

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## Delve into the minds and motivations of our former Prime Ministers

Join leading academics and creative thinkers on 13 June 2014 at the Australian Prime Ministers Centre (APMC) seminar, as we delve into the minds and motivations of prime ministers from Barton to Howard.

‘The thing about the prime ministership is that very few people leave it willingly, but leave it they do and it is the manner of their going which is so revealing,’ says academic, political commentator and former APMC Fellow Dr Norman Abjorensen, who is writing a book on prime ministerial exits.

Ms Toni Dam, Manager at the Australian Prime Ministers Centre, says the seminar provides a crossroads where people from the research and arts communities, government circles and members of the public can converge around a common interest. ‘As we know more about our prime ministers, we also discover more about our nation and ourselves,’ she says.

Other speakers include award-winning playwright Alana Valentine, who is exploring the conflict between Prime Minister James Scullin and King George V, and Professor Haig Patapan, Director of the Centre for Governance and Public Policy at Griffith University, who is examining the leadership of Edmund Barton, Australia’s first prime minister.

They join Professor John Uhr; Director of the Centre for the Study of Australian Politics at the ANU, Dr Jason Flanagan; University of Canberra, Paul Clarke; writer and director of *Whitlam: The Power and the Passion*, cartoonist and community artist Sarah Howell and APMC summer scholars Marija Taflaga and Mitchell Welch.

‘The role of our prime ministers is a key focus for the museum,’ says Ms Daryl Karp, Director of the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House, ‘and the work of the APMC is integral to extending the conversations we have about prime ministers and political leadership.’

The Australian Prime Ministers Centre Seminar 2014 will be held in the Members Dining Room at Old Parliament House, 18 King George Terrace, Canberra from 4.00pm – 7.30pm on Friday 13 June 2014. The event is free after entry to the museum. Bookings required.

In addition, APMC summer scholar and emerging poet Mitchell Welch will be at the museum on Saturday 14 June to deliver two exciting events which grapple with the interplay between politics and poetry and the experience of using Old Parliament House as a creative space (1.30pm in the House of Representatives Chamber and 3.30pm in the Zine Lounge).

For more information on these events and bookings, visit [www.moadoph.gov.au/prime-ministers/events/](http://www.moadoph.gov.au/prime-ministers/events/)

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**For further information or to arrange an interview or photo opportunity, please contact:**  
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