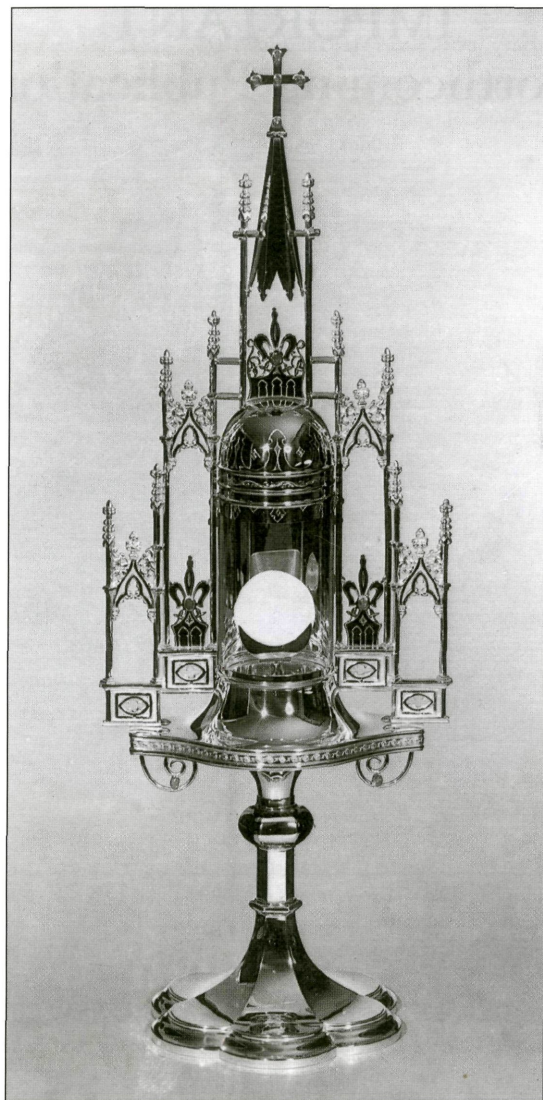

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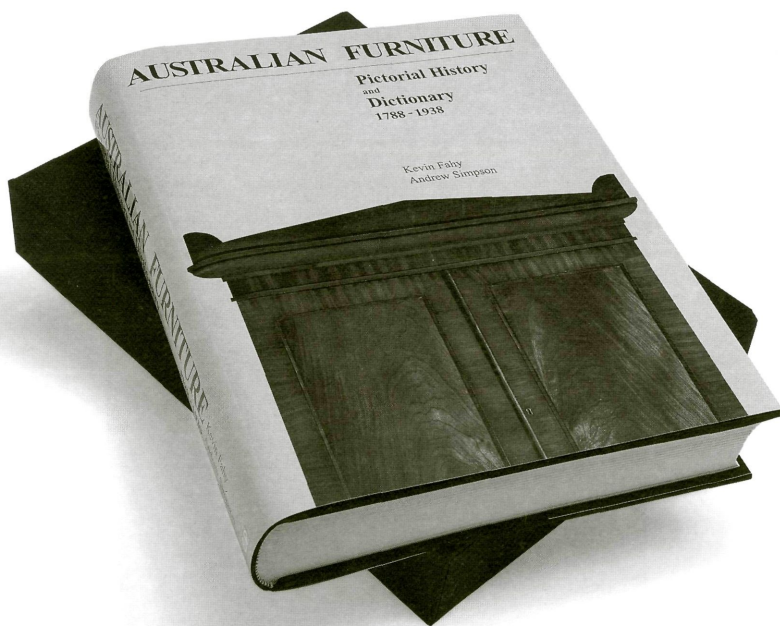


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Cover: Gilt Monstrance in Gothic Revival form (h: 75cm) c. 1937.

THE AUSTRALIANA SOCIETY

PO BOX 643, WOOLLAHRA NSW 2025



— SOCIETY PROGRAMME —

MEETINGS — 1998

Thursday
2 July 1998

The Society is fortunate that Michael Lehany and Colleen Morris have agreed to present a joint illustrated lecture on historic gardens and garden ornaments in Australia.

Mr Lehany and Ms Morris have pioneered the study of gardens in Australia and their public lectures and publications are well-regarded.

Thursday
3 September 1998

The curator of the Marion Mahoney and Walter Burley Griffin exhibition at the Powerhouse Museum, Ann Watson, will address the Society and lead a walk-through of the exhibition.

Parking will be available in the staff parking area behind the Powerhouse Museum. Please use the school group entrance on the lower ground level.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Please note that Society meetings will be on the first Thursday of every alternate month:
March, May, July, September, (A.G.M.), November.

They are held in the meeting room of the National Trust Centre, Observatory Hill.
Ample parking available.

Drinks served 7.30-8.00pm, followed by Australiana showcase
(bring your Australiana treasures along for general discussion).

The lecture will commence at 8.00pm.

W J Sanders Manufacturing Silversmiths, Goldsmiths & Art Metal Workers

Kenneth Cavill

William James Sanders was an accomplished silversmith. He was born in 1885 in the jewellery district of Birmingham, England and as an apprentice, he learnt his craft at the noted Vittoria Street School of Jewellers and Silversmiths. Moreover the practical expertise he gained while in the employ of Levi and Salaman and later as factory manager for C. Lyster and Son, manufacturing silversmiths of Birmingham, was to serve him well in Australia.

W. J. Sanders chose to emigrate and on arrival in Sydney in 1911, set about establishing his own business. Briefly he occupied premises in the old Victoria Arcade. By 1912, his small workshop was located in Sabiel's Building at 80 Hunter Street. During these early years he was largely engaged in restoration and repair work for the trade.¹

Following on the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, regular shipments of British and Continental silverwares were interrupted. Long established jewellery houses and

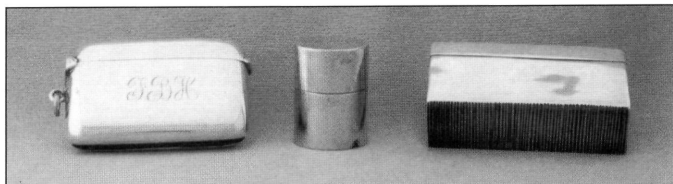


Fig. 1. (a) Double Vesta Match Case, Vesta Box, large Match Box;



Fig. 1. (b) Snuff/Tobacco Box, Cigarette Case, Compact.



Fig. 2 Napkin Rings.

wholesalers soon turned to local manufacturers for supplies. W. J. Sanders took up the challenge and began manufacturing much of the small silver work then in demand. By 1915, he had moved to larger premises at 212 Clarence Street where his output included trinket boxes, cigarette cases, vesta match




Fig. 3 Tea and Coffee Service c. 1925-35.

boxes and match box holders, photo frames and napkin rings² (Figs 1 & 2). Popular ladies' accessories followed including compacts in several sizes, silver-mesh bags and purses. Individual sporting shields, cups and trophies were made to order.

Sanders' business continued to expand and in 1924, a further move was made to Bowen's Building at 1 Lee Street, Railway Square. This was to be the location of W. J. Sanders, manufacturing silversmiths, goldsmiths and art metal workers for close on half a century. Sanders production of tableware, in sterling silver, was extensive. The wares included tea and coffee services, sauce boats, condiment sets, tankards and beakers, jugs and of course, numerous christening and presentation mugs (see Figs 3, 4, 5). Salvers were made in considerable numbers. By far the greater proportion of the smallwork and table silverware produced by W. J. Sanders was manufactured prior to the Second World War. Many of these items are now eagerly sought by collectors of Australian silver.

The wide range of sterling silver goods produced should bear the standard mark shown.

W.J.S 925  **STG** The four stamps: "W. J. S", "925" and the characteristic "STG" together with an

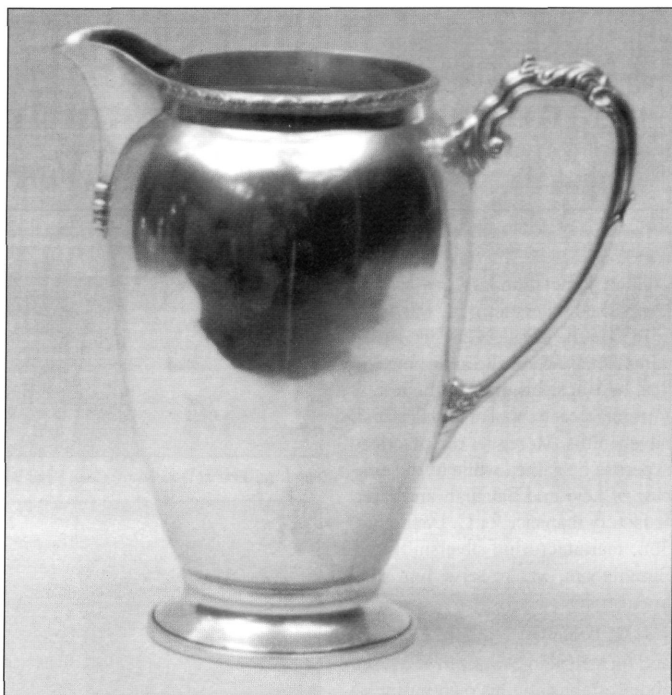


Fig. 4 Wine Jug c. 1925-35.

"ELEPHANT'S HEAD" have been used by W. J. Sanders, W. J. Sanders Pty Ltd and subsequently, Amor-Sanders Pty Ltd from c.1915 to 1996. The elephant's head has its origin in the coat of arms of the Sanders family. The arms were granted in the 14th century and the crest, carved in stone,

may be seen at the entrance to the village church at Honiley, near Stratford-on-Avon. The church was built by a forebear, John Sanders, in 1726.

Much of the silverware, designed and manufactured by William Sanders, was made for the better known jewellery houses and department



Fig. 5 Set of Beer Mugs.

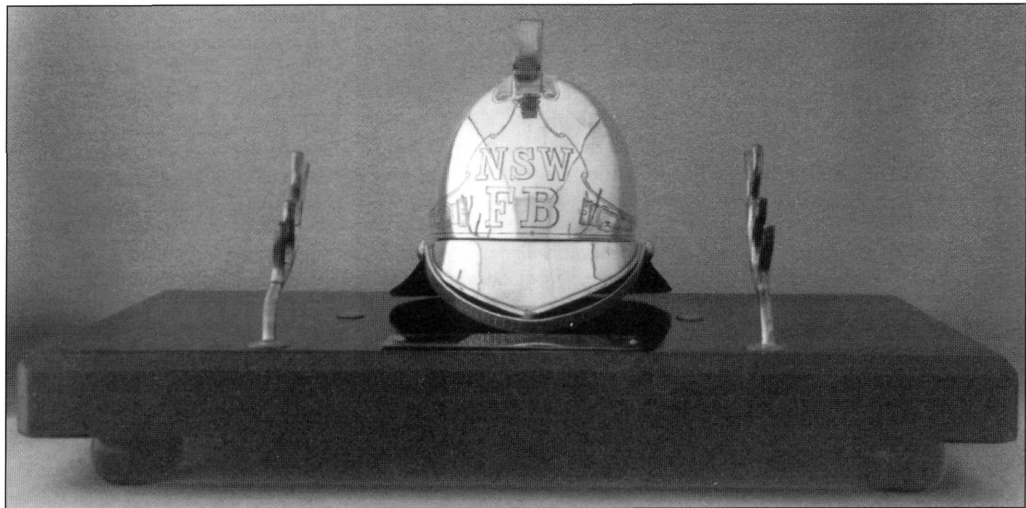


Fig. 6 Presentation Inkwell, NSW Fire Brigade c. 1915-20.

stores including David Jones, J. M. Dempster, Drummonds, Fairfax and Roberts, S. Hoffnung and Company, Hardy Bros, W. Kerr and Prouds. The marks of these companies were stamped on the silverware that Sanders made for them³. The wares are documented in Sanders pattern books.

W. J. Sanders undertook special commissions for hand crafted silver. The novel inkstand shown in Fig. 6 is indicative of Sanders highly skilled work, c. 1915-20. The silver inkwell is a finely engraved replica of a New South Wales Fire Brigade helmet, being set on an ebonised wood base. The silver plaque is not inscribed. The hand-raised inkwell bears Kerr's standard mark: "W.KERR" plus Sanders characteristic "925" and "STG" stamps. Regrettably, the demand for special pieces made by tradi-

tional methods is limited. The hand-raising of a fine tea and coffee service by Sanders, c. 1939, has been fully described and illustrated elsewhere.⁴ Individual commissions that required intricate chasing and embossing were usually crafted by Louis Somme. For

example, the finely decorated salver shown in Fig. 7, c. 1935, has been chased and embossed with classical scrolls while the applied border is further embellished with cast shell ornamentation.

Sanders were widely known for their manufacture of silver trophy cups – large and small. Many of their sporting trophies can be found, especially in the golf clubs that surround Sydney. William Sanders is remembered as a keen golfer, a member of the Lakes Golf Club at Kensington and of the Roseville Golf Club.⁵ Of the smaller trophies shown in Fig. 8 (left to right), the first is a House Cup of the New South Wales Golf Club at La Perouse, presented in 1930. It is a simple spun cup with two shaped handles and bears Sanders standard marks.

The second, elaborate trophy is a miniature fluted vase resting on a shaped base. There is applied deco-



Fig. 7 Hand embossed and chased Salver c. 1935.

ration to the rim and base. The cup is marked for Hardy Bros with the year letter "F" for 1938. It is the President's Associates Cup of the Australian Golf Club, Kensington and was presented in 1938. This unusual heavy, cast vase may well prove to be a small replica of the perpetual trophy. Many of the perpetual trophies of the Australian Golf Club were lost in a disastrous fire that destroyed the clubhouse in 1983. Amor-Sanders Pty Ltd were given the task of reproducing the club's important trophies, originally made half a century before. The third example (Fig. 8) is a cup of modern form with applied handles. It bears the stamp of the retailer, Fairfax and Roberts plus Sanders "925", "STG" and the "Elephant's Head". There is no inscription.

The Rifle Club Cup of the Royal Sydney Golf Club at Rose Bay is one of W. J. Sanders larger trophies (height: 26cm). It is a plain cup (Fig. 9) that has Hardy Bros marks: "HB conjoined", "Crown", "STG" and the year letter "C" for 1935. The Rifle Club Cup of 1935 was backdated with inscriptions from 1930 as documented by the Royal Sydney Golf Club:

"At the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, at the suggestion of General Jobson, members of the Club over the age of 45 and therefore ineligible for active service, formed themselves into a Club for elementary military training which was carried out on the links, especially on the first hole of the Short Course. After the war, General Jobson donated a cup for competition among the members of the Rifle Club ... It was later decided that this Competition should be carried on among all the members of the Club in general and in 1935 a cup was given by the Club for this purpose." (See Fig. 9).

With the outbreak of the Second World War this firm of skilled metal workers was soon involved in the production of aircraft component parts for the Ministry of Munitions. By mid 1946, W. J. Sanders were able to resume pre-war activities.

The untimely death of William James Sanders occurred later in 1946, at the age of 61. His obituary records:⁵ "With the passing on Saturday, November 30, of Mr W. (Bill) Sanders, one of Australia's foremost goldsmiths and silversmiths, the trade has lost one of its most respected and popu-

lar craftsmen ..." Control of the family business passed to his widow, Mrs Ellen Sanders, who was actively involved in its operations until 1958. Their son, John William Sanders, joined the business in 1947 and was responsible for its management from 1948. W. J. Sanders was incorporated as a proprietary company in 1961, with John W. Sanders as managing director. The 1950s and 1960s was a period of considerable church building and refurbishment; John Sanders greatly expanded the company's production of church plate and ecclesiastical metalware at that time.

Following on the merger of W. J. Sanders Pty Ltd with W. J. Amor Pty Ltd in 1971, manufacturing facilities were combined with those of the latter company at 1-15 Marshall Street, Surry Hills. W. J. Amor Pty Ltd, the well known medallists, engravers, designers and die-makers had been founded in Sydney by William Amor in 1888.⁶ Thus from 1971, the manufacture of silverware and art metal wares was undertaken in parallel with the production of medals, medallions and badges. In 1979, W. J. Amor Pty Ltd, managed by Ronald Byatt and W. J. Sanders Pty Ltd, managed by



Fig. 8 Trophy Cups (left to right) – NSW Golf Club, 1935; Australian Golf Club, Sydney, 1938; Sporting Trophy for Fairfax and Roberts.

John Sanders formed Amor-Sanders Pty Ltd. John Sanders retired in 1984.

Horse racing has long been viewed as one of Australia's national sports. Since the gold rush era of the 1850s and 1860s, prestigious racing events have been commemorated by the presentation of a suitably inscribed gold cup. Inevitably the elaborate, hand-crafted gold racing trophies of the Victorian age have given way in more recent times to simpler forms – traditional and modern.

W. J. Sanders has been responsible for the production of the Sydney Cup trophy through most of the present century. The Sydney Cup is the premier event of the Australian Jockey Club autumn race meeting held at Royal Randwick since 1866. The gold cup, commissioned from Hardy Bros of Sydney, was first made by William Sanders in the 1920s. Until 1947, it was manufactured in 18ct gold as a traditional two-handled presentation cup with campana-shaped body (see Fig. 10). An exception was made in 1938, when a special cup was produced for Australia's 150th Anniversary Celebrations (Fig. 11). This open, two handled cup of modern form is inscribed:

“AUSTRALIA'S 150TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

1788-1938

AUSTRALIAN JOCKEY CLUB

SYDNEY CUP

Two Miles

Won by

W. DIGBY'S

Bg “LAIGLON”

Trained by D. LEWIS Ridden by A.
HARVEY

Time 3min 23 sec”

It was valued at \$400. Prize money was increased from \$10,000 to \$14,000 to mark the special occasion.

The 1938 gold cup is marked: “HB conjoined”, “Crown”, “18CT”

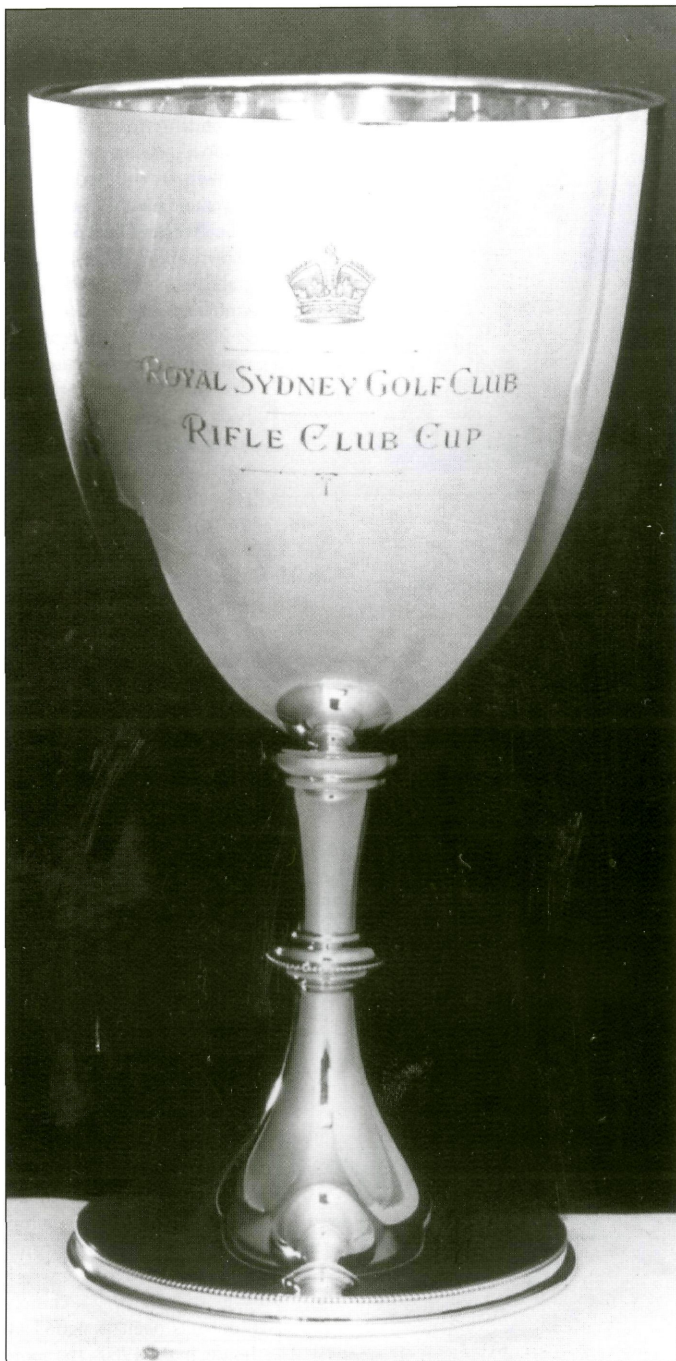


Fig. 9 Rifle Club Cup, Royal Golf Club, 1935 (photo courtesy Royal Sydney Golf Club).



Fig. 10 The Sydney Cup of 1923 (h: 23cm).

and "F". The year letter, "F" confirms the earlier observation^{3,6} that Hardy Bros system of dating began in 1933 with the letter "A".

The relatively simple, classical design of the 1920s and 1930s gave way in the post Second World War period to an elegant vase-like trophy



Fig. 11 The Sydney Cup of 1938 (h: 23cm)

with cover (see Fig. 12). From 1947-1957, the cup was shaped as a vase resting on a truncated stem and spreading foot. The restrained, decorative fluting applied to the body, foot, cover and finial is distinctive. The Sydney Cup of 1950, shown in Fig. 12, is an outstanding example of Sanders craftsmanship and is of 15ct gold. The Cup of 1955, of comparable design, also has distinctive fluting to the body, foot and cover but less to the finial.⁷ The latter cup was valued at \$1,000. The prize money awarded to the owner of the winning horse was then in the order of

\$20,000.

Over three decades from 1957, the Cup has been fashioned as a plain, tapering vase with cover. The Sydney Cup of 1983 (Fig. 13) is typical of the era. It is marked: "H BRS" and "9CT". Amor-Sanders continued to make the trophy until 1992. In the later years, 1987-1992, it was formed as a plain gold cup with wide bowl. The prize money for the prestigious Sydney Cup race now exceeds one million dollars, making it one of Australia's richest events. The inscribed gold cup is symbolic.

W. J. Sanders production of church plate in silver and gold has been noteworthy. Many fine examples of their ecclesiastical work – chalices, ciboria, tabernacles and monstrances – are to be found in places of worship throughout Australia and New Zealand. The greater proportion of Sanders church plate has been designed in house. In the 1960s, the company advised⁸ that their chal-



Fig. 12 The Sydney Cup of 1950 (Photo courtesy J. B. Hawkins Antiques).

ices were made in sterling silver or solid gold, or in sterling silver with solid gold cups. Patens were included with every chalice. All vessels were specially made to order and designs



Fig. 13 The Sydney Cup of 1983.

could be varied to meet personal requirements. Ciboria were made to match the design of the chalice. The catalogue⁸ illustrated some 25 chalices and ciboria of traditional and modern designs.

Two earlier chalices are shown in Fig. 14 and 15. The first is a replica of the 15th century De Burgo Chalice,⁹ the spreading octafoil base and the knop have been hand-chased. The second chalice, also traditional, has a scalloped hexafoil base and the cup is heavily overlaid with hand-pierced ornamentation. Fine church plate of the 1920s and 1930s usually bears the engraved mark: "W. J. Sanders, Sydney, sterling silver" on the underside of the base. Much of the church plate produced since the Second World War has been of simpler design. For example, one of their modern heavy chalices features a hand-beaten bowl with polished knop set on a plain spreading base. The latter bears an applied gem-set cross.⁸

Architects' designs for church plate and furnishings have been executed by W. J. Sanders from the Federation period onwards. The monstrance shown in Fig. 16 is of Gothic Revival form. It was commissioned from R. C. Lacey, manufacturing jewellers of Sydney and was painstakingly crafted to the design that they supplied. The large monstrance (height 75cm) is a unique example of Sanders workmanship in sterling silver, c. 1937. It was described in the following manner:¹⁰

"The monstrance stands 30 inches high, is gilt all over and set with opals. The lunette is contained in a cylindrical compartment surmounted by an ornamental dome and spire with Gothic ornaments on each side. From the hexagonal foot to the ornamental cross on top the work has been carried out almost entirely by hand, the striking ensemble bearing silent, but eloquent, testimony to the fact that it is no longer necessary to

go outside our country to find workmen capable of producing articles requiring the application of the highest forms of skills and craftsmanship."

Moving to more recent times, the sanctuary furnishings designed by T. A. Daly in conjunction with Stephen Moor that were made for St Peter Julian's Church, Sydney c. 1964, have been illustrated in "Treasures from Australian Churches"¹¹. The radiant, circularly-shaped monstrance produced by W. J. Sanders is a dominant feature of the church's modern furnishings.

A major proportion of W. J. Sanders ecclesiastical silverware has been manufactured for the several church supply houses of Sydney. These establishments, past and present, include Church Stores, CMS Church Supplies, E. J. Dwyer, Louis Gille, R. C. Lacey, Pellegrini and Company and S. M. Wallace. Individual items of church plate should bear the mark of the supplier plus the sterling silver stamp of W. J. Sanders. The vast range of church furnishings – art metalwares in brass and bronze, that have been produced by Sanders for well over half a century lie

outside the scope of this article (see Ref. ⁸).

Amor-Sanders Pty Ltd ceased operations in 1996. However the silversmithing and art metal ware division has been acquired by Church Stores Pty Ltd and is now known as W. J. Sanders and Company. The standard marks introduced by William Sanders, c. 1915, for wares produced in sterling silver remain in use.

Chronology

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| W. J. Sanders | 1911-1960 |
| W. J. Sanders Pty Ltd | 1961-1978 |
| Amor-Sanders Pty Ltd | 1979-1996 |
| W. J. Sanders and Co Pty Ltd | 1997- |

Acknowledgments

The considerable help of Mr John Sanders has been invaluable. The assistance of the Australian Jockey Club, the Royal Sydney Golf Club, Mr J. B. Hawkins, Dr R. J. L. Martin and owners of individual items of silver has been greatly appreciated.



Fig. 14 Replica of a 15th Century Irish Chalice (h: 21cm).



Fig. 15 Traditional Chalice with hand pierced ornamentation (h: 23cm).

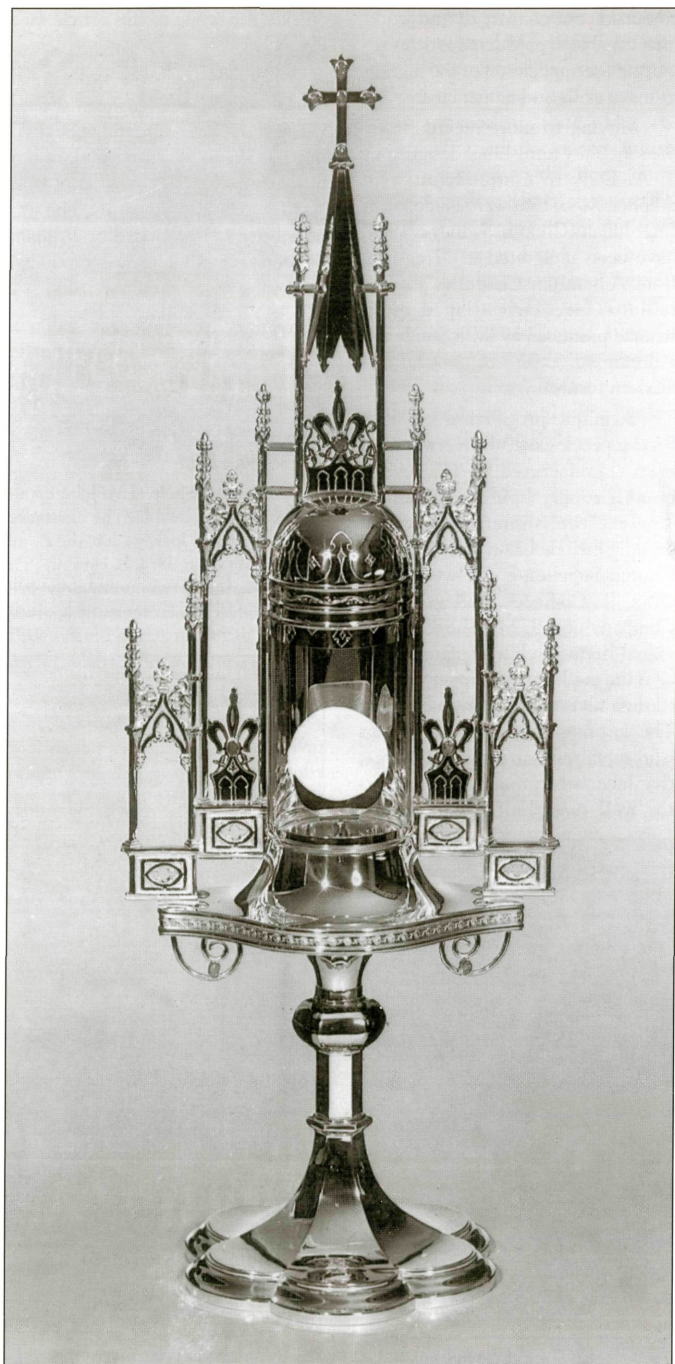


Fig. 16 Gilt Monstrance in Gothic Revival form (h: 75cm) c. 1937.

Footnote

* The original publication: "W. J. Sanders and Company" appeared in the *Australiana Society Newsletter*, 1984, 6(4), pp. 14-21. The present article contains material not available to the author in 1984. It provides an overview of Sanders manufactures in silver and gold to 1996, concluding with the closure of Amor-Sanders Pty Ltd. A further publication on W. J. Sanders commemorative and presentation silverware is intended.

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Australia Day Picnic 1998 Vacluse House

Caressa Crouch

A great deal of effort went into the organising and running of this year's Australia Day Picnic thanks to the hard work of committee members Ros Maguire, Ian Stephenson and Scott Carlin. (Ian even rang from India while on holiday to help with final arrangements!). Thanks also for the help given on the day by Diane Fischer in organising the afternoon tea and coffee and to Elayne Jay for running and organising the raffle.

The raffle was made possible by generous donations by The Powerhouse Museum book shop, Kevin Skelsey Antiques of Beverly Hills, the Australiana Society, and others.

A very relaxed and enjoyable time was had by those who attended and the weather blessed us with a perfect sunny day, which resulted in holding the lecture by James Broadbent under the trees in the garden, instead of in the stables as planned. A warm thank you to James Broadbent who gave, as usual, one of his interesting lectures. A lot of praise was given by James to the astuteness shown by Australiana Society members when examining objects.

Thanks are also due to our Secretary Michael Bogle, who although on duty at The Barracks, Macquarie Street all day, came in the afternoon and took us for the walk to the Wentworth Mausoleum and explained its history. The Historic Houses Trust should be congratulated for the efforts it has been making in preserving our built heritage, and the recent lease and conservation work of the Wentworth Mausoleum will ensure that it will be preserved for future generations.

The privilege of having an Australia Day Luncheon at Vacluse House, could not have occurred without the help and generosity of the Historic Houses Trust, in particular the head curator Suzanne Bravery.

And finally, as the Society needs such fund-raising functions as the Australia Day Picnic, a special thanks from the Committee for the support shown, by all those members and friends who attended.

The James Broadbent talk on the day covered two subjects. The first is the one I have chosen to relate, as I hope you will enjoy it as much as those who attended did. The second was an analysis of the methodology in James Broadbent's recently published "Colonial Houses of NSW", during which James continually praised Australiana Society members.

As I would not be able to retell or explain James' talk myself, and give it the emphasis and credit it deserves, I will relate it in his own words. James told us a fairy story in the beautiful setting on the front lawn of Vacluse house under the Moreton Bay Fig tree.

"Let me tell you a fairy story. If you didn't know, fairies are very in at the moment. Even Elizabeth Bay House is being interpreted at the moment with an exhibition entitled Flora Flower Fairies. You have all heard that Alexander Maclay was a great etymologist, but really all those insect cabinets are really full of fairies, categorised and neatly stuck up in pins .

"But that has nothing to do with my fairy story. Mine is a fairy story about an Australiana collector. Once

upon a time there was a collector, who was interested in things Australian. Many years ago he began collecting Australian colonial art. He spent long hours discovering many unknown artists, researching their careers, identifying their work, only to find that the State's Art Gallery jumped on his band wagon, and outbid him at every turn.

"Frustrated, he turned his attention to Australian furniture. Again he looked, he researched, and he identified. For a few years he happily collected cedar and blackwood and huon pine, but then the Australiana Fund came along, and queried his pitch.

"He took a different angle. Instead of fine cedar, he would collect folk furniture, tables made of twigs, chest of drawers, made of kerosene tins, and picture frames, decorated with casuarina nuts. He disclosed a whole exciting tradition of ingenuity and making do. But again he was defeated. Along came the Australian National Gallery. It was the same old story. He was continually outbid on the objects whose histories he had so carefully collated, objects who were then set in sterile galleries, as picturesque, or funky objets de vie.

"He was dejected, but he was not deterred from collecting. He would forget folk art, and colonial arts, and look at our modern consumer society. He would collect shopping bags and bottle tops. But even here, his fun was put paid by the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences.

"That was it. Enough was enough, the straw that broke the camels back. Why should he be frustrated

at every turn, by public institutions deciding to enter the game, and to take advantages of all his hard-won expertise.

"If only once some institution could lead the way, instead of follow, and contribute, rather than take. He vowed to collect no more.

"Instead he thought, if you can't beat them, join them. He certainly had enough experience of how museums behave, from all those over polite, pleading, but also rather threatening and condescending letters he had received over the years. Time and time again, he had been coerced into lending for this exhibition, or that, with never anything in return but an invitation to the opening, and his name wrongly spelt in a miserable catalogue. He too would not bother about opening up new things, he too would plunder others' fields, he too would become a buccaneer, he would become a mu-

seum curator. And so he did.

"But as we all know collecting is addictive. He tried therapy, he tried drugs, he was in rehabilitation for a time, but then, what did a chance perusal of the *Saturday* auction columns do, or was it the *Australiana* Society's journal. All that detoxification in a public museum was in vain. He had not thrown the habit.

"Although, there was now another dilemma. He was a museum curator. What about conflict of interest? What about professional ethics? Sleepless night followed sleepless night. He need not have worried however, for now what caught his eye was collecting things relating to Sydney's history, *Sydneyiana*, and there was no conflict of interest at all.

"For he worked, I forgot to tell you, at the Museum of Sydney, and it is well known that they only collect post modernist hyperbolicals. There was no

conflict of interest. There was at last not even any competition, and so, as in all true fairy stories, he lived and collected happily ever after."

As James' Broadbent explained, *Australiana* is a diverse area of collecting as it involves not just connoisseurship, or just categorising, or just history but it is each and all, the evidence of the history and society of Australia.

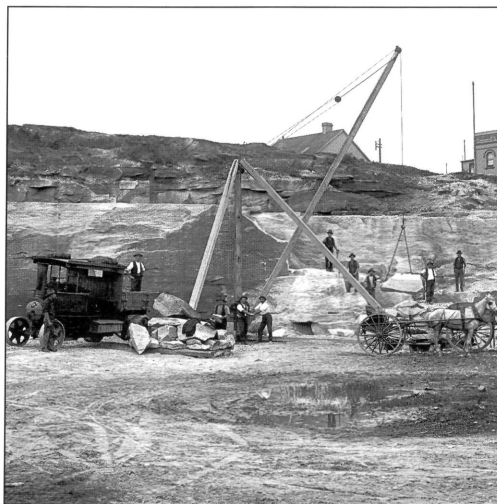
The moral for James' fairy story was to show that there is no point in trying to kick the habit of collecting, whether for bottle-tops or colonial furniture, waggas or silver. *Australiana* collectors can take heart in the knowledge that no matter how tiresome public institutions are, they do not lead the field in research, that is the domain of the collectors of *Australiana*, to research and publish in such areas as the *Australiana* journal, as they explore the infinitely expandable field of *Australiana*.

Treasures of Light

Louise Davies, Curator, Historic Photograph Collection, Macleay Museum

The Macleay Museum's Historic Photograph Collection holds images which tell the story of Australian photography and the development of photographic technology. In the new photographic display at the Macleay Museum, titled *TREASURES OF LIGHT*, visitors can view rarely seen images from the Collection. These images reflect the life and times of twenty one photographers, some famous, some unknown, from the 1850s to the 1940s. Four broad themes are presented: images of the photographers or the people they photographed; landscapes; built structures, and typical examples of the photographer's work.

Original examples of the different photographic processes are also



John Park, Quarry at Leichhardt, Sydney c.1927.

featured. One is able to see the silvery sheen produced by the highly hazardous Daguerreotype technique from the 1840s and 1850s. Louis Daguerre, who developed this very early method, is often said to be the 'father of modern photography'. Representative examples of the Ambrotype process, the Cyano-



Archibald Liversidge, interior of the Octagon.

type process, characterised by its blue colouring and matt finish, the Tintype process and the popular Carte-de-Visite are shown. Glass-plate negatives and glass 'magic-lantern slides' give some insight into the difficulties encountered by the nineteenth and twentieth century amateur or professional photographer.

Walter Baldwin Spencer, for example, was Professor of Biology at the University of Melbourne in the late nineteenth century. He set out as zoologist/photographer on the Horn Scientific expedition in 1894/5, transporting unwieldy glass plates and camera equipment by camel through the deserts of Central Australia. Even though many of the images he took are overexposed, they are significant in being amongst the earliest photographs taken of the then mysterious Central Australia. Spencer's photographs can be likened to the images taken of Mars by "Sojourner" a century later.

The Macleay is fortunate enough to hold very early images of Sydney and environs. These were taken by professional photographers like William Hetzer, Alexander Brodie, Henry Beaufoy Merlin, and John Paine. However, the images taken by amateurs such as Joseph Docker and his son, Judge Ernest Docker, Professors Smith and Liversidge from the University of Sydney, and John Shewan, the Macleay Museum's Cu-



John Shewan, Veterinary School, Fisher Library.

rator from 1912, provide another perspective on life at that time. These images also reflect the personal interests of the nineteenth century gentleman scholar.

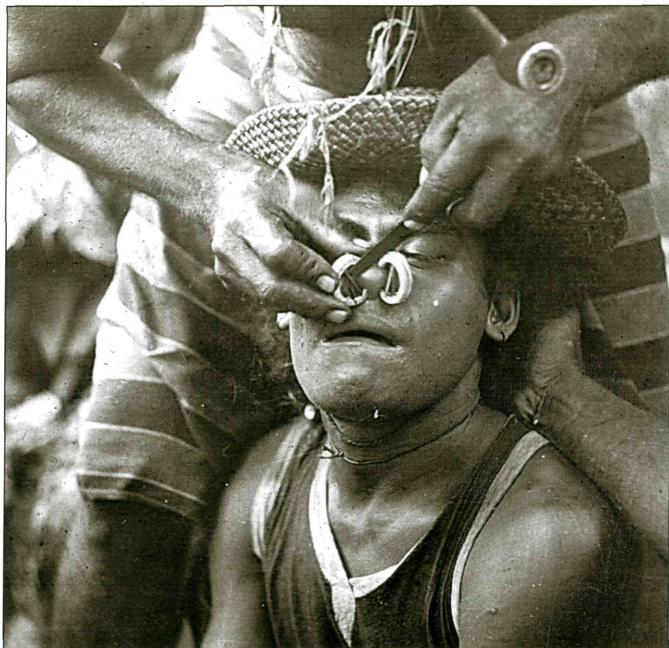
Many of those amateurs were some of the most prominent citizens of the day and often closely linked with the University of Sydney. These men were interested in exploring the uses of photographic technology, applying it to both the teaching and re-

cording of scientific endeavour. In many ways they contributed as much to the development of Australia as to photography. For example, Professor John Smith, an expert on water resources and foundation Professor of Chemistry and Physics at the University of Sydney, was instrumental in developing Sydney's water supply as well as, in the role of analytical chemist, helping the emerging sugar industry.

Professor Archibald Liversidge held the Chair of Chemistry and Mineralogy at the University of Sydney between 1872 and 1907. He contributed much to the general development of the sciences in Australia during this period and was instrumental in the founding of both the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science (now ANZAAS) and the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences. Not only did he record the development of the University of Sydney but his images give an interest-



John Ramsay, Bristol Box Kite, April 1911. This is possibly a composite photograph.



Ian Hogbin, nose peircing, Papua New Guinea, c.1940.

ing perspective on the general life of the time.

John Shewan used photomicrography in capturing images for the Anatomy Department, as well as using a number of different photographic processes including one of his own invention. The Historic Photographic Collection holds over 200 glass plates and prints by John Shewan dating from the 1890s to the 1920s.

Research by scientists at the University of Sydney took the academics to exotic locations from Antarctica to the Pacific Islands. The anthropology of the Pacific was captured by Ian Hogbin, who lectured in

the Anthropology Department from the 1930s and spent much of his time in the Pacific working on anthropological projects and advising Governments in Australia and throughout Melanesia. The Macleay also holds an archive of images taken by employees of Burns Philp, a company which took cargo to the many islands where plantation products were loaded for the return to Australia. These photographs depict a way of life which in many cases has since disappeared.

An interesting character was John Ramsay who, with his mentor Sydney William Jackson, pioneered ornithological photography in Aus-

tralia. What makes him intriguing is the fact that he modified cameras and developed specialised equipment to enable him to capture images of birds in most inaccessible places. His attention to detail and patience was impressive and was rewarded with hundreds of images recording the amazing avian fauna of Australia. He also had in his collection early birds of a different variety including the "Bristol Boxkite" aeroplane. This glass plate of the aircraft may be of J.J. Hammond or William Hart both of whom flew this type in the Sydney area around 1911. William Hart was the first Australian to gain a pilot's licence.

Professional photography in the early twentieth century is represented by John Park. Park was a portrait photographer in Leichhardt, but as a hobby he took his camera to the streets to provide a fascinating record of the lives of his fellow citizens. Through his photographs we gain insight into the community as a whole and develop a feeling for the era.

Perhaps one of the most remarkable aspects about the TREASURES OF LIGHT is the quality of the images and that these images exist considering the photographic technology available. Imagine holding a pose for an exposure of several minutes, or lugging glass plates over miles of desert, or developing the image using highly toxic and expensive chemicals that were brought out from Europe. Indeed, all these images evoke an era of exploration and discovery when, to take a photograph was a considerably more difficult task than in this day of disposable cameras.

Contributions Please ...

We require articles urgently for our *Australiana* journal.

We would appreciate if our members doing research into aspects of *Australiana* "would put pen to paper and let us have the fruits of your labours for publication".

Please forward your submission to: The Editor, *Australiana*, PO Box 643 Woollahra NSW 2025.



The Architect's Sketchbook

An exhibition at the State Library of New South Wales until 16 August 1998

John Murphy, Curator of Exhibitions

Introduction

The original drawings, sketches, plans and models which appear in the exhibition, *The Architect's Sketchbook*, are drawn from the State Library of NSW's extensive architectural collection of more than 80,000 items. The exhibition focuses on domestic architecture in Sydney and NSW through the 20th century, contrasting traditional styles with the influ-

ence of modernism. The exhibition's atmosphere relates the architects' works to a group-showing of artists as their drawings become fine art and architectural models take the place of sculpture.

Like preliminary sketches for paintings, the architects' drawings and sketchbooks reveal personal thoughts and creative methods which preceded the buildings' appearance.

While it may seem to be one of the most permanent of the arts, architecture is also one of the most fragile and most vulnerable to change. The architects' original drawings and plans restore their original intention in structures that have been altered or destroyed. They may be the only record of buildings which were not executed, such as Jørn Utzon's proposed house at Bayview, Sydney.

Excerpts from the guide to *The Architect's Sketchbook*:

William Hardy Wilson

William Hardy Wilson (1881-1955) believed that symmetry, scale and simplicity vanished from architecture in 1840. Enchanted by Georgian architecture, Wilson travelled in search of Australia's colonial buildings, visiting and sketching them until his courtship culminated in the publication of his drawings, *Old Colonial Architecture in New South Wales and Tasmania* (1924)

Wilson joined his friend Stacey Arthur Neave in establishing an architectural firm in 1911, John L Berry becoming a partner in 1920. The firm's design for A. S. Jacobs' residence (Fig. 1) presents a countenance prepared by Georgian classicism. The house revives its spirit of delicacy, solidity and undisturbed harmony. The severe shape of the house is finely dressed with small pane windows, fan-lights and lou-

vred shutters. The flow of bricks changes expression gracefully as it meets the arches and windows.

The open spaces of the verandahs and balconies are integrated within the house to preserve the facade's chastity and its immaculate symmetry. Its self-containment is enhanced by placing a central window on the principal elevation

where the entrance door might be expected. Order is continued internally with divisions in its planning which separate areas for day and night; servants and the served; girls and boys. The hierarchy of ground floor rooms permeates the floor above, led by the master bedroom being positioned above the living room.

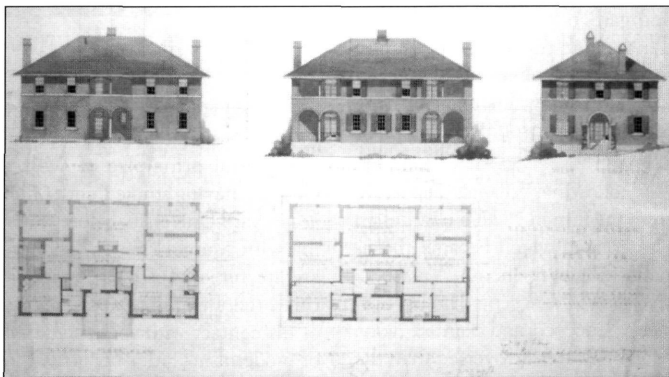


Fig. 1. Elevation for a house for A. S. Jacobs Esq., Gordon, Sydney by Wilson, Neave and Berry c.1927. (Detail from a sheet 410 x 680). PXD 280/38

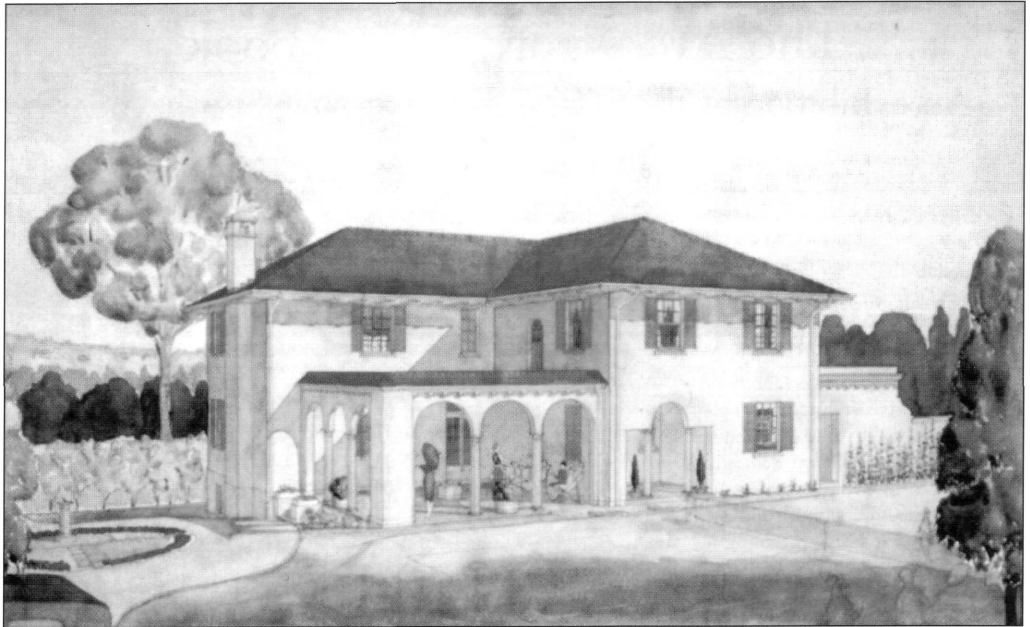


Fig. 2. Perspective of a house for A. S. Jacobs Esq, Gordon, by Neave and Berry c.1928 (Now the Lady Gowrie Nursing Home) (570 x 760). PXD 280/31

To build a house of this style without the composure of a suitable garden would be 'to exhibit a butterfly in a museum'.² The garden plan created by the firm harmonises the house with a prepared landscape and provides a discreet service entrance like the wings of a theatre. Its garden frontage is free for the stage-effects of fountains, sundials and garden benches, offering evidence that the house's primary function to shelter has been satisfied and the owners may cultivate interests more sophisticated than survival.

Following Wilson's departure from the firm in 1927, a new design was created which became the final choice for the house. A perspective shows the accepted house, now sleek, stuccoed and painted ivory. (Fig. 2) More extroverted than the earlier version, it is influenced by Mediterranean architecture in

opening the front to a loggia and the choice of terracotta roof tiles. A maid in costume serves guests while shadowy figures play tennis. Like the airless engravings of British settlement from a century earlier, the watercolour enshrines a sense of unchanging privilege and suggests the improving nature of

architecture in the little colony of the house's civilisation. Architecture could also make substantial the fantasy of grandiose houses entered through films, and magazine photographs flickering with rooms furnished by grand pianos and grandfather clocks, fireplaces in upstairs bedrooms and four-poster beds.³

Harry Seidler

Like Baldwinson, Harry Seidler (b.1923) was influenced by the architectural principles of Walter Gropius, having studied under him at Harvard University before working with Marcel Breuer. Seidler's architecture in Australia communicated the immediacy and integrity of his contact with the inspiration of modernism. From his arrival in 1948, Seidler's range of designs has testified that the simplicity of mod-

ernist forms need not result in dullness. The perspective documenting his house for Mr and Mrs Waks exhibits a work of sculptural grandeur which expresses structural and aesthetic confidence (Fig. 3). The house is depicted within an unmannered landscape, positioned on a steep waterfrontage overlooking Sydney's Middle Harbour. Its weight appears to have levitated from the ground and rested on thin columns which contradict the suggestion of heaviness.

The side view of the house makes rapid the interchange between solid and void; its walls of reinforced concrete open entirely to a glass front and series of terraces from each of the three floors. The terrace of the central floor projects, indicating the function of this floor as the living and entertaining area.

It is the family meeting place between the floor above, which is occupied by the parents' bedroom and music room and the children's bedrooms on the lower floor.

The emphatic lines of the drawing serve the design's irreducible clarity, and indicate that any addition would erase the harmony

of its geometry. Drawn from a low perspective, it dramatises the conflicting feelings of the house as both monumental and agile, massive and airy. Beauty inhabits the purity of its cubic spaces; its resolute simplicity produces forms which seem imperishable and immune to sentimentality.

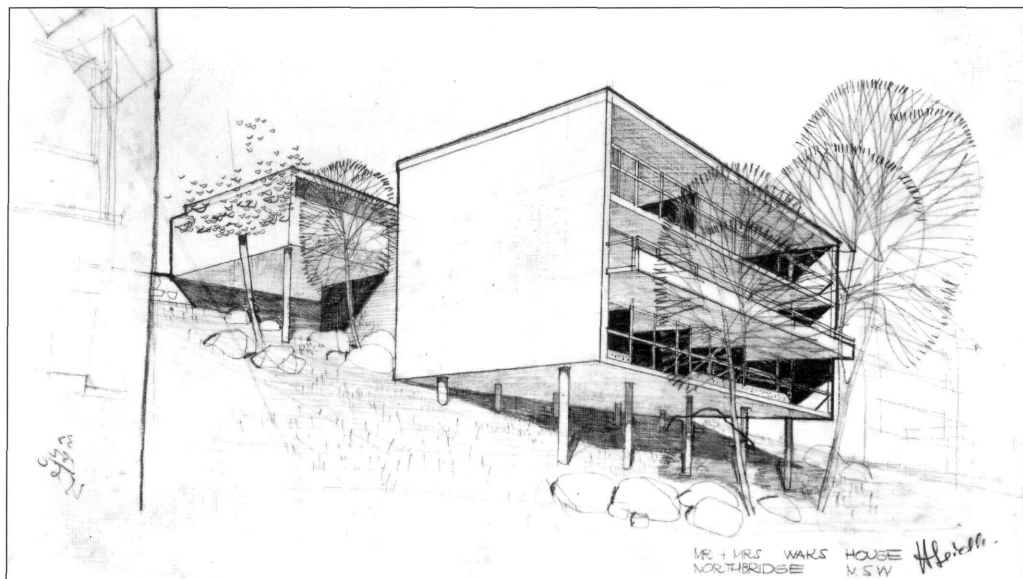


Fig. 3. Perspective of a house for Mr and Mrs Waks, Northbridge, Sydney, 1959, by Harry Seidler (400 x 660). PXD 613/60/58-01

Jorn Utzon

Jorn Utzon (b.1918) had hoped to settle permanently in Sydney and make it his 'architectural laboratory'⁴ In Bayview, Sydney he planned a family house composed of separate pavilions, related and independent like family members.

The site of a building is one of the determining factors in Utzon's design: 'the site tells me what to do.'⁵ With the Bayview house the pavilions colonise the headland, following its horizontality. It moves towards the water view like his Syd-

ney Opera House. The arrangement of rooms delays the moment the view is revealed, waiting until the living room window frames it like a camera lens. One of his sketches expresses this euphoric moment of this effect as a figure throws its arms high with pleasure. In disguising then revealing the view, Utzon enacts the very emotion of inspiration and creation.

Utzon's sketches for the house describe the motion of his thought; they express its fluidity and ease. (Fig. 4.) A personal language of design is created by Utzon, stemming

from a simple building system. For his house the method was based on prefabricated concrete blocks for the walls and plywood beams which are metal-capped for the ceiling. The principles of this building system remain constant while their shape and detailing adjust themselves naturally. Utzon sketches in a symbolic and consistent language like a composer using musical notation. His style of sketching is reminiscent of Alvar Aalto's:

I begin to draw in a manner rather like that of abstract art. Led only by instincts I draw, not architectural syn-

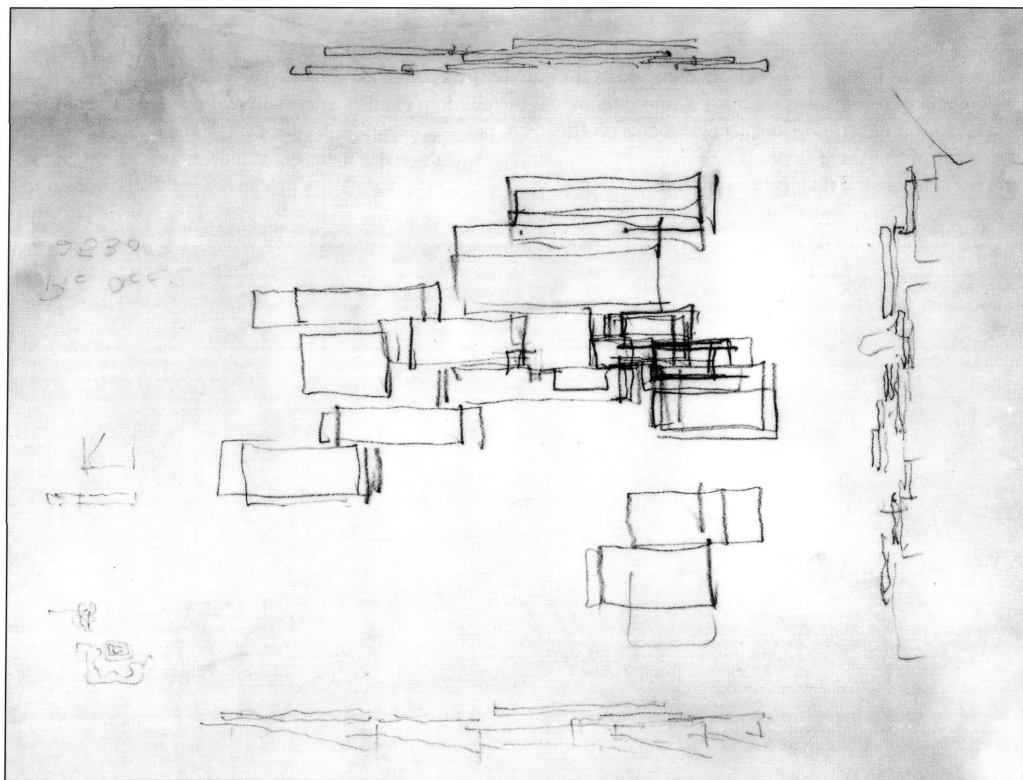


Fig. 4. Jorn Utzon, sketch for a proposed house at Bayview, Sydney c.1963 showing plan with sketch elevations on the sides (420 X 390). PXD 492/54

theses, but sometimes even childish compositions and via this route I eventually arrive at an abstract basis to the main concept ...⁶

Utzon's designs for the house were abandoned when he left his Sydney Opera House project in 1966.

Notes

1. William Hardy Wilson, 'Building Purulia' in *Domestic Architecture in Australia*, special issue of *Art in Australia*, Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1919, p.12
2. W.H.Bagot, 'A Plea for Tradition' *ibid.*, p.27
3. For example, John L Berry 's tour of houses in "The Home" issue of *Australia Beautiful*, July 1928
4. Jorn Utzon interviewed in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 31 October 1992
5. Jorn Utzon interviewed in the video, *Skyer [Clouds]* Director: Pi Michael, Denmark, 1994
6. Alvar Aalto, 'The Trout and the Mountain Stream', in *Sketches*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1978, p.97

the architect's sketchbook

The guide to the architect's sketchbook is available from the Library Shop, State Library of New South Wales for \$10.

The Late Kurt Albrecht

Robin Hunt

Kurt Albrecht, doyen of Kozminsky Galleries in Melbourne, died on 15 November 1997 aged 71.

Kurt was a passionate advocate and connoisseur of the decorative arts, both European and Australian, and his larger-than-life profile on the Bourke Street Hill will be sorely missed.

His life history is as interesting and colourful as the details and information he garnered about the items he dealt with.

Kurt served his apprenticeship as a gold- and silversmith in Hamburg, Germany. During World War II, as a youth, he spent some time in appalling conditions in a Siberian-Mongolian prison camp. After liberation, he travelled to France and practised his trade there. He immigrated to Australia in 1952 and, after spending some time at Prouds (the jewellers) in Melbourne, Kurt joined the firm of Kozminsky Galleries Pty Ltd, then owned by Norman Lardner. Through his talents and hard work, he acquired the business and made Kozminsky Galleries the focus in Melbourne for the jewellery, antique silver and other decorative arts.

Kurt appreciated the craftsmanship seen in his adopted country and he soon became one of our first experts about the work of the Australian gold and silver smiths. In 1969, he published his seminal work *Nineteenth Century Australian Gold & Silver Smiths* (Hutchinson Australia, 1969. 69pp plus b&w plates). His was the only book available on the topic until John Hawkins published his *Australian Silver 1800-1900* in 1973. Kurt's book showed him to be a scholar and a student of history. He was able to look at the work be-

ing done here by Australian craftsmen and to link them to European traditions and to identify where their manufacturing styles diverged.

Never a man to idly sit still when things were happening, Kurt fought off two armed robbers in his shop in November 1985. A first bullet fired by one of the miscreants missed Kurt but a second bullet hit him, requiring him to spend some time in hospital. The robbers escaped empty handed.

In 1988, following a perceptive remark he made about cultural events being supported during the Australian Bicentennial celebrations, Kurt soon found himself curating a "Bicentennial Exhibition of Australian Silver, Gold and Jewellery" at his Gallery. With customary energy and professionalism, he was able to encourage people to loan a large number of important items for the Exhibition. At the same time, a number of superb items of Australian craftsmanship were seen in public for the first time. From their standard of excellence, one can only conclude that many pieces came from Kurt's private collection. Kurt published a catalogue of the Exhibition (Craftsman Press, 1988. 52pp with many b&w plates) and some excess copies of this were donated to the Australian Society.

Through his persistence and enthusiasm, he was partly responsible for changing Australian public opinion with regard to the acceptance of Australian craftsmanship. This in turn led Kurt's association with the establishment of several major private and public collections of Australian gold and silver works. He was also a generous benefactor, lending

his expertise and some important items to various public institutions – such as the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney in 1995. It is also understood that Kurt donated some major items to public institutions, although he was always concerned lest they be locked away and not on public view.

In August 1996, Sotheby's Melbourne auctioned the "Kurt Albrecht Collection of Australian Silver, Gold and Jewellery" and the sale catalogue was interesting in its showing of domestic objects, as well as trophies and the important J. M. Wendt presentation silver coffee and tea set. Although the sale certainly did not represent the depth of Kurt's collection, it did give us a chance to see its breadth and the level of his commitment to this area of Australianiana.

Kurt will be remembered as a man with intense energy and great style; a man of passion who offered his friendship and expertise freely. He was an astute businessman and he was able to lift Kozminsky Galleries to the pre-eminent place it holds in the galleries of Melbourne. His knowledge of European history, as lived through the lives of royalty and the rich and famous, made Kurt a true encyclopedia of the fine arts.

He will be missed wherever connoisseurs gather to discuss antique decorative arts. He is survived by his wife Jan, his daughter Kristen, and his sons Michael, Ben and John, all of whom are associated with the antique and jewellery trade and whom have a role in the on-going Kozminsky business.

We express our sympathy to them all and we mourn Kurt's passing.

A New Industry Afoot

Lindie Ward

The shortage of shoes was a constant problem for Europeans who first settled in the colony.

Bare feet were not officially acceptable although indigenous Australians had little need for shoes. We know that before European settlement, shoes had been designed by indigenous Australians from twisted and woven strips of bark to afford protection from sharp coral or rocks or from intense desert heat.¹ Special shoes were also used in cultural ceremonies.

It was fortunate for the new settlers that barefoot was a practical option given the warm climate and sandy beaches, because the supply of shoes to the colony was a problem for many years. Evidence found in advice to emigrants, letters home and the much repaired state of surviving footwear confirms the severe shortage of shoes, especially for women².

In 1830 Elizabeth Shaw from the Swan River colony of Western Australia wrote with disgust that *"the Governor sometimes received guests without shoes or stockings on!"*

Commissioner Bigge expressed fear that the shortage of clothing might lead to a breakdown of law and order in the colony. Because there was initially no local source of clothing, it was imported from Britain and other countries and much was issued by the Government. Quotas were set for different groups - convicts one pair of shoes every six months, bullock drivers and woodcutters every 3 months.³ Soldiers, too, had to be supplied.

Imports to the new colony were vital. In 1793 the vessel, *Speedy*, delivered 6,400 pairs of shoes to Sydney. But supplies did not always ar-

rive. Merchant ships were sometimes lost, or shoes badly mildewed in transit. The ship *Sydney Cove* laden with bundles of men's goatskin shoes from India sank in the Bass Strait off Tasmania in 1797. Several of these survive in the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery in Launceston.

According to shipping records in the Northampton Museum in England, it might take up to two years for a British supplier to be paid for a shipload of goods sent to Australia so it was a risky business. When imports did not arrive, shoes were made up locally. Shoemakers began to establish themselves in Sydney. In 1809 a Mr Hayes advertised in the *Sydney Gazette* for a *"Person to superintend a Boot and Shoe Factory"*. His factory also offered *"hessian boot legs, shoes and boots, boot top leather, ladies and children's shoes, colours, russet calf skins for ladies' shoes ..."*

Records show that 2093 pairs were manufactured in 1819. In 1831 Governor Darling ordered 10,000 pairs of shoes for the following year from Britain, arguing that it would be cheaper than manufacturing them in Sydney.

The merchant shipping trade was often speculative. On the wharves locals bartered with wheat, hides or other produce for manufactured goods such as mens' shoes and clothing.

In 1792 men outnumbered women by five to one. By the 1820s, when more women had arrived in the colony and survival was less of a pre-occupation, social gatherings became more fashionable affairs and women began to wear more glamorous shoes. Of the preparations for the King's Birthday Ball at Government House

in 1826, the *Sydney Gazette* noted: *"Tailors and tailoresses, shoemakers and shopmen were in great requisition up to the auspicious moment."*

James Thearle, a third-generation shoemaker, emigrated from England in 1838. He worked as foreman with James Vickery of George Street, Sydney, who had a Government contract to make boots for convicts.⁴ Vickery was the first shoemaker to import shoemaking machinery into Australia in 1861. The Powerhouse Museum holds several examples of his work donated by his great grandson Frederick in 1958. One of these, a pair of silk uppers, was left unfinished when the Governor's wife, Lady Fitzroy, was tragically killed by bolting horses in Parramatta Park in 1847.⁵ A single miniature kangaroo hide boot, boasting 42 stitches to the inch or 17 stitches to the centimetre is part of this collection. It was displayed in Abbey's shoe shop window for 12 months and £50 was offered to anyone who could make a boot to complete the pair.

Shoemaking and mending was an easily transportable skill and it was a popular occupation amongst new immigrants. A whole family could contribute, children running errands and wives and older girls sewing the uppers, men and boys attaching the soles. Skills were often passed down through several generations. It was officially a man's profession since the strong linen threads were very hard on the hands. Shoemakers were often employed on the larger country properties in the 1820's. In the early part of the nineteenth century shoemaking was, after carpentry, the largest single trade in London. It is not surprising that many shoemakers found their way to Sydney either as

free men or convicts. By 1828 shoemaking was the second largest occupation with one shoemaker per 236 inhabitants.⁶

The colony soon developed profitable export industries by exploring the potential of local materials. Kangaroo hide was found to be stronger for its weight, finer and more comfortable for shoes than other leathers. It is still highly prized to-day by bespoke shoe-makers.

Hides were important trading

goods and had many other uses in addition to bootmaking.

Tanning was a separate trade altogether. In 1819 Thomas Kent successfully extracted tannin from wattle bark which led to a very important trade in hides and tannin. Wattle bark was used extensively during the nineteenth century until the technique for chrome tanning was perfected in 1900. Simeon Lord, the astute emancipist businessman charged 20 shillings to tan a hide.

The colony needed to explore the potential of local materials. Seal-skin, porpoise, whale, kangaroo, wallaby, wombat, emu and possum were tanned but kangaroo proved the most successful. Sheep leather was not considered strong enough and was only used for linings.

Imports of all kinds increased tenfold as the Gold Rush gained momentum and the Great Exhibition of 1851 was held in London. Australia became one of the most successful export markets for British shoe companies. One of those, C. & J. Clark, still manufactures in Australia. International exhibitions were a marketing opportunity for the large colonial powers especially Britain, but they proved even more beneficial to Australia. They created a lucrative trade in fine goods and raw materials and marketed Australia as an attractive country for industrious immigrants and investors.

Immigrants with new skills played a major role in shaping the industry as did improved techniques and new materials. In the 1860s new machinery from overseas changed the nature of shoemaking. Production became more streamlined and work gradually became confined to a factory site. The extended family shoemaking businesses continued but as companies grew larger, workers narrowed their expertise to one or two tasks in the shoemaking process. The 1880s saw machines sewing 900 stitches to the minute and the evolution of mechanised mass production.

In 1872, the Goodyear company mechanised the welting process, which joined the sole to the upper, previously only possible by hand. The welt was attached to the upper, lining and insole by chain stitch, the outsole by lockstitch. Many Australian companies successfully adopted this technique which is still used by the bootmaker, R. M. Williams, whose

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THE AUSTRALIAN LEATHER JOURNAL
JUNE 15, 1903

These Leathers are soft, bright, and uncrackable.
Send for Samples at once.

We also have many inquiries for our Special
Light Substance Chrome Calf Linings.

COMING EVENTS
cast their
SHADOWS BEFORE

Yes! "Coming events cast their shadows before" in the making of Leather as well as in the making of History: And the Winter brings in

CHROME BOX CALF, BOX HIDE (SMALL GRAIN), BUFFALO HIDE, BOVINE KID, MAZEPPA KID, ROYAL GRAIN, CHROME GLACE WALLABY, &c., &c.

J. KENNON & SONS,

RICHMOND, MELBOURNE, VICTORIA.

Fig. 1. The Australian Leather Journal June 15, 1903 Courtesy of the State Library of NSW.



Fig. 2. Merit Award 1906, Courtesy of Enoch Taylor & Co.

company exports boots all over the world.

Shoe manufacture in Australia had become a significant industry by the end of the nineteenth century. The industry became almost self sufficient in materials. A network of supporting industries evolved, especially in Victoria where protective tariffs were imposed on goods imported into the state. Shoe manufacture was a major employer and many (but not all) manufacturers produced quality goods.

After the 1886 Colonial and Indian Exhibition the *Art Journal*, Lon-

don reported of Australia: "The Grand United Oceana [sic] of the future, the last born child of the old country, is doubtless destined to become one of the greatest manufacturing centres of the world."

It was America, however, that led the way with techniques, machinery and design for fashionable shoes from the 1890s. Liberated American women stepped out in assertive black and brown boots. With the help of mail order catalogues, imports gained momentum in Australia. Australian manufacturers and workers fought fiercely to protect their local indus-

tries, a key issue leading up to Federation in 1901. The federal tariff legislation of 1902 crippled American and British imports, shoe imports now shrank to almost nothing and Australia's shoe industry survived.

As war approached in 1914, production turned to soldiers' boots. Men's boots have dominated the footwear industry in Australia since the 1840s. For over a hundred years Baxter's, Blundstone Boots and Enoch Taylor have excelled with their products. This award was presented to Enoch Taylor Pty Ltd in 1906 by the Australian Natives Association of New South Wales. At this time Australians took pride in using locally produced leather, tacks, stiffeners, threads and even Tasmanian myrtle lasts.

After the war leisure wear became more fashionable. As a complete departure from traditional materials, Barnet Glass, a Melbourne company, began using by-products from the gas industry in the 1880s to manufacture waterproof clothing. When King George V opened the first Commonwealth Parliament in 1901, he was presented with a pair of fisherman's wading boots by the company. When they later merged with Dunlop, their range included moulded rubber surf shoes, sport shoes, plimsolls, galoshes, and Wellington boots. Volley, their most famous brand, were strictly for tennis, the era of sport shoes for general leisure wear had not yet arrived.

The Australian Leather Journal, Boot & Shoe Recorder played a key role in bringing the industry together. Later, as *The Footwear News*, and based in Melbourne, it provided a continuing editorial and pictorial history of the industry as well as facilitating an information network for companies involved in all aspects of the shoe industry including retail, export, materials and machinery.

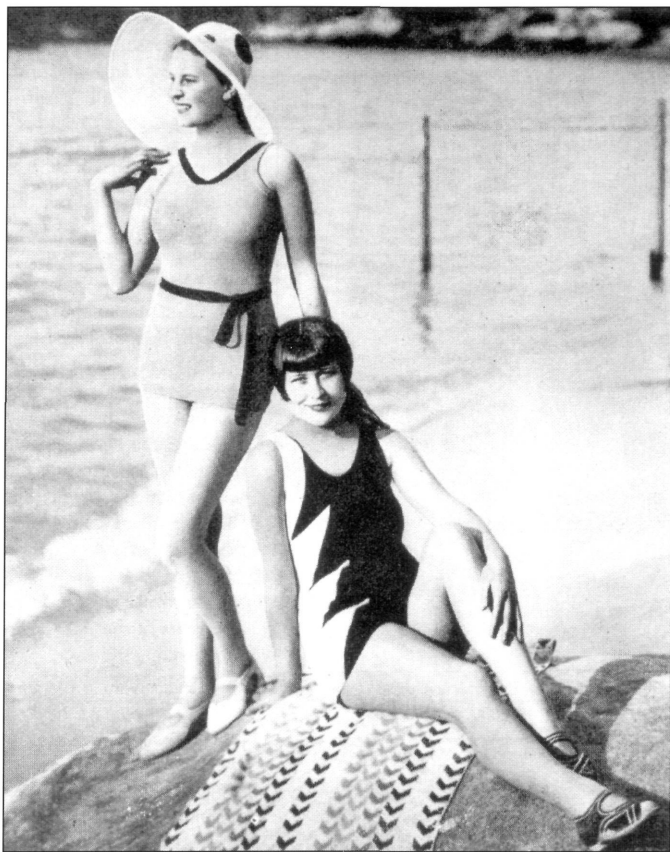


Fig. 3. Home Magazine 2nd November 1931.

The retailing of shoes and the marketing of brand names became more sophisticated after 1900. Shoes with the company's ring stamp on the sole, or the name on the inner sole lining, often absent on earlier Australian shoes, inspired product loyalty, particularly for expensive, stylish shoes made for department stores. Other stamps promoted a technique or quality materials, the *Goodyear welt*, or the *Dunlop heel* or the *Selby Arch Preserver*. Clever marketing aimed to create and capture a shoebuying elite. Serious discussion ensued as to whether advertising in the newspaper might help companies to sell more of their products. This

was soon acknowledged. This message from Parker Shoes appeared in a 1934 copy of *The Home*: "Your personality...what an intangible, lovely thing when nothing disturbs it. But what a serious matter when it is threatened! You can save it by refusing to countenance commonplace shoes."

Retailers were to have a powerful effect on styling and local manufacture when the volume of imports increased after the Second World War. Joe Goldberg's Melbourne company, Voma was a giant of the import and retail business in the 1960s and 1970s and continued until 1996. He had the agency for Ferragamo the prestigious Italian shoe designer and advertised his locally manufactured product as 'Styled in the US.'

Selby Shoes was set up as a manufacturing company by David Jones in 1934 and supplied all their stores around Australia until 1977. Like *Westbrook and Mason* and *Parker Shoes* their shoes were known for their fine quality. The Public Benefit Bootery, operating from 1908-1996, advertised "red Shoes, American shapes; Real Horse-skin Bals, strong soles ..." all at one price. As the name suggests, they offered good quality at a competitive price.

Inexpensive shoes were retailed at Fay's shoe store in Pitt Street, established in 1894. The company expanded the shop to the corner of Liverpool Street and in 1923 added five extra floors. Tragically, while the building was being completed, hot coals from a steam-driven crane set the roof alight causing extensive damage. In the subsequent fire sale, 60,000 pairs of shoes were sold in two weeks. The company continued, however, to expand, leasing shops in suburbs and country towns until they were bought by G. Coles Stores in 1963.

Retailers were to have a powerful effect upon styling and local manufacture when the volume of imports



Fig. 4. Moulded rubber surf shoes, c.1925
Collection: Powerhouse Museum.

increased after World War Two. Edward Meller, in particular, retailed high-fashion imported shoes in Sussex Street for many years. He also made shoes to order locally for clients.

Thongs had a dramatic impact on the Australian footwear trade in the late 1950's, when thousands were imported from Asia. They offered welcome relief from the painful stilettos and wrinkle pickers of the time. Australian feet are wide, needing an additional 1/8" width on the American Brannock fitting system. It is thought that a lifestyle of bare feet and open shoes in summer has caused the Australian foot to become wider.

The availability of powerful new adhesives made a fine pointed toe possible. This was difficult to achieve with a welt construction. Raoul Merton manufactured beautiful men's high fashion wrinkle pickers. 'Of comfort you're certain when you're wearing Raoul Merton' was the saying when Graham Kennedy offered the shoes as prizes on his 1960s quiz shows, the first shoe company in Australia to use radio and television marketing.

There was strong growth in the postwar period. At the peak in 1959, 35 million pairs of shoes were made in Australia but in 1973 protective tariffs on clothing and footwear were reduced by 25 per cent. The effect was dramatic. This forced manufacturing companies to radically reassess production. J. Robins & Sons, founded in 1873, successfully changed from large

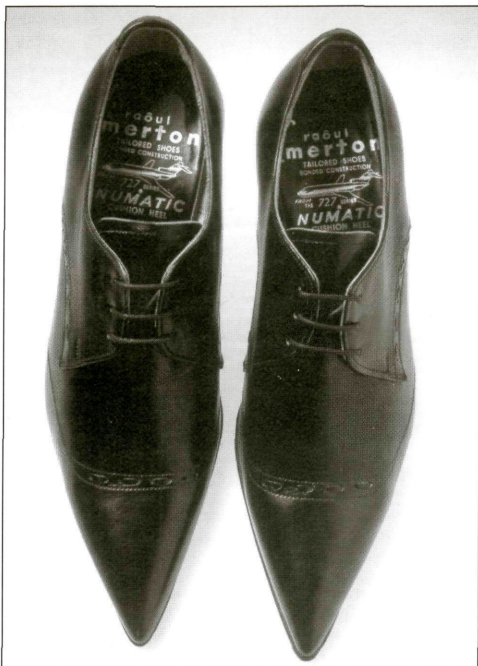


Fig. 5. Men's wrinkle-picker shoes, Raoul Merton, c.1962 Collection: Powerhouse Museum



Fig. 6. Thongs c.1965, Collection: Powerhouse Museum

scale mass production to twelve-person group systems. With this method, more styles could be produced concurrently and rejects were eliminated. At this critical point in time, companies who did not rise to the challenge and reorganise production did not survive.

From its inception in 1906 the School of Footwear in Ultimo, Sydney, has trained many of the best shoemakers in the trade. Bill Delaney, the head teacher, has written a history of the school which sadly records the closure of many businesses since tariff reduction commenced. It also gives insight into the most productive years of the Australian shoe making industry.⁷

Lindie Ward is co-curator of the exhibition at the Powerhouse Museum, *Stepping Out: Three Centuries of Shoes*, which will be on display until October 1998.

Footnotes

1. Man, A monthly record of Anthropological Science, December 1960.
2. *Fashioned from Penury* by Margaret Maynard, Cambridge University Press 1994.
3. *Report of the Commissioner v, Inquiry into the State of the Colony of NSW*. J. T. Bigge. 1822.
4. *The Ordinance Storekeeper Register* of May 1839 records an order for 600 pairs of shoes from J. Vickery.
5. *Theatles in Australia 1838 of 1988*. Susan Thearle 1991, pp 12-15.
6. *The Hatch and Brood of Time*, Portia Robinson, Oxford University Press. 1985, p 225.
7. *From Erskinvile to Ultimo, A History of the NSW School of Footwear 1906-1996*. William Delaney, 1996.



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