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Published by The Australiana Society
Editor: John Wade

AUSTRALIANA, the journal of the
Australiana Society, is published in
February, May, August and November.

Subscription rates (1986):

Individual	\$15
Household	\$20
Institutions	\$25
Overseas	\$25
Life	\$500

Advertising, subscriptions, membership
enquiries, and requests for back numbers
should be sent to The Hon. Secretary,
Australiana Society, Box 288, Lindfield
NSW 2070.

Editorial correspondence, manuscripts
and books for review should be sent to
John Wade, Editor Australiana, 10 Porter
St, Bondi Junction NSW 2022. Deadlines
are the first day of the month before
publication.

Committee 1985/6:

President Kevin Fahy;
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Ian Rumsey

Designed, Typeset and Printed by The Honeysett Printing Group. (02) 569 8133

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Registered by Australia Post Publication No. NBH 2771

Cover illustration: "Meroogal" at Nowra, built in 1887 and recently acquired by the Historic Houses Trust
of NSW (see Letter page 30)

EDITORIAL

BURYING THE FACTS

One of the great untapped areas of research into Australian history is that of archaeology. Here is a field which can recover material evidence of early British settlement, although often in fragmentary form. How else are we to know what kind of houses the first British settlers lived in, and what sort of household utensils they used? Historical records are either silent on some of these aspects of life, or similarly fragmentary.

In recent years there have been a number of archaeological excavations of historic sites, which could throw light on these and other questions. Some, like First Government House in Sydney, have achieved lots of media publicity. Others, such as Norfolk Island and The Gateway at Circular Quay, get the occasional mention. But all of the funding and all of the interest is confined to the digging, which looks like fun. No-one is interested in reporting on, or paying for, the less glamorous studying of excavation records and artefacts, or the hard slog of writing up the result into a report of lasting value.

A letter to the *Sydney Morning Herald* from Robert Varman drew attention to his plight on Norfolk Island. An archaeologist employed to investigate a trench dug for a fire hydrant pipeline across the settlement of Kingston (formerly Sydney), Varman was paid to supervise the digging but not to follow up the study of 500 bags of archaeological finds recovered. Even a request for a Bicentennial grant to throw new light on this material was unsuccessful.

The township on Norfolk Island was established in 1788, six weeks after the settlement at Port Jackson. Varman reveals that a preliminary examination of the finds shows an extensive reliance on Chinese porcelain. Thick deposits of bird bones reflect the food shortages in the settlement and the heavy consumption of local birds, with the result that several indigenous species were wiped out within a decade of the arrival of the British.

Equally exciting finds are coming up in supervised excavations on the mainland. A metal plate from The Gateway site commemorates the death of Lord Nelson in 1805, its battered surface telling more about the vicissitudes of life in early Sydney than a pristine example preserved in some collector's cabinet.

Ted Higginbotham's research at Parramatta has confirmed the existence of a row of convict huts on George Street, each with its own garden plot so that the men could be self-sufficient. Chinese porcelain is found here too, together with several examples of very crude one-handed pottery mugs almost certainly made in the colony in the first quarter century of settlement. There have a good claim to be the earliest Australian pottery known, a claim based on their archaeological context.

Of course, excavations at First Government House have revealed our first mass-produced manufactures, bricks and tiles from the house of the early governors. But none of this material is being researched either, no funds being set aside for the purpose. Fortunately, there is a trickle of money made available for some work on the archaeological material recovered from the Mint and Hyde Park Barracks, though long after some of it was put on display to the public.

These examples from Sydney demonstrate at best a half-hearted interest in researching the beginnings of British settlement in Australia. Yet the Bicentennial is supposed to be awakening or reinforcing the interest in Australian history. Let's hope that our commitment means more than just scratching the surface.



*Mr John Wade
Editor, Australiana*

I was very happy that "Meroogal" has been purchased by the Historic Houses Trust, as it is a very special house. It was built for my widowed great-grandmother, Jessie Thorburn, by her eldest son, Robert Taylor Thorburn, a goldminer and Nowra coach proprietor. His four sisters inherited the property after their mother's death. She lived to be ninety one.

The youngest of the sisters, called Kennina, (who was always known as Tot within the family) lived until she was ninety two, then the house was inherited by her two maiden nieces and a married niece, Mrs Steele. The other nieces were Helen and Elgin McGregor.

Mrs Steele's daughter, Mrs June Wallace, subsequently inherited the house.

My mother was called Jessie Arminelle Thorburn. She was the only daughter of the Rev. James Thomas Thorburn. On his retirement in 1932 he went to live with his sisters, Jessie Katherine (Kate) and Tot, at "Meroogal".

It was a very special household, as my great-aunts were very talented in all the housekeeping arts, making jams and pre-

serves for the local fetes and shows, often carrying off the prizes. My great-aunt Kate grew champion carnations and took a great pride in her flower garden, which was absolutely delightful.

Their mode of housekeeping was particularly 'particular' and their housekeeping arrangements had great charm. Elegance always prevailed in the way they set the table, served their meals, and entertained their guests.

They were very well read and prided themselves on keeping up with things that were happening. My grandfather gave Tot a car, a 1930 model Ford, which gave her great plea-

sure and freedom, and she was able to take the family out for picnics and other social activities. She was a very keen tennis player when young, and also rode well.

My grandfather was very fond of his youngest sister, and when my grandmother, Miriam Thorburn, died in 1924, Tot went up to Blayney where he had his last call, to stay with him.

Your mention of "Meroogal" in the April 1985 issue gave me this opportunity of sharing some of its history with you and your readers.

Sincerely,
Mrs M.A. HAMILTON

Society Information

Report on Special Meeting

Special Meeting of the Society was held on 3 April 1986 to approve a new constitution for the society

The new constitution is based on the model rules supplied by the NSW Corporate Affairs Commission, with minor changes to conform with requests made by members when the previous constitution was recently amended.

The new constitution was accepted unanimously by the members present and has been submitted to the C.A.C. for approval so that the society can become a corporate entity, entitled *The Australiana Society Incorporated*.

New Members

NSW

Amanda Beresford
Mrs E. Dorrough
Louise Douglas
Bruce Duff
Eileen Gibson
Prof. Roy Guthrie
Chris Hallam
Damien Hickey
Rod & Bev Millward
Helen Temple
The Australiana Fund
David Worland

TAS

Thomas Baron
Tasmanian Museum

VIC

Anna Bergin
Judith O'Callaghan
State Library

WA

Library Board of WA

QLD

Judith McKay

Program - NSW

All meetings are held at 7.30pm at the rooms of James R. Lawson Pty Ltd, 212 Cumberland St, The Rocks, unless otherwise indicated.

June 5

Guest speaker: Dr Joan Kerr
"The Dictionary of Colonial Artists".

August 7

Annual General Meeting and Auction.

Recycle some of your second-hand Australiana, exchange it for some more, and have some fun fueled by light refreshments.

September

Excursion: TBA

October 2

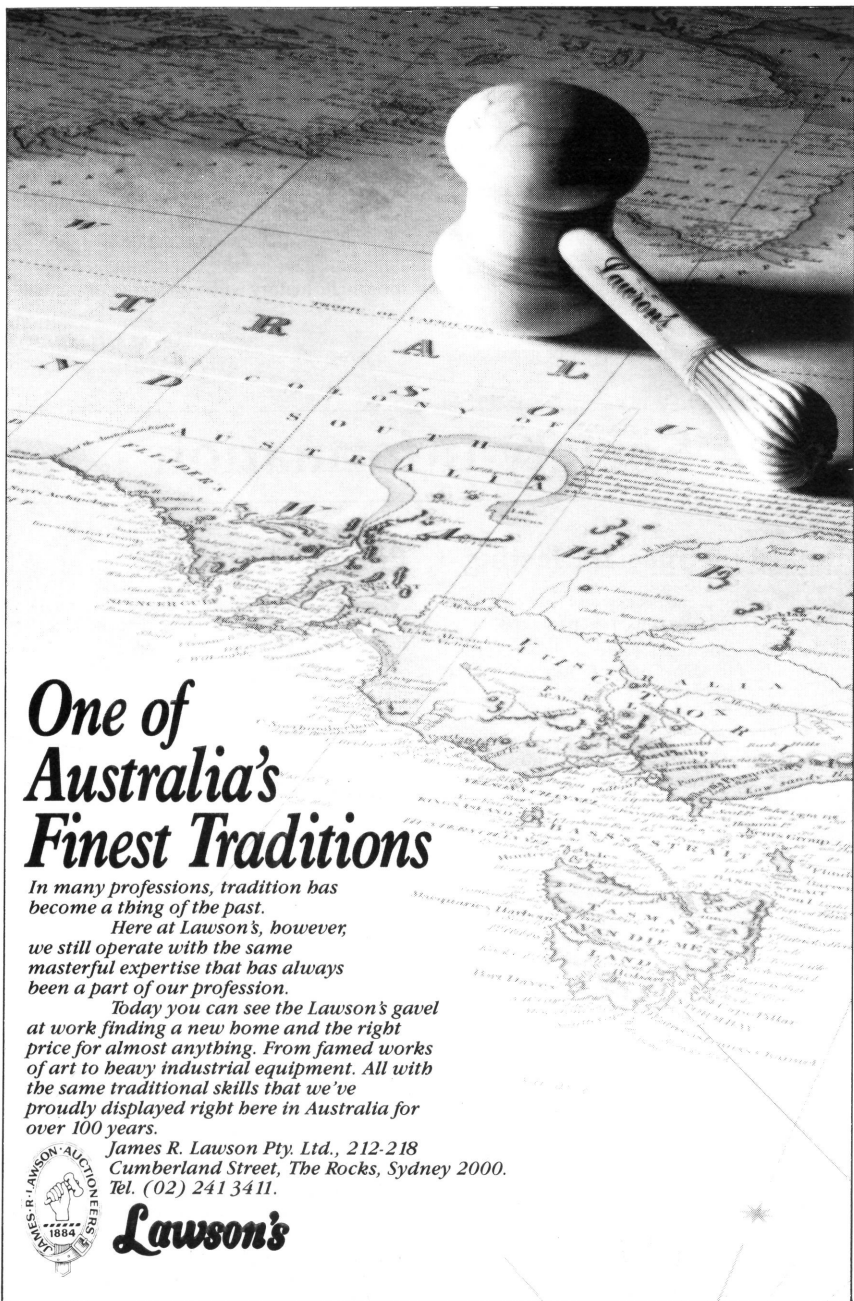
Guest speaker: Julian Bickersteth
"Conservation and Restoration"

The field of conservation has grown enormously in Australia over the last decade in particular, spurred on by museums' recognition of the importance of looking after the national heritage for future generations to appreciate and enjoy. Come and hear about what to do, and what not to do with the things that you are the temporary custodian of.

December 4

Trash or Treasure Night and Christmas Party.

Bring along something you want to show, or something you want to know about. Hear the experts tell you what it is or make up a plausible story anyway.



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NEWS

Government House Competition Announced

Speaking at the official opening of Heritage Week on 13 April, NSW Premier Neville Wran announced that \$200,000 had been set aside for an international competition to select the best way to develop the First Government House site.

"The Government has decided that a small scale glass Interpretation Centre will be built to enclose the site at the corner of Phillip and Bridge streets", Mr Wran said.

The competition will be conducted by the Public Works Department with a distinguished judging panel. The Young Street terraces will be restored and integrated into the scheme.

The Premier indicated that the glass structure proposed will ensure a stable, dry environment for the site and allow for a selective display of the archaeological remains together with an educational and research centre.

This year's Foundation Day lecture, celebrating the 198th anniversary of Governor Phillip's laying of the Foundation Stone of Government House, will be given by Dr Isabel McBryde. "Guests of the Governor — the Aboriginal Residents of the First Government House" will be the title of the lecture given at 8pm on Thursday, 15 May at the Law School on the corner of Phillip and King Streets, Sydney.

Union is Strength

The Western Australian Museum would appreciate the return of a small gold brooch, stolen on 4 March. Considered and presented by the museum as historically precious, someone nicked it apparently in the mistaken belief that it would make them a lot of money.

The obverse shows two hands clasped and the legend "Unity is strength". The back is inscribed with the presentation details, "Presented by S.G. Pearce, President of the Barrier Ranges United Trades and Labor Council, to Nurse Mrs Joseph Knuckey for her many humane acts during the strike 1892"

Australian History Scholarships Announced

Three researchers have each been awarded \$2,500 to pursue their writings on Australian history from original sources. They are recipients of C.H. Currey Memorial Fellowships which were announced by the NSW State Librarian, Russell Doust.

Roslyn Maguire will continue her study of 19th century Italian immigrants. Maja Sainisch is investigating the life of Charles Rasp, discoverer of Broken Hill's mineral deposits. Peter Synan is concentrating his research into 19th century Gippsland on the emergence of his home town of Sale as its regional centre.

Hausconcerts

It is not our spelling, but that of the Historic Houses Trust, which is organising in conjunction with radio 2GB a series of concerts at Vaulcuse House, Elizabeth Bay House, and Elizabeth Farm.

The concerts are varied in programs and performers. There are plenty of dates to choose from throughout the year, on Friday, Saturday or Sunday afternoons and evenings. Prices include refreshments and light supper, with single tickets mostly \$18. Some of the concerts are free. Programs and details are available from the organisers, telephone (02) 635 9488.

National Museum Moving

The National Museum of Australia, formerly the Museum of Australia, is moving at last. As well as a name change, it has a new logo combining "the ochre of the land and the blue of the sky, features which describe most of Australia". On International Museum Day, 18 May, it expects to open a new visitor centre on the shores of Lake Burley Griffin in Canberra.

Buvelot Gift to A.N.G.

Miss Ernestine McKellar, of Kyneton, Victoria has given to the Australian National Gallery a painting by Louis Buvelot of Terrinallum House, in the Western District of Victoria. Two other Buvelot paintings of the same property have been lent to the Gallery.

Buvelot sketched the property on a visit in 1868, working them up into paintings in the years following for the owner, John Cumming.

HMS Sirius

Two surveys have been undertaken of the wreck of HMS Sirius, Governor Phillip's flagship of the First Fleet, which sank off Norfolk Island in 1790. An anchor (there is already one on display in Macquarie Place, Sydney), a carronade and the spectacle plate with the earlier name of the ship, "Berwick", were recovered.

Further action to preserve the Sirius, to recover finds from the wreck held elsewhere, continue the underwater research and develop an exhibition about it, is being considered.

Icon for Sale

Bits of the True Cross are widespread, but bits of Cook's *Endeavour* are harder to come by — or so they say. Spinks auctioned a piece of oak, reputedly from the keel of the *Endeavour*, in Sydney in April.

The *Endeavour* was sold after Cook's return to England. Apparently renamed the *Liberté* she operated as an American whaler briefly before being beached at Newport, R.I., where she broke up. Fragments are supposedly preserved in the Newport Historical Museum, the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich, and in Australia.

An article on the fragment offered for sale in *Australian Coin Review* for March has a photograph captioned "The Endeavour" – which is surprising, since the article says she was broken up in 1796! Obviously pieces of the *Endeavour* have qualities as miraculous as those of the True Cross. The keel fragment sold for about double the estimate of \$12,000.

Export Controls Mooted

Controls on the import and export of cultural properties are being considered by the Australian Government, which has drafted the "Protection of Moveable Cultural Heritage Bill".

The legislation will allow Australia to become a party to the 1970 UNESCO convention to restrict the illicit export of cultural material. If as predicted it supersedes aspects of the Customs Act, it will be a great blessing.

The bill is designed to recognise an individual's right to enjoyment of property while establishing the nation's right to restrict the movement of that property where it represents an irreplaceable part of the cultural heritage. Export of certain protected objects will be prohibited, and a National Cultural Heritage Fund set up to facilitate purchase of objects prohibited from export under the legislation. Passing of the Bill will bring Australia into line with many other countries, and give official recognition to what private collectors have been doing for years — repatriating Australia's cultural heritage.

Australiana Abroad

A group of 5 watercolours by John Glover of English scenes fetched £5390 at an auction in Guildford, England during September 1985. Apparently they had been the property of a North Country family for the past 150 years and had presumably been purchased by the vendors' ancestors direct from the artist before 1831 when Glover settled in Tasmania. Decidedly bargain priced when one considers the prices reached for his Australian works.

In November 1985 a Chichester, England auction house sold for £520 a manuscript map of considerable Australian interest, entitled 'Tracing from Plan of the Town of Sydney N.S. Wales by Jas. Meehan Assistant Surveyor by Order of his Excellency Governor Bligh 31st Oct. 1807'. Although in need of restoration it retained its essential details and original colouring and provided a general disposition of the military establishments and the main street, together with the lessees of the 32 principal plots and sites in Sydney at this time three years before the advent of Governor Macquarie who dramatically changed the face of colonial Sydney. This map was presumably copied from James Meehan's Plan of the Town of Sydney in New South Wales' which is reproduced in *Sydney Takes Shape* by Max Kelly and Ruth Crocker (The Macleay Museum, University of Sydney, 1977) from an engraving in the Mitchell Library.

The exhibition 'Style of Empire' at the Miami-Dade Community College, Florida, U.S.A. during January 1986 selected from the 'Mitchell Wolfson Jnr Collection of Decorative and Propaganda Arts' covering a wide range of architectural pictorial material and the decorative arts of the British Empire between 1880 and 1940 included several items of Australian interest such as a magazine cover of 'Australia Today' (1940) designed by C. Dudley Wood a Victorian commercial artist and painter, and an exotic chandelier designed by Walter Burley Griffin the American born architect who made an important contribution to Australia's architectural heritage.

Looking after old Buildings

South Australia's Department of Environment and Planning has provided a useful service by issuing a 16 page booklet of guidelines on how to look after old buildings.

Parts of the guidelines are based on an American publication, and parts on the Australia Icomos Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance. It is very useful fodder for anyone concerned with preserving the significance of historic buildings; there are plenty of books on looking after your house, but not so many about how to look after buildings generally, such as your office or factory.

The S.A. guidelines are also going to be adapted for publication by the N.S.W. Department of Environment and Planning, and late in 1986 the S.A. authorities intend to issue a further publication, with suggestions on how to adapt historic buildings to other uses.

For free copies of *General Guidelines for the Preservation, Restoration and Reconstruction of Historic Buildings and Places*, write to:

The Manager
State Heritage Branch
Dept of Environment and Planning
GPO Box 667
ADELAIDE SA 5001

Ceramics Conference in Melbourne

You don't have to be a member of the Australian Ceramic Society to attend their 12th Australian Ceramic Conference to be held in Melbourne on 27–29 August 1986.

The conference will continue the innovation introduced in Sydney in 1984, with a consideration of historical ceramics. Sessions of particular interest will be those on archaeological ceramics and art pottery.

More information is available from Dr J. Drennan, Conference Chairman Austceram 86, CSIRO Division of Materials Science, Locked Bag 33, Clayton 3168, telephone (03) 542 2777.

Edwardian Organ Restored

The English organ in the Pitt Street Uniting Church

in Sydney has now been restored with the support of the NSW Heritage Council. Prominent organist David Kinsela gave a concert during Heritage Week to celebrate the restoration.

Built in 1910 by William Hill and Sons in the Neo-Classical church building of the 1830s, this instrument is considered to be the best example of Edwardian organ-building in the country. Over the past 5 years, repairs have been carried out on the tubular pneumatic action, the wind chests, the console and pipe work.

The pity is that this fine church is in such a sad state compared to the Great Synagogue just a short distance away. The church's congregation, now shrunk to 100, is too small to maintain the church as it ought to be maintained. Having announced a further grant for St James' Church in Macquarie Street, perhaps the NSW Government can look next time at financial support for restoration of this building.

Drop in and have a look at details like the cedar joinery around the doors, the cast iron columns and sandstone facade.

NSW Public Works Department History Project

The PWD History Project Office is located on the 15th Floor of the State Office Block — the northwest corner. Phone number is (02) 270 5303, and address is PO Box 5626, Sydney, 2001. People currently working on the Project are the Coordinator, Dr Lenore Coltheart; two consultants, Sue Maddrell (bibliographer) and Ann Burke (pictures researcher); a Departmental liaison officer, Beverly

Firth who is also writing a book for the Project; and four other writers preparing their research for publication in the PWD History Series.

The Project Office provides space and facilities for all the above but the resources may also be used (appointment essential — phone the Coordinator) by researchers. A card index classified according to the functions of the PWD over the 130 years of its history lists books, articles, theses, Royal Commissions, bibliographical data, departmental records and AONSW material. There is a small historical collection of photographic prints filed by subject. Reprints of selected journal articles are on file, as are copies of PWD extracts from "Blue Books" for most years from 1856 – 1900.

A guide to studying PWD history including organisation, senior officers, Ministers and activities should now be available, in three parts:

- I Abbreviated organisational history
- II Bibliography
- III Guide to picture resources

This working draft was circulated to a limited number of researchers to suggest amendments, additions etc. Later this year, the *Research Guide to the History of the Public Works Department*, NSW will be published. Expressions of interest in advising on the working draft are welcomed.

Two research workshops have already been held, on James Barnett and Dr J. C. C. Bradfield. Publication of books on PWD history is planned, while the project also intends to collect documents, artefacts and oral history.



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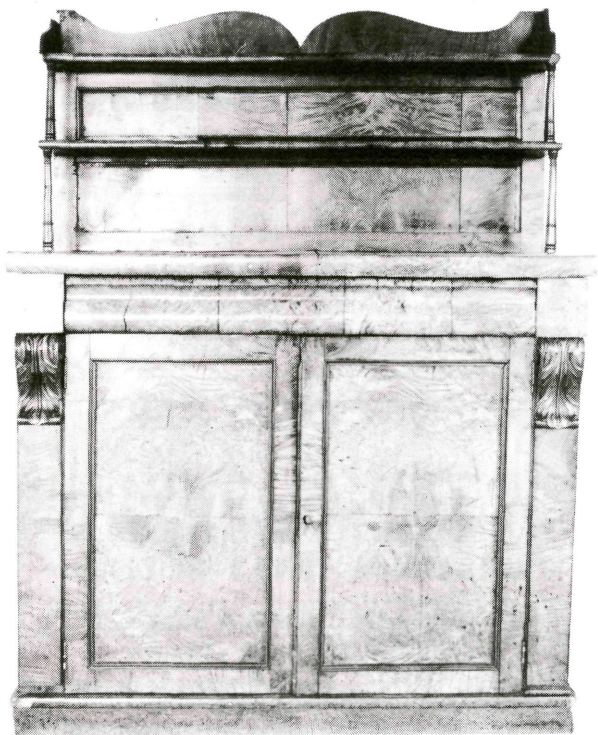
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The Silverware of Stokes and Sons

by Kenneth Cavill

Thomas Stokes, like many emigrants of the 1850s, came to Australia in search of gold. He was not successful at the gold-fields but, by 1856, had returned to Melbourne with the resolve to practise his craft as a die-sinker and button-maker. He set up his business at Mincing Lane, off Flinders Street. Die-engraving is a demanding task and Thomas Stokes, who had learnt his trade in Birmingham, was soon recognised as a skilled medallist. In the early days, not only medals but a multitude of penny tokens were struck for the merchants of Melbourne.^{1,2}

By 1860 Thomas Stokes had moved to larger premises at 100 Collins Street East, where he remained until 1882. The business prospered, and in 1867 he was joined by a partner, G.F. Martin. Presumably additional funds were required for expansion, as the firm was soon to introduce the process of electroplating to Australia. By the mid 1870s Stokes and Martin were listed in Melbourne directories as die-sinkers and medallists, as electroplaters and gilders, and as manufacturers of embossing presses, military ornaments, buttons, tokens, brand and trade marks, and all kinds of stamped metalwork.

Further moves were made as Stokes and Martin continued to expand. By 1890, a large four-storied factory and warehouse had been built at Caledonian Lane, off Post Office Place.³ This was to be the location of the firm for 45 years. Harry, the eldest son of Thomas Stokes, had joined the firm in 1875, to be followed by Thomas Jnr in 1886, and Vincent in 1895. In the aftermath of the Australian banking crisis of the early 1890s, the partnership involving G.F. Martin was dissolved. In 1893, the business was re-formed as Stokes and Son, and in 1896 it became Stokes and Sons. Stokes and Sons was incorporated as a proprietary company in 1911 under Harry Stokes. From the turn of the century there has been substantial growth with diversification into metalware manufactures, as well as the continuing production of medals, badges and silverware.

In the present article attention is to be focussed on Stokes and Sons, not as medallists, but as the first major manufacturers of table silverware in Australia.

Two interesting examples of colonial silver of the Stokes and Martin period have been identified.⁴ The first, circa 1875, is a jug or ewer — the plain silver body is shaped as an emu egg, mounted on a slender stem and footed. The handle is in the form of a snake. The ewer has the mark: "Stokes and Martin, Makers, Melbourne" on the underside of the base. The second item — a large epergne, some 50 cm high, was designed for the Melbourne Inter-

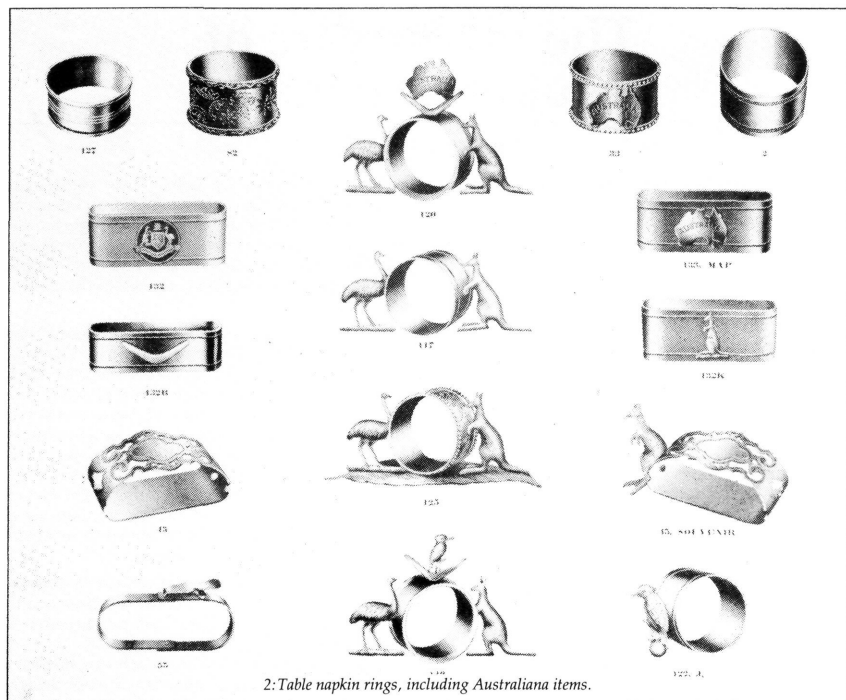
national Exhibition of 1880. This centrepiece images an Australian landscape prior to European colonisation. It has an aboriginal, kangaroo and emu figures, plus a central tree-fern, plants and wildflowers — cast, die-stamped and hand-chased — on a spreading base. Both are still in the possession of Stokes.

The earlier electroplated goods produced from the 1870s were largely for personal use. These so-called trinkets of the Victorian era included cloak-fasteners, ear rings and other fancy plated goods. No doubt the manufacture of such items was undertaken in parallel with the production of metal buttons. Relatively simple plated wares were manufactured for domestic use, such as trays, bread forks, etc. By the 1890s electroplating formed a substantial part of their business. Cups, trophies, vases and dishes were then being produced at their manufactory in the Caledonia Buildings.⁵

However, it is in the present century that Stokes and Sons have become well known for their quality silverware. Vincent Stokes had purchased new electroplating equipment in England in 1909, largely for the purpose of manufacturing hotel and restaurant silverware in quantity. Stokes' designs were substantial, and many of the tea and coffee pots manufactured by them in the early part of the century have remained in service for many decades. The tea set, illustrated in figure 1⁶ is typical of the electroplated silverware introduced in the 1920s. During this period Stokes supplied the table silverware for use in the dining cars and restaurants of the Victorian, and the Commonwealth, Railways. In 1927 they supplied the silverware for use at Parliament House, Canberra.



Plate 1: A substantial tea set, coffee pot and hot water jug in E.P.N.S., design by Eric Stokes c. 1925.



2: Table napkin rings, including Australiana items.

Stokes have designed and manufactured a vast range of silverware for domestic use. Some 800 items were listed in their "Boomerang" Electro Plate and "Georgian" Silverware catalogues.^{5,6} The wares included tea and coffee services, trays, salvers, sauce boats, entree and vegetable dishes, casseroles, condiment sets, biscuit barrels, sugar castors and cream jugs, cocktail sets, ice buckets, and of course, napkin rings.

The tableware and related items designed by Stokes and Sons were manufactured in quantity in electroplated nickel silver (E.P.N.S.) Whilst these wares were available in sterling silver, the proportion of sterling silverware that was produced would appear small. Napkin rings were an exception.

In the Victorian era, Stokes and Martin had manufactured silver plated mounts for emu eggs in considerable numbers. Comparably Stokes and Sons have designed and produced numerous Australiana items in electroplate and sterling silver. These have included kangaroo and emu paperweights and car radiator mascots. However it is the table napkin rings with Australian motifs that appear to have survived in greater numbers. A selection of these is shown in plate 2.^{5,6}

In 1933 Stokes decided to change the name "Boomerang" Electro Plate to "Georgian" Silver-

ware. Apparently the change was made to assist the jewellery houses, and other retailers, in selling Australian made wares of high quality. Competition from overseas firms was considerable, and some prejudice against Australian made electroplated, and sterling, silverware still persisted. Stokes' catalogue of "Georgian" Silverware follows on the earlier "Boomerang" Electro Plate catalogue. The letter opener in the shape of a boomerang (see plate 3) was a promotional item for their "Georgian" Silverware. Stokes, in 1936, introduced a medium-priced range of electroplated tableware under the brand "Crown Windsor" Plate.



3. Letter opener in E.P.N.S., a promotional item for "Georgian" Silverware c. 1935.

Additionally, flatware and cutlery were illustrated in Stokes "Boomerang" and "Georgian" silverware catalogues.^{5,6} Presumably the spoons,

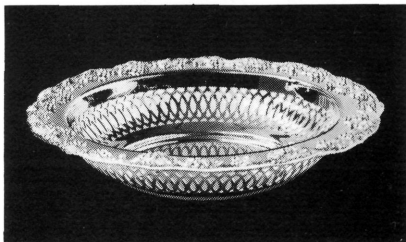
forks and knives, shown in the "Old English" and in more elaborate patterns, were produced by Stokes from imported nickel silver blanks. It was not until the 1930s that plain flatware was wholly manufactured, in quantity, in Australia.⁷ Further, Stokes produced speciality items such as salad servers, "Berry" serving spoons and asparagus tongs. The then fashionable sets of afternoon tea spoons and cake forks were available in E.P.N.S. and in sterling silver.

Towards the end of the depression the company planned and built a large up-to-date factory at Albert Street, Brunswick. The new premises were occupied in 1935, however they were soon to be used for purposes other than the production of medals and table silverware. During World War 1, Stokes and Sons had produced the many badges, insignia, and other personal items, in brass required for the outfitting of the Australian and New Zealand armed forces. With the outbreak of World War 11 in 1939, such items were again manufactured in quantity. Their well-equipped factory at Brunswick was soon engaged in defence production for the Ministry of Munitions. Stokes' skilled craftsmen were to undertake tasks not previously attempted in Australia.¹

At this time the staff comprised some 280 persons. The third generation of Stokes were then responsible for the management of the company. Russell and Eric, the sons of Harry and Thomas Jnr, respectively, had joined the firm in the 1920s, whilst T.V. (Tom) Stokes, son of Vincent, had joined in 1934. Russell Stokes had succeeded Vincent Stokes as managing director in 1932; Eric Stokes – a natural engineer – was works manager. Tom Stokes was on active service with the Royal Australian Air Force.

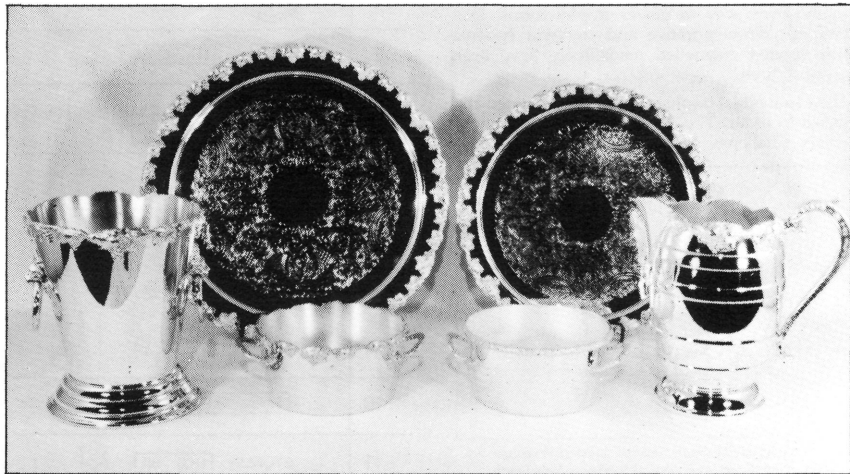
A substantial proportion of the wares manufac-

tured in the first half of the century was for hotel, restaurant and institutional use. By the 1950s stainless steel wares had replaced much of this electropated silverware and cutlery. Stokes were then concentrating on the manufacture of their Old Sheffield Reproduction silverware, primarily for domestic use. This quality tableware of traditional design is illustrated in plate 4. The manufacture of an individual item of reproduction Sheffield Plate, for example, a large salver or dish, with an applied border (see plate 5), has required the same skill and attention to detail as that needed to produce a comparable item in sterling silver.



5. Large pierced cake dish, with applied border – Old Sheffield Reproduction silverware c. 1950.

Stokes' "Euroa Project" of the early 1950s involved the company in decentralization of their manufacturing operations. A new plant at Euroa, in the Victorian midlands, was to produce a distinctive range of medium-priced table silverware under the brand name "Stokes Euroa". Presumably this range was to replace the earlier "Crown Windsor" Plate. The "Stokes Euroa" silverware was displayed in 1951,⁸ but it does not appear to have been produced in any quantity. The Euroa establishment was sold in 1955.



4. Ice tubs and bucket, water jug and salvers – Old Sheffield Reproduction silverware c. 1950.

In 1947 Stokes were commissioned to produce the wedding gift presented to the then Princess Elizabeth by the Government and People of the Commonwealth. The gift comprised two fruit stands and two salvers, in sterling silver, with hand-chased and saw-pierced borders in a golden wattle motif. Again in 1954, Stokes crafted the fine gold rose bowl presented to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, by the Government and People of Victoria, on the occasion of her first Royal Tour of Australia (see plate 6.)



6. Gold rose bowl, presented to Queen Elizabeth II, 1954.
Photograph Wolfgang Sievers.

Many trophy cups, shields, tankards and related wares – designed to commemorate sporting and other achievements – have been manufactured over the years. Cups were first produced, in quantity, under Stokes and Sons, “Boomerang” brand. Whilst Stokes have continued to produce trophies and commemorative wares, the traditional cup has largely given way to newer trophy forms. Die-stamped commemorative and souvenir spoons, with applied enamelled medallions, have been mass-produced.

Fine individual trophies have been designed and crafted to order. The American Polled Shorthorn Society Challenge Perpetual Trophy exemplifies










7. American Polled Shorthorn Society Challenge Perpetual Trophy of the Royal Agricultural Society of New South Wales, 1952.

these. This perpetual trophy commissioned by the Society, has been awarded on an annual basis, since 1952, for the best poll shorthorn at the Royal Easter Show in Sydney. The trophy consists of a finely modelled bronze bull, standing on a circular silver base, the whole mounted on a wooden plinth (see plate 7).

Marks found on silverware produced by Stokes and Sons are listed in the Table. Mark 1, “Stokes and Sons”, is the earliest to be found on mass-produced items. It was noted on an oval napkin ring with an applied Grecian key border, and an embossed fern pattern. The ring has an inscription for 1907. Another napkin ring, with an applied border and embossed pattern, has mark 2. This mark – a kangaroo with a six-pointed star above the tail, the star enclosing the letter S, in Old English script – was registered by Stokes and Sons, apparently in 1907. The ring is also stamped “S & S”, and bears an inscription for December, 1907. Presumably the original “Stokes & Sons” mark was discontinued at this time, whereas the “S & S” stamp has been sighted on silverware from the 1900s to the 1950s (see marks 2, 4, 5 and 8).

Table of Marks on Silverware by Stokes and Sons

NO.	MARK
1	STOKES & SONS E.P. N.S.
2	 E.P. N.S. S&S
3	 STG. SILVER
4	 E.P. N.S. S&S
5	S&S STG. SILVER
6a	STOKES STG. SIL
6b	STOKES STG. SIL 260
7	 ST. SIL 153
8	STG  H S&S
9	STOKES SILVERWARE E.P.N.S. A.1. 
10	Stokes E.P.A.1
11	STOKES STG. SIL 

The third mark – a boomerang with the six-pointed star above, the star enclosing the letter S – is to be found on the majority of the silverware, E.P.N.S. and sterling, that Stokes have produced. It was introduced in 1911, and has been sighted, for example, on yet another napkin ring similar in design to no. 82, plate 2. The ring has an inscription for 1912 (see Table, mark 3). One of the many items of Australiana produced by Stokes, an elaborate napkin ring on a leaf base with an emu supporting the embossed ring, has mark 4. This mark includes elements of marks 2 and 3. Again, mark 5 was noted on a small patterned ring, die-stamped and hand-finished. It is considered that marks 3, 4 and 5 would have been used from 1911 to the 1940s.

For some 50 years Stokes have manufactured a shaped napkin ring with pierced and embossed decoration (no. 45, plate 2). The patterned ring has been die-stamped from sheet metal, nickel or sterling silver, then shaped and hard-soldered (item 6a). A later version of this ring, bearing the pattern no. 260, has also been noted (item 6b). Whilst these two napkin rings have mark 6, another example has mark 8. Mark 8 is an Australian version of a hallmark, and comprises four stamps: "STG", a "Koala", "S&S", and a year letter. This pseudo hallmark, found on sterling silver goods produced in the immediate post-war period, had been discontinued by the 1960s. Year letters sighted to date have ranged from H to L.

An inscription for 1954 appears on a napkin ring bearing the year letter, L. Thus Stokes have used the kangaroo, the boomerang and the koala as marks to signify that their silverware was Australian. Mark 7 has been noted on a small sweets dish in sterling silver, with hand-pierced decoration and an applied border.

From the mid 1940s Stokes quality electroplated wares have borne mark 9. By then the simple brand name: "Stokes Silverware" had replaced the earlier "Boomerang" and "Georgian" brands. Their familiar trade mark – the boomerang and six-pointed star enclosing the letter S – has been used from 1911, the original capital S being in Old English script. It appears in Roman script on later wares (see mark 9). The "Stokes Euroa" mark has not been sighted. The company's name, "Stokes" is raised in the recent marks, 10 and 11.

Stokes have developed and expanded their considerable engineering resources through the last 50 years. In 1962 the company became a public one, Stokes (Australasia) Ltd, under the chairmanship of Russell Stokes. The company has diversified as a major manufacturer and supplier of component parts to the automotive and domestic appliance industries. They have become one of the leading manufacturers of heating elements in Australia. In order to accommodate their diverse engineering and merchandising activities, Stokes constructed new manufacturing and warehousing facilities at Ringwood, on the outskirts of Melbourne. Following on their closure of the Brunswick factory,

Stokes Australasia Ltd had, by 1977, transferred their headquarters to Ringwood.

In the 1850s Thomas Stokes was a pioneer medalist in a young colony, Victoria. Diversification notwithstanding, the firm that he then founded in Melbourne has continued as a prime manufacturer of medals and badges in Australia. In 1970 Stokes acquired the Australian agency for the Franklin Mint. Since 1976 they have also manufactured proof medallions at the Stokes mint for the Franklin Mints organization. When Franklin Mint took over the marketing and distribution of their own products in Australia in 1976, T.V. (Tom) Stokes resigned as a director of Stokes to become chairman of Franklin Mint Pty Ltd.

Whilst Stokes ceased actual manufacture of silverplate in the late 1960s, they have continued to market a comprehensive range of quality table silverware. For over three quarters of a century Stokes and Sons were to design and manufacture a vast array of quality electroplated silverware. Perhaps the time is not far distant when their fine Australian reproduction Sheffield Plate will be sought by collectors, as eagerly as their Australiana wares of the 1910s and 1920s are sought today.

Acknowledgments

Mr T.V. Stokes is thanked for his kind help. The considerable assistance of Stokes (Australasia) Ltd, and in particular of the company historian, Mr L. Blackburn, has been greatly appreciated. I am also indebted to the Royal Agricultural Society of N.S.W., and to owners of individual items of silverware.

References and Footnotes

1. Anonymous, "The Stokes of Victoria", *The Australian Electroplater*, 1949, pp.13-16.
2. L.J. Carlisle, *Australian Commemorative Medals and Medalets from 1788*, 1983, p. xv et seq. (Brian Kench, Sydney).
3. Anonymous, "Colonial Enterprise – Messrs. Stokes and Martin's Steam Silver, Electroplate, and Nickel Works", *The Australasian Manufacturer*, 1890 (July), pp.140-141.
4. Mr T.V. Stokes has provided detailed information relating to these important items of silverware produced by Thomas Stokes.
5. Catalogue: "Boomerang" *Electro Plate*, c.1925, Stokes and Sons Pty Ltd, Melbourne.
6. Catalogue: "Georgian" *Silverware*, c. 1935, Stokes and Sons Pty Ltd, Melbourne.
7. By 1930 Myttons Ltd, of Melbourne were manufacturing spoons and forks in quantity, in E.P.N.S. in the plain "Old English" pattern.
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Arthur Merric Boyd/John Percival: 35 cm

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Exhibitions

Skangaroovian Funk

Peculiar Adelaide Ceramics 1968 – 1978

Art Gallery of South Australia till 27 April

Skangaroovia is a 1985 suggestion of a new name for the state of South Australia. The bizarre pottery made there in the decade 1968–1978 is celebrated by this exhibition. The potters, mostly young, broke away from functional ceramics in the Japanese tradition and created sculptural forms. Some express a personal aesthetic, some sheer fun and some a political or social message.

The catalogue by Judith Thompson illustrates a dozen potters works in colour. A notable lack in the text is an assessment of the importance of these artists in the longer term.

A.G.S.A. will show several exhibitions of Australian interest later in the year – Golden Summers, Eugene von Guerard's South Australia, S.T. Gill: The South Australian Years, and Colonial Crafts.

Deutscher's April Exhibition

Another lavish catalogue, illustrating many of the works in colour, has been put together by Deutscher Fine Art of the inner Melbourne suburb of Carlton. Chevalier's "Mt Abrupt and the Grampians" on the cover is a heavily romanticised view complete with a pioneer woman bearing remarkable resemblance to a southern European peasant. If that is not to your taste, there are Margaret Preston wildflowers, a Robert Prentzel carving, Roy Opie nudes, and a view of Bundaberg.

Scrimshaw – The Sailor's Art

McClelland Gallery, Langwarrin, Vic., until April 20.

We missed a notice about this exhibition in the last issue and nevertheless thank the correspondent who told us about it. Drawing largely on the collection of Ian Armstrong, it features scrimshaw old and new. Some, with subjects like Batman, Fawcner and Henty's vessels, the 'Lady Nelson' and Port Arthur, are identifiably of Australian interest.

The Gallery hopes that the exhibition will tour after it closes at Langwarrin (enquiries (03) 789 1671).

Carnival Glass

Enfield Civic Centre, Broadview, S.A., April 25-27

Carnival Glass is not everyone's cup of tea. The Australian Carnival Glass Enthusiasts Association Inc. have arranged this show around South Australia's sesquicentenary; expect to see some piping shrieks.

Early Australian Silver and Australian Colonial Masters

Hugh Williamson Gallery of Early Australian Art, National Gallery of Victoria, March

It is harder to get information out of the NGV than almost any other Museum in Australia. We do not know what is in this exhibition, except that it presumably includes two paintings by Eugene von Guerard. The first, of Sydney Heads, was sketched by von Guerard on Boxing Day 1859, painted the next year, and exhibited at the International Exhibition in London in 1862. A second, larger version of the same scene was painted by the artist in 1865 and is now in the Art Gallery of NSW.

The second painting is one of "Glenara", a homestead at Bulla in Victoria, painted in 1867. The homestead is set in its formal garden surrounded by undulating pastoral land stretching to Mt Macedon. It is illustrated in Howard Tanner's *Art of Gardening in Colonial Australia*, page 68.

The Melbourne Gallery seems, from its press release, to be immensely impressed by money. "Glenara" is the most expensive work purchased for the Australian collection while "collectively, the paintings are valued at well over one million dollars". Thieves take note.

By The Harbour, The Beautiful Harbour

S.H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney, 11 April to 11 May

The Ervin Gallery on Observatory Hill is rivalled only by the Art Gallery of NSW and the Manly Art Gallery as a venue to display paintings of Sydney Harbour. This exhibition, selected from the Howard Hinton collection at the New England Regional Art Museum and the Ervin Museum's own collection, includes paintings by Sir Arthur Streeton, Walter Withers, Blamire Young, Sydney Long and Elioth Gruner.

The Photographs of Frank Bell

Manly Art Gallery, from March 20

Local photographer Frank Bell captured the spirit of Manly, its surfers, citizens and visitors in the first quarter of the century.

Banks' Florilegium

Blaxland Gallery, Grace Bros, Pitt & Market Sts, Sydney, from April 17.

Banks' Florilegium consists of 738 plates depicting many of the plants collected by Joseph Banks and Daniel Carl Solander on Captain Cook's first voyage around the world in 1768–1771.

These finely engraved plates were made, under Banks' supervision, following his return to England in 1771. The project took thirteen years to complete at a cost equivalent to \$1,000,000 in today's

currency. One of history's great puzzles lies in the reason why Banks failed to publish the engravings after such endeavour. However, apart from a set of proofs, the plates were left untouched and on his death, were bequeathed to the British Museum where they lay, between layers of 18th century newspaper, in a cabinet for nearly two hundred years, virtually undisturbed.

In 1980, for the first time, the British Museum, in conjunction with Alecto Historical editions, commenced publishing the full set of 738 engravings in colour in 100 numbered sets. These sets were subscribed worldwide by institutions and a small number of private collectors.

Individual prints are being offered by The Blaxland Gallery, at prices generally ranging from \$250 to \$1750.

The Australian Bicentennial Exhibition

In 1988 the Bicentenary will take to the road with the Australian Bicentennial Exhibition.

One of the largest projects being undertaken for that year, the Exhibition will travel around Australia, visiting far-flung regional centres as well as the capital cities. Transported by a convoy of pantech-nicons, it will open out at each location to form a spectacular series of tent structures, including an arcade of exhibition modules, an audio visual theatre and a sound shell.

Envisaged as an 'Exhibition about Australia for Australians', it will explore the Bicentennial theme 'Living Together'. It will focus on our history and our heritage, our culture and community, our achievements and our future. It will build a picture of the Australian people — through a series of six related themes: Journeys, Living with the Environment, Living with Each Other, An Australian Identity, Living Today and Futures.

The Exhibition is designed to enable visitors and local communities to take an active role so that a different style emerges at each location. Exhibits will include 'hands on' elements such as computers and working models and each community will be encouraged to participate through the production of local exhibits, displays, demonstrations, pageants and live performances.

The pantech-nicons and prime movers used to transport the Exhibition will form an integral part of its structure. Some vehicles will open out to form display areas and others will be used to anchor the framework and roofing. The mobile structures are the result of an award-winning design by the leading firm of architects Daryl Jackson and Associates, with the Commonwealth Department of Housing and Construction acting as project managers for the design and construction phases.

The challenge of assembling this unique show is being met by an experienced team under the direction of Desmond Kennard, previously deputy director of Sydney's Museum of Applied Arts &

Sciences. Dr Peter Emmett formerly director of the Craft Council, is the Curator in charge of the display content.

The itinerary of the Exhibiton will include all States, and ACT and the Northern Territory, visiting some 40 towns and cities in the 12 months from January 1988. The emphasis will be on reaching people in remoter parts of Australia, where the opportunities to participate in the Bicentennial celebrations will not be as great as in the major cities.

BHP has committed \$6 million in sponsorship for the Exhibition, with the Australian Government contributing a further \$19 million.

Next Ussue:

Louise Irvine,
Doulton's Australiana

Tim North,
Australia's Garden
Heritage

Colonial Militaria Quest

Naval officer turned author Bob Nicholls is on the trail of letters, photographs and items of military equipment which might assist him in his current search for material for his forthcoming book on the military — that's army and navy — forces of the Australian colonies in the period leading to Federation.

Bob, whose recently published book 'Bluejackets and Boxers' tells the tale of the colonial naval contingents who went to China in 1900 to help suppress the Boxer uprising, is looking for odd or unusual facets of the volunteer forces raised by the colonies in the wake of the departure of the British garrisons in 1870. The colonies were subsequently shaken by numerous war scares and often reacted in hasty and surprising ways.

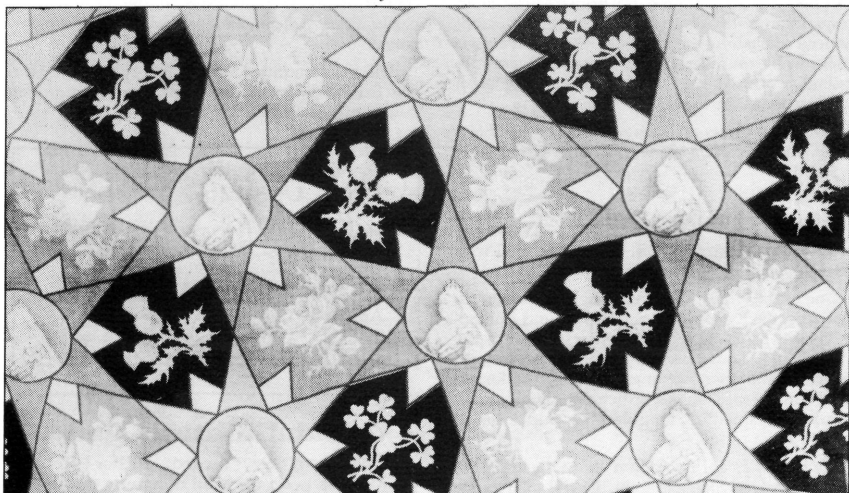
Details of long-forgotten units such as the Reedbed Volunteers, the Southern Tasmanian Volunteer Artillery and the Queensland Scottish Volunteer Corps will all be grist to Bob's mill, as will mention of the various naval forces maintained by many of the colonies.

Bob's address is 25 Thomas Street, BAL-MAIN NSW 2041, (02) **810 7391**

Quilt makers from our Past

Two Australian Quilt makers:
Alicia Florinda Tye (1864 – 1959 and
Mary Ann Bruton (1851 – 1930)

by Annette Gero



Mary Ann Bruton The backing fabric of the quilt – Queen Victoria Jubilee fabric with the rose, the shamrock and the thistle together with a cameo of Queen Victoria (1887)

With the tremendous revival of interest in patchwork and quilting, many quilts made by our Australian ancestors are coming to light. Many, of course, have simply worn out or been thrown away but some have been handed down and treasured by subsequent generations.

Patchwork and quilting first came to Australia with the early British settlers. In the early years of the Colony conditions were obviously too harsh to allow women the leisure time to make decorative patchwork quilts. Those that were made were of a utilitarian nature and were hardly likely to have survived.

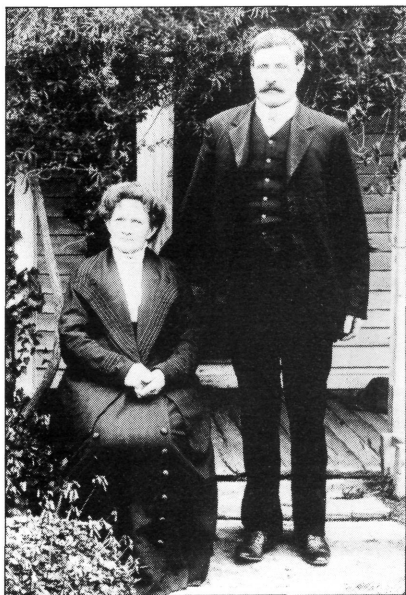
Many early 19th century quilts found in Australia today are those which came to the Colonies with the wealthier emigrant families – hexagon and medallion quilts. From documentation in early Australian diaries of the 1830 and '40s we know that subsequent generations copied the designs and patterns on these quilts (a custom well documented in the USA where granny's quilt design would be copied 30 years later by the next generation.) However, as the fabrics, threads, and needlework tools were also imported to the colonies from England, these quilts are likely to be indistinguishable from the original English pieces unless the quilt has a

firm family provenance or has incorporated materials or motifs¹ which can be documented as being of Australian origin. Provenance is the origin or source of an object, which could be the mention of a quilt in a house inventory, will, deed, diary or letter. It may also be the record of its previous owners.

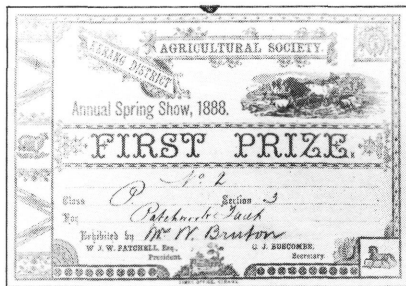
It is always a thrilling experience to find a quilt with a firm family documentation. By the time many quilts turn up in opportunity and antique shops their provenance is lost. Even quilts which have remained in a family frequently acquire a different history over the years. Those quilts which are found, together with their prizes at Agricultural Fairs, written documentation or features which allow them to be dated, are those which can truly be attributed to the Australian quilt makers of our past.

Mary Ann Bruton appeared to have made only one quilt – which won first prize in 10 Agricultural Fairs between 1888 and 1897. It is still in mint condition and has never been used. Alicia Tye made four quilts, all of which are still owned by her descendants. Both women were dressmakers at some period in their lives and both women were associated with life in Victorian gold mining towns.

1. Many quilts with Australian motifs have turned up including designs with kangaroos, emus, aborigines Australian coats of arms (for federation) and Australian flora.



Mary Ann Bruton (née Holley) was born in 1851 in Deloraine, Tasmania. Her mother had emigrated from Somerset, England and had married in Deloraine in 1849. Mary Ann married a farmer, William Bruton, in Sandhurst (Bendigo) in 1868. She became the local dressmaker in the Bendigo district and the small prints in the centre of her quilt are those materials which were the left-over scraps. She started the quilt in 1873, the year her second son was born, 'patching the tiny pieces by hand whilst rocking his cradle with her foot. The pieces in the centre of the quilt (2cm x 2cm) date from this period. Life at that time was tough on the land. There was no electricity and the quilt was pieced by the light of kerosene lamp. Mary Ann Bruton also had to sew all the clothes for her family – she had eight children. In 1885 the family moved to Swan Hill as her husband obtained a contract to carry goods by horse wagon between Swan Hill and Bendigo. Mary Ann did not complete her quilt until 1887. The materials on the outside of the centre medallion were purchased locally especially to finish the quilt and were pieced together by machine. The quilt was backed with a cotton print produced for Queen Victoria's jubilee in 1887 and printed with the rose, the shamrock and the thistle together with a cameo of Queen Victoria. (Note that the leek for Wales is not represented). This is possibly the only surviving example of this material in Australia. The finished quilt (222 cm x 264 cm) was not stuffed or quilted but held together by the binding.



First prize awarded to Mary Ann Bruton for her patchwork quilt in 1896

CERTIFICATE OF MARRIAGE.

District of *South-east* No. in Register *812*
 On *24th March 1888* at *the Parish of St. Peter's, St. Albans*
 Marriage of *Alicia Tye* was solemnized between the following persons according to the
 Rite of the *Anglican Church of Australia*

Signature *Alicia Tye*
 Residence (Present) *Myers Creek*
 (Usual) *Myers Creek*
 Age *26*
 Rank or Profession *Housewife*
 Condition *Single*
 (Former) Deceased in (Children) *Living* Dead

Signature *William Bruton*
 Residence (Present) *Myers Creek*
 (Usual) *Myers Creek*
 Age *30*
 Rank or Profession *Housewife*
 Condition *Single*
 (Former) Deceased in (Children) *Living* Dead

Birth Place *Myers Creek*
 Parents' Names and Father *Charles Bruton* Mother *Elizabeth Bruton*
 Rank or Profession *Housewife* *Housewife*

Signature *Mary Ann Holley*
 Residence (Present) *Myers Creek*
 (Usual) *Myers Creek*
 Age *26*
 Rank or Profession *Housewife*
 Condition *Single*
 (Former) Deceased in (Children) *Living* Dead

Birth Place *Myers Creek*
 Parents' Names and Father *Charles Bruton* Mother *Elizabeth Bruton*
 Rank or Profession *Housewife* *Housewife*

I, *William Bruton*, being a *housewife* *housewife*
 do hereby certify that I have this day, at *the Parish of St. Peter's, St. Albans*
 solemnized Marriage between *Alicia Tye*
 and *William Bruton*
 after notice had been duly made and published as by law required.

Dated this *24th* day of *March* 188*8*.

Signature of Minister (Minister of the Gospel) *William Bruton*
 or other Minister of the Gospel

Witnesses *Mary C. Shackleton*
John Shackleton

Marriage certificate of Mary Ann Holley to William Bruton 1868

The quilt was first exhibited and won first prize at the Kerang District Agricultural Fair of 1888. It must have been an extraordinary piece of women's fancy work because it won first prize for the next ten years from 1888–1897. (In later Fairs one could not exhibit any item more than once.) The pattern appears to be her own, different from the English style of hexagons or tumbling blocks, a variation of the medallion design. Many Australian quilts of the late 19th century appear to have variations of this pattern.

It was obviously fashionable for women to produce quilts during this period and highly desirable that ladies' work should be encouraged by regular exhibition, such as at Agricultural Fairs and International exhibitions.

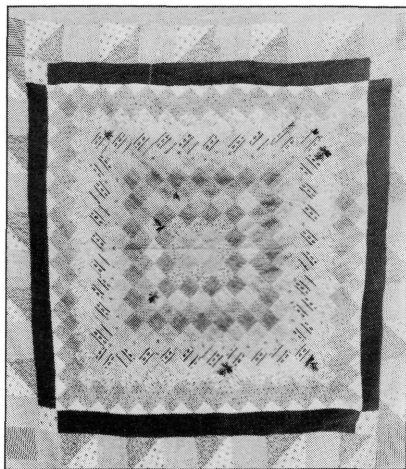
The International Exhibition held in Sydney in 1879 included a separate Ladies' Court which, amongst other fancy work, included needlework. A patchwork quilt exhibited in this exhibition contained 7000 pieces and was made by Mrs Hatton of Liverpool.

The *Universal Self Instructor* (McNeil and Coffee, Sydney, 1883) describes patchwork under Home Occupations for leisure hours:

"Patchwork"

Let no one despise this homely art. It is an accomplishment worth boasting of to make a really elegant patch-work quilt. If you have pretty patterns or can procure them, save them carefully, for sooner or later you will meet some elderly woman who keeps a quilt on hand, and fills up her "betweenies" by combining tints and matching pieces with poetic harmony."

and also adds some moral reasons for occupying one's time with fancywork.



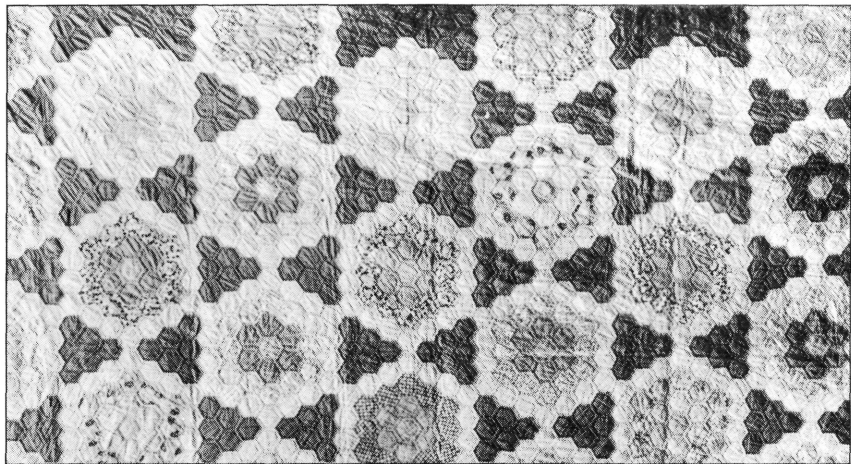
Mary Ann Bruton's quilt (front detail)

"Your sixteen-year-old daughter might certainly indulge in more profitable occupations than gossiping, reading novels, and flirting at her window with the young gentleman over the way. There are many useful and beautiful arts which may be practised at home, greatly increasing the sum of home enjoyment, and adding also to the elegance of the familiar rooms where the better part of our lives is spent.

"There has been a revival of taste in common things, and we care much more than our grandparents did about surrounding ourselves with beauty. The struggle of life was harder for them, and they had not time, as we have, for adorning . . . our houses."

Alicia Tye's mother came to Australia in the 1850s from Longford, Ireland. The other half of the family emigrated to America and settled in Oxford, Ohio. Alicia's mother married a gold miner and lived in Guildford near Castlemaine in Victoria. Alicia was one of her seven children. Alicia, interested in fabrics and dress designing, became an apprentice to the head dressmaker at Buckley and Nunn in Melbourne before her marriage to George Tye in 1880. George set up a successful furniture business "Tye & Co." in Bourke Street (listed by Fahy, Simpson & Simpson at Sturt St, South Melbourne, 1893–1899) and the family moved to a large mansion on the corner of Tennyson and Dickinson Street in St Kilda (demolished in 1940). Alicia had servants and led a life of Victorian splendour.

After her husband died in 1930, Alicia decided to travel to America to visit her relatives in Oxford, Ohio. Here she met with her cousin Maye Morris, who taught her to make patchwork quilts. Although the American side of the family had been there for several generations, Alicia was taught to



Section of the pastel hexagon quilt made by Alicia Tye. The colours are cream, green and pastel prints. Quilt measures 215cm x 150cm

make quilts in the English style using a template and overlocking the seams. On her return to Australia she made four quilts, three "grandma flower gardens" (single bed size) and one large double size "trip around the world" which was exhibited at the Royal Agricultural Show in Melbourne in 1935. It was also displayed in the window of Buckley and Nunn. The fabrics in all four quilts are pastel and contain prints with tiny flowers. In fact, the materials were ordered from America as Alicia felt that the Australian fabrics available in the 1930s were too crude and apt to fray. All four quilts were entirely handsewn and quilted (which was probably the American influence as very few Australian quilts were quilted).

Quilts with provenance such as these provide us with some valuable information – not only about the lives of Australian women in the 19th and early 20th centuries but also about the fabrics available and the motivations for domestic decorative work. As our ancestors had wool for bedding (unlike the early Americans who made quilts mainly for utilitarian purposes) many Australian patchwork items were made for pleasure or decoration. Mary Ann Bruton's quilt has never been used and was obviously highly valued as a piece of women's art. As well, the variety of fabrics contained in it (dated pre 1887) provide valuable information in enabling us to date other quilts which contain the same fabrics – but have no provenance. The design, also, is of interest as it is a pattern seen quite often in Australian quilts but not influenced directly by the English or the American style of patchwork of that period. Alicia Tye's quilts, by contrast, were directly influenced by both the English and the American techniques.

Domestic needlework of the 19th and early 20th century produced in homely surroundings in Australia, such as these patchwork quilts, has only

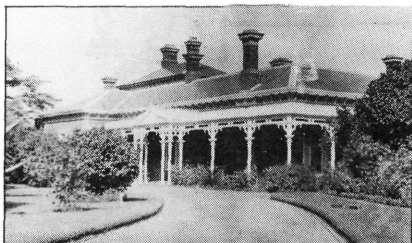
recently begun to be acknowledged and given due status. It is important that we continue to recognise that our own history and heritage is expressed through such women's work.

I am indebted to the families of these two women for allowing me to photograph their quilts and supplying me with the family documentation. Without their help this article could not have been written.

Since Dr Gero submitted this article she has found two other quilts of historical significance, both with provenance and full documentation. One is a silk log cabin quilt made by the wife of an Irish immigrant to the Victorian gold fields. The second is a Depression quilt made from squares of old suitings or factory off-cuts. It was made by a descendant of the first white man to be born in Van Diemen's Land.

Annette has documented many old Australian quilts and hopes that many of them will be included in an exhibition for the Bicentenary. If anyone has an old quilt – no matter how battered – of Australian origin, or brought to Australia by immigrant families, please get in touch with her at P.O. Box 389, Neutral Bay Junction, NSW 2089, or (02) 908 2942.

(Continued on page 51)



Alicia Tye's house in St Kilda



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Books

J.W. LINDT, MASTER PHOTOGRAPHER, by Shar Jones. Melbourne, State Library of Victoria, about \$40.

Society member and Curator of Elizabeth Bay House, Shar Jones, here analyses the work of German-born colonial photographer J.W. Lindt (1845–1926). Considered by Blamire Young as “the greatest out of doors photographer who ever lived”, Lindt was renowned for his studies of fern gullies, public buildings and natives of the Pacific basin.

A GOOD PLAIN COOK. AN EDIBLE HISTORY OF QUEENSLAND, by Susan Addison and Judith McKay. Brisbane, Boolarong Publications, 1985. Hard covers, 152 pages, illustrated, \$24.95.

This really is a delightful anthology of recipes and photographs, drawing on the great Australian cooking tradition expounded by cooks such as Mrs Lance Rawson and Miss Amy Schauer (“pronounced shower”). It is not so easy today to find good recipes for Colonial Goose, Bread and Butter Pudding, Potato Cakes, Aberdeen Sausage, Cockles and such things as many of us grew up on. They are all here, with lots of interesting sidelights on social customs. The four-tier cake for the wedding at Chinchilla in 1899, iced by the bride’s plasterer father, and the 1901 example illustrated from Toowoomba would be collectable as architectural models if they were still around.

THE FEDERATION HOUSE. A RESTORATION GUIDE, by Ian Evans. Sydney, Flannel Flower Press, 1986. Hard covers, 160 pages, colour and monochrome illustrations, \$26.95.

Ian Evans continues his successful series of books on old houses with this one devoted to Federation, between 1890 and 1920. Like the others, it is a useful guide on how to restore a Federation house, from the fence to the finials. There is a handy directory, but no list of sympathetic architects for the owner whose needs go beyond DIY.

VOYAGE TO THE GREAT SOUTH LAND, by Guenter Schilder. Sydney, Royal Australian Historical Society, 1985. Hard cover, 259 pages, illustrated, \$49.

Professor Schilder holds the Chair of the History of Cartography at the University of Utrecht in the Netherlands. His book appeared in 1976, and has now been translated and published by the RAHS with the assistance of The Australian Bank.

The author recounts the voyage of Willem de Vlamingh, sent out in 1696–7 by the Dutch East India Company (VOC) to explore several islands in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, and investigate the

presumed loss of the Ridderschap van Holland in 1694. He publishes watercolour impressions of the South Land made by Victor Vectorszoon on the voyage (displayed in Perth in 1979). Little came of the voyage and de Vlamingh’s discoveries, but it is a timely reminder with the approaching Bicentenary that Australian history, even recorded history, did not begin in 1788.

BLUEJACKETS AND BOXERS. AUSTRALIA’S NAVAL EXPEDITION TO THE BOXER UPRISING, by Bob Nicholls. Sydney, Allen and Unwin, 1986. Hard cover, 164 pages, illustrated, about \$20.

In 1900, 500 sailors of the NSW and Victorian naval brigades sailed on the transport *SS Salamis* and cruiser *HMCs Protector* to join the Western forces in China. Northern peasants, inflamed by a secret society which became known as the Boxers, had risen up against the Westerners intent on exploiting the country and spreading Christianity and Western ideas. This lively book details the action, and is profusely illustrated.

THE FEDERATION HOUSE: AUSTRALIA’S OWN STYLE, by Hugh Fraser. Sydney, Lansdowne Press, 1986.

Just released is architect Hugh Fraser’s profusely illustrated book about the Federation style in Australian domestic architecture, which we hope to review in the next issue.

(Continued from page 49)

References and Bibliography

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From Here and There

compiled by Ian Rumsey

*: These facts have been checked and rechecked!

London:

A set of 8 volumes of Gould's *Australian Birds* sold at auction for \$200,000 to an unknown Australian buyer. The price could hardly be regarded as chicken feed.

Tasmania

A set of near complete Gould's *Australian Birds* was stolen along with other rare books and prints from Christchurch College at the University of Tasmania. The thieves concentrated on Australiana comprising Gould's *Mammals of Australia* and J.S. Prout's *Australian Scenes*. Fortunately, the State has duplicate works in various libraries and museums.

Correction:

In the July 1985 issue of the journal FH & T's question and answer section was not quite correct. De Queros did not actually name the continent of Australia nor was he the first European to discover the continent. In fact he landed in the New Hebrides and named them, as stated earlier, in honour of Phillip I of Spain. De Queros mistakenly thought he had reached the Southern Continent, postulated by the second century A.D. geographer, Ptolemy of Alexandria. It was Ptolemy who first included Terra Australis Incognita (Unknown Southern Land) in his maps of the world. Legend has it that Roman and Greek sailors spoke of distant lands where animals stood like men and carried their young in pouches. The Chinese too were credited with visiting our shores in ancient times, but it was De Queros' lieutenant, Torres, who first sighted Australia after leaving his captain's expedition. Torres mapped the coast of New Guinea and the islands between to the Australian coast. From his maps and charts, Torres must have sighted the northernmost tip of Australia but he did not realise this.

It was left to the Dutch explorers to actually land on Australian soil and record their discoveries. William Janszoon, in 1605, roughly following Torres course but from the opposite direction was the first European to set foot on, and map, parts of Northern Australia. His maps show while sailing from the Dutch Spice Islands to map New Guinea, he sailed to Cape York and along the North Queensland coast west towards the Northern Territory. Janszoon thought the world's two largest islands were joined. Abel Tasman later followed Janszoon's charts and again failed to realise that New Guinea and Australia were separated by water, but did map our eastern coast south to Tasmania, and failed to discover that Tasmania was in fact separated from the mainland. There were other explorers, like Dirk Hartog, who made discoveries in the

West, as well as the Englishman William Dampier, who in turn was followed by Cook's voyage of discovery.

The honour of first using the term Australia to refer to the continent belongs to Matthew Flinders. Before Flinders, several names were interchangeable for the region. Cook used the Dutch term New Holland for the whole continent, and as we know, he named the eastern seaboard New South Wales. Governor Phillip, after settlement, split the continent in two, the western part being New Holland, a de facto Dutch possession, and the eastern half was N.S.W. The settlement and at times the whole English colony was known as Botany Bay, even after relocation to Sydney Cove in Port Jackson. At times, all three of these names were interchangeable. It is now hoped, readers are not confused and that the matter is now corrected. Please no more abuse for the slip in Australian Maritime History. Perhaps society member Conrad Blakeman could write a detailed account of European voyages to Australia prior to 1788. One of Conrad's interests are the postulated Spanish and Portugese voyages to our shores.

Q: Who was chosen Australia's first Prime Minister on December 15, 1900, by the Governor-General Lord Hopetoun?

A: Ex N.S.W. Premier William Lyne. Hopetoun made a monumental blunder, because Lyne was an Anti-Federalist and the furore that erupted caused great embarrassment to all concerned. Lyne tendered his resignation and Hopetoun's next choice was another New South Welshman, Edmund Barton.

Sydney:

The phantom practical joker has struck again. From the *Sydney Morning Herald* - "Colonial long case clock and early measuring devices by Oatley, Dick & Robinson, some in need of minor restoration ph. 7476311." If prospective purchasers checked the directory guide of the phone book an embarrassing situation could have been avoided. The number belonged to "pastor Bob" and his dial a prayer service and a long one at that — from what this column has been told. The culprit was thought to be the same person who successfully pulled a similar stunt on Terry Ingram some time ago.

Help:

Not only does the editor require articles, but this column could do with some new informants especially in Victoria and Queensland. One paragraph is all that is needed, from auction prices to new

exhibitions at public or private galleries. F H & T will even give free publicity to the trade, subject to the editor's discretion. So now the society is over 300 strong, please contribute to the organisation with more than your membership dollar. It's a case of the few who do so much for so many, could do with some more help from the many who do so little for the rest. Apologies to Sir Winston Churchill.

Tasmania:

The township of Ross celebrated its famous bridge's sesquicentenary (150th year) in February this year. The bridge was opened on October 21 1836 by Governor Arthur and is the third oldest in Australia, but is by far the most decorative colonial bridge due to the profuse carvings on its stone work. All the carvings were executed by convict stonemason, David Herbert.

Adelaide:

South Australian society members held their first local Australiana Society meeting last November at the premises of Moghul Antiques in Adelaide. The shop's owners Ned and Peter Roberts should be congratulated on their generosity as should South Australian members for their keenness in spreading the aims of the society in their state. It should be noted that there are only 20 or so society members spread throughout South Australia and of those half managed to attend the meeting with many more sending their best wishes.

Tasmania:

November 24 marked the celebrations of Tasmania's discovery. "Tasmania Day" as it is to be known will be an annual event held by Tasmanians to honour Abel Janszoon Tasman's discovery of what he called Van Diemen's Land, (in honour of the Governor of the Dutch East Indies) in 1642.

Society members of late have been bombarded with catalogues of paintings and antiques. Some worthy examples include Trevor Bussell's picture catalogue at \$15; the Hoopers excellent effort at showing their wares, with its tipped in photographs for \$10 and Deutscher Galleries picture and furniture catalogue (which also contains some Melbourne society members' stock) sent free on request. With all these examples there is not one price to be found of any of the items offered for sale, so it was heartwarming to see Rustic Charm Antiques break from the normal practice and show their prices on all the furniture displayed at the "Painted Panorama" exhibition at Grace Bros' Blaxland Gallery in Sydney

Sydney:

For those who have not realised it, the membership fees have risen this year. The increases are mainly due to the increased costs of printing the journal and maintaining its high standards (with the possible exception of this column and a certain anonymous on-the-spot-correspondent). The society offers more than good value for money with

free lectures and four issues of the journal per year. Many similar organisations charge their members for these services on top of their annual membership fees. Future fee increases will be brought to the notice of all members earlier and with a brief explanation.

Melbourne:

All Australian silver collectors know of the pioneering work Kurt Albrecht did in his book *19th Century Australian Gold and Silver Smiths*; and so it is sad to hear prior to Christmas last year Mr Albrecht was shot and wounded during an attempted robbery of Kozminsky's Galleries in Melbourne. It is hoped he has a speedy recovery.

Misceants who allegedly attempted a similar stunt in Sydney's Queen Street in December were surprised by the NSW Police, who understandably wished to speak to the characters involved and took them away to a quiet place to do just that.

Hobart:

The Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery is currently holding an exhibition titled 'Sullivans Cove, Birthplace of a Colony'. The show depicts the origins of Hobart Town. An information leaflet is available for \$1.

Hobart's Masterpiece Gallery is holding an exhibition of paintings, photographs and a small offering of furniture, titled "Views and Visions of Van Diemen's Land". Sydney dealer Josef Lebovic has supplied photographs by Tasmanian Alfred Winter (c.1870), for sale through the Masterpiece Gallery. The catalogue is very good, except there are no prices quoted.

Sydney:

Australian publishing house, Angus & Robertson celebrate their centenary this year. A & R is now part of Rupert Murdoch's publishing group and in the past handled C.J. Dennis, Banjo Patterson as well as Henry Lawson.

The Josef Lebovic Gallery has for sale a collection of 12 art works depicting Paddington and the eastern suburbs of Sydney, from 1844 to the 1860s. There are 10 watercolours by the primitive painter George Roberts and 2 pencil sketches of Sydney Harbour by George Edward Peacock.

F H & T didn't appear in the first issue of the new look Australiana due to space considerations. So far, reaction has been favourable to the new format but, as with many things, it takes a little time to adjust to change. The secretary tells us the new image gives the Society greater scope to make the magazine more interesting to our 300 odd members. Seven years ago we had barely 50 Society members and the first newsletter consisted of two A4 sheets, stapled in one corner.

Up, Up, and Away?

by Warren Wickman

A quick look through most newspaper articles concerned with prices paid for Australian art during 1985 will reveal the extent to which values have soared. If one reads closer, names like Holmes à Court, Bond and Waterhouse, or their agents appear constantly. What it tells us is that the day of the private collector has arrived in earnest. It has in fact, reached the point where no gallery, library or museum can afford to compete at auction for major Australian works. These new prices are not, furthermore restricted to art. In many areas, including books and prints, works are fetching new prices and the records spiral upwards rapidly.

There appear to be several reasons for this frantic increase in prices throughout 1985. One can say, however, that the scene for this explosion was set during 1984. That year saw the auction record for an Australian work broken three times.

April – A Tom Roberts painting "The Beach at Mentone" sold for \$190,000 to the Art Gallery of South Australia.

November – A Eugene von Guerard view of Sydney Heads realised \$200,000. At the same sale a record was set for an Australian watercolour: a view of Balmoral, Sydney, by Conrad Martens went under the hammer for \$100,000.

December – In London a John Glover oil, "Natives in the Eucalyptus Forest on Millers Plain; Patterdale Farm, the Artist's Home and Ben Lomond" sold at Phillips to a Greek woman, resident in London, for over \$550,000. This price represents a ten-fold increase in the value of Glovers since 1974. Regarded as one of Australia's foremost colonial artists, Glover emigrated to Tasmania at the age of 64 in 1831. He lived for a further 18 years. Thus he was not as prolific as other colonial artists and therefore very desirable. The only major institution bidding for this work was the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

(The record for an Australian related work was paid in 1983 by Alan Bond for John Webber's portrait of Captain Cook. The price was just over \$500,000).

Thus 1985 arrived with high expectations. And many were not to be disappointed. The spiral upwards was to continue. In the early part of the year several newspaper and magazine articles were devoted to the topic of ever-rising prices, predicting that 1985 would see a continuation of what had started the year before.

Certainly many see Australian art as an investment. Ann Roberts of Sothebys was quoted as saying in April "Australian paintings are a terrific form of investment. Prices are going up rapidly, the

more so for the better than the mediocre works".¹

The rate of growth leaves all other forms of investment far behind. The areas of Colonial and Impressionist paintings are the fastest growing in Australian art. It will be interesting to see if this trend continues and whether it moves into other areas, particularly works from the 1920s to 1940s. This may, in fact, already be happening with Mr Holmes à Court paying \$313,000 for Arthur Boyd's "Melbourne Burning", a 1940s painting which had an estimate of \$200,000. However, one needs to ask the question: do buyers like Messrs Holmes à Court and Bond pay enormous prices for investment only? But more of that later.

During 1985 several more records were broken:

April – "Bathers, Killarney" by Arthur Streeton sold for a world record for this artist at Sotheby's for \$220,000. The work, which came from an English mansion, was purchased by David Waterhouse. At this same sale a Conrad Martens sold for over \$70,000. The entire auction realised about \$1,000,000, with Alan Bond taking away 8 paintings for \$300,000. This included a watercolour by R. Browne for \$35,000 which had a pre-sale estimate of \$6,000.

May – Geelong dealer P. Hedley Earl arranged for the sale of Arthur Streeton's "Golden Summers", once described by Sir Lionel Lindsay as the cornerstone of Australian art. The painting was purchased by Perth millionaire Bill Hughes from Ken McKenzie, who owns a sheep station at Trowalla, near Ballarat. The sale of this painting for \$1.1 million set a new record for an Australian painting. It had been offered to the Australian National Gallery.

Also in May the Art Gallery of New South Wales announced that it was selling works to pay for a Tasmanian landscape by John Glover at \$500,000 after missing the one sold in London in December the previous year.

July – At a Leonard Joel auction Robert Holmes à Court paid \$800,000 for Streeton's "Settlers' Camp". This established a record auction price for an Australian artist. This painting is reputedly one of only four large scale works from Streeton's early golden period still in private hands.

In Sydney a Conrad Martens watercolour "Cockatoo Island from St Leonards" fetched \$90,000 at an Edward Rushton sale.

August – Mr David Waterhouse paid \$600,000 for a John Glover "The Bath of Diana", which depicts nine Aborigines in and around a Tasmanian lake. The painting was formerly the property of Sir Andrew Grimwade.

September – Dealer Christopher Day purchased a 1916 Hans Heyesen painting "Droving through the Gums". The price was \$74,000, a record for the artist and was sold through Hamilton and Miller auctioneers of Sydney.

October – an unidentified telephone bidder paid

\$700,000 for a von Guerard landscape entitled "View of Sydney Heads". This price set a new record for von Guerard works and was the highest auction price paid in Australia. At the same auction a William Westall "Distant View of the Town of Sydney" (1809) with a presale estimate of \$50,000 went under the hammer for \$160,000. It was rumoured that Alan Bond might have been the successful bidder, setting a new record for an Australian watercolour.

November – Sotheby's chose to market a von Guerard "Weather Board Creek Falls, Jamieson's Valley, NSW" by tender. This painting was considered by von Guerard to be his most important work. It was suggested that it might sell for \$1 million.

Naturally, all these high prices have made it nearly impossible for Australian institutions to compete for these heavyweight works of art. Are they concerned? In December 1984, after the Art Gallery of New South Wales missed the Glover in London, Director Edmund Capon said that this was "not necessarily a pattern for the future".² However, by August the following year he was saying that such continued high prices were putting galleries out of contention. There are gaps in the collection of the AGNSW, but there was no way the Gallery could spend money to fill them with prices at an all time high. As noted above, AGNSW had to consider selling some works to supplement donations to purchase a John Glover.

The Australian National Gallery came in for much criticism during the year. The failure to secure the Glover in London in December 1984 was considered by some dealers and reporters as a national disgrace. There were a few comments as to why the ANG did not bid for it.

The ANG was in for further criticism in May when its Director, Mr James Mollison, decided not to purchase "Golden Summers" after some protracted negotiations had been conducted. This was followed by more questions on why the Gallery did not bid on Streeter's "Settlers' Camp" in July. At this point Mr Mollison defended his institution by pointing out that many paintings of the Heidelberg School were later retouched or overpainted by the artist. Yet Terry Ingram referred to Golden Summers as a "stunner with its little bit of 'overpainting' removed",³ now that it is on public display in the NGV's travelling exhibition of the same name.

James Mollison is critical of the reporting of art prices in recent times. He feels that the Australian National Gallery has paintings in storage, just as good as those selling for record prices, only the Gallery did not pay enormous prices for them. For the moment the ANG appears to be concentrating on building its collection of international art. In March it paid \$1 million for a Cezanne "An Afternoon in Naples". And recently it announced plans to purchase several works by Jackson Pollock, including "Totem Lesson 11" for \$1.5 million.

With the upper end of the market left to wealthy private collectors, we return to the question of whether they see the purchase of works of art as an investment. For men like Mr Holmes à Court and Mr Bond, the answer is probably no. As businessmen in control of large corporations, the long term future of their collection probably lies with the assets and prestige of their companies. A number of Mr Holmes à Court's purchases hang on the walls of the Melbourne and Perth offices of the Bell Resources Group. In time these collections will probably join the ranks of those owned by other large concerns like Elders – IXL, ICI, John Fairfax and Sons and Australian Consolidated Press.

Has anyone cashed in on this dramatic rise in prices? The Melbourne Club sold its Alfred Turner "Fighting for Home" showing settlers fighting a bushfire. The club has been ordered to undertake work to meet fire safety requirements. The work would cost \$150,000. Many club members were angry at the sale, arguing that one should never sell assets, but others wanted to cash in on the boom. The painting fetched over \$300,000.

The only question remaining is whether this boom in prices is due to the rapid approach of the Bicentenary in 1988. Undoubtedly this has a lot to do with such price movements. It will be interesting to see whether a large number of works, sold in recent years, will be dumped on the market in 1987 in an attempt to realise quick profits. Perhaps the entry of Sotheby's onto the Australian market in 1983 has also brought a certain amount of international prestige with it, forcing our prices to fall into line with those overseas. Whatever the reason, it looks as if the boom will continue.

A consolation to Australians bemoaning the rapidly growing prices of our art is that it is also happening overseas. In 1984 the Chatsworth sale of drawings at Christie's realised £21 million, the highest ever for a single auction session. In July 1984 a record for a single painting was made when Turner's "Seascape Folkestone" sold for £7 million. In New York City the Gould Collection set a new record at \$US34 million in April 1985. At this sale a Van Gogh sold for \$US9.9 million. This was followed by the Getty Museum bidding \$US16 million for the "Adoration of The Magi", painted by Andrea Mantegna in 1500. This sale was disputed and the British Government had blocked the export of the painting for six months while attempts were made to buy it for a British gallery. At a sale at Christie's New York, a watercolour entitled "Snow Queen" painted by Admund Dulac to illustrate a Hans Christian Anderson story sold for \$94,000 on a pre-sale estimate of \$11,000. Finally, it is suggested that a consortium of Americans is prepared to pay \$15 million for "Blue Poles" if it were for sale.

Footnote: 1986 has seen prices continuing to rise with several new records being set. It appears that this trend will continue for the foreseeable future.

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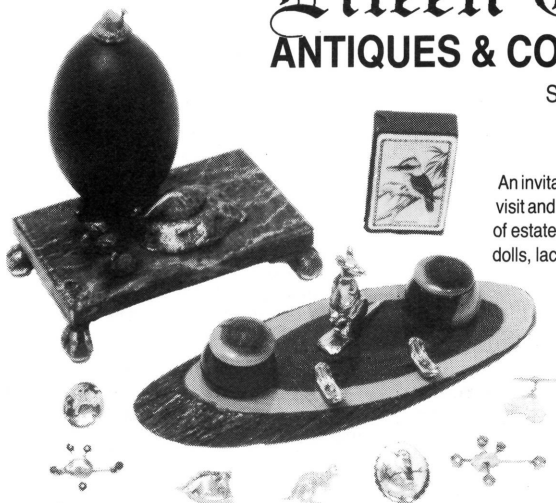
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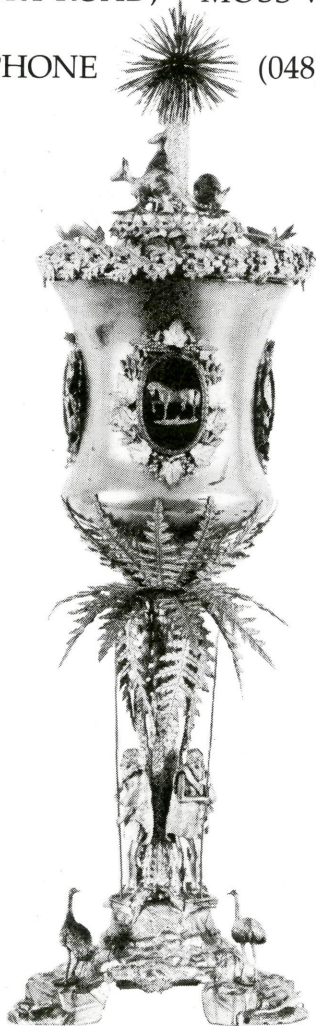
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