



NEWSLETTER

Number: 2008 (121)
August 2020



From the chair

Dear Members and Friends,

Last month was a sad time for ADFAS Camden with the passing of dear Olive McAleer, who was a valued committee member for many years. Olive's ready smile



was a wonderful welcome to

ADFAS lectures during all the years she organised our raffles. Tributes to Olive are included in this edition.



I am sure that this will come as no surprise to you that Carrington has advised us the hall will not be available to us this year. Therefore the vain hope that I had been clinging to that we could possibly have two Australian lecturers for our September and October dates has well

and truly been dashed.

It has also been confirmed by our National Lecturers' Committee that no UK lecturers will be coming to Australia for the first half of 2021. This means that our committee will be looking at the viability of having Australian lecturers from March to June 2021 should Carrington become available for our use. Unfortunately, we are still unable to commit to any firm arrangements for our 2021 lecture series.

As we were only able to have one face to face lecture this year, your committee has decided to give paid-up members the choice of either a refund or a credit towards your 2021 membership fee and a note from our Treasurer, Pamela, is included for your information.

In the meantime, we will continue with our monthly newsletters which I hope you are still all enjoying. Please keep submitting articles to Gaylene at gjfeld@bigpond.com or phone me on 4655 9724 or 0439 807 628 if you are unable to contact Gaylene by email.

Sincerely,

Carla

Carla Hill, chairman



What's in this edition?

This edition of the Newsletter begins with tributes to artist and long-time member and committee member of ADFAS Camden, OLIVE McALEER.

On page 3 you will find a very important Notice to Members regarding fees paid for the 2020 lecture season.

Contributions from members continue to roll in and this month page 4 brings us something a little different with an ART QUIZ compiled by committee member Cliff Reece. (for answers go to page 7).

Linda Inglis has continued to provide us with information on 'Lectures at Home' from The Arts Society (page 5). Thank you, Linda.

Also on page 5 is an article by Paul Gregson on JOHN KENDRICK BLOGG, an exceptionally fine Australian wood carver, among other things!

And to continue the thread on public art! Having now been exposed by Colin Howie to Silo Art, I have included a short note on some rather remarkable *Trompe L'oeil* on an otherwise unremarkable concrete block public convenience in Brewarrina (page 7). I will bring you a little more on another version of public art next month!

The notices on page 8 include the recent release of an autobiography by one of our members – not an every-day event!

Keep well,

Peter Claxton, Ed

IN MEMORIUM

OLIVE MAY McALEER

30th Sept 1933 -15th July 2020

ADFAS Camden wishes to pay tribute to Olive McAleer who recently passed away on 15th July, 2020. Olive was a hard-working and well respected member of our Committee until 2014. A friend to all, she thoroughly enjoyed her involvement with ADFAS Camden, and regularly attended meetings and lectures for as long as she was able.

EULOGY

'In her early years Mum lived at Bargo and the Oaks. She went to Camden High and sat her Intermediate Certificate. She was made Head prefectexcelled in art and needlework. It was here that she met her lifelong friend, Betty Donohue (Small). As Mum's memory declined Aunty Bet included her in outings and never stopped visiting her.

'Mum met Dad (Geoff) at a local dance and they were married in 1952. 'Mum and dad were different....you went to Dad for sympathy....he was a softie. You went to Mum for practical no-nonsense advice. They were together for 60 years during which they travelled, raised 8 daughters as well as many grandchildren and great grandchildren.

'Dad gave Mum a painting kit at age 37 and this began an art adventure that lasted 50 years. She began taking classes run by Alan Baker where she met Nola Tegel, Patricia Johnston and Marge Baker. She took classes at the Royal Art Society and gained a Diploma 1986. She became an Associate of the Royal Art Society 1998.



Olive and her family

'She received many awards for her art in oils, charcoals, watercolours, still life and landscapes.

'Olive belonged to many community groups ...ADFAS, Inner Wheel, CWA, Catholic Women's League and Camden Historical Society'.

'You were a gentle woman, a true lady, beautiful inside and out'.

Anne McPherson (daughter)

Memories of my Painting Pal OLIVE McALEER

Patricia Johnston

Love of art was the inspiration for my friendship with Olive McAleer, when we met in the little art group established by Alan Baker and Ken Rorke in the 1970s. Determined to improve and learn more, Olive, Nola Tegel, Gary Baker and I enrolled in art classes at the Royal Art Society of NSW, where Alan was Vice President.

Olive was the first of us to gain its Diploma of Art in 1986, and went on to become an Associate of this prestigious society in 1988. However it wasn't all study, for each week Olive, Nola and I spent a precious few hours away from the demands of our growing families, to picnic and paint in the beautiful Camden countryside.

Then came the thrill of an overseas art tour to Bali in the 1980s led by Lindsay Sever, President of the Royal Art Society. We skipped away like excited schoolgirls, leaving 14 children in the care of their bewildered dads, to sample the delights of Sanur and Ubud, bartering and bargaining to Olive's "pangpang" for carvings, silverwork, shells and all the crazy things tourists buy.

Later came wonderful art tours in France, Thailand and Laos, where Olive in chef's attire prepared a delicious Lao-tian feast, and later we both explored the exotic night markets of Luang Prabung.

Olive was remarkable in balancing the demands of her busy household of husband Geoff and their 8 daughters, with active involvement in many local societies, and with time spent to paint beautiful works in oils and watercolour. Sadly in her last years the onset of dementia diminished these impressive skills.

I was honoured to be invited to her funeral service at St Paul's, Camden on July 23rd especially as attendance was so severely restricted to family members by the COVID 19 contagion.

I remember Olive as a wonderful friend, full of verve and energy, who delighted in new experiences and adventures.



Olive's artwork acquired by CAP and added to the municipal collection



Olive's artwork on the hitching post outside the ABAG

NOTICE TO MEMBERS

Covid-19 and your 2020 ADFAS Membership

With the power of hindsight AND a view into the future, we could all be a little wiser.....

As you know only too well, we have been able to hold only one lecture this year..... way back in March.....and at this stage we are still not too sure of what is happening into 2021.

Your Committee has determined that ADFAS Camden is able to absorb much of the costs of this year's other expenses i.e. Affiliation fees to Head Office, printing, postal fees etc. Therefore:-

- Your membership fees paid for 2020 \$145.00
- **MINUS** the fee for the March Lecture \$20.00
(One-eighth of your fees rounded up slightly)
- **Balance held over per member** **\$125.00**

If you would like us to hold over a credit for the \$125.00 in your name towards 2021 fees, **YOU DO NOT HAVE TO DO ANYTHING AT THE MOMENT.**

If you would prefer a refund of this amount before this year's 'virtual' AGM.... please reply to me, Pamela Hartley, with your bank details or a request for a cheque.

Email: hartraff@bigpond.com.au
Mobile text: 0412 311 194
Post: PO Box 146 Camden 2570

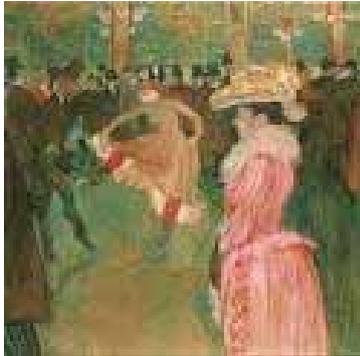
...or I'm happy for you to drop a note into my letterbox or under my doormat at 12 Barsden Street Camden 2570.

With best regards to all,

Pamela Hartley – Treasurer

ART QUIZ

- 1: What is the derivation of the word 'Art'?
- 2: Who were the earliest known pictorial artists?
- 3: Which artist created the painting below?



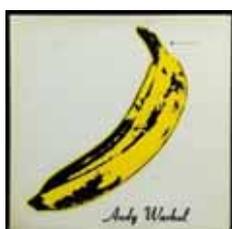
- 4: What is the name and nationality of the sculptor who created this piece?



- 5: Which Australian artist painted this and where is the scene located?



- 6: For which band did Andy Warhol create this album cover and in what decade?



- 7: Name the person who photographed this?



- 8: This is a painting of which artist and what is her nationality?



- 9: Who painted the picture below and what is the name of the technique used in which small distinct dots of paint are applied in patterns to create an image?



- 10: Who painted this wildflower watercolor and what is her nationality?



This quiz has been put together by one of our members, CLIFF REECE, with acknowledgement to ADFAS Perth.

ANSWERS ARE ON PAGE 7

LECTURES AT HOME

Each month I've been reporting on the free lectures provided by the UK organisation The Arts Society. Two new lectures have gone up since my last report and once again I'd highly recommend them. All of these short lectures are provided by experienced ADFAS presenters.

Just go to The Arts Society webpage or to:

www.connected.theartsociety.org.

I loved the beautiful lecture given by Viv Lawes on 18th Century hand painted Chinese export silks. It's got everything for ADFAS members – art history, painting, colours and fabrics. Viv not only provides a background into how these fabrics were produced and to the trade, but also provides a wonderful demonstration of painting the fabric, including details as to the colours she's using and the technique. She binds the powders with something she calls 'rabbit skin glue' and her colours include actual silver for outlining the leaves and flowers. It's fascinating!

I admit the title of the other new lecture, 'Rescuing unwanted diaries', didn't really inspire me. But, as is so often the case, I was completely wrong! Irving Finkel is a rather eccentric character who is a curator at the British Museum. And he has a chatty, witty style that makes his enthusiasm for and explanation of the value of old diaries very entertaining. As he points out, diaries are historical records that give us the voices from many ordinary people in the past and, unlike so many documents, they speak the truth – not fake news, I think he means!

Unfortunately, Viv Lawes lecture is described as the 'last in the series'. I'm not sure if there's to be another series, but I'll keep you posted.

Linda Inglis
Secretary

fumes from native plants and trees. Apart from being technologically inclined he was also artistic and a creative writer in verse.

History has it that he took up carving as a hobby after the death of his wife Annie in 1893. It is possible that he took classes with Lewis Godfrey who taught at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. The similarity in style of Blogg to Godfrey would seem to support this suggestion.



John Kendrick Blogg at work on a spray of golden wattle blossom (*Acacia pycnantha*).

The spray stands out in bold relief.

From an article by John Blogg in *The Argus*, September 28, 1929

I have now worked on five of Blogg's works, four of which were eucalypt leaves and nuts - so lifelike that you would think the leaves had just fallen and dried. The fragile nature of them allowed/required me to replace losses and hence carve in his style.



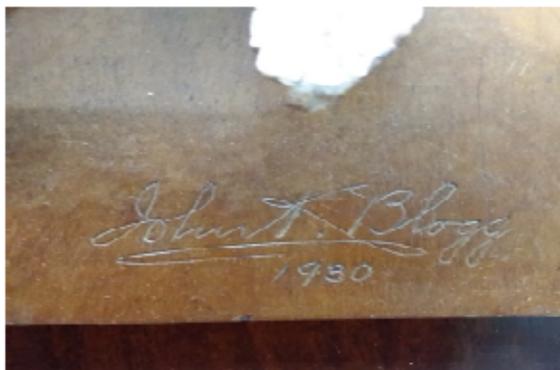
Beautifully carved and detailed eucalypt leaves and nuts by John Kendrick Blogg

I have also had the privilege of repairing works of wattle, possums, leaves etc. by Prenzel, another important wood carver of Australiana of the early half of the 20th century.

The ART of JOHN KENDRICK BLOGG & the study of one work Paul Gregson

John Blogg was born in Canada in 1851 and after studying chemistry at university migrated to Victoria in 1877 as an industrial chemist. He established a business, JK BLOGG & Co. that extracted essential oils and per-

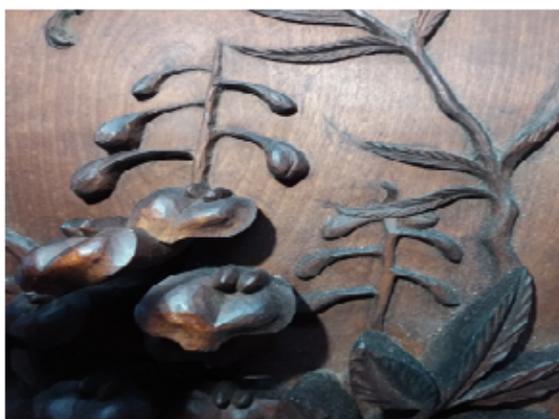
The latest of Blogg's work that came to me was not signed (usually by incised signature and date) nor was the plant portrayed Australian. As a student of botany and wood I could see that I needed an opinion and identification. To those ends an image of the plant in bud was sent to the Botanic Gardens for their opinion.



Example of John Blogg's incised signature

The following is an extract from their report:

"The carving is showing a flowering stage plant not fruiting....carving is depicting a flowering legume..... more specifically Fabaceaeexamples of genera include Wisteria, Austrocallerya, Millettia".



Detail of the item showing the flower arrangement above the leaves

I then referred to my own library: -

Millettia: "Tree Wisteria or Ironwood Fabaceae, the Pea family....at least one important specie from South Africa....the hard, strong wood is prized locally as the ideal medium for the carvings of small decorative objects...."

So with this information my CSIRO 'bible' of end grain identification plates gave me the final proof in a match.

As I had studied Blogg's technique I was convinced that the work, although unsigned, was by him.

Now to the reverse of the panel – it has attached a distressed paper label handwritten in ink:

".....was done as part of a commission by John K. Blogg in 1914 for the Corbett family Brisbane."

From all of the evidence above I have accepted that the item I am working on is Blogg's work and it may well be that a specimen of the identified tree species grew in Brisbane, perhaps in the grounds of the Corbett family, the tree being felled for one reason or another and then used to produce this and other woodworks for the family (balance of the commission).

By reference to the published description of *Millettia* ("*... An evergreen tree to 8 – 10m tall the single trunk branching at 2m or so to develop broad, umbrella like crown with twiggy branchlets ... the flowers standing clear of the leaves and covering the upper crown of the tree ...*", because the flowers are arranged above the leaves, it would seem that the panel has been hung upside down for the best part of 100 years!

Q.E.D.

The conservation work now being undertaken is to inlet small twig loss, and clean and polish the artwork. Presentation will be to fit and hang in a frame of Red Silky Oak (*Stenocarpus salignus*).

Silo Art, Water Tower Art and now Public Convenience Art!

Recently some good friends of mine decided to take advantage of the relaxation in COVID travel constraints and set off on a four week trip through outback NSW. Hearing of this I suggested that they might take some photos for me of any silo art or water tower art that they came across in their travels.

A few days ago I received the following email with image attached:

'No arty silos out here I'm afraid - this delightful dunny in Brewarrina is the best I can do at this stage'.



Why a public convenience? Rather intrigued, and because the artists name was included in the lower right hand corner of the image, I decided to do a little research on my computer.

The artist is JENNY McCracken, an international mural artist, painter and apparently Australia's most highly awarded pavement artist. You can find more information on her and her various works on her website:

www.jennymccrackenartist.com

But why Brewarrina and why a public convenience?

The image also contained the website for an organisation called Zest Events. Brewarrina had been doing it tough during the 2019 drought and Zest Events had obtained a community well-being grant to artistically reinvigorate the public amenities block and the levee banks, with the aim of improving the mental health of the residents and supporting local businesses by attracting more tourists to the town.

The majority of the population of Brewarrina is indigenous and this mental health project involved local teachers, students and trainees right from its very beginning. Jenny McCracken was commissioned to apply her talents to the public convenience using the inspirational local cultural and indigenous stories provide by the young people.

As you can see from the following two images taken from the Zest website Jenny's *Trompe L'oeil* has magically transformed that concrete block cube into a veritable work of art – with a little help from some new friends!

From this: (early front view)



to this: (rear view with helpers)



Tip: For the full effect, enlarge this image on your screen.

Peter Claxton, Ed.

www.zestevents.com.au/mental-health-art-project/

ANSWERS TO ART QUIZ

1. Surprisingly perhaps, there are at least two versions of the answer to this question. One is that the word 'Art' derives from the Latin "ars" (stem art-), which means "skill method" or "technique", also conveying a connotation of beauty. Another is that it derives from the Greek word Arete (Greek: ἀρετή), meaning in its basic form "excellence".
2. A cave-wall depiction of a pig and buffalo hunt appears to be the world's oldest recorded story, according to archaeologists who discovered the work on the Indonesian island Sulawesi. The scientists say the scene is more than 44,000 years old. The 4.5-metre-long panel features reddish-brown forms that seem to depict human-like figures hunting local animal species. Previously, rock art found in European sites dated to around 14,000 to 21,000 years old were considered to be the world's oldest clearly narrative artworks. The scientists working on the latest find say that the Indonesian art pre-dates these.



3. French artist Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864-1901). *At the Moulin Rouge, The Dance* is an oil-on-canvas painting dated 1890.
4. British sculptor Henry Moore OM CH FBA (1898-1986).
5. Sir Arthur Streeton ROI (1867-1943). The scene is the Grand Canal in Venice, Italy.
6. Velvet Underground in the 1960s.
7. American Ansell Adams (1902-1984). He is best known for his black-and-white images of the American West. He helped found Group f/64, an association of photographers advocating "pure" photography which favoured sharp focus and the use of the full tonal range of a photograph.
8. Frida Kahlo (1907-1954) is considered one of Mexico's greatest artists. Her father was of German descent and her mother was half Amerindian and half Spanish.
9. Frenchman Georges-Pierre Seurat (1859-1891) painted 'A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte' over two years (1884-86) using a technique named 'Pointillism'.
10. Philippa Mary Nikulinsky AM (1942-current) is a botanical and wildlife artist born in Kalgoorlie, Western Australia whose work focusses on the arid lands of WA.

Acknowledgment ADFAS Camden would like to thank ADFAS Perth for devising the idea of an Art Quiz and also for giving permission to use some of their questions in this first edition of our own Art Quiz. Their support and encouragement are greatly appreciated.

New BOOK:

**The Journey of a VERY GRATEFUL
10 Pound Tourist**

CLIFF REECE is one of ADFAS Camden’s Committee members and has recently self-published his autobiography *'The Journey of a Very Grateful 10 Pound Tourist'*. Cliff has lived in seven countries on five continents and been involved in some very interesting situations especially in South Africa during the apartheid years and Hong Kong following the Tiananmen Square Massacre in 1989. He has had a successful career in business and as CEO of a NFP, and became involved in politics during the tempestuous 1970s in Australia.

'I've had an interesting journey – I've seen a lot, made a lot of mistakes, but generally been quite successful. You can achieve without being all that good at school, even without an advance education. I left school at 16 and didn't go to university. You don't need a lot of money to succeed'

His book is available at the National Library of Australia bookshop in Canberra and several NSW outlets including Harry Hartog's bookshop in Narellan Town Centre.

(see recent article, Camden Advertiser Aug 5th 2020).



EXHIBITION:

Van Gogh comes to Sydney!

We sympathise with all Melbournians at this time as they struggle with COVID19 and its many issues.

However, one city's pain is another's gain! Courtesy of the current COVID19 'crisis' down south, the Australian premiere of a major international art exhibition, *Van Gogh Alive* has been transferred from Melbourne to Sydney.

Instead of marking the grand opening of the Lume in South Melbourne it will now be held at the **Royal Hall of Industries in Moore Park in SEPTEMBER 2020.**

This exhibition is described as a multi-sensory, interactive exhibition that has been presented in 50 cities across the globe.

It is claimed that the Sydney exhibition will be the largest version of *Van Gogh Alive* that has ever been staged and will feature absolutely 'huge visual art projections synchronised to a musical score and the release of aromas!!!'

It is also claimed that the projections will be equivalent to '30 or 40 IMAX screens positioned in (sic) different angles'.

So keep your fingers crossed that COVID 19 does not get in the way again as this is an exhibition not to be missed.



Van Gogh Alive opens on September 18, 2020. You can sign up on the waiting list at: www.vangoghalive.com.au

ART GALLERY NSW **Brett Whiteley Studio**



The Studio is open

The Brett Whiteley Studio at 2 Raper Street, Surry Hills was the workplace and home of one of Australia's most celebrated artists, and is now a museum managed by the Art Gallery of NSW. It is open to the general public from 10am to 4pm Thursday to Sunday. No tickets or bookings required. You will need to provide your name and contact details on arrival to support contact tracing.

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