Scientists, mathematicians and doctors regard the history of their subject as merely of curiosity value, fit for pottering around in after one’s retirement. The history of philosophy is taken much more seriously, as a part of philosophy itself. Because of what the outsider would see as a lack of forward movement in the subject, the arguments and points of view of the great figures of the past do not become obsolete, and meditation on them continues to be worthwhile. The most ambitious Australian work in the field was John Passmore’s *A Hundred Years of Philosophy*, which aimed to survey all the main writers in philosophy from about 1850 to 1950. Some were offended that Anderson and his school were relegated to a single footnote.¹ Most of the Dead White Overseas Males have their Australian interpreters, listed here in chronological order of their subjects:

E. Benitez, ed, *Dialogues with Plato* (special issue of *Apeiron* 29 (4) (1996)).

W.A. Merrylees, *Descartes* (Melbourne, 1934).
S. Gaukroger, *Descartes’ System of Natural Philosophy* (Cambridge, 2002).
P. MacDonald, Descartes and Husserl: The Philosophical Project of Radical Beginnings (New York, 1999).
J. Broad, Women Philosophers of the Seventeenth Century (Cambridge, 2002).
J.A. Passmore, Ralph Cudworth (Cambridge, 1951).
J.A. Gunn, Benedict Spinoza (Melbourne, 1925).
A. Donagan, Spinoza (Chicago, 1989).
J. Colman, John Locke’s Moral Philosophy (Edinburgh, 1983).
K. Haakonssen, ed, *Traditions of Liberalism: Essays on John Locke, Adam Smith, and John Stuart Mill* (St Leonards, 1988); (Haakonssen also edited the *Cambridge History of Eighteenth Century Philosophy*, which has several Australian contributors).
E. Morris Miller, *Moral Action and Natural Law in Kant* (Melbourne, 1911).
E. Morris Miller, *Kant’s Doctrine of Freedom* (Melbourne, 1913).
G. Currie, *Frege* (Brighton, 1982).
M. Charlesworth, *The Existentialists and Jean-Paul Sartre* (St Lucia, 1975).
(Other work on Foucault was listed at ch. 11, fn. 88.)

I am grateful to Udo Thiel for help with this bibliography.

For a quicker run through the most famous of the DWOMs, one could try Hector Monro’s *Sonneteer’s History of Philosophy* (Melbourne, 1981). There are also a few books that survey particular themes over long periods of time:


**Australian Philosophy**


The website of the Australasian Association of Philosophy www.uq.edu.au/hprc/aap has recent information on events. It includes a link to, among other things, the valuable though now somewhat outdated guide to Internet philosophy resources, ‘Philosophy in cyberspace’, compiled by Dey Alexander of Monash University.

Recommended reading in Australian philosophy: the following are simply my favourites, and no litigation will be entered into.

For readability, it is impossible to go past David Stove’s stylish polemics in Popper and After: Four Modern Irrationalists (Oxford, 1983, repr. as Anything Goes, Sydney, 1998, and as Scientific Irrationalism, New Brunswick, 2001), (on the philosophy of science); The Plato Cult, and Other Philosophical Follies (Oxford, 1991), (on philosophical errors in general) and in the collections of essays, Cricket versus Republicanism (Quakers Hill, 1995), Against the Idols of the Age (New Brunswick, 1999) and On Enlightenment (New Brunswick, 2002).

For abstract argument at the highest level, but still written comprehensibly, there are D.M. Armstrong’s books on metaphysics: Universals and Scientific Realism (Cambridge, 1978), What is a Law of Nature?

On a different science-related topic is Graham Nerlich’s *The Shape of Space* (2nd ed, Cambridge, 1994).


**Political and Social Philosophy**

Apologeties are in order for the absence of political and social philosophy in this book. They are very large and valuable topics in themselves, but they have a very different character from the more abstract philosophical topics treated here. To deal with them would require another book of the same size. The following surveys provide starting points for further research:


There is a strong Australian presence in the *Journal of Political Philosophy*. 
Monty Python’s Philosophers Song

The Bruces from Monty Python Live at City Center and Monty Python Live at the Hollywood Bowl, etc. [courtesy Python (Monty) Pictures Ltd]

Bruce: How are you, Bruce?
Bruce: G’day Bruce.
Bruce: Gentlemen, I’d like to introduce a man from Pommyland who is joinin’ us this year in the philosophy department at the University of Woolloomooloo.
Everybruce: G’day!
Michael: Hello.
Bruce: Michael Baldwin, Bruce. Michael Baldwin, Bruce. Michael Baldwin, Bruce.
Bruce: Is your name not Bruce?
Michael: No, it’s Michael.
Bruce: That’s going to cause a little confusion.
Bruce: Mind if we call you ‘Bruce’ to keep it clear?
Bruce: Gentlemen, I think we better start the faculty meeting. Before we start, though, I’d like to ask the padre for a prayer.
Bruce: Oh Lord, we beseech Thee, Amen!!
Everybruce: Amen!
Bruce: Crack tube! (Bottles opening)
Bruce: Now I call upon Bruce to officially welcome Mr Baldwin to the philosophy faculty.
Bruce: I’d like to welcome the pommy bastard to God’s own Earth, and remind him that we don’t like stuck-up sticky-beaks here.
Everybruce: Hear, hear! Well spoken, Bruce!
Bruce: Bruce here teaches classical philosophy, Bruce there teaches Hegelian philosophy, and Bruce here teaches logical positivism. And is also in charge of the sheep dip.
Bruce: What’s New-Bruce going to teach?
Bruce: New-Bruce will be teaching political science, Machiavelli, Bentham, Locke, Hobbes, Sutcliffe, Lindwall, Miller, Hassett and Benaud.
Bruce: Those are all cricketers!
Bruce: Aww, spit!
Bruce: Howls of derisive laughter, Bruce!
Everybruce: Australia, Australia, Australia, Australia, we love you, amen!
Bruce: Another tube! (Bottles opening)
Bruce: Any questions?
Bruce: New-Bruce, are you a Poofter?
Bruce: Are you a Poofter?
New-Bruce: No!
Bruce: No. Right, I just want to remind you of the faculty rules: Rule One!
Everybruce: No Poofters!
Bruce: Rule Two, no member of the faculty is to maltreat the others in any way at all — if there’s anybody watching. Rule Three?
Everybruce: No Poofters!!
Bruce: Rule Four: now this term, I don’t want to catch anybody not drinking. Rule Five?
Everybruce: No Poofters!
Bruce: Rule Six, there is NO ... Rule Six. Rule Seven?
Everybruce: No Poofters!!
Bruce: Right, that concludes the readin’ of the rules, Bruce.
Bruce: This here’s the wattle,
   The emblem of our land.
   You can stick it in a bottle,
   Or you can hold it in your hand.
Everybruce: Amen!
(Now all four Bruces launch into the Philosopher’s Song.)
   Immanuel Kant was a real piss-ant who was very rarely stable.
   Heidegger, Heidegger was a boozy beggar who could think you under the table.
   David Hume could out-consume Schopenhauer and Hegel,
   And Wittgenstein was a beery swine who was just as sloshed as Schlegel.
   There’s nothing Nietzsche couldn’t teach ya ’bout the raising of the wrist.
   Socrates, himself, was permanently pissed.
   John Stuart Mill, of his own free will, after half a pint of shandy was particularly ill.
   Plato, they say, could stick it away, ’alf a crate of whiskey every day.
   Aristotle, Aristotle was a bugger for the bottle,
   And Hobbes was fond of his dram.
   And Rene Descartes was a drunken fart:
   “I drink, therefore I am.”
   Yes, Socrates himself is particularly missed;
   A lovely little thinker, but a bugger when he’s pissed.