

DIGITAL HISTORIES RESEARCH SEMINAR

UTS: Thursday 14 March 2019, 5.30pm, UTS Building 10, Level 14, Room 201

RSVP to public.history@uts.edu.au

The Intimacy of Digital Mapping: The Frontier Massacres Mapping Project and the Connection to Regional Australia

Professor Lyndall Ryan, University of Newcastle

In July 2017, the release of stage 1 of the [digital map](#) of 172 frontier massacre sites in Eastern Australia to 1872 generated an enormous response from regional Australia. A year later, when Stage 2 of the map was launched with more than 250 sites in Central and Eastern Australia to 1930, more than 500 people from regional Australia had accessed the contact page on the map to provide information about new and /or existing sites and make suggestions for improvement. It was then that the research team realised that they were the custodians of a national project in which regional Australians expected to make a significant contribution.

How has the research team grappled with this unexpected situation? To address the question, the presentation will first reprise the project origins to show how it influenced the project design and methodology used in Stage 1. Then in response to the issues raised by regional Australians it will discuss the changes that the team included in Stage 2 and outline the plans for Stage 3 due for release in late 2019.

The presentation finds that regional Australians know more about frontier massacres than their urban cousins. They are also anxious to ensure that the disparate forms of evidence for each site is made as accessible in digital form. To this end, evidence that is available in digital form, such as newspapers on trove, has been incorporated into the map.

The presentation concludes that digital maps can not only help to make the past visible, they can reconnect in intimate ways regional and urban Australians in their understanding of the past.