



summer 2015

ADFAS

POKOLBIN

AUSTRALIAN DECORATIVE & FINE ARTS SOCIETY



Lecture Program 2016

February 22nd

June Ross

The Mystery of Kimberley
Rock Art

March 21st

Pauline Chakmakmakjian

The City of Kyoto and
the Cult of Beauty

May 30th

Lucia Gahlin

Nefertiti: Images of
Ancient Egypt's most
intriguing Queen

June 20th

Adrian Dickens

Elizabeth Taylor's
greatest love affair
...with Jewels!

July 25th

Michael Howard

The Art of Cuisine and
the Cuisine of Art

August 29th

James Allan

"Domes and Minarets:
Mosques of the Islamic
World"

September 26th

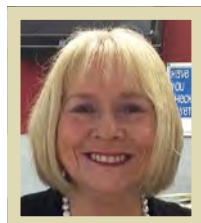
Stephen Richardson

A voluptuary under the
Horrors of Digestion?
Prinny and the excesses
of Regency Period Style

October 31st

Sarah Cove

A Bit of Slap and Tickle:
Constable's Brighton
Paintings 1824-1828



A final word from the Chairman

Dear Members

What a busy and stimulating ADFAS year we have enjoyed. Since our last newsletter in June, we have had five lectures, our Welcome to New Members evening at the home of Vice Chairman, Heather Wilson and our trip to the Archibald Exhibition.

It was quite an event when the projector failed in the middle of Patricia Begg's lecture in July but like a true professional, she saved the day with her spontaneous presentation which everyone thoroughly enjoyed. Her **recipe for ice cream** is included!

At the beginning of August, NADFAS lecturer, Barry Venning gave a wonderful lecture on borrowed images in art which was truly fascinating. August proved to be a busy month with our excursion to the Archibald Exhibition. We had early admission to the Art Gallery with two excellent guides providing deep insight into the art, the symbolism used and the motivation of the artists. This was followed by a delicious lunch at Pavilion in the Park. I know the early 6.15am departure from Cessnock does deter some people from attending but we cannot have a private tour if we leave later and it is such a marvellous day, so please try to come next year. At the end of August we welcomed Toby Faber to Pokolbin. His lecture on Cremona and the Golden Age of Violin Making was so interesting and feedback from both members and visitors was excellent.

In September we hosted Alexandra Drysdale, her second visit to our region. This time she told us about the colour Blue; its history, use and symbolism in Art, which was indeed an informative and stimulating lecture.

The first two days of November were extremely busy for ADFAS Pokolbin. We enjoyed a very entertaining afternoon at the Maitland Cinemas on Sunday 1st, to view *The Dressmaker*, a remarkable Australian Film. Patrons feasted on gourmet pizzas and choc-top ice creams & sipped delicious wines. We were delighted that our NADFAS lecturer, Oliver Everett and his partner, Diana, were able to join us for this happy social event. Our final lecture for 2015 was held the next night and Oliver gave a fascinating presentation on the drama behind the Taj Mahal. Prior to the lecture, the audience enjoyed a performance by the Cessnock Community of Great Public Schools Choir, sponsored by us as part of our Young Arts Program. It was a wonderful finale to a very happy and successful ADFAS year.

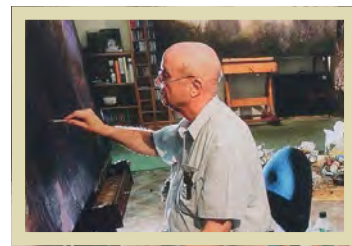
You will read about all the projects we have financed this year in our young Arts Report. Without your generosity, we would be unable to fund these amazing experiences for the young students in our region, so thank you all for your ongoing support.

The National body of ADFAS is attempting to create a register of Australian Schools of Art. Two of our committee members, Bev Holden and Ray Jacomb have become involved in this fascinating area of research. Bev has already submitted a project on Woodville School of Arts and is now researching the building at Paterson. Ray has almost completed the Cessnock SOA. If any member would like to become involved or start their own project, please contact a committee member.

We have come to the end of my three years as Chairman of ADFAS Pokolbin and it has been a most rewarding and enjoyable experience. My sincerest thanks go to my wonderful and dedicated Committee who have supported me throughout my term and worked tirelessly to ensure that our Society has continued to blossom. We strive to create a society that is not only fun to belong to, but provides lectures and excursions of the highest calibre to stimulate, provoke and entertain members.

At the AGM on Monday, 23rd November, we will be saying farewell to two long serving committee members, Liz Ewen and Robyn Mendoza and I know you will join me in offering our sincerest thank you for their time and efforts over the past years. Thank you to the members of Pokolbin for your continued support and we look forward to welcoming you back to another exciting year in 2016 with Heather Wilson at the helm.

Wishing you a safe and happy festive season,
Paula Cameron.



William Robinson

William Robinson

Alexandra Drysdale

Top left & right paintings by William Robinson:
<http://www.ogh.qut.edu.au/wrgallery>

Below: Love is in the air by Alexandra Drysdale - 2003
<http://www.alexandradrysdale.com>



When my lecture tour came to end in Pokolbin on 29 September, I went to spend two weeks with friends in the Tweed Valley. From their house we looked across to the volcanic cliffs of the Lamington and Springbrook National Parks, one of the most sublime panoramas I've ever seen. I wanted to visit these places as I had known of them through the paintings of William Robinson.

I had come upon his work quite by accident in 2012 when I was lecturing in Brisbane. I had made a pilgrimage to Old Government House because my Great Great Grandfather Sir George Bowen had been the first Governor of Queensland, and later on the fifth Governor of Victoria. On the ground floor of this grand building I had enjoyed looking at old photographs of Sir George and his Greek wife Diamantina Roma. Upstairs were the William Robinson Galleries that are devoted to showing the work of this Queensland artist. I was bowled over by his paintings of the rainforest and precipitous cliffs of the Lamington and Springbrook Nat.Parks and made a promise to myself that one day I would visit these places. Little did I know then that my partner had great friends living in this area!

So after a few days of rest and recuperation we set off for the Binna Burra Lodge in the Lamington Nat. Park. During the day we walked the trails and at night we made a campfire and barbeque. Our safari tent failed to keep out the mice so we ended up sleeping in our car. As an artist myself I tried to imagine how I would paint such a vast wild landscape compared with the small domesticated landscape we have in Britain. William Robinson creates multiple viewpoints in a painting so that you have a sense of being both in the rainforest and standing on the edge of a precipitous cliff looking down onto forest. He combines detailed observations of plants and trees with panoramic views. As a foreigner to this landscape I was awestruck by the beauty but this was accompanied by feelings of fear and disorientation which I don't get in my home territory. We nearly trod on a Brown snake on one of our walks and the temptation to jump off a cliff was a bit worrying!

I am now back in my home town of Cambridge. I have photographs and drawings of my time in Australia pinned up in my studio. I have prepared a collection of canvasses. Now I just need to get painting. Watch this space!



ADFAS Pokolbin Young Arts Program

Robyn Emerson
Young Arts Coordinator

ADFAS Pokolbin Young Arts Program has supported and funded a number of arts-based projects and initiatives in 2015 and we have proposals for 2016. In June this year we were very pleased to once again fully fund an operatic performance by Opera Australia Schools Tour of Rossini's "Cinderella" at Cessnock West Public School. The enthusiasm shown by the students at the school and the commitment by the Principal, Mrs. Ruth McGlashan, to provide the students with a wonderful cultural experience has resulted in our Committee agreeing to fund a performance of Rossini's "Hansel and Gretel" at the School in June 2016.

Since 2008 we have provided annual funding for a Sydney Excursion for Stage 3 students (years 5 and 6) at Cessnock East Public School. This year's Excursion took place on 8th October and included a live performance of "The 52-Storey Treehouse" at the Opera House and a digital interactive tour of this iconic building which was an amazing experience for them. Our

funding includes coach transport and a picnic lunch which is always very much appreciated by the students and teachers. The Committee has agreed to provide funding for the school's 2016 Sydney Excursion.

Also this year at Cessnock East Public School, we are providing funding for a number of prizes to be awarded at the school's Presentation Day on 25th November. These books will be presented for "Inspired Learner Award". Additionally, we have purchased a book "One Minute's Silence" for the School Library.

Prior to our last lecture this year on 2nd November we were treated to a special performance by the wonderful Cessnock Community of Great Public Schools Choir. The Choir consists of young students from a number of schools in our area, and singing together they create such beautiful music. It requires a huge commitment and dedication by Miss Annie Devine, the Choir's Musical Director and Coordinator, the students, families and supporters. We congratulate each and every one of them. We were very pleased to present our cheque for \$600 from our Young Arts Program in support of the CCGPS Choir. On 3rd November we were invited to attend the CCGPS Choir Presentation Day and very pleased to accept a Certificate of Appreciation as acknowledgement of the ongoing support of ADFAS Pokolbin Young Arts Program.

This year we are very excited to provide funding for sculpture workshops for young students as part of the Wollombi Sculpture in the Vineyards Education Program. These workshops will be provided either at local schools in the Wollombi area, or transport to venues where sculptors will conduct the workshops.

In 2016 we anticipate being able to fund 'Art Experience' classes for young people with disabilities, at Cessnock Regional Art Gallery. The art classes will be held one Sunday each month and our funding will provide for cost of an Art Educator and art materials. The special art classes will provide opportunities to help inspire and encourage self expression for these young people.

Our Young Arts Program funding is only possible with the ongoing generosity and support of members and friends of ADFAS Pokolbin. All proceeds of raffles and special fund raising events contribute towards our Young Arts Program.

As always, our special thanks to Members and Friends of ADFAS Pokolbin.



Cessnock East Public School - Yrs 5 & 6



Heather was accompanied by John Craft another Pokolbin ADFAS Member



Cunard celebrates 175 years.

Heather Wilson

How special it was to have been on board the Queen Elizabeth on 25th May this year.

It was a privilege to be part of history, as the Queen Elizabeth, Queen Victoria and the Queen Mary, united in Liverpool for the first time. A glimpse of the spectacle about to unfold was seeing the many thousands of people, some standing knee deep in water, lining the banks of the Mersey. We slowly sailed up the river in majestic convoy towards the city. Tugboats with water jets and smaller craft accompanied these grand ladies of the ocean. They made their way to rest briefly in full view of the "Three Graces" this being in front of the central waterfront and main quayside.

For nearly a century, mariners sailing into the Mersey port have been greeted by the majesty of these buildings - The Royal Liver Building, The Cunard Building and the Port of Liverpool Building - they define one of the worlds most recognised skylines

The ships, three abreast, pirouetted 380 degrees in unison, saluting the crowd of over one million. This act was a maritime first. The City returned their salute with cannon fire and each ship responded with a Blast (or two) from their horns. Let it be noted, that the Captains, Officers and crew who had been involved in the planning of this complicated manoeuvre, were greatly relieved at its very satisfactory outcome. The winds, tides and currents were all important factors, that if not read correctly, could have resulted in some very red faces. However, it was all smooth sailing, pardon the pun.

The spectacle included a fly past by the famous aeronautical acrobatic team, The Red Arrows. The sounds of Beatles songs echoed in the air as well as Rod Stewarts "We Are Sailing".

The Liverpool Welsh Choir, the Band of the Royal Marines and a lone bagpiper, performed wonderful choral music on the front steps of the Cunard Building. Songs included "You'll Never Walk Alone" this of course being this city's Football Club Anthem. Powerful speakers magnified the music along the foreshore. It was awesome!

The celebrations continued well into the night. A son et lumiere, comprising historical footage were reflected onto the Three Graces as its music echoed across the river and quayside. This incredible day came to an end with a spectacular fireworks display. The crowds dissipated and those of us lucky enough to be back on board, enjoyed a magnificent celebratory dinner.

Liverpool is the birthplace of Cunard and still very much it's spiritual home. This year marks 175 years since the Britannia set sail for Nova Scotia. Back in those days the Mersey and city skyline, were the final view of England for tens of thousands of people making a new life in the New World, and the first glimpse for many travelling in the opposite direction. Liners stopped their regular service from Liverpool years ago, with the rise in cheap air travel. However, in recent times, Luxury cruise ships have once again started to make the city a port of call.

Liverpool has 2,500 listed buildings and 250 public monuments. The central water front area and pier comprises Liverpool's UNESCO World Heritage Site. This city will forever be part of Cunard's history, having been it's home from the beginning in 1840, until its move to Southampton in 1967.

For one incredibly special day, I felt very British.

A tale of two bridges

Charles Pope

On a recent trip to France we visited the Pont du Gard on our last day in Avignon. This is a much visited 2000 year old Roman aqueduct /bridge and is well worth a long visit. The bridge is of stone construction, with an aqueduct at the top level. Under the aqueduct is a viaduct for pedestrian and horse traffic. The whole structure was built without the use of mortar. It is 59 metres above the River Gardon with a span of 350metres. This aqueduct is part of the 50 km Nimes aqueduct from Uzés. Such was the precision of the Roman builders that the fall across the bridge was a mere 2.5cm, a gradient of one in 14,000 and capable of carrying 200,000 cubic metres per day for the baths, fountains and homes of Nimes. It is also visually stunning.



The next day we drove from Avignon to the Dordogne via the Millau Viaduct. This a Norman Foster-designed, cable-stayed steel and concrete behemoth – the highest in the world. At 350 metres at the top of the masts it reaches as high as the Eiffel Tower. The deck is 270 metres above ground level. The Millau Viaduct is one of the key elements joining Paris to the South of France by road and has a total span of 2.5 kilometres. It is widely acknowledged as one of the greatest ever engineering achievements.

Almond Ice Cream

recipe supplied by Patricia Begg



An easy ice-cream to make, richly flavoured with almonds and caramel.

Serves 8

Praline:

2 oz. (1/4 cup) castor sugar

2 tablespoons (2 1/2 T) water

2 oz. (1/3 cup) unblanched almonds

Ice cream:

4 eggs, separated

4 oz. (3/4 cup) icing (confectioners) sugar, sifted

4 pint (1 1/4 cups) thick (heavy) cream, lightly whipped

Put the castor sugar and water in a pan, heat slowly until the sugar has dissolved then add the almonds. Cook quickly until mixture is a deep golden brown, stirring frequently.

Turn on to an oiled baking tray. Leave until set then pulverise in a blender or put praline between a double layer of greaseproof paper and crush with a rolling pin.

Whisk the egg yolks until blended. In another bowl whisk the whites until stiff then whisk in the icing sugar a teaspoon at a time, making a meringue. Whisk the egg yolks into the meringue mixture with the cream.

Turn the mixture into a bowl, whisk until smooth, then stir in the praline. Covered container and freeze until required.

LONDON'S GOLDSMITHS FAIR 2015

THE 32ND YEAR

Heather Mckendry



This is an annual event which showcases contemporary stylish jewellery and silver from designers throughout the UK.

I attended the last day of the Fair in early October this year. The exhibition showcased eighty three separate exhibitors displaying stunning collections of jewellery reflecting traditional and cutting edge techniques. Also on display were interior designer items and sculptures finely crafted in silver and gold.

All items were for sale, starting from beautiful bracelets for \$150 up to spectacular gem-set necklaces costing up to \$50,000.

One of my favourites was a titanium necklace – light and colourful and fine, like lace. The craftswoman is from Scotland, and takes inspiration from the Scottish heather which, she says, is light and strong, durable and springy, similar to titanium.

I also loved the statement jewellery by another Scot from Glasgow – her pieces are inspired by details of rock formation and the dramatic Scottish landscape. She recreates a natural stone surface in finely forged silver and gold.

The exhibition area was on two levels of the magnificent building of the Goldsmith's Company, not far from St Pauls Cathedral. This is the original Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths. It is one of the Twelve Great Livery Companies of the City of London and received its first royal charter in 1327. The Company was founded to regulate the craft or trade of goldsmiths. Since 1300 it has been responsible for testing the quality of gold and silver then Platinum from 1975, and Palladium from 2010.

The word Hallmark originates from the 15th century. London craftsmen were required to bring their artefacts to Goldsmiths Hall for assaying and marking. This requirement continues today in the Goldsmiths Company Assay Office. The Goldsmiths Company also works with the Antique Plate Committee to check items of antique silver plate suspected of contravening the Hallmark Act.

The Goldsmiths Office also examines coins manufactured by the Royal Mint. This is another tradition, known as the Trial of the Pyx, dating from the 12th century and one of the longest established judicial procedures within the UK. The work Pyx comes from the chests that stored coins in a chamber in Westminster Abbey.

The Goldsmiths Fair brought together remarkable modern designers in the splendid building of an ancient guild.

BARELLAN THE GOOD OLD DAYS

Charles and Robin Pope



The town of Barellan (40 km east of Griffith NSW) is a small village of 328 inhabitants famous for not much except being the birthplace of Evonne Goolagong. For six years, however a committee in the town has been producing a festival of traditional farming heritage featuring horse and bullock drawn wool carts, horse drawn ploughs, mowers, reapers and binders and headers, as well as horse powered stationary machinery such as a flour mill. The event takes place over the October long weekend.

You can stand and watch as Steve Johnson and his crew from Lake Cargelligo set up a team of 27 Clydesdales and then a crew of three drivers take them on a full circuit of the showground. This is no static display – the horses are pulling real machinery under real conditions and making real hay, harvesting real grain and towing an enormous laden wool cart followed by a bullock team towing another wagon guided by a team of bullockies. As well as horse and bullock driven attractions there are continuous demonstrations of shearing (both blade and comb), rebarreling Furphy Water Carts, whip and rope making and other lost rural skills such as hand milking. I know of no similar display in Australia.

There is also specially brewed Barellan beer and excellent catering for sustenance. So if you have an interest in how life was lived at the beginning of the 20th Century Barellan is an excellent place to see it in vivid action. One day is hardly enough to take it all in.

For more information see:

<http://barellancllydesdalesfestival.webs.com>

The Wall

Stuart & Liz Ewen



Occasionally you can be lost for words.

In the very heart of Tasmania is a Craftsman Built Shed the content of which is just extraordinary, and will surely take your breath away every time you go to see it.

It is called "THE WALL."

It is a very serious and amazing tribute to "days previous" in Australia.

Located not far from Derwent Bridge, adjacent to the world famous Cradle Mountain in Lake St Clair National Park, it is about halfway between Hobart and Straun.

The location is important. It is brilliantly situated in the high country of Tasmania, where the very solitude of the place, its ambience, creates its own magic.

Greg Duncan is the carver, creator and master craftsman.

He was motivated to tell a story of bygone pioneering Australia in the medium monumental wood carving.

He started work in 2005, on an endeavour that was to expand to 100 panels of carved Huon Pine, dimensioned 3m x 1m, and weighing some 250kg each. To date he has completed about 80% of the work, assuming it will take another 2 years to complete the project.

Each panel is carved in bas-relief, rather like the effect seen on the face of a coin, the surface achieving a 3 dimensional effect. It is a tribute to the talent of the sculptor that this is achieved with a max depth of cut only 40mm in the carving.

The incidental carvings in the shed, of saws, coats, (yes) hats and gloves, all carved in Huon Pine are breathtaking. No words of mine can adequately describe the workmanship and brilliance of his carvings.

Liz and I visited again in September of this year, it was rather cool...at 2 centigrade, with snow on the ground. But inside the Shed with a huge open fire burning all was well.

The drive to Derwent Bridge is an easy one taking some two hours.

We have over the years visited all types of galleries around the world, very few come close to the impact of seeing THE WALL.

We are seeing the most wonderful display of timber work being created today. One that will stand the test of time and allow generations to come to see and marvel at the work.

Don't just read this...go see it now.

Lemurs & Lions

Jenny & Geoff Marshall



Jenny walking with lions



The Prime Minister of Lemur Island

Geoff & a lemur

Geoff about to kiss a chameleon



In May, 2014 we booked a trip called "Pearls of the Indian Ocean", visiting Mauritius and Reunion Islands and Madagascar. We experienced so much, but have picked out two in particular; "Walking with Lions" in Mauritius, and being up close and personal with the Lemurs in Madagascar.

Walking with the lions was something we had never thought about, but when the opportunity arose we both did. Watched over by their dedicated keeper, we strolled with the lions in a large enclosure. The keepers always carry a stick held upright; the lions have been trained that a stick is a no-go zone, so we too carried a stick. These beautiful white lions have of course been trained as youngsters. Over a period of an hour or so, we listened and learnt from these men that it is possible to be among the lions. They are not doped, and as you can see have a healthy respect for their keepers.

We flew to Madagascar arriving into the capital Antananarivo. Agriculture is the mainstay of the Malagasy economy. Land is used for the cultivation of rice and other crops, raising of zebu and other livestock, the fabrication of bricks and other traditional livelihoods. In the country they live in basic mud brick homes, thatched roofs with packed dirt floors, no electricity or running water (the children go to a pump in the village and cart water in cans) and grow their rice.....they are a happy people. In 2015, the population of Madagascar was estimated at just over 24 million, 90% of whom live on less than \$2 per day!

We first experienced the lemurs in a National Park. There are many types, up to 90, some large and some very tiny. They mostly live in the trees, leaping from tree to tree and communicating very loudly. The Dancing Lemur does not leap, instead when he wants to relocate, he comes down to the ground and "dances" to the next tree, hands in the air, using his

feet to jump sideways. Fascinating and interesting to watch.

They do not use their tails like monkeys; they put scent from their wrists on the tail, arch it over them toward another male lemur in a "stink fight", and also to mark their territory. Their feet and hands are very soft and have fingernails like us. Seeing them in the wild was wonderful. We also saw them on an island surrounded by water. As they do not swim, these lemurs can be contained by a narrow strip of water, which we accessed by a small boat. As we stepped onto the island, a ring-tailed lemur was sitting on the fence checking us out as we arrived; he seemed to be in charge. We walked freely among them, and as they are quiet and gentle and the eternal sticky beaks. They leap onto to you and inspect you. It was an incredible experience. They live in a small community very like ours, with a Prime Minister etc.

We also saw many Chameleons, who are many and varied in colour and size and quite beautiful.

An interesting custom in Antananarivo and throughout the highlands, many families practice the famadihana, an ancestor reburial ceremony. This ceremony typically occurs five to seven years after the death of a relative and is celebrated by removing the relative's lamba-wrapped remains from the family tomb, rewrapping it with fresh silk shrouds and returning it to the tomb. Relatives, friends and neighbours are invited to take part in the music, dancing and feasting that accompanies the event. The famadihana is costly; many families sacrifice higher living standards to set aside money for the ceremony.

If you would like an interesting and different trip, go to Madagascar, you won't be disappointed.



life-sized recycled wire sculptures by artist Richard Stainthorp

recycled wire sculptures

Great Street art



"Ants" in Paris, France by Pejac



Step beneath these massive red flowers in Jerusalem's Vallero Square and they'll bloom before your eyes, offering light after dark and shelter from the rain. The interactive installation by HQ Architects reacts to pedestrians and traffic, their crimson textile petals filling with air when motion is sensed nearby.

Giant flowers that react to passersby

Committee 2015

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Committee:

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