

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Friends

It certainly has been busy since the last time I wrote to you.

The attendance at our Friends activities over the past three months has been most gratifying. A highlight was the special Friends Preview on 22 May of the exhibition *Melodrama in Meiji Japan*. Curator Dr Gary Hickey captivated us with a very entertaining and informative talk, after which we gathered in the Library foyer to enjoy some very tasty Japanese delicacies.

A close-to-capacity audience gathered to hear Sue Ebury's talk on 6 July, held in conjunction with the Australian Garden History Society (ACT), on Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, a very fashionable landscape architect of eighteenth-century England.

Don't miss our upcoming events, including the special Friends Preview on 19 September of the Library's exhibition of Peter Dombrovskis' wonderful photographs of the Tasmanian wilderness.

Our new Friends Facebook page will help you keep up to date with the latest Friends news. You can find it at facebook.com/NLAFriends.

It was with sadness that many of us gathered at the Library on 15 July to remember Alan Ives, who passed away on 4 June. Alan had served many years on the Friends Committee, only standing down when illness prevented him from carrying out his duties to the standard he would have liked. Fond stories were shared about Alan, his career in archives and libraries and as a bookseller and collector. Our former Director-General, Anne-Marie Schwirtlich AM, in particular, spoke movingly about her memories of Alan.

Finally, Friends membership fees will rise from 1 January 2018, to ensure that we are able to continue to support the Library in the way we would all like. This will be the first increase since 2003 and we trust that members will continue to support the Library through membership of the Friends.

Best wishes

Gary Kent, Chair

LIBRARY NEWS



Peter Dombrovskis, *Morning Mist, Rock Island Bend, Franklin River*, 1980, nla.cat-vn4707363

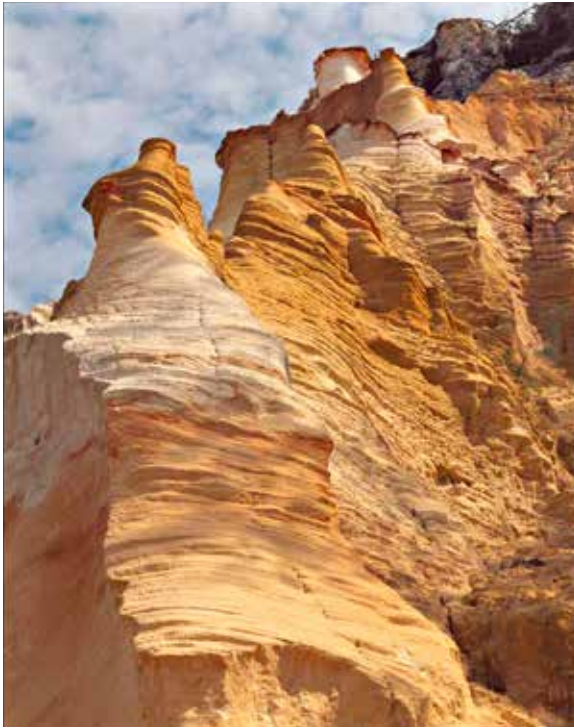
New Dombrovskis Photographic Exhibition

On 21 September, the Library's new exhibition, *Dombrovskis: Journeys into the Wild*, will open to the public. This exhibition will feature the stunning photographs of Peter Dombrovskis in the most complete survey of his work yet mounted in Australia. Seventy of the best images from the Library's Dombrovskis archive have been specially printed for this exhibition.

Peter Dombrovskis (1945–1996) was one of the world's foremost wilderness photographers. He created powerful, reflective and deeply personal images of the unique Tasmanian wilderness, images that saved the areas they depicted and changed the way Australians think about their environment. His photograph *Morning Mist, Rock Island Bend, Franklin River* is one of the most famous images in Australian history and was integral to the successful campaign to prevent the Tasmanian Hydro-Electric Commission's plan to dam the Gordon and Franklin rivers.

Dombrovskis was born in a refugee camp in Wiesbaden, Germany, in 1945 to Latvian parents. His father Karl went missing at the end of the war, and in 1950 his mother Adele made the decision to move to Hobart, Tasmania. As a child, Dombrovskis loved nature and developed an interest in photography. At the age of 17, he met Olegas Truchanas, a fellow refugee from Central Europe, wilderness photographer and conservationist, and an important father figure.

Dombrovskis studied architecture, botany and zoology and worked in the Tasmanian Department of Construction. After the death of Truchanas in 1972, Dombrovskis quit his job and began



Peter Dombrovskis, *Sand Cliffs, Fraser Island, Queensland*, 1995, nla.cat-vn4802897

to self-publish his own work through what was eventually called West Wind Press. His first calendar was produced in 1972, his first diary in 1976 and his first book *The Quiet Land* in 1977.

In 1996, while working near Mount Hayes in South West Tasmania's Western Arthur Range, he suffered a heart attack and died. He was 51 years old. His second wife Liz continued to run West Wind Press, producing calendars, books and diaries until 2009.

Dombrovskis' contribution to the environmental movement is profound but his technical ability and artistry as a photographer are equally celebrated. In February 2003, he was inducted into the International Photography Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City, an honour afforded to only 76 other innovators in the art form's history. He is the only Australian to be honoured in this way.

Dombrovskis' work has been collected by several of Australia's major cultural institutions, and in 2007 the Library acquired over 3,000 colour transparencies that now make up the Dombrovskis archive. This archive has been digitised and is now available online on the Library's website for all Australians to access.

Matthew Jones, *Curator*



Jacques Arago, *Ile Timor: Reception a Diely*, 1818, nla.cat-vn549972

Rose de Freycinet's Journal

While researching material about items in the new Treasures Gallery installation, I was very taken by the story of Rose de Freycinet. I have always been interested in stories of women in early Australian history and this one piqued my interest.

Rose and her husband Captain Louis de Freycinet had been married for only three years when Louis was commissioned to lead an expedition to circumnavigate the globe. He and Rose secretly planned that Rose would stowaway on the *Uranie* so they could be together for the voyage, which was likely to take three or more years. As captain of the ship, Louis arranged for a *dunette* or small cabin to be built, ostensibly for use by fellow officers or to store plant specimens, but actually as accommodation for Rose.

Rose arranged to embark just prior to departure. To avoid detection, she dressed as a man in an officer's uniform, and stole aboard just after midnight on the day the expedition was to sail from Toulon in France.

At this time, the French Navy did not allow spouses to join their husbands on official voyages, and few women would have been prepared to endure the hardships of such a journey.

In her journal, Rose describes the people she meets and the places visited en route, often with wit and humour. Among the many incidents she describes is their reception by the Governor of Dili in Timor. She writes:

I did not possess suitable attire for such formal occasions; a light muslin dress alone, together with a hat decorated with a few feathers, was all the finery I had.

The Governor was present with all his staff. When I stepped ashore, he gave me his hand and invited me to share with him the shade of a huge parasol carried by a Timorese slave dressed in strange clothes. A similar parasol was held over Louis' head.

There are two versions of this encounter now on display in the Treasures Gallery that you must see. Jacques Arago's original watercolour shows Rose being greeted by the Governor, as described in her journal. In stark contrast, the watercolour by Alphonse Pellion, published in the official account of the voyage, shows no sign of Rose.

If you would like to learn more about Rose de Freycinet, you might like to read the staff blog post at nla.gov.au/blogs/exhibitions/2016/09/17/three-years-at-sea-with-125-men.

Jenny Oates



Alphonse Pellion, *Ile Timor: Vue de Notre Premier Debarquement a l'Etablissement Portugais de Dille*, 1818, nla.cat-vn1046291

RECENT FRIENDS EVENTS

Visionary or Vandal?

On Thursday evening, 6 July, the Friends held their annual lecture with the Australian Garden History Society. Sue Ebury, a patron of both the Australian Garden History Society and the Library, had the audience enthralled as she took us on an illustrated tour of the landscapes created by the eighteenth-century English landscape architect Lancelot 'Capability' Brown.

Sue explained that Brown popularised the English Landscape Style, in which formal gardens gave way to naturalistic parkland with trees, expanses of water and smoothly rolling grass. Many of his contemporaries were appalled by this and criticised him for his 'vandalism' in destroying his clients' elaborate and stylised formal gardens. However, the style became fashionable throughout Europe and beyond in the eighteenth century.

Brown's genius lay in his ability to quickly see how a work of art could be created out of parkland or an existing formal garden. His workmen moved huge amounts of earth and diverted streams or rivers to create the natural effect that he wanted. He drained land for grazing and planted woods for timber, so that estates were productive as well as attractive.

His talents were not limited to landscapes. He also designed great houses, churches and garden buildings, and was known for his skill in engineering, especially with water.

Brown's career began in the 1740s when he was appointed Head Gardener at Stowe, Buckinghamshire, the most famous garden of the day. His first major commission came in 1751, when George Coventry, the 6th Earl of Coventry, asked him to redesign the house and estate at Croome Park in southern Worcestershire, England.

Brown's design for Croome Park included a man-made lake and river, statues, temples and other buildings with the court as the central focus. The other buildings around the park included gatehouses, a grotto, a church and buildings termed 'eye-catchers'. These are Pirton Castle, Panorama Tower, Dunstall Castle and Park Seat. They are set away from the core of the park and are intended to draw the eye.

Brown also transformed the existing Jacobean house into one of the finest examples of Neo-Palladian architecture. Notable features are its plain exterior and the corner towers with pyramidal roofs. Brown also remodelled and improved the original grounds, creating a most fashionable landscape.

Typically, Brown's garden designs would include a single tree, such as the Cedar of Lebanon, placed to create a special visual feature. At Croome, the tree he planted is now some 300 years old and still standing splendidly where it was originally planted.

In 1764, King George III appointed Brown Royal Gardener at Hampton Court and St James. Brown also began re-landscaping 2,000 acres of parkland at Blenheim Palace.

Sue Ebury showed contemporary pictures of Croome Park in a somewhat neglected state and described how in recent times the gardens have undergone considerable restorations, during which some quirky features of Brown's original design have emerged. These include a 'ha-ha', an icehouse used for storing large blocks of ice, and the foundations of a 'hot wall', which was



Croome Park, courtesy Sue Ebury

powered by underground furnaces to create a special climate for propagating and extending the growing seasons for fruits, vegetables and vines. The hot wall, in particular, shows Brown's advanced design and engineering skills and capabilities.

Today, Brown's name is linked with more than 250 estates, covering 200 square miles throughout England and Wales.

So, what is your verdict? Was he a visionary or a vandal?

Jenny Oates

FRIENDS NEWS

Annual General Meeting

The 2017 Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the National Library of Australia Inc. will be held on Thursday 23 November at 5.30pm. Nomination forms for the 2018 Friends Committee are included in this month's Friends mail-out and are also available from the Friends office.

In addition to the AGM business, the meeting will include the announcement of the recipients of the 2018 Friends Travelling Fellowship and Friends Creative Arts Fellowship, and the 2017 Friends Medal.

Bookings are requested for catering purposes on 02 6262 1698 or at <http://tix.yt/agm>.

Join the 2018 Friends Committee

If you would like to contribute to the running of the Friends of the National Library, please consider joining the committee. We try to make it as easy for our committee members as possible. You will be offered the chance to contribute to the Friends events program, the Friends newsletter and other initiatives run by the Friends.

Meetings are held at 5.15pm on the third Tuesday of every second month, starting December 2017, and run for around an hour.

For Friends Association Liability Insurance purposes, in addition to the nomination form, all nominees must complete a statutory declaration form stating that they have not been personally declared bankrupt or been associated with an organisation that has gone into insolvency.

We welcome nominations from members of all ages and backgrounds; previous committee experience is not a prerequisite. Simply complete and return the enclosed nomination form by 23 October. If you would like further information, please contact Sharyn O'Brien, Friends Executive Officer, on 02 6262 1551 or email friends@nla.gov.au. We look forward to hearing from you!

Dramatising Taboos

Going Where Angels Fear to Tread: From Biographical Fact to Dramatic Truth

The 2017 Friends Creative Arts Fellow at the Library, Australian playwright Timothy Daly, is an internationally produced writer specialising in the complex and difficult art of dramatising significant cultural and political figures. His subjects have included Czech writer Franz Kafka, notorious FBI boss J. Edgar Hoover, conductor Eugene Goossens and, most recently, Donald Friend, who was the subject of his 2017 Library research.

In a special fellowship presentation, Timothy Daly and actors will show how dormant historical material is turned into viable and exciting contemporary theatre.

Thursday 9 November, 5.30pm

Theatre, free (includes refreshments)

Bookings: nla.gov.au/events or 02 6262 1111

The Lake View Book Club

The Lake View Book Club meets in the Friends Lounge at the Library on the last Tuesday of each month from 6.15 to 7.45pm. It is open to all Friends of the National Library, so feel free to come and join in. If you have any questions, please contact kathryncole@grapevine.net.au.

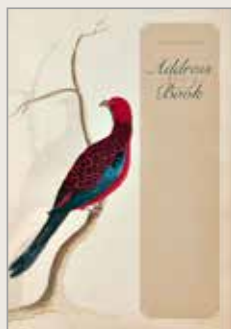
Forthcoming titles for discussion are:

- Tuesday 26 September—*His Bloody Project* by Graeme Macrae Burnet
- Tuesday 31 October—*Night Train to Lisbon* by Pascal Mercier
- Tuesday 28 November—*The Birdman's Wife* by Melissa Ashley

NATIONAL LIBRARY BOOKSHOP SPECIAL OFFER FOR FRIENDS

Friends will receive a free copy of the *John Hunter Address Book* with any purchase made online at bookshop.nla.gov.au between 1 September and 30 November 2017. This offer is in addition to the usual Friends discount and any other offers advertised on the Library's Bookshop website.

To claim your free copy of the *John Hunter Address Book*, and your 15 per cent discount with all online purchases, use the promotional code **FRSPR17** at checkout.



FRIENDS EVENTS

Bookings: nla.gov.au/events or 02 6262 1698

Friends Exhibition Preview: *Dombrovskis*

Be the first to see the Library's new exhibition *Dombrovskis: Journeys into the Wild*, as the Friends host an exclusive preview with an introductory lecture by former Australian Greens leader Dr Bob Brown and exhibition curator Matthew Jones.

Tuesday 19 September, 6pm

Theatre and Exhibition Gallery

\$20 Friends, \$25 non-members (includes refreshments)

Discovering Ferdinand Bauer

Botanical artist Ferdinand Bauer was the first European to record in detail an unprecedented range of the unique plants and animals of Australia. David Stuart, former Australian Ambassador to Austria, explores the work of Bauer, whose illustrations are held in collections around the globe, with significant holdings in Vienna.

Friday 20 October, 12.30am

Conference Room

\$10 Friends and AGHS members, \$15 non-members



Ferdinand Bauer, *Stewartia Serrata*, between 1800 and 1810, nla.cat-vn213950

UNBOUND: ISSUE 4 OUT NOW

Delve into issue 4 of the Library's online magazine *Unbound*, where you can read about child stars of the stage in early twentieth-century Australia, the life of art historian Bernard Smith, one man's efforts to elevate the Australian poetry publishing scene and the plight of three bold women in print. Available online at nla.gov.au/unbound.

FRIENDS DISCOUNT CODE FOR NATIONAL LIBRARY EVENTS

To claim your 15 per cent discount on ticketed Library events, bookings must be made online at nla.gov.au/bookings and the discount code **FRSPR17** entered when booking. This code is valid from 1 September to 30 November 2017 and does not apply to Friends events (select the members ticket option for these) or events that are free of charge.