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Mysterious 'girl Robinson Crusoe' honoured through State Library award

The environmental work of former typist turned 'girl Robinson Crusoe' in the 1960s will be explored by the winners of a prestigious State Library of Queensland award announced today.

Dr Deb Anderson and Associate Professor Kerrie Foxwell-Norton were awarded the \$20,000 John Oxley Library Fellowship during a special online announcement by State Library today.

Their project titled *The Women of the Great Barrier Reef: the untold stories of environmental conservation in Queensland* aims to identify the 'louder and quieter voices' who worked to protect this international treasure.

Part of the project will explore the life and work of 19-year-old Terry Ridgway who quit her typing-pool job in Brisbane in 1966 and moved to a remote island in the Great Barrier Reef. She lived alone, studying marine life with the hope of identifying 1,500 species of fish.

Dr Anderson and Associate Professor Foxwell-Norton's work will also document the uncelebrated work of other female conservationists in Queensland.

The Queensland Memory Award prize was one of eight fellowships and awards, collectively worth \$60,000, announced by State Library.

The winner of the John Oxley Library Honorary Fellowship Allison O'Sullivan will also explore a little known facet of our history by uncovering the fascinating travel diaries of colonial women.

The inaugural Monica Clare Research Fellowship was awarded to renowned contemporary artist Dr Fiona Foley.

The Queensland Memory Awards are made possible by the support of donors through the Queensland Library Foundation.

2020 QUEENSLAND MEMORY AWARDS WINNERS:

- **John Oxley Library Fellowship (\$20,000 plus 12-month residency):** Dr Deb Anderson and Assoc Professor Kerrie Foxwell-Norton for their project *The Women of the Great Barrier Reef: The Untold Stories of Environmental Conservation in Queensland*
- **John Oxley Library Honorary Fellowship (12-month residency):** Allison O'Sullivan for her project, *In their own words: women diarists of colonial Queensland*.
- **John Oxley Library Award:** Joanne Tapiolas for *Footprints of Italian Prisoners of War*.
- **John Oxley Library Community History Award (\$5,000):** Herberton Mining Museum and Visitor Centre. The museum has created a community research room, and a collections operation centre which includes a dedicated archives space and new archival storage.

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- **Mittelheuser Scholar in Residence (\$15,000 plus 12-month residency):** Meredith Garlick for her project - *Reel Times: Thirty Years of Queensland Filmmaking (1990-2020)*.
- **Inaugural Monica Clare Research Fellowship (\$15,000 plus 12-month residency):** Dr Fiona Foley for her project – *Bogimbah Creek Mission: The First Aboriginal Experiment and the Magna Carta Tree*.
- **Letty Katts Award (\$5,000 plus 6-month residency):** Narelle McCoy for her project - *Musicians Should Be Heard and Not Seen: the life and music of Letty Katts (1919-2007) and her cultural contribution to the Australian music scene*
- **State Library of Queensland Medal:** Dianne Byrne

Quotes from Minister for the Arts Leeanne Enoch:

“The Queensland Memory Awards acknowledge the achievements of individuals and groups dedicated to preserving our stories and cultural history.”

“This year’s winners will help reveal important insights into the documentation of the often unrecognised contribution of women to our collective history.”

“Coincidentally, all of this year’s winners are women. The winning projects focus on leading and little known Queensland women who have helped to shape our shared past.”

“I congratulate all the winners for their inspirational dedication to research and valued contribution.”

Quotes from State Librarian and Chief Executive Officer Vicki McDonald:

“The judges were impressed by the high calibre of applications this year, demonstrating the ongoing passion for Queensland history.”

“The Queensland Memory Awards allow researchers an opportunity to add valuable context and meaning to State Library’s extensive collections.”

“I am particularly pleased to announce the winner of the inaugural Monica Clare Research Fellowship, Dr Fiona Foley.”

“The fellowship aims to increase research and knowledge about Queensland’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures using State Library’s significant collections.”

“Monica was the first Indigenous woman to have a novel published. Her book *Karobran* (meaning ‘together’) was published in 1978, five years after her death.”