

The Academic Fellowship and Supportive Ambience of Wright College: Part 2¹

J.S. Ryan and many other referenced informants

ABSTRACT: This paper treats the progression of 'Wright' thinking folklorists through some four generations of folklorists associated with Wright College at the University of New England with a focus on figures such as Russel B. Ward and Alan T. Atkinson. In this way, it explores Wright College as a hub for the development of Folklore Studies in eastern Australia. It also chronicles the movement of the journal *Australian Folklore* from Western Australia to the University of New England in New South Wales.

KEYWORDS: Wright College, University of New England, Armidale, Folklore Studies, Russel Ward, Alan Atkinson, Australian Studies

Perhaps the most interesting of these very open minded thinkers and colonial culture comparativists—as then reflecting on the British and the Australian societies and their mores / attitudes from the 1960s—would be (Professor / Dr.) Max Hartwell, once a Glen Innes boy who was by then an illustrious supervisor of research scholars in the field of [Comparative] Economic History² at, and through, Nuffield, College, within the University of Oxford; and he was, of course, someone who had started his academic career when he had been an internal student of the then New England University College, as it was then styled, living in the first micro-community of almost all first generation university students in the old colonial homestead, now the University College's Main Building, 'Boooloominbah', during the time of World War II.

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1 Part 1 of this article was published as: J.S. Ryan, 'The academic fellowship and supportive ambience of Wright College, A Longtime Seminal 'Folklore Centre'—and one significant for the closer study of Australian Social History / Regional Australian Identity, Non-Indigenous / Settler Heritage, and Culture, within the University of New England, Armidale, N. S. W.', *Australian Folklore*, 31 (2016), 43-77.

2 Although the more challenging and reformist term 'political economy' was not then used, much of R.M. Hartwell's thinking was in that direction.

Meanwhile at the Top of the University Hill in the North West of Armidale, and its Lecture Theatres.

And, in due course,—and, quite regularly by the early 1990s,—the Department of English, and the Department of History would, variously, be both offering degree courses in this folk-centred field, even as they would produce a further crop of very able postgraduates in the same subject area.³ Interestingly, the provision of regular courses in Folklore had been formally asked for by lecturers⁴ who had come across to the now augmented University of New England—in Armidale—from the Armidale Teachers' College, when the two institutions had amalgamated under the Dawkins Reforms (as operative from 1990).⁵

And so the University would then—in addition to its supervision of theses in the field—be teaching and supervising dissertations / advanced undergraduate degree units in Australian (and some general systems) Folklore from the 1990s, as well as answering scholarly and often postgraduate student queries from the South of the United States of America, from Scotland, and, variously, from Scandinavia, and particularly from Estonia and the officers of the world-surveying and prestigious *e-Folklore*, the international journal which had accepted several important U.N.E. contributions in recent decades.⁶

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3 Seal's book would be a recommended background text at all levels of offering 'Folklore' units. The now New Zealand domiciled folklorist, A. Asbjørn Jøn is one who fits this 'trained in New England' paradigm in his postgraduate course work and first thesis, as does Robert James Smith, the long-time co-editor of *Australian Folklore*, and a number of other regular contributors to the annual journal over the years.

As of the end of 2014, aspects of Scottish, Indonesian, Māori, Aboriginal lore—and their users and contexts, and / or recorders—would be probed in successful theses that were in part offered by the folklore -trained graduate members of the U.N.E.'s Schools of Arts and / or of the Humanities.

4 As with Stephen Hooper, or the to be editor trainer of aspiring student collectors of literary—and historical—documents, Paul Adams.

5 These took effect from the end of 1990, in unity with many other bindings of teachers' colleges into appropriate—and so much larger—universities.

6 As on Folk Festivals, and the patterns of these, especially in Eastern Australia. J.S. Ryan, 'The Range—and Purposes—of Australian Public Festivals That are Functioning at Present', *Folklore*, 34 (2006), 7-29. DOI:10.7592/FEJF2006.34.ryan

See also: J.S. Ryan, 'Australian Folklore Yesterday and Today: Definitions and Practices', *Folklore*, 8 (1998), 127-134. DOI: 10.7592/FEJF1998.08.aflore

A Asbjørn Jøn, 'Shamanism and the Image of the Teutonic Deity, Óðinn', *Folklore*, 10 (1999), 68-76. doi:10.7592/FEJF1999.10.teuton

*But Now, Some Australian Background Antecedents and Dimensions as to the U.N.E. Folkloric Culture Research, and so to its Like Teaching More Generally*⁷

While, earlier in the twentieth century, the Department of Anthropology at the University of Sydney,—most notably under the aegis of Professor A. P. Elkin;—or , and progressively, as in the Mitchell Library, as within the Public Library of New South Wales (located in Central Sydney), from the 1950s, by Russel Ward's close friend, (Dr.) Edgar Waters (1925-2008),⁸ he still then working within that Public Library; and there would be the various visits to Armidale of the Melbourne based Hugh Anderson, (b.1927), F.A.H.A.,⁹ and his wife, Dawn, to meet up again with Russel Ward (1914-) not so much later, in 1995, their older friend from much folklore and ballad style research work together, and that from soon after World War II; and then there would be fine support for loner collectors and interpreters amongst their ongoing duties and related work in the [copyright and deposit] collection sections of the National Library in Canberra; and it was there, too, by the end of the century, that there would be the Easter time folk occasions and ideas-coalescing seminar opportunity for meeting up for scholars of folklore from across the nation.

And then, and much more recently, in the research areas of the more applied (and so focussed on the Western Pacific area and nearer Asian Countries) Arts milieu, these steadily expanding at Curtin University in Western Australia,—the last under the long-time direction of the to- be (Professor) Graham Seal,¹⁰ who would, duly, expand his focus to consider aspects of the Indian Ocean littoral, and even of the Europe-colonised regions of South East Asia.

However, other currently ongoing and folk culture interested groups in Australia, if put to it, are hard pressed to make the claim of their having

7 It should be noted that the University of New England has never had a Department of Anthropology and that the New England area field research among the Aborigines had been largely before World War II, and done as outreach work from the then sole university for the whole state, the University of Sydney.

8 Very quietly, he would be enabled to do similar collecting work in the History Department at the U.P.N.G. in Port Moresby, something very familiar to the present writer. Some of it he would share with Russel Ward, as in the case of the story that Russel would tell- of a suicidal last stand by a sole Aboriginal-descended soldier of the Archibald family (of Armidale) and as published in *Australian Folklore*—in 1994 (journal number 9),—those assembled from afar , in Armidale, for his very quietly observed eightieth birthday. On that occasion he would receive the new issue of the journal, it dedicated to him, and with initially placed congratulatory messages from his co-researcher in their Melbourne days in the years after World War II.

9 *Australian Folklore* would issue a celebratory volume for his eightieth birthday in 1994, and it would be spoken to- as to its interest and impact in the United Kingdom—by Associate Professor David Kent. The journal would pay a like tribute to Hugh Anderson in the autumn of 1997, on the occasion of his 70th birthday.

10 His early career is discussed variously near the beginning of this present survey.

any strong / lasting folkloric driving purpose, or an ongoing and coherent scholarly research editing, research and general scholarly productivity in even the more general field of modern or more international folklore.

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But, Further Off, Other Smaller / Earlier Folklore Enterprises

In no sense do we wish to pass by the fine Melbourne collection work done over many decades by Russel Ward's friend and colleague from those postwar years, the above-mentioned Hugh Anderson (b.1927), publisher extraordinaire—let alone the empathy and support that this worker and collector had given long ago to his close friend,¹¹ the actually somewhat older and former serviceman and collector of folk materials, specially of significant ballads, Russel B. Ward. But this cadre in radical Melbourne, Victoria, in the early 1950s did not create more than a small but continuing core of collectors and scholars such as the most insightful Mark Gregory (b.1943), and they then all focussed on one place-scholarly community, as had developed in Melbourne.

However, another group that could gain strength over the years, as would actually happen, had developed in Armidale from the mid-1950s; and the catalyst for the northern outpost / 'bridgehead' for the closer study of customary lore and practice in Australia had come (in its stimulus) from Russel Ward's appointment to teach Australian history in the then-about-to-expand but still tiny U.N.E. Department of History (and the soon to be linked host body of/for elementary Australian Archaeology field work under Dr. I. McBryde, and following as many local Koori informants as possible.)

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Meanwhile, and Nationally, Aboriginal Studies Being Better Resourced and so its Workers Now Moving to the Regional Language and Archaeological Fresh Researches

In actuality—and this is certainly a fair assessment—it is probably the case that the longest running, and most serious collection and persistent presentation and publication of its own field work in collecting Australia-generating tales, and in sociological and comparative studies—is the

¹¹ Hugh Anderson has mentored many over the years, especially,—and more recently—the fine comparativist, Mark Gregory. And Hugh Anderson would also receive a congratulatory and dedicated volume of *Australian Folklore*. Hugh Anderson himself, in the issue presented to R.B. Ward, had offered that earlier volume's fine 'Dedication and a Tribute', 'Man on a Bough', pp. ix-x.

AIATSIS (the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies),¹² a group significantly inspired by the initiatives of John Mulvaney, archaeologist, and his making their field and recording presence felt nationally from the early 1960s onwards, with especial guidance as then offered to I. McBryde of the History Dept. at the U.N.E. Arguably, it was the male members of these pioneering excavation parties, almost all drawn from Wright College, such as James Belshaw, Jnr., who made their field work both highly proficient and pattern setting for the next phase of comparative landscape usage and recalled / traditional lore and seasonal work, as it had been *in situ*. (And the Belshaw work could be variously linked with the not dissimilar research on Mid North Coast Aboriginal Tribes and their lexis, as collected up by J.S. Ryan, in his *The Land of Ulitarra*, a work concerned with the lexis and preserved belief system of the tribes of the Mid-North Coast of New South Wales (Grafton: Department of A.F. of University Extension, University of New England, 1964, and with many subsequent reprints / slight modifications of the original text, up to the Lismore-issued-to-the-schools bicentennial edition of 1988.)

(Much latter, the poet, Les A. Murray, would aver that this last named text had in fact ‘saved a nation’, meaning that ‘those so descended had regained their previously lost self-respect’. And that they been assisted by these records to a reminder of who they were.)

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12 For background and convenience, we may cite here the comprehensive and relatively more recent / up to date encyclopedia entry, ‘Australian Aborigines’, pp. 292—299, by Stephanie Rose Bird, in *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of World Folklore and Folklife* (2006), Volume One. [The Encyclopedia is in four large volumes.] [See further ahead for another relevant reference to a survey account, this time of the Australian material in this research and overview- giving Volume One, of *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of World Folklore and Folklife: Volume 1: Topics and Themes, Africa, Australia and Oceania*. Greenwood Press: Westport, Connecticut, and London: 2006.] This work is in Four Volumes, with an Advisory Board of some fourteen scholars, five of whom, - namely Gillian Bennett (once of Sheffield, and now of Manchester), Mary Ellen Brown, Peter Knecht, Gerald Pocius, and John S. Ryan have all appeared in / been referred to in the national folklore journal, *Australian Folklore*, the second of whom has appeared in conference in Melbourne, Australia; the third, an Australian by extraction, has had J. S. Ryan as a consultative member of the Editorial Board of the English-language and most comprehensive journal *Asian Folklore*, while the sixth has for many years been the Editor / Co-Editor for *Australian Folklore*. Thus *Australian Folklore* has had professional / editorial links with nearly half of this Editorial Board, even as the long-time editor of *Australian Folklore* was long on the Board of *Folk Life Studies*. (See further ahead.)

From Aboriginal Anthropology and the like in Content, as well as from Concept Linguistics, to Early Collecting Work in School Yard Games, and to the Quite Careful Recording of Various Childhood Customs in / from Victoria

Of course, after the comparative and boldly analytic work from across the nation on Aboriginal Story—as in E.M. Curr’s *The Australian Race*,—the Institute for the Study of Early Childhood at / linked to the University of Melbourne may fairly be claimed as the next stalwart and regional / nationally representative base for both the collection and the significant interpretation of a distinct body of the nation’s lore, a research base that can be seen to have been assembled carefully, studied closely, and duly published,—despite its largely American inspiration—and this occurring between the two World Wars. This would firm into the Institute of Early Childhood Development in Melbourne and be duly housed in the Australian Children’s Folklore at the University of Melbourne. And that Melbourne work had had further support in the earlier / middle years of the twentieth century, now some decades past, in the periodical, *Play and Lore* under the fine leadership of June Factor. (See the helpful reference to her in *OCAF* (1993), p. 115.)

And there was one too—already glanced at by New Englanders—the tireless work in Melbourne of (the to be Dr.) Gwenda Davey, someone who, having assisted with folklore courses begun by the Oxford –trained— and formerly British Folklore Society member, Dr. Winifred Trindade at the University of Melbourne,—would soon become the co-editor—with Graham Seal—of the milestone reference and compendium text treating of many closely related themes—and various individuals important to the maintenance of folkloric thinking across the nation their judiciously assembled and jointly edited volume, to wit, *The Oxford Companion to Australian Folklore* (1993).

And she would,—and most deservedly,—have been most prominent in the significant and soon following national congress producing the major and very bulky folkloric volume, *The Possum Stirs* (1989), one which contained the surprisingly rich, imaginative, field-surveying, and generously space-allowed *Proceedings* of the same and already mentioned splendid national conference held in Sydney under the auspices of Dr. Keith Hollingshead of the Kuring-gai College of Advanced Education, that tertiary institution then located in the inner northern suburbs of Sydney . The Armidale Conference is thus to be seen as the sequel, in so many ways, to the seemingly abruptly halted Kuring-gai gathering, the work of which had so soon been transferred, in effect, to a more appropriate setting,—both in a more rural landscape, and in the most populous and much earlier settled state (than Western Australia), and where it has moved steadily ahead over the last thirty years or so—and this in both its then contacts

with overseas countries, and it also concerned with the recording of aspects of the political and social history of the nation.

Again, as with *The Land of Ulitarra* (1964, and later editions, v. *supra*), the discipline of Australian folklore, earlier assisted by the records from the North Coast of New South Wales, has been well served by that same region—this in the committed work of the long-time New England student, (Dr.) Robert James Smith, by now long on the staff of the Southern Cross University in Lismore, and, for some years now, the co-editor of the annual journal, *Australian Folklore*.

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But then, Back to—a Pause in Policy and to the Work of its Leadership in the Greater Field, in The State Capital's Centre, and then to a Grinding Halt in the Later 1980s.

Sadly for the greater prominence of the discipline for Australia, as in just achieved then by the inspirational convenor, Dr Keith Hollingshead, would proceed to England,—and actually function most effectively in the western further suburbs of London, and there teach similarly imaginative and spirit—refreshing (folkloric) studies at the tertiary level, and this largely in the same West London region. A similar blow to the desired development of the field as a widely taught Australian discipline would come from the unfortunate national decision with not to proceed with the then exciting plans to make folklore a serious teaching and research discipline and practised nationwide in the to be much encouraged Australian tertiary studies, and in many ways following the rise of folk studies in the Scandinavian countries of Northern Europe, particularly since the early nineteenth century.

For it had been conceived of—and intended to be—as a significant and appealing field, it ideally straddling the gaps between the then more elitist / narrowly ‘professions-focussed’ Universities and the very much newer—and more regionally and more the general populace focussed institutions—several in the hinterland vastnesses of the Continent—as in several of the [later 1980s-1990s] Colleges of Advanced Education across Australia,¹³ and which would, on 1 January 1990, become autonomous universities.

13 This decision, the one to create such Colleges from the existing State Teachers’ Colleges,—would work to folklore’s advantage, but in only a patchy fashion. One instance of this development would be the work on legends and historical documents and their motifs (as by the late Maurice Ryan, of Lismore), at what would become the Southern Cross University, after its earlier phase, from the 1970s, as the Lismore Teachers’ College. Significantly, Maurice Ryan would have the area in question in the institution named from the friend to all such work, Professor Charles Manning H. Clark. In a more general sense, Dr. Robert J. Smith, the co-editor of *Australian Folklore* may be said to have continued on

And folklore itself,—as a world-wide respected discipline, one embracing the literary, the linguistic, and the historical aspects of the Australian field,—could very well have become as popular as folk music, country (and western) music,¹⁴ or various other and more popular styles of dance and of regional crafts and other adult recreations. Sadly, that was not to be.

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From Unfortunate National Pause to an Appropriate Launching Pad, New England, as it Began to Lead the Fresh Campaign for Making / Teaching and Supervising of Confident Research Work in The Realm of Australian Folklore

However, there had been another seminal—if unexpected—(national) folklore conference which was to prove more persistent and outreaching in its influence,—one held in early 1990, and one with residence at a tertiary level and—by its location—in a ‘bush’ college of a rurally-based University—(by then, it already one accepting both men and women students)—the above-mentioned Wright College within the University of New England, in Armidale, in northern New South Wales, the National Conference¹⁵ to be opened by Emeritus Professor Russel B. Ward, by that

with the work begun for that north-east corner of New South Wales by the late Maurice Ryan.

And that institution, late in the century, would produce a long-serving co-editor for the national journal in Dr. Robert James Smith, Smith (he with his degrees earned while an external and Wright-visiting student of U.N.E.), as well as a number of significant theses on the lore and custom—both Aboriginal and settler—of that north-eastern corner of New South Wales.) Interestingly—and, in a style like that in Armidale,—the Lismore-based CAE-become University would link up with nearby regional historical studies, as with the Richmond River Historical Society.

A similar pattern of severance from the older and more orthodox ways, and it with a new confidence would occur in Toowoomba in the plateau area far to the west of Brisbane, where its tertiary institution styled the ‘Darling Downs Institute of Higher Education’ would morph itself into the University of Southern Queensland. Some few of its students would pursue folklore, but mainly with their supervision being from the University of New England, the which body would require of them regular residence in Armidale, N. S. W.

14 This would be associated with Tamworth, where U.N.E. had a fine Regional University Office, and, courtesy of the Director there, it had much assisted with various music offerings, even as it supported the long-running Book Review Panel with *The Northern Daily Leader* newspaper, the exercise being to give New England plain and academically considered and reflective opinions to its New England readers and thinkers. On a lesser scale, U.N.E. would long assist the Tenterfield newspaper with like more probing reviews and articles.

15 A then folklore Ph.D. student, Barry Macdonald, already a significant scholar of Aboriginal song and legend, would produce a fine exhibition of his musical findings on this occasion, even suggesting the influence of the Aboriginal people on the tunes later and in a vague traditional sense, to be ascribed to memories of Captain Thunderbolt (the alias / self-chosen bushranging name for Fred Ward, who was ‘on the road’ in the middle years of the reign of Queen Victoria, until his death in 1870, in an escarpment region to the further east from Glen Innes.)

time he having become the university's much revered Deputy Chancellor. And by then, too, he had completed more than thirty years of hugely significant teaching and leadership in thought and publication in that rurally—set small residential and remarkably syllabus-influential university, with its proudly and defiantly announced concern for the experiences in peace and in war—and for the more traditional beliefs—of the ordinary men and women of these often seeming sprawling vastnesses of hinterland New South Wales.¹⁶

It is appropriate now to quote some of his reflections at that Conference opening, and as on the content of a particular Australian bush ballad:

I found that many Australian ballads could be sheeted home to one, often highly literate, individual; and that most of those which could not were descended from earlier Irish, English or Scottish songs whose origins were lost in antiquity. (J.S. Ryan, *Wright on Education* (2006), p. 115)

Most happily, this 1990 assemblage had also taken place in the more populous cultures-mingled—and-mixed eastern mass of the Continent, and it was quite soon after the lively and very positive Kuring'gai gathering in 1988, and in an even more appropriately location, in fact, at a genuine 'bush centre' in inland New South Wales; and this Wright College gathering was to prove to be much more successful, and so to assist the University of New England to becoming, in supportive fashion, an even more dynamic and ongoing ideas base for the richer national folklore to be gleaned in the vastly more closely settled, culturally archived, and populous Eastern States of Australia than from its begetter, Curtin University in the west, and on the outer edge of the metropolitan sprawl of Perth.

The Editorial Move,—and More Permanently,—to the More Populous and Settlement / Convict History-Richer East Side of the Continent

And then there was presented to the University of New England the opportunity for new and then to be peculiarly strongly nurtured research to be published, as when the still very small but quite significant national

¹⁶ Later, and especially with the coming of the internet, the U.N.E. catchment could become national, and, especially for post graduates, international. For an explanation of much of all this determined syllabus-extending work, see the present writer's anniversary contribution, the 50th Madgwick lecture to the University of New England in 2004. The full title of the quite rich text of this commemorative lecture explains much of the Armidale scholarly mental climate, and purpose, it being entitled: *Robert Bowden Madgwick (1905-1979), Modest Educationalist, Compassionate Visionary, and Civilising Force for his Region and the Nation, a Man ever concerned 'to know how ordinary people lived and worked'*. (Armidale: The University of New England, 2004.)

journal came east, as well as the much more likely opportunity for the eastern state's adult students' closer possible study—it embarked on for credit—of the nation's folklore as a whole.¹⁷ And soon there would be the regular teaching and treating of living and widely encountered lore, and this with a strong non—Indigenous and so settler-based content, similar to, but reaching beyond what Graham Seal had offered as in the first journals and his own and largely urban-focussed book, and very much European politics-influenced work, *The Hidden Culture*.

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Now, to the Folkloric Thought, History and Racial Mixes in the Eastern States of Australia

Indeed, the Armidale Conference could be said—much more than the Kuring'gai Conference earlier—to have introduced more closely¹⁸ Graham Seal and Gwenda Davey to: the U.N.E. campus and educational scene, as with—Russel Ward, David Kent, an English born social historian with relevant migration causing events in Britain, and another Armidale (U.N.E.) staff member, J.S. Ryan, then a comparative folklorist whose first training—in classics and with a very small measure of the Oceanic region's cultural contents, Museum curating—in New Zealand, and, quite early on, he a folklorist¹⁹ already contributing variously to the published work of the world-ranging *Folklore*, the journal of that international Society so long based in London. In his years in Oxford, and then, later, in Cambridge, he had been much concerned with Aboriginal lore, as he was also with the Germanic lore as surviving in Old Norse, Old English texts and lexis, and then, as re-fashioned, in the creative writings of his old Professor, one J.R.R. Tolkien, even as he had been much encouraged by Christina Hole, the early flourishing Oxford Folklorist, who had taken him under her wing,²⁰ and by the Cambridge women folklorists of the Senior

17 For the Curtin University's teaching text, *The Hidden Culture* by Graham Seal—was unduly theoretical, Gramsci influenced, and fated to not be re-published as originally issued. Interestingly, over the last 20 years or so, students enrolled in folklore courses at English, Scottish, and American and Continental Universities, have been given permission to count simultaneously studied U.N.E. courses into their graduate work for the higher degrees in their own countries.

18 For they had first met earlier, but fleetingly, at the Kuring'gai Convention.

19 In the early twenty-first century, he would serve for ten years on the Editorial Committee of the British journal, *Folk Life Studies*, even as he had edited a small volume of the tales of K. Langloh Parker for the London-based Folklore Society. And he would also be consulted, at the end of the century—and by the New Zealand contributors to the *Oxford English Dictionary*,—for opinions on Māori culture as he had recalled it from his Dunedin [N.Z.] nurture, and so the cultured scene there, as of the 1940s and 1950s.

20 This is referred to in the still embargoed series of sound tapes in the Australian National Library, 'The Boy from Belleknoves', there variously assembled since c.2009. And it is based on taped dialogues with William Oates, the Archivist for the University of New

Common Room of Lucy Cavendish College in the same university such as the redoubtable Hilda Ellis Davidson, sometime President of the Folklore Society, and Mrs. Nora Chadwick.

And so to Moving Australia Folklore, and to the Heritage Futures Research Centre at U.N.E.

Although it was not raised as a possibility at the time of the just discussed 1988-89 activities in New England, he, J.S. Ryan, and the Armidale Australian cultural scene were, doubtless, being vetted as possible regular contributors for materials for the Perth-based and very new but intended to be as its masthead said, the national journal, *Australian Folklore*.

And so, Perhaps, to Maintaining a / the Ward-conceived and More Folkloric Aspect—and Responses—to Australian History?

Meanwhile, the writing of regional Australian history had continued to be variously supported within the various historical societies, these usually affiliated with the much older doyen of them all, the Royal Australian Historical Society. And although he was not involved in the Armidale folklore Conference of 1989-90, the then (Associate) Professor Alan Atkinson was a lively and deeply respected supporter of the folklore enterprise there. In due course, he and J.S. Ryan would be the two main editors for the sensitive and remarkably comprehensive and so powerfully evocative New England cultural collection, *High, Lean Country*.²¹ Significantly, that collection had crystallised into a fine the work in New England of a clutch of outreaching scholars of Australian matters, from several disciplines, and who had come together in the 'Heritage Futures Research Centre', one of Australian social history focus, and drawing together in their research scholars from almost all the teaching and research Schools within this same rurally-set in northern New South Wales, these of the University of New England.

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21 England, and for the northern region of the state. There are scripts of this material, also embargoed for the present, and which have been, variously, expanded in more recent years. While the book version (2006) has Alan Atkinson as first editor, this name is followed by J.S. Ryan in the e-edition (2016), the latter writer also introducing the volume, as in pp.1-9 and the treating of the significant literature produced from within and much concerned in its settings with the region of 'New England'.

Thus, In Resume: A Particular Place, Suitable Conditions, Older and Committed Students and Teaching-Research Personnel in the General Area of 'Folklore', These Long Located in the Easiest and Most Regular Daily Contact

In a similar fashion to the earlier folklore-sympathetic clusters after 1945—these first in Melbourne, in Sydney, and then in Canberra,²²—the Armidale complex of sympathetic entities—from both the small and rurally set University and from the older and closely region-serving Armidale Teachers' College—(one founded in 1928, and with some nuanced Lancashire mindset input),—had long ago probably become the most persistent centre of such meticulous field work, of its collection and analysis, as well as of its informed / comparative scholarship, that can be found outside any of the Australian states' capital cities. On this last point, it is interesting that J.S. Ryan was—long ago, now—invited to write the reflective article on the frequency and patterning of Australian- Aboriginal and settler / migrant / folk motifs as they might be deemed to fit / to modify variously the Stith Thompson classifying system,²³ and so he had treated carefully as of their frequency and likely motif patterning(s) in Australia-produced texts, in the significant survey article, as mentioned above, it located at pp. 177-182, in *The Oxford Companion to Australian Folklore* (1993).

(Further, although it is a considerable anticipation, he would, much later, be selected to join the Editorial Advisory Board from Australia for *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of World Folklore and Folklife* (Greenwood Press: Westport, Connecticut & London), (in four volumes), 2006. In addition to it then subsuming portions of his Australian material, he would contribute variously, as with the Volume 1, section, I, pp. 44—49, on the concept of 'Hero', or the long and quite close and sympathetic nation-analysing survey, 'Australia (British)', Vol. 1, pp. 277-292),²⁴ apart from other minor editorial tasks and responses to his much more distant colleagues' queries.

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22 Sydney is caught in the Kuring'gai exercise, Melbourne in the already referred to early work of Ward, Anderson, and others, and, long after World War II, the various folkloric gatherings held each Easter, in Canberra, and associated with the National Library.

23 Although the system is popularly linked with Stith Thompson, it had originated with the Estonian A. Aarne—the two names often being linked by a hyphen in more standardized Motif References.

24 In *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of World Folklore and Folklife* (vol. IV, pp. 277, ff.) he would provide nuanced sections on: the English Heritage; the Irish Heritage; the Scottish Heritage; and 'Post-war Immigration and Englishness', then turning to the more subtle 'Oral Traditions'.

But, to Return to our,—at the Outset—Remarks, and so, to—the Town / Small City of Armidale in Northern New South Wales, and to its SMALL and Very Rurally Set University—as A Further and Most Appropriate and Energetic Host Body for the Collecting And Study of [Australian] Folklore

Under this head, we should notice the significance of the culture recording work [by the same J.S. Ryan];²⁵ the like earlier work of the late Eric Dunlop in the Armidale Folk Museum, in the small New South Wales rurally set city of Armidale, and also note his achievements—(1) as the foundation President of the Northern Tablelands of new New South Wales' Armidale and District Historical Society in 1955, and (2) particularly for his fine teaching of local history to local schools and to intending primary school teachers, this done particularly by means of the materials that he would collect up to fill the (still to be ongoing and strong in 2015-16) Armidale and District Folk Museum, to long remain a fine teaching resource for the schools of the surrounding area.

Apart from his various and wider ranging early studies to be found in the *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, he, Dunlop, had produced a number of papers concerning folk museums, as well as having been asked to give a definitive account of this movement, his fine synopsis and appraisal finally appearing in the very significant, scholarly, and direction-pointing 1958 edition of *The Australian Encyclopedia*. And, as indicated earlier, he had worked in tandem with the English –by-birth Dr. Robin Walker, the first editor for the *Armidale and District Historical Society Journal and Proceedings*,²⁶ this journal commencing with assisting Walker's very much pioneering research, a body of investigation and enterprising collecting up which would, in due course, result in his own and so fine regional and folk-rich recording history, *Old New England* (1963).

But, Back to the Larger Movement, Re-capping, on the Evolution of Australian Folkloric Studies

This already noted, the Second National Folk Conference came,²⁷ and it to be held in January 1990 at the University of New England, and there in the common rooms and the splendidly lit and already quite historically

25 This record is found in various volumes of the *Armidale and District Historical Journal and Proceedings*.

26 Interestingly, J. S. Ryan would be drawn into the editorship—and for a number of years—of this regional historical—and cultural—journal in later 1966, and serve in this capacity for another thirteen years. See again, below.

27 A later, and intended to be National Folklore Conference, but one of small numbers, and lacking the now ailing Russel Ward, was presented in St Albert's College, at U.N.E., but it did not attract either truly significant papers, or the quality of attendees as had occurred for the milestone Wright College event.

atmospheric Dining Hall of Wright College,²⁸ would be stimulated by the local—and now, metaphorically giant—figure, then much earlier Associate Professor—and, quite early on, Professor, then full Emeritus Professor and Deputy Chancellor—Russel B. Ward, the author of the milestone culture-exploring work, *The Australian Legend* (1958), and one hauntingly associated with the south end of the Wright College Dining Hall. It had been a momentous and nation-defining text which came from the much pruning down of the ungainly and sprawling thesis as originally submitted for his doctorate by Ward under the supervision at the Australian National University of his longtime friend, and erstwhile Protestant associate in Melbourne, Professor Charles Manning H. Clark.²⁹

The latter had long been earlier a close friend to his slightly older (b.1914) research student in their Melbourne and pre-Canberra days,³⁰ and each was much stimulated by their friendship, their careers of some academic / political leftist stance / academic mischance, and, not least, by the close doctrinal nurture experienced by them both, it giving them the considerable knowledge that they had of the Protestant denominations of the Christian religion, of its social manifestations in Australia, and thus of its adherents' often simplistic but traditional behaviour patterns, as of service to one's fellows and the duty of care within the family, and of unswerving loyalty to one's mates.³¹

Wright College as a Time of Pause and Then to be a Launching Pad

The before mentioned 1990 conference, as held in Wright College within the University of New England, was, indeed, a sort of saving / holding operation, as a follow-up to the by then tragically stalled—but

28 This was created by the fine stain glass windows over the High Table, and by the quite quickly assembling collection of paintings of significant pastoral and educational figures, most notably of the Wright Family. (For the last, see above.)

29 Of much interest here is the fact that the practical plan for a pilot study of an early settled inland area for close research into Australian place names,—a project put to the Australian Academy of the Humanities by Dr. J.S. Ryan of the then Department of English at the University of New England, in Armidale, N.S.W.,—would be both approved by the Academy, and obtain Professor C.H.M. Clark as an academic supervisor who would visit project and region much more than general supervision would have dictated.

And its so salaried collector and field researcher would be John F. Atchison, [later O.A.M.] a New England history graduate, whose Ph.D. was on the theme of 'when the Australian Agricultural Company 'went west'—i.e turned inland from the coastal region of Newcastle, in N.S.W., the place and the research following on from the convict period.

That Canberra- approved topic was to prove an excellent apprenticeship for his Place Names Project, based on a land area to the south of Armidale, and focussed on the small rural centre of Walcha. [The whole was submitted as by Atchison and Ryan, with some mediation from A.T. Yarwood.]

30 For then the slightly older man would become the researching 'pupil' to his friend.

31 Interestingly, Manning Clark would observe to the present writer that they both had something in common, a considerable dose of Dunedin Presbyterianism, this being the case with Manning's own mother, and in part my mother's temper, as from her father, a Scot dispossessed from the High Barbeth lands facing onto Loch Ryan in southwest Scotland.

would be nation-arousing—cultural and identity-defining purposes of the Kuring'gai event. And that event had then been attended by scholars from all over (eastern) Australia, with this large gathering in the eastern states giving, amongst many other activities, an enthusiastic endorsement of the pioneering and somewhat hesitant editorial work just begun at Curtin University,—two of whose folk material collectors had become the foundation editors of what had become the still somewhat tentative, and slim—but presented as a national / international journal,—the soon to be annual, *Australian Folklore*.

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And So to the Then Appearance / Siting in the Eastern States and the Editing There of the Journal Australian Folklore.

That publication was,—as it continues to be—a serious and scholarly academic journal, however grass roots-like many of its contents may be deemed to be—and a publication which would and did take cognizance of more political, national and even of what were deemed relevant international matters akin to its folklore. And this national journal of the field overview had been intended, very briefly,—as from 1987—to be issued twice a year. It had been planned to come from Curtin University, under the editorship of the England-reared, graduate of the University of New South Wales,—and then to be Sheffield-further trained—Graham Seal, and he was then in a working partnership in Perth, Western Australia, with the bush music enthusiast, the America-born David Hults.

The former of these, Graham Seal of Curtin University, with Gwenda Davey who was then teaching an Early Childhood Diploma at Monash University, had worked so assiduously for the discipline to obtain for it a place in the Australian academy, he being very much assisted by a period of graduate training—and experience—in the general field area at the Professor John D.A. Widdowson-headed Centre for the English Cultural Tradition and Language (CECTAL), a research and teaching centre within the University of Sheffield,³² in western Sheffield, Yorkshire, in the North of England, an institution almost in sight of the historic and heroic dales of the Lakes Districts themselves, as well as of the defiant border and south west portions of Scotland.

32 It is difficult to exaggerate the significance of the splendid support supplied over many years to scholars from Australian universities by Professor J.D.A. Widdowson, the long-time head of the Institute / Centre there for the English Cultural Tradition and Language (CECTAL). Some specific references will follow, but the long-time editor of *Australian Folklore* has been so indebted to, as well as grateful for—two leave periods as Visiting Professor within the same Centre. More recently, the journal's co-editor, Dr. Robert James Smith, has also worked closely in Yorkshire with the by then partly retired Professor Widdowson.

And so, it was that Graham Seal, with Dr. Gwenda Davey, had assembled—with a number of discussions held in Armidale with those then conference-resident personnel,³³—and then edited to publication the very thoughtful and clearly signed articles' compilation, *The Oxford Companion to Australian Folklore* (it only to be released in 1993, and, sadly, never to be re-printed, let alone go into paperback.)

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And So Return to the New England Eastern Australian Counterbalance to the Rather Formal Motif Approach and Perhaps Overly Urban / International Perspectives of Gwenda Davey and Graham Seal: Folk / People, History, and Traditional Thought in the Armidale, N.S.W. region.

However, the influence on the collecting of folklore-like / folkloric materials, the writing of postgraduate theses in the field, and the general mentoring of many nationally respected students by Russel Ward, the author of the national, colonial and folk epic-chronicling *The Australian Legend* (Oxford University Press, 1958), and the collection of outgoing academics who were to be found in both the membership of the Junior and Senior Common Rooms of this Armidale university college,³⁴ Wright College, would mean that lore and idiomatic and vernacular language—both of which had, variously, already been features to their local and cited communities-enmeshed annual publication, the *Armidale and District Historical Society's Journal and Proceedings*—would become of considerable significance to what was, in a sense, in some notion of its progeny, the now—and for so long—to be the Australia's east-side-edited, and producing a large proportion of the articles for the for so long now annual publication, *Australian Folklore*.

It—this re-configured publication—would be very firmly embedded in folk / bush / urban/ migrant Australian life as experienced, and often

33 The present writer recalls very clearly his discussion with Seal as to the patterns laid out by Stith Thompson, and their likely presence / absence in the Australian Aboriginal material. In consequence he would be asked to contribute the overview article on these legends and their major motifs that appears in Davey and Seal, *The Oxford Companion to Australian Folklore* (Melbourne: The Oxford University Press, 1993), pp . 240, ff.

34 John Robertson, Raymond J. Macdonald, and the British born and earlier trained at the University of Liverpool (Dr. /Associate Professor) Robin Walker were early in that SCR, while, variously, the 20th century JCR had included the previously mentioned Don Aitkin, Ken McNab, Peter Drysdale, also Geoff Page—the first three to be professors of stature in related cultural fields, the last a poet and essayist of power—and other later well-known writers in New England were to be much inspired in their studies of Australian culture, history and outreach to other nations—and this both by Russel Ward, and by the College's founding family, the Wrights of Wollumbi, whose members were much associated with the College, as was Phillip (the University's Chancellor), Peter (a conservation-practising grazier), and Judith, the only daughter, and one of Australia's best known and loved poets, and Owen Wright, of the same family, who would write the classic history of their family property, *Wongwibinda* (1985).

described in the most significant / authentic and esteemed Australian literary texts,³⁵ as well as containing appropriate overseas, international or comparative materials.

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In Some Recapitulation

The regional and heavily rural, regional and colonial / folkish contents of this same antecedent journal, the *Armidale and District Historical Society Journal and Proceedings*, were—and remain—distinguishing features of this journal, one which had been edited / much shaped by (the late) Dr. Robin Walker, a graduate of the University of Liverpool, for several years,—then by Dr. John S. Ryan,³⁶ and others—much as it was to be much assisted by the (later Dr.) Lionel A. Gilbert, O.A.M., from the earlier Teachers' College, and that Society's long serving President, from the later 1950s. Indeed, careful readers will discern many interesting links in both topic and contributor-preferred /- encouraged themes, as between the two publications.

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An Early—and Deeply Australia- Influential Encounter with (Western European) Folk Life Studies in the Mid 1960s

And of some interest—and concerning a continuity of persons and of their formative experiences and folkloric and related tastes here—is the fact that J.S. Ryan,—when researching the folklore-like and oral tale antecedent material in relation to the so-called 'fictions' of J.R.R. Tolkien, in his (Ryan's) research work for the Faculty of English in the University of Cambridge, in England in late 1964, 1965, and 1966—had attended and contributed to both the British Association for the Advancement of Science Conference's Folklore section, which was one held in Cambridge in 1965, and another group, one so significant of that period. Soon after he, J.S. Ryan, had attended the other scholarly gathering, one which sought to give current and likely future perspectives on the activities then freshly as labelled 'Folk Life', and the early and seminal separate conference in

35 After volume 10, the journal, following a gentle hint / suggestion from the Modern Language Association in New York, has included a very careful and comprehensive index of names, concepts, etc. These indices constitute an invaluable collection of nuanced lexis, semantics, and guidance to the folk lexis and folk thought.

36 He would serve as sole editor to the end of the 1970s; and he very early became Associate Professor, with responsibilities for language work, for the expounding the History of the English—and so of Australian English—Language, Lexicography, and, from c.1990, he would be teaching Australian Folklore, duly becoming the Professor of Folklore and Heritage, and so serving in both the more recently separately designated Schools—of the Humanities, and—of Arts.

the field of writing and thinking in what was to be termed Folk Life Studies,³⁷ and a distinct integrative approach; for it was one which brought back the (collected / curated) objects, the museums, and the (localised and appropriately recorded) folk experience into the more continental—and even Scandinavia-influenced—realm of the hitherto discrete Folk Museums of the British Isles, and of the nearer countries of Western Europe.³⁸ In short, for the British Isles, Folk Life Studies was deemed a profession with a particular twist, and one which gave a certain distinction to the ‘folkish’ strand in so many small regional collections that were usually displayed/ presented in a one off fashion, rather than as being parts of a dynamic and community-fascinating movement.

[It is, of course, all of these cultures, collections, genres, and the linked scholarship that are to be found in the largely British journal *Folk Life*,³⁹ one issued twice a year and having the sub-title, ‘*Journal of Ethnological Studies*’. This fine publication has for many years now, commanded world attention—particularly in the countries settled / resettled by Western European peoples, and details of its purpose and more evolved and current style are given at the end of this paper.]

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Now, to Return to the Cultural Mix, as by 1988, and One Very Well Prepared for Nurturing the National—but So Long Armidale-based and the Wright (College) and Core Community of Scholars—Moulding—Annual Publication, Australian Folklore

As the above account as given will have made clear, the national folklore journal’s longtime place of sole editing, and also of the several formative influences that then also came into play, for not least did the peculiar combination of circumstances influencing the teaching of—and research into—Australian colonial society and its beliefs and working life in the 1950s and 1960s, come into play, as well as deriving—in some part—from such shaping influences as:

37 In the earlier 21st century, he would be invited to serve for some ten years on the Editorial Board of the *Folk Life* Studies journal, one variously edited from representative universities / folk museums of Great Britain and of Ireland. This society produces the learned but very readable journal, *Folk Life: Journal of Ethnological Studies*.

38 This conference actually visited the Cambridge Museum on an afternoon excursion of the conference. Sadly many of the terrible upheavals of mass murders of civilians in the second decade of the twenty first century have been related to / concerned to destroy aspects of the same innocent folk culture of these very countries.

39 The contents range over Western Europe, with the odd further colonial example treated, and a fairly regular cognizance of the institute nearest the place of first landing in the Americas, (the University of) Newfoundland.

- the rise in post -World War II Britain of the reflective and sympathetic / somewhat nostalgia -driven discipline of ‘folk life’, and of
- the already less etymological and more sociological aspects to close work on both the linguistic form and the actual physical terrain caught in every toponym as of interest to place name studies, all of this as from the English Place Name Society and its country volumes and its other (serial) publications;⁴⁰
- of the Sheffield style, integrative aspects both to ‘folklore’ and to the largely / longtime rural and traditional field studies in / for that Centre for the ‘English Cultural Tradition’;
- of a regained and belated first hand Australian understanding of the last century as lived / suffered in Ireland;⁴¹ and, in a heightening contrast,
- a much sharper awareness of the vast influx of non—British immigrants into Australia since 1945, of their cultural baggage, and so of many fresh and hitherto not encountered social habits and modes of expression.

However, it is the peculiar and distinctive nature of the intermeshing scholarly and folk communities—most especially of the non-Indigenous people(s) in Eastern Australia, and of the various exercises in the education of adults associated with the quite small and decentralised—and nation watching—university city of Armidale in northern New South Wales,—that have, alike, combined in no small degree to support and shape serious publication of so much researched and collected folklore, now early in the 21st century, the raw materials being assembled for due consideration from all parts of Australia, and, comparatively, from further afield, a the more recent issues of *Australian Folklore* make abundantly clear.

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40 In the 1960s, J.S. Ryan, J.F. Atchison and others had been involved in a pilot study—one under the auspices of the Australian Academy of the Humanities- into the patterns / significance of Australian Place Names in the Walcha District to the nearer south of Armidale [this under the general direction of the already mentioned iconic historian of his nation, Professor C.H.M. Clark]. J.S. Ryan had also been a colleague to Dr. Kenneth Cameron, University of Nottingham, the Director of the English Place Name Society, in 1957-1958, especially in the extension of the teaching of the History of the English Language to adults studying for interest, rather than as for the Honours School of England Language and Literature, with a special emphasis on language.

41 This last applied particularly to A.T. Atkinson, *v. supra*. It is also a part of the Ireland, then Australia background of J.S. Ryan, as from his paternal grandparents, they crossing from Bacchus Marsh in lower and western Victoria to the Lawrence—Waitahuna region goldfields in Eastern / ‘Central’ Otago, but after the passing of the riches and the beckoning rush to Gabriel’s Gully, near Lawrence, in the inland of the southern province of Otago.

To Pause, Reflect and Assert

Further, *Australian Folklore*—or, if you will, its Editorial Board and Advisers—have all been the better placed, courtesy of: the foundation period’s style of Wright College; its physical educational, and social location; its Fellows, its early and Australia-curious ability to offer a place, a platform even,—for publishing reflective perspectives on aspects of the like lore of southern Pacific Ocean countries ; and, occasionally, on certain significant and impinging South East Asian cultural issues, notably in Viet Nam, in the Philippines, in Indonesia, and, variously, in and from the south west Pacific.

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A Remarkable Viewing Platform for Folk Matters / Comparative Perspectives

As has often been observed by visitors, the region of New England, in Northern New South Wales, has—by both location and historical / cultural detachment—afforded remarkably balanced perspectives on its own and others’ / other cultures’ lore,—in so many other discrete regions, and more nationally,—and this very much in the fashion as has occurred in other and quieter watcher and reflective cultures, as in the cases of significant folk culture studies—as with those from Denmark, Estonia, Sheffield,⁴² Edinburgh, or Newfoundland—in every instance , the bemused onlooker academy / learned publication resolving to assist adjacent / larger and more influential societies in assembling the larger/ more impacting folk record / experience, since the beginning of the nineteenth century; and all of this pausing, comparing and reflecting would lead to an important sharing of their conclusions as to the patterns in—and significance of—their folkloric experiences and of their chronicling, to the reflective benefit of all.

A Distinctive Heritage from / through the Members of Wright College for 21st Century Australia

Indeed, Wright College may be deemed—as many earlier visitors had observed—a place for pause, a viewing platform, as from one of their own anthologies and publications that so well reflect that shrewd and representative body’s experiences, duly determined insights, and folklore-like conclusions. The work that enshrined much of this, *Wright for New England* (2016),—a bulky folio volume largely assembled on behalf of all the living members of that same body, by the present writer,—has, in

⁴² Here the reference is made to the long running CECTAL, the Centre for the English Cultural Tradition and Language, it located on the western side of the city of Sheffield, abutting on the ballad-rich dales of Yorkshire.

the brief period since its publication, proved to be able to surprise many by its quietly persistent categorising of research already to hand, and even to be reflected aloud in the peculiarly successful manner of the Estonian National Museum and Folklore Committee and editors of the fine reflective globally-aware publication *e-Folklore*, which—and most pleasingly—has included in its favourite Australian researchers, more than one scholar from New England (Australia).⁴³

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Not a Conclusion

The moral of this necessarily somewhat disjointed—but intended-to-be-explanatory-tale is that both careful planning—as from the reaching and recording group so long associated almost daily in both the then styled Faculty of Arts, at U.N.E. and also in the early years of the tertiary-education and nationally pioneering Wright College, in Armidale, New South Wales—and of its influential regional Armidale and District Historical Society, one where (Professor) Russel Ward had long been a key figure,—and the operation of chance,—probably / did actually work together to produce a steering / directing pattern for the teaching of—and research into—the body of folklore that is believed to exist, persist, and to have its ongoing life variously in our greater and surrounding (Eastern) Australian society, and in its memory and records.

The New England Folkloric / Cultural Development Pattern- A Quite Vital One

In the just explored Australian case, perspective, quiet, empathetic and more mature students, as well as scholar teachers and writers of some considerable experience in and with the Folkloric materials of other cultures, and / or of earlier periods of their present societies, were here, and, generally, are most likely to be able to sustain research into their own / the proximate living story of Australian culture, along with fresh insights into the fragments / themes of the transported lore that are more obviously both remembered and clearly generative of / available for fresh treatments and embellishments in the new and ever changing and more mixed cultural settings. For Australia has long been ‘multicultural’, a condition mirrored in its so numerous folk customs, writings, and (more) popular thought and in its regular modes of expression.

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43 From New England, J.S. Ryan and A. Asbjørn Jøn have published in that journal.

Appendix: Folk Life

There now follows the more developed official description of the journal, *Folk Life*, as it appears inside the cover of its issues since 2011, as in this account, when the following appeared in Volume 50, Number 1, May 2012: ‘*FOLK LIFE: Journal of Ethnological Studies*’; then there was given the Editorial Board with persons from two Scottish Universities, one from Ulster, one from Eire, one from France, one from the University of Oslo, Norway, and one, from a colonial folk—outreach, one Professor Martin Lovelace, from the Memorial University of Newfoundland.⁴⁴ There would also be an Australian representative on this Board, J.S. Ryan, University of New England, for a number of years, and Professor G. Seal, Curtin University, would be invited to it, as from 2015.

We may now quote—this a composite—from the inside cover of that very recent particular issue, and from the like definitions of purpose, as in Vol. 15, Number 2, of October 2015:

Folk Life: Journal of Ethnological Studies is a journal devoted to the study of all aspects of traditional ways of life in Great Britain and Ireland. The journal publishes original, high quality, peer-reviewed research in the form of unsolicited articles, solicited papers (which are usually selected from those read at the Society’s annual conference,) and members’ papers (which are usually short reports of work in progress).⁴⁵ Work published in *Folk Life* may also include appropriate reporting on museology related to traditional ways of life of other countries and regions, on cultural heritage and tourism, and on the history and development of the study of ethnology.

This fascinating interdisciplinary subject, *Folk Life*,—as it has roused itself—particularly since World War II, and so endeavoured to define its style, purpose, and anticipated impact / role—is one clearly and importantly, to be seen from an historical perspective, but it is also one highly relevant to the widespread and chaotically confusing current debate on sustainability, globalization, migrations of people and so on (cultural / historical) and / or meaningful ‘folk’ identity. The journal (*Folk Life*) itself states very firmly that it is committed to multi-disciplinary approaches, and that it wishes to foster international perspectives and debate. It deals with all forms of both material and expressive culture, engages in current theoretical debate and provides a forum for innovative museological

44 This last inclusion is a long-standing and most appropriate one, from the early days of the Sheffield-born John H.D. Widdowson’s time there some fifty years ago, and appropriate in view of it being an early landfall in North America for migrating peoples from Western Europe.

45 These / similar rubrics are to be found in all the issues of the journal.

thinking. *Folk Life* also ‘aims to provide a robust selection of book reviews, which assists in the achievement of the purpose of the Society for Folk Life Studies.’

Now issued twice a year, each number contains between 90 and 100 pages, has a number of black and white photographs, and the occasional table of relevant data.

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Appendix: How to be Aware, to do Research and so to Publish on One’s Own Society’s Past and Present Thought and More Communal Thought?

And so we may return to the initial speculations about the favourable climate for the collecting and so, duly, of the interpreting of a body of fading or even well nigh lost lore, both specifically located, and so often discovered to be hugely significant in itself, as well as being fascinatingly comparative in its content. In our case, we are further sustained by a most powerful and companionable scholarly publication somewhat later on the scene, that of the *Australian Journal of Colonial History*, and one also very much a product of the perspectives of this place called ‘New England’, one where in many aspects time has stood still, and the past is so much more easily pondered on. And this tale will seem one strangely familiar to those who know anything of the ever collecting and, globally, hugely significant perspectives attained in the nearer field at another seemingly out-of-the-way academy, the Memorial University in Newfoundland, or of those museum-based authorities in Estonia which produce the world-ranking *e-Folklore* journal and related publications of remarkable perspicacity.

New England / Wright College / ‘Wright Thinking’, and Other Perspectives

Indeed, all this reminds us strangely of the not quite lost but retrievable lore behind the *Beowulf* poet, of his crafting of the new from the fragments of the old, and, perforce, also of the much scattered and but fragmented old heroic lays which scholars like the late Oxbridge history-probing and comparative literary thinkers—Professors H.M. Chadwick, or E.O.G. Turville-Petre—had sought to speculate on. Yet whether all of this is completely convincing to our readers, or no, it is intended that this account—as from the vantage point in the , for so long now, Wright—and U.N.E.—and scholarly pondering from New England, have, alike been so well located for musing on the style of the settler lives as lived and told of across the Australian land mass and of researching developing / modifying ways of its many incoming or evolving societies,—may afford you some insight into the way that the thoughts of (the now very) many—those whose perspectives have been recorded, suitably—refereed for and then

published in—this Australian national journal—have for so long developed, and, variously, been moved to illuminating publication.

Wright College and Russel Ward

This massive cultural perception, effort and achievement have, alike, also been supported a particular place, and by its so well remembered College man, Russel Ward and the younger contemporaries he had led, by the reflective memory of its Editors, Assessors and Editorial Consultants, and by their knowledge of other relevant / apposite / analogous cultural materials. Yes, it is vital to recognise the greatest Wright Intellectual Legacy to our generation and those to follow, that of such a powerful reflective perspective on Australian culture, history, and so on their place in the historical and social experience of all mankind in Time's flux.

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And so we, the students, teachers and so many of the other members and variously, associates of the Wright cultural researches –and benefactors thereof—, have sought to bring together our pondering on a record of surprising achievement, one which is the seedbed in which the yarn, the tale, the national conscience, and the space for reflective pause, and the practice of tolerance have all come together. In short, after much thought, there has been more clearly identified—at a particular cultural centre—a seeking for, and achieving, reflective and robust expression of the sequential life experience of the non-Indigenous peoples of Australia.

Further, from time to time like the mentioned journal, the University's teaching and research have further treated of the proximate, framing, and equally complex and intriguing cultures as may be found along our several horizons, in the south west regions of the Pacific Ocean—especially in the colonial period and in 'the Australian bush', or lingering in the life as lived / remembered outside the great sprawling cities, especially along and behind the Eastern litoral.

In the sincerity of their communal living, the several Wright and U.N.E. generations of humanities students and their successor teachers to date have practiced much tolerance, the joyousness possible for humanity from their inherited and identity –bestowing thought, and the deepest compassion for the less fortunate; and they have put their stamp on those whose heritage follows their occasional journal, *The Martlet*, and the ideals of tolerance and of service that is synonymous, as it is with the poetry and thought of the College's own Judith Wright, poet and ecologist.

In the spirit of our Russel Ward, so, with the recording of Australia and its people's attitudes, may Australian folklore long be conducted with the

sort of inspiration so typical the deeply thinking compassionate and ever so challenging Wright and Wright College names and related and similarly located communities of honest and truth-seeking scholars. Our last major communication of the thought and development come from that College, in a vast folio volume, issued in 2016, has been styled *Wright for New England*, but its holistic manner of historical and cultural folklore was / is, of course, one appropriate for all of Australia, from the late twentieth century and beyond.

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