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Pen and ink design by
Ethel Falkiner for Lucy Falkiner

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Adrian Feint (1894-1971), a short biography

By Richard J King, Hobart

Adrian Feint was born in the New South Wales country town of Narrandera where his father was the newsagent. Educated locally, he then completed his studies at Fort Street High School in Sydney. He joined the Julian Ashton Art School in 1912 and enlisted as an ambulance driver and medic in Belgium and France for the duration of the First World War. He resumed his art studies when he returned in 1921, joining Sydney Ure Smith, publisher of *Art in Australia* and the *Home* magazines. The NSW Society of Artists listed him as an exhibitor that year as well. His association with the circle of fellow workers etc endured to the end of his life. A bookplate commissioned by Sydney Municipal Childrens' Library in 1922 opened a chapter in his life which spanned over twenty years and which established him as the doyen of the Australian bookplate world. Two hundred and twenty one bookplates are documented by his friend Thelma Clune in her *Checklist*, published in 1964.

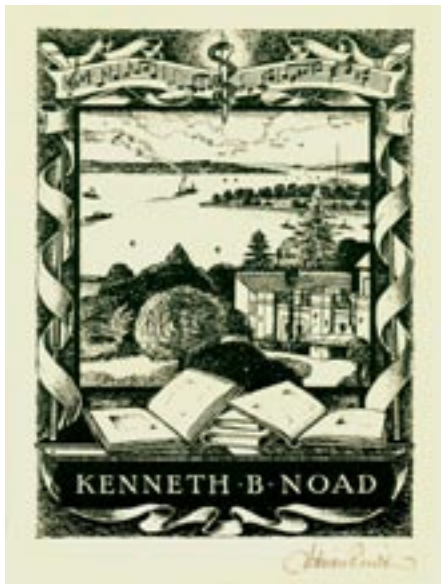
He created his first etching in 1923, exhibiting at the gallery of Farmers' department store, which was a fund raiser for a show in London by Australian artists under the auspices of the Society of Artists. Many shows followed, mostly with other artists. Another society called The Younger Group had an exhibition at Anthony Hordern's Fine Art Gallery in 1924. Adrian contributed five etchings each priced at one to two guineas. Julian Ashton wrote the introduction to the catalogue and William Moore, art critic and author, wrote: 'Adrian Feint who has recently done excellent designs for bookplates is not always so successful with his larger drawings. He has a fine sense of composition but there is considerable room for improvement in his drawing of figures'. 1924 saw his partnership with bookbinder of note, Wal Taylor, in the creation of Grosvenor Galleries in Sydney, with

Adrian as manager. This relationship lasted for four years. Exhibitors at Grosvenor Galleries included many of the now household names in Australian art: Thea Proctor, Elioth Gruner, Margaret Preston, Roland Wakelin, Roy de Maistre, G W Lambert, to name a few. This society was known as the Modern Group of Painters.

More and more of Adrian's drawings and bookplates were being reproduced in *Art in Australia*. What were referred to as woodcut bookplates [but were actually wood engravings] began to appear from the mid-twenties and his famous image *Circe* was reproduced in *Art in Australia*, Third series No. 27, September 1927. He was now creating many of the covers for the prestige magazine, the *Home*. John Winter once told me that Adrian would often do the design for Hera Roberts when it was her turn to do one, but she lacked any inspiration on the given subject, and let her take the credit. All who knew



3-colour wood engraving for P Tansey, 1930



Pen and ink design for K B Noad, 1944;

him spoke of him in loving terms as a true friend of integrity and of generous spirit. With the founding of the Australian Ex Libris Society following a successful exhibition in May 1923 at Tyrrell's Gallery in Sydney, it was not too long before Adrian was the dominantly featured artist. Commissions came from many diverse directions in those halcyon years of great enthusiasm. In 1928 he published his first book under the Palm Tree Press imprint ... *Bookplates*. John Lane Mullins, President of the Australian Ex Libris Society and bookplate patron, wrote the introduction. It was just six years since Adrian's first bookplate had appeared and in that short time he had created sixty-eight individual designs. The book was in an edition of 125 copies and contained 21 original bookplates tipped onto the pages.

Over the years I contacted many of the people who had owned bookplates designed by Adrian, and each had an individual tale, often funny, often with great nostalgia of how their bookplate came into being. Perhaps one day I could share these memories with the members. In 1929 he won second prize in the Society of Artists annual show with a tempura painting, *Magpies*, which was subsequently reproduced in *Art in Australia*, Third series, No. 29, September 1929. The street sign he designed for Mrs Frances Zabel's Roycroft Book and Art Shop was

a feature of Sydney's favourite haunt of writers and painters, Rowe Street. All was lost in the sixties when the Australia Hotel and surrounding buildings were demolished to make way for the MLC Centre ... a time of much vandalism! The 1929 report of the Australian Ex Libris Society stated that Adrian was the most notable contributor to the list of Australian published bookplates. P Neville Barnett, the guiding force behind the movement then and for decades to come, wrote a brief history of the bookplate, singling out Adrian for special mention.

Despite the stockmarket crash of 1929, it was a very good year for Adrian in 1930, as he won 1st prize in the competition held in Los Angeles by the Bookplate International Association, against over 700 entrants from sixteen countries. His winning entry was a wood engraving for Raoul Lempriere. As a result, a one-man show of his bookplates was held at the Library of Congress, Washington DC, organised by the American Society of Bookplate Collectors and Designers. To celebrate the completion of his 100th plate, for Barbara Rixson, a white-line wood engraving, he published a booklet entitled *Bookplate 100* in a limited edition of six copies with tipped-in examples of the three states in creation of the design. The wood-engraved bookplate for Lady Enid de Chair, Patron of the Australian Ex Libris Society, was awarded 1st prize as best bookplate of the year. It was reproduced in *Art in Australia* No. 34, October-November 1930.

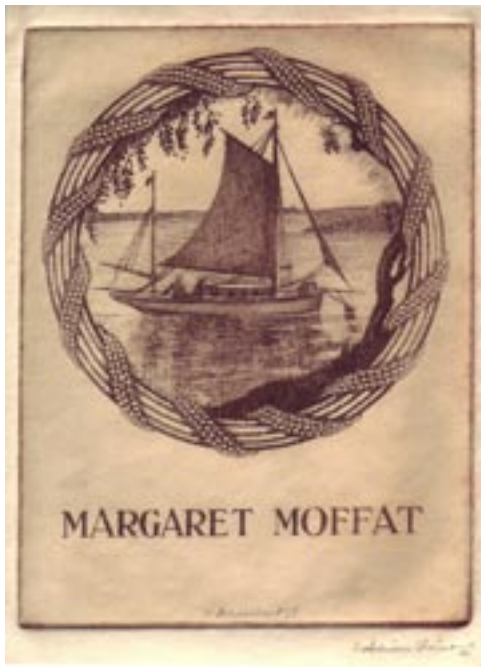
Still living at Burdekin House, where he had helped stage an exhibition the previous year known as the Modern Show, for which he and Leon Gellert had designed the interior of a study, his rent of two pounds ten shillings a week, despite the hardships of the Great Depression, did not seem to pose a problem. The building was later demolished for St Stephen's Church and the portico pillars now reside at St Malo in Hunter's Hill, near Fig Tree Bridge. The December 1931 issue of *Art in Australia*, known as the Hugh McCrae number (Third series, No. 41), was completely illustrated by Adrian. If anything, Adrian's star was shining brighter than ever. He is thought to have charged an

average of five guineas a bookplate, which included 200 printed examples, signed and sometimes numbered. Some were hand coloured as well. He only used Turkish boxwood for all his wood engravings throughout his life. And of course, every bookplate had to be carved or etched in reverse using a small mirror to work from.

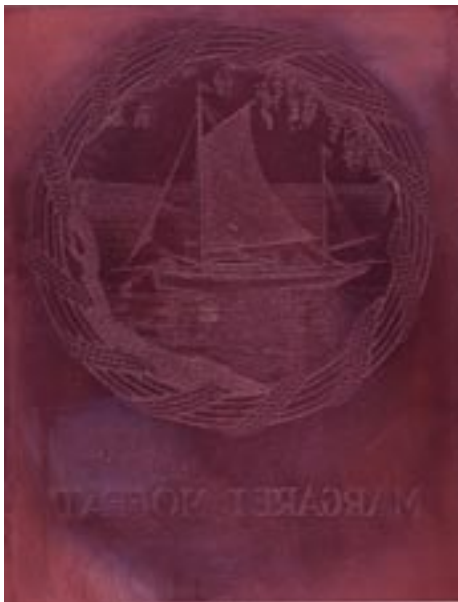
During 1932 he moved to Darnley in Onslow Avenue, Elizabeth Bay. It was to be his home which he shared with his life partner, John Winter, for the next twenty three years. To celebrate his close friendship with the Clune family he published that year in an edition of thirty copies, a booklet reproducing all the bookplates commissioned by the author, Frank Clune. There were five bookplates for various family members. All of these self-published books and booklets were done entirely by hand, and most carry the imprint of Feint's Palm Tree Press.

In 1933, the Sydney Art School invited Adrian to submit four works for their retrospective exhibition to cover the period 1890 to 1933. All of his works were shown. In an article for *Manuscripts* magazine, solicitor and bookplate collector Frank E Lane wrote of Adrian's development, characteristics and art of the bookplate, whilst *Art in Australia* reproduced seven of the latest designs. Again, despite the severe and dire restrictions of the Depression, Adrian continued to enjoy success. The 1934 publication by the Australian Ex Libris Society entitled *Bookplate Artists, Number one, Adrian Feint* was limited to one hundred and fifty copies. The introduction was written by Carlyle S Baer, Secretary of the American Society of Bookplate Collectors and Designers, and Mullins wrote the forward. It included a checklist of all his plates to that date.

As if to prove all bookplate creators were not dull literary types, a Coming Out Party was arranged by P Neville Barnett to clear that image and to celebrate the publication of his latest effort, *Woodcut book-plates*. Barnett organised with Harrie Mortlock's Beacon Press to have 'very privately printed' a souvenir booklet, containing numerous light-



Etched design for M Moffat, 1925 (above); copper plate (below).



hearted woodcut and linocut bookplates, mostly by women artists. A strong Art Deco influence can be seen in the images with one or two word comments on each page.

By 1938 Adrian had created about one hundred and eighty bookplates. He was probably the most prolific in the field in Australia. His design panel greeted all visitors to the Australian Main Pavilion at the New Zealand Centennial Exhibition and the Art Gallery of New South Wales created a special court featuring Adrian's paintings. *The Australian Art Annual* covered the event

in its 1939 issue. He was increasingly being asked to illustrate various limited edition books. These included two publications of the Australian Limited Editions Society *A Narrative of the Expedition to Botany Bay* (1938), and the *Life and Times of Captain John Piper* (1939). Although no longer involved with Grosvenor Galleries, he was invited in 1939 to have a one-man show of his oils and watercolours which, by all accounts, was a great success. His flower paintings were becoming a hallmark of his style. The Australian Academy's third annual show included works by Lloyd Rees, Adrian and others. The trio of Lloyd, Adrian and Frank Medworth were singled out by the reviewer as giving specific character to the exhibition. The Academy was being torn apart by the many competing artists' factions which had come and gone throughout the preceding years. It did not last the distance. No bookplates were created between 1939 and 1942. The Second World War engulfed everyday life and Adrian joined the Manpower Authority as part of his contribution to the effort. He worked as a bookbinder for Benjamin Waite printers and binders, the publishers of the *Story of John Fairfax* (1941), which he illustrated. In this period he also worked with fellow artists on the Ure Smith publications such as the *Australian Weekend Book*.

1944 was the end of an era for Adrian in the art of the bookplate. With the reworking of the wood engraving for Gretchen Alexander, (née Borsdorf) who had married and wished to be known henceforth with her new name, he lay down his woodworking chisels and etcher's tools forever. His career as a painter flourished and to celebrate his flower paintings, Sydney Ure Smith published a book of them in 1948 whilst his portrait was included in the prestige volume, *Alec Murray's Album*, a photographic collection of the elite of Sydney society of the day.

He died in his Sydney home, an apartment in the building called Ashdown, in Elizabeth Bay. It had been purchased as a gift to Adrian many years before by Sir James McGregor. The year was 1971.

State Library of Queensland bookplate exhibition: some notes from a biased observer

By Mark J Ferson, Sydney

As reported in the September issue, the exhibition *Ex Libris: bookplates from our collections* ran at the State Library of Queensland from 1 October 2007 to 28 January 2008. Your humble President had been invited by curator Alison Wishart to give a talk on Friday 18 January and was given encouragement and the opportunity to hold a launch of a possible Queensland chapter of the Society on the prior evening of Thursday 17 January. The Library was kind enough to arrange transport from Sydney to Brisbane and back again and accommodation at a nearby hotel for the night.

The exhibition was carefully researched by Helen Cole, the Library's art librarian, and beautifully arranged in the intimate and tranquil space of the Philip Bacon Heritage Gallery on the Library's fourth floor. An important feature of the exhibition was that it covered both historical and contemporary aspects of the subject (much like our Society). In addition, it somewhat unusually made a link to the BookCrossings movement (www.bookcrossing.com), in which books are passed from person to person, each time being 'released' in some public space to be acquired, temporarily, by the next reader. Although this turns the traditional concept of book ownership on its head, and suggests that the bookplate is irrelevant in this situation, in fact, bookplates are widely promoted for these books. Another important feature of the long running exhibition was the events program. In addition to tours conducted by the Curator and Art Librarian, the first event was a talk on bookplate design by artist and printmaker Ron McBurnie, whilst well known Australian children's book author and illustrator Narelle Oliver conducted an ex libris design workshop for children.

The launch of the Society's Queensland Chapter was attended by about a dozen people including professional and amateur printmakers, book collectors and others

who had stumbled across the exhibition and were attracted by the beauty of the subject. The President gave a short history of the Society and its antecedents and encouraged those present to keep in touch with each other and think about forming a local group. The illustrated talk held on Friday 18 January was entitled 'A century (and a bit) of pictorial bookplates in Australia' and presented to an audience of about 20 people, many of whom remained after the talk to ask further questions, chat with each other or show the speaker interesting examples of bookplates. The Society has acquired six Queensland members as a result of this exposure, including the State Library of Queensland and the Fryer Library, University of Queensland, both of which have substantial collections of bookplates.

Apart from some positive results for the Society, the exhibition was a great success on a number of parameters. Curator Alison Wishart reports that over 9000 people attended the exhibition, and that perhaps 5000 bookplates were designed at workshops for visitors to take home with

them. The visitors' book provides some evidence that the exhibition did open some eyes to a previously unappreciated world:

- ◆ *I'm excited! I've loved books for years – now I have a wonderful new world opened to me.*
- ◆ *fascinating 'world' I'd never heard of – great exhibition.*
- ◆ *could spend all day in this one room – excellent!*
- ◆ *Kids loved making their bookplates.*
- ◆ *Heard interview on 612 (radio) and had to come on next visit to Brisbane.*
- ◆ *Wonderful exhibition – worth coming to Brisbane for.*

Perhaps the last word should come from the Curator herself:

“What a treat it was to discover these personal and petite works of art in the form of a bookplate. The bookplates on display in the Ex Libris exhibition are only a small sample of the State Library of Queensland's truly diverse and extensive bookplate collection.”

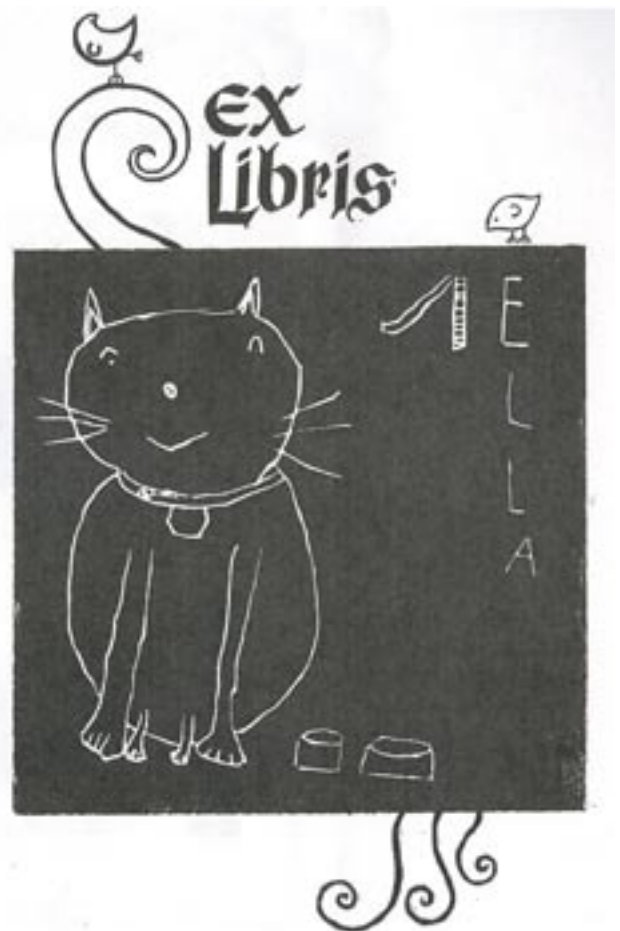
Coleman Hyman and Australia's first bookplate exhibit

By Mark J Ferson, Sydney

The pictorial bookplate movement in Australia, and interest in bookplates as an artform rather than as a mark of social standing, was initiated in the 1890s by John Lane Mullins, a Sydney solicitor and art patron. Mullins commissioned emerging Australian artists to design bookplates for his own use and for members of his family. The first of these was a pen-and-ink design by Percy F S Spence, dated 1892, incorporating a view of Lane Mullins' study but including a discreetly placed family coat of arms – a nod to both the owner's position in society and the weight of heraldic tradition behind the bookplate.¹ Over the subsequent decade, a group of artists including Norman Lindsay, Tom Roberts, Thea Proctor, Sydney Long and D H Souter began experimenting with bookplates, spurred on by plentiful examples reproduced in the pages of the highly influential London *Studio* magazine.²



Above: Curator, Alison Wishart (l) and Art Librarian, Helen Cole at the State Library of Queensland
Right: Linocut bookplate by Ella, 10 years, exhibition workshop



There is, however, little documentation from this time of Australian bookplate collectors. In addition to Lane Mullins himself we know a little about David Scott Mitchell (1836-1907) who began his collection by persuading a juvenile James Tyrrell to part with his first gathering of bookplates.³ In this atmosphere, the Library Association of Australasia invited individuals and organisations to contribute books and related material to the Loan Exhibition which was to accompany its first meeting, to be held in Sydney during the first week of October, 1898. There were 620 items in the exhibition, loaned by institutional lenders such as the Public Library of New South Wales, and private individuals including Professors M W McCallum and E E Miller, D S Mitchell and Rose Scott.

Among these, Coleman P Hyman loaned (items 129-142) a collection of Australian currency, autographs of British and Australian notables, a number of items of Jewish historical interest, early issues of the *Sydney Gazette*, and at no. 140 a display of 'Book-plates'.⁴

This is the earliest record that I have been able to find of any Australian bookplate

exhibit or exhibition. Unfortunately no details exist of the bookplate display. Hyman was born in Chatham, Kent in 1862, where he later became honorary secretary of the local synagogue. He arrived in Australia in 1885 and immediately became active in historical research and communal affairs, both Jewish and secular. The Government Printer published his *An account of the coin, coinages and currencies of Australasia* for the Chicago Exposition of 1893. His article 'The progress of Jews in Australia', featured in the *Jewish Herald* of 21 September and 5 October 1894. He returned to England c.1912 and died there on 29 December 1929.⁵

His obituarist records that 'Long before the Ex-Libris Society was formed, he was a keen collector of book plates and designed the prize plate for the Jewish Education Board.'⁶ This bookplate, in the guise of a prize plate from 1909, the first year of its use, is shown below; Percy Marks had an example in his own collection.⁷

Knowing what we do about Hyman, we could speculate that his display '140. Book-plates' comprised armorial bookplates of prominent Jews and other notable citizens of both England and his temporary home in Australia, and possibly a smattering of the new-fangled pictorials being promoted by John Lane Mullins. Oddly, there is no evidence from Australian or English records that Hyman ever owned a personal bookplate.⁸

Perhaps of greater significance for the early twentieth century passion for bookplate collecting, is the link we might draw between Hyman's exhibit and Jane Windeyer's amassing of 2500 bookplates deposited half a century later in the University of Sydney's rare book collection, and so colourfully contextualised by the late John Fletcher.⁹ The connection, if it existed, might be Jane's sister Margaret Windeyer, who attended the Melbourne meeting of the Library Association of Australasia (and whose several essays are reprinted in the *Conference proceedings*), travelled to the United States to study librarianship, and on her return in 1901 presented Jane with an

album of library bookplates, which became the nucleus of Jane's collection.¹⁰

Hyman's contribution to the 1898 meeting of the Library Association of Australasia was emulated at the following meeting, held in Adelaide from 9-12 October 1900, where there were two displays.¹¹

Item 683 was a collection of South Australian bookplates on loan from Mr G G Shaw. George Gerard Shaw (1856-1904) was an Adelaide photographer and portrait painter, a collector of coins, stamps and rare books, and was said by art historian William Moore to have been 'a keen collector of Australiana'.¹² Neither his personal bookplate nor his bookplate collection have been located to date. His son, Gerrard Gayfield Shaw (1885-1961) became a well known bookplate artist, specialising in etched designs.

A larger selection loaned by Mr W T Bednall was described thus:

692a. **Series** of book-plates, arranged on sheets in the following order, viz. – Early book plates, 1690-1790; Plates of Public Libraries; University and ecclesiastical; Colonial Governors and old and prominent colonists; Ladies [sic] plates; The book plate in its simpler form [could 'simpler' in fact mean typographic?]; Recent plates; Plates of well-known authors; Book pile plates.

William Tompson Bednall (1838-1915) was a printer and sub-editor with the *Adelaide Register*.¹³ He joined the London-based Ex Libris Society in 1895 and eventually left his collection numbering some 2184 examples to the State Library of South Australia. Three bookplates are recorded for Bednall, all of them designed in London by Tebay, the earliest dated 1897.¹⁴

Displays at subsequent meetings of the Association did not feature bookplates. Over a decade was to pass before the competition organised as a section of the 1907 Exhibition of Women's Work, and the bookplate exhibitions mounted at the University of Sydney and the National Art Gallery of New South Wales in association with P Neville Barnett, but these are another story.



Prize plate in pen and ink by C P Hyman for the NSW Board of Jewish Education, 1909



From the Books of
W^T TOMPSON BEDNALL,
Adelaide, South Australia.

Date

Bookplate by F Tebay, London, for
W T Bednall, 1904

I wish to acknowledge the assistance of: Helen Bersten, Australian Jewish Historical Society; Rachele Lever, NSW Board of Jewish Education; the late Dr Ben Haneman for introducing me to Yehuda Feher and Mr Feher for information on Percy J Marks; Gillian Dooley of Flinders University Library, A G Peake and Maureen Koch for information on G G Shaw.

This is an updated version of an article of the same name published in *Biblioneus and Australian Notes & Queries*, issue 355-6, Sept.-Dec. 2007, pp 118-23

[1] Mark Ferson, 'John Lane Mullins, father of the Australian bookplate movement', *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, vol. 89, pt 1, Jun. 2003, pp 38-52.

[2] Mark J Ferson, 'Australian bookplates of the 1890s: art nouveau experiments by Australian artists', *World of Antiques and Art*, Aug. 2007-Feb. 2008, pp 134-6

[3] James R Tyrrell, *Old books, old friends, old Sydney*, Sydney, Angus & Robertson, 1987, p 55.

[4] Library Association of Australasia. *Conference proceedings*, 1898. (Occasional Papers in Librarianship No. 8). Adelaide, Libraries Board of South Australia, 1969.

[5] Compiled from a variety of sources including Malcolm J Turnbull, 'Two pioneers of Australian Jewish historiography: Alfred Newton Super and Hirsch Munz', *Australian Jewish Historical Society Journal*, vol. 13, no. 3, 1996, pp 487-99 and papers in the Australian Jewish Historical Society file on Coleman P Hyman.

[6] 'Mr Coleman P Hyman', *Australian Jewish Chronicle*, 27 Feb. 1930, p 11.

[7] Percy J Marks, 'Australian Jewish bookplates', *Jewish Herald*, 16 Aug. 1912, page unknown.

[8] Peake, *op cit*, records no bookplate for Hyman; Anthony Pincott, Bookplate Society (UK), personal communication, 26 Jul. 2004.

[9] John Fletcher, *The Jane Windeyer bookplate collection in the University of Sydney Library: a catalogue*. Sydney, Book Collectors' Society of Australia, 1990 (Studies in Australian Bibliography, no. 30).

[10] *Ibid*, p ix.

[11] *Transactions and proceedings of the Library Association of Australasia at its second general meeting, held at Adelaide, October 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th, 1900*, Government Printer, Adelaide, 1901, p 85.

[12] William Moore, *The story of Australian art*, Sydney, Angus & Robertson, 1934 vol. 2, p 219.

[13] This information was provided by Andrew Peake, Adelaide, personal communication, 31 Mar. 2002.

[14] Andrew Peake, *Australian personal bookplates*, Adelaide, Tudor Australia Press, 2000, p 42.

Notes and happenings

International bookplate competition,
University of Insubria, Italy

The Society has been approached by the University of Insubria, which, as part of the celebrations of the 10th anniversary of its founding, is mounting a bookplate design competition in collaboration with the Italian Ex Libris Association (AIE). The theme of the competitions is (in Italian) 'De Libera Universitate' which our correspondent has translated as 'University and freedom'. The University of Insubria has its seat in Varese and Como, cities which nestle on the edge of a lake and are close to the Prealpi mountains, a region referred to as Insubria.

There are a number of rules of entry into the competition, the main ones of which are that bookplates must be on paper no larger than A5 size (148mmx210mm), use the techniques of lithography, xylography (woodcut or wood engraving) or chalcography (which I believe translates as copper engraving, but presumably also includes etching and related techniques), to enter is free and the closing date is 31 July 2008. There are three prizes of €2000, €1000 and €500.

The University of Insubria website <http://decennale.uninsubria.it/> has information, and Italian contacts for the competition are Mauro Mainardi, President of the AIE

(mainardi_mauro@libero.it) or Filadelfo Ferri at the University (filadelfo.ferri@uninsubria.it).

Please contact the Editor on m.ferson@unsw.edu.au or telephone: 02 9428 2863 if you are interested in entering the competition and wish him to email or post the application form with full information to you.

Recent articles and works on
bookplates

1 Roger Butler, *Printed images by Australian artists 1885-1955*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 2007, pp 156-7, 166

This encyclopaedic and well-illustrated work notes the relationship between the English between-the-Wars fine printing movement and Australian bookplate design of the same period. Images by A Feint and G D Perrottet

2 Mark J Ferson, 'Coleman Hyman and Australia's first bookplate exhibit', *Biblioneus and Australian Notes & Queries*, no. 335 & 336, Sep. & Dec. 2007, pp 118-123

Uncovers evidence of a bookplate exhibit loaned by Hyman to the Loan Exhibition of the Sydney meeting of the Library Association of Australasia, October 1898; refers also to bookplate exhibits at the subsequent meeting of the Association, held in Adelaide in October 1900, loaned by W T Bednall and G G Shaw

3 Bernard O'Neil and Peter Donovan, *For the love of books: the Friends of the State Library of South Australia, 1932-2007*, Friends of the State Library of South Australia, Adelaide, 2007, pp 11, 15

Andrew Peake drew my attention to the publication of this book; depicts the bookplate denoting a donation to the State Library by the Friends as well as a design by C Wall

4 Vivienne O'Neill, 'Reading and writing', in *Carter's Yesterday's paper: collecting ephemera in Australia*, John Furphy, Sydney, 2007, pp 144-6

Brief section on bookplates, with 8 images, including those by E Renton, and N and L Lindsay

Lucy Frances Lowry (née Falkiner, 1905-77)

An amazing thing, the internet and its search engines! Members who both carefully read the *Newsletter* and have good memories may recall my inclusion of the bookplate for Lucy Frances Lowry on the back page of issue no. 5 (June 2007). This short article noted, among other things, that the book wherein the bookplate resided had been bought from Frances Zabel's Roycroft bookshop, and ended with a plea that anyone knowing who Lucy was might get in touch. Well I was most excited to receive an email from Sydney author Suzanne Falkiner a few weeks ago which opened with:

Today I was following a Google trail trying to find out more about Mrs Frances Zabel when I came upon your query below from June 2007. Lucy, née Falkiner, was my paternal aunt and godmother. She married James Lowry of Hawkes Bay, New Zealand in April 1926. I

know quite a lot about her mother Ethel Falkiner's books; I wrote about her library and its affect on me during my childhood in my book Ethel: a love story (1996). But I've never really thought much about Lucy's taste in reading ... I have quite a number of examples of Falkiner family book plates, most of which date from about the same era as Lucy's: my grandmother Ethel (who had artistic and literary leanings), seems to have been in the habit of commissioning them for all her children, but I've never known who the designers were. I would be very happy to swap information if there is anything else you would like to know about Lucy. I have another bookplate of hers, I believe, in the name 'Lucy Falkiner'.

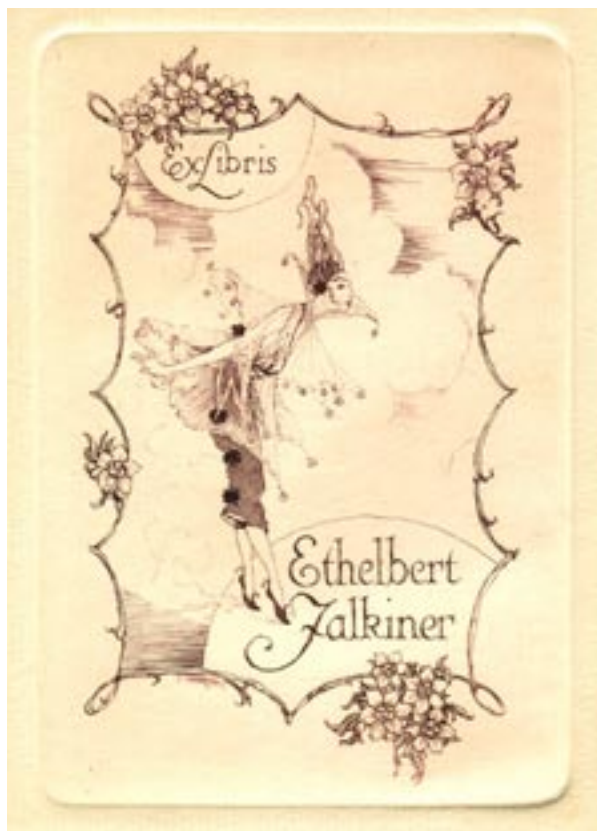
Suzanne and I have since exchanged numerous emails about the Falkiners' various bookplates and related topics. As she was interested in Lucy's book, we met and exchanged the book with bookplate *in situ*

for a loose example of the same design plus a number of other Falkiner bookplates of which Suzanne had spares. Suzanne also very kindly gave me a copy of her *Ethel: a love story* which she proceeded to sign for me. There seem to be a number of other books in preparation from this prolific pen and I look forward to bringing them to your notice, in due course. And perhaps the Falkiner family bookplates could be the subject of an article in a future number of the *Newsletter*.

Mechanics' Institution Hobart Town, Van Diemen's Land

Not only did I receive a comprehensive answer to my request for information on Lucy Frances Lowry, but 'Some mid-nineteenth century typographic bookplates' by Dennis Bryans and myself in *Newsletter* No. 6 of September 2007 elicited a response from friend and mentor Jeff Bidgood. One of the illustrations to this article took the form of the oldest Australian bookplate in my own collection, a label for the Van Diemens' Land Mechanics' Institute, which Dennis felt most likely dated from the 1840s or perhaps early 1850s.

Jeff has mined his extensive and well-organised collection of bookplates to unearth what looks like an engraved design for the Mechanics Institution, Hobart Town, V.D.L. Now, in his paper 'Australia's first mechanics institute and its very different sister' published in the proceedings of the conference *Mechanics' institutes: The way forward* (Melbourne, Dept of Infrastructure, 2000), librarian and library historian Stephan Petrow states that the Van Diemen's Land Mechanics' Institute was renamed in 1857 the Hobart Town Mechanics' Institute. Not surprisingly the Tasmaniana Collection of the State Library of Tasmania holds bookplates for the Institute/Institution and I asked the reference desk for any clues to the date the bookplate may have come into use. I subsequently received information from Jenny Jerome, librarian at the State Library of Tasmania, that the original name of the Institute at its formation in 1828 was the Mechanics Institution, Hobart Town, Van Diemen's Land, and that a stamp was initially used to mark its books. I suspect that Jeff's plate is a pretty early one, but again, will be pleased to hear from anyone who may have a better idea of its period of usage.



Above: Etched design by E Warner for Ethelbert Falkiner

Right: Engraved bookplate for Mechanics Institution, Hobart Town

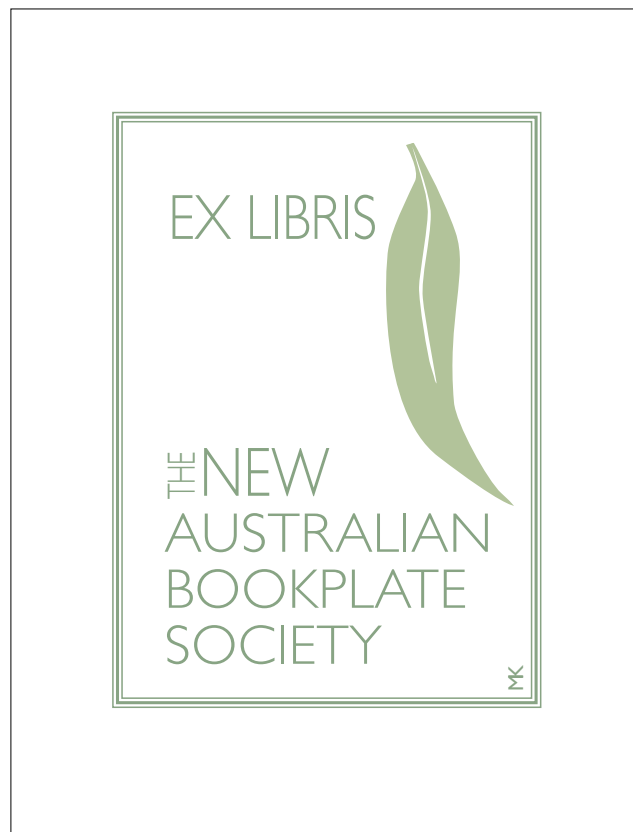


IMPORTANT NOTICE

Directory of members

We plan to issue in late 2008 a Directory of members of the Society. Our aim is to illustrate the Directory with a bookplate belonging to each member. If you do not have a personal bookplate, or have one done some years ago, now is your excuse to commission a bookplate. The Editor would be pleased to help you locate a suitable artist if you need assistance.

Deadline 31 July 2008



Computer drawn and typeset digital print by Mary Keep for the New Australian Bookplate Society, 2007

Editorial

We present in this issue quite a pot pourri of material, the headline feature being a vital and informative article on Adrian Feint by member and long-time print collector and dealer Richard King. Richard has over the years made contact with many of the individuals who had received or commissioned bookplates from Feint, and he has worked their insights about the artist's life and work into his chronology of Feint's art making.

It is always a pleasant surprise when someone actually responds to questions thrown out into the void, and the advent of sophisticated internet search engines has greatly increased the likelihood that such questions will be seen by someone other than the intended, and in our case, small audience. So I am grateful for Suzanne Falkiner's email concerning the identity of Lucy Lowry (see issue No. 5) and also to Jeff Bidgood for uncovering an interesting and probably older bookplate for the Hobart Town Mechanics Institution than the kindred design reproduced in *Newsletter* No. 6.

The bookplate exhibition held recently in the State Library of Queensland has netted the Society 7 members, including one currently residing in the Northern Territory, so I am proud to report that we now have members in every State and Territory apart from Western Australia, as well as in New Zealand. Incidentally, I have also provided a short report on the very successful Brisbane exhibition.

Finally I would like to thank Paul Feain for allowing me to reproduce his new Cornstalk Bookshop bookplate by Ellie Aroney, and in addition draw your attention to Mary Keep's elegantly simple design for The New Australian Bookplate Society, a copy of which is provided to members with this issue of the *Newsletter*. MF



Etched design by Ellie Aroney for the Cornstalk Bookshop, 2007