

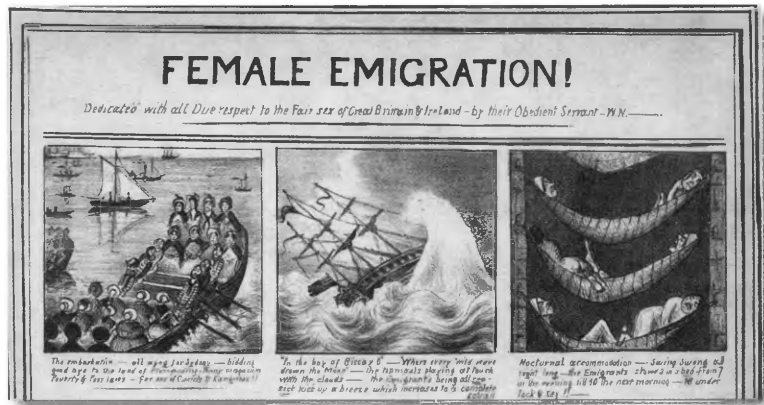
# Becoming Queensland

It's hard to imagine a time when Queensland didn't exist, but that is the starting point for a new virtual exhibition, part of the State Library of Queensland's Q150 celebrations. *Becoming Queensland* explores the state's beginnings from Proclamation in 1859 to the 1909 Jubilee celebrations as a dynamic 'work in progress'.

The beauty of a virtual exhibition is that it can be visited again and again, from anywhere. A simple click of a mouse takes visitors to stories about the people, places, institutions, and lifestyles that have made Queensland unique. These are woven around the themes of *Hope, Taking Shape, Queensland Style, and Turning Fifty*.

There are many stories to tell about the making of *Becoming Queensland*. As curator, I decided to involve staff from the State Library's Heritage Collections. Their expert knowledge would enrich the telling and bring to light items only they knew of. At our first 'show and tell', I saw how vividly they brought history to life and decided to add their accounts to the exhibition.

Every item in *Becoming Queensland* has its own story to tell. Some show how little times have changed. Others contain secret stories within them for us to unravel. And there are those that make us exclaim, "Aha! So that's what happened!" Everywhere we find memories, surprises, emotions, and mysteries.



There is the pamphlet from 1898 that invites young British women to move to Queensland with the same government spin used today to encourage newcomers to the Smart State. The Illuminated Addresses presented to visiting political dignitaries follow the familiar lobbyists' ploy of coating hidden agendas with flattering words.

A surprise for anyone who thinks Queensland was an isolated backwater is the flow of international writers, intellectuals, activists, and entertainers who visited our state to share ideas, enjoy our special brand of hospitality, tuck into some unique local recipes, and relax on the long cool verandas. Even the veranda came from another part of the British Empire.

Anyone who spent hours in school drawing the Queensland border will be intrigued to read of the struggles that determined its iconic shape, including that awkward western corner. There is the terrible story of Australia's worst natural disaster, Cyclone Mahina, which killed over 400 people in

1899. You can also find out what shearers were reading during the 1890 strikes, as well as seeing the famed Labour Party Manifesto.

Behind all these stories is the tragedy of the deaths of thousands of Indigenous people during those fifty years of becoming Queensland. Yet their descendants remain a vital force today. On a slip of paper is a one hundred-year old poem describing their passing. Next to it is a link to YouTube showing a 'modern tradition' of Aboriginal people walking proudly on their country.

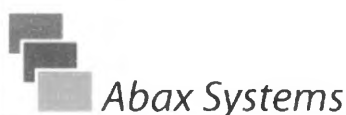
Be sure to visit this beautiful virtual exhibition online at <http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/whats-on> to explore amazing images, read stories, do the activities, and leave your comments on the blog.

**Anna Haebich**  
Queensland State Library's  
historian-in-residence and Curator,  
*Becoming Queensland*  
[paula.hackney@slq.qld.gov.au](mailto:paula.hackney@slq.qld.gov.au)



Abax's Kingfisher Library range covers everything, from the front desk to back of house, and everything in between: shelving; furnishings and library consumables. From one shelf to an entire fitout, Abax has all you need to create the ideal environment for your collections and for those who love them.

Contact us today for more information.



P: 1300 300 369  
F: 1300 300 676  
E: [info@abax.com.au](mailto:info@abax.com.au)  
[www.abax.com.au](http://www.abax.com.au)

Ever get the feeling you're being ignored? That your product supplier is always busy with other clients? Well that won't happen with Abax Systems. Because according to Abax you are their one and only client. They work with you and work for you: they listen and they deliver. And after 25 years, they've got a rock solid reputation for understanding their clients objectives, responding with the best service and the best quality products.

