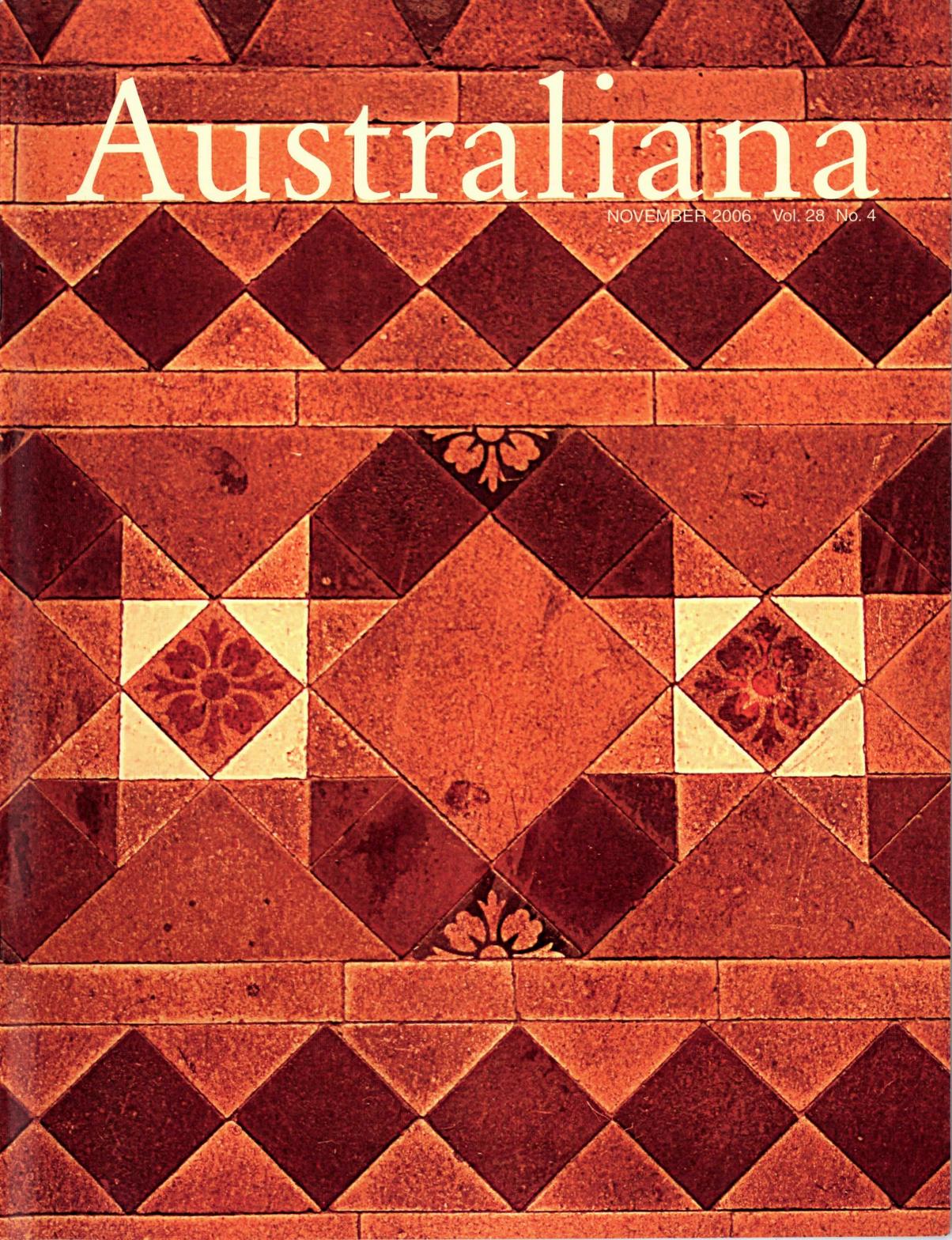


Australiana

NOVEMBER 2006 Vol. 28 No. 4





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COVER: Threshold laid with Tornaghi's tiles in the inner hall at Government House, Sydney, c. 1867-68.
Photo John Wade, courtesy Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales



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Johannus Martyn Haenke

ARTIST, ARCHITECT AND DESIGNER 1877 – 1963

John Hawkins

It was the minerals mined in the north of Tasmania that created the delightful Edwardian city of Launceston. Mt Bischoff, one of the world's richest deposits of tin, was discovered in 1871; the Beaconsfield gold mine that opened in 1877 produced 26,500 kg of gold until closure in 1914; and Australia's largest copper mine at Mount Lyell, combined with the zinc, silver and lead mine at Zeehan, all contributed to making Launceston one of Australia's richest cities. So rich, that in 1891 20,000 people could hold an International Exhibition within its still-standing Exhibition Hall, built to hold 2,500 people at a cost of £272,000.

In April 2005 my daughter purchased the Victoria League House in Lyttleton Street, Launceston, built in 1905 by J. & T. Gunn and then known as 'The Manor House' (plate 1), the private residence of Cyril Perrin, a leading Launceston businessman.¹

J. & T. Gunn's surviving records at the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Inveresk, include Gunn's original Contracts Book showing that building commenced on 3 March 1905 and was completed on 27 April 1906 at a final cost of £1,631-5-1d. Every payment is recorded: wages £497-17-5d, materials £1,032-14-4d, plumbing £59-16-3d and various extras in particular electric light (wages) £22-14-10d with materials £21-16-3d. The copper panels to the doors (plate 2) and the dining room fireplace (plate 4) cost £5-10-0d. These remarkably survive, with two of the original hall lights on their brackets and the central hall light (plate 26).

What attracted the family to this house was the cutting-edge Arts & Crafts design of the building and its interior. Two houses, designed by another Gunn's



Top: Plate 1. The Manor House, Launceston designed by J. Martyn Haenke, commenced 3 March 1905 and completed 27 April 1906 at a final cost £1,631-5-1d

Above left: Plate 2. Manor House, repoussé copper panels to the doors

Above right: Plate 3. The Tasmanian Arts & Crafts Society display of metalwork at the 1903 Exhibition in Hobart. This photograph proves that quality repoussé work was available in Tasmania. I suggest that the panels were manufactured in Tasmania, specifically for this commission. The Section B Metalwork Class 14 repoussé 1st Prize and special certificate was awarded to Alan Cameron Walker. Certificates to Miss Swan and Mr Fawcet. Class 15 Metal Miscellaneous. 1st prize Mr A Bartlett; 2nd, Mr C Watson

Above: Plate 4. Manor House, repoussé copper panels to the dining room fireplace

deat. (Copy) Launceston Tasmania. Nov 24/05.

Messrs. Dickington Brothers, St. Helens.

Gent. Please supply Messrs. J. & S. Gunns, Launceston, Tasmania, with the following:-

2 Cases large Muraneses White @ 3 1/2 lbs 5/.

1 " " Japanese No. 95/2 (Claret)

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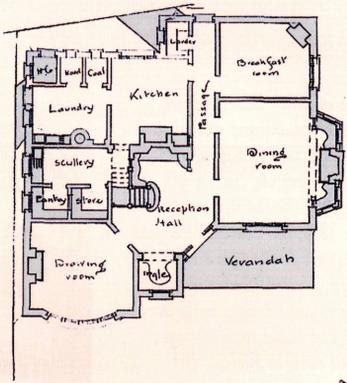
Ship direct Sailer to Launceston

Insurance & Forms etc; please work on previous lines

Yours Obedt.
H. Mees.

Lalla Pouch

CYRIL PERRIN
LYLLETON ST
Proposed Residence



J. Martyn Haenke
Architect etc.

Above left: Plate 5. Pilkingtons glass order, page 605; Gunns letterbook CHS 39, 6/2
Above right: Plate 6. 'The Manor House', signed footprint plan for Cyril Perrin. By 1905 it appears that 'etc.' was the easy way out of describing his questionable architectural qualifications, hence 'J. Martyn Haenke Architect etc.'

J. Martyn Haenke
Architect
m. n. v. l. o.

Left: Plate 7. Tasmanian Woolgrowers Agency, April 1904 footprint plan with signature of J. Martyn Haenke, complete with bogus qualifications
Below: Plate 8. F. & W. Stewart jewellers, contemporary photograph of this magnificent façade in the *Weekly Courier*, 20 August 1904, together with three views of the interior. This group of photographs would have made Haenke's name prominent in the tight-knit community of Launceston. The reference to Tiffany's is very much the quip one would expect from our artistic designer. The canopy over the street is glass with the large floodlights for illumination at night in the foreground



contract architect Thomas Searell and recently completed or under construction in nearby Elphin Road, 'Kilmarnock' for John Ingles in 1903 and 'Lemana' for Mrs M.A. Tyson in 1906, have none of verve of 'The Manor House'.² A search of the Launceston Council records produced the original

floor plan of 'The Manor House', signed 'J Martyn Haenke, Architect etc.' (plate 4). Johannus Martyn Haenke was born in Ipswich, Queensland on 8 July 1877 and by February 1899 was working in the office of George Brockwell Gill.³ Gill, born in London in 1857, came to Ipswich in 1888 and set up his practice as an architect. Around 1900, J.M. Haenke practised as an architect in Toowoomba, possibly in partnership with his brother.⁴ He claimed to have worked in Melbourne supervising the work of Lloyd Tayler & Fitts after the death of the principals, before arriving in Launceston in 1903. J. M.'s elder brother William Martyn Haenke (1875-1952) was articled to Ipswich architect Henry E. Wyman in 1891 before joining the Melbourne firm

of Lloyd Tayler & Fitts. William may have worked in Toowoomba with his brother. He returned to Ipswich by 1900 and advertised as an 'architect and electrician' there in December 1900. Later he was to prove an early proponent of the Californian bungalow style in Queensland.⁵ London-born Lloyd Tayler (1830-1900) arrived in Melbourne in 1851 and in 1881 went into partnership with his pupil, F.A. Fitts (died 1903).⁶ Tayler was President of the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects in 1886-87, 1889-90 and 1899-1900, his obituary referred to him as the 'best known figure in the architectural profession in Melbourne.' As well as designing the Houses of Parliament in Adelaide and the Australian Club in Melbourne, Lloyd



Taylor & Fitts designed the Melbourne head office of the Commercial Bank of Australia in 1890. The vast domed banking chamber caused a sensation at the time and is carefully preserved. The firm provided the extensions and improvements to one of Melbourne's finest private house 'Rippon Lea' for Frederick Sargood.⁷

The well-known Melbourne architect Harold Desbrowe-Anneer launched a guild for architects, artists and craft workers in January 1900. Known as the T Square Club, the guild, with some fifty architectural students, first met at the Melbourne Working Men's College on 17 February 1900, where Desbrowe-Anneer, as instructor at the College, occupied the chair; the Haenke brothers may have attended. In his lecture to the T Square Club in 1903 Desbrowe-Anneer noted

The only way forward was through an alliance of architecture, art and craft following the models of the English Arts & Crafts revival, the French L'Art Nouveau and the Austrian Secessionists who are all advancing with rapid and giant strides. ... Australians must do likewise

Some were already doing so and he cites William Montgomery and Auguste Fischer,⁸ artists in glass, Otto Waschatz a creator of ornamental plasterwork, Marriot, iron founder and the architects Oakden, Purchas, responsible for 'Purrumbete', Campbell and Wheildon.⁹

J. Martyn Haenke arrived in Launceston from Melbourne on the *Pateena* on 28 February 1903, aged 26, describing himself as an 'artist' and taking up residence at 3 Balfour Street. Plans submitted to Launceston City Council¹⁰ show that Haenke appears to have commenced work with J & T Gunn by June 1903. His first signed plan¹¹ was for the extensive 32-room extension to the Launceston Hotel¹² to include a billiard room and conservatory endorsed 'J. Martyn Haenke A.I.A etc' presumably for 'Associate of the Institute of Architects'.¹³

On the first floor the ceiling cornice and window surrounds survive and show Haenke to be one of the first Australian architect designers to work in the Art Nouveau style, a style in which he soon excelled.

He is specifically noted as the 'designer' to the extensions of the still existing c. 1870 shop occupied by the jewellers F. & W. Stewart.¹⁴ The

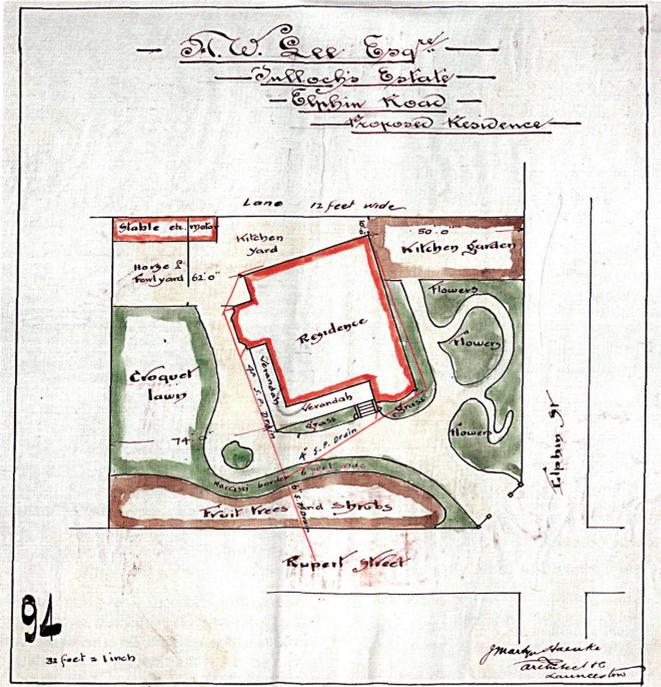


Above left: Plate 9. Tasmanian Woolgrowers Agency, from the *Weekly Courier* 18 March 1905. The Art Nouveau decoration to the centre has now been virtually completely removed to advertise the Spotlight store, the tuck-pointed façade painted white and blue. The desecration of this iconic building is deplorable

Above right: Plate 10. This must rank as the finest Art Nouveau interior in Australia for its date. Terence Lane pointed out to me that this interior was illustrated by this photograph, in R.T. Baker's *Cabinet of Timbers of Australia*, 1913, p 73. The steel columns have applied cast plaster decoration with entasis and require knowledge of classical architecture and an adaptive mind to formulate their construction; they are probably unique in Australia. This interior has been repainted, the dividers have been removed from the tops of the blackwood counters but the reeded brackets supporting the counter are echoed in the extant jewellery cases in the Stewart jewellery shop and the dining room fireplace in the Harrah house

Left: Plate 11. Column detail

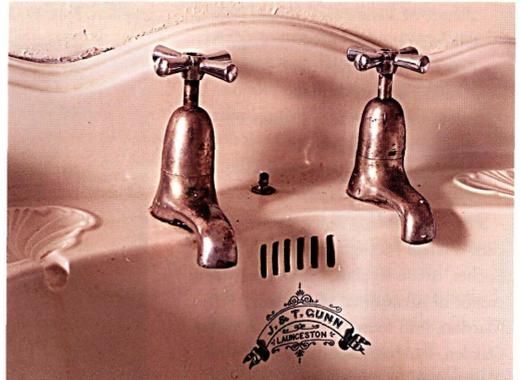
Below: Plate 12. The street side window as it is today



Above: Plate 13. Lee house. This plan is unusual – a garden, a watercolour and in Haenke's own hand. I have been unable to find a single elevation by Haenke surviving in Launceston, so this is the closest I can get to his artistic palette. Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery

Below left: Plate 14. Herald Examiner Building, Los Angeles, designed by Julia Morgan. She also designed Hearst Castle in San Simeon on the central coast of California for William Randolph Hearst, owner of the *Herald Examiner*. The architects J. Martyn Haenke and W.J. Dodd participated in this project. They may have prepared the working drawings and supervised construction. It was designed in Spanish Colonial Revival style with Moorish details seen in the mosaic domes, combined with the Mission Revival style characterised by the flat central arched façade of the entrance. The City of Los Angeles declared it a Historic Cultural Monument

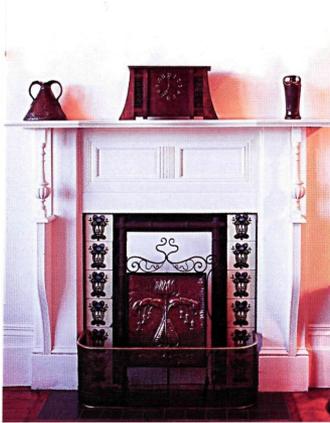
Below right: Plate 15. Taps and wash basin supplied for J. & T. Gunn



windows (plate 8) are superb examples of both design and the gilder's art.¹⁵ A contemporary newspaper describes his efforts:¹⁶

A Palatial Jewellery Establishment... the main window is one of the largest plate glass windows in Tasmania, being 14ft by 8ft above which are 18 inches of leaded stained glass, a replica of that which forms a feature to the exterior of Tiffany's, the famous New York Jewellers. The plate-glass is embellished externally with three Coats of Arms - The Royal, The London Goldsmiths Corporation and the Tasmanian... The stained glass, the counter, the shop fittings and decorating generally were from the designs of Mr J Martyn Haenke who also supervised all the work in connection with the evolving of the artistic structure which is such an ornament to Launceston.

Haenke's footprint plan to incorporate two new brick kilns in a 6,900 sq foot (640 m²) extension at a cost of £403¹⁷ to the McHugh Bros Pottery in Launceston, dated 2 March 1904 and the Campbell's Pottery drying rooms some two months later still exist.¹⁸ His connections, both as an architect and a designer, with Launceston's leading silversmith and jeweller and with two decorative potters may eventually provide the link to sheet home the design of any surviving Arts &



Crafts objects manufactured by them in Launceston between 1904-1910.

Without doubt Haenke's masterpiece, his most expensive construction project and probably the finest Art Nouveau interior in the Southern Hemisphere,¹⁹ was the Stores and Offices for the Tasmanian Woolgrowers Agency in Cimitiere Street, Launceston (plate 9). Costing £9,360,²⁰ the plan gives the area of the building as 29,000 sq feet (2,694 m²) with three stores, an office with 13-foot ceilings, and a dwelling.²¹ The plan is signed 'J. Martyn Haenke Assoc of I. of A. and M.R.V.I.A. Architect' (plate 7).²² Construction took place between 16 April 1904 and 5 May 1905. The offices were open for business and described in the *Weekly Courier* of Saturday 18 March 1905 as follows (plates 9, 10, 11, 12):

The massive preparations of what might fitly be described as the headquarters of Tasmanian Woolgrowers ... are an appropriate symbol of the wealth of the paramount resource of the State ... the internal lavishness of finish is worthy of such big centres as Melbourne and Sydney. Indeed visitors from other States and from England agree that they have never seen it surpassed ... Mr J Martyn Haenke at one time in charge of Lloyd Tayler and Fitts in Melbourne was the architect ... In the counting house, a model of its kind, a

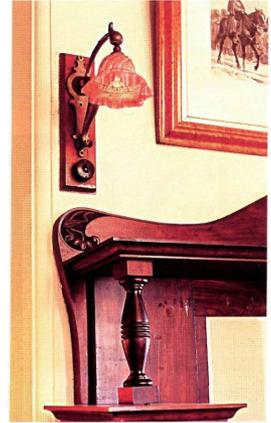


flood of light comes in from the immense windows and brings out in delicate tones the extremely artistic ceiling which is divided into 12 panels by the columns and girders. The composition is of fibrous plaster elaborately hand modelled to the architect's special designs in modern English conventional treatment decorated in art shades of green, terracotta, cream and gold ...

This ceiling was probably painted by H.A. Reisz, who shared his accommodation in Elizabeth Street with Haenke in 1905.²³

Haenke designed three important Launceston private houses during his time with Gunns. The Harrap house, at a cost of £1,784 of 13 rooms with 12 foot ceilings on the corner of Wellman and Elizabeth Streets, commenced 4 July 1903 and completed April 1904, survives virtually intact and untouched as evidenced by the photographs, even down to its original light fittings with their shades.²⁴ The Bruce house in York Street was constructed in 1904 at a cost of £1,492.^{25, 26} Outside contractors were used: Blackaby a former employee and Thomas Partridge were the bricklayers, but the plumbing, joinery, painting and electrical work were in-house.

Perrin's 'Manor House' in Lyttleton Street preceded Haenke's downfall.²⁷ It was contracted at £1,600 but deductions on

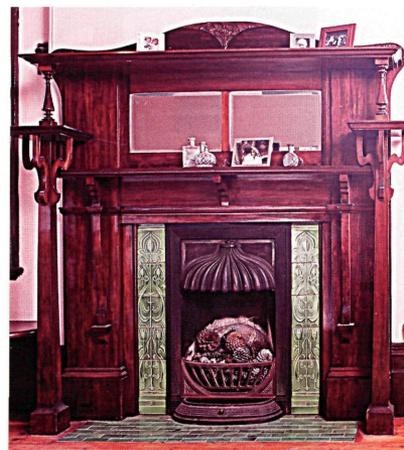


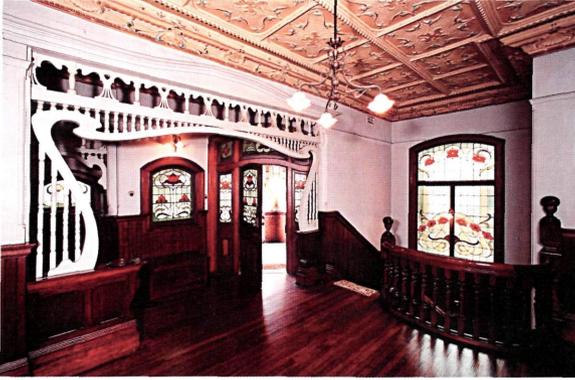
Above left: Plate 16. Manor House, the white painted drawing room fireplace with its unusual hearth tiles supplied by Sherwin & Cotton, Hanley, (appendix, p. 617) to a Register Grate, supplied by either the Falkirk Iron Company, Glasgow (appendix, p. 6) or Lane & Girvan (appendix, p. 671). In true Arts & Crafts spirit, both drawing rooms seem always to have been painted white

Above centre: Plate 17. Harrap house, the white painted drawing room fireplace of highly original design, the register grate now missing. The reeded brackets suggest that these fireplaces were designed by Haenke and were not from Gunns stock

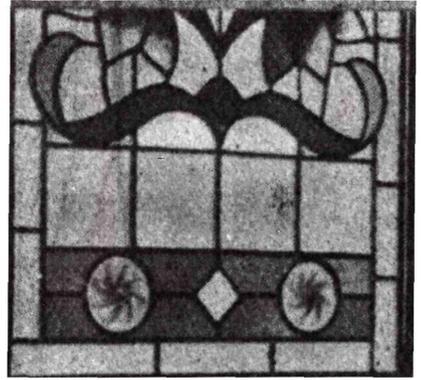
Above right: Plate 18. Harrap house, the library fireplace, with original lighting system

Below: Plate 19. Manor House, the principal bedroom fireplace in grained wood





Above left: Plate 20. Harrap house, staircase and entrance. I have not yet been able to determine if the leadlight windows were made in Hobart, Launceston or Melbourne. A likely connection is Auguste Fischer, winner of Section F, Class 36, Lead Lights, at the 1903 Arts & Crafts Exhibition in Hobart and a member of the T Square Club in Melbourne



Above right: Plate 21. Hobart Arts and Crafts Exhibition 1903, leadlight window from the entry of Tasman & Walter Trowbridge, artists in glass. The brothers lived in Victoria between 1879 and 1900. Both are listed as 'artists' on the 1903 Hobart Electoral Roll

Below: Plate 22. Manor House, leadlights from the front door. The windows for both the Manor and Harrap houses are by the same hand. The glass appears to be supplied by Pilkington's, see plate 3. It is doubtful that these windows were made in-house by Gunns and I suggest Fischer or Trowbridge as possible alternatives

the contract were allowed at £64-10-0d. Arthur Taylor, who had commenced his apprenticeship with Gunns in 1901 states 'J.M. Haenke: Architect came from the mainland and was in charge of the plans. He left suddenly, some said that he put a lot of work into jobs that was not in the specifications.'²⁸

Work that was not in the specifications would have involved the owner in extra payments.²⁹ Looking at Searrell's detailed contracts³⁰ for comparison, it suggests that Haenke designed the house and provided the designs for the interiors, although no elevations or design drawings survive. He was probably not capable of supervising detailed architectural contracts, so problems over cost and payment resulted.

Miss Muriel Masters, presumably the daughter of one of the partners in North & Masters Architects, who replaced Haenke at Gunns, comments acidly:

he involved the owner of the house in considerable financial commitments, became engaged to a Launceston girl, presented her with a diamond engagement ring without paying the jeweller and decamped to the mainland leaving his debts behind him.³¹

Be that as it may, after the Perrin contract he no longer worked for J. & T. Gunn. He transferred his allegiance to Hinman & Wright, an up and coming Launceston firm of architects who submitted their first plan to Council on 17 June 1905. Haenke's plan for Mr H. Lee (plate 13) for a house in Elphin Road costing £1,484 was dated July 1905 - his last recorded architectural work in Tasmania.³²

The architectural historian Max Freeland, in his study of the development of architectural associations, provides a likely explanation of the reason behind Haenke's departure.³³

As early as 1905 the T.A.A. [Tasmanian Association of Architects, formed in 1903 with North as



Left: Plate 23. Harrap House, dining room fireplace (detail); note reeded brackets, high quality copper panels and original light fitting with shade



President and Masters as Secretary³¹] had written to the Institute in Queensland inquiring about one T. [sic] M. Haenke who was causing havoc amongst the Launceston architects. Haenke was one of two Toowoomba [sic] brothers, both of whom had been received into the Q.I.A. against the better judgement of its Council. In 1905 [sic] he had been in the general exodus from Queensland and the depressed conditions there. The Q.I.A. had lost track of Haenke and when it received the Tasmanian inquiry could only reply that they had just expelled him from membership for being five years in arrears with his subscriptions. The T.A.A. could do nothing and Haenke was left free to publicly offer his architectural services for three per cent and to advertise 'Architect's Free Plans' to people who engaged his building company.

Some time in 1905 he left for the mainland and then California, where he became an architect of note. His biography, presumably compiled from information he supplied, makes no mention of Ipswich, Queensland, Tasmania or Australia and with regard to his origins is embellished and largely fictitious.³⁵ His iconic Herald Examiner Building in Los Angeles, built in 1912 for William Randolph Hearst (plate 14) is a further testament to his ability and artistic skill.

J. Martyn Haenke was artistic, a good talker, an embellisher of the truth, but design wise, most capable, if not brilliant. The detailing of the Perrin and Harrap

fireplaces (plates 16, 17, 18 & 19) the design of the lead light windows (plates 20, 21 & 22) cornices (plate 24) and ceilings (plate 25) are original, stylish and totally unlike any other residential work completed by Gunn's prior to Haenke's arrival in Tasmania.

The distinction between the architect and decorator had by the end of the 19th century become blurred. Traditionally the architect was responsible for the design layout of the building, doors, fireplaces, windows, cornices, bathrooms, plumbing and electrics; the designer for the fireplace surrounds, internal decorative details, furnishings and fabrics. I suggest that Haenke's attraction for Gunns was that he could provide the total service and combine the interior design of finishes, colours and furnishings with the overall architectural concept. His only surviving colour scheme, the staircase ceiling in the Harrap house, confirms his extraordinary talent and may help us to visualise his interiors, as originally decorated.



Above left: Plate 24. Manor House, drawing room cornice. Paint scrapes indicate it was originally white and gold, since badly over painted. This design was reused in the Harrap house and retains its original colour scheme. Haenke's white drawing rooms seem to have followed Voysey's philosophy 'Try the effect of a well proportioned room with white washed walls, plain carpet and simple furniture and nothing in it but necessary articles of use'

Above: Plate 25. Harrap house staircase ceiling, the only Launceston Haenke ceiling to survive in its original state. This magnificent concept retains its original decorative colour scheme and light fitting possibly supplied by Bisseker. Who was responsible for the plaster moulding within J & T Gunns is yet to be determined

Below: Plate 26. Manor House Staircase, with original copper Arts & Crafts chandelier and wall lights



APPENDIX

Annotated extracts from Gunns overseas orders letterbook CHS 39, 6/2, which survives in the Gunns archives at the QVMAG, arranged by date.

COMPANY	DATE OF ORDER	PAGE
Falkirk Iron Company, Scotland 10 Baths, various patterns, taps, plugs, washers, overflows, 22 register grates various patterns. C.F.A. Voysey designed a special grate for this Company, with hearts in the decoration	15 May 1899	6
Henderson & Walker, Birmingham Polished brass electroliers, 2 light & 3 light, 14 different styles	15 May 1899	7 & 136
General Electric Company USA Lamps [globes], plugs, ceiling roses, insulators, counter weights, glass shades, steel shades	30 May 1899	17
The Art Tile Company, Byron Street, Hanley, Staffordshire Tiles, various, 42 different patterns by number from a catalogue	12 September 1899	46
Saunders Davies & Co, Birmingham Door knockers, door knobs, door handles, sash lifts, window and door furniture	14 March 1900	105, 106
Chas Joyner & Co. Ltd, Birmingham Cord pendants, hall lamps, 3 light electroliers, brackets [lights]	21 March 1902	302
Henry Brooks Agents for J & T Gunn, London "Star" Deep Gold Leaf, 3,000 leaves ordinary and 3,000 leaves transferred. Arrived 10/12/1902 presumably for FW Stewart window	June 1902	364
Geber Webendorfer, Hamburg Electric fancy shades, 28 various types from 6/3d to 16/9d in sets of 12	3 August 1902	312
E.J. Stout Ltd, Birmingham Hearth tiles, coloured, plain majolica panels, prints and tiles	5 May 1902	319
Alfred Field & Co, Birmingham Tiles from an unknown manufacturer, possibly Stout	3 October 1902	
Geber Webendorfer, Hamburg 5 miles of Bell wire, 6 doz electric bells	1 June 1903	454
Henry Bisseker, Birmingham Chains, tubes and rods presumably for hanging pictures or lights, in addition 39 electroliers ordered. Arrived 21 April 1904. 72 bracket lights, 2 doz shades and galleries	June 1903	455, 496, 497, 498
Robert Miller & Sons, Montrose, Scotland Baltic deals and flooring, 5 x 2 1/4 and 4 x 2 1/4 for architraves	30 March 1905	590, 591, 592
Blundell Spence & Co. London Paint suppliers, all colours listed. Figured rolled glass, large Muranese, Kristelle Pilkingtons Japanese and plain ornamental, Brooks Continental and specially selected continental glass - flashed ruby, deep pot blue, pot green and Belgian sheet, also 3,000 fire bricks, paints all colours specified	6 June 1905	603, 604
Sherwin & Cotton, Hanley, Staffordshire Tiles for hobs, grates and fires all patterns specified	September 1905	617
Pilkington Bros Ltd, St Helens Glass for windows, see Plate 3	24 November 1905	316 & 645
John Stanley & Sons Ltd in addition to brass and copper fire utensils '3 silver table tops for JM Haenke'	November 1905 but undated	635
Henry Bisseker, Birmingham 3 light and 2 light electroliers	6 March 1906	652
Mr E T Miller, 38 Palings Buildings, Sydney as agents for John Stanley & Sons Ltd Oxidized copper panels with hammered finish, 75 variations in 9 sizes, with a further order for fern pots, coal boxes and copper coal scoops	11 July 1906	663
H.W. Sambridge & Sons, Highgate Street, Birmingham Finished in Antique Copper, one copper beaten screen [ea] Pattern nos: 134 16/6d, 88 15/-, 133 15/6d, 89 17/-, 90 18/-, 94 19/-	July 1906	668
Lane & Girvan, Caledonia Stove World, Bonnybridge, Scotland 58 register grates, 18" fire boxes, various models for tiles	September 1906	671
Goodwin & Co, Fleet Street, Birmingham Brass and copper kerb suites	28 February 1907	687

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Terence Lane, for remembering the location of a near-contemporary photograph of the Tasmanian Woolgrowers Counting House interior. Ross Smith, at the Community Library Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery for research into the Electoral Rolls, thereby discovering that Haenke described himself as an artist, when noting his occupation. Kaye Dimmack, for accessing the Launceston City Council Footprint Plans and allowing me to use photographs from their collection. Ruth Dwyer, for research into the Haenke brothers in Melbourne between 1895-1905.

Thelma McKay, for research into the Trowbridge brothers 'Artists in Glass'. Photographs of the Perrin and Harrap house interiors were taken by Ray Joyce, to whom I am most grateful.

NOTES

- Register of the National Estate ID 102222. This Register notes the house mentioned in the following:

R. Apperly *et al*, *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture*, Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1989; *Launceston: National Estate Conservation Study*, prepared by the City Architect and Planners Department of the Launceston City Council for the Department of Environment Housing and Community Development, Australian Heritage Commission, Launceston, 1977; M. & R. Morris-Nunn, 'Pure Air and Lovely Aspect: Federation Architecture in Launceston's suburbs', paper read, October 1983; *Twentieth Century Architecture in Launceston*, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston 1985.
- Launceston was undergoing a boom as a result of the Beaconsfield Gold Mine and mining in the north and north west of Tasmania. The city's leading building contractors had full order books. Under construction by Gunns in Elphin Road from October 1904 was a house for Mrs M.A. Tyson, contracted for £4,232-13-8d and 'Kilmarnock' for Mr J. Ingles costing £1,680, both designed by T. Searell. The complete contract for the latter has survived drawn up by the architect. Of note to the furniture historian, the contractors charged:

Extra cost of graining and varnishing woodwork	£3-00
1 mantel and over mantel	£7-10-0
1 marble mantel	£11-11-0
1 mantel	£3-5-0
1 Reg [ister] grate	£5-0-0
1 iron kerb	£ -15-0
1 marble kerb	£1-15-0
1 majolica kerb	£1-15-0
1 tile hearth and panels (ea)	£3-12-6
1 enamelled bath	£11-11-0
2 hall light fittings (ea)	£1-7-6
2 light electrolier	£ 10-6
3 light electroliers 35/-, 63/- 65/-	£8-3-0
9 ceiling roses	6-9d
3 counterweight fittings	8-3d
- Donald Watson & Judith McKay, *Queensland Architects of the 19th century, a biographical dictionary*, Queensland Museum, Brisbane 1994, q.v. 'Haenke' p 84. Johan Wilhelm Haenke (1842-1900), born Morasko, Poland, had a timber business in Brisbane Street, Ipswich. He came with his parents, brothers and sisters to Ipswich in 1861. His father Johannes Martyn Haenke (1805-1883) was a blacksmith possibly from Charlottenburg. Johan Wilhelm married Frederike Christina Louise Muller in Ipswich in 1869 and they had numerous children of whom two are part of this story, William Martyn Haenke, architect in Ipswich and his brother Johannus Martyn Haenke, born 8 July 1877. Information kindly provided by the granddaughter of William Martyn Haenke, Angela Geertsma, from the family Bible. J.M. Haenke died in the USA in 1963 and is buried in the Hollywood Forever Cemetery, Los Angeles, California.
- Donald Watson & Judith McKay, *ibid*.
- Donald Watson & Judith McKay, *ibid*. In 1898 William Martyn Haenke, a pupil of Lloyd Tayler, won the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects Measured Drawing Competition and as a result was elected a Probationer of the RVIA (RVIA Minutes of Institute 1890-1905, p 230); University of Queensland Library, papers of William Martyn Haenke, UQFL 115, 15 boxes, 280 plans. His Californian bungalow designs originated from his brother in California; his grand-daughter, Angela Geertsma, has some contemporary architectural magazines sent by J.M. Haenke from America.
- ADB*, Vol 6, gives a full biography of Lloyd Tayler.
- Contemporary photographs can be seen in T. Lane & J. Serle, *Australians at Home*, OUP, Melbourne 1990, pp 346-348.
- Auguste Fischer - an acquaintance of Alan Cameron Walker, founder of the Tasmanian Arts & Crafts Society Hobart - designed the prize certificate for this 1903 exhibition, as a result of winning the design competition: Caroline Miley, *Beautiful and Useful* exhibition catalogue, QVMAG 1987, p 20.
- Extracted from Harriet Edquist, *Harold Desbroue: Annear, a Life in Architecture* pp 46-53.
- A complete set of these footprint plans submitted to the Launceston Council is held in the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery Library, prefixed LCC 1991 AD then the sequential plan number.
- J. & T. Gunn Contract Book, p 56 £2,952.
- Plan No 544, *The Weekly Courier*, 19 December 1903: 'The extensive alterations were carried out in less than four months by the contractors J & T Gunn under the personal supervision of Mr J.M. Haenke architect.'
- See J.M. Freeland, *The making of a profession: a history of the growth and work of the architectural institutes in Australia*, Angus & Robertson, Sydney 1971.
- Plan 602.
- J. & T. Gunn Contract Book, p 76 £997. Employee Frank Deane was their gilder and the company sign writer.
- Daily Telegraph* 22 June 1904 p 5.
- J. & T. Gunn Contract Book, p 86, notes Higgs account at £340, he, presumably, being another specialist bricklayer.
- Plan no. 620, Mc Hugh's and Plan no 664, 25 May 1903, John Campbell's Pottery drying shed.
- S.V. Rowe is another Art Nouveau designer who commenced work for Wunderlich Ltd Sydney in 1904. He did actually study at the South Kensington School of Art and designed furniture, wallpaper and fabrics for Liberty's in London prior to his arrival in Australia. Susan Bures, in *The House of Wunderlich* p 61 illustrates some equally superb Rowe Art Nouveau designs in pressed metal.
- J. & T. Gunn Contracts Book, p 84.
- Plan No 662.
- It has proved impossible to check his credentials as a Member of the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects, which his brother was, but Freeland *ibid*. shows that

- both were members of the Queensland Institute c. 1900.
- 23 Brendan Lyons *All Gunns Blazing* pp 12 & 142. Reisz was a painter and decorator employed by Gunns who later started his own decorating business. His occupation is given as artist on the 1903 Electoral Roll.
- 24 Footprint plan 653.
- 25 Plan 660.
- 26 J. & T. Gunn Contracts Book, p 93.
- 27 Plan 745.
- 28 Brendan Lyons *op. cit.* p 140.
- 29 *Ibid.* p 65.
- 30 Gunn's original contract with Ingles dated 5 Nov 1903 is in the QVMAG Library as part of the Gunn's papers. Drawn up on their behalf by Searell, its 17 pages cover all aspects of the job in detail leaving no room for dispute and should be published.
- 31 Lyons *op. cit.* p 65.
- 32 Plan 591.
- 33 J.M. Freeland, *op. cit.* p 130
- 34 Information from Janine Saunders, RAlA Tasmanian Chapter, 18 Sep 2006
- 35 'HAENKE, J. Martyn. Architect. Res. 2068

Hobart Blvd.; office 1114-22 Story Bldg., Los Angeles, Cal. Born in Charlottenburg, Germany, 1880; son of William Martyn Haenke, who moved with his family to Surrey, England, in 1884. Married to Marie Hooper Churchill. Attended English preparatory schools; graduate of Trinity College, and South Kensington School of Art. Entered offices of George Brockwell Gill of London to study and practice architecture; traveled and studied in European art centers. Moved to America in 1905; located in San Francisco in 1906, and engaged in practice of his profession; located in Los Angeles in 1910, and established independent practice; since locating in Los Angeles, has been prominently identified with architectural development. Notable examples of his work: Home Builders' Bldg., Eighth and Spring Sts.; Examiner Bldg.; Midwick Country Club; Huntington School for Girls; Canfield Home for Girls; residences for Burton E. Green, Wm. Bayly, Percy H. Clark, C. B. Eyer, Kenneth Smoot of Beaumont, S. M.

Spalding, Dr. Peter Janss, Dr. Edwin Janss, J. M. Danziger, M. C. Treat; is preparing plans for Harold Braly, Harold Janss, H. G. Moffitt, Mrs. Rindge, Malibou Ranch, H. M. Halderman, C. O. Middleton, H. L. Hall, O. H. Bennett, H. G. Wylie, C. J. Curtis and W. B. Scott. Member Royal Inst. of Archts., England; Architectural & Engineering Assn., England; Amer. Inst. of Archts.; Burlingame Country Club, Burlingame, Cal.; Midwick Country, Athletic and Gamut clubs of Los Angeles.' Source: *Who's who in the Pacific Southwest: a compilation of authentic biographical sketches of citizens of Southern California and Arizona.* Los Angeles, Times-Mirror Print. & Binding House, 1913, 406 pp. Angelino Heights Preservation Plan of 10 June 2004, notes: 'The following architectural styles were current in Los Angeles at the turn of the century - Airplane Bungalow, Colonial Revival, Craftsman/Bungalow, Mission Revival, Shingle, Spanish Colonial Revival, Transitional Arts & Crafts. One of the leading architects responsible for their promotion was *J Martyn Haenke.*'

¹⁷⁹³
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Angelo Tornaghi's tiles

Roslyn Maguire

The reappearance of a tiny, ivory-cased thermometer marked 'A Tornaghi. Sydney.' serves as a reminder of the maker's many notable achievements and prompts a fresh acknowledgment now, exactly 100 years after his death.¹ The thermometer possesses the soundest possible provenance, having been recovered by the current owners in internal wall plaster of 'Milano', the house Angelo Tornaghi (1831-1906) owned and occupied for more than 45 years at Hunter's Hill, a peninsula in Sydney's inner west.

He left his birthplace Milan and worked in London with respected firm Negretti & Zambra, gaining valuable

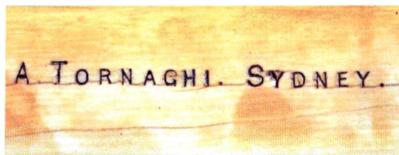
technical and commercial experience that would have assisted the commencement of a business of his own in post gold-rush Sydney. He arrived in Sydney in about 1858, and in 1861 he was elected to the Philosophical Society of New South Wales, one of 140 or so members which included Sir Daniel Cooper, the Rev. W.B. Clarke, T.S. Mort, John Flavelle and Gother K. Mann.

Tornaghi registered his first patent in 1863 and by 1866 opened larger premises at 312 George Street near Hunter Street, as a 'Mathematical & Scientific Instrument Maker'. He managed to secure government contracts – supplying goods to the Observatory, Surveyor-General's Office, Customs House and the Colonial Architect's Department.² In 1867, he married Ellen Byrne.

TILE-MAKING IN SYDNEY

The year 1866 was also significant for the emergence of a tile-making company in which Tornaghi and a number of other Italians living in Sydney invested. An assortment of documents – including correspondence between Tornaghi and the well-known Liebenritt family of potters³ – expose a complexity of connections behind the design and manufacture of 'paving tiles' for which Tornaghi accepted awards at the 1869 and 1870 Agricultural Society of NSW Metropolitan Intercolonial Exhibitions.

Exhibitions were an essential feature of colonial Sydney's calendar – the Agricultural Society's influential French-born secretary Jules Joubert (1824-1907) was a Hunter's Hill neighbour of Tornaghi – and provided an annual

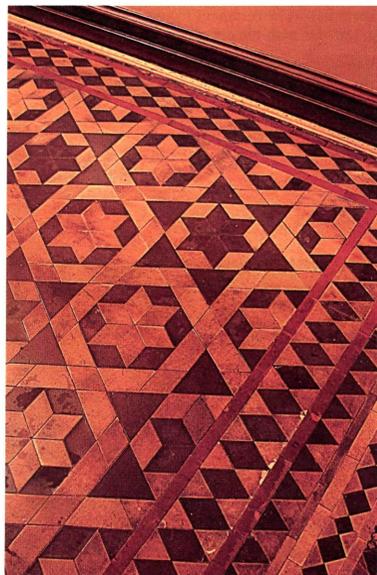
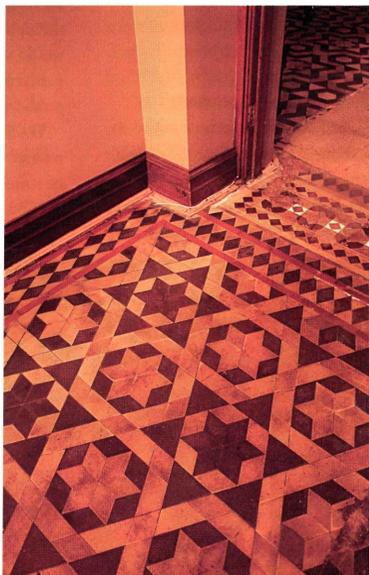
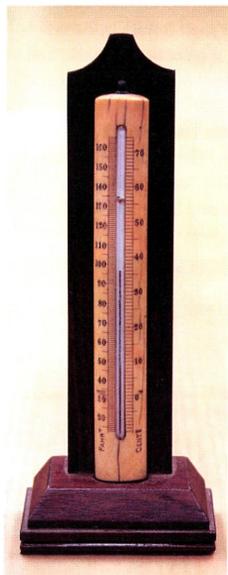


Left: Tornaghi's 'signature' on the thermometer. Private collection

Below left: Thermometer stamped A. TORNAGHI. SYDNEY found in the walls of his house 'Milano' at Hunter's Hill, NSW (stand later). Private collection

Below centre and right: Floor laid with Tornaghi's tiles in the inner hall at Government House, Sydney, c. 1867-68.

Photos John Wade





Above: Floor laid with Tornaghi's tiles in the inner hall at Government House, Sydney, c. 1867-68, with the outer hall beyond

Below: Floor laid with Tornaghi's tiles in the outer hall at Government House, Sydney, c. 1867-68

Photos John Wade

forum for displaying new items of manufacture. The 'beautiful encaustic tiles, which obtained first prize' exhibited in 1869 in the name of Mr Tornaghi were in the same category as another 1869 Exhibition prize awarded to Battista Pedrazzi's Sydney Patent Tile Company for roofing tiles, which were visible on the pavilion of Emilio Zuccani.⁴

The attribution to Tornaghi's Enfield tile factory of the paving tiles, examples of which survive in the vestibule of Government House, Sydney, deserves closer scrutiny and the purpose of this paper is to look beyond the exhibition awards.

Battista Pedrazzi had applied in May 1866 to the Colonial Secretary for Letters of Registration 'for Invention for Manufacturing plain and ornamental tiles for roofing houses and flooring Rooms, Halls and Passages etc', suggesting that Pedrazzi introduced the design.⁶ When the Letters of Registration were printed in September 1866 (No. 140), Pedrazzi stated that he acted as 'the assignee of Jean Louis Honoré of Marseilles in the Empire of France ... author or designer of ... tiles for roofing'. He omitted any reference to, or specifications of, flooring tiles, apart from including a set of four detailed diagrams, illustrated here, which were probably a remnant from the initial or draft application.

When granting approval on 31 July 1866, Gother K. Mann and Colonial Architect James Barnet reported that 'the roofing-tile possesses sufficient novelty of design' to permit registration, but made no reference to flooring tiles shown on the opposite page. Ironically, Barnet would soon acquire the floor tiles and supervise their laying in four major public works.

The Pedrazzi manufacturing business, referred to as 'The Sydney Tile Company' or simply 'The Tile Company', was already operating by April 1866, formed,



Right: Haslem's Creek (Rookwood) Mortuary Station showing the tile floor in 1871. Photo NSW Government Printer, probably by Charles Pickering, courtesy State Library of NSW SPF/41



Below: Floor tile diagrams in Battista Pedrazzi's patent application of 1866, the only known illustrated record with a Tornahgi association

according to its manager John Bassetti, with thirteen shareholders.

If the Bassetti insolvency papers reveal little on the production side, they indicate complex investment connections and borrowings – recording between May and September 1866 a Pedrazzi payment to Bassetti on account of the Tile Company, a Tornahgi loan of £30 and accounts paid to the Sydney wholesale chemist Elliott Brothers. Regarding the shares' original value of £46, Bassetti in his December 1866 statement said, 'I sold a half of the share I had for £62 and the other half for £40'.

At that time Tornahgi himself was facing financial problems.⁸ But the following year, as part of his close and lifelong involvement with Sydney's Italian community, he assisted a group of five to be naturalised. One of them, Francis Bacigalupo the purchaser of one of Bassetti's half shares, gave his occupation as 'tilemaker'.⁹

A protest was lodged in 1867 against the registration of the roofing tiles manufactured by Pedrazzi's Sydney Tile Company by the rival Australian Tile

Company, a matter clearly resolved prior to the 1869 Exhibition, when both received a prize.¹⁰ Nevertheless, as an example of early technological experiments utilising local clays, of Italian initiative in local manufacture and of a small, specialised labour force, it is surely the first venture with Italian initiative in the building industry in Australia.

The 1870 Exhibition catalogue was adapted into a hard-cover publication titled *Industrial Progress of New South Wales* published in 1871, an indication of the pride in which colonial manufacturing was held at the time. In describing the

manufactures of New South Wales, the catalogue reports:

Of tile-works there were four at the end of 1869, all in the metropolitan district. The chief of these is the Australian Patent Tile Company, at Enmore, where the handsome grooved Italian tiles are manufactured. These have come into use within the last two or three years. The Company employ about twenty-four hands – twelve in the manufacture and twelve in the roofing.



Fig. 1. A.

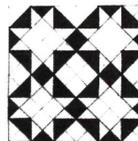


Fig. 2. B.



Fig. 3. C.

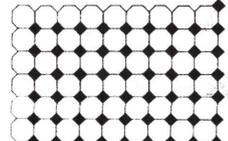


Fig. 4. D.

This is the Paper of Drawings referred to in the aforesaid Letter of Application, & entered in the Public Office on the 26th day of September 1866.
Signed, Battista Pedrazzi



Large cedar-cased wall clock supplied by Tornaghi. Government House, Sydney, photo John Wade

Encaustic tiles for pavements are manufactured at the factory of Angelo Tornaghi & Co., at Enfield, Liverpool Road, and are said to be equal to, and far cheaper than, those imported. The Government have already recognized this new industry, and have had several orders executed by the manufacturers, - the floor of the entrance-hall at Government House, the floors at the Mortuary-buildings, at Redfern and Haslem's Creek Cemetery, and the entrance-hall of the Government Printing Office, having been laid with them, under the inspection and superintendence of the Colonial Architect. These tiles exhibit great beauty of design, and an exquisite delicacy and harmony of colour, and obtained the first prizes at the Intercolonial Exhibitions held in Sydney in the years 1869 and 1870.⁵

TILES AT GOVERNMENT HOUSE AND THE MORTUARY STATIONS

The principal interest in the floor or paving tiles today arises because of their survival and prominence at Government House in Sydney, the first of four public works for which James

Barnet, the Colonial Architect, selected a new, locally manufactured floor tile. In the case of Government House, his decision may have been prompted by an impending refurbishment in preparation for the visit of HRH Prince Alfred, the Duke of Edinburgh in January 1868; approximately £2,500 was spent on furniture and £700 on alterations and repairs.¹¹

The tiles laid in 1867 or early 1868 would have been those tiles in the existing inner hall area, presently hidden by carpet. Those in the outer hall, which have been visible for some time, had been thought to have been laid around 1873 when the enclosure by the porte-cochere beyond the outer hall was completed.¹²

In both pavements, diamond, triangle, hexagons, and various sized rectangles were used in colours of a light and dark beige, black and a light and a darker terracotta, but the patterns are different.¹³

We know from Tornaghi's correspondence with members of the Liebenritt family that their first contact regarding tile manufacture occurred some time in 1867. In a letter to Paul Liebenritt when urging their assistance in production of paving tiles in May

1869¹⁴ - the same month he received his award for 'Paving tiles' - Tornaghi writes 'It is now about 2 years since I first called on you in respect of tiles business...' That year Tornaghi was paying a £40 annual rent on a section of Liebenritt's land 'near Liverpool Road', Enfield.¹⁵

In awarding Angelo Tornaghi a bronze medal at the 1870 Exhibition, the jurors' reported

1779 A. Tornaghi, 312 George-street. Geometrical, Mosaic, and plain tiles, for pavement. Price, from 10s. to 14s. per square yard. Quality equal to the best imported, and lower in price; made from clay obtained at Enfield ...

This exhibit is of remarkable merit, being a Colonial manufacture, combining with a durable material geometrical accuracy and artistic design in form and colour, forming a flooring material well-adapted to halls, passages, and verandahs, for houses in this Colony.¹⁶

If Pedrazzi deserves recognition for the manufacture of the floor paving tiles as the diagrams shown in his 1866 Patent Application and the Bassetti documents indicate - Tornaghi became the driving force behind their production from at least 1869, when he anxiously urged completion of the contracts for the two mortuary stations at Redfern and Haslem's Creek (Rookwood, since removed to Ainslie in the ACT). The Tornaghi letter contains no reference to a prior contractual arrangement for Government House paving.¹⁷

Before I accepted the contract of paving the 2 Mortuary Stations I consulted you and your sons. After many consultations you and your sons many times positively assured me that the present contract would be finished in October last year...

Tornaghi's frustration continues:

Bear in mind the proposal I made then was that if you could make

them, and charge me so much per hundred or per thousand, or [come] to some arrangement for partnership ... As I am pressed by the contractor for the completion of the floor at Haslems Creek, I wish you would be good enough to inform me when it will be completed.

And so, at this time they appear to be, without question, 'Tornaghi's tiles'. No evidence of Pedrazzi is found after 1870, nor of Sydney Tile Company roof tiles in exhibition catalogues. Without the detail of company records, it appears that they ceased operation around 1871-72 and that Tornaghi's full responsibility for production followed the August 1869 agreement with William and Teodore Liebenritt specifying weekly wages 'for the manufacturing of Tiles & as I may require' and a share of the profits.

Completion of work at Haslem's Creek dragged on. One account approved on 28 November 1868 showed 'Ornamental tiling in lobbys, platform and floors £147' and later Parliament would be asked to sanction 'a further

sum of £1,548.23.7 to finalise costs.'¹⁸ Two photographs dated March 1871, part of a series taken for the Government Printer, pick up sufficient sharp detail of a platform's pattern of paving and borders at Redfern and Haslem's Creek to allow comparison. Major improvements continued there, overseen by Charles Moore, with curved paths and a serpentine canal decorated with 54 terracotta urns made by the Liebenritt pottery, of which remnants survive in the Rookwood Cemetery collection.

The fourth example of Tornaghi paving tiles, in the entrance hall of the Government Printing Office in Phillip Street, Sydney were demolished years ago and no photograph of the interior entrance has been seen.

What happened to Battista Pedrazzi? The only Sydney address found for Battista Pedrazzi was c/- The Italian Hotel, 10 George Street, and neither he nor the Sydney Tile Company appear in directories beyond the early 1870s. However, Marjorie Graham reported that Pedrazzi Brothers operated a pottery in Brisbane from about 1874 to 1877.¹⁹

Battista Pedrazzi died in Brisbane in 1886; the Pedrazzi monument in Brisbane's Toowong Cemetery is a tall sandstone column with marble tablets on four sides surrounded by an iron railing. The only inscribed tablet states

'In memory of the late Giovan Battista PEDRAZZI, born at Cerentino, Valle Maggia, Canton Ticino, Switzerland, died 12 December 1886 in his 61st year. Faithful husband, affectionate brother and generous friend, loyal and respected by all who knew him. This stone erected by his deeply grieved and desolate wife.'

The cemetery registers reveal that Anna was buried in the same allotment (no.7) and Giovanni in no.8. All three were Anglicans. The burial particulars are: Giovan Battista Pedrazzi 13/12/1886, Funeral Director K.M. Smith; Anna Pedrazzi 5/9/1894, Cannon & Cripps; Giovanni Pedrazzi 12/6/1912, Cannon & Cripps; Minister of Religion T.H. Brown.²⁰

Government House, Sydney, August 1870, showing the grand southern entrance before the addition of the porte cochere by James Barnet. Sharkey Collection, NSW Government printer





A. TORNAGHI

Angelo Tornaghi in 1888 from *Australian Men of Mark*

While Pedrazzi's patent application indicates two initiatives, one for the patent or design, the duration and extent of the Pedrazzi company's production in Sydney is uncertain and whether paving tiles were manufactured prior to the 1869 exhibit in Tornaghi's name is not clear. The inner hall tiles at Government House are a likely pre-1869 example. If those in the outer hall were laid at the same time, they would have been exposed to the weather until Barnet's 1873 porte-cochere addition. In any case they were lifted at some stage, stored in a Government House cellar and in recent memory relaid. A slight variation in pattern seems a possible outcome, complicating an accurate dating.

If a tiny thermometer plastered into the walls of Tornaghi's sandstone house – extended in the late 1860s – serves as a firm reminder of his time and place, one wonders why examples of the encaustic tiles with which he was so closely associated do not appear there. Nor indeed are they found in those villas in the immediate vicinity belonging to his friends of considerable influence, such as the largest landholder Didier Joubert, or Jules Joubert, secretary of the

Agricultural Society that awarded Tornaghi a bronze medal of 1869, or the famous furniture maker Andrew Lenehan who acquired a Joubert villa 'Potsdam' now 'Windermere' in 1866 and supplied furniture for Government House. Was it simply the erratic and frustrating dealings with the Liebenritt brothers that prevented 'Tornaghi tiles' being used more frequently in institutional as well as domestic buildings?

Just as he appears to have acted as adviser, mentor and negotiator for Pedrazzi, it is thought that much of the stonework so characteristic of Hunter's Hill, in walls, kerbing and wide guttering, occurred during Tornaghi's terms as mayor. When he was elected, in 1879 and again in 1882, groups of Italian stonemasons were recruited and were said to live in the attics of John Cuneo's Garibaldi Inn.

Tornaghi's core business was retailing scientific instruments and clocks, and he supplied many to NSW Government public buildings under the supervision of Colonial Architect James Barnet. In his later years, Tornaghi's interests tended towards large-scale inventions – bulky quartz-crushing machines for use in mining, put to use around the Solferino goldfield in the Richmond River region of northern NSW, where the town had a high proportion of Italians who worked the ground.²¹ He died at his house 'Milano', named after his birthplace, in Hunter's Hill on 15 October 1906.

Thanks to the late Judith Hunter, a Friend of Rookwood Cemetery and General Reference Librarian at State Library of NSW 1962-1978 for sharing ideas and copies of the Tornaghi-Liebenritt correspondence; to Helen Woodward for more recent assistance with papers relating to Rookwood Cemetery; to Scott Carlin and Megan Martin of Historic Houses Trust of NSW and Rev. Canon Dr John Steel.

NOTES

- 1 *Australian Men of Mark*, 1889 p.226; Roslyn Maguire, 'Angelo Tornaghi, An inventive Italian of the nineteenth century', *Australian Antique Collector*, Jan-June 1985, pp 42-46.
- 2 Registrar General's Old System Title, Book 99, no 786, 13 August 1866.
- 3 David Dolan, 'Liebenritt's Cumberland Pottery and Arthur Rice', *Australiana* 14 no 4, Nov 1992 p 106.
- 4 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 6 May 1869, p 3.
- 5 *Industrial Progress of New South Wales*, NSW Government Printer, Sydney 1871, p 458-9.
- 6 Colonial Secretary Register 1866-67, 66/3452 then 66/3876 and 66/4448.
- 7 Insolvency File 7949, Declaration December 1866, State Records NSW.
- 8 Registrar General's Department, Book 99, no 786. 13 August 1866.
- 9 Sydney jeweller and fellow Hunter's Hill resident Hippolyte Delarue signed as second referee.
- 10 Colonial Secretary Register 1866-67, 67/6750 - 'Letter from Board Reporting a Protest of Australian Tile Company against issue of Letters of Registration to Battista Pedrazzi'.
- 11 *Illustrated Sydney News*, 31 October 1868, p 78.
- 12 Barry McGregor & Associates, Government House Sydney Conservation & Management Plan, 1997, vol. 1, p 111-2.
- 13 Siobhan Lavelle, *Report on Archaeological investigations of the No. 1 Mortuary Station and Necropolis Circuit, Rookwood Necropolis, Sydney, NSW*, nd p 82.
- 14 Tornaghi-Liebenritt correspondence, copies provided by the late Judith Hunter, Friend of Rookwood Cemetery.
- 15 Registrar General's Old Systems Title, Book 116, no 606, 1 November 1869.
- 16 Exhibition Catalogue of 1870 published as *Industrial Progress of New South Wales*, NSW Government Printer, Sydney 1871, p 83.
- 17 Barry McGregor & Associates, *Government House Sydney Conservation & Management Plan*, 1997, vol 1, p 111f.
- 18 C.C. Singleton, 'The Rookwood Cemetery Line', *Australian Railway Historical Society*, vol XI, no 268, February 1960, pp 18-19.
- 19 Marjorie Graham, *Australian pottery of the 19th and 20th century*, David Ell Press, Sydney, 1979 p 102.
- 20 Information generously supplied by Rev Canon Dr John Steele.

The Milky Way:

RESEARCHING AND MAKING FAMILY HISTORY

Lesley Garrett

How do we keep our memories alive? Lesley Garrett tells how she explored her family's ancestors and preserves their memory for future generations by examining people, history and images.

Proust had his madeleines to prompt the unfolding story of his search for time lost. I was fortunate enough to have my mother's living words as she responded to a wife's lament chipped into a headstone in far western New South Wales '... dear little widow, I wonder where she lies now?' These words are noted down in a series of working books kept over fifteen years as she and my father criss-crossed their way all over Australia. I have dubbed them the 'Grass Diaries' as they are so full of botanical specimens gathered along the way that the covers do not close. Held in the lap with pages open and crackling with age, they pack all the punch of a madeleine.

Just such an item, seemingly ordinary, on examination can have the power to act as a catalyst in embarking on family history research.

The items still in existence within a household act as links to the past - not surprising really, as they have sprung from the hearts, minds and hands of our own forebears. So it was with me as I started to examine my own household, and those of my sisters. They stood revealed as veritable cabinets of curiosities, coming into sharper focus as concurrent research at libraries, museums, registry offices, country graveyards and homesteads revealed all sorts of surprises. Even that, finally, was not enough. I was filled with the urge to commemorate the family's lost

time and link it to the present, even perhaps to the future, so that it could be part of a continuum.

Over a period of three years the resultant silverware, which I have called 'The Milky Way', took shape. It is a series of ten linked picture frames done as miniatures, which trace the ten generations of my family from 1775 to 2000 in a direct descent line of women, from my great, great, great, great grandmother Elizabeth down to my grand-daughter Hope.

The making lurched along parallel to the research, from the shaky beginnings of Term I of 'Silversmithing for Beginners' to the present day when finally we ten women stand side by side on top of the dresser. Elizabeth Thompson, Albenia Walker, Sarah Hobden, Jane Duff, Emilia Watts, Irene Paton, Rene Patrick, Lesley Hewitt, Agnes Bruck and Hope Murphy.

This article serves as a mud map for anyone wishing to embark on their own family history research. It is arranged in two parts. The first is an alphabetical index of sources I consulted along the way, here and there interspersed with my own recollections. The second is a step by step description of the making of the frames, in case anyone would like to do this as well.

During the process of examining all these lives, a thread of communality has emerged which still holds true in Australia. From the earliest days of colonial settlement, convicts, government personnel and free settlers alike hit the ground running, feeling on the one hand they were liberated from an old regime, but on the other that they had their backs to the wall in grand isolation. Through rapid intermarriage and procreation a new

society formed, in which the hallmarks of tenacity, endurance, patience, frugality, humour, inventiveness, and courage began to emerge, together with a visceral attachment to the land itself.

ALPHABETICAL INDEX OF RESEARCH SOURCES

Before starting research, you need to work out a system of recording and filing material as it comes to hand. Many researchers record information by using a computer, but inevitably paper begins to accumulate as well as photographs, maps and newspaper cuttings, so a system to handle this avalanche needs to be in place from Day One.



Squatter's chair from 'Parakeet' made of pick-handles and ironing boards. Maker, Lesley Garrett

ARTEFACTS

These will be numerous and scattered throughout many houses. They will have been acquired or made by family members. They are all Australian and therefore precious: they could include paintings, china, glassware, books, silver, clocks, letters, quilts, clothing, photographs, furniture, lace—the list is almost endless.

AWARENESS

Awareness of past events such as droughts, floods, land and property crashes, epidemics and political change is essential. Such events sometimes offer reasons for changes in family fortunes and explain relocation, e.g. from the country to the city.



Hewitt family Bible

BIBLES

Events such as births, marriages and deaths are often recorded at the front and back pages of family Bibles. Sometimes pressed flowers from weddings, funerals and birthdays will be caught in the pages as well.



Grass Diaries, Rene

BOOKS

Books are enormously useful. Quite apart from reference books found in libraries, the shelves at home can be surprising, perhaps holding rare editions that haven't been opened for years. Two little birthday books from each of my grandmothers faithfully recorded the names of their friends and most of the family. Compiled in the latter 19th century, and written with wonderfully variable hands, were all the names in the generations of the Milky Way.

Among our own books were countless photograph albums, the Grass Diaries kept by my mother and

numerous leather-bound volumes with gilded pages, given as prizes for academic or musical achievement, even young ladies' autograph books.

BOXES

Boxes store random bits and pieces and can be large or small, and as Genevieve Cummins points out in her book *Antique Boxes* we are even buried in one. I found many boxes in my house, from a small salt box now holding coins to a somewhat larger trial lens box right through to a much larger Chinese chest and a Bavarian wedding chest. Recorded here are some of them, including a small green-painted cardboard box, stuck all over with transfers and tied with black velvet in which my grandmother kept war medals, jersey cow prize certificates and old letters. With sadness I recall the night when a carpenter and I worked furiously to shape Tasmanian oak with carved initials into a coffin for my husband.



Commemorative stained glass church window, Dunedoo, Irene

CHURCH RECORDS AND CHURCHES

Church records and churches are of great use in locating and authenticating such things as baptisms, marriages and burials. The burial records of St Matthew's Church at Windsor verified details of my great, great, great, great grandmother's death and burial in the churchyard. In particular, the Catholic Church has very good records of early Catholic pioneer families and these are readily accessible at family history research centres in major libraries. Sometimes stained glass windows record the family (Frame 7).



Transportation judgment, Elizabeth

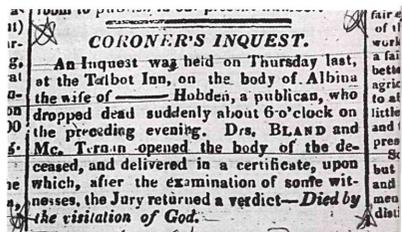
CONVICTS

We may try to run away from it, but most of us will not be able to hide from the fact that there is a convict somewhere in our past. The longer our tenancy in Australia proves to be, the greater the likelihood that this will be the case. And so it was with my family - there in Frame 1, Elizabeth, convicted at the Old Bailey of the theft of bed furniture and sentenced to seven years transportation to Australia. Luckily, she was never imprisoned here, rapidly re-married and secured land in the Hunter, thereby providing for her daughter Albenia.

Not a whisper about her had reached down to the 20th century; we didn't even know that she existed till we started to dig! She had been neatly covered over with other more glorious ancestors and completely forgotten. For those who have convict ancestors, there is a wealth of information to be found about them, from personal appearance to dates of arrival and the granting of tickets of leave, land and pardons.

CORONER'S REPORTS

For that difficult to establish cause of death, these are illuminating. In the



Coroner's findings, Albenia, Sydney Gazette 7 Nov 1829

Sydney Gazette of 7 November 1829, my sister and I learnt that Albenia (Frame 2) had not been found sitting in a chair with an open Bible on her lap and her head staved in, but was in fact dead 'by the visitation of God'—her sixth child barely five months old.

COURT RECORDS

These are widely available both for the UK and Australia.



Jane, née Duff, and her 12 children. Her daughter Emilia is in the centre.

DEATH CERTIFICATES

The bare facts can be gleaned for free from the births, deaths and marriages website listed below, but by ordering (and paying for) a death certificate from the Registry Office, such extra details as cause of death, where buried, and the names of the parents of the deceased can be determined.

FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES

They are invaluable and from time to time of great help in finding new material. I will never forget the day when my friend and neighbour Caressa Crouch came bounding down the garden path with her finger marking page 348 of Rachel Roxburgh's *Early Colonial Houses of New South Wales* saying 'Look what I've found!' She had located one of the most important Duff references—the father of Sarah, frame 3, my great, great, great, great grandfather Peter Duff and his connection to 'Bridge House' in Maitland.

A few days later she was hot on the trail again, this time with page 46 of the *New South Wales Directory for 1839* (a postal index) which not only cites Peter Duff jr., first husband of Sara, frame 3, but many other relatives dotted around the state.

Caressa introduced me to the Australian Society as well, and over the years since joining, the Society has been a great source of pleasure and information. My thanks here too to Kevin Fahy who suggested consulting A. Wood, *Dawn in the Valley*, with its copious references to the Hobdens (frames 2 and 3) and the Hewitts (frame 7, but also going back to 1798 on my father's side).



Irene's music prize

GARDENS AND PLANTS

Though it has often been said that gardens last only as long as the gardener, this is not true. Many plants grow up to be ancient trees. Bulbs in particular, such as jonquils, iris, amaryllis and bluebells, will continue to flower and reproduce if left undisturbed for decades. Many of these plants can still be found around long-abandoned old homesteads. Underfoot, half buried pathways can be detected leading eg towards an old stable block, as was the case at 'Bengallalah'.

As children we spent most of our holidays with grandparents in the Hunter Valley or at 'Winbourne', one of the three original Cox family properties at Mulgoa. We came to know the lie of the land very well from the forsaken garden and empty cellars crowded with bats at 'Fernhill', to the lodge at 'Winbourne' and its old fountain and wishing well, by then in the middle of a paddock and breeding tadpoles. From earliest memory, I can remember the stone pines (*Pinus pinaster*) at old

'Sunnyside' (frame 7 and much earlier), the huge agaves up the drive between the lodge and main house at 'Winbourne', bougainvillea at 'Eversleigh' (frame 6) the hydrangeas at 'Alpha' (frame 7) the Chinese elm at 'Bengallalah' (frame 8) and the pepper trees (*Shinus molle*) at the site of the demolished 'Hampton Park' (frame 3).

Only the hardy, drought-tolerant plants survive the absence of a gardener and they are recognised as beacons in old gardens. Among the palms there are *Phoenix canariensis* and the cabbage tree palm *Livingstonia australis*; of the Araucaria family, the bunya bunya, Norfolk pine and *A. columnaris* are the most likely to endure. Plumbago, oleander, some roses such as Lady Hillingdon 'Parakeet' (frame 8) can live to a great age, as do the humble violet and household grape. One grape, Isabella, is named the 'Settlers' grape' in our family as it seems to have been there forever, still carefully propagated and then grown at each new dwelling. Its saving grace was and still is its hardiness, leathery leaves and the fact that the whole bunch does not ripen at once, allowing it to be grazed in passing.



Isabella grapes

My mother Rene (frame 7) was an excellent plantswoman and some of her plants still survive in pots, among them *Stanhopea tigrina*, the spectacular downward-flowering orchid, which I have divided and potted on many times. During the post-war years when musical tastes were changing, the radiogram was king and the LP record hovering in the wings, Rene seized a



Rene's record pots

stack of old 78 rpm records and made good use of them – into the oven went *Les Sylphides*, *The Bartered Bride* and *The Donkey Serenade*. Out came fluted pots for planting up coleus and small succulents.

GENEALOGISTS

Useful when research becomes stuck fast. They can be of particular use when researching Irish history, as many records were lost in fires during 'the Troubles'.



Father and son Peter Duff have matching gravestones at Jerry's Plains and Christ Church Cathedral, Newcastle

GRAVEYARDS

Hours can be lost and dreamed away here, the more so that any search for a particular headstone needs to be thorough. In smaller rural graveyards, fewer graves mean the search is quicker. Some are among paddocks, as at Jerry's Plains (frame 3); located on remote rural properties, as at 'Eversleigh' (frame 7); in the case of Peter Duff, in Cathedral precincts; or lost altogether as was his wife

Elizabeth at St Matthews, Windsor. Some rural councils have plot plans for cemeteries which record the position of each grave. Many of the older stones are very beautiful, carved by master stonemasons and with many inclusions such as verse or a description of the deceased. Occasionally a particular design will be carried down from one generation to the next, which was the case with the two Peter Duffs, father and son, each headstone identical save for the verse written on them.

Sometimes bulbs such as white iris still bloom over the graves, and roses planted at the time of burial have become ancient and gnarled, the name of the species long forgotten and supplying useful budding material for propagators. My sister and I found Sarah (frame 3) buried at Jerry's Plains between her first and second husbands, resting peacefully. Old headstones removed from Sydney's Sandhills Cemetery to Bunnerong in 1901 can still be viewed – some 5,000 of them.

HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

As well as the Royal Australian Historical Society at 133 Macquarie Street in Sydney, there are many other historical societies. In this bracket I am including the local history centres which are often found at public libraries. They include not only general information but also material specific to their region, and some publish their own guide texts.



Shearers' quarters and woolshed at 'Parakeet'

HOUSES

Most of the houses depicted in the frames are still standing. Some are still just standing but are no longer occupied, as is the case with 'Great

Lodge' (frames 1-3) and others have disappeared altogether. They vary in size and grandeur from the earliest rural dwellings to much later and grander city houses. Built in all sorts of materials from adobe, timber and brick to pebble dash, they are roofed variously with shingles, iron, tile or slate. When not sure how to locate a house, the site can sometimes be found on an old map, marked with a dot or a square, or an address found at the State Library or in the case of rural houses, the Land Titles Office.

Death certificates contain the last address of the deceased, and marriage certificates the address at the time of marriage. House names are often carried on in families eg 'Woodlands' and it is as well to photograph any you can find.

LAND TITLES OFFICE

Here are to be found all the original subdivisions of land into lots within each parish and county. Old maps frequently have the first owner's name faintly scribbled across a lot. The researcher is reminded that land records are only just over 200 years old! Titles to land can be searched, as well as original land grants and cross-referenced to Colonial Secretary's papers. Old systems titles can be frustrating and obscure, but with luck you will befriend an officer in the LTO who will help. A special historian is based here, and an appointment can be made to ask for help. Land was granted to free settlers on the basis of how much capital they brought with them to the colony. Small grants of 25 up to 200 acres were made to retiring military personnel and to convicts on the discharge of their sentence. Maps can be researched at the LTO as well as some shire councils.

LAW

A background to the law pertaining at the time is essential. My grandmother Irene (frame 6) found herself widowed in her early twenties and expecting her fourth child. Her husband William died intestate and as a consequence,

she was divested of their 22,000-acre property at Gulargambone, as it reverted to his family of origin. There were virtually no provisions made for widows at this time.



Love letters from Lance Hewitt to Rene

LETTERS/LOVE LETTERS

My father wrote letters to Rene Patrick at Keepit Station, and my grandfather concealed those he received in the false bottom of a tool chest squirreled away in the workshop. He, Robert D'arcy, was in his seventies at the time.



Hewitt field medicine kit, World War II

MEDICINE

An understanding of medical knowledge at the time of any historical event will explain many mysterious deaths, which to modern

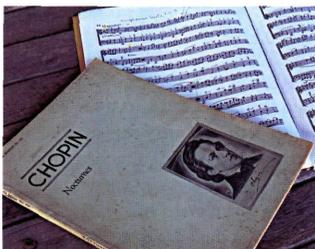


Hewitt Army Medical Corps badge, World War II

readers are incomprehensible. Up to the early 20th century, diseases such as diphtheria, tuberculosis, typhoid, diabetes, cholera and septicaemia were rampant, and surgical intervention was at best chancy, as there was no understanding of sepsis. Anaesthetics did not begin to be used till the late 19th century and not with any confidence till the early 20th century.

MILITARY AND NAVAL RECORDS

Military and naval records are a rich source of information for those researching relatives known to have served. Many permanent settlers received their first entitlements to land at the point where they left the Navy or their regiment.



Music score for piano and traverso flute, Hewitt and Lesley Garrett

MUSIC

Many a piano, flute or violin has been handed down from generation to generation. In my family, one such piano is still played in generation 10. As well, I own a very old timber transverse flute where the holes are so worn that it can be immediately recognised as having seen decades of use. Music was actively taught and played at home and in assembly halls for dancing. To this day, I have an image of my great uncle Noel Hewitt settling down to a complete set of all major and minor scales at the piano, a glass of water balanced on the back of

each hand to encourage smoothness of play. That was before breakfast. After milking and breakfast he would play away for hours: Schumann, Beethoven and Schubert.

His nephew D'arcy Hewitt would likewise play hour after hour of Chopin, often to his wife Cath's distress. She was known to slam the lid down on his knuckles when she had heard enough. Irene, my grandmother (frame 6) won prizes for her playing and I have only to hear Liszt or the *Moonlight Sonata* and there she is at the keyboard, in a world of her own. Her brother Rosco was renowned for being able to play anything that was put before him, and he a horse master. The skill and knowledge of music making is rapidly disappearing and few people today are prepared to allocate the time necessary to reach competence.

MYTH

Aha! Sooner or later the researcher comes across a red herring, common in Australian families. In past times, all reference to any connection with a convict would be actively suppressed if not denied, by a stony silence. The same became true too, lamentably, for indigenous connections. In more recent times this trend has been reversed.

In our family, two popular myths were faithfully repeated. The Duff family was allegedly descended from the Duke of Fife (my sister and I are still looking). On my father's side, the de Ste Croix family was connected with the aristocratic *Ancien Régime* of France. Both sets of circumstances were cited by great grandmothers and grandmothers with distinct pride. This may seem laughable today, but against the backdrop of a developing 19th century Australian society it is understandable. So, be enchanted by the myth, believe it even, but keep on doing the research.



Top, flute 19th century; bottom traverso baroque pitch flute, maker H. Oberg, Sydney 1985, owned and played by Lesley

NEWSPAPERS

Newspapers offer real joys but at the cost of many hours of hunting through old newsprint connected to a microfiche. The best place to do this is in the relevant State Library, where the whirr and ping of the print whizzing before the eyes has a strange (some find somnambular) effect on mind and body alike.



De Ste Croix daguerreotype, Hewitt

PHOTOGRAPHS

Every family has some old and even very old photographs. Equip yourself with a magnifying glass, preferably one with a light attached and then small detail will come into focus – eg in frame 4 is that a Hogarth & Erichsen brooch pinned at the neck of great, great grandmother Sara's blouse? I *can* tell you that the brooch at great grandmother Emilia's throat in frame 5 used to be mine until stolen from 'Bengallalah'. Some photographs may have been taken indoors and it can be thrilling to identify furniture and other artefacts still in use today. Often there is no name on the photograph and then it can be of use to at least date it by studying the fashion and clothing of the subject. Cross reference with other images where the subjects are known, and where the unidentified face may appear again. Photographs need to be handled with care and preferably with gloves, as they pick up acids from fingers easily and become marked with constant handling.

POPULATION

It is useful to be aware of population growth and distribution during the time being examined. This can be established by referring to the official muster or census of a given region.



Three sisters – Jennifer, Marcia and Lesley Hewitt

RELATIVES' ANECDOTES

Relatives' anecdotes could well be copious and are often conflicting. Nevertheless, record them wherever possible as they provide many insights into the past. I can remember my father reciting poetry and recalling family history from encounters with bushrangers to long-ago cricket matches. This, seated round a brazier of his own making, in the middle of a frosty paddock and with the stars of the southern hemisphere blazing overhead.



Southern Cross windmill and hand-hewn hardwood trough, 'Parakeet'

RURAL

The family may have its roots in rural Australia. If so, there is just so much waiting to be discovered, including windmills, woolsheds, rusting farm

machinery, buggies, and long-abandoned houses with only their chimneys still standing. Hearths may still be in use, old pack saddle trees and hand wrought gate hinges and rabbit traps just lying around in the grass. The list is endless, every item poignant in its own right.

WEBSITES

This list is not complete and unfortunately the goal posts are always being shifted by changes of address, as is the case with the old Land and Property Information site in NSW with its online archive maps. Other states would have similar sites.

www.genuki.org.uk
www.pastfinders.net
www.rootsweb.com –
World Connect Project
www.familysearch.org
www.bdm.nsw.gov.au (Births, Deaths and Marriages)
www.convictcentral.com
www.lands.nsw.gov.au
www.sl.nsw.gov.au State Library of NSW
www.sl.nsw.gov.au/picman (Images)
www.sl.nsw.gov.au/records (Records)

WILLS

Once probate has been granted and a certain amount of time has passed, copies of wills can be ordered for a small cost from the relevant government authority. They can be most illuminating and the writer's own words speak out over the centuries, even if they are a little disguised by the ever-diligent lawyer. This was the case with Peter Duff's will as cited by Rachel Roxburgh. My sister and I learnt from his will that he had made provision for all three sons including Peter (frame 3) during his lifetime, and that the residue of his estate was divided between his daughters Anne and Eliza. We learnt that in this family at least, primogeniture was no longer in operation and that the order of inheritance was beginning to change. Likewise, by examining the title deeds of 'Woodlands II' (frame 4), at the time when I purchased back some of the lots to build 'Woodlands III', I found that it had been inherited equally by all twelve children, sons and daughters alike.



The ten frames which constitute the Milky Way, maker Lesley Garrett

MAKING THE MILKY WAY

With some trepidation, I enrolled at the Manly Warringah Community College in Term 1 of Silversmithing for Beginners taught happily by Sandra Kerr, herself a capable silversmith. The classes continued for two years during which time we explored sawing, sanding, soldering and smithing repeatedly. One thing certain to be said about silversmithing is that absolutely *nothing* is easy.

The process had to begin with a concept and arising out of that a design. At first only five or six frames were envisaged, but as research progressed, the generations reached further back in time, well beyond spoken recalled history. And then when my daughter Agnes had a daughter, the unwieldy number of ten was arrived at and with that the difficult challenge of making the frames linked yet freestanding. A memory of dog's hind leg fences and blackberries in the Hunter Valley stirred, and with that image came the solution.

Next, I made sketches and constructed a mock-up fence. From there it was a matter of sawing the sheet metal into ten blanks and shaping by means of using files, sanding paper and tripoli.

The oval windows were then removed and corresponding struts to hold glass, image and backing boards sawn to shape. In the process lemmel began to mount up to one side and I planned to use this at a later date for casting.

Next, each blank received several 'hallmarks'. Australia does not utilise a standardised system of marking silver similar to the British system. In this country, marking is haphazard and

often entirely absent. The marks on each blank were the sterling stamp, maker's mark of LH (my original initials) within a map of Australia and the year date expressed with separate numerals. Lastly, each frame received a number, from 1-10. This last mark was important as the next step was to score the front face of the blanks with an electric burr above and below the oval apertures. Later this would be darkened through oxidation and represent the night sky, leaving the clear path of the Milky Way caught in an undulating wave between the two darker bands. For this reason the frames needed to stay in order.

The next step is hard to talk about. The frames had to be joined, and the most elegant way of doing this was with a long piano hinge at each interface. Weeks were wasted as attempt after attempt was made to make piano hinges that matched. Reluctantly slots were cut in the corner of each frame in the belief that they could be held together with knitted silver wire cuffs.

All raw edges were then filed, sanded and buffed again.

Soldering the struts to the backs proved difficult. Working down through hard, medium and then easy solder, with annealing and pickling interspersed where necessary, the struts were gradually attached to the frames. Numbers 4 and 10 proved too weighty and would not take, and Ernst Pfenniger, using a bigger blowtorch kindly put them in place for me.

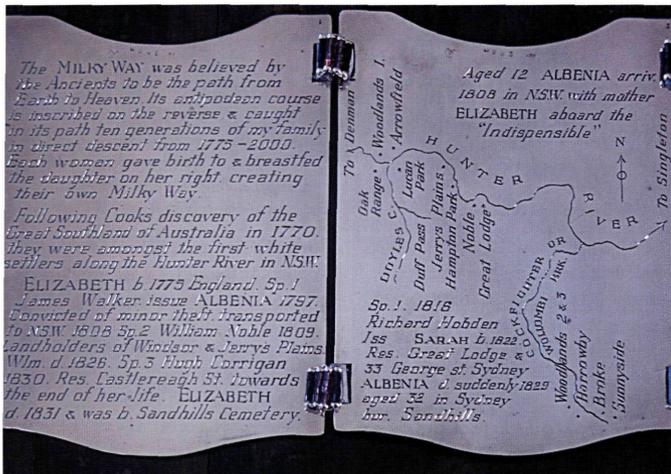
At this stage, considerable fire scale became apparent. It is the bane (yet another) of the silversmith's life, leaving a grey cast on the surface of the metal. Personally, I find it quite attractive but most people agree it has to go. Some smiths simply silverplate

over the fire scale, but this was not an option as the added silver would have clogged up the night sky. With repeated sanding, buffing and rouging most of it was removed.

All silver when it is being worked and used begins to be scratched, and this repeated process of scratching and polishing over time develops into patina, that elusive charm seen in older pieces. Deep scratches and gouges are unattractive, so at this stage I sewed a long velvet pouch which housed and protected the silver as it began to travel back and forth in the saddle bags between Sydney and 'Parakeet'. Would that I had done this sooner.

There was a pause in the smithing while relevant details of each person's life were collated. The intention was to engrave these details on the backs of the frames so that the family history could be read from left to right like a scroll. In addition to that I planned to include a map of the Hunter River showing the properties established by the family and a short introduction. And what to do about the unknown faces of the first three women? No images were to be had as they were largely prior to 1850, so I settled on three silhouettes – rather like unknown soldiers – each successive face a little more sophisticated, as their position within colonial society became more assured.

The text needed to be brief and to the point. In mock-up after mock-up, it gradually evolved into a final draft which included a map of the Hunter with location of dwellings, the name of the next daughter, issue, and some information on the subject, wherever possible in their own words and at all times adhering to proven fact.



Back of frame 1 Elizabeth and 2 Albenia

A close relationship with the unpredictable electric burr left me in no doubt as to my skill as an engraver. On exploring the possibility of etching, engraving and computerised laser cut engraving, it became apparent that hand engraving was the only option. After much searching, Ray Kidd was located, he even turned out to be a Hewitt relative, and the frames went from my desk to his for the next few months. Engraving is a most painstaking art. Ray not only devised a wonderfully legible script, part copperplate, part italic, but proceeded to engrave all 3,000 characters without one mistake. Thanks to him, the finished work is cohesive and flowing with its fine elegant hand.

Meanwhile the problem of linking the frames remained unsolved. To be honest, I was deeply worried and very happy to leave this problem till after I

had darkened the engraving lines. This was a risky and heart-stopping matter, involving dipping each one for a few minutes in a diluted lime sulphur (rose spray) solution. It was dreadful watching them turn yellow and then darker still. Fished out of the bath and rinsed repeatedly, the silver was then buffed with a silver cleaning cloth, removing the darkened oxidation from the surface but leaving it trapped in the engraved depressions. At once the text and the night sky leapt out around the burnished Milky Way and that was a good moment.

The business of linking the frames could no longer be avoided. It was finally achieved by doubling grey grossgrain ribbon into a cuff and joining it in a smooth end-to-end anastomosis using figure-of-eight stomach sutures which my father had taught me ages ago. The cuffs were

then beaded by lacing 0.3 mm silver wire through the glass and silver beads and securing the wires through the grossgrain and twitching the ends together inside the cuff. At last, the phalanx could stand up.

Photographs were scanned and their size standardised to match the three silhouettes, which Ray had engraved on the first three frames. My daughter Agnes handled this stage very well, spending hours edging the mouse up and down and round.

Cardboard backing boards were then cut to size so as to not obscure any engraving and covered with moiré silk. Black grossgrain bows were sewn to the top of each backing and extra black and amethyst glass beads were strung on tiger tail and incorporated into the design in the event that at some future date a repair would need to be made or another frame added.

With reference to my grandmother Irene, I set two moonstones into bezels and added these as well.

Using an emptied egg carton, half a dozen eggs were then cracked open and the half shells used as cups resting in the cartons. Into these shells went successive batches of mixed cold black enamel and additive, as well as acetone for cleaning brushes.

Painting the silhouettes was hair-raising using very fine brushes and waiting several days between consecutive sanding and re-coating tours till enough depth of colour had built up.

Finally the perspex was cut to size, sanded, and slid into place.

It is always interesting to know how much something costs!

Approximately 1 kilo silver	\$690
Classes	\$1,200
Beads and findings	c. \$160
Engraving	\$3,000
Time spent smithing	c. \$5,000

Approximate total \$10,000! Is it worth this amount? Only time will tell. Would I do it again? No. Was it worthwhile? Absolutely. Should I insure it? Probably. But for how much? No idea.



Front face frames 1 Elizabeth, 2 Albenia, 3 Sarah

Front face frames 4 Jane, 5 Emilia, 6 Irene

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

My thanks go especially to my sister Jennifer Hutchinson née Hewitt, with whom much of the above research was undergone and who also, along the way, became a smith.

BACKGROUND AND FURTHER READING

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- M. Ellis, *Francis Greenway*
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- C. Hanna, *Bandits of the Great North Road*
- C. Mitchell, *Hunter's River*
- M. Perrott, *A Tolerable Good Success*
- A. Wood, *Dawn in the Valley*
- James Broadbent & Joy Hughes, *The Age of Macquarie*
- Rachel Roxburgh, *Early Colonial Houses of New South Wales*
- R. Hewitt, her Grass Diaries
- Pioneer Register, Singleton District, Singleton Historical Society
- State Library of NSW: Heritage Collection / Nelson Meers Foundation
- I. Ellis, *Notes on the Ellis Family*
- I. Ellis, *Jerry's Plains, The First 100 Years*
- J. Atchison, 'The Duff Family of Jerry's Plains', *Descent*
- A. Box, 'A Soldier in the Family'
- 'Pioneer Women Our Great Heroines', *Maitland Mercury*, 14 November 2003
- J. Donohue, *The Catholics of NSW 1788-1820*
- The 1788-1820 Pioneer Register
- Gravestone Inscriptions, State Library of NSW
- W. Hardy Wilson, *Old Colonial Architecture in NSW and Australia*
- E. Biesalski, *Scherenschnitt und Schattenrisse*
- *Gravestone Inscriptions NSW Vol 1 Sydney Burial Ground*
- *Land Grants 1788-1809. A record of registered grants and leases in NSW, Van Diemen's Land and Norfolk Island*
- The Second Fleeters, State Library of NSW Family History



Front face frames 7 Rene, 8 Lesley, 9 Agnes, 10 Hope



Top: 'Great Lodge', Jerry's Plains NSW, timber slab cottage with shingle roof, built 1832

Above: 'Alpha'

Right: Bronze fire dogs made by M. Money, Uralla NSW 2004



Tasmania's Huon Pottery

Geoff & Kerrie Ford

Geoff and Kerrie Ford have transferred their National Museum of Australian Pottery from Wodonga to Holbrook NSW, where it opened in September. These are recent additions to the 1,200 pieces on display.

These two very rare bung jars and the broken pickling crock were acquired at a recent auction in Hobart. The small jars are 11.5 cm high by 8.5 cm in diameter, and the crock is 27 cm high by 32 cm in diameter. All are lead glazed and impressed 'HUON POTTERY' the crock, five times.

Richard Hill (1824-1913), the son of an Irish violin performer transported to Tasmania for highway robbery, was born in Hobart. The family lived in Goulburn Street, Hobart, a few doors from the Tibbs family. Richard probably knew Charles Tibbs quite well.

After serving an apprenticeship to become a millwright and engineer at Messrs Easby & Robertson's foundry near the port of Hobart, Hill set off for the Huon Valley, becoming one of its early pioneers. Around 1848 Richard Hill and two others purchased a water-powered sawmill on the banks of the Kermande River near Geeveston. Within a short time the mill was upgraded and Hill bought out his partners.

By March 1851, when the census was taken, Hill's establishment was listed as a 'Pottery & Sawmill'. His dwelling was listed as housing fifteen people. Besides himself, Hill had ten men listed - seven as 'mechanics and artificers', the others as gardeners and servants.

As well as being engaged in the timber industry at Geeveston, Hill ran a flour mill there for a number of years. At what became known as Shipwright Point, he built a number of vessels.

Richard Hill and his son-in-law Matthew Fitzpatrick were also connected with the opening and development of the Port Cygnet coal mine. Hill took a very active and valuable part in local affairs, being



National Museum of Australian Pottery

Huon Pottery.

R. HILL, & Co.

IN returning thanks for the kind and liberal support they have received since commencing in the above business, beg to notify to their friends and the public, that, they have completed their arrangements for manufacturing a Superior Article, which they can warrant not to absorb; and hope by strict attention and superior workmanship, to merit a continuance of their favors.

All orders to be sent to R. Hill & Co., "Huon Pottery;" or, to Mr. W. Russell, City Market, which will be punctually attended to, and where Pottery is now on Sale.

AN APPRENTICE WANTED.

Hill's advertisement in the *Hobart Town Guardian*, 27 August 1851

responsible in a large degree for the gradual development of the Huon, which was carried on in the face of considerable difficulties in the early days of expansion. He took a particular interest in the construction of the Huon Bridge and was chairman of the Geeveston Road Trust for many years.

Hill announced the establishment of his pottery works near Geeveston, by placing an advertisement in the *Hobart Town Guardian* on 27 August 1851. This editorial notice appeared in the same issue of the newspaper:

HUON POTTERY. We beg the attention of our Colonial readers to an advertisement in our columns of this date announcing that Messrs. R. Hill & Co. have opened a pottery manufactory on the Huon. The material of which the articles are composed is of the most approved quality, and warranted from absorption. It is with much pleasure that we notice the progress which our Huon friends are making in the development of

Colonial resources: and, since the press has latterly censured the manufactures of Goulburn-street, owing to their tendency to absorb, we strongly invite public trial of those now turned out at the new establishment of our enterprising fellow colonists, R. Hill & Company.

The manufacturer in Goulburn Street was Charles Tibbs, who was having trouble with the quality of his jars, which were allowing the liquid contained in them to seep through.

Richard Hill's wares were transported from the pottery to market by boat down the Huon River, up the D'Entrecasteaux Channel and then the Derwent River to Hobart Town. This trip took a day in favourable weather, but often longer due to the strong and frequent wind changes in southern Tasmanian waters. Upon arrival at the wharf in Sullivan's Cove at Hobart Town, Hill's wares were unloaded and transported to William Russell's stall in the nearby City Market.

Hill's Huon Pottery produced a small variety of bung jars, pickling crocks, demijohns, etc., lead glazed, some of which were impressed: 'HUON POTTERY'. However, the manufacture of these wares was short lived and by early 1852 production had finished. This may be in part because the jars were too similar in style to the Goulburn Street Pottery jars, which already had a poor reputation. But reliable labour became a problem in 1851, as many of the available men left Tasmania to seek their fortune on the Victorian or New South Wales goldfields. Nothing else appeared in newspapers, and records of the pottery's existence are sketchy.

Hill was widely respected, and held the position of returning officer for the Franklin electorate. He twice sought election, though unsuccessfully, to the Tasmanian Parliament as the representative of Kingborough. His character was such as to win him the affectionate personal regard of many friends. He died on 2 July 1913, aged 89, leaving a widow, two sons and two daughters.

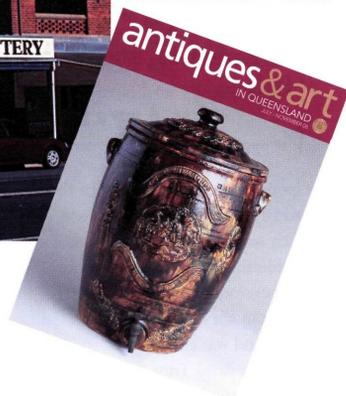
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to thank Frank Conrow, for his help with the research.

Geoff & Kerrie Ford's National Museum of Australian Pottery is open from Thursday to Tuesday 9.30 am to 4.30 pm, closed Wednesdays and August. entry \$5. Their six publications are available from the museum. For those who want to stay overnight, Holbrook has six motels, two hotels and a caravan park.

National Museum of
Australian Pottery
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info@australianpottery.net.au
www.australianpottery.net.au

The National Museum of Australian Pottery at Holbrook



Dr Judith McKay, Senior Curator at the Queensland Museum, was invited to open Geoff and Kerrie Ford's National Museum of Australian Pottery in its new premises at Holbrook NSW on 1 October 2006. This is an edited version of her speech

I'm honoured to speak on this occasion, and I speak on behalf of Australia's museum community because the reputation of this museum extends nationwide.

Through Geoff Ford's research and collecting over almost 30 years, he has transformed our knowledge of early Australian pottery in our own museum collections. Much of this pottery is unmarked, so museums as well as collectors throughout Australia have relied on Geoff's pioneering work to identify the ceramic riches in their collections.

Only by comparing and contrasting examples on a national scale can the

output of the multitude of potteries and potters be identified, and their distinctive features recorded. This process is rather like taxonomy in natural history museums.

Geoff had the enthusiasm and foresight to begin this research long before Australia's public museums became aware of this important aspect of our national heritage. His publications are on the shelves of museum curators throughout Australia. In my case, I use Geoff's monumental books *Australian Pottery: the First 100 Years* and the *Encyclopaedia of Australian Potter's Marks* at least weekly as I attempt to answer reference inquiries; and we all look forward to the *Potting About* newsletters that he issues regularly from this museum.

Moreover, Geoff is enormously generous in answering our requests for advice whenever we are seeking to catalogue or extend our collections. My only complaint is that when Geoff takes

Top left: The 1910 store now houses the National Museum of Australian Pottery at Holbrook

Top right: Dr Judith McKay

Above: Dinmore water filter that Geoff identified, featured on the cover of *Antiques & Art in Queensland*

an interest in any pieces coming up at auction the prices zoom astronomically!

So, on behalf of many curators who would like to be here today (including my Queensland colleagues Glenn Cooke and Michael Beckmann), I extend our warmest regards and thanks to Geoff.

To illustrate the importance of Geoff Ford's work throughout Australia I use the example of my own state, Queensland. In 1997 the Queensland

Museum engaged Geoff to catalogue and value its Australian pottery collection.

Among other things, he identified a splendid, but unmarked, water filter made in 1888 for the Brisbane monumental mason John Simmonds. This Geoff attributed to the Dinmore Brick and Tile Co. of Ipswich on the basis of its similarity to known examples of Dinmore's output. Now the water filter is hailed as the finest example of that pottery's work, and it featured recently on the cover of Queensland's *Antiques and Arts* magazine. Previously, before Geoff recognised its true value, it had remained hidden in the museum store.

Not only expert in identifying pottery, Geoff also has vast practical knowledge. During his Queensland Museum consultancy he pointed out that most of our pottery needed cleaning as much as cataloguing. Finally he was permitted to do this provided he used only soap and 'Brillo' pads, under the watchful eye of the conservators. Geoff's consultancy was the best money the Queensland Museum ever spent and he went on to document the pottery collection of the Museum of Brisbane.

More recently, in 2004, Geoff was guest curator of an exhibition at the Ipswich Art Gallery, *Ipswich Potteries: 1873-1926*, highlighting that city's once extensive brick and pottery production. At the height of production in the early 20th century, Queensland could boast about 40 brickworks and 15 potteries, many based in Ipswich.

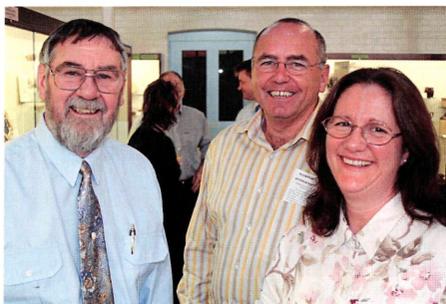
This exhibition drew together more than 250 examples of Ipswich pottery, from simple bricks and flowerpots to ornate domestic wares, from public and private collections throughout Australia, including examples from the National Museum of Australian Pottery and the Queensland Museum. It was the first exhibition of its type held in Queensland and was accompanied by a handsome catalogue with text by Geoff, up to the standard we've come to expect of him.

In the following year, 2005, the Queensland Museum hosted one of the National Museum of Australian Pottery's



Above: The extensive displays on both the ground floor and upper gallery level

Right: Geoff Ford OAM, Councillor Brian Wicks of Wodonga City Council and Kerrie Ford at the opening



excellent series of travelling exhibitions, on the master potter William Holford. So Geoff returned to Queensland to set up the exhibition in the museum foyer, where it was seen by every visitor to set foot in the building, setting another precedent for early Australian pottery in Queensland.

To complement this, the Queensland Museum showcased its own extensive collection of local pottery, also in the foyer. Again I had the privilege of working with Geoff and we collaborated in a public floor talk. Other curators have worked productively with Geoff Ford over the years but, being a long-term player, my association has been about the longest.

As a feminist, I am keenly aware that behind every great man there is an equally great woman. Throughout Geoff's career he has enjoyed the support and encouragement of his wife Kerrie. This museum and its collection are not only a tribute to Geoff but also to Kerrie. Geoff and Kerrie are truly national living treasures.

I congratulate both Geoff and Kerrie for putting their lifetime's work on show in this outstanding museum, and for giving us the opportunity to see Australia's largest and most significant collection of our early pottery.

Knowing Geoff and Kerrie, I expected the museum to be good, but it has exceeded all expectations, achieving a standard of display worthy of a much larger, state-funded museum. The museum will be a wonderful asset to this district which already boasts a fine series of museums, including one of particular interest to me, the Pioneer Women's Hut at Tumburumba. I look forward to the day when tourists will come to Holbrook not so much to see an old submarine but to see Australia's best exhibit of pottery.

I now have much pleasure in declaring this, the National Museum of Australian Pottery, now relocated to this splendid building in Holbrook, officially open.

An Australian silver ladle in London

Christine Erratt

2006 marks 400 years since the beginning of Australia's documented history. In 1606, under the command of Willem Jansz, the Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC or United Dutch East India Company) 60-ton ship *Duyfken* sailed along the northern coast charting 300 km of coastline, and landed near the present town of Weipa on Cape York Peninsula.

Australia has had a rich history of maritime exploration and trading voyages by the Dutch, French and English. However, not all went smoothly and there were many shipwrecks, particularly off Western Australia. In 1963, the first shipwreck there was discovered, the 1656 wreck of the VOC ship *Vergulde Draeck* (*Gilt Dragon*). Following extensive looting, WA quickly enacted legislation to protect historic wrecks. The discovery of the *Vergulde Draeck* and other wrecks was the catalyst for the development of maritime archaeology in Australia.

During the early 1960s the WA Museum expanded from its focus on natural history to include maritime

archaeology and became responsible for managing the VOC shipwrecks. Tripartite cooperation and legal arrangements between the governments of Western Australia, the Commonwealth of Australia and the Netherlands were necessary to decide such matters as ownership and funding of salvage.

The WA representative was Dr David Ride, Director of the WA Museum; for the Commonwealth, Sir Kenneth Bailey, Commonwealth Solicitor-General; and the Netherlands was represented by Mr D.G. van der Heide. The two Australians struck up a friendship which was to lead in 1971 to the connection with Gray's Inn, at the Inns of Court, London.

Born in Melbourne, serving in World War I, winning a Rhodes scholarship and graduating from Oxford, Sir Kenneth Bailey QC (1898-1972) was admitted as an ordinary member to Gray's Inn, London in 1922 and called to the English Bar in 1924. Professor at the University of Melbourne from 1928 to 1946, knighted in 1958, Bailey was Commonwealth Solicitor-General and Secretary of the Attorney-General's Department from 1946 to 1964, and Australian High Commissioner to Canada 1964-1970.

Although Australian, Ride (b 1926) served in the British Army during WWII and graduated with a BA, MA and Doctor of Philosophy from Oxford University. As Director of the WA Museum 1957-1975, Ride extended the scope of the Museum from natural history into history and maritime archaeology. Leaving the Museum in 1975, Ride worked with CSIRO, then joined the Canberra College of Advanced Education (CCA), becoming Principal in 1987.

In 1971, Sir Kenneth Bailey decided to make a presentation to Gray's Inn after nearly 50 years' association. Gray's Inn offers dining facilities and Sir Kenneth decided to present a piece of modern Australian silver – a large soup ladle. Dr Ride was a keen supporter of Australian silversmithing, and Sir Kenneth asked his friend to suggest a silversmith for the commission. Dr Ride suggested Eric Car, who had joined the WA Museum in 1957 as a cadet taxidermist. He later dived on the *Vergulde Draeck*, and restored maritime artefacts.

Car was making a name as a silversmith and had exhibited in the first exhibition held by the Crafts Council of WA. In 1968/69 the WA and Netherlands Governments sent him to the Netherlands to study maritime conservation laboratories and to learn conservation techniques, with a view to setting up a maritime conservation laboratory in Fremantle. Car took three months' leave to work with a silversmith in Amsterdam, learning from a master rather than from books, which had been his source of tuition up to that time. On his return to WA in 1969, he set up the new museum laboratory in Fremantle and a small silver workshop at his home.



From left to right Sir Kenneth Bailey 1960s. An Australian Information Service photograph reproduced with permission of the National Library of Australia; Dr David Ride 1978; Eric Car 1975

Car eagerly took on the commission. Car's 'mock up' - better known as a 'maquette' - of the ladle met with Bailey's approval, so Car proceeded to make the larger presentation ladle.

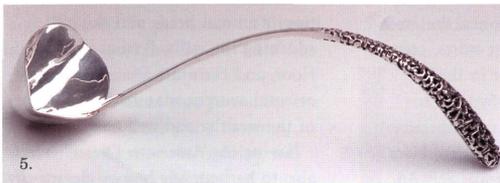
Sir Kenneth duly made his presentation to Gray's Inn, which is recorded in the minutes of the Pension for 10 November 1971. This gift of an Australian sterling silver ladle was the first - and remains the only - Australian-made presentation silverware at Gray's Inn.

The ladle is 410 mm long, 155 mm wide and bowl capacity 300 ml. The bowl was forged from an oval sheet of silver and the shaft hand-forged from a bar of silver. The ornate hollow handle was constructed from cuttlebone castings. The top and bottom cuttlebone casts were soldered together to give a look reminiscent of the decorative work of Aborigines on pearl shells from the Kimberley. Car stamped the ladle with his maker's mark *ej*, the initials of his given names Eric Joseph; *W AUS* and the WA state symbol of a swan; and a metal purity stamp *STG SIL* for sterling silver.

His Canberra colleagues presented the maquette to Dr Ride in 1982 when he was appointed Head of School of Life Sciences at CCAE. The maquette ladle is slightly smaller than the ladle at Gray's Inn and is a beautiful functional object. Dr Ride gave the maquette ladle to his son Edwin Ride and his wife as a wedding gift in 2000.

Eric Car left the museum in 1973 to become a full-time self-employed silversmith and jeweller. His work is in many churches, public and private collections. He had his own gallery, the Eric Car Gallery, in Fremantle, taught and currently has a showroom and workshop in Claremont, WA.

Christine Erratt is a private researcher with a particular interest in Australian silver, researching makers' marks on recent Australian silver.



1. Detail of design on handle of ladle reflecting the style of Aboriginal carvings on pearl shells from the Kimberley region

2. Kimberley pearl shell, decorated by incising the design into the surface and then filling it with ochre. Photograph courtesy Kim Akerman

3. Marks on ladle. Maker's mark *ej* (initials of Eric Joseph Car's given names); *STG.SIL* (metal purity stamp for sterling silver); [swan] and *W AUS* for place of origin, Western Australia. The black swan is the State emblem for WA

4. Silver ladle presented to Gray's Inn. London by Sir Kenneth Bailey in 1971. The ladle was made by WA silversmith, Eric Car. The bowl has a capacity of 300ml - enough for a complete serving of soup. Overall length 410mm. Ladle is alongside a 12 inch (304mm) ruler. Photograph supplied by Gray's Inn.

5. Maquette silver ladle made by Eric Car in 1971. Bowl capacity 225ml; overall length 304mm. Photograph courtesy of Johannes Kuhn

Thoroughly modern Sydney: 1920s and 30s glamour and style

MUSEUM OF SYDNEY, 1 JULY TO 15 OCTOBER 2006
CURATORS: HOWARD TANNER AND INARA WALDEN

Review by Mark Ferson

Between the World Wars, Sydney society absorbed and reflected, in its many possible manifestations, the international style which later came to be called Art Deco. The new style was taken up by the elite as inspiration for their clothes, jewellery, furnishings and art, and for the architecture and interior décor of their homes and offices.

Art Deco influenced every aspect of Australian industrial design, from radios to tableware to books to light fittings. The exhibition shown at the Museum of Sydney reveals a great deal of this period through a thematic arrangement of material based around a core of elegant photographs taken by Harold Cazneaux of the fashionable and their playgrounds.

The exhibition's thesis is that the network that centred on Sydney Ure Smith, artist, publisher and president of the Society of Artists, and Charles Lloyd Jones, former art student and proprietor of David Jones, the most modern of department stores, created and promoted interest in the international style in Sydney. In Tanner's words: 'Their stylish circle included artists Thea Proctor, Hera Roberts, Margaret Preston and Adrian Feint; sculptor Rayner Hoff; and architects W. Hardy Wilson, Leslie Wilkinson and John D. Moore. Harold Cazneaux was their photographer of choice and George Patterson their marketing mentor.'



The first of the exhibition themes, labelled 'Hollywood Visions' depicts mansions photographed by Cazneaux or featured on pages of *The Home* magazine: 'Boomerang', Elizabeth Bay, 'a Hollywood fantasy of a Moorish palace', and 'Glen Ascham', Darling Point. Images of 'Craigend', also at Darling Point, include interiors with trophy animal heads and skins adorning the walls, Persian rugs on the floor, and furniture from a variety of oriental sources; manifestly the home of the wealthy and well-travelled.

'Living the American Dream' refers also to harbourside homes, elegant city apartments and the newly erected, glitzy State and Regent theatres. Other new behaviours, presumably also imported from across the Pacific, are highlighted here. Adjacent to a panel featuring an advertisement for Ford motor cars in

'Thoroughly Modern Sydney' at the Museum of Sydney. Courtesy Historic Houses Trust of NSW, photographer Jody Pachniuk

vibrant colours is the statement 'Wealthy young women found a further freedom in their own cars, venturing out alone, unchaperoned.'

Further panels explore related themes using Cazneaux's photographs and pages from *The Home* and its parent publication *Art in Australia*. 'Society Portraits' gives the short catalogue its ultra-chic cover image of visiting English theatre designer Doris Zinkeisen; 'Skyscrapers' presents images of Asbestos House, the AWA



Tower and an iconic photograph of parked vehicles lining Martin Place. 'Modernity' draws attention to the artistic element represented by Bruce Dellit's Anzac Memorial and its Rayner Hoff sculptures, and by the Burdekin House Exhibition, to which so many members of the Ure Smith circle had contributed.

'The Rule of Taste' combines pictures of 'Eryldene', designed by Hardy Wilson for Professor Waterhouse, the Rushcutters Bay showroom of Francis de Groot, and images of homes of members of the Hordern family located at Darling Point and Bellevue Hill. The final section 'Tastemakers' returns to the people who were instrumental in Sydney's adoption of the modern style – Ure Smith, Lloyd Jones, Adrian Feint, Thea Proctor among others.

Largely based around photographic images and graphic design, a small number of additional artworks were selected for display: paintings by Ure Smith and John D. Moore of the suburbs and harbour adorn the

exterior wall, while Jean Broome-Norton's signally Art Deco bas-relief 'Abundance' (1934) greets visitors as they enter the gallery. All is set off by the further sensual beauty of a dozen blow-ups of brilliantly-hued *Home* magazine covers to delight the eye. The background music of inter-war jazz provides a beautiful ambience which emphasises the good taste of the period.

Perhaps the only weakness of the exhibition is that it has taken a high society-*Home* magazine approach to describing the Sydney of the 1920s and 1930s. Its focus on one influential social circle and the idea of 'taste' has necessarily meant that the changes in the environment of this period for the 'common man', the pubs, cinemas, shopfronts, homewares, lighting and every manifestation of the new international approach to advertising and packaging, could not be included. Some of these aspects of the modern style were, however, covered in the Art Deco exhibition, held at the Museum of Sydney from June to

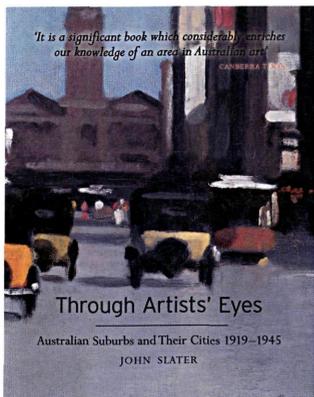
September 1999, and it seems a pity that the curators have not made any reference to this earlier exhibition on a related topic.

Nevertheless, the exhibition is a delightful gathering of beautiful and vital images, and indeed provides a vibrant and exciting overview of that inter-war style which, as the curators maintain, 'still underlies the essence of Sydney'.

The exhibition is accompanied by is a short but informative catalogue as well as an illustrated leaflet providing details of a self-guided walking tour covering nine key Sydney buildings from the period.

Professor Mark Ferson is a paediatrician and public health physician with qualifications in art history. He was co-editor, with the late Mary Nilsson, of *Art Deco in Australia: Sunrise over the Pacific* (Craftsman House, 2001). Tel: 0401 141 890, email: m.ferson@unsw.edu.au

Book review



John Slater,
Through Artists' Eyes. Australian Suburbs and their cities, Miegunyah Press, Carlton Vic, 2004, 337 pages, illustrated. Reviewed by John Ramsland

Through Artists' Eyes is a magnificently illustrated book which provided a fascinating study, by an accomplished art historian, of the period between the end of the First World War and the end of the Second World War in the visual history of Australian cities and their suburbs.

The author, John Slater, is a Londoner who became increasingly fascinated with Australian art and literature as a recreational interest while he was one of Her Majesty's long-serving Inspectors of Schools. After retirement, he turned his abiding passion for interpreting history in visual forms into an academic pursuit, successfully completing a Master of Arts at London University and then a Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Exeter. This book is the fruit of his research in London and around Australia in public galleries and private collections. Amassing prodigious research, Slater worked on the book for seven years.

Slater's book ranks as one of the best inclusive histories of Australian suburbia ever produced. When dealing with the

same period, most art historians have explored almost exclusively outback and pastoral images that were painted – and as such hung in people's living and dining rooms in the well-heeled suburbs of Melbourne and Sydney.

Slater, however, does not accept the standard view that Australia between 1919 and 1945 was visually a country of pioneers in the bush, a pastoral idyll, a place of bleached light and gum trees, and that the suburbs of the city were somehow mediocre in comparison and lacking in artistic imagery and interest.

He interrogates this misleading myth and provides overwhelming evidence to support the opposite argument. On hearing the words 'suburb', 'suburbia' or 'suburban', he does not accept the sneer or the curl of the lip that has become a stereotypical reaction. He ironically quotes the elderly academic and essayist Walter Murdoch in Perth railing against the 'everlasting enemy' of the 'suburban spirit' from his comfortable and well-appointed suburban home in, of all places, Suburban Road.

Barry Humphries, more recently, has done an equally savage job on the Melbourne suburbs in his stage and television satires. Murdoch, Humphries and many others of the intelligentsia have produced what is now a very conventional point of view. Radio and newspaper commentator, Phillip Adams, from his pastoral idyll in Scone in the Upper Hunter, continues to do the same. The suburbs are viewed as second rate, or as intellectual and artistic wastelands devoid of interest.

And yet Slater has uncovered an impressive array of top-flight artists, like Lloyd Rees, Margaret Preston, Donald Friend and Grace Cossington-Smith. They have not only captured the charm, vitality and beauty of the suburbs, cities and their waterways, but have also explored the human condition, the psychological complexity, and cultural variety of suburban social life.

In the first sentence of the first

chapter, Slater tells us what he sets out to do so successfully: 'The words of this book are driven by its pictures'. He does not merely describe the pictures and their painterly qualities, he interprets them as documents of social history, how they tell us of the way we were and still are – as the most urbanised and suburbanised society on earth. The artists who appear in the book frequently viewed the suburbs in which they lived with affection, pride and identification, and not with a trace of irony. This was particularly the case with some of the paintings of Grace Cossington-Smith, Charles Meere, Sali Herman, Freda Robertshaw, Sydney Ure Smith, and Ethel Carrick, as well as the great photographers, Harold Cazneaux and Max Dupain. Some artists who appear in Slater's book, which is organised thematically, depict the work place, especially heavy industrial work of building the modern city in steel and stone, and the commuter crowds of workers at peak hours; others reveal much about leisure activities at theatres, in coffee shops, snack bars, pubs and on the beaches.

Several of the images even shock the eye with their freshness, especially those of John Perceval. Indeed, Slater takes a 'forensic scalpel' to the worn myth of heroic, rugged and lean bushmen and the idealisation of the countryside. He helps to resurrect the city and its suburbs as fascinating places where the great themes of 20th-century Australian history were acted out. In so doing, he recognised the dominance of urban, suburban and coastal-hugging cultures in the process of rapid social change in Australia. The movement depicted in the illustrations presented is towards modernity, sophistication and cosmopolitanism as well as a sexually freer society.

Highly recommended for lovers of Australian art, as well as 20th-century history. Slater has superbly 'summoned up remembrance of things past'.



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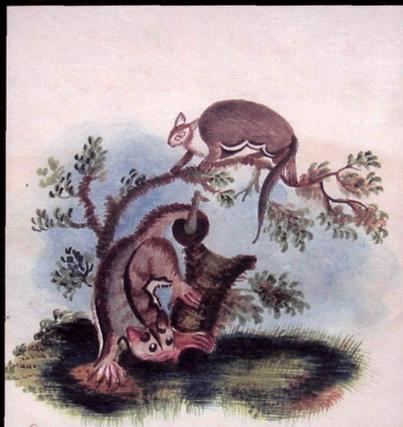


*Mid 19th-century Australian cedar & rose mabogany
full tester bed, c. 1845*



PETER
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The Opossums of
New Holland (circa 1815)



One of an early group of eight watercolours depicting
possums and birds of Australia and New Zealand.
Circa 1815.

Paper watermarked variously 1810 and 1813.
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This Exhibition chess games work table is totally original and untouched. It is without doubt the finest labelled item of Tasmanian cabinet-made veneered furniture, with a long history of illustration and location in important collections. It deserves to be in a Tasmanian museum, as being labelled it is the key item for identifying stylistically other quality cabinet made examples of Tasmanian-made Huon Pine furniture. Hobart, Tasmania, circa 1840

