



QUADRIVIA

The HPI Bulletin

Head of School Editorial

Dear all,

We are all looking forward to the end of the year, tired but pleased with our labours. The end of 2025, however, has brought Australia's challenges to the forefront. As I write, we grieve the deaths caused in the antisemitic attack on Jewish people in Sydney at Hanukka. It's hard to bear witness to racist violence in our communities, and the terrorism that occurred at Bondi will sit with us forever.



It's difficult, then, to turn our minds so quickly to the positives of the year. However, we do need to keep celebrating the inspiring achievements of our staff, honoraries and students, as a reminder of better times. The past week highlights the importance of continued work in our disciplines, to understand culture, religion, history, ethics, and inclusion.

Probably the biggest change in HPI in quite some time is one of staffing. We bid farewell to Serena and Jake the Border Collie – the heart and soul of our School. Serena's warmth and institutional knowledge have shaped HPI. She dedicated almost thirty-seven years of service to the School, while Jake's gentle presence touched everyone who crossed his path, whether it was a quick cuddle between meetings or a silent reminder that sometimes the best way to tackle stress is to take a nap. We'll miss his gentle energy, his impeccable timing for treat breaks, and his ability to make even the busiest days feel lighter. We wish both Serena and Jake the very best in their next chapter.

We've had much good news to celebrate this year. Dr Pete Evans' was promoted to Senior Lecturer, effective January 2026. Pete's outstanding research in philosophy of science, recent ARC DP success, and commitment to teaching make this a well-deserved recognition. Congratulations also to Associate Professor Ian Hesketh on his appointment to the Academy of the Humanities, and to Dr Janette McWilliam for receiving a UQ Award for Excellence in Teaching Leadership. Earlier this year saw the launch of the Queensland Atlas of Religion - an online archive of stories about people, landmarks, and social actions associated with religious communities. Co-led by Associate Professor Geoff Ginn and Associate Professor Adam Bowles, the public reference website is the first major scholarly treatment of historical and contemporary religious life in the Queensland setting. Our students continue to shine too—Isabella

Tran and Maisie Palmer have each secured highly competitive summer scholarships at the Australian War Memorial. Congratulations to all of our graduating students also.

In terms of new faces, we are delighted to welcome Laura Johnson as the School's new Administrative Assistant. Laura will be the first point of contact for students, staff, and visitors. She will also manage general and student administration, coordinate facilities matters, support exam administration, and process student enquiries. Laura's already made an impact in the office, and we look forward to working with her further in 2026. In addition, recruitment for new academic roles is nearly complete, and we look forward to welcoming our new recruits in Philosophy and Classics in 2026.

I can't finish the year without also recognising the enormous contributions of the late Emeritus Professor Graeme Turner AO FAHA FQA, a towering figure in the humanities whose scholarship and advocacy shaped our field. His legacy will continue to inspire us.

And last but not least, special thanks to all of the amazing supporters of HPI. We wouldn't be able to do what we do without you. I wish you and your families a safe and joyful holiday season, may it be a peaceful one for all.

Lisa

Farewell Serena and Jake

It is with a mix of sadness and joy that we say farewell to the incredible duo, Serena and Jake Bagley.

Serena (*pictured right*) has dedicated nearly 37 years of service to the University and our School.

When Serena first joined the Department of History at UQ as a Clerk Typist on 11 April 1988, it was just 19 days before the official opening of Brisbane's World Expo 88 by Queen Elizabeth II.



In confirming Serena's six-month probation, Head of Department (the late, Emeritus Professor, Reverend J.A. Moses) described Serena as "technically proficient, and personally most cheerful and helpful". According to Prof Moses, she was a "most felicitous appointment".

Serena didn't remain a Clerk Typist. In 1998 – ten years into her role – Serena's role expanded into that of Administrative Assistant, because, to quote then Head of School Emeritus Professor Martin Stuart-Fox "of the changes which have occurred in technology."

Thirty-seven years have seen some big world changes. When Serena started, fax machines were cutting-edge. Today we're talking about AI, MS Teams, the 2032 Olympics in 7 years, and Brisbane will see the development of the world's first fault-tolerant quantum computer. Across seven Prime Ministers, countless restructures, and three decades of technological revolutions, one thing has remained constant — Serena's calm wisdom, sense of humour, constant presence and contribution.

The School won't be the same without Serena and Jake's warm and welcoming presence. Enjoy the freedom and we look forward to seeing you again in future!

Interview with Jake, our four-legged superstar

Q: Hi Jake! Thanks for taking time out of your busy schedule to chat with us. How's your

day going?

Jake: Woof! Busy as always—pats to enjoy treats to sniff out, and making sure Serena doesn't wander off without me. It's a full-time job, but someone's gotta do it.

Q: You've got quite the fan club among staff. How do you handle all the attention?

Jake: It's tough being this popular, but I manage. I give everyone my best "puppy eyes" and wag like I mean it. They fall for it every time. Humans are easy.

Q: Tell us about your career highlight.

Jake: Oh, that's easy—the day Laura brought in her chickens. That was next-level fun. I was born for that moment.

Q: What's your secret to success in the workplace?

Jake: Two words: strategic napping. You've got to pace yourself. And always look adorable—it's basically my brand.

Q: Any big plans for retirement?

Maybe I'll write a book: "A Working Dog's Guide to Doing Nothing." Bestseller for sure.



Antiquities Museum shares stories of the Greek Islands culture

A community-led exhibition celebrating the heritage and stories of Greek migrants in Queensland has opened at RD Milns Antiquities Museum.

[NOΣΤΟΙ | Homecomings: Stories of the Ionian Island Diaspora in Queensland](#), recounts the personal histories of those who emigrated to Australia from the Greek islands of Kerkyra, Paxi, Lefkada, Ithaki, Kefalonia, Zakynthos and Kythira in the 19th and 20th centuries.



Museum Manager and Curator James Donaldson said the exhibition considers how these islands and their culture continue to be celebrated in Queensland and was a close collaboration between the Antiquities Museum and the Queensland Greek community.

The opening night was attended by Greece's Honorary Consul-General in Queensland, George Mastrocostas, who delivered a keynote address reflecting on the ancient Greek concept of nostos – a return home that spans far beyond geography.

The exhibition will run until 2027.

Image: Associate Professor Dorothy Watts AM explores antiquities from the RD Milns Antiquities Museum collection at the opening of the new NOSTOI | Homecomings exhibition.

[Read more](#)

Cypriot Antiquities bring a Second World War story to UQ.

A gift of two Cypriot antiquities to the RD Milns Antiquities Museum tells a story dating back to the Second World War.

A Bronze Age pottery juglet (1900-1650 BCE – UQ 24.001) and an Iron Age figurine fragment (700-500 BCE – UQ 24.002) were donated to the Antiquities Museum in late 2024 by Mr Peter Anderson, on behalf of his family.



His father, Warrant Officer First Class Thomas Shaw Anderson (1908-1977), purchased the artefacts from the Cyprus Museum in Nicosia on Cyprus during the Second World War.

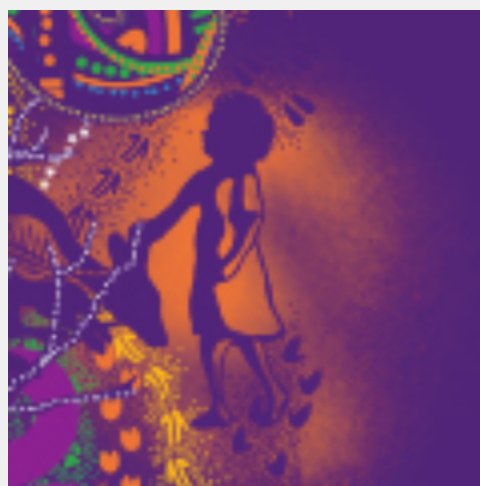
Peter said the antiquities have been a treasured part of his family home for many years.

Image: Warrant Officer First Class Thomas Shaw Anderson, before 1955. Photographer: Unknown. License: Public Domain.

[Read more](#)

Indigenising the Curriculum in HPI

UQ's [Graduate Attributes](#) state that students graduate from UQ as culturally aware citizens. By Indigenising the curriculum, we're ensuring our graduates have an understanding of, and respect for, Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and global Indigenous peoples' values, cultures and knowledge. Colleagues in HPI have been working on this project and each issue we will feature a story about the ways our courses are being Indigenised.



In [RELN2410](#) The Bible: Narratives and Interpretations, students are introduced to historical contexts and indigenous perspectives to think through the relationships of Christianity, the Bible, and colonisation. The material forms a block of three lectures.

This lecture block aims to recognise and clarify colonial disruptions, violences, and dispossessions involving asymmetries of wealth and raw power. Yet it also aims to shine a light on patterns of resistance, adaptation, and agency within the context of such processes. The point is as much about how the Bible is utilised as it is about what it says, the latter being a point of contention, as is the case, perhaps, of any enduring book.

[Read about the lectures here.](#)

Annual Lecture recording available

We were thrilled that our very own Professor Marguerite La Caze (*pictured right*) presented this year's Annual Lecture: *Simone de Beauvoir on independence, freedom, and happiness: Things to Come (Mia Hansen-Løve, 2016)*'.

[Listen Here.](#)

With Acknowledgement of Country presented by Associate Professor Stephanie Gilbert, Associate Dean Indigenous Engagement (HASS) and Opening Remarks by Professor Lisa Featherstone, Head of School.

Simone de Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* contends that in considering women's emancipation, we should not take happiness to be the aim, as it is a confining emotion. Instead, using the perspective of existentialist ethics, we should aspire to freedom. I examine how Beauvoir's distinctions between happiness, independence and freedom illuminate Mia Hansen-Løve's film *Things to Come* and how the film's portrayal of a philosophy teacher's, Nathalie Chazeaux, existential crisis enhances understanding of these ideas' potential and relations. Nathalie's husband Heinz ends their long marriage, her mother dies, and her book series is cancelled. Rather than despairing, Nathalie continues to pursue her projects and claims to be experiencing total freedom for the first time. We might see Nathalie as an example of what Beauvoir calls the independent woman and possibly even a free woman able to live without her ex-husband. I argue that closer analysis of the film does not support the view of Nathalie as completely free or happy. This interpretation of *Things to Come* shows how Beauvoir's insights have contemporary relevance and throws light on the ambiguous situation of an independent woman.



QLD Atlas of Religion website launch

Huge congratulations again to Associate Professor Geoff Ginn and Associate Professor Adam Bowles and colleagues on the launch of the QLD Atlas of Religion earlier this year.

What is Queensland's religious history? What stories and landmarks are peculiar to Queensland? And what are the characteristics of contemporary religious and spiritual practices, experiences, and movements?

These are questions that University of Queensland researchers and affiliated contributors aim to answer using the [Queensland Atlas of Religion](#) - an online archive of stories about people, landmarks, and social actions associated with religious communities.

[Read more](#)



Semester 2 Research Celebration

The Semester 2 Research Celebration was quite a hit this year!

The panel explored the fascinating world of performance and performativity in the Humanities.

The 3 speakers, in different ways, reflected on performative elements in various academic and relationship settings. Tyla Cascaes (who proposed the panel) explored



cinematic performances in a teaching context, reminding us that performances are enjoyable, engaging, instinctive, and reflect broader constructions of cultural frameworks that we use in the every day. Josh Szymanski reflected on “The Performative Turn: Butler and Performativity”, and Emma Cole (School of Communication and Arts) considered the interpretive challenges and opportunities presented by fragmentary Greek Tragedy texts.

The event wasn't just talk though - it was music to our ears. Associate Professor Geoff Ginn and his band, 'What Happened in History', brought the house down with a live set that had the audience tapping their feet and grinning from ear to ear. Their historical ditties (as Geoff likes to call them) about art critic John Ruskin, religious reformer Martin Luther and Brisbane shoe salesman Vic Jensen presented a more speculative kind of history than we usually get in the HPI classroom!

[Watch youtube video.](#)

Their performance reminded us that scholarship and creativity can harmonise beautifully—and sometimes, quite literally.

Huge thanks to Tyla Cascaes, Josh Szymanski and Dr Emma Cole (Communication and Arts) for their excellent presentations.

Gender Studies Industry Connection Day

On Wednesday 4 June Gender Studies students gathered and engaged with industry professionals over lunch. They covered:

- ✨ Research snapshots from GEND3001 students — what they explored, discovered, and found challenging
- 🔍 Insight into academic and career pathways in Gender Studies
- 👉 A chance to connect with students across year levels, staff, and industry partners
- 🌱 Inspiration for their own Gender Studies journey



It was a fantastic day!

2025 UQ Philosothon winners

The Philosothon has developed a very significant profile over the last few years both nationally and internationally. Congratulations to the 2025 UQ Philosothon winners!

The Philosothon is a program designed to develop the ability of high school students to critically analyse ideas and concepts, improve skills in argumentation and to collaboratively explore philosophical issues. This year we welcomed 160 students from 15 schools. Thanks to all staff who participated.



School Awards Division A (10-12)

- 1st place: Anglican Church Grammar School
- 2nd place: Palm Beach Currumbin State High School (PBC)
- 3rd place: Brisbane School of Distance Education

School Awards Division B (7-9)

- 1st place: St Aidan's Anglican Girls' School
- 2nd place: Palm Beach Currumbin State High School (PBC)
- 3rd place: Brisbane South State Secondary College

Division A - Most Promising Philosopher runner up: *Tayla Carr (Ormeau Woods State High School)*

Division A: Rob Hamilton Award for Most Promising Philosopher: *Remy Hancock (St Aidan's)*.

Division B - Most Promising Philosopher runner up *Sophie Donnelly (PBC)*

Division B - Rob Hamilton Award for Most Promising Philosopher: *Nishtha Roy (St Aidan's)*.

HDR News and Events

A huge congratulations to the winners of the 2025 HDR Poster Competition. There were some amazing entries this year!

Thanks also to Shannon Ross for her amazing work as HDR Representative two years running.



The new HDR Representative will be announced in due course.

HDR Poster Competition Winners (*pictured right*):

- Best Content: Melanie Roylance '*More than Walking War Memorials: The Agency of Australian War Widows 1914-1939*'.
- Best Visuals: Kyla Duffy '*Wooden Children's Toys in Ancient Roman Society*'.
- People's Choice Winner: Tyler Horton, '*Virtue, piety and royal resolution to death*' *Godliness, Sovereignty and Mary Queen of Scots*.

[View posters here.](#)

Atkins Visiting Professor Public Lecture Presented by Emeritus Professor Susan James

The School of Historical and Philosophical Inquiry was thrilled to welcome Professor Emerita Susan James as our 2025 Atkins Visiting Professor (*pictured right*). A leading scholar in early modern philosophy, Professor James brought her expertise and insight to a series of thought-provoking events for staff and students.

The Public Lecture, 'What's Really Wrong With Fake News? A Spinozist Perspective' explored how fake news is nothing new. For many generations, philosophers have discussed it and asked themselves what's wrong with it.

Professor James' research considers whether their conclusions can deepen our own understanding of its dangers. Focusing on the work of one insightful opponent of fake news, the seventeenth-century Dutch philosopher Benedict de Spinoza, the lecture explores his view that it undermines our attachment to truthfulness. This is its most harmful effect, and it has radical political implications. What might they mean for us?

[Listen here](#)

About the presenter

Susan James completed her PhD at the University of Cambridge. She has taught at the Universities of Connecticut, Cambridge and London and held visiting positions in Australia, Europe and the United States. Her research focuses on 3 overlapping areas - the history of early modern European philosophy, social and political philosophy and feminist philosophy - concentrating particularly on the ideas of Margaret Cavendish and Benedict de Spinoza.

These interests are reflected in some of her publications, including *Margaret Cavendish: Political Writings*; *Passion and Action: The Emotions in Seventeenth-Century Philosophy*; *Spinoza on Philosophy, Religion and Politics*; *The Theologico-Political Treatise*; and *Spinoza on Learning to Live Together*.

Susan James is a Fellow of the British Academy and Chair of the British Society for the History of Philosophy.

Thank you to Dr John Atkins for his generous funding of the Atkins Visiting Professorship since 2014.



Visiting RD Milns Professor Kelly Olson

We are very grateful for the support of the RD Milns Classics and Ancient History Perpetual Endowment Fund, which allows us to deepen the significant work done in the School of Historical and Philosophical Inquiry in Classics and Ancient History.

The Fund has enabled us to invite another distinguished Visiting Scholar to the School, Professor Kelly Olson, Professor of Classics at Western Arts and Humanities (*pictured right*).

Prof Olson presented the Friends of Antiquity Milns Visiting Scholar Sunday Series: [styles and status – Roman women and the art of hair](#) (recording not available).

Kelly Olson holds a PhD from the University of Chicago and is currently a full Professor in the Dept. of Classical Studies at the University of Western Ontario, with a cross-appointment in the Department of Women's Studies and Feminist Research. Her research focuses on Roman society, sexuality, and appearance, as well as fashion history more generally. Dr Olson is the author of several articles on clothing in Roman antiquity, published in *Mouseion*, *Fashion Theory*, *The American Journal of Ancient History*, *Classical World*, and *The Journal of the History of Sexuality*. She has recent chapters and articles on gender and appearance in publications from Oxford University Press, Blackwell, Routledge, Berg, Bloomsbury Academic, and Cambridge University Press. Her first book, *Dress and the Roman Woman: Self-Presentation and Society*, was published by Routledge in 2008. *Masculinity and Dress in Roman Antiquity* was published by Routledge in 2017. *Dress in Mediterranean Antiquity: Greeks, Romans, Jews, Christians*, of which she is co-editor along with Alicia Batten, was published in 2021 by Bloomsbury Academic. She has 3 more edited collections forthcoming. She has



lectured all over North America and Europe, most recently at the Art Institute of Chicago, the Getty Villa in California, and the Norwegian Institute in Rome.

Ed Conrad Memorial Lecture

We were absolutely delighted that Emeritus Professor Peter Harrison (*pictured right*) presented the 2025 Ed Conrad Memorial Lecture titled 'The Bible and the Rise of Science'.

[Watch the lecture here.](#)

Biblical literalism is often associated with hostility to science. This association draws support from the Galileo affair and, more recently, religiously motivated opposition to evolution. In this lecture Professor Harrison suggests that, despite apparent tensions between the bible and science, new literal approaches to biblical interpretation characteristic of the Post-reformation period actually helped promote science, while particular biblical narratives also helped lend it social legitimacy.



The rise of modern science in the seventeenth century was thus facilitated by biblical literalism in surprising ways. This helps us see apparent episodes of science-religion conflict—such as the Galileo affair and evolutionary controversies—in a new light.

Peter Harrison is Emeritus Professor of History and Philosophy at The University of Queensland and Professorial Research Fellow at the University of Notre Dame, Australia. From 2015-21 he was an Australian Laureate Fellow and before this held the Ireos Chair of Science and Religion at the University of Oxford. He has published extensively on the philosophical, scientific and religious thought of the early modern period and his recent work focuses on secularization. He is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities and a Member of the International Academy for the History of Science. His twelve books include *The Territories of Science and Religion* (Chicago, 2015), based on his Gifford Lectures and, most recently, *Some New World: Myths of Supernatural Belief in a Secular Age* (Cambridge, 2024).

We are grateful to Dr Linda Conrad, Ed's widow and an accomplished scholar in her own right, for her sponsorship.

World Religions Experience Day

Each year the Religious Studies team hosts the dynamic and thought-provoking World Religions Experience Day, an outreach initiative designed to inspire and engage Year 11 students.

This is the second year the event has toured up to Cairns before running at UQ for 2 consecutive days of immersive learning.

Leading the charge to the tropics were 4 academics from the School of Historical and Philosophical Inquiry—Associate Professor Adam Bowles, Associate Professor Tom Aechtner, Dr James Lancaster, and Dr Ryan Williams—joined by Kristen



Johnston and Stephanie Rieck from HASS Marketing and Engagement, along with current Advanced Humanities student Grace Wilson.

Events like this that align with curriculum in schools are proving more popular than ever and this event is an exemplar of high school outreach in HASS.

[Read more.](#)

Book Feature: Prophets and Witches

Prophets and Witches by Dr Debra Parish (*pictured right*) offers an exploration of female prophecy and witchcraft during the political and religious upheavals of the English Revolutionary period from 1640 to 1660.



The religious fervour and End of Days enthusiasm precipitated by the Civil War opened the door for unprecedented numbers of women to achieve visibility and spiritual authority as prophets. However, as self-proclaimed instruments for God's spirit, these women were also exposed to the charge of demonic possession or witchcraft. This book explores both the gender and political elements at work in the construction of the prophet as a witch. It uncovers the role of witchcraft in the dominant political and religious debates and power conflicts of the times which provides a crucial framework for the female prophet's transformation from divine instrument to demonic witch. This study of the early modern prophet and witch reveals the fluidity, and at times close relationship of these assumed opposites.

This book is a valuable resource to students and scholars of early modern England, the English Civil War and all readers interested in female religiosity, prophecy, witchcraft, demonology and early Quakerism.

Critics' Reviews

"In this welcome and nuanced study, Debra Parish maps out the murky borderlands between female prophecy, demonic possession and witch beliefs in revolutionary England, with a keen eye on the religious politics of the age. The result is a reminder that the concept of witchcraft – and indeed divine authority – was bound into the larger debates of this turbulent period."

Darren Oldridge, University of Worcester, UK

"This makes a significant contribution to our knowledge of the period of the English Revolution, by teasing out the relationship between attitudes to religion, magic and gender, as they operated in a cross-fire over the appearance of radical prophetesses."

Ronald Hutton, University of Bristol, UK.

Image: Debra is pictured outside the Museum of Witchcraft and Magic in Cornwall UK where she presented a paper on Anna Trapnel, the seventeenth-century Cornish prophet/witch.

HPI Recent Books

Congratulations to the following staff for recent book publications (listed in espace).

- Almond, P.* (2025) Noah and the Flood in Western Thought. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

- Bonnell, A.* (2025) Revolutions in modern German history. London, United Kingdom: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Parish, D.* (2025) Prophets and witches: witchcraft, gender and politics in Revolutionary England. London, United Kingdom: Routledge.



Other 2025 Publications

It has been a busy year of publishing. Our School thrives through the collegiality and prodigious productivity of our esteemed honorary staff. Congratulations to all who have published this year.

See [2025 Publications](#) from HPI and Honorary staff members (as recorded in [UQ espace](#)).



Acknowledgement of Country

The University of Queensland (UQ) acknowledges the Traditional Owners and their custodianship of the lands on which UQ operates. We pay our respects to their Ancestors and their descendants, who continue cultural and spiritual connections to Country. We recognise their valuable contributions to Australian and global society.