

# ADFAS Mudgee Inc

ABN 38 303 378 600

## Newsletter

No. 5 July 2013

### Dear ADFAS Mudgee friends,

Our ADFAS year in 2013 got off to a great start in late February with a dynamic lecture from NADFAS presenter Pauline Chakmakjian on the delights of old Kyoto.

We have since hosted: Australian lecturer Michael Bligh, discussing colour and variety in gardens throughout the seasons; NADFAS lecturer Las Tharp, entertaining us on the perils of the Antiques Roadshow; Australian lecturer Paul Brunton, defining Henry Lawson as Australia's greatest writer; NADFAS lecturer Barry Venning, dissecting Napoleon's brilliant use of art as propaganda; and most recently NADFAS lecturer Mary Alexander on the fascinating story and architecture of New York's iconic Waldorf Astoria Hotel.

### 2012 AGM

The 2012 Annual General Meeting of ADFAS Mudgee Inc was held on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> December at the Cudgegong Valley Public School hall which resulted in the re-election of all of the executive from the previous year:

**Chairman:** John Broadley  
**Vice-Chairman:** Jill Grieve  
**Secretary:** Penny Mowat  
**Treasurer:** Peter Windeyer

The following committee members were re-elected: Margaret Charlesworth, Terry Croom, Kayleen Fergusson, Gai Lydiard, Marcelle Marskell, Lynne Mearing, Ray Parle, Randall Reed and Anne Watts.

Thanks are due to Yvonne Bucknell, who retired at the end of 2012, while two new committee members, Ro Francis and Julie Heslop, are welcomed for 2013.

After the formalities of the AGM the audience experienced a treat with a wonderful presentation by guest lecturer, Mudgee jeweller Sabine van Gent, on her craft. Many thanks to Sabine for her insightful talk.

### VALE RUTH POPE

Many of our "oldtimer" members would be saddened to hear of the death late in March of this year of ADFAS lecturer Ruth Pope, after a long illness. Ruth was a most knowledgeable and polished presenter with a keen interest and great expertise in many aspects of the decorative arts, enhanced by many years of living in Turkey.

Ruth was most supportive of the ADFAS concept for Mudgee prior to the Society's establishment in 2002 and generously donated two lectures - on "*The Decorative Arts of the Ottoman Empire*" in 1999 and "*The English at*

*Table*” in 2001 – to give Mudgee audiences a taste of what ADFAS had to offer. She returned to Mudgee in 2005 to lecture on Australian silver, and ran a well-attended and memorable study day on silver with a marvellous lunch at Tina Whitney’s home, Binda at Gulgong. Her last lecture for Mudgee was in 2009 on the fascinating topic of Trade Beads.

A gracious lady who will be missed by many!

### **LOUISA LAWSON: CELEBRATED IN HER RIGHT**

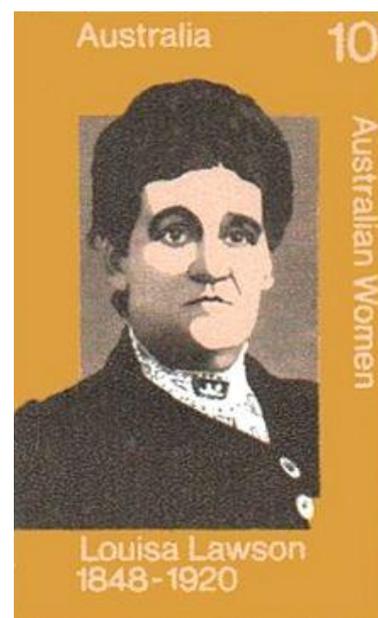
Paul Brunton’s lecture in May was very appropriately held just before the annual Henry Lawson Festival on the long weekend in June in Gulgong. While his presentation naturally contained numerous biographical references, he concentrated on why his literary skills earned him the accolade of “Australia’s greatest writer”. Remarkably, Paul explained, Henry actually spent little time in the bush apart from his childhood and youth in the Mudgee district which had a powerful influence on his characters, events and settings. Yet he was able to capture the essence of the “bush” despite becoming, essentially, a city slicker.

A major influence on the young Henry was his formidable mother, Louisa, who is worthy of some attention in her own right. Louisa, nee Albury, was born in 1848 on Guntawang, a noted Mudgee district property a few kilometers south-east of the town of Gulgong. Her father, Henry Albury, was a bush carpenter who was long in the employ of the Rouse family, owners of Guntawang; reputedly he built the substantial circa 1870 homestead (now demolished) on Biraganbil, once part of Guntawang, for Richard Rouse junior.

In 1866, at the age of eighteen, she married Peter Lawson, a Norwegian who had anglicized his name from Larsen once he arrived in the

colony. Henry, their first child, was born on the goldfields at Grenfell in 1867 during a short absence from the district; they had a further four children, three of whom survived.

Her marriage to Peter Lawson failed, and in 1882 she moved to Sydney where she managed boarding houses to survive. She also became a political activist in a period when women did not have the vote. Her strong literary bent undoubtedly influenced her son, and she ran a newspaper, *The Republican*, which she co-edited with Henry for a few years. However, the relationship between mother and son was not always harmonious. From 1888 until 1905 she published *The Dawn*, a journal which was produced solely by women and had an international distribution. The issues dealt with in *The Dawn* had a strong feminist perspective, and it is through her political activism that she is esteemed as a pioneer suffragette in Australia. In 1975 a commemorative Australian stamp (shown below) was issued in her honour.



In later life she published a volume of short stories and volumes of verse and continued to write for magazines after her retirement in 1905. She died in Sydney in 1920 and is buried in Rookwood Cemetery.

## THE ROWLING COLLECTION

Over the years we have had some fascinating lectures on various aspects of photography from both NADFAS and Australian lecturers. Archival photographs in particular have a great story to tell, and many people may not be aware that Mudgee has its own unique collection of photographs from the 1870s and 1880s. A recent exhibition at the State Library in Sydney of the Holtermann collection of photographs, which includes many scenes of the towns of Hill End and Gulgong during the Gold Rush period of the 1870s, has proved immensely popular. Commissioned by successful Hill End gold miner Bernardt Holtermann, the collection was taken by Beaufoy Merlin and Charles Bayliss of the American and Australasian Photographic Company.

Fortunately for historians, Merlin and Bayliss, and many other photographers, travelled constantly throughout regional New South Wales recording the development of numerous towns. These scenes of prominent public buildings, commercial buildings and houses are a valuable reference of what once existed and can also help to date construction.



Beaufoy Merlin

In the late 1960s a collection of nineteenth century photographs, assembled in several albums, were donated by Mark Beresford of Binnaway to the Mitchell Library. The

photographs had been collected by his great-grandfather, Dr Charles Rowling (pictured below), who practised in Mudgee from 1869 to 1885. Included were numerous photographs of Mudgee buildings, often at different time frames which showed alterations and additions.



Dr Rowling, whose wife was a daughter of noted pioneer vigneron, Dr Henry Lindeman of the Hunter Valley, was also reputed to be a keen amateur photographer and it was long thought that he had taken the photographs. However, having had the opportunity to examine the original photographs in the Mitchell Library, I discovered that the vast majority in fact bore the stamp of the American and Australasian Photographic Company.



One of the photos in the album is the simple yet elegant building shown above, the Oddfellow's Hall in Mudgee. Until the 1960s it stood in what is now the car park of David Parry-Okeden's veterinary surgery in Church Street.

## NEW NORCIA, A TOUCH OF SPAIN IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

I recently spent some time in Perth and had the opportunity to visit New Norcia, a small rural community less than two hours drive north-east of Perth on the edge of Western Australia's wheat belt. New Norcia is quite unique in being a religious-based settlement, dating from the early days of the Swan River colony, which was founded by Spanish Benedictine monks; remarkably, the town is still owned and controlled by the monastic community.

New Norcia, named after the birthplace in Italy of Saint Benedict, was established in 1847, when the foundations of the monastery were laid. The first and longest-serving abbot, Rosendo Salvado, had close links with Queen Isabella II of Spain, a generous benefactor to the community. The buildings of the community, which contains a monastery, chapel, girls and boys boarding schools (no longer functional) and girls' and boys' orphanages for Aboriginal children, are an exotic mixture of Spanish and Gothic and are ornately decorated. The whole town looks directly transplanted from Europe and is the last thing you would expect to find in the Australian bush. Six monks remain in residence in the monastery and it is possible to join them in their daily prayers.



John Broadley  
Editor, and Chairman, ADFAS Mudgee Inc