

Arty facts . . . WYKEHAM PERRY, EILDON

By Emily Friedel

IN 1976, aged 40, Wykeham Perry made the brave decision to leave a stable and well-paid position in the public service to become a professional painter. Wykeham had, at that time, been painting long into the night then getting up to go to the office – something had to give.

Now, almost 78 years old, Wykeham says he has loved every minute of his career as an artist and has no intention of stopping: "I'll just paint until I drop."

Wykeham grew up on a property on the Marysville-Buxton Road and he began painting local scenes at a very early age. He still has a delightful water colour

of Old Cloverdale Cottage he painted when he was 11 or 12 years old; his natural aptitude for fine art became clear around this time and it was nurtured by family members and school teachers.

Wykeham sold his first painting for two guineas at a high school parents' day and in his final year of high school at Alexandra Secondary College he hitch-hiked from Buxton to Alexandra to fulfill a commission from the Alexandra Hospital to paint Dame Pattie Menzies childhood home.

Completely self-taught, Wykeham studied the paintings of artists such as Sir Arthur Streeton at every



Wykeham with Old Cloverdale Cottage which he painted when he was 11 or 12 years old.



given opportunity to try to figure out how they created such superb depictions of the Australian landscape.

The influence of the Heidelberg School on Wykeham's own paintings is clear, and his ability to capture the unique Australian landscape so succinctly is certainly reminiscent of the work of artists such as Streeton and Withers.

Even with a lifetime of painting the Murrindindi area under his belt, Wykeham is still readily

inspired by its beauty and diversity; it never gets boring.

The Cathedral Range alone, with its ever-changing face, has provided much fodder for his creative mind. In fact, a recent rendering of The Cathedral Range sits proudly in his studio among beach scenes, garden scenes, cityscapes and classic Australian Impressionist images of gum trees, old farm buildings and eucalypts.

This Easter, Wykeham will exhibit at the Alexandra ▶

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