



## Aboriginal Australians and the First World War Home Front

Wednesday 19 October 2016 4:15–5:30pm

School of History seminar series

**Speaker: Samuel Furphy**, School of History, National Centre of Biography

McDonald Room, Menzies Library, ANU



Port Lincoln Aboriginal personality known as "Black Fanny" with members of the Armed Services and other local residents during the 1914–18 War (State Library of South Australia, B27552).

In recent decades there has been an increased interest in and recognition of the wartime service of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, which has manifested itself in both scholarship and public remembrance. In contrast, scholars have paid relatively little attention to the home front experiences of Aboriginal people, especially during the First World War. Ernest Scott's "home front" volume (1936) in the *Official History of Australia in the War of 1914–1918* does not mention Aboriginal people at all, and Aboriginal perspectives have been either absent or marginal in most subsequent studies. Meanwhile, scholars in the parallel discipline of "Aboriginal History" have considered the effects of war on indigenous lives, but usually as a part of projects with a much broader scope. This paper attempts to provide a broad overview of Aboriginal home front experiences during the Great War, focusing particularly on the themes of employment, imperial loyalty, and changes to Aboriginal policy.

**Dr Samuel Furphy** is a research fellow in the National Centre of Biography, School of History, and is currently the recipient of an ARC early career fellowship on Aboriginal Protectors in Early Colonial Australasia. This paper draws on research for a large collaborative ARC linkage grant, "Serving our Country: a history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the defence of Australia".