The Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia, in conjunction with the University of Melbourne is pleased to present its 2014 Keith Hancock Lecture:

“RESILIENCE AND FRAGILITY IN THE ASIAN CENTURY: REFOCussING AUSTRALIA’S ECONOMIC NARRATIVES THROUGH THE LENS OF ECONOMIC HISTORY”
by Simon Ville FASSA, University of Wollongong

Behind every policy strategy, of government or business, lies a narrative that contextualises and justifies a course of action. Restrictive immigration policies are necessary to prevent an oversupply of labour and a taxing of our natural resources… allegedly. Who develops these narratives and how well informed are they? Often they derive from the thinking of influential foreign and supranational organisations, or the conventional wisdom and philosophies of domestic political parties and powerful media organisations. In this lecture, Simon Ville argues that the design of narratives that best shape our future must draw deeply upon our national historical experience. The newly-published Cambridge Economic History of Australia provides a modern statement of our past experience to guide our economic narratives for the Asian century, highlighting our sources of resilience and exposing our potential frailties.

Professor Simon Ville FASSA

Simon Ville is Professor of Economic and Business History and Head of the School of Humanities and Social Inquiry at the University of Wollongong. He previously worked at the Australian National University, and at the universities of Auckland and Manchester, with visiting positions at Harvard Business School, University College London, London School of Economics, the Universities of Glasgow and Melbourne, and the Australian National University. He has written widely on big business, industry associations, social capital, the Vietnam War, and the rural and resource industries for major publishers such as Cambridge, Oxford and Melbourne University Presses and many leading international journals. He has research collaborators from the USA, Norway, Britain, and Japan. His edited Cambridge Economic History of Australia has just been published and was recently cited in Hansard. He is a fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia and a member of the College of Experts at the Australian Research Council.

The Keith Hancock Lecture is named in honour of Emeritus Professor Keith Hancock AO, a distinguished Fellow and past President of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia.