

July 2008

Message from the Editor

Dear Friends

It was with some pleasure that we noted in the recent Queen's birthday honours that the Friends Chairman, Greg Cornwell, was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia "for service to the Australian Capital Territory Legislative Assembly and to a range of community organisations."

Greg arrived in Canberra in 1966 as a young man and took an active interest in politics, serving in many office-bearing positions in the Liberal Party. He was elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1974 and its successor, the House of Assembly, in 1979 and 1982.

In 1992 Greg won election to the Legislative Assembly, which had been established at self-government in 1989, and he was reelected in 1995, 1998 and 2001. During this period, Greg served on and chaired a number of parliamentary committees and occupied a range of shadow ministry positions. From 1995-2001 he occupied the position of Speaker and Deputy Speaker from 1992 until 1995 and from 2001 until 2004. When he retired in October 2004, Greg had served in the ACT Parliament for over 24 years.

Can it really be that the National Library will be celebrating its 40th birthday this year? The fascinating history of the various buildings that have housed the library and its predecessors over the past century will be the subject of a lecture to be given by Christine Fernon on 20 August. This is an event not to be missed. Similarly, I encourage Friends to attend the Dame Nellie Melba tribute, featuring a marvellous musical performance and display of fascinating items of Melba memorabilia, to be held on 25 July. You will find details of both functions later in this newsletter.

Best wishes,

Gary Kent

Dinner at Bookplate after the Kenneth Myer lecture

If you are attending the Kenneth Myer lecture on Tuesday 15 July, why not make a night of it and enjoy a meal with friends at bookplate following the lecture? The bookplate kitchen will remain open until 8.30pm, offering a light supper menu to patrons. The menu will include hearty soup, cheese plates, shepherds pie, and reuben melt sandwiches - just the sort of food to go with a glass of wine.

Nellie Melba: Queen of Song

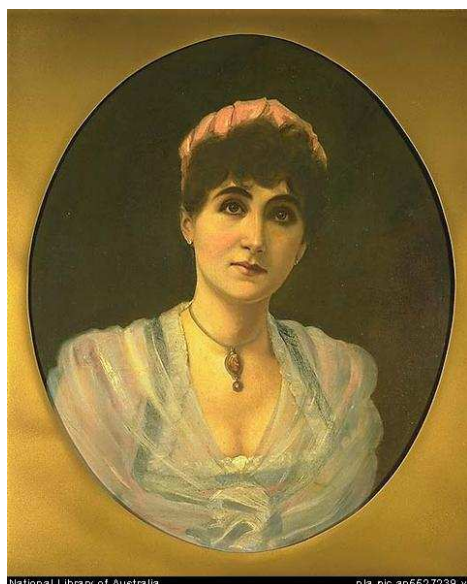
This month the Friends of the National Library are delighted to present a performance of *Nellie Melba: Queen of Song*. Canberra soprano Louise Page, accompanied by Phillipa Candy on piano, will present an evening celebrating the glamorous life and beautiful music of Dame Nellie Melba, Australia's first international diva. This costumed show leads the audience through Melba's life, interspersed with performances of the songs and arias which made Melba an icon.

This performance will be further enhanced with a viewing of special items from the Melba collections held by the National Library. You will be the first to view selected treasures from the Library's most recent Melba collection, acquired in 2007 from the Melba Conservatorium.

These include bound editions of Melba's own operatic scores, set with leather and gold leaf, some signed or annotated, others with handwritten notes from composers; an autograph manuscript of cadenzas written for Melba by the most celebrated violinist of his day Joseph Joachim; and Melba's silk fan with 25 signatures from famous artists who were associated with her written on the ribs. There are tickets and programs, sheet music dedicated to Melba, letters to her sister, signed photographs and personal items including her silk bag. These all testify not only to Melba's international career and fame but also to her place in Australian history, the place she used to sing about as "Home, Sweet Home".



Louise Page as Nellie Melba (photograph courtesy of *The Canberra Times*)



National Library of Australia nla.pic-an6527239-v
Portrait of Dame Nellie Melba by M.H. Livingstone (nla.pic-an5527239)

The performance will be introduced by Dr Jeff Brownrigg, Adjunct Professor of Cultural History at the University of Canberra where he teaches heritage interpretation, cultural heritage management and museums and collections. He is an expert on Melba in Australia and on singers of her generation, and will be available both before the performance and at interval to answer questions from those viewing the display of Melba items.

Please join us for an exciting night of song on Friday 25 July. The performance will begin at 7pm, but the Melba display will be open from 6.30-7pm and at interval. Tickets are available through the Friends office on (02) 6262 1698 for \$35 Friends and \$45 non-members.

Canberra Series Lecture: Building the National Library

In August 2008, the current National Library building will celebrate its 40th birthday. To mark the occasion, the Friends of the National Library have invited Christine Fernon to speak about the history of the National Library.



At the opening of the National Library building in August 1968, the National Librarian, Harold White, spoke of the joy of having reached the promised land (a purpose-built library) after 'forty years in the wilderness' of Canberra. During her talk, Christine will discuss the many strange buildings occupied by the library during those wilderness years, including the Old Canberra morgue and the various explosives sheds at Duntroon and local quarries, and will show the many plans for a national library, drawn up by White and his predecessor, Kenneth Binns, over the years.

With the strong support of Prime Minister (Sir) Robert Menzies, and under the direction of the National Capital Development Commission, new plans were devised for a national library by the architectural firm, Bunning and Madden, in 1962. Chief architect, Walter Bunning's inspiration for the design came from many directions, including Menzies' edict that the building should have columns, and the beautiful drawings of Canberra submitted by Marion and Walter Burley Griffin in the 1912 Canberra design competition. The award-winning, contemporary American architect, Edward Stone, was another strong influence.

The talk will be richly illustrated and will include the sketches and proposed artworks that never made it past the drawing board.

Christine Fernon is a researcher at the Australian Dictionary of Biography and has particular interest in Canberra's history. She started researching the National Library while undertaking a Graduate Diploma in Librarianship at the University of Canberra and became entranced by its fascinating history. She is a particular fan of Kenneth Binns (Chief Librarian from 1928-47), who not only resisted calls, by various governments in the 1930s, for the national library to be packed away in boxes and put in storage until a suitable building could be found, but continually expanded the library's activities.

Please join us for this lecture in the National Library's Conference room on Wednesday 20 August, 12:30-1:30pm. Entry fee is \$5, payable at the door. Bookings: (02) 6262 1698 or friends@nla.gov.au

Friends of the NLA Book Club

The Friends Book Club is held on the last Tuesday of each month, from 7 to 8.30pm in the Friends Lounge at the National Library. The July meeting will be held on Tuesday, 29 July and the book for discussion will be *Suite Francaise* by Irene Nemirovsky



Friends of the National Library of Australia Inc. Canberra ACT 2600
Telephone: 02 6262 1698 Fax: 02 6273 4493 Email: friends@nla.gov.au

If you would like to participate in the Friends Book Club, please RSVP to the Friends Office on (02) 6262 1551 or friends@nla.gov.au. Don't forget that as a Friend of the NLA you receive a 15% discount on all purchases at the bookshop.

NLA Book Club - Advance Notice

26 August- *On Chesil Beach* by Ian McEwan

30 September - *People of the Book* by Geraldine Brooks



SPECIAL OFFERS

Discount Photographic Framing during the VIVID Festival

Vivid, the National Photography Festival, will be held for the first time in Canberra from 11 July to 12 October 2008. It will celebrate the vital role of photography in Australian life and history. Over fifty national and ACT-based institutions, including the National Library, are collaborating to present exhibitions, conferences and a range of events for photographers, photographic historians and everyone with an interest in photography.

As a sponsor of Vivid, *Hang Ups Australia*, a Canberra framing business, are offering members of the Friends of the National Library a **30% discounted rate** for framing of photographic or related media for the duration of the Festival. *Hang Ups Australia* provide a complete service in picture framing from basic styles through to extravagant custom frames, with advice and guidance to make your selection easy. They frame almost anything, from inexpensive and cheerful to complete Museum frames with museum rag, museum glass or scratch resistant UV acrylic. They also provide a computerised mat cutting service using the worlds most advanced mat cutter, able to cut the most basic of cuts to the most intricate.

To take advantage of this offer this offer, contact *Hang ups Australia* on 02 6280 0312 or visit them at Unit 3, 80-82 Kembla Street, Fyshwick ACT.

Mediterranean Magic - Art Song Canberra

Art Song Canberra presents **Mediterranean Magic**, featuring Christina Wilson (mezzo-soprano) and Alan Hicks (piano) on Sunday 27 July at 3pm at the Wesley Music Centre, National Circuit, Forrest.

This recital celebrates the inspiration of poets and composers by the cultures and history of this sun-drenched region. Included will be Ravel's *Cinq mélodies populaires grecques* as well as songs by De Falla, Rodrigo, Granados, Schubert, Wolf, Noel Coward and Richard Rodney Bennett.

Friends of the National Library of Australia are entitled to admission at the discounted price of \$22. This includes program and refreshments. Tickets at the door ONLY. Enquiries: Oliver Raymond, 02 6295 9613. www.artsongcanberra.org



COMING EVENTS

The full programme of events can be consulted in the 'What's On' section of the National Library's website at <http://www.nla.gov.au/apps/events/>

Friends Events

<p>2008 Kenneth Myer lecture: Professor Tim Flannery Tuesday 15 July 6:00 - 7:00pm Theatre</p>	<p>BOOKED OUT Internationally acclaimed scientist and conservationist, Professor Tim Flannery presents this year's Kenneth Myer lecture on the topic 'Climate Change: an update to July 2008'.</p>
<p>Nellie Melba: Queen of Song Friday 25 July 6.30 for 7:00pm performance Foyer \$35, or \$45 non-members</p>	<p>Soprano Louise Page, accompanied by Phillipa Candy on piano, present a tribute to Australia's first international diva. The performance will be enhanced with a viewing of special items from the Melba collections held by the Library. Bookings essential: (02) 6262 1551 or friends@nla.gov.au</p>
<p>Friends Book Club Tuesday, 7:00-8:30 pm Friends Lounge</p>	<p>The book for discussion at this month's meeting will be <i>Diary of a Bad Year</i> by JM Coetzee. Bookings required on (02) 6262 1551 or friends@nla.gov.au</p>

NLA Talks and Events

<p>Images, History and Invention Monday 14 July 6:30 - 8:00 pm Theatre Free</p>	<p>Join image-makers, private collectors and picture curators in conversation about their passion for image collections. View new works of art produced by creative Australians from the key Australian collecting institutions. Free entry. Bookings: bookings@nla.gov.au or (02) 6262 1271</p>
<p>Charles Bayliss Floor Talk Tuesday 15 July 12:30 - 1:30 pm Exhibition Gallery</p>	<p>Join curator Helen Ennis for an in-depth look at the <i>A Modern Vision: Charles Bayliss, Photographer 1850-1897</i> exhibition. Free entry. Bookings not required.</p>
<p>Photographic Narratives: Their Meaning, Development and Craft Wednesday 16 July 2:00 - 5:00 pm Conference Room</p>	<p>How can photographs be woven together to create historical or social narratives, with their images and texts creating integrated stories? And how, through developing such narratives, can the deeper meanings of individual photographs be amplified? This seminar will address the "whys" and "hows" of crafting memorable photographic narratives. Presented by Edward Stokes, a photographer, writer and publisher. Free entry. Bookings: bookings@nla.gov.au or (02) 6262 1271</p>
<p>Film - We of the Never Never (1981) Thursday 24 July 6:00 - 8:00 pm Theatre</p>	<p>134 mins, DVD, G In 19th century Australia, a white woman's love for her husband takes her to a place no civilized woman had gone before. Staring Angela Punch McGregor and John Jarratt. Entry by gold coin donation. Bookings not required.</p>



<p>Hidden Treasures - Inside the National Library of Australia: First Fleet Sketches Thursday 30 July Session 1: 2:00 - 3:00 pm Or Session 2: 3:30 - 4:30 pm Conference room</p>	<p>Join us for the second in a series of special viewings of selected collection items and curator talks at the Library. This month's viewing will focus on the First Fleet Sketches. Free entry. Places limited. Bookings essential: (02) 6262 1271.</p> <p><i>Hidden Treasures is a Film Australia National Interest Program in association with Early Works. Produced in association with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.</i></p>
<p>Winter Tales Australian Women's Archives Project: <i>The Pursuit of Power in a Time of Plenty</i> Sunday 3 August 2:00 - 4:00 pm Conference Room</p>	<p>Guest speaker will be Virginia Haussegger, journalist, media commentator and author of the controversial book, <i>Wonder Woman: the myth of having it all</i></p> <p>Cost: \$15, includes afternoon tea Bookings: bookings@nla.gov.au or (02) 6262 1271</p>
<p>Hidden Treasures - Inside the National Library of Australia: Kenneth Slessor's <i>Five Bells</i> Thursday 6 August Session 1: 2:00 - 3:00 pm Or Session 2: 3:30 - 4:30 pm Conference room</p>	<p>Join us for the final in a series of special viewings of selected collection items and curator talks at the Library. This month's viewing will focus on Kenneth Slessor's <i>Five Bells</i>.</p> <p>Free entry. Places limited. Bookings essential: (02) 6262 1271.</p> <p><i>Hidden Treasures is a Film Australia National Interest Program in association with Early Works. Produced in association with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.</i></p>

NLA Exhibitions

<p>A Modern Vision: Charles Bayliss, Photographer 1850-1897 Opens Friday 11 July Exhibition Gallery, free</p>	<p>Charles Bayliss was probably Australia's greatest nineteenth century photographer. This comprehensive exhibition examines his work in depth and places it in the context of late nineteenth century life and culture. It features the full range of his output - portraits, architectural photography, panoramas of Sydney and landscapes. Materials relating to Bayliss' associate Beaufoy Merlin and his patron B.O. Holtermann are included.</p>
<p><i>Wild Places: photographs by Richard Green</i> Open Friday 11 July Visitor Centre and 4th Floor</p>	<p>Richard Green is a photographer with a passion for landscape photography and for helicopters. He and his wife spend weeks at a time using their helicopter to access and then photograph remarkable remote areas of Australia - often wild places never before photographed. Green's works are large colourful panoramic landscapes - usually over 2 metres in length.</p>
<p><i>The Opening Chapter: National Library of Australia</i> Until 16 November 2008 Visitor Centre</p>	<p>This year marks the 40th anniversary of the opening of the National Library building. <i>The Opening Chapter</i> looks at the physical attributes of the building, including the vision of architects Bunning and Madden, photographs of the interior by Max Dupain and the important contribution of renowned artists Tom Bass and Leonard French.</p>

