

THE AUSTRALIANA SOCIETY

P.O. Box A378,
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N.S.W. 2000

NEWSLETTER No. 1

November, 1978

A PERSONAL INVITATION

In the last few weeks a number of people interested in Australiana has got together and formed an Interim Committee to set up The Australiana Society. We have sent this *Newsletter* and Membership Application Form to you personally because we know that you are interested in Australiana. We hope that you will join the Society.

The aims of the Society are, broadly, to encourage the collection and preservation of Australiana, and to further research and appreciation of Australiana. It will do this through regular meetings, its *Newsletter* and other publications.

The Interim Committee realizes that many people have valuable collections which they do not want widely publicized. For this reason we intend to screen intending members carefully. The membership records of the Society will be kept securely, and membership details will not be made available to any other person or organisation.

INTERIM COMMITTEE

The Interim Committee set up at a meeting on 7th October comprises the following:

President	Robert Hutchinson
Vice-Presidents	Don Tomsett Kevin Fahy
Secretary/Treasurer	Andrew Simpson
Orientation Officer	Jim Garaty
Editor	John Wade

The Committee has prepared a Constitution and set of Rules which will be available shortly to members.

MEETINGS

Meetings of the Society will be held regularly on the first Saturday of every alternate month.

The first meeting of the Society will be held on Saturday, 2nd December from 6.30 to 8 p.m. at David Cloonan Antiques, 38 Neill Avenue, Rushcutters Bay ('phone 31 2452), and will provide an opportunity for members to get together. As numbers are limited, please reply as soon as possible to the Secretary on 33 3762 between 11 am and 5 pm, Tuesday to Fridays.

NEW EXHIBITIONS

1. The Fourth Part of the World (Australian Museum, Sydney, until 19th November).

An exhibition showing aspects of Australian history, created for the American Bicentennial in 1976 by David Hutchison, Curator of History at the Western Australian Museum. It includes relics from the *Batavia* and *Vergulde Draeck* wrecks, personal effects of James Cook, Kelly gang armour, historical silver, scrimshaw, explorer's artifacts, Aboriginal gorgets, etc. There is an illustrated catalogue (\$1.50).

2. Australia's Animals - Who discovered them? (Macleay Museum, University of Sydney, until 3rd November).

Many early illustrations of Australia's unique fauna appear both in the displays and in the well-produced catalogue which accompanies it (\$4.50).

3. Australian Pottery 1900-1950 (Art Gallery of N.S.W. Sydney, 7th December to 9th January; National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 18th January to 8th February; Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, 24th February to 25th March).

Peter Timms, Director of the Shepparton Art Gallery, has collected examples mostly of Art Pottery from many private and public collections in all States. They will be seen in several venues, thanks to Art Gallery Directors' Council sponsorship. The illustrated catalogue (\$4.00), available in Sydney at the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, includes a useful directory of many artist potters working during this century. Peter Timms, who also designed the catalogue, hopes that the exhibition will bring to light further pieces and information on potters.

4. Australian Flora in Art ("Banyule", 60 Buckingham Drive, Heidelberg, Victoria, 25th October to 28th January; Wollongong Art Gallery from 5th February).

The Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences exhibition first shown at Elizabeth Bay House has since been to Canberra Botanic Gardens and Adelaide's Jam Factory Gallery. Illustrated catalogues from Canberra and Adelaide (20c each) are available from the Museum; an article on the subject will appear in the next *Australasian Antique Collector*.

The display at Banyule includes a suite of furniture carved with Australian motifs in "Gumnut Art Nouveau" style by Robert Prenzel, c.1910.

Banyule is an Extension Gallery of the National Gallery of Victoria, built in about 1846. It displays the Jack Manton Collection of Australian paintings downstairs, with changing displays on the upper floor. It is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday 10 to 5, and to booked groups only on Thursday; it closes for four weeks from 1st February and 1st July.

5. Colonial Crafts of Victoria (National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, until 14th January, 1979).

Painter/printmaker Murray Walker researched and mounted this exhibition of crafts in Victoria from early settlement up till 1921. The selection of over 400 items was made from eighty-seven Victorian public and private collections; all but four of them are illustrated in the 170 page catalogue, which sells for \$4.

Murray Walker, who describes the collection as a "people's exhibition", says it is the first time in Australia that folk craft has been detached from solely historic associations and subjected to aesthetic scrutiny.

6. The Thirties (Elizabeth Bay House, Sydney, till 26th November).

An exhibition of social life in Sydney in the 1930s when Elizabeth Bay House was a popular venue for parties and wedding receptions. The next exhibition at the House will treat Sir William Macleay's *Chevert* expedition to New Guinea.

7. The Explorers (S.H. Ervin Museum, National Trust Centre, Observatory Hill, Sydney, until 27th November.)

Director of the Museum, Clytie Jessop, has mounted a large number of paintings relating to the explorers, from the Dutch in the 17th century to the British in the 18th and 19th centuries. Modern Australian paintings on the same theme, and objects of decorative arts and scientific instruments associated with exploration, are included.

8. National Gallery of Victoria

The "permanent" displays of the Decorative Arts at the National Gallery of Victoria have been extended by the creation of a new gallery devoted to works of the 19th and 20th centuries, and organised by the Curator, Terry Lane. Among the many fine objects of European origin there are also Australian silver, gold (the Geelong gold cup, 1880), jewellery, ceramics (especially Bendigo, including the tall basket vase reminiscent of Belleek) and furniture.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

1. *Collecting Australiana*, by Juliana and Toby Hooper, has just been published by Macmillan at \$14-95. The photographs, most of which are of items not previously published, number around 200 and make the book worth buying.

2. *Australasian Antique Collector*, vol. 19, 1979 which is due in November will have several articles of interest, on Australian Flora in Art, ceramics for the Australian market, an Australian boxing belt by Sydney silversmith J.J. Cohen, Australian Impressionists, and Australia's first observatories.

3. *The Golden Decade of Australian Architecture: the Work of John Verge*, by James Broadbent, Clive Lucas, and Ian Evans, with photographs by Max Dupain, is to be published before Christmas by David Ell Press and the Elizabeth Bay House Trust. This work has grown out of the excellent recent exhibition on Verge's work, held at Elizabeth Bay House. The book is hard cover and limited to 1,500 copies, which will sell for \$36 each.

4. *Pioneer Crafts of Australia*, by Murray Walker, is promised in November by the publishers, Macmillan Australia. It too is centred around an exhibition, sponsored by the Victorian Ministry for the Arts and Conzinc. The book will retail for \$19.95.

5. *Australiana*, by Mona Brand will be published by Hamlyn in December at a recommended retail price of about \$9.50.

6. *Chairs made by Tasmanian Bush Carpenters during the 19th and Early 20th Centuries*, by McWilliams, Dufour, Sharp and Thorp, was published in 1978 by the Tasmanian School of Art, Mount Nelson, Tasmania 7007. The soft-cover book accompanied an exhibition of Tasmanian chairs held in September, and has many illustrations.



THE AUSTRALIAN INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION BUILDING, SYDNEY, 1879.

1879 EXHIBITION

The Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences is planning an exhibition commemorating the centenary of the Sydney International Exhibition held at the Garden Palace building in the Domain during 1879-1880. This has great historical and sentimental value for the Museum, which grew out of this Exhibition and occupied the "Garden Palace" until its complete destruction by fire in September 1882, six weeks before the Museum was due to open to the public.

Fortunately the Museum still retains a few items from the 1879 Exhibition, but anyone who can help with other items from the Exhibition, or with souvenirs of the Exhibition, is asked to contact John Wade at the Museum (659 Harris Street, Broadway, 2007, telephone 02-211 3911).

The Art Gallery of N.S.W. will also be exhibiting, among the permanent collection, the paintings which it acquired from the 1879 Exhibition.

GOTHICK FURNITURE IN N.S.W.

The Autumn 1979 exhibition at Elizabeth Bay House will be on the theme "Gothick Furniture and Architecture in N.S.W.". The Curator, James Broadbent, would like to hear of any pieces of Gothick furniture which might be lent for the exhibition (Elizabeth Bay House, 7 Onslow Avenue, Elizabeth Bay, N.S.W., 2011, telephone 02-358 2344), especially those of Australian manufacture.

AUSTRALIAN POTTERY SALE

A collection of Lithgow, Bendigo and other Australian pottery from the private collection of Danny Drake is to be auctioned in Sydney on 28th November. The auction will be held by Geoff K. Gray, Morley Avenue, Rosebery.

AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY FOR HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY PUBLICATIONS

ASHA, well-known already for its monograph series *Studies in Historical Archaeology* which includes the reprints of the Lithgow pottery catalogues and reports of archaeological excavations at the Old Sydney Burial Ground and Ross Bridge, Tasmania, is about to release a series of *Occasional Papers*. Five of these are already in the press:

Eleanor Crosby, *Survey and Excavation at Fort Dundas, Melville Island, Northern Territory, 1975.*

Damaris Bairstow, Judy Birmingham and Bob Holmes, *Excavations in the City of Sydney 1971-73: Pitt Street Congregational Church.*

Marjorie Graham, *Printed Ceramics in Australia.*

Damaris Bairstow, *Archaeological Finds, University of Sydney Building Programme 1965-1975.*

Robert Varman, *The Marseilles or French Pattern Tile in Australia.*

These *Occasional Papers* are printed offset in an A4 format, with line drawings and photographs. They are obtainable from the Secretary, ASHA, Department of Archaeology, University of Sydney NSW 2006 (692-2763). Prices not yet available.

RESEARCH NOTES

One of the major projects which the Society can undertake is the compilation of an index of maker's marks for silver, furniture and ceramics. Already some of the members have begun to make a record of these marks, and a file of ceramic marks has been started at the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences.

Robert Hutchinson and Jim Garaty are making a special study of furniture stamps and labels, not only of manufacturers but also of retailers and wholesalers. If you have any furniture marks and you would not mind them being photographed, please contact Robert or Jim, through the Secretary.

At a later stage, this kind of information will be collated into book form and hopefully produced under the auspices of the Society as a research report.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Contributions of short articles, notes, information and suggestions for future issues of the *Newsletter* are welcomed. We are able to reproduce line drawings by our offset process, but not photographs to an acceptable quality.

Send your contributions to:

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