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Born and educated in Western Australia having degrees in education, art and design and a doctorate in art history – she has lectured in jewellery and silversmithing, technology and design history. She was the President of the Craft Council of Western Australia from 1979–81 and was made a Fellow and Life Member. A Research Associate of the Western Australian Museum since 1987 and founder of the Jewellers Group of Western Australia (now incorporated into the Jewellers and Metalmiths Group Australia), she is a well-regarded historian on Western Australia's portable heritage.

She has travelled widely bringing an international perspective to her many years of research, commencing her writing career in the 1970s as an art critic. Initially contributing articles to a variety of journals in Australia and overseas and chapters to a number of books, she then edited *Art and Design in Western Australia: Perth Technical College 1900–2000* before publishing her first book *Kings Park: A Joy Forever* in 2009. This was followed in 2010 by *Gold and Silversmithing in Western Australia: A History*.

Dr Erickson has won the *Powerhouse Award for Australiana* (writing) in 1994 and the *Peter Walker Fine Arts Writing Award* in 2011.



Western Australia has a rich visual culture based on physical, social and artistic environments that is subtly different from the rest of Australia. *Inspired by Light and Land* details the portable heritage of the State, providing a context for understanding the objects designed and made.

Tracing the arts from the first years when the practice and appreciation of the fine arts, architecture and the crafts was fragmented and disjointed – *Inspired* outlines the practice of historical designers and makers who drew their inspiration from their western land.



Western Australian Museum

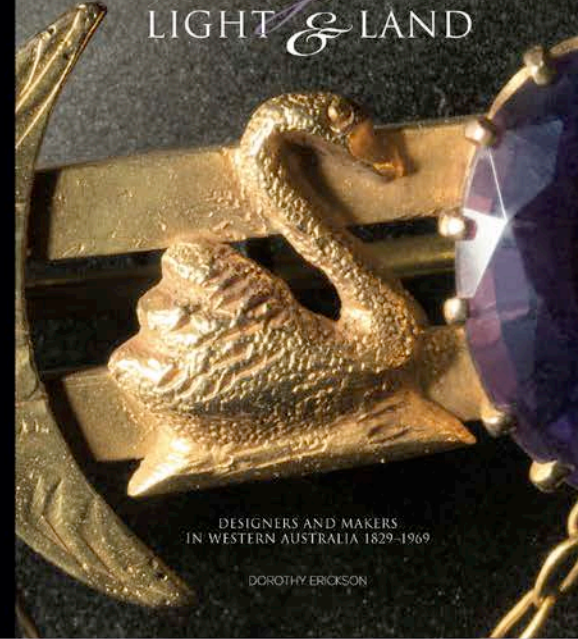
INSPIRED BY LIGHT & LAND  
DESIGNERS AND MAKERS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA 1829-1969

DOROTHY ERICKSON

Western Australian Museum

# INSPIRED

## LIGHT & LAND



DESIGNERS AND MAKERS  
IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA 1829-1969

DOROTHY ERICKSON

Western Australia's Swan River Colony did not prosper and development was erratic until the advent of the gold rushes in the late 1850s. Despite the rigours of pioneering, crafts – both professional and amateur – were undertaken with enthusiasm at most levels of society and with varying degrees of success. Fine furniture in traditional styles was produced using local materials.

Some distinctly local forms developed in jewellery during the gold rushes while the unique flora of the colony has been an enduring source of design. It was depicted in metalwork and featured strongly in watercolours, illuminated addresses, china painting, embroidery, woodcarving, design of textiles and graphic design. However, the small population base and lack of conservation have meant that these few objects that remain are rare and precious.

*Inspired by Light and Land* draws our attention to many forgotten makers and shares the intriguing features of this illustrious heritage.



C. H. Allen. One of the finest of the popular swan brooches.  
c.1890. 2005. The gold set with the swan. S. Strickland.  
Western Australian Museum. 1180642.

# Inspired by Light and Land

## Dorothy Erickson



# INSPIRED

BY

## LIGHT & LAND

DESIGNERS AND MAKERS  
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WESTERN AUSTRALIAN  
MUSEUM



# INTRODUCTION

Western Australia has a rich and interesting visual culture based on physical, social and artistic environments that are subtly different from the rest of Australia. Art and design are not made in isolation. Whether they are made as an adornment to society, an activity of necessity or, as is increasingly seen, a critique upon it, they remain the product of the economic and social milieu in which they have been developed. Many vibrant experiences are provided by work that references its history or surroundings through the imaginative consideration of the world that has shaped both the maker

and the discipline. As such it forms part of a continuum.

This book is a broad-brush introduction to objects designed and made in Western Australia and tells the story of the first 140 years of settlement tracing the first years when the practice and appreciation of the fine arts, architecture and the crafts was as fragmented and disjointed as the isolated settlements that clung limpet-like to the periphery of the continent.

Settled as a British colony for gentlefolk (in the class system of the time — those



immediately below the nobility), development was erratic until the advent of the gold rushes in the late 1880s. Music, the crafts and architecture were the most successful art forms in this early colonial period as they supplied immediate social needs so the provision of clothing and shelter, crafts of necessity, fine cabinet-making as well as leisure crafts such as fine needlework and sketching are covered in Chapter 1 setting these in the context of social mores and life in an isolated and struggling pioneer colony. From the beginning the new settlers were entranced with the light, landforms and particularly the unusual flora and fauna. Chapter 2 includes the stronger development of crafts in the period following the introduction of convicts and includes

boatbuilding, jewellery, furniture, interior design and the International Exhibition in Perth in 1881.

Despite the rigours of settler life, crafts — both professional and amateur — were undertaken with enthusiasm at most levels of society with varying degrees of success. Fine furniture in traditional styles was produced using local materials and boat building was a major craft. Some distinctly local forms appear to have developed, particularly in jewellery and areas of rural ingenuity, but the small population base and lack of conservation of many forms of objects have reduced the sample base upon which more informed generalisations can be made.

**ABOVE:** Watercolour of *Old Farm Strawberry Hill*, 169 x 244mm, the home of Sir Richard and Lady Ann Spencer, thought to have been painted by Mary Ann Trimmer, née Spencer, c.1836. From a scrapbook, National Trust of Australia (WA).

**LEFT:** A fine jarrah settle from a homestead in the Albany area, maker unknown, c.1860s, 207 x 90 x 62cm. Private collection.



Local involvement in the Aesthetic Movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century had a considerable impact, and our story in Chapter 3 focuses on the instruments of its importation into Western Australia. The gold rushes that brought people and wealth encouraged the flowering of an art circle and the development of an art school before World War I curtailed activities. Some of the useful industries that developed, such as commercial potteries, pressed metal, ironwork and stained-glass are detailed. The arts of calligraphic addresses and goldfields jewellery come to the fore in this period.

The Society of Arts, Museum, Art Gallery and Art School, together with international magazines of the time, were important in

forming taste and expectations in Perth. Society members and students used local materials, imagery and flora to develop a regional variant of an international style Art Nouveau, known at the time as The Domestic Art Movement which is explored in Chapter 4. Exponents included James W. R. Linton, Francesco Vanzetti, Frederick Williams, Bessie Rischbieth, Mattie Furphy, Flora Landells, Loui Benham, May and Helen Creeth, and Pansy Francis. The unique flora and fauna of the colony was a particular source of design. It was depicted in metalwork and featured strongly in watercolour sketches, illuminated addresses, china painting, embroidery, woodcarving, textile design, and graphic design in the local



newspaper the *Western Mail* and exhibited in international exhibitions. Prominent in these were painters May Creeth, Annie Dorrington and Margaret Forrest. Metalsmith Gordon Holdsworth won a frieze design competition in 1908 using a banksia motif, while teacher James W. R. Linton set design and drawing exams utilising wildflowers, and student Mattie Furphy incorporated them in her metalwork. Local identity Francesco Vanzetti mixed European flora with Australian birds in door panels for his home and designed jewellery for sale using local flora as a motif.

Janda Gooding wrote in *Western Australian*

#### *Art and Artists 1900–1950:*

*There has been a tendency to explain the visual arts in Western Australia as a product of cultural and geographical isolation and a resistant physical environment ... A myth has developed that poor communications and geographical circumstances were a restraining influence on the development of art in the west ... Much more important than physical isolation, has been the desire to remain insulated from the rest of Australia.*

LEFT: Manning's Ferry, Fremantle, 1858, the home of wealthy merchant C.A. Manning. Architectural drawing attributed to Thomas Henry Johnston 'Satan' Beowine, 185 x 275 mm. Collection of Lauder & Howard.

ABOVE: Wildflower paintings *Boronia*, *Leschenaultia* and *Grevillea* by Helen Creeth, c.1912, in their original frame. Gouaches, each panel 27 x 10.5 cm. Private collection.





**RIGHT (FROM TOP):** The *Western Australian Casket* containing an illuminated manuscript that was the gift to Queen Victoria from the parliament of Western Australia on the occasion of her Diamond Jubilee in 1897. The manuscript was by A. G. von Stach and the casket was constructed from a variety of local timbers and minerals including copper, silver, tin, pearl shell and 1.1 kilograms of gold. It was designed by E. H. Hamilton advised by Herbert Gibbs and Henry Prinsep with woodwork fabricated by Cohen and Madsley and the metalwork by Jerger assisted by Donovan & Overland. National Archives A1721, 2. Flora Landells, bowl, lustre-ware, date unknown, 9.6 x 12.9cm diameter. Private collection.

**ABOVE:** Gordon Holdsworth, ecclesiastical book cover, c.1909–12. Copper with silver mounts and an enamelled medallion of St George, 25.5 x 20.2 x 1.6cm. Private collection.





This was an accurate assessment, for even in the federated twentieth century, Western Australia had the communication channels but little wish for close ties with the east coast. The focus in the first two decades of the twentieth century continued to be on a wider world and its art as part of international movements of the time. Only the closing in of the world and contraction of information

systems occasioned by World War I reduced this interaction, restricting it to the allied countries. In this physical isolation, the state developed a tradition of artists working as craftspeople. This was commenced by J. W. R. Linton and maintained by others through the difficult years of the 1940s and 1950s.

Chapter 5 outlines the practice of the better-known craftspeople and the problems of the

interwar years and to avoid confusion follows their careers through to the end. J.W.R. Linton himself worked as an artist-craftsman and painter until 1947. His son, Jamie, worked as a sculptor and then artist-craftsman in metal until 1976. Gordon Holdsworth, who began work in 1908, continued working as a painter, etcher and artist-craftsman until 1964. Art teacher and painter Flora Landells included pottery in her oeuvre, retiring from this in 1960 and from china painting in 1980. Following WWI there was a brief period of prosperity before the Great Depression overtook the world, followed shortly by World War II and then reconstruction. During and after the Depression there was a focus on commercial aspects of art with graphic design becoming a strong interest exemplified by the varied careers of A. B. Webb, Rae McPherson and Jean Lang.

The generation that developed between the wars had to cope with the Depression and its aftermath that not only restricted opportunities for women but also failed to provide them for men. Interest in local flora intensified with the setting up of the Country Women's Association network and the proliferation of private art schools, women's magazines and stamped patterns for embroidery. China painters stylised flowers into 'modern' designs, and Aboriginal motifs became the inspiration for others trying to develop a peculiarly national form of art.

Chapter 6 details a number of women and their struggles for recognition including

students of the Maylands School of Art, Amy Harvey and Marina Shaw, who became potters and china painters. Teacher and craft-worker Muriel Southern, textile designer Ira Forbes Smith and the women's societies. The commercial potteries Calyx Pottery, Wembley Ware, Kohler Ware, Darbyshire Potteries and the short-lived Narrogin Potteries are also detailed here. The effect on some craftspeople such as William Andrews and Wilfred Priestner is also included.

Inspiration — that spark that ignites a work of art and gives it a sense of place — comes from a variety of sources, conscious and subconscious. Chapter 7 focuses on the explosive energy and inspiration that developed in the wake of the 1960s iron-ore boom. It tells the story of the postwar rise of the artist-craftsperson, detailing the influence of the migrant population, returned servicemen and women, the Festival of Perth, the Skinner Galleries, the iron ore and nickel booms and the careers of Guy and Helen Grey-Smith, Norma Rolland, Geoffrey Allen, Marie Miller, Heather McSwain, David Foulkes Taylor, Robin McArthur, Eileen Keys, Kitch Currie and Francis Kotai. The story is told of the revitalized Fremantle and Perth Technical Colleges, the careers of influential graphic designers Norman Aisbett and Cedric Baxter, the rise of the various craft groups and the beginnings of the Craft Council movement.

LEFT (FROM FAR LEFT): Percy Stanway-Tapp, printed postcard of Western Australia's floral emblem, the kangaroo paw, c.1910. Private collection.

George Stedman Waits (1804–89), watercolour painting of his sons *George and Frederick* at their property on the Canning in 1842, 220 x 165mm. Private collection.

## CHAPTER ONE

## COLONIAL LIFE

*Aspects of Sensibility, 1829–49*

*How different my rural life from that which I had imagined it would be! Instead of Demi-savage and romantic, it is civilized (often ceremonious) and uniform, with less of privation and much more occupation of the mind and body than I had anticipated.<sup>1</sup>*



So wrote early colonist George Fletcher Moore (1798–1886) of his life in Western Australia in the early days of the colony. The settlement on the Swan River came into being ostensibly as a colony for gentlemen. Settlers arrived with romantic notions of creating a utopia in the southern hemisphere where, within a short time, no one was expected or needed to work — at least no one who was gently born. The haste with which the whole project proceeded sowed the seeds of the problems that followed and these were such that the colony was later described by the anonymous author of *The Cinderella of the South* as an ‘... anomaly in the history of colonisation ... never had a colony been so impoverished, and yet lingered on.’<sup>2</sup> The British government had only given its assent to the establishment on the condition that the colonists themselves met all costs. That the reality fell short of the dream and the colony did not prosper as planned had considerable bearing on the activities undertaken in the early years. The first settlers in the many small settlements clinging limpet-like to the long coastline bore the major hardship, physically and financially, and many such as the Hentys left the colony for greener pastures in the eastern colonies. Most of those who persevered eventually prospered. Adversity bred close-knit communities that were very strict in their observance of social formalities and extremely hospitable. The deprivation, however, has often been exaggerated. For instance the Bussells arrived with very little cash, yet by 1842 the Reverend

John Ramsden Wollaston (1791–1856) wrote in his *Picton Journals*, ‘The Bussells have gone through a great deal and met with many losses ... They are now in possession of plenty of all the necessities of life. This is the case also with many of the other old settlers.’<sup>3</sup> When Anthony Trollope (1815–1882) visited in 1872 he observed,

*I heard very much of the poverty of Western Australia, but I found that people there lived as they do elsewhere, there were carriages and horses, and good dinners, and if not liveried servants, a class which is not common in the colonies, men waiting with white cotton gloves ... they seemed to hand the dishes very well.<sup>4</sup>*

From the very beginning the social fabric was set in a conservative mould. Innovators, leaders of fashion and those with a taste for extravagant displays of wealth were not attracted to a conservative, rural, antipodean existence like that of provincial life in England. Those who came as settlers in the first few years were, for the most part, sons or daughters of minor country nobility, sons of the clergy and returned officers from the Napoleonic Wars who found half pay and peacetime not to their liking. Their ways were those of the country gentry and naturally those attitudes and social morés were transported with them, together with the means for continuing their usual activities. Since educated people kept diaries, we can

LEFT: After Louisa Clifton, *View of Koombana Bay or Port Leschenault, Australia, Western Australia, 1840s*. Hand-coloured lithograph, 36 x 51.8cm, State Art Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia, 1956/Q60.

snatch glimpses of their life and endeavours from these and the picture is very similar to that in Jane Austen's novels. Indeed the people she wrote about, her friends and family, were amongst those that migrated to the Swan River Settlement: Knights, Lefroys and others feature in both places. Country life, sentiment, activity and expectation were typical and can be imaginatively transferred from England to Australia with the minor difference that the better climate in Australia allowed more outdoor activities. Sketching of native flora and scenery took up more time than the indoor crafts that had entertained both males and females in England. Evenings in Western Australia were somewhat more social and were full of music, dancing, glee clubs, literary societies and the like. Because of the addition of a government establishment there was also a higher proportion of intellect and education than in rural towns in England.<sup>546</sup> Taste was conservative, favouring Georgian furniture and paintings such as would be found in a country parsonage: portraits, miniatures,



botanical paintings, sketches of family and friends, paintings of the countryside and, as the revivalist movement got into full flight in the 1860s, pictures painted or embroidered with religious and moral messages. The social hierarchy was strictly maintained by gentry, which did not always go down well with the wealthy men of commerce or the successful tradespeople.

Louisa Clifton (1814–80) and her sisters had their sketchpads out almost as soon as they landed. Louisa, who had been somewhat reluctant to accompany her parents so far from her civilised life, was nevertheless quite delighted and wrote of her arrival in her diary on 3 April 1841,

*The scene has been most beautiful;*



*worthy of the pencil of a Claude Lorraine — the moon and sky dazzling bright, the sea glistening and perfectly smooth, the outline of the shore dark and clear, the lurid flash and curling grey of vermillion and yellow of the fires throwing a bright redness over the scene, investing it with a wildness congenial to the spot and exciting to the imagination.<sup>7</sup>*

The Clifton family had lived in France prior Migrants of the landed class came

to moving to Western Australia. Marshall Waller Clifton (1787–1861), the patriarch, was the agent for the Western Australian Land Company settlement at Australind. Louisa Clifton and her sisters were typical of many of the new colonists. They were educated with the skills appropriate for gentlewomen. French conversation, music, painting, embroidery, literature and dancing were accomplishments considered most necessary, together with a knowledge of etiquette.

LEFT: Portrait of the young Georgiana Mollay, née Kennedy, who settled on the Vasse in 1830 and became an important botanical collector. Private collection.

ABOVE (FROM LEFT): Louisa Clifton at about the time she arrived in Western Australia in 1841. Private collection.

A Kennedy from an anonymous album of wildflower sketches, c.1850–60. Watercolour, 18.9 x 22.7cm. State Library of Western Australia, 7217B.





expecting to lead a life of leisure within a short time, a leisure that would be crowded with activities to improve the mind and fill the hours. Apart from the traditional pastimes of reading, painting, music and embroidery, an interest in natural science that was prevalent at this time engendered botanical studies: collecting and identifying flora, collecting and making seaweed pictures, sand pictures, collections of shells and pressed flowers — the usual activities of Victorian society. While they were the pastimes of a leisured class, this is not to say that they were not done well, for indeed, they frequently were. The prime object, however, was the doing, and self-improvement was the aim rather than the provision of a vocation.

Wealthy and educated settlers, determined as they were to enjoy a cultured life, had first to provide the three basic needs of food, clothing and shelter. The provision of the first and last mostly fell to the men, some of whom still had the time to sketch and paint the exotic plants and unfamiliar surroundings, while the women continued to sew fine seams. Night-times and rainy days were good for embroidery, which they were able to do while their menfolk read aloud or engaged in their own crafts. Many enjoyed their antipodean adventure. In 1833 Fanny Bussell (1807–81) wrote of her family's surroundings, 'I feasted my eyes on the beautiful woods, rivers, hills and lagoons with the sun just rising upon this wide and almost uninhabited country.'<sup>8</sup> This was the

country in which Georgiana Molloy née Kennedy (1805–42) collected botanical specimens for Kew Gardens and Chatswood House, the home of the Duke of Devonshire, in England, and wished to design patterns on china and fabric to be used in England.<sup>9</sup> Georgiana, wife of Resident Magistrate and Napoleonic War veteran 'Black Jack' Molloy, was a noted botanical collector.

Several levels of craft operated at once from the formation of the colony. Apart from the crafts of the leisured classes, which were meticulous, sophisticated, decorative and, at times, useless, there were also the professional craftsmen-artisans such as goldsmiths and furniture makers, and professional needlewomen who sewed bed and table linen and fine underwear for financial gain, all of whom must also be included in this category. Most operated from their own homes, working on commission or selling work as it was completed.

The tradesman was in great demand and, according to Henry Trigg (1791–1882), 'The most independent man in the colony.'<sup>10</sup> Trigg, a boatbuilder and carpenter, arrived on the *Lotus* in 1829. He worked mostly in Perth and was appointed Superintendent of Public Works in 1838. He was followed by James Austin and later Richard Roach Jewell (1810–96), Clerk of Works in Fremantle and Perth from 1853–84, who designed and supervised many early public buildings such as the Colonial Hospital (1852), the Cloisters

LEFT (FROM TOP): St Georges Terrace Perth painted by Charles Wittenoom Sr, 1836–7. The Reverend John Burdett Wittenoom is seen driving his buggy. Watercolour, pencil, chalk, 22.5 x 34.6cm. Private collection, on loan to the State Art Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia.

Perth from Mount Eliza painted by George Nash in the 1840s. Watercolour, 37 x 56cm, State Library of Western Australia, 28945P.

furniture for the school run by his wife and also donated the pews to the Central Methodist Church. Lazenby was born in England where he was apprenticed as a cabinetmaker, but when his brother, a master mariner, sailed to Western Australia in 1831, George sailed with him hoping to improve his health. Finding it to his liking, he returned in 1833 as a migrant. Other Methodists

including Barnard Clarkson and George Shenton were on the same ship, and all three went on to have considerable influence in the colony. Lazenby arrived with a good amount of cash and immediately commenced business as a master builder and cabinetmaker. Some of his activities are documented. He built twelve cottages to rent and a comfortable house for himself in Murray Street near



where Royal Perth Hospital now stands. He also opened a store in conjunction with his building industry. He was a man with a social conscience and was Chairman of the Swan River Mechanics' Institute, played the cello and violin, was the first Methodist Sunday school superintendent and a lay preacher. He married Mary Ann Wells, who arrived in

1839. Lazenby was a man of enterprise and in 1845, trying to establish an export market for local timber, he took a sample of furniture made from jarrah to London. On his return he was soon in charge of the repairs to Government House and was connected with its handsome, classic Regency-style jarrah cellarets. They are thought to be the work of

LEFT: Pedestal table reputedly made for Government House in Perth, attributed to Joseph Hamblin, c.1848. Jarrah, 75 x 135cm diameter. Similar pedestal tables were made for Captain Molloy and Captain J. S. Roe. Woodsworth Collection, NGA 2010.968.A-C. Purchased 2010.

ABOVE: One of a pair of jarrah cellarets made for Government House Perth, c.1848, when George Lazenby had the contract for its refurbishment, 100 wide x 90cm deep. The piece is attributed to his employee Joseph Hamblin. Government House Western Australia.



## FINE NEEDLEWORK AND OTHER FEMININE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Fine needlework was a traditional occupation of aristocratic women and others of gentle birth. Other than acting as a governess, undertaking fine embroidery or needlework was the only acceptable occupation for distressed gentlewomen. By the nineteenth century, however, all educated young ladies were expected to be competent needlewomen. In Western

Australia many a young lady had to make her own gown before she could go to a ball and everyday dress was not neglected. Plain sewing was a necessity for almost everyone, particularly in rural areas. Although there were few professional seamstresses in the early years, such as milliner and dressmaker Mary Hyde (b.1791) who arrived in 1829, by the second half of the century there were many dressmakers, tailors and cobblers to service the community. Lace making and crochet remained popular, particularly for collars, cuffs and shawls. In 1839 the weaver Margaret McGorman arrived with her husband and was, no doubt, in demand, winning an Agricultural Society prize in 1843 for weaving stockings and clothing.<sup>34</sup> Local women were kept up to date with overseas trends by friends sending dolls dressed in the latest fashion for their dressmakers to copy. Eliza Shaw was one who received such dolls. She dressed her daughter Mary in a net frock looped up with pearl ornaments, white silk stockings, blue kid shoes and ankle trousers with frills for a party at Lady Stirling's. Her hair was arranged in long curls with a silver flower caught in them.<sup>35</sup>



**ABOVE:** Margaret Brockman, 'The Fair Maid of Perth', was photographed in the 1850s dressed for a ball. She wears a lace fichu over her evening gown. Private collection.

**RIGHT:** Christening gown thought to be made by Eliza Breadhurst, née Howes, in the 1860s, featuring broderie anglaise and Scottish flowering. Royal Western Australian Historical Society Collection.





education for an Anglican girl in Western Australia at this time, with her mother or a governess teaching her embroidery, music, the scriptures and social graces. She is noted for an embroidered smoking cap made in 1870 as an engagement present for her fiancé, Nathan Elias Knight (1848–1904). It is of purple velvet lined with taffeta with lily-of-the-valley in white, gold and olive-green silk embroidered around the rim and with a wreath around the tassel. It is quite lovely and typical of the domestic scale of endeavour. The piece is in the Augusta Museum. Annie Harriet married Nathan in her grandfather's octagonal church, St Mary's, Middle Swan (p. 24) on her birthday in July 1873. Nathan became Chief Clerk in the Colonial Secretary's Department two days after they married and later Inspector of Imported Stock in the Customs Department. They lived at first in Guildford and later at 4 Dean Street in Claremont. With eleven children in seventeen years, Annie Harriet had a busy domestic life. However in 1902 she enrolled at the newly opened Perth Technical Art School and studied there for some years.

One unusual occupation was that of James Inkpen who was a comb maker by trade and arrived in 1829 with his wife, Lydia, and son, James. He worked first as shingle splitter, as that was a more urgent need, and then returned to comb making in 1843 using ivory, horn and tortoiseshell.

Secretary to the Board of Education. Then, in 1865, the family moved to the Swan Valley property, Sandalford, where they made wine and where it is still made today. In 1870, the year that Annie Harriet became engaged, the family moved to Henley Park. Soon after Courthope became Auditor General of Western Australia, a post he held until 1891 and mixed with his farming activities. This was the sort of civil service progression possible, from cottage to private estate, in the families with connections.

Annie Harriet would have had a typical

**ABOVE:** Smoking cap made in 1870 by Annie Harriet Courthope for her fiancé, Nathan Knight. Purple velvet lined with taffeta and embroidered with silk, 18cm diameter. Augusta Museum.

**RIGHT:** The Stirling Cup and entrée dishes presented to Governor Stirling by 'the friends of the grateful colonists' in 1833. The cup was made by Thomas Haggood in 1832 before he migrated to Western Australia. Sterling silver, cup 45.5 x 33 x 24cm, dishes 26.3 x 19 x 13cm. Collection of the Western Australian Museum, CH173.209, CH174.173

## JEWELLERS AND SILVERSMITHS

A number of jewellers arrived in the colony in the early days and many set up in Fremantle. The first, John Gresswell (1798–1882), probably did not practise for some years. He had, however, undertaken work for jewellers who were 'By Royal Appointment' and the skills listed in his daybooks were of a high order. He sailed out in his own boat, the *Jolly Rambler*, in 1831, opened a tavern and took up agricultural land on Rottnest Island. He later worked from his residence in Mount Street,

which had commercial gardens stretching down to the river with arbours where patrons could come and buy fruit or take their leisure. Frederic Glaskin (1820–99), the second goldsmith to arrive, went first to work as a clerk at York but by 1853 was established in St Georges Terrace as a goldsmith. He too did not confine himself to goldsmithing, finding it more lucrative to manufacture soap, of which there were periodic shortages. He set up in the 1850s during the time of transportation





but did not seem to prosper. No work has been traced, although pieces in the Western Australian Museum could well be from his hand.<sup>40</sup>

The first twenty years of the colony had been particularly hard with no infrastructure and it seemed to some that it would never succeed. However, by the 1840s many of those who persevered with their romantic dream were beginning to prosper. The energetic workingmen who had come out as servants of the wealthy colonists were often able to acquire their own land and

raise their social status. Shepherds began to own flocks and then land and by the 1840s, when sandalwood became an export commodity, there was a desperate shortage of workmen. The colony for gentlemen had to consider a radical solution and they entertained the idea of accepting ticket-of-leave convicts to alleviate the problem. The British government, which was having difficulty placing their convicts, acted quickly and before Western Australians had fully considered the matter the first boatload had arrived under the charge of Royal Engineer Edmund Henderson.

**ABOVE:** Ring belonging to Sarah Fauntleroy with carved gold shanks set with emerald and seed pearls, 2cm wide. This is the style of work Frederic Glaskin would have been making to replace her jewellery lost during the wreck of the *Eglington*. Collection Western Australian Museum, CH80.174b.

**RIGHT:** Frederic Glaskin's advertisement in the *Herald Almanack*, 1880.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

The Oldest and Best House in the Trade.

**F. GLASKIN,**  
GOLDSMITH, JEWELLER AND WATCHMAKER.

*(Freeman of Goldsmith's Company, City of London).*

**H**AS always in stock a large assortment of Jewellery, Watches, Clocks, Spectacles, Reading Glasses, Snuffing Bottles, Compasses, Thimbles, &c., &c.

CHAINS, RINGS, ETC., MADE TO ORDER.

St. George's Terrace, next to Boys' Government School.

**F. GLASKIN**

IS NOW MANUFACTURING

**SOAP,**

In Price and Quality to compete with any imported from England or the other Colonies.

TALLOW purchased in large or small quantities, at the highest price.

**FACTORY:**  
ST. GEORGE'S TERRACE, PERTH.

[ 23 ]

## CHAPTER TWO

## PROGRESS, 1850–89

*Convicts to Responsible Government*

... (an) anomaly in the history of colonisation, as never has a colony been so impoverished but lingered on.<sup>1</sup>



At the end of the 1840s, the colony began to prosper and a desperate shortage of labour ensued. The lucrative export sandalwood trade, which had drawn almost all the free labour, put the agricultural and pastoral industries in jeopardy so a request was sent to the British government to send ticket-of-leave prisoners. Some settlers were opposed, however, from 1850 to 1868 all types of male convicts were sent. To compensate for this an equal number of free colonists was to be brought out, and many were women from poorhouses and worse. The enterprise was supported by the British government bringing much needed capital as well as labour to the colony. A number of craftsmen were also brought from Adelaide to instruct the convicts in various trades, for they were required to make everything they needed including their gails.<sup>2</sup> Many, perforce, learnt useful skills such as ironwork, woodwork, tailoring, shoemaking and the like, which stood them in good stead on their release.<sup>3</sup> The number of boot and shoemakers was astounding. Brown Bros appears to have been successful, advertising that they made 'riding, top and dress boots ... lightest patent dress to the heaviest double solid boot for winter wear ... ladies kid leather.<sup>4</sup> Wheelwrights and blacksmiths were also in demand. Royal Engineer (Sir) Edmund Henderson, the Comptroller of Convicts, recorded the town's growth in his elegant painting. By this time, as E. W. Landor wrote about 1847 Fremantle, 'The homes appeared to be generally two

storied, and were built of hard marine limestone ... In the principal street, most of the houses stand alone, each proprietor having a garden, or paddock of the quarter of an acre or extent about his dwelling.<sup>5</sup>

The convicts made quite a difference to the face of Perth constructing roads, buildings and furniture both in government service and on their own account. George Keane (1816–77), for instance, set up a cabinetmaking business in his own right in 1861. Others also made a difference in the country. Daniel Marsh (1844–98) at Champion Bay (Geraldton) soon employed William Douglas and skilled brass moulder Edward Onion (1833–1906). Originally a blacksmith, Marsh added an iron and brass foundry to his business in 1880 importing a steam engine and other machinery for the works. Marsh's foundry and carriage works manufactured farm machinery such as stripping machines and fine carriages. In November 1884 he secured the services of an expert tinsmith from England and was prepared to undertake all sorts of tinsmithing, baths, pannicans, billies, general household and bush requisites. Heavy castings were turned out on the spot.<sup>6</sup>

The Fenian convict Joseph Nunan (1842–85) became an architect-builder. He had been trained as a carpenter by his father and had established a successful contracting business with his brother in Cork. Having joined the Fenians he was identified as such, captured and sent as a political prisoner to

LEFT: Perth, Western Australia, 1862, by Edmund Yeamans Walcott Henderson, engineer and Comptroller of Convicts in Western Australia from 1850–63. Watercolour, 34.6 x 50.6cm. Wordsworth Collection, National Gallery of Australia, 2010.987.



1889. William Hall (b.1836), who was a wood turner, worked at the Vasse, Perth and Fremantle before leaving for South Australia in 1871. Another who left was Edwin Truscott Gill (b.1846), who sailed for California in 1876. He was a woodcarver, carpenter and joiner and had worked in King Street, Perth. John McAlish (b.1830) was a cabinetmaker who worked at Mount Anderson, Toodyay, in the 1850s. Henry Cutting (b.1822), who arrived in 1853, was listed as a carpenter and builder but also made the pews for the Central Methodist Chapel in 1869.

One convict who was apparently quite successful was Alexander Wilson (alias Lyons, b.1832), an upholsterer who arrived per the *William Hammond* in 1856, and who was reconvicted again in 1869, yet by 1884 was advertising himself in Hay Street, Perth, as 'By Appointment'. He employed fourteen ticket-of-leave men between 1865 and 1884. According to chronicler Jesse Hammond, Wilson's cabinet shop and workshop was between Barrack and William Streets, almost next door to jeweller Seeligson in St Georges Terrace from 1871-72.<sup>9</sup> He moved to Congdon Street, Claremont, employing a woodcarver, four cabinetmakers, a 'tinner', a painter and a sawyer, and remained there until 1881.

Other convicts were trained by George Drummond Ralston, who was Master Carpenter and Foreman of Works at the convict establishment at Fremantle from 1862-70. A chifonier made under his direction for Eliza Blinco, wife of a prison warden, was illustrated in Lauder & Howard's 1988 book



*An Introduction to Western Australian Colonial Furniture*. Examples of work by other convicts that have been identified include an occasional table on a turned pedestal made c.1865 in the York district. Constructed of sandalwood, York gum and jarrah it is a somewhat naive but nevertheless interesting example of rural endeavour, and is now in the collection of the National Trust at Woodbridge, the former

**LEFT:** A chifonier made in the 1870s in Fremantle for Eliza Blinco features late Regency styling with split-tumed pilasters and unusual moulded decoration. Jarrah, 146.5 x 1070 x 50cm. Private collection.

**ABOVE:** Occasional table on a turned pedestal made c.1875 in the York District by a German convict. Sandalwood, York gum and jarrah, 74 x 45cm. National Trust of Australia (WA), Woodbridge.



PROGRESS, 1850-89

## JEWELLERS

Those convicts who arrived in the 1850s and 1860s with trade skills were often very successful. Frederick May alias Mason (1839-1921), an ormolu worker in England, was apprenticed, as 'John Mason', to successful expirée goldsmith Chom Reichberg (b.1815) in Perth. At the end of his apprenticeship he set up his own premises as Fred Mason and specialised in work using pearls. In 1875 the *Inquirer* printed a description of a piece made by Mason,

'... massive gold pendant, pear shaped, set with pearls. In the centre ... a beautiful gem weighing 100 grains.'<sup>9</sup> Mason was appointed goldsmith to Governor Sir William Cleaver Robinson. The high point of his career was winning a first-class medal at the 1881 *International Exhibition* in Perth. The papers described his work in glowing terms, '... nothing shown in any court can compare, for beauty and value, with Mr Mason's show of clocks and jewellery ... his beautiful exhibits of pearl jewellery, are the product of his own workshop.'<sup>20</sup> Few pieces of Mason's work are known. The family holds two.

Alfred Jackson (1842-1912), an expirée trained in Clerkenwell, worked for Mason then for himself. He was an extremely competent jeweller and probably made the better work from Mason's establishment. The engagement ring that he made in 1868 for his bride, Rosanna Julia Chan (1861-1942), is particularly charming featuring rubies, emeralds and diamonds supported by carved shanks of 18ct gold. It remains in the family. He continued to work until 1911 and made designs under licence so there are a considerable variety of styles in work attributed to him. His premises were in Fremantle then Geraldton and later Albany where he had the Clockhouse Jewellery Factory. He had won the tender for the Albany town clock in conjunction with a man called Brodie.



LEFT: Frederick Mason, demi-parure featuring a gold brooch and earrings with cockatoo motif in their original box, c.1875. Brooch 4.5cm wide, earrings 5.5cm high. Private collection, Sydney.

ABOVE: Pendant made in the workshops of Frederick Mason, c.1880. Pearl and 18ct gold, c.4.5cm high. Private collection.





Jackson had carried his recipe book for coloured gold with him at all times. This notebook-diary dating from his apprenticeship days contained the recipes for red gold, grey gold, gold as hard as

steel, imitation gold and many others. This enabled him to alloy all manner of gold of different carat and colour. Jackson was a typical trade jeweller who spent some fifty-seven years adapting styles to suit fashion. His work covered a wide range, from the delicate engagement ring to cheap pressed goods for the souvenir market. The styles changed from Victorian to Edwardian, the latter being lighter and slighter. Most work seen is indistinguishable from British work of the period and this is understandable as his training had been undertaken in England. His brother-in-law Matthew Chand (who altered the spelling of his name to one more approximating the correct sound of their Indian heritage), son of Hookum Chan, and son Alfred also became jewellers.

John Welby (b.1842) was another very competent goldsmith who was an expirée.



LEFT (FROM TOP): Jackson and his family, c.1895. His wife is seated, as is his sister. His brother-in-law, Matthew Chand, stands behind his wife. The other people in the picture are his children. Private collection.  
 Alfred Jackson's apprentice piece, gilding metal (tortbac) with pin engraving, c. 4.5cm wide. Private collection, London.  
 ABOVE (FROM TOP): Alfred Jackson's, engagement ring for his wife, Julia Chan, c.1868. Rubies, emeralds and diamonds in 18ct gold, 1.8 x .9cm. Private collection.  
 Alfred Jackson, *Advance Australia* brooch, c.1909. 9ct gold, 4.5cm long. Hazel Nash Bequest, Western Australian Museum, H2013.172.

He was born in England into a jewellery family related by marriage to the Habgoods, prominent London jewellers who were also settlers in Western Australia. He arrived in 1867, setting up his London House in High Street, Fremantle, in 1873. Wellby exhibited in the Sydney Easter Show in 1873 where he won a medal. He exported his pearl-set jewellery to the eastern colonies and to London. He also managed Mason's business for him when the latter was in Europe. He made spectacles out of Kimberley gold for Dean Gregg and diamond-set bracelets that were copies of those worn by the Royal princesses to Queen Victoria's Jubilee of 1887. He appears to have been successful in business at least until 1891. He was noted for his work with naturally occurring blister pearls, with one beautiful cluster set as a bunch of grapes. Delicately chased vine leaves complement the natural pearl cluster. This work begins to show a Western Australian influence.

Following the cessation of transportation and the increasing prosperity of the 1870s, other jewellers were attracted to the colony. It seems likely that some were brought out to work for the burgeoning businesses of the emancipists. Anthony Fouchard emigrated from London in 1873 with his wife and

**CLOCKWISE (FROM TOP LEFT):** Brooch similar to a description of work made by John Wellby. This piece is simply marked '18'. The blister has been carved to resemble leaves and fruit, and is mounted on a gold back-plate embellished with gold flowers. Blister pearl and gold, 5cm long. Hazel Nash Bequest, Western Australian Museum, H2013.174.

Pendant of the type made by John Wellby in the 1870s. Blister-pearl on 18ct gold back-plate, marked '18', 3.5 x 2 x .7cm. Stolen 2002.

Paperknife made for, or by, William Shakespeare Hall, pastoralist-pearler at Cosack in the 1870s and 1880s. Pearl shell, 22cm long. Western Australian Museum, CH1970972.





daughter. Fouchard was, according to his advertisements, a gold and silversmith, practical watch and clockmaker, and working jeweller.<sup>21</sup> He arrived with first-hand knowledge of the latest European styles.

By 1879 he had set up on his own account and developed a substantial business employing a number of men. One of these was Charles E. Band (act.1892–1915), a

meticulous workman, who was with the firm from 1892–98. In 1886, Fouchard attracted attention by making rings from Kimberley gold and setting a nugget from the Elvire goldfield 'to great advantage ... The workmanship of the ornaments is excellent, and reflects great credit upon Mr Fouchard.'<sup>22</sup>

Fouchard had premises in the Town Hall Chambers, Perth, until 1889 when he moved to more prominent premises in Hay Street advertising as 'the Lucky Wedding Ring House prepared to make wedding and all kinds of pearl and gem rings to order on the shortest notice.' The styles that Fouchard brought with him included the taste for archaeological jewellery popularised by the Italian firm of Castellani in the mid-nineteenth century, which was very popular in Europe and persisted in a simpler form in commercial catalogues in England and Australia until after the turn of the century. One attractive piece is in the collection of the Western Australian Museum.

Another goldsmith who made presentation



**ABOVE (FROM TOP):** Neo-Etruscan style brooch by Anthony Fouchard. Gold, 4.8cm wide. Western Australian Museum, CH1972.226.

Mrs Eliza Liddelow, née Mason, wearing the brooch, c.1897. Fouchard made the brooch between 1892 and 1897 from gold mined in the Marchion District by Edward Mason of the timber-milling family. It was made as a gift for his sister Eliza. State Library of Western Australia, 4205P.

**RIGHT:** William C. Hooper made this trowel for the laying of the foundation stone of the Perth Stock Exchange by Sir John Forrest in 1896. It features a swan finial on the handle and florid late Victorian decoration where the handle joins the blade. 9ct gold cast, carved and chased and jarrah, 33.5cm long. Marked 'HOOOPER, 9ct.' Western Australian Museum, CH172.99.

objects was William C. Hooper (1861–1949). He arrived on the *Helena Mena* in September 1882 setting up at Lot 61, High Street, Fremantle. In 1887 he moved to new rented premises at 106–107 High Street, which comprised shop, workshop and dwelling, and where he remained until 1906–07. A businessman of some acumen, he understood the power of advertising taking a small line of type at the bottom and top of every page in the Post Office directories for a number of years. Hooper's business included 'Practical Watch-making, Goldsmithing, Jewellery, and Optometry.' He advertised 'Jewellery — in endless variety, Gold, Silver, Enamel, Jet &c. in all the newest designs, as well as electro-plated ware.'<sup>23</sup> Hooper was a consummate craftsman who made a beautiful gold bracelet commissioned as a wedding

present for Louisa Edwards for her marriage to John Slade Durlacher in 1890. It is set with five white pearls and four black, which Durlacher probably acquired in his pearling days. Hooper is a possible maker of a pearl cross with similar settings. He is reputed to have made a set of seven identical gold crosses for female members of a prominent Fremantle family thought to be the Leakes.

In the 1880s the economy improved and a number of South Australian jewellers were attracted to Western Australia. One of these was Vincent Edward Nesbit (1856–93), who quickly made a reputation and was awarded the commission to make the mace for the Legislative Council.<sup>24</sup> He was a successful goldsmith who drowned tragically young. He was born in Adelaide to English parents. His father was a teacher who, in the 1870s,





sent his son to train as a goldsmith. At this time South Australian goldsmithing was at its peak and it must have appeared a most attractive career. There was an excellent range of craftsmen to whom he could have been apprenticed. However, Carl Rettig at Falk & Company appears the most likely. Rettig was the foreman, having sold his Crown Works to Peter Falk and his cousins. Nesbit spent some time in Adelaide after his original training but by 1882 a depression was making itself felt in South Australia and Nesbit took advantage of this, advertising to buy old gold and silver.<sup>25</sup> The reports of gold and the success of pearling

Consequently he was in 'a better position to make every description of jewellery' to order. 'Pearl mounting a specialty.' Gold dress rings at this time were 7s 6d, Alberts twenty-five shillings, sets of brooches and earrings were twenty-three shillings and silver dress rings were sold for sixpence.<sup>26</sup> For comparison of purchasing power at this time a nursemaid earned twelve pounds per annum and a governess twenty pounds. There were twenty shillings in a pound.

Nesbit made quite an impact in Perth. He was well placed to take advantage of the gold rushes in the Kimberley in the 1880s. He



of the time, was awarded the commission. Destined for the Legislative Council, it was designed in the State Works Department. The design was very traditional and based on the maces of the Westminster sergeants-at-arms. The craftsmanship is meticulous. Chased and repoussé decoration on the fabricated silver-gilt form is skillfully done, with the incorporation of symbolic swans, roses, thistles and shamrocks.<sup>27</sup> Nesbit undertook the work at the Beaver Factory in South Australia, by this time under the ownership of Silas Schlank (1885-1972), where Carl Rettig was still in charge of the works. Nesbit probably lacked the facilities to fabricate the larger castings and solder joins, or the large baths required for the gold plating. Schlank was a good publicist and pieces made by Rettig and others were written up in the papers as being produced by the firm without ever crediting the actual maker. Nesbit left on 20 October 1887, returning to Perth in January 1888. The piece is stamped with Nesbit's mark 'VEN' as well as that of the factory. It cost seventy pounds.

Nesbit sold his business to a Mr H. Jerger just before he died, drowning at Cottesloe Beach in 1893 during an unsuccessful rescue at the age of thirty-five. Although he had a large manufacturing jewellery workshop with a number of branches, the amount that had been made was limited.

**FAR LEFT:** William C. Hooper made this bracelet for Alfred Durlacher to give to his bride, Louisa Edwards, in 1890. 22ct gold, 62 x 5cm. Western Australian Museum, CH1995.1371.

**LEFT:** The mace for the Parliament of Western Australia was made in 1887. It is marked with 'VEN', for goldsmith Vincent Edward Nesbit, with the hallmarks of Schlank of South Australia. Silver gilt, 80cm long.

## CHAPTER THREE

## GOLD FEVER, 1890–1910

## THE GOLD RUSHES

Gold was discovered in Western Australia in payable quantities in the 1880s and a rush began that would affect the quality of life for people in the hitherto struggling colony. Western Australia became visibly more prosperous, particularly after lodes at Coolgardie and Boulder were confirmed in the 1890s. Cities flowered almost overnight; in a short time the shanty towns and miners' shacks of the desert turned to 'fine wide streets, lit with electric light, (and) handsome buildings,' which impressed travellers such as May Vivienne who experienced 'every elegance of comfort that could be suggested' in Coolgardie in 1901. She was also impressed with the capital, writing,

*Perth is beautifully situated and one cannot fail to be charmed with its picturesque and lovely surroundings ... a handsome and prosperous city with noble buildings on all sides, electric light, tram cars, beautiful parks around it and yachts dancing on the Swan River!*

When the boom started the population grew dramatically. Not all newcomers were engaged in digging for gold, some were employed in a fast-developing public works program for harbours, pipelines and railways, and there was an enormous influx of private architects. On the goldfields these included Edwin Summerhayes (1868–1965), Daniel

T. Edmunds, Geoffrey O. Hawkins and James Hine (1849–1928). George Pitt Morison (1861–1946), the artist and future curator at the Western Australian Art Gallery, was also on the goldfields in 1894 and soon there were other artists such as James W. R. Linton (1869–1947) and Frederick Matthew Williams (1855–1929). A number of these architects and draughtsmen had interests in the arts and engaged in activities such as drawing the illuminated addresses



**LEFT:** *Kanowna Mine*, 1897, by Walter Godden, a draughtsman in Public Works in Kalgoorlie. A ten-stamp battery and cyanide plant were housed in the tall building. Pen and ink, and watercolour, 25.2 x 40.3cm. State Art Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia, 1978/W9.

**ABOVE (FROM TOP):** *The Lady Forrest* South goldmine near Coolgardie in 1894, which Johann Erickson and friends sold to a French syndicate. Erickson is the middle seated figure, and M. Caleau, on the right, represented the French syndicate. From *Those Were the Days* by Arthur Reid, 1933, facing p. 108.

David Carnegie, glamorous prospector and explorer, made his first foray with Lord Percy Douglas. State Library of Western Australia, 4708P.



that were often the presentations of choice when special occasions were celebrated. Draughtsmen in the Lands and Surveys or Public Works Departments made many, independent architects and artists designed others. Norman Hawkins (act c.1894–1904) was one who lettered these presentations; others were Arthur W. Bassett (1869–1947), W. H. Bonney, Edward C. Dean (1832–1907), who had won a first order of merit at the 1881 *International Exhibition* in Perth, his son C. Youle Dean (1856–1907), E. H. Hamel (1868–1933), Ernest H. Hamilton (1879–1928) and Arthur von Stach.

Commercial art activities had been undertaken in an ad hoc manner in the early days. St George's Hall, for instance, was built

as a theatre in 1879 with a façade designed by Henry Prinsep, who also acted in plays staged there and painted scenery and backdrops for performances. The West Australian Society of Arts, T. S. Henry (1865–1934) and others later used the hall as an exhibition venue. This changed with the arrival of specialists such as Phillip Goatcher (1852–1931) and his son James (1879–1957), theatrical scenery painters and decorators who arrived in 1906. They painted scenic backdrops for the Mechanics' Hall in Katanning and Boulder Town Hall curtain and decorative works in a variety of other new buildings such as His Majesty's Theatre, the Capitol Theatre, the Theatre Royal and frescoes in All Saints Church in Collie, as well as other churches.

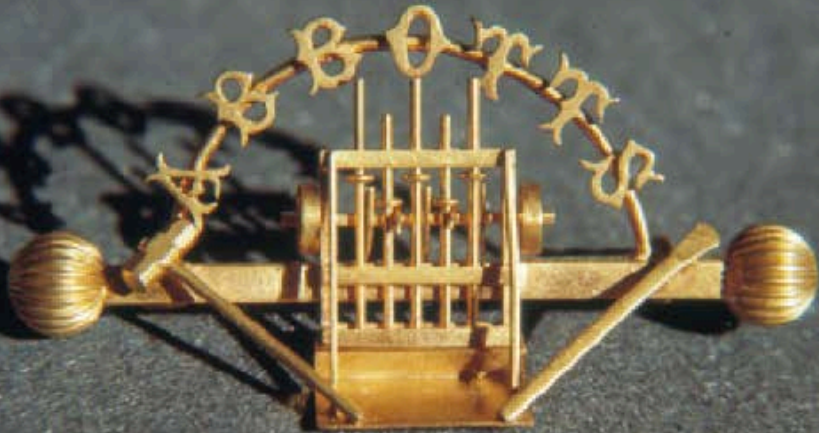
**ABOVE (FROM LEFT):** *Address to the Governor His Excellency Sir Gerard Smith 1895* designed by W. H. Bonney. Watercolour and ink, 61.8 x 48.7 cm. State Library of Western Australia, 995A/12.

*Address to the Honourable George Throssell, M.L.A., on becoming Premier* designed by C. Youle Dean. Watercolour and ink, 60.3 x 44.6 cm. State Library of Western Australia, 201A.

**RIGHT (FROM TOP):** *St George's Hall* by Elizabeth Anne Owtram, c.1890. Watercolour, 13.7 x 22.9 cm. State Art Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia, 2001/0020.

Phillip Goatcher, curtain for Boulder Town Hall, 1908. The subject was the *Bay of Naples*. Goatcher was a master of trompe l'oeil painting.









set either side of a nugget or stone, while Addis's work is more varied. Fine examples of this work are in the Western Australian Museum, the National Gallery of Victoria and the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra.<sup>3</sup> Details of artists' lives are to be found in my publication, *Gold and Silversmithing in Western Australia: A History*.

The most prominent of the jewellers who serviced the needs of the Eastern Goldfields' dignitaries and diggers alike was George Richard Addis. Addis was born to English parents who migrated to South Australia and then followed the gold. When he was about fourteen the family moved to Melbourne where he may have trained.<sup>4</sup> By 1890 he was established as a goldsmith in Launceston, where hobbies included prospecting for gold and gemstones. He remained there until 1893, being highly commended in the 1891 exhibition where he appears to have had a starring role.<sup>5</sup> In 1894, Addis set sail for Albany and the Western Australian goldfields, arriving in time to make a gold brooch with 'HANNAN's' arched across it. This brooch, in 15ct gold, is in the collection of the Western Australian Museum.<sup>6</sup> The Addis mining and nugget brooches documented are all in



striking contrast to each other, which suggests that Addis purchased findings (or finished work) from wholesale jewellers such as Joseph Pearl, Alex Rettig, Alex Kamprad and Charles May as well as Donovan & Overland, and then marked and assembled the final piece,



**PREVIOUS SPREAD** (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT): Hannan's brooch by George R. Addis, c.1894, is marked '18ct', 5.6cm wide. Western Australian Museum, CH772.

A fine Western Australian mining brooch. The 'Hannan's' mining brooch, 1895–1902, marked 'PIAGGIO & CO', 'PERTH', '15ct', 'Pd No 9' is 5.3cm wide. Stolen 2002.

Coalgardie brooch. 15ct gold marked '29 5 94' 'REG No 6', '15', with a golden fleece and a star over heraldic bar, 6.5cm wide. The marks, each within a six- or eight-sided cartouche, include the Melbourne makers' quality marks of 15ct and a golden fleece, next to the star, which was the Melbourne-registered mark of Lazarus Bens. Note the double-ended pick indicating that it was probably designed in Melbourne. Western Australian Museum, H89.348.

This gold nugget (in white quartz) brooch, 1895–1910, is a souvenir of one of the many Poseidon goldmines operating around the turn of the century. It is set with seed pearls, 5.5cm wide. Western Australian Museum, H88.645.

**ABOVE:** A very realistic set of frog cufflinks also by Addis. 18ct gold. The bar c. 2.5cm long.

**RIGHT:** This attractive bracelet made in 1907 was presented to Ruby Dickson (Mrs A. T. Wardell-Johnson) by her parents on the occasion of her twenty-first birthday. The piece was retailed by Charles Edward Band and is thought to have been made by Donovan & Overland. 9ct gold, set with rubies and diamonds, 6.7cm wide. Western Australian Museum, H89.97.

or in the case of a complete object had the wholesaler mark the work. Addis' work is marked with 'G.R.ADDIS' or 'G.R.A.' in a rectangular cartouche, adding sterling or 18ct as appropriate. Addis' shop was burnt out on Sunday 12 March 1899,<sup>7</sup> and to restock he probably purchased work from wholesale jewellers and, finding the practice convenient, continued it. Addis did not intend to stay a goldsmith. He purchased the Gordon River Estate at Tentenden, in 1911, intending to return to the family roots on the land but in 1912 he had an accident while clearing the land, which resulted in him losing a leg. Addis was, therefore, obliged to continued goldsmithing, eventually selling to Caris Bros on his retirement in 1933–34.

The major wholesalers were Charles Henry May and later Donovan & Overland. May was

the nephew of the emancipist Fred Mason and had come out from England to join him in 1883. In 1895 he was the solitary wholesale jeweller in Perth; six years later there were thirteen. In 1893, May married Annie Cooper, which appears to be the catalyst to set up his wholesale manufacturing business in Fremantle. This was quite a large concern, supplying a number of other goldsmiths. There are no records as to who these retailers were but stylistic similarities and the stamp on the work would indicate that he supplied George Richard Addis and possibly Joseph Mase, later his father-in-law. At the time of his death in 1921 the equipment, by then twenty-five years old, included a front-wheel-treadle polisher and scratch-brush lathe, flat and wire rolling mills, wire-drawing bench and plates, sand-blasting box, benches and stools, bench



vice and gilding pots, pliers, triblets, files, etc. These were assessed for probate at £28.<sup>8</sup> May's work included the popular swan and swag brooches, of which the finest are probably those in the Western Australian Museum. Swags and swans were popular motifs in Western Australia and were seen on a number of diverse objects, from the first page of the *Western Mail* in 1898 to a casket presented to the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York in 1901.

The most prolific of the local firms that sprang up was Donovan & Overland (1897–c.1926). This was the trading name of Joseph Donovan, reputed to have come across from Queensland in the early 1890s.<sup>9</sup> The firm had a considerable output in the years it operated, until about 1926 when, according to ex-employee Alec Lambert (1899–1994), it 'just fizzled out' because not enough trained men returned from the war.<sup>10</sup> The firm was the maker of the series of mining brooches incorporating names such as Malcolm, Leonora, Kalgoorlie and Marble Bar that were made from about 1898 when the design was registered.<sup>11</sup> They were certainly made before 1908, by which time the firm had instituted the use of a key as its maker's mark. The careful modelling of the constituent parts and the artistic balance to the compositions are probably why so many have survived. The series incorporated the 'golden hole' — a nugget-encrusted plate through which the



rope from the windlass descends, suspending a bucket for winching up ore. This was derived from the golden cavity of the legendary Londonderry strike.<sup>12</sup> Despite the fiasco of the original, it was symbolic in Western Australian goldfields iconography of fabulous wealth. However, Donovan & Overland made much more than goldfields jewellery and supplied many of the other retailers. In 1921 they were still the premier wholesalers. The key to their success may have lain with their work remaining at the upper end of the market.

**LEFT (FROM TOP):** An attractive collection of gold-in-quartz jewellery. The cufflinks and studs, marked 'JP' and '18', are attributed to Jonathan Ferry. The brooch is 7.5cm wide, the studs 1.5cm and the cufflinks 3cm. Cufflinks and studs, Hazel Nash Bequest, Western Australian Museum, H2013.175-6.

Swags and swans were popular in Western Australia and were seen on a number of diverse objects, from the first page of the *Western Mail* in 1898 to a casket presented to the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York in 1901. Swan, swag and crescent motifs were also used in English work of the time and C. H. May combined them to make a distinctly local version of an international style. They were made between 1893 and 1906. This one is 18ct gold and is 5.5cm wide. Western Australian Museum, H88.643.

**ABOVE:** Charles Henry May and his wife, Annie, at the time of their wedding in 1893. Private collection.

## CHAPTER FOUR

# THE DOMESTIC ART MOVEMENT

*Never since the days of the Ancient Greeks has a Century opened in which so general an interest has been taken by all classes in Art work, and never before has there been so general a recognition of the importance of what is now known as Domestic Art, that is to say in the adornment of our homes and of all they contain in the way of furniture, fittings, and articles of domestic utility.<sup>1</sup>*



So wrote Bernard Woodward, Curator of the newly established Western Australian Museum and Art Gallery. Citizens had been made more confident by the wealth of the gold rushes and artistic endeavour expanded. Western Australians began learning new skills and making objects for their homes, homes that reflected the entire spectrum of fashionable styles ranging from the eclecticism of Aesthetic Movement interiors, through those with touches of Arts and Crafts historicism to the sparser early modernism of late Art Nouveau.<sup>2</sup> Society of Arts members and students of the new Technical Art School used local flora to develop a regional variant of an international style. It was depicted in metalwork and featured strongly in watercolour sketches, illuminated addresses, china painting, embroidery, woodcarving and textile design.<sup>3</sup> 'Modern taste' by this time was the Liberty or Secession Style of Art Nouveau synonymous with Federation, as exemplified in the homes of the younger members of the community.<sup>4</sup>

Some newcomers to the state, who in the normal course of events would not have considered migrating to such an isolated outpost, came for health reasons — attracted by a climate beneficial for tuberculosis sufferers — while others came for business opportunities, drawn to a gold-boom colony that had escaped the world depression of the 1890s. Significantly, the west coast continued its traditional orientation towards Europe rather than eastern Australia. The citizens concerned themselves with local issues

but also looked towards the international arena. Now, indicative of Western Australia's international financial significance, the world returned their gaze.<sup>5</sup>

Historian Geoffrey Serle has stated that it was difficult to discern any cultural development or achievement in Australian art in the first third of the nineteenth century as few of the migrants were capable of raising cultural standards.<sup>6</sup> This particularly east-coast-centric view ignored the flowering of the arts in both South and Western Australia. Such a perspective was typical of histories propounding 'national trends', which failed to recognise the diverse nature of art practice in Australia.<sup>7</sup> Western Australia was a vibrant place in the first decade of the twentieth century. There was artistic promise and growth.

Citizens commenced the new century confident of future achievement. The economy was booming. International communication was open. Great progress in art education was capped by international awards.<sup>8</sup> Yet before the second decade closed much of this was negated by a war and a declining economic situation, which was widely blamed on the mechanics of Federation.<sup>9</sup> The manufacturing sector had failed to grow when protection was removed following Federation and mining and construction was hard hit during World War I.<sup>10</sup> Added to this, many of the state's artistic powerbrokers were gone by 1918. John Forrest (1847–1918), John Winthrop Hackett, Bernard Woodward and Alex Purdie

LEFT: *View from Mt Eliza*, after JA (John Absolon) c.1880s. Wesley Church, Perth Boys School, Perth Town Hall, the Anglican Cathedral and the Catholic Bishop's Palace are plainly identified. Artists are preparing to set up easels in the foreground. Watercolour, 31.8 x 49.2cm. Royal Western Australian Historical Society, AR 1986-134.



of the writer Joseph Furphy (1843–1912), at Shepparton in 1902. In 1903, they moved to Western Australia to set up the Furphy foundry, and her parents-in-law, Joseph and Leonie Furphy, joined them in 1905. Strong-willed Mattie, who did not get on with her mother-in-law, spent most of her time at the Perth Technical Art School where she enrolled in freehand, cast and model drawing, and undertook classes in repoussé. For a tiny, corseted Edwardian belle this was some considerable physical feat. According to Joseph Furphy she was there five days a week

from 10 am to 10 pm.<sup>31</sup> She was an outstanding student between 1905 and 1910, winning scholarships that paid for her fees, and was mentioned with Flora Le Cornu in the annual reports as energetic and persevering students

who stimulated others. Furphy made an overmantel, door panels, fingerplates, mirror and sconces for her house on the corner of Clement and Marmion Streets, Swanbourne, now part of the Allen Park Heritage Village.

**CLOCKWISE (FROM TOP LEFT):** The drawing room in Sam and Mattie Furphy's House, now the Mattie Furphy Centre for Creativity, Allen Park, Swanbourne.

Mattie Furphy, quondam motifs/door panels, c.1905–10, originally made for her own house, now known as Mattie Furphy Centre for Creativity. The carpentry was by Joseph Furphy. Repoussé copper, 10 x 42 cm. Fellowship of Australian Writers (WA Chapter), Tom Collins' House, Swanbourne.

Fireplace surround by Mattie Furphy, c.1905–10, originally for her own house and now in Tom Collins' House, Swanbourne. Joseph Furphy made the original wooden framework. Repoussé copper, 85 x 76 cm. Fellowship of Australian Writers (WA Chapter).

Sam and Mattie Furphy on their wedding day, 1902. Fellowship of Australian Writers (WA Branch), Tom Collins' House.

to fabricate, and maximum production of craftwork occurred when partners such as Cross were available.

A particularly interesting design for an art jewel is seen in the Linton sketchbook (NGA. 1981.398) held in the National Gallery of Australia. This may have been No. 23 from the Linton and Cross 1913 exhibition catalogue, which was listed as 'Pendant in gold and silver set with opal, tourmalines and peridots — fifteen guineas.' There are several pencil sketches that preceded the coloured rendering, featuring a stylised tree with leaves and branches curved as an upturned arch sheltering the heart-shaped opal within. Linton simplified natural forms in a manner recalling those in the Aubrey Beardsley (1872–1898) drawings for *Morte d'Arthur*, by then in the Western Australian Art Gallery. Linton, as he did frequently, picked up a detail and transformed it into another object altogether. In this case, he used the closely packed overlapping detailing of the leaves in the drawing as part of the design. The opal was supported, within the framework of branches, by a gold shell and two small circular stones set in gold. Tourmalines were set in the leaves, in the boss, and in a small pendant below. The pendant, as sketched, is extremely beautiful and quite individual.

Linton and Cross had only two exhibitions during the partnership. The

first, entitled *Exhibition of Arts and Crafts*,<sup>97</sup> was held at the Theosophical Society Rooms in December 1910 and included sixty-three items of metalwork and fourteen watercolour paintings. The gem of the show, according to *The West Australian* reviewer, was the enamel *Madonna and Child Enthroned*. The piece, based on a painting by Linton's father, is now in the Art Gallery of Western Australia. It is an intricate cloisonné requiring both patience and skill. As the reviewer said, 'The colouring of the panel is magnificent, and the manner in which the reds have been thrown into relief by the interposition of fine hairs of gold is a triumph of the artist.'<sup>98</sup>

A number of jewels were exhibited at this exhibition and were described,

*Of the jewel work, a pendant in gold and silver links set with Australian opal, Mexican opal, carbuncles, and peridots and finished with a pearl drop, at the private view yesterday commanded almost unlimited attention. The work is so delicately finished, the designing so artistic as to make it without doubt the feature of that section of the display. Another chain pendant in gold and silver, set with carbuncles and opals, while not so elaborate as the other, was only a degree behind the first one in appearance.'*<sup>99</sup>



LEFT: James W. R. Linton, rendering for a jewel (detail), c.1908–10. Sheet 304 x 24cm. National Gallery of Australia, 1981.398.1.

*in design and the collection under notice emphasises the heights still to be climbed in the direction of allying art to the making of accessories and ornaments for everyday use. Stone set rings and exquisite pendants are a predominant feature but there is plenty of variety about the specimens which embraces articles from huge candlesticks and medium bronze and brass to tiny*

*teaspoons in silver and enamel and brooches.<sup>101</sup>*

Fortuitously there was little competition for Linton and Cross' individually designed silver flatware or for presentation caskets and the partnership concentrated on these as well as undertaking some ecclesiastical work. Prices were relatively modest, ranging from two to twelve guineas for a box. Candlesticks were priced at five to ten guineas, bowls at less than two guineas,

**LEFT:** James W. R. Linton, *The Peacock* necklace, c.1910. Silver, 18ct gold, opal, carbuncles, pendant section approx. 6.0 x 5.5cm. Private collection.

**BELOW:** James W. R. Linton, bracelet made for Flora Le Cornu as a gift from her future husband, Reginald Landells, 1913. Silver, gold, opal and almandine garnets, 6.5 x 6.25 x 2.5cm. Private collection





fertilisation of ideas between 1920 and 1935.

Most of the silver by the Lintons shown at this time was either exhibited in Perth at the West Australian Society of Arts under 'J. A. B. Linton' or in the Eastern States under 'J. W. R. Linton'. In the 1920s Holdsworth and the Lintons had their work permanently displayed in a 'depot' in Rowe Street, Sydney — the outlet for the NSW Society of Arts and Crafts — a practice they continued for some years. J. W. R. Linton appears to have deliberately left the local scene clear for a son who needed to make his living from the work.

In 1923 Linton closed his Royal Arcade

studio and in concert with a group of friends opened a new purpose-built studio and gallery in Murray Street west. Here he and Jamie set up as 'Art Metal Workers, Designers, Dealers in works of Art, etc.' and the Linton School of Art operated there from c.1923–25. In his new building, Linton designed and carved furniture made by silversmith-furniture maker Harold Englund and withdrew a little into himself when Jamie and his friend Hal Missingham (1906–1994) left for Europe in 1925. Student Coralie Clarke gives some idea of the surroundings, the man and their impression on a visitor, 'After tea he introduced us to the sanctuary

LEFT: *The Dolphin pendant* by James W. R. Linton, c.1914–20. Sterling silver, 18ct gold, pearl and jade, 4.4 x 2.3cm. State Art Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia, 1987/90.

ABOVE: James W. R. Linton, teaspoons, 1931–35. The spoons d and f are marked with a 'gumnut', 'st silver' and 'JWRL'. Sterling silver, largest 12 x 2cm. Western Australian Museum, CH172/479 b, c, e, j, d and f.

## POKERWORK AND STAINING

Pokerwork (pyrography) and staining were in vogue in the 1911–12 exhibitions. In 1911 Bessie Rischbieth exhibited a stained mantel board designed by Loui Benham, a colourful work that featured peacocks and is still in existence (p. 158). The following year two panels by Ethel Heap were shown as well as a panel and a glove box designed by Loui Benham and executed by Mrs H. Higham (Maud Mary née Bateman (1848–1941). Mrs Henry (Marion) Diggins Holmes also exhibited a frame in this exhibition. Larger works of hers are in the collection of the Western Australian Museum,<sup>13</sup> including an umbrella stand featuring poppies, a four-panelled screen of sunflowers and chrysanthemums, shelves with Art Nouveau scrollwork and panels featuring figures of the muse Errato and a woman in Elizabethan costume.

Marion Holmes was the daughter of Joseph Genders, merchant of Kooringa, South Australia. She married Henry Diggins Holmes of Adelaide and the couple lived in Melbourne and South Australia before they arrived in Western Australia in 1890, where Henry managed the Western Australian



Bank. Marion Holmes was a foundation member of the Karrakatta Club and a tireless charity worker for the Anglican Church. Examples of her art are also in the Anglican Meath Homes, an organisation that she helped establish in Western Australia.

LEFT: Marion Holmes, pokerwork fimscreen, deal, 1890s, 73.5 x 64.9 x 0.8cm, Western Australian Museum, CH 1971.65.

ABOVE (FROM LEFT): Marion Holmes, pokerwork panel *Errato*, deal, 1890s, 79 x 22cm, Western Australian Museum, CH 1971.66a.

Marion Holmes, pokerwork umbrella stand, deal, 1890s, 69 x 27.4cm, Western Australian Museum, CH 1971.63.



## CHAPTER FIVE

## BOOM, DEPRESSION AND WAR

*Major Makers, 1919–49*

Although Federation and the removal of tariff barriers had put a stop to most industrial growth in Western Australia with the jewellery industry being particularly affected, and the state had gone into a low-level depression once mining became the province of companies c.1911, the economic outlook in the 1920s was optimistic<sup>123</sup>. The 'war to end all wars' was over and although so many of the men who returned were damaged there was a new spirit in the air and promise of better times ahead.

Professional artist-craftspeople began to have national and even international exposure. J. W. R. Linton, Flora Landells, Gordon Holdsworth and Jamie Linton (1904–1980) were the most prominent figures in the crafts and together with graphic designer A. B. Webb they made their mark. The two Lintons, Holdsworth and Webb achieved national recognition. Flora Landells, assisted by her new husband Reginald, set up one of the first self-sufficient studio potteries in Australia.<sup>4</sup> The elder

Linton continued the studio workshop, which was separate from his teaching career but was unable to make the break to become a full-time craftsman. After his first partner Arthur Cross died in 1917 he had a number of working partners who reflected his various interests, among them were Kitty Armstrong, William Andrews (1878–1959) and Harold Englund (1906–88), all former students.

Western Australia enjoyed relative prosperity during the 1920s. The flow of international information was no longer impeded by war and the eclectic influences of the French style, now called Art Deco, began to be seen in Perth. Jamie Linton, who had been in Paris shortly after the 1925 *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes*, was one who took advantage of this new sophisticated and hedonistic taste. He commenced making cocktail goblets, cigarette cases and cigarette boxes to cater for the new fashions. Jamie made his living entirely from his art and craftwork, as did his friend Gordon Holdsworth.

## GORDON HOLDSWORTH

Hubert Augustus Gordon Holdsworth (known as Gordon 1886–1965), silversmith, painter and printmaker was born in Middlesex, England, to Charles Edward Hall Holdsworth and Ellen Louise née Bostock. Both were from old Yorkshire families connected for generations with the Anglican Church, a heritage that had considerable bearing on Holdsworth's occupation as a

metalsmith who made objects in silver, brass and iron for an array of Anglican churches and chapels.

Details of his education are sketchy but it included music and art in England and Australia. The family arrived in Western Australia in 1900 and settled at Coplow, Hester Siding near Bridgetown, where they became timber millers. The family were

LEFT: Muriel Southern's sketch, Perth Town Hall, 1933. Watercolour and pencil, 37 x 32cm. Royal Western Australian Historical Society, AR.1949.11.

unusual and particularly formal. Gordon, although a dashing young bachelor, never married. Artist John Feeney who met him in 1961 wrote,

*He was then an old man but quite extraordinary ... He was relatively well known as a painter and was a complete artistic personality of a vanishing era. I felt he was quite a 'discovery' ... his work whilst not being particularly modern was of a rare excellence.<sup>5</sup>*



Holdsworth joined the West Australian Society of Arts in 1904 and began a career as painter, etcher, sculptor and metalsmith. Tradition has it that he had tuition in metalsmithing from James W. R. Linton before he opened an art school in Bridgetown in 1911. The families were certainly friends but Holdsworth soon made larger works than Linton. Much of his technique can be sourced to treasured books and magazines that he eagerly devoured in his rural retreat or to the metalworkers in local factories. His earliest known commission was in honour of Sir James Lee Steere (1830–1903) — a large brass lectern for St Paul's, Bridgetown in 1910–11.

In 1913 he made an intricate and unusual Metropolitan Processional Cross for Bishop C.O.L. Riley (1854–1929), first Anglican Archbishop of Western Australia. It is carried by the archbishop's chaplain and used at all diocesan functions when the archbishop

appears in his official role. The piece was one of the most remarkable made in Australia, possibly anywhere, at this time and when it featured in *Treasures from Australian Churches*, it caused the curator Judith O'Callaghan to write that Holdsworth's work defied categorisation, 'Although firmly rooted within the Arts and Crafts tradition, Holdsworth's ecclesiastical metalware always exhibits a highly individual approach.'<sup>6</sup>

Holdsworth, perhaps in consultation with the donors, gave considerable thought to the symbolism of the piece. The arms of the cross are applied with silver panels intricately embossed with entwined fruiting vines. The vine was, and is, one of the most vivid symbols used to express the relationship of God to his people. For Holdsworth and his



commissioners the 'protected vineyard', symbolised by the use of vine leaves, was the Anglican Church in Western Australia in which God's children could flourish tended by the Archbishop as the Vicar of God.

The splayed shape of the copper section gives the impression of a cross within a circle. The circle, as the monogram of God and symbol of eternity, is thus cleverly incorporated into the design. In contrast, the square is the emblem of the earth and earthly existence, and this has also been subtly incorporated into the outline of the four stylised fruiting vines placed at the intersection of the cross. At the intersection

of the arms, an encrusted-enamel of St George is set in a circular boss within a crown of thorns. The encrusted-enamel technique gives a particular luminosity to the image in blue, yellow, mauve and green. The fruiting vine appears again in an openwork band of repoussé silver set at the widest portion of the copper knob. Four cabochon stones of deep blue lapis lazuli are set into this band. The copper stem and reverse of the cross have been applied with silver *fleur-de-lis*.

Henry Wilson's seminal text helpfully described how the *fleur-de-lis* and openwork bands were made, and as this technically difficult piece was made early in Holdsworth's

ABOVE: Gordon Holdsworth, c.1918. Private collection.

RIGHT (FROM LEFT): Gordon Holdsworth, lectern for the chapel at Perth College, 1929. Brass, 127cm high.

Gordon Holdsworth, Metropolitan Processional Cross, made for the first Anglican Archbishop of Perth, 1913. Silver applied to copper with vitreous enamel, 190.5cm high. St George's Cathedral, Perth.

career he may have needed all the help he could get. That it did succeed in part explains why Linton, an Anglican of higher public profile, did not receive as many commissions from the Anglican Church. In succeeding years Holdsworth made 'furniture' for many churches, the most notable, usually in brass, silver and copper, are in St Paul's, Bridgetown; St George's Cathedral, Perth; St George's College, Crawley; Perth College, Mount Lawley; St Boniface Cathedral, Bunbury; and St Mary's Church, Busselton.<sup>7</sup>

Despite a rural domicile near Bridgetown, Holdsworth orchestrated a sixty-year career as a painter, etcher, art teacher and metalsmith. He exhibited paintings in the Royal Albert Hall, London, in 1912 and silver in Western Australia and New South Wales. From 1919 Holdsworth exhibited regularly with the West and South Australian Societies of Arts and the NSW Society of Arts and Crafts. A hexagonal copper box with enamelled quandong trees was purchased for the Art Gallery of New South Wales in 1920 having been mentioned in *The Bulletin* as 'a casket that might have been Pandora's'.<sup>8</sup>

In 1922–23 he exhibited forty pieces of metalwork with his paintings in Perth, including a trophy cup in silver and enamel and his mermaid necklace intricately worked in gold, enamel and oxidised silver with bezel-set carnelian. In this delicate but *retardé* piece, an enamelled medallion of a girl's face framed in clouds of red-gold hair was worked in the difficult technique of *email en*



*ronde bosse*. The stylised floral frame to the medallion was further developed as a series of motifs, repeated to form a necklet from which the larger medallion is suspended. Lovely as the piece is, it reflects the time warp of Holdsworth's family surroundings and possibly of those who purchased his work. His courtly nineteenth-century behaviour was at variance with his love of speed and fast cars,



ABOVE: Gordon Holdsworth, *Businessmen's Cup*, 1920. Silver-plated brass on a turned wooden base, c.20cm high. Bridgetown Tennis Club

RIGHT: Gordon Holdsworth, *The Mermaid necklace* made in 1922. Silver, gold and enamel, pendant 7.5cm high. Stolen from a private collection in 2002.



and the dashing image he liked to convey. Like Linton he cultivated the aura of 'the artist' and is remembered as such in the country district in which he spent almost his entire life.

Holdsworth was at the height of his career when he exhibited at the 1924 *British Empire Exhibition* in London. He was one of two Australians selected to show craftwork in the Fine Arts Palace and the only metalsmith.<sup>9</sup> The lectern he exhibited is one of his finest works and like a number of his pieces it

incorporates a domed base. It is a crisply executed technical tour de force, fabricated from brass using the techniques of repoussé and enamelling. The book rest is supported by four arms, three of which are in the form of a fruiting vine that rise from a cylindrical stem mounted on the domed casellated base supported by four minaret feet. Around the stem are four niches, which contain skilfully handled figures of four saints that are embossed in the same sure manner of

**LEFT:** Gordon Holdsworth's remarkable lectern that was exhibited in London in 1924. Brass and enamel, 140cm high. St Paul's Anglican Church, Bridgetown.

**ABOVE:** One of the last pieces Gordon Holdsworth made was a brooch for Dolores Cable in 1964. Silver and enamel, 5cm diameter. Private collection.

Studio pottery was popular in Europe and much space had been devoted to it at the 1925 exhibition in Paris. French manufacturers encouraged artists to design for them — a continuing interaction of which Flora was aware when she set up her studio-pottery. Her pots reflected both the interest of French artists in carving and the renewed interest in medieval styles inspired by William Morris' centenary. Her own work was hand-built until after 1927 when she persuaded Frederick Piercy to teach her to throw. A large pot in the Art

Gallery of Western Australia's collection is an example of the handmade style seen worldwide from the 1930s until after World War II. This pot is coil-built, incised, with a painted underglaze design featuring peacocks.

The combination of Reg and Flora Landells was fortuitous: the chemist-engineer and the artist were the perfect foil for each other in pioneering such a venture. Reg built much of their equipment and prepared all their clays and glazes, which he developed to suit the high firing temperatures they used. Flora

**LEFT:** *Tall Timbers* by Flora Landells, 1940s. Watercolour and pencil on paper, 47.7 x 35.5cm. Methodist Ladies' College, Claremont.

**BELOW:** Reg Landells centering clay on a potter's wheel and Flora 'pulling' a spout on a jug illustrated in *Pix* magazine, 1944.





Stylised rendering of plants, as exemplified by the cover of *The Studio* was seen in many local artworks. However these images generally had a local particularity for the artists were concerned not only with being modern but also with being individual, as James Linton insisted his students develop their own designs.

The earlier work often incorporates geometric elements. The National Gallery of Australia has a fine teapot, c.1914, with Sturt desert peas painted in hemispherical lunettes. The piece has affinities — the strong black band, small touches of gold and native flora — with the hardenbergia vase of Helen Creeth in the collection of the Art Gallery

**ABOVE (FROM LEFT):** Flora Landells, teapot painted with Sturt desert peas, c.1913. 11.4 x 16.3 x 10.3cm. National Gallery of Australia, 82.4.A–B.

**RIGHT (FROM TOP LEFT):** Flora Landells painted this jug with Quailup bells, c.1920s high. Private collection.

Flora Landells painted this arum lily vase with lustres, c.1930, c.25cms high. Private collection.

Flora Landells, coil built and incised peacock vase, c.1933. Earthenware, 24.3 x 20.5cm. State Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia, 2005/6.



of Western Australia (p. 128). Other early work featured lustres and swirling forms reminiscent of Rozenburg Ware from the Netherlands, also in the collection of the Art Gallery. These early pieces differ markedly from post World War II work, widely copied by her students, which generally featured realistically painted wildflowers on a broken ground.

Flora Landells had a strong local following. She taught at Methodist Ladies' College and other schools from 1909. She ceased teaching at Midland Technical School in 1930 because of social pressure occasioned by the Great Depression that dissuaded married women from working.





Jamie went to work for his father in 1920,<sup>27</sup> making the cutlery that was then in demand. He also attended the Perth Technical School part time. He embarked on his public career in 1922 with the West Australian Society of Arts when interest in the 1922 exhibition was high.<sup>28</sup> By this time, the first of the motifs confined within geometric cartouches had been made by the workshop, a convention

Jamie adopted as his own. It is interesting to compare Jamie's dolphin necklace with Holdsworth's *Mermaid* shown at the same exhibition and J. W. R. Linton's *The Dolphin*. Marine motifs were popular with the three men.

Jamie's piece has a curious visual ambiguity. At a cursory glance it reads as a

peacock or madonna rather than an aerial view of a playful dolphin. The overall style with its looped chains is Edwardian, tending toward the Liberty styles seen in his father's art journals. A beautifully modelled gold dolphin glides forward through waves of silver, leaving in its wake foam flecked with air bubbles of opal. Another opal bubble issues from the animal's mouth and further opals are set in the bosses used to regulate the chains. Long, single loops of chain were becoming fashionable, a nicety of fashion not yet understood by the retiring eighteen-year-old.

J. W. R. Linton's strongly held conviction that 'It is absolutely necessary that every art student should visit Europe, for however well he may be educated in the colonies his experience is small compared with those who have had the advantage of studying those magnificent examples that are only to be seen in the big centres'<sup>29</sup> reinforced prevailing attitudes. He encouraged as many



of his students as he could to visit Europe and many of the talented ones were able to do so. They, in turn, encouraged others, keeping the European attraction alive for Western Australians.<sup>30</sup> Hal Missingham and Jamie Linton were two to go abroad after Kate O'Connor and Miguel McKinlay.

**FAR LEFT:** Jamie Linton, cutlery made for Professor Higgins, 1940s. Sterling silver. Private collection.

**LEFT:** Jamie Linton painted by his father, 1925. Oil on canvas. Private collection.

**ABOVE:** James A. B. (Jamie) Linton, dolphin necklace, c.1922. Gold, silver and opals. Private Collection.



and, later, by his son John Alexander (b.1953). Both continued to make the traditional work of the studio, increasing the output to an ever-expanding public.

Jamie Linton began his career as a man of his time interested in technology and new developments. His inclination was towards sculpture but lack of opportunity denied him that avenue of employment and he turned to making luxury goods in silver and copper, which provided him with a considerable

following and a respectable living. In the absence of a developing industry in Western Australia with which to collaborate, he continued to fulfil the function himself, training and employing a number of assistants to meet the orders that continued to arrive. He fully merited the attention he received from the 1940s as the most sought-after artist-silversmith in Australia. During his career an event of significance to Western Australia occurred: the colony turned one hundred.

**LEFT:** Jamie Linton Altar cross and candlesticks made for St Jude's Anglican Church, 1944-46. Sterling silver, vitreous enamel, cross 71.3 x 33.4cm. Arch Diocese of Adelaide.

**BELOW:** A pair of sterling silver serving spoons, 1955, featuring wildflower motifs Wirrah and Creper, cast and raised by James A. B. Linton and his workshop assistants. 24cm long. State Art Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia, 1955/00M1-2, purchased 1955.



CHAPTER SIX

## INDUSTRY AND AMATEURS

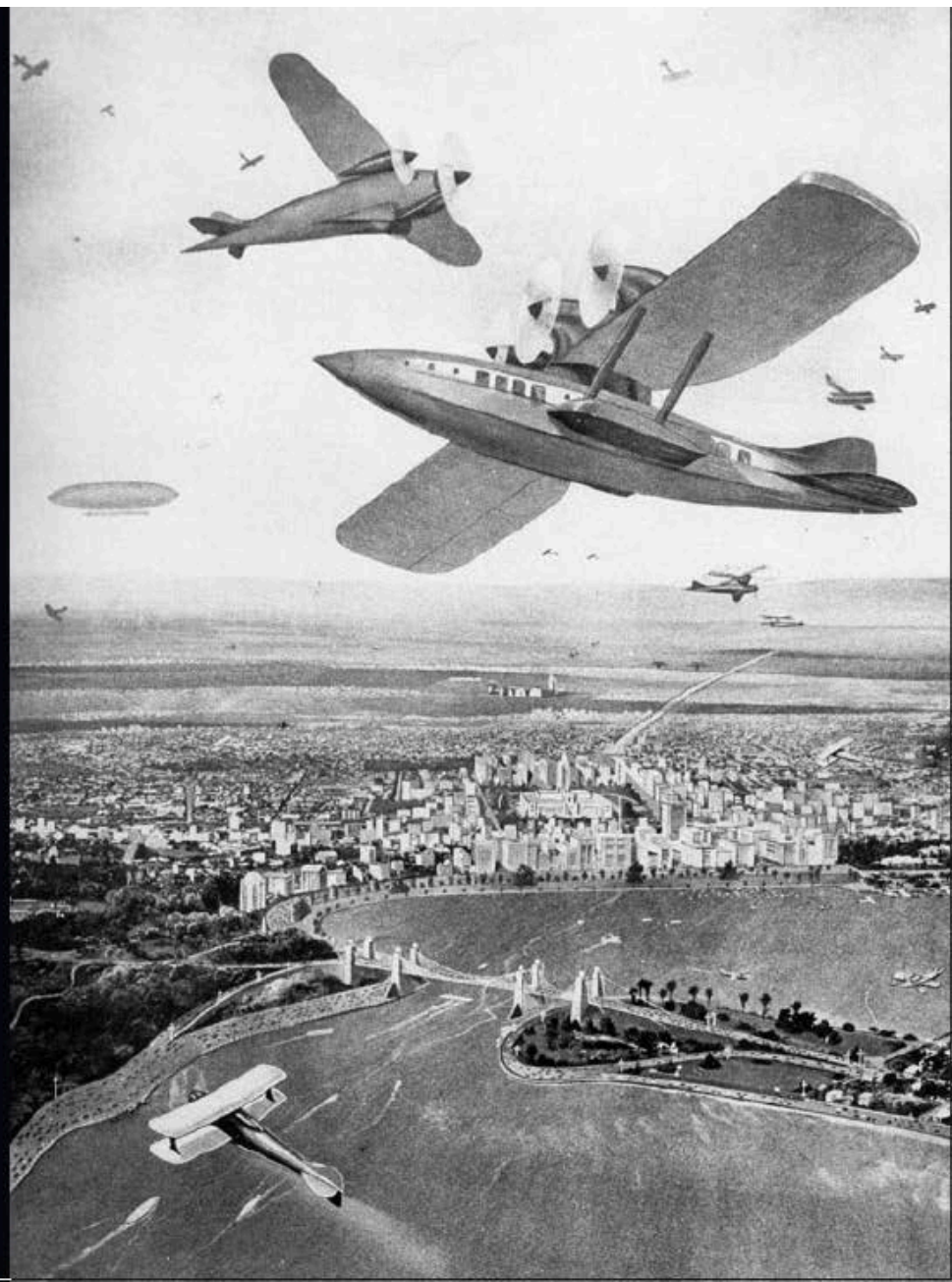
### *Post Depression and War*

The 1929 centenary celebrations of the state's foundation was a time of looking forward to the future but also remembering the past. Western Australia had gone into a low-level depression in about 1913, when mining was dominated by underground mines, from which it did not fully recover until the iron-ore boom of the 1960s although there was a mini boom in the 1930s when gold prices soared. The state was an extremely dissatisfied member of the Federal Commonwealth and the focus was very much on local achievement. 1929 was in many ways a watershed — the beginning of a schism. Preparations for the centenary of the state's founding not unnaturally provoked an air of nostalgia, which impinged on artistic activities for some years, and as this happened in a period of revivals in the decorative arts the work is disparate.

Before the centenary year was out the Wall Street Crash, which led to the Great Depression, put a dampener on much activity. The structure of society had also

undergone a change: the entrepreneurial internationals were replaced with group settlers from a different social stratum little interested in the arts. Antipathy to the east coast, which was blamed for the Depression, was at an all-time high and in the state referendum held in 1933 two-thirds of voters favoured secession, but as assent had to be given by the Commonwealth this was not possible.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless the gold boom that had energised the colony had provided the people and finance for a lively and entertaining first third of the twentieth century. Achievements had been made and awards won.

A sense of cultural maturity within the arts community was occasioned by the publication in 1934 of William Moore's *Story of Australian Art*. This seminal work was the first substantial history to be written on the arts in Australia, and unlike many publications that followed Moore had taken the trouble to research the arts scene in Western Australia. By this time, instead of the usual venues of



RIGHT: Percy Starway-Tapp's vision for the future. *Western Mail* Centenary edition, 1929.



In 1937, when she married Harold Peirl, she was obliged to resign as a teacher as married women were not permitted to remain working in the Education Department. However, she took private students in her South Perth home passing on her skills to others. In 1951 when there was a shortage of teachers she taught at Girdlestone and Applecross High Schools. She retired in 1963 and returned to

china painting until in her eighties. Harvey was an enthusiastic member, office bearer and exhibitor with the Western Australian Women's Society of Fine Arts and Crafts, and developed a body of strong work, which, with its rich colour and strong geometric design base, was modern for the time. She painted both naturalistic and abstracted nature, and while the representational work sold very

well, few of the abstract pieces sold and still remain in the family. Her work attracted praise from *The West Australian* critic Charles Greenlaw Hamilton (1874–1967), who wrote in 1937, 'Pottery painting by A. Harvey is very good — especially a Waratah Vase and a small ashtray.' 'P.S.T.' was not so sure. Hamilton reviewed another exhibition writing, 'Various ladies showed painted china, Mrs Peirl's decorative work being

rather unusual,' and of yet another exhibition held in 1947 with Ira Forbes Smith (1920–94 Mrs Kentish) and Bessie Saunders in Newspaper House Gallery he wrote:

*(Amy Harvey) shows some good china painting, sound in design and craftsmanship. Her naturalistic and conventional designs are well drawn and harmoniously coloured. Two large vases and a loving cup are*

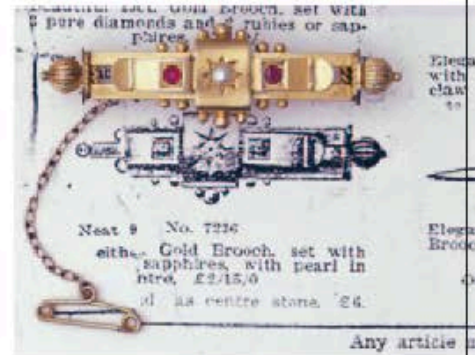


ABOVE (FROM LEFT): Amy Harvey, *Redbrush* vase, c.1930. Onglaze painting on porcelain, 19 x 8.3cm. Private collection.  
Amy Harvey, *Waratah* vase, c.1946. Onglaze painting on porcelain, 28 x 15.5cm. Private collection.  
RIGHT: Amy Harvey, *Short Desert Pea* plate, 1947. Onglaze painting on porcelain, 22cm diameter. Private collection.

## TRADE JEWELLERS

To return to earlier times, 'the jewellery shops of Perth and Fremantle come also as another surprise to the interested visitor, and well-appointed spacious amply stocked business places are numerous in both cities. Certainly there are only a few places in Sydney or in Melbourne that are better.' So wrote an Eastern States' jeweller on a visit in the 1920s. The major jewellery retailers he was writing about were Levinson's, Caris Bros, Stewart Dawson's and J. C. Taylor, while the major wholesaler remained Donovan & Overland until about 1926 when it 'just fizzled out' according to ex-employee Alec Lambert 'because not enough trained men returned from WWI.' The key symbol of the firm appears on elegant bracelets, delicate rings and brooches, and men's fob locket.

Levinson & Sons had arrived from Ballarat during the goldrush period and consisted of Mark Levinson (1848–1912) and his two sons, Eugene (1880–1955) and Felix (1884–1971). Levinson's expanded rapidly in the 1920s; the sons had joined the business and new premises were opened in Sheffield House, Hay Street. Built in concrete in the latest Moderne style, the facade featured brass and lapis lazuli inlay, and there was enough



LEFT: Stewart Dawson napkin ring, silver, Hazel Nash Bequest, Western Australian Museum, H2013.177

RIGHT (FROM TOP): Levinson & Sons, brooch, c.1913, photographed on mail order catalogue. 1.5ct gold, 5.5cm long. Western Australian Museum, CI190.273.

Levinson's, chalice, 1947. Sterling silver, amethysts, c. 20cm high. St George's Cathedral, Perth.



workshop space for about 120 workmen. An aggressive marketing campaign, which included a mail order catalogue, and ecclesiastical goods made inroads into other businesses including that of the Lintons. This continued until the firm was taken over by and amalgamated with Caris Bros in 1961.

The Caris brothers, John (1860–1933) and Stanley, had also come to Perth during the goldrush period. By 1903 Caris Bros had a forty-page catalogue, and much of the work probably resembled that featured in advertisements that ran almost weekly in the *Western Mail* from the turn of the century until the 1930s. It would appear that in the early days quite a proportion of fancy goods, as well as some jewellery, were imported from the English branch of the firm. Other Caris merchandise was fabricated by Donovan & Overland with the remainder by outworkers and their resident goldsmiths. Caris expanded and bought a number of other businesses, such as Pearl and Addis. London and Adelaide addresses were added to Perth and Kalgoorlie, and there are numerous pieces of fashionable jewellery marked 'CARIS' in private collections including work featuring blister pearls as the pearling industry enjoyed a boom in the early twentieth century. The volume of turnover, fuelled by aggressive marketing campaigns, contributed to financial success. John Caris died in 1933, by which time the firm had been sold. The Ledger family owned it in the 1940s and 1950s; Lindsay Rosenthal,



the owner in 1961, purchased Levinson's in Ballarat and Perth and amalgamated the firms.

A firm that arrived at the end of the goldrush was J. C. Taylor. James Taylor's work was different from the general run made by trade jewellers: it tended to be

**ABOVE:** Caris Bros, brooch, 1900–1940. Carved pearl shell, c. 4 x 4 x 0.8cm. Hazel Nash Bequest, Western Australian Museum, H2013.168.

**RIGHT:** Caris Bros, pendant, c.1900. 18ct gold, blister pearl and peridot, c. 5cm high. Hazel Nash Bequest, Western Australian Museum, H2013.169.





individual and handmade with, at times, the inclusion of repoussé. Its oeuvre included delightful enamelled magpie napkin rings and teaspoons, spoons with modelled Aborigines as the stems, or stiff gumnut and gumleaf finials, carved pearl-shell brooches and repoussé trophies, as well as large silver platters. His first premises were above the Literary Institute in Pier Street, Perth, but by the 1930s he was in the Padbury Buildings in Forrest Place. When the new Piccadilly

Arcade was built between Hay and Murray Streets in 1938, the firm moved to its Murray Street end and also purchased a Hay Street frontage. However Taylor's career came to an abrupt halt in the 1940s when his dog bit him on the right thumb, necessitating amputation. The firm was sold to Harris & Son, and Taylor retired to develop land he owned in what is now the suburb of Nedlands.

A firm that rose to prominence as Levinson's

declined was Mazzucchelli's. Matthew Mazzucchelli (1876–1955) moved his firm from Boulder to Perth in the 1920s, and one of Matthew's sons, Harold, took over the business after World War II. He was a retailer more than a jeweller, not having completed his apprenticeship because of economic

factors, but expanded the firm in concert with his son-in-law and nephews during the mineral boom of the 1960s and 1970s to make it one of the largest chains of jewellers in Western Australia. Very few pieces were marked with the firm's mark and so work is not easy to trace.

## A TRADE SCHOOL – THE TECH 1930–50

The Great Depression saw admission to art classes at Perth Technical College restricted to 'those who required the work for vocational purposes'.<sup>30</sup> The emphasis centred on supplementing 'trade' training for apprentices and developing commercial courses such as typing. Linton was retired two years early at the end of 1931 as part of the economic emergency.<sup>31</sup> The list of subjects Linton taught in the six months preceding his retirement indicates how far towards graphic art the course had veered. He was teaching black and white, wash drawing, fashion drawing, design for fabrics, model drawing for architects, commercial art and woodcarving, as well as the routine art subjects.<sup>32</sup> After Linton's departure, commercial art took precedence and it was not until the next mineral boom in the 1960s that art schools and professional artist-craftspeople were seen in abundance in Western Australia.

When A. B. Webb retired, London-trained Walter Rowbotham was invited to head the

art classes, which he did from 1935 to 1946. Rowbotham coped with the aftermath of the Depression and World War II, towards the end of which he instituted two-and-three-year Art Teachers' and Commercial Art courses with certificates and diplomas. These provided graduates not attached to Trade classes with qualifications, which would allow them to practice independently as graphic designers or as teachers in schools.

Rowbotham was born in Macclesfield, England, in 1878 and studied art at the Macclesfield School of Art from 1893–98 and textile design at the Hope Mills. He worked as a textile designer and then became a teacher. From 1900–05 he attended the Royal College of Art where he worked in the stained-glass atelier of the design school under William Lethaby.<sup>33</sup> He studied woodcarving, tapestry weaving, writing and illumination, and sold tapestry work. A top student, he won the Royal College of Art Scholarship for three years and the Travelling Scholarship, which he used to study in Italy. After time in India

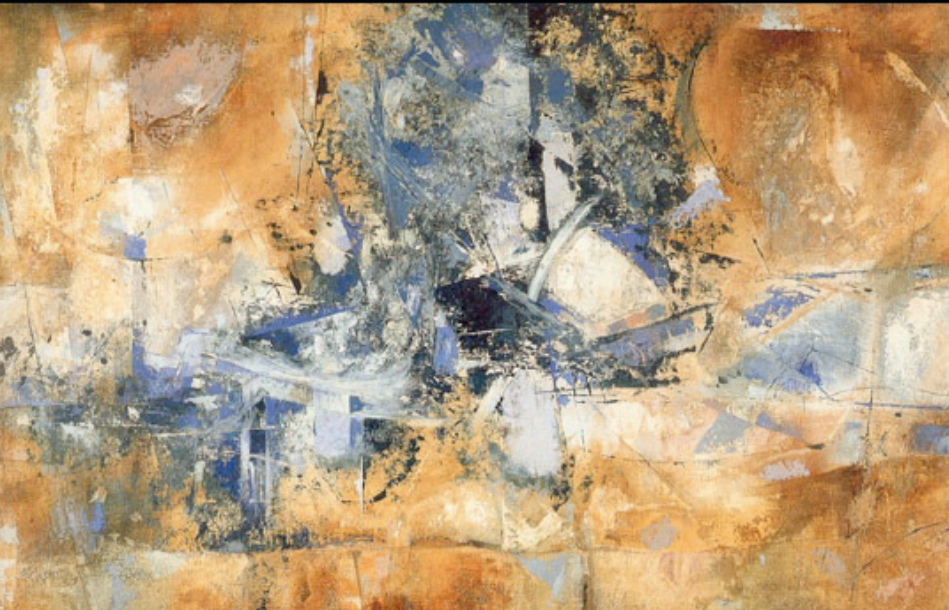
**ABOVE (FROM TOP LEFT):** J. C. Taylor, pendant, 1904–1930. Blister pearl, c. 3 x 4 cm. Hazel Nash Bequest, Western Australian Museum, H2013.170.

**RIGHT:** J. C. Taylor, napkin ring, 1904–1940. Sterling silver, enamelled with magpies, c. 4 x 7 cm. Hazel Nash Bequest, Western Australian Museum, H2013.171.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

# THE RENAISSANCE OF THE 'ARTIST CRAFTSMAN', 1950–70

*Everywhere in Australia people are finding that they need to make things, themselves, with their own hands. They and the objects they make are part of a spontaneous movement to find individual satisfaction and fulfilment, and to improve the quality of life.<sup>1</sup>*



In Western Australia the years immediately following World War II were of rationing and reconstruction. Australia was still acting as a food basket for war-ravaged England and every effort was made to conserve resources to assist the mother country to re-equip. Then, as manpower became available to work the land and migrants arrived, expansion programs were instituted so that by the early 1950s prosperity had returned to a level not seen since 1913. Overseas, as life returned to normal, artists such as Pablo Picasso (1881–1973), Joan Miró (1893–1983), Alexander Calder (1898–1976) and Salvador Dalí (1904–1989) engaged in making or designing craft objects and once again established these as legitimate vehicles for expressing ideas. This blurring of the boundaries of art and craft led indirectly to the 1960s renaissance of the 'Artist Craftsman'. In England Lucie Rie (1902–1995), Ruth Duckworth (1919–2009) and others such as Hans Coper (1920–1981) commenced making ceramics that were elegant and refined, away from the heavier rustic Bernard Leach (1887–1979) tradition.

As the chaos of postwar Europe sorted itself out, migrants and displaced persons came to Western Australia and by 1947 the ethnic mix included people from Greece, Holland, Germany, Malta, Italy, the Dutch East Indies and Ireland. Together with returned servicemen they enriched the local population and rekindled the sophistication of Europe introduced in the 'Golden Years' at the beginning of the century. These refugees were dispersed about the state, broadening the outlook of rural as well as metropolitan areas. A number possessed traditional or

professional craft skills, which enriched the fabric of society. However, a two-way exchange was taking place. While the migrants were coming in, Western Australians were setting off to see the world, and on their return they would demand the things that they had seen being produced in the revitalised Europe of the sixties.

Exploration for minerals began again after the war, reserves were proved and pressure was put on the federal government to allow exports of iron ore, which had been banned as a strategic resource during the war. The Brand Liberal-Country Party Government came to power in Western Australia in 1959 on an industrial expansion platform and stayed for thirteen years. The federal government removed the export embargo on iron ore in 1960, allowing the iron-ore boom and the nickel boom that brought prosperity back to the level of the gold boom at the turn of the century, and coincidentally increased interest in art in the state.

The Festival of Perth, the first of its kind in Australia, was established in 1953 by the University of Western Australia's Professor Fred Alexander (1899–1996) and had a major impact because once air travel had become the accepted way of life Perth began to miss out on many of the major international events such as touring opera, ballet and theatre companies that had traditionally arrived by boat. The festival, which grew out of the university's Summer School, set out to remedy this situation. Under director John Birman (Poland 1913–89), it made a major contribution to the cultural life of the isolated city by encouraging and subsidising events. While the main thrust

LEFT: Image of Kal. Winter by Robert Juniper, 1959. Mixed media on canvas, 120 x 180cm. Joint winner of the Western Australian section of the Perth Art Prize, 1959. Private collection.



pieces and is reminiscent of Jamie Linton at his best. Currie marked his work 'KC' in a square cartouche, 'STG. SIL' in a rectangular cartouche and with a swan also in a separate square cartouche. Currie ceased

work in 1988 when failing eyesight, due to cataracts, interfered with his ability to see. Operations undertaken in 1990 enabled him to commence work again in 1991 and he continued almost until his death in 2002.

## FRANCIS KOTAI AND HIS STUDENTS

In 1954 Francis Kotai, who had arrived from Hungary as a displaced person, was asked to take the pottery course at Fremantle Technical College. Heather McSwain from Swinburne in Melbourne joined him in 1957 and Bruno Guigliarelli from Italy in 1958.

Kotai's approach and background was from the tradition of training artist-designers for industry. Heather McSwain also drew a strong following until the Diploma in Advanced Ceramics was instituted at Perth Technical College in 1979.

LEFT: Kitch Currie, *Psacod* necklace, 1970s. Sterling silver, 18ct gold, opal, pendant 8.1 x 7.1 cm. State Art Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia, 2002/310.

ABOVE: Kitch Currie, bracelet, 1970s. Sterling silver and amazonite, 7cm diameter. Private collection.

## GEOFFREY ALLEN

A name that came to the fore from 1960 in Western Australia was the painter-turned-silversmith Geoffrey Allen (1924–2000), who was also teaching at Scotch College and exhibiting with David Foulkes Taylor. He was one of a number of returned servicemen, retrained to enter the workforce, who had studied art and made a living as a craftsman. Allen's jewellery was very much sought after in the 1960s and continued to be so until he semi-retired in the 1990s. His work was unusual and attracted international attention in the early 1970s.

Geoffrey Allen was born in Mount Barker, Western Australia, the son of Frederick Allen the manager of De Garis' Kendenup Estate, an early attempt at a garden city. He was educated at Kendenup and Mount Barker and enrolled in the army in 1942. After the war he studied to be a painter at the East Sydney Technical College. He was part of the Sydney 'push' and remembers the time as exhilarating but confusing with many styles developing in the art world. Allen, who returned to Perth in about 1953, achieved success as a painter, winning the *Perth Prize*, the *Bunbury Prize* and the *Fremantle Drawing Prize*. He entered the field of jewellery unintentionally. When he was teaching at Scotch College he was commissioned to make a sculpture for the new Council House in Perth, which led from experiments in metal to making jewellery for sale<sup>20</sup> and finally to giving up his teaching position to set up as a 'village craftsman'. Unlike painting, he felt completely at ease with jewellery and his direction was clear: he had found himself.

Allen enjoyed instant success with his jewellery. His path had been eased by the example of the Lintons, *père et fils*, who had accustomed Western Australians to thinking of purchasing silver and jewellery from artists. Early work had overtones of Calder constructions but before long he embarked on the techniques of lost-wax casting and reticulation, which he taught himself from journals and through experimentation. It was as well that he had an enquiring mind, as lateral thinking was required to solve some of the technical problems he encountered. His first casting machine, for instance, was constructed from parts cannibalised from a washing machine and a baby's pram. His



early experimentation with lost-wax casting brought him to the attention of Graham Hughes (1926–2010), the Curator at Goldsmiths' Hall in London. Hughes wrote a series of articles for *Optima Magazine*,<sup>21</sup> published under the title 'The Renaissance of the Artist Craftsman'. It was typical of the

times that of the four Australian jewellers illustrated in the articles, three were painters turned goldsmiths — David Dunne (b. United Kingdom, 1931) and Emanuel Raft (b. Egypt, 1938) of Sydney, and Allen. In this and his seminal book *The Art of Jewellery*, Hughes, who commissioned work from

LEFT: Geoffrey Allen in his studio in Broadway, Nedlands, in the 1980s.

ABOVE: Geoffrey Allen, *Self-portrait*, 1959. Oil on board, 75 x 59 cm. Private collection.





fruits of his third marriage. Work from this time is often very sculptural with vegetative or anatomical references to procreation.

Some of Allen's work is geometric, abstract and plays with form. An example of this is a bracelet in the Art Gallery of Western Australia that was made in about 1974 and cleverly incorporates interlocking links. It was the result of an exercise he set for an assistant, Nicholas Tandy. There are also forged pieces made before the onset of rheumatism prohibited this activity. A forged gold bracelet made in 1971 is the result of experimentation with technique, a device that was used by Allen as a creative catalyst to his design process.

One of Allen's most successful and continuing themes was his *Oceanic Series* that developed out of his use of the lost-wax method of casting. He used a controlled collision of molten wax into ice-cold moving water, which caused the wax to shrink in a pattern resembling bark or foam, something he discovered by accident while in a hurry to cool a pair of cufflinks. This process yielded the forms on which further research and refinement were undertaken. A brooch and ring, which incorporate amethysts in silver and 18ct gold, are typical examples of this organic style.

The postwar period, of which Allen was very much a part, was one of change from the stringencies of war to boom and plenty,



**CLOCKWISE (FROM ABOVE):** Geoffrey Allen, ring, 1974. Sterling silver set with pearl, 4 x 4 x 2.5cm. Private collection.

Geoffrey Allen, *Spinning-gaw Ring*, 1970s. Sterling silver, amethyst, pearl, quartz. Private collection.

Geoffrey Allen, bracelet, 1971. Forged 18ct gold, 18 x 2 x 0.5cm. Private collection.



and those who bridged the period had the chance to develop and prosper with the economy. Geoffrey Allen, with his more experimental approach, stood out and was counted on the international scene. He, like Linton before him, rose above shortages of materials and technological information. He was an innovator, experimenter and leader who blazed a trail for others to follow, one who was privileged to be part of the van of a worldwide movement in a time of prosperity that provided unlimited horizons. He was there at the beginning of the Craft Revival and continued to make his living by his work, unlike many of the major names in modern Australian jewellery who supported themselves by teaching. Allen's work was an individual expression of local environment couched in an international idiom. There was no other Australian work in the same mode. It reflected his sense of person and very much his place, yet was part of the wider arena that included London and New York.

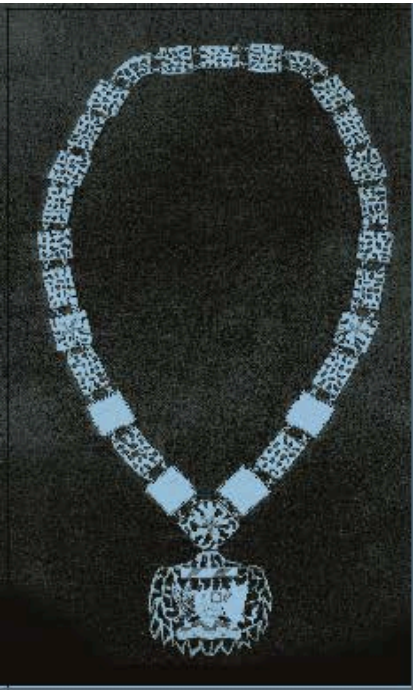
David Foulkes Taylor also promoted Francis Gill (1924–2004), who arrived in 1965 and set up as a craftsman. He was the nephew of Eric Gill (1882–1940), the English sculptor-typographer. Gill had some sculptural training in England but was basically self-taught in making jewellery, which was a sideline to his main activity of building. Gill started teaching at Midland Technical School



not long after he arrived and became the first teacher of jewellery and silversmithing at the newly opened WAIT in 1970. Gill's work was very much in the international idiom of the time incorporating free-form amoebic shapes. He exhibited at the Old Fire Station and Skinner Galleries. He also made some

**LEFT (FROM TOP):** Geoffrey Allen, *Cosmic Series brooch*, 1978. Sterling silver and amethyst, 5 x 4.5cm. Private collection.  
Geoffrey Allen, *Cosmic Series ring*, 1970s, 18ct gold with pearls. Private collection.

**ABOVE:** Francis Gill, necklace, 1966. Sterling silver, 60.2 x 3.5cm. Private collection.



major commissions such as the mayoral chain again he took up metalsmithing working in for the City of Stirling but soon returned to Fremantle and then opening a studio gallery building until his retirement when once in the Margaret River region.

## GEORGE LUCAS

A silversmith who continued the Linton training as a French polisher was apprenticed to his father-in-law. Lucas was in partnership with Linton in Linton Silver from 1966 to 1976 making the wildflower-design cutlery

**LEFT (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT):** Francis Gill, Mayoral Chain for the City of Stirling, 1972. Sterling silver. Brooch designed by Dorothy Erickson and made by Francis Gill, 1967. Opal, oxidised sterling silver, 7 x 6 x 1 cm. Collection of the artist.

Wildflower design cutlery designed by Jamie A. B. Linton and made by George Lucas.

**BELOW:** Box made by George Lucas while a student at Sir John Cass College in London, 1975. Sterling silver and vitreous enamel, 12 x 6 cm. Collection of the artist.

