



winter 2015

ADFAS

POKOLBIN

AUSTRALIAN DECORATIVE & FINE ARTS SOCIETY



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2015

Lecture Program

13th July

Patrica Begg

"Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild, Cap-Ferrat, Cote D'Azur"

3rd August

Barry Venning

"The Sincerest Form of Flattery" – great images and those who 'borrow' them.

31st August

Toby Faber

"Cremona and the Golden Age of Violin making"

28th September

Ms Alexandria Drysdale

"Out of the Blue" the Story of Blue in Art.

2nd November

Oliver Everett

"The Drama behind the Taj Mahal"



A word from the Chairman

Dear Members

It is amazing that half the year has gone by already. On behalf of the committee I extend a belated but very warm welcome to our new members and of course am delighted to have so many members renewing for another exciting year.

We started our ADFAS year with a happy movie event at Maitland Cinemas in January to see Unbroken. These are always fun afternoons and a great way to catch up with everyone after Christmas.

In February we had our first lecturer, Melbourne based Adrian Dickens who presented a fascinating account of the collections of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor. We had a record number of visitors for this lecture and it was wonderful to welcome guests from all over the Hunter and beyond. Adrian certainly had us intrigued by stories of the Windsors' daily routine and passion for all things royal.

In March, our first NADFAS lecturer arrived. Antony Penrose was a charming man who shared the story of his parents extraordinary lives and gave us an insight into the art world of that period. Prior to his departure on Tuesday, Antony had the opportunity to visit the Maitland Regional Art Gallery, meet the director and have a guided tour of the gallery. He was extremely impressed by what he saw and returned home having thoroughly enjoyed his visit to our lovely region. Because of the structure of the Hume Circuit, Pokolbin is last on the list of societies for each lecturer, so for the first half of each year we tend to have a huge gap between lectures. The Committee tries to plan something special to fill the gap so this year we organised an excursion to The Powerhouse Museum. This was such an interesting and insightful experience. Although our numbers were small, it was a very enthusiastic group and we appreciated the opportunity to meet curators and conservators involved in the exhibitions.

As I write I have just farewelled Charles Harris and his wife Marilyn who leave for England with fond memories of their stay here in the Hunter. Charles' lecture was enthusiastically received and his in depth knowledge of poster production during the Belle Epoch period was indeed fascinating.

On 13th July, we will be hosting our second Australian lecturer, Mrs Patricia Begg, OAM. Patricia is an internationally recognised expert on ceramics and will be talking to us about the magnificent collections in the Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild on the Côte d'Azur. This will be a most inspiring lecture and one not to be missed.

At the next committee meeting we will be deciding our lectures for 2016. The six NADFAS lecturers are chosen by the national body and they provide us with a list of topics from which we choose. As a Committee we welcome your input, so should you have any suggestions or comments please let us know via email or phone.

Our Young Arts Programme continues to thrive thanks to your generosity and support. Every dollar spent on raffle tickets goes towards helping young students in our area and I know you will enjoy reading the YA Report.

We are always delighted to welcome new members and visitors so please encourage your friends and family to come along. I look forward to seeing you at our next meeting.

Paula Cameron



Charles and Marilyn Harris



A rare Parisian treat

Charles and Robin Pope

When visiting Paris, one generally ticks the standard boxes of tourist sights, but on a recent extended stay we found ourselves at the Nissim Camondo Museum, one of the group of small museums under the management of the Musée des Arts Decoratifs. The Camondo Museum is the former home of Moise de Camondo, the fabulously wealthy scion of a Jewish banking dynasty of Italian parentage. He built a private mansion at the edge of the Parc de Monceau to house his large collection of eighteenth century objects and art – all of unusual quality.

Yet behind all this traditional eighteenth century beauty was a home of amazing modernity for its era. The house and its collection are all preserved in excellent condition and give an insight as to how the other half lived in the Belle Époque era. Despite their wealth the family lived a sad life. His marriage to a much younger woman ended in divorce when she met a handsome horse trainer. His son Nissim was killed not long before the Armistice in World War I. His daughter Beatrice showed no interest in the Paris house and lived with her family at their country estate. He bequeathed the entire home and collection to Musée des Arts Decoratifs and it stands essentially as it was when he died in 1935. In a tragic epilogue, Beatrice and her family were rounded up and sent to Auschwitz during the German occupation in 1944 and never seen again.

The cost of admission includes an audio guide that can move the visitor to tears with the family story while amazing with the provenance and exquisite beauty of the contents. It is also fascinating to see a nineteenth century kitchen and scullery in what looks like perfect working order. And you are free to wander – you are almost alone and not a selfie stick in sight

And a few other bonuses – the adjacent park is truly delightful, and you are also near the small Russian area with its small cathedral, famous if for nothing else than for being the site of Pablo Picasso's first marriage.

For a virtual tour see:

<http://www.lesartsdecoratifs.fr/en/museums/musee-nissim-de-camondo>



"The Barber of Seville" at Cessnock Public School last year.

We continue to provide funds from our Young Arts Program for arts-based events and performances in our Local Government Area.

At our last lecture in October 2014, members and visitors very much enjoyed a performance by the Cessnock Community of Great Public Schools Choir. These are all young students from Public Schools in our area who are very dedicated members of the Choir, which requires a considerable commitment for rehearsals and performances. There is definitely 100% enjoyment when they are singing together and creating such wonderful music. We were very pleased to be able to present our cheque for \$500 in support of the CCGPS Choir.

We were invited to attend the Cessnock Community of Great Public Schools Choir Presentation Day in November 2014, and were very pleased to accept a Certificate of Appreciation as acknowledgement of our support. We look forward to continuing our involvement with the Choir.

Also in November 2014, we were invited to attend Cessnock East Public School Presentation Day and delighted to present the prize for CEPS Citizenship Award. ADFAS Pokolbin Young Arts Program will provide a number of prizes at the 2015 Presentation Day for arts-based Awards.

ADFAS Pokolbin Young Arts Program

Robyn Emerson
Young Arts Coordinator

We are once again very pleased to be able to fully fund an operatic performance of Rossini's "Cinderella" at **Cessnock West Public School** on 17th June 2015. The entire school community is treated to this wonderful performance by Opera Australia Schools Tour.

Every year we provide funds for an arts-based excursion to Sydney for **Cessnock East Public School** years 5 and 6 students. This year's excursion is scheduled for 8th October, and will include a performance of "The 52 Storey Tree House" at the Sydney Opera House, plus a digital tour of the iconic building. Our funding includes coach transport and a picnic lunch for each student...which is always very much enjoyed.

"Wollombi Sculpture in the Vineyards" will be held in November 2015 and we are proposing to fund sculpture workshops for local school children. We are currently communicating with the event's Education Officer to arrange venues and sculptors to conduct the workshops.

Our Young Arts projects are 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. Thank you Members and Friends of ADFAS Pokolbin.

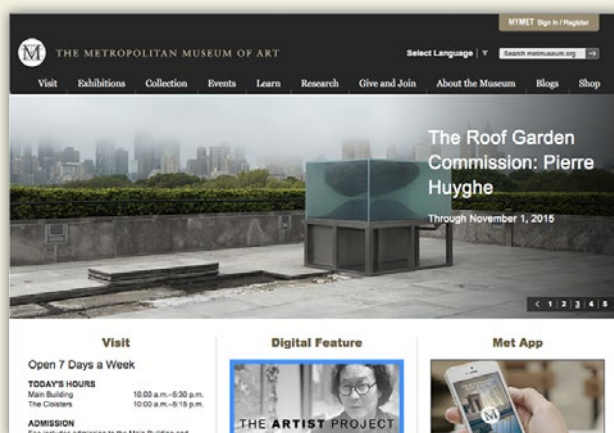
WEBSITE THAT MAY BE OF INTEREST

www.rolandcollection.tv

The Roland Collection would very much like to help with your selection of activities for ADFAS members. Free previewing, streaming of quality filmsart, architecture and modern authors.

www.metmuseum.org

A huge collection of digital art, tours, and videos.



London's river - the city's ebb and flow.

Heather Mckendry



Yasha Beresiner mentioned London City Guided Tours – regular walking tours of the City during a recent lecture.

At the end of February, I flew to London to visit my son and his girlfriend; finding time I headed off on the weekly Monday morning tour – “London’s River – the City’s Ebb and Flow” Carl, our guide, introduced himself as a post-war German immigrant who fell in love with the city and now loves to show London off to visitors. You pay your 7 pounds (6 Concession) and he will take the tour.

We started our walk with a look back at the magnificent St Pauls Cathedral, a building with a wonderful history. The current cathedral (there have been several rebuilds) was designed by Sir Christopher Wren after the cathedral was gutted by the Great Fire of London in 1666. Carl described how the lead roof, which was patched with timber, melted and “rivers of molten lead ran down Ludgate Hill”. Wren’s iconic dome replaced the previous lead spire. The cathedral was also struck during the World War II blitz, but survived.

Down a graded walkway from St Pauls is the Millennium Bridge, a steel suspension bridge which links Bankside with the City of London; there is a direct view from the Tate Modern to St Pauls Cathedral framed by the bridge supports. The Bridge has a known “wobble”, oscillations which are caused by a positive feedback from people crossing. The day of its opening, it was “definitely swaying” said Carl.

The famous Globe Theatre can be seen on the Southern Bank of the Thames. It was built as close as possible to Shakespeare’s original Globe Theatre, a project undertaken by an American, Sam Wanamaker, and initially unpopular as it was felt that a faithful reconstruction was too difficult. The current theatre opened in 1997 and has been busy with productions since. The Southbank area was known for its taverns and brothels, or ‘stewes’ and so we walked past Stew Lane where boatmen took customers from North Side to dally on the South side of the river

Our walk continued along the Thames, toward the Vintners Hall, one of the City of London’s Twelve Great Livery companies. The river walk stays close to the Thames and took

us toward Southwark Bridge, an attractive arch bridge that has appeared in many films – most recently “Grimsby”. The movie is due for release in 2016, according to Carl.

We head away from the Thames for a short time, to walk under part of Cannon Street Station which has lights showing the original line of the Embankment of the Thames. As Carl explains, without the Thames there would be no London, and the Embankment has been elevated many times to keep the river within its channel.

Back out to the river, along the Hanseatic Walk looking towards London Bridge. Carl relishes in the history of this bridge, which in medieval times had buildings on it. The southern side was a



place for displaying the spiked heads of criminals; history tells us that the first head was that of William “Braveheart” Wallace in 1309. Other famous gory heads on display in Tudor times were Sir Thomas More in 1535 and Sir Thomas Cromwell in 1540. As the nursery rhyme suggests, London Bridge fell or burnt down many times over the centuries.

From London Bridge, Carl invites us to look to another iconic crossing, the Tower Bridge, further down the river, and the lovely Old Billingsgate Market building, once the London Fish Markets, now a posh bank and function centre. Many of the old docks and markets along the Thames have been transformed this way. Our final place to see is The Monument to the Great Fire of London. The monument stands near the Church of St Magnus the Martyr, another post-fire rebuild by Sir Christopher Wren, and one of his most expensive. Most of the city was destroyed during the four days it burned. The Monument stands 202 feet high, the exact distance between it and the site in Pudding Land where the fire began.

A wonderful treat if you have the opportunity to enjoy it.



Gallipoli
1915 - 2015
Centenary

Anzac Dawn Service

Richard Bennett

Having been fortunate to secure two tickets to the 100 year ANZAC anniversary service at Gallipoli, Judy and I travelled to Turkey in April 2015. Together with thirteen thousand fellow Australian and New Zealanders, we journeyed to the Gallipoli Peninsular (now a National Park), arriving many hours before the first of several commemorative services at Anzac Cove, Lone Pine and Chunuk Bair.



Later we commenced a three kilometer walk along the shores of the Aegean Sea to Anzac Cove. The beach is little changed since 1915 and it was a most reflective moment. The first 1500 pilgrims before us had taken residence on the front lawn and had laid out their sleeping bags ready for bed. Throughout the long night we were well entertained by a military band, soloist, readings from high school students, and documentaries about ANZAC.

The service commenced in darkness with a digeridoo, reflections from the Gallipoli campaign, school choir, and prayers. armada of Turkish frigates sailed past, with the beat of a helicopter in the distance. Presentations and wreath laying from NZ and AUS followed and the service concluded with the ode and last post.

From Anzac Cove we walked a steep path to Lone Pine to attend the 11am Australian service while the New Zealanders had a six kilometer trek to Chunuk Bair for the NZ service. Chunuk Bair was the furthest point taken by the ANZACs with a few NZ

soldiers being the only ANZACs to see the Dardanelle Straights. Proud moment for the Kiwis.

On route to Lone Pine we had the opportunity to view the Ataturk memorial plus visit several war grave sites including Ari Burnu, Beach, and Shell cemeteries. Tributes to many diggers were left on the graves with the grave of Trooper Simpson completely adorned. Written tributes from school children and descendants were evident on many graves, a toy kangaroo on one and an Anzac biscuit beside another.

I sprinkled some dried rosemary leaves carried from our garden on the tombstone of a 6th Light Horseman. This brave trooper was unknown to me but unlikely not to my grandfather, trooper William Stevens who served in the same battalion with courage in the latter and more successful campaign in Palestine.



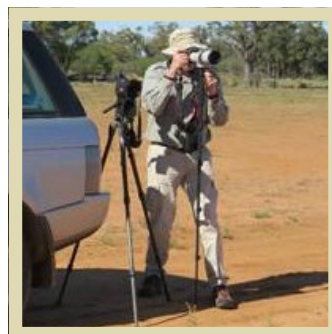
ADFAS Members Richard Bennett and Judy Harrington at Gallipoli

The Lone Pine service paid tribute to all servicemen and women who had served our country, not just the ANZACs. The service was conducted with military precision and dignity. Dignitaries from several countries attended along with Prince Charles and Prince Harry. A wreath laying ceremony followed the service with numerous individuals and groups laying a wreath in memory of fallen diggers.

The last pilgrims boarded buses just before midnight and the evacuation, like a century ago, was a success. Gallipoli was silent once again. Our diggers can rest knowing we still care and much respect their sacrifice.



Black Winged Stilt (juvenile)



John Emerson
photographing
birds at Bowra

Visit to Bowra Wildlife Sanctuary

John Emerson - Member

We recently made a road trip to the Bowra Wildlife Sanctuary in South-West Queensland to take part in some bird surveys on the property.

Bowra Station was purchased by Australian Wildlife Conservancy in May 2010. The property is 140 sq. kms in area and is part of the Mulga Lands Bioregion, situated west of Cunnamulla. AWC is trying to rebuild the region's wildlife community. The property includes over 300 species of vertebrate animals, 200+ species of birds, including 9 threatened species (including the rare Grey Falcon), and 226 native plant species, as well as intact vegetation structure and permanent waterholes. It is a refuge for our declining wildlife.

All stock had been removed from the property to aid in recovery of the vegetation, however we did report seeing a number of feral animals which will be removed. We enjoyed seeing majestic Red Gums at Gumholes Creek which is the property's main watercourse. The property is managed by AWC Land Management Staff, assisted by volunteers, mostly members of Birdlife Queensland, who commit to a one month stay at Bowra.

Numbers are restricted as there is limited water and power available. Accommodation is available in the renovated woolshed, or camping by the permanent lagoon which is trickle-fed by artesian bore water. We were treated to a family of 5 Black Winged Stilts who had set up home here. Also the beautiful Major Mitchell Cockatoos with their pink feathers and even brighter pink crests.

Visitors are invited to take part in daily bird surveys and these are recorded at 'Birdcall', held each evening in the woolshed to record sightings and numbers. Just prior to our arrival the area had received substantial rain and the waterholes had been replenished, attracting birds and animals. There was an abundance of kangaroos and emus. We very much enjoyed driving around the property which has a range of environments ranging from clay pans and pastures to waterholes and lagoons, perfect for waterbirds, eagles and falcons, honeyeaters, woodswallows, just to name a few.

We are hoping to visit Bowra again in Spring when the bird population will increase with migrations for the breeding season.

Committee 2015

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