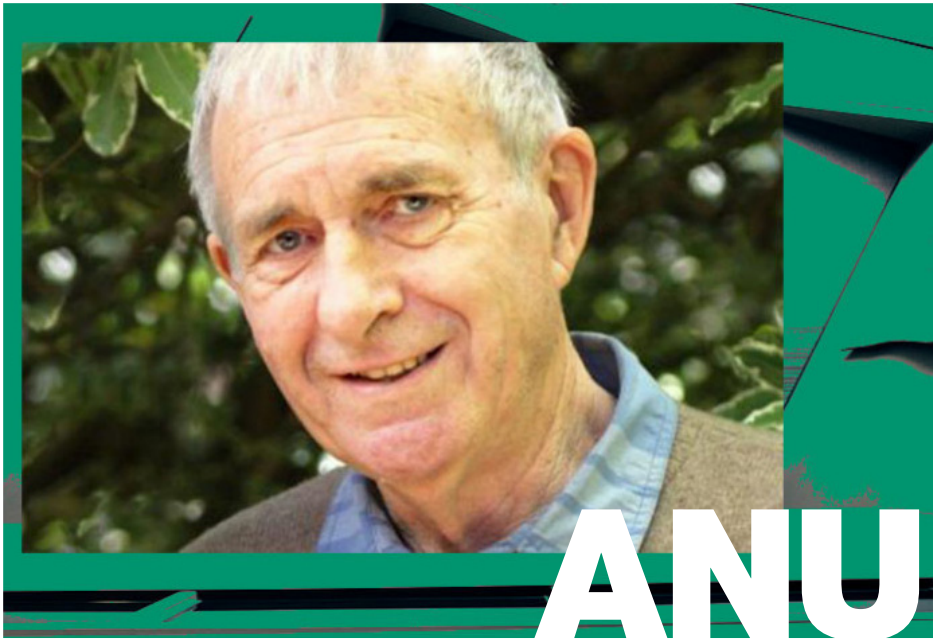




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Hyland Neil ('Hank') Nelson AM, 1937-2012

For over forty years Hank Nelson was the leading historian of and commentator on Papua New Guinea. He wrote, co-wrote or edited fourteen books, three multi-part series for radio, two prize-winning films, dozens of chapters, and hundreds of articles and reviews on the country and the wider Pacific.

Hank supervised over sixty post-graduate students, and was automatically the go-to man for students, journalists, radio and TV presenters, governments and agencies, other academics and the public seeking advice on PNG: in these roles he helped thousands of people. He emphasized the importance of recording the experiences of Papuan New Guineans rather than their colonial masters, and in this sense created PNG's written history.

He taught at UPNG in 1966-72 and at ANU from 1973, serving several terms as acting director of the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies. On retirement in 2002, he maintained a prodigious output of high quality writing and commentary. It is hard to accept anyone as irreplaceable, but in his field, Hank was.

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