

Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 2022 I SERIES 5 I NO. 7

President's Message

Next year our Society will be celebrating its fiftieth anniversary.

As part of that celebration, following the success of the calendar produced this year, we will be publishing another, commemorative, calendar. We hope to feature street views of noted restorations or adaptations of district buildings, in order to celebrate local heritage and history. The calendar will be ready later this year.

We will keep you posted on other anniversary year happenings. More will be on the ADHS website (at <https://ashfieldhistory.org.au/> or of course by your favourite search engine).

The website is, as many know, a great way to keep up with society news, publications and events.

Also in progress are works on Frederick Clissold and the 'Houses of Ashfield' to look forward to.

If you are at the Summer Hill Flour Mill markets, drop into our stall. We will be there for the market on Sunday 2 October. The stalls have been a lot of fun and very successful in promoting the Society and an interest in local history, with a positive response to our publications.

I thank all our contributors for another bumper newsletter, with reports on many successful events and more to come, as well as other news and information.

I hope you enjoy your reading.

Alex Lofts

Upcoming events

1920s Architecture

A presentation by

Scott MacArthur

Sunday 25 September 2022

Mervyn Fletcher Hall

81 Dalhousie Street,

Haberfield; 2:00pm to 4:00pm

Entry from Dickson Street



Scott has over 25 years professional experience in heritage conservation and adaptive reuse of historic places, including the preparation of conservation management plans, conservation documentation and site superintendence. He is currently in his ninth year as President of the Marrickville Heritage Society.

Scott is a previous winner of a NSW Government Heritage Volunteer Award and an RAHS Special Achievement Certificate in recognition of his work with Marrickville Heritage Society to champion the built heritage of the former Marrickville LGA. He is also a retired GP with an interest in the architecture of health.

Charge: \$5 members; \$10 non-members.

If you wish to attend, please register through our website page:

<https://ashfieldhistory.org.au/event/1920s-architecture/>

Art Deco Architecture

A talk by Dr Peter Sheridan

Sunday 23 October 2022

Pratten Park Community Sports & Bowling Club; 2:00pm to 4:00pm

Dr Peter Sheridan is an acknowledged historian, collector and speaker on Art Deco. His collection of Art Deco radios is considered one of the best in the world. He has published several reference books on the Art Deco period.

This includes his recent book *Sydney Art Deco*, reviewed by Colin Webb later in this newsletter

Peter is also a highly regarded dentist in Sydney and is a Senior Clinical Lecturer in the Faculty of Dentistry, Sydney University, where he teaches clinical photography to undergraduates, dentists and specialists in Australia and internationally. Source: Peter's website: [Peter Sheridan](#)

Peter's talk on Art Deco Architecture will complement our previous talks on architecture this year – being Italianate and 1920s Architecture.

Charge: \$5 members; \$10 non-members.

If you wish to attend, please register through our website page:

<https://ashfieldhistory.org.au/event/artdeco/>

Save the date

Sunday 20 November 2022

Pratten Park Community Sports & Bowling Club

2:00pm – 4:00 pm

An event is proposed to be held on this date. Further details will be provided to members via email and please check our website.

Callan Park Podcast

Roslyn Burge, a long time Society member and founder of the **Friends of Callan Park** (FOCP) has provided some information about a new podcast on Callan Park, a fabulous and somewhat neglected Inner West asset:

*In 2020 FOCP supported the application by **Jane Curtis** for an Inner West Council Local History Grant to make podcasts about icons in the Inner West, including Callan Park. Jane's work is **Callan Park Podcasts - 10 special ICONS OF THE INNER WEST**:*

<https://www.innerwesticons.com/episodes/callanpark>

There are also **Show Notes** on the website: <https://www.innerwesticons.com/episodes/callanpark>

This includes a link to Broughton Hall photos of 1939, which Roslyn had never seen before:

<https://collection.sl.nsw.gov.au/record/9ALZpeaY>

Roslyn also sent a photo of a rally in August 2002, from the material uncovered by Jane:



and rediscovered in some footage Jane sent along, recall that ... yards of green material were sourced at Merrylands, cut up into long, wide ribbons and wrapped around each telegraph pole all the way from Wharf Road to the Main Gates at Cecily Street ... some shreds were still hanging in 2010 when they were taken down and tucked away (like some religious relic) safely in FOCP's archives!

Past events

A guided visit to Caroline Simpson Library & Research Collection

On Thursday 18 August, Society members visited the **Caroline Simpson Library & Research Collection** in The Mint, Macquarie Street, Sydney and it was an absolute treat.

The colonnaded former Rum Hospital is a marvellous colonial relic. The building served as a General Hospital then was re-purposed as the Mint with the coining factory being built behind.

Today it is home to Sydney Living Museums and the Caroline Simpson Library & Research Collection which has the finest collection of books and ephemera related to the decorative arts, architecture, and design. For any historian or social history buff, it is an incredible resource, and our visit was a terrific introduction.



Caroline Simpson Library & Research Collection

On display and very carefully laid out, was a panel of wallpaper or 'wall covering' - it was as brilliant as the day it was drawn and coloured. The piece, executed in the Art Nouveau style, consisted of highly stylised daffodils. It was a sample of work by **Ethel Atkinson**, a former resident of Ashfield and it was absolutely stunning.



Design for a wall covering c1901 by Ethel Atkinson
1887-1991
Call No: CSL&RC PIC 2018/2 – Watercolour

For the ADHS visit, librarians selected suburb-specific items which included photograph albums featuring well known Ashfield and Summer Hill historic houses *Glentworth, Coniston, Holwood and others*.



Amongst the ephemera on display, there were invoices and letters related to a Summer Hill builder, **A. R. Findlay** (known as Roy Findlay).

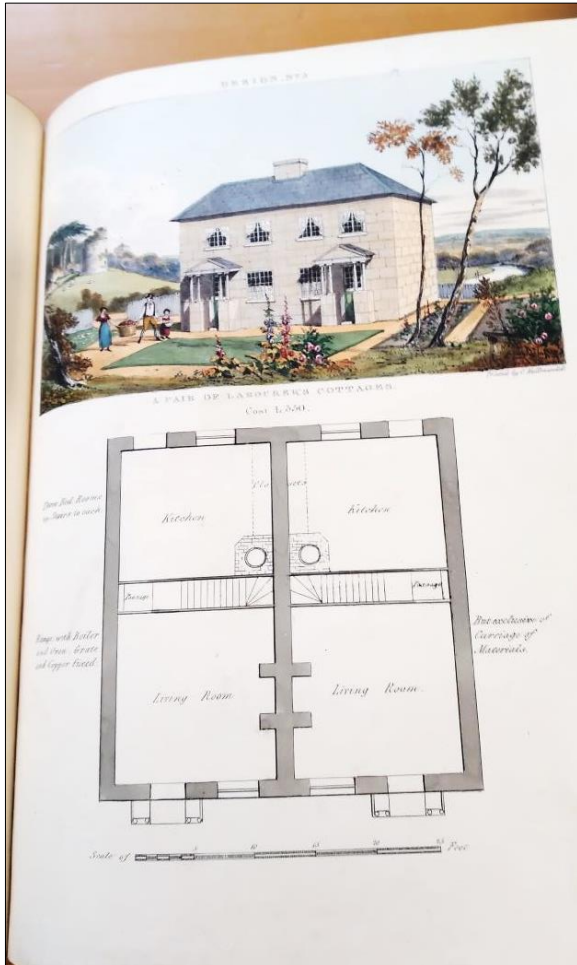
For me one the most fascinating and oldest items was a book of Architectural Plans with 'patterns' of different dwellings dated 1825.

I also imagined the owner of such a book being quite the colonial entrepreneur - perhaps a builder, perhaps the colonial architect or even a Governor's wife.

It is said that Mrs Macquarie had an abiding interest in design and was influential in some early colonial builds - no doubt she had a similar book or two.

There were patterns for the humble farm cottage to a rather grand town house, complete with a floor plan and picture of the finished build. This book truly captured my historical imaginings - in carefully leafing through, I could not help but think about the sturdy double fronted houses of colonial Parramatta, in particular Samuel Marsden's.

Caroline Simpson Library & Research Collection



Novel designs for cottages, small farms & schools, by John Hall; Call No: FRB: 728.37 HAL
Hand coloured lithograph.



Another gem on display was a design drawing for an architectural presentation, so beautifully and precisely drawn and coloured by **Marion Mahony Griffin**.

There were retail catalogues from David Jones and Anthony Hordern which were essential when the tyranny of distance shaped many lives and when mail order was a necessity.

The Caroline Simpson Library and Research Collection is so well worth a visit - although there was a short time allocated to ADHS, it was a wonderful 'taster' for the gems hidden here.

Many thanks to our hosts from Sydney Living Museums, Research Librarian **Dr Matthew Stephens** and Curator **Michael Lech** for showing us the Library & Collection. The event was quite an experience and very special.



Dr Matthew Stephens showing ADHS Members a sample of the interesting items in the Library & Research Collection

The website:

[Caroline Simpson Library & Research Collection | Sydney Living Museums](#)

has information on how to access the Library & Research Collection, including on-line access to the Library's Catalogue.

Ronda Gaffey

Images: Ronda Gaffey & Heather Warton

Mungo Scott Centennial Celebrations 1922 - 2022

In 1922, Mungo Scott commenced milling wheat at Summer Hill. On **21 August 2022**, hundreds of Flour Mill market visitors joined in a centennial celebration in the iconic mill.

This event was co-sponsored by ADHS and EG, the developer of the new apartments and terraces on the site. Mr **Michael Easson, CEO of EG**, opened the event at 10 o'clock.

With a great jazz band playing at the entrance, an exhibition of photographs taken by EG before the mill closed, a fantastic working model of the mill's rail operations by the Sydney Model Railway Society, not to mention the super-sized ADHS bookstall, the ground floor of the old mill was **abuzz**.

In the south room, flour once more scattered the floor as children had fun with baking crafts.

Former master miller, **Leonard Smith**, gave excellent talks which were followed by EG staff guiding tours of the upper floors, now being converted into stylish open-plan offices.



From mill to apartments



The working display by the Sydney Model Railway Society of the siding that served the Mungo Scott mill during its operation was a real hit, with the model engines and grain wagons being shunted in and out while other goods trains of the period went past. This was a reminder to many of us of what we heard and saw when ADHS partnered with Council in 'Tracking the Past' at the mill back in October 2019.



More buildings were added over the decades as technology changed and the business grew. The landmark concrete silos were built in the 1950s, now adapted into apartment buildings: Wheat Silos and Durum Silos.

Mungo Scott

Centennial Celebrations

1922 - 2022

The last owner was Allied Mills and production at Summer Hill ended in 2009 when operations moved to a new plant near Picton.

EG's redevelopment of the site by architect Hassalls aimed to restore the Mungo Scott mill building to the original 1920s form. To achieve this, some more recent structures were demolished and replaced by new apartment buildings.

The mill's brickwork was restored and repaired with bricks salvaged from demolished additions. The unique multi-paned windows were restored where possible and replaced with identical copies when beyond repair. Some interior elements have been retained, such as the yellow sliding doors used to separate the mill and loading area from the packing area on all levels.

On completion, the adaptation of this industrial landmark, created a home for 750 residents and a community hub

Flour Mill of Summer Hill has won the following awards.

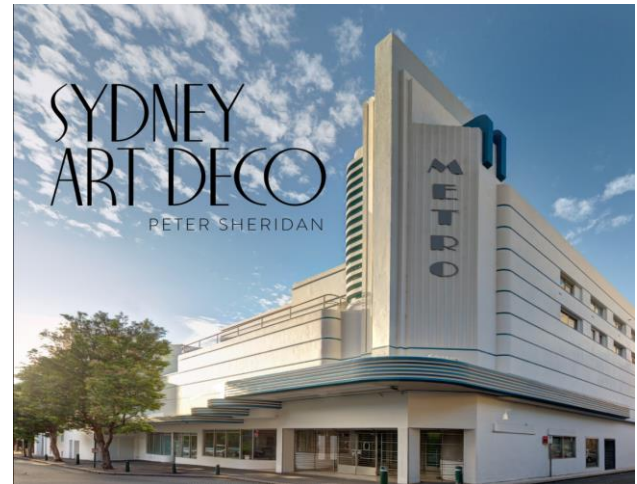
- Urban Developer Industry Excellence – Development of the Year – New Communities 2019
- Australian Urban Design Awards – Built projects (Local and Neighbourhood Scale) 2019
- NSW AILA Architecture Awards for Urban Design 2019.

Bernadette Williamson
Images: Colin Webb

Book review

Colin Webb has reviewed Peter Sheridan's wonderful book:

Sydney Art Deco



For Christmas I was given this wonderful book by Dr Peter Sheridan. While *Sydney Art Deco* has a comprehensive emphasis on the spectacular Art Deco architecture in Sydney, it also provides an insight into the 'global percolation of ideas' in Australia in the 1920's – 1940's.

As a long-time resident of Sydney, much of the Art Deco architecture pictured in the book had become 'background noise, but, what this book does is to draw attention to these buildings and highlights just how significant this brief period of time was in the evolution of Sydney.

Sydney has some truly remarkable Art Deco buildings and Peter Sheridan has documented many of these with some equally remarkable photographs. There is, without doubt, a 'wow' factor on almost every page.

The book curates 1000 beautifully photographed images of 350 commercial and residential buildings: cinemas, hotels, shops, civil and industrial buildings in a 420-page tome that really emphasises their heritage value to the city.

Book review:

Sydney Art Deco

Society members will be pleased to see references to and photographs of some Art Deco architecture in our local area.

You don't have to be a lover of Art Deco to appreciate this stunning book. I find myself returning to the book frequently to enjoy the beautiful photographs. I can now look at some of these Art Deco buildings with a greater understanding and appreciation of their heritage value to Sydney.



The interior of *Boomerang*, Elizabeth Bay

***Sydney Art Deco*, Peter Sheridan, Bakelite, 2019.**

The first edition of this book was published in 2019 and reprinted in 2020.

Colin Webb

Images: Colin Webb, from Peter's book

Heritage matters

The planning controls, known as local environmental plans (LEPs) of the three former LGAs have now been consolidated into one document and map series, known as Inner West LEP 2022 and gazetted on 12 August 2022. Focusing on the former Ashfield, I can see that Council has taken the opportunity to do a few 'tidy-ups' re the heritage listings but otherwise has just carried over the Ashfield 2013 LEP into this new one.

The Council is currently consulting on a comprehensive review of planning for the entire LGA and one focus area is an area generally bounded by Elizabeth St and the rail line (between Nixon Ave and Alt Street) called North Ashfield.

The intention is to up-zone for eight storey flats while retaining the few heritage items. I will be discussing the plan with the heritage/urban design consultants Council has engaged.

These consultants have also suggested deleting some properties from two heritage conservation areas – I think their reasoning is incorrect. There are also some errors re their 'tidy-ups' of a few heritage items.

I will be following these matters up.

I will be lodging an objection on the Society's behalf to a current DA for a large 'black Colorbond box' first floor to a modest cottage in a heritage conservation area at **9 Wellesley Street, Summer Hill**.

David Rollinson

Recent acquisitions

A gift from Mackay, Queensland

On 1 August 2022 the Society received an email from **Christine Vaughan** who runs a small private museum called *Yesterdays Memories Museum*. Chris' place is on the corner of the Bruce Highway and the Balnagowan-Mandarana Road, Mackay, Queensland and it is also the site of the Mackay heritage listed cemetery.



Chris offered our Society a package of patterns, tools and instructions relating to a flower-making course that was undertaken by B. Warner at the Ashfield Public School Evening College in 1951. Chris felt it important to return it to where it will be more meaningful.

We answered without hesitation, 'Yes please', and soon a box arrived at the Post Office from Chris, brimming with a collection of items, all once belonging to B. Warner.

The pattern book is full of hand-drawn paper cut-outs of petals and leaves fixed to the pages with special clips, all labelled according to the flower they relate to, whether Camelias, dahlias, daisies or hyacinths. Also included were pages of samples of the patterns cut from different coloured fabrics.



B. Warner's small notebook contains her jottings from the classes, a list of shops where the fabrics and other materials could be purchased, and her own instructions for making specific flowers.

Of particular interest, included in the package is an introductory letter by Ashfield's Principal, **A.R. Healey**, explaining about the financial aspect of commencing the College *only when there was a strong local demand evidenced by a sufficient number of students wanting a variety of courses*.

It is apparent from this that the Evening College was in its infancy and was reliant on enrolments to commence offering courses. Another letter from **Mr P.A.J. Kelly**, the Town Clerk of Ashfield, dated 29 August 1951 informs B. Warner that she should attend the Ashfield Public School at 7pm on Monday 10 September 1951, entering by the double gates opposite Queen Street in Liverpool Road.

The Society is enriched in receiving the donation of this most interesting collection of educational material all the way from Mackay – but how did it end up so far away? Chris cannot recall when or from where she obtained it.

We extend an invitation to any member to answer these questions:

Who was B. Warner?

Where did she live?

These are questions that we would love answered!

A gift from Mackay, Queensland

To complement this collection, in our library we have a handsomely bound copy of *Ashfield Evening College, 1950 – 1990* which was donated to the Society by Fay Michos over 30 years ago.

The book was her thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for her Degree of Bachelor of Education (Technical), which she undertook in 1990 with the Faculty of Adult Education, University of Technology, Sydney. The detail in Fay's thesis provides an in-depth look at adult education and the management and operation of the Ashfield Evening College, which was run using the Ashfield Boys' High School campus when it closed in the early 1990s.



It surprises some of us that the 1950s is 'history' to the younger generation and resources such as B. Warner's flower-making collection and *Ashfield Evening College, 1950-1990* are becoming increasingly important in documenting our local history for the future.

If you have documents, books, photographs or ephemera from the 1950s onwards, don't toss them, donate them to our Society as they may be vital information to a researcher of the future.

Ann O'Connell

Images: Ann O'Connell

More recent acquisitions

Discussing the Prospects painted by Dorothy Lindsay

When ADHS member **Jan Winders**, informed us that a friend, **Marilyn Joma**, was trying to find a home for an original oil painting which was once owned by the **Ashfield Art Society**, again we did not hesitate in saying yes – we would take it please!

Discussing the Prospects was painted by artist **Dorothy Ellen Lindsay** and shows two drovers standing at a fence looking at a mob of cattle.



The scene evokes thoughts of dusty grazing stations through the artist's use of the orange, red and yellow tones that one expects of the Australian outback

The history of community groups often give insight into local lifestyles and attitudes. While the Ashfield Art Society was active in the 1970s, this is now 50 years ago, which in some younger minds, is ancient history. When we are offered something such as the oil painting, we know that taking it in will help preserve an aspect of our local history for when it indeed becomes 'old' history.

Discussing the Prospects

Miss **Dorothy Ellen Simpson** was born in Burwood in 1912 to parents **Oswald Goulburn Simpson** and **Emma Simpson** (nee Barnsley). She 'played about' with painting at school and then studying art at the **Australian School of Sketching** in Sydney from around 1927. However, she did not take it up seriously until much later in life.

In 1936 Dorothy married **Norman Andrews Lindsay** of Wauchope, who was employed as a 'buttermaker' in a dairy factory at Gunnedah. War broke out in 1939 and Norman enlisted, serving for the duration and beyond to 1946, ending up with the rank of Captain. The Lindsays moved to Byers Street Enfield and by 1954 had moved again to 13 Turner Avenue in Haberfield.

Dorothy busied herself with working for the Red Cross, an interest that she kept up for her lifetime. It wasn't until her family was grown up that Dorothy began spending much more time on painting with her success and reputation increasing during the early 1970s. She travelled overseas extensively in search of subject material for her paintings to such places as England, Europe, Russia, Africa, the Pacific and throughout the outback of Australia.

By 1974, she was becoming well-known in artistic circles and in July, along with other artists, Dorothy's paintings were exhibited at a ten-day charity function for 'Food for Babies Fund' at the Grace Brothers Chatswood Gallery.

During the 1960s and 70s Ashfield Municipal Council held art exhibitions in the Town Hall and according to **Mayor Paul Whelan**, through the interest shown in these, the **Ashfield Art Society** was formed in October 1975.

At the first meeting chaired by Mr Whelan, office bearers were elected: **Mr G.K. (Karl) Kilian** as president, **Dorothy Lindsay** as vice-president and **Mrs Lee Gruzdeff** as secretary.



Dorothy Lindsay was one of the exhibitors at the Red Cross Chelsea art exhibition in Sydney.

Source: Aeroplane Press, 5 May 1978

From the outset it was hoped that those interested in pottery and ceramics, music and drama would come forward to form groups within the Society, and after a short while the group became known as **Ashfield Arts and Crafts Society**.



From the *Ashfield Arts Society* grew the *Crafts Society* which partnered with Ashfield Council each year for the Christmas Exhibition.

Source: Sydney Morning Herald, 16 December 1978

In 1979, Dorothy and Norman Lindsay moved to Port Macquarie where they spent the remainder of their lives. Once Dorothy had left the Ashfield Art Society, the group appears to have wound up as no further reports of its activities could be located.

Although the Society operated for only a few years it provided local artists with an opportunity for collaboration and a chance to exhibit their works, with many members being well known and highly skilled. Perhaps the most successful artist within the Ashfield Art Society was **Leeka Gruzdeff** who continued painting vibrant works throughout her lifetime and winning over 120 first prizes in city and country exhibitions. She was finalist in the Archibald Prize in 1986 and 1988 and is a Fellow of the Royal Art Society of NSW.

We thank **Jan Winders** and **Marilyn Joma** for a great example of Dorothy Lindsay's work for our collections.

Ann O'Connell

Images: Ann O'Connell

Leadlight images appeal

This is an appeal for your photos of any leadlight windows and doors in your houses.

Some years ago, **Colin Webb** gave our Society a marvellous presentation on his leadlight project. He was on a mission to photograph and record all the extant leadlights in buildings in the old Ashfield Municipality and create a website to share this. His project has now expanded to cover the entire Inner West Council area. By now, he should be very fit and he has no doubt worn out several pairs of shoes!

He describes his website as “a repository of photographs of leadlight in homes in the Inner Western Suburbs of Sydney”. However, it is much more than images of leadlight. He gives descriptions of the buildings, and a potted history of the suburbs and subdivisions, as well as other interesting snippets of historical information.

His images are daytime, exterior shots. There have been a few contributions of night-time images, but only rare interior images in daytime, when the leadlight patterns and colours glow as they should with natural daylight.



38 Bartlett Street, Summer Hill, contrasting day and night-time photos



106 Liverpool Road, Ashfield, contrasting exterior and interior views

Leadlight images appeal



52 Nowranie Street, Summer Hill, contrasting day and night-time photos

I urge our members to send photos of your leadlight to Colin, and let all your friends and neighbours know about the website and how they can contribute. Click on the hyperlink below to look at Colin's website:

[Leadlight of Inner Western Sydney; A Photographic Record](#)

or see www.innerwestleadlight.com

Images, information, suggestions and queries can be emailed to Colin at colinwebb1952@gmail.com

Looking forward to some glowing images

Clare Herscovitch
Images: Colin Webb

Research Rooms

When you next visit the Society's Rooms in Thirning Villa, you will see that that we have improved the layout and have some new storage:

- A donated 10-drawer map/plan cabinet, thanks to the organisation, co-operation and physical effort of **Paul Williams, Colin Webb and Phil Burne**
- **Lois Gray** organised the delivery of two more 4-drawer filing cabinets, delivered by her neighbour who has saved and delivered filing cabinets to us before
- Another 3-drawer filing cabinet was recently delivered, another donation from Acoustic Directions.

All this extra cabinet space will be well used as the collection is sorted and expanded. **Carolyn Carter** is continuing to list, describe, database and rehouse material, such as folders and pamphlets, which at present are in bookshelves but are more appropriately in hanging files.

We plan to reorganise the library after a stocktake which is nearing completion.

Clare Herscovitch and Ann O'Connell have continued with cataloguing and scanning loose, hard copy material. Ann has added many records to the existing catalogue.

Vincent Crow from the Haberfield Association has kindly identified six of the nineteen previously unknown houses in our Wolfers photographic collection of Haberfield houses. These records have been updated in our Access database.

One of our microfiche readers (an unused one) was offered as a donation in the RAHS newsletter. It was snapped up very quickly by the State Library of NSW and collected by a SLNSW librarian who was delighted by it.

Clare Herscovitch

Research Rooms

The Society's Research Rooms at Thirning Villa, Pratten Park, Arthur Street Ashfield are open to visitors for research **on the second and last Saturdays of each month from 11am until 4pm.**



Committee members at work the Rooms on Saturday 10 September 2022

Image: Heather Warton

Contact the Society

- Postal address:
PO Box 20 ASHFIELD NSW 1800
- Email:
adhs@ashfieldhistory.org.au
- Website:
<https://ashfieldhistory.org.au/>

Newsletter contributors

Thank you to **Ann O'Connell, Ronda Gaffey, Lois Gray, Clare Herscovitch, Alex Lofts, David Rollinson, Colin Webb & Bernadette Williamson** for contributing to this Newsletter.

Heather Warton, Editor
14 September 2022

The passing of Her Majesty the Queen

The Society notes with sadness the death of Queen Elizabeth II on 8 September 2022.

To quote (in part) from the Statement on the Passing of Her Majesty the Queen from the Prime Minister, issued on 9 September 2022:

With the passing of Queen Elizabeth the Second, an historic reign and a long life devoted to duty, family, faith and service has come to an end. This is a morning of sadness for the world, for the Commonwealth and all Australians.

It is a day of profound sadness and grief for the Royal Family who have lost a beloved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. The person who for so long was their greatest inner strength.

There is comfort to be found in Her Majesty's own words: "Grief is the price we pay for love."

This is a loss we feel deeply in Australia. Queen Elizabeth II is the only reigning monarch most of us have known—and the only one to ever visit Australia. And over the course of a remarkable seven decades, Her Majesty was a rare and reassuring constant amidst rapid change. Through the noise and turbulence of the years, she embodied and exhibited a timeless decency and an enduring calm.

Her Majesty served our nation and the Commonwealth for 70 years. She is the longest-reigning monarch in British history and, remarkably, the second longest-reigning monarch of a sovereign state in world history.

Today marks the end of an era, the close of the second Elizabethan age. This time of mourning will pass, but the deep respect and warm regard in which Australians have always held Her Majesty will never fade.

May she rest in eternal peace.