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Wood engraving by
L Roy Davies for
Blanche D'Alpuget, 1923

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The Society's Third Annual General Meeting

At the 2008 annual general meeting it was agreed that it would be more sensible to hold these meetings early in the new year. This would allow the Treasurer and other of the Society's officers to provide reports on the full calendar year of activities. The Annual General Meeting held on the evening of 23 June 2010 thus reflected on the Society's third full year of existence, 2009, and also included discussions on plans for the future.

We were privileged to be allowed to use the Research Library of the Art Gallery of New South Wales as the venue for the meeting, through the good offices of Steven Miller, Head of the Research Library and Archive at the Gallery. Despite the heavy rain and resulting dreadful Sydney traffic, we had a record attendance of 15 members, including three who had travelled from Melbourne (although not solely to attend the meeting).

The President reported that the *Newsletter* continued to be well received, and that Mike Carter had arranged for him to address the

Australian Society for Miniature Art (NSW) in November. Our Society now has 77 members, including the legal deposit libraries, and whilst a small number have failed to renew, this was more than balanced by 5 new members in 2009 and 7 joining so far in 2010. He also reported that he would be attending the international bookplate congress – FISAE – in Istanbul over 25-29 August and would be representing the Society. The Treasurer then tabled the financial report to 31 December 2009, showing that funds on hand amounted to approximately three thousand dollars. With this healthy account balance, he suggested that the Society could issue some finely produced publications to raise the Society's profile and boost membership.

A viewing of the mock up of the Members' Directory prepared by the Secretary engendered much discussion and it was clear that those present were enthusiastic about this project; however, some members require a further reminder to forward copies or scans of their own bookplates for inclusion. Similarly, the Vice



Members and friends at the 3rd Annual General Meeting, 23 June: (l-r), front, Robert Littlewood, Liz Rouse, Mike Carter, Mary Keep, Brenda Heagney, Mellissa Read-Devine, Lee Sanders, Mark Ferson; 2nd row, Steven Miller, Nick Ingleton, Douglas Stewart, Ronald Cardwell, Edwin Jewell, Bronwyn Vost; rear, Tony Palmer.

President had pursued the question of how the Society might assist artist members, including raising their profile among other members and the public. It was agreed that a page on the Society's website would be an excellent vehicle to showcase designs produced by artist members, and that a subcommittee would be formed to progress this and other ideas.

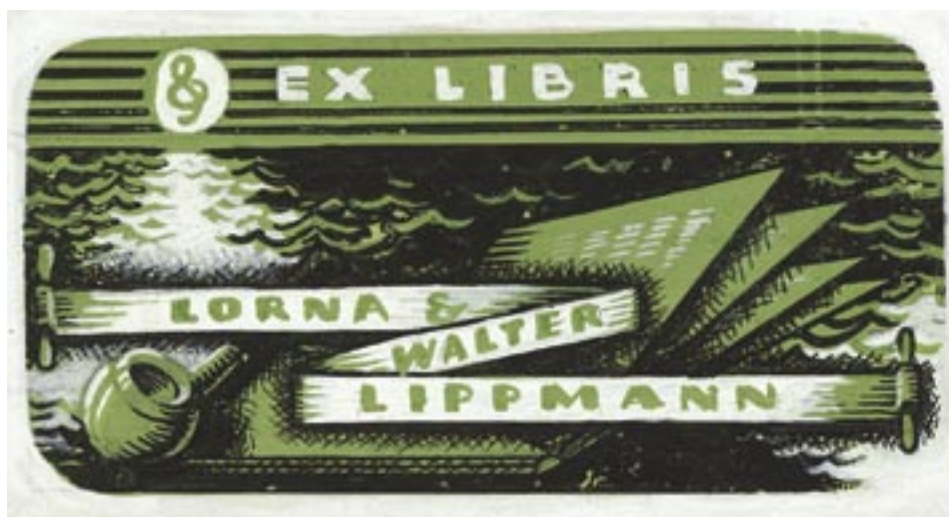
After this, election of office bearers was held and in the absence of other nominations, the 2009 office bearers were re-elected for 2010: President, Mark Ferson; Vice President, Mike Carter; Treasurer, Ronald Cardwell; and Secretary, Mary Keep. Mark thanked all for their contributions to the running and continuing development of the Society.

At the conclusion of formal business, the President introduced guest speaker Steven Miller who gave a brief but interesting and tantalising overview of the Pat Corrigan Collection of Australian artists' bookplates held by the Library. Members were given an opportunity to view bookplates, associated material and actual printing plates on display in the Library as well as in a number of volumes collected and donated by Corrigan. Steven was thanked for his talk and for providing the very comfortable venue.

Bookplate collections in Australian institutions: The Corrigan collection of Australian artists' bookplates in the Art Gallery of New South Wales

Steven Miller, Head, Research Library and Archive, Art Gallery of NSW

Recently the Research Library and Archive of the Art Gallery of NSW hosted the Annual General Meeting of the New Australian Bookplate Society. This was an opportunity to showcase some of the fine bookplates contained in the Pat Corrigan collection. Donated in 1995, it includes over 4,000 plates, tipped into volumes dedicated to individual artists or kept loose. Often original sketches are included, along



Anne Graham, original watercolour for Lorna and Walter Lippmann bookplate, 1940s

with intermediate states of the plate and sometimes the block from which a plate was pulled. The donation also included a comprehensive library of books, journals and catalogues, as well as correspondence between key bookplate artists and collectors.

Pat Corrigan is often the final figure in a fascinating chain of provenance for these plates, and continues to give bookplates and related materials to the Library. The majority have come from the libraries of RH Croll, John Lane Mullins, Harry Chaplin, John Gartner and HB Muir. All of these bibliophiles played a significant part in promoting bookplate art in Australia. Mullins, a long-standing trustee of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, mounted a well-publicised bookplate exhibition in Sydney in 1923 and formed the Australian Ex Libris Society later in the same year, remaining its president until his death in 1939. Croll became the Victorian vice president of the Society; Chaplin was an important collector of Lindsay family material; John Gartner, proprietor of the Hawthorn Press, founded the Australian Bookplate Club in Melbourne in 1942; and Harry Muir was a bookseller in Adelaide who published a series of booklets on bookplate subjects in the early nineteen forties.

The donor, Pat Corrigan was born in Hankow and spent his childhood in Tientsin, North China. Attempting to reach Australia during World War II, his

family was captured by the Japanese. He was interned for four years in Hong Kong, along with photographer Lewis Morley. Pat's professional life in Australia has been spent largely in the freight forwarding business. He is known for both his art and book collections, with his extensive art library being purchased by James Hardie Industries and presented to the State Library of Queensland as a Bicentennial gift.

The Corrigan collection includes a wide range of bookplate types, from armorial and calligraphic ones through to such well known pictorial plates as the Dr Johnson plate which Lionel Lindsay cut for Camden Morrisby and which was reproduced in *The Studio*. The percentage of women artists who contributed to the quality of bookplate creation in Australia is high and is reflected in this collection. Eirene Mort was one of the first to devote artistic talent in this direction, along with Ethel Stephens, Thea Proctor, Ada Parsons, Ella Dwyer and others.

Since the original donation, the Pat Corrigan collection has attracted further donations of material from artists and collectors. For instance, when we contacted Melbourne artist Anne Graham recently to seek her help with the cataloguing of the bookplates which she had designed during the 1940s, she gave us some plates which were missing and also some of the original watercolours sketches for plates in the collection.



Off-set lithograph by John Coburn for Pat Corrigan, 1982

This large collection is in the process of being digitised, and once this is done, it will be available online through the Research Library web page. Until this is completed, a comprehensive printed content list for the collection is available in the Research Library. The Collection can be consulted through the Research Library and Archive, which is open to the public on Tuesday to Friday from 10am-4pm and on Wednesday evenings until 7.30pm. Staff may be contacted on 02 9225 1785. The catalogue of the Research Library is available at www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/lib/cat

Letter to the Editor

Congratulations and many thanks for *Newsletter* no. 16, March 2010. It is excellent. I particularly appreciate your article about Mr GD Perrotet. He was such an accomplished

artist. As a child I adored Princess Elizabeth – she is 10 days younger than me, and there was always a lot of publicity about that darling little house presented to her by the people of Wales. That house fascinated every little girl in the Commonwealth. I wonder what happened to it? King George V was on the throne at that time, and no-one would have dreamed that Edward would have rejected the kingship for Mrs Simpson. It all hinged on out-of-date ordinances. I believe our queen has done very well given the uncertainties of the last 30 years. So thank you for that charming bookplate. I liked John Lane Mullins' heraldic plate and had a wee smile at the stylised fishes on the bookplate for FCV Lane. Jeff Bidgood has an interesting article with the presentation plate for the Kurnell landing. History lurks in all sorts of places.

*Rie Fletcher, Auckland
15 May 2010*

Notes and happenings

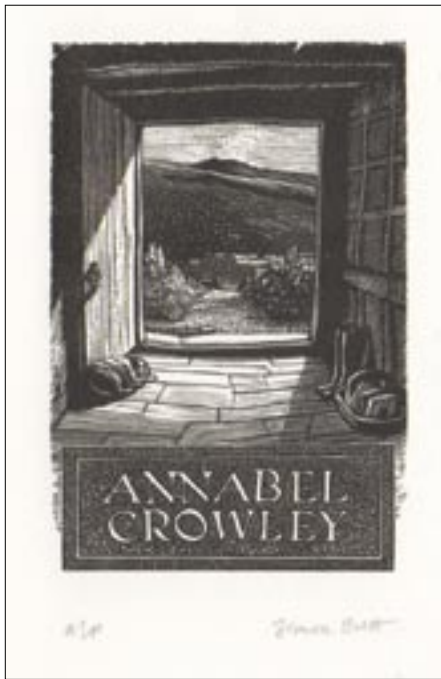
'Ex libris'. Exhibition at the Art Gallery of South Australia, 13 February–30 May 2010

This exhibition, subtitled 'The printed image and the art of the book' uses material drawn from the Gallery's collections to illustrate the history and strength of the book arts by focussing on the images made to accompany books from incunabula to the modern day. A group of 12 bookplates are included, by Allan Jordan, Lionel Lindsay, Will Mahony and Eric Thake.

With thanks to Elspeth Pitt, AGSA, for providing this information.

'With Pleasure: Prints from personal collections'. Exhibition at the Northern Print Gallery, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 26 February to 17 April 2010
www.northernprint.org.uk

This show, which provides a selection of contemporary British wood-engraved bookplates by Simon Brett, Chris Daunt, Andy English, John Lawrence, Hilary Paynter, Richard Shirley Smith and Ian Stephens, accompanies an exhibition of prints on loan from private collectors designed to give an insight into the personal enthusiasms and motivations of print collectors. The prints tell us something about their owners, and what they convey about their lives and passions may be intentionally shared or not. The bookplates on the other hand are so often designed specifically to hold clues about the owner. I am sure that visitors to the show enjoyed both deciphering the codes hidden within these delicate and complex prints as much as musing upon what they would choose to say about themselves were they to commission their own bookplate. I do hope people who came to the exhibition were inspired to either commission one of the many wonderful wood-engravers working today or to come along to Chris Daunt's course to make their own bookplate.
With thanks to Anna Wilkinson, Director, Northern Print, and to Mike Carter for drawing attention to this exhibition.



Sale of works by Marguerite Mahood, Hurnall's Decorative Arts Gallery, Melbourne, 26 April to 2 May 2010

Marguerite Mahood (1901-89) was a multi-talented artist who gained a PhD in later life for a study of nineteenth century Australian political cartoons. She is best known for her ceramics, often decorated with cheeky animal figures, but was also a prolific print-maker. I feel lucky to have bought, many years ago, her copy of LA Doust's *A manual on wood engraving* (Warne, London, 1942) with her own bookplate. The Hurnall's catalogue shows a Mahood bookplate for Colin Friend – Peake records these two, plus a further three bookplates by Mahood. See: James Cockington, 'Collect: Rare ceramics prized', SMH, 14 April 2010, p Money 9.



Bookplates from the exhibition at the Northern Print Gallery, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 'With Pleasure: Prints from personal collections'. Above: Wood-engraved bookplate by Simon Brett for Annabel Crowley Below: Wood-engraved bookplate by John Lawrence for William Fern

Pen and ink design by Marguerite Mahood for herself, 1938



Editorial

Thank you for your forbearance in awaiting another tardy copy of the *Newsletter*, which I trust you will nevertheless enjoy. We open with a report on the recent Annual General Meeting of the Society, a successful event held at the Art Gallery of New South Wales with Steven Miller as our guest speaker. And Steven has kindly contributed an article on the important Corrigan bookplate collection held in the Gallery's Research Library, together with an image of original artwork by Anne Graham which was among the most recent additions to the Collection.

I would like to thank those others who have contributed or suggested material for this issue: Mike Carter, Elspeth Pitt and Anna Wilkinson (UK). Finally, in light of Australia's rush towards a Federal election, it seems appropriate to show on the front page the bookplate of Blanche D'Alpuget, great aunt of that namesake with the strongest of political connections, the biographer and wife of former Prime Minister Bob Hawke.

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