

GRACE KARSKENS

About Grace



Associate Professor Grace Karskens teaches Australian history at the University of New South Wales. Her research interests include Australian colonial, urban, cross-cultural and environmental history. Grace is interested in promoting historical understandings and awareness to wide audiences and is currently on the boards of the Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales and the Dictionary of Sydney. Her books include *Inside the Rocks: The Archaeology of a Neighbourhood* and the multi-award winning *The Rocks: life in early Sydney*. Her latest book, *The Colony: A History of Early Sydney* won the 2010 Prime Minister's Literary Award for non-fiction.

Grace will present a Keynote **address**. Her topic is:

Men, women, sex and desire: family history on Australia's first frontier

This will present some of the findings of her research on relationships, marriage and families in the early settler community at Castlereagh, on the Nepean River in New South Wales. Why did people want to get married? What impact did the shortage of women have on the marriage stakes in early colonial New South Wales? What happened when older men married fourteen and fifteen year old girls? What about the fact that there were so many young convict men around? How big were their families and what became of all those children? And how far were men and women prepared to go for love and passion?