

Australiana

AUGUST 2010 Vol. 32 No. 3





SIMPSON'S ANTIQUES

FINE AUSTRALIAN ANTIQUES



*An Australian made Cedar Longcase Clock fitted with an imported English movement and a painted dial with painted scenes of a church. The hood has canted corner decoration as does the trunk which rests on "French" bracket feet. NSW origin circa 1825.
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COVER

George Dowden (England/Australia c. 1821-1875), *Gooloowan sideboard*,
c. 1865, cedar (*Toona ciliata*), lead, brass. Collection: Ipswich Art Gallery,
acquired with funds donated by Wingate Properties through the
Ipswich Arts Foundation, 2006

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early Ipswich cabinet-maker

31 July – 24 October 2010

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Surrounding the image are printed medallions listing all the countries of the British Empire. These are represented pictorially in the image by women in 'national dress'. 'Australia' has kangaroos printed at the bottom of her dress. \$1800 including GST.



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George Dowden,

early Ipswich cabinet-maker

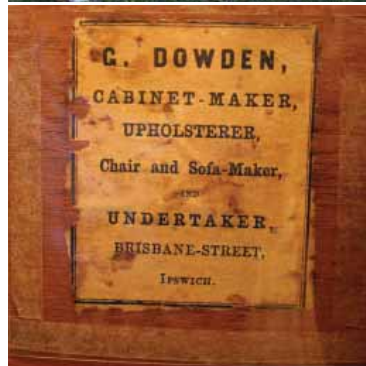
In a rare exhibition dedicated to a single 19th-century cabinet maker, Ipswich Art Gallery has consolidated the known examples of furniture made by George Dowden into a temporary display that highlights the work of this early Queensland colonist.

CASSANDRA LEHMAN-SCHULTZ

Magnificently sited atop a hill, the beautiful mansion *Gooloowan* presides over the city of Ipswich in south-east Queensland, as it has done for almost a century and a half (plate 1). The house was built in 1864 for the Cribb family who came to Australia from England.

The house proudly retains much of its history and many of its original contents, thanks mainly to the fact that only two families have ever lived there. The dignity and continuing significance of *Gooloowan* must be attributed partly to the loving care taken by the current owners, Dr and Mrs Isbell. Since 1988, the Isbells have maintained *Gooloowan* as a comfortable home while preserving the integrity of this fine example of Australian colonial architecture and heritage.

Recognising the opportunities that arose from the failure of cotton production in America during the Civil War, Benjamin Cribb relocated



1
Gooloowan, Ipswich,
Qld, built 1864,
architect: Charles
Balding. Photograph
June 2010

2
George Dowden's
trade label circa 1860
on the *Gooloowan*
chest of drawers



3
George Dowden
(England/
Australia
c. 1821-1875),
*Gooloowan
sideboard*, c. 1865,
cedar (*Toona
ciliata*), lead,
brass. Ipswich
Art Gallery,
acquired with
funds donated
by Wingate
Properties through
the Ipswich Arts
Foundation, 2006

his family with the intention of farming cotton. The house library still has a number of reference books on the topic. Cribb was elected to the Queensland Legislative Assembly in 1861 and rose to great prominence as a citizen and an important retail trader in partnership with his brother in law John Clarke Foote.

Gooloowan is one of several Victorian mansions still standing in the Ipswich region. Visible from *Gooloowan*, on a not too distant hill stands *Fairy Knoll*, built by Thomas Hancock with the proceeds from his dealing in timber, chiefly *Toona ciliata*, which is also known as Australian red cedar. He also traded hoop pine and hardwoods. Hancock made his fortune running the Ipswich Timber Mill and logging business. Teams of bullocks dragged huge logs from the pristine forests where cedar and hoop pine were selectively cut, leaving other less desirable native trees behind. In Hancock's sawmill, they were milled and sold as timber to be made into fences, carriages, houses and some very fine furniture.

In an upstairs corner bedroom of *Gooloowan*

sits a fine cedar chest of drawers. Elegant in its simplicity, this chest of drawers of typical mid-Victorian form comprises two deep hat drawers over two graduated full-width drawers on simple turned bun feet. Opening the top left drawer reveals the maker's label (**plate 2**). This piece was made by George Dowden, one of Queensland's earliest recorded colonial cabinet-makers. By the label, it has been assumed that the chest of drawers is slightly later than the two other pieces of furniture known to be from *Gooloowan* and attributed to Dowden. These earlier pieces, a sideboard and table, may have been commissioned for the house when it was built.

According to the late Miss Viva Cribb, the last surviving member of the Cribb dynasty, the dining room at *Gooloowan* once sported two twin-pedestal, scroll-backed cedar sideboards. One of these is now part of the collection of the Ipswich Art Gallery (**plate 3**). The other is believed to have passed into the hands of another branch of the family and its present whereabouts is unknown.

George Dowden emigrated from England aboard the *Argo* in 1854 and began trading in Ipswich by 1856. Dowden would have been very influenced by the furniture fashions in England around the time of his leaving. Regency and William IV influences are indeed visible in some of his later Australian pieces. Dowden created fine furniture for a number of the grand residences built in the Ipswich region during the mid-Victorian period and may well have selected some of his timbers from the trees felled by Hancock's teams.

The finely carved *Gooloowan* sideboard is a beautiful example of early Queensland regional furniture. The two sideboards were removed from the dining room and replaced by built-in cabinets around 1900 (plate 4). However, it is not difficult to imagine how grand and elegant the pair of sideboards must have appeared, when they stood either side of the dining room fireplace.

A single spade-back armchair with sabre legs (plate 5) is also attributed to Dowden. This carver chair appears to be influenced by the Regency neo-classical style with some slightly heavier, more Victorian features, such as the florid edges on the chair back and the tulip carvings to the front legs. The elegance and balance of the chair again demonstrates Dowden's refinement and talent as a furniture maker.

The National Trust of Queensland is lending a fine secretaire bookcase. Although it now furnishes historic *Wolston House* in Wacol, it most likely emanates from a home in Ipswich. Of mid-Victorian design, the bookcase has an upper cabinet which is surmounted by a heavy moulded cornice and a cross-banded frieze, above a pair of glazed doors enclosing adjustable shelves for books. The lower cabinet consists of a secretaire drawer, containing ten pigeon holes and five small drawers, above a cupboard with panelled doors enclosing a single shelf and flanked by turned columns. The bookcase stands on exuberantly shaped turned feet, which together with the heavy moulded cornice impart an air of importance and prosperity.

Indications are that the Dowden family did not do quite as well as the Cribbs, Footes or Hancocks. The small population of Ipswich could not provide a living from making furniture alone, so, in 1857 Dowden expanded his business to include undertaking, as attested



4 *Gooloowan* (interior) dining room. The *Gooloowan* sideboards originally stood either side of the fireplace and were replaced by these built-in cabinets c.1900

5 George Dowden (England/Australia c. 1821-1875), *armchair*, c. 1860, cedar (*Toona ciliata*), horsecloth. Ipswich Art Gallery, acquired with funds donated by Wingate Properties through the Ipswich Arts Foundation, 2006

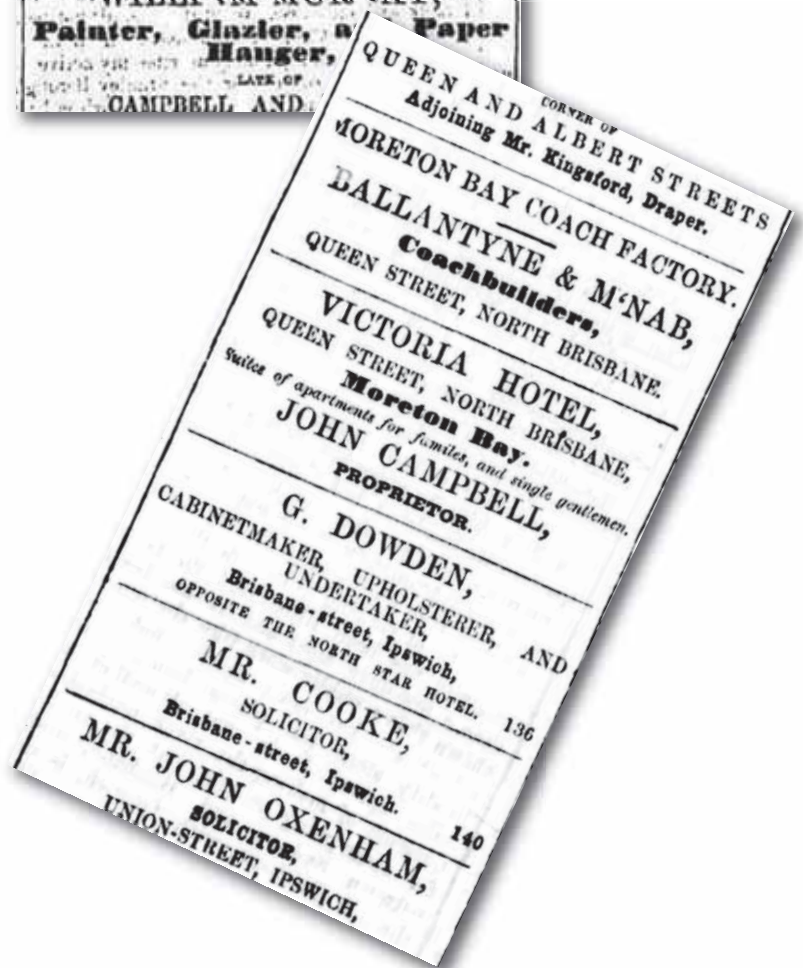
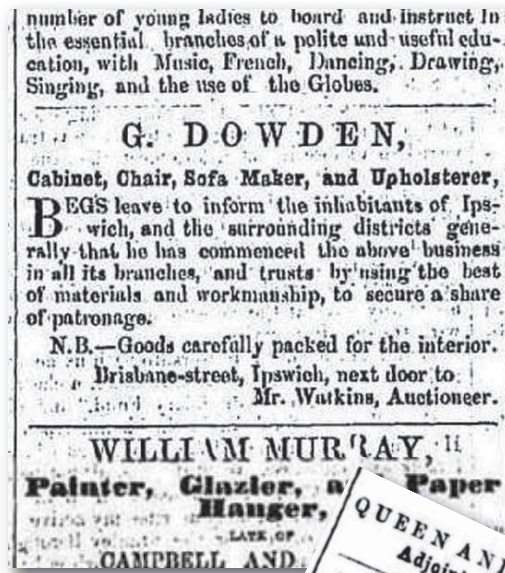
by his change of label and advertisements in the *Moreton Bay Times*. This was a common combination for cabinet-makers, who not only supplied coffins, but were able to utilise their carts and horses in funerals.

No doubt much of the precious local timber disappeared underground as coffin wood. In earlier times, colonial furniture was not valued as highly as imported pieces, which is why so very few examples remain today. Sadly, many fine old pieces are known to have ended their days decaying on verandas or rotting away in sheds.

On 2 January, 1875, while tending to the funeral of a Mr Drysdale at the Ipswich cemetery, George Dowden collapsed and later died of heat-induced apoplexy. On 15 April 1875, a hearse was advertised for auction in the *Brisbane Courier* as part of George Dowden's insolvent estate.

More than just a tribute to the life and legacy of Dowden himself, but to families such as the Cribbs and Hancocks, and to the prosperity and affluence achieved by the city founders, each piece in this exhibition is a significant part of Ipswich's cultural heritage. The furniture also serves as a reminder of the majesty of the vanished forests in the region where, perhaps even right where the Ipswich Gallery is located today, once stood magnificent Australian cedar trees, hundreds of years old.

Cassandra Lehman-Schultz MVA is an independent artist and arts writer based in Queensland. She is currently employed as a gallery assistant at the Ipswich Art Gallery, Queensland.



6
Moreton Bay Courier,
29 March 1856.
National Library
of Australia

7
Moreton Bay Courier,
21 February 1857.
National Library
of Australia

The *Gooloowan* sideboard, the *Gooloowan* chest of drawers and several other original pieces of Dowden's furniture will be displayed at the Ipswich Art Gallery for the exhibition: *George Dowden – Early Ipswich Cabinet Maker*, from 31 July to 24 October 2010. The exhibition brings together for the first time all seven pieces of Dowden's furniture known to exist.

The Ipswich House, a new exhibition of commissioned house portraits by Queensland contemporary artists will feature both Gooloowan and Fairy Knoll. It will open on 11 September 2010.

**Ipswich Art Gallery is located at d'Arcy Doyle Place, Nicholas St, Ipswich.
The gallery is open seven days a week from 10am until 5pm.**



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Marcia Rackham reports on the Australiana Society's nine-day tour of Tasmania in September 2009. It's a catalogue of mouth-watering visits to historic places combined with good food, good company, the unfailing hospitality of their hosts and the opportunity for participants to learn from their hosts and each other.



Australiana
Tour of *Tasmania* 2009

MARCIA RACKHAM

A tour of Tasmania with the Australiana Society was an idea often discussed over tea between neighbours and good friends, Lesley Garrett and Caressa Crouch. Caressa had a wealth of knowledge regarding the Apple Isle and Lesley had the interest and energy to bring the idea to fruition. Lesley conducted her own tour of the island to see what she could squeeze into a group tour. This led to the most memorable Australiana Society excursion.

Day 1, Friday 18 September

Seventeen complete strangers from NSW, Queensland and Victoria, all with a keen interest in Australian history, converged upon the Clarendon Arms Hotel in Evandale for dinner. The 'Arms' was incredibly accommodating with our varying arrival times, the meals were a real pub affair but by no means average, as the steaks were literally melting over our plates, they were so large. Our special guest for the evening was Peter Woof of Evandale Antiques, who had been a great help to Lesley in arranging accommodation and excursions in and around Evandale.

Day 2, Saturday 19 September

This was a self-drive holiday, and after ensuring that all members had lifts we head to our first destination Franklin House, Youngtown, not far from our Evandale base. The National Trust of Australia (Tas) was founded in 1960 for the specific purpose of protecting and preserving Franklin House. Built in 1838, the property was originally known as Mr Hawkes' School. Here we were given a guided tour and served the most delicious morning tea. The volunteers here make a scrumptious old-fashioned jelly slice.

Our next stop was the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery in Launceston. Here we were met by the manager of collections Glenda King, and Patsy Cameron, a well known shell necklace maker. Patsy gave a very interesting talk on the history of Aboriginal Tasmanians and their connection to the land and sea, with an emphasis on the shell necklaces that have been made by generations of Aboriginal women, and that are still being made today by Patsy and her 'sisters'.

The walls around us were furnished with beautiful displays of varying lengths, colours and styles of shell necklaces. Some shell varieties



1
The beginning of our exciting week. The Clarendon Arms Hotel Evandale. Photo Leigh Hattin

2
Sculpture of John Glover, Evandale. Photo Marcia Rackham

take many years to collect before they can be strung onto cord to be worn. Some of the shells used include the unusual names of cats teeth, rice shells, toothies, oat shells, black crows and the stunning maireneer shells.

Glenda King showed us through the collection of colonial paintings. To see so many John Glover paintings in the same room was amazing. A particular favourite of Patsy Cameron's was a very large painting by Robert Dowling, titled *Aborigines of Tasmania* 1859. The painting depicts Patsy's ancestral great, great grandfather, Manalargenna. To have a descendant of this man telling us his story was a true history lesson. A quick tour of



3
Back view of *Dysart House* in Kempton.
Photo Marcia Rackham

4
The six legged sideboard inside *Entally House*, Hadspen. Photo Marcia Rackham

5
Discussions regarding some of the contents
in *Entally House*. Photo Marcia Rackham

the storeroom with Glenda, and then Patsy and Glenda joined us for a meal in the museum restaurant.

After lunch we drove to Hadspen to visit *Entally Estate*. Built in 1819 for Thomas Reibey II, the house is presented as a colonial gentleman's residence. *Entally* houses many fine pieces of colonial furniture, the six-legged sideboard in the entrance foyer being one example. The conservatory is the oldest in Australia. Dr W G Grace is reported to have batted on the cricket pitch there in 1868. Our guide was very knowledgeable in all aspects of *Entally's* history and made our visit very special.

Back to Evandale and we were treated to two extra surprises in the early evening with a wonderful tour of *Blenheim* by its owner Victoria Clark. Victoria had very kindly housed



6
Church of St Andrew Evandale.
Photo Marcia Rackham

7
The magnificent candelabrum inside the church. Photo Marcia Rackham

8
All set for church! Outside the small chapel in Deddington. Photo Marcia Rackham

9
Rear view of *Clarendon*.
Photo Marcia Rackham



two of the tour guests at her magnificent home. *Blenheim* was originally known as the Patriot King William The Fourth Hotel and is one of Tasmania's earliest buildings, having been built in 1832. Victoria has lived in Evandale for many years and is a well known local identity. Her house is a reflection of her remarkable personality.

Just a short stroll across the road and we were treated to our second surprise organised by Peter, a sunset tour of the Presbyterian Church of St Andrew, High Street, Evandale, built in 1839–1872. We were greeted at the door by our guide who had arrived on a penny farthing bicycle! What a thrill. The first minister to preside over the church was the Reverend Robert Russell who ministered from 1839–1872. The 24-sconce gilded Scottish



10
Detail of one of the onion domes at *Bentley*. Photo Marcia Rackham

11
John Hawkins and tour group beside *Bentley's* fine gates. Photo Leigh Hattin

12
Bentley's folly, with *Bentley* in the background. Photo Leigh Hattin



candelabrum hanging in the centre of the church was stunning and the two storeys of cedar pews are still intact. An active though small congregation still worships within its walls. Our host then gave us an unforgettable sight, riding off into the Evandale night on his penny farthing. How absolutely romantic.

Dinner once again at the Clarendon Arms Hotel where our accommodation was a hot topic of conversation, with it being so varied: bed and breakfasts, old bakehouses, stables etc, but all very comfortable. At dinner we were each given a \$10 note from the kitty to be used as we 'bargain hunted' our way around the Evandale markets the next morning. The rules were simple; the item should have an Australian theme and should cost no more than \$10. All items would then be produced at dinner to be vetted by the remaining 16 'experts'. We all went to bed in anticipation of just what we may find when the sun rose.

Day 3, Sunday 20 September

Sunday morning meant an early rise for some of the group, determined to find the treasure to top all treasures at the market. The Evandale markets are held every Sunday and the entry fee is still a very reasonable 20c! After we ferreted around the markets, Peter Woof gave us a talk on life in Georgian Evandale.

Deddington was our next destination, visiting the small chapel where John Glover is buried. As a special treat we were allowed inside the church and were given a terrific talk by Terry Talbot who, having lived in the area for many years, really brought the history of the valley to life. As the weather had closed in, we were permitted to eat our picnic lunch seated in the pews – a novel way of attracting the flock to church.

From the chapel it was a short drive along the dirt road to Patterdale to view the homestead featured in John Glover's famous painting, *Glover's House and Garden* 1840. Though the original garden is gone, it does not take much imagination to visualise how it would have looked, and Glover himself no doubt used artistic licence when painting this picture. The eucalypt-covered rolling hills are still there to frame the image.

It was then off to the very grand colonial *Clarendon* with its porch of Ionic columns, built in 1838 for James Cox. The entrance hall currently houses, along with many fine pieces of



furniture, the most beautiful circular cedar table that has been painted by Michael McWilliams. Michael paints the most incredible images of Australian fauna and flora. The table top has been painted with every imaginable Australian creature all connected to one another by a fine piece of painted string. Michael's work often has a strong environmental message. The entrance hall to *Clarendon* is a fitting place for such a fine piece of Australian furniture/art. The dining and drawing rooms that lead off from the entrance hall at *Clarendon* take your breath away.

Dinner was taken up by our show and tell: a large Bristol blue jug, a set of brass silver weights, a rolled gold brooch, a pair of Victorian reading glasses in case, an Aspro booklet, a hand-held drill, a sterling silver map of Tasmania, and a Betty Williams ceramic figure of a possum, were just some of the treasures found at the markets!

Day 4, Monday 21 September

This morning we travel west to Chudleigh below the magnificent Western Tiers. We arrive into a valley surrounded by wooded hills, to view what must be one of the most magnificent residential settings in Australia. *Bentley* sits so graciously amid its 12,000 acres of pastures, lake and forested hillsides. The villa is splendidly crowned with an onion dome not unlike the John Nash-designed Royal Pavilion at

Brighton. John and Robyn Hawkins had invited our tour group to visit *Bentley* and to learn a little about the development of this very grand estate.

The walk to the top of the hill was spectacular even if a little wet under foot. From here you could see the township of Chudleigh overlaid on an Aboriginal landscape. Fire was used regularly by the Aboriginal inhabitants to keep vegetation low so that good hunting could be carried out around the many watercourses in the valley. The hedges on the property were originally laid out in 1842, and are still being cut and laid in the traditional way.

John and Robyn are both passionate about the environment and this was evident in Robyn's beautiful art works displayed throughout the house. I really cannot do the house justice in any description; I was awestruck by the beauty of each room and its contents and will be eternally grateful for being invited into such a magnificent home. With so much to see and take in, an intermission of lunch was arranged at the Chudleigh General Store. This was a delicious home cooked affair.

It was hard to leave *Bentley* with its kilometres of dry stone walls, its stable block, the folly on the lake, the ironwork, the Gillows furniture, the clock tower, tack room etc, etc but we had an appointment with Dr John Millwood, collector of colonial furniture and art.

13
Detail of early woodwork in storage shed at *Brickendon*, Longford.
Photo Marcia Rackham

14
Detail of one of *Panshanger's* many gates.
Photo Marcia Rackham

15
Memorial at *Panshanger*.
Photo Marcia Rackham



16

The Red Bridge, Campbell Town.
Photo Leigh Hattin

17

Dinner at *The Fox Hunters Return*,
Campbell Town. Photo Marcia Rackham

John's house in Launceston was originally built for a Dr Pugh who was the first anaesthetist in Tasmania (1838), and was the first house in Launceston to have a sewerage system installed. Prior to John purchasing the property from the Sisters of Charity, it had not been lived in as a home since the 1940s. After champagne and nibbles, we were given a tour of one of the largest private collections of colonial art in Australia. It is truly mind blowing – paintings and drawings by Augustus Earle, Thomas Griffiths Wainwright, Thomas Watling and John Glover, to name just a few. John speaks about each portrait with so much intimacy and knowledge that you imagine that he is related to each and every sitter. This is truly a unique collection and a wonderful way to top off a remarkable day.

Day 5, Tuesday 22 September

We say farewell but not goodbye to Evandale and motor along the road to *Brickendon*, the estate of the Archer family. *Brickendon* comprises 20 brick and timber buildings which were built in the early 1820s–50s sitting on over 420 hectares of arable land. *Brickendon* has been nominated for the World Heritage List as an important Australian convict site. It already has National Estate listing. *Brickendon* will proudly stand among 16 other Australian sites listed for their outstanding universal, natural or cultural value. This property has been continuously farmed by William Archer's descendants for seven generations.

After an extensive tour of the buildings and heritage gardens we are ready for a cup of tea down the road in Longford. We descend on

Robert Henley co-owner of Longford Antiques for a spot of shopping which was great. Robert was minus his beautiful pug dogs that are usually a fixture in the shop, but they were obviously resting at home!

We farewelled Robert and took off for our tour of *Woolmers* (1819) with its Italianate 1840 additions. Thomas William Archer bequeathed *Woolmers* in 1994 to the Archer Historical Foundation, now re-named The Woolmers Foundation Inc. The cider house (c 1843) is fascinating, with its huge sandstone crush used to crush the apples in preparation for cider making. You can just imagine the noise of the horse's hooves and the smell of their sweaty flanks as they moved around the crush preparing the apples for the cider press. The open fire in the restaurant was a welcome comfort from a cold wet day, and the famous *Woolmers* lamb shanks were received well.

As if we had not experienced enough in one day already, our next destination was one of my favourite homes in Australia: *Panshanger*, the home of the Mills family, overlooking the Lake River. *Panshanger* is reached by driving along one of the longest private tree-lined driveways in the country. Upon reaching the dry stone wall and gates that mark the entrance to the estate proper, you round a bend and the stately, withdrawn *Panshanger* comes into view. Built in the Neo-Classical style 1825–1835, it is breathtaking. Marie Mills walked us around the garden, with its own cider crush, and into the huge vegetable garden laden with sheep manure ready for the next big crop. The pump house and pool of reflection sit so well within the landscape.

We thank Marie and head off to Campbelltown for our lodging in *The Fox Hunters Return*, a beautiful Georgian coaching inn built in 1833. The inn stands beside the Elizabeth River, spanned by Australia's oldest surviving brick bridge, built 1836–38. Our hosts Ken and Sheila Pearson-Smith have spared no expense in providing excellent accommodation in keeping with the Georgian period. Ken is a heritage architect so knows exactly what he is doing. Our dinner in the formal dining room was first class and a lot of fun with many stories exchanged. An auction was held after dinner; there was only one catalogue entry and that was the Betty Williams Possum purchased at the Evandale markets just



18
Debra Spohn and
Archie, Ross.
Photo Marcia
Rackham

three days prior. The bidding was frantic and the possum was knocked down to a very happy man. After dinner we were led on a candle-lit tour of the extensive cellars. Convict labourers would be locked in the cellars during the evening, and early clay tobacco pipes can still be found in the soil.

Day 6, Wednesday 23 September

After a good night's sleep we head south to the town of Ross. Here we meet up with Debra Spohn (another pug owner, though you never really 'own' a pug). Debra is a historian currently researching the Ross Bridge. Governor Lachlan Macquarie passed through this area in 1821. After rainfall in the north, the river below the bridge is flowing very quickly and as we stand beside the bridge listening to Debra's fascinating research, the water level in the Macquarie River was rising rapidly. Just after we left Ross, the road into the township was cut by floodwaters. It was great to see rivers flowing in Tasmania, as it is such a rare site on the mainland. A quick stop at the Ross bakery where all of the pastries and bread are still cooked in the century-old wood-fired oven, beginning at 4 am each morning.

In Hobart, the State Library of Tasmania and the Allport collection are a must-see, although predominately displaying European furniture and ceramics. Marian Jameson takes us on a tour of the works on paper held in the library's extensive collection, and to see the picture collection in the stack. This was wonderful. We head over to historic Battery Point for our evening's accommodation.



19
The early woodfired oven and baker, Ross.
Photo Marcia Rackham

20
Cedar seat inside the Hobart Synagogue.
Photo Marcia Rackham



Day 7, Thursday 24 September

After a leisurely breakfast we drive back into Hobart to meet our guide at the Hobart Synagogue. Built in 1843 and designed by J A Thomson in the rare Egyptian Revival style, this synagogue has remained unchanged since that time. It was wonderful to visit a house of worship so perfectly intact in every way. Even the paint colours within the building are the original colours used. The congregation today numbers just 80, a mixture of Orthodox and Progressive worshippers.

The Synagogue houses a number of beautiful and historical Torahs, but one in particular – donated by a generous benefactor – was purchased in the 1960s from the Czech government. This was one of over 1,564 Torah scrolls that were seized by the Nazis and were

originally intended to be exhibited in a museum 'to commemorate the culture of an extinct race'. One of these scrolls found its way to Tasmania where it proudly and solemnly rests today among faithful worshippers, a reminder of a time in history never to be forgotten.

We leave the Synagogue for lunch at *Narryna*, a merchant's residence built in 1836 up on Battery Point. *Narryna* houses a comprehensive collection of furnishings and items used in the early years of the colony up until the 1900s. The costume collection is noteworthy, in particular the Indian beetle wing embroidered dress from the 1890s. The staff were wonderful, allowing members close access to items of interest. This was greatly appreciated by all on the tour, and was a common occurrence in Tassie. There was such a wealth of knowledge among the group that it was truly educational for all.

We leave *Narryna* for the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, designed by the 28-year-old Henry Hunter in 1861. I wonder how many 28-year-olds get to design buildings of this calibre today. Hamish Maxwell-Stewart gives a terrific presentation on 'Convict skills tokens, tattoos and health'.

We are joined by a number of our fellow Tasmanian members. George Burrows from *The Black Snake Inn* at Granton then led us around a collection of furniture very close to his heart. George began collecting early Huon pine furniture back in the late 60s, building up a significant collection. These fine examples of furniture have now been purchased by the Tasmanian Museum for the entire world to see. To have George the collector talk about the individual pieces was very special indeed. His next area of interest is early blackwood furniture – so look out!

This has been a busy day but we have one more excursion, to the Tasmanian Museum & Art Gallery storage facilities at Rosnay. Here we were treated to a table laid out with some very fine Australian silverware. A couple of members who had seen and researched many of the pieces individually were thrilled to see so many pieces together. To cap it off, they donned white gloves and held a piece or two, giving a description of each piece to their captive audience. At the end of the day all silver was accounted for! We thank the Tasmanian Museum staff for taking so much time with us, we truly appreciated it.





22
Violet the Violinist and
Government House
in background. Photo
Marcia Rackham

23
Tulip display in
the Royal Botanical
Gardens, Hobart.
Photo Leigh Hattin

Day 8, Friday 25 September

Friday is our second last day together and we have all had a wonderful time. Considering that our age span is some 30+ years, it is a true reflection on the capabilities and organisational skills of our fearless tour leader Lesley. Though each day is very busy, the activities are paced beautifully.

Misty rain this morning sees us parked outside the gates of *Government House* Hobart. We motor up the driveway in convoy, pretending we are heads of state. We are greeted at the entrance to the house by the Governor's assistant and Mr John Hawkins who was to be our guide to the furnishings in the house. Once again we are joined by Tasmanian members.

Lunch is next door at the Royal Botanical Gardens. This must be one of the world's most beautiful public gardens. The conservatory and Peter Cundall's veggie patch are a must see and the tulip display was magnificent.

After lunch the rain is still falling but that does not deter us from boarding the brig *Lady Nelson* at Constitution Dock. The *Lady Nelson* is a replica (built in 1987) of an early vessel which served the Tasmanian colony in the years 1800–1825. We sail around the Derwent River accompanied by a very fine young violinist, Violet Harrison-Day.

Back up the hill to Battery Point for a well-earned rest and to prepare for dinner. A group heads down to the docks to dine at the Drunken Admiral. Great fish and chips in the over-the-top, nautically themed restaurant. An excellent suggestion by one of the party and a lot of fun.

Day 9, Saturday 26 September

Sadly this is the last day of our tour. Yet another treat in store as we head north again along the Midland Highway, passing the very interesting Anglican church of St Mark at Pontville, to Kempton where we have an appointment with Leo Schofield at his home *Dysart House*.

Leo's house is described as one of the most monumental houses on the Midland Highway. It was originally built as an inn in early 1840s and was designed by Andrew Bell in the restrained Greek Revival style. *Dysart House* was built using Oatlands stone and at the time of its construction was one of three inns in Kempton. The free-standing stables were built in 1845 and could accommodate up to 20 horses, a busy inn indeed.

When Leo first saw the house back in the 1960s *Dysart House* was in a ruinous state. There are over 22 rooms and evidence of the original use for many of the rooms is fairly scant. Over its long life it has accommodated an inn, a ladies and friendship academy and most recently served as a B&B. Morning tea was served in the large kitchen



where a plate of freshly laid duck blue eggs was displayed. Colour was evident throughout the house with the use of traditional Georgian colours from the Farrow & Ball range. Leo explained that the original stucco plaster work in the entrance hall would have been carried out by itinerant workers travelling around the countryside specialising in such work.

In the courtyard at the rear of the house there is a large, very pretty collection of auriculas. The garden is a work in progress but in time it too will be a thing of beauty (we cannot forget what wonderful work Leo carried out in the gardens at *Bronte House* in Sydney) and look forward to returning at a later date to see its progress.

After lunch at Cassaveit it was, to use Lesley's words 'au revoir' to all of our fine travelling companions. This had been the most wonderful holiday. We had been invited into private homes, gardens, and museums to see some of Australia's finest collections, and we thank all of our hosts for their exceptional generosity, for which we are eternally grateful.

Most of all we thank Lesley Garrett for turning an idea over a cup of tea into action. Her rich and so thoughtfully planned tour on behalf of the society was brilliant. Lesley was presented with the Betty Williams Possum at the end of the tour, which now sits very proudly on a table overlooking Pittwater!



... **Marcia Rackham** is a collector and committee member of the
 ... **Australiana Society.**

The Australiana Society organises occasional tours to places of interest. The Tasmanian tour was our most ambitious to date, and highly successful. A tour is planned to Victoria in 2012.

24
 Front view of *Dysart House*, Kempton.
 Photo Leigh Hattin

25
Australiana Tour of Tasmania 2009 by Leigh Hattin

Garden structures: lost, found and threatened

Some are collectable, some are not, but as well as plants, Australian gardens display a range of portable ornaments or fixed structures which should encourage collectors to look outdoors as well as indoors.



LESLEY GARRETT

The disappearance of Britomart's headstone from the face of the Earth was the catalyst for this article. Her headstone had for many years occupied a dusty corner overhung with old weigelia bushes in a neighbour's garden in Mosman, Sydney. Trusting in the solidity of Federation buildings, I had always accepted that this faithful watchdog's resting place would be there forever. But no. Gone with Britomart's headstone was not only the faint connection to Spenser's *Faerie Queen* with its portrayal of Elizabeth I the maiden warrior symbolising courage and chastity and with the gates of her temple guarded by fierce dogs, but also later, twentieth-century references to that name.

By descent, Britomart had come to be a favoured name for defenders such as battleships and guard dogs. I was therefore shocked to find razed earth in place of the gravestone and with that, all memory of this much-loved pet gone forever. With disappointment, I retraced my steps to another favoured garden subject: that of an aboriginal hunter setting out for the chase, wadi and churunga to hand, bedded likewise – and as I thought timelessly – into an intact arcadia of woodland plantings, pond and flowers in a front garden. He too had disappeared overnight so, overcome by a sense of loss, I set out on a mission to track down and record some of these garden structures while they could still be found.

This search turned up far more discoveries, but only a few can be selected for this article. Happily too, it proved that not all had been lost in the passing of the years and that while many of the original signposts may have disappeared or come under threat from neglect, many were still thriving in their original places, with new ones appearing beside them.

The pet cemetery

With Britomart's lost headstone in mind, the pet cemetery seems to be a good starting point in examining structures found in Australian gardens, both private and public. Once commonplace in rural Australian gardens, pet cemeteries could be found tucked away, often towards one corner of the generous space in a country garden. The household's animal companions, both working and decorative, were close to the hearts of their owners and their



passing lovingly noted. For adults as well as children, this bond between animal and human continues unchanged, but the reduced space available today has led to changes in the disposal of dead pets. At *Brickendon*, near Longford in Tasmania, the Archer family still maintains its pet cemetery, encompassed by the much larger garden surrounding the homestead. It is an endearing memorial (plate 2).

Sundials and floral clocks

Gardens are places of tranquillity and retreat from the everyday world where, in repose and restored by natural beauty, the mind can reflect on the past and contemplate the future. It is not surprising that gardens have, since time immemorial, included devices to measure the passing of time, often with the added bonus of an inscription reminding that time would slip

1 (Previous page)
Floral clock, Royal
Tasmanian Botanical
Gardens, Hobart TAS

2
Pet cemetery at
Brickendon,
Longford, TAS

3
Floral clock,
Taronga Zoo, NSW



4
Wire plant stand,
Manilla NSW



5
Swans guarding
the entrance,
Tamworth, NSW



6
Lions in transit,
Aberdeen, NSW

away, with only a finite number of days before oblivion of one sort or another followed. Most people reading the inscription on a sundial will become noticeably still, their gaze turned inwards as they decipher not only the Roman numerals and time correction tables often included on the dial, but also come to terms with their own moral compass.

Sundials happily still abound in many public and private gardens, town squares and even in prisons: at Parklea prison NSW a giant shadow is cast by the gnomon of its sundial, a pun at the expense of all doing time within its walls. Many sundials carry wonderful inscriptions – one in Broke, NSW quoted from Ezra Pound ‘... the moon is upon my forehead, the wind is under my lips ... and I shall sing of the sun ...’ and was at the centre of a rose garden.

Relying on the shadow cast by the gnomon onto the dial plate with its measured hours, the sundial can only be accurate in the reading of time if the gnomon is at the exact angle of the parallel of latitude of that location, and, in the Southern Hemisphere, pointing truly towards the celestial south pole. For this reason, the original site of a sundial, bought for example at an auction, can be

determined by accurately measuring the angle of the gnomon and then going through a process of elimination. Sundials were as accurate as possible and great care would be taken to ensure that they were correctly designed and mounted, in locations where a whole populace could refer to them. Today they are much more likely to be just a garden feature picked up at the local garden centre, one size fitting all.

This is certainly not the case where they are mounted in public or private gardens where they have been specifically designed for the site. The firm Sundials Australia based in Adelaide and founded by Margaret Folkard and John Ward has over the years produced many of the world’s finest sundials. Many are mounted in Australia and can be admired at locations nationwide or seen in their publication entitled *Sundials Australia*, published in 1994.

Many will remember the floral clock which once marked the passing of time in front of Central Railway in Sydney. Its twin was on the other side of the harbour, bedded deep into the hillside of Taronga Park Zoo, surrounded on all sides by flower beds and the mingled trumpeting of elephants and lions. While the

floral clock at Central Station has long since been dismantled to make way for a wider road and car park, the clock at the zoo has famously survived and is still faithfully ticking away, its mechanism in operation viewable through a window set into the back of the display. It is one of only two surviving mechanical clocks and its accompanying bedding plants are changed with the seasons or to mark special occasions (**plate 3**). The Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens in Hobart has a more modern floral clock which is operated electronically (**plate 1**). Both clocks are wonderfully maintained and spectacularly placed in their settings.

Wire plant stands

These fragile but amazingly strong structures were often used in Victorian times to display special collections of tender plants such as ferns or begonias. They were most likely to be found standing on the tiled floor of a shaded veranda or conservatory close to a watering point so the plants could be easily watered with a watering can. Reproduction stands are now being manufactured as their charm is indisputable, but this one dates from about 1900 and was made by a wire worker in Manilla, northern NSW (**plate 4**).

Who guards the gates?

Whether grand or modest in design, by tracing the evolution of gate statuary, a detailed social history of Australia could be accurately mapped. With a bewildering variety of notions to choose from, ranging from assorted griffins through lanterns to sandstone pineapples, animals seem to win this popularity contest hands down. The lion, in every conceivable posture from couchant to rampant, is the clear favourite.

Lions, whether public or private, large or small, have remained the staunch favourite of the Australian householder. For over 5,000 years dating from the ancient Egyptians to the present, they have continued to attend the gates of palaces and cottages alike, showing no particular worldwide geographic preference. Chipped from stone, baked in terracotta, cast in bronze, or in more recent times moulded from cement, they remain on watch without batting an eyelid, perched on their piers or at the foot of a sweep of steps leading from the garden to the front door, or uprooted and in transit to a new location (**plate 6**).



With the larger, more elaborate models, no expense has been spared and no short cuts taken. It is possible to see not only left and right bronze castings but the differentiation of a lion paired with a lioness, as is the case with the bronze lions at the Lion Gate Lodge at Sydney's Royal Botanic Gardens. Smaller lions, once traditionally posed with one forepaw resting on a globe – no doubt toying with the idea of world dominance – began to appear on mantelpieces, or shrunk to the size of a kitty playing with a ball of knitting wool flanking the steps leading from the garden up to the house. Further to the lions' embarrassment, cost was reined in by making do with a single casting repeated twice. Viewed head on, this has the lions lined up like dancing girls at the Folies Bergère, all paws crossed in the same direction. It begs the question – why stop at two? Why not string a conga line of eight along the verandah?

7
Family of kangaroos,
Warwick, QLD

8
Tyre swans,
Manilla, NSW



9
Peter, Mona Vale,
NSW

10
Possum birdbath,
Tamworth, NSW

11
Cockatoo,
Warwick, QLD

Glimpsed from the highway, a pair of swans are caught roosting on gate piers, the economy of a single casting carried successfully by turning the birds to face each other in a graceful mirror image particularly suited to the swan (plate 5).

A convenient cluster of granite rocks at the entrance to an isolated property in Queensland is guarded by a family of kangaroos, each perched on a separate stone, completely at one with their surroundings (plate 7).

A recent development along the northern beaches of Sydney has seen the introduction of sandstone animal statues as roadside sculptures. Unfortunately they have attracted vandals who regularly behead or colour them in. A pair of Gondwana lizards operating as gateway sentinels survive unmolested in Palm Beach. A thousand kilometres to the north, a pair of American bald eagles, rarely sighted in the Southern Hemisphere, has been spotted perching either side of the gateway leading to a brand new McMansion on the outskirts of Brisbane.

The war between the swans

The war between the swans naturally concerns our very own invention, the tyre swan, which James Broadbent in his witty entry in *The Oxford Companion to Australian Gardens*, published in 2002 by Oxford University Press, lists as an endangered species. Once prolific in rural gardens, and arising from the Depression, they are now hard to come by as their natural life span seems to be about half a century, allowing for perishing in the rubber and/or metal fatigue and rust in the wire and bolts supporting the neck. Made of discarded car or tractor tyres when money was scarce, they were largely put together by the

man of the house working from his bench in the garden shed. Instructions for making a tyre swan are readily available on the net but make for daunting reading, the most challenging step being when the time comes to turn the tyre inside out.

Then there is the matter of the swan's colour: it is tempting to believe that their colour, as both white and black swans are still to be found, echoes their owners' political persuasion. Certainly it would seem that the first, post-Federation swans born from the Depression and onwards were black, with red beaks and yellow eyes, modelled on the Australian black swan. This development runs parallel to the appearance of cast concrete native animals mentioned below, both introductions marking a new awareness and pride in a unique Australian identity expressed through its fauna. At a later stage, possibly coinciding with the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953, white swans emerge, the black whitewashed, their beaks now black.

Diverging a little, we note that Her Majesty still employs a Keeper of Swans today as all English swans remain the property of the Crown and hence come under her protection. As well, there is a current movement in the UK to cull invading feral black swans as they are not indigenous and their numbers are rising. Perhaps the black swans nesting in England are the counterpart to the burrowing rabbit in Australia and a good example in both countries of natural selection at work.

Be that as it may, while photographing the white swans (plate 8), I asked their owner how she had come by them. She replied that she had bought them in a clearing sale the previous



fortnight and they had looked old, dusty, black and worn out, only in need of a coat of white paint to spruce them up. She assured me that they would revert to being black once they had moulted their white feathers.

Concrete figures

From the early 20th century, Norman Lindsay experimented with concrete and wire sculpture in his studio in the garden of his Springwood NSW family home. He developed a method of building his figures by first creating a wire cage and then building up successive layers of concrete around it. I believe that this method was used to construct Peter and his Water Buffalo in Mona Vale, NSW, his dray piled high with produce grown on the five-acre allotment behind him. Dating from the same era as Lindsay's, this outlying Sydney suburb was then largely given over to five acre allotments and market gardens supplying the city. The real life Peter had been glimpsed by the owner of the allotment while in Darwin, and he was so impressed that on his return to Sydney he had a life-size Peter, buffalo and dray made to advertise his fruit and vegetables to the passing trade. Peter is still to be found by the side of the road in his old place, but the gardeners are gone, the markets too, with a relentless stream of traffic passing by his dray, now empty of vegetables but carefully maintained by the current business operating from his old garden. For the last twenty years or so he has been put in a cage for his own protection (plate 9).

Once a favourite inclusion in the Australian garden, cast concrete figures spread rapidly to all suburbs in the 20th century. Affordable and

readily available, whole menageries of animals, many of them native, can still be seen cavorting in flower beds, or holding bird baths aloft (plate 10). One sulphur-crested cockatoo with attitude, having recovered from strangulation and beheading at the hands of vandals, was discovered announcing Christmas loud and clear from the front lawn in Warwick (plate 11).

With relief I came across an indigenous hunter surviving intact from the 1950s, resting side by side with a companion lion on the verandah of a rural cottage (plate 12). This particular garden had been arranged with great care and included a whole herd of cast concrete figures neatly yarded to one side (plate 13).

Such sights are becoming rarer in cities today where the break from the natural world has widened, robbing the traditional city garden of its own wildlife. There, you are more likely to stub your toe on a terracotta duck wearing a gingham bandanna, be tripped up by a cast iron sign saying 'Potager', or have your way lit at night by a pagoda lantern. One rural gardener told me that her figures had all come from her father's old garden and were no longer available. Even the gnomes are in retreat.

The rustic arch or arbour

Warwick Oakman's article in *Australiana*, August 2008 examined garden arbours made of whalebone in Tasmania. These arbours are unfortunately long lost, but one can still be seen in Edinburgh spanning the aptly named Jawbone Walk. Whale jawbone has never been readily available to the average home gardener wanting to build an arch or arbour, but the garden itself could supply alternative material.

12
Hunter and lion,
Manilla, NSW

13 Herd of garden
animals and
ornaments,
Manilla, NSW



14
Rustic arch,
Vaucluse House,
Sydney, NSW



15
Stone-lined drain,
Vaucluse House,
Sydney NSW



16
Bible Garden,
Palm Beach, NSW

During the early 19th century movement known as the picturesque, marked by a desire to return to nature and away from the old classicism of the aristocracy, rustic arbours and arches began to appear. This style flourished, paying renewed homage to nature with buildings such as the *Cottage ornée*, a purpose built small cottage tucked away in an existing grand garden, sometimes built of whole tree trunks and with added naturalistic flourishes such as thatch.

Likewise, trellises hung with all manner of climbing plants and the wandering gravelled path through shrubbery also became part of the new garden fashion. During Macquarie's time as governor, these elements were willingly incorporated into Australian garden design by settlers keen to recreate the gardens they left behind in Britain. Many examples of rustic garden furniture made entirely of rough tree branches are recorded from this period and have often staged a comeback in gardens since then.

Utilising prunings from the surrounding environment, the rustic arch was made of interwoven tree and shrubbery branches culled from existing garden shrubs and trees. Of sturdy dimensions, firmly dug into the ground and often spanning a path leading through shrubbery, it would be surrounded by plantings that made it look as though it were naturally growing from the surrounding greenery. Luckily, one survives at *Vaucluse House* in Sydney, the home of the Wentworth family and a fine example of Gothic Revival architecture. This arch, arising from tall plantings such as *nicotiana*, connects the front lawn and fountain with the lower shrubbery. It has been lovingly

maintained, even wholly recreated over the years, surviving into the 21st century with ease. (plate 14). Many other features of this garden have survived as well, including the original stone-lined waterways (plate 15).

The themed or designated garden

It was not only Roy de Maistre's eye which in 1926 was caught by the sublime northward arcing sweep of Palm Beach seen from the cliff above. He painted this view more than once, posing his figure with parasol deep in a reverie before its timeless beauty. Years later, with his own garden situated along that same line of cliff, and doubtless equally seduced by a vanishing point lost somewhere on the hazy horizon of the Pacific to the north east, Gerald Hercules Robinson decided to dedicate part of his garden to establish a Bible Garden. Complete with the Ten Commandments hewn on tablets of stone, and planting every plant mentioned in the Bible, this biblical arboretum was ultimately given in perpetuity to the public by his family. It is now owned by Pittwater Council and is meticulously maintained by a group of volunteers and members of the congregation of St David's church, Palm Beach.

Looking out from its slope towards the sea today, the same feeling of suspension between earth and sky, this life and the next can still be felt, just as it has by countless others before. Robinson's generous gift to the world is intact, the message of the Ten Commandments caught on their stone tablets easily read by anyone taking the time to do so. While some of the plants, such as *Indigophera*, palm, mulberry and pine are instantly familiar, others remain unfortunately unrecognised



as the plaques which name the plant and link it to its reference in the Bible by chapter and verse seem to have been lost, hopefully not due to vandalism or theft, the modern plagues of many public gardens. While a development application over the garden and its tablets is currently under consideration, there can be little doubt of the garden's survival for many years to come (plate 16).

The grotto

Christian institutions included a grotto in their garden as a place of sanctuary and retreat where, in privacy, devotion could be offered to a benevolent God via the intercession of a Saint or Mary, often symbolised by a votary sculpture. These grottos were often built of stone blocks within charming gardens in an area set aside from the mainstream of monastic life. An element of trickling water could enhance an atmosphere of peace and coolness to a dim interior. Similar to a hermit's cave, they remained plain in design and without ostentation until the coming of the Baroque era in Europe when their decoration, along with architecture and music exploded with ornate detail. There they became heavily encrusted with shells, even semi-precious stones, and gradually found their way into the secular gardens of the well-to-do right across Europe and the United Kingdom.

Nationally, many grottos survive in the grounds of Catholic churches, convents or monasteries today, but sadly some of them have come under attack from vandals and have had to be rebuilt by their orders which have consequently made them unavailable to

outsiders. With the appearance of hospices for the terminally ill, there has been a rebirth of sanctuaries within the garden, reminiscent of the medieval cloistered infirmary staffed by monks proficient in tending the sick and preparing their own medications from their own medicinal gardens.

Marburg in Queensland (plate 17), now operating under its original name *Woodlands*, has an intact grotto. The original property had been selected in the 19th century, subsequently wound up and sold to a religious order in the Netherlands. Once established at Marburg, the order built their grotto into the hillside below the main homestead, where it became a part of their monastic life. The monks relinquished it when their order was recalled to the Netherlands, the seminary shut down, the land and buildings sold.

The original *Woodlands* homestead is now used as a function centre specialising in weddings conducted on the lawn in front of the grotto, its entrance left and right closed off by pot plants. I did manage to wriggle inside, and surrounded by attendant spiders, entered a time-warp reaching back to a time of cave burials, the resurrection and sombre devotion. Many a latter-day bride or groom has chosen to be married in its cool glen, watched over by a kneeling figure beseeching clemency.

The haunting image of this flight of steps lost in its garden and in time is a fitting end note (plate 18).

∴ **Lesley Garrett** is a committee member of the Australiana Society. She organised the 2009 members' tour of Tasmania.

17
Grotto at *Woodlands*,
Marburg, QLD

18
Garden steps,
rural township, QLD



*The name will live on
after we are gone*¹
the story of Annan Fabrics

Anne Outlaw and Nance Mackenzie founded the textile company Annan Fabrics in Sydney's Mosman in 1941, exploring the use of Australian motifs to establish a national visual identity. Annan Fabrics will be the subject of an exhibition at Mosman in September-October.

JULIE PETERSEN

Many articles written during the 1940s and 1950s about the success and development of Sydney textile printers Annan Fabrics concentrated on the achievements of the two remarkable business partners, Anne Outlaw and Nance Mackenzie. Described as 'plucky' and possessing considerable 'mettle' and 'courage', their stars burned brightly for 13 years. The two factors that assisted their rise were the shortage of imported fabrics during World War II and the existence of the Arts and Crafts Society of NSW which trained, promoted and assisted women to become major players in the world of Australian design.

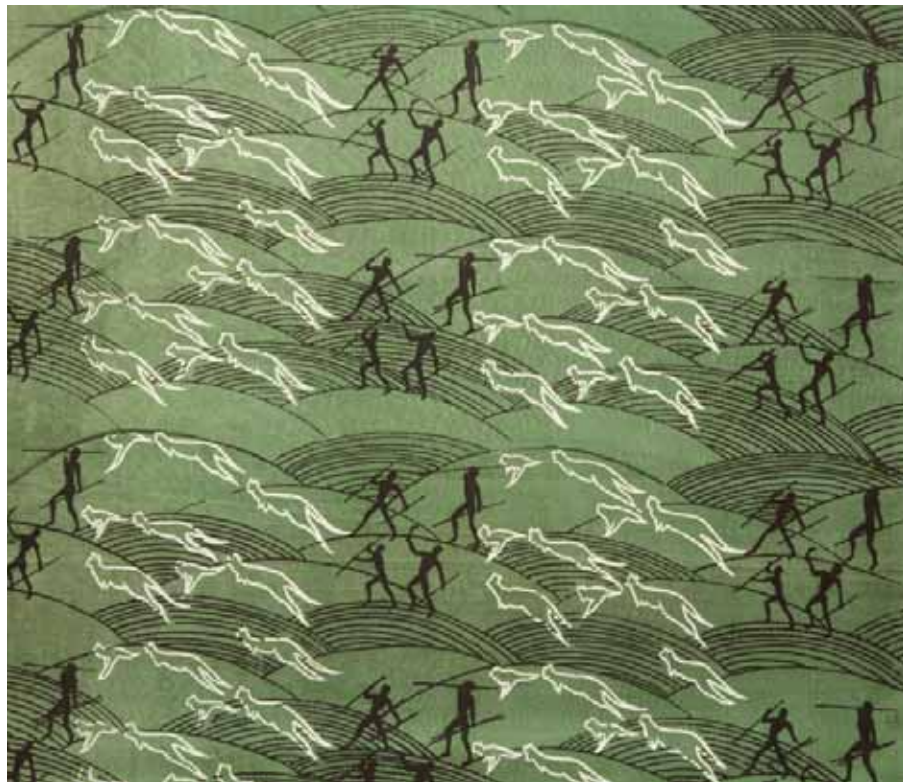
Nance Mackenzie joined the Arts and Crafts Society in 1929 while at East Sydney Technical College where she studied general design as well as painting and drawing. Other members included Margaret Preston who was to be a key influence, friend and professional colleague² and Anne Outlaw, the secretary of the Society, who was later to become Mackenzie's business partner.

Mackenzie was initially unable to sell her textile designs to existing printers, but it was reported that 'being a young person of mettle, practical, enterprising as well as a good artist, she was determined not to be baulked by such obstacles' and gained the support of Anne Outlaw 'to take a plunge to start their own factory.'³ In fact Outlaw was an ideal business manager with excellent society connections and capital.

At the age of 22 she was secretary to the British Prime Minister Earl Lloyd George and received an MBE and OBE in 1919 for her work during the Versailles Peace Conference at the end of World War I. She came to Australia in 1923 and eventually used her considerable organisational skills in the business and was described in numerous magazine articles as having a 'dynamic' personality.

The two women combined their first names to form Annan Fabrics in 1941. In a press interview Outlaw explained: 'we had our business horoscope taken and they said the name was very fortunate. We are under astrological guidance the name will live on after we are gone.'⁴

The formation of Annan was an ideal and astute business venture as there were wartime restrictions on imported goods and fabrics were in short supply. Settled in their newly acquired



factory-premises in the Sydney suburb of Mosman at 1 Vista Street, the largely self-taught women proceeded to do all their own work – they made the screens, mixed the dyes, printed the designs, dried the fabric, fixed the colours in an acid bath and rinsed the fabric.

Annan Fabrics remained a two-person operation for five years, printing an average of 36 metres a day: 'We don't want to expand. We feel we are developing something for ourselves which is experimental, artistic and Australian.'⁵ Because of war-time restrictions, discarded dye lots sourced by Outlaw from large commercial manufacturers allowed Annan to print 'in two or three colours while other fabric printers had to be content with monotonous.'⁶

Writing for *Woman* magazine in 1946,⁷ Beatrice Lilley commented on the radical effect that Annan's designs had on visitors to the Arts and Crafts Society exhibitions, where their fabrics won numerous awards and 'attracted the managing director of a large retail firm but the bold designs were too revolutionary for the firm's conservative buyer. He had not then emerged from the Sprigged Chintz Age but finally he gave an order. Soon they had almost more orders than they could fulfil.' Commissions from David Jones in Sydney and Myer Emporium in Melbourne

1
Textile length
'Strelitzia'
screen-printed
cotton, made by
Annan Fabrics.
c 1945. Collection:
Powerhouse
Museum,
Sydney, gift of
Mrs Alexandra
Kirkwood.
Photo Sotha Bourn

2
Curtain, 'Kangaroo
Hunt' screen-
printed cotton,
made by Annan
Fabrics c 1947.
Collection:
Powerhouse
Museum, Sydney,
gift of
Dr Ian Parkin



3
Café curtain, 'Emu Track' screen-printed cotton made by Annan Fabrics c 1950s. Collection: Powerhouse Museum, Sydney, gift of Mrs Dorothy Nicholas. Photo Sotha Bourn

gave Annan Fabrics an opportunity to market their fabrics as exclusives to the big retailers.

Following World War II, the reputation and size of Annan Fabrics steadily increased. With modernised equipment and two young assistants⁸ the business was able to aim at larger commissions and overseas markets. In 1947 they sent 14 lengths of fabrics to an exhibition of Australian textiles at Australia House in London and in Cairo. The bright, bold, designs featuring native flora also attracted the travel industry, which was interested in investing in the commercial appeal of Australian themes. In 1949, P & O Cruises had created *The Australia Room* in its ship *Himalaya* which was due to make its maiden voyage, and ordered the bold single colour 'Monstera Deliciosa' for its furnishings.

By the early 1950s, the search for a national visual identity through the use of symbols and language often associated and derived from Aboriginal culture was continually employed by companies to brand Australian products and services. In 1952 Annan Fabrics were displayed in an exhibition of Australian Aboriginal art for the Australian Trade Commission at the Australia Display Centre in the Rockefeller

Institute in New York. This exhibition highlighted the inspiration that textile designers, artists and potters gained from Aboriginal art. Paintings by Preston, textiles by Annan Fabrics and ceramics by Martin Boyd were exhibited alongside bark paintings.⁹

Around half of Annan Fabric's designs were based on Aboriginal-inspired themes with names such as 'Emu' and 'Turtle' or 'Rock Carving'. The rest derived from native flora and fauna 'Bush Bunch', 'Ginger Plant', 'Strelitzia', 'Lyrebird', abstract designs, classical and mythical subjects such as griffins or international themes such as 'Zebra Stripe' and 'Leopard'.

In 1953, the Wentworth Hotel in Sydney ousted any associations with English tradition when its *Tudor Room* was replaced by *The Corroboree Room*. The strong relationship between Annan Fabrics and contemporary architects led to many commercial commissions including 'Banksia' curtains for the Dining Room at Parliament House, Sydney, as well as furnishings for the Ainslie Rex Hotel and Australian National University in Canberra, the P & O Offices, Hooker and Toothy Brewery Hotels. Looking to build on the associations with their 1944 kangaroo logo, Qantas Airlines chose

4
Nance Mackenzie and
Anne Outlaw hanging
fabric, *Pix Magazine*
c1940s. Collection:
Powerhouse Museum,
Sydney



5
Nance Mackenzie
posing with
Annan fabrics
c1940s. Collection:
Powerhouse Museum,
Sydney

Annan Fabrics' 'Emu' for its overseas offices in Honolulu, New York, Singapore and Jakarta and 'Snake and Turtle' for the Mascot overseas terminal in Sydney. By this stage the commercial commissions were important, as cheap post-war American textiles had flooded the domestic marketplace.

In 1954 Annan Fabrics rode the surge in interest for 'national' motifs to take on their largest and final commission for 1,500 street banners for the Royal Tour of the new British monarch Queen Elizabeth II. Mackenzie emphasised they 'were all done with an Australian theme which has been my specialty ever since I started.'¹⁰ However, because Annan Fabrics acted as subcontractors for the large-scale production, they were left unpaid when the contractor was declared bankrupt. This brought a halt to the further growth and survival of their business, as they had suspended all other production in order to complete the order.¹¹

By the early 1980s, a resurgence of interest in Australian textiles was due in part to the work of designers such as Jenny Kee and Linda Jackson. This helped to renew interest in textile design pioneers of the



6

'Emu' curtains by Annan Fabrics in the Qantas office at Waikiki, Honolulu, Hawaii c1955. Qantas Heritage Collection



1940s and 1950s such as Annan Fabrics and Francis Burke. In retirement, Nance Kirkwood (née Mackenzie) donated her remaining Annan Fabrics collection to the Powerhouse Museum in 1985.

Mosman Art Gallery in partnership with the Powerhouse Museum will present the story of the remarkable achievements and success of the women of Annan Fabrics through the exhibition *Australian Accent: the Designs of Annan Fabrics and Vande Pottery in the '40s and '50s*. The exhibition runs from September 4 until October 10 at Mosman Art Gallery, corner of Art Gallery Way and Myahgah Rd, Mosman 2088, T 02 9978 4186.

Julie Petersen is Curator, Exhibitions and Public Programs Co-ordinator at the Mosman Art Gallery. Prior to that, she worked in art education and video production. After completing a Masters in Public History degree at UTS, Julie worked at the National Trust in Sydney in public programs, education and exhibitions.

Notes

- 1 'Women Textile Printers celebrate their 4th Year', *The Sun*, 11 June 1945. Collection: Nance Mackenzie Scrapbook, Powerhouse Museum, Sydney.
- 2 Nance Mackenzie and Margaret Preston worked together on the organising committee for the exhibition 'Australian Aboriginal Art and its application' at the David Jones Auditorium in Castlereagh St in August 1941.
- 3 Freda Barrymore, 'Courage and Capital', *The Argus*, 1945. Collection: Nance Mackenzie scrapbook, Powerhouse Museum, Sydney
- 4 'Women Textile Printers Celebrate their 4th Year', *The Sun*, 11 June 1945
- 5 Nance Mackenzie quoted in 'Success from Kitchen Experiments', *Pix Magazine*, Vol 13 No 14, 1 April 1944.
- 6 Nance Mackenzie quoted by MM Pearson, 'Enthusiastic Women undertake unusual Task', *The Weekly News*, 23 July 1947.
- 7 Beatrice Lilley, 'Fabricated Success Story', *Woman*, 13 May 1946.
- 8 MM Pearson, *op.cit.*
- 9 *Fifties Interiors, The Australian Dream*, Powerhouse Museum, 1992.
- 10 Unidentified newspaper clipping. Collection: Nance Mackenzie scrapbook, Powerhouse Museum, Sydney.
- 11 'New Art links Fabric's Days', *The Daily*, 16 June 1976, p 5

Australiana Society Inc.

President's Report 2009

A highlight of the year was undoubtedly the Australiana Society members' tour of Tasmania. For nine days during September, members experienced the beauty and history of Tasmania, from Evandale in the north to Hobart in the south. Numerous museums, galleries, private houses and collections were visited; among the highlights were trips to Bentley and the Hobart Synagogue.

The tour was organised and led by committee member Lesley Garrett with the assistance of our membership secretary, Marcia Rackham. Special mention must go to Lesley for her tireless efforts to put together a fantastic itinerary that resulted in a tour which received warm praise from all participants.

During the last part of 2009 and the first part of this year, the committee has sought to develop a new web strategy. Driven by our web master, technical guru and committee member David Barsby, the website itself will be streamlined and made easier to use, but members will also be provided with a password and be able to update their contact details and eventually renew membership as well as RSVP for events on-line. Furthermore, the committee sees the web as an opportunity for members to interact with each other through an on-line 'show & tell' format to be developed – members will be able to post new collection items online while others can comment on different aspects of those items in cyberspace. All of this, of course, exposes the Society to a potentially untapped number of new members, particularly from the younger generation.

Our magazine *Australiana*, produced four times a year, is and will continue to be our flagship. John Wade has remained as editor while committee member Andy Simpson looks after the production of the magazine. All our many authors and advertisers deserve our thanks for their support throughout the year.

There is also an exciting new development relating to our magazine. Towards the end

of 2009, RMIT Publishing (Melbourne) approached the committee to add our magazine, *Australiana*, to the Informit e-Library. RMIT Publishing is the only specialist journal aggregator operating in the Australasian region, is a not-for-profit business unit of the university and exists to further education and research aims. In other words, Informit is a database used by researchers and libraries to look for journal articles on any topic across a huge range of magazines and journals published in Australasia. It is used in every university and government library throughout Australia and New Zealand.

There are no charges to be part of Informit and Informit will create specialised metadata and indexing and offer this online across all key search engines (Google/Google Scholar etc.). There would also be electronic full text searchability across all articles and issues (for about the last 3 years and for all future editions of *Australiana*). Articles are then available to authenticated subscribers to Informit, although non-subscribers can purchase articles on a pay-per-view basis. In exchange, the Australiana Society would receive royalties on all sales and subscriptions to the Informit service. In addition, it would increase visibility for our journal across Australia, New Zealand and even international regions.

Lastly, I would like to thank our treasurer, Andrew Morris, vice president and events organiser Annette Blinco, secretary Michael Lech, membership secretary Marcia Rackham and committee members Andy Simpson, Michel Reymond, Paul Donnelly, David Barsby and Lesley Garrett who have all been active in working for the Society and its members over the last year.

Megan Martin
President
22 April 2010

Treasurer's Report

Year ended 31 December/2009

Your Society achieved a cash surplus of \$6,286 during the 2009 calendar year, a result that was comparable with the 2008 surplus of \$8,703.

At 31 December 2009, overall the Society had invested a healthy \$69,700 in cash and investment reserves (the prior year: \$63,400).

During 2009 the immensely successful tour was organised to Tasmania and your Committee resolved to formally appoint an editor of the magazine, to ensure our flagship publication continues to be issued on a timely basis and

remains of a high standard.

Personally I would like to thank Michael Lech, our secretary, and all committee members for their assistance in making my role as honorary treasurer that much easier.

I look forward to continued support from renewing subscribers, donors, advertisers and our other supporters.

Andrew Morris FCA
Honorary Treasurer
24 March 2010

Australiana Society Incorporated

Profit & Loss Statement	12 Months to 31/12/2009	12 Months to 31/12/2008
Income		
Subscriptions from Members	18,027.33	19,763.29
Advertising in <i>Australiana</i>	3,854.55	10,163.64
Australia Day & Other Events	1,760.00	3,085.00
Interest Received	3,173.98	2,700.05
Donations Received	1,790.00	1,870.00
Sales of <i>Australiana</i>	170.91	201.82
Tasmanian Tour Income	21,897.82	0.00
Total Income	<u>50,674.59</u>	<u>37,783.80</u>
Expenditure - <i>Australiana</i>		
Production	16,698.18	22,368.00
Editorial Fees	3,774.27	0.00
Postage	3,030.96	3,610.90
Stationery	306.55	248.73
	<u>23,809.96</u>	<u>26,227.63</u>
Expenditure - General		
Australia Day	2,356.55	1,256.36
Website	0.00	395.00
Insurance	440.00	440.00
Merchant & Bank Fees	520.77	518.26
General Meeting & Event Expenses	431.58	0.00
Subscription to RAHS	209.09	200.00
Corporate Affairs Filing Fees	0.00	44.00
Tasmanian Tour Costs	16,620.67	0.00
	<u>20,578.66</u>	<u>2,853.62</u>
Total Expenditure	<u>44,388.62</u>	<u>29,081.25</u>
SURPLUS FOR YEAR	<u>\$6,285.97</u>	<u>\$8,702.55</u>

Australiana Society Incorporated

Balance Sheet

31/12/2009 31/12/2008

Assets

Cash at Westpac Bank	13,399.69	10,921.44
Donations Account (Westpac)	358.77	357.54
Interest Bearing Term Deposit (Westpac)	56,496.16	48,382.07
Subscribers & Other Debtors	0.00	4,163.64
GST Refundable	62.80	133.37
Total Assets	70,553.25	64,481.22

Less Liabilities

Creditors & Suppliers Owed	0.00	948.02
Subscriptions Raised in Advance	804.65	0.00
GST Payable	298.63	656.53

NET ASSETS

\$69,685.80 **\$63,399.83**

Members' Accumulated Funds

Balance Brought Forward	63,399.83	54,697.28
Surplus for Year	6,285.97	8,702.55

MEMBERS' FUNDS

\$69,685.80 **\$63,399.83**

Australiana Books

CHRISTINE ERRATT

Marks on Australian Silver 1950-2005

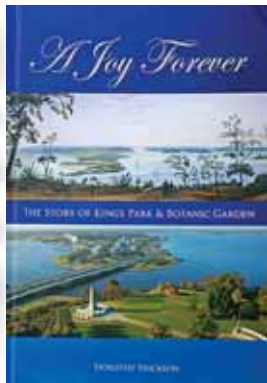
Parker Press, Sydney 2010. 208 pp, colour and b&w illustrations, hardback 240 x 160mm, ISBN 9780646523279. Order from www.parkerpressbooks.com.au, \$105 including postage within Australia.

Christine Erratt, an Australiana Society and Silver Society member, spent seven years putting together the information for this useful reference book. It aims to include both makers' and retailers' marks of those who produced a substantial body of work, and marked it. With no formal Australian hallmarking system in place, a list such as this is essential to identify makers' marks.

Some makers use initials and some use symbols. The first section lists the alphabetical marks followed by the symbols, each illustrated with a photograph. The second section lists 300 makers alphabetically, with photos of their marks, a summary of their career, and a list of collections where they are represented. Without a mandatory Guild Hall system, makers are free to vary their marks. Some makers used four or five marks, each of which is illustrated. Interspersed in the text are photos, colour or black and white, of about 60 objects.

The book, designed and printed in Australia, is a tribute not only to the author, but to the hundreds of silversmiths represented. Christine Erratt's book is a handsome addition to the small list of essential reference works on Australian decorative arts.





DOROTHY ERICKSON

A Joy forever. The Story of Kings Park and Botanic Garden.

Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority, Perth 2009. 360pp, colour and b&w illustrations, softcover 240 x 170 mm, ISBN 9781876479152, no price stated.

Every city prides itself on its parkland. West Australians are justly proud of Perth's huge Kings Park, which is the biggest tourist destination in the state.

Kings Park is not only big, ten times the size of Melbourne's Fitzroy Gardens, but all-encompassing. It combines native bush with landscaped gardens, a cenotaph and other memorials, statues, playgrounds, restaurants, sport and recreation facilities, walkways, an ecology centre, a plant nursery, a research facility, and more. With all those functions, there are bound to be conflicts and changes in outlook. Dr Erickson devotes most of the chapters to the period of leadership of each chief executive, examining their philosophy and the changes and additions to the Park during their tenure.

The author is an historian, the daughter of botanist Dr Rica Erickson, a member of the Australiana Society and frequent contributor to *Australiana* magazine, as well as a renowned jeweller who is represented in numerous collections as well as being listed in Christine Erratt's silver book.



JOHN JONES

Robert Dowling, Tasmanian son of Empire.

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 2010. 192pp, colour illustrations, hard cover, 240 x 175mm, ISBN 9780642334107 \$39.95

Robert Dowling (1827-1886) gave up his day job as a saddle-maker to become a full-time artist in Launceston in 1850. Though claiming to be self-taught, he had worked with other colonial artists, possibly training with Frederick Strange. Dowling was the first locally trained artist and the first to exhibit successfully in Britain.

His Australian paintings are largely portraits, both of white settlers and of the indigenous people of Tasmania and Victoria. Some of the latter are large figure groups, showing great detail in portraiture as well as in depicting weapons, clothing and personal ornament.

Moving with his family to London in 1857, Dowling enrolled at J.M. Leigh's Academy. His English paintings are staid academic works, with a strong component of biblical, historical and Middle Eastern genre scenes; the figures are notable for elaborate costumes with skilful light-and-shade treatment of the folds of their drapery.

Dowling returned to Melbourne in 1884 with 'a secure reputation', painting portraits of Melbourne and Victoria's leading citizens and their wives. He sailed back to Naples and London in 1886, where he died suddenly.

This monograph accompanies an exhibition shown in Launceston, Geelong and Canberra. Author and curator John Jones took years to research the artist and to find his dispersed works; one, *Breakfasting Out*, 1859, had been acquired by the Museum of London bearing the signature of another artist and the date 1881. The exhibition closes in Canberra on 3 October.



PENNY OLSEN

A brush with birds.

Australian bird art from the National Library of Australia.

National Library of Australia, Canberra, 2008. 120pp, 100 colour plates, soft cover, 290 x 236 mm, ISBN 9780642276803, \$34.95

Australian birds were a subject of interest to the early explorers, who often sailed with scientists aboard, as part of the ship's community, to record the flora and fauna. Dr Olsen, a biologist

and Visiting Fellow at the Australian National University, wrote the introduction and presumably the essays on each artist.

A picture book showcasing the quality and variety of artworks in the National Library collection, chapters highlight the major artists. Prominent among the early artists are John Hunter, George Raper, Sarah Stone and John William Lewin, all of whose works are largely 'stilted reproductions of a dead bird ... unruffled by wind and weather'.

John Gould and the two Neville Cayleys, father and son, fill the middle period, developing the genre to include native flora and naturalistic settings, and to capture the bird's personality. Their work was extended by Ebenezer Gostelow (cover image), Lilian Medland, Betty Temple Watts and William Cooper – not forgetting the printers who strove to improve colour reproduction techniques.

This is the sort of book which might have accompanied an exhibition, worth dipping in to regularly as a reminder of the beautiful birds, the artists and the magnificent collection that is the National Library. It is now complemented by another by Linda Groom on the paintings of the First Fleet midshipman artist, George Raper (\$49.95).

THE ARTISTS' RESALE ROYALTY SCHEME



HAS COMMENCED

The scheme commenced on 9 June 2010:

- commercial resales of artworks must now be reported; and
- a 5% royalty is payable on certain resales.

What you need to do:

- **artists:** register to participate in the scheme
- **galleries, dealers, auction houses:** report all commercial resales of artworks, and ensure royalties are paid
- **vendors:** report commercial resales yourself or through an agent and ensure royalties are paid

You can register to participate, and report resales online at www.resaleroyalty.org.au.

For more information:

www.resaleroyalty.org.au
Email resale@copyright.com.au
Call CAL on 1800 066 844



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The Australian Government has appointed Copyright Agency Limited (CAL) to manage the resale royalty scheme.

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John Blogg (Aust. 1851 - 1936)



HAND CARVED WOOD PANEL

This work was carved in 1914 as a commission for the Corbett family of Brisbane
45 x 30 cm

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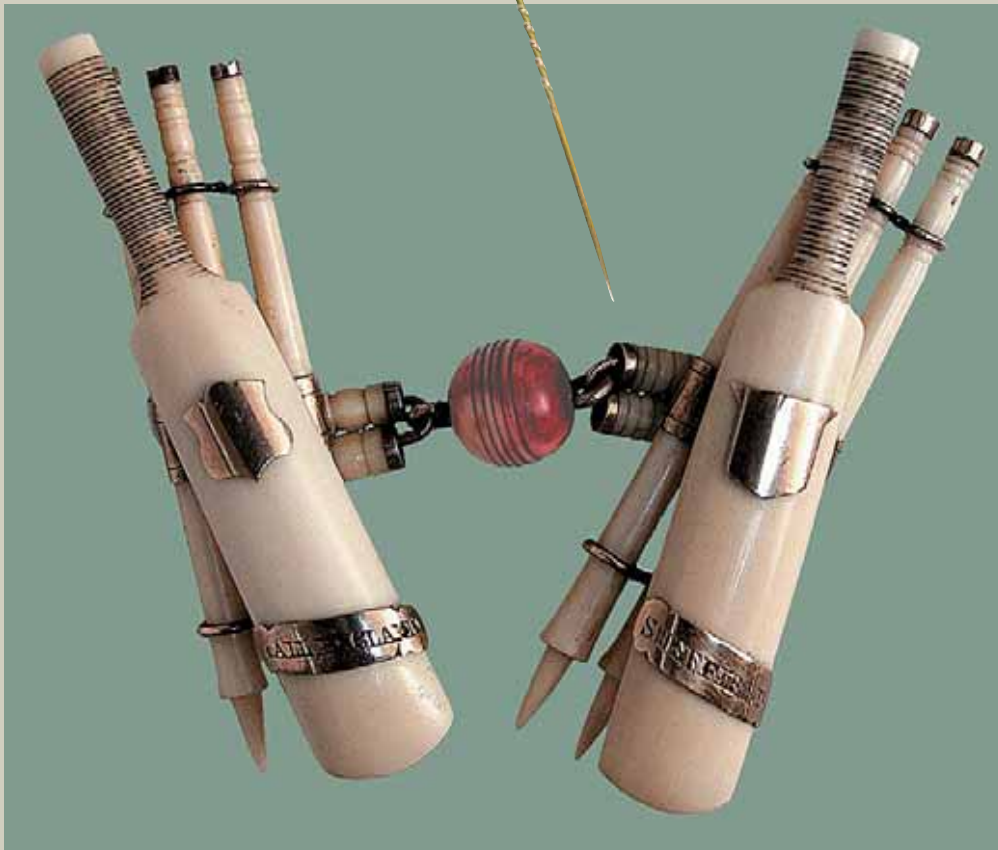
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This superb cravat toggle engraved "All England" and "Sheffield" is matched by a cravat pin recently purchased by Mrs Howard as a gift to the former Prime Minister.

Captained by W.G. Grace, the All England Eleven was brought to Australia in 1892 at the expense of Lord Sheffield. To commemorate the tour Lord Sheffield paid £150 towards the costs of the Blashki made trophy, formerly known as the Sheffield Shield. (J.B. Hawkins, *19th Century Australian Silver* Vol I, pp. 285-286)

Phillip Blashki's work is known only from two cricket shields, The Sheffield and The Hordern. Hardy Brothers of Sydney seem a far more likely firm for the commission and may in some way prove to be associated with this order from Lord Sheffield.

These two gold mounted ivory items, the cravat pin and cravat toggle, are I suggest, the creation of Marcus Benjamin (1839-1906) working for the then Royal Warrant holders, Hardy Brothers Jewellers Sydney. I noted in the *Australian Antique Collector*, July/December 1981 that Benjamin manufactured a unique surviving ivory watch with gold mounts.

Benjamin was born 1839 in Pickelyn, Russia, arriving in NSW in 1884. He was immediately employed by John Hardy of the Sydney firm Hardy Brothers and together they took out a world patent on Benjamin's invention of a new form of watch escapement in 1890. The watch was exhibited at the Columbian Exhibition Chicago in 1893, described as "All the wheels and the setting of the jewels are in gold and also the mounting of the case." The description omits to mention the case was made entirely of ivory. The watch was also exhibited at the Queensland International Exhibition of 1897 and is further described as winning "Special first for ivory carved watch."

I suggest the only man in Sydney in 1892 who could have conceived and made a cravat pin and toggle in ivory, mounted with gold to such a standard, is Marcus Benjamin. It should be noted that working in ivory and bone is a Russian craft.

This truly unique item of Australiana with connections to W.G. Grace, Lord Sheffield, The All England Eleven and cricketing history will cost the new owner \$20,000.