

In the matter of the *Inquiries Act 2014***Yoorrook Justice Commission****AFFIDAVIT OF CATHERINE BISHOP**

Date of Document: 1 February 2024

Solicitors Code: [REDACTED]

Filed on behalf of: Dr Catherine Bishop

DX: 494, Melbourne

Prepared by: Russell Kennedy Lawyers

Telephone: (03) 9609 1691

Ref: 300317-01076

Email: [REDACTED]

I, Dr Catherine Bishop of Leura NSW 2780, affirm as follows:

1. I am a historian and post-doctoral Fellow at Macquarie Business School in New South Wales. I primarily research gender and business history in Australia and New Zealand. I currently have a Discovery Early Career Researcher Award (**DECRA**) fellowship funded by the Australian Research Council.
2. In 1991, I completed a Master of Arts at the Australian National University (**ANU**). My Masters thesis was on Annie Lock, who was a missionary with the United Aborigines Mission (**UAM**) in the first half of the twentieth century.
3. In 2012, I completed a PhD in history at the ANU.
4. In 2021, I published a biography of Annie Lock, *Too Much Cabbage and Jesus Christ*, based upon the research I undertook as part of my Masters thesis, supplemented by further research in the intervening years.
5. In preparing my Masters thesis and my biography of Annie Lock, I had extensive correspondence with UAM and reviewed many of their records. I also found extensive records in State government archives, State Libraries and the National Australian Archives. I conducted oral history interviews with missionaries (in 1989) and later with First Nations people. My knowledge of record-keeping in relation to First Peoples stems predominantly from this work.

History of the UAM

6. The UAM originated in about 1897 as a non-denominational faith mission, made up of Protestant evangelical missionaries. UAM missionaries tended to be people of great faith, but particularly in the late nineteenth and early to mid-twentieth centuries, were often people with practical skills rather than extensive secondary or tertiary education.
 7. As the UAM was a faith mission, the missionaries were unpaid. They relied on God, and prayer to sustain them and their missionary work. They could not take out mortgages or loans, nor could they ask directly for money. The UAM sent out monthly newsletters explaining what the
- [REDACTED]

missionaries were doing, asking people to 'join us in prayer' for particular needs, and publicly thanked those who helped in 'practical ways', acknowledging donations.

8. Some UAM missionaries worked on government stations as missionaries or were allocated government rations to distribute to First Nations people. While they might have said they relied on God, they were also often dependent on governments for food and rations.
9. The UAM was deeply complicit in removal of First Nations children from their parents in what became known as the 'Stolen Generations'.
10. As part of its work, the UAM set up children's homes, including the Colebrook Childrens' Training Home (**Colebrook Childrens' Home**) in South Australia.
11. Annie Lock, the subject of my thesis and 2021 biography, founded what became Colebrook Childrens' Home. She worked in New South Wales (1903-1908), Western Australia (1909-1923), South Australia (1924-1927, 1933-1937) and Central Australia in the Northern Territory (1927-1932). She did not work in Victoria or Tasmania.
12. Given Annie Lock was the focus of my research, my knowledge of UAM is mostly limited to her period of activity, pre-World War II (**WWII**). I have little knowledge of UAM's practices post-WWII; the information that I do have was heard second-hand.

Contact with UAM and access to UAM records

1989-1990

13. I first had contact with UAM records while researching my Masters thesis in 1989/1990. As part of that process, I reached out to the UAM requesting access to their archives.
14. The UAM was completely open and welcoming of my request, granting me free access to all documents they held in their archives.
15. At the time I accessed the UAM records in 1989/1990, some New South Wales records were held by a member of the UAM, [REDACTED]. I think they were at his home. I viewed various records, including minute books from early council meetings. I believe [REDACTED] is now in Western Australia. I also visited the UAM National Office in Victoria where [REDACTED] had further records.

2007

16. I re-engaged with the UAM records in 2007 as part of the process of turning my Masters thesis on Annie Lock into a book. Once again, I contacted the UAM to request access to the records. As had been the case in 1989/1990, the UAM was completely open and welcoming, allowing free access to the records.
 17. To access the UAM records in 2007 I travelled to Victoria, where the records were then being stored.
- [REDACTED]

18. The records were by then being stored in a garage in a house in the suburbs of Melbourne. [REDACTED] allowed me to explore the boxes as I wished. One wall of the garage was taken up by cupboards running along the full length of the wall. These cupboards were stacked from floor to ceiling with labelled boxes of documents.
19. The boxes of records were not in any order, and a significant number were misfiled and/or incorrectly labelled.
20. As a historian, I have seen varying qualities of record keeping. Keeping records in this way was not ideal. However, UAM is an institution of essentially volunteers, and had managed to keep its records dry, labelled, and preserved.
21. I recall seeing records from UAM activity in South Australia, Western Australia, New South Wales and Central Australia.
22. The majority of the documents related to the post-WWII period, primarily the 1950s and 1960s. Most of the material I looked at was administrative: minute books from council meetings, letters from missionaries, etc. There may have been other materials, particularly post-WWII. However, as my visit was related to Annie Lock, I did not look at material beyond 1943 (the year Annie Lock died) so I cannot comment on that content.
23. I was told that the New South Wales records held by [REDACTED] had been transferred to Melbourne when he left the UAM (before 2007). But I could not find the minute books of New South Wales UAM Council meetings which I viewed in 1989/1990, when I accessed the records again in 2007.
24. [REDACTED] moved to the Australian Indigenous Ministries (**AIM**) after leaving the UAM and I also checked the AIM records which were deposited in the State Library of New South Wales, but the minute books were not there. (The AIM and UAM began life as the same organisation.)

2016

25. In 2016, I again contacted the UAM. I sought permission to publish UAM records as part of my book on the life of Annie Lock. I received permission to do so.
26. During this time, I also requested access to the records again. This time, my request was refused. I had an email exchange with [REDACTED] who informed me that all the records were in storage in shipping containers and that no one could get access to them as UAM did not have the necessary staff. I expressed my regret at this and suggested that the State Library of Victoria could be a good place to send the records to preserve them.

Now produced and shown to me and marked "CB-1" is a true copy of the 2016 email chain between myself and [REDACTED] regarding accessing UAM records

Involvement with [REDACTED]

27. In 2021, I gave a paper at an online Australian Historical Association conference. In my presentation, I spoke about having seen the UAM records.

[REDACTED]

28. I understand that [REDACTED] was in the audience for my presentation.
29. I did not give a content warning as part of my presentation and was later informed by others that the presentation had upset [REDACTED]
30. I felt terrible after hearing this and reached out to [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was shocked that I had seen records from the UAM. [REDACTED] and I had a long conversation comparing notes on our experiences with the UAM.
31. I was struck by the differences between [REDACTED] experience when requesting access to records and my own. When conducting my research in 1989/1990 and 2007, I had been welcomed and granted unreserved access to the UAM records. As I understood it, [REDACTED] had a markedly different and less cooperative response when she sought access to the same records.
32. My conversations with [REDACTED] brought home to me what it was really like for those affected by institutions such as the UAM, particularly in the loss of knowledge about parents, grandparents and family history and culture.
33. Since our meeting in 2021, I have been providing ad hoc support to [REDACTED] as requested from time to time.

The contents of this affidavit are true and correct and I make it knowing that a person making a false affidavit may be prosecuted for the offences of perjury.

[REDACTED]

Affirmed at Leura

in the State of New South Wales on 1 February 2024.

Before me,

[REDACTED]

on 1 February 2024 at Melbourne, Victoria 3000 (via audio-visual link)

[REDACTED]

Level 12, 469 La Trobe Street

Melbourne Victoria 3000

An Australian Legal Practitioner within the meaning of the Legal Profession Uniform Law (Victoria)

A person authorised under sections 19(1) and 21 of the *Oaths and Affirmations Act 2018* to take an affidavit.

[REDACTED]

* In accordance with section 27(1A) of the Oaths and Affirmations Act 2018, this affidavit was signed/ affirmed by the deponent by audio visual link and the authorised affidavit taker has used an electronic copy of the affidavit and not the original in completing the jurat requirements.



In the matter of the *Inquiries Act 2014***Yoorrook Justice Commission****CERTIFICATE IDENTIFYING EXHIBIT OR EXHIBITS**

Date of Document: 1 February 2024
Filed on behalf of: Dr Catherine Bishop
Prepared by: Russell Kennedy Lawyers

Solicitors Code: [REDACTED]
DX: 494, Melbourne
Telephone: (03) 9609 1691
Ref: 300317-01076
Email: [REDACTED]

This is the exhibit marked "CB-1" now produced and shown to Dr Catherine Bishop at the time of affirming her affidavit on 1 February 2024:

[REDACTED]

Dr Catherine Bishop (deponent)

[REDACTED]

Level 12, 469 La Trobe Street

Melbourne Victoria 3000

An Australian Legal Practitioner within
the meaning of the Legal Profession
Uniform Law (Victoria)

(a person authorised to take an affidavit
pursuant to the *Oaths and Affirmations
Act 2018*)

Exhibit "CB-1"

2016 Email chain between Dr Catherine Bishop and [REDACTED] of the United Aborigines Mission regarding access to United Aborigines Mission records.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Annie Lock
Date: 19 October 2016 at 11:44 am
To: Catherine Bishop [REDACTED]

CJ

Thanks Catherine, all the best with your book on Annie Lock.

On 18 Oct. 2016, at 4:28 pm, Catherine Bishop [REDACTED] wrote:

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you so much for getting back to me - and thank you for the permission to use the material I have. I am so sorry the UAM are unable to maintain the archives. I understand that you have other more immediate priorities though.. which got me thinking.

I have copied [REDACTED] at the State Library of Victoria into this email because it occurred to me that he might be able to help. I know - none of my business - but I know how helpful the UAM archival material was and is to my project on Annie Lock and how it would be wonderful if it was more accessible. The State Library, or a similar institution would provide a safe repository for your archives while you retain control over access and use. (And it would save you long term storage costs!!) Forgive me if I am telling you what you know already but please believe that I am genuinely concerned about the longterm preservation of an important part of Australia's history and have no other agenda. I would just never forgive myself if I said nothing! [REDACTED] will be in touch with you shortly to see if he can be of any assistance. I understand the sensitivities around this issue and also the practicalities and time involved in maintaining archives and I am truly only trying to be helpful... and I am sorry if you have already been down this path before and reached a dead end!

Regards
Cath Bishop

On 17 October 2016 at 10:19, [REDACTED] > wrote:

Hi Catherine,

my apologies for the delay in responding to your request., but I have been away for an extended period and don't attend to UAM full time.

The archives we held in Doncaster were closed in 2010 and the property sold with records going into long term storage, so access is not possible, there is nobody to attend to this.

However, UAM gives permission for the use of any photos you may have and wish to use in your book.

Yours faithfully

[REDACTED]

On 2 Sep. 2016, at 3:38 pm, Catherine Bishop [REDACTED] wrote:

Dear UAM

I am writing a biography of Annie Lock. This is a project that began in 1989 as a Masters thesis at ANU, was resurrected in the early 2000s, when I did some more research, including visiting UAM archives in a house in Victoria, I remember.

Now, having completed a PhD on a different topic, I have managed to obtain a State Library of NSW fellowship in order to finally lay Annie to rest.... or rather, to release her onto the world. I am in the process of updating my research (again!) and writing her story. I am hoping that the UAM will allow me (a) to use some pictures from your archives and (b) to have access to your archives once again - to double-check that I have not missed anything important. I am coming to Melbourne for a workshop and conference in late November. I am particularly looking for something that appears to have vanished since I took notes from it in 1989. This is a NSW minute book from 1906 -

Perhaps someone at the UAM might remember me ...turning up periodically on the trail of Annie Lock ... but you can also check me out on my website here: <http://catherinebishop.wix.com/history> and you can see that I have a number of projects on the go - with Annie Lock being probably the longest running in terms of years.

I am hopeful that the publisher of my first book will be interested in my biography of Annie Lock. I intend it to be a book that is accessible to the general public, while underpinned by solid scholarship, a bit like my first book *Minding Her Own Business: Colonial Businesswomen in Sydney*.

I am very excited about finally having a real opportunity to publish this story, as I believe it still has relevance today.

Thank you for considering my request.

Yours faithfully

Cath

Dr Catherine Bishop

New South Wales State Library Australian Religious History Fellow 2016