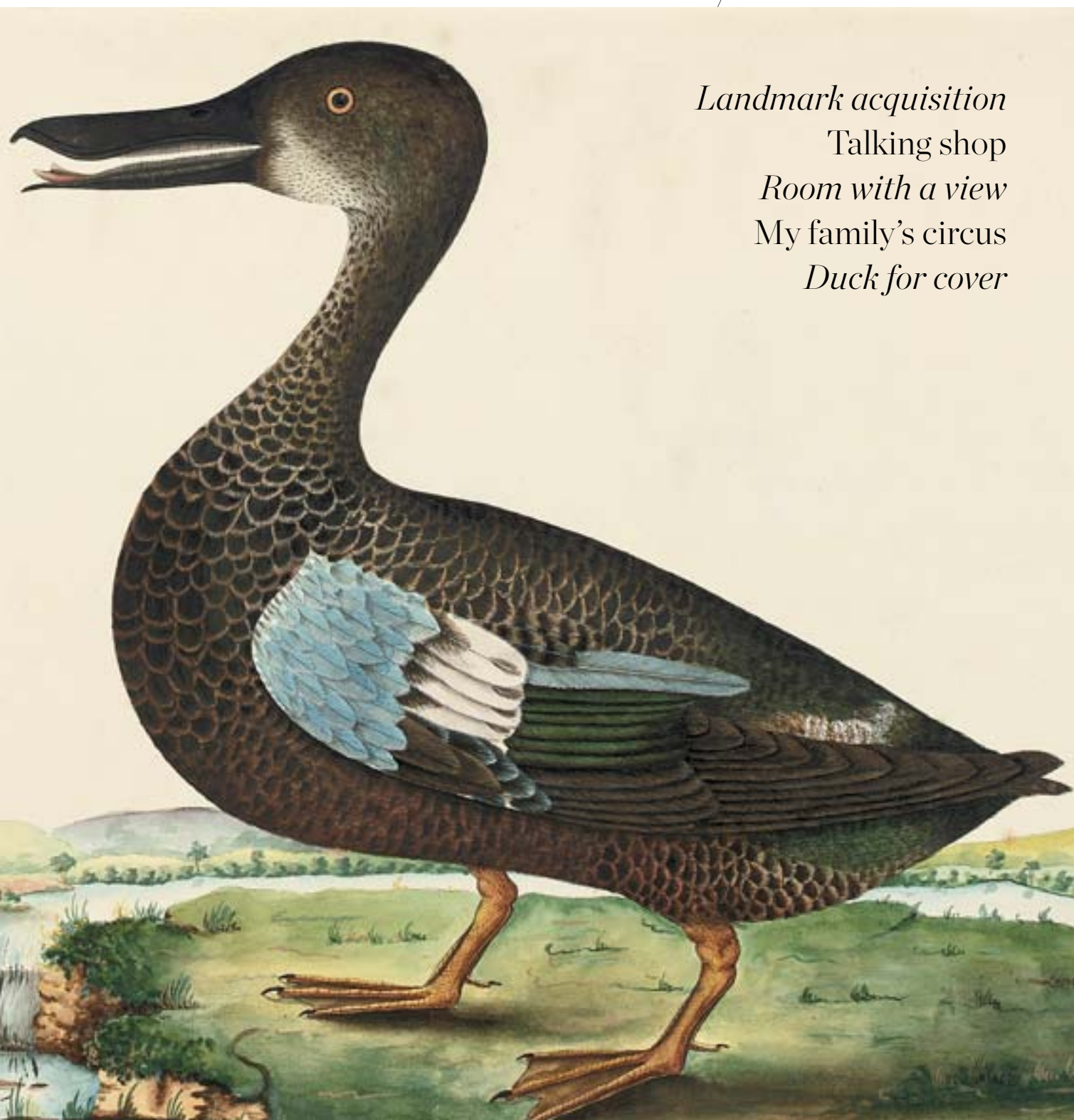


Magazine for members  
Spring 2011

# SL



STATE LIBRARY®  
NEW SOUTH WALES



*Landmark acquisition*

*Talking shop*

*Room with a view*

*My family's circus*

*Duck for cover*

# ‘Message

*Rob Thomas*



This is a wonderful moment in the history of the State Library. We're about to welcome a new State Librarian & Chief Executive, we're embarking on a major renovation of the Macquarie Street building, and we've just made the most significant acquisition of early colonial material in 80 years.

It's also a time of vital development for libraries generally, with the first Bill passed by the incoming NSW State Government on 30 May amending the *Library Act 1939* to give local councils more flexibility in managing library services.

In the debate before the Bill was passed, 33 Members of Parliament spoke about how much they appreciated their local libraries. Many offered outstanding praise for the State Library — our collection, our services to students, researchers and lifelong learners, and our support for the public library network. The Hon. George Souris MP, the Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Hospitality and Racing, and Minister for the Arts, stated in conclusion: 'This Government understands the importance of public libraries in our communities.'

Minister Souris was at the Library on 6 June to celebrate the acquisition of 741 natural history drawings and watercolours from the collection of the 13th Earl of Derby, featured on page 10. A critical addition to the Library's world-renowned First Fleet Foundation collections, we would not have been able to acquire these magnificent albums without the generous philanthropy of TAL & Dai-ichi Life and the support of the NSW Government.

That our Foundation goes from strength to strength is also shown in the collaboration with Rio Tinto, reported on page 34, to preserve Indigenous language wordlists and make them available to Aboriginal communities and the general public. Thanks to a pleasing response to the 2010 Mitchell Library Centenary Appeal, our conservators are carrying out crucial preservation work on a number of significant objects, including the rare Dutch atlas featured on page 30.

Dr Alex Byrne (News, page 6) is well placed to lead the State Library into its next exciting chapter. Our new State Librarian & Chief Executive has had a distinguished career in university libraries. He brings an in-depth understanding of digital technologies and a special interest in Indigenous peoples and knowledge. We look forward to working with Dr Byrne as we continue to build on the State Library's international standing as a leading research library and to increase access to our services and collections across the NSW community.

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**ROB THOMAS**

President, Library Council of New South Wales



# C

# ontents

Spring 2011

## SL

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### EDITOR

CATHY PERKINS  
CPERKINS@SL.NSW.GOV.AU

### DESIGN & PRODUCTION

SIMON LEONG

### PHOTOGRAPHY

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### STATE LIBRARY OF NSW

MACQUARIE STREET  
SYDNEY NSW 2000  
PHONE (02) 9273 1414  
FAX (02) 9273 1255  
LIBRARY@SL.NSW.GOV.AU  
WWW.SL.NSW.GOV.AU

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### FRONT COVER

DUCK, LATE 1790s, TAL &  
DAI-ICHI LIFE COLLECTION

### BACK COVER

SHOP MANNEQUIN CLOTHED  
IN DUPLICATE GARMENT  
SWING TAGS FROM  
EPHEMERA COLLECTING  
DRIVE CONDUCTED BY  
THE LIBRARY IN 2010.  
MARTIN WALE (CONCEPT);  
MEGAN PERRY (REALISATION);  
COLIN WARNER (SUPPORT)

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## Stand OUT

Romance was Born staged a fashion show in the Mitchell Library.





# N



PHOTO BY JOANNE SAAD

## New State Librarian

The State Library welcomes Dr Alex Byrne as the new NSW State Librarian & Chief Executive. Dr Byrne takes up the five-year appointment on 5 September 2011. He has been the University Librarian at the University of Technology, Sydney, since 2000, having also held leadership positions at Charles Darwin University and the Australian Defence Force Academy. A researcher, writer and international speaker on issues such as collection accessibility and the role of collecting institutions in the digital age, Dr Byrne said he felt honoured to be appointed the new State Librarian. 'The State Library holds the foremost collection of Australiana and is central to the cultural life and economy of the state. I am delighted to have the opportunity to lead the Library,' he said.



## We're renovating!

We're transforming our Macquarie Street building. The first stage, to be completed in late September, will give the State Reference Library a contemporary new look, with dedicated study rooms, more informal work spaces and more computers. The new layout will create better access to services such as Family History and to collections. The Mitchell Library, Library Shop, cafe and exhibition galleries remain open.

Early next year we'll be renovating the Macquarie Street foyer, with a new bookshop, cafe and enhanced theatre-style auditorium. Please speak to Library staff and check our website for the latest information about access to resources and services during this time.





# NEWS

## In fashion

The award-winning Berg Fashion Library database is now available for Library clients at home. It documents fashion history from around the globe and contains thousands of images from the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the MoMu Fashion Museum in Belgium. It's an invaluable resource for students, professional researchers, and anyone interested in dress, anthropology, art history, sociology, folklore or cultural studies. Visit the 'eResources' section of our website for more information.

BALMORAL ANKLE BOOT, 1851, PHOTO BY CHRIS BROTHERS, POWERHOUSE MUSEUM COLLECTION, SYDNEY



KING JAMES BIBLE, 1611, RICHARDSON/ F237

## Biblical sense

This year marks the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible. Its elegant prose has had an enduring influence on the English language. The publication of the King James Bible was the final chapter in a fascinating and turbulent story of the translation, printing and publication of the Bible in English. The Library holds a copy of each landmark Bible — from the first complete Bible in English, the Coverdale Bible, published in 1535, through to a first edition of the King James from 1611. A number of our Bibles have a significant provenance, including the Bligh family Bible and the Bible which, according to Elizabeth Cook, accompanied Captain James Cook on all three voyages.



**TUESDAYS**  
IN THE GALLERIES

## Free Tuesday night events

Join us in the galleries on Tuesday nights from 5 pm to 8 pm for a special program of free events. There's something new every week — music, films, talks and book launches, as well as a chance to view the latest exhibition after dark.

[www.sl.nsw.gov.au/events](http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/events)

## 21 September 1918

The Australian Flying Corps and the Royal Flying Corps attack retreating Turkish troops in the Wadi Fara, Palestine.

A FLIGHT OF BOMBING PLANES, 1ST AUSTRALIAN FLYING CORPS, PALESTINE, C. SEPTEMBER 1918, FRANK HURLEY PXD 29/106



## 29 September 1900

The last patients to recover from the bubonic plague during the outbreak in Sydney are released from the Quarantine Station. During the outbreak, which lasted around nine months, 103 people died and many more took ill. Extensive cleansing operations in the Rocks and surrounding areas saw the extermination of thousands of rats, removal of rubbish and the condemning of unsanitary shops and homes.

PROFESSIONAL RATCATCHERS, 1900, JOHN DEGOTARDI JNR, PXE 93 /264



## 12 October 1821

Governor Macquarie opens the Benevolent Asylum 'for the aged, infirm, blind and destitute'. By the end of the year, nearly 50 people were housed in the building on the corner of Devonshire and Pitt streets. By 1840, there were more than 1000 residents in the asylum.

BENEVOLENT ASYLUM FROM DRAWINGS IN SYDNEY, C. 1840 50 PX\*D 123 /1B



## 13 October 1934

The film *Little Miss Marker* starring 'the screen's smallest but greatest star', Shirley Temple, opens at the Prince Edward Theatre in Sydney. Temple's huge popularity inspired PR stunts such as look-alike contests, talent quests and essay competitions.

NINE GIRLS IN A FOX FILMS AND DAILY TELEGRAPH SHIRLEY TEMPLE LOOK ALIKE CONTEST ... SYDNEY, C. 1934-35, SAM HOOD HOME AND AWAY - 814



*on this*

# DAY

COMPILED BY Emma Gray, *Discover Collections*



## *21 November 1937*

Tom Morris, speed and distance skipping champion, breaks his own skipping record in Sydney. In two hours, he registered 22,806 turns of the rope, beating his previous best of 20,527 turns. The feat was declared a world record.

TOM MORRIS, SKIPPING CHAMPION, JUNE 1937, SAM HOOD HOME AND AWAY - 15464



## *24 November 1934*

The Duke of Gloucester opens the ANZAC Memorial in Sydney's Hyde Park. Bruce Dellit shocked the architectural community when his art deco plan won a design competition for the new war memorial.

ANZAC WAR MEMORIAL, HYDE PARK, 15 SEPTEMBER 1930, C. BRUCE DELLIT XV1 / MON WAR / 1

A detailed illustration of a blue bird, possibly a species of rail or grebe, with a prominent red beak and red-tipped feet. The bird is standing on a grassy bank next to a river. The background features a landscape with a river, a waterfall, and a large tree trunk. The text 'AT FIRST' is written in large, bold, black capital letters, and 'glance' is written in a smaller, italicized, black serif font below it. To the right of the bird, there is a small black asterisk followed by the text 'WORDS Richard Neville' in a black serif font.

# AT FIRST

*glance*

\* WORDS Richard Neville



## LANDMARK ACQUISITION

An extraordinary collection of natural history illustrations — purchased with the generous support of TAL & Dai-ichi Life and the NSW Government — is the Library's most significant addition of early colonial material since the 1930s. Mitchell Librarian Richard Neville looks at how the Derby drawings convey a genuine sense of wonder at Australian natural history.

In glancing through any of the myriad English natural history publications from the early 1800s, it is surprising how frequently the phrase 'from the drawings of' or 'from the collections of' Aylmer Bourke Lambert appears. And further compounding the intrigue is how often the material being described is Australian. Yet Lambert is hardly a familiar name in the story of English natural history: he is not associated with heroic explorations, magnificent publications, or with the networks of Sir Joseph Banks.

But after basic investigation, it soon becomes clear that Lambert was not some dilettante, but a heavy hitter, fully enmeshed in London's frenetic world of naturalists and collectors. Born in 1761, Lambert inherited property and estates which left him very wealthy, and he used this advantage to pursue botany. He was a voracious collector, passionate about Australian natural history, and is perhaps best known for his *A Description of the Genus Pinus* (1803–24), which was in part illustrated by the great Ferdinand Bauer.

So it is hardly surprising that he should have been the man responsible for compiling, in the late 1790s to early 1800s, the extraordinary collection of natural history illustrations that the Library has recently purchased with the generous, indeed unprecedented, support of TAL & Dai-ichi Life and the NSW State Government.



OPPOSITE: PURPLE SWAMPHEN (*PORPHYRIO PORPHYRIO*), FROM THE TAL & DAI-ICHI LIFE COLLECTION, LATE 1790s  
ABOVE: WOODY PEAR, (*XYLUMELUM PYRIFORMA*)



This wonderful collection comprises six volumes of watercolours, which contain some 741 illustrations. It has direct links back to the first days of the colony, and to its most significant natural history collector, Surgeon-General John White. White, who arrived in the colony with the First Fleet, returned to London in July 1795 with a substantial collection of natural history specimens and drawings. Two years later White approached Lambert to see if he could help him get his manuscript and drawings of the colony published: Lambert was known as someone with wealth and influence who was knowledgeable about Australian natural history.

Some of White's drawings were created in the colony by the convict artist Thomas Watling, but most were by that unknown group of artists who are now collectively called The Port Jackson Painter. It seems that White allowed Lambert to make copies of 226 of his drawings, mostly birds and some animals. Lambert then lent these drawings to England's foremost ornithologist, Dr John Latham, who used them to describe a number of new Australian birds in the supplement to his influential *General Synopsis of Birds* (1800–02).

These drawings were bound into three albums, which are referred to in the sparse historical literature on the topic as the Lambert drawings. But Lambert also compiled three other albums which, until they appeared on the market this year, had never been seen before. Two were made up of botanical drawings — some 372 in total — while the third comprises 144 bird and fish illustrations.

Lambert's habit of acquiring collections of natural history drawings was common. But in those days it was difficult to mechanically copy drawings, so if a naturalist wanted one from someone else's collection, he would engage an artist to reproduce it. This is what Lambert did with White's collection (now known as the Watling Collection, in the Natural History Museum, London). Lambert seems to have been generous with his drawings and specimens, and lent them to the publishers of natural history books for inclusion in their texts.

Drawings were an integral part of the way natural history was discussed, processed and circulated. While we may today be charmed by their apparent naivety, naturalists then took these drawings very seriously and trusted them sufficiently to determine

ABOVE LEFT: EASTERN QUOLL  
(*DASYURUS VIVERRINUS*)

ABOVE RIGHT: UNIDENTIFIED  
FISH

OPPOSITE: RAINBOW  
LORIKEET (*TRICHOGLOSSUS*  
*HAEMATODUS*)







CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:  
BLACK SWAN (*CYGNUS  
ATRATUS*), GOLDEN GUINEA  
FLOWER (*HIBBERTIA  
SCANDENS*), WHITE BELLIED  
SEA EAGLE (*HALIAEETUS  
LEUCOGASTER*)

OPPOSITE: RICHARD  
NEVILLE, MITCHELL  
LIBRARIAN, WITH  
WATERCOLOURS FROM  
THE TAL & DAI-ICHI LIFE  
COLLECTION, PHOTO BY  
TAMARA DEAN, COURTESY  
OF FAIRFAX

species names. They are more than decorative images: they are hard evidence of the whole process of Australia becoming part of the British Empire.

After Lambert died in 1842 his library was auctioned by Sotheby's. Lambert owned a lot of Australian material, including most of the major contemporary texts published about the colony, again a strong reflection of his interest in NSW. He knew colonial painter and naturalist John Lewin, tried to employ colonial botanist George Caley as a curator of his collection (which was said to number 33,000 specimens), and owned a major series of landscape views of Australia by convict artist Joseph Lycett, which the Library acquired in 1953.

In the end it was the Earl of Derby who purchased these drawings from the Lambert sale. A passionate naturalist and collector, the 13th Earl of Derby assembled one of the finest natural history libraries in England and a substantial menagerie at the family seat of Knowsley Hall, near Liverpool.

The six volumes were probably rebound (all have a Liverpool bookbinder's label on their inside covers) and placed on the library shelves, where they remained, protected and probably never opened. Today the watercolours are seemingly as fresh as the day they were painted, and the volumes themselves are in remarkably good condition.

The Derby drawings, to be known as the TAL & Dai-ichi Life collection, are one of the most important additions the Library has made to its First Fleet collections in 80 years. The Library holds the largest collection of manuscripts, books and images relating to the colonisation of Australia anywhere, and the Derby albums dovetail into their rich documentation of the process of building European Australia. These albums demonstrate that colonisation was not just the physical occupation of the land, but intellectual engagement with, and documentation of, its natural history and resources. Indeed European interest in natural history specimens created the earliest export market of Australian commodities to Europe — so high was the interest that the first live kangaroo to arrive in England in 1790 was valued at £500.





These albums are a vital and evocative record of genuine wonder and pleasure. They reflect the tremendous excitement about all that was arriving in Europe from NSW, which, as one naturalist commented, 'bursts upon our view at the first glance like the new creation; the naturalist contemplates its various productions with astonishment'.

## TAL & Dai-ichi Life collection appeal

The TAL & Dai-ichi Life collection is one of the largest archives of the First Fleet period and a landmark acquisition for the Library. The Foundation has committed \$1 million over the next year to support the acquisition of this magnificent collection. We need your help to reach this goal. All individual donations, of any amount, build a significant contribution that will secure this valuable material for the future.

**Enquiries: Susan Hunt, Executive Director,  
State Library of NSW Foundation  
Phone: (02) 9273 1529  
Email: [shunt@sl.nsw.gov.au](mailto:shunt@sl.nsw.gov.au)**



# SHOP

*talk*





# EXHIBITION

*On Sale!* presents a stunning array of material to illustrate the evolution of shopping in Australia. Here we talk to the curator, conservator and designer about how the exhibition was created. From Sydney's first shops, to the twentieth century rise of modern merchandising and today's slick mega malls, there is much to love in the story of how we're persuaded to part with our money.

## STORYTELLING

Margot Riley confesses to being 'an inveterate shopper' whose fascination with the retail world ranges from chic boutiques to weekend market stalls and the local 7-Eleven: 'Impulse buys can (and do) happen in them all!' Some of the curator's most vivid childhood memories centre around the excitement of a day in town, lunching at the Coles cafeteria with her mother and four siblings, and stories of the family's Rowe Street gem business where her grandmother was 'the pretty shopgirl'.

Curating *On Sale!* was Margot's chance to focus on lesser-known items in the Library's collection — things that reflect patterns of daily life but, by being so familiar, are often overlooked in telling our history. Margot also wanted to highlight the Library's ongoing role in collecting our 'throwaway' print culture. 'Today's sale flyer may become a valuable example of advertising literature in the future,' she says.

Margot pursued the broad theme of 'shopping' across all parts of the Library's collection. She found nineteenth century shopping lists, rare drawings of the Sydney markets, shopfronts and interiors, and lavish plans for early arcades and department stores.

The promotional kit for National Washing Machine Month 1959, with its slogan 'Every woman deserves a washing machine', was part of the post-war boom in consumption which turned luxuries into necessities. *On Sale!* features a 1950s Simpson washing machine — sourced at a secondhand depot — which stunned conservation staff when it arrived in the loading dock. The Library doesn't normally set out to buy objects, explains Margot. 'After you go shopping, and you consume the merchandise,'



she says, 'the Library collects what's left — the newspaper advertisement that enticed you to the store, the catalogue that focused your desire, the packaging and instructions, the receipt, and perhaps the bag you carried it home in.'

To add depth to the exhibition, Margot looked outside the Library's five-million strong collection. She visited the Coles Myer archive at the State Library of Victoria, which holds the records of several Sydney department stores, including Farmer & Co and Grace Bros, and the David Jones archive stored in a warehouse in the industrial suburb of Silverwater. An advertising flyer, titled *A Message*

OPPOSITE: *ON SALE!* CURATOR, MARGOT RILEY, AT THE DAVID JONES ARCHIVE, PHOTO BY SCOTT WAJON

ABOVE: GROCERY PACKAGES FROM THE 1970s AND 80s WERE RECONSTRUCTED FOR THE EXHIBITION





from *Mars: An Old Firm Adopts a New Method of Publicity*, records David Jones' launch of Australia's first commercial air service in 1919, and particularly appeals to Margot: 'I like the sense of continual innovation, which is probably what has kept David Jones in business for so long.'

## HANDLING WITH CARE

It's not surprising that conservators are drawn to the solidity of the vintage washing machine. Other items in the exhibition tend to be less durable, which means that every letter, pamphlet, book or docket comes under their scrutiny for a judgment on whether it's robust enough for display. In the case of *On Sale!* staff checked over 400 items; a quarter were found to be too delicate or were culled during the exhibition design process.

Almost two-thirds of the items in *On Sale!* needed some repair — an unusually high number, according

to conservator Catherine Thomson. 'Covering the period from colonial settlement to the present day,' she says, 'the items range in condition quite radically. And it's not the oldest items that are in the worst repair.' A large proportion of paper-based material, such as manuscripts, trade catalogues and advertising posters, are deteriorating due to their acidity. 'Many of these pieces were never meant to last more than a week, or at most a season,' says Catherine.

The binding had deteriorated on two sample books filled with carefully annotated fabric swatches. An architectural plan of a Hunter Street shop facade inscribed with pen and watercolour wash onto translucent 'butter' paper had become brittle, causing cracks along folds and creases.

Conservators were charged with the safe transport of items selected from the David Jones archive. As is the case with any loan material, the condition of items is documented before travelling and on arrival.





Four conservators packed up the David Jones material, with a selection of gorgeous posters dating from 1949 to 1967 ‘the most enjoyable items to document’. According to Catherine, ‘Colourmania’, a psychedelic poster from the 1960s, was a highlight.

One of the more creative tasks for conservators was reconstructing grocery packaging from the 1970s and 80s. The Library has a collection of ‘flat-packed’ boxes featuring familiar, and some now re-branded, grocery items such as Aeroplane Jelly, as well as vanished products like Drinkin’ Soup and Mr Tea.

Working closely with exhibition designer Martin Wale, conservators also install and dismantle the exhibition. Some items will need further conservation treatment after display – such as being re-secured into albums. Only when the items have been returned safely to their shelves, is the conservator’s job finally done.

## REVEALING

While conservators preserve the condition of items in the exhibition, the designer brings them to life. Martin Wale sees his job as ‘devising a practical, yet graceful, solution to a problem’. He must combine the cultural artifacts, graphic reproductions and the curator’s story to create an experience that visitors are engaged by and delight in. The designer guides the visitor’s path through the galleries and manages technical issues such as ensuring light levels

illuminate but don’t damage the collection items on display.

For *On Sale!* design inspiration was close at hand. ‘This exhibition is all about the shopping experience and no one has solved the intricacies of that realm better than the successful retailers that line our city streets,’ says Martin. Expensive boutiques and overflowing two-dollar shops all lent their influence.

As well as walking the pavement, Martin consulted historical drawings, photographs and architectural sketches to devise a plan for the five-gallery show. One stand-out visual, featured in *On Sale!* and driving its design, is a hand-coloured photograph of window displays at the State Shopping Block in 1929. Stylish garments and accessories seem to float in rows of gilded, octagonal glass cases.

*On Sale!* presents a dynamic window on the cultural history of shopping that leaves visitors with a sense of how shopping has evolved and where it might be heading in future.

OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:  
 CONSERVATORS KATE HUGHES, CATHERINE THOMSON AND LANG NGO PACKING MATERIAL FROM THE DAVID JONES ARCHIVE, PHOTO BY SCOTT WAJON  
 FLYER FROM NATIONAL WASHING MACHINE MONTH KIT, 1959  
 EXHIBITION DESIGNER MARTIN WALE AND ‘MR TEA’, PHOTO BY BRUCE YORK  
 AN EXHIBITION DESIGN LAYOUT FOR *ON SALE!* BY JEMIMA WOO  
 ABOVE: STATE SHOPPING BLOCK, SYDNEY, C. 1929, HAND-COLOURED PHOTOGRAPH, PXA 348/48

# *Political*

# FOOTBALL



WORDS Andy Carr

This year, Australian rugby union fans look to the fortunes of the Wallabies in the 2011 Rugby World Cup. Forty years ago, rugby union became more than just a game.

The Springboks, the national rugby team of South Africa, visited Australia from June to August 1971 for a tour that divided the community. Playing fields became battlefields in the struggle against the apartheid regime in South Africa.

By then, many anti-Vietnam war protesters had turned their attention to other global issues. One of these was the system of racial segregation in South Africa. For anti-apartheid activists, the Springboks – a team whose all-white composition reflected its racially based selection process – were the embodiment of this system. Activist groups such as the Anti-Apartheid Movement and Campaign Against Racism in Sport saw the 1971 Springbok tour of Australia as an opportunity to show unequivocally their opposition to apartheid. Many trade unions, churches and university students also protested against the tour.

In early 1971, protest groups were present at various sporting events in Australia that involved South African athletes. Protesters heckled South African women tennis players at tournaments in Sydney and Melbourne, and disrupted a surfing contest at Coogee before focusing on the Springboks.

The protesters were well organised, and were committed to non-violent principles. The Anti-Apartheid Movement's *Protesters' Guidebook* exhorted them to prevent matches from taking place, but 'under no circumstances do harm to the tourists or spectators, or any other sector involved'. The group advocated noisy dissent, with protesters encouraged to bring loud instruments and to repeatedly chant slogans such as 'Paint them black and send them back'.

From Perth to Toowoomba, hardcore rugby fans were joined at Springboks matches by protesters who, in the words of South African Rugby Union president Danie Craven, were 'dirty, long-haired ruffians suffering from delayed puberty'. Four matches were played at the Sydney Cricket Ground. On the night before the first Test on 17 July, protesters attempted to cut down the goalposts. The match took place nonetheless, amid smoke bombs, tear gas and feverish battles between spectators and police. Tensions escalated on the Queensland leg of the tour, when Premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen declared a state of emergency for the duration of the tour.

The Springboks were undefeated on their 1971 tour of Australia, but the protesters were victorious





as well. They attracted much attention and support for their anti-apartheid crusade, and made other South African sporting bodies think twice about sending their athletes to compete in Australia. The South African cricket tour of Australia proposed for 1971–72 was cancelled, with a ‘World XI’ touring instead of the South Africans. These events were a catalyst for the Gleneagles Agreement, signed by member countries of the Commonwealth in 1977. It sought to isolate South Africa’s apartheid regime in the international community by discouraging all sporting contact with South Africa. In a small way the 1971 Springboks tour protests contributed to the eventual dismantling of apartheid.



TOP: SMOKE BOMBS, PHOTOGRAPHS OF ANTI-APARTHEID DEMONSTRATIONS DURING 1971 SPRINGBOKS RUGBY TOUR, WAYNE DAVIES, PXE 863/3, COURTESY OF WAYNE DAVIES  
LEFT: OFFICIAL MATCH PROGRAM, PUBLISHED AS ISSUE OF *RUGBY NEWS*, ML 796.33305/4, COURTESY OF *RUGBY NEWS*

# A ROOM

*with a view*



WORDS Louise Anemaat



## FEATURE



Commonly undervalued, nineteenth century scrap albums offer a unique souvenir of time and place. The images they hold typify family and social relationships, preserving memories of loved ones, places and events sometimes through the decades or even generations.

When turning the pages of a scrap album from the Library's collection recently, just such a souvenir was uncovered. Mary-Jane Macarthur's small scrap album is distinctive in the quality and historical significance of a number of its pictures, and in the associations of its contributors. The album was presented to the Library by her granddaughter, Polly Tilley, in 1983. It came to attention recently when the brief description of its Synnot family associations was made available online by the Library's eRecords team, working to convert the card catalogues to electronic records.

After Synnot's death in 1851, Mary-Jane married pastoralist Charles Macarthur, a son of Hannibal Hawkins Macarthur and grandson of Philip Gidley King, in 1854.

The scrap album's many and varied drawings indicate a number of different hands at work, including Mary-Jane's first and second husbands.



It provides tangible evidence of the lives and the circle of these three people.

Woven locks of Synnot family hair cover a single page, and a message from George Synnot 'to his fond Mamma Mary J. Synnot' — in fact his stepmother — and several quite accomplished small watercolour drawings by Walter Synnot's mother, Jane, Lady Synnot, are also included. No drawings are signed as being by Mary-Jane.

Walter Synnot, the son of an Irish landowning family, had served in the British Army and retired to South Africa. He returned to Ireland and then sailed to Tasmania in 1836 with his third wife, Mary-Jane, and eight of the surviving children from his second marriage.

OPPOSITE: SIR MAURICE O'CONNELL'S DRAWING ROOM TARMONS, C. 1837-48, ARTIST UNKNOWN, PXA 1278 VOL. 1

ABOVE LEFT: TARMONS, WOOLLOOMOOLOO, SYDNEY, RESIDENCE OF SIR MAURICE O'CONNELL (DETAIL), 1885, GE PEACOCK, OIL ON BOARD, ML 148

ABOVE RIGHT: THE GREAT COMET, '6 MARCH 1843 V.D.L.', WALTER SYNNOT, PXA 1278 VOL. 1



Synnot's amateur drawings, usually dated and signed 'W.S.', are typical, in style and subject, of his military origins. They include naive depictions of his fellow officers and numerous, more proficient natural history drawings, mainly from Van Diemens Land. He also recorded the Great Comet of 1843 in a watercolour noting that 'it appeared with astonishing brilliancy'.

The scrap album includes at least eight drawings signed by Macarthur of views mainly in Tasmania. Some, dating from the 1830s to 1850s, pre-date Charles' marriage to Mary-Jane, and were either added after the marriage of Mary-Jane and Charles or were exchanged between the two families prior to Walter Synnot's death.

A pencil drawing of The Vineyard, the grand residence at Parramatta designed by John Verge for Charles' father, Hannibal, and completed in 1840, is glued into the album. Dated 1847, its discovery brings to six the number of known drawings or paintings of The Vineyard, including a painting by Conrad Martens (ML 48). The house was demolished in 1961.

One of the more intriguing drawings in the album shows another house designed by Verge that flourished in the mid-nineteenth century and was demolished in the 1960s. Unsigned, undated and unfinished, the watercolour is titled 'Sir Maurice O'Connell's drawing room Tarmons'. Sir Maurice O'Connell, an officer of the 73rd Regiment, was the son-in-law of William Bligh. He married Bligh's daughter, the widow Mary Putland, in May 1810. When Bligh returned to England just after the wedding, more than two years had passed since the 1808 Rum Rebellion that had deposed him as Governor of New South Wales.

Tarmons in Woolloomooloo was located on today's Victoria Street. It began as a cottage in 1830 and was extended in 1836–37 to create the two-storied, verandahed villa. On 26 June 1846, Lieutenant Colonel Godfrey Charles Mundy dined with the O'Connells at their 'beautiful villa of Tarmons'. He recorded his impressions in his book, *Our Antipodes or Residence and Rambles in the Australasian Colonies* (London, 1854).

Mundy described the general sense of wellbeing in the O'Connell household, unaffected by the excess of the 1830s, the drought of 1838–39 and the Depression which followed. At Tarmons, there were 'brisk coal fires burning in both dining and drawing room ... the general appliances of the household, the dress of

the guests and servants, were as entirely English as they could have been in London'.

The sketch of the O'Connell's drawing room at Tarmons is of particular interest not only for its detailed interiors. It complements an 1845 painting by George Edwards Peacock in the Mitchell collection of the exterior of the O'Connell home. Looking at the painting and the sketch together, it is clear that the position of the drawing room is to the right of the villa entrance.

The unfinished state of the drawing lends it an almost ghostly quality, but despite its incompleteness, it is replete with detail and invites close examination. Drawn at the end of the day, it shows the interior of the O'Connell's drawing room looking out towards Sydney through panelled glass French doors. The panels of one door are open to the covered, overhanging verandah. A dog sits outside. The verandah and uncurtained French doors allow the occupants to enjoy the Sydney climate.

The unfinished figures of two men are shown reading, seated around the room. A third man, also reading, and two women, possibly sewing or reading, are seated companionably around the draped, centre table — the focus of family life. The central placement of the table, with its tall centrepiece, follows the trend, evident since around the 1830s, to move furniture out from the walls. Two side tables, between the French doors, hold large covered dishes. Two of the figures, it seems reasonable to suppose, might be Sir Maurice and Mary O'Connell.

The high-ceilinged room is typically furnished with a deep crimson, bordered axminster carpet, green upholstered furniture — possibly rosewood — and bold, polished wooden architraves and doors. The floor is likely to be boarded, though this detail is not included in the sketch.

The walls are hung with a large, gilt-framed landscape painting, with another smaller piece, outlined in pencil, below it, on the left. Two groups of portraits hang on the far wall, with two smaller landscapes on the right wall, all gilt-framed. The landscapes are hung flush, rather than angled, from brass rods beneath the cornices; the portraits hang from a single pin in the wall.

Large squares delineate the ceiling with central, gilded medallions. A suspended, oil-burning argand light hangs from the ceiling. Weights on either side allow the light to be lowered for refilling and



trimming of the wick. The unusually high suspension of the light might be artistic licence, so as not to interfere with the depiction of the French doors, or might simply reflect a degree of technical incompetence in our unidentified, amateur artist. The drawing's perspective is also inaccurate.

This small, incomplete drawing is our most intimate glimpse into the O'Connell family drawing room, allowing us to form an idea of the tastes and habits of the people who lived in Tarmons. Sparsely furnished, the room reflects the fashion and style typical of the 1830s and 1840s. This small sketch, preserved in Mary-Jane Macarthur's carefully compiled scrap album, allows us to flesh out the character of Sir Maurice and Mary O'Connell's family and home life.



TOP: MJ MACARTHUR, C. 1854-60, PENCIL AND WATERCOLOUR, ARTIST UNKNOWN, PXA 1278 VOL. 1

ABOVE: LOCKS OF HAIR IN SCRAP ALBUM BELONGING TO MARY-JANE MACARTHUR, C. 1830s





# *Finding the* **CIRCUS TRAIL**



WORDS Mark St Leon

When, in the middle of 1968 and much to my displeasure, I was dropped into boarding school in Sydney for three terms, I began to seek light relief from the solitude of empty weekends. One Saturday afternoon, I wandered into the State Library of NSW to seek information for a history assignment. The seeds of an enduring respect for this magnificent edifice, its dedicated staff and the contents of its catalogues were thus sown.

A year or so later, a latent fascination for my family's past in the circus was piqued by the revelations of distant cousins whose unexpected visit raised more questions than provided answers. According to family folklore, St Leon's Circus was the first circus in Australia, but that's about all I knew. Things were not made clearer by handed-down allusions to a vaguely aristocratic French past or by a sepia-toned *carte-de-visite* — of a well-built but unidentified young man with arms folded and dressed in the scant attire of a bareback rider — found in an old hatbox in the attic.

I hastened to the State Library again, determined to find out something about St Leon's Circus. But all I could find was a single reference in the card catalogue of the Mitchell Library to an eight-page pamphlet authored by my great-uncle, Gus St Leon, entitled

*The Clown's Revel: A Collection of Songs Sung with Unrivalled Success*, printed at Queanbeyan in 1882. The pamphlet, bearing the signature of DS Mitchell, is part of the original Mitchell collection. Apart from that little gem and a few other pieces of ephemera, no one, it seemed, had taken the trouble to chronicle the history of the circus in Australia. By default, the task had fallen upon my shoulders.

If a circus travelled and entertained, I reasoned, surely its movements and activities would be captured in newspapers of the day. At that time, the 1970s, microfilm readers were a novelty and most of the Library's newspaper collection was contained in large bound volumes. As I fumbled through country newspapers of the 1870s, I entered an age of horsepower, buggies and coaches, of top hats, crinolines and gas lamps. The colonial journalism, thanks to the immigration of highly trained English journalists, was outstanding.

Eventually I reached the pages of the *Wagga Wagga Express* of September 1879 to see before me advertisements for St Leon's Big Show. The circus was about to visit the township for its local race week, detailing day and date, artists and attractions. In an adjacent column were advertisements for a rival circus, Ashton's, still in business today. Words cannot adequately



ABOVE: THE LONDON TUMBLER WHO ESTABLISHED THE ST LEON FAMILY CIRCUS, PHOTOGRAPHED IN BRISBANE, 1882, MARK ST LEON COLLECTION, PIC ACC 5250

OPPOSITE: THE ST LEON TROUPE, INTERNATIONAL STARS OF THE TEETERBOARD, MEXICO, LATE 1950S



describe the mix of emotions I felt at this moment. Reconnecting across five generations with a lost and forgotten past, I felt as Howard Carter probably felt as he peered into Tutankhamen's tomb in 1922 and saw 'wonderful things ... strange animals, statues and ... everywhere the glint of gold'.

Having picked up the trail of the family circus, I pursued it relentlessly throughout Australia and New Zealand. As I ploughed through one newspaper after another, I gradually became aware that, in the century or so between the gold rushes of the 1850s and the introduction of television in the 1950s, Australasia was kept amused by an incredibly diverse industry of travelling entertainers. They differed widely in quality and reputation and catered for a range of tastes, but all grappled with the challenges of delivering entertainment over long distances in rudimentary conditions. As well as circus, there were variety, minstrel, marionette, medicine, wild west, panorama and magic lantern shows, menageries, carnivals, boxing troupes, brass bands, magicians, singers, lecturers and merry-go-rounds. Then there were hawkers, medicine men, phrenologists, snake charmers, and showground spielers and cheapjacks.

Having entered an almost completely uncharted area of Australia's history, I had only boundless curiosity to guide my enquiries. Signposts were few, while the value of my enquiries — if any — was unclear. The luxuries of digital technologies and online access were unknown. With the benefit of hindsight, there were shortcuts I could have taken.

Over many years of research, the contours of my family's history have gradually taken shape. In fact, I have not found any other family in any genre of Australian entertainment whose history can be traced as far back. My great-great-grandfather John Jones, a London tumbler, was landed in chains in Hobart Town in 1843. Granted his freedom four years later, he appeared as one of the 'four wonderful acrobats' in Radford's Royal Circus, arguably Australia's first circus, in Launceston in December 1847. In 1851, he organised his own circus on the goldfields at Sofala. Taking the name of 'Matthew St Leon' for professional purposes in 1865, the family remained active in circus and other branches of popular entertainment, in Australia and the United States, across five generations until the 1960s.

In the early 2000s, after some 30 years of research and increasingly aware of my own mortality, I switched my attention to documenting my endeavours. In the past decade I have produced books, limited edition monographs, and scholarly and general articles. My scholarly articles have so far linked Australia's circus history to fields as diverse as popular culture, Indigenous studies, regional, transport, sporting, accounting, educational and military history. The State Library receives copies of these published works as legal deposits.

TOP LEFT: ST LEON BROS  
CIRCUS ON THE BANKS  
OF THE MURRAY RIVER AT  
LOXTON, SOUTH AUSTRALIA,  
1911, MARK ST LEON  
COLLECTION, PIC ACC 5250

TOP RIGHT: WALTER  
ST LEON IN THE ATTIRE  
OF A BAREBACK RIDER,  
TAMWORTH, 1878



I am gradually devolving my research material to the Mitchell Library. This includes photographs, transcripts of interviews, correspondence, documents and printed ephemera. In 2009 I handed over a card index containing about 10,000 cards and an estimated 30,000 entries. These resources may inform anyone else intending to explore the diverse industry of live entertainment – circus or otherwise – that kept Australians amused before the electronic age. Our understanding of the character of contemporary Australian society and culture would be greatly enriched by such endeavours.

And just who was that bareback rider whose *carte-de-visite* I found in the family hatbox? After investigating the Tamworth photographer's details on the back of the image, checking and cross-checking with other images I came across in my searches, I concluded that he was my great-grandfather, Walter St Leon, photographed during the visit of St Leon's 'Big Show & Great Moral Classic Circus' to Tamworth in October 1878.

**Mark St Leon's latest book is *Circus: The Australian Story*.**



TOP LEFT: MARK ST LEON WITH MATERIAL HE DONATED TO THE LIBRARY, PHOTO BY JOY LAI

TOP RIGHT: ST LEONS CIRCUS FLYER PRODUCED FOR TOUR OF NEW ZEALAND, C. 1920, MARK ST LEON COLLECTION, PIC ACC 5250



## PRESERVING THE FUTURE

# *shining* ATLAS



With Foundation support, traditional book-binding techniques and X-ray technology have helped preserve a beautifully engraved atlas.

The rare Dutch atlas – *De nieuwe groote lichtende Zee-fakkel* or *The New Great Shining Torch of the Sea* – was published in six parts between 1714 and 1753. The first part includes plates dating back to the 1680s. Representing a high point in the production of sea charts by the Van Keulen family, it is a magnificent example of Dutch cartography in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Each part begins with a lavish hand-coloured and gilded title page. A stunning example is the opening of the first volume, which shows the sea-god Neptune standing behind a large celestial sphere with a trident in one hand and a pair of dividers in the other. The charts are engraved with large decorative cartouches, compass roses, and rhumb lines for navigation.

The final part of the atlas contains sailing instructions and charts essential for navigation in the East Indies, including the coastal waters around South-East Asia and northern Australia.

The complete six-part set held by the Library is bound in two volumes in cream vellum with elaborate gilt tooling. Although the atlas has enjoyed optimal storage conditions at the Library, it suffered damage from moisture and poor handling prior to acquisition.

As part of the Mitchell Library Centenary Appeal, a team of expert State Library conservators has treated both volumes. To begin they closely examined the binding, the maps attached to their guards, and the pigments. After dusting and dry-cleaning

to remove surface dirt, more than 30 maps were removed and humidified to flatten out creases.

Before repairing tears, conservators used X-ray fluorescence analysis to examine the pigments used over two centuries ago. The spectacular illustrations were coloured with vermilion, rose madder (a plant-derived pigment used for thousands of years), lead white and lead tin yellow, all commonly used by cartographers of the time.

The presence of copper pigment was also confirmed through X-ray analysis. The copper had made areas of the paper brittle, a condition that would get worse if too much water was used in the treatment. For this reason, instead of using wheat starch paste to attach fine pieces of Japanese tissue paper over the tears, conservators applied a dried gelatine film adhesive that only requires a small amount of water.

Once repaired, the charts were attached back into the volumes on their original guards or hinges. The vellum covers were cleaned, treated and repaired, and new headbands were attached. Customised ‘clamshell’ boxes will be built to house each volume and preserve the atlas.

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**NICHOLA PARSHALL**  
Collection Preservation



TOP: CONSERVATOR NICOLE ELLIS REMOVES A CHART FROM *DIE NIEUWE GROOTE LICHTENDE ZEE-FAKKE*, 1714-53, AMSTERDAM: JOHANNES VAN KEULEN, 1753, X912/11

ABOVE: X-RAY ANALYSIS HELPED DETECT COPPER PIGMENT IN THE ATLAS

# new acquisitions



## Dumaresq watercolours

A recently acquired album of beautiful views of the Dumaresq estate of St Heliers, near Muswellbrook NSW, is inscribed on the title page 'Christiana Susan Dumaresq 13th October 1830'. It contains the only known images of the newly built Dumaresq homestead at St Heliers before its demolition in the 1850s.

Christiana was the second daughter of Alexander and Elizabeth McLeay of Elizabeth Bay house. In 1830 she married Captain William Dumaresq, deputy surveyor general and a brother-in-law to Governor Ralph Darling. The St Heliers estate belonged to William's brother, Colonel Henry Dumaresq, military secretary to Governor Darling.

To our surprise, when the album arrived from the auction house in London it was discovered that it also contained 15 photographs. Unrecognised, they had been simply described at sale as 'a number of sepia photographs'. These proved to be rare 1850s images

taken in Sydney by Matthew Fortescue Moresby. An amateur photographer and sketcher, Moresby was stationed in Sydney from 1856 to 1860 with the first British naval station in Australia. Moresby's photographs include Tivoli, the Rose Bay residence of William and Christiana Dumaresq. Today the house is part of Kambala girls school.

Prior to this acquisition, no works by Christiana Dumaresq were held by the Mitchell Library and these seem to be the only known, documented works by her. This album is among the earliest known work by a woman artist in Australia. The sketchbook passed by descent through the family until its recent purchase by the Library.

**LOUISE ANEMAAT**  
Head of Pictures



# White and Weary

Sir Edward ‘Weary’ Dunlop and Patrick White are two iconic figures whose names are recognisable to generations of Australians, the former for his work in the prisoner of war camps on the infamous Burma–Thailand Railway, and the latter as the only Australian to have been awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature.

While their achievements were in vastly different fields, these two men come together in a recently acquired collection, donated to the Library by the late Dr Rowan Nicks AO, OBE. The collection of private correspondence includes four letters and two postcards from White to Nicks, written between 11 February 1970 and 21 April 1976. White writes candidly about his work, friends, travels and his belief in God. In one, dated 27 July 1975, he thanks Nicks ‘for your letter of congrats’, going on to say ‘I already feel acceptance was a mistake — too many people wanting me to do incongruous things which get between me and my work’. While it is unclear which award White may be referring to (possibly the 1973 Nobel Prize or the 1973 Australian of the Year Award), the sentiments echo his antipathy towards the Nobel Prize, which he described to another correspondent, Ragnar Christophersen, as ‘a farce’ (see ML MSS 7953).

The bulk of the collection, however, comprises 34 letters to Nicks from ‘Weary’ Dunlop. These letters, many written on blue aerogramme paper and others on Sir Edward’s personalised stationery, date from 9 July 1977 to 15 January 1992. They speak of a deep and abiding friendship between the two men, who had much in common. Both were surgeons who served in the Second World War — Sir Edward with the Australian Army Medical Corps in the Middle East, Java and on the Burma–Thailand Railway, and Nicks with the Royal Naval Medical Service. Both men pursued distinguished medical careers after the war, and in retirement both travelled extensively — Sir Edward to Asia and India, and Nicks to Africa — promoting and training medical professionals.

Sir Edward writes with great admiration of his friend’s travels and work in Africa and appreciation for his friendship. The feelings were mutual, as reflected in a tribute written by Nicks in the *Asia Pacific Journal of Thoracic Cardiovascular Surgery*. Nicks wrote that Sir Edward was ‘beloved of his friends and enjoyed the acclaim of the people in his later years’. Sir Edward, who was regarded as

a gregarious person with a good sense of humour, was a diligent correspondent. These letters are replete with the affection and respect born of a genuine friendship, and confirm these attributes.

**TRACY BRADFORD**  
Head of Manuscripts



TOP: EDWARD ‘WEARY’ DUNLOP ON BANKS OF RIVER KWAI, THAILAND, C. 1986, ROBERT MCFARLANE, PXE 809/22, COURTESY OF ROBERT MCFARLANE

LEFT: A SELECTION OF LETTERS FROM SIR EDWARD ‘WEARY’ DUNLOP TO DR ROWAN NICKS, 1977–1992, ML MSS 8069

ABOVE: PATRICK WHITE, KINGS CROSS, 1980, BY WILLIAM YANG, PXD 878, COURTESY OF WILLIAM YANG

# discover/collections

## Rio Tinto partnership: Rediscovering Indigenous Languages

The Foundation is thrilled to announce an exciting new partnership with Rio Tinto: *Discover Collections: Rediscovering Indigenous Languages*. This partnership continues Rio Tinto's collaboration with the State Library of NSW since 2004, particularly with the award-winning *Discover Collections: Indigenous Australians* online story. A world leader in mining and exploration, Rio Tinto is the largest private sector employer of Indigenous Australians.

The Library holds a unique collection of Indigenous vocabularies and wordlists compiled by early colonists and visitors from 1788 through to the late 1930s. These archival records are letters, manuscripts, diaries and journals which document Indigenous languages of NSW, Queensland, Victoria and Tasmania. They are often the only surviving records of these languages. Recent government and community initiatives are attempting to rescue and preserve these critically endangered Indigenous languages and bring renewed national and international attention to some of the 'oldest surviving languages in the world'.

The three-year project aims to identify as many of these wordlists and vocabularies as possible and make them available, not only to the relevant Indigenous communities, but also to the general public through an innovative online multimedia presentation.

With the support of Rio Tinto, *Rediscovering Indigenous Languages* will add significantly to the current interest in community-driven language



reclamation and produce a valuable resource for research and education.

We are excited to announce that Mr Mick Gooda, Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, has accepted the role of Patron for this project. Dr Michael Walsh, a pre-eminent linguist of Aboriginal languages, is identifying the relevant material in the Library's collection to inform the project.

**SUSAN HUNT**

Director, State Library of NSW  
Foundation



RIGHT TOP: THE GEORGES RIVER TRIBE, NSW, 1880, FROM AUSTRALIAN INDIGENOUS MINISTRIES - PICTORIAL COLLECTION - VARIOUS HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPHS, C. 1860-1909, PXA 773/BOX 6

RIGHT: SUSAN HUNT DIRECTOR, STATE LIBRARY OF NSW FOUNDATION PHOTO BY BELINDA CHRISTIE





## Magnificent Dixon maps

Thanks to the generosity of many Foundation supporters, the Sir William Dixon map collection has been preserved and digitised.

The Foundation raised funds to digitise the magnificent collection of over 1000 maps bequeathed to the Library in 1952 by Sir William Dixon. For over a year, a team of Library curators, conservators and photographers has been diligently preserving and photographing the maps. We are now pleased to confirm that the project has been completed and an online showcase of selected maps is available.

The collection has many rare examples of world maps created by Dutch cartographers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, including hand-coloured maps by Ortelius, Blaeu, de Wit and Jansson. Many of the maps are manuscript copies, possibly unknown, by inland explorers including

Sir Thomas Mitchell, Ludwig Leichhardt and Augustus Gregory. A selection of fascinating maps identified through the project includes George Barney's *A Map of Brisbane Town* from 1839, the hand-coloured *Plan Showing the Shifting Sands of Newcastle* in 1850 and the 1873 *Plan of the Circular Quay including the Harbor Steamers Wharf*.

In the Winter 2010 issue of *SL* magazine we illustrated the delicate process of conserving the maps, which were then photographed with specialised map-scanning equipment and placed in temperature and humidity-controlled storage.

Our Foundation supporters have made it possible for the Library to revitalise these precious maps and showcase them online to new audiences.

INDIAE ORIENTALIS  
INSVLARVMQVE  
ADIACENTIUM TYPVVS,  
[ANTVERPIAE: ORTELIUS,  
1584], Z/CA 58/1





## Life and times of May Gibbs

In May the Foundation started raising funds to develop an online collection on the life and times of May Gibbs.

One of Australia's foremost children's authors and illustrators, May Gibbs is best known for the iconic Australian story *The Complete Adventures of Snugglepot and Cuddlepie*, but there is much more to her life's story.

May Gibbs was born in Kent, England, on 17 January 1877. Her family migrated to South Australia in 1881 and four years later moved to Harvey River homestead, Western Australia – where she spent two impressionable years in the Australian bush – before finally settling at The Dune, Perth. Demonstrating artistic ability at an early age, with a penchant for fantasy and satire, Gibbs was encouraged to study art in England and often travelled abroad.

After moving to Neutral Bay in 1913 she maintained a steady livelihood with publishers' commissions, especially for works she wrote and illustrated. In 1916 Angus & Robertson – which would be her publisher for 50 years – offered to print *Gumnut Babies*, the first in a series of five wildflower baby booklets.

On 17 April 1919 Gibbs married mining agent Bertram James Ossoli Kelly, who became her manager. The 1920s proved to be a prolific and prosperous period for Gibbs as a syndicated cartoonist and columnist. In 1925 they moved into Nutcote in Neutral Bay where she created a largely English-style garden.

In 1955 Gibbs was appointed a Member of the British Empire for her contribution to children's literature and in 1969 the Commonwealth Literary Fund granted her a literary pension. May Gibbs died in Sydney on 27 November 1969.

The Library holds substantial published and unpublished material on May Gibbs, including a wide selection of manuscripts, pictorial items and printed works.

**If you are interested in supporting this fascinating and significant story, please contact Kay Payne, Partnership Manager, on (02) 9273 1517.**



TOP: FLANNEL FLOWERS AND OTHER BUSH BABIES, C. 1917, MAY GIBBS PXD 304 (V.1) /65

ABOVE: DR STORK POSTER, 1918, MAY GIBBS, XV / 34

TOP RIGHT: MAY GIBBS, N.D., PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN, PXD 304 / VOL. 17 /1820



## Miles Franklin Literary Award

The Miles Franklin collection is one of the Mitchell Library's great treasures.

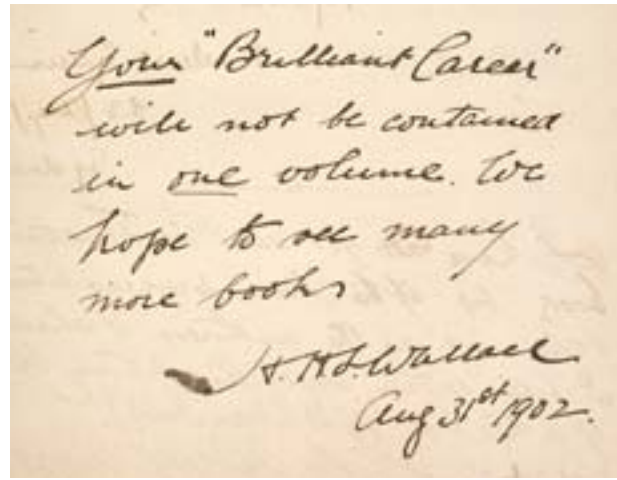
This year, for the first time, the Miles Franklin Literary Award was announced in Melbourne. The award dinner was held at the State Library of Victoria on Wednesday 22 June, hosted by The Trust Company as trustees of Miles Franklin's will as well as this year's judges of the award, one of whom was Mitchell Librarian Richard Neville.

The focus at the dinner was the award itself, and this year's short-listed writers. There was a strong sense of Miles, too, thanks to information panels around the dining area, and a new Miles Franklin Award website nearby. (Whoever thought of creating a new waratah book for the guests to sign deserves a medal.)

Several new features ensured a successful event. Most important was the decision not to announce the award winner beforehand. This meant that all the short-listed authors were present. Moreover, this most illustrious of Australian literary awards has been strengthened. It is now worth \$50,000, and for the first time the short-listed authors also received \$5000 each.

The three short-listed authors were Kim Scott, Roger McDonald and Chris Womersley, and the winner, Kim Scott, is a West Australian Indigenous writer. Scott endeared himself, to me at least, by saying in his thank you speech that he had not prepared anything because it would be bound to jinx his chances if he did, and by his generous reference to his colleagues. In her report, chief judge Morag Fraser AM said Scott's novel *The Deadman Dance* was 'heart- and mind-stretching', 'clear-eyed and prophetic'. The judges' assessment of the short-listed works is on the new website, as is the long list.

In addition to the thoughtful and encouraging remarks by the Trust's Master of Ceremonies Simon



Lewis and Trust CEO John Atkin, we were welcomed to country by Aunty Joy Murphy of the Wurundjeri people, and there was a formal welcome by the Hon. John Cain, president of the Library Council of Australia. We now have a separate Miles Franklin Oration, delivered by the previous year's winner — in this case, Peter Temple — sponsored by The Trust and the University of Melbourne. It will soon be on the website.

Another welcome initiative is the 2011 Vision Australia Braille Book of the Year, to be awarded in association with the Franklin Award on World Sight Day this coming October.

The amount of thought and care that the Trust team put into the evening was most impressive. I'm sure Miles would be delighted. Mention should also be made of the support of the Copyright Agency Limited and the libraries. A high standard has been set for Brisbane (the award will tour state capitals in future). But if I'm still standing I'll be there.

Morag Fraser has announced her retirement after nine years chairing the judging panel. A strong vote of appreciation is in order. She left us with a salutary message: at a recent talk to senior tertiary students, she found that apart from one who had vaguely heard of Patrick White, none knew anything about any of the writers she mentioned.

**JILL ROE**

**Jill Roe is the author of *Stella Miles Franklin: A Life*. She was a guest of The Trust Company at the 2011 Miles Franklin Literary Award Dinner in Melbourne.**

**Admirers of Miles Franklin can enjoy a free reading of her play *The Dead Must Not Return!* (an unpublished work in the Library's Miles Franklin collection) at the Toxteth Hotel in Glebe on Tuesday 6 September at 7 pm.**

ABOVE LEFT: MILES FRANKLIN WINNER KIM SCOTT, PHOTO BY MARK GAMBINO  
ABOVE RIGHT: MILES FRANKLIN: THE BOOK OF THE WARATAH CUP (DETAIL) 1902-08 1944-54 R 230C

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### Exclusive book offer

*Book Life: The Life and Times of David Scott Mitchell 1836-1907*

by Eileen Chanin

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Australia's greatest book collector, David Scott Mitchell, gave his extraordinary collection to the people of Sydney and the world. This is the first comprehensive account of his life and what, how and why he collected, told through his books, reading and correspondence. The story of Mitchell's life and his collecting opens a window on the world of ideas, literature, libraries and philanthropy in the nineteenth century. Eileen Chanin's *Book Life* was launched at the Library in May. The author is pictured here, centre, with Alan Ventress, Director of the State Records Authority of NSW, and Margy Burn, Assistant Director-General, Australian Collections & Reader Services, National Library of Australia; both are former Mitchell Librarians.

The offer is available at the Library Shop, phone: (02) 9273 1611, email <libshop@sl.nsw.gov.au>.



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# HIGHLIGHTS



/01



/02



/03



/04



/05

01 STEPHEN MALARKY, COMMUNITY LEARNING SERVICES, AND YOUNG LIBRARY VISITORS IN THE NEW GLASSHOUSE LEARNING SPACE, 13 APRIL  
PHOTO BY JOY LAI

06 AT MORAN PRIZES 2011  
PHOTO BY BRUCE YORK

07 THE HON. GEORGE SOURIS MP, MINISTER FOR TOURISM, MAJOR EVENTS, HOSPITALITY AND RACING, AND MINISTER FOR THE ARTS, SECOND FROM LEFT, WITH THE LIBRARY DIRECTORS FRANCES SIMS AND NOELLE NELSON, AND LIBRARY COUNCIL MEMBER DR JOHN VALANCE, 12 MAY  
PHOTO BY BRUCE YORK



/06

02 CARVED TREES EXHIBITION CO-CURATOR RONALD BRIGGS AT THE OPENING WITH MARY KENNEDY AND BARBARA STANLEY FROM THE NGEMBA WAILWAN ARTISTS' GROUP (WARREN, NSW), 15 APRIL  
PHOTO BY SARAH HERMAN

08 MINISTER SOURIS LAUNCHES THE GLASSHOUSE LEARNING SPACE, 12 MAY  
PHOTO BY BRUCE YORK



/07

03 ROMANCE WAS BORN DESIGNERS ANNA PLUNKETT AND LUKE SALES WITH CATE BLANCHETT, 2 MAY  
PHOTO BY DANIEL BOUD

04 JACK ATLEY'S PHOTOGRAPH OF STEVE WAUGH AO AND THREE-YEAR-OLD SARAH WALKER WINS THE MORAN CONTEMPORARY PHOTOGRAPHIC AWARD, 3 MAY  
PHOTO BY BRUCE YORK

05 MARIE CLAIRE DENT AND SARAH HAYMAN AT THE MORAN PRIZES 2011 LAUNCH IN FRONT OF SHANE BOWDEN & DEAN REILLY'S PORTRAIT OF MAX MARKSON, 3 MAY  
PHOTO BY BRUCE YORK



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*recent highlights*



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- 09 ARTISTS THE LATE MARGARET OLLEY AC, AND CHARLES BLACKMAN OBE AT A 30-YEAR CELEBRATION FOR BERKLEY EDITIONS, 12 MAY PHOTO BY SARAH HERMAN
- 10 NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY AWARD 2011 WINNER, ALASDAIR MCGREGOR, AND AWARD BENEFACTOR MICHAEL CROUCH AO, 16 MAY PHOTO BY BRUCE YORK
- 11 VOLUNTEERS AT A SPECIAL VIEWING OF AUDUBON'S BIRDS OF AMERICA, WITH DANIEL PARSA, ACCESS AND INFORMATION, CENTRE, 19 MAY PHOTO BY BRUCE YORK
- 12 MAGGIE PATTON WITH DUTCH ANTIQUARIAN BOOKSELLER FREDERIK MULLER AT THE AUSTRALIAN & NEW ZEALAND MAP CONFERENCE, 23 MAY PHOTO BY BRUCE YORK
- 13 RALPH PLINER, TAL DIRECTOR; KOICHIRO WATANABE, PRESIDENT, DAI-ICHI LIFE; NORIKO (KOUJIRO) BROWN, INTERPRETER; TAKAYUKI KOTANI, GENERAL MANAGER, INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS MANAGEMENT; STEVEN BELL, CONSERVATOR; AND ROB THOMAS, PRESIDENT, LIBRARY COUNCIL OF NSW, AT THE TAL AND DAI-ICHI LIFE EVENT, 6 JUNE PHOTO BY BRUCE YORK
- 14 PETA STRACHAN, FRONT, AND RAYMA JOHNSON, IN THE WELCOME TO COUNTRY AT THE TAL AND DAI-ICHI LIFE EVENT PHOTO BY SHARON HICKEY





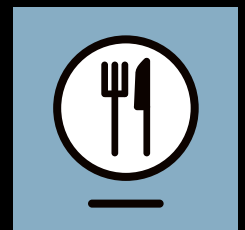
# Delicious



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# ‘Q&A *Jennifer Byrne*

**F** *First Tuesday Book Club* host Jennifer Byrne visited the State Library for promotional photographs and found a knight-errant.



PHOTO BY ANDY BAKER

—  
**IF YOU COULD INTERVIEW  
A LONG-DEAD AUTHOR,  
WHO WOULD IT BE?**

Charles Dickens — because he would make sure it was a good article.

—  
**WHO IS THE MOST  
INTRIGUING PERSON  
YOU’VE INTERVIEWED?**

Keith Richards.

—  
**YOUR FAVOURITE LITERARY  
CHARACTER AS A CHILD ...**

Winnie the Pooh.

—  
**AND NOW ...**

Winnie the Pooh.

—  
**WHAT MAKES A  
SUCCESSFUL BOOKCLUB?**

Energy. Open minds.  
Irrational love of books.

—  
**BOOK V E-READER ...**

I have all the means for e-reading, and respect it. But I go for paper books every time.

—  
**IS THERE A BOOK YOU  
JUST COULDN’T FINISH?**

*Ulysses*.

—  
**WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN  
YOU’RE NOT READING  
FOR WORK?**

I read for myself. I still love it. And I walk the dog.

—  
**WHAT WAS THE HIGHLIGHT  
OF YOUR RECENT VISIT  
TO THE LIBRARY?**

Definitely the Friends Room with the Library’s Don Quixote collection. What a concept!

