

Newsletter #9

August 2023

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Message from the Chair

Members and Supporters will be aware that our campaign to build our Endowment to ensure the future of The Fund was launched at the celebration of The Fund's 45th Anniversary, hosted by Their Excellencies the Governor-General, General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd) and Mrs Linda Hurley at Government House on 16 May. As I described in the last newsletter, this was a delightful evening with Mrs Tamara Fraser AO inspiring all present with her recollections of the genesis of The Fund – an independent membership organisation with the unique role of acquiring artworks of social, historical and cultural significance for display and use in Australia's Official Residences

Though we are just beginning our five-year campaign, we have had an encouraging response spurred by end of financial year donations. With the October AGM fast approaching, I am sure momentum will keep building as we focus on strategies and events which will underpin the achievement of our campaign goal. We are also in the early stages of planning a December event which will highlight The Fund's collection on display in Admiralty House.

As you can read in the newsletter, this year's AGM is being held in the Southern Highlands on 27–29 October and I encourage you to come along. Every State Committee makes a great effort to craft an AGM program which is both enjoyable and eye-opening. Having never held a NSW AGM outside Sydney, the Committee have made the most of the historic houses and gardens in the region, as well as wineries which were so popular during last year's South Australian AGM. Thank you to the NSW Committee led by Councillor Philip Gosse with Di Garder, Stephanie Hardy, Louise Dobson, Jane Stanham, John Milne, Bunny Gardiner-Hill and Julieanne Watson, for all your planning and attention to detail.

The NSW Committee and their friends, along with Sonya Abbey, The Fund's Fine Art Advisor and her 'assistant', Carl Stevenage had a very successful presence at the Open Day on 3 June for both Admiralty House as well as Kirribilli House and, of course their impressive gardens and stunning views of Sydney Harbour. Fund Members and Supporters ran a stall selling merchandise and raffle tickets and assisted with interior monitoring in the Houses. I was posted in the dining room at Kirribilli House and it was fantastic to greet such a diverse crowd of enthusiastic visitors –who were invariably keen to know more about the houses, The Fund and, our Collection. Thank you to all who represented The Fund so well at this signature event – Their Excellencies were very appreciative of our presence as were our partners at the Office of the Official Secretary of the Governor-General and Prime Minister and Cabinet.

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Government House advise that there were 3,670 visitors through the gate. The Fund sold 50 copies of 'Collecting for the Nation' at \$40 a copy, which with a modest raffle, sales of Fund souvenir merchandise; tea towels, postcards, embroideries, raised a total of \$3,646.

Above L-R: Kirribilli House and Admiralty House, Open Day 2023

Finally, we are over halfway through our online lecture program for 2023. The fascinating lecture, 'A Life in Botanic Gardens', by Professor Tim Entwisle, retiring Director, Melbourne Botanic Gardens is now available online as is the lecture, *Australiana, Designing a nation*, by Bendigo Art Gallery curator, Emma Busowsky. Her lecture brings to life this impressive exhibition which she curated and which featured 13 loans from The Australiana Fund's Collection. Log in to The Fund's website and watch Emma's presentation which gives fantastic context to The Fund's objects – indeed to our Collection. And, for those members of the Australiana Society, the Society's May 2023 magazine has an extensive article by Emma about the exhibition (pp12-26) in which The Australiana Fund is acknowledged as a significant supporter of the show. Our most recent lecture was given on 8 August by Martin Green who spoke so well about Beleura House and Gardens, Mornington and the families that lived there. The recordings for all lectures to date are all available on the website Events and Home Pages.

I encourage you to take the time to watch the last two distinguished speakers presenting in the online lecture series to complete the 2023 program: on 12 September, Fund Member and Director, National Museum of Australia, Dr Mat Trinca AM FAHA, will reflect on his career at the Museum; and to finish the year, on 14 November, Fund Member, Robert Reason, Director of the David Roche Foundation House Museum in Adelaide, will talk about current exhibitions and plans for the future of the Museum.

Looking forward to seeing you at the AGM in October,

Best wishes

Jennifer Sanders

Chair

The Australiana Fund.

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Annual General Meeting, NSW Southern Highlands, 27 – 29 October 2023



On Friday we will proceed to *Milton Park* for a light lunch and the AGM. *Milton Park* is a grand mansion and garden with a rich history, built around 120 years ago by the Hordern family, prominent in the retailing and pastoral industries in the Southern Highlands and Sydney. Anthony Hordern acquired the property in 1910 at the age of 21!

After the AGM we will be bussed to Berrima for the river walk, or be dropped off at the Berrima District Museum for those not doing the river walk. The Berrima River Walk highlights much of the story of many German shipping companies traded in the South Pacific and other waters near Australia in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The Berrima District Museum is a highly regarded and award-winning local museum, with much to reward a visit.



On Saturday we will visit two beautiful Leslie Wilkinson designed homes and their gardens, not normally open to the public: *Shadowood* is owned by NSW Fund Committee Members Ian and Stephanie Hardy, and *Bibury* is also in private ownership. Leslie Wilkinson designed and built *Bibury* in 1929. Much of his architectural work blends a combination of Georgian and Mediterranean influences.



We then will visit Ngununggula Gallery, to be conducted on a private tour of the gallery and its historic buildings by Assistant Director Milena Stojanovska. The gallery is the former dairy and veterinary clinic of Retford Park. We will Lunch at *Hearth* by Moonacres.

Following lunch guests will make their way to *Retford Park*, where we will be treated to a private viewing including its beautiful gardens. Another Hordern property, in the grand Italianate style, it was built in 1887 by Samuel & Jane Hordern.



The Annual Dinner will be held at *Milton Park*.

Sunday will be another fabulous day starting with a visit to *Golden Vale*. Opening exclusively for this event, we will take a private tour of the house and gardens. Built c. 1870 on more than 200 acres, it has had many owners, some of them quite colourful. It was donated in 2005 to the National Trust (NSW).

Next we will visit *Hillview* – see the article below by NSW Member, Patrick O'Neill for more details on this interesting property.

We will then proceed to *Centennial Vineyards* Restaurant for a delicious 2-course lunch, the restaurant specialises in fresh local produce. Our final treat will be the New South Wales Rail Museum for a private tour and an optional historic steam train ride.

We will have a private tour including viewing the luxurious carriage, built in Sydney for the first Governor-General, The Right Honourable John Adrian Louis Hope, 7th Earl of Hopetoun, KT, GCMG, GCVO, PC.



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Hillview – A Victorian folly or a marvellous mess? By Patrick O’Neill



It was a good 20 years after the arrival of the First Fleet, when the first settlers started to move into what we know as The Southern Highlands. And they were much taken by this beautiful area. According to former convict explorer John Wilson: ‘*The country still runs very fine; full of large meadows, thousands of acres of land without any timber upon it....and some very large lakes.*’

And that description still holds true today. May be its how *Hillview* got its name. For 70 years this ramshackle house with 46 rooms and 9 bathrooms would become the social hub of the Southern Highlands. Between 1882 and the mid 1950s, it was a summer residence to the NSW Governors.



An important aspect of the Southern Highlands is climate. At over 2240 feet (730 metres) the elevation made it more bearable to British settlers eager to escape Sydney’s summer heat. It reminded them of England, even attracting the odd fall of winter snow.

By the 1860s the highlands became more accessible when the railway arrived, bringing yet more settlers, more schools, more businesses, all seeking rural tranquillity and cool climate! One of them was the NSW Governor Lord Belmore – maybe inspired by India. Once a year the Viceroys escaped sweltering Calcutta for the Raj’s summer capital high in the Himalayas. It involved 5 days of bone-jarring cart driving, often pulled by camels. All Belmore had to do was hop on a train!

He rented *Throsby Park* near Moss Vale. Fortunately Belmore was man-of-means as the NSW Government refused to pay for his highland getaway. Matters came to a head in 1881 when then Governor Lord Loftus, had to entertain two royal visitors, Princes Albert-Victor and George. He was not a wealthy man and their visit left him almost homeless – certainly penniless! Pressure for another residence was now ramped up. Finally after much criticism from the NSW Parliament, and a bit of help from the Colonial Office, they agreed to buy *Hillview*.

‘This was no holiday house’ said *Hillview* lessee, Damien Miller. ‘It was a working Governor’s home. Important matters of state were handled here and there is still a safe for confidential documents in the Governor’s office, to prove it,’ he said. ‘And many important people visited *Hillview*. In 1932 there was a constitutional crisis when the Governor Sir Philip Game sacked Labor Premier Jack Lang – it was serious enough to station police at *Hillview*’s gate.



‘Indeed we were lucky that much of the original viceregal furniture is still intact,’ said Damien. ‘There is a wonderful example, a complete dining room suite including chairs and sideboards, made of Australian timber in Sydney. It had been sent to the Chicago International Exhibition in 1890. It was gifted to the Governor for *Hillview*,’ said Damien. ‘It was made by Edward Verdich in Sydney and it is in excellent condition, complete with beautiful carvings of Australian wild flowers,’ he said. ‘It was designed to showcase, Australian timber and craft.’



A walk around *Hillview* reveals how this viceregal establishment grew on an ad-hoc basis. ‘Whenever they needed more staff, they built on more rooms,’ said Damien.

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‘Eventually there was room for 50 people, and a staff of 35. As one architect put it, “whichever way you look at it, it was either a Victorian Folly or a marvellous mess!”



And yet this ‘marvellous mess’ started a trend. In the following decades, many wealthy families moved up to the highlands to escape the summer heat. In the 1880’s mansions were



popping up like mushrooms around Moss Vale and Bowral, all built by wealthy ‘grandeers’: *Golden Vale* (1870) *Retford Park* (1887) and *Milton Park* (1911) being examples

Yet there is nothing at *Hillview* to proclaim its Vice-Regal past – no crowns, or other royal devices.



There were once impressive gates on the Illawarra Highway (left), but in 1959 they were removed and installed at the local church. Today *Hillview* is a sculpture park, with various art works scattered around the house and garden. ‘And you can stay here, said Damien. With so many rooms for ADC’s, butlers, maids – it makes for an ideal B&B!’ he said.

In 1893 *Hillview* received its most lethal visitor, Archduke Franz-Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He was visiting Australia on a shooting holiday, and the Governor made *Hillview* available to him. According to the Archduke’s diary, he shot 8 koalas! Add to that the hundreds of kangaroos, wallabies, brush turkeys and many other native birds he also shot; his kill-rate estimated at over 2100 animals a day! He got his comeuppance in 1914 when Franz-Ferdinand was himself shot at Sarajevo! ‘So the koalas finally got their revenge’ said Damien!



During the tour, we also visit the Governor-General’s luxurious and carefully restored train carriage in the NSW Rail Museum at Thirlmere.



George V who in 1901 first rode in it declared it: ‘*the most comfortable train I ever travelled in, in my life!*’ And he’d have known a thing or two about trains!

Patrick O’Neill is a NSW member of The Australiana Fund. For over 50 years he has been a TV journalist, mostly with the ABC (I was a founding reporter on the ‘7.30 Report’), and has also been involved in Heritage issues, having been elected to the Councils of both the National Trust of South Australia and NSW. More recently he was a TV documentary maker specialising in science, environment and travel. His work has been shown on most TV Channels as well as on ‘Discovery’ in US. Some of those documentaries won awards; one was at a New York Film Festival, another was a ‘Sir William McKell Award’ for environmental journalism.

2023 ONLINE LECTURES

To book lectures and access recordings of past lectures: <https://www.theaustralianafund.org.au/events>

Lectures to come:

- 12 September at 6pm – Fund Member and Director, National Museum of Australia, Dr Mat Trinca AM FAHA, will reflect on his career at the Museum.
- 14 November at 6pm – Fund Member, Robert Reason, Director of the David Roche Foundation House Museum in Adelaide, will talk about current exhibitions and plans for the future of the Museum.

Recordings for recent lectures now available:

- 8 August – ‘The Story of Beleura’ by Martin Green
- 11 July – ‘Australiana, Designing a nation’ by Bendigo Art Gallery curator, Emma Busowsky
 SMH article – <https://www.smh.com.au/culture/art-and-design/larrikins-louts-and-paddle-pops-local-icons-leave-their-mark-20230314-p5cs25.html>
- 13 June – ‘A Life in Botanic Gardens’, by Prof Tim Entwisle, retiring Director, Melbourne Botanic Gardens

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THE FUND'S 45th ANNIVERSARY CAMPAIGN

Launched on 16 May 2023, The Fund's 45th Anniversary Campaign goal is to raise \$5 million within 5 years. There has been an encouraging response already with 2023 end of financial year donations. We will continue to build on this during the next few years with a programme of fundraising events.

Please support The Fund's unique contribution to the nation by donating to our Endowment Fund. Your generosity will enable us to develop and preserve our remarkable collection inspired by our shared love of Australia. Please donate now to this important campaign using the DONATE NOW form at the end of this newsletter.

COLLECTION NEWS

New Acquisition



Digging stick,
Uluru, Northern Territory, Australia, 1982,
timber (tbc), silver metal, dimensions (tbc).
Presented to The Right Honourable Malcolm Fraser AC CH GCL PC,
Prime Minister of Australia (1975 – 1983) by tbc at Uluru National Park, 6 June 1982.
Gift of Mrs Tamara Fraser AO, August 2023.

With silver metal presentation plaque bearing the inscription:

Wana nyangatja yungani Prime Minister /
Malcolm Frasernya Ulurula nguru /
6 June 1982

There are currently 21 accessions relating to the Office of Prime Minister including artworks in the likeness of former Prime Ministers and objects of art once owned by or presented to a former Prime Minister. Prior to this acquisition there were no accessions relating directly to The Right Honourable Malcolm Fraser although The Fund was founded during his term and under the direct initiative of his wife, Mrs Tamara Fraser AO. This presentation digging stick will represent an important occasion in The Fund's timeline of the Official Office.

The importance of this Indigenous artefact is twofold: its cultural significance as an everyday practical tool used by First Nations people of the Northern Territory and, as the official gift to the then Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser.

Located 18 km from Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, the town and facilities at Yulara are key in the management of tourism to this world heritage site managed by the Indigenous Land Corporation. In 1978, the Commonwealth Government granted the Northern Territory self-government.

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In 1980 the Northern Territory government set up the 'Yulara Development Company' to develop an international tourist resort around Alice Springs and 18 kms from Ayers Rock, now called Uluru. Prime Minister, Malcolm Fraser was presented with this digging stick at the turning of the first sod at Yulara. The 1982 presentation was the commencement of the first stage of the building of the Uluru resort, and the first step towards the handover of the park in 1985 after the Parks and Wildlife Act was amended.



This significant Indigenous artefact will go on display in the *Fraser Room* at The Lodge in Canberra.

State Events:

Future events will be added to the Events page when events are confirmed.

Note: Bookings are either via The Fund's [Events page](#) or by direct invitation for the Members only events.

- 1 Sept *Walking Tour of Government House, Canberra. 11:00am – 12:00pm [CLICK HERE FOR DETAILS](#)
 *This tour will be run by Government House Canberra. Date and timing may be subject to changes in the Official Calendar. Check the [Governor-General's WEBSITE](#) for updates and details
- 7 Sept Spring Season Garden Tours at Government House begin [Check Fund website for details](#)
- 24 Sept Special open afternoon to view the distinctive architecture and art and taste the fine wines at the Denton View Hill Vineyard in the Yarra Valley from 2pm (Victorian Committee).
- 5 Oct The Qld Committee are hosting an event for QLD members at the home of fund member Andrew Clouston on Thursday 5 October from 6–8 pm
- 7 Oct Public Open Day, Government House, Canberra, 10am–2pm.
- 27–29 Oct Annual General Meeting, NSW Southern Highlands.
- 13 Nov Vice Regal Reception at Government House, South Australia (further details below).
- 1 Dec A Musical Evening at Admiralty House. Details TBC

South Australia Event 13 November: Her Excellency, the Honourable Frances Adamson AC, Governor of South Australia will kindly be hosting a Vice-Regal Reception for the South Australian Members and Supporters of The Australiana Fund on Monday the 13 November. This event is being held to acknowledge the contribution that South Australian Members and Supporters have made to The Fund over the years and, to mark the 45th Anniversary of The Australiana Fund.

Government House will be mailing out invitations approximately six weeks before the event. Alan Smith and the South Australian Committee are very much looking forward to seeing Members and Supporters there.

The South Australian Committee is planning three events in and around Adelaide in 2024. These will be held respectively in Autumn, Winter and Spring next year. Details will appear in future Newsletters.

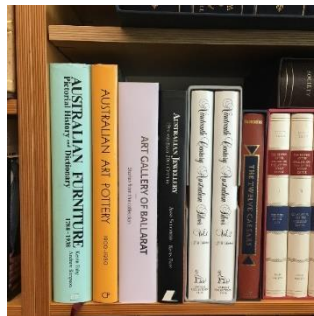
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2023 Raffle Prizes

Further to the success of our 2023 National Raffle, we have received wonderful responses from some of the lucky prize winners. The National Raffle will be a regular fundraising event so keep an eye on our website and social media for updates.



New Fund Members Robert Hannan and Peter Crawshaw won 3rd prize in the 2022 Fundraising Raffle - a two-night stay at Bundanon. In a note of thanks about their Bundanon experience in June, they said that *'The two-night stay was exceptional and we could not fault a thing. We did not want to leave. Thank you for providing such a wonderful prize...'*



Thomas Bradley, Queensland Committee Member, won the 4th prize. *'I was pleased and surprised to receive these volumes as a winner in the Australiana Fund raffle. They arrived in excellent condition. The historical research texts cover furniture, pottery, jewellery and silver. The stories from the Collection of the Art Gallery of Ballarat provide large high-quality reproductions of more than 500 works accompanied by descriptions of their context and relevance for fine art in Australia over the 130 years of the Gallery's existence. Collectively the books were an unexpected prize for supporting the admirable and important work of The Fund.'*

Contributors, August 2023

Jennifer Sanders, Chair.
Caroline Johnston OAM, Councillor, Vic.
Alan Smith, Councillor, SA.
Patrick O'Neill, NSW Member.

Sonya Abbey, Fine Art Advisor.
Bettina Groves, Councillor, Qld.
Philip Gosse, Councillor, NSW.
Julianne Watson, Assistant to the Fine Art Advisor.

WAYS TO DONATE

Help us celebrate our 45th Anniversary – Please support The Fund’s unique contribution to the nation by donating to our Endowment Fund.

Your generosity will enable us to develop and preserve our remarkable collection inspired by our shared love of Australia.

Other opportunities include donating towards conservation and maintenance:

Details of our current conservation activities which include the *Yarralumla Cabinet* by Geoffrey Hannah OAM and The Fund’s suite of furniture in the Small Dining Room at Government House, Canberra, can be found on The Fund’s Website ‘Support Us’ pages.

TO DONATE BY VISA / MASTERCARD

I would like to donate \$

Name on the Card:

Telephone:

Email Address:

Card number:

Expiry:

TO DONATE BY EFT

Please mark your deposit with “First Initial Surname Donate” E.g. “JSmithDonate”

NAB BSB: 083 088 a/c: 767550438

In the name of The Australiana Fund

Email Address:

Donations can also be made by credit card over the phone:

(02) 9994 8034 Mon – Tues & Thurs–Fri from 10 –4pm

OR

through our website* by clicking: [DONATE NOW](#)

***DONATIONS VIA THE WEBSITE ARE SUBJECT TO FEES.**

Help us maximise the benefit from your donation by selecting payment by EFT or Credit Card.

If returning this form by Mail – please mail to:

The Fine Art Advisor, PO Box 906, Maroubra NSW 2035

Printed forms can be scanned and returned by email to contact@theaustralianafund.org.au

Thank you for your support