

First Australiana Virtual Show and Tell Report

April 2020

All reports will be available to members via the website: <https://www.australiana.org.au> or else by email link.

In this report much of the information has been provided by the owners of the items, which, for the most part have not been seen by us. Questions asked by collectors have been answered by our editorial team to the best of our knowledge and any specialists that we know have been consulted, but we are aware that there are limitations to seeing only photographs. Any members who believe that they have better or additional information please send an email to australiana.queensland@gmail.com Please reference the Report number, item number and page number (e.g. VS&T 1, page 1, Number 1) and the information will be passed on to the owner.



1. National Museum of Australia's invitation to the opening of the Endeavour Voyage Exhibition, 7th April 2020. Folded A4 card, 21x29.5 cm

The exhibition was to tell 'the Untold Stories of Cook and the First Australians'.
The exhibition dates: 8th April – 11 October 2020.

On the 18th March the following email was received by the invitee: 'Thank you for your RSVP, however, I wish to advise you that regrettably the Endeavour Voyage will be cancelled due to the current situation in relation to the COVID-19 virus. A formal letter of notification will be sent to guests in the coming days. Kind regards, Mary Tallarida, Event Coordinator, National Museum of Australia. Another email of same date was received 'As far as I'm aware the exhibition will still open on 8 April. However in saying that, it may be likely that the Museum may have to close its doors to visitors depending on any upcoming government mandate. Therefore at this stage it is the exhibition launch that will not go ahead. Hope you stay safe also. Kind regards Mary'

The NMA temporarily closed its doors on the 23 March 2020 until after the COVID-19 crisis.



**2. Martin Boyd plate decorated with a donkey and panniers.
Handmade pottery, 17 cm (diam.)**

During the 1950s many artists in Australia were inspired (probably the correct terminology today is ‘informed’) by other cultures around the world, which was a sign that Australia was becoming part of the trend to globalisation and what was termed ‘modernisation’. The owner says of this plate “Not the best example of Australiana Mexicana” but it does show what was a major decorative theme during the period.

Martin Boyd had a whole series of appropriately 'Australiana' subjects such as Aboriginal portraits but they also produced Dutch and ballet subjects as well as Mexicana.

Since Boyd, globalisation has obviously considerably expanded with considerable cultural exchange, the importation of inexpensive products from overseas eliminating Australian makers and ‘benefits’ of cheap goods.

In the current COVID-19 pandemic we are seeing a great deal of that globalisation wound back, with countries isolating from each other and even expelling the foreign students that they so ardently enticed only last year, as a means to prop up Australia’s underfunded educational system.

We wonder what new artistic themes may inform the Australiana creators and artists of 2020 and beyond. We hope the themes will be Australian and not shaped by the virus.



**3. Carved wooden serving tray
depicting *Eucalyptus ficifolia*, now called *Corymbia ficifolia*.
The timber is probably Red cedar, *Toona ciliata*.**

C. mid-20th century, maker unknown. 47x29x4.5 cm.

**Bottom right: Drawing of *Corymbia ficifolia* from Stan Kelly's book *Eucalypts*,
published by Thomas Nelson in 1969.**

Corymbia ficifolia is a Western Australian red-flowering gum, which, although its natural distribution is a small area of South West, WA, is widely cultivated throughout Australia and the rest of the world. Information supplied by David Bedford.



4. Burlled timber wine table, probably made in the last quarter of C19th.

Description: This very lovely and rare little wine table has very interestingly figured timber and quite a history. 71.5 x 60 diam. cm

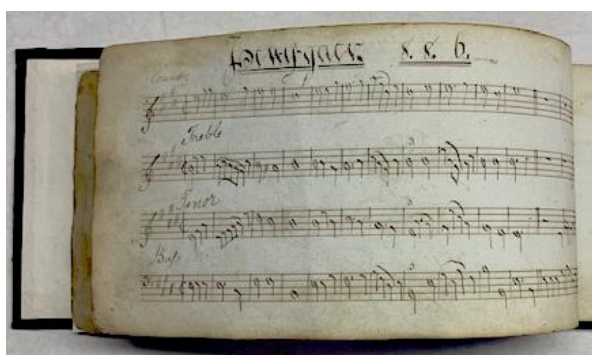
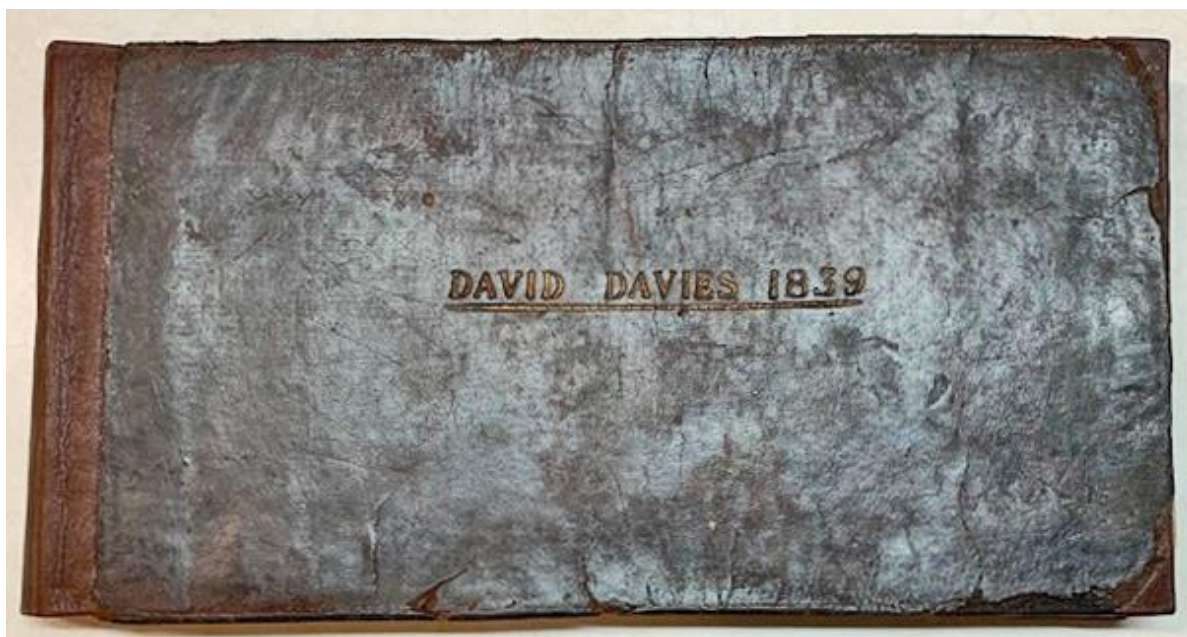
The owner acquired this little table on instinct, after finding it in the workshop out the back of a dealer in Albury. It was covered in mission brown fence paint at the time. As it was cleaned it up it was clear it was an interesting and very dense and solid timber with wonderful figure. It was sold as Musk, but the owner is aware how rare that is in the solid, so has not accepted that with any great certainty.

The timber is dense and heavy for its size. The turnings are crisp with very modest damage. The table has a light chamfered edge but the table has been in the wars so the owner wonders if the edge of the top is in its original form or not. The editors believe the chamfer may be original but have not seen the table physically.

There are two added supports under the table which may not be original (they appear to be Blackwood), and two which clearly are (a match to the timber).

Ornately figured timbers can be extremely difficult to determine without wood technological assessment. Burls (sometimes called burr) are usually deformed growths on the sides of trees. However, some burls are of different biological origins. Burls on tree trunks are sometimes caused by attack from insects or fungi. Because they are abnormal growths no two burls on the one species are necessarily the same form, although some trees respond very similarly and can be recognised with some degree of certainty.

This editor's recognition identification 'best guess' is that this table is made of Myrtle Beech (*Nothofagus cunninghamii*) burl. Myrtle Beech grows in Tasmania and in Victoria.



**5. Choir book dated 1839 owned by Welsh convict David Davies.
Size 21 x 11 cm. 140 pages**

This Choir book was probably brought to Tasmania by the Welsh convict David Davies, who was transported for 20 years for being a ringleader in the Rebecca Riots, a Welsh uprising against unjust taxation. In Wales he was known as “Dai’r Cantwr”, David the Singer, because he “taught them to sing in church”. He attended the Philadelphia Baptist Church in Cadoxton.

He arrived in Van Diemen’s Land in 1844 and was continually in trouble, but received his ticket of leave in April 1854 and conditional pardon October 1854 - after transportation had ceased and the English Government was trying to close down the convict system in VDL. He is thought to have had an ignominious ending: He is reported to have died in an outhouse of the Ross Hotel in August 1874, from smoke inhalation, after his pipe accidentally set fire to grass whilst he was asleep and intoxicated.



*William Penn Beauchamp
born July 5th 1856*



6. An oil portrait on tin of William Penn Beauchamp, Tasmania, unsigned, undated.
It was C19th practice to clothe both boys and girls in a dress until a certain age. Boys were “breeched” at about 7 years old, but this varied with class and the individual.

Dimensions: 44.5 x 34 cm.

Born in New Zealand, William Beauchamp (1857-1926) was the eldest son of an adventurous and artistic father, Robert Proctor Beauchamp (1819-1889) of Langley Park, Norfolk, England, and from 1862 of Langley, at Rosevears on the East Tamar River, northwest of Launceston. Prior to establishing his house and orchard there Robert had travelled between England, New Zealand and Victoria, earning a living variously as painter, pastoralist and orchardist. Once settled at Rosevears he exhibited his paintings – landscapes in watercolour, some oils, and pencil drawings – in Melbourne, Launceston and Otago NZ.

William Beauchamp travelled twice as a child with his parents to England, but lived most of his life in Tasmania, at Derby, then Zeehan, and from about 1914 at Wynyard. In April 1895 he married Margaret Ann McLeod Cunningham at Derby. Moving to Zeehan, William established his business as a butcher and advertised widely, and on his move to Wyndham did

likewise. In 1918 a fire broke out at night time in his smoke-house, but luckily was seen and soon extinguished by passers-by before it could spread to adjacent businesses. He retired in 1921, and his popularity among his fellow townsfolk when he died in 1926 at age 69 was marked by the *large number present to pay their last tribute of respect*.

Although the clothes William is shown wearing appear anomalous, it was a custom in the Western world for some centuries, up until the late 19th or early 20th centuries, for boy and girl children to be dressed alike. But at a variable age (from perhaps 2 to around 10 years old), a boy would be “breeched”, and then wear breeches or pants. It was an important rite of passage at the time.

This interesting image, and the challenges of researching it has prompted the editor of *Australiana* to consider publishing a more detailed version of this history with useful information and research hints for using online sources.



7. A metal mounted plaque on timber with the Australian Coat of Arms

Description:;, below TO ADOLPH MENJOU WITH THANKS FROM AUSTRALIA FOR YOUR HELP IN OUR SECURITY LOAN B. CHIFLEY [signed] PRIME MINISTER.

The owner’s question: Can anyone identify the timber base of the plaque?

Editor’s answer : The timber is most probably root burl figure of Australian Red Cedar (*Toona ciliata*). Other suggestions welcome.

In 1946 The Australian Government sought loans from Australians and overseas. Ten Hollywood film stars made gifts to Australia of five minute recorded sketches, prepared specially in support of the Security Loan, including Adolph Menjou, Alan Ladd, Ray Milland and Robert Young. The sketches were broadcast on the radio. The plaque was given to Menjou as a token of appreciation by the Prime Minister.



Detail

8. Home Front Crochet recording the sinking of the Lusitania that was torpedoed on May 7th 1915, near Ireland.

Size 39x140 cm

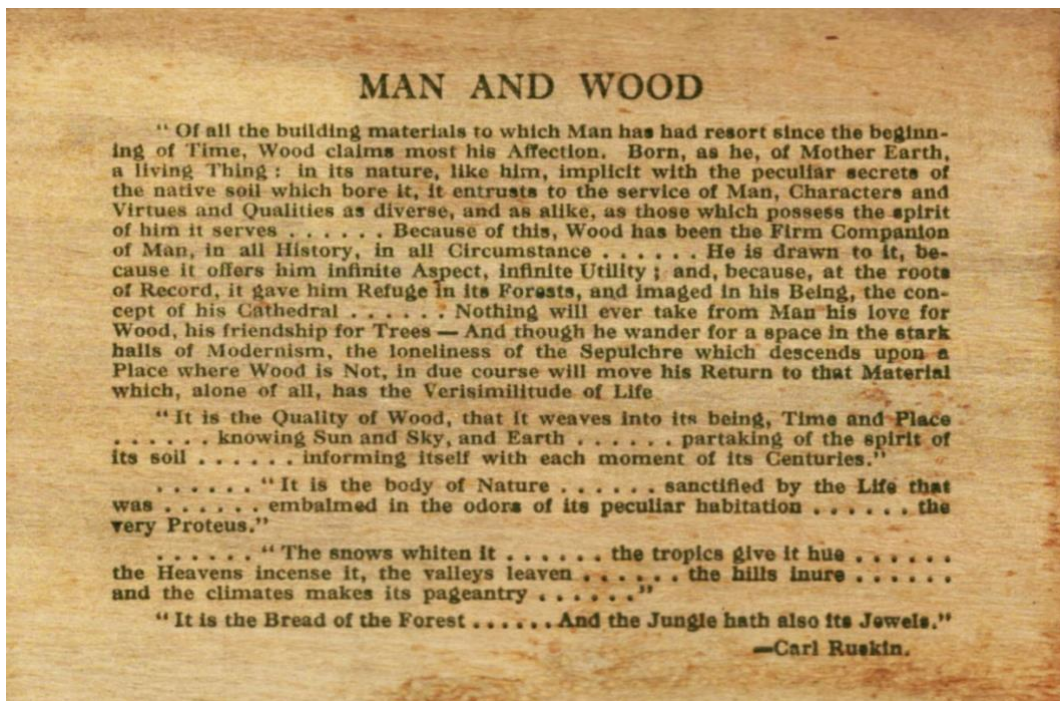
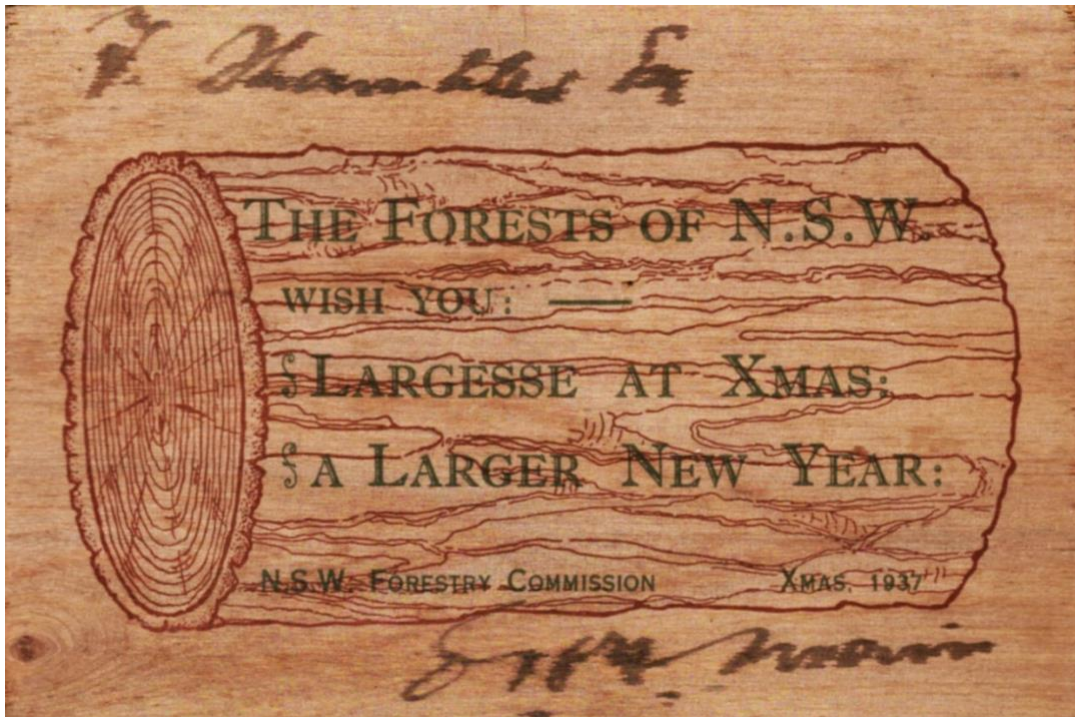
The Crochet: Centre, ‘Lusitania Torpedoed May 7th 1915’ two images of the ship and a torpedo, and around the edges, British flags, semaphore flags, cannons and biplanes.

The Cunard ocean liner RMS Lusitania, full of civilians, was sunk by a German submarine. Of those on board 1,198 died and 761 survived. The Lusitania became an iconic symbol in military recruiting campaigns showing why the war was being fought.

At least two other crochet designs for the Lusitania are known but this is by far the largest; the Australian War Memorial has examples in its collection, but not the above one. Whilst the Lusitania was a British ship, Australians being part of the Empire felt a strong connection to it.

Six days after the sinking, *The Melbourne Age*, ran an advert for British knitting machines, with the by-line; ‘Are you still Buying German after the Lusitania?’

In August 1918 at Paddy’s Market in Bundaberg, Queensland at an ‘Our Wounded Soldiers’ fundraiser organized by Mrs Steptoe, a dressed doll was auctioned which the maker, Mrs. B. St Ledger, of Bonna, named ‘A Lusitania baby’. The “unfortunate” little “victim” of that cruel outrage, when so many little children were sent to the bottom, realised £4/4/.



9. NSW Forestry Commission Christmas Card 1937. 10.3 x 15.2 x .2 cm

Very thin three-layer plywood, probably of NSW Coachwood (*Ceratopetalum apetalum*), printed both sides. The front, with what now seems an antiquated greeting, has been addressed and signed in ink with a fountain pen and is almost illegible. Suggested interpretations would be welcomed, the owner thinks part of it to be "To Thomas ?? Esq / with an unrecognised signature at the base.

The rear of the card has an extensive quote from 'Carl Ruskin', but seems more like a quote from John Ruskin, the very influential C19th philosopher. The owner has not been able to find a reference for the quote or for a Carl Ruskin so far.



10. Golden Sickle U.A.O.D. Cedar Letter Box, C 1890.

Description: The front in gold paint, GOLDEN SICKLE U.A.O.D. LETTER BOX in three lines. Key hole, letter slot on lid.

Maker unknown, stands 18.8 cm high, is 31 cm wide and 18 cm deep.

The UAOD a fraternal society, a splinter group of the Ancient Order of Druids, was established in England in 1833. The first lodge in Australia was set up in Victoria in 1850. The Golden Sickle Lodge was established in April 1890 and was based in the Melbourne suburb of Brighton. The Lodge held fortnightly meetings in various hotels and held a variety of activities including euchre, quoit and 'Bobs' tournaments, and shooting and smoking competitions.



11. A cedar secret ballot box with bun feet c 1860

Dimensions: 22 cm high, 28.3 cm wide and 20.5 cm deep.

This dovetail joined ballot box features two circular openings in the top, which appear to be of turned Huon pine, one silver (or white) and one black. In Freemasons and many clubs, members would lodge a white ball in the opening to accept a new member, or a black one to reject them. The balls drop into the partitioned drawer beneath and the ballots are tallied. This is where the term "to blackball" someone comes from.



12. Bronze medal of the Agricultural Society of NSW, 1878, by Hardy Brothers, designed by Arthur James Stopps (c1832-1931). Diameter - 89 mm.

Obverse inscription: AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY OF NEW SOUTH WALES / HARDY BROTHERS LONDON & SYDNEY

Reverse inscription: PRACTICE WITH SCIENCE and recipient's details engraved.

The first prize medal won by the optician Louis Malcolm Keyzor for his spectacles and eyeglasses. Keyzor had trained in London, where he apparently had many family connections in the optical and jewellery trades. Arriving in Sydney in 1877 he was quick to establish himself, firstly in George Street, then a little later in Hunter Street. Advertising as *The Only Optician*, he took orders for the wide range of goods he imported, as well as offering to make instruments such as theodolites and microscopes to order. Keyzor mounted magic lantern shows and consulted in country towns, but this was not enough to maintain his business, and shortly after moving into Hunter Street in early 1879 he was bankrupt. This was attributed to *losses in business, dullness of trade, and depreciation in the value of goods*. The Insolvency Court found that his affairs had been precarious for six to twelve months

Intermittent business after his insolvency and a messy divorce saw him incarcerated for six months in 1887 for contempt of court, when he failed to pay the £30 and costs awarded against him. Thereafter, even up to 1929 he seems to have eked out a living as a somewhat itinerant optician, although early in 1900, again in a court case, presumably the same Louis Malcolm Keyzor was shown to have been living, at least for a few months, in *a hut at Central Wyalong*.

Arthur Stopps was born in Devonshire, showed artistic promise from an early age, and became a pupil of the artist and illustrator William Spreatt. Coming to Sydney in 1863, he built a home there at Hunters Hill and gained employment as a draughtsman in the Department of the Surveyor-General, headed by R D FitzGerald. With his experience as a lithographer Stopps was able to contribute his skills to illustrating FitzGerald's work *Australian Orchids*, published in 1875, a book which gained the author a gold medal at the Paris Exhibition of 1878. Following his retirement after 45 years of service Stopps was struck by loss of sight when in his early nineties, and died in his 99th year.



13. A Studio Anna hand painted slip cast ceramic bowl depicting a Macassan prau drawn in the style of *Yirrkala* artists. Designer unknown, dia. 17 x height 15cm.

Studio Anna was established around 1954 by Karel Jungvirt (1927-2000) and his wife Toni [nee Coles], first working briefly at Neutral Bay, then Sheppard Street Marrickville, where it remained until closed. In the beginning they exhibited displays at Ceramic Art and Fine Ware Association exhibitions and their business thrived, at one time employing thirty people. The firm focused on slip cast ceramics decorated with local scenes and Aboriginal themes that appealed to both tourists and locals. When the business closed in 1999 Jungvirt returned to his place of birth, Czechoslovakia, a country that he had left in 1951 to come to Australia, and died there the following year. Examples of Studio Anna wares that have paper labels were created towards the end of the business.

The bowl's subject: A Macassan prau that came from Makassar in southern Sulawesi, Indonesia, to the north coast of Australia to harvest trepang. Today archaeologists believe the Macassans first arrived in the 1500s. Their praus could carry a crew of thirty and it has been estimated that some 1,000 Macassans arrived each year. The trade continued to dwindle toward the end of the 19th century, due to the imposition of customs duties and licence fees and probably compounded by overfishing. In 1907 the last fleet arrived in Australia, due to the White Australia policy.



14. Baxtergrafik Embroidered Panel: Glasshouse Mountains c. 1980s
Unknown embroiderer. 38 x 31.5cm

Berlin wool work is a style of embroidery that is associated with the use of woollen yarn (tapestry yarn) on canvas. Berlin work was usually produced with the help of embroidery charts in a single stitch, notably cross stitch or tent stitch. Patterns (such as the below) were first published in Berlin, Germany, early in the 19th century and catered for a broader market. In Britain, Berlin work received a further boost through the Great Exhibition of 1851, and by the advent of ladies' magazines such as *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*.



Hertz & Wegener in Berlin Pattern print for Berlin woolwork, mid-19th century
Edwardian fire screen, 94 x 76cm. Collection National Gallery of Victoria

Collectors of 19th century Victorian furniture will be familiar with the formalised floral designs that embellished dining chair seats, footstools or decoratively framed as pictures or on pole or fire screens. Other figurative scenes were popular although landscape elements were much reduced such as the background to the spaniel.

Handwork and needlework have been expected skills for women (especially those in the upper-class) in the British Isles and Europe for many years. During the 19th century and with the rise of the middle classes there was a large increase in interest in the craft. Commercial kits soon developed for those who were reluctant to trust their own creative skills. Although

women in Australia had less free time than those in the British Isles, ladies of Adelaide's Barr Smith family executed the designs of May Morris *Australia table cover*. C. 1890 (Collection AGSA)

Landscape kits have developed through the 20th century largely of sentimental or quite generic scenes such as 'Mountain landscape' but also tapestry kits of famous artist's paintings have been produced such as the work of impressionist artists like Manet and Renoir. In Australia the works of the South Australian artist, Hans Heysen such as 'Rest at midday' and Fredrick McCubbin 'The pioneers' have been turned into tapestries and even in Brisbane Godfrey River's iconic painting 'Under the jacaranda' has been subject to this translation.

This *Glasshouse mountains* image is the key! The mountains have been an icon of south-eastern Queensland for a century or more and have thus been considered a suitable subject for a needlepoint souvenir without the mediation of an artwork. I can think of very few Australian landscape features that have achieved this prominence.



The 'Three sisters' are an iconic element in the Blue Mountains and so familiar that they have rarely been the subject chosen by major Australian artists: Penleigh Boyd and Hilda Rix-Nicholas are two exceptions. Here are needlepoint grounds provided by Baxtergrafik and one by Semco based on the work of the minor landscape artist David Spencer Couper.



Semco kits

Even more surprising is the absence of early images of Ayer's Rock apart from the expected watercolour by Albert Namatjira. These images did not appear until the late C20th when Semco provided a long stitch tapestry kit before the site was handed over to the traditional owners in 1994 and a latch hook rug since. Digital designs are also now available.



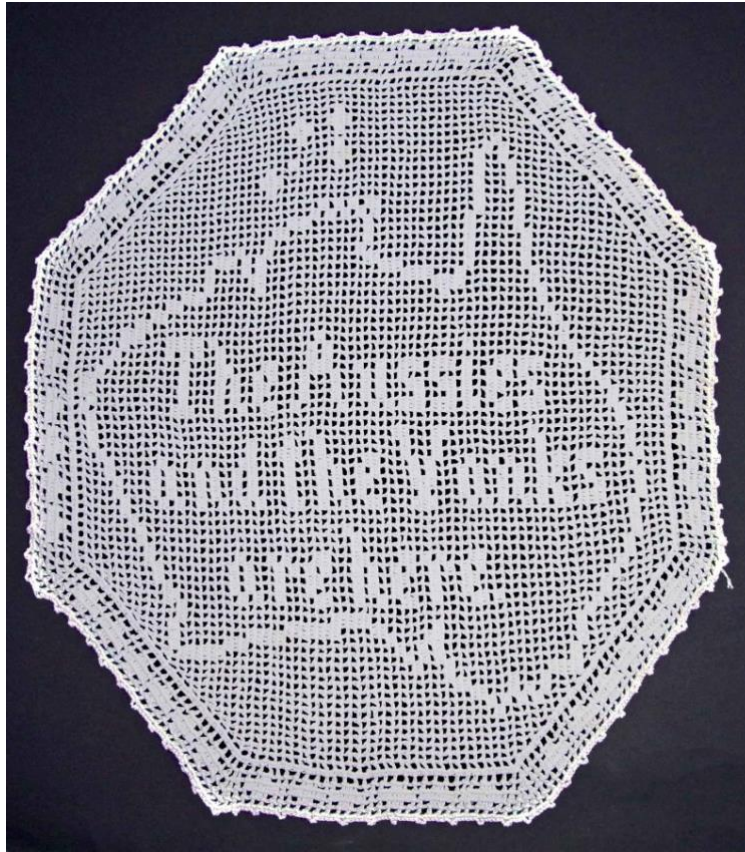
15. John Mitchel white metal medal. mint unknown, 26 mm.

Obverse: Male bust facing right, around JOHN MITCHEL

Reverse: In eleven lines. THE BRAVE, HONEST, AND NOBLE ADVOCATE OF REPEAL; WHO WAS PROSECUTED BY GOVERNMENT FOR HIS WRITINGS, AND SENTENCED AS “A FELON,” TO 14 YEARS TRANSPORTATION MAY 17 1848.

Little is known about this medal; it may have been used as a propaganda medal struck around 1848, the year he was transported. Another theory, and more likely, it was made in 1854 when Mitchel's book 'Jail Journal, or, Five Years in British Prisons', was published in New York. While his trial and publication were famous it therefore surprising how seldom seen this medal is.

John Mitchel (1815-1875) was born in County Londonderry, an Irish nationalist, activist, author and political journalist. In 1837 he married Jane Verner by whom he had three sons and two daughters. As a member of and activities in the 'Young Ireland' movement he was transported for sedition and given a sentence of 14 years. Six other Young Irelanders were sentenced and sent to Van Diemen's Land (William Smith O'Brien, Thomas Meagher, Terence MacManus, Kevin O'Doherty, John Martin and Patrick O'Donoghue). Mitchel first went to Bermuda and was placed in a prison hulk there, then shipped to Van Diemen's Land, arriving there in 1850. He lived near Bothwell where in June 1851 his family joined him. With his family he escaped from Tasmania and in late 1853 arrived in New York to a hero's welcome. He became a controversial editor, in particular supporting the rights of Southern slave-owners. He returned to Ireland on a number of occasions and died there.



16. Crochet doily celebrating the arrival of Americans during WWII

Description: ‘The Aussies and the Yanks are here.’ within a map of mainland Australia, above the Southern Cross. Designer and maker unknown. 32x27 cm.

The doily symbolises the relationship and alliance between America and Australia during World War II. The words come from a song of the same name written in early 1942 by Private Johnny Nauer of Saginaw, Michigan.

THE AUSSIES AND THE YANKS ARE HERE

We’re all together now as we. Never were before,
The Aussies and the Yanks, sure we’re gonna win the war;
And now throughout the ranks everyone can give their thanks,
‘Cause the Aussies and the Yanks are here.
We’re all together now and we’ll soon be on the go,
And marching side by side from Berlin to Tokyo.
We’ll never give an inch and it’s gonna be a cinch,
‘Cause the Aussies and the Yanks are here, we’ll fight to the end,
No matter where we’ll be: we’ll: always give and take,
And we’ll never break until the world is free,
And we will show the world something they have never seen.
We’re gonna fight again like they did in seventeen,
They’ll soon be blowing taps over Nazis and the Japs,
‘Cause the Aussies and the Yanks are here,
‘Cause the Aussies and the Yanks are here,

In 1943 a parody of the song was written by a camp mate of Australian soldier Private. J. J. Jones of Adelaide, titled ‘The Mossies and the Ants are here.’ and sung to the same tune.



17. Souvenir slipware milk jug and sugar bowl, for tourists visiting Wandoan, Queensland, made in Brisbane by 'Kitty Pottery'.

The Dutch influence is clear in the bold decoration. The town's name on the sugar bowl is misspelt. Sizes: jug 7 x11.5 cm, sugar bowl 8 x 11.5 cm.

Every time you look on eBay you will probably find an example of Kitty Pottery's souvenir ware. At the moment (2 April) you will find a dice shaped ashtray made for a Coolangatta retailer — most likely a news agent or jeweller — and another ashtray with an Aboriginal style animal for Melbourne.

I discovered that the Kitty Pottery was named after Kitty Breeden, one of the host of migrants in the post-World War Two period who contributed their specialised craft skills to the Australian community. Kitty was born in Soest, Holland in 1933 and trained with a traditional potter Nol de Bruin in a nearby village. The family migrated to Queensland in 1952 and the following year established a pottery behind their home in Stoneleigh Street, Albion. Kitty's own work and the production prospered and soon her father Jacob joined her

to help with marketing. Kitty and Jacob decorated the wares but other Dutch migrants also helped. The success of their contribution to the 1955 Industries Fair prompted a Brisbane based wholesaler W. Hoffnung & Co. to take over the distribution of their products — and very successfully as the locations on their pieces testify. They had their highest profile during Queensland’s Centenary in 1959 but during the 1960s with the relaxation of importation regulations Australia was flooded with cheap Japanese ceramics. This situation was reflected in migrant-based potteries in Sydney and Melbourne.

One of my interests is the evidence of migration to Australia, such as this small jug and sugar-bowl which asserts its Australian origin with the ‘Qld’. Glenn Cooke gives a fuller appreciation of Kitty Breeden in an article published a 2007 issue of *Australiana* but the extent of the production of the pottery is clearly demonstrated: Wandoan, is a small rural community of less than 600 people 80kms south west of Rockhampton.



18. Mulga Wood serviette ring c 1940-50s with applied decal reading “The Desert Manna Tree”. size: 3.5 x 6 cm.

This simple and elegant Mulga Wood serviette ring with applied decal graphic and words is a prized family heirloom. The decal of the company logo makes this relatively unusual as such decals, if they ever existed, were often lost or removed by cleaning. The owner’s father also owned a desirable mulga wood blotter but they have only the memory of that item.

Mulga, *Acacia aneura*, is a shrub or small tree that grows widely across inland Australia (approximately 20% of the Australian continent). The trees are believed to live for between 200 and 300 years. Human use of Mulga wood goes back thousands of years as our first nations peoples used it for implements and weapons because of its strength and density. Documentation of the first colonial use is elusive and requires further study. However, colonists definitely used mulga wood extensively from at least the late C19th to the 1960s to make a wide range of small items for the household and as gifts and souvenirs. 20th century records indicate that mulga items were expensive and numerous companies were established to produce items. Only some of them labelled items and to this editor’s knowledge the industry seems to be poorly documented to date.



19. Australian cedar chest of drawers with she-oak veneers and cross banding circa 1810 (first quarter of C19th).

The top has an octagonal inlay of she-oak *Banksia* sp. and pine. The string inlay on the drawers is recorded as pine. Sizes: 102 x 98.5 x 56.5 cm.

This early chest with ring-turned stump feet has all the signs expected of its early origin: cock-beaded drawers with string inlay, cross-banded edges and brass handles. As some dealers that I know have been known to say “it’s a cracker!”



20. Octagonal cedar side table with string inlaid apron and top, C. first quarter of C19th.

Label underneath reads “Table, Parsonage Parramatta used by Mrs Martha Betts, left to K Betts” Size: 73.5 x 71.5 x 42 cm.

This early and elegant table is cedar with pale timber string inlay. Such an inlay was a feature of high-quality cabinetmaking early in the colony’s history, copying the English and European trends of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The splayed legs are typical, although their shaping makes them something special and may suggest other than an English origin. Some additional expertise is needed here ... anyone?

Botanically, the identification of string inlays is very challenging. Unless the timber shows some distinctive figure, as is often the case with Huon Pine stringing, it is almost impossible to determine the species without aesthetically damaging the item. There were quite a few Australian candidates for pale timber string inlay in NSW from the earliest days of the colony (work in progress).

The owner found the later period label underneath quite by accident about 15 years after they bought the table. Mrs Martha Betts was the daughter of Reverend Samuel Marsden (25 June 1765 – 12 May 1838) and was married to JA Betts who had a stud farm. Trove has a record and brief text that the State Library of NSW contains the Betts family papers, but they have not been digitised, unfortunately. It is unclear why the wife of a stud farmer would have had an address at the Parsonage, Parramatta, so more research is needed.



21. Miniature desk, Australian cedar, later part of the C19th.

Turned legs and two fitted drawers, probable NSW origin. Size: 24 x 31 x 23 cm.

The miniature desk is cedar, with 2 drawers. The finely turned legs show the straight sided bulbous sections common seen in late C19th furniture. When purchased it was described as a Colonial apprentice cedar desk. The drawers are well-fitted with correctly scaled, well-made knobs but are not dovetailed. The lack of dovetail construction would argue against this being an apprentice or travelling salesman “proof of expertise” piece. This editor suggests that it was most likely made by a carpenter for his daughter’s dolls house at a time when cedar was plentiful and many features in houses were made from the timber, ensuring ample offcuts for such purposes.

Miniature items are much prized by collectors as they are easy to accommodate in today’s small dwellings.



22. Request for information: Can anyone identify the maker of this hinge?

The stamp has been described as “H pierced by an arrow” or “a turret and arrow”. This hinge is quite common on Australian made timber articles from the early twentieth century and they appear on articles of some quality - probably imported and possibly expensive.

Best answer so far: Information provided by vin.callcut@btinternet.com website: https://oldcopper.org/makers/birmingham_brassmakers.php ‘The mark does look like a Birmingham one but I do not have it on record. It may be a variation from John Collins.’
Please let us know if you have additional information.



23. ANNIE MITCHELL SCHOOL, Adelaide

A request for information by Glenn Cooke

Annie Mitchell Jug with kookaburra 1932

E. N. Webb Jug with bird 1938

**Earthenware, hand-built, modelled and glazed
23 x 28 x 15cm and glazed.**

**Earthenware, hand-built, modelled
10 x 13 x 8cm**

My article ‘The Founding Years of Harvey School 1916-1922: Completing the Story’ which appeared in the first *Australiana* this year finalised research on a vital but obscure part of the School’s history. The history of the spin offs of Harvey’s methods in regional Queensland (none more so than in neighbouring Ipswich) is even more obscure than that in other States . . .

However, a collector here in Brisbane has a substantial group of the work of Annie Mitchell and her students in Adelaide and I have been tempted by the prospect of developing a picture of the School, even at this distance and with the knowledge that the possibility of any personal recollection is indeed remote.

After the death of both her parents in 1929 the 55 year old Annie Mitchell (1874-1961) visited her first cousin Mary Ann Macdonald in Brisbane (1879-1949) — she would have had no inkling that she was to embark on the most significant part of her life. Macdonald was already an accomplished practitioner of the method of hand-built art pottery taught by L.J. Harvey at the Central Technical College, and Mitchell accompanied her to these classes. Mitchell was already a proficient china-painter, but her enthusiasm for Harvey's hand built ethic inspired her to begin classes on her return to Adelaide the following year. The classes, taught from her home at Goodwood, lasted for more than 20 years.

Her early work in Adelaide was a continuation of what she had learned in Brisbane, but slab-building gave way to the simplicity of ‘pinch building’, and she even introduced the most ‘primitive’ form of all ‘coil building’ to her students. Vestiges of Harvey’s functional forms can be seen in the occasional coffee pot she made, but Harvey’s set of teaching exercises (so distinctive of the output from Brisbane) also disappear. The complex surface decoration of Brisbane pieces such as carving and double sgraffito gave way to applied decoration and simple glazing.

Apart from the ladies she taught Mitchell gave classes to children, and neighbours recall bus-loads of children being delivered to Goodwood. Because Mitchell fired her student’s

work she eventually had three separate kilns. Like private classes elsewhere there is no record of her classes, and the identity of her students has to be determined from surviving works. These include: Mary Blades, Johanna Laught, A.M. Lewis, Flora McKenzie, Violet Myers, N.M. Webb, and a host of others. Unfortunately, although the School pieces were consistently named they were infrequently dated.

So, I would be happy if members of Australiana could contact me with details of Annie Mitchell and her students that may be in their private collection. I would be especially delighted if any were dated. (contact via Australiana.Queensland@gmail.com if you do not have Glenn's email)



**24. Single leaf extension table of Australian Cedar on quadriform base.
Maker unknown, C. 1830, Size: 74 x 111 x 111 cm unextended 1610 cm extended.**

This table, with its cylindrical column, simple collar and quadriform base on four bun feet is designed in the Biedermeier style, (1815-1848 in Europe) which emphasised simplicity of form, but was often ornamented by specially chosen figured timber. In this case, the highly-figured cedar leaves are three single pieces (that is only one board each, not glued-up from smaller boards). The decorative shaping to the quadriform base may indicate a German settler

maker. Biedermeier style continued to influence furniture design for many years but gradually became more ornate towards the middle of the C19th.

The table is quite unusual in that the single leaf is stored by sliding into the base and then forms part of the moulding at the base of the apron of the table.

Quite an exceptional piece of furniture!

END OF FIRST REPORT. ITEMS ALREADY RECEIVED WILL GO IN THE SECOND REPORT, DATES FOR WHICH WILL BE ADVERTISED SOON

David Bedford, Peter Lane, Richard Phillips 6 April 2020