

## Book Reviews

**Paul Robert Adams**, *The Best Hated Man in Australia: The Life and Death of Percy Brookfield 1875-1921*, Puncher and Wattman Biography, Glebe, 2010. ISBN 9781921450228; 377 pp., 40 photographs.

**P**ercy Brookfield aroused violent emotions in many. He was shot dead at Riverton railway station, South Australia, on March 22, in 1921, his killer was Koorman Tomayoff, a Russian. Some on the political Left, particularly those who made up the Militant Minority Movement in the late 1920s long maintained that Brookfield, an English-born seafarer turned labour activist, turned New South Wales Parliamentarian, was the victim of a political assassin.

As is often the case in the telling of the lives and times of heroes of organised labour, myth replaced mundane reality – at least for several decades. Brookfield was simply and sadly the collateral damage from a shooting spree initiated by the apparently deranged Tomayoff who wounded several other innocents in the course of the spree.

However, despite the attendance of an estimated 15,000 people at his funeral in Broken Hill on March 25, 1921, there were those who probably entertained a view that Tomayoff had performed a public service by despatching Brookfield. To his supporters, Brookfield was a champion of working people, a warrior against conscription in Australia during the years of The Great War and a powerful advocate for workplace health and safety. To his detractors, Brookfield was a dangerous revolutionary and an incendiary.

In this engaging biography, Paul Robert Adams buries the myth surrounding Brookfield's murder and, in a narrative that is far from mundane, unfolds the layered life of the Lancashire lad who went to sea aged 13, in 1888, and plied the oceans until his arrival on the Melbourne waterfront in November, 1894. From Melbourne, Brookfield moved to the bush, working as a coal miner, a hard rock miner, a prospector, a coach-driver and horse drover. He carried his swag across Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland before arriving in Broken Hill in 1910. In was there, in the Silver City, that Brookfield would make his name as a unionist and firebrand politician before being laid to rest as mourners sang *The Red Flag*, and listened to a graveside orator proclaim that 'Brookie' was the grandest man that ever lived, the greatest champion that the people have ever had. The unidentified orator added:

*His heart was the best that ever beat in a human breast. There was not a weak link in the great chain on manly principles. There was no weak spot in the character.*

Writer Paul Robert Adams' assessment of Brookfield is more measured. He observes:

*A calm and temperate man, thoughtful and not rushed to respond, Brookfield was nothing like the demon he was later presented as, and he had little in the way of unsavoury or immoral habits. By the standards of a Broken Hill miner he was virtually vice-free. He would attend the odd boxing match or game of football. He was, however, all but teetotal. From time to time he would join others in a social beer but none of his friends recalled seeing him affected by alcohol. Along with the occasional bet, this was the extent of his known vices.*

The Adams' assessment will refresh the spirits of those who, toiling in the muddy fields of labour history, often find the idolised have feet of clay.

Adams paints a rounded picture of the Broken Hill where Brookfield worked then rose to prominence through union involvement, advocacy of the rights of working people, robust opposition to conscription for military service in a war that never ended all wars and service as the Member for Sturt in the New South Wales Parliament. Thus, in many respects, *The Best Hated Man in Australia* is as much a crisp, brief history of the place as it is a biography of the man. This is significant since Broken Hill and its companies, to a degree still not truly comprehended, forged the template for an industrial relations managerial mindset that remains pervasive in 21<sup>st</sup> century Australia. In producing this well-referenced volume, Adams, who grew up in Broken Hill, should be recognised for attending to unfinished business. As the author notes, an earlier biography of Brookfield, based on drafts written by Gilbert Giles Roper and edited, after his death, by Wendy and Alan Scarfe was published as *Labor's Titan* in 1983. Adams correctly observes that this book 'inevitably suffered because the author did not live to complete it'. Another work, drafted by former New South Wales Education Minister Ernest Wetherell remained unpublished as a consequence of the death of the author in 1996. Appropriately, Adams recognises that *The Best Hated Man in Australia* owes much to the earlier endeavours of Roper and Wetherell.

Importantly, however, this book goes well beyond those earlier endeavours, providing a new window on the early-life experiences that shaped Brookfield and the workplace realities that gave Broken Hill its passionate brand of labour activism. As such it will interest and inform those with an interest in both Broken Hill and the wider Australian labour movement. Contextually, this book is a winner.

Overall, this is no hagiographic work that canonises Brookfield as some labour saint and martyr. If Brookfield had many followers it was not because he sought to lead. It was because he inspired hope and confidence and because, as is often the case, he spoke what many only thought and did what many only imagined could be done. Brookfield's power was the power of attraction. To portray Brookfield as a working class superhero – a Titan, perhaps - would have served only to diminish the man. His attractiveness as a character stems from his lack of grandiosity and mendacity, his pedestrian determination and his plodding, quite touching, decency.

Brookfield's relatively brief life in the limelight is a story that is worth the telling. Adams has told it in a workmanlike manner – without sentiment, without drumbeats, without the flutter of flags flown at half-mast. It cements Brookfield's deserved place in the history of organised labour in Australia and provides novel insights into the enduring strength that characterises some sections of organised labour and mineworkers in particular.

**Alan Murray**

\*\*\*\*\*

**John Hillman**, *The International Tin Cartel*, Routledge, London and New York, 2010, Pp. 484 +xii.

**J**ohn Hillman has written a very comprehensive history of the international cartel that sought to control the tin industry from 1928 to 1985. To start with, he provides an informative overview of tin mining and usage from ancient times down through the rise of industrial production and marketing in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, before undertaking his analysis of the International Tin Committee (in 1956 reconstituted as the International Tin Council). Along the way, we are informed of conditions affecting production, refining, and distribution within the various centres of tin mining (Cornwall, West Africa, South East Asia, and China) and consumption (from the nineteenth century Europe and the United States).

The ITC arose as a depression-fighting measure aimed at supporting prices and reducing the degree of volatility in consumption and production. As such it was one of several primary commodity support schemes; others included sugar, rubber, and wheat. Of these, the international tin arrangement was the most durable, a record that is simply

remarkable given the complexities of exercising control when a host of variables had to be juggled. The basic challenge was to adjust production to retain an alignment with demand after allowing for fluctuations in inventories, including a buffer stock manipulated by the ITC. Like other primary products, demand for tin was price inelastic and rapid supply side adjustments were impossible to achieve. Moreover, unlike agricultural commodities, unique conditions faced organisations that governed minerals: investment was non-transferrable, depletion was a concern, and price levels affected exploitation practices, with low prices encouraging high-grading and high prices promoting rapid exhaustion, and few if any substitutes were available. Behind these basic conditions, the ITC grappled with a range of other considerations. The structure of the industry varied from one country to the next and created different tensions among producers. Some countries lacked the administrative machinery to exert effective control over production levels. National quotas were a source of painful negotiations involving metropolitan, colonial, and national priorities. Estimating the level of inventories – a key factor affecting current and future prices - was difficult because consumers of tin held undisclosed stocks. Similarly, some production was ‘invisible’. The prices of other metals entrained in tin ores influenced production decisions. Hillman masterfully charts the course of the negotiations that led to a succession of agreements over the course of the ITC’s operations.

The author also examines changes in the structure of the mining, smelting, and consuming branches of the industry at the national and international levels. He assesses the impact of shocks and unanticipated developments such as changes in tin use, personal disagreements, civil and world wars, panics, and the notorious Howeson scandal. Hillman also evaluates the efficiency of the ITC, and he emphasises the effect of learning processes that enabled its leaders to refine their methods.

The ITC attracted more than its share of controversy. The author carefully points out that arguments against the cartel were not informed by rigorous economic theory or by solid empirical evidence. Instead, ideology shaped debate. In so doing, he presents economic principles in a digestible way and gently introduces elements of game theory.

*The International Tin Cartel* is encyclopaedic in its coverage and overall it is written in an approachable style. Although the treatment of the tortuous negotiations is sometimes heavy going, the understanding of the subtleties of complex international bargaining thereby gained is invaluable. The book is based on the comprehensive records of the Colonial Office and national archives around the world. In the best

scholarly tradition, Hillman has spared no effort in compiling a rich history of an important international institution. The book will interest economists, scholars of international business, policy analysts, as well as professionals interested in commodity markets. Its broad coverage of a key international industry will earn it a place on the shelves of every serious library.

**The University of Newcastle, Australia**

**Gordon Boyce**

\*\*\*\*\*

**R. Keith Johns**, *A mirage in the desert? The discovery, evaluation and development of the Olympic Dam ore body at Roxby Downs, South Australia, 1975-88*, O'Neil Historical & Editorial Services, Adelaide 2010, 64 pp.

**A** *mirage in the desert* provides the history behind the development by Western Mining Corporation (WMC) in outback South Australia of the giant Olympic Dam copper, uranium, gold and silver mine from its discovery in 1975 until formal opening of the mine in 1988. The author, Keith Johns, was the key State Government Officer involved throughout this entire period and this volume demonstrates his intimate knowledge of all aspects of the project.

The importance of this work is immediately demonstrated by the fact that Olympic Dam remains the world's largest single resource of uranium, the fourth largest copper deposit and fifth largest gold deposit. Yet as revealed by this work, the lengthy 13-year process of developing the controversial mine was overshadowed by one potential product, uranium.

The volume is framed sequentially around the bureaucratic approval process and mine progress. It is arranged primarily in short, succinctly written chapters with explanatory headings on exploration tenure, environmental considerations, the 1983 blockade, the 'Three Mine' uranium policy and water supplies. There is a major chapter on the Roxby Downs Indenture Act and another emphasis on the controversy surrounding aboriginal sacred sites. A detailed description is also included of mine development following a final commitment to mining was made in May 1986.

The development period of the Olympic Dam mine is revealed here as a tale of hypocrisy and political expediency. Readers are advised that, soon after discovery in

1977, both Liberal and Labor parties in the South Australian Parliament supported a moratorium on uranium mining. This was reiterated one year later. However, after the Liberals gained Government in September 1979, they quickly supported uranium mining and processing under their energetic Mines and Energy Minister, Roger Goldsworthy, whilst the Labor Party continued its opposition. The latter blocked indenture legislation in South Australia's Upper House in June 1982 until one Labor member dramatically 'crossed the floor'. At this time the Labor Party was accused by its Liberal opponents as perceiving the Olympic Dam development as a 'mirage in the desert' thus providing the title to this book. Yet the political balance quickly changed again when the Labor Party was returned to Government in November 1982 when it maintained Government support for mine development within the so called 'Three Mine policy' on uranium mining. Consequently it was a Labor Premier, John Bannon, once an outspoken critic, who opened the Olympic Dam mine in 1988.

Aboriginal and environmental concerns about mining at Olympic Dam were first raised in 1979. In June 1980, it was alleged that clay pans adjacent to a proposed shaft site were of mythological significance. Such matters led Premier David Tonkin to note in November 1981 that only as a consequence of the Olympic Dam discovery was aboriginal interest attracted to the remote area. However, it was the construction of the bore field road across Canegrass Swamp, 50km north of Olympic Dam, in July 1982 that provoked the largest indigenous protest. It was only resolved in December after it was suggested that WMC might invoke the *force majeure* provision of their indenture and the Government approved \$450,000 expenditure to reroute the road.

Opposition also came from the Campaign Against Nuclear Energy (CANE) and in August 1983, 250 police were deployed to Olympic Dam to counter a CANE mine blockade. Three-hundred arrests resulted and the protest continued until the protestors were finally evicted by the police in November of that year.

Underlying all sections of the book is the astute and focussed commercial opportunism of WMC, commencing with its trail-blazing exploration programme that discovered a major ore body under 350 metres of barren rock. Coupled with this is the unambiguous appreciation of the economic opportunity by the State Department of Mines and Energy. Over the 13 years development period, WMC's exploration tenure was quickly and efficiently expanded over adjacent areas, joint ventures partners were secured, and an Indenture Act was requested and facilitated. Extensive environmental

and anthropological reports were compiled and assessed as required. At the same time, mainstream political support was gained in face of initial opposition.

This volume is highly recommended for all those interested in modern mining history as well as those involved in establishing new mines in Australia today. Olympic Dam is and will remain significant to the economy of Australia for a long period. Consequently this history will be also an important, indeed an essential study, in ongoing reflection. The book is well illustrated with photos from the period under consideration and neatly edited. It also includes excellent explanatory maps and a very useful time-line of the events.

*University of South Australia*

**Barry Cooper**

\*\*\*\*\*

**Philip J. Pells and Philip J. Hammon** (Written & compiled by), with contributions from Amanda Mackie, Karen Carlson and Brian Fox, *'The Burning Mists of Time': A Technological and Social History of Mining at Katoomba*, WriteLight, Blackheath, NSW, 2009, v, 258 pp., ill., maps.

**T**his fine production with many stunning photographs, old and new, and a plethora of maps, is a tribute to the enthusiasm and dedication of the two principal authors and their support team, who have walked, climbed and excavated, unearthing both the artefacts and manuscripts of a fascinating and important history of mining in a region mainly known to most as a scenic tourist landscape.

Their work has brought together information from a variety of long-forgotten documents, combined with their own expert observations, to explain the extraordinary story of coal and oil-shale mining in the Katoomba area. It is a story which shows the brilliance of engineers and miners in attempting to overcome the practical problems of a very difficult terrain, one of beauty and, in many ways, of menace.

There are 14 chapters, supplemented by seven appendices. The first four chapters are, in a way, introductory, but important to the overall story, outlining the geology of the region, rocks that burn, early entrepreneurs, and the relatively little remembered story of oil-shale mining in New South Wales. Then follow what to me is the meat of the book, six chapters dealing with specific mineral exploration of the

valleys adjacent to Katoomba, mining itself and the technologies designed, (some in Germany, some locally) and tested, during the various periods of exploitation between 1865 and 1945. This main section concludes using the life of a coal skip, Cecil, with Bertie the bucket, to explain the workings and changes in technology in carrying coal and oil shale from the mines of the valleys to the Katoomba plateau. An additional related chapter (13) tells the story of how the mining technology has been adapted, since mining ceased, to become one of Australia's most successful tourist attractions, the Scenic Railway and Skyway.

The remaining chapters deal with the living conditions of the mining families, Aboriginal occupation, perhaps misplaced at Chapter 12, rather than as the second chapter, and the final chapter, The Recovery of the Forests and the Return of the Lyrebirds. This is a discussion of the ecological changes of the valleys since mining ceased and the region became part of the World Heritage listed National Park. It is interesting that the senior author, Philip Pells, a civil/mining engineer, first became interested in the area in 1980 through examining the massive Katoomba 'Dogface' rockfall, which happened nearly fifty years earlier (1931) and which owed its occurrence to the final mining (pillar extraction) which had taken place immediately below.

The Appendices cover a wide range of topics, three dealing with aspects of the lives of important players in the mining story, viz. Campbell Mitchell, Oscar Schulze and the Bleichert and Saddington families. Other significant personalities, such as Norman Selfe, Robert H. Reynolds, are given 'boxed' treatment in earlier chapters. There is an extensive table of mining residents at South Katoomba in 1892, additional information on the mining leases and on Land Surveys and there is a comprehensive index.

The first appendix is a special delight for the authors, as it documents, probably for the first time, the apparently earliest mention of European discovery of coal in the Blue Mountains in a letter from Governor Hunter to Sir Joseph Banks, 20 August 1796. The authors make the point that the discovery, by William Paterson, was possibly as early as September 1793, predating by some nine years the well-known reporting of such an occurrence by the French naturalists, Joseph Bailly and Louis Depuch, at the same locality, the mouth of the Grose River, as discussed at the beginning of Chapter 2.

In accordance with what is becoming common practice the authors have set up an internet web site, [www.scenicworld.com.au/bmot](http://www.scenicworld.com.au/bmot) where the references are listed, new photos posted and readers encouraged to contribute research.

There are a few points over which I will quibble. In the opening chapter, *The story of the Rocks*, some confusion, I feel, is introduced on page 2 by describing the formation of the Lithgow Seam from a thick peat deposit, then a sentence or two later referring to the deposition of 'corals and reef creatures' followed by a return to peat formation for the formation of the Katoomba/Bulli Seam. In the western coalfields there is no evidence of a marine period of deposition between these seams. The authors have taken the Hunter Valley geological story where marine deposition occurred between the formation of the much older Greta Coal Measures and the later Newcastle Coal Measures. Perhaps they also overdramatised the significance of the end of Permian extinctions in the story of the Sydney Basin. Undoubtedly the *Glossopteris* flora died out but it was quite rapidly replaced by other flora, such as can be collected in the Triassic rocks closely overlying the uppermost coal seam in the Blue Mountains.

I feel that the geological story would be enhanced by developing the story for the period following the cessation of deposition in Triassic times, as, in the text we move directly from this deposition to the present landscape, the formation of which baffled the early explorers and naturalists such as Charles Darwin, who got it quite wrong, and later geologists such as E.C. Andrews, who got carried away by Davisian concepts of peneplanation. The formation of the Blue Mountains plateau and the deep valleys by water and abrasive erosion certainly baffled early naturalists, and continues to pose problems for present day geomorphologists. Matters such as uplift (how much and when), erosion (by what processes), and structure (joint control, beautifully shown in the Dog Face Rockfall photos) would clarify this story, I feel. These are discussed at a layman's level in the NSW Geological Survey's well-illustrated *Layers of Time* booklet.

While due credit is given to the Rev. W.B. Clarke for his work on the stratigraphy of the Sydney Basin, it took him a long time to accept the Permian age of the Coal Measures, a matter which was clear to James D. Dana who examined the rocks of the basin with Clarke in 1839–40. Clarke's voluminous correspondence shows his struggles to sort out the geology. Much of this correspondence, although lacking most of the valuable sketches Clarke made, appears in the 2-volume *The Web of Science*, edited by Ann Moyal (published in 2003).

While there are appropriate references listed in the chapter on the Aborigines, it is rather surprising that, although (Eugene) Stockton is referred to in a quotation from

Geoff Mosley (p. 168), his comprehensive work on this topic (edited with John Merriam) *Blue Mountains Dreaming*, (first published 1993, with a new edition in 2009) is not referenced. The photos in this chapter lack captions. The contacts with the Aborigines made by Francis Barrallier (he kept the double ‘l’ in his name, despite being baptised with only one, see p. 168) are more fully dealt with in Andy Macqueen’s *Blue Mountains to Bridgetown: The life and journeys of Barrallier 1773–1853* (published 1993). It should also be mentioned that Thomas Jones’ trip from Hartley down the Cox (p. 171) was essentially an extension of the journey undertaken just three weeks earlier up the Warragamba and Cox by Jamison, Jones and others, including an Aboriginal, Gilderoy. Footnote 10, Thomas Jamieson is surely an error?

Scattered through the text are a few spelling errors (e.g. for names: Rylstone, p.1; Liversidge, p. 18), and grammatical errors such as ‘comprised’ for ‘composed’, along with missing hyphens that have escaped ‘spellchecker’.

However, all the nitpicking in the latter part of this review is just that. This book presents for the first time a knowledgeable account of a hitherto neglected aspect of the Australian mining story, told with the enthusiasm of personal involvement in the unearthing of so much forgotten and neglected technology. While it will attract ‘ordinary’ visitors to Scenic World, it will be of special interest to mining enthusiasts, and an encouragement to mining historians to tell similar stories as well as this one has been told.

*University of New South Wales*

*David Branagan*

\*\*\*\*\*

**Michael Waterhouse:** *Not a Poor Man’s Field: The New Guinea Goldfields to 1942 – An Australian Colonial History*, Halstead Press, Braddon, ACT, 2010, 272pp, 155 photos, maps.

**I**t isn’t often that one can successfully judge a book by its appearance but the reviewer can confidently state that the promise of excellence associated with the magnificent illustration on the dust cover proved correct, for what is revealed is a fascinating story based mainly on development of New Guinea’s Morobe goldfield between the First and Second World Wars. In pursuing the story the author set out on a personal quest, because his grandfather, Les Waterhouse, had played a part in

developing the industry. However, with only snippets of information at hand, the difficulty of research was compounded as the Japanese had destroyed most of the primary sources during their occupation in 1942, thus forcing the author to delve deep into archives, newspapers, journals, government papers, and oral sources and interviews for his information. His achievement in formulating a coherent, interesting and well-told story is thus the more commendable, as he has mined this information to provide an in-depth and balanced story of the people who prospected and won the gold - those who administered, those who toiled, those who faced disappointment and hardship, and those who succeeded in the often hostile environment that was New Guinea.

Not only does the author provide a detailed account of the mining development but as an anthropologist he casts a critical eye on the relations between the European miners and Colonial Administration and the local indigenous people by taking oral and documentary evidence from all three sides of the picture. What comes to the fore is the exploitative nature of the relationships and in particular the often neglectful approach of the Administration in meeting the terms of agreement as set down in the League of Nations Mandate that was awarded to Australia with regard to New Guinea in 1921. That in itself is a sorry story well documented by the author but the criticism is also extended to the Administration's lack of action and foresight when dealing with the development of an infrastructure that would have aided the economic development of the Territory, especially that which embraced the country in the Wau and Bulolo Valleys where much of the gold mining took place. This lack of infrastructure, especially access into the gold bearing areas, was to be a major source of hindrance and the story told is much related to how the problem of access was overcome by two private companies, New Guinea Goldfields [NGG] and Bulololo Gold Dredging [BGD]. It is also the story of how managerial decision-making let down the shareholders of the former and led to remarkable success by the latter from the mid 1920s and throughout the 1930s.

The early chapters tell a fascinating story that highlight the almost impossible conditions facing prospectors from the 1880s onwards. These hardy men experienced nightmare situations that included formidable terrain, disease, inhospitable weather conditions and hostility from locals who had always viewed strangers with suspicion but who were additionally traumatised when first faced by these alien interlopers into their territory. Not surprisingly, many prospectors suffered for little or no reward but

early discoveries provided the seed for further exploration, eventual success, and opening up of a major goldfield. That revelation came in January 1926 when Bill Royal of the Alpha Syndicate pursued the source of alluvial gold to reach a plateau above a waterfall some 7,000 feet above the lower Eadie Creek where it was claimed his panning resulted in more gold than sand. Using sluice boxes, some 7,600 ounces of gold were removed in six weeks.

While the subsequent rush saw prospectors share in the bonanza, not all were as fortunate and even many who did strike alluvial gold found that the logistics of servicing their needs for supplies was immense, it being estimated that a miner needed to recover at least 16 ounces of gold a week to break even. Not only were supplies costly at Salamaua where they were offloaded from ships but everything had to be carried on the backs of New Guineans who had to be fed and paid to transport their supplies over nightmarish terrain. The cost of access was a major problem and thus the title of the book 'Not a Poor Man's Field'. Once the easy pickings had disappeared it became obvious that to exploit the riches, company capital was required but even the two Australian registered companies NNG and BDG found that accessing the alluvial valleys was an almost impossible and costly task. The salvation came in the form of the aeroplane, which allowed the companies to quickly reach the fields from Salamaua or Wau, with times being reduced from days of hardship to 30 minutes or so of difficult but nevertheless triumphant flying. One surprising statistic is that up to 1942, aeroplanes in New Guinea flew 104,000 tons of freight compared to Australia's 5,000 tons. Not only did aeroplanes allow personnel and stores to be flown into the goldfields but amazingly, considering that flying was in its infancy, it allowed for the carrying of heavy equipment to be ferried in converted Junker G31's to provide materials for power stations and the construction of massive dredges. By 1939 BDG had eight dredges at work that had handled 119 million cubic yards of alluvial gravel to produce 1.3 million ounces of gold and 576,000 ounces of silver. The venture proved extraordinarily profitable with dividends of £A5,400,000 (1935 exchange rate) being paid to shareholders. However, as noted by the author, part of the price paid in using these Leviathans was environmental, with no attempt being made to regenerate the despoiled land – OK Tedi certainly had its antecedents!

While BDG looked after its native labour force by providing fresh food, sanitary needs and medical facilities, this was not the case with all employers. Many labourers on the field died of beri beri, dysentery, bush ulcers or malaria, and many deserted. The

labour was obtained usually from distant villages where the young and fittest men were coerced into signing indentures for a period of two years. This proved a situation compounded by the Administration's devious taxing of each village community, the tax being based on those fit to labour. In turn, the tax was paid from the earnings of the village labourers in the Copra plantations or goldfields. Part of the rationale for indentures was to 'civilise' the indigenes by introducing them to alternative life styles and diverse work experience, though this proved a fiction as no education was provided, strict segregation was usually imposed, little attempt was made to employ them at other than manual labour, and even sumptuary laws that prevented them from wearing European clothing was legislated. Furthermore, the system led to dramatic and often negative changes in traditional village life. As the Governor of Papua, Sir Hubert Murray remarked, the indenture system was 'really rather like slavery'.

Michael Waterhouse has written a fascinating book. Not only does he highlight the physical difficulties faced in New Guinea by the miners but he also exposes the underlying social aspects of the local and European communities and their relationships, gives fascinating details of the contribution of the aeroplane in the successful exploitation of the goldfields, and provides revealing information on the workings of the Administration and of the triumphs and tribulations of the major companies and individual prospectors involved in winning gold. Additionally, as Ross Garnaut says in his foreword, this book will remind people in Australia and Papua New Guinea of how much history they share.

The last but not least comment is that this is a beautifully presented publication and the many high quality and interesting photographs are alone reason to purchase and own this book.

**The University of Western Australia**

**Mel Davies**