



The  
Australian  
Bicentennial  
Authority

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12th August, 1987

Mrs. P. Boyd-Davies,  
290 Walsh Street,  
SOUTH YARRA. VICTORIA. 3141.

Dear Mrs Boyd-Davies,



## HERITAGE 200

Thank you for sending a nomination for the Heritage 200 program.

All of the nominations will be considered by an expert panel which has been established under the co-chairmanship of Mr Alan Coates AO and Dame Beryl Beaurepaire DBE.

The closing date for nominations has now been set at 31 August 1987 and the committee intends to complete the selection process before the end of 1987.

A significant guideline determined by the committee is that the person nominated has to have made his or her notable contribution to Australia before 1970. The names of those people nominated whose achievement was in or after 1970 will be referred to a future committee.

We will contact you again in due course.

Yours sincerely

Des Walsh  
Director Special Projects

Many thanks for your original photos which have been photocopied and are herewith returned to you for safekeeping.



# Fact Sheet



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## Heritage 200 Program

### Guidelines:

The purpose of the Heritage 200 Program is to identify and honour the two hundred Australians who have made the greatest contribution to making Australia what it is today.

The contribution of any person nominated must have been made before 1970. Those whose contribution post-dates 1970 are expected to be considered by a future committee, some fifty years hence.

The final list will not incorporate quotas, but the Committee hopes that a representative spread of nominations will achieve a significant cross-section of Australian life and history.

The deadline for nominations is 31 August 1987.



# T HE conflict between barbarism and romanticism is a savage one: the horror of the dreamer dreaming of something far greater and waking to find everything as it has always been; the fragility of the visionary who is attacked and scorned for daring to believe that things could be different. In Australia we are about to witness a romantic again express his vision and, soon after, we can expect the dogs to begin their baying.

# MANNING CLARK OVERCOMES AUSTRALIA

In a few days the sixth and final volume of Professor Manning Clark's monumental *A History of Australia* will be published. Subtitled *The Old Dead Tree and the Young Tree Green*, it covers the period from 1916 to 1935, with an epilogue bringing it up to the present day. It is the culmination of Clark's controversial lifework — and is a vintage finale.

Clark's previous volumes have been both admired and criticised for the personal views he has brought to his task. The criticism reached a crescendo in 1981 following publication of Volume V, with the letters columns of major newspapers alive with attacks about Clark's prose style, alleged lack of objectivity and romantic Marxist philosophy. One particularly scathing letter in *The Australian* described Clark's writing as "chaotic, mystical, hopelessly opinionated and not fastidious as to fact. It almost seems to have been written in an opium haze."

This was a period of personal turmoil for the professor, now 72, a passionate believer in the ability of Australia to become a pioneer in the creation of a new and fairer society, a man whose political sympathies are with the Left. Through the late 1970s, following the dismissal of the Whitlam Government, he became disillusioned. His high hopes for Australia had been crushed.

In 1978 he expressed his agony in a remarkable lecture to students graduating from Wollongong University.

"At the moment in our country there is a great lull," he told them. "It might not last for long. At the moment there is a great dullness, a dullness so deep that no human being can fathom it. But I believe this is essentially the calm before a great storm — that a tempest will blow, or, if I may change the image, ▽

*He calls Australia the Kingdom of Nothingness. But, after a life searching for answers in the confusion he saw around him, the creative professor has finished his six-volume history and has found hope. ALAN TATE reports.*

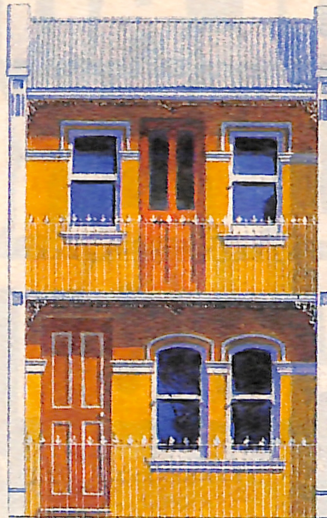
PHOTOGRAPHY BY STUART DAVIDSON



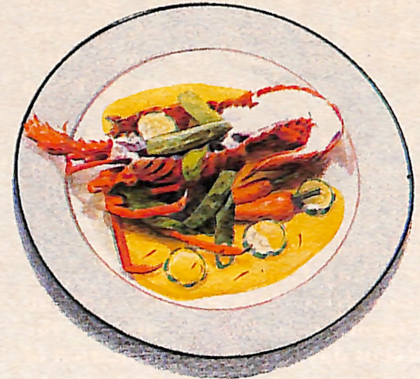
Hurry into "the things ain't what they  
used to be" sale.



Lygon Street Coffee.  
Was 40¢. Now \$1.80.



Carlton Terrace.  
Was \$50,000. Now \$140,000.



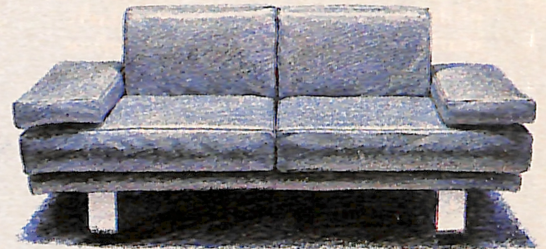
Lunch at Toorak.  
Was \$20. Now \$65.



Carlona Chaise.  
Was \$1747. Now \$1399.



Italian Chair.  
Was \$245. Now \$198.



Thomas Sofa.  
Was \$1975. Now \$1699.

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# 'There might be a fratricidal war. We are all going to be tried in a fiery furnace.'

that a cleansing fire will sweep over the ancient and barbaric continent of Australia, and during the fire great madness will occur and maybe, although I hope this won't occur, there might be a fratricidal war — a civil war. We are all going to be tried in a fiery furnace."

As the trial of Manning Clark was taking place following the publication of Volume V, he was suffering serious heart problems — the result of putting off a necessary bypass operation. He now accepts that ignoring the need for surgery and pressing on with Volume VI was a mistake. He would spend his afternoons researching in the National Library, gathering a mountain of information which he organised into folders according to year, topic and character. Mornings were spent writing in his book-lined study in the Robin Boyd-designed house in Canberra he shares with his wife Dymphna. It took him three drafts — a total of 600,000 words — before he had a story he believed would work. Midway through the endeavour, he succumbed to the need for the bypass operation.

The hallmarks of his other volumes — telling the story of Australia's history by probing the thoughts and consciences of men and women and, through this, making a judgment on their times — remain in this final volume. He has surrendered nothing to his critics. The characters are vivid and human. In the belief that all human stories are tragic, he reveals his characters' flaws, triumphs and ultimate failures.

The theme is the decay of British civilisation in Australia and the blossoming of a new national sentiment. The story ends with Robert Menzies' return to Australia from England in 1935, strengthened in his belief in the value of British civilisation, at the very time James Scullin was forced to resign as Labor leader after collapsing at Mass, and John Curtin, with his beliefs in a new Australia, took over. The ensuing confrontation came at the right time for Clark. He had planned originally to end the volume at 1945, but at 1935, with a draft of 200,000 words, he completed the endeavour with relief. He doesn't say so, but one senses he was tired of it.

"It's a marvellous scene," Clark says. "Of course, both of them have terrific weaknesses — Menzies, the arrogance and pride which he would pay for terribly in 1941 when he was forced to resign. Curtin has got this weakness of alcohol. Curtin gives an assurance that he won't drink again in 1935 and he keeps it and becomes Prime Minister in

1941, but before he can really achieve what he wants to achieve, he dies. Death gets him. Menzies suffers for his weakness, but learns his lesson and comes back in 1949 and has this long period. But again it is a period in which, instead of moving with the great river of life in Australia and the winds of change that are blowing around the world, he again devotes himself to the notion of a transplanted British civilisation."

The epilogue tells what happens to the main characters of the period. Clark's view is that things went bad for all of them — Menzies had a terrible punishment, Curtin and Scullin died, the "Big Fella," Jack Lang, was destroyed, the dreams of all of them were crushed. All should be viewed with "the eye of pity."

"The other theme, I suppose, is the new Australia, post the atomic bomb, after the horrors of the Holocaust in World War II, the atomic bomb, the purges in Russia, the horrors of World War I. The great hopes of humanity — the religious hope of a loving and understanding and forgiving God, that this is really dropped. I don't mean by everyone, but it seems to have become irrelevant almost.

"And the other great hope that humanity would create a much better society, that gets a terrible pasting with the abominations committed by human beings during that period. And you get all this liberation from the morality of the past — the coming of the Pill, the ability to mention swear words in print without being prosecuted, the fact that you can talk about things like homosexuality in public."

Thirty years ago, as a lecturer in Australian history at the Australian National University, Clark set out to write a textbook for his students. He planned to take a technical approach, to be balanced and meticulous with the facts. It was the kind of approach which his upbringing suggested would be proper. He had received a privileged education, with scholarships to Melbourne Grammar and Melbourne University. Later he went to Balliol College, Oxford, then taught at Geelong Grammar in the early 1940s. He was a brilliant cricketer who some believed could have played for Australia.

But underlying the education was a childhood full of puzzles. His father belonged to a respectable, evangelical Church of England working-class family and later became a clergyman, marrying a woman from the old clerical landed nobility of NSW. There was an

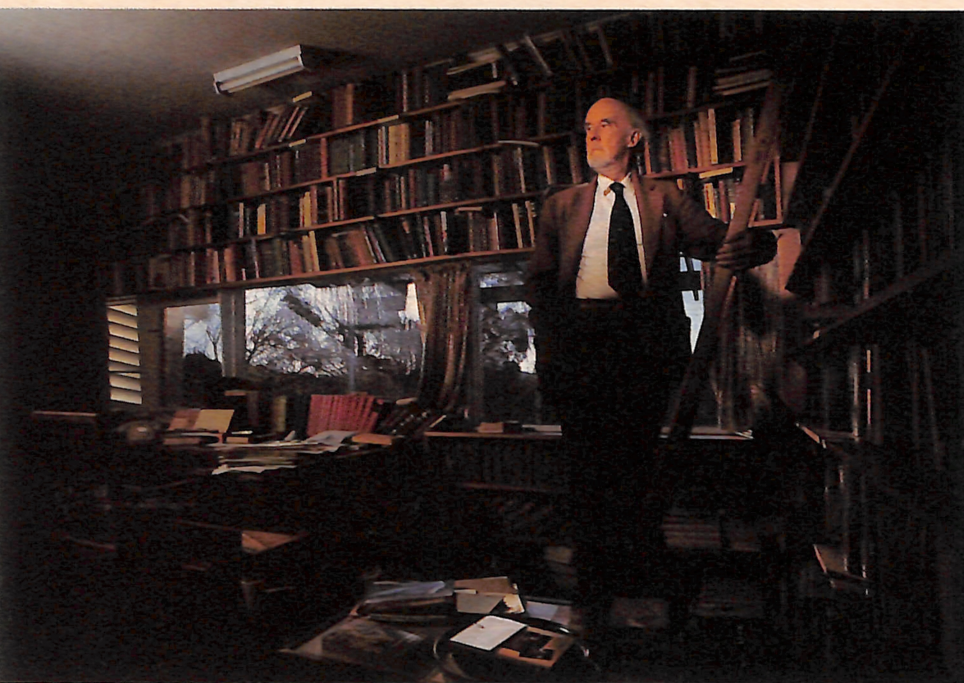


July 9<sup>th</sup>

*Our Chardonnay has proven so popular we're currently training new vines onto the trellises to meet the demand. The work is carried out almost exclusively by women, who seem to have a better feel for the job than men. Call it the women's touch or whatever, but it's an important job, as it has a profound bearing on the mature vine and consequently the Chardonnay we drink in 5 years time. Like the proverb says: "As the twig is bent, so the tree will grow."*



**'Nothing in my life has ever been stately. It has always been stormy, tempestuous and tormented, consumed by doubt, guilt and anxiety.'**



enormous gap between his parents' families. His mother and her maiden sisters, the great-grand-daughters of the Rev Samuel Marsden, talked often of the family's noble history. Clark remembers meeting Marsden's grand-daughter when he was six or seven years old. She was 98 and knew W. C. Wentworth, John Macarthur, and the explorer Oxley. The differences in class and religion within the family were immense issues which Clark as a child found strange and puzzling. Later, he was to find the puzzles of his childhood were the puzzles of society at large.

He wrote about aspects of his life a few years ago for Kevin Childs's book *Men On Women*. "Nothing in my life has ever been stately," he wrote. "It has always been stormy, tempestuous and tormented, consumed by doubt, guilt and anxiety."

This questioning of his circumstances and those of the community in which he lived helped him consign his textbook to the rubbish heap. He remembers thinking that here was a great story and he was trying to explain it in a technical fashion — a textbook in which even he had no interest. The story of the coming of the civilised British to the ancient continent of Australia, and the great story of what civilisation did to the Aborigine and to the land, and what they did to each other when they got there and which faiths they brought with them, surely could not be dealt with in a textbook. So he started again and tried to write the story as a story. Thus began the

first volume of what became his life-work.

"Manning Clark is not like other historians," a former student, Professor Geoffrey Blainey, Dean of Melbourne University's arts faculty, said recently. "Many people reading him in search of the answers they expect in orthodox history books might not always find them there. He is an historian with deep powers of creativity. Inside him there's a novelist, a painter, theologian and prophet, and from these callings he brings some of the qualities of imagination, a sense of wonder, and the will to create order from chaos."

Having finished his work, Clark admits to feelings of regret but also satisfaction. Now in good health, he continues to accept speaking engagements around the country, but has more time for his two great loves — music and fishing, followed closely by football. His disillusionment has been replaced by great hopes.

He believes he did not pay enough attention in his earlier volumes to Aborigines and women and regrets it deeply. He admits he was sometimes careless, although never as careless as his fiercest critics said. And he wishes he had been better able to tell the story about Australia that was inside him.

His satisfaction comes from having travelled all over Australia — and from getting to know Australians.

"The other good things are that I got to know the Australian painters very well and they were a great help to me —

Arthur Boyd, William Dobell, Nolan, Drysdale. They taught me a lot about Australia. They taught me what to see; they took the blinkers off my eyes and showed me the beauty of Australia. I suppose my greatest good fortune was to get to know Patrick White very well. We happened to get along very well."

In the great void that Clark saw develop through the failure of religion or enlightenment to create a fairer Australia — what he calls "the Kingdom of Nothingness" — he now sees reason for hope. "On the contrary, people who have been deprived can have a great fellowship and it's rather romantic," (he laughs a little, then lowers his voice to a whisper). "But it's possible for them to be more caring and loving and tender to each other than maybe in the days when they had the great expectations. This is one ground for hope."

"The other is that it looks as though some of the great causes of human beings inflicting pain and suffering on each other — namely domination, class over class, white man over coloured man, man over woman, sometimes parent over child, teacher over student — that these at least have been called into question. There's been a great period of liberation. And also there's been an enormous change in the attitude of man to woman; and, secondly, although it hasn't got much further than a start, an enormous change in attitude of the white man to the whole question of the Aborigine."

"I think I have some sort of romantic notion in my mind that the Aborigines and their descendants, the British and their descendants, the Europeans and their descendants, the Asians and their descendants, that the one thing we have in common is the land of Australia — our common mother as it were. I hope that is not too fanciful for you."

Clark's strength is the simple courage of a man prepared to speak from his heart about the confusion he sees around him; of the vast emptiness of the place he has spent his life roaming. The hope he expresses in his final volume is that emptiness can be replaced by good; that we have a chance to make our own history. The danger is that the void will instead be filled by evil. We can make the right choice, Clark believes, only when we understand our history.

The great question for Australia as it moves towards its Bicentennial is: is anyone listening in the Kingdom of Nothingness? □

*A History of Australia, C. M. H. Clark, Melbourne Uni Press, \$35 cloth, \$25.95 paper*