



AUSSIE INVENTIONS

THAT CHANGED THE WORLD



HISTORY

Mondays June 24

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Aussie Inventions That Changed The World

History's Newest Original Commission

Stream new episodes every week or watch on HISTORY
Starts Monday, June 24 at 7.30pm AEST

[Watch the trailer here](#)

From life-saving devices to modern conveniences, ***Aussie Inventions That Changed The World*** is an original 8 part series that reveals a raft of great Australian inventors who turned game-changing ideas into a reality and forever changed how we live.

Historically Australia has punched well above its weight on the world stage of timely innovations, scientific breakthroughs, and cleverly designed new technologies. And yet amongst our national heroes the sporting, military and political greats have typically enjoyed the limelight, while our remarkable inventors have been largely ignored. This series sets the record straight.

Comedian, actor and brainiac **Matt Parkinson** heads up a team of expert co-hosts; science journalist **Anja Taylor**, inventor **Sally Dominguez** and historian and writer **David Hunt**, who explore the little known stories across eight themed episodes; *Home Life, Communication, Wartime, Farm Smart, Medicine, Food Preservation, Airborne and Super Vision*,

Matt and the team explore inventions that are loved by the world and born in Australia including familiar ones like the Bionic Ear, Wine Cask, Pacemaker and WiFi, along with other inventions known to few, such as the Telephane and Transporter.

Drawing on an eclectic mix of contributors, from inventors, engineers, historians and model makers, to a colourful range of invention re-builds, road-tests and experiments, the series is an active and contemporary journey into the past.

Aussie Inventions That Changed The World delivers a unique view of these inventions by bringing them back to life. From the birth of the Black Box thanks to the unwavering perseverance of David Warren, which is now an essential component of air safety. And the rebuild of Worsfold's life-saving Transporter from World War One, then road-tested to understand its bespoke functionality.

“What’s really exciting about this series is that it will remind Australians that, at our best, we are a progressive, innovative country. We thrive on challenges and these invention stories are all about people who backed themselves against the odds. Sometimes the best ideas are the ones that stand out from the pack.” Matt Parkinson said.

Group General Manager, Factual, Jim Buchan said, “It’s amazing how many Australians have contributed to inventing ingenious solutions to unique challenges. Our latest commission is a fun, warm, feel good series celebrating our nation’s pioneering spirit: a spirit of inventive problem-solving and resourcefulness demonstrated by inspiring individuals throughout our history.

“The producers SkinnyDip Pictures and Northern Pictures have done an incredible job with such an ambitious series, and our expert presenters have told these stories with real wit and candour. My personal favourites may well be the rare interviews with Australian inventors. Captured for posterity they reflect the very personal experience of some who improved daily life, while others achieved the extraordinary!”

Aussie Inventions That Changed The World will be available to stream every week or watch on HISTORY from Monday, June 24 at 7.30pm AEST.



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About Foxtel

Foxtel is one of Australia's most innovative and dynamic media companies and home to award winning local drama plus the widest choice in live sport, hit international TV and movies and a host of complete TV seasons. Foxtel believes in the importance of telling Australian stories, and its ongoing commitment to creating the best in Australian programming has garnered numerous industry awards for its Foxtel Original productions. Foxtel has helped put Australian talent on the world stage with highly acclaimed international exports and it proudly invests in the people who help tell those stories by employing thousands of Australians directly and indirectly across Australia's creative industry. It has also pioneered advancements in entertainment technology with the iQ3 set top box; the Foxtel app for mobile devices; streaming service, Foxtel Now and Foxtel broadband, home phone and entertainment bundles. Foxtel is owned by News Corporation (65%) and Telstra Corporation Limited ACN 051 775 556 (35%).

EPISODIC SYNOPSIS

Episode 1 – Home Life

Monday 24 June, 7.30pm (AEST)



The surprising stories behind four helpful household inventions to improve **Home Life**: Gilbert Toyne created an Aussie backyard icon - **the rotary clothes hoist** – only to have it made famous by someone else; Myra Taylor improved women’s lives with her **Boneless Corset** leaving a legacy of freedom we still enjoy today; Mervyn

Richardson forever changed the suburban landscape with his **Victa Lawnmower**, while Dr Steve Cummings and Bruce Thompson achieved huge water savings around the world with the **Dual Flush Toilet**.

Episode 2 – Communication

Monday 1 July, 7.30pm (AEST)

Australian inventors have boldly re-imagined communication across the spectrum of technologies: Graeme Clark’s extraordinary **Bionic Ear** delivered deaf patients the sound of speech; John O’Sullivan and his CSIRO team created the world’s first high-speed **WiFi** that dramatically changed the communication landscape worldwide; Henry Sutton’s visionary **‘Telephane’** was designed in Ballarat decades before the Television, and post-master James Raymond established the world’s first **Pre-Paid Postage** system in Sydney in 1838 with his delightfully simple pre-paid envelope.



Episode 3 – Wartime

Monday 8 July, 7.30pm (AEST)

The fires of war become the forges of Australian invention: William Scurry invented a decoy **Drip Rifle** to help Anzacs safely evacuate from Gallipoli; Alexander Worsfold built his all-terrain **Transporter** to hurry injured soldiers to field hospitals on the Western Front; Adelaide-born Howard Florey and his team developed the wonder drug **Penicillin** that was first deployed amongst infected allied soldiers during World War Two, and from Wollongong, Evelyn **Owen’s Sub Machine Gun** out-performed its competitors and become known as ‘the diggers’ darling’.



Episode 4 – Farm Smart

Monday 15 July, 7.30pm (AEST)

The push for smarter farming is at the core of Australia's tough agricultural history: Richard and Clarence Smith quarrelled over who was the true inventor, but their **Stump Jump Plough** improved the economic prospects of farmers working difficult terrain; Frederic Wolseley's **Mechanical Shears** eventually won

over the shearers and transformed the wool industry; Lew Bandt designed the **Ute** for farmers needing a comfortable working vehicle, and Benjamin Dunkerley invented a fur-cutting machine that led to the iconic **Akubra**.

Episode 5 – Medical

Monday 22 July, 7.30pm (AEST)

Four great medicos and mavericks risked their careers testing these ground-breaking medical inventions: Psychiatrist Dr Joh Cade discovered the psychological effects of **Lithium** on his bipolar patients after first testing its toxicity on himself; Dr Mark Lidwill worked in secrecy on the world's first **Pacemaker** following his experiments on the hearts of recently deceased patients; Prof Fiona Wood developed a process to help severe burns victims recover quickly with **Spray On Skin**, and the Ansell's helped prevent infection with their **Disposable Medical Gloves**.



Episode 6 – Food Preservation

Monday 29 July, 7.30pm (AEST)

Food Preservation has been a major challenge throughout Australia's history. In Victoria James Harrison invented a process of refrigeration that could make **Artificial Ice** on a commercial scale. In New South Wales Thomas Mort and Eugene Nicolle adapted and improved on Harrison's technology to build the world's first freezer

works to produce **Artificially Frozen Food**. In Western Australian Arthur McCormick came up with the **Coolgardie food Safe** that ran on evaporative cooling, and in South Australia Tom Angove invented the **Wine Cask**.



Episode 7 – Airborne

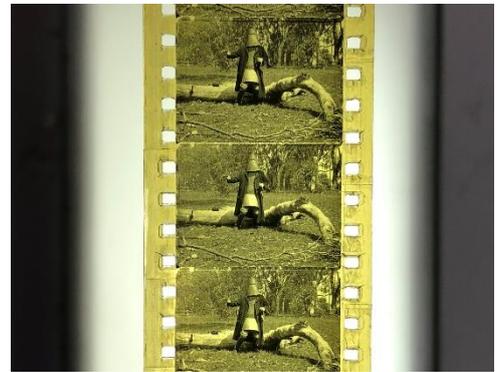
Monday 5 August, 7.30pm (AEST)

The inventors who sent us airborne typify tenacity and perseverance: Lawrence Hargrave, who was ridiculed for his **Box Kites**; laid the foundation for modern aviation. David Warren's **Black Box** helped make flying the safest form of transport, but he faced staunch resistance getting it off the ground; Jack Grant persisted for 10 years to get his lifesaving **Slide-Raft** into planes, while it took 60,000 years for the inventors of the returnable **Boomerang** to receive recognition for their aeronautical achievements.

Episode 8 – Super Vision

Monday 12 August, 7.30pm (AEST)

Four Australian inventions that transformed how we see the world around us, and what we know about it: William and Lawrence Bragg invented **X-ray Crystallography** to reveal the atomic structure of crystals; Milutin Stoilovic and colleagues at the Australian National University worked with Federal Police to create a forensic lamp; the Polilight, which could detect latent finger prints; Charles Tait created the world's first Feature Film with the help of his family, and William Beech invented the Periscope Rifle in the trenches of Gallipoli.





MATT PARKINSON

Comedian, Actor, Writer, Radio Presenter and Game-show Winner

Matt Parkinson has over three decades of experience in the Australian entertainment business.

As a comedian, actor, writer and radio presenter his credits run the full gamut, including The Big Gig, Full Frontal, Spicks and Specks, A Country Practice, The Doctor Blake Mysteries, regular spots on ABC radio and co-hosting top-rating commercial breakfast show The Cage.

Over the years he's also established a reputation for his formidable memory and general knowledge.

In 1992 he took home over \$250,000 worth of cash and prizes on 'Sale of the Century'. Subsequently, he was a key member of the Brains Trust on the cult quiz show 'The Einstein Factor' and is currently known to many as quiz behemoth 'Goliath' on 'The Chase Australia'.

'Aussie Inventions That Changed the World' represents a new role for Matt as a documentary host.

"As a viewer, documentaries on TV have always been my thing. I just can't get enough of them", he says, "So when the chance to tell some great Australian stories came along, I just had to be involved. What's really exciting about this series is that it will remind Australians that, at our best, we are a progressive, innovative country. We thrive on challenges and these invention stories are all about people who backed themselves against the odds. Sometimes the best ideas are the ones that stand out from the pack."



SALLY DOMINGUEZ

Inventor, Designer, Innovation Educator and Futurist

Sally's experience is steeped in innovative practice and commentary. As an inventor, she has won seven international awards for her products Rainwater HOG and Nest highchair, including Rainwater HOG being named one of USA's Top 10 Green Building Products in 2008.

The Nest highchair is held in the Powerhouse Museum's Permanent Collection and the Victoria & Albert Museum in London in recognition of its adaptive concept and design. In 2012 she was named one of Advance Australia's "50 for the Future" entrepreneurs in the USA.

Sally is also an activist for innovative thinking. She devised the 'Adventurous Thinking' strategy to provoke curiosity and multifarious thinking by combining multiple intelligences, design thinking and research. She has been sought after to teach her method at Stanford University, at NASA, and to a broader base of participants through workshops in Brazil, Australia and the USA. She also works with education leaders in Australia and Brazil creating Innovative learning environments. She devised an enhanced STEM learning strategy, named SYSTEMIC, now piloting in Australia and USA.

In Australia Sally is still most recognized for her regular role over six years as a panelist judge of inventions on ABC TV's long running series, New Inventors. Her love of cars has led to her judging 'Car of the Year' for Wheels & Drive for over ten years, and since 2013 Sally has been an Ambassador for Engineers Without Borders Australia.

When asked why she was keen to delve into historical stories of invention, Sally says,

"There is so much to learn from looking at how innovators think up and realise their game-changing ideas. So much of Australia's history is about making do with limited supplies, and so many of our great inventions came about through the ability of Australians to think laterally, and to repurpose things that we often take for granted. Now we call this frugal innovation, but back in the day it was the only way to get things done."



ANJA TAYLOR

Science Journalist, Actor and Filmmaker

Anja's road to becoming one of Australia's best-known science journalists wasn't a typical one. Stepping onto the set of the 1970s hit series *Chopper Squad* as a five year old, she looked set to follow her famous dad's footsteps into acting.

Roles in Australian film and TV followed, including in *Patrol Boat*, *The Year My Voice Broke*, *Water Rats*, *All Saints* and *Dating the Enemy* - but it was while playing a marine biologist on the US series *Flipper* that she got curious about

science and began making a transition to documentary film-making.

Since then, Anja has worked in the engine room of many high-end factual programs, and as a director, Anja has produced more than 80 long-form, prime-time science programs from concept to broadcast. Highlights include the 2015 WW1 commemorative edition mapping the AE2 Gallipoli submarine wreck in Turkey, a climate change special in Antarctica, exploring underwater Nullarbour groundwater caves and broadcasting live astronomy from the dark fields of Siding Spring Observatory.

Anja is best known as a long-term host of the ABC science program *Catalyst*, which was broadcast in prime-time to an average weekly audience of around 1 million.

Anja has been widely recognised for her work, winning the Goethe Institute EcoFilm award for *Plastic Oceans*, the Best Program Supporting Climate Change Initiative at the World TV Film Festival for *Extreme Weather* and the Tasmanian MEAA Best Documentary award for *Earth on Fire*. She has also been a finalist four times for the prestigious Australian Museum Eureka prize for Science Journalism.

As a co-host of *Aussie Inventions that Changed the World*, Anja is delighted to be the 3rd member of her family to join the Foxtel team - father Robert Coleby and brother Conrad Coleby play father and son in *A Place to Call Home*.

Of her attraction to the series Anja says: "So many of our greatest inventions have come from the application of abstract science principles to a crack a problem that has profound influence on us all - like the algorithms used in the search for black holes leading to high speed WiFi, or the understanding of fluorescence leading to a portable forensic light. Being able to tell these stories in the context of Australia's growth as a country, including how our unique landscape, population and climate inspired and challenged our brightest and most determined minds was an irresistible opportunity for me as a science journalist. I think it's fantastic series that will have really strong appeal to a wide audience."



DAVID HUNT

Award-winning Historian, Writer, Podcaster and Speaker

David jumped to national attention with his award-winning first history book, *Girt: The Unauthorised History of Australia*. His dry wit, selection of curious historical moments and vivid portrayal of the heroes and villains of Australia's past breathed fresh life into the nation's story. The audiobook version of *Girt*, read by David, is one of Audible Australia's top 5 bestselling audiobooks of all time.

The cracking sequel, *True Girt*, was shortlisted for the 2017 Audiobook of the Year at the Australian Book Industry Awards and the 2017 Russell Prize for

Humour Writing. David is currently working on volume 3 of *The Unauthorised History of Australia*, *Girt Nation*.

David is also a children's book author, with *The Nose Pixies* shortlisted for Speech Pathology Australia's 2017 Book of the Year Awards. His second children's book, *My Real Friend*, will be published in 2019.

David wrote and co-presented the ABC Radio Australian history podcast, *Rum, Rebels & Ratbags*, which was one of Rolling Stone's four hottest podcasts of 2016 and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's Ten History Podcasts You Need to Hear. He also wrote and narrated a series of animated web-videos for the National Museum of Australia's *Defining Moments in Australian History* project.

David regularly talks about Australian history on ABC Radio and has written about our past for *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Age* and *The Guardian*. He also writes for *The Chaser Quarterly*.

David spoke about Australians' relationship with their history at TEDxSydney 2017 and regularly delivers presentations at universities, schools, libraries, clubs, writers festivals and corporate events.

Before his writing career, David was a lawyer and policy advisor.

Of his exploration into Australia's history of inventions in this series, David says,

"I'm fascinated by how our unique history and harsh environment have fostered a truly inventive culture that has gifted the nation with brilliant, opportunistic and oddball thinkers, tinkerers and titans of industry."

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