

August Australiana

August Australiana will be a little late, not least because of Covid-19. With people in lockdown, unable to go to work, it has been harder than usual to get material in and to stick to our deadline. So here is what to expect in the next issue, plus some background which doesn't appear in the stories themselves.



Scott Carlin reviews the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery's exhibition on the sophisticated portrait artist, forger and suspected triple murderer, Thomas Griffiths Wainwright. This important exhibition closes on 3 October and lockdown will prevent many people visiting.

On the cover, we show Wainwright's touching portrait of the promising young Assistant Surgeon Frederick Brodribb, who died from Typhus fever caught while treating patients at the hospital in 1840, a reminder of the dangers medical staff faced then and now.



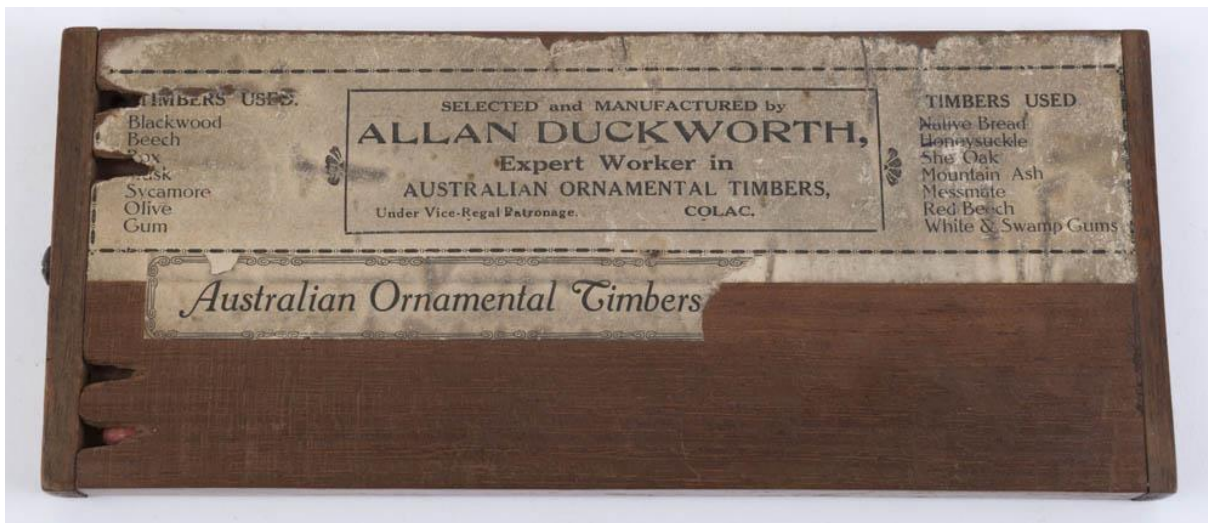
Gregory Hill has been researching and collecting Australian pottery, particularly from Victoria, for decades – one of the few ceramics collectors who also takes an interest in research and publication. He explores Victoria's earliest potteries and explains how collectors ignored some of the early potteries because they had adopted British names and were confused with imports.



In the 19th century, girls practised their needlework and school work by creating 'samplers' with the alphabet and a series of numbers. One of these girls was 12-year-old Ann(e) Ransom, who stitched her sampler at her school, Ellinthorpe Hall, in Van Diemen's Land in 1829; it was preserved in the pages of a later family Bible. Retired geologist Carol Bacon researched this very early Tasmanian sampler – the second earliest known – and the lives of the families who owned it.



Chair of the Queensland Branch, botanist Dr David Bedford, has long been interested in the use of Australian timbers. He chose to collect Australian cribbage boards, primarily for their display of various different and contrasting timbers. As the card game of cribbage is no longer fashionable, these cribbage boards – used for tallying points – are mostly redundant, and now a quaint and affordable collectable.



While we were working on this issue, Leski Auctions in Melbourne offered a cribbage board with a paper label identifying the maker as Allen Duckworth of Colac Victoria, a woodworker and native timbers crusader. Yvonne Barber and John Wade followed up, with the help of descendants and locals.

Duckworth made a font for the tiny wooden St Paul's Anglican Church at Deans Marsh, and local Kylie Doak, taking country hospitality way too seriously, visited the church (twice) to photograph the font.

Around 1919, the village butcher's daughter sang in the small chapel choir. Twenty years' later, she and her brothers sang there again, accompanied by their aunt the organist. In the meantime, she had been a soloist soprano in opera houses at Monte Carlo, Paris and New York. As Brünnhilde at the Met, she famously revived her rural childhood skills by riding her horse, bareback, into the flames of Siegfried's pyre in Wagner's *Götterdämmerung*.



Dorothy Erickson concludes her series on 'Angels in the Studio' in Western Australia. Part 4 discusses women artists who came to Western Australia, mostly from South Australia, and then stayed to develop professional careers as a time when 'women's place was in the home'.

Contributing to *Australiana*

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