Paper Title: David Sissons Project

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Abstract
David Sissons devoted much of his life to the study of Japan, and in particular to the history of relations between Japan and Australia. He was a thorough and meticulous scholar who covered most aspects of the relationship, using materials in both English and Japanese, including great quantities of material gathered from the archives of both countries. He may be regarded as having been right at the head of this field.

Sadly, David died in 2006, leaving some work unfinished, but more particularly, much completed work unpublished. In the months before he died, knowing that his illness was terminal, he sorted his research notes and manuscripts into 60 boxes which he placed in the National Library in Canberra. The present writer went through all of these during two periods in Canberra in 2011, with a view to publishing a selection of David’s written work, some of the letters he wrote and received in the course of his investigations, and extracts from other documents of interest. In addition I have received reminiscences of David from doctoral students that he supervised, and some from his friends in Japan. My co-editors Pam Oliver and Keiko Tamura and I plan to publish a book, probably in two volumes, combining these materials.
The topics that David covered may be divided into the following categories:

1. The early history of Australia-Japan relations
2. Japanese immigration to Australia as a political issue.
3. Particular Japanese individuals and groups in Australia from the late 19th century (including especially the Takasuka family).
5. Japanese prostitutes in Australia.
6. Australian defence concerns about Japan.
7. Australia-Japan trade relations, including the trade diversion episode of 1936.
8. The teaching of Japanese in Australia, with particular reference to Professor James Murdoch of Sydney University.
10. Australian war crimes trials of Japanese servicemen, mainly on islands of the south Pacific, at the end of the war. This includes investigation of Japanese atrocities, Australian ill-treatment of Japanese prisoners, medical issues, and the Katayama execution case, which greatly exercised David.
12. Australia in the Occupation of Japan.
14. Post-war relations between Australia and Japan.

A further issue that David researched in great detail (and in which he was himself involved for a while) was that of Australian intelligence relating to Japan during WWII and has already been published (or is in press?) written and edited by Des Ball and Keiko Tamura.