



NATIONAL TRUST (NSW)

75
YEARS

BRINGING OUR
HERITAGE TO LIFE

Celebrating 75 years

Ludovic Blackwood Sanctuary, Beecroft.
Cover Image which appeared on the 2015
Conservation Management Plan.

During our 75 year history we have not only conserved and preserved built and natural assets throughout New South Wales, but we have also played an invaluable role caring for more than 60,000 collection items. Collection items were acquired, as well as many gifted to us from generous donors. We have also been the guardian for countless regions of our local bushland, all of which has come into our care for future generations.

Housed within our National Trust (NSW) properties across the state, is a nationally significant collection of paintings, sculptures, photographs, furniture, furnishings, decorative arts and crafts, letters, memorabilia, household items and children's toys dating from Regency, Victorian, Edwardian, and Art Deco periods to the present day. Many items have particular historical and cultural significance, under the broader Australian story, while others play a significant part in stories of those individuals who established estates, communities, local industries, governance of the colony and therefore broadly influenced and shaped the Australia in which we live today.

While many works have been acquired through more conventional channels, such as specific purchases from fundraising through Committees and Friends groups or the National Trust itself, other items have come directly through bequests and financial donations from members and donors either as separate pieces, broader collections or attached to a property. It reflects

the generosity and foresight of members and supporters of the National Trust, past and present. The collection has over time held considerable social value across communities, for our members and our volunteers.

Just as the National Trust saved important buildings for the community, it has also preserved highly significant objects, in situ collections and works of art, and made these accessible to the public. Through the development and display of the collection over the past 50 years, we have continued to champion key objects from our past, influenced community appreciation of Australian art, Australiana, and Australian colonial furniture for which the National Trust now has one of the most significant collections held in the country. Our collections have also contributed to research, education and understanding of the way of life of people and families from different periods, places and classes through history.

Over the last decades we have acquired significant items from all facets of Australian life.

In 1960, the National Trust acquired the *Portrait of Emily Phillips*, c. 1855 (artist unknown). Ms Phillips emigrated to Australia as a widow and in order to support herself, opened a private school for girls and operated it from her home on the north side of Phillip Street, Parramatta, not far from where her portrait now resides at Old Government House.

As we moved further into the 1960s, three large embroidered panels designed by Emily Twynam featuring images of trees and Australian birds, and embroidered by Louise de Lauret of Wynella, Goulburn c. 1907 were part of the bequest of Riversdale from Alice Joan Twynam, (1882–1967) to the Trust in 1967. Hanging pride of place in the drawing room at the Riversdale Homestead the panels were shown in 1907 in the First Australians Exhibition of Women's Work at Sydney and Melbourne. Also acquired in 1967 for Lindesay, was a 1780s Reader's Chair with adjustable book slope.

National Trust (NSW) Celebrating 75 Years

Our Collection

Our Adam Beyer piano c. 1775, held in the Old Government House collection since 1969, is identical in appearance to that of the oldest surviving English piano in the world c. 1767, which resides in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

Believed to be the oldest signed and dated piece of furniture in Australia is a specimen cabinet c. 1815 constructed from casuarina, pine and ebony with cedar and huon pine as secondary timbers. Made for travelling, with its folding sides, the cabinet is an excellent example of the fashion for collecting cabinets in the colony, where settlers would collect specimens of the exotic shells, feathers, eggs, pressed flowers and even taxidermy animals. Found in London in the 1970s, the National Trust acquired it with funds from an anonymous benefactor in 1972, to be housed in the Old Government House collection.

Throughout the 1970s the National Trust, acquired many significant artworks and sculptures, including in 1970 Norman Lindsay's, Royal Caroline ship model and Oriental Vase, in 1973, Norman Lindsay's, *The Balinese Dancer* (Norman Lindsay Gallery) and in 1975 *The Legations - French, American, British and Dutch Hongs at Canton*, by Chinese artist Sun Qua at Bedervale (together with a rare melophone).

Two of the National Trust's more significant items were both bequeathed in 1977 the first of which is the Sydney Gold Cup c. 1870, by C.L. Quist, from Miss Ida Traill of Bathurst. The cup is of classical form with a cover or lid surmounted by a cast figure of a horse and jockey, with chased and applied decoration. It is marked on the base with a quality mark for 18 carat gold and the impressed name of its maker. The second item, held as part of the S.H. Ervin collection is that of a wine cooler, made from Irish bog yew, which was exhibited in the Great Exhibition in London in 1852.



Adam Beyer Piano, Old Government House, c. 1775

Owned by Robert Lethbridge King, the son of Philip Parker King and grandson of Governor Philip Gidley King, the Collector's cabinet is made of Australian Cedar, has twenty four drawers and contains approximately 450 shells and was added to the National Trust's collection in 1979. In the same year, the *Study of a Possum* by Louisa Atkinson (1834–1872) who resided in the Southern Highlands, was donated to the collection, a sample of her work which also included writings on botany for newspapers, and also the publication of two fiction novels and many short stories.

In 1985, a cotton hexagonal patchwork quilt c. 1830, thought to be made by Elizabeth Macarthur, wife of the pastoralist John Macarthur was added to the collection. This quilt is one of the few early 19th century examples to have survived and it had been in the Macarthur family hands until 1985 when it was bequeathed to the National Trust. Another generous donation two years later was that from the Whalan family, of a travelling desk in 1987, made of mahogany with brass handles with a plate inscribed L. Macquarie on the lid. It is thought to have been sent to Charles Whalan Jnr from Lachlan Macquarie Jnr after the death of Governor Lachlan Macquarie in 1824 and is housed at Old Government House.

During the 1992 restoration of Dundullimal Homestead, Dubbo, a squatter's chair was found in an outbuilding. Dating from the 1850s and celebrating her contribution to women's art over the last decade, Portia Geach's, *Ferries at Dusk, Lane Cove River* was generously donated in 1994 to the S.H. Ervin Gallery by John F. Gilfillan.



Convict half gill mugs, Cooma Cottage, c. 1827

Following his appointment by Governor Macquarie to look after the government clocks c. 1817, James Oatley established his own clock making business, producing amongst other timepieces, long case clocks. After the installation of the first clock at Hyde Park Barracks, Oatley No 9 was made for Thomas West of Barcom Glen in 1821, and it remained in the West family until donated to the National Trust in 2001, where it now resides at Old Government House.

Together with James Fairfax's generous gift of Retford Park in 2017, was a number of collection items including the Inge King sculpture *Euphoric Angels*, one of the many sculptures displayed through the property's picturesque gardens.

Our most recently recorded addition to the collection, was the half gill mugs, made from tin and manufactured in c. 1827 which were possibly bought from England and re-purposed at a later date. They are believed to be owned and used by Hamilton Hume and his convicts during the time he resided at Cooma Cottage.

The National Trust has recently toured parts of our collection to our regional properties allowing the public to enjoy these treasures, including the collection of Georgian Glass that was bequeathed by Mr Havelberg.

The National Trust's collections are vast and include many intact collections with direct provenance to a particular place. These 'closed collections' are found in properties like Miss Traill's House & Garden, Bathurst, Miss Porter's House, Newcastle, Bedervale, Braidwood, Saumarez, Armidale amongst others, and are incredibly important as they provide our visitors with the chance to glimpse back and appreciate an unaltered past.



Top left image – Anna King Evening Dress, Old Government House c. 1805

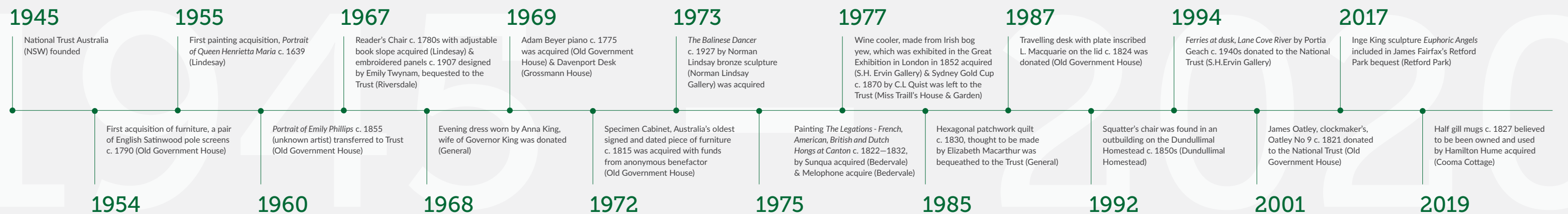
Top right image – Longcase Clock Oatley No. 9 - J. Oatley, Old Government House, c. 1821

Middle image – Bee Skep, Riversdale, c. 1900

Bottom left image – *Portrait of Emily Phillips*, Old Government House, c. 1855

Bottom right image – Sydney Gold Cup - C. Quist, Miss Traill's House & Garden, c. 1870

Timeline Of Significant Collections In Our Trust Story



Preserving our natural landscape

Weed incursion into natural areas is ranked high amongst environmental threats now facing Australian ecosystems. Generally, an underappreciated ecological problem, invasive species are rapidly expanding and now account for approximately 15% of our total flora. Of the 15%, half will invade natural areas and ultimately outcompete native vegetation. They will effect fauna by altering habitat opportunities and potentially reducing food supply in the area. Approximately one-quarter are considered serious environmental weeds or display the characteristic of serious weeds. A substantial amount of our native vegetation has been, or will inevitably be, invaded by introduced species at some point if not controlled. This invasion will continue to adversely affect Australian ecosystems, native species composition, diversity and critically reduce the abundance of native communities.

Bush Regeneration is the restoration of natural areas that have become degraded through the introduction of weeds, to a healthier community of native plants and animals. The best environmental outcomes are achieved when restoration activities facilitate the systems own natural ability to sustain native regeneration processes unaided by human intervention.

The National Trust's bush management services branch Bushland Management Services (BMS) is extremely proud of its achievements in the field of Bush Regeneration or Natural Area Restoration as it is commonly known today. Together with the Bradley sisters, we pioneered the industry's evolution into the mainstream and in doing so, have helped protect and conserve remanent parcels of bushland and the health of associated ecosystems throughout greater Sydney.

44 years on and our team of restoration staff continue to front line the war against weeds and although the crew may certainly look different today, our passion and dedication to the cause has not altered. Our staff come from greater diversity of backgrounds but all share a common love for the Australian bush and the beauty a healthy native bushland reveals. Many of our projects are very technical in nature and often within endangered and critically endangered ecological communities such as Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub, Blue Gum High Forest, and Cumberland Plain Woodland, to name but a few. The industry too has evolved considerably in 44 years however, the fundamental principles of protecting our native vegetation by facilitating regeneration processes unaided by human intervention remains the same. Today our projects also may include erosion control, asset protection, seed collection for propagation and re-installation and habitat creation which may include the building and installation of nesting boxes.

It is often said that prevention is better than cure, and as the largest proportion of weeds have been derived from horticultural species that have escaped cultivation, it is vital that we all begin to consider and adopt native species when landscaping our gardens if we are serious about reversing the impact that introduced species are having on Australian ecosystems.



Top image – Elaine and Joan Bradley

Middle image – Native species regenerating

Bottom left image – Techniques to prevent erosion

Bottom right image – Lucas Heights regeneration area

Volunteer with us

Make history and volunteer your time and talent with the National Trust (NSW).
nationaltrust.org.au/volunteers-nsw/

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nationaltrust.org.au/membership/



The Bradley tools

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