

A MAGICAL MEDIEVAL MYSTERY TOUR: 2015 FRIENDS TRAVELLING FELLOWSHIP

If you wandered through the front doors of the National Library in mid-2015, you might have found yourself caught in a heady spell of medieval mania. The magnificent display of the *Rothschild Prayer Book*, the inspirational visit, lectures and workshops by Professor Michelle Brown, and the enthusiastic behind-the-scenes work of the Medieval Manuscripts Project in preserving, digitising and describing the Library's 250 very own medieval manuscripts infused the building with a sixteenth-century fervour. And all this stimulating medieval activity coincided with the 800th anniversary of the signing of the Magna Carta in 1215.

As the privileged recipient of the 2015 Friends Travelling Fellowship, I found myself in July 2015 embarking on a much anticipated tour of the United Kingdom.

I had applied for the Travelling Fellowship for two purposes: to undertake research of important original and secondary source materials in the United Kingdom towards my thesis in the History of the Book program at the University of London and to provide an opportunity for face-to-face meetings with my supervisor, Professor Michelle Brown, in London and Cornwall.

My thesis is a detailed study of the history and provenance of the 11 medieval manuscripts in the Clifford Collection (MS 1097), the private library of the Clifford Family of Ugbrooke, Devon, which was purchased by the National Library of Australia in 1963. It includes 75 English and European manuscripts and more than 10,000 volumes of rare books and pamphlets. The Cliffords were a prominent Catholic family who until 1829 were debarred by their religion from holding public office.

In addition to the National Library's holdings, the principal archival sources relating to the Cliffords are held at the British Library (St Pancras), National Archives (Kew), Devon Heritage Centre (Exeter) and the Plymouth and West Devon Record Office (Plymouth). The British Library is also an unrivalled source of medieval manuscripts for comparative research, and the Palaeography and Manuscripts Studies

continued on back page



Register of Chertsey Abbey, c. 1300–1350, British Library, Lansdowne 435, f.9.



left: Cartulary of Chertsey Abbey, c. 1432, National Archives UK, E 164/25
right: Clifford Papers, Devon Heritage Centre, Exeter.

INSIDE

Message from the Chair 2

Feature Article 2

Recent Events 3

Friends News 4

Friends Events 7

Library Bookshop 7

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



Dear Friends

December is usually a time for looking back and looking forward. During 2015, together we have continued to support the Library and we have enjoyed some wonderful events. Our thanks go to the Director-General and her staff for their generous assistance and I would like to make special mention of Sharyn O'Brien and Rosemary Walker in the Friends Office this year. Unfortunately, Sharyn and Rosemary have recently moved on to other positions, but I am delighted to welcome Kelli Turner as the acting Friends Executive Officer for the next 12 months, and Belinda Jessup as the new Friends Administration Assistant.

This year, your support has provided valuable artworks, Friends Fellowships and celebrations of Australian creativity and culture.

Our chief objective is to support the National Library of Australia and its great collections and resources. One of our priorities is to maintain and increase membership. Not only do we want to share the riches of the Library through our events, but annual membership fees are a major source of the income that funds our fellowships and ongoing Library support.

Have you thought of the gift of Friends membership for your own friends and family for Christmas, birthdays or even as a retirement present?

The committee looks forward to announcing our new and expanded Friends Benefits Program in the New Year. There are attractive concessions for purchases, season tickets and reciprocity benefits around Australia as well as in Canberra. To renew or give a gift membership, call the Friends Office on 02 6262 1551, email friends@nla.gov.au or visit us online at nla.gov.au/friends/join-the-friends-online.

Thank you for your interest, support and attendance this year and my very best wishes to you for the Christmas Season and the New Year.

Robyn Oates

FEATURE ARTICLE

Report from the 2015 Friends Creative Arts Fellow

The year is 1970. Thirty-four-year-old Australian composer Nigel Butterley has been commissioned to write an orchestral work for the royal visit in celebration of what would have incorrectly been called Captain Cook's 'discovery' of Australia's east coast. Written for an auspicious occasion, the work does not comfortably fit common associations of 'occasional music'. At a length of about 30 minutes, *Explorations* for piano and orchestra opens with 'one of the most audacious passages in all Australian music', to use Elliott Gyger's words. The work is severe and uncompromising, almost relentlessly avoiding the apparent mood of celebration, of 'occasion'. Rather than bowing down to our royal visitors, the piece stands proudly, confidently asserting itself with every note. And yet, despite its assurance, the title, *Explorations*, hints at something that is incomplete: a beginning, rather than an arrival.



Nigel Butterley, Chris Williams and Robyn Holmes at the workshop performance.
Photo: Michael Hooper

It is audacious music, certainly, but 1970 is an audacious time for Australian cultural life. Preparations for the Sydney Opera House are reaching fever pitch, the Elizabethan Theatre Opera Company begins the decade under its new name, The Australian Opera, and, in anticipation of having our very own Opera House, The Australian Opera undertakes an audacious project of commissioning seven one-act operas from Australian composers. Nigel Butterley's opera for this project was inspired by the story of The Snow Queen, and had the working title, *The Desolate Kingdom*. It was, unfortunately, never completed. Each one of these seven operas, in various states of completion, or 'incompletion', represents a cultural history of beginnings, rather than arrivals. I imagine an alternative history for us in which the Sydney Opera House opened to a season of seven new operas by Australian composers performed by The Australian

Opera. Though my historical flight of fancy is just that, the failed project was admirably audacious.

The year is 2009. In preparing his papers for the National Library of Australia, revered 74-year-old Australian composer Nigel Butterley finds his manuscript for *The Desolate Kingdom*. It was written half a lifetime earlier. He doesn't remember writing so much music for the project all those years ago. In showing me the manuscript, he offhandedly remarks, 'I'm too old to do anything with this. If you ever want to do anything with it, it's yours'.



Chris Williams with performers at the workshop performance of *The Truth of the Flowers*. Photo: Michael Hooper

The year is 2015. I am sitting with 80-year-old Australian composer Nigel Butterley in the foyer of the National Library of Australia for the first performance of music from *The Desolate Kingdom*, unheard until now. I have arranged the orchestral score into a chamber ensemble as part of the Canberra International Music Festival. This venture is one part of the work I have been able to undertake through the inaugural Friends of the National Library of Australia Creative Arts Fellowship.

Later, I am sitting with Nigel Butterley, my teacher, mentor and friend of almost a decade. He is listening to the Sydney Chamber Opera performing a workshop of my own operatic scene. Together with my friend, Pierce Wilcox, we have reworked an incomplete scene from *The Desolate Kingdom* and made it our own, under the title *The Truth of the Flowers*. Of course, as a single scene, this too is incomplete for the moment—a beginning rather than an arrival—but I also have an overwhelming feeling that this is a point of arrival too, from a beginning 45 years ago. History doesn't always travel in straight lines, sometimes it comes in circles and I am tremendously proud and grateful for the extraordinary opportunity to join this circle, thanks to the Friends of the National Library of Australia.

Chris Williams
2015 Friends Creative Arts Fellow

RECENT EVENTS

Friends Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the National Library of Australia was held on Thursday 5 November.

After welcoming those present, Robyn Oates, Chair of the Friends Committee, began her report by thanking committee members for their contribution. The valuable work of the Executive Officer, Sharyn O'Brien, and the Administration Assistant, Rosemary Walker, was specially acknowledged as was the support of the Director-General, Anne-Marie Schwirtlich, and her dedicated staff.

Robyn described 2015 as another successful year for the Friends. Initially the membership dropped a little below 2,000, but the numbers are again increasing.

During the year, 40 functions were held, including a White Gloves evening, Coffee with a Curator, private viewings and the launch of two National Library publications: David Hill's *First Fleet Surgeon* and John Olsen's *My Salute to Five Bells*. A highlight was the celebration of the Friends quarter centenary, with an evening addressing the theme 'Why Libraries Matter'. The speakers were Don Watson, Marion Halligan and Omar Musa. To celebrate the occasion, the Friends presented the Library with two contemporary art works from the East Kimberley region.

Other noteworthy events were a joint lecture with the Australian Garden History Society, at which Sue Ebury spoke about the Medici Legacy and Renaissance Gardens in Italy, and a celebration of the 150th birthday of William Butler Yeats, in combination with the Friends of Ireland. Thanks were given to the Embassy of Ireland and Dr Richard Reid for their support of a most successful evening.

The Friends Book Club continued to meet monthly, as did the Reel McCoy Film Society (although film screenings will not be held in the Library from 2016). In an effort to diversify its activities, the Friends also initiated a Storytime for young readers, but this venture was not a success and was discontinued.

Robyn reported that during 2015 the Friends Committee undertook a thorough review of the structure, role and functions of the Friends. Full details of this review are included in this newsletter under Friends News.

Robyn also reported on the two fellowships funded by the Friends in 2015. The winner of the 2015 Creative Arts Fellowship was Chris Williams, a music scholar who proved a very enthusiastic recipient. He made very good use of the Library collections.

The recipient of the 2015 Friends Travelling Fellowship, Susan Thomas, provided a very entertaining report on her trip to the UK. This talk has been reproduced in part as the cover story of this newsletter.

The Treasurer, James Ferguson, presented the Friends audited financial statements for the year ending 30 June 2015. He reported that, while an operating deficit of \$34,540 had been recorded for the financial year, it was a deficit planned by the Committee, who had decided it was appropriate to use some of the accumulated cash reserves to purchase two artworks to donate to the Library and to fund a \$10,000 Creative Arts Fellowship. He also noted that cash reserves at 30 June 2015 were at \$132,630, still a most comfortable position.

The Chair then announced the two Friends fellowships for 2016. The Travelling Fellowship of \$12,000 was awarded to Monika Szunejko, who will travel to the UK and France to assess the applicability of linked data to a national bibliographical database. The Creative Arts Fellowship of \$10,000 was awarded to Micharne Cloughley, who will use the Library's collection to develop a play based on the life and work of oral historian, Hazel de Berg.

Robyn then presented the 2015 Friends Medal to Margaret Astbury. Details of Margaret's extensive contribution to the work of the Library appear in Friends News.

The meeting concluded with the election of the Friends Committee for 2016. Robyn thanked the outgoing Committee members: Joan Kennedy, Dennis Pearce, Dianne Parrey and James Sandry. The membership present approved the six nominations received for Committee positions, and Kathryn Cole, James Ferguson, Alan Ives, Geraldine Mackey, Robyn Oates and John Seymour were all reappointed to the Committee for 2016. The six remaining vacancies may be filled by the Committee by co-option of members at forthcoming meetings.

Copies of the Chair and Treasurer's reports and the audited financial statements for 2014–15 are available online at nla.gov.au/friends/corporate-documents.



Monika Szunejko and Robyn Oates.

FRIENDS NEWS

2015 Friends Medal

Congratulations to Margaret Astbury, who is the annual Friends Medal recipient for 2015. The medal is awarded to a staff member, a volunteer or a Friend for a significant contribution to the work of the National Library of Australia.



Margaret Astbury.

This medal has been awarded for Margaret's significant contribution to the National Library of Australia over many years. Margaret has generously given her time as a volunteer at the Library since 1999, working variously as an exhibitions guide, a behind-the-scenes guide and a front-of-house volunteer. She has also been the first point of contact for building art tours at the National Library and has guided many groups around the building, sharing her prodigious knowledge of the artworks.

Margaret has been a member of the Friends for many years and supported the activities of the organisation, particularly as a founding member and co-convenor of the Friends Book Club, which was formed in 2006.

Margaret loved the interaction between the Library staff, the volunteers and the public. She guided more than 40 exhibitions; one of the highlights was giving an impromptu personal tour to Dame Quentin Bryce and her sister, who had just popped into the Library for a look around.

In the 1960s, she watched the current building being erected beside the lake. Later, her work as a volunteer guide fostered her love of history. This learning has fed into her reading and travel. Margaret intends to do her own research now, so she will continue to be a member of the vast Library family. She said she has enjoyed every moment of her time as an NLA volunteer and here is her advice to us all: wherever you travel, make a point of taking a guided tour—it is well worth the effort.

Robyn Oates



2016 Friends Committee: (l-r) Cathy Pilgrim, Anne-Marie Schwirtlich, Jenny Oates, Robyn Oates, Kathryn Cole, John Seymour, Alan Ives, Gary Kent, Kelli Turner, Kathryn Favelle, Alan Kerr, Geraldine Mackey.

2016 Friends Committee

The 2016 Friends Committee was appointed at the AGM on 5 November, with several additional members being co-opted at the first meeting of the new Committee on 17 November. Members of the 2016 Committee are:

Chair	Robyn Oates
Deputy Chair	Kathryn Cole
Treasurer	James Ferguson
Newsletter editor	John Seymour
Members	Anne Davis
	Alan Ives
	Gary Kent
	Alan Kerr
	Geraldine Mackey
	Ingrid Moses
	Jenny Oates
NLA Representatives	Anne-Marie Schwirtlich AM
	Cathy Pilgrim
	Kathryn Favelle
Executive Officer & Public Officer	Kelli Turner

Future Directions for the Friends

During 2015, the Management Committee of the Association of the Friends of the National Library of Australia has been reviewing its structure, role, objects, functions and operations to ensure that they remain appropriate to the purposes of the Friends and to the needs of the National Library. Similar reviews have been undertaken in past years.

As a first step, the Committee examined the structure and functions of a number of kindred Friends organisations in the ACT and in NSW and Victoria. Secondly, the Committee sought the views of the Library as to its role and effectiveness in managing the affairs of the Friends Association—in particular its implementation of the objects of the association.

Following consideration of its examination and the Library's response, the Committee decided that the objects, which are broadly expressed, should not be altered as they provide maximum flexibility for the Committee to carry out its role. Further, the Committee agreed that its structure (that of being incorporated separately from the Library) continues to be most appropriate as it allows the Friends, through the work of the Committee, to best achieve the association's objects.

The Committee agreed that in order to achieve the objects it will:

- 1 support the aims and objectives of the National Library of Australia through, in particular;
 - a establishing fellowships;
 - b supporting projects;
 - c organising and promoting events in association with the Library;
 - d publicising Library collections and activities; and
 - e promoting and advancing the Library as a national institution.

- 2 promote membership of the association as a means of supporting the Library.
- 3 secure the provision of benefits to members compatible with the objects of the association through:
 - a organising events;
 - b securing discounts for members on goods and services; and
 - c arranging with the Library for the provision of a lounge for the exclusive use of members.

The Committee further decided that in order to better utilise its resources in performing its functions it should hold meetings every two months with ad hoc face-to-face or email meetings at other times if necessary; existing sub-committees will continue to meet as required.

In the past, the Committee has each year organised a large number of events for members, some of which have not been well attended or profitable. At times these events have competed for an audience with events run by the Library. The Committee has therefore decided that in future it should concentrate on organising fewer, more specialised and distinctive events, such as the White Gloves evenings and Coffee with a Curator. These will continue. In addition, the Friends will, as in the past, arrange special lectures and book launches and will support two fellowships.

The other recommendation resulting from the review was that the benefits of membership of the Friends should be enhanced. The Committee has acted on this recommendation and details of the new benefits that Friends will enjoy from 2016 are set out below.

For those wishing to review the Friends Rules of Association, a copy can be accessed online at nla.gov.au/friends/corporate-documents.

Improved Membership Benefits for Friends

We are pleased to announce that the membership benefits available to Friends of the National Library of Australia have now been expanded, and hope that you will be able to take advantage of some of the benefits that have been negotiated.

Friends members are now entitled to a 15 per cent discount on all online ticket purchases to National Library of Australia events. We know this discount will appeal to many members and, combined with existing discounts offered by the Bookshop and Bookplate, will ensure the price of membership offers real value for money.

As well as confirming, and in some cases expanding, arrangements with existing partners, we are delighted to welcome many new partner organisations. Some of our new partners include:

- TFE Hotels
- *The Monthly*
- *Griffith Review*
- National Library of New Zealand
- Musica Viva
- Alliance Française de Canberra
- The Clubhouse at Hyatt Hotel Canberra

A brochure detailing the new benefits to members is enclosed with this newsletter. Details are also available on our website at nla.gov.au/support-us/benefits-of-friends-membership.

Friends Discount Code for NLA Events

To claim your 15 per cent discount on ticketed National Library events, bookings must be made online at nla.gov.au/bookings and the discount code CELESTIAL1 entered when booking. This code is valid from 1 December 2015 to 29 February 2016.

Christmas Closure

The Friends office will be closed from 12 noon, Friday 18 December, to 9 am, Monday 11 January. Friends staff and Committee members wish all our members a very happy Christmas and look forward to seeing you again in the new year.

FRIENDS EVENTS

Bookings for all Friends events may be made online at nla.gov.au/bookings/friends, through the Friends Office on 02 6262 1698 or by emailing friends@nla.gov.au.

Cheque payments, made payable to 'The Friends of the National Library of Australia', should be posted to Friends of the National Library, National Library of Australia, Canberra ACT 2600.

Cash payments may be dropped off at the National Library Bookshop during opening hours, and must be delivered in an unsealed envelope, with your name, event name and the dollar amount written on the envelope. These will then be passed on to the Friends Office.

For details of other National Library events, please refer to the Library's *What's On* guide or visit nla.gov.au/events.

Friends Exclusive Viewing

Celestial Empire: Life in China, 1644–1911

Join us for an exclusive members-only viewing of the Library's new exhibition, featuring an introductory lecture by exhibition curator, Dr Nathan Woolley.

Friday 22 January, 6 pm

Theatre and Exhibition Gallery, \$30 Friends
(includes light refreshments)

Bookings: nla.gov.au/bookings/friends or 02 6262 1698

Book Club

A monthly literary discussion, for members only.

Tuesday 19 January (note earlier than usual date)

The Buried Giant by Kazuo Ishiguro

Tuesday 23 February

The Garden of Evening Mists by Tan Twan Eng

Tuesday 29 March

One Life: My Mother's Story by Kate Grenville

6.15 pm

Friends Lounge, free

Bookings not required

GIVE THE GIFT OF FRIENDSHIP

Give someone special a gift that will last the whole year with a gift membership to the Friends of the National Library. Not only will you be supporting the Friends and the Library, but your gift recipient will be able to enjoy exclusive behind-the-scenes visits, discover collections that reveal our unique heritage and experience one of the world's great libraries.

Friends of the Library enjoy exclusive access to the Friends Lounge, located on Level 4. This lounge features seating areas, a dedicated eating space and panoramic views of Lake Burley Griffin.

Other benefits include:

- discounts on National Library event tickets purchased online;
- discounts at the National Library Bookshop and at selected booksellers;
- discounts at the Library's cafes, Bookplate and Paperplate;
- invitations to Friends-only events; and
- quarterly mailing of the Friends newsletter, *The National Library of Australia Magazine* and *What's On*.

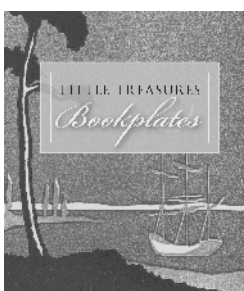
SPECIAL OFFER

Purchase a gift membership from 1–17 December 2015 and receive a free pack of 8 Thesaurus gift cards.



To arrange a gift membership, contact the Friends office on 02 6262 1698 or visit our website: nla.gov.au/friends.

Library Bookshop—Special Offer for Friends



In conjunction with the Library's Bookshop, the Friends are pleased to announce a special offer for members who make a purchase using the Library Bookshop website.

For any purchase made between 1 December 2015 and 29 February 2016, Friends will receive a free copy of *Little Treasures: Bookplates*. This offer is in addition to the usual Friends discount and any other offers advertised on the Library Bookshop website.

To claim your free copy of *Little Treasures: Bookplates* and your 15 per cent discount with all online purchases, use the promotional code FR15DEC15 at checkout.

This code is valid from 1 December 2015 to 29 February 2016.



Collection, Senate House Library (Bloomsbury), is a major international secondary-source research collection on this subject. Thanks to the generosity of the Friends, I was able to visit all five institutions.

Particularly thrilling moments included viewing two 'sister' copies of the National Library's *Chertsey Cartulary* at the British Library, and musing on the puzzle of which copy is the 'exemplar' (the original book on which subsequent copies were based). Also at the British Library, the Clifford Papers yielded some interesting insights confirming the book-buying habits of Thomas, 1st Lord Clifford. Three entries for August 1673 record the purchase of books through a bookseller named William King, and another inventory lists two illuminated missals. Tantalising as these finds were, the descriptions are rudimentary, and more investigation is needed to link any of the entries to manuscripts in the Clifford Collection with any confidence.

Having penetrated the locked doors of the Invigilation Room at the National Archives, I was able to view a third Chertsey cartulary. Imagine my surprise when the copy was wheeled out in a kind of library wheelbarrow and lifted onto the desk by two attendants, such was its enormous size. But what a delight it was to view this version and to discover it contained beautiful coloured maps of the abbey and enchanting vignettes on most of the pages—rabbits, caricatures, swirling pen curlicues—none of which I had anticipated.

Another highlight was a visit to Ugbrooke Park, 11 miles south of Exeter and home to the Clifford Family since 1645. I eagerly joined the house tour for some glimpses of the library room, in which many of the 10,000 items in the National Library were once housed, and the chapel. Between 1593 and 1829, Catholics were debarred from outwardly practising their religion, though private observance of faith was generally tolerated. The Ugbrooke chapel was accessed through a 'secret door' from the library and the exterior hidden behind outer walls with no windows or doors, so as not to draw attention to its purpose. This was but one example of the benefit of being able to experience the history of the family firsthand, gathering important contextual information in a way that could not be achieved by reading

about it in secondary sources. In addition, through visiting the house I was able to establish contact with the Clifford archivist, who informed me that 60 metres of family records are stored in a suite of upper rooms in the house, a fact that is not widely publicised.

Of the collections that I was privileged to access on the trip, those at the Devon Heritage Centre proved to be the most revealing, including highly relevant primary and secondary sources. These included the will of Thomas, 1st Lord Clifford, which provided evidence of books in his possession at his death, and notes and transcripts of selected Ugbrooke house records made by the nineteenth-century antiquarian, George Oliver. These sources also revealed that the family had powerful connections on the Continent, particularly in Germany and Italy, raising the possibility of other routes by which some of the medieval manuscripts came into the family's possession.

An impromptu visit to the Exeter Cathedral Archives located an original comprehensive list of manuscripts held by the cathedral in 1327, with which Ugbrooke Park (built on church land originally owned by the Bishops of Exeter) has a strong association. Viewing the manuscript was a particularly evocative moment for me, as the thick sheepskin parchment was still redolent with the smell of the almost 780-year-old lanolin. I have never been so moved by the pure 'honesty' of a manuscript before and it was a transformative experience to hold and examine the item.

I would like to thank the Friends for supporting my trip, which was an incredible learning experience, providing me with access to highly relevant and significant source materials that are inaccessible in Australia. Thanks to the Friends, I have returned inspired and brimming with new knowledge and ideas, which I hope to bring to bear on our medieval collections and the Clifford manuscripts in particular.

Susan Thomas
Assistant Curator of Manuscripts
2015 Friends Travelling Fellow