

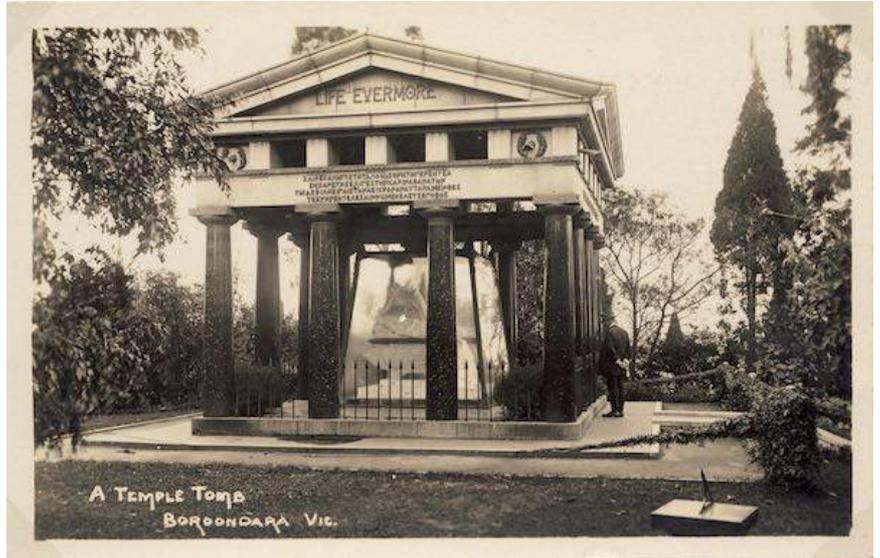
**HISTORICAL
SOCIETY INC.**

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NEWSLETTER

No. 122
MARCH 2018



THE SPRINGTHORPE MEMORIAL

The Springthorpe Memorial in the Boroondara General Cemetery is included on the Victorian Heritage Register. The heritage citation explains why it is significant:

“The Springthorpe Memorial is historically important in demonstrating nineteenth century social and cultural attitudes to death, and for reflecting the ideals of the Victorian Garden Cemetery movement which aimed at providing comfort for mourners. The memorial is important in demonstrating uniqueness, no other example being known of such aesthetic composition, architectural design and execution, or scale. It is important in exhibiting good design and aesthetic characteristics and for the richness and unusual integration of features. The Springthorpe Memorial is also important in illustrating the principal characteristics of the work of a number of artists including Desbrowe Annear, Mackennal, the glass manufacturers Auguste Fischer and the bronze work of Marriots.”

While the citation reflects on the Memorial’s historical and spiritual significance, it makes little comment about why it was constructed.

Dr. John Springthorpe was a well-known and highly respected Melbourne doctor who worked as a pathologist at the Alfred Hospital and also as an out-patient physician at the Melbourne Hospital. Besides running a thriving Collins Street practice, he was a university lecturer in therapeutics, dietics and hygiene, writing numerous articles for medical and other journals.

The Memorial was built by Dr. Springthorpe to celebrate the love he felt for his wife, Annie Inglis Springthorpe (1867-97) who had died when she was 30-years-old, giving birth to their fourth child. Her death occurred after only ten years of what he described as “an idyllic marriage”. Springthorpe wrote copious notes in a diary and a scrapbook, both of which are held in the State Library of Victoria. In these documents we can read how he tried to overcome his loss and about the development the Memorial that he was to spare no cost in having erected.

Two years after his wife’s death, Springthorpe wrote to the Trustees of the Boroondara Cemetery, requesting a site for the erection of a memorial. In April 1899, he was shown a proposed site at the Cemetery with a glorious

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THE FIRST COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENT

Kew residents, rich and poor, celebrate this important national event

Front-page

A Temple Tomb, Boroondara Vic.

Postcard, Kew Historical Society collection

Right

Two rare early postcards of the central tableau of the Springthorpe Memorial. Kew Historical Society collection

THE SPRINGTHORPE MEMORIAL (cont.)

view towards Heidelberg, with Mount Macedon on the horizon. His diary entries convey a mounting excitement and a sense of achievement as he imagined a tomb surrounded by a garden.

Harold Desbrowe Annear, the distinguished architect, was employed to construct a model of the tomb. He designed the tomb in the classical Greek Doric style with a lead-light glass roof and dark green granite columns. Within the tomb, the noted sculptor Bertram Mackennal was commissioned to create impressive life-sized statues, depicting an angel of love placing a wreath over Annie's head, while an angel of sorrow plays the lyre in a pitiful mourning posture.

Initially the statuary was enclosed in a glass pyramid, which was removed in the 1940s when it was discovered that mould was starting to appear on the marble. The copper snake heads near the top of the 'temple' occasionally spout water when it rains and the stained glass roof casts a rosy red glow over the faces of the statuary.

In this remarkable memorial, inscriptions feature everywhere. There are biblical inscriptions in English, ancient Greek and Latin on all four sides of the statuary group. The tiled floor also contains various inscriptions. These include quotations from 19th century poems including those of Walt Whitman, William Wordsworth and Robert Browning. Some were even written by Springthorpe. Annie's Springthorpe's name is not mentioned on her memorial and the names of other descendants, who also lie within the mausoleum, only have their initials in the corners.

Springthorpe commissioned William Robert Guilfoyle, the curator of Melbourne's Royal Botanic Gardens, to landscape a 'garden of the dead', which included flowering red gums from Western Australia. However, much of the surrounding land was to be taken back by the Cemetery Trust in the 1930s, following Springthorpe's death, when it was discovered that this land had not been paid for. Today, an imposing gate with a large aluminium and bronze shield, stone seats and sundials are all that remain of this proposed garden.

Three years' after his wife's death, Springthorpe was to become President of the Melbourne Medical Association. He established a training system in dentistry and became the first president of the newly established Royal Victorian Training Nurses Association in 1901, which he had helped found. He published a two-volume textbook, *Therapeutics, Dietics and Hygiene* in 1914, and in that year enlisted in the Australian Army Medical Corps, eventually becoming senior physician to No. 2 Australian General Hospital in Egypt, and then in France. Throughout his war service and beyond, he became interested in soldiers who suffered 'shell shock'; a new branch of the emerging field of psychiatry.

Preparatory work for the conservation of the Springthorpe Memorial is being undertaken by a working group, which also includes representatives of the Cemetery Trustees, the Friends of Boroondara (Kew) Cemetery, and the Kew Historical Society.

A collaborative approach is essential, as restoration of the memorial is not the responsibility of the Trust.



In fact, the memorial remains the property of the family, and before any work could proceed, approval had to be sought and granted from family members. This has been obtained, and the family are thrilled that conservation work will prevent any further deterioration of this historically important memorial. Funds for conservation work will be sought via Government grants and philanthropic donations.

PAULINE TURVILLE

KEW HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

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Sir Gustav Nossal AC, CBE

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MONTHLY MEETINGS

The Kew Historical Society holds monthly meetings in the Phyllis Hore Room at the rear of the Kew Library. Meetings are held at 8.00pm on the second Wednesday of the month. Refreshments are provided.

KEW COURT HOUSE

Members of the Society played a key role in the preservation of the historic Kew Court House. Volunteers staff the Kew History Centre on Level 1 every Friday & Saturday (11.00am-1.00pm). At the Centre, you can ask questions about Kew's history and view displays from the Society's collection.

NEWSLETTER

This is published quarterly and distributed to all members. Additional copies are made available to the community. Past newsletters can be downloaded from the website.

WEBSITES

www.kewhistoricalsociety.org.au |

victoriancollections.net.au/organisations/kew-historical-society

Kew Historical Society Inc.

Inc. No. A0010789W | ABN 97 824 890 237

PO Box 175 Kew VIC 3101

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HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

EVENTS

JANUARY TO JUNE 2018

FEBRUARY MONTHLY MEETING

Topic: Boroondara Cemetery: Returning it to a garden cemetery

Speaker: Helen Page

Helen, a horticulturist with a keen interest in old gardens, was president of the Australian Garden History Society Victorian branch for many years. She is currently a member of the Boroondara General (Kew) Cemetery Trust. She, and an active group of volunteers have an ambition to return it to a garden cemetery. Come and listen to Helen explain why, how and when this is happening.

Wednesday 14 February, Phyllis Hore Room, 8.00PM

KEW FESTIVAL 2-18 MARCH

New Exhibition Opening Night (Friday 2 March)

Sackville Street Heritage Walks (Sunday 11 March).

2018 McIntyre Lecture (Wednesday 14 March)

Green Glam Fiesta Day (18 March)

[For details, see page 4]

APRIL MONTHLY MEETING

Topic: The Weirs of Princess Street

Speakers: Jillian Rigby, Robert Baker, Suzanne McWha

Jillian is a descendant of George and Edith Weir who lived at 84 Princess Street between 1917 and 1950. Jill will speak about her family's history; Robert will outline how Jill's generous gift of a number of costumes enhances our current collection; and Suzanne will describe a number of the outfits in detail.

Wednesday 11 April, Phyllis Hore Room, 8.00PM

MAY MONTHLY MEETING

Topic: Frances Derham: artist and teacher

Speaker: Felicity Renowden

Felicity is an active member of our Research Group and is also a volunteer in the Preshil School Archives. She will talk about the artist Frances Derham, and how her interest in child art was triggered at Preshil and by her teaching experience at the school from 1935-7.

Wednesday 9 May, Phyllis Hore Room, 8.00PM

MEMBER ACTIVITY

House Museum Tour - The Johnson Collection

William Johnston (1911-86) was a 20th century collector and antique dealer. His collection was bequeathed to the people of Victoria after his death, and is displayed in a constantly changing domestic setting in his former residence. Specific details about this tour for our members will be provided at the April and May monthly meetings and in the eBulletins.

Wednesday 23 May. Melbourne CBD bus pick-up

JUNE MONTHLY MEETING

Topic: The Influenza Epidemic in Kew

Speaker: Andrew Frost

In October and November 1918, the influenza epidemic broke out in the United Kingdom, India, Australia and New Zealand. It was called the 'Spanish Influenza' because the virus had originated in Spain. Initially, it was known as the 'South African' influenza, since it seemed to spread to Australia from there with troop transports returning from the War. Andrew will describe the impact of the epidemic in Kew.

Wednesday 13 June, Phyllis Hore Room, 8.00PM

THE COLLECTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT

The Society is pleased to announce that it has appointed Ms. Emma Russell, of History@Work to conduct an assessment of our collection. Emma has considerable experience in conducting assessments to determine the historic, aesthetic and artistic, research and scientific, and social and spiritual significance of collections.

NEW ACQUISITIONS

Since the publication of the last newsletter, the Society has been the recipient of a number of generous donations. These include:

- A 1920s 'Kew Flyer' Lady's Racer, gifted by John Wyatt.
- Costumes, including a pair of 1891 wedding shoes, a 1920s beaded chiffon scarf, and an Edwardian silk and lace bed jacket, gifted by Jillian Rigby.
- A collection of personal, family and civic items, gifted by Judith Voce.
- Research files, compiled in the late 1990s about specific heritage properties in Kew, gifted by Graeme Butler.
- Costumes and hats, bought or worn in Kew by Kathleen Gervasoni, a former Lady Mayoress, and member of the Society.

BOOK SALES

In addition to membership fees, the Society depends for much of its operating budget on money raised through Quarterly Book Sales. We need volunteers to participate in setting up, selling and or storing books at the end of the each sale. If you can help, please contact David White, the Society's Book Sale co-ordinator at a monthly meeting, or by emailing him at dwarch@ozemail.com.au.

Book Sales will be held on 18 February, 20 May, 19 August, and 25 November in the Phyllis Hore Room.

2018 KEW FESTIVAL

KHS EVENTS

NEW EXHIBITION

TRADERS OF KEW

Kew Court House & Kew Library

Opening night: Fri 2 March

Our first new exhibition for 2018 will open on the first night of the Kew Festival and focus on the history of trading - retail, commerce and services - in Kew and Kew East. Items exhibited will be drawn from the collections of the Kew Historical Society and include historic photographs, postcards, advertisements, manuscripts and objects. The exhibition will also showcase the history of a number of current Kew traders who have successfully operated their businesses for many years, and in some cases for decades.

Both exhibits include free entry. The exhibition at the Kew Court House will be open for viewing each Friday and Saturday between 11.00AM and 1.00PM. The display in the large glassed display area at the southern end of the Kew Library can be viewed during library hours.



POMEROY
(Merridale from 1908), 43 Sackville Street.

Piesse family collection

View it on our Sackville Street Heritage Walks

HERITAGE WALKS

SACKVILLE STREET

Sunday 11 March, 10.00AM & 2.00PM

Felicity Renowden and Robert Baker will lead two guided walks of Sackville Street during the Kew Festival. The 75-minute walks will allow participants to view and hear about the history of the streets traversed, gardens, trees and houses. Participants on the walks may be able to view parts of the interiors of *Blackhall* and *Kalimna*, which currently house Preshil's Primary School.

In the past, our heritage walks have been oversubscribed, so participation in the walk is dependent on prior registration. Details can be found in the 2018 Kew Festival program.

2018 MCINTYRE LECTURE

MELBOURNE STREET LIFE: THE ITINERARY OF OUR DAYS

Professor Andrew J. May

Just Theatre, Kew Court House, 188 High Street

Wed 14 March, 7.30 for 8.00PM

Ugo Catani's *A Summer Shower in Collins Street*, 1889, sets the scene for Professor May's invitation to walk the streets of Melbourne, imagine the everyday past, and see the urban landscape with new eyes. For the historian, as for artists like Catani and Tom Roberts, the street frames the ever-changing throng of the wealthy and down-and-out, the passers-by, shoppers, idlers, hawkers, cabbies, entertainers, beggars, larrikins, prostitutes, custodians and law-breakers. It is the stage of ritual, procession and protest and the site of proud architecture, fine trees and public utilities. And it also has its hazards, of traffic, animals, assault, falling buildings, and fire.

In the McIntyre Lecture, Professor May, will discuss the growth and transformation of a great Australian city and the balance between the need for public order and the democratic right to public space.

Andrew J. May is Professor of History in the School of Historical & Philosophical Studies at the University of Melbourne, where he has been a faculty member since 2000. A social historian with broad interests across urban, colonial and imperial history, he has published widely on the social experience and cultures of the Australian city. He is the Historian member on the Victorian Heritage Council, and a board member of Urban History, the Journal of Urban History, and the European Association for Urban History.

The McIntyre Lecture is a ticketed event. Information about the cost of tickets and how they may be purchased are available in the 2018 Kew Festival Program.



GREEN GLAM FIESTA DAY

KHS Stall, Victoria Park

Saturday 17 March, 12.00-5.00PM

Meet our members and view our special display.

NETTIE & VANCE PALMER

LITERARY GIANTS OF KEW

Nettie and Vance Palmer were an Australian-born couple who had a significant influence on Australian literary and cultural life for nearly 40 years. They were widely known through their novels, poetry, plays, reviews, literary criticism and radio broadcasts. Both were prominent in debates about conscription, censorship, civil liberties and the rise of European fascism. Vance was a founder of the Fellowship of Australian Writers and chairman of the Commonwealth Literary Fund's advisory committee (1947–53). Through their published writings, they championed the cause of Australian literature.

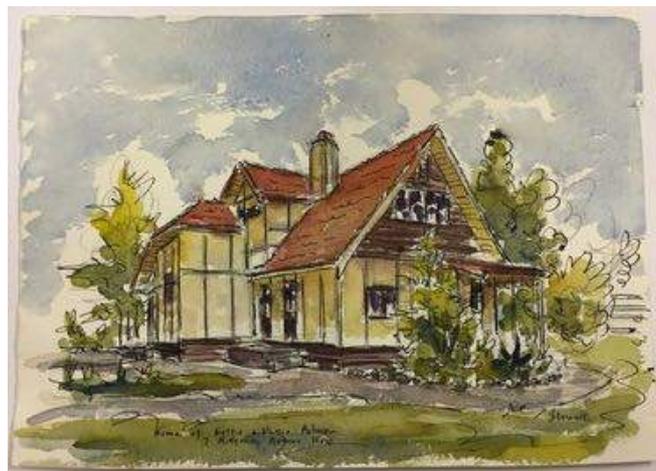
On 14 August 1985, Phyllis Hore, Mayor of Kew assisted Dr. Arthur A. Phillips, literary critic, teacher and acquaintance of the Palmers unveil a memorial plaque at the Kew Library, commemorating Vance and Nettie. The Palmers had been Kew residents from 1930 until their deaths.

Edward Vivian (Vance) Palmer was born in Bundaberg, Queensland in 1885. He left school at 16 and took office jobs in Brisbane before leaving for England in 1905 where he established himself in the literary scene. In 1907 he visited Russia and attempted to meet Tolstoy. By 1909 he was making literary contacts in Melbourne and had joined the Victorian Socialist Party.

Janet Gertrude (Nettie) Palmer *nee* Higgins was born in 1885 in Bendigo. Initially she was educated at her family home *Killena* in Malvern and later at Presbyterian Ladies College and the University of Melbourne. Although her social activities were restricted by her deeply religious parents, she participated in student affairs, political events of the day and gained a grounding in socialism and cultural nationalism. Nettie was introduced to intellectuals in the Higgins family drawing room where her aunt Ina Higgins entertained women who held 'advanced ideas'.

At the age of 25, Nettie visited London and attended lectures by Sylvia and Emmeline Pankhurst and was horrified by the violence meted out to female demonstrators. Although a feminist sympathetic to the cause, Nettie did not join the suffragists.

Nettie and Vance met in 1909 and married in London in 1914. Travelling in France when war broke out, they returned to London where their daughter Aileen Yvonne Palmer (1915-88) was born. Later in 1915, the family returned to Melbourne. Their second daughter, Helen Gwyneth Palmer (1917-79), was born at *Lancewood*, a private hospital in Glenferrie Road, Kew. In March 1918, Vance enlisted in the Australian Military Force, but arrived in France three days after the Armistice. He spent some time in France, England and Ireland before he was discharged from the Army at the end of 1919. While Vance was overseas, Nettie and their daughters lived with the Higgins family in Malvern. When he returned to Victoria, Vance moved his family to a cottage at Emerald owned by Katherine Susanna Pritchard. Nettie home-schooled their daughters in Victoria, and later in Caloundra, Queensland.



Ardmore, 7 Ridgeway Avenue. Joy Stewart, 1980s.
Kew Historical Society collection

During the 1920s, Nettie became the most important literary critic in Australia. She won a major essay prize, published regular articles in the *Illustrated Tasmanian Mail*, the *Brisbane Courier*, *All About Books* and the *Bulletin Red Page*. Vance's volume of verse, *The Camp* (1920), contained his best-known poem, 'The farmer remembers the Somme'. He wrote many poems and novels, some under the pseudonym 'Rann Daly'.

Writing provided the family's modest livelihood. Between 1925 and 1929 they lived frugally at Caloundra, before returning to Melbourne. As Nettie's earnings increased, Vance devoted himself to serious writing. In 1929 and 1930, *Men are Human* and *The Passage* won third and first prizes in the *Bulletin* novel competition and subsequently their income greatly increased.

In the 1920's and 1930's, most Australian readers assumed that books by their countrymen and women would be of no importance. Vance and Nettie were committed to the development of Australian literature and encouraged other Australian writers, notably Katherine Susanna Pritchard and Eleanor Dark. They offered help and friendship to authors of high quality work.

Soon after their return to Melbourne from Queensland in 1929, Vance and Nettie began living at *Ardmore* [since demolished], 7 Ridgeway Avenue, Kew. The house belonged to Catherine Higgins, Nettie's mother and remained their home until their deaths. The garden at *Ardmore* was designed by Ina Higgins, Nettie's aunt. Ina was the first female landscape architect in Victoria and one of the first women to be trained at the Burnley School of Horticulture. By 1946, Vance was listed as the owner, and it remained a Palmer property until 1970.

The *Centenary Gift Book 1934* was co-edited by Nettie, for which Ina Higgins contributed an article titled, 'Women and Horticulture'. The focus of the book was the role of pioneering women in the settlement of the Victoria.



Vance and Nettie Palmer at Ardmore.
Palmer Collection. National Library of Australia

NETTIE & VANCE PALMER (from page 5)

Nettie was active in the Australian Literature Society, the Verse-Speaking Association and the Fellowship of Australian Writers. She also lectured and broadcasted. Vance strove to be remembered as a novelist, underrating his other skills. Many readers prefer his short stories to his novels, which some describe as lacking in vitality and feeling.

In 1935 and 1936, Vance, Nettie and their daughters visited Paris, London and Spain where they became involved with the Republican cause. In 1935, Nettie attended the first International Congress of Writers for the Defence of Culture in Paris. After visiting Spain in 1936, Nettie became a member of the Spanish Relief Committee and joined the fight against fascism. Nettie subsequently spoke and debated about Spain in Melbourne and became active in the 'defence of culture'. She was the editor of an anti-fascist journal for women and a member of the International Refugee Emergency Committee. Nettie also arranged adoptions of Spanish orphans by Australian couples and worked for Australians for Spanish Relief.

When the family left Spain for England in 1936, at the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, their elder daughter Aileen joined the London-based, Spanish Medical Aid Committee and returned to Spain as a secretary and interpreter. Vance, Nettie and younger daughter Helen returned to Australia. Aileen spent two years in Spain and became a member of the International Brigade. She was a playwright, poet, feminist and member of the University of Melbourne Labor Club. Her biographer records that ASIO kept a file on her.

Vance became interested in writing about Australian literature and investigating the 'Australian dream'. In 1937 Vance and Nettie published their abridgement of *Such is Life: Being Certain Extracts From The Diary of Tom Collins*, which outraged some critics, including Miles Franklin, but introduced Joseph Furphy to a new generation of readers. Their publisher's aim was to introduce Furphy to English readers, so about 50,000 words had to be cut from the work as "parts of it are so local as to be unintelligible to anyone who doesn't know the period and the background, other parts so wordy they act as a drag on the book."

In the late 1930s, Vance began reviewing books for the Australian Broadcasting Commission. This was the work for which he became best known. After the war, he returned to writing fiction. In 1948, *Golconda* the first of a trilogy of novels was published. It is now regarded as among his best works. During the 1950's he wrote some of his finest stories. In 1951, with Margaret Sutherland, he published the pioneering work *Old Australian Bush Ballads* and then in 1955, *Let the Birds Fly*, a collection of short stories.

A left-leaning socialist, Vance went to Helsinki in 1955 as delegate to the World Peace Council. Despite his socialist ideals he was highly regarded by the conservative establishment. He declined the offer of an O.B.E. and when he was accused of being a Communist, he was defended by Robert Menzies, the Australian Prime Minister.

Daughters Aileen and Helen joined the Communist Party as University students, and while Aileen remained a member, Helen became disillusioned and was eventually expelled from the Party. Vance and Nettie were both described as liberal socialists.

Aileen had returned to London after her stay in Spain and drove ambulances in London's East End during the Second World War. She returned to Australia in 1945, and three years later suffered the first of a number of mental breakdowns, unable to cope with the violence, death, trauma and destruction she had witnessed in Spain and London. Today she would probably be diagnosed as having Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. The family was living in *Ardmore*, when, against her wishes, Aileen was committed by her parents to the private asylum *Alencon*, in Malvern. For the rest of her life, she was periodically admitted to psychiatric institutions for treatment.

A peace activist, Aileen protested against the Vietnam War. She published articles and poems in Melbourne left-wing journals, such as *The Realist* and *Overland*, and in 1964, a volume of original poems and translations, *World Without Strangers?* Much of her writing, including the unfinished autobiographical novel 'Pilgrim's Way', remains unpublished. A talented linguist, she translated Ho Chi Minh's prison diaries and also some Vietnamese poets.

Younger daughter Helen was dux of Presbyterian Ladies' College in 1934 and became a writer, teacher and political activist. In 1942, Helen joined the Women's Australian Auxiliary Air Force, working in the education section until she was retired in 1946. She joined the New South Wales Education Department after leaving the WAAF and made her home in Sydney.

In 1952, during a visit to China, she was impressed by the reforms made by the Chinese Communists. Disillusioned by Soviet Communism, she was expelled from the Communist Party of Australia for attempting to open up discussion on socialist issues.

In Sydney in 1957, Helen began the publication of *Outlook*, an independent socialist journal. From its earliest issues *Outlook* carried articles on the social conditions that generated revolutionary upheavals in underdeveloped countries. In the complex anti-war movement led by peace groups, students, radicals and civil libertarians, *Outlook* was a voice of protest.

NETTIE & VANCE PALMER (from p.6)

Vance and Nettie's contribution to the Australian literary and arts landscape cannot be underestimated. In addition to their own writings across a range of genres, they helped establish a theatrical group in Melbourne that specialised in producing Australian plays. They were supporters of social reform both in Australia and overseas. Aileen and Helen produced significant literary works of their own and were activists and supporters of the radical movements of the day.

Nettie and Vance's last years were troubled by their own ill health and concern for Aileen and her mental illness and alcoholism.

Vance died of heart disease at home in Kew in 1959 and was cremated at Springvale Botanical Cemetery. Nettie scattered half his ashes in the Dandenong Ranges and half in the sea. The sea and the mountains were Vance and Nettie's favourite places to live and write.

Nettie died in Hawthorn in 1964 after years of poor health. She too was cremated at Springvale Botanical Cemetery, and her ashes scattered by her daughters. Helen died of cancer in North Sydney in 1979 and was cremated there. Aileen died in Ballarat in 1988 and is buried there.

DESLEY REID

THE ARTISTIC SENSIBILITY

WORKS OF ART & MANUSCRIPTS IN THE VAUGHAN-SMITH COLLECTION

The Kew Historical Society's collection includes a number of sketchbooks and scrapbooks. These range from Dorothy Rogers' scrapbooks, in which she pasted annotated copies of her newspaper articles on local history, to 'artistic' scrapbooks assembled in the 19th century, where content and decoration contributed equally to the design.

Four of the latter include an original Victorian sketchbook dating from c.1862, an Edwardian 'Autograph' album dating from 1905, and two 19th and 20th century scrapbooks. All four were donated by Rosemary and Raymond Vaughan-Smith; part of a generous donation that also included artworks, costumes, and photographs.

Raymond Vaughan-Smith (1923-2011) was born in the United Kingdom. A systematic botanist by profession, he is recorded as professionally active from 1954-89 as a collector of plant specimens in New South Wales, South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia. A number of the specimens he collected are in national collections, such as the National Herbarium of New South Wales. He was to name *Grevillea floripendula* in 1981. His wife, Rosemary Alison (Gipps) Vaughan-Smith (1930-2013), was the third child of Richard Brook Woodthorpe Gipps (c.1872-1946) and Mary Alys (Kirkland) Gipps (1889-1981). Rosemary's school years were spent at Fintona, Methodist Ladies College and Clyde. On leaving school she studied to be an occupational therapist. Raymond and Rosemary Vaughan-Smith were residents of Cameron Court, and members of the Kew Historical Society from 1978.

The four illustrated books that form part of the larger Vaughan-Smith Collection vary in the degree of their historical, aesthetic and social significance. Three were compiled by artistic women in an Anglo-Australian family, which included Louisa Goulburn (Thomas) Gipps (1843-1926); her daughter Mary Alys (Kirkland) Gipps; and her granddaughter Rosemary Alison (Gipps) Vaughan-Smith. The fourth book, a scrapbook, dates from the 20th century and was presented to Raymond and Rosemary by "Aunt Gertrude".



Group of soldiers after de Southerberg. Unknown artist, 1830.
From the Sketchbook of Louisa Goulburn (Thomas) Gipps

The large bound sketchbook has a marbled cover with blue binding. The name Louisa Goulburn Thomas and the date 1862 are faintly inscribed in pencil on the front page. The book contains pen and ink and pencil drawings, watercolours, and photographs, a number of which predate 1862. She was to marry Henry Gipps (1837-91) in 1863. The approximately 75 works are loose-leafed items and [currently] do not form a chronological, geographical or thematic sequence.

Creators identified on some drawings and watercolours include Mary Julia Wilder Thomas, JFV Wright, ELG (Edward Louis de Bondell Gipps?), L Nicholson, Bertha Isadore Thomas, and HG (Henry Gipps?).

Many of the works are signed and dated, and include rural landscapes and seascapes, archaeological sites, animal studies, and portraits. While many of the works were created in the British Isles, others are scenes of Venice, the Ionian Islands, Cape Town, Hong Kong and Japan. A number of the 'oriental' paintings on silk were probably purchased from local artists.

THE ARTISTIC SENSIBILITY (from page 7)

The art works in the book are at various stages of completion and represent a diverse range of artistic skills. What may be the earliest work in the sketchbook is a drawing of three uniformed soldiers (page 7). An annotation on the reverse records that the drawing is of a *Group of Soldiers after [Philipp Jakob] de Southerbourg 1830*. P. J. de Southerbourg (1740-1812) was a French painter, stage designer, and illustrator, active mainly in England, and a member of the Royal Academy. The date on the reverse presumably represents the date of the work's re-creation. While drawing from pre-existing models was an essential element of artistic development, the fine line work and expert use of washes indicates an already accomplished amateur painter.

A depiction of a naval battle, signed 'H. Gipps', who is on stylistic evidence the creator of a number of works in the album, may have been created by Col. Henry Gipps the husband of the owner of the sketchbook, or be earlier works by her husband's father or brother.



The ship in the foreground of the watercolour is a galley, which by the 19th century was a relic of a bygone naval era. The watercolour is built up in a number of stages, starting with a rough graphite line drawing, broad washes of colour on the sky and sails and especially the sea, and fine line brushwork on the masts and the aft of the galley.

Louisa and Henry Gipps had six sons and two daughters. The birth of the oldest son, William Henry Houston Meyrick Gipps (1864-1903) in Corfu perhaps explains why a number of scenes and items in the album are of the Ionian Islands.

Louisa is probably the creator of a number of still life and botanical studies in the album. These range from floral studies to a bird's nest. The 'Yellow Amaryllis', (above right), one of the less sombre studies, bursts off the page in vivid yellow and greens. The painting of objects was to remain a socially 'approved' specialty of amateur and professional women artists into the 20th century.

While Louisa and Henry Gipps were to die in Sussex, two of their sons, Frederick George De Visme Gipps (1867-1953) and Richard Brook Woodthorpe Gipps (c.1872-1946) migrated to Queensland, possibly bringing with them their mother's sketchbook. While the date of their arrival with ship in Australia is still to be determined, the Brisbane newspaper *The Telegraph* reported in great detail about the wedding of Richard Gipps to Mary Alys Kirkland at *Elvaston*, The Righi, South Yarra in June 1925. The bride, like the groom, was originally from Queensland, but at the time of her marriage lived with her parents at 21 The Righi.

Richard Gipps was born of artistic parents, and was to marry a woman of similar sensibilities, as Mary Alys Kirkland's 'Autograph' album bears ample witness. Compiled between 1905 and 1922, the album has considerable aesthetic coherence, even though drawings and text are by different hands. Together, it provides a vivid depiction of social life and values in Brisbane in the period preceding the First World War.

Like other autograph albums of the period, it is a compilation of pen and ink sketches, watercolours, quotations, poems, aphorisms and signatures. Most entries are from Queensland, particularly Coorparoo in Brisbane; friends and acquaintances from other Australian States also contributed items.

The autograph album predictably contains numerous mementoes of the notable and the forgotten. It includes the signatures of the British contralto Dame Clara Butt (1872-1936) her husband, the baritone R. H. Kennerley Rumford (1870-1957), and that of the Australian actress and singer Nellie Stewart (1858-1931).

While the signatures are interesting, they are not rare. Rather it is the illustrations that dazzle with the surety of their design and execution. In the portraits, one can recognise the debt that Edwardian art and design owed to the Pre-Raphaelites whose serene and poised idealisations of women are exemplified in the drawings, albeit simplified for a new 20th century sensibility.

THE ARTISTIC SENSIBILITY (from page 8)

Typical, is a very early portrait (below left) from 1906 of Mary Alys Kirkland by a 20-year-old Garnet Agnew (1886-1951). Agnew later became an illustrator for *The Brisbane Courier* and *The Queenslander Illustrated Weekly*, creating cover illustrations for these publications between 1926 and 1930.



Another pen and ink portrait (above right) of Mary Alys Kirkland was created in 1910 by Augusta Frances Isabel Hobday (1884-1961). Augusta, with her brother and sister, Percy Stanhope Hobday and Gladys Hobday, were artists and teachers. Each was involved for many years in the Queensland Art Society.

In addition to the 30-full page illustrations, there are numerous humorous and or satirical cartoons and texts such as that penned by Arthur Perry in 1906 (above right), depicting Eros pressing a stethoscope to the heart of Miss Kirkland with the accompanying text: "The expert. What makes you think she has got one? I can hear nothing."

Identification of the authors, artists and composers who contributed to the album can be challenging due to their use of initials. Signatures also, while having meaning to the owner, are often now indecipherable. What is evident is that like the family that Mary Alys Kirkland married into in 1925, she was educated, cultured and socialised in circles of similarly talented individuals. While the album has historic, aesthetic and social significance to Brisbane's history, as a document, its preoccupations have a wider Australian relevance and importance.

Secreted in blank pages at the end of the Autograph album is an evocative photograph of Mary Alys Kirkland and a group of her intimates (below). It is as if the characters and the portraits in the album come alive as all pose on a buggy, oblivious to the cataclysm that would destroy their carefree world in a few short years.

Through the Vaughan-Smith donation, Kew became the final repository of the sketchbook, the autograph album, and the scrapbooks, and because of the donation of these manuscripts to the Society, they are now available to all Australians.



ROBERT BAKER

KEW RESIDENTS LEAVE THEIR BEAUTIFUL BOROUGH FOR FEDERATION FESTIVITIES IN MELBOURNE

On 1 January 1901, 21 days before she died, Queen Victoria signed the document to federate the six Australian colonies. The terms of Federation were 'one Queen, one country, one people and one destiny'.

Despite Australia being in mourning for the old Queen, the inauguration of the Australian Commonwealth Parliament needed to be celebrated. The Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York, as representatives of King Edward VII, came to Australia in May 1901 to formally open the new Commonwealth Parliament in Melbourne.

The 10-day Melbourne Royal visit was highly organised by an unidentified committee, which was heady to impress. The Melbourne streets were decorated with celebratory mock-marble arches, 1,300 Venetian poles, street musicians and numerous parades. Money seemed to be no object. However, wealthy businessman, David G. Carnegie of *Southesk*, Kew, was to express his opinion on the expenditure of public money, by writing to the editor of *The Age*. He was concerned about the 'exclusiveness' of the program compared to the 'barren' expenditure on ordinary people. This comment was despite train and tram ticket prices being dramatically reduced, profuse public fireworks, and a free booklet published to advise people unfamiliar with the metropolis about vantage points to view the parades, other entertainment, accommodation and eating venues. The City was the focus of the main festivities so ordinary Kewites abandoned their small but beautiful borough for the festive highlights of Melbourne.

Monday 6 May 1901 was officially declared a half-day holiday. An estimated half a million people flocked to St Kilda Beach to witness the *Ophir* being escorted by the Royal Australian Navy through the Bay to the pier. The Royal entourage were whisked away in a horse-drawn carriage and taken on a tour of the main streets of Melbourne before reaching Government House.

The following day, Royalty and the general populace watched as 200 'authentic stockman' rode through the main thoroughfares of Melbourne cracking whips. Following was the local Chinese community who wove silk dragons through the main streets to 'ear splitting' music. In the evening 6,600 Metropolitan firemen and 400 instrumentalists marched the streets in a torch light procession. Buildings were illuminated with incandescent lights to create a fairyland spectacular.

Some 8,000 distinguished guests, with a formal invitation, dined at Government House before a *Conversazione* at the Exhibition Building.

The immigrant Scotsman, James Maitland Campbell [and his wife] of *Ramornie* in Pakington Street, received one of the 45 invitations sent to people with a Kew residential address. His credentials for such a prestigious invitation were his success as an eminent Melbourne lawyer and his civic contribution as Mayor of Kew on three separate occasions.

The Kew Historical Society has in its collection of documents, the Campbell's invitation to the event. More importantly, the Society holds another three prestigious invitations that were issued for the official events to J. M. Campbell and wife. Within the collection, there are also a number of additional invitations with invitational names scratched out, and another for the Misses Dowling. These invitations are of intrinsic value in that they form a partial record of the celebrations that formalised the Federation of Australia. [It should be noted that the general public could purchase these invitations as memorabilia for the auspicious occasion from several shops in the city.]

Artists, architects, lithographers and colourists were some of the professionals employed to design the invitations. Victorian Government public works architect, George B. H. Austin was given the task of faithfully reproducing the Exhibition Building as the focal point of the design of the invitation to the *Conversazione*. Artist John Ford Patterson, noted for his romantic colours, as exemplified in a number of the interior murals of *Villa Alba*, was responsible for the design of the border. It consists of a small portrait of the Duke and Duchess, vignettes of the States and garlands of native flora and fauna as well as heraldic shields.



Government of Victoria invitation to a *Conversazione*,
7 May 1901

On Wednesday 8 May, returned Boer War military heroes were issued with medals and an unidentified number of 'the poor' were treated to a Victorian Government funded luncheon.

Thursday 9 May was designated as a public holiday. Approximately 12,000 invitations were sent to eminent Australians, and representatives of English colonies, such as Canada, India, Ceylon and South Cape. The Government of Victoria gave local artists, John Longstaff and a young Norman Lindsay, the brief to design the symbolic imagery on the invitation to the formal Proclamation.

FEDERATION FESTIVITIES (from page 10)

The Neo-classical design consists of three female personifications: England to the left, Australia to the right and Justice in the centre. All three cohere to signify conviviality between the Mother Country, England, and her Australian ex-colonies.



Government of Victoria invitation to the formal Proclamation, 9 May 1901

His Majesty's Australian Ministers also issued invitations to prominent people to witness the formal opening of the Parliament of the Commonwealth. Artist, satiric cartoonist and social commentator, Tom Carrington was chosen to design the invitation (below). It was to be a highly controversial design, based on Rudyard Kipling's first verse of his imperialistic *Commonwealth Ode*. The framing device of the image is a massive arch, possibly mythical, *The Hall of a Thousand Years*. 'Miss Australia' sits upon a white steed. Both the horse and the woman kowtow before Britannia who stands on a canopied dais. The personification of England is robed in royal purple and ermine. Six figures, representing the six states of Australia are strategically faded into the background, while Britannia's fighting shield and combative trident are in the foreground, resting against the left pillar.



His Majesty's Ministers of State for Australia's invitation for the formal Proclamation, 9 May 1901

The original hand-coloured drawing was at one stage suspended above the main cornice in the Old Parliament House. The design represented the Old Queen handing over a crown, on a plush cushion, to the New Queen of Australia.

On either side of the drawing, British and colonial shields were displayed.

On Thursday evening, there was a formal reception to meet the Royal couple at the Exhibition Building.



Invitation from His Majesty's Ministers of State for Australia to the formal evening reception at the Exhibition Building, 9 May 1901.

The invitation (above) was designed by Julian Rossi Ashton and his son Howard. A banderol ribbon across the top of the image announces: 'In Celebration of the Opening of the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia'. Britannia, representative of England, dressed in red is to the left and 'Miss Australia', dressed in blue is to the right. Red and blue were the official colours of the Duke, later George V. The sinuous, floral framing design in the background is the hardy climbing trumpet vine, signifying new beginnings.

Mr and Mrs Campbell were also guests to the Royal Review at Flemington Race Course on Friday 10 May. Designed by an unidentified artist, the invitation was reviewed, in the press, as a very pretty equine scene enlivened with a splay of coloured flags.



Invitation from the Government of Victoria for the Royal Review, Flemington Race Course, 10 May 1901

Despite heavy rain 80,000 people paid a minimal fee to witness 15,000 colonial troops parading to the beat of numerous military bands as they marched past the official grand stand. Although wet, the various uniforms worn by the troops and the 1,575 expertly groomed horses made a brilliant scene. While there was not enough food to feed the general populace, the mood of the crowd was joyous. This was the conclusion of the formal Melbourne festivities. The Royal Party had a rest day and travelled on to country towns. The people of Kew, rich and poor, returned to their borough and regular life with the knowledge they were now officially members of a nation. They dried themselves off, ate some food, slept and awoke to the dawning of a new Australia.

Kew Historical Society Inc.
PO Box 175
Kew VIC 3101

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Suite 1/400 High Street, KEW VIC 3101
(03) 9853 2999 | tim.smith@parliament.vic.gov.au | www.timsmithmp.com