ‘The Grand Old Woman of Australia’.

**SPENCE, William Guthrie**
1846-1926
Born Eday, Orkney, Scotland, on 7 August 1846
Politician and trade unionist

William Spence arrived in Australia with his parents probably in 1852. He had no formal education and between the ages of twelve and fifteen worked as a shepherd, a butcher’s boy and a miner. By 1874, as a mine manager and ‘shift boss’, he helped to organise a mining union which eventually became part of the Amalgamated Miners’ Association of Victoria. In 1878 he was secretary of the Creswick Miners’ Union. In the 1880s he actively advocated a single mining union.
the first journey only) was discovery of the Glenelg River, the Stephen Range and Mount Lyell.

After a short time as resident magistrate at King George Sound, Western Australia, in 1840 Grey was appointed Governor of South Australia, meanly denigrating the incumbent Governor, George Gawler, to the Colonial Office while praising Gawler to his face for the efforts he was making to rescue the colony from its economic difficulties. Grey later took the entire credit for the return to prosperity engendered by the steps Gawler had already set in train.

In South Australia, as in his subsequent governorships mentioned above, Grey's overbearing behaviour brought him into conflict with the colonists and their political representatives and with the Colonial Office itself. So, despite some success in solving problems between natives and settlers in each of the colonies he administered, he was recalled to England, from New Zealand, in 1868. He returned to the latter country, however, as an immigrant and from 1875 sat in the New Zealand House of Representatives for almost twenty years, serving two years as Premier.

In 1894 he was again in England. He died there four years later on 19 September 1898. His grave is in St Paul's Cathedral.

**GRiffin, Walter Burley**
1876-1937
Born Maywood, United States of America, on 24 November 1876
Architect

Walter Burley Griffin's credentials as an architect were impeccable. He graduated with a BSc from the University of Illinois in 1899. While at university he had been a student of the famous architect Nathan Ricker. By 1901, having been accepted as an associate of the American Institute of Architects, he was working with Frank Lloyd Wright. In 1906 he set up his own practice and in 1911 he married Marion Lucy Mahony, the second woman to have ever graduated in architecture from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Two months after the marriage Griffin began to work on a design for Canberra and it is now recognised that the elegance of his submission was largely due to his wife's exquisite draughtsmanship. In May 1912 it was announced that Griffin's design would be that of the new Federal capital.

Griffin could not have known the trouble and acrimony his design would produce in parliament. The political situation in Australia at the time was volatile and Griffin had to contend with changing governments and bureaucratic ineptitude for the next seven years. Modern-day Canberra is a very modified version of Griffin's original design.

While he was directing the building of the Federal capital Griffin maintained his private practice and amongst his more lasting achievements of the period were the Sydney suburb of Castlecrag, Newman College at the University of Melbourne, Capitol House in Melbourne and the Willoughby incinerator in Sydney.

In 1935 Griffin took up an offer to design a library for the University of Lucknow. The library was never built but Griffin was entranced by India and he stayed there until his death from peritonitis on 11 February 1937.

**Griffith, Sir Samuel Walker**
1845-1920
Born Merthyr Tydfil, Wales, on 21 June 1845
Premier of Queensland and first Chief Justice of Australia

The Australian Constitution owes much to Griffith and his experience of twenty years in Queensland politics.

Griffith came to Queensland with his family in 1854. He was educated in Sydney and then called to the Bar in
Sir Samuel Griffith.

Brisbane in 1867. He was a member of the Legislative Assembly from 1872-93 and was Premier from 1883-88, appointed KCMG in 1886 and Premier again from 1890-93. He was responsible for introducing free, secular and compulsory education in 1875. In Opposition, he campaigned strongly in the 1883 election against Kanaka labour and won. He compiled Queensland’s Criminal Code, established payment for members of the Assembly and encouraged local government and trade unionism. In 1893 he retired from parliament to become Chief Justice of Queensland and was appointed GCMG in 1895.

Griffith supported Federation and was instrumental in the formation of the Federal Council of Australasia. In 1899 he was appointed Lieutenant-Governor and in 1901 was appointed a Privy Councillor. Griffith became the first Chief Justice of Australia in 1903 and while visiting England in 1913, sat on the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. For his contribution to the law he was awarded honorary doctorates of law from Queensland in 1912 and Wales in 1913. He retired from the High Court in 1919.

Griffith died in Brisbane on 9 August 1920.

**GRIFFITHS, Albert**

1871-1927

Probably born at sea, on 23 July 1871

Prize fighter

Albert Griffiths or ‘Young Griffo’ can be described as a brilliant, controversial, outrageous, alcoholic boxer. He was unbeaten in his first 114 recorded fights and out of 166 recorded fights he won 66, lost 9 and had draws or no decisions in 91.

Some sources say Griffo was born on a steamer on route to Australia in 1871, while others suggest he was born in Bendigo, Victoria, or in New South Wales. He grew up in the Millers Point-Rocks area of Sydney and worked as a newsboy there.

In about 1886 Griffin turned to professional boxing. He refined his techniques under the tutelage of Larry Foley and became a regular fighter at Foley’s White Horse Hotel. He won the Australian featherweight title in 1889. Griffo’s claim to the world featherweight title after fighting New Zealander Billy Murphy in 1890 is one of the great controversies of boxing. According to the record books he did not hold the title.

Griffo was a featherweight with unbelievable defensive and evasive boxing skills. Outside the ring he was interested only in booze and brothels. Throughout his boxing career he always preferred drinking to training and was known to be drunk in the ring on several occasions. He was often in trouble with the police for being drunk and disorderly. In 1893 he went to the