



NEWSLETTER

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September 2020



From the chair



Unfortunately, nothing has changed since our August newsletter regarding our 2021 program. The advice from our National Lecturers' Committee remains that no UK lecturers will be coming to Australia until July 2021. However, to tantalize you, I have listed below what we can look forward to from our UK lecturers.

- 31st July Ian Gledhill - The Story of the Crystal Palace
- 28th Aug Mark Cottle - Masonry, Manuscripts & Music: An Inspirational Journey through Medieval England
- 25th Sept Sandy Burnett - The Amadeus Myth: Mozart & his world – culture & society in late C18th Vienna
- 6th Nov Paul Roberts - Hadrian: Man of Mystery

Our only Special Interest lecture in 2021 will be:-

- 27th Aug Mark Cottle - The Cult of Gloriana: Art, Music & Politics at the court of the Virgin Queen

Our first four dates allocated for 2021 are:- 13th March, 17th April, 29th May & 26th June and, as soon as we are advised that Carrington will be available to us for any or all of these dates, the committee will be able to check into the availability of Australian lecturers for March to June. I sincerely hope that we are able to present a full eight lectures to you in 2021.

Spring has certainly arrived with those few lovely warm days and all the blossom trees looking stunning. I'm sure we will get a few more coolish days though, so don't put away those warm woollies just yet.

Apart from continuing to read many books, I have enjoyed listening to radio and watching all the TV programs reliving Sydney's 2000 Olympics. I have lots of great memories of going to a rehearsal of the opening ceremony, attending equestrian & softball events and also attending the closing ceremony of the Paralympics with family & friends. All lovely memories to have. It really doesn't seem 20 years ago.

If anybody would like to share some of their memories and stories from the 2000 Olympics, or anything else, please submit 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.

Stay safe and well.

Sincerely,

Carla

Carla Hill, chairman



CONTENTS

This month's edition is pretty colourful – with plenty of images – and I hope, of some interest to readers. It kicks off on page 2 with our second ART QUIZ courtesy of **Cliff Reece**. How did you all fare last month?

This month **Linda Inglis** has provided us with some information on a few things to see and do – titled "Out and About with the Arts" (page 3).

And I have put together a follow-up public art story – this time on UTE ART (careful how you say that) and a Sculpture trail down the Lachlan River from Forbes to Condobolin (page 3).

Gaylene Feld has very kindly put pen to paper with an update on the restoration of Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris and also an article on War Horse the Play (both on page 5).

And then we have two stories relating to member's visits to Japan, to different towns but both in Gifu Prefecture, a very mountainous region to the west of Tokyo. Thank you to **Susan Zamudio** (page 6) and **Cliff Reece** and **Jo Wong** (page 7).

And the last page, of course carries the answers to ART QUIZ No 2 and it is again full of very interesting information. Thank you again Cliff.

I trust you are all coping well and remaining COVID safe!

Peter Claxton, Ed

ART QUIZ No 2

- 1: Who has her own mailbox at the Louvre in Paris because of all the love letters she receives?
- 2: Who had the original *Mona Lisa* painting hanging on his bedroom wall for several years?
- 3: Which street artist hung this painting in London's Tate Modern Museum as a prank in 2003?



- 4: Was 'Art' ever an Olympic sport?
- 5: What is the name of this famous sculpture that so dramatically depicts the extent of human suffering?



- 6: Why is this hard-to-determine photograph so famous?



- 7: Name this band and their home country and what is unusual about their singing style?



- 8: What is this famous building called, where is it located, and why has it recently been in the news worldwide?



- 9: Name as many books as you can that you think would be in the list of the 10 most read books over the past 50 years?
- 10: Who painted the series (18 in total) of *Dogs Playing Poker* paintings?



ANSWERS ARE ON PAGE 8

Out and about with the Arts

Linda Inglis

In the absence of any further 'Lectures at Home' from The Arts Society I have provided information on some more local happenings that may be of interest to members.

HAZELHURST ARTS CENTRE

The Hazelhurst Arts Centre in Gymea is currently showing an Art Deco collection that is on tour from the National Gallery of Australia. The exhibition closes on 8 November 2020.

Hazelhurst Arts Centre is at 782 Kingsway, Gymea. For any members going in that direction, I'd recommend a visit to this very attractive gallery. I was fortunate enough to visit it with Gay a few years ago, as it was included as part of an ADFAS conference.



VOGUE magazine

Have you bought your September copy of Vogue?

It seems that Vogue Magazine has made the decision that all copies internationally (26 editions, going to a potential audience of 50 million) will have a front cover with the theme of 'Hope' for the September 2020 edition. For the Australian cover, Vogue collaborated with the National Gallery of Australia to commission artist Betty Muffler, an Anangu Pitjantjatjara woman.

Check it out at your local newsagency! (Information from the National Gallery).



SCULPTURE IN THE VINEYARDS, Wollombi Valley Sculpture Festival

For members looking for a trip within NSW, Wollombi Valley is hosting their annual sculpture exhibition from 17 October to 1 November 2020 (I Googled 'Wollombi Valley' and it seems to be near Cessnock and Pokolbin.)

The judges are John McDonald, art critic and lecturer, and Sarah Johnson, curator of Newcastle Art Gallery. There will be work from 103 sculptors, including seven previous Sculpture by the Sea prize winners.

For accommodation you could check out wollombival-leystays – some lovely looking farm houses and cottages (yes, I know it's all about the art, but you might as well be comfortable!)

NB: This will be a COVID-Safe event complete with a trained COVID Safety Hygiene Marshal to ensure implementation of the NSW Health Department's safety requirements.



And now from PUBLIC CONVENIENCE ART
to
'UTES IN THE PADDOCK' ART!
Peter Claxton

Last month I was able to report on some art found by some friends of mine on a public convenience in Brewarrina and the interesting reason for its coming into being.

On my behalf they were searching for silo or water tower art during a trip around outback NSW and just before they returned home I received a second email from my peripatetic friends:

'As I approach the end of our NSW circumnavigation I have to confess to a zero tally of photos of painted silos. However I can at least offer today's shot of the "Utes in the Paddock" artworks in Condrobin.'

In fact they sent me not one, but several photos of this rather extraordinary collection of 'decorated' vehicles painted and posed in extraordinary ways as you can see from the following photos. There is even one dressed up as an outdoor (occupied) country dunny!



If you google *Utes in the Paddock* you will find more information about this attraction, including some more images.

However, the reference to Forbes inspired me to see what the computer might also have to say about the sculpture trail being developed along the Lachlan. I have a soft spot for Forbes as I spent a few Christmas holidays there during my teens, staying with relatives in town or on one of their properties along the Lachlan between Bedgerebong and Warroo.

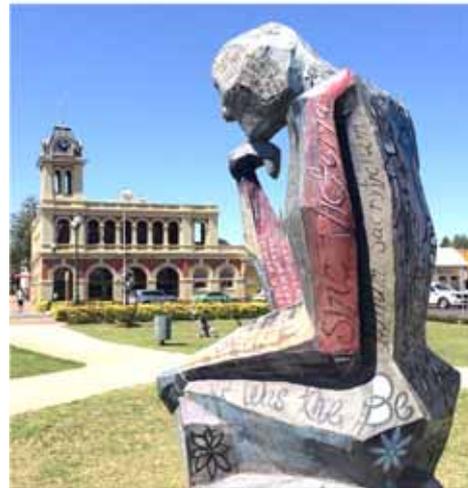
If you go to the following website:

<https://www.somewheredownthelachlan.com/home>

you will open a page titled ***Sculpture down the Lachlan*** which will give you the story of this venture. Briefly:

Sculpture down the Lachlan was inspired by the success of Sydney's *Sculpture by the Sea* exhibition but it will be a permanent collection added to over time. It was launched in the centre of Forbes in 2014 with the intention that it would develop into a sculpture trail around Lake Forbes and then extend along both sides of the Lachlan River between Forbes and Condobolin.

If you go to 'MAPS' on the Website and click on 'Forbes to Condobolin' you will see where the existing and future sites are located. While on the website you will be able to scroll through images of the "AMAZING" (part of the exhibition) array of sculptures already in place.



The building in the background on the right is the rather grandiose Forbes Post Office.

'What do I do next?'

Giant goanna



The email went on to say that 'Utes in the Paddock' is to become the final feature in an evolving series of outdoor sculptures being installed along the Lachlan River commencing at Forbes.

I would recommend a trip to both Forbes and Condobolin if you are intending to visit the central west of NSW.

Notre Dame Cathedral

Gaylene Feld

More than a year since Notre-Dame cathedral lost its gothic spire, roof and many precious artefacts to an inferno, authorities have finally agreed on how the centuries-old structure will be rebuilt — **just as it was before.**

The famous Paris landmark and major tourist attraction was gutted by fire on April 15, 2019, in a disaster that stunned the nation and the world.



President Emmanuel Macron promised after the fire that the Cathedral would be rebuilt within five years, suggesting that a contemporary design could be used for the spire and that it could be rebuilt *'even more beautifully than before'*. Soon after the fire, French Prime Minister Édouard Philippe launched an international architectural design competition for the new spire and roof.

Although this presented architects with a once in a generation opportunity, the idea of a new, modern design for the Cathedral was met with outrage from those with more traditional views.

Christopher Girard, deputy mayor for culture in Paris, maintained that the Gothic masterpiece must be painstakingly restored to its former glory. In his words:

"Notre Dame is like a very strong lady – belonging to the world. She's asking us, the world and our country, 'what can you do for me and how fast can you repair me?'"

France's chief architect of historical sites, Philippe Villeneuve, agreed, insisting the spire be rebuilt exactly as before.

However, that drew a strong rebuke from French army General Jean-Louis Georgelin, who told Mr Villeneuve in a

National Assembly committee meeting to *"shut his mouth"* – to gasps of astonishment.

Eventually, after months of deliberation, the commission in charge of the decision announced that the centuries-old cathedral will be rebuilt just as it was before.

The national heritage and architectural commission have now approved plans to restore the cathedral to its last "complete, coherent and known" state, including the spire, the restoration body said in a statement.

Church officials are now hopeful that Notre-Dame will be open for mass by 2024, when Paris is due to host the Olympic Games.

Restoration work on the cathedral continues, although it was paused briefly this year during the coronavirus shut-down.



Posted/Updated Fri 10 July 2020 – ABC/wires

WAR HORSE THE PLAY

Gaylene Feld

In recent years, I thoroughly enjoyed the film called War Horse. Later, I viewed a film by the National Theatre of Great Britain's production, featuring horse puppets, which I found remarkable.

Then, when the Lyric Theatre, Sydney, publicised the National Theatre play direct from London, I immediately made a booking.

What an unforgettable experience!



Based on Michael Morpurgo's novel of the same name, *War Horse* featured a 34 strong cast and more than 20 puppets. Apparently the most successful play in the National Theatre's history, it has won more than 25 international awards and has been seen by over 8 million people worldwide, in 98 cities across 12 countries. It even has Her Majesty the Queen's seal of approval.

It is a story of courage, loyalty and friendship, telling the story of a young boy called Albert and his horse Joey, set during the First World War.

It is a powerfully moving and imaginative drama full of phenomenal inventiveness, stirring music and songs. It features ground-breaking puppetry work by South Africa's Handspring Puppet Company, who manage to bring breathing, galloping horses to life on stage.



The puppetry was so realistic that at times I was so totally engrossed that I became unaware that I was viewing puppets. In my mind the puppeteers ceased to exist. The movement of the horses was captured perfectly. Added to this the sound effects and music kept one fully engaged.



Consequently, for me, the performance cleverly drew out many emotions....from laughter, through to experiencing the horrors of war, and from delight to heart touching scenes.

The drama has received many accolades worldwide:

'An entertainment phenomenon'

The Daily Telegraph, UK

'Majestic, magnificent. Not to be missed.'

Chicago Tribune

'An astonishing piece of Theatre'

Time Out London

Editor's note:

It seems that this is *Japan month* as I have received two contributions on visits by members to the same region of Japan. They are complementary articles so I have included both in this issue. The first is by Susan Zamudio and the second by Cliff Reece and Jo Wong– thank you!

TAKAYAMA and HIDA VILLAGE

Susan Zamudio

On a visit to Japan last November, my tour group was taken by train to Takayama where we stayed in a fairly traditional hotel for two nights. Takayama (in Japan it is called a city) is a town in Japan's mountainous Gifu Prefecture and is located in the Alps west of Tokyo. It was founded during the 107-year reign of the 6-generation Kanamori dynasty that began when Nagachika Kanamori subjugated Hida during the Warring States period (1467-1603).

Takayama gained importance as a source of high quality timber and highly skilled carpenters during the feudal ages. The city was consequently put under direct control of the shogun and enjoyed quite a bit of prosperity considering its remote mountain location.

It is famous for its traditional inns, museums and galleries and, of course, the Hida village nearby and Hida-gyu – the beef from a breed of black-haired Japanese cattle raised in this area until at least 14 months of age. We were able to sample this 'delicacy' having to fry the meat and vegetables on top of a pot with a flame.



Spending nearly two days at Takayama, we had time to wander the town and visit the farmers' market. The Japanese are well known for their crafts, which include origami, bonsai, etc. and at the farmers' market we visited, the presentation of the chillis was amazing. They had been woven, with a type of grass, into a rather artistic hand-held arrangement.



The narrow streets of the Sanmachi Suji historic district are lined with wooden merchants' houses dating back to the Edo Period (1603-1868).



Being Autumn, we were able to see the lovely colouring of the Autumn leaves, especially in this area.

While staying at Takayama, we were taken by local bus to the Hida Folk Village nearby. Hida is about 2km west of Takayama station. The village is an open-air museum of 30 buildings between 100 and 500 years old. It boasts a collection of traditional thatch-roof houses taken from around central Japan and carefully reconstructed there.



The houses are spread around a lovely park with a central pond. You can enter many of the houses and marvel at the beams and construction techniques.

It is beautifully laid out and the Autumn colouring of the trees was quite spectacular.

The gassho style houses have steeply peaked thatched roofs to allow snow to slide off easily. Inside each build-

ing, you will find a glimpse of what day-to-day life was like in the past.

The village offers demonstrations of traditional crafts and artisans were working on these in several of the houses.



SHIRAKAWA-GO VILLAGE IN JAPAN

Cliff Reece and Jo Wong

Situated on the western side of the main island – due west of Tokyo and an hour's drive south-east of Kanazawa are several wonderful little villages, one of which we visited during a recent trip to Japan, Shirakawa-go. Its unique farmhouse-style houses are called Gassho-zukuri and are very rare even in Japan. They are constructed using timber beams and have steeply-pitched thatched roofs that resemble two hands together in prayer; these are ideal for managing heavy snowfalls.

Amazingly, the residents rear silkworms in their attics! Mulberries are also a speciality of that region, which is quite mountainous and very scenic. From artifacts and pottery that have been excavated it is now believed that humans have lived there from about 7000 BCE. The name 'Shirakawa-go' first clearly appears in around 1176CE and is thought to have been in wide use at that time as it appeared in the diary of an aristocrat living in Kyoto.



Editor

Peter Claxton
4655 9781

pclaxton8@bigpond.com

Honorary Secretary

Linda Inglis

0428 825 386

linda.inglis@westnet.com.au

ADFAS CAMDEN Inc. .PO Box 146 Camden NSW 2570

ANSWERS TO ART QUIZ No 2

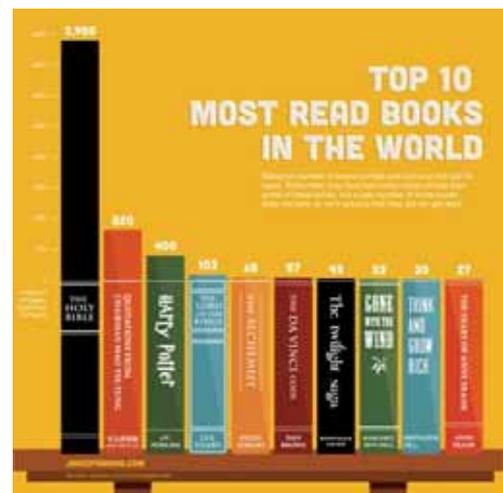
1. Mona Lisa. Since the painting first arrived at the Louvre in 1825, Mona Lisa has received plenty of love letters and flowers from admirers. And, yes, there is a special mailbox in her name there.
2. Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821) hung the painting in the bedroom of the Tuileries Palace for 4 years from about 1800 when he was Emperor of France. It is said that he found her so captivating that he embarked on a mission to find an Italian woman to marry, which led him to marry Teresa Guadagni who was a descendant of Lisa Gherardini – the likely model for the *Mona Lisa* painting.
3. 'Banksy' is the nickname of the street artist – his identity is still not known. The prank was soon undone by its inadequate glue, but for a few hours *Crimewatch UK Has Ruined the Countryside For All of Us* was hung in one of the world's most famous museums. The stunt was planned with precision and executed with aplomb. Disguised as a pensioner, Britain's favourite graffiti artist shuffled into Tate and stuck one of his own creations on to a gallery wall.

Another one of his paintings – titled the *Well Hung Lover* is below. 😊



4. Yes it was. The founder of the modern Games, the Baron Pierre de Coubertin, was enamored with the idea of the true Olympian being a talented artist and sportsperson. Thanks to him, between 1912 and 1948 medals were given out for sporting-inspired masterpieces of architecture, music, painting, sculpture and literature.
5. Perhaps the most famous sculpture of Roman antiquity, *Laocoön and His Sons* (2nd Century BC) was originally unearthed in Rome in 1506 and then moved to the Vatican, where it resides to this day. It is based on the myth of a Trojan priest killed along with his sons by sea serpents sent by the sea god Poseidon as retribution for Laocoön's attempt to expose the ruse of the Trojan Horse. Originally installed in the palace of Emperor Titus, this life-size figurative grouping, attributed to a trio of Greek sculptors from the Island of Rhodes, is unrivalled as a study of human suffering.

6. This is the FIRST photograph ever taken, it was made by Joseph Nicéphore Niépce and named *View from the Window at Le Gras*, circa 1826. It was an 8-hour exposure and there is only one copy, a positive image. This is why the image is somewhat confusing because the sun had moved across the courtyard during the exposure, causing shadows on both sides to appear.
7. *The Hu* is a Mongolian heavy metal band formed in 2016. They play traditional Mongolian instruments including the Morin Khuur and Tovshuur and utilize traditional Mongolian throat singing. The Hu were inspired by the Hunnu, an ancient Mongolian empire, known as The Huns in western culture. Well worth listening to as it's very different to other singing styles.
8. The *Hagia Sophia* in Istanbul, Turkey. The 1,500-year-old UNESCO World Heritage site became a museum in 1934. This year a Turkish court annulled its status, saying any use other than as a mosque was "not possible legally". The decision to turn it back into a mosque was criticised by religious and political leaders worldwide.
9. Writer James Chapman created a list of the most read books in the world based on the number of copies each book sold over the last 50 years. He found that the *Bible* far outsold any other book, with a whopping 3.9 billion copies sold over the last 50 years. "*Quotations from the Works of Mao Tse-tung*" came in second with 820 million copies sold, and "*Harry Potter*" came in third with 400 million copies sold. Designer Jared Fanning created an infographic (below) on the most read books in the world, based on Chapman's research.



10. Although his paintings are now considered iconic in the world of pop culture, Cassius Marcellus Coolidge (1844-1934) is largely unknown and was once dubbed "The most famous American artist you've never heard of." The artist was born in 1844 and had no formal art training. Despite this, he had a talent for creating playfully surreal, humorous illustrations and started selling his drawings to various magazines by 1864 when he was just 20 years old.