

You are invited to the next Melbourne Salon at the Alliance Française
51 Grey St., St. Kilda

Thursday 24th August 2017, 7pm - 9 pm

Flanders in Australia: A Personal History of Wool and War

Presented by **Jacqueline Dwyer** in conversation with **Elaine Lewis**

From the late 19th century to the 1950s, many wool buyers from the Flanders region of France and Belgium emigrated to Australia with their families to establish careers as buyers for the woollen mills of Europe. Although originally they had no intention of remaining here permanently, many stayed, establishing a prosperous and vibrant French community.

A peaceful period of business building ended suddenly in 1914 when the Flanders men of Australia returned to the defence of their homeland. Their villages, towns and fields became the site of some of the worst killing of World War One. They fought and died in battles all along the Western Front.



Jacqueline Dwyer's grandfather came to Australia in 1889 and her father, Jacques, saw action with both French and Australian units. Through the life of this family a story of immigration, commerce and war is brought vividly to life.

Jacques Playoust's World War 1 Verdun Diary and letters from the front to his relatives were the source of Jacqueline's first book, *Flanders in Australia*. Several further years of research have led to this revised and expanded second edition.

Jacqueline Dwyer was born in Australia, daughter of French wool-buyer Jacques Playoust, who was called up in 1914 to fight in the French army in the Great War. After growing up bilingually and enjoying regular trips to France during her childhood, Jacqueline studied English and History with a Diploma of Social Work at the University of Sydney. After WWII she spent a year in France, fascinated by the stories of family members who had spent years under Nazi occupation. Returning to Australia, she married and raised a large family, before enrolling in a Master of Philosophy at the ANU, where she wrote a thesis on the French wool traders in Australia.

Elaine Lewis founded the Australian Bookshop in Paris in 1996 to promote Australian writers. Her book *Left Bank Waltz: the Australian Bookshop in Paris* was published by Random House Australia in 2006. She is currently co-editor of *The French Australian Review*, the journal of ISFAR. Elaine recently received *Les Palmes Académiques* from the French government for her contribution to French language and culture.

Flanders in Australia (PB, 2nd edition) will be on sale (\$34.95) and Jacqueline will be signing books after the talk.

Cover charge (includes cheese and wine) \$15; Bookings and pre-payment essential please:

<http://www.afmelbourne.com.au/culture-and-events/special-events/melbourne-salon-24-august/>