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# AUSTRALIANA

FEBRUARY 1992

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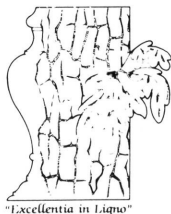
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## CONTENTS

### 4 SOCIETY PROGRAMME 1992

#### ARTICLES

- 5 James Oatley & His Long Case Clocks – A list and bibliography  
– Kevin Fahy
- 9 A Mount Gambier Foundation Trowel  
– Dick Phillips & John Houstone
- 11 The Three Macquarie Chairs  
– Julian Bickersteth
- 15 The Horn of Plenty – Talking Machine to Gramophone in Australia  
– Marjorie Graham
- 25 An Early Australian Lighthouse Surviving in Model Form in Hobart  
– Peter Mercer
- 14 LETTER TO THE EDITOR
- 8 Exhibition and Book Notice

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Cover: The Macquarie Chair – Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences. [Photo J. Whitelock, courtesy National Trust of Australia (NSW)]

# THE AUSTRALIANA SOCIETY

PO BOX 322, ROSEVILLE 2069



## — SOCIETY PROGRAMME —

### MEETINGS – 1992

THURSDAY,  
2 APRIL

Illustrated Lecture by David Dolan  
“McALPINE REVISITED”

*David Dolan, senior curator at the Powerhouse Museum, looks back on the McAlpine collection of Australian “bush toys and furniture”, as exhibited at the Powerhouse in 1990. If you saw the exhibition, this lecture will bring back memories. If you missed it, this is your last chance to catch up. Sadly, the collection has now been dispersed, and so can never again be exhibited as a whole.*

THURSDAY,  
4 JUNE

Speaker to be announced.

THURSDAY,  
6 AUGUST

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Speaker to be announced.

THURSDAY,  
1 OCTOBER

Speaker to be announced.

THURSDAY,  
3 DECEMBER

CHRISTMAS PARTY

Speaker to be announced.

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### EXCURSION

SUNDAY,  
5 APRIL

The Society has arranged an inspection of an interesting turn-of-the-century house in an inner suburb of Sydney to view a comprehensive and valuable collection of Australian decorative arts and paintings.

Society meetings are held at 7.30pm at the Glover Cottage Hall,  
124 Kent Street, Sydney. Convenient street parking.  
Drinks served 7.30 - 8.00 pm, followed by Australiana Showcase  
(bring your Australian treasures for general discussion).  
Lecture will commence at 8.30 pm.



# James Oatley & His Long Case Clocks

## – A list and bibliography

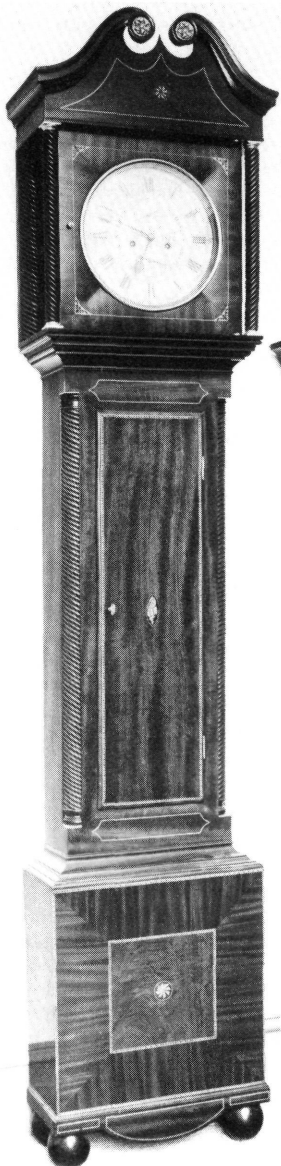
Kevin Fahy

James Oatley (c.1770-1839) is the best known of Australia's early clock and watchmakers. A native of Stafford, England, he was sentenced at the Hampshire Assizes in 1814 to transportation for life as a result of his prosecution for stealing sundry bed linen and other items.

He arrived at Sydney on the *Marquis of Wellington* in 1815 where later he was appointed by Governor Macquarie as successor to Henry Lane and John Austin as Keeper of the Town Clock a position he held until 1822 when he was replaced by James Robertson.

His first recorded address in Sydney was in 1816 when he acquired land at Cockle Bay (Darling Harbour). By about 1817 he had moved to George Street premises which he purchased in 1822, opposite the site of the present Town Hall. On his death in 1839 the business was briefly continued by his son Frederick Oatley (1819-1890). The premises were leased, being later occupied by the well known Sydney jeweller and silver-smith William Kerr and eventually purchased by Kerr's sons.

In 1819 James Oatley was paid £75 for the installation of a dial train turret clock in the gable of the Hyde Park Barracks. This together with his official position of Keeper of the Town Clock no doubt contributed to his free pardon which was granted in 1821. *The New South Wales Census of 1828* lists Oatley's assigned convict employees. They were the watchmakers Cooper Broderick (arr. 1827), William Kay (arr. 1826) and John Wilson (arr. 1821), the jeweller William Hanson (arr. 1826) and the clockmaker William Harbourn (arr. 1818). Harbourn



(or Harban) was previously listed in the *General Muster and Land and Stock Muster of New South Wales 1822* as a Government Servant with James Oatley together with the watchmaker Henry Smith who by 1828 was employed by the watchmaker Joseph Davis. Broderick and Wilson were still in Oatley's employ in 1837. Smith opened business on his own account by 1833 and Kay who received a conditional pardon in 1840 was by 1844 likewise employed.

*The General Return of Convicts in New South Wales 1837* also lists Patrick Francis (arr. 1835), Nathaniel James (arr. 1836), William Johnson (arr. 1832) and Thomas Page (arr. 1836) with James Oatley but no indication is given of their actual occupations.

The following list of sighted and recorded examples of James Oatley's long case clocks and the included bibliography provide important documentation of early Australian technological skill and craftsmanship.

The actual clock components of all Oatley's long case clocks would appear to have been made and certainly assembled by James Oatley or his workshop. They are not merely imported units installed in locally made cases as is to be found in a number of examples of long case clocks carrying the name on the dial of several Sydney clockmakers active from the second quarter of the nineteenth century. ▽



Plate 1. Oatley Timekeeper No. 15, 1822. Collection – National Parks and Wildlife Service, Throsby Park, NSW.



Plate 2. Oatley Long Case Clock No. 19  
– 1822. Collection – M.A.A.S.

Denis Eccles, a leading Sydney horologist, who has sighted and repaired a number of Oatley long case clocks considers that their movements were made locally.

While the dwarf long case clock, of definite American style, made for Major Henry Antill is predominantly of stained pine, others are of red cedar, most of the recorded examples featuring she-oak cross-banding and pine stringing decoration reflect considerable cabinet-making skill together with the use of possibly imported decorative inlays. The identity of the case makers is as yet unknown but it would seem likely that they are in the main from the one hand or workshop.

All the silvered brass dials of recorded examples are inscribed with Oatley's name. Dated inscriptions range from 1818 to 1827. Those that are numbered (Nos. 5-51) are dated from 1820 to 1827.

There is, at present, no firm documentation, as to the original purchasers of long case clocks from James Oatley. Apart from those of unquestionable family provenance only an undated newspaper article c.1904 held in the Mitchell Library (Q991/Np 88) notes several of their purchasers at £40 each. They include Governor Macquarie, Mrs Throsby, the Rev. Cartright, Major Druiitt, William Hutchinson and the Rev. Fulton.

Several clock parts from James Oatley's workshop are believed to be held by his descendants.

An early photograph in the Mitchell Library (Small Picture File – Clocks) accompanied by no further information illustrates what would appear to be one of his long case clocks although it does not relate to any sighted example.

The following list of Oatley's long case clocks has been compiled with the grateful assistance of Dennis Eccles and W.F. Bradshaw and includes all those known or reported to this author.

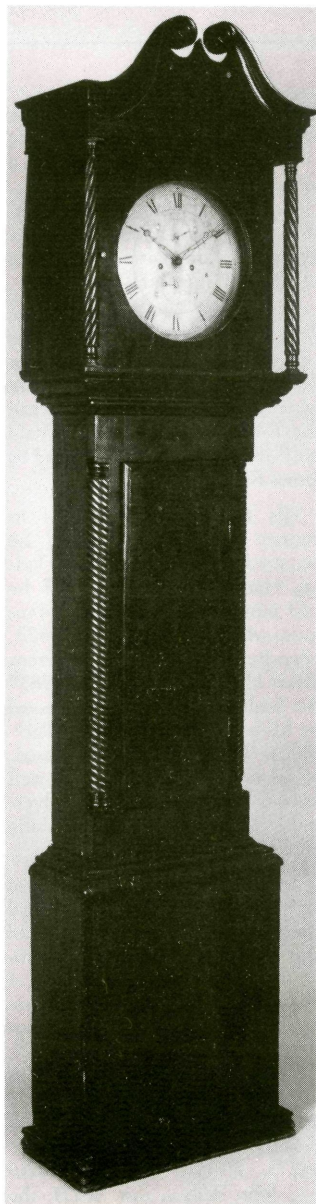


Plate 3. Oatley Long Case Clock No. 31  
– 1827. Collection – Australiana Fund.

TYPE	ORIGINAL OWNER	REFERENCE
<b>Inscribed, Not Numbered or Dated</b>		
Dwarf	Maj H.C. Antill	(ill.) C. Craig, et al, <i>Early Colonial Furniture in New South and Van Diemen's Land</i> , p.93
Timekeeper	—	(ill.) K. Fahy, et al, <i>Nineteenth Century Australian Furniture</i> , p.255
Short	—	Mudgee Antique Fair, 1965 (catalogue)
<b>Inscribed and Dated</b>		
Regulator	1818	Reported
Short	1820	
	James Badgery	(ill.) B. Hardy, <i>From the Hawkesbury to the Monaro</i> , Kenthurst 1989, p.64 (f.)
Short	1820	Sighted
<b>Inscribed, Numbered and Dated</b>		
Short	No. 5 1820	Sighted
Short	No. 7 1820	
	John Brush	Sighted
Tall	No. 9 1921	
	Thomas West	(ill.) J. Broadbent & J. Hughes (ed.), <i>The Age of Macquarie</i> , Carlton 1992, p.126.
Timekeeper	No. 15 1822	(ill.) K. Fahy, et al, <i>Nineteenth Century Australian Furniture</i> , p.254
	Mrs Throsby	
Tall	No. 16 1822	(ill.) C. Craig, et al, <i>Early Colonial Furniture in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land</i> , p.95
Short	No. 17 1822	(ill.) <i>Australian Antique Collector</i> , July-December 1985, p.90
Tall	No. 19 1822	(ill.) C. Craig, et al, <i>Early Colonial Furniture in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land</i> , p.94
		<i>A Companion to the Mint Collections</i>
Short	No. 20 1822	
	George Hall	Sighted
Timekeeper	No. 21 1822	Exhibited at the Art Gallery of NSW 1953 (ill.). 1988 <i>Commemorative Collection of Fine Colonial Furniture</i> , (catalogue), pp.16-19
Short	No. 22 1822	(ill.). <i>Australian Business Collector's Annual</i> 1987-1988, p.131
		<i>Australian Antique Trader</i> , Dec 1986-Jan 1987, p.2
Short	No. 25 1823	
	William Cape	Sighted
—	No. 27 1823	Reported
Tall	No. 29 1825	Reported
—	No. 30 1826	
	William Roberts	Reported
Tall	No. 31 1827	
	Thomas Rose	(ill.). <i>The Australiana Collection</i> , Sydney 1990, p.48
Short	No. 32 1827	Reported
Tall	No. 51 (?) 1827	Reported

It is likely that a number still remain undocumented in private collections. Hopefully further information will be forthcoming and this indicative article may eventually produce a more definitive statement of James Oatley and his pioneering work.

#### Selected Bibliography

*Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol. 2, Melbourne University Press, Carlton 1967.

Clifford Craig, et al, *Early Colonial Furniture in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land*, Georgian House, Melbourne 1972.

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D.J. Hatton, *Mr Oatley the Celebrated Watchmaker*, Sydney 1983.

K. Vidler & G. Dodd, 'For Whom The Bell Tolls', *Australian Antique Trader*, December 1986-January 1987.

I. Rumsey, 'The Case of the Oatley Clock: Is there a case to Answer?', *Australiana Society Newsletter*, April 1982.

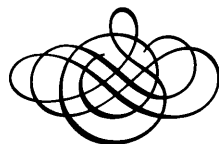
C.J. Baxter (ed.), *General Muster and Land and Stock Muster of New South Wales 1822*, Sydney 1988.

M. Sainty & K. Johnson (ed.), *Census of New South Wales November 1828*, Sydney 1980.

N.G. Butlin, et al (ed.), *General Returns of Convicts in New South Wales, 1837*, Sydney 1987.

#### Photograph Acknowledgements

Andrew Simpson, The Trustees of the Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences, Sydney and The Australiana Fund.



# The Age of Macquarie

## Exhibition and Book

There are perhaps two periods in Australian colonial history which in the public's mind stand above all others, the mid-nineteenth century goldrushes and the decade of Lachlan Macquarie's governorship. The former is identified for its vigour and wealth, the latter for its social, cultural, economic and geographic expansion – the first signs of the maturing of the Australian colonies. No early colonial governor, other than the founding governor, Arthur Phillip, appears so clearly in the public's eye as does Lachlan Macquarie.

The flowering of the decorative arts and architecture during the early 1810s and 1820s, combined with the expansion of the colonies of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land in exploration, commerce and development, make *The Age of Macquarie* a rich and diverse study for both a major exhibition and book.

The book and exhibition will look at the achievements as well as the society of the twelve years of Macquarie's governorship, from 1810 to 1822, giving an understanding of early colonial life at the time it was leaving behind its infancy and looking confidently to the future.

Rarely have the cultural, political and economic aspects of a period of Australian history been considered together and never has there been an exhibition or book which focuses on our early colonial history in this way. Despite the numerous and popular biographies of such colonial players as Lachlan Macquarie, Francis Greenway, Samuel Marsden, John and Elizabeth Macarthur and studies of trade and politics of the period and the exploration of the country, no one book or exhibition has gathered

these themes together as a concise and vivid tableau, each theme becoming richer by being elucidated by the others.

The exhibition will include items of exceptional rarity and historical importance from private and public collections, including colonial manufactured silver and furniture, costume, paintings and drawings, manuscripts, medals and memorials, Macquarie memorabilia (from portraits to a lock of his hair) and rare books published and printed in the colony. The range of objects is extraordinary, from a brass dog collar inscribed 'Lachlan Macquarie junior' to a collector's chest painted with views of Newcastle and the Hunter region, from a banner embroidered by the pupils of the Parramatta Sunday Schools in 1815 to the wedding dress worn by John Blaxland's daughter, Anna, from bills of lading for sending coal from Newcastle to India, to a silver cup

presented at the Richmond Races in 1822.

The exhibition will be curated by Dr James Broadbent, Curator of the Lyndhurst Resource Centre.

Dr Broadbent has been involved with similar exhibitions and books for the Trust including *Gothick Taste* and *Demolished Houses of NSW*. He will curate *The Age of Macquarie* as a major exhibition, appropriately presented at the Greenway Gallery in the Hyde Park Barracks, one of Macquarie's most important buildings.

The exhibition will focus on Lachlan and Elizabeth Macquarie, politics, trade and economics, the decorative arts (silver, furniture, and textiles) architecture, town planning, exploration, literature, art, education and religion.

Associated events will include lectures, seminars, tours and educational programs for schoolchildren.

*The Age of Macquarie* will be a milestone in recording one of the richest periods in Australian history.

### EXHIBITION

<b>Venue</b>	Greenway Gallery, Hyde Park Barracks, Macquarie Street, Sydney
<b>Dates</b>	27 February to 17 May 1992
<b>Times</b>	10am to 5pm daily
<b>Admission</b>	Adults \$4, Concessions \$2, Family Ticket \$10

### BOOK

<b>Editors</b>	Dr James Broadbent and Joh Hughes
<b>Publisher</b>	Melbourne University Press
<b>Pages</b>	196
<b>Illustrations</b>	25 Colour and 70 Black & White
<b>Price</b>	\$29.95

### A SERIES OF LECTURES EXPLORING THE SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND POLITICAL HISTORY OF NEW SOUTH WALES 1810-1821

<b>Venue</b>	Hyde Park Barracks, Macquarie Street, Sydney	
<b>Dates</b>	5 consecutive Tuesdays, 3-31 March 1992 inclusive	
<b>Time</b>	7.30pm	
<b>March 3</b>	Joy Hughes Dr Carol Liston Professor Elizabeth Webby	The Exhibition Colonial Society Literature
<b>March 10</b>	Dr John Eddy Dr Margaret Steven	Empire and Politics Trade and the Economy
<b>March 17</b>	Dr James Broadbent Mr Kevin Fahy Mr John Houstone	Building in the Colony Furniture and Furniture Makers Silver and Silversmiths
<b>March 24</b>	Mrs Helen Proudfoot Professor Brian Fletcher	Exploration Religion and Education
<b>March 31</b>	Ms Patricia R. McDonald Ms Jennifer Sanders	Arts and Artists Dress and Textiles
<b>On 3, 17 and 31 March the evening will include a visit to the Exhibition.</b>		
<b>Fee</b>	5 meetings – \$157.00	
<b>Enquiries</b>	Historic Houses Trust of N.S.W. (02) 692 8366	



# A Mount Gambier Foundation Trowel

*Dick Phillips and John Houstone*

The illustrated silver foundation trowel was bought some years ago by John Hawkins in England. It is 34 cm in length and has an all up weight of 240 grammes. It is housed in its original well made fitted cedar case, lined with blue velvet.

The trowel is inscribed: "Presented to Leonard Gilbert Browne of Moorak on his laying the Foundation Stone of Christ Church Mount Gambier Feby 21st. A.D. 1865, By Members of the Congregation".

Around the perimeter of the blade is inscribed: "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, goodwill towards men." The blade also bears the small inscription "J. Sellwood, Jeweller, Gambier".

Mount Gambier, in the extreme South East of South Australia, was named in December 1800 by James Grant from aboard the *Lady Nelson*. This was the first part of the State to have been sighted and named by Europeans.

In 1841 S.G. Henty stocked a cattle run there and built the first hut. The town of Mount Gambier came into existence in 1854 and it is now the largest city of the State outside the metropolitan area of Adelaide.<sup>1</sup>

In 1860 the Anglican population of Mount Gambier numbering about 50 met and discussed the building of a church. In January 1863 the first complete Church of England Service was conducted by the Bishop of Adelaide in the Wesleyan Church there. An Anglican rectory was built in 1864 and on 21st February 1865 the foundation stone of the new Christ Church was laid by Leonard Gilbert Browne the 13-year-old eldest son of Dr. William James Browne (1815-1894).<sup>2</sup>

William James Browne arrived in South Australia in 1839 as Assistant Surgeon on the "Buckinghamshire". His brother John, also a doctor, arrived in 1840, and though their names appear on the first South Australian medical

register, they did not practise, but devoted themselves to pastoral pursuits. They first leased a farm at Lyndoch and in 1842 had 1,043 sheep. They steadily increased their holdings until by 1867 these covered more than 2,000 square



Plate 1. Foundation Trowel – 1865.

miles across the State. They bought "Moorak Station" at Mount Gambier in 1862. At the peak of their activity they were the biggest exporters of wool from South Australia.

William James Browne was the chief founder of Christ Church at Mount Gambier, donating the land and half the building cost.<sup>3</sup> In 1865 the population of the town was less than 2,000. The laying of the foundation stone was recorded in the "Border Watch" of 25th February of that year.

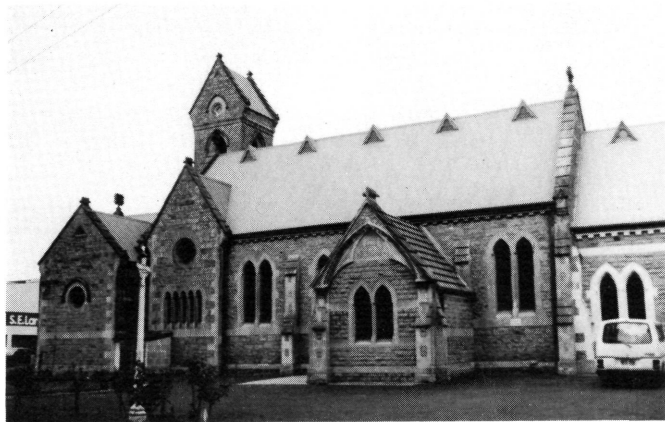


Plate 2. Christ Church, Mt Gambier, South Australia.

"Capt. Lyon, addressing Master Browne, said he had been commissioned by the Committee of the Church to present him with a silver trowel, which was to have been used in the day's ceremony but through some oversight it had not arrived. However he held a drawing of it in his hand, with the inscription, and in the name of the Committee he begged Master Browne's acceptance of it when it came. Mr. Browne returned thanks for his son."

In the "Border Watch" of 25th March 1865 the following appears:

"Presentation Trowel. We had the pleasure of inspecting in Mr. Sellwood's shop the other day, the very handsome silver trowel which some members of the Church of

England intend presenting to Master L.G. Browne in commemoration of his laying the foundation stone of Christ Church, Mount Gambier. It will be remembered that this presentation was to have been made at the time of laying the stone, but through an oversight it was not then to hand. The trowel is very beautifully chased ..."

The trowel is in fact of excellent quality and made by a skilled craftsman.

John Sellwood advertised on 5th August 1864 that he was commencing business as a watchmaker, jeweller & silversmith opposite the Telegraph Office. He stated he was from "Dents of London". He offered "an assortment of English and Colonial jewellery of the best quality".<sup>4</sup>

Two changes of address are subsequently shown in his advertisements, first to "Bank of Adelaide building next door to the Mount Gambier Hotel" in September 1864 and then to "Heineman's next to the South Australian Hotel" in June 1865.<sup>5</sup>

On 22nd July 1865 it was reported that he had given the "first magic lantern lecture". Obviously he was a man of considerable initiative.<sup>6</sup>

On 3rd August 1867 the Border Watch reported that John Sellwood had died aged 42 years.

Other than the trowel, there is no record of any piece of jewellery or silver bearing his name. Perhaps this is understandable having regard to his sadly brief career in Australia.

Did he make and engrave the trowel? Perhaps the newspaper report, stating that "through some oversight it had not arrived" implies that it had been ordered from Adelaide, possibly from Steiner or Wendt. But it must be said that the trowel is by no means identical with any recorded Steiner or Wendt trowel.

In L.R. Hill's book "Mount Gambier - the City Around a Cave", the author states: "On February 21st, 1865, 13-year-old Leonard Gilbert Browne, eldest son of Dr. William J. Browne, owner of Moorak Station, laid the foundation stone of Christ Church in Bay Road. Sixty years later, the same L.G. Browne wrote from Hoburne, Christchurch, Hampshire, England that he still treasured with great affection the silver trowel presented to him as a memento of the important occasion. He stated that the engraver's name was J. Sellwood, jeweller, of Mount Gambier."

This suggests that Sellwood certainly engraved the trowel, even if it was fashioned elsewhere.<sup>7</sup>

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1. Australian Encyclopaedia 1963 Vol.6 p.185.
2. Mount Gambier - The City Around a Cave by L.R. Hill, Investigator Press South Australia 1972 pps.247-248.
3. ADB Vol.3 p.270.
4. Border Watch, 5th August 1864.
5. Border Watch, 2nd September 1864, 3rd June 1865.
6. Border Watch, 22nd July 1865.
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# The Three Macquarie Chairs

*Julian Bickersteth*

## INTRODUCTION

Early in 1991 I was approached by Macquarie University to undertake conservation work on the chair used by the Chancellor of the University when conferring degrees. This chair is known as the Macquarie Chair owing to its association with Governor Macquarie. Coincidentally in the same month, the Parish of St James, King Street, Sydney requested some conservation work be undertaken on the chair the church uses whenever the Archbishop or a bishop of the diocese is present. This is known as the Scott Chair through its association with Archdeacon Scott. Both chairs are remarkably similar in style and execution as is a third chair owned by the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, currently displayed in The Mint and also known as the Macquarie Chair. The existence of these three chairs and their connections have been known about for some time, but a detailed examination has never been undertaken. This article therefore draws together their provenances and attempts to resolve some of their differences. For identification purposes I have called Macquarie University's chair the "University Chair", the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences Chair the "Museum Chair" and the Scott Chair by its usual name.

## A BRIEF DESCRIPTION

All three chairs are constructed from *Dysoxylon fraserianum* or Australian rose mahogany or rosewood. The chairs are the earliest known example of a style known as "Colonial Gothic" and feature extensive gothic decorative features. These include pointed arches, pinnacles and pierced quatrefoils, reflecting the influence the Gothic

designs detailed in George Smith's pattern book "A Collection of Designs for Household Furniture and Interior Decoration", 1808. There is pierced fretwork along the lower part of the back and blind fretwork on the leg facings. All faces of the legs and the sides of the seat rails have casuarina panels set into them. The University and Museum chairs both bears a carved



*Plate 1. Museum (Macquarie) Chair. Collection – M.A.A.S.*

arm clutching a dagger or skion dhu (the crest of the Macquarie family) on the top rail with finials on top of each back leg. The Museum chair is upholstered in kangaroo fur, the University chair is partly upholstered in kangaroo and partly in tan leather and the Scott Chair is fully upholstered in red leather.

## THEIR HISTORY

Governor Lachlan Macquarie, probably towards the end of his governorship of New South Wales (1809-21), commissioned two large chairs. These chairs were designed for matters of state rather than personal comfort and are likely to be the two large armchairs referred to in the inventory of the contents of the drawing room of Government House, Sydney dated 21 March, 1821. Upon his retirement he took these chairs with him back to his estate on the Island of Mull in Scotland. The chairs then passed through the widow of Governor Macquarie's son, Lachlan to Lt Colonel Gardyne. Both chairs were given by Colonel Gardyne to Governor Macquarie's nephew, Captain Charles Macquarie, who himself had two sons. One of these sons migrated to Canada taking one chair with him.

His widow placed the chair on loan with the Vancouver City Museum in the 1930s and was last heard from in 1937 when she wrote to the Museum saying, "I wonder if you have got the parts of the Macquarie Chair assembled yet so that a picture of it may be taken for Australia". The missing parts referred to were apparently fragments of the carved crest, which had only recently come to light. It would appear from this comment that Macquarie was keen for her chair to be known about in Australia and so in 1959 the Vancouver City Museum approached the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Sydney, to explore whether they would be interested in receiving a donation of the chair. After some negotiation the transfer took place in 1961.

The University Chair stayed in



Scotland with the family of Captain Charles Macquarie's other son, Archibald and was in the possession of Mrs Taylor of Edinburgh, his daughter, when it was brought to the attention of Macquarie University in 1965. The newly founded University was at the time looking for a physical direct link with Governor Macquarie, and were delighted to find the chair. They moved quickly to acquire it especially as they were advised that it would certainly end up as firewood if it was allowed to remain in private hands. The chair now stands in the reconstructed parlour of Governor Macquarie's Scottish house within the University's library building.

The Scott Chair has no direct link with Governor Macquarie other than its great similarity to the Museum and University Chairs. Thomas Hobbes Scott came to Australia in 1819 as secretary to John Thomas Bigge, the Commissioner appointed by the British Government to enquire into the affairs of New South Wales. Scott was given the right to succeed Bigge if he died or was incapacitated. They both returned to England in 1921, and Scott was consulted by the Colonial Office and submitted plans for chaplains and schools in the colony. He was ordained in 1821 upon his return to England and in 1824 was appointed Archdeacon of New South Wales at the not inconsiderable salary of £2,000 with allowances, taking precedence next to the Lieut. Governor. New South Wales and its dependencies, including Van Diemen's Land, was at that time in the diocese of Calcutta. A colourful character, Archdeacon Scott once locked the pew of Edward Smith Hall, the editor of the *Monitor* with whom he disagreed. When Hall responded by lifting his wife and family into the pew, Scott boarded the entire pew up with planks to prevent further access. He returned to England in 1829,

dying a bachelor in 1860, and leaving an estate valued at less than £800 and bequeathing his family Bible, his gun and his artwork (including presumably the chair) to his relations. Known within the family as the "Archdeacon's Chair", it finally passed through Antony Herbert Scott Judd, a descendant of his nephew who donated it to St Peter's Church, Bexhill-On-Sea in Sussex in 1948. The historian Kelvin Grose, while researching Archdeacon Scott, discovered the chair in 1971 at St Peter's where it was being used as the Bishop's Chair. The parish council of St Peter's

offered the chair as a gift to the people of St James, Sydney and it arrived in March 1974.

Despite Commissioner Bigge's damning report into the Governorship of Macquarie, it would appear that his secretary took a fancy to Macquarie's state chairs, and had the Scott Chair made up during the first visit to New South Wales. This would appear to be reinforced by a label which is attached to the outside of the back rail of the Scott Chair and which reads "Temple & Webster New South Wales 1821." This is carved into a piece of pine or spruce and over-scribed in black ink.

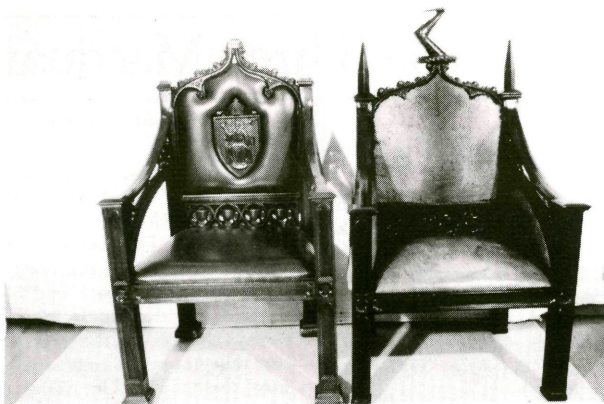


Plate 2. Scott Chair (left). University Chair (right).

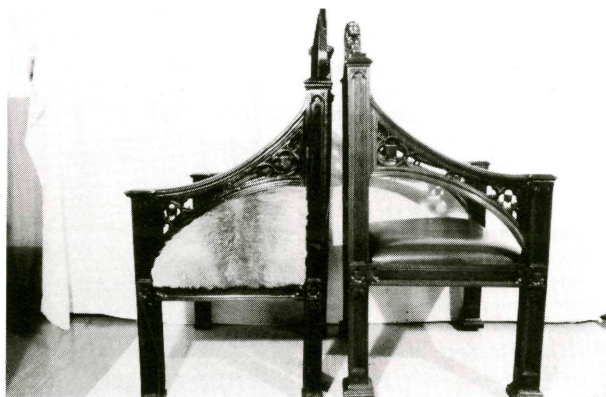


Plate 3. Side profile: University Chair (left); Scott Chair (right).

Temple was a native of Boston, Lincolnshire, and was transported in 1813, aged 34. Described as a 'carpenter and joiner' he worked at the Government Lumber Yard, frequently absenting himself. Despite these misdemeanours he applied for and was granted a conditional pardon by Governor Macquarie in November 1821, being then described as a cabinet maker. In his petition for a conditional pardon, he stated that he had "been exclusively employed under your Excellency's direction for the last 18 months at Government House". John Webster was a native of London who was transported to New South Wales arriving in August 1820, aged 22 years. He was described as a carver and gilder and applied with Temple for a conditional pardon, saying he had been employed ever since his arrival in the colony as a carver at Government House. He also was granted a conditional pardon at the same time as William Temple in November 1821.

## THE CHAIRS

The choice of rose mahogany for the construction of the chairs is interesting. It reflects the popularity of this north coast timber during Macquarie's Governorship, but it may also be a direct result of a personal preference one Patrick Riley had for the timber. Patrick Riley was a carpenter working at the Lumber Yard who gave evidence before Commissioner Bigge in 1821 stating that rose mahogany was "very good for fine furniture and for veneering and turning". Patrick Riley was listed as absenting himself on two separate occasions from the Lumber Yard, on both occasions having William Temple with him, suggesting a close working relationship.

All three chairs have been heavily restored and undergone some losses during their lives. None carry their original upholstery, although use of kangaroo fur does

appear to be correct judging by a 1915 letter of Colonel Gardyne, the original recipient of the Museum and University Chairs from the Macquarie family in which he referred to such. The top rails of the Museum and University Chairs both bear finials at the top of each leg and the carved Macquarie crest in the centre. The finials are extensively carved on the Museum Chair, and plain on the University Chair, probably being replacements. The crest is original to the University Chair except for the dagger and was copied for the Museum Chair. Neither finials nor crest exist on the Scott Chair, with the top of the legs and the centre of the top rail being rather unsatisfactorily finished off with small carved blocks which look to be later. Evidence exists that finials were once in place.

It is understandable that Scott would not have chosen to put a crest on top of his chair, choosing instead to place his coat of arms carved in wood in the back of the chair. When the chair was given to St Peter's Bexhill-on-Sea, they chose to remove his coat of arms and replace it with the coat of arms of the local Diocese of Chichester. It is interesting to note, however, that a photograph taken by Mrs Taylor, the most recent owner of the University Chair, appears to depict a small black shield set in the back of the University Chair.

The same photograph shows no carved rosettes extending from the underside of the top rail, whereas these do exist in the Museum and Scott Chairs. However, examination revealed these had once existed being crudely sawn off presumably to facilitate upholstery. The upholstery varies, as has already been mentioned. Mr W.V. Abraham, the Architect-planner of Macquarie University, in giving instructions to the restorer in 1969, specified that the "seat to be leather, all other inside panels fur,

all outside panels leather to match original". Although this was not carried out (outside panels are fur, and inside panels leather), the University Chair might have had the original upholstery on it when acquired by the University. The back of the University Chair is now a stained plywood panel, whereas it is upholstered on the other two. The Scott Chair has no side panels, and examination shows there never to have been any, whereas the cedar frames of the University and Museum Chairs for these side panels would appear to be contemporary.

In all other matters of detail and proportions, the three chairs are almost identical. The Scott Chair is approximately 2 inches higher all around, and has always been that way. As a result there is some difference in the detail at the base of the legs. The pierced fretwork beneath the back seat panel is also slightly differently carved on the Scott Chair, and the top section of the back of the back legs has been more simply finished. The carving of the top rail is rather more undercut on the Scott Chair, but very similar in execution.

The front rails of both the University and Scott Chairs had to be removed during conservation work. This revealed that the mortice and tenon joints on both were made loosely, with the mortices too deep, and the tenons too narrow (requiring linen to be added on the Scott Chair to pad them out).

This reflects that the chairs were most likely made by carpenters with some experience of cabinet making rather than fully trained cabinet makers. A number of other features also reflect this, most noticeably the uncomfortable resolution of the join between the arms and the front and back legs, and the crude way the upholstered side and back panels are attached.

The finish on the three chairs varies, with a much lighter colour on the Scott Chair, suggesting it

has been refinished. However, both the University and Museum Chair appear to have had later applications of polish.

Finally, the label on the back of the Scott Chair presents a conundrum. It is an extremely unusual way of labelling furniture, the most frequent place for chairs being under or on the inside of the back rail, either by impressing a stamp or applying a paper label. It is unlikely at the time that Scott would have wanted to advertise the convict manufacture of the chairs. It may therefore be that family tradition recorded the convicts' names and that the label was glued on later. However, removing it reveals a very light shade of polished casuarina underneath it compared to the surrounding area, suggesting that, although the chair was polished before the label was attached, the label was glued in place before the surface of the wood could oxidise and darken, a process which happens within only a few years.



Plate 4. Detail of back rail of Scott Chair showing position of label.

## CONCLUSION

The conclusions I have drawn from this analysis are that the three chairs all date from a period between mid-1820 and late 1821. They were all made by the one team of the carpenter-cum-cabinetmaker William Temple and the carver, John Webster. The cabinetry bears the hand of one man, as does the carving, the slightly more skilful execution of the Scott Chair's carving reflecting an increased confidence on Webster's part. The University and Museum Chairs were made between the arrival of Webster on 7 August 1820 and their listing in the Government House inventory of 21 March 1821. Later in 1821, with their work at Govern-

ment House complete, Temple and Webster were commissioned by Thomas Scott to make a further chair with some slight alterations at Scott's request. They did this either with the University or Museum Chair in front of them, or working from very detailed drawings.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The permission of the owners of all three of the chairs, namely the Office of the Registrar and Vice-Principal of Macquarie University, the Trustees of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, and the Parish Council of St James, Sydney, to examine the chairs is gratefully acknowledged. In particular, the assistance of Mrs Irene Berger and Mrs Anne Steel of Macquarie University, Mr David Dolan and Ms Anne Watson of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, and Dr Rosemary Annable of St James has been very helpful. I am also grateful for the advice and opinions of Mr Kevin Fahy, Dr James Broadbent and Mr Andrew Simpson.

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# Letter to the Editor

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Dear Editor,

With colonial furniture I hold an old finish and good patina in high regard. While researching in the Archives of Tasmania, Hobart, I found an article that says it all.

"In these new Australian lands whose great age does not exceed three generations there is small scope for the collector of old furniture, plate or other artistic objects of days of old, but of all the States, Tasmania, has ever been the richest field for such gleanings. It has therefore been the case that wealthy collectors and enterprising dealers have to a considerable extent denuded Tasmania of its greatest treasures which have gone to adorn the homes of wealthier

folk elsewhere, in many cases, unfortunately, without their original owners being aware that the shabby tables and chairs, parted with for a few shillings, were in fact, good period specimens really worth a large amount. And there have been other tragedies for as every collector of furniture knows to his cost, beautiful specimens innumerable have been ruined by sheer ignorance of the varnish brush – that fiend of destruction which still, alas! remains active in the home and awakes to destroy with the annual spring cleaning. It is not so many years since the mistress of an old Tasmanian home filled with good mahogany furniture varnished it all brilliantly, only to learn too late by doing so

she had destroyed its value to all those that appreciate beauty.

The varnish brush has been responsible for the destruction of more good furniture in Tasmania than time, damp, or fire, or wear, and today as five thousand years ago, ignorance is responsible for more evil than all other ills."

This article is from the *Tasmanian Mail*, 1 December 1927, so nothing is new, is it? No wonder in Tasmania pickings are a bit thin. By the way, could comment be published from restorers as to how to remove the varnish and restore Eve and the rest of us poor females from evil. We've never been that bad.

Caressa Crouch

# The Horn Of Plenty

## "Talking Machine to Gramophone in Australia

Marjorie Graham

As almost everyone knows, Thomas Alva Edison (1847-1931) invented the gramophone – or did he? In 1857 a French inventor had written out his plan for recording the human voice, but not for playing it back. The design would have worked, had it been actually produced as a machine. It wasn't. In April, 1877, a certain Monsieur Charles Cros presented the plan for his 'Paléophone' to the Académie des Sciences. This would have worked too; and the invention also dealt with the playing-back question. Little did Cros know that Edison had beaten him by a few months, by actually constructing the same kind of talking machine. That was the important point: Edison had invented something and made it. Cros bore no hard feelings. Like a gentleman, he acknowledged that Edison had 'got off the ground' first. We might consider the two men as co-inventors; but the American had many patents, the press gave him coverage, and his expanding company possessed good business sense. Edison thought his invention had a future as office equipment – like a dictaphone; and some became immersed in developing electric light. In the meantime, others, seeing wider possibilities, were busy seeking out further developments which would not infringe patents. This may have spurred on Edison, as in November, 1887, it was reported that he was again at work on his talking machine. Edison called his machine a 'Phonograph', and his cylinder records were 'Phonograms'.

In 1888, a competitor, German-born American, Emile Berliner, produced a new model which sold under the name 'Gramophone' – thought to have been simply an inversion of Edison's name 'Phono-

gram'. The contest over who owned what names, was apparently dropped, and 'gramophone' became generic. In Australia we knew talking machines by this name before 1900, and right through to the 1950s radiogram.

Edison's, and Berliner's 1888 model, each had a horn, hearing tube, and had to be wound manually and continuously; otherwise the machine would not play the record.

How was this done? She claims the hearing tube, which he stands there and keeps on turning the handle? What a way for 'boy-meets-girl', and all in the respectability of the family parlour.

There was one difference – and it seems strange that the idea was not sooner and more widely adopted; patent troubles no doubt.



Plate 1. The Edison Phonograph postcard.

Berliner's model played disks – no less. Berliner also worked out what his disks could be made of – he used a shellac mixture. The modern gramophone record can be fairly claimed to have been born in 1888. It took some time to reach maturity as the vinyl LP. As Edison products were early in the Australian market, we had best deal with the

background of the Australian branch, which imported and sold a range of goods including the Edison 'Kinetoscope', which projected moving pictures, and had beaten off challengers in the US courts.

A quality, American postcard, copyrighted in 1905, was distributed in Australia as an advertisement – probably in 1906; possibly in 1907. On the back was printed: 'Issued by the National Phonograph Company of Australia Ltd., 340 Kent Street, Sydney N.S. Wales.' The picture on the front shows the two old folks in a near-dark kitchen, somewhere in the American back-blocks. A cooking pot stands on the glowing open hearth, and more pots are glowing on a shelf. Dinner attended to, mother, and father, with a full glass and tobacco – are gleefully listening to 'The Edison Phono-

graph'. A cylinder packet rests on the table. If this picture sold the product in the United States, why not in Australia? (The idea of a gramophone for 'The Old Folks at Home' was used again in Australia in 1929. Which shows that a good idea can be re-used.)

Besides American models, there were English and Continental.

**You know it by this**

**THE HALL-MARK OF QUALITY**

**THE 1911 MODELS OF "HIS MASTER'S VOICE" GRAMOPHONES ARE NOW ON SALE!**

THEY ARE OBTAINABLE AT ALL ACCREDITED  
"His Master's Voice" Gramophone Dealers.

The New Models embrace several new  
Horn Types, as well as  
**TEN NEW STYLE HORNLESS GRAMOPHONES.**

These Instruments are all of the Latest Design and represent the most modern and up-to-date improvements.

For Perfect Sound, Reproduction, and Mellowness of Tone these 1911 Models have never been equalled.

We shall be pleased to post you our New Instrument Catalogue and Complete List of "His Master's Voice" Gramophone Records, also name of nearest Dealer.  
Address:  
**THE GRAMOPHONE CO. Ltd.**  
163 PITT ST., SYDNEY.

*Marie Hall.* *Kubelik*  
*Amy Castles* *GRAMOLA No. 1* *GRAMOLA No. 2* *Sousa.*  
*Melba* *MELBA* *MARLBOROUGH* *Caruso*  
*Zealand* *H.M. Coldstream Guards* *Clara Bull* *Tetrazzini* *BRUNSWICK*  
*MONARCH SENIOR* *Battistini* *Geraldine Farrar* *Calvé* *MONARCH JUNIOR*  
*The late Danleto* *John McCort Mack* *John Harrison* *Scotti*  
*LIBRARY GRAND. MANOCANY.* *EXCELLO* *QUEEN ANNE* *AUSTRAL* *LIBRARY GRAND. OAK*  
*Harry Lauder* *George Grossmith*

**PURCHASE ONLY**

**"HIS MASTER'S VOICE"**

**GRAMOPHONE RECORDS**

**THEY ARE UNEQUALLED FOR QUALITY & TONE REPRODUCTION.**

**W. H. PALING & CO. LTD.** SYDNEY, BRISBANE, NEWCASTLE, TOOWOOMBA

Plate 2. Advertisement c. 1910.



Seemingly, few of the last-named were sold in Australia, although makers could have established agencies. For example, Pathé was an early maker of talking machines, under the name 'Pathéophone'. This company may be best remembered as a maker of silent movies.

However, in 1968, Sotheby's, London, spent a day auctioning the 'Gilchrist Collection of Victoriana'; at the time not in the expected Sotheby's field. The collection was fine and varied, and the Pathé included had a mahogany case, and a 'flared and faceted brass horn'. (Brass horns tended to be smooth-surfaced; japanned, tin ones tended to be shaped in flutes.) The late Mrs Gertrude Gilchrist also had a German 'Klingsor' gramophone, as well as several Edison models. One such was the 'Fireside' Phonograph, with wax cylinders, and 22 inch polygonal horn. It is tempting to associate this model with that depicted on the postcard handed out in Australia.

The other company whose machines and records were good sellers in Australia, especially in the years between the wars – was The Gramophone Co. Ltd, at 163 Pitt Street, Sydney. Their extensive stock was imported of course; Australia wasn't making gramophones at that time. What later happened, was that say, English or Swiss motors were fitted into local cabinets.

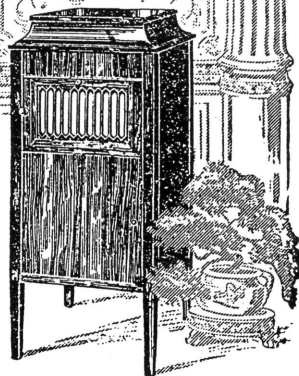
The Gramophone Co. Ltd was English-based, and their recordings were made at the Hayes, Middlesex studios. (Records were lighter and thinner by now – different to the early Edison disks.) This company's connection with His Master's Voice is interesting, but a bit complicated. The dog, Nipper, was born in Bristol in 1884, and adopted by the artist Francis Barraud, who owned a cylinder-type talking machine. When it was played, the no doubt puzzled dog would sit with his ear turned to the horn. And so Barraud painted him, titling the picture 'His Master's Voice'. Nipper died

in 1895. Barraud thought the trade might be interested in his painting – but no. A friend suggested that if a brass horn could be painted over the black one already there, the picture would be brighter. He also suggested that a small firm called The Gramophone Company, might let Barraud borrow a horn as a model. This small company went

on to much greater things; and, not only did it lend a brass horn, but if Barraud could change the cylinder to a disk-playing machine, the company would purchase the painting, and presumably the title; which suited so well. It was a splendid, ready-made trade mark, destined to be known worldwide. That was in 1899. Now briefly: in

## The Aeolian-Vocalion

**The New  
Instrument  
that Reproduces Disk  
Records  
with  
Breathing  
Realism**



The Aeolian-Vocalion is the only Disk playing Instrument that preserves the natural tone, the delicate phrasing and subtle details of the original performance.

We invite you to call and hear some gems from your favorite Grand Opera during the Opera season. Special demonstrations are held daily, at which the most famous Operatic Artists in the world can be heard. Large stocks of Disk Records on hand, and for excellence of performance and value we recommend

Columbia-Rena Grand Opera Records at 3/6  
Columbia Grand Opera 10 & 12in. „ at 7/6 & 10/6  
Double Sided.

**The Pianola Coy. Pty. Ltd**  
384 GEORGE ST. Opp. Beard Watson's.

1901 H.M.V. became the trade mark of the American Victor Talking Machine Company, which made 'Victrola' machines, and in 1929 the Radio Corporation of America (R.C.A.) took over Victor. In England, the rights were acquired by E.M.I., who in March 1991, announced that the Nipper mark had been dropped from their record labels. In the United States the H.M.V. Nipper mark was current in the mid-1980s. It may still be so. (Apparently the original painting exists – one supposes in England.)

In Sydney, the latest H.M.V. gramophone designs were given a large spread of advertising in 1911. Prominence was given to the Nipper trade mark. Names of H.M.V. recording artists were displayed – Melba, Clara Butt, Amy Castles (Australian soprano), Sousa (American bandsman who came to Australia in the same year), and others; in an impressive line-up. For a lower-range market, the 1911 designs included two horn-type, table models, but cabinets of mahogany and oak were now the thing to aim for. All were the 'wind up' type, W.H. Paling & Co. Ltd, of Sydney sold all the models; and, as this music store had branches in Newcastle, Brisbane and Toowoomba, that took care of a large slice of the market.

Dealerships were spread in other States, and H.M.V. machines went into many Australian homes. In quality records, H.M.V. led the field – you have only to inspect an old record collection to realise that. There were 'pop' records too; but, by and large, the gramophone-buying public seemed to 'go for culture' – part of the time, anyhow. Single-side disks were usual to about 1905, and it is thought that the German Odeon company pioneered the double-sided, which was to become standard. However, you'll find Melba's yellowy coloured, H.M.V. labels on single-sides. These would date a bit after the approximate 1905 cut-out.

Just for the record – no pun intended – Caruso was first recorded in 1902; (Sir) Charles Santley, for whom Gounod wrote the famous baritone aria in Faust – 1904: and Melba in 1905.

It may seem strange, that now, that when measures against 'noise pollution' and 'decibel rating' are being preached and decreed, that it was **lack** of volume that was the persistent and pressing problem, for gramophones and radios in the not-so-distant past. Looking like a doctor's stethoscope, were the hearing tubes; an essential and standard piece of equipment with the purchase of a talking machine.

That is, one was part of the deal; more were optional extras. After a while, it was possible to adjust the speed – sometimes with comic results – but not the volume. The problem carried over into the 1920s, when gramophone sales were being pushed amid rising competition. Steel needles came in extra loud, loud, medium and soft ratings, and H.M.V.'s were in different coloured tins. But needles which produced very loud sound, even if used once only, as was recommended, wore out records. You could buy another, or put up with the worn tracks. The old, visible horn was now hidden in the cabinet gramophones, and the amplified sound emerged

McDOWELLS LTD., KING & GEORGE STS., SYDNEY.



### THE "DENISONOLA" CONSOLE MODEL PHONOGRAPH.

Our latest Console Model, constructed in best Queensland Maple, and finished in modern two-tone shade. Fitted with heavy British motor.

McDOWELLS PRICE ..... £23/10/-

TERMS: 30/- Deposit, 7/6 Weekly.



via the fabric-lined fret at the top of the machines.

The less expensive table models in metal or timber, were offered with a 'Loudspeaker' as an optional extra. For cabinets and some table models, the diaphragm came next. Mica was used in the gadgets, but H.M.V. put out a 'pleated' version, which was propped up like a circular fan, on top of the opened gramophone. All these innovations were to improve the volume. Picnics and parties called for something else: enter the fully 'portable', which fitted into a sort of attaché case. You took it along with you: opened it, erected the diaphragm, put in the handle, wound up, and played the record. One advertisement shows father and son sitting listening, while mother cooks dinner at an open camp fire. This sounds like the ancestor of the 'trannie' at the beach, but probably without mother cooking, when the take-away is so handy.

About 1901-2, as production costs come down, so did the prices of basic models. This was helped – in America, anyway – by substituting the expensive electric motor, with the clockwork, spring device, which became standard for gramophones. Electric motors, America's most modern technology in practice, were too much ahead of the market anyhow. The machines would not work unless 'connected to current'. Most homes – especially in Australia – had no 'current' – so, by using a spring motor, sales were enlarged. In the 1920s, and 1930s, broken springs kept repairmen busy. The warnings re overwinding were falling on deaf ears.

As early as 1900, Sears, Roebuck & Co., the giant, Chicago-based store, promoted a bright idea. You could make extra income by doing 'exhibitions' with your gramophone; and, S.R. & Co., could send you 'outfits' with various paraphernalia to make a success of doing a show at local halls. Extra hearing tubes were in the package. There was

also a coin-in-the-slot talking machine for use in small town drug stores. (Another ancestor – the local milk bar, especially in the country.)

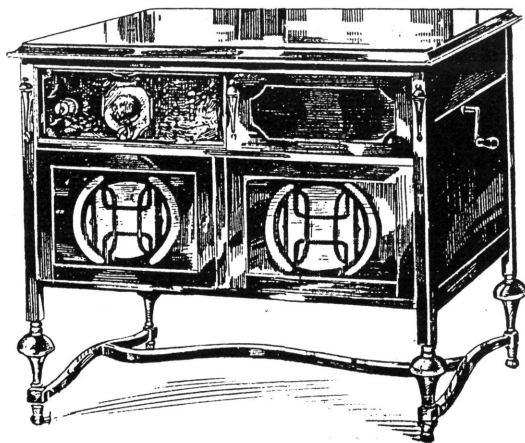
Private owners of gramophones did take their machines along to charity and social functions. This happened in Newcastle, NSW, in 1899, when a man, allegedly wrongly convicted in Maitland in 1891, was now travelling around and speaking in an attempt to establish his innocence. His two-hour lecture was 'The Story of a Crime', and the mayor, aldermen and citizens gave him an ovation. Before the lecture began, a gentleman whose family had married into that of the present writer, 'gave some very amusing selections with a gramophone, which were greatly

enjoyed'. (No – not family tradition – reported in The Newcastle Morning Herald.) Although interesting to read of a gramophone entertainment at this date, one wonders as to the appropriateness of the amusement preceding that lecture. As had been said, the talking machine by any name, was a novelty; much as was TV when it first hit the Australian population in 1956.

As the 1920s wore on there were many brands of gramophone and combination machines to attract the buyer, and the illustrations here are mostly self-explanatory.

The 'Talk-a-Phone Co.' at Circular Quay sold the Rexonola, and records from H.M.V., Columbia and Regal. Vocalion (Middlesex) was another brand, and this gramo-

#### McDOWELLS LTD., KING & GEORGE STS., SYDNEY.



#### THE "DENISON" COMBINATION.

All Electric 3-valve Wireless, with Phonograph and pick-up. A beautiful article of furniture, constructed in Maple and finished in two-toned Walnut, combining the latest popular musical instruments.

McDOWELLS PRICE ..... £39/10/-

TERMS: £4 Deposit, 15/- Weekly.

Plate 5. Advertisement c.1929.

phone company had its own Aeolian Orchestra for accompanying singers whose recordings had earlier been issued on the Vocalion label. The Vocalion name was not in the market for as long as some other companies, but the Australian bass, Malcolm McEachern recorded 'Why Do the Nations' from Messiah, and the writer has never heard it sung at such a breakneck speed. They got it onto a 12 inch disk. The old Vocalion records are still around, and apparently being nurtured by collectors. Their labels, in black and gold, on sky blue, red, and possibly green(?), are quite handsome. Australia was to have some shares of the action. Brunswick records carried the words: 'Made in Australia' – the pressings, one supposes. Also on the label was 'Reg. U.S. Patent Office' (and) 'The Brunswick-Balke-Collender Company'. This arrangement meant that in Australia, buyers could obtain Rachmaninoff's Prelude in C Sharp Minor, played by an international artist. (My late senior aunt told me that 'everyone had one of those'.)

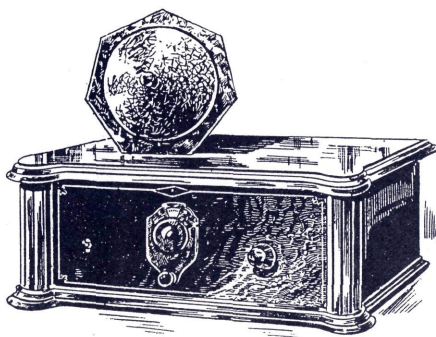
In some Continental cities, about 1890, it was noticed that pleasant rooms at street level, had coin-in-the-slot talking machines. The customer selected the record, paid up, and listened in – certainly with a hearing tube. Presumably the same customer might purchase the same record from stock. Whether anything like this was done in Australian cities is doubtful, and the date is too early for such advanced methods in the Antipodes. (We had coin machines for postcards – but not in 1890 or so.)

Around 1926-7 Brown's Music Salon, 'opposite the fountain', Parramatta, had a listening room which outdid the Hanging Gardens of Babylon. Seagrass chairs and tables, floral wallpaper, potted palms, bowls and vases of flowers, and more greenery higher up; all were there. Wearing a cloche hat, Madam sits while a male assistant

puts on a record. Pictures on the walls, an open portable, cabinet models, and what looks like a 'chip' doorway curtain, are all in the photograph. Sadly, it is just not good enough for reproduction here. But it did show a more 'genteel' way of shopping than we now experience. For those who invested in a 'broadcast receiver' (a wireless or radio – as was the coming name), the first taste of what they were about to receive, came on 23 November, 1923. It was Australia's 'first broadcast, and an estimated 6,000 people listened in. It was said to be fuzzy and crackling, but this was the latest novelty, and nothing short of a miracle. The first two high-power stations were 3LO in Melbourne, and 2FC in Sydney, and both were commercial. The 'FC' stood for Farmer & Co., the prestigious department store; whilst the 'LO' was a compliment to the pioneer Marconi, from whose London building, experimental broadcasting had been carried on. The call sign was 'LO', short for London, and the

Melbourne folk were happy to be 3LO. The Sydney licensees preferred their own initials. The early history of broadcasting is fascinating; but, as this story concerns the sound machines themselves, and the people who used them, and not sound engineering, we shall return to the main theme. Some budding electricians made their own sets. One gentleman, now in his eighties, did just that, and his wireless was as good as any in the shops. All the twiddling with the tuning knob would not bring added volume; the number of expensive valves helped, but the old problem remained. This is literally illustrated on a sheet music cover of a song copyrighted in New York in 1923, and available in Australia in this form, probably in 1924. The lines at the top: 'If You "Listen-in" with your wireless ...', tell us something, but the drawings tell us lots more. The children use earphones, and one wireless had a loudspeaker attached; being a better plan for the young child who would not have to sit up with earphones.

McDOWELLS LTD., KING & GEORGE STS., SYDNEY.



### THE "DENISON" A.C. THREE.

This model is handsomely constructed in Maple and finished in two-toned Walnut, with a beautifully figured panel to match. Equipped with Philips parts, single dial control, and guaranteed for 12 months.

McDOWELLS PRICE ..... £27/10/-

TERMS: £3 Deposit, 10/- Weekly.

Plate 6. Advertisement c.1929.

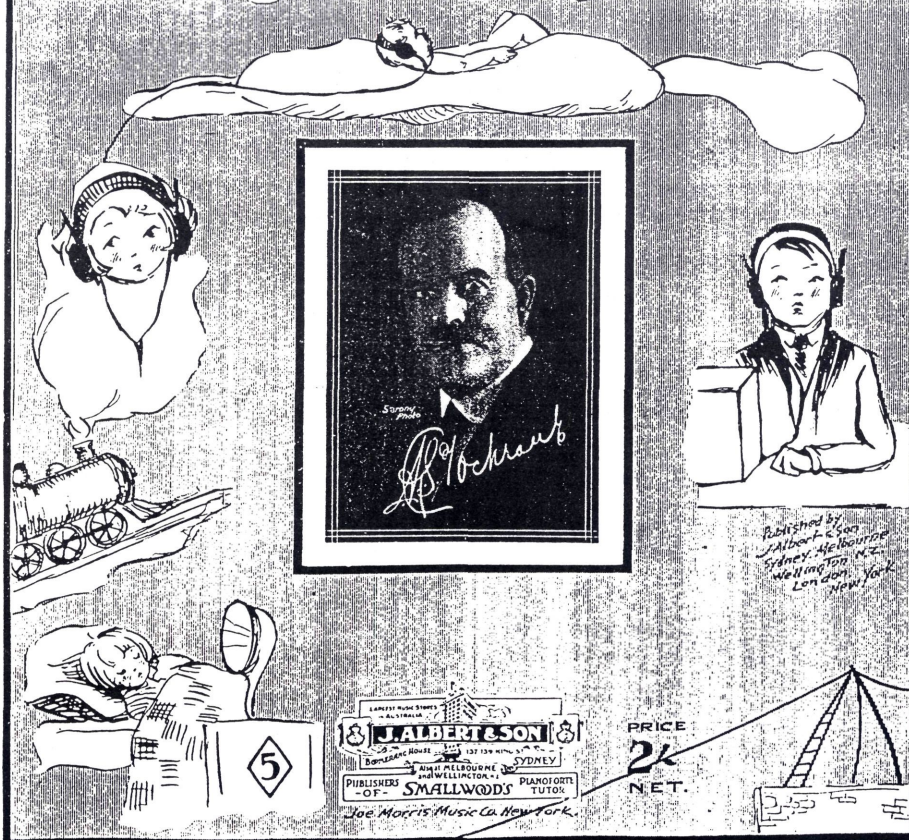


IF YOU "LISTEN-IN" WITH YOUR WIRELESS,  
YOU MUST HAVE A COPY OF THIS SONG.

# DREAM DADDY

Dedicated to the Australian "Dream Daddy"  
The Bedtime Stories Man, A. S. COCHRANE.

Station 2. F. C.



This Song includes Special UKULELE Accompaniment

Plate 7. Advertisement c. 1927.

From the outset, Australian radio had 'Aunts' and 'Uncles' – even Mr George Cochrane was 'Dream Daddy'. 2FC later became an ABC station, and another of 1923 vintage became 2BL. Both have updated names. As well as being just a bit amusing, this music cover is history. In the early 1920s it was not amusing – it was deadly serious for the listeners and the broadcasters.

By 1928-9 radios were really coming on. Specially designed cabinets, such as the 'Georgian', looked like pieces of furniture. They were not cheap; but there was money about, until the Depression, which was almost with us.

Worldwide gramophone sales reached a peak in 1929; were nearly as good in 1930, then came the blow. Sales went down. Much the same applied to radios, which hadn't had much time to establish a following before the Depression. After that, radios gained the lead, and the ordinary gramophone lost its popularity.

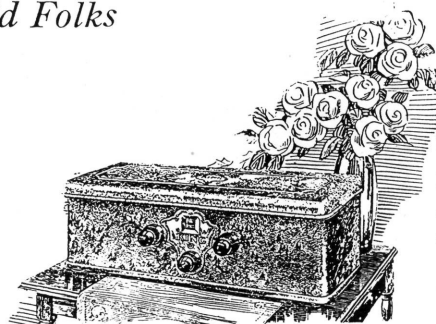
In 1929 the all-electric radio-gram lay in the future. Meanwhile, there were electric and battery radios; the diaphragm was still used for the less expensive, low volume models; and surface noise was said to have been eliminated in 1923 – it wasn't, but it was lessened. The better (read 'expensive') models had reduced static; and, it was claimed, were 'capable of great volume'. So the manufacturers turned their attention even more, to the cabinets, and to emphasising the quality timbers used in construction, which incorporated an assortment of styles, from William and Mary to the plainer, Stickley-like forms. The radios and gramophones of the late 1920s were, in effect, furniture. Many people were not prepared to have something starkly technical and machine-like in their homes. At least the article should be as elegant as their fine piano. Some of these shapely models were converted into cupboards

## WHAT COULD BE FINER For The Old Folks AT HOME?



The Georgian Cabinet  
for "King" Radio Sets

This charming cabinet has been specially designed to accommodate any "King" Radio Set. It incorporates a built-in tonal chamber of the long air column type and a high grade loud speaker unit. Complete with King Radio Set and all accessories, the cabinet may be purchased as follows:  
With Model "G" . . . £ 55  
With Model "F" . . . £ 49/10  
With Electric Model . . . . . £ 65



## KING in RADIO

If there is someone you know who has't a Radio Set, or you haven't a really up-to-date set in your home, why not buy a "King" Radio? Nothing else could give greater pleasure! The new 1929 Battery and Electrically operated models—the very peak of Radio perfection—are just out. They are fully shielded, marvellous distance getters, and capable of great volume. Control is by a single dial.

MODEL "G" 6-valve Genuine Neutrodyne built into rich bronze-finished metal case, as illustrated above. **£24**  
Price without accessories . . . . .

MODEL "F" is similar to Model "G." but has only 5 valves. Price without accessories . . . . . **£19**

ALL ELECTRIC MODEL—This is complete in itself, the only accessory to be bought being the Loud-speaker. In appearance this model is identical with Model "G."  
Price . . . . . **£46/6/-**

## The AEOLIAN COMPANY

(Australia) LTD.

AEOLIAN HALL, 264 PITT STREET, SYDNEY, Next Criterion Theatre

Plate 8. Advertisement c. 1929.

when their primary use had passed. They were too good to throw away: besides they had backs, which soon disappeared from the next line-up of designs. Art Déco was on the


way. But there was one model available in 1929, which retained the 'chest-on-stand' appearance, yet the upper section was inlaid in a geometric pattern which was

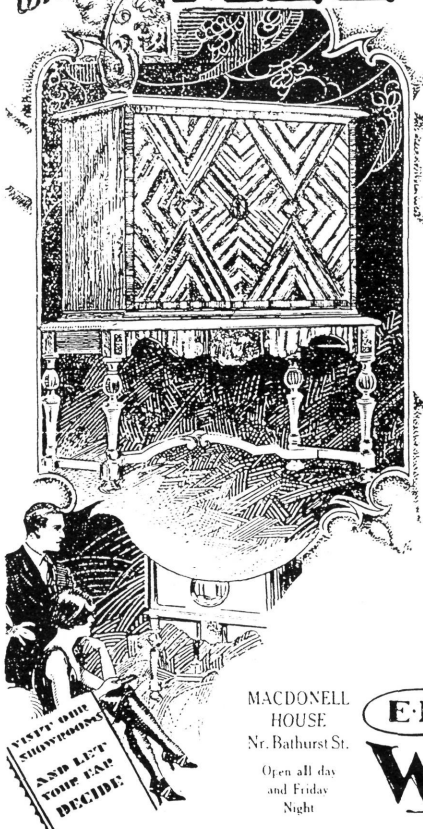
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from RECORD or RADIO -

*with the*

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*Sonora* 



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It reproduces and amplifies  
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vibrations per second.

The individual characteristic of every instrument,  
voice, etc., has at last been made to combine in a  
volume of sound which gives the same purity of  
tone and volume that would be heard by listening  
to the actual orchestra, band, voice or other  
musical combination of sound.

Just connect to the nearest power point and

*YOUR EAR WILL TELL YOU HOW FASTLY  
DIFFERENT THE MELODON IS FROM THE  
REST.*

*The BRILLIANCY, DEPTH and PURITY of  
TONE, from the deep vibrant bass of the  
MIGHTY ORGAN to the trill of the Piccolo,  
must be heard to be realised.*

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ARE CORDIALLY INVITED.

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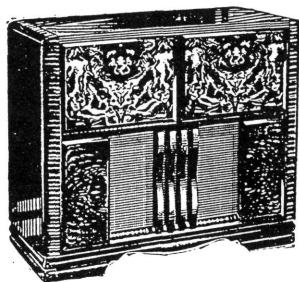
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*Leader's in radio development in Australia since 1927*

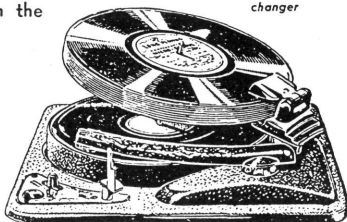
*Radio Pioneers of America since 1894*



All Stromberg-Carlson Radio-phonographs are fitted with the amazing "velvet-action" 3-speed **AUTOMATIC RECORD CHANGER**

Plays standard records at 78 r.p.m. High-fidelity microgroove 10-inch at 45 r.p.m., and 12-inch at 33 $\frac{1}{3}$  r.p.m.

*The World's  
finest automatic  
changer*



*There is nothing finer than a*



# STROMBERG-CARLSON

Plate 10. Advertisement 1952.

nothing if not Art Déco. This was the 'Melodon Sonora', which had everything possible in 1929. It was an all-electric machine for radio and record playing, and really a beauty; worthy of a place in a museum, if one exists. You'll notice the doors: the caring owners could blot out the mechanical aspect, when not enjoying home entertainment. Unfortunately the advertise-

ment does not state the price, but it would be safe to say that the Melodon Sonora was aimed at the affluent music-lover, and attuned to their gracious living.

By the mid-1930s, technology took precedence over furniture design. It was the beginning of the backless radio. (Evening dresses followed suit — or did the radios

follow the dress styles? No, the radio designs had a reason of sorts.) Everyone was standing their radios against the wall. The works fitted on to a shelf at the top, and the rest was open and required dusting occasionally. In Australia, AWA was showing cabinet models of 'beautifully matched veneers', in straight up-and-down styles, with larger square dials. But the mantel model, in polished black Radelec (plastic) was completely Art Déco, in having a ziggurat outline. This was backless too — but some space and openness was needed to 'get at the works' when necessary. It had gold trimmings and would have looked very smart on the mantelpiece. The Fuller Grand Opera Season of 1934/5 was used to gently urge people to invest in a new radio — why? The operas were to be broadcast!

Stromberg-Carlson, 'Radio Pioneers of America since 1894' had been in Australia since 1927, but seem to have had less exposure than other makers. In 1952, their 'Radio-Phonograph', with a 3-speed changer (i.e. 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ ; 45 and 78 rpm disks), fine cabinet, and advanced technology, was one of several up-and-coming radiograms. In 1953-4 H.M. Queen Elizabeth, and H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh, visited Australia. It was quite an occasion, with public response enthusiastic and joyous. Under their Radiola label (with leaping kangaroo logo), AWA in collaboration with the ABC, issued an LP album — 'Royal Progress'. It made the best seller list for 1954.

Time has caught up with the marvels of the 1950s, as surely as it will do with the marvels of the 1990s. Technical achievement has passed the expectations of even a generation ago. We can only sympathise with the pioneers of little more than a century ago, and admire their skill and imagination which brought such wonderful fruits; even if noise pollution and decibel ratings are facts of life.

# An Early Australian Lighthouse Surviving in Model Form in Hobart

*Peter Mercer*

A particularly interesting item in the collections of "Narryna", the Van Diemen's Land Memorial Folk Museum at Battery Point, Hobart, is a small model in a glass case of the original lighthouse at Low Head, a peninsula which helps form the eastern entrance of the Tamar River. An inscription indicates that it was made in 1866. It measures 42.3x24cm and is 25cm high.

It appears to be the work of an untrained but nevertheless talented and appreciative model-maker who in all likelihood could have been an early superintendent or keeper of the lighthouse. Certainly whoever made it had a strong attachment to this lighthouse on its windswept promontory. Perhaps it is the work of Alfred C. Rockwell or his son Alfred for the Rockwells, son following father, were keepers there for 47 years from 1865 to 1912. Although there may well be inaccuracies in scale and detail and an effort to make it look rather more elaborate than it really was, this model is an important historical item. This is because, together with the drawing of it as it was in 1848, it is one of the earliest visual records of what this well-known lighthouse complex once looked like.<sup>1</sup> More importantly, what the model offers is a three dimensional view of the original stone-constructed light tower with its keeper's quarters attached on each side. This was the only lighthouse built like this in Tasmania and it was demolished after the present brick tower was completed 100 years ago.

Although geographically the

best-placed port of entry in Tasmania, the entrance to Port Dalrymple at the head of the Tamar River is naturally very hazardous. Shoals and reefs are found in rather unexpected places. One such example is the notoriously deceptive Hebe Reef which is in the centre of the entrance slightly north of Low Head and is exposed only at low tide.

Effective marking of the channel was a priority from the beginning of European settlement and until a lighthouse was built a beacon fire was kept burning on the highest elevation of the head as a rather primitive but age-old guide and warning to help mariners find the entrance safely.

Because of the constant need for firewood close at hand to keep the beacon burning, the windswept Low Head peninsula soon became grasslands cleared of all naturally occurring shrubs and trees. For many years afterwards until the intrusion of the South African boxthorn the head in particular was completely devoid of trees or shrubs of any kind.

During the lush economic years of the 1830s when prospects for young and free settlers arriving in the colony knew no bounds, substantial improvements to communications and public facilities were taking place. Port Dalrymple in particular after 1835 became strategically important as the supply centre for the embryonic Port Phillip Bay settlement. Many younger members of the already established landed pastoral families crossed Bass Strait with their possessions to take up and occupy some of the vast tracts of potentially excellent grazing land in Australia

Felix, later called Victoria. Others, recently arrived, used Launceston as a springboard to successful pastoral activities on the mainland.

Civil Engineer and Colonial Architect, John Lee Archer (1791-1852), the designer of many of Tasmania's much admired early colonial buildings and the Ross Bridge, turned his hand to lighthouses and in 1835 drew plans for both the Low Head and Cape Bruny lighthouses. However, things were already moving in the north. By 1835 the building of the Low Head lighthouse, with conjoined keeper's quarters consisting of two rooms each side of the tower, was already well underway, the work having been commenced in 1832.<sup>2</sup> Built in local stone rubble by convict labour under the supervision of a colourful character named Richard "Bolting Dick" Warmesley, it took six years to fully complete, using Archer's plan.<sup>3</sup>

While the building work was in progress, it became necessary to abandon the lighting of the beacon fire. As a temporary measure a wooden lighthouse with a fixed light beam was built nearby to provide a light until the lighthouse was commissioned and this was first lit on 9 December 1833. It was the third lighthouse to be built in the Australian colonies and the second to be lit in Tasmania.<sup>4</sup> The tower and the lanterns for the permanent light were pre-fabricated in the Launceston Timber Yard and erected by Warmesley.<sup>5</sup>

By 1838 both the Low Head and Cape Bruny lighthouses were fully operational. The Low Head tower was 15.25 metres from the base to the top of the lantern which was 43



metres above high water mark. Spermin whale oil was used to light the lamp which was revolved by means of clockwork machinery wound up by hand every eight hours. The beam was concentrated and magnified by large metal reflectors.

John Lee Archer also designed the earlier buildings of the nearby Pilot Station, the first of which was built in 1834. Today the Pilot Station has the most outstanding group of early colonial buildings surviving in Northern Tasmania.

The lighthouse superintendent and his assistants, the pilots and boat crews, the signalmen operating the two-way semaphore system to Launceston (1835-1858) and later the cable operators from 1857 onwards formed a close-knit community at Low Head long before it became a popular seaside resort for Launcestonians. The lighthouses in the Australian colonies in the 1850s were still under the control of the East India Company but later those in Tasmania came under the Hobart Marine Board and with Federation, they became a Commonwealth responsibility.<sup>6</sup>

The original stone rubble tower, with its stucco finish, showed increasing signs of failing structurally in the 1870s so only 50 years after its completion it was replaced by the present brick structure which was commenced in 1888 and commissioned in March 1890. The new lighthouse, now itself over 100 years old, was built to the west of the old tower and the original structures were then demolished.<sup>7</sup>

The two-storeyed head keeper's house and office, built in the latter part of the 19th century, survived until the late 1930s when it was demolished and replaced by the present brick bungalow, with office attached, which is built on the same site. The cottage to the left of the light tower, which is now used as a lighthouse museum, is the only survivor of the earlier period and was probably built in the 1870s.

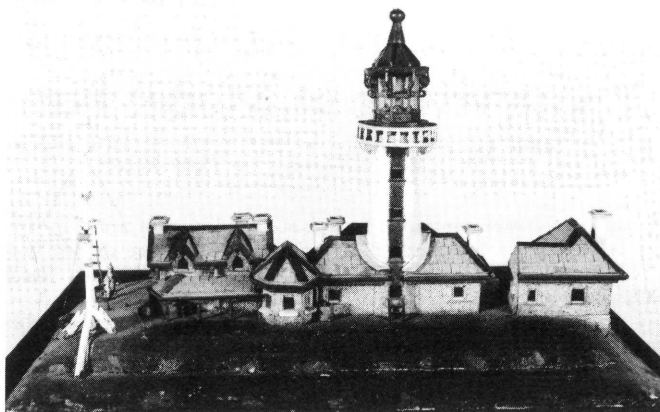


Plate 1. Model of Low Head Lighthouse 1866, front view.

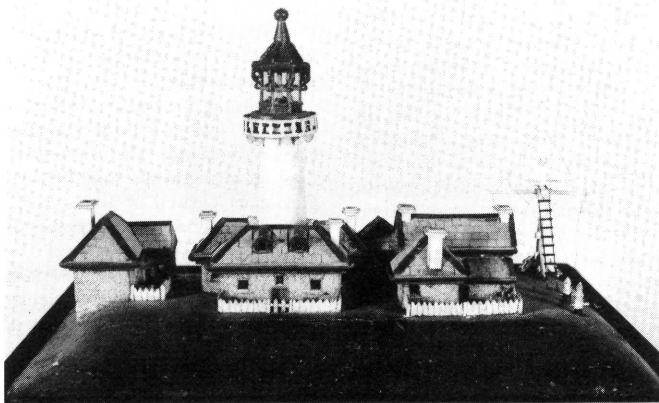


Plate 2. Model of Low Head Lighthouse 1866, reverse view.

John Lee Archer's other lighthouse at Cape Bruny on the southern tip of Bruny Island survives intact to this day.

#### References

1. The drawing is in the Mitchell Library in Sydney.
2. Roy Smith, *John Lee Archer, Tasmanian Architect and Engineer*, Hobart, 1962, p.36.

3. J.G. Branagan, *George Town – History of Town and District*, Launceston, 1980, p.149.
  4. Kathleen M. Stanley, *Guiding Lights*, Hobart, 1991, p.16.
  5. Branagan, op cit.
  6. Valmai Phillips, *Romance of Australian Lighthouses*, Adelaide, 1977, p.86.
  7. Branagan, op cit.
- Photography: Simon Cuthbert.



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