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Design in pen-and-ink
for Harold Crompton by
Bernard Hesling, c. 1930

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The Society's inaugural meeting

A meeting to officially form the New Australian Bookplate Society was held in the Edward Ford Room of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians, in Macquarie Street, Sydney on the afternoon of Sunday, 22 October 2006. A draft constitution, which had been provided in *Newsletter* number 2 and circulated prior to the meeting, was finalised, office bearers elected and committee appointed, and a number of activities canvassed for the coming year. According to the agreed Constitution, the aims of the Society are to raise awareness of, and promote, bookplates (ex libris) as both a historic and contemporary art form and to bring together individuals with an interest in designing, owning, studying or collecting bookplates.

The following office bearers were elected: Professor Mark Ferson, President; Mike Carter, Vice President; Mary Keep, Secretary; and Ronald Cardwell, Treasurer, also acting as Membership Secretary. June Sanderson (NSW) and Edwin Jewell (Vic.) offered to join the Committee, whilst Elisabeth Bastian (NSW) and Andrew Peake (SA) were coopted onto the Committee.

Activities proposed for the coming year include: continuation of the successful *Newsletter*; production of a directory of members; publication of a finely printed booklet containing original bookplates of members; a Society website; and an annual dinner. Interest has been drummed up in the Society for approximately 12 months prior to its official formation, and is already evident from the involvement of artists and designers who have produced a variety of bookplates in this short period. As well, prospective members of the Society have been recruited to date from South Australia, Victoria, Tasmania and New Zealand, as well as New South Wales.

The subscription has been set at \$30 per year, and a membership kit is available, comprising a sample copy of the *Newsletter*, Constitution and Membership Application Form. Those interested in joining the Society, or in hearing more about it, should contact the President at m.ferson@unsw.edu.au or on 02 9428 2863, or the Secretary at marykeep8@hotmail.com or on 02 9558 8449.



Inaugural meeting of the Society at the Royal Australasian College of Physicians, Sydney, 22 October 2006. Present (from l-r), standing: Brad Stone, Mike Carter, James Fellows, Edwin Jewell, Ronald Cardwell, Mark Ferson; seated: Brenda Heagney, June Sanderson, Geoff Ford, Mary Keep.

Designer profile

No. 2: James Fellows

In continuing to bring to general attention the work of contemporary Australian artists producing bookplates, in this issue of the *Newsletter* we feature James Fellows, who originally made contact with me in February through the website hosted by Stop Laughing This is Serious Gallery, Blackheath. James's opening words included:

... and I am keen to produce original art work in the form of Book Plates. Some months ago after showing my portfolio to a friend, an encourager, I offered to make him an ex libris. Now I am excited to find an article about your collecting etc in the Sydney Morning Herald ...

Rather coincidentally James shares two interests with me — bookplates (of course) and less obviously, bird flu, which is taking a lot of my work time and that of many public health colleagues around the world.

But enough about me; here is James' artist statement:

Born in Western Victoria, I returned to live in rural Dunkeld at the base of the wonderful Grampian range. I put together a body of work and held an exhibition of my work, all oils, featuring landscapes at the Hamilton Regional Art Gallery in 1973. From painting solely in oils, I progressed to watercolours, and revelled in the light of the Tasmanian countryside, exhibiting at Ritchies Mill in Launceston. In the Blue Mountains I completed a series of black and white sketches for a Lithgow alderman, featuring such subjects as Collits Inn. I have exhibited at the Bandamoorra Gallery in Blackheath, and more recently in a group show at the Project Gallery in Wollongong. I am currently completing a Diploma in Fine Art from West Wollongong Institute of TAFE. My sketch books are never far from me, and this year as a major I have been studying and producing works

in the Sculpture studio on campus and at home in Mollymook. My theme has been the bird flu, and I have developed a body of work which recalls how sickness decimated the Eora people in Sydney after the arrival of the First Fleet. Travelling to Malaysia in September, and living in rural areas near the Thai border, I was able to note and experience how closely these people live to their animals and birds, and to observe how easily an outbreak could spread through such close contact amongst avian and human dwellers in the Kampongs. Not a subject for a book plate though! Since coming to printmaking, I realise that my forte is the drawn line, and I look forward to executing art works in this medium.

Over the past year or so, James has produced a number of bookplate designs:

For Mr Frank Barr, a retired teacher and avid cricket fan, and with a fine appreciation for good wine, a bookplate



Aquatint design for Frank Barr by James Fellows, Mollymook, 2006



Aquatint design for Jed Merton by James Fellows, Mollymook (NSW), 2005

incorporating cricketers, a cricket bat bearing his name, and references to the grape. Printed on a zinc plate, etched and with an aquatint process involving seven separate acid baths.

For Mrs Colleen Barr, a retired teacher and keen gardener, a plate depicting her favourite rose, and buds. Similarly printed as above.

For my brother, William Fellows, mariner, a depiction of the barque 'Polly Woodside' a restored sailing vessel. William has an interesting collection of Australiana relating to wooden-hulled ships, and collects first editions of the works of Ion Idriess. This bookplate was also etched and printed overlaid with a colour roll.

For Jed Merton, a young man with a passion for the natural world, a depiction of an axolotl, which may not be anatomically correct, but does evoke his love of ponds and their contents. Etched and aquatinted in a sepia tone.

For Dr Peter Magnus, retired dental surgeon, a bookplate depicting a dragon fly, his hobby having been flying over water in a yacht and having a mate who is a fisherman. Etched and aquatinted, on archival paper, as indeed all my bookplates are.

James would be pleased to consider any bookplate commissions and can be contacted by email on fellows@shoal.net.au or by post at 38 Valley Drive, Mollymook Beach NSW 2539

Any bookplate designer wishing to be the subject of a Designer profile or to have work reproduced in the Newsletter should contact the Editor on 02 9428 2863 or by email. The Society's website may be found if you go to www.stoplaughing.com.au and click on the Society link.



Sample of ex libris wallpaper available from Lewis & Wood, Uley, Gloucestershire, UK

Notes and happenings

Ex libris wallpaper

Those of you who are members of the Bookplate Society, meaning the one based in the United Kingdom, will have received in the latest package containing the *Newsletter* for June 2006 and the *Bookplate Journal* for September 2006, an unusual insert (see illustration above). Lewis & Wood, of Uley, Gloucestershire, is selling ex libris wallpaper for GBP36.50 per roll. The rolls comprise a marbled background, in one of three colours — green, beige or antique — with scattered bookplates in the traditional armorial and trophy styles. The bookplate collector who is keen on the traditional, and has everything, may be interested in contacting Lewis & Wood at lewisandwood@lineone.net or viewing their website www.lewisandwood.co.uk

Bibliographical Society of Australia and New Zealand Bulletin

A recent issue of this serial, which arrived in the letterbox earlier in the year, has the official date of 2004, being volume 28, number 3. Irrespective of its date, it contains an interesting article by Ruth Lightbourne, entitled 'Bookplates, book labels, and handwritten inscriptions in a New Zealand colonial library' (pp 62-77), which concerns the marks of provenance in books acquired by the New Zealand Parliamentary Library, originally the General Assembly Library, founded in 1858. The article depicts 13 armorial bookplates and two book labels, generally dating from the nineteenth century. The only name known to me is that of Sir Stamford Raffles, founder of Singapore, but students of British or New Zealand history will undoubtedly recognise the names and

the significance of the books described. Those of us who collect bookplates for their beauty or artistry, sometimes forget that many have added interest as marks of ownership, and that those ones (if not all) should be kept *in situ*.

The world of cricket bookplates in Australia

By Ronald Cardwell, Sydney

In Australia there are estimated to be around four hundred serious collectors of cricket books. Each year in Australia around 40-50 books on cricket are published. The Ashes cricket test series in 2006-2007 has significantly stimulated the publication of cricket books — some by well known publishers, others are by private publishers or cricket clubs.

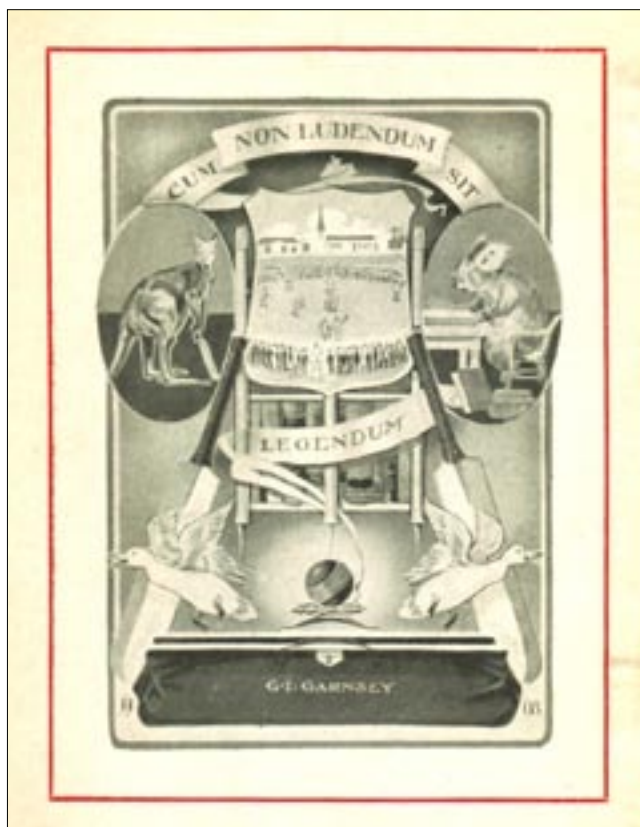
Over the years there have been some serious collectors in Australia. Perhaps the most notable was Patrick J Mullins, a Queensland solicitor who from the late

1940s collected cricket books. Prior to his death a few years ago, his collection was sold to the Melbourne Cricket Club where it remains today. When I first started collecting cricket books I met Mullins. He was very warm, and encouraged me in my pursuit. He said in 1973, 'If you want to be a noted collector do it right and get a bookplate.' At that stage I was not aware of bookplates. Mullins gave me one of his and said that he was not aware of many serious collectors who possessed a bookplate. I started making inquiries and found that none of the serious collectors possessed a bookplate. I was told that Bradman, the Melbourne Cricket Club and Sir Robert Menzies all possessed bookplates. Alas, this was not correct [Menzies owned two designs, neither depicting cricket — *Ed*].

The only bookplate that I did find in my early days of collecting was one owned by the former NSW cricketer, George Garnsey. He was the first of the big Australian cricket book collectors. He communicated with all of the early English collectors

and exchanged books and bookplates. He was a member of the Australian Ex Libris Society from its inception until his death. In 1908, long before the Society came into existence, he had an unusual design made featuring a cricket scene with equipment, a kangaroo holding a cricket bat and a koala poring over books (illustrated below left). Clearly fascinated by koalas (as well as cricket), in 1910 he commissioned Norman Lindsay to design a bookplate featuring the 'Lindsay Bears', referred to by Bertram Stevens as 'Bill Bluegum's Bookstall'¹. The earlier of the plates is hard to find, whilst the Lindsay plate appeared in many of his books, a considerable number of which were donated to the New South Wales Cricket Association.

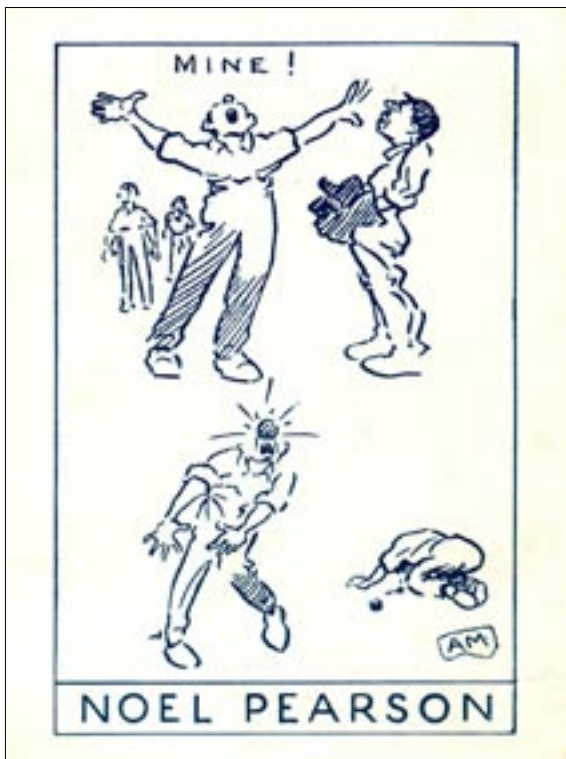
Ernest S Marks, the noted sports administrator, whose book collection is now in the Mitchell Library, had a sports bookplate, a design from 1906 by H J Recknell of London². It depicts a variety of sporting equipment, including a cricket bat and ball (illustrated below right).



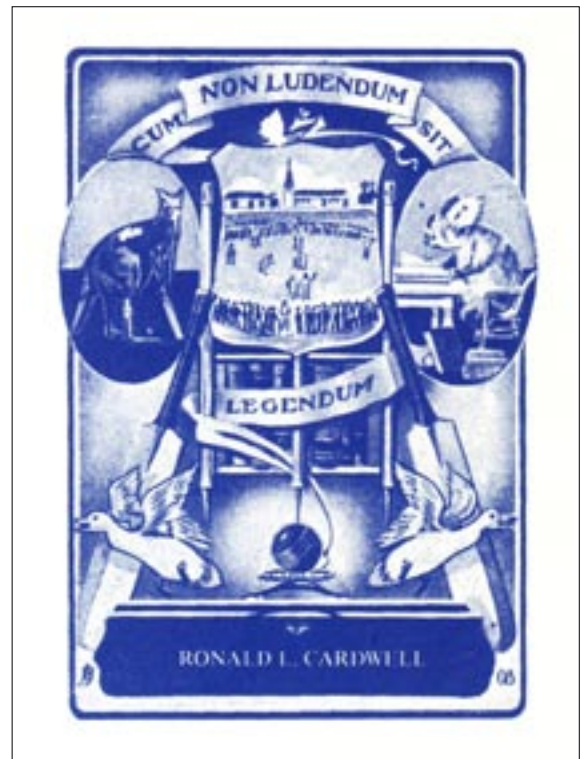
Bookplate for George L Garnsey, 1908



Pen and ink design for Ernest S Marks by H J Recknell, London, 1906



Pen and ink design for Noel Pearson by Arthur Mailey, c. 1933



Garnsey's design adapted for use by Ronald Cardwell

The only other bookplate that has surfaced is one for Dr Roland Pope, a former NSW and Australian cricketer. He was a famous eye surgeon. His bookplate, probably created in the late 1930s, depicts cricket bats as well as his portrait. Some of his books were left to the NSW Cricket Association.

As time moved on I sought to locate 'cricket bookplates'. I was able to collect bookplates from Lord's, the MCC, the C C Morris Cricket Library in America, famous English cricket book collectors and the NSW Cricket Association. Today in Australia there are only a few bookplates around. Cricket book collectors such as Arthur Watson, a former first class umpire, Dennis Coon, Ken Woolfe and the writer of this article are the possessors of cricket bookplates. None of the State cricket associations possesses bookplates with the exception of the NSWCA. Their plate is a simple insignia composed of the NSW emblem in blue, white and red.

An interesting aspect of cricket bookplates in Australia is that where a collection of cricket books has been acquired, the library

has commissioned a bookplate to mark the collection. Examples include the Melbourne Cricket Club, which produced a plate for the Clarrie Grimmett collection bought some years ago, and the NSWCA which acquired the A H McLachlan collection by bequest. Recently there have been a few collections sold that belonged to test cricketers. The auctioneers have had produced a simple bookplate saying the book was 'From the collection of'.

We should perhaps pose the question. 'Why are there so few cricket bookplates in Australia?' It is perhaps due to the fact that cricket book collectors are more interested in collecting rather than in identifying their books with a bookplate. Perhaps the formation of the **New Australian Bookplate Society** will see an interest in bookplates for the serious collector. I will certainly be encouraging my cricket book collecting friends to seriously consider having a 'cricket bookplate'.

[1] Bertram Stevens, 'On book-plates and some Australian designs', *Lone Hand*, 1 Dec. 1910, pp xxxvi-xlvi

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

From the Auckland Ex Libris Society, November 2006

By Ian Thwaites and Rie Fletcher, Auckland

Bookplates have been a focus of attention at some recent book auctions. At Bethunes@Webb's Rare Books auction held on 22 November, a selection of 37 Hilda Wiseman plates fetched NZ\$1500. At a recent auction held by John Cordy Limited an assortment of 33 New Zealand plates realised NZ\$850. These included designs for David Graham and R B Castle by E Mervyn Taylor and plates for M B & Z V Castle by William Main.

Other ex libris related items to be sold at the Bethune@Webb's auction included: Pat Lawlor's author's copy of his *Books and Bookmen* (1954); signed and inscribed 'first off the press', it was accompanied by several related letters and bookplates, and realised NZ\$2100. An Auckland Ex Libris Society member bid successfully for *Patty Who Believed in Fairies* (1928), a children's story by Dearmer MacCormac, published by Dent, London. It features charming

colour illustrations by Society stalwart Olive Lloyd (1900-78), designer of several etched bookplates and well-known as a fashion artist for one of Auckland's much-loved department stores, Milne & Choyce Ltd. The Australian Ex Libris Society Year Books for 1929 and 1935/36 once owned by Hilda Wiseman sold for NZ\$150.

Last but not least was our pleasant Christmas luncheon, held this year at Valentine's Restaurant, Mount Eden. As they had done in previous years, Bob Langholm and Simon Misdale presented gifts to each member. Application forms to join the New Australian Bookplate Society were passed round among members along with good wishes from Mark Ferson and the new society. Afterwards everyone adjourned to 'Ellamore', the lovely 1880s villa belonging to Katherine Redshaw and Brendan Waters. There in addition to Christmas cheer and cake, etc. everyone took part in reading from Dylan Thomas's delightful *A Child's Christmas in Wales*, illustrated by Edward Ardizzone. Artist Ron Stenberg who had drawn the iconic Auckland motif for the cover of our book *75 Years of Bookplates. Auckland Ex Libris Society 1930-2005* said that he and Edward Ardizzone had been fellow members of the Society of Industrial Artists and Designers in London. It really was a charming edition and it seemed as though we had indeed stepped back into a bygone era where there was time for such niceties as reading aloud. This was a magical experience that was thoroughly enjoyed by all and a sweet end to a wonderful day.

Good wishes to all New Australian Bookplate Society members from their Auckland friends.

Editorial

Before I turn to the current, feature-packed issue of the *Newsletter*, I would firstly like to acknowledge the contributors to *Newsletter* no. 2, a duty I was unable to discharge at the time because of a lack of room in an already oversized issue. Andrew Peake provided a description and checklist of the bookplates

of his uncle A J Peake, and I am also grateful to him for the thirty or so copies of the bookplate which enabled us to provide a tip-in to 'subscribers'. Claude Dany of La Maison du Livre suggested that describing the commissioning of a bookplate would interest readers, and subsequently provided the text and images which made this article an original and enlightening contribution. I must also express my thanks to Roy Howard, the owner of the felicitous design which was the subject of the article, for allowing us to use the material. I wish to acknowledge our New Zealand friends Mike Ferris and Rie Fletcher for their Auckland report, and for the use of Mike's design, and while I'm at it, thank Ian Thwaites and Rie again, for their Auckland report in the present issue.

The current issue seems to have acquired a cricketing theme, obviously very topical in this Australian summer where the 'Ashes' competition between the Australian and English teams dominates many a conversation. My thanks are due to Ronald Cardwell for the idea of a piece on cricketing bookplates and for both producing interesting words and providing copies of his own bookplate, an adaptation of a design from 1908 for G L Garnsey. You may be interested to note that the humorous bookplate for Noel Pearson initialled A M was designed in the 1930s by Arthur Mailey who, as well as being a cartoonist and journalist, played cricket for Australia in the 1920s — oddly, he shares a birthday with your humble editor, but 70 years earlier. Our irregular series on contemporary designers reappears in this issue and features James Fellows, who deserves grateful thanks for providing both words and images, one of which is on a cricketing theme!

As always, huge thanks are due to Mary Keep, designer of the Newsletter (and now the Society's secretary), for turning interesting raw material into an exceptional, professional product.

My final duty is to wish you Compliments of the Season and to hope all your bookplate-related and other dreams come true in 2007. And if you want the Society's dreams

to come true, please become a member by sending in your subscription — the application form can be obtained from either Mary or me (see contact details on the front page).

FOR SALE

AUSTRALIAN PERSONAL BOOKPLATES

by Andrew G Peake

A 216 page publication with details of over 5700 Australian personal bookplates. Illustrated with over 138 bookplates, with a further 44 original plates tipped into the Author's Special edition. Case bound in dark blue buckram, with the Author's Special edition in full leather. The Standard Edition is limited to 350 copies and the Author's Special to 14 copies.

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agpeake1@bigpond.net.au**

Books and periodicals from the Bookplate Society (UK). A member has reluctantly decided to sell his Bookplate Society material. Available are: an almost complete run of 46 issues of the *Journal* from volume 1, number 1 (March 1983) to the end of 2005, for **\$240**; an almost complete run of 80 issues of the *Newsletter* from September 1984 to December 2005, for **\$160**; and 15 members' books, for **\$300**.

If you are interested in any of these items, or wish to know more about them, please phone the Editor on 02 9428 2863 or email m.ferson@unsw.edu.au