

## From the Editors

As our guest editors Nicholas Herriot and Paul Sendziuk point out, the Oral History Association of Australia was founded in 1978, when labour history was developing as a rich and legitimate area of research. As oral history practitioners' have consistently demonstrated over the past five decades, the oral histories of marginalised or subjugated groups (such as the working classes) counter and disrupt dominant narratives, they flesh out and bring to life the experiences of those whose voices may otherwise remain largely unheard.

The value of synthesising oral and labour history is evident in the articles and reports included in this year's journal; themed 'Oral History and Working Lives', this edition shows the diversity of workers' experiences and their creativity and agency in challenging exploitative workplaces and practices. We hear of the adaptability and resourcefulness of women working in a male dominated industrial mining region and the racism African American employees continue to experience in workplaces across the Unites States of America. The subjective memories of General Motors-Holden workers in Adelaide and Melbourne and ship builders in North East England are interrogated to uncover emotional attachments to these workplaces and to reveal workplace cultures – information difficult to capture through archival material and official statistics. We hear how the adoption of online technology in Singaporean workplaces has transformed human relationships and shifted workers' senses of connection and intimacy. In contrast, documentary videos shown to ship builders prompted memories and provoked strong emotions. These articles demonstrate how

oral history interviews provide participants with a valuable opportunity to reflect on their working lives guided by a respectful and interested interviewer – this is also powerfully evident in the report that showcases the portraits of workers from the coal-fired power station in Muswellbrook, NSW. On that note we acknowledge artist Todd Fuller for so readily and generously permitting us to reproduce his portraits on the cover of this edition, and Conan Griffiths for the cover design.

The safe storage and monitored accessibility of audio and video recordings is an ongoing dilemma for oral history practitioners, and several of the reports describe and advocate for collaborative projects between university libraries and departments, industry professionals and community groups. Continued discussions regarding the ethics of ownership – including post-custodial archiving practices – are imperative with the rapid evolution of artificial intelligence and its increasing ability to transcribe audio recordings. This, in turn, makes transcripts readily searchable and potentially available to be mined and misused in ways which were never envisaged when recordings were made and consent forms completed.

We would like to thank all the contributors to this edition, and to acknowledge the hard work of our guest editors Nicholas Herriot and Paul Sendziuk. We are grateful for the ongoing support of the OHA committee, and the professionalism and warmth of our copy editor Katie Connolly. We would also like to acknowledge our designer Conan Griffiths and the work of our reports and reviews editors, Alex Mountain and Gwyn McClelland. It has been an absolute pleasure to work with you all this year.

We hope you enjoy reading this year's journal, and strongly encourage you to contribute an article, report or review to next year's edition.

Skye Krichauff and Carolyn Collins