

Marriage Material: A 1903 Wedding

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 INNER WEST COUNCIL



Margaret Meek was the granddaughter of James Meek Snr, one of Marrickville's pioneer settlers. James Meek Snr had established successful orchards and market gardens during the 1840s, which had secured the wealth and community prominence of the Meek family.

As part of the third generation of Meeks, Margaret grew up in Myrtle Grove, a large two-storey villa built by her father, James Meek Jnr, on High Street, Marrickville. On 23 September 1903, Margaret married Henry Thomas Braddock, a tailor who owned a shop at 232 Marrickville Road. They shared 42 years of marriage, during which they both became driving forces in the Marrickville community.

In September 2013, the gown worn by Margaret on her wedding day was donated to Marrickville Library and History Services. On public display for the first time, it is the centrepiece of the exhibition Marriage Material: A 1903 Wedding.

No Meek Dress – Poetry in the Library

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The exhibition was launched in February 2015 with a special event presented by Sydney Poetry called No Meek Dress – a night of poetry and performance celebrating and responding to the significant gift of Margaret Meek's wedding dress highlights 1900s style and influence in Marrickville.

The participating poets were Kaveh Arkbari, Richard James Allen, Cathy Bray, John Carey, Carol Jenkins and Andy Kissane.

Audio: Kaveh Arkbari Ayra, Paradigm Rape

Audio: Richard James Allen, The Wedding Dress

Audio: Cathy Bray, Blue Moon

Audio: John Carey, Henry and Margaret

Audio: Carol Jenkins, Wedding Fables

Audio: Carol Jenkins, Unmarry Me

Audio: Andy Kissane, Breaking the Mould

Audio: Andy Kissane, I will be wearing this all day

Poet bios

Kaveh Arkbari is a refugee from Iran who migrated with his family to Australia in 1995. A poet and activist known as The Unlikely Poet, Kaveh channels his personal experiences through his performance poetry. A professional kickboxer, he manages a fitness centre in Rockdale, which runs youth programs promoting healthy masculinity.



Richard James Allen's recent collection of poems, *Fixing the Broken Nightingale* (Flying Island Books), is his tenth book as a poet, fiction, performance writer and editor. Widely published in anthologies and journals, Allen has been the recipient of numerous awards, nominations, grants, as well as opportunities for presentations, screenings and broadcasts, in a unique international career as an acclaimed writer, director, and choreographer.



Cathy Bray has had her poetry published in a number of anthologies (Phoenix, Prismatic, ILLUMINA and Dodecahedron), websites and journals (Five Bells). In 2010 her chapbook of poems *The Owl* was published by Picaro Press. Cathy won the Sydney Fringe award for Best in Show for Poetry and Literature for Latitude Platitude in 2014. She had a sell-out one-woman show at The Sydney Fringe festival 2010 entitled *Mad Woman's Breakfast. Eat My Bush!* which addressed Australian ambivalence towards America. In April 2011 the collection of 15 poems from the show *Madwoman's Breakfast* was published by Picaro Press.



John Carey is an ex-teacher and former actor, most recently appearing in *Darlinghurst Nights*. He is the author of four poetry collections, including *The Old Humanists* and the latest, *One Lip Smacking* (Picaro Press, 2013). He has been widely published in journals and magazines, in *Best Australian Poems 2009* (UQP) and *Best Australian Poems 2011* (Black Inc). John is renowned as one of the best performers among the "page poets".



Carol Jenkins lives in Sydney. Her first collection of poetry was *Fishing in the Devonian* (2008). Her second book *Xn* (2013, Puncher & Wattmann) is shortlisted for the WA Premiers Award. Her next book *Select Episodes from The Mr Farmhand Series* is due out from in Spring 2015. She was married in St Stephen's Church in Newtown in 1987 and remains so.



Andy Kissane is a Sydney-based poet. He has published four books of poetry, including *Radiance* (Puncher & Wattmann), which was recently shortlisted for the Victorian Premier's Prize 2015. He has won a number of prizes including the inaugural 2009 Cricket Poetry Award, the Harri Jones Memorial Award for his first book *Facing the Moon*, the John Shaw Neilson Poetry Award and the BTG-Blue Dog Poetry Reviewing competition. His fiction includes the novel *Under the Same Sun* and a raft of short stories published in the *Sleepers Almanac*, *Island*, *Going Down Swinging* and *Famous Reporter*. *Under the Same Sun* was shortlisted for the Vision Australia Audio Book of the Year.

