



## IN THIS ISSUE:

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## EDITORIAL

*Barracking* is a familiar feature of Australia's sporting culture and a word in common use in Australian English. But what's the history of this word and the culture it represents? Our lead article in this edition, written by Dr Matthew Klugman, explores the fascinating history of early barracking in Melbourne, and investigates the origins of this important word.

In the last edition, Lauren Samuelsson gave us some insights into the world of mock foods. We received many interesting anecdotes and examples of readers' own encounters with these delights, and some of these can be read on the competition page (see p. 8). Our other article in this edition was inspired by Lauren's article, with Bernadette Hince sharing with us her memories of colonial goose, as well as considering whether Australia or New Zealand can lay claim to its origin.

The ANDC celebrated its 30th anniversary at the end of 2018, and we would like to thank Oxford University Press Australia and New Zealand and the Australian National University for the ongoing support of the Centre. This newsletter celebrates its 30th anniversary this year. We would also like to thank all *Ozwords* readers for their enthusiastic responses and contributions to *Ozwords* over the years, and hope to continue for many more.

**Amanda Laugesen**  
Director



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# ON BARRACKERS AND BARRACKING

MATTHEW KLUGMAN

In 1877 the Melbourne writer Marcus Clarke mocked celebrations of the coming greatness of white Australia in an essay on *The Future Australian Race*. Among other attributes, Clarke predicted that Australian men would become renowned for their 'good lungs' and strong jaws. But while Clarke was imagining the Australia of 1977, within a decade Melbourne had become notorious for the howling and hooting of men who seemed to be putting their robust lungs and muscled jaws to ill use. Indeed to some scandalised observers these *barrackers* – as they were termed – were evidence that white Australian men were degenerating rather than progressing.

The earliest known references to *barrackers* occur in 1878, just one year after Clarke's essay was published. The occasion was a cricket game between South Melbourne Imperial and Hillside that was marred by ill-feeling between the vocal spectators. In a letter to one of Melbourne's numerous suburban newspapers, 'Hillite' blamed the '*barrackers* (a slang appellation) of the South Melbourne Imperial Club'. (*Record and Emerald Hill and Sandridge Advertiser*, 15 February 1878) One of the umpires of the game replied with a letter claiming that the '*barracking*' of the Hillside supporters was 'far more troublesome' than that of those supporting South Melbourne. (*Record and Emerald Hill and Sandridge Advertiser*, 22 February 1878) 'A Lover of Cricket (When it is Fair)' joined in the debate a few weeks later, stating that the South Melbourne '*barrackers*' had used 'disgusting' language 'towards the Hillside men'. The partisan behaviour of these supporters was especially troubling for this observer. When South Melbourne's captain was bowled the '*barrackers*' let loose 'numerous cries of "What a fluke, how did you do it"', but that when the Imperials 'bowled a man out there were no cries then of "what a fluke"'. (*Record and Emerald Hill and Sandridge Advertiser*, 8 March 1878)

In these early exchanges it was already clear that the terms *barracker* and *barracking* were pejorative. To *barrack* was to jeer or shout out abuse. Not only was such behaviour offensive, but *barrackers* behaved unfairly, cheering one side while haranguing the other. As 'Hillite' made clear 18 months later, those at fault were viewed as uncouth working-class men. Cricket was 'better off without them' because the '*barracking* fraternity ... converts the cricket field into a low bawling house' with 'a lot of excited partisans rushing about frantically with their mouths full of unrefined adjectives, hardly fitted for respectable society, or to be tuned in a modest one's ears'. (*Record and Emerald Hill and Sandridge Advertiser*, 21 November 1879)

When Edward Morris published his groundbreaking *Austral English* in 1898, the terms *barrack*, *barracker*, and *barracking* had become primarily associated with Australian Rules football rather than cricket. Nevertheless, their general use remained disapproving. As Morris noted, to *barrack* generally meant 'to jeer at opponents, to interrupt noisily, to make a disturbance; with the preposition "for", to support as a partisan, generally with clamour'. The verb *barrack* had even been 'ruled unparliamentary by the Speaker in the Victorian Legislative Assembly'.

Yet while the early meaning of the terms was clear, the etymologies of *barrack*, *barracker*, and *barracking* were contested in a manner that hinted at the tensions and complexities of a British colonial settler sporting culture shaped by invasion, migration, and the displacement of Aboriginal peoples. Morris was certain that *barrack* derived from *borak*, an

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Aboriginal word he attributed to New South Wales (likely Dharug) ‘meaning banter, chaff, fun at another’s expense’. *Borak* is now understood to be from the Aboriginal Wathaurong language of the Bellarine Peninsula (meaning ‘no’ or ‘not’). It inspired the once widely used Australian phrase *poke borak* (‘poke fun’ or ‘ridicule’), and thus might be linked to the jeering nature of *barracking*.

In 1884, shortly after arriving in Melbourne, Edward Dyson published a short story in *Australian Tit-Bits* that directly tied *barracking* to *poking borak* (*Colac Herald*, 12 September 1884). However, fifty years later the lexicographer Eric Partridge was scathing of what he considered to be the unnecessarily ‘pedantic’ linking of *barrack* to an Indigenous Australian term rather than to the language that British migrants brought with them. Writing in 1937 in his famous *A Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English*, Partridge declared that *barracking* was ‘a very natural development’ of the Cockney *barrakin* or *barrikin* which meant ‘jargon’.

In a later edition Partridge mentioned a letter from the prominent Victorian journalist Guy Innes who attributed *barracker* to the British soldiers who resided in the Victorian barracks in Melbourne until 1870. Perhaps this letter shaped Geoffrey Blainey’s view that the term *barracker* became popular because it evoked memories of those loud, rough British soldiers whose games against Victorian teams drew large crowds in the mid to late 1860s (*A Game of Our Own*).

More recently *The Australian National Dictionary* (second edition, 2016) and others have come down in favour of the Northern Irish word *barrack* – to brag and boast of fighting powers. Yet if the term did come from overseas, the link to a vocal, rough sporting spectator culture seems to have been developed in Melbourne. Sporting *barrackers* and associated acts of *barracking* were first mentioned occasionally in the British press in the 1880s in discussions of Australian Rules football and cricket crowds. Usage of the term slowly increased over the ensuing decades as British journalists started using it to describe the behaviour of local sports spectators as well as those in the Antipodes. However the terms retained their pejorative edge, and they continue to be used in a disapproving manner in Britain to this day.

But to return to Melbourne: who were the initial *barrackers* and what was so disturbing about their actions to occasion the development of these new terms? As the references to *barrackers* and *barracking* increased in Melbourne’s suburban newspapers in the early 1880s, the focus shifted to Australian Rules football. Like the first references to cricket, the *barrackers* in question were depicted as working-class men unable or unwilling to behave in a respectable manner. They yelled loudly and crudely. Worst of all they tended to direct their frustration and rage at one individual: the **umpire**.

The *Leader* newspaper’s main football correspondent ‘Follower’ led the condemnation. ‘This abominable “barracking” mania is becoming simply insufferable’, ‘Follower’ wrote in 1883, decrying the mass ‘hostility to a capable and impartial umpire, probably for fairly and strictly enforcing the laws which are supposed to regulate the game’. (Melbourne *Leader*, 18 August 1883) As a sardonic letter to the *Melbourne Punch* put it:

Football umpires in all our big matches are the most disobliging set of individuals in existence. They seldom if ever comply with the wishes of the thousands of spectators who assemble every Saturday to witness our big events. (*Melbourne Punch*, 30 July 1885)

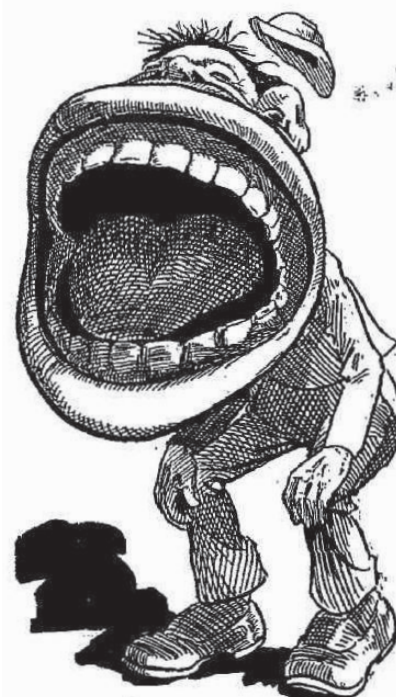
Like larrikins, *barrackers* were taking pleasure in flouting the rules of respectability. In this case, *barrackers* indulged in the pleasures of partiality. Rather than behaving reasonably, they cheered umpires for decisions in favour of their team, and harangued them when the decision went the other way, regardless of whether they appeared to be the correct calls. As ‘Follower’ put it, the ‘mass of those who allow themselves to become victims to excitement’ became ‘senseless’ and incapable of judging ‘the merits of the game dispassionately’. The result, ‘Follower’ concluded sorrowfully, was ‘that your real red hot “barracker” is as a rule singularly blind to that which he would rather not see’. (Melbourne *Leader*, 18 July 1885)

But rationality was a hallmark of civilised masculinity. It was what supposedly placed white men above white women and the men of other races. To wilfully choose pleasure over reasonableness was to risk one’s manliness and court degradation. Umpires needed to be protected ‘from the jeers and taunts of leather-lunged partisans’ if the game were ‘to be carried on as a manly sport’, editorialised the *Sportsman*. (Melbourne *Sportsman*, 9 September 1885)

The bodies of the *barrackers* themselves seemed to be at risk. Eyes would go blind, lungs coarsen, jaws harden, brains wither. In 1887 Edward Dyson claimed to have conducted an in-depth study of the ‘scientific’ devolution of ‘the barracker’s mouth’. (*South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, 13 July 1887) He returned to this theme in 1889 providing a grotesque, if sardonic, vision of the future mouths of Melbourne’s *barrackers*:

“ ‘This abominable “barracking” mania is becoming simply insufferable’... ”

IDEALS.—No. 5.  
THE BARRACKER.



‘THE BARRACKER’: MELBOURNE PUNCH, 7 JULY 1892.



I have watched the rise and progress of the barracker with great interest. I have noted the development of his lungs, and seen, the corners of his mouth drive his ears back, till they will nearly meet and tie behind. ... and I foresee the time when his mouth will run down to his hips, and he'll split apart like a clothes horse when he desires to express the warmth of his feelings at a future match. (*Melbourne Punch*, 23 May 1889)

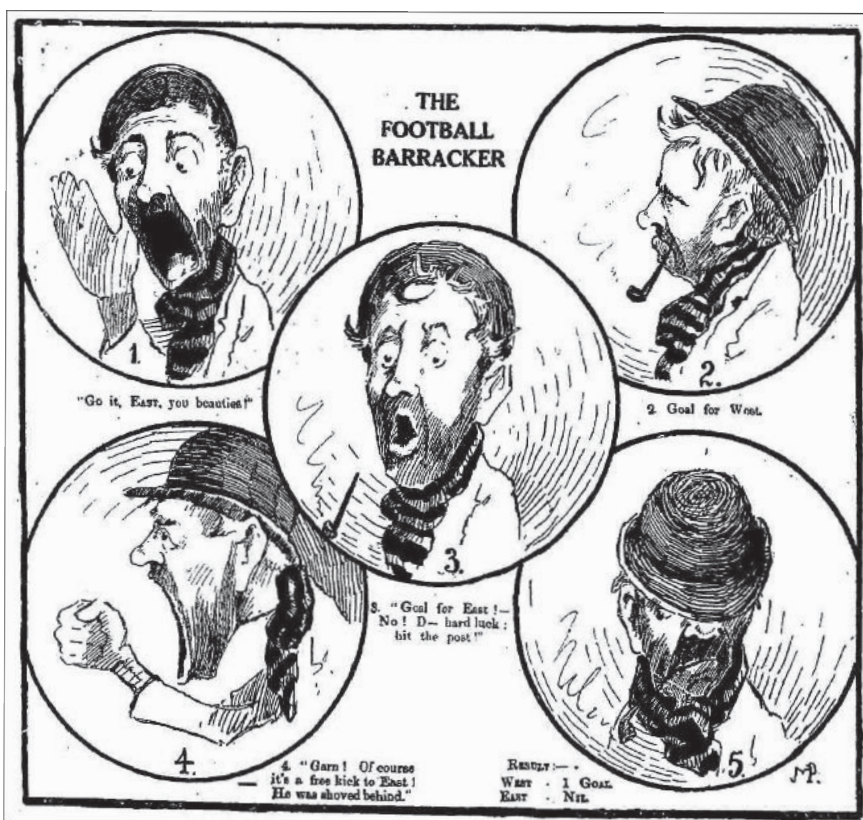
In the same year 'Viator' of the *Weekly Times* was both appalled and fascinated by the way *barrackers* 'contorted their faces and their bodies' all the while, 'yelling' themselves hoarse. 'What will become of the great army of barrackers' asked Viator, their 'brains are out, but the men don't die'. (*Melbourne Weekly Times*, 17 August 1889)

By this time newspaper reporters were increasingly concerned that middle-class men were also succumbing to the joys of *barracking* for one team and against the other. Dyson's account in 1887, for example, asserted that, 'The barracker belongs exclusively to no grade of society. He may be a counter jumper, grocer's clerk, or young mechanic. Even the gentle civil servant becomes energetic enough to howl'. (*South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, 13 July 1887)

In other words, it seemed to at least some observers that the excitement of football games threatened the impartiality – and thus rationality – of men of all classes. The result of such racial degradation could also be seen as threatening future generations, with a writer claiming in the *Melbourne Punch* in 1889 that 'the great-grandchildren of the football barracker' would be 'paupers, lunatics, or criminals'. (*Melbourne Punch*, 16 May 1889)

In the 1890s it seemed like women were also embracing *barracking*. Accounts of female *barrackers* typically evinced surprise that girls and women could follow Australian Rules football as passionately as men. This surprise turned to horror in 1896 when female *barrackers* were accused of starting a melee and attacking the umpire during a clash between North Melbourne and Collingwood. A report in the *Argus* decrying these women was reprinted around the world:

The woman 'barracker', indeed, has become one of the most objectionable of football surroundings. On some grounds they actually spit in the faces of players as they come to the dressing-rooms, or wreak their spite much more maliciously with long hat pins. In the height of this melee some of the women screamed with fear, others screamed 'Kill him'. (*Argus*, 21 July 1896)



'THE FOOTBALL BARRACKER': *PUNCH* (MELBOURNE), 3 AUGUST 1911.

“ This surprise turned to horror in 1896 when female barrackers were accused of starting a melee and attacking the umpire... ”

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## YABBIES FIT THE BILL

In 2015, American children's author **Leslie Bulion** emailed us for advice. She was planning a science-themed poetry book about birds with spectacular attributes, and wanted to write a poem about the Australian pelican, which has the longest bill of any bird. She hoped to include a word from an Australian language, and had come across *goolayyalibee* for 'pelican'. Did we know how to pronounce it? We didn't know the word, and consulted linguist David Nash. David found no evidence for *goolayyalibee*, but turned up similar words for pelican, *gulayaali* and *gulaanbali*, in languages from around northern New South Wales. However, these are not well known; the most commonly used name in Australia for the pelican is *pelican*. Leslie, still keen to use an Australian word in her poem, asked if there were any such words for 'beak' or 'bill', or an item of the pelican's diet. Editor Julia Robinson suggested *yabby* as a pelican delicacy. *Yabby*, deriving from Wemba Wemba, appears in Australian English from the mid-1800s. Recently Julia was delighted to receive a copy of Leslie's educational picture book, *Superlative Birds*, hot off the press. Leslie's acknowledgements include thanks to Julia and David for their help, and for the word *yabby*. With permission, here is the pelican poem:

*Crayfish for Supper*  
'My bill can feel prey underwater,'  
the Australian pelican said.  
'With the hook at its tip,  
I grip fish, that I flip  
down my throat with a jerk of my head.'

'No worries,' said the pelican,  
'though I've a deep pouch to fill.  
If I dipper for fish,  
and they flee with a swish,  
yummy yabbies fit the bill.'

[*Superlative Birds*. First published in the United States under the title *Superlative Birds* by Leslie Bulion, illustrated by Robert Meganck. Text copyright © 2019 by Leslie Bulion. Reproduced by arrangement with Peachtree Publishing Company, Inc.]

## HAS HE COUNTED YOUR RIBS YET?

Early this year a reader sent the following query:

*I would be obliged if you could please tell me the meaning of the following question. Mother to her adult daughter about the daughter's new boyfriend: 'Has he counted your ribs yet?' I took it to mean 'Have the two of you had intercourse yet?', on the basis that counting the ribs might be something the male might do to the woman after the act, but I have googled the expression and cannot confirm this as an interpretation.*

We didn't know the expression, and had no luck finding evidence of its existence. We

wondered briefly if *has he counted your ribs yet* referred to checking the financial status of a new partner, since *Green's Dictionary of Slang* has several *rib* expressions relating to money, including *get into one's ribs* 'to borrow money'; and *ribbed up* 'financially secure'. A further email discounted this notion, and we believe our reader's interpretation is accurate. The event took place in Perth in 1986, and the mother who asked her daughter if the boyfriend had *counted her ribs yet* was in her sixties at the time. Is it perhaps an older Western Australianism? Do any Ozworders know this expression? Please let us know.

## FRONTING UP

*I am in England. Sometimes I enjoy reading news from around the world, although translation can be a bit hard. In the Sydney Morning Herald, there is an article saying that some men 'front court'. The internet keeps going on about basketball, so I was hoping that you could take a moment to explain this phrase.*

R. Craddock

We're always happy to translate Australian usage for the non-Aussie. In Australian English, one meaning of *front*, a transitive verb, is 'to appear before (a court etc.)' This is the sense of *front* in the article you read. To *front court* is a common expression in news articles covering legal cases. *Front* is recorded in Australian English from the early 1940s, and derives from Australian military slang. It can also mean to *confront*, as in this quote from Denis O'Grady's novel *A Bottle of Sandwiches*: 'A man feels a galah fronting a new boss and putting the bite on him for the price of a gallon of juice.' Another related Australian term is *front up*, an intransitive verb meaning 'to make an appearance' or 'to show up', as in 'he fronted up at the office in his best suit'.

## WORTH YOUR WEIGHT IN COCKY SEED - OR COCKY CHAFF?

*I am keen to find out the origin and meaning of the phrase 'worth your weight in cocky seed'. Neither my State Library nor the National Library could shed light. It may be regional, as my mother used it when I was a child, and she came from wheat farming country on Yorke Peninsula, SA.*

C. Tan

*Worth your weight in cocky seed* is likely to be an Australian variant of the much older British English idiom *worth your weight in gold*, meaning 'extremely useful or helpful'. We assume that *cocky seed* also has a positive meaning, but we can find no evidence of this exact idiom in our own archives or other databases.

However, there is a skerrick of evidence for the similar idiom *worth your weight in cocky chaff*. *Cocky chaff* is an Australian term for wheat chaff, 'the husks separated from wheat grain by threshing'. Chaff is nutritionally poor, used as a last resort (at least in the past) to bulk up fodder for livestock when other feed is scarce. So being *worth your weight in*

*cocky chaff* may be a backhanded compliment. Here, the *cocky* element in *cocky chaff* refers to the *cocky farmer*, a small landholder. The *cocky in worth your weight in cocky seed* perhaps refers to the bird rather than the farmer, but we would like to see more evidence. Do any readers know this expression?

## BARCOO FLY VEIL

A reader sent us the term *Barcoo fly veil*, adding to the number of terms based on *Barcoo* we already record in the *Australian National Dictionary*. The *Barcoo* is a river in western Queensland, and in Australian English the name of the river has been used to characterise the often harsh living conditions of the remote inland. Terms include: *Barcoo dog*, an improvised rattle to drive sheep in the absence of working dogs; *Barcoo rot* and *Barcoo spew*, unpleasant medical conditions; a *Barcoo shout* (now obsolete), a round of three one-shilling drinks for two shillings and sixpence; and *Barcoo sandwich*, a goanna (etc.) between two sheets of bark—a jocular term alluding to the hardship of outback life. *Barcoo fly veil* taps into the same vein of outback humour. Our reader defines it this way: 'Ya rip the arse out of ya dacks to keep the flies off your face.' Thanks Brian!

## SOCIAL MEDIA QUERIES

What do you mean when you say someone is in a *blue funk*? *Green's Dictionary of Slang* records this with first printed evidence dating from 1855. He defines it as 'abject terror, utter cowardice, complete misery; thus *blue-funked*, utterly terrified.' A correspondent recently contacted us regarding the meaning of *blue funk*, which she understood to be 'a bad mood' rather than a state of fear or misery. She has consulted others about this: *Several have given the kind of definition I was used to—a bad mood, having a storm cloud over one's head, etc; one person suggested that it meant rage.* *Green's* quotation evidence doesn't support a 'bad mood' sense, although there is a 1951 quotation from a novel by an American crime writer that may come close to it: 'Servo's going to be in a blue funk when he finds out you aren't where you can be gotten to easily.' (Mickey Spillane, *The Long Wait*). We now have the 'bad mood' sense of *blue funk* on our radar, and will be looking for current evidence of its use.



found a new word?

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## ANNIVERSARY MORNING TEA

In November we marked the 30th anniversary of the establishment of the ANDC in 1988, when an agreement was signed between the Australian National University and Oxford University Press (Australia and New Zealand). In the same year Oxford published the first edition of the historic *Australian National Dictionary*, edited by the late Bill Ramson, the centre's first director. We celebrated with a morning tea attended by colleagues, ex-staffers, and well-wishers. Oxford University Press ANZ was represented by Arthur Baker (Managing Director) and Lee Walker (Director of School Publishing). Paul Pickering (Director, Research School of the Humanities and the Arts, ANU) spoke about the history and significance of the *Australian National Dictionary*. In particular he noted the enduring partnership between Oxford and the ANU, and their joint commitment to support the centre's work in chronicling the evolution of Australian English. Arthur Baker spoke of Oxford's continuing commitment to the centre, and paid special tribute to the work of its directors in researching and documenting the Australian lexicon. Amanda Laugesen outlined the current work of the centre, especially the way in which our research informs each new edition of Oxford dictionaries in Australia. Thanks to all our guests for their presence, and their support over the years. For their advice, and help with the event, special thanks to Phoebe Garrett, Denise Steele, Raewyn Arthur, and Jo Washington-King.

## AUSTRALEX CONFERENCE

AustraLex, the Australasian Association for Lexicography, is holding its biennial conference in Canberra, 3-4 September, 2019. The conference theme is 'Lexicography and Dictionaries in the Public Sphere'. This year's conference aims to highlight the relevance of dictionaries, and to celebrate the contribution

of lexicography and dictionaries to society and culture. The keynote speaker will be Professor Jakelin Troy, University of Sydney. For further information, see: <http://slll.cass.anu.edu.au/centres/andc/australex-2019>

## WORD OF THE YEAR

Our Word of the Year 2018 was *Canberra bubble*, a disparaging term meaning 'the insular environment of federal politics'. It expresses the suspicion of the Australian taxpayer that Parliament House in Canberra is a world unto itself, where politicians and commentators are more concerned with navel-gazing and the latest political shenanigans than with the everyday issues affecting us all. *Canberra bubble* first appeared in 2001. Usage spiked in 2018, especially when new Prime Minister Scott Morrison used the term as a contrast to his own political style.

Other words on our shortlist featured in the national discussion:

- *bag rage* 'anger provoked in a customer by the removal of free plastic bags at the checkout'
- *blockchain* 'a system in which records are maintained across several computers that are linked in a peer-to-peer network, used especially for cryptocurrency transactions'
- *drought relief* 'financial or practical assistance given to those in special need or difficulty due to severe drought conditions'
- *fair dinkum power* 'dispatchable energy; coal, as contrasted with renewable sources of energy'
- *NEG* 'National Energy Guarantee; a regulatory obligation imposed on energy companies to provide a reliable supply of energy while meeting emissions reduction targets'

## ROUND UP: OTHER WORDS OF THE YEAR

Here are the Words of the Year from other dictionary entities. Oxford Dictionaries (UK and US) chose *toxic*, a word widely used as a descriptor for some of the year's hot topics. These included: *toxic environment*, *toxic masculinity*, *toxic relationship*, *toxic waste*. Collins Dictionary chose *single-use* 'made to be used once only'. The term spiked in use in 2018 as a result of increasing awareness of environmental damage done by the proliferation of disposable plastic items. Dictionary.com chose *misinformation* 'false information that is spread, regardless of whether there is intent to mislead'. They noted the recent explosion of misinformation and the increase in new terms relating to it, such as *filter bubble*, *fake news*, and *influencer*. Merriam-Webster's choice was *justice*—a word showing a significant increase in lookups in their online dictionary in 2018. The American Dialect Society chose *tender-age shelter*, describing it as 'used in a euphemistic fashion for the government-run detention centers that housed the children of asylum seekers at the U.S./Mexico border'. Macquarie Dictionary Committee's Choice was *Me Too* 'of or relating to the Me Too movement; or to an accusation of sexual harassment or sexual assault'. The Macquarie Dictionary People's Choice was *single-use*, reflecting the same environmental concerns noted by Collins, above. The Global Language Monitor chose two terms: *the moment* 'a confluence of fame, fortune, and happenstance' (worldwide use); and *weaponize* 'in today's bitterly partisan infighting, any word, action, or deed can and will be weaponized' (US use).

## PUBLICATIONS

Our anniversary event also saw the launch of three new dictionaries. The latest (8th) edition of the *Australian Pocket Oxford Dictionary* was launched in a special anniversary edition, with dustjacket and endpaper designs by Sue Dani, based on 18th century watercolours of NSW plants. We launched two student dictionaries as well: second editions of the *Australian Middle Primary Oxford Dictionary* and the *Australian Middle Primary Oxford Dictionary and Thesaurus*. Editors of all three publications are the centre's Mark Gwynn and Amanda Laugesen.



CURRENT AND FORMER STAFF MEMBERS AT OUR ANNIVERSARY MORNING TEA. L-R: MARK GWYNN, DOROTHY JAUNCEY, BRUCE MOORE, AMANDA LAUGESEN, BERNADETTE HINCE, JULIA ROBINSON, MAUREEN BROOKS, JOAN RITCHIE, JANET HADLEY WILLIAMS.

### Letters, emails and tweets are welcome.

Please address letters to:  
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It was not until 1909, however, that some men called for **women** to be banned from attending games. In what might have been part of the backlash following Victorian women winning the right to vote in November 1908, ‘Meteor’ wrote to the Melbourne *Herald* in June 1909 arguing that the coarse language of male *barrackers* was harming young women who ‘would be better employed at home in domestic work’. (*Herald*, 12 June 1909) A few months later the state MP Samuel Mauger sparked further debate by announcing that ‘a leading doctor in Melbourne had informed him that the young women of Melbourne were undermining their constitutions by yelling and getting excited at football matches’. (*Age*, 22 September 1909)

Although female *barrackers* were often described as ‘invading’ football grounds, the claims of ‘Meteor’ and Mauger were met with derision. The *Leader* observed caustically that ‘hitherto nobody has imagined for one moment that’ women might endanger their ‘health by indulging in vocal exercise’, and that it was ‘a terrible warning for suffragettes and female politicians generally’. (Melbourne *Leader*, 25 September 1909) *Punch*, meanwhile, noted that there was ‘not much to be gained from the discussion, since woman has answered it in a most emphatic manner, a manner that leaves no loophole for disputation, by going to football matches persistently and in large numbers’. (Melbourne *Punch*, 15 July 1909)

Sports reporters were not the only people concerned by the rise of Melbourne’s *barrackers*. Bankers like J.H. Barrows and socialists like Bernard O’Dowd were equally disturbed by this particular form of ‘football mania’. Yet *barrackers* seemed to here to stay, and the term largely lost its pejorative edge in Melbourne and the rest of Australia after the First World War. It has nevertheless remained a characteristic Australian term. Indeed the words of O’Dowd’s friend, John Buckley Castieau, still ring true. Writing as ‘Jarno’ in 1900 in the socialist newspaper *Tocsin* that he co-edited with O’Dowd, Castieau proclaimed that the Australian *barracker* was ‘as distinct a species as the platypus and kangaroo’, transcending both ‘social [class] distinction’ and ‘sex’, and that ‘the female enthusiast, both highborn lady and daughter of the people, forms not an unfamiliar variation in Australian crowds’. (*Tocsin*, 4 January 1900)

Matthew Klugman is a Research Fellow at the Institute for Health & Sport, Victoria University. His research interests include those who love and hate sport, and the intersections of sport, passions, bodies, race, gender, sexuality, religion, and migration. He has written about the emergence of ‘Genus Barracker’ in *Australian Historical Studies*, and the rise of female *barrackers* in the *International Journal of the History of Sport*. Email: matthew.klugman@vu.edu.au

“  
...the term  
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pejorative edge  
in Melbourne  
and the rest  
of Australia  
after the First  
World War.  
”



‘AT THE FOOTBALL MATCH—COLLINGWOOD V. NORTH MELB.—LAST SATURDAY’: MELBOURNE PUNCH, 30 JULY 1896.

# COLONIAL GOOSE

Bernadette Hince

‘Colonial goose’ (*Ozwords* October 2018)—that rings a bell! In 1970s Melbourne, our typically Australian Anglo-Celtic family of the time went to mass every Sunday and came home to a family ‘roast dinner’ for lunch, almost always a leg of lamb. We all loved roast dinners.

Things got even better when my mother and I discovered a recipe for colonial goose ... which is not goose. It’s mutton or lamb, a boned and stuffed roast leg—easier to carve than an unboned leg (or a goose, for that matter), but more work. It usually includes a sage and onion-based stuffing—which is what you’d traditionally stuff a goose with.

Because my father sold old Australian books, my mother had an extraordinary collection of old Australian cookbooks. One of these, the *Green and Gold Cookery Book*, 16th edition (ca 1941) gives a recipe for ‘mock duck’—it’s a leg of boned mutton, and it’s exactly what other cookbooks call ‘colonial goose’. But my family used a recipe from a 1973 English cooking magazine series, *Good Housekeeping*, which had a full-page shot of a gleaming leg of lamb—‘colonial goose, step by step ... a New Zealand classic’. Boned lamb is marinated overnight in red wine and vegetables, giving a tender roast with a flavoursome gravy. Boning the leg creates a neat pocket for the stuffing, and this stuffing has dried apricots in it. Yum.

Labelling it ‘Austral. and New Zealand’, the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) defines colonial goose as a boned leg of mutton stuffed with sage and onions. This is pretty close to our 1970s dish in Melbourne, and it’s a definition lifted straight from the second OED quotation, which is from E.E. Morris’s 1898 *Australian English*. The only other OED quotation is from Sarah Amelia Courage’s *Lights and Shadows of Colonial Life*, published in New Zealand in 1897. Courage, a settler on New Zealand’s Canterbury Plains, writes: ‘I ... declined it ... and also “Colonial goose”, and bullock’s heart.’

Colonial goose appears in New Zealand cookbooks till at least the late 1950s (*Aunt Daisy’s Ultimate Cookery Book*). So New Zealand’s claim to the dish might—as with pavlova—look stronger than Australia’s. However, it’s not the whole story. There is earlier Australian evidence of the dish under this name. It is in the 1888 *Kingswood Cookery Book* by domestic economy instructor H.F. Wicken, ‘Diplômée of the National Training School for Cookery’. I guess you could say colonial goose is a genuine Kwaussie.

Colonial goose can be cooked in three different ways: done gently on the stove at first and finished off in the oven; pot-roasted from start to finish (in a pot roast, the meat is browned and then cooked, covered, on the stovetop, usually with added liquid); or oven-roasted after marinading. Wicken does it the first way, using the mutton trimmings and bone, and adding ham or bacon for extra flavour. She instructs: ‘Boil it gently for 1 hour; then take it up and put it into the oven for 1 hour or more.’ As Lauren Samuelsson says in her *Ozwords* article, some modern recipes claim that the point of boning and stuffing is to make the leg of lamb look like goose. Who would ever be fooled into thinking that a leg

“  
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‘colonial goose’  
”

of lamb, even a boned one, looks remotely like a goose? But marinading and stuffing it does change the taste. Try it.

Bernadette Hince is a Visting Fellow at the Australian National Dictionary Centre, and is writing a historical dictionary of polar English. She is easily diverted onto questions of food history.

## Colonial Goose.

Take a shoulder or leg of mutton and bone it. Boil some onions until soft; chop them up, and mix them with some bread crumbs and sage; season nicely with pepper and salt. Put this into the place from which the bone was removed, and sew it up. Place a rasher of bacon or ham in the bottom of a saucepan, lay in the mutton, and pack round it the bones and trimmings, with an onion and vegetables, and 1 quart water. Boil it gently for 1 hour; then take it up and put it into the oven for 1 hour or more, according to size; reduce the gravy, strain it, and pour round before serving.

FROM THE KINGSWOOD COOKERY BOOK, H.F. WICKEN, MELBOURNE, 1888



# OZWORDS COMPETITION

## RESULTS OF OZWORDS COMPETITION NO. 51

Following Lauren Samuelsson's article in our last issue, we asked for your memories of mock foods, family names for food, and the food fibs your parents told in order to get you to eat dinner.

Readers sent us memories of several 'mock' dishes, including *mock duck*, a summer dish made from homegrown tomatoes, which 'tasted cheesy and was delicious spread on bread or toast.' *Mock chicken*, a similar dish from the 1950s, was spread on jatz crackers and made a useful 'bring a plate' item when money was tight. *Mock ham* was a pickled leg of hogget, and *mock fish* was a potato fritter. One reader wished that mock dishes had been a feature of his childhood: 'Lamb's fry ... would have been far more appetising if it was called mock venison, mock moose or mock anything else.'

Some creative children invented their own 'mock' foods. An after-school specialty for one reader's sons was their version of self-saucing chocolate pudding—a sauce made with drinking chocolate and boiling water, poured over Weetbix.

The resourceful parent often finds a way to sell an idea to a fussy eater. We liked the family term *pumtato*, 'a variety of potato that is—inexplicably!—orange when cooked, always served mashed, but ... definitely contains zero traces of any kind of pumpkin whatsoever'. Occasionally, reverse psychology works: 'My parents used to call fried onion, *Emu Guts*, because I refused to eat onion.' Other family names for food were *baby nachos*, a budget version of the Mexican dish with corn chips, cheese, and baked beans; and *shepherdess's pie*, a vegetarian version of shepherd's pie, with lentils.

Readers sent other kinds of family food memories: in one instance, an attempt to *discourage* a child from eating. A reader's grandfather warned him off meat pies, saying they were made of 'lips and arseholes'. This may still work today, despite the current nose-to-tail consumer trend.

**1st prize** (books to the value of \$150 from the OUP catalogue) goes to a reader for this tale of a family conspiracy:

I have fond memories of not liking my

mother's cooking, and eating at Nanna and Pop's house instead. Remarkably, Nanna always had dinner for me ready in the fridge. I only discovered as an adult that my mother would put my rejected dinner in a container, drive me to my grandparents, sneak it across to Nanna, who would pretend to pull it out of the fridge with great fanfare. Yes, I always ate it!  
N. Franklin

**2nd prize** (books to the value of \$100 from the OUP catalogue) goes to a parent who swore her husband to secrecy on the nights she cooked rabbit for the family:

This worked except one night we were well into the meal when he forgot and said how great the rabbit was! My daughter downed tools and refused to eat another mouthful ... I rarely tried after that, and she would often ask if a chicken was a bit small boned!

K. Browne

## OZWORDS COMPETITION NO. 52

In 2017, a young Canadian boy, Levi Budd, invented a new term to describe a word that spells another valid word backwards. For example, *stop/pots*, *deliver/reveled*, *loop/pool*. Levi's term is *levidrome*, based on his own name and *palindrome* (a word or phrase that reads the same backwards as forwards). Thanks to a video posted on social media by Levi's father, the word *levidrome* has gained a lot of publicity. Oxford Dictionaries commented that *levidrome* is on their watch list of words, and if it becomes used widely, in a year or so it may be added to their dictionaries. Not a bad effort for a six-year-old. Our challenge to you in this competition is to come up with an interesting levidrome. The best, most entertaining, or perhaps the longest one wins. Extra points for levidromes if you convince us the pair of words relate in some way, such as stressed/desserts—a great levidrome for those on a no-sugar diet.

### Entries close 31 August 2019.

Send entries to the ANDC at our address at the top of the next column, and please include a postal address, so we know where to send the prizes. You can also submit via Twitter @ozworders, or on our Facebook page.

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