



NEWSLETTER

Number: 2207 (144)
July 2022



From the chair



Dear Members and Friends,

It was very good to see so many of you at our June lecture where we were very pleased to welcome new members and a large number of visitors.

We all enjoyed a wonderful lecture from Dr Rodna Siebels, taking us back thousands of years to the amazing structural and artistic work of the ancient Egyptians. It is incredible, and so fortunate for us, that so much has survived, despite grave robbers, floods and the general ravages of time.

Once again, my sincere thanks to all the Committee for their commitment and hard work. Getting back on our feet has needed quite a bit of multi-tasking! We were very pleased to see the return of the raffle and sincere thanks to Meredith Lawrie who volunteered to help run the raffle table. Thank you to Gaylene Feld who helped set all this up. We all enjoy the raffle – and it is also very valuable to help us cover our costs.

Through the efforts of Peter Claxton, Susan Zamudio and Pamela Hartley, membership cards were distributed at the last lecture. More of this in Membership Matters.

Members should have received an email from the Association of ADFAS (there are 38 Societies across Australia) advertising an online lecture by Leigh Capel that is a fund-raiser for conservation work needed for the Lismore Regional Art Gallery following this year's floods. One item that was damaged is the much-acclaimed Hannah Cabinet. I greatly enjoyed watching the You Tube presentation on Geoff Hannah and his work, with a link provided on this email. What an amazing man! I then learnt that Geoff Hannah is a good friend of our own Paul Gregson who is also a well-known conservator and restorer. A cliché, but sometimes such a small world.

Our next lecture moves us far from ancient Egypt to fashion and style in Paris in the rather frenetic period between the two world wars. Elsa Schiaparelli is recognised as one of the most innovative and influential designers of the twentieth century. Professor Peter McNeil, a specialist in the history of design, has been to Camden before and is a very popular speaker. We look forward to seeing you there!

Linda

Linda Inglis, Chairman,



COMING PRESENTATIONS

LECTURE 5

MAGIC FASHION -

Elsa Schiaparelli

Presented by:

Prof Peter McNeil, FAHA

In the early part of the 20th century Victorian taste was very 'out of fashion'. In the 1930s a strong female designer, Elsa Schiaparelli, rediscovered the period and cast it in her own light. Learn about the creative circles of fashion and design in inter-war Paris, understand the 'chic of poverty' promoted by couturier Coco Chanel and interior designer Jean-Michel Frank, track the stylish South Americans, and follow the collaborative inter-war aesthetic project of fashion, fantasy and Surrealism

Saturday 30 July 2022

11.30 am for 12.00 Noon

Carrington Recreation Centre

Gate 2, 90 Werombi Road, Grasmere NSW 2570

For COVID and CATERING reasons BOOKINGS would be appreciated (See below for booking details)

XX

LECTURE 6

EXPLORING TURNER

Presented by:

Robert & Catherine Ketton

Saturday 27 August 2022

11.30 am for 12.00 Noon

Carrington Recreation Centre

Gate 2, 90 Werombi Road, Grasmere NSW 2570

XX

For more information & bookings, contact:

Secretary: Gaylene Feld

Mob: 0417 659 587

Email: gjfeld@bigpond.com

In this Edition

My thanks to Gaylene Feld who has taken the trouble to compile another trio of interesting and once again very different, stories for this edition.

The first story provides a lead in to our July lecture by Prof Peter McNeil on Elsa Schiaparelli. I'm rather taken by the telephone!

The second story on page 2 takes us to Windsor Castle and the exhibition of memorabilia of the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1952.

The third story reminds us of Australia's most famous literary hoax perpetrated just after the end of WWII. How embarrassing!

On page 4 the music theme is continued from last month, with the subject this time being Gustav Mahler.

And on page 6, Paul Gregson has kindly allowed me to plagiarise an article he wrote in 2010 on Geoff Hannah and the Hannah Cabinet. What an extraordinary piece of furniture!

I hope you enjoy 'The Dragonfly'...and the read.

Ed

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

A very warm welcome to new members, LAURA HILL and SUE LIGHT. We look forward to catching up with both of you at our future lectures.

All members should receive a name tag and a membership card. Please let Susan and Pamela know at the front desk if you haven't received these.

Also, we are always keen to hear if you know of people who should be receiving the newsletter and are not, or who you know would like to receive it.

Just a reminder, too, for members to log on to the ADFAS website from time to time and catch up on news and updates from the Association.

The Association website address is:

www.adfas.org.au

And don't forget to invite friends or relatives, or both, to share our lectures and encourage them to join our Society.

To whet your appetite for this month's lecture:

ELSA SCHIAPARELLI – and that LOBSTER DINNER DRESS

In 1937 Elsa Schiaparelli, Italian fashion designer, created the lobster dress with assistance from Surrealist artist Salvador Dali. His work inspired the lobster design and he drew the initial motif which was incorporated onto the silk organza dress by master silk designer Sache.

Elsa Schiaparelli (Italian, 1890-1973). *Woman's Dinner Dress*, February 1937. Printed silk organza and synthetic horsehair. Philadelphia: The Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1969-232-52. Gift of Mme Elsa Schiaparelli, 1969. Source: PMA



The lobster motif came from a theme Dali had cultivated in his own work which included the Lobster Telephone (1936).



Elsa Schiaparelli.
Lobster Telephone –
Salvador Dali

The lobster Dress made its debut as part of Schiaparelli's Summer/Fall Collection 1937.

Schiaparelli's dress attained widespread notoriety after Cecil Beaton photographed the American socialite Wallis Simpson wearing it.

The photograph, part of an eight page spread in Vogue magazine in 1937, was taken shortly before she married Edward VIII. The dress was included as part of Simpson's trousseau.



Schiaparelli Spring '37 Couture- Photograph
Getty images Source vogue.com
Cecil Beaton Photographer

Wallis Simpson gained the title, Duchess of Windsor, after Edward VIII abdicated the British throne to marry her.

In 1969 Schiaparelli donated her own copy of the dress to the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Resources

Fashionhistory.fitnyc.edu Celestial Rubenstein | Last updated Jan 13, 2020 | Published on Jan 8, 2020 | 1930-1939, 20th Century, garment analysis en.wikipedia.org Wikipedia

If you are planning a trip to the UK, you may like to include a visit to Windsor Castle...

CORONATION MEMORABILIA

Exhibition at Windsor Castle

The Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II took place on 2 June 1953. Her *Platinum Jubilee* was celebrated recently marking 70 years on the throne.

Occurring not long after WWII, her Coronation has been considered to be a symbolic moment for the nation since it gestured to a new age of progress and spirit of optimism.

Queen Elizabeth II, 1953 Hulton Getty Images



The exhibition is staged at Windsor Castle and includes portraiture, photographs, items of Her Majesty's attire, the Coronation Dress, Robe of Estate and the Coronation Necklace and Earrings.

The **Coronation dress** was designed by the British couturier Sir Norman Hartnell and was created from white satin and

richly embroidered with floral emblems in gold and silver thread and pastel coloured silks encrusted with pearls, sequins and crystals. The dress included embroidery of thistles (Scotland) as well as the rose of York (England)



The coronation dress and robe of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II
Royal Collection Trust

The Queen's **Coronation Necklace and Earrings**, comprised of 28 diamonds, were originally made in 1858 for Queen Victoria. The necklace was subsequently worn by

Queen Alexandra (wife of Edward VII), Queen Mary (wife of George V) and Queen Elizabeth (wife of George VI) at their respective coronations in 1902, 1911 and 1937.



The Coronation necklace
Royal Collection Trust

Portraits of the Queen on her Coronation Day are also included in the exhibition.



Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II Bettmann



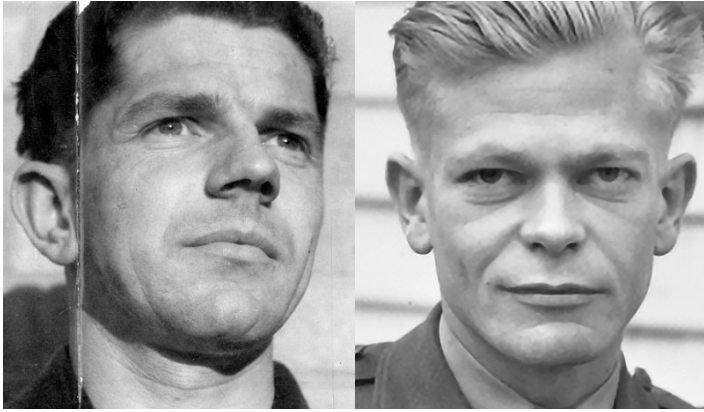
Queen Elizabeth II and Maids of Honour, Print Collection/Getty Images

Resources

Tattler tattler.com – Doris Davies-Evitt 8 July 2022

Australia's most famous Literary Hoax

ERN MALLEY was a fictitious poet, created in 1943 by two traditional poets, James McAuley and Harold Stewart, in order to hoax the *Angry Penguins*, a modernist literary and art movement, based at the University of Adelaide.



Harold Stewart and James McAuley wrote the Ern Malley poems in an afternoon at Melbourne's Victoria Barracks. *Wikimedia: Public Domain*

The *Angry Penguins* Journal was coedited by poet Max Harris and art patron John Reed of Heide, Melbourne.

The hoaxers, who despised modernistic poetry, deliberately created poetry which they thought was bad verse and mailed sixteen poems to Max Harris (co-editor of *Angry Penguins*) ostensibly from Ern Malley's fictitious sister. For their attempt to debunk modernistic poetry McAuley and Stewart rapidly wrote the sixteen poems by nonsensically pasting together strings of words from magazines and books that were on their desks.

Harris and other members of the Heide Circle fell for the hoax and consequently devoted the next issue of *Angry Penguins* to Malley hailing him as a genius. Sidney Nolan painted a work for the cover. Harris wrote an introduction to the edition describing Malley's short life as outlined by his sister.

The hoax was later revealed to Harris' embarrassment. Harris was put on trial, convicted and fined for publishing the poems on the grounds that they contained obscene content. *Angry Penguins* folded in 1946.

Subsequently the Ern Malley poems became celebrated as



In the 1940s, Max Harris (left) was connected with modernists such as artist Joy Hester (right). *Public Domain: Albert Tucker*

surrealist poetry, lauded by poets and critics. Strangely the poems of Ern Malley are more widely read than those of his creators.

The hoax has inspired works by writers and artists such as Peter Carey and Sidney Nolan.

In later years Max Harris ran a Mary Martin Bookshop in Melbourne, wrote a column for *The Australian* and founded the *Australian Book Review*.

McAuley went on to be founding editor of the conservative literary journal *Quadrant*, and later was appointed head of the University of Tasmania's English Literature Department.

Stewart became known as a Buddhist scholar and translator of Japanese haiku and moved to Japan in 1966.

Resource

Wikipedia en.wikipedia.org
abc.net.au

Anton Bruckner, Gustav Mahler and the Federal Budget

Last month's story on an introduction to fine music and Anton Bruckner provoked a couple of comments from readers which 'inspired' me to indulge in a follow-up article.

Pauline (D) commented that her introduction to the world of classical music was via a school concert at Sydney Town Hall. Sergei Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* captivated her as she was exposed for the first time to the full orchestra.

Her comment reminded me that I was also treated to this same experience in the 1950s. Perhaps I was not quite as receptive at the time as it did not lead me to an immediate appreciation of orchestral music. However, I do recall how the music of the orchestra reverberated in the Hall as it seemed to bounce around and engulf the audience in the sound – an experience that has been lacking in the Opera House.

Linda (I) informed me that it is on public record that one of our more famous federal treasurers stated that he listened to Bruckner and Mahler while he was preparing his Federal budgets. Having listened to all of Bruckner's symphonies and some of Mahler's, I must say that they are not the soothing background music I would choose for such task.

Which brings me to Gustav Mahler, who was something of a fan or at least a friend and supporter of Anton Bruckner. Born in 1860 he was an Austro-Bohemian composer and one of the leading conductors of his generation, dying prematurely in 1911 at the age of 51.

As a side story, when I was living with my parents in Carlton, Sydney in the 1950s one of our immediate neighbours was a Mr Mahler. I don't have much recall of him but I remember my father telling me that Mr Mahler claimed to be a nephew

(or grand-nephew) of a famous composer named Gustav Mahler.

Gustav Mahler was born in Bohemia, which in 1860 was part of the Austrian Empire, to Jewish parents. Like Bruckner, Mahler was of humble origins. His grandmother had been a street pedlar but his father managed to raise the family into the *petit bourgeoisie* by eventually becoming a coachman before 'reinventing' himself as an innkeeper.



The young Gustav began to display his musical skills at a very early age. While living in Jihlava (Iglau) he was introduced to the street songs of the town, dance music, folk tunes and the brass-winds of the local band and these early influences are reflected in his later musical works.

At four years of age he apparently discovered his grandmother's piano, becoming known locally as the *Wunderkind*. By the age of 10 he had given his first public performance in the local town hall.

The young Mahler was obviously very talented and his father Bernhard supported his ambition to become a musician. Gustav was accepted into the Vienna Conservatory in 1875 after being auditioned by renowned pianist Julius Epstein.

At the Conservatory, Gustav attended occasional lectures by Anton Bruckner and became influenced by him and his work. He was also influenced by Richard Wagner with the influence of both recognizable in his later work.

While at the conservatory, Mahler also became interested in the art of conducting and after he graduated in 1878 he held a number of increasingly important conducting posts in the opera houses of Europe. In 1897 he was appointed Director of the Vienna Court Opera, converting to Catholicism in order to achieve this prestigious appointment.

In the early years of his career, he earned his living as a conductor, with composing being a spare time occupation.

Again like Bruckner, Mahler's life and career bridged the end of one musical era and the beginning of another. In many ways his work represented the last of the 19th century Romantic world of Liszt, Wagner and Tchaikovsky. He developed his own style and exciting harmonies and ways to 'use' the orchestra, leading to the 'new' 20th century music of Schoenberg and others of the Second Viennese School. One commentator described listening to Mahler's work as at times "a truly overwhelming experience".

As a composer, Mahler produced a rather limited body of work, mainly song cycles and symphonies. He completed nine symphonies and the tenth remained unfinished due to

his untimely death in 1911. He once wrote: "The symphony must be like a world – it should contain everything"... and in his Symphony No 2 (*Resurrection*), he did indeed build a symphonic world encompassing every type of human experience.

He wrote music on the grand scale and for a huge orchestra, and perhaps taking a lead from Beethoven, sometimes added voice to at least one movement. And not content with the usual four movements, the *Resurrection* extends to five movements and lasts for around two hours, an issue for his critics on most of his works.

While some of his music achieved popularity during his lifetime it apparently fell out of favour after his death. During the 1930s and WWII, while Bruckner's music gained favour with the Nazi party because of its very masculine demeanour, the music of Mahler was banned throughout most of Europe. However after the end of WWII he was rediscovered and he became one of the most frequently performed and recorded of all composers – and that has apparently continued into the new millennium.

Returning to his other talent, Mahler was also a conductor of note. Because of his dedication and devotion to detail and precision and hard work he is deemed to have outshone all other conductors before him and those of his own time. It is said that "he spared neither himself nor anybody else in his desire to raise the standards of performance to new heights". However his new conducting style was at times the subject of humour and caricature.



The first all-powerful maestro, he became the model for other famous conductors of the following century and more!

NB

Just in closing I think that when Sandra and I next prepare our family budget, I will resurrect my LPs of Bruckner's 4th Symphony and Mahler's 2nd Symphony and see if playing them in the background assists our fiscal position – or sends us into recession.

Peter Claxton

Resources

A-Z of Music, International Masters Publishers P/L
e.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gustav_Mahler

Lismore Regional Gallery Fundraiser and the Hannah Cabinet

Recently, most ADFAS members will have received an email from the Association regarding *The Value of Art* online lecture to be held on Sunday 24 July from 5.00 pm. This is a fundraising activity to assist the Lismore Regional Art Gallery as they begin the long and expensive process of recovering from the calamity of losing much of its precious collection in the recent devastating floods in the area.

As Jane Smith, National chair of the Association of ADFAS has stated "A primary focus of ADFAS is the preservation and conservation of works of artistic merit. The recent flood disaster severely impacted many of these valuable works including Geoff Hannah's remarkable cabinet".

The Hannah cabinet is, or was before the flood, a most remarkable piece of furniture and we are fortunate in ADFAS Camden to count among our members, Paul Gregson, a good friend of Geoff Hannah and well-known conservator and restorer. Paul is, among other things, Associate Editor of the *Australian Woodworker* and in August 2010 wrote an illustrated article for that magazine on the Hannah cabinet.

Paul's article was titled: *The Art in the Cabinet – One man's journey...* and with his permission I have made liberal use of, and extracted from, his text and used some of the images he included in the article.



The cabinet as it appeared on public display for the first time at the Southern Cross University in Lismore

The Hannah cabinet is a magnificent example of artisanal craftsmanship at its very best. But first some specifications:

It is monumental in size at 2.4m high, 2.4m wide and 740mm deep. It has 18 doors, all veneered and inlaid with marquetry, stone and shell. It has a staggering 140 drawers, all hand dovetailed, slip bottomed, with some inlaid to their fronts, sides or bottoms.



The rear of the drawer Geoff is holding displays a piece of fabric reproduced from material thought to belong to Marie Antoinette

The dominant carcass timber is mahogany supported by eight shaped columns on a plinth base. The ebony columns to the façade are all inlaid and cut from a single piece. The pediment's gallery is made of petrified wood with gilded finials. All of the marquetry has floral and faunal themes.

Thirty four (yes 34) species of timber are used in the construction of the cabinet, along with 17 kinds of stone, 24ct gold and a variety of shells. To top it off, one internal drawer has a fragment of cloth attached to its back – a replica of cloth that once belonged to Marie Antoinette.

The most hidden of all of the hidden drawers is embellished with yellow and red sapphires, two peridots and an oval amethyst set in gold. The cabinet was glued almost exclusively with hide glue and hand finished in dewaxed blonde shellac.

The cabinet was officially unveiled on 5 August 2009 at Southern Cross University, Lismore by the Governor of



Her Excellency being shown one of the drawer undersides inlaid with an eagle

NSW, Her Excellency, Professor Marie Bashir AC, CVO. The following month Geoff Hannah was made an Honorary Fellow of the University and later received a Silver Medallion for his contributions to the Arts.



The lower part of the structure showing the supports, inlaid and gilded, as an arcaded cloister over a veneered plinth.

Geoff Hannah was born in Coraki and has lived in the Northern Rivers area of NSW for the whole of his life. He began his working life at 15, as an apprentice with a well-known Lismore firm, Brown & Jolly. A decade or so later and with the help of his wife Rhonda, he established a business in independent furniture making and refurbishing.

In 1980 he travelled to England and France on a Churchill Fellowship to study 17th to 19th century furniture.

Since that time he has become a prolific artist in his chosen field. He does not taking commissions but makes only items that he wants to make and then puts them up for sale and insisting that they go into 'a good' home' – where they will be understood and appreciated.

For the past 25 years or so, Geoff's interest and passion has been to create four grand cabinets in his own style, along the way developing great skill in the art of veneering. The 2009 Hannah Cabinet is the fourth of these creations and almost certainly the most complicated and finest of his works.

We can only hope that the damage wreaked by the floods can be undone!

With thanks to Paul Gregson
Ed.

Resource

Paul Gregson, *The Art in the Cabinet: One man's journey*
The Australian Woodworker, August 2010. No 152. 16-18

WHAT'S ON AT OTHER SOCIETIES?

ADFAS Blue Mountains:

Next lecture: Friday 26 August at 2.00 pm, Wentworth Falls School of Arts, Great Western Highway, Wentworth Falls.
Claudia Chan Shaw will present '*Art Deco of Sydney: A Persistent Presence*'.
(Contact: bluemountains@adfasc.org.au)

ADFAS Bowral & District:

Next lecture: Wednesday 31 August at 5.00 pm Bradman Museum 7 Cricket Hall of Fame, St Jude St, Bowral.
Claudia Chan Shaw will present '*East meets West in Dress*'.
(Contact: secretary@adfascbowral.com)

ADFAS Canberra:

Next lecture: Monday 15 August at 6.00 pm at The National Library of Australia.
Robert & Catherine Ketton will present '*Exploring Turner*'.
(Contact: adfasmembershipcanberra@gmail.com)

ADFAS Ku-ring-gai:

Next lecture: Wednesday 24 August at 10.30 am and at 6.00 pm at Zenith Theatre, Chatswood.
Robert Ketton will present '*Learn the Lines and don't Fall Over the Furniture*'.
(Contact: kuringgai@adfasc.org.au)

ADFAS Molonglo Plains:

Next lecture: Thursday 17 August at 2.00 pm at the Queanbeyan Bicentennial Hall, 253 Crawford St. Queanbeyan.
Robert Ketton will present '*Speak the Speech I Pray You*'.
(Contact: adfasmembershipmolonglo@gmail.com)

ADFAS Newcastle:

Next lecture: Monday 29 August, at 6.30 pm at the Hunter Theatre, Hunter School of Performing Arts, Lambton Rd, Broadmeadow
Claudia Chan Shaw will present '*Beyond the Little Black Dress-Chanel plus Florence Broadhurst-Design Legend*'.
(Contact: Secretary@adfascnewcastle.org.au)

ADFAS Pokolbin:

Next lecture: Monday 8 August at 6.45 pm in Cessnock Performing Arts Centre, corner of Vincent St & Aberdare Rd, Cessnock.
Claudia Chan Shaw will present '*Art Deco of Sydney: A Persistent Presence*'.
(Contact: secretary@adfaspokolbin.org.au)

ADFAS Scone

Next lecture: Friday 9 August at 6.30 pm at venue TBA.
Claudia Chan Shaw will present '*Florence Broadhurst: The Enigmatic Design Legend*'.
(Contact: scone@adfasc.org.au)

ADFAS Shoalhaven

Next lecture: Thursday 28 July at 7.30 pm at the Uniting Church Hall, 71-77 Alfred St, Berry.
Sasha Grishin will present '*Art and Revolution – Russian Art of the Revolutionary Period*'.
(Contact: shoalhaven@adfasc.org.au)

ADFAS Sydney

Next lecture: Thursday 18 August at 7.30 pm at the Paddington Woollahra RSL Club.
Claudia Chan Shaw will present '*Art Deco of New York*'.
(Contact: David Andrews 0413 554 024)

Programmes & contact details for ALL Societies are available on the ADFAS website: www.adfasc.org.au

At our June Lecture
History of the Valley of the Kings
 Centre: Chair, Linda Inglis with lecturer, Dr Rodna Siebels



The Dragonfly

Today I saw the dragonfly
 Come from the wells where he did lie.
 An inner impulse rent the veil
 Of his old husk; from head to tail
 Came out clear plates of sapphire mail.
 He dried his wings: like gauze they grew;
 Thro' crofts and pastures wet with dew
 A living flash of light he flew.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson
 1809-1892

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