

FRIENDS REVIEW

AUGUST 2020

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From the President



This has been a challenging year for all Australians and particularly difficult for museums, galleries and cultural centres. The year began in Australia with fires and widespread tragedy which has involved many communities and families in terrifying ways. As regional communities began to clear debris and contemplate the future, the COVID-19 pandemic brought further disruption, loss and uncertainty.

Many major events and conferences were cancelled and an early loss was our own WFFM Congress at the end of March 2020. For the dedicated and hardworking committee which spanned two cities, Sydney and Canberra, it was a heartbreaking but responsible decision to cancel this event. The team led by Carolyn Forster OAM, President of the World Federation of Friends of Museums, had been working for more than a year to curate a truly stellar programme that would have showcased the very best of our nation to our international delegates. The programme was possible because of philanthropic support, in-kind sponsorship from major institutions and above all was the product of investment by many volunteers.

On a personal note I commend them for not only developing such a fabulous World Congress but managing the unexpected last phase of the planning so professionally.

The long term consequences of the global pandemic are as yet undefined and unquantifiable but our institutions have been busy behind closed doors rethinking their business models, pivoting towards more digital content and in some cases using the time to clear some neglected backlogs of tasks. Unfortunately, many of our volunteers have been at high risk and unable to even attend to back office tasks.

After the fires I encouraged those of us in capital cities to assist not just by making charitable donations but by visiting and spending within tourism centres. Now, all regional towns are suffering economically, so I encourage metropolitan Friends to get onto the road and enjoy some local tourism. Visiting regional centres supports local businesses and is an opportunity to support the efforts of volunteers in art galleries, museums and heritage centres.

The economic and social impacts of bushfires and the pandemic have added global disruption to the pressure that the cultural sector already faces. If you have an opportunity to speak with any of the politicians distributing economic stimulus packages, it might be worth explaining that infrastructure investment with long term social gains can be found within the cultural sector and not just within transport.

At our 2019 AGM in Hobart the most popular presentations were from regional Friends such as the vibrant and campaigning team from the Burnie Regional Art Gallery and Museum. We will showcase Burnie Friends and other similar groups in future newsletters, so send in your news please.

Such awareness raising opportunities are important as the economy recovers and is a way to support our sector.

Whilst we had expected our 2020 AGM to be hosted by the Friends of the New England Regional Art Museum in October, due to the continuing uncertainty nationally we expect the meeting to be entirely digital. Possibly next year we may be able to visit Armidale for our 2021 AGM, enjoy a road trip and help to support the local economy.

As ever our cultural institutions will be part of the recovery process and our Friends the backbone of our communities. Thank you.

Jane Lomax-Smith AM
President, Australian Federation
of Friends of Museums

AGM and museum visits in Hobart, 25 October 2019

Delegates who attended the AFFM Annual General Meeting in Hobart on 25 October 2019 enjoyed networking opportunities and visits to the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery and the Museum of Old and New Art (MONA).



Left: Delegates chat at morning tea at the Annual General Meeting.



Left: Enjoying a presentation at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery.



AFFM President Jane Lomax-Smith and
WFFM President Carolyn Forster at MONA.

YOUR WINDOW TO THE ARTS

neram.com.au

JOIN THE FRIENDS

become a member
support the museum

The Friends of New England Regional Art Gallery (NERAM) have recently paid for a striking new decal for the front window of the Museum.

Save the date

The AFFM AGM

The AFFM AGM and
election of Office Bearers
will be held via Zoom on
Friday 23 October 2020,
at 10am AEST.

Friends organisations and Covid-19

Lucy Chetcuti, Weekend and Memberships Coordinator at the Drill Hall Gallery, Australian National University, has asked fellow AFFM members in the ACT about how they have adapted their Friends programs during the Covid-19 pandemic.

There were swift responses from three Friends organisations in the ACT: Dr Ray Edmondson, President of the Friends of the National Film and Sound Archive; Rachel Hopkins, Acting Membership Coordinator, National Portrait Gallery; and Melanie Olde, Friends Executive Officer, National Library of Australia.

All three reported that they have been engaging with members through regular e-newsletters, and all have extended their membership periods. Online events such as a webinar featuring a documentary film and discussion with the film maker (Friends of NFSA), and two online Zoom events per month, one with authors and the other collection-based (National Library of Australia) have kept Friends connected with these institutions.

They may be continued post-pandemic, as they are fairly low cost.

The National Portrait Gallery is considering member previews for upcoming exhibitions, and priority booking upon reopening.

The National Library's Melanie Olde reported that 'We sent a survey out early on, to see how our members would like to engage online. Mostly this was fairly positive, with even splits for watching, reading and listening.' She believes that 'the reach for online activities is beneficial'.

Has your Friends organisation developed new and innovative ways of engaging and retaining members at this difficult time? We would love to hear from you.

A message from the Editor, *Friends Review*

Our goal for *Friends Review* is to include coverage of as many Friends and Members activities across Australia as we can in each issue—and that goes for events, programs and exhibitions in member institutions as well.

In future we will produce two issues per year—in June/July and November/December.

Please send contributions and images by the copy deadlines:

End of April for June/July

End of October for November/December.

Please send your contribution to Ros Russell, email ros@rrmuseumservices.com.au

Now that *Friends Review* is an e-newsletter, it can be sent to all your Friends and Members, or a link to the PDF can be provided on your website.

Know My Name:

Australian Women Artists 1900 to Now at the National Gallery of Australia

On 13 November 2020, Australian women artists will take centre stage across the National Gallery of Australia, with the opening of the major exhibition, Know My Name: Australian Women Artists 1900 to Now. Know My Name is a landmark initiative that celebrates all women, and ushers in a new chapter for the Gallery, changing the historical gender bias by reconsidering the many stories of Australian art through the lens of women's art practices.

Postponed from its original May opening due to the pandemic closure, the now expanded exhibition will bring together more than 350 works of art including new commissions, performances and works drawn from the national collection, as well as collections across Australia.

The exhibition will feature artists such as Destiny Deacon, Marie Hagerty, Emily Kame Kngwarreye, Margaret Preston, and Margaret

Worth. Highlights include a floor-to-ceiling presentation of artists' portraits of artists; a commission by the Tjanpi Desert Weavers; the work of pioneering performance artists Bonita Ely and Jill Orr; a complete edition of Tracey Moffatt's key photographic series, an installation by Justene Williams and more.

To coincide with the exhibition opening, the National Gallery will host 'Know My Name: Women and

Art in the 21st Century', a three-day conference from 11 November, celebrating the role of women as artists, researchers, mentors, and activists.

As well as the exhibition and the conference, the Know My Name initiative also includes a national art event on billboards across the country, and new entries on Wikipedia about women artists and new learning programs.

Roma Butler, from Irrunytju in Western Australia, and Yangi Yangi Fox, from Pipalyatjara in South Australia, with their sculptures, 2017. Photo: Rhett Hammerton.



News about people

Caroline Downer is the Executive Director of Arts North West with over 20 years' experience in the gallery sector. Moving to Armidale in 1997, Caroline began as the Public Programs Officer at the New England Regional Art Museum, moving through various roles including Travelling Exhibitions Manager and Curator. Following a short break, she returned to the Museum as Director in 2008.



Caroline Downer OAM

In 2015 she was appointed Executive Director of Arts North West, the regional arts development organisation for the New England North West. Arts North West facilitates the development of arts and cultural projects and initiatives across the region, increasing participation in arts and cultural activities. It builds cultural community capacity, through advice and advocacy, through substantial professional development provision and with the forging of key partnerships and networks. In 2017 Arts North West took over the coordination of the Museums Australia New England Chapter and now delivers professional development workshops and networking opportunities for the many volunteer-run museums in the region.

Caroline is committed to regional community arts organisations and is interested in a broad range of the arts, from visual arts and film, to music.

She has coordinated large regional music festivals, and served on a number of arts committees including the State Government's Classical Music Artform Advisory Board.

She holds a Bachelor of Arts (Hons), a Bachelor of Music (Hons Performance), a Postgraduate Diploma in Art Curatorship and Museum Management and a Master of Arts Honours (Museum Studies) from The University of Melbourne and is a member of the 2014 cohort of the Australia Council's Emerging Leaders Developing Program.

In 2020, Caroline was awarded a Medal in the Order of Australia for services to performing and visual arts. Caroline said the OAM emphasised

the importance of arts and creativity in our regional communities, particularly during this difficult COVID-19 pandemic.

'When many of our arts venues have had to close, it has been really obvious that the arts play such an integral role in a healthy, happy and inclusive community.

Many people have turned to the arts as a source of real comfort,' Caroline said. 'So, I am delighted that the arts sector is acknowledged in this special way.'

'One of the highlights of my career is meeting and working with the wonderful creative people in this region. I see this award as a tribute to the extraordinary arts volunteers who work behind the scenes in museums and galleries, and who are on committees that support theatre, music and dance in our region. With their support, our communities are so much richer.'

Dr Darryl McIntyre FAIM,

1949-2020, who had a long career in the museum community in Australia and also the United Kingdom, passed away peacefully at home on 31 May, his beloved husband Gordon by his side. He had been experiencing ill-health for some years.

Dr McIntyre served as Chief Executive Officer of the National Film and Sound Archive from November 2008 to November 2010, when he resigned to pursue personal research interests, historical writing and work in the not-for-profit cultural sector, including a term as Museums Australia President from 2009 to 2012.

He was Deputy Director and Group Director, Public Programs at the Museum of London from November 2003 until October 2008.

Before moving to London, Dr McIntyre was General Manager, Core Operations and then Public Programs and Content Services at the National Museum of Australia (1994 to 2003), where he was involved with the conceptual planning and development and construction of the new museum facility on Acton Peninsula. From 1985 to 1994 he worked in the Cultural Heritage Branch of the Arts portfolio, including two years as Assistant Secretary for Cultural Heritage where he worked closely with all the national collecting institutions and was a member of a Commonwealth/state working party on heritage issues. From 1972 to 1985 he worked at the Australian War Memorial, including five years on the official history of the Korean War with Professor Robert O'Neill AO.

Louise Douglas, former Assistant Director, Audience and Programs, at the National Museum of Australia has paid tribute to her late colleague:

'Darryl and I worked together as senior managers at the National Museum of Australia from 1994 to 2003 – during the heady years of the Museum being approved, built and opened, and then through the exhilaration of operating as a new and innovative public institution. He was a terrific colleague and expertly guided me (an outsider) through the mysteries of the Commonwealth public service with generosity and a mischievous sense of humour. He had a Herculean capacity for work and laid strong foundations for the Museum's operations and practices, many of which are still evident today.'



Paul Worstead
Cooking fish and chips in paradise 1976
 Screenprint and photo-screenprint on paper
 92.5 x 92.3c

These images of NSW Premier Neville Wran installed in Penrith Regional Gallery reflect the Wran government's support for the Gallery's establishment. They are popularly known as 'the Nevilles'.

Circle of Friends

Circle of Friends celebrates the generous, sustained and ongoing support that The Friends of Penrith Regional Gallery, Home of the Lewers Bequest have given to the Gallery and its collection. Beginning in 1979, before there was even a gallery to support,

The Friends was formed by a small visionary group of locals who collectively recognised the wonderful opportunity the Lewers bequest represented for the people of Penrith and beyond.

The advocacy of The Friends ensured that the council accepted the bequest and committed to developing the site, that was originally the Lewers family home, as a public gallery. The Friends group quickly grew in number to become, at the opening of the Gallery in August 1981, a group of 185 individuals/ local residents - all united by a shared vision of what the first regional gallery in Western Sydney could become.

For over forty years The Friends have been instrumental in developing both the Gallery and its Collection. In the early days it was The Friends who formed the Gallery Changeover Committee, volunteering their time to install exhibitions, fundraise and generally support the care and growth of the gallery's historic

collection. With assistance from The Friends, successive Directors were able to secure significant acquisitions, increasing the Gallery's holding of artworks by artists such as Elwyn Lynn and Leonard Hessing, who alongside a significant holding of artworks by Margo and Gerald Lewers, were represented in the original bequest.

Friendships amongst the painters, sculptors, writers and architects who were known to have travelled from the city to visit the Lewers at the Emu Plains property throughout the 50s and 60s are also reflected in the Penrith Regional Gallery Collection.

These relationships be they familial, scholarly, or friendships grown out of shared interest in the Modernist cause, were strengthened through the free expression of ideas and robust respect for criticism and debate that characterised their gatherings.

The artist friends of Margo and Gerald shared influences and joined forces with a larger circle of friends, whose works are included in this exhibition, and who, with the passing of time, have come to be recognised for the important contribution they made to our understanding of Modernism in Australia.

It could be said that the loyalty and commitment to their artistic ideals which sustained these artists in friendship, still echoes through the site today, through the dedication and commitment of The Friends.

A volunteer group whose unwavering support will continue to benefit current and future generations of visitors by ensuring the survival of a thriving and robust regional gallery that welcomes all, excites and delights many, and remains a unique and thriving part of the cultural landscape of the region.

Our region owes much more to The Friends of Penrith Regional Gallery than we will likely ever realise.

Lauren Parker is Registrar at Penrith Regional Gallery & The Lewers Bequest. This article was first published on the Gallery's website as part of the online catalogue for the exhibition, *Dream Realised – Our Community Victory*, https://www.penrithregionalgallery.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/FINAL_PRG-DreamRealised-Catalogue.pdf



Lionel Fraser teaching in Victoria Street Schoolroom.
Photo: Roslyn Russell

School's In!

Every Tuesday and Thursday morning in school term times a dedicated and skilled team of volunteer educators gathers at Fairfield City Museum & Gallery in western Sydney. The team includes school teachers and blacksmiths, and other volunteers ready to impart their knowledge of domestic life in earlier times in Australia within the structures that form the Vintage Village.

The assemblage of buildings and other items in the Vintage Village at Fairfield City Museum & Gallery interpret life in Australia from the nineteenth century to the first half of the twentieth century through relocated and reconstructed buildings and their contents. They demonstrate former modes of domestic life, education, trades such as blacksmithing, early motor trades and printing, and retailing in earlier times in the Fairfield area.

The Vintage Village has much in common with a number of other historic reconstructions of this type, which are often designated as 'pioneer' or 'heritage' villages (for example, Jindera Pioneer Village at Jindera Pioneer Museum and Australian Pioneer Village at Wilberforce, NSW; and Rockhampton Heritage Village in Queensland).

Most other historic villages confine live demonstrations of activities such as blacksmithing and the use of domestic

Continued on following page >



Greg the blacksmith.
Photo: May Lei Hunt.

appliances to special 'open days', or conduct them for booked tour groups. Instead, this happens twice a week at Fairfield City Museum & Gallery.

In early March this year, before the Covid-19 restrictions closed down activities in museums and galleries, I was fortunate enough to see the interaction of the Vintage Village volunteer educators with school pupils from the Fairfield City area. I witnessed the children's interest and excitement as they sat in Mr Fraser's class in Victoria Street Schoolroom, watched a demonstration of domestic utensils and their use in Caversham Cottage, saw the blacksmith at work at Robson Bros' smithy, learned about shopping in pre-decimal currency times in Wheatley's Store, and helped to hang out washing on an old-style clothesline using dolly pegs.

First stop was the Victoria Street Schoolroom, where children sit at the wooden desks in the Schoolroom and practise 'running writing' using pen and ink. The teacher, Mr Fraser, formally attired in waistcoat and bow tie and holding a cane, teaches the class arithmetic as it was done in the first half of the twentieth century.

Further on in the Vintage Village at Caversham Cottage, a volunteer educator demonstrates how a flour sifter was used in the days when most meals and other food were produced at home.

At Robson Bros Blacksmiths a volunteer blacksmith explains to visiting schoolchildren how tools and other metal items were made by hard manual labour in the smithy, with its blazing fire. The blacksmith works with molten metal on the anvil, beating it into the required shape. Robson Bros Blacksmiths is a reconstruction of a traditional 'smithy' that operated in Smithfield between 1911 and 1924. It demonstrates the various processes carried out by blacksmiths in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including producing ironwork for vehicles and ploughs, and making horseshoes, yokes, neck bows and other parts for working animals.

Wheatley's Store is a reconstruction of the store opened by George Wheatley on The Crescent, Fairfield, in 1892. The reconstruction shows how the store operated from that time until 1953, with a soundscape focusing on the period around 1932, the period of the Great Depression when shoppers exchanged government relief coupons for goods. The store harkens back to a time before supermarkets and shopping malls, with a wide variety of goods available in one place, from groceries – packaged and in bulk – to haberdashery, garden equipment and paint. The shelves are lined with a huge array of packaged and bulk goods. In Wheatley's Store, goods are weighed before sale, and schoolchildren learn that shoppers used pounds, shillings and pence in the days before decimal currency.

Washing day in the Vintage Village involves schoolchildren, guided by a volunteer educator, doing the laundry in the way that it was done when Monday was washing day and typically took all day. Tuesday was often devoted to ironing the dried washing so that a family had clean clothes for the week ahead. In the days before electric irons, when flat irons had to be heated on a stove top, this was a time-consuming exercise.

School children use dolly pegs from a wicker washing basket to hang out washing on a rope clothesline supported by wooden clothes props. The volunteer educator, using one of the flat irons from the FCMG collection, demonstrates how ironing clothes was carried out in earlier times.

The buzz of excited schoolchildren that can be heard around the Vintage Village each Tuesday and Thursday morning is a sign that this is one learning experience that will stay with them. It is a tribute to Fairfield City Museum & Gallery's volunteer educators, and to the Museum's capacity to engage with its community.

**Roslyn Russell, Editor, *Friends Review*,
Australian Federation of Friends
of Museums**



Jackie in Wheatley's Store.



Michelle in the laundry.



Volunteers Rougina Haifa, Jackie Powrie and Lionel Fraser.



Australian National Botanic Gardens

**celebrates significant
anniversaries in 2020**

20
20

Above: Kangaroo paw (*Anigozanthos flavidis*).

Photos on this page and the next
by Roslyn Russell.



This year the Australian National Botanic Gardens marks two significant anniversaries: the opening of the Gardens in October 1970; and the establishment of the Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens in October 1990.

Planning for a botanic gardens in Canberra began in the 1930s, but this was interrupted by World War II, and it was not until after the war had ended that the project was revived by Lindsay Pryor, Superintendent for Parks and Gardens.

Three weeks after peace was declared in August 1945, Pryor sought funding for a botanic gardens to be located on the lower slopes of Black Mountain, and on 12 September 1949 Prime Minister J. B. 'Ben' Chifley and the Director of the United Kingdom's Kew Gardens planted a eucalypt and an oak to mark the Gardens' inauguration.

Two decades later, after preparation of the site and field collecting to make sure that

the collection was truly representative of the Australian flora that was the focus of the Gardens, the herbarium had been established, the Nursery, administration buildings and the car park had been constructed, and paths and bridges built over the steep gullies. The Gardens opened to the public for the first time in late 1967, and in October 1970 the Prime Minister, John Gorton, declared the Australian National Botanic Gardens officially open. Since that time the Gardens have become a major attraction for Canberrans and tourists alike.

Twenty years after the official opening, the Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens was formed as a community support group for the Gardens in October 1990. The Friends now has 2400 members, and has raised close to \$1.3 million to support Gardens projects. Volunteers lead guided walks, and provide hands-on support for research programs, with over 200 volunteers working in 16 different programs across the Gardens and the Australian National Herbarium.

The Friends host popular weekly talks on botanical and environmental topics in the Gardens' Theatre.

The Friends also comprises special interest groups, the two oldest of which are the Guides and the Growing Friends. There are also three Botanic Art groups, a Photographic Group, and a Plant Science Group.

A series of events to mark these significant anniversaries is planned for 2020. Executive Director of the ANBG, Dr Judy West, wrote in the December issue of the Friends of the ANBG magazine, *FronDS*, that the 50th Anniversary of the Gardens 'provides a platform for staff recognition and public outreach, highlighting the Gardens as a world renowned scientific institution, as well as a popular Canberra tourism destination – both now and into the future'.

Information on the program of celebratory events can be found on the Gardens website, <https://parksaustralia.gov.au/botanic-garden> and the Friends website, <http://friendsanbg.org.au>

**Above: *Calytrix leschenaultii*.
Photo: Roslyn Russell.**



Exceptional service recognised

Iris Bingham is pictured with three of the original Friends of the Museum Committee, Christine and Ray Crawshaw and Neil Mott.

Burnie resident, Iris Bingham, has been recognised by the Friends of the Burnie Regional Museum Inc. for her exceptional service to the Friends' group and to the Museum.

At the time when the future of the Museum was in doubt and there were plans to close it about ten years ago, Iris and her husband, Reg, rallied the Museum volunteers and the Burnie community in support of the Museum. They recognised its cultural value in this city and to the community of the North West Coast.

Through the efforts of many people, led by Iris, dozens of letters were published in *The Advocate* and a petition with over 3000 signatures was presented to the Burnie City Council. A public meeting in the Civic Theatre convincingly demonstrated the feelings of the community on this matter and the future of the Museum was assured.

Iris instigated the Friends of the Museum committee. The group increased in number to over 100 members, became a fully constituted and incorporated association and gained registration as a not-for-profit charity under the leadership of Iris as President.

Her dedication and loyalty were recognised at the September 2019 meeting of the group when she became the first Life Member of the Friends of the Burnie Regional Museum Inc. She was presented with a framed certificate and a citation which read:

"Mrs. Iris Bingham enlisted as a volunteer at the Pioneer Village Museum in 2004 and assisted with the cataloguing of the Winter photographic collection.

In response to signs in 2008 that the future of the Pioneer Village Museum in Burnie was under threat, Iris commenced writing letters to *The Advocate* newspaper highlighting the importance of the Museum to the City of Burnie and its residents. She succeeded in bringing this important issue to the attention of the public who responded in the media and at public meetings, resulting in a change of plans by the Burnie City Council.

At the end of 2009, Iris invited the Museum's volunteers to join her in her campaign to save the Museum. From January 2010, a small group of supporters gathered for monthly meetings at the home of Iris and Reg Bingham as the Friends

of the Museum. They used a variety of methods to raise the awareness of the public and of the Burnie City Council to the value of the Museum and its importance in this region.

When the future of the Museum looked to be more secure, Iris and the Friends sought to increase the membership of the group and attracted over 100 supporters under the guidance of Iris as President.

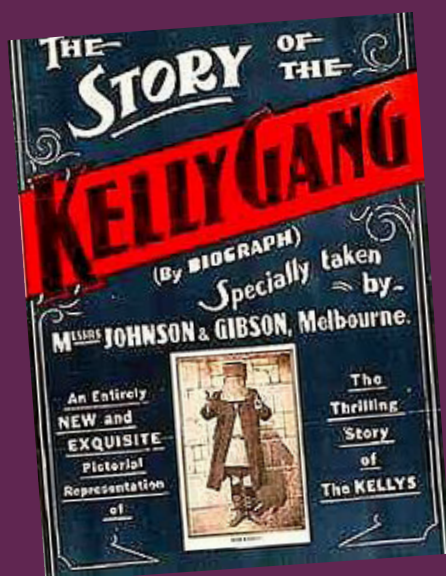
Further issues concerning the Museum have arisen over the intervening years and been addressed by the Friends under the leadership of Iris who continued in the role of President until August 2014. She continued as a very active Committee member until August 2017 and remains a stalwart member of the Friends' group.

In grateful recognition of her outstanding and exceptional contribution to the Friends of the Burnie Regional Museum Inc., Iris Bingham is hereby conferred with Life Membership of this organisation."

LAUNCH OF THE FRIENDS OF National Film and Sound Archive

in Melbourne

24 November 2019



Above: Still from 'The Story of the Kelly Gang'.
Images courtesy of the National Film and Sound Archive.

Left: Poster for 'The Story of the Kelly Gang' in the National Film and Sound Archive.

Melbourne was the effective birthplace of the Australian film industry and the home of those pioneering iconic projects, the Salvation Army's *Soldiers of the Cross* (1900) and *The Story of the Kelly Gang* (1906), now officially acknowledged as the world's first feature film. It was the Melbourne-based Limelight Department of the Salvation Army that documented on film the Federation ceremonies held in Sydney in 1901.

The National Film and Sound Archive is arguably one of the world's oldest audiovisual archives, tracing its beginnings to the National Historical Film and Speaking Record Library, established in 1935 under the joint auspices of the Commonwealth National Library and the Cinema Branch of the Department of Commerce, both of which had their beginnings in Melbourne. Its initial collection was housed here in the vaults of the Cinema Branch.

By comparison, the Friends of the NFSA is a mere spring chicken, having been incorporated in 2000 at a time when many feared that the NFSA was at risk. The Friends' initial priority was to achieve a reversal of what quickly proved to be an unwise name change, the previous year, to ScreenSound Australia. The new Association chose its name very deliberately in order to save and protect the NFSA brand, so that it could ultimately be reinstated – as it was in 2004. By then, however, the NFSA had been taken over by the Australian Film Commission, and the Friends – with others – pursued a four-year campaign to protect the Archive from dismemberment and to reverse the government policy which had brought about the merger. In 2008 the NFSA finally gained the security of independent statutory status and its own Act of Parliament.

Today the Friends is the visible embodiment of the NFSA's constituency. It is a community of individuals who support the NFSA in fulfilling its mandate to collect, preserve, interpret and make accessible Australia's audiovisual heritage. It acts as an independent public advocate for the NFSA, and helps increase awareness and understanding of its activities. It is a means through which members may enjoy its collections and express their support of the institution.

Times change, but the NFSA will always need its friends, to advocate for its budgetary needs – as we currently do; to provide voluntary practical support, which we also do, and to be a sounding board for ideas and policies.

I look forward to what comes next here in Melbourne, and congratulate Gwenda Davey, Teresa Pitt and the other members of the Friends Melbourne Subcommittee on their enterprise and energy in developing the new Melbourne chapter of the Association.

Ray Edmondson
President, Friends of the National Film and Sound Archive

Timothy Cook, Kulama 2004
natural pigments on linen, 107 x 127 cm,
MAGNT Collection



Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory

The Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT) sits on Bullocky Point, on the shores of Fannie Bay.

On my visit towards the end of July 2019, staff were installing and finalising the *Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Awards* (NATSIAA). What a treat to be taken behind the scenes to see the large number of entries, spread over two galleries.

Three other exhibitions caught my eye, however: the small exhibition *Smoking Pipes: a history of collecting*, *Between the Moon and the Stars* and the *Cyclone* Tracy Gallery.

The MAGNT holds over 100 pipes, from Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Thailand and China. A special feature is a number of Macassan-style pipes that came with the Macassan traders, who brought them – with tobacco – to Australia. Small ceramic pipes from Laos, dating from the 16th and 17th centuries, are the oldest in the collection.

This exhibition highlights the relationship between Indigenous people and those from South East Asia, through shared maritime histories, and more recently the arrival of asylum seekers in the 1990s. Pipes come from the highlands of Papua New Guinea and the early missionary days on Groote Eylandt.

Several of the pipes were donated by the Australian Customs Service in Darwin and come from Thailand and China. The pipes

are well displayed and form an interesting collection of modest objects that come together to show a singular history of both collecting by the Museum and the history of pipe-smoking in the southern hemisphere.

The second exhibition – *Between the Moon and the Stars* – celebrates the 50th anniversary of the moon landing, but is far more than that. It includes objects from each of the museum's art, science, history and culture collections to create a cross-disciplinary perspective and reflect on the significance of the moon to life on earth.

This is a fascinating exhibition which includes maritime tools that helped early sailors navigate their way around the world's oceans, paintings by Indigenous people, ceramic sculptures and photographs.

Continued on following page>



Above: Yilyarra (pipe), c 1930s
wood, metal, paperbark, string
Gift of S.C. Port, 1980. MAGNT Collection



Above: Makassan-style pipe c 1980s
wood, metal, synthetic polymer paint
Purchased, 2003. MAGNT Collection



Left: Ban Chiang Pipe c 1000 BC
stoneware and porcelain
Purchased 1978. MAGNT Collection

The world has always found the phases of the moon a wondrous phenomenon, and artists and scientists alike have been inspired by it, and the exhibition shows some excellent examples of interpretations.

The eponymous catalogue has several essays, which I also found very interesting. The exhibition runs until 22 March 2020 and entry is free. The catalogue is \$24.95.

The third exhibition is a permanent attraction at the Gallery and I am

always drawn to it. Cyclone Tracy (24-26 December 1974) is a story of endurance, recovery, courage and faith. Mike Hayes (now deceased) narrates a film he took as he drove around the ruins of Darwin very early on Christmas morning. A sound track, based on an audio tape recorded by Father Ted Collins (now Bishop Collins) in one of the rooms, booms in the background, showing how terrifying the night must have been. A light pole is bent double; aerial photographs of Fannie Bay and other suburbs are graphic reminders of the destruction. It is difficult to imagine how much damage was caused; many heritage buildings and artefacts were damaged or completely destroyed. The MAGNT itself suffered from the cyclone. Renovations to the Old Town Hall

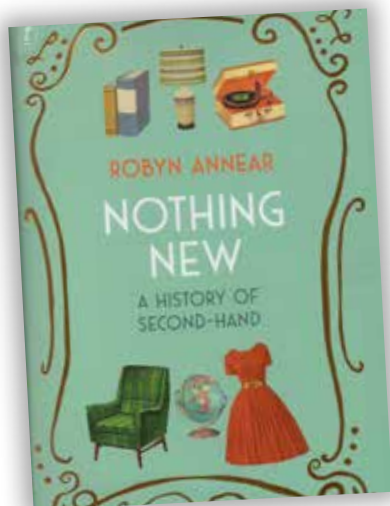
made to house the collections of the then Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences were almost complete on Christmas Eve 1974.

On Christmas Day the roof was blown off and the walls collapsed. The most valuable, recovered items had to be protected from the monsoonal rain and humidity. It was more than a month before some items could be recovered and by then many were completely ruined, including many of the museum's records.

This is a small museum with several interesting and much-loved exhibitions.

Meredith Hinchliffe

Meredith is an arts writer based in Canberra.



Robyn Annear, *Nothing New: A History of Second-Hand, Text Publishing, Melbourne, 2019.*

Recycling of second-hand clothes and goods is, to borrow the words of the title of this new book from Victorian historian, Robyn Annear, 'nothing new'.

Annear's book begins with the story of the opportunity shop organised by Lady Tallis, wife of Melbourne's lord mayor, on the old Cyclorama site that would soon be occupied by St Vincent's Hospital, over the Christmas period in 1925.

Designed to raise funds for St Vincent's Hospital, the first 'opportunity shop' to open in Australia was the latest iteration of a tradition of adaptation and re-use of discarded goods – predominantly clothing, but encompassing a wide range of items of material culture – that dates back several centuries in the United Kingdom and Europe.

Annear traces the stories of Rag Fairs, old clothes vendors, pawnbrokers, and institutions such as London's Old Clothes Exchange; the disposal of the contents of lost property offices; the evolution of the ubiquitous jumble sales familiar to readers of novelists such as Barbara Pym and other chroniclers of mid-twentieth-century British village life; and the formal

Bookreview

development of the opportunity shops we know today, the successors in Australia of the one established for a few brief months in Melbourne's Cyclorama building in 1925.

She describes the many ways in which old garments were repurposed and 'revived', and gives a fascinating glimpse of social attitudes governing who could give and receive second-hand goods and clothes, and who could wear them and maintain the social niceties.

While the book does not deal directly with museums, it does illuminate a number of areas for those who work with, for example, textile collections, with useful information about how modifications were made to the original garments which can alert conservators to potential problems in treating them. And it also addresses a conundrum that many museums face: why do our collections hold so many 'high-end' garments from the nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries but very few clothing items with a provenance to working class lives? Annear writes:

"Second-hand dresses of stuff (that is, wool) or cotton sold for about one shilling and sixpence, less than half the price of silk. And they were snapped up. It was silk dresses that perpetually hung in glossy ranks, 'out of keeping with the rough and dirty-looking aspects of the market itself', and that have survived to populate the costume collections of museums. Workaday dresses were worn, remade and worn again until reduced to rags."

And there was an after-market for those rags. These were collected by the 'rag-and-bone man', immortalised in the BBC series of the 1960s and early 1970s, *Steptoe and Son*.

Annear's book is written in a lively and engaging style, and is a significant contribution to our understanding of the life-story of objects, and of a phenomenon, the love of 'op-shopping' for second-hand bargains, that shows no sign of disappearing any time soon.

Cover image:

National Gallery of Australia Paper Conservator Fiona prepares Margaret Worth's *Samsara 13* for display in exhibition *Know My Name: Australian Women Artists 1900 to Now*.

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia.

Contact list for AFFM members

Here is a list of AFFM representatives who are able to assist with problems, give advice and bring issues to the notice of the Executive Committee.

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Nominations for executive positions in all states are welcome prior to AGM in October.

WFFM Congress in Australia cancelled due to Covid-19 pandemic

On 12 March, Carolyn Forster OAM, President of the World Federation of Friends of Museums, notified our World Federation colleagues that the conference, like so many events in Australia and around the world, had been cancelled as a result of the World Health Organisation's declaration of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Her letter to WFFM expressed her regret that these overwhelming circumstances

would prevent those who had made arrangements to come to Australia for the Congress from participating in the exciting programs that were to be provided by the Art Gallery Society in Sydney and the many national institutions in Canberra.

Ms Forster also thanked those in Canberra and Sydney who had 'spent months preparing to meet their fellow Friends and to showcase the many aspects that make up the cultural fabric of Australia'.