

## Tinkering with payroll tax - a back-door route to broadening the base of taxation on consumption?

The recent significant and sustained reduction in commodity prices and the likely consequences of same on both state and federal government budgets has sparked debate about, amongst other things, the Goods and Services Tax ("GST"). Calls for a broadening of the base (much narrowed during the 1999/2000 parliamentary process introducing the legislation including the compromises agreed to by the then Coalition Government in negotiations with the Democrats) and/or an increase in the rate (requiring agreement between state and federal governments as a result of the design of the legislation when enacted) have grown more frequent and have come from an increasing number of quarters over recent years.

Despite the clamour for a review of the GST, the Federal Government has refused and the state governments have been largely equivocal. It is in this context that comments made by the Federal Treasury Secretary, Dr Martin Parkinson, as recently as 5 October 2012<sup>1</sup>, are interesting. As Dr Parkinson says towards the end of his paper<sup>2</sup>:-

"Some in the public debate are ... calling for increasing the rate of the GST..... It is worth making two points on this:

- First, both major parties at the Commonwealth level have ruled out a GST increase... .
- Second, the GST is only part of state revenue and while it is a relatively efficient tax, there are other areas - such as ... payroll taxes - that should be explored for the opportunity for reform."

Dr Parkinson warms to the subject on the next page of his paper and asserts that payroll tax is effectively a tax on workers and is akin to income tax. Unfortunately he ends his paper there, having planted a very interesting idea in the audience's mind, one that was taken up with a varying degree of care by the day's mainstream press, but on the whole superficially.

Some research reveals that he was drawing on, amongst other things, a Background Note produced by the Parliamentary Library<sup>3</sup>. This note, after pointing out that payroll tax makes up about one quarter of each state's revenue, has a narrow base due to tax free thresholds (more than 90% of NSW businesses

are exempt<sup>4</sup>) and has varying rates from state to state, then discusses the effective incidence of the tax.

The Note argues<sup>5</sup> that as with other indirect taxes, the economic incidence of the tax, i.e. where the tax is finally brought to bear, can shift along the production and distribution chain and is determined by whether the price of what is taxed increases when the tax is imposed. One might intuitively feel that of course the price of wages increases in direct response to the imposition of payroll tax, such that 100% tax shifting occurs and lower employment is the only effect of the imposition of payroll tax. However, the 2008 review of state taxation in NSW<sup>6</sup> observed:-

"... in practice, the cost of paying [payroll tax] ... can be passed on to either employees (through lower wages) or to consumers (through higher prices)."

The Note therefore argues that the effects of a payroll tax are borne in the same way as an income tax or a consumption tax. It quotes from a 2009 Treasury paper<sup>7</sup> which puts it thus:-

"The equivalence of income to consumption and saving, means that in the long run taxes on consumption (such as the GST and excise) can be broadly thought of as taxes on labour ...

For example, a payroll tax that reduces the after-tax income of a worker means that the worker has less money to buy goods and services. The payroll tax can therefore be viewed as a tax on labour income or equivalently, as a tax on the consumption of goods and services."

So, payroll tax is a de facto GST. As such, the opportunity exists, in the face of complete intransigence on the GST front, to reform payroll tax. Ideally, from an economic point of view, one would remove the thresholds and the variation in rates, allowing it to be collected via the Business Activity Statement nationally as GST is.

It will be interesting to see how far Dr Richardson gets in promoting payroll tax as the new tax reform tool...

<sup>1</sup> *Challenges and Opportunities for the Australian Economy - Speech to the John Curtin Institute of Public Policy, Breakfast Forum, Perth by Dr Martin Parkinson, Secretary to the Treasury, 5 October 2012.*

<sup>2</sup> *As above, Page 8.*

<sup>3</sup> *Background Note - Economic effects of payroll tax Parliament of Australia, Department of Parliamentary Services, 14 September 2009.*

<sup>4</sup> *Review of state taxation. Report to the treasurer October 2008, Sydney, page 101.*

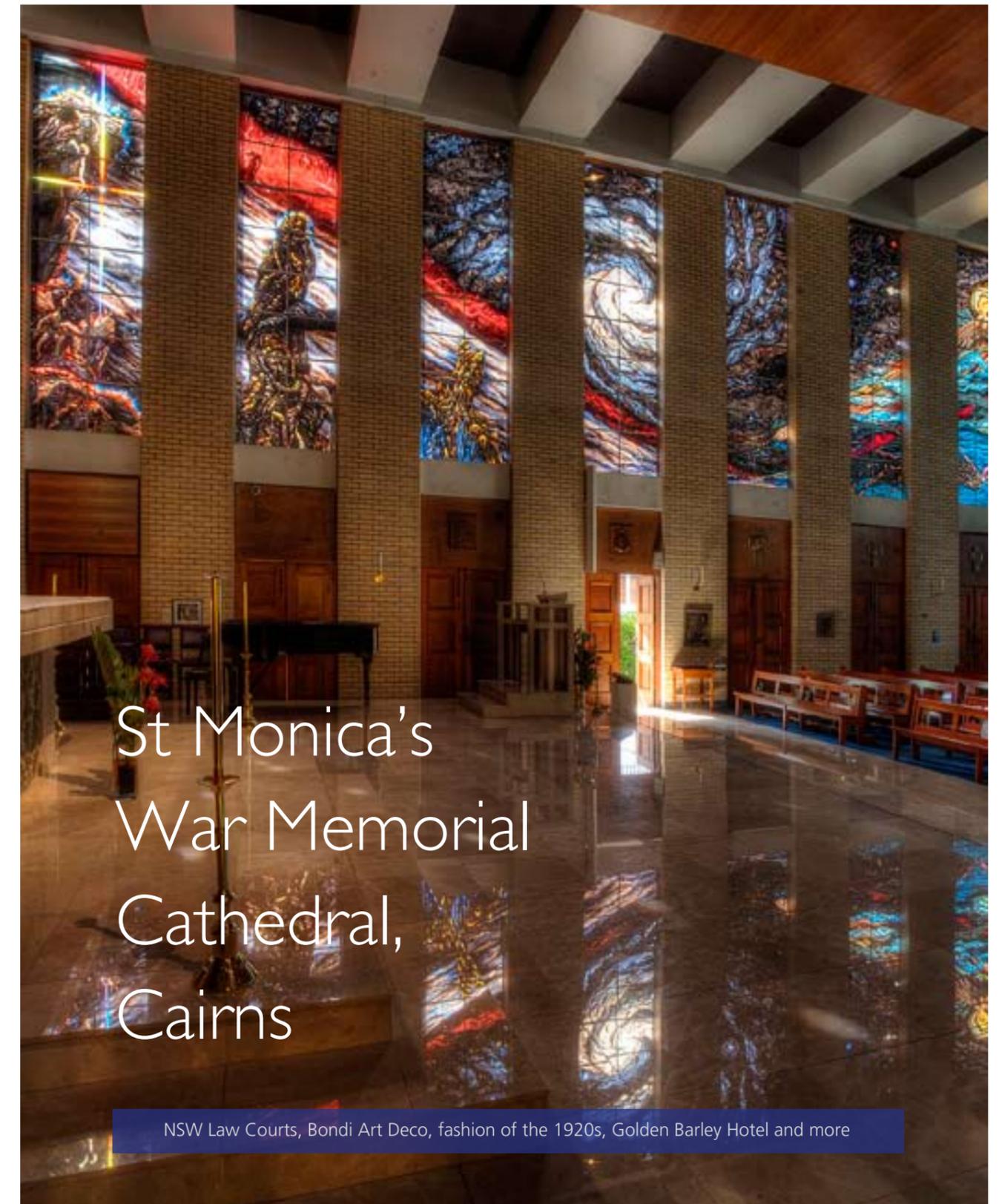
<sup>5</sup> *As above, page 3.*

<sup>6</sup> *As above, page 57.*

<sup>7</sup> *Architecture of Australia's tax and transfer system Treasury, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, August 2008, page 169.*

Dymond, Foulds & Vaughan works with fellow professionals to provide taxation, structured estate planning, asset protection and wealth preservation services for individuals and their businesses. To discuss these issues and their relevance to you call John Dymond at Dymond, Foulds & Vaughan.

**DYMOND FOULDS  
& VAUGHAN**





FROM THE EDITOR

The busy pace set by the Committee at the start of the year has continued and over the last six months there has been a wide variety of talks, walks and other events for members.

I was particularly pleased to see that a regional tour, something we haven't been able to put on for several years, finally got up and was such a raging success that I dare say we will make it an annual event - more on that in the next edition.

The Society has been very busy already this year and there are many more events to come, as detailed very effectively by our renowned Vice President David de Rozenker-Apted at page 3.

We are very fortunate again to have received a wide variety of contributions to this newsletter. Contributions from members are always especially welcome and in this edition we hear from no less than Graham Swann, Geoffrey Douglas, Larisa Sarkadi and our esteemed President, Roy Lumby. We look forward to hearing from you, dear reader, very soon.

Graham's article on the Law Courts in Sydney provides an insight into how vulnerable those buildings of less than 50 years' standing are and how unfortunate the simplistic notion that "heritage means old" can be. His revelations begin at page 4.

Geoff's comprehensive essay on the New Formalism movement and its expression through the construction of St Monica's War Memorial Cathedral is fascinating, please take a look at this, beginning on page 6.

Our guest contributor, Paul Paech, has compiled a wonderful summary of how Bondi became, in his words, "an Art Deco enclave". This intriguing article begins at page 12.

Larisa, a regular contributor, has a deep interest in and broad knowledge of fashion of the 1920s and 1930s and imparts some of her wisdom in an engaging piece starting at page 14.

We are privileged to have received a comprehensive review of Dr Robert Riddel's book on Robin Dods by respected Sydney architect Howard Tanner. Mr Tanner's review begins on page 16 and Dr Riddel's book is available online at www.uromedia.com.au.

In this edition our esteemed Dr Lumby, pub expert extraordinaire, waxes lyrical about the Golden Barley Hotel in Marrickville. His exposition is tucked away on page 18.

Finally our renowned Vice President, David de Rozenker-Apted has provided us once again with an excellent round up of the Society's events over the last six months and this appears on page 3.

The Society has embraced technology in organising its events and these are now listed and administered through Eventbrite, a superb web based facility specifically geared to the running of group events.

The link is www.twentieth.eventbrite.com.au and from this website you can keep track of all Society events, and keep right up to the minute as to the latest developments affecting you as a Society member.

You can also book online and pay online for any Society event, thus securing your place for even the most popular of activities. Keep an eye out too for eNews, a snappy one or two page publication which sets out upcoming events over the next few months.

We have again been able to provide you with a bumper 20 page newsletter due to the devoted contributions of a few of you. We encourage contributions of any sort from all of you and on page 19 we explain how to submit text and/or pictures.

We are also happy to have news of upcoming events etc., so please feel free to contact us. The next edition is sure to be something special, so why not be part of it?

John Dymond



FROM THE VICE-PRESIDENT

Yes! The President and I have said it before, and this year has proved our comment to be correct...the AGM was certainly not a boring evening.

Roy Lumby opened with an illustrated recap on issues and events of 2011 and 2012, handing over to John Dymond to present the Financial Statements as Treasurer and then conduct the formalities as Public Officer.

Geoffrey Douglas shared with us important initiatives he has made during his term as Chairman of the Management Committee, designed to improve all aspects of the management of the Society and to streamline meetings.

Once the formalities were over, Roy Lumby treated Members and Guests to a presentation on the prominent architect Emil Lawrence Sodersten, which was very warmly received, as evidenced by comments during the supper afterwards.

Over the past few months, the Society has continued to present high quality events and talks, as those who have attended would attest to. Roy's Hyde Park walk in June was well supported, as was Nonie Hodgson's talk on Beautiful Buildings from Afar in July.

In August a special invitation was received from the Bendigo Art Gallery for Roy to prepare a presentation as part of the public program for Ian Hill's "The Riverina Series" photographic exhibition at the Gallery.

The subject of Roy's talk was "Sydney or the Bush? Architectural Modernism in Regional New South Wales" and his introduction to the talk was: "Ian Hill's exhibition of extraordinary photographs has been taken as the starting point for this presentation: an exploration of architectural Modernism in regional New South Wales, with reference to the Riverina".

Early in September I accompanied Roy as representatives of the Society to the Blue Mountains Historical Society at Wentworth Falls.

Roy was asked to provide a presentation to examine conservation issues in the Blue Mountains and encourage a broader appreciation of Twentieth Century buildings.

It was a most enjoyable morning, attended by a large number of their Members whom we were able to meet during their luncheon. We support a commitment to keep links with this important group.

The President and I wish to stress the important contributions made to the Society by the Management Committee and those serving on the various working groups. Without their support, running the Society would be onerous; however, they have lightened our workload and helped ensure a harmonious workplace for all of us.

Whilst we do not want to single any one person out, we must give special thanks to Gail Conder who took on the Membership from me when it became too onerous. Gail has done a great job and deserves our praise.

I am also sure that both members and guests would like us, on their behalf, to make special mention of the catering provided by the Committee for the suppers after each talk. I think I can safely say that we do them "rather well" and it's a great way to interact with members, guests and invited speakers.

I encourage all of you to continue your strong patronage through membership, attendance at events, and all manner of contributions that you would like to make to the continued advancement of our Aims and Objectives.

In closing, I would like to commend to you the review on page 15 of Dr Robert Riddel's book, *Robin Dods 1868-1920: Selected Works*.

David de Rozenker-Apted

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Cover photo by Mike Watt

# The Law Courts

## A very Sydney story

Since its opening in 1977, the Commonwealth / State Law Courts has been an imposing presence on Queens Square.

The 27-storey building was designed by architects McConnel Smith and Johnson (MSJ) to be "dignified and cater for the comfort and convenience of all users".

The Law Courts building accommodates the High Court of Australia, Federal Court of Australia and the Supreme Court of NSW, together with hearing rooms, judges chambers, conference rooms, registries and library.

As large volumes were required to be accommodated the building was constructed using a steel frame. Some steel beams and columns resulted in being the largest fabricated steel members ever used in a city building. When it was opened it had the largest floor area of any building in Sydney.

The facade of the building reflects the internal functions, the pre-cast concrete panel system refined from MSJ's Metropolitan Water Sewerage and Drainage Board's Head Office 1965 ("The News", Autumn 2010 edition). Appropriately, as the building's functions were more complex than those of a conventional high rise building, so was the innovative and original expression of the facade. It established a language of precast elements assembled in differing configurations reflecting the function behind it. The result was lively and interesting, totally in character with not only the precinct but also the sandstone buildings of Sydney.

Consistent with the philosophy of the building's original architects, it addressed the issues of sustainability and energy efficiency. It is the recipient of a merit award from the Australian Institute of Architects.

The building is one of a number of distinguished buildings of the period that included the State Government Offices (demolished), The Metropolitan Water Sewerage and Drainage Board's Head Office (under imminent threat) and Australia Square. At the time these buildings, with the exception of Harry Seidler's work, were the urban manifestations of the "Sydney School" of architecture. Greg Wright writes: "The 'Sydney School' espoused the values, referred to as 'Sydney nuts and berries', developed partly as a reaction to outside influences such as the international style and was influenced by organic architecture, brutalism and arts and crafts.

It was also concerned with improving the quality of housing for average Australians. In the 50s and 60s there was a group of young Australian architects who were indeed very happy to use the term. Their work was inspired by the 'organic functionalism' of Frank Lloyd Wright and together, consciously or unconsciously, their modernist design philosophies can be loosely described as comprising the Sydney School of architecture. The story of how these young architects interpreted Wright's utopian regionalism by placing them quietly within an Australian context is a remarkable one, not only for the fact that their story has remained such a secret, but also for the fact that for the first time in the modern era there emerged an urban design philosophy that was entirely appropriate for the Australian landscape."

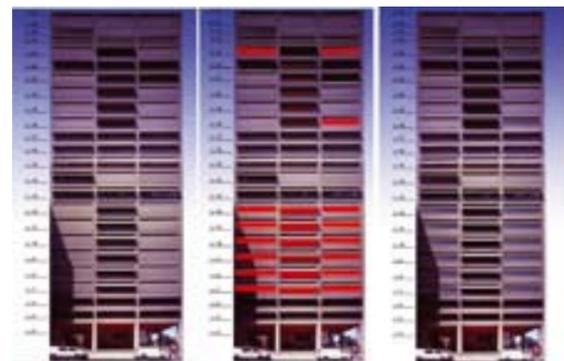
Law Courts Limited owns and operates the Law Courts building in Queens Square, Sydney.



The Law Courts as designed

CENTRAL SYDNEY PLANNING COMMITTEE 23 AUGUST 2007

Proposed changes to southern façade (below), showing existing (left), proposed highlighted (centre) and proposed (right).



Proposed changes to western façade (above), showing existing (left), proposed highlighted (centre) and proposed (right).



The Entry Lobby

Law Courts Limited (LCL) is an unlisted public company, limited by guarantee. LCL's operations are jointly funded by the Commonwealth and NSW Governments through their respective Attorneys-General.

Ownership is vested in 8 Members, 4 appointed by the Commonwealth and 4 appointed by the NSW Attorneys-General. All Members are officers of the Commonwealth and NSW Public Service respectively.

In 2007 a development application D2007/00933 by Law Courts Ltd c/o Crown Projects was approved for

- Improvement of base building infrastructure to contemporary standards.
- Removal of residual asbestos on structural steel beams.
- Upgrading of fire and life safety features, to comply with current BCA standards.
- Modification to energy and water reticulation, to improve the building's environmental footprint.
- Refurbishment and replacement of fixtures, fittings and finishes due to past wear and tear.

The application also approved changes to 71 bays of the facade.

The City of Sydney Heritage DCP provides controls for development to heritage items, and buildings and sites within heritage conservation areas and heritage streetscapes, and development to properties over 50 years old.

As such the Law Court Building did not need to comply.

It is accepted that all appropriate approvals have been received for the refurbishment of the Law Courts.

Experience tells us that authorities are loath to take on issues that may be subject to lengthy challenges. For example the Rural Bank Building in Martin Place was the subject of a lengthy protest against demolition that was lost. The result now speaks for itself.

The state bank that proposed demolition has itself long since disappeared. The city council has recently approved the demolition of a building that is on its own list of buildings of significance!

The partners of the MSJ, at the time the Law Courts was designed and documented, are now deceased.

The Building's original designer was Geoffrey Atherden who is now more well known as the writer of the much loved television series "Mother and Son." He waived his intellectual right to the design as he felt that he was now far removed from the practice of Architecture. The principals of the documentation team, now partners of an offshoot practice of MSJ gave approval for the changes to the facade. I understand that at least one of these architects has reservations about the emerging result.

As work on the facade progressed I became progressively more alarmed. I wrote to Law Court Limited and to the architects expressing my concerns, as I believe that the authenticity of the building was being destroyed.

In reply to my letter, the current project architect responded by stating that "The proposed amendments to the facade were determined by the new developing philosophy of Justice being more observable, less hidden, of openness.

The previous aesthetic was driven by the reverse philosophy, that of protection, that of detachment from the world, of a lack of distraction"

This argument, if taken to its logical conclusion, would require all court buildings to be modified including the Central Court, the Downing Centre and the Darlinghurst Court!!

Surely in the case of the Central and Darlinghurst Courts the buildings reflect their contemporary philosophy of justice?



Queens Square

Why then should not the Queens Square complex reflect the philosophy of its time?

All the practical issues could have been achieved without changing the facade.

It is difficult to determine the logic behind the changes but I suspect judicial vanity.

Anecdotally, I understand that those who use the spaces behind the "interventions" are not happy.

Now that panels have been removed, there seems to be a glare issue which means that windows need to have curtains drawn. If true, it would defeat the purpose.

The Law Courts should be appreciated for the visionary design and be considered as architectural heritage.

It can only be hoped that if the building survives another 50 years then the original design may be appreciated and the facade restored to the original.

Graham Swann

# SIXTIES CHIC

## St Monica's War Memorial Cathedral, Cairns

By Geoffrey Douglas



Photo: Mike Watt

The CBD of the City of Cairns in Far North Queensland is home to several notable examples of Twentieth Century architecture, and is well worth the trip for the aficionado of the period. The Queensland Government's City Walk brochure [Note 1] provides a useful overview of the many interesting heritage buildings in the city.

St Monica's War Memorial Cathedral is located at 183 Abbot St and sits just outside the bounds of the CBD and although not covered by the brochure should not be overlooked by the visitor to Cairns. The Cathedral was constructed in 1967-68 and dedicated as a war memorial to the Battle of the Coral Sea, which took place due east of Cairns in 1942. The Cathedral is entered as an item of State Heritage #601961 on the Queensland Heritage Register.

St Monica's is a good example of 1960s ecclesiastical architecture, designed by American-born Queensland architect Ian Ferrier (see separate box). The design reflects the traditional basilica model expressed via a modern idiom. Stylistically the architect has likely been influenced by the so-called 'New Formalism' defined by American architects such as Philip Johnson in the 1960's, and typified, for example, by the Lincoln Centre complex in New York.

This movement reacted somewhat to 'International Modernism' championed by the Bauhaus school, Meis van der Rohe and others, to find a more neo-Palladian language drawing on pared down Classical expression, yet translated through a modernist language. Features of this style typically include temple-like monumentality, colonnades and strict symmetry, often employing flat roofs and arches emphasising the plasticity of modern construction techniques.

In St Monica's, the original basilica plan included transepts and a vaulted roof, both of which were abandoned due to budget limitations. The resulting form is a simple and elegant rectangular double-height volume, flanked by single-storey verandahs enclosed in parts to house ecclesiastical functions such as a side chapel and confessionals. Verandah doors otherwise open down the length of the nave to allow cross ventilation, a concession to the Cathedral's tropical context. The Sanctuary consists of a raised platform three steps high, with a centrally located altar defined by simple clean lines and flat surfaces.

The nave is defined by a rhythm of twelve bays described by wide brick columns and large square roof beams, each expressed as simple and unadorned elements. A simple flat timber ceiling [note 2] runs over the nave and provides a powerful visual connection and forward movement towards the Sanctuary. Flanking the flat ceiling on either side are narrower coffered ceiling sections, each defined by expressed roof beams which add an interesting counterpoint to the flat ceiling, and dramatise the clerestory windows down either side of the nave.

Externally the architectural language remains tight, formal and restrained. The overall expression is of a crisp rectangular box. The sides present with alternating vertical panels of red brickwork and glazing. The glazed sections conclude in a simple thin concrete arch demonstrating the plastic versatility and strength of concrete expressed as a reduced classical form.

A cantilevered cornice terminates the wall in a most delicate and understated manner. The main entry façade and front of the Cathedral presents similarly via a large central window of the entry



Photo: Matt Kenwick

doors which are flanked by narrower windows. These in turn are flanked by plain and simple panels of brickwork.

The Baptistry sits to one side of the Cathedral and finds expression as a tall cylindrical-shaped building surmounted by an aluminium fleche with a curved base supporting a cross. An elevation of narrow, full height windows provides a dramatic vertical movement that in turn is arrested with a simple arch, while narrow columns of red brickwork separate these window sets. All these elevation elements are visually terminated by a subtle concrete cornice that floats effortlessly over the top of the window and brick panels.

Altogether the effect of these elements accords a robust and austere architecture that is powerful, simple and profound. By this work the architect Ian Ferrier introduced into Far North Queensland a highly mannered work of contemporary architecture worthy of its international cousins.

The architect's intention for the main Cathedral windows was of gold and light blue glass panels laid out in a Mondrian-esque pattern. The Bishop of the time requested the glass be a rich burgundy colour with an amber border, and this was installed somewhat against the architect's recommendation. The result was an over-



Photo: Matt Kenwick

whelming and almost hallucinogenic red glow within the Cathedral, some sense of which can still be had in the Baptistry and the Bishop's Chapel, which remain the only parts of the building with burgundy glass. The congregation must have sweated out many a long Mass bathed in red during tropical summers over the decades. Something had to be done.

The first change to the burgundy glass was the installation in 1995 of the "Peace Windows" on the eastern entry facade. These windows celebrated 50 years of peace in the Pacific and were designed and installed by Australian stained glass artists Gerry Cummins and Jill Stehn (see separate box). Flanking the Cathedral entrance, one work acts as a crucifixion window, displaying the deeply personal and tragic scene of warship and plane wrecks resting on the sea floor. The other is a resurrection window and rebirth scene describing new life with bright and colourful tropical fish and other sea creatures making these wrecks their home.



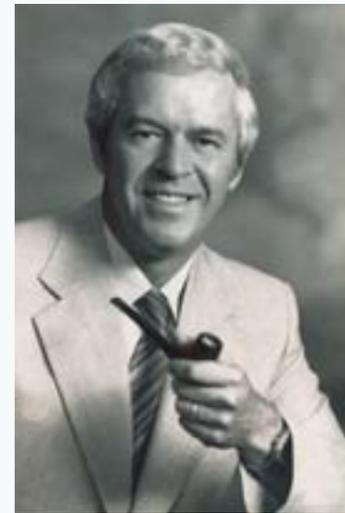
Photo: Matt Kenwick

Following installation of the Peace Windows, it was decided to replace the main Cathedral clerestory windows either side of the nave. Metal louvres had been placed over these windows to help control tropical glare, so it was decided at the outset that the new windows should be kiln fired stained glass, to better control light. The Biblical theme of Creation as told in Genesis was selected. The works were designed and progressively

installed in 1998, 1999 and 2000 and are known as the "Creation Windows". Purportedly the largest themed stained glass windows in the world, they form one continuous image broken into 24 bays (12 each side). The designers sought an interplay between the architecture and the glass design, based on the brick panels and the windows in the nave being the same width. This allowed them to evolve a design which was simultaneously episodic and continuous. Each window has a different subject, but all are interconnected while the brick panels provide an overarching articulation of the complete narrative.

Commencing at the front right of the Sanctuary with an image of darkness then proceeding through the creation of light, matter and life as it wraps around the Cathedral and the congregation, before the narrative concludes on the front left with Eschaton or end of days, and the "...coming to God". Embedded in the penultimate panel is a 100mm diameter crystal that represents a unity or single point of perfection and light. When the morning sun strikes this crystal a rainbow spectrum is cast across the Sanctuary wall and floor, its movement evoking time, the fourth dimension. The real time presence and drama of this effect was seen by the window's designer as a fitting symbol with which to conclude the story.

The Creation Windows imagery draws on *Continued page 11...*



### St Monica's Architect

**Ian Ferrier** (1928-2000) was a well known Queensland architect practicing mostly during the second half of the twentieth century. Born in New York, Mr Ferrier grew up in Saigon Vietnam where his father was the manager of the Hong Kong Shanghai Bank. He then attended boarding school in England before studying architecture at McGill University in Canada.

There he married the daughter of Frank Forde, the Australian High Commissioner to Canada. Mr Forde was a Minister of the Australian Government in a variety of senior portfolios, and was the Defence Minister and acting Prime Minister for a considerable period during the War. He became the 15th Prime Minister of Australia in July 1941 upon the death of Mr Curtin.

This Australian connection saw Ian Ferrier settle originally in Sydney before moving to Queensland where he set up his own practice in the late 1950's. It was soon apparent that few architects were working in Far North Queensland and he quickly filled the void with numerous commissions.

Mr Ferrier achieved some stature in the architectural community during his career, holding the post of RAI National President 1980-1981. Additionally he won the Board of Architect's inaugural 'Architect of the Year' award in 1995. Several of his projects were recognised with industry awards. He was renowned for designing progressive ecclesiastical buildings, with the radical fan shaped church in Auchenflower being a personal favourite.

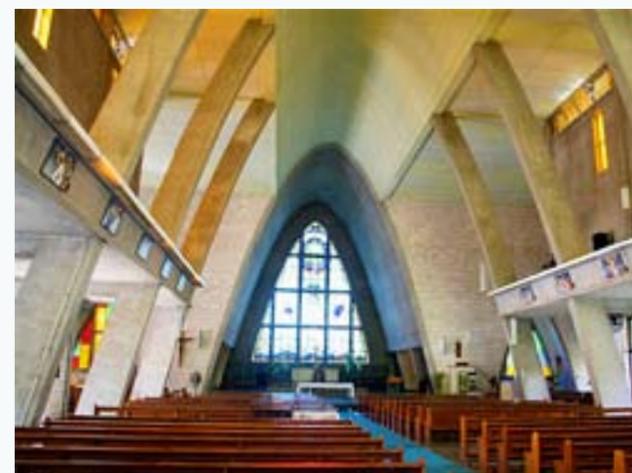
Darwin Cathedral



The design was the result of Vatican II, where it was recommended that the congregation move closer to the altar. During his career, Ian Ferrier designed many projects for the Catholic Church throughout Queensland, including some twenty-five churches and chapels. Additionally he designed the Coat of Arms for the Bishops of Queensland. Some of his most impressive work is evidenced by the Cathedrals of Cairns, Darwin and Port Moresby.

His daughter Catherine Baudet continues the practice today under the name Ferrier Baudet in Brisbane.

Port Moresby Cathedral





### St Monica's Glass Artists

**Gerry Cummins** is regarded as one of Australia's foremost stained glass artists, highly skilled in design, painting and staining, fabrication, conservation and restoration of stained glass. **Jill Stehn** works on new commissions and is a highly regarded conservator and restorer of stained glass.

Gerry is a 2002 Churchill Fellow and an associate member of the International Scientific Committee for the Conservation of Stained Glass (Corpus-Vitrearum-ICOMOS) in 2011.

He learnt his lead-lighting skill working with RJ Albert Stained Glass in Melbourne in the mid 1970's, establishing his own studio in Eden Park, Victoria in 1978. His work is constantly in demand, often with a two or three year wait.

In 1990 Gerry and Jill set up a studio in the hinterland of the Sunshine Coast, Queensland where they work on a variety of new and conservation projects throughout Australia.

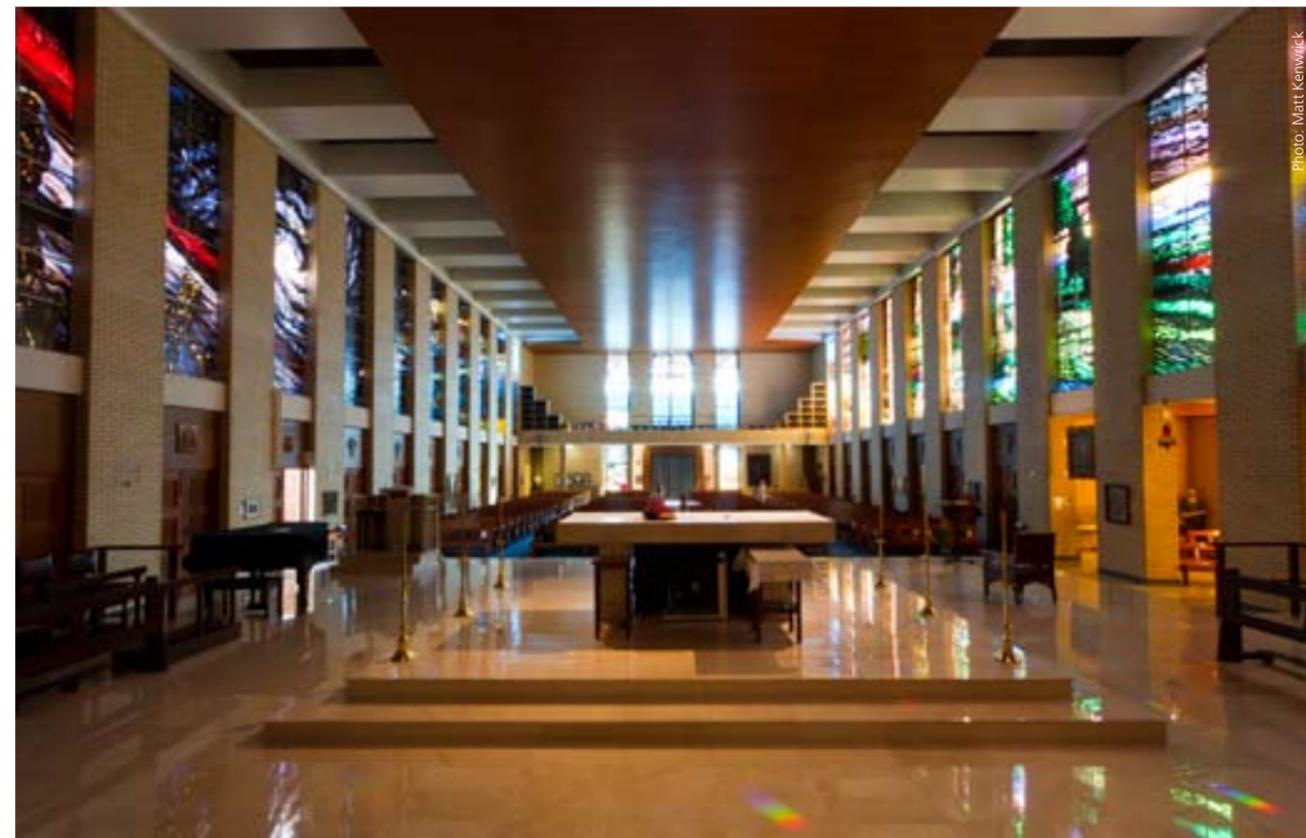


Photo: Matt Kenwick

local landscape, including the Cooktown Mountainscape and York Peninsular to describe a profile of tropical North Queensland. The Cassowary, a flightless bird native to the area, the Reef and its colourful sea life, the luxuriant forests, giant tree ferns, mosses, kangaroos and bird life create a super abundance of flora and fauna of the region with a palette of dramatic colour.

The windows were intended to be read on both a secular and a spiritual level. Many of the images in the early creation scenes draw from Hubble telescope images and discoveries including the Horsehead Nebula, our spiral Milky Way and planets from our solar system including Mercury, Venus, Mars and Earth.

Taken together the Peace and Creation Windows create a powerful and dramatic statement that is all the more remarkable for being unexpected and quite unlike traditional church stained glass windows. The design firmly roots the Cathedral in Far North Queensland with its extremes of climate, vigorous flora, beautiful Reef and tragic wartime past. The drama of the windows is, however, somewhat at odds with the restrained neo Palladian manners of the Cathedral's architecture.

It is hard to imagine that the architect who delivered a building of such finely-tuned monumentalism would have conceived of such a dramatic roller coaster as the Creation Windows. We understand his vision for these windows was a much more restrained palette of gold and light blue glass, and that even these were temporary due to budget constraints until stained glass windows could be afforded and installed.

The question of sensitive 'insertion' of new work into existing items of cultural heritage is in itself an age old dilemma. Adaptive

reuse challenges the architect who transforms a warehouse into an art gallery, or a GPO into a hotel lobby. Similarly, when new windows are being designed for an existing Cathedral, what should be done? In a 13th century Romanesque French church for example, should contemporary window design regurgitate an original design while denying developments in history, theology, liturgy, art and materials over 700 years? Or should the design be of its time while acknowledging the artistic intent of the original building?

How successful the integration of these assertively contemporary windows with the Cathedral's 1960's architectural aesthetic has been, is a subject that can and should be debated.

However, what cannot be denied is that St Monica's War Memorial Cathedral in Cairns remains a masterful work of mid Twentieth Century architecture, and that the Peace and Creation Windows are sublime works of religious glass art craftsmanship. Together they invoke a feeling of breathtaking awe and grandeur, making this place special both as memorial to the tragic losses of war and as a place of uplifting spirituality.

NOTES: 1. [http://www.cairns.qld.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0018/1881/brochure\\_citywalk.pdf](http://www.cairns.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/1881/brochure_citywalk.pdf)  
2. An original flat timber ceiling spanned the full width of the Cathedral. Envisioned as a temporary ceiling, it remained in place for some 40 years before the present ceiling with side coffers was installed.

REFERENCES: Queensland Heritage Register website, State Heritage item #601961 <https://www.derm.qld.gov.au/chimsi/placeDetail.html?siteid=16697>; Catherine Baudet, daughter of - telephone interview 29 August 2012; Catholic Diocese of Cairns website <http://www.cairns.catholic.org.au/Places/StMonicasCathedral/index.html>; Gerry Cummins - telephone interview September 2012

PHOTO CREDITS: Mathew Kenwick and Mike Watt, Cairns; Gerry Cummins and Jill Stehn, Eumundi; Catherine Baudet, Brisbane

THANKS: Bishop James Foley, Catholic Diocese of Cairns, City of Cairns Library, Catherine Baudet, Gerry Cummins and Jill Stehn, Matthew Kenwick

# BONDI BEACH ART DECO

By Paul Paech



If you think Sydney's famous Bondi Beach is a superficial scene where the young and groovy hang out waiting to be discovered, you're only partly right.

And if you look at Bondi's spectacular sweeping bay of brilliant white sand and sapphire water, endlessly rolling breakers and perky board-riders, well, you might like to turn around and look inland as well.

Because what most people don't realise is that Bondi boasts some of the most charming local adaptations of inter-war architecture in the whole world.

And there's the bonus that, despite all the hype about "iconic Bondi", most of these relatively modest buildings are still in their original condition.

Local real estate agents know about the popular appeal of Art Deco, misapplying the label to almost anything built before the 1960s.

Now, thanks to the hard work of a handful of local visionaries, Bondi's rich Art Deco heritage is receiving the attention it deserves.

An inspiring prime force in this is long-time local resident Hugh Norton. A couple of months ago, Hugh (a retired solicitor) arranged a significant visit to Bondi by Robert McGregor of New Zealand's Napier Art Deco Trust.

At a well attended meeting sponsored by the Friends of the Bondi Pavilion and attended by Dr Roy Lumby and David de Rozenker-Apted of the Twentieth Century Heritage Society, Robert explained how a few brave people saw the value of preserving and promot-



ing that city's Art Deco heritage, and of their success. Robert urged Bondi to incorporate local Art Deco into the stories told to visitors.

The vital process of protection and recognition for Bondi's interwar heritage is well underway.

In 2008, the beach and park were added to Australia's National Heritage List, and Waverley Council has now established a Conservation Area for most of Campbell Parade which runs along the beachfront, but as heritage fighters know, this still requires vigilance.

Waverley's energetic Mayor, John Wakefield, a local himself, has introduced a major Art Deco initiative aimed at ensuring Council staff have the knowledge they need, and Council is also looking at defining a colour palette and providing incentives for the owners of notable Deco buildings.

Next time you come down to Bondi, put aside an hour or two to wander the backstreets. You'll be surprised at the treasures you'll find tucked away back from the beach.

But be warned: many people have found these buildings so charming that they actually end up living here. But then again, that's not such a bad thing, perhaps.

How Bondi became an Art Deco enclave

Already in 1894, the famous Bondi Tram was bringing day-trippers to the beach, but at the turn of the century, only a few large family residences occupied Bondi's sand dunes, swamps and scrubby headlands. However, major change lay ahead.

In 1905 Sydney's first residential flat building was erected in Millers Point, and developers and builders alike quickly adopted the new money-making formula of two- or three-storey walk-up blocks of flats. Thus was Bondi's development pattern set.

Until 1928, Councils had no legal tools to control the building of flats, and the result was a construction bonanza. In 1929, Waverley had 50% more residents than a decade earlier, most of them living in these new flats. There were just 647 flats in Waverley in 1921, but more than 9000 by 1947, many clustering around the booming Bondi Beach.

And what a beach it had become. In 1928, an ambitious Council had erected the Bathers' Pavilion in the middle of Bondi Park. This was one of the nation's largest such structures, built in the fashionable neo-Georgian style, and providing an entertainment focus for the new community, with big-band dances, concerts, and even Turkish baths.

Then, as in Napier in 1931, catastrophe struck; not a physical tidal wave here but the social and economic one of the Great Depression, hitting Bondi's working and lower and middle class population hard. Many lost jobs and lacked the resources to ride out the tough years. One-third of the stylish flats lay empty, and Bondi became better known for down-and-outers camping out in its coastal cliffs.

Although down, Bondi was not beat. A plucky band of real estate agents formed the Bondi Publicity League, and its inventive campaigning, combined with broadly distributed colourful and optimistic images presenting Bondi as the equivalent of any European or US resort, helped Bondi regain its mojo. Soon, builders were working on more stylish blocks of flats and, further away from the beach, semi's and free-standing houses.

As the price of much land in Bondi was lower than in many other suburbs, builders and developers could afford to woo new residents to their beachside offerings with bonus flourishes of the very latest styles: Art Deco, of course, but also Streamline Moderne, Mediterranean, California Bungalow, Functionalist, and Arts and Crafts. Some enthusiastic buildings happily mixed and matched their references.

The result was an orgy of ornamentation, with adjacent blocks competing: externally it was fancy brickwork and other detailing, and inside, terrazzo floors, lead-light and engraved glass, moulded ceilings, bay windows, and fancy tiling. Why, some of them even had garages.

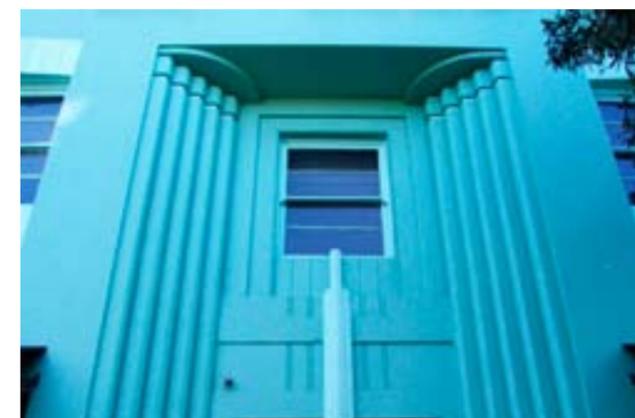
Many of the chic double-brick blocks were given evocative names



that reveal an international yearning: Mariposa and Monterrey, Lurline, Mayfair. They provided terribly smart yet affordable rental homes for Sydney's growing post-war population, eager to live in one of Sydney's most cosmopolitan suburbs.

Along with these blocks came the larger public and commercial buildings that spoke the same up-to-the-minute decorative language. Banks, hotels, cinemas, even a prominent service station, all joined in the thrill of presenting themselves as excitingly modern: everyone wanted to be part of this brave new post-war world.

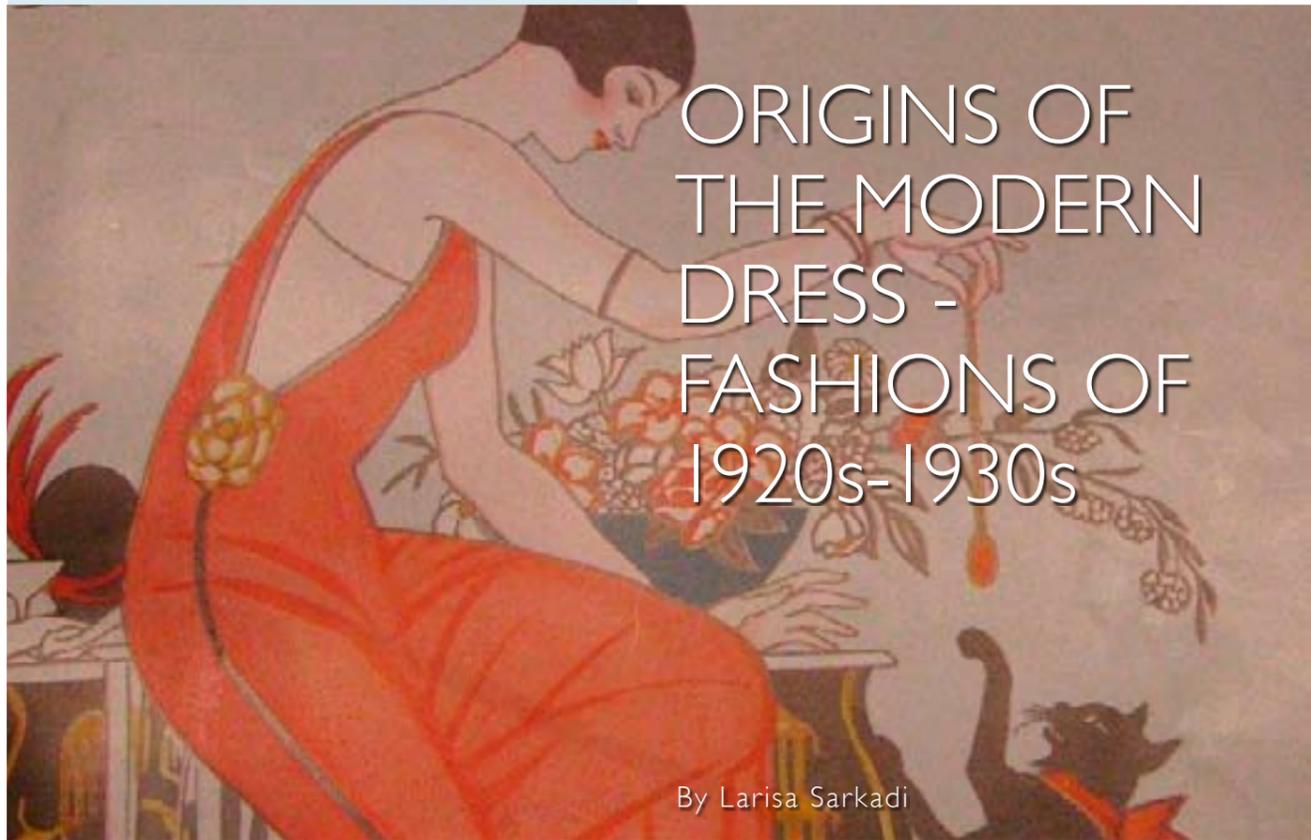
Since then, successive waves of development have threatened Bondi's Deco heritage, and some of the larger interwar buildings on prime land have been demolished, the King's Cinema, for example. But many remain. Now a surf shop, the former Commonwealth



Bank building in Hall Street still retains its lofty fluted façade, and the dramatic ceilings are untouched, if somewhat hidden.

Bondi Beach has mostly avoided the blight of the undistinguished developments common to much of Australia's eastern seaboard. It narrowly escaped one shocking proposal from the 70s that would have seen all of Campbell Parade razed and replaced by Surfers Paradise towers in Bondi Park.

This remarkable collection of Art Deco and interwar buildings is a national treasure. While locals know and value it highly, it now looks set to be better protected and much more widely celebrated.



# ORIGINS OF THE MODERN DRESS - FASHIONS OF 1920s-1930s

By Larisa Sarkadi

Cover of the Home Journal, June 1925

In times of abundant supplies of mass-produced goods, when items of clothing psychologically, if not physically, outlive their novelty every few months, it is hard to underestimate the timeless appeal of a vintage dress.

It is not a secret that many fashion designers "mine" old archives looking for inspirations for their collections. These days, the principles of cut and craftsmanship of made-to-measure dressmaking of the early 20th century are largely simplified to suit mass manufacturing.

To understand the relevance of fashion design of those early decades of modernity to our present times, one should reflect on the evolution of women's clothing within a wider spectrum of socio-economic circumstances.

As the Great War came to an end in 1918, the world had become a different place. Arms production propelled technology forward and machines entered every aspect of living. Transportation, manufacturing and methods of communication were transformed.

Women's life choices were no longer limited to homemaking and child rearing. During and after the war, traditionally male occupations such as office and retail fields opened to the female workforce. Everyday fashion had to meet the requirements of this new lifestyle. To accommodate these changes in women's lives, the outfits and hairstyles needed to be streamlined. To look stylish, a working woman did not need a maid's help with dressing up any more.

During the first decades of the twentieth century, several French fashion designers were highly influential in the development of clothing for the modern woman. Coco Chanel (1883-1971) pioneered a natural, corset-free silhouette, and Madeleine Vionnet

(1876-1975) must be credited with introducing a bias fabric cut: both are main principles of modern dressmaking.

In the 1920s perception of the female body shifted from an ideal figure with voluptuous curves to the androgynous shape of the teenager. Dancing and sport participation, such as playing tennis and golf, sailing and motoring became quintessential parts of leisure activities. Freedom of movement was the key requirement for women's clothing; hence the position of the waistline at hip level became the most characteristic feature of the 1920s dress. The short, boyish hair style, topped with a cloche hat completed the look.

With a sense of relief after the deprivations of the war years, the younger generation wholeheartedly embraced the emerging jazz culture. This trend gave birth to a peculiar breed of young female called a "flapper". The term arose from the flapping movement of the skirts of their dance party dresses. The hemlines hovered at knee level and simple necklines were adorned with long strands of beads. Striking geometric motifs were often used for dress fabric prints and embellishments. The whole look sent a message of a care-free, daring, modern woman.

In the Sydney of the mid-1920s (and up to the early 1940s) The Home journal published by Ure Smith informed its female readers of the latest fashion trends. One of the contributors to this publication, none other than Thea Proctor, called on Australian women to resist the slavish following of overseas trends and develop their own dress style.

The Great Depression of the late 1920s stopped the party. The



Vintage fashion parade, Montreal, Canada, 2009



1920s (on the right) and 1930s outfits in the house-residence museum, Toronto, Canada.



King Street with the Grace Hotel in the background, 1931(?). Photograph by E O Hoppe

Australian economy, with its heavy reliance on exports of wheat and wool, was severely affected by the Wall Street Crash of October 1929. Massive business closures left nearly 30% of the country's workforce unemployed. Jobs were scarce, incomes of most households dropped and women had to make do with very little.

In times of economic restraint, attitudes became more conservative, with designs of outfits reflecting the general mood.

Hemlines dropped below the knee and, most characteristically for the fashion of the 1930s, waistlines returned to their place at actual waist level.

Textile manufacturers were desperate to sell fabrics in those times of low demand. Cinema became a way of escaping the harsh realities of life, albeit for a short time. Promoting Hollywood-inspired glamour fashion for floor length gowns was also a commercial device used to persuade women to buy more fabric.

Motifs on dressmaking textiles produced in the 1930s were mostly in small shapes, demure and overtly domesticated. Until the end of the Depression, around the mid-1930s, this wholesome look was meant to project an image of a woman's dependability in the eyes of both her employer and husband. This attitude did not relax until the late 1930s.

At present, revival of interest in vintage couture is just a tangential part of the current concerns for environment and sustainability of the Earth resources.

If one is lucky enough to find them in good order, outfits made during those ground-breaking decades of the 20th century could be easily adapted for use in the office or for special occasions.

Their uniqueness guarantees that there wouldn't be another one around.

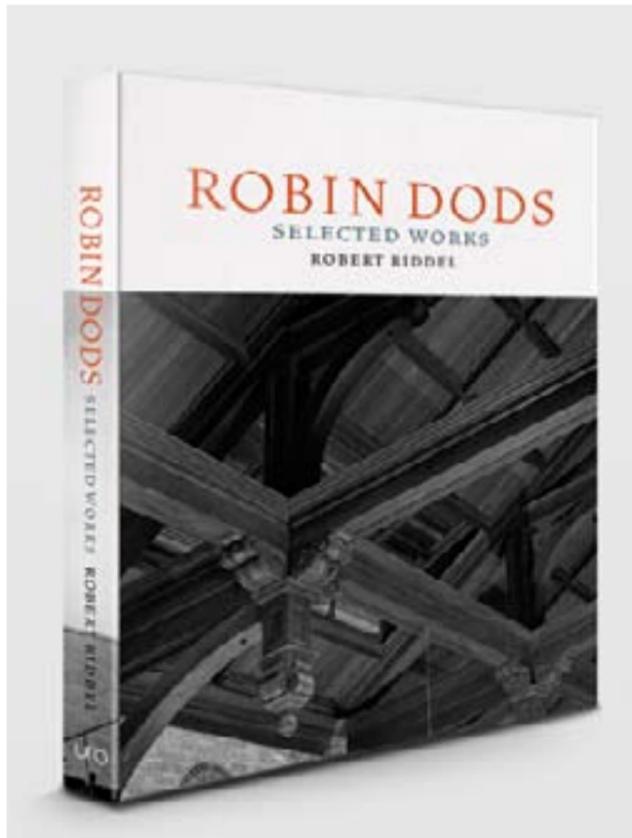


Promotional photograph. Unknown, 1927



Sydney Snapshots, The Home Journal, February 1938

Sources: Australia - Image of a Nation 1850-1950 David Moore and Rodney Hall, Collins, Sydney, 1983; Fashion from Ancient Egypt to the Present Day, Milla Conti, Paul Hamlin, London, 1967; The Home magazine, Sydney, 1925-1938; Out of Line - Australian Women and Style, Margaret Maynard, UNSW Press, Sydney, 2001; Sydney Bridge Celebrations 1932, Art in Australia Ltd



**ROBIN DODS 1868-1920: SELECTED WORKS**

Author: Dr Robert Riddel

Reviewed by Howard Tanner

Born in Dunedin, New Zealand in 1868, Robin Dods spent much of his youth in Brisbane, before travelling to Britain to become an architect.

He trained in Edinburgh and London with well-known practices and became a life-long friend of (Sir) Robert Lorimer, arguably Scotland's most celebrated Edwardian architect.

Around the turn of the twentieth century the British Empire was at its zenith, and Dods was torn between staying in Britain and returning to Brisbane.

Winning a competition for the Nurses Home at the Brisbane General Hospital determined the outcome, and he went into partnership with the Brisbane architectural entrepreneur, Francis Hall.

As 'Hall & Dods' they produced robust and striking city buildings with clear reference to the British Queen Anne Revival, such as the New Zealand Insurance Company (1908-10) and the AML&F Offices (1912-13); also, the remarkable Albiesque St Brigid's Church, Red Hill (1913-14).

By 1913 Dods had determined that he would move to Sydney to gain bigger opportunities (as Spain, Cosh & Dods), of which the Newcastle Club (1919) and the South British Insurance Company

building (1918-21, now demolished) were heroic Classically-inspired outcomes.

In 1919 a pair of enterprising aesthetes, Sydney Ure Smith and Charles Lloyd Jones, decided that a sophisticated Australian public deserved a book which celebrated Domestic Architecture in Australia.

They were assisted by Bertram Stevens and William Hardy Wilson, and the book revealed the emerging themes of 1920s architecture, in particular the Georgian/Colonial Revival. Leslie Wilkinson, recently arrived in New South Wales from England, advocated a new simplicity and recognition of climate; Hardy Wilson told of 'Building Purulia', his servantless cottage at Warrawee, on Sydney's North Shore; and Robin Dods wrote of 'The Architect and the Future'. Dods reflected on the importance of a well designed domestic environment, and the increasing influence of America.

For many Australian architects, the pictures of Dods' work in Domestic Architecture in Australia - of the impressive formal bungalow Lyndhurst (1896), and his own house in Abbott Street, New Farm (1899), both way ahead in date and in taste of the work of his compatriots - registered him in our minds as one architect whose idiosyncratic work drew on tradition, yet responded to local climate.

The Brisbane architect Neville Lund wrote a student thesis on Dods in the 1950s, and photographer Richard Stringer captured some of his finest creations before their demolition circa 1970. Dods' son, the famous Sydney paediatrician, Sir Lorimer Dods - by then an elderly gentleman - attended my architectural history classes at the University of Sydney in the 1970s, and through him I got to know and appreciate his father's last residence, Fenton at Edgecliff, Sydney, with its memorable vaulted hallway and its entry with filigreed fanlight and sidelights.

I recall first meeting Dods' biographer Robert Riddel in 1971 or 72, when he was studying in London, living in a flat overlooking a beautiful historic square. Bob was already in the thrall of Edwardian architecture, and its influence on East Coast Australia.

The architecturally cohesive Brisbane of Bob's youth - described by David Malouf (who launched the Dods monograph in Sydney) as 'a one-storeyed weatherboard town', was composed of verandahed timber houses, each raised up on a forest of hardwood stumps.

At its heart were also a few remarkable city buildings by architects Hall & Dods, which sought to convey some of the sophistication of recent British architecture, though adapted to suit the sub-tropical climate. In the inner suburbs, and on country properties, Dods showed how the traditional Queensland house and church could be disciplined into significant architectural compositions.

(There is a wonderful 1915 photo in the book of St Brigid's Church, Red Hill, ascendant, above a hillside of weatherboard cottages,



Brickwork as an articulated sculptural mass. St Brigid's, Red Hill, Brisbane 1913-14. Photo circa 1915.

paling fences, and washing out to dry).

During the 1970s and 80s much of central Brisbane was systematically demolished or vandalised. I remember hearing David Malouf's novel Johnno being read on the ABC around the late 70s, and its vivid description of the frenzied mood of Brisbane at that time:

*'In the old city centre slim tower-blocks were staggering towards the moon like grounded rockets aimed at nowhere, vying perhaps with the figures, forever climbing, of the stock exchange, where oil and mineral stocks were reaching astronomical heights, an index of Australia's extraordinary confidence in its future....'*

Bob Riddel returned to Brisbane in 1979, and resolutely set about making his mark on Brisbane architecture, conserving the old, and creating the new. For more than three decades Bob has followed up every available piece of information on Robin Dods: in Britain, in Brisbane, Sydney and Newcastle, and in the countryside.

His quest resulted in a marvellous PhD thesis (2008), and now - with particular encouragement from Espie Dods and Clive Lucas, and wonderful photography by Richard Stringer - this fine book.

Sydney critic, Elizabeth Farrelly, noting Dods' training in London with 'the great Arts and Crafts maestro Sir Aston Webb' states



Dods loved daylight glancing along the curvature of barrel vaults; and also across rich timber panelling or gleaming tile work on walls. AML&F Offices, Brisbane 1910-12 (demolished). Photo by Richard Stringer 1971.

that 'he produced some of the finest, most gracious and sophisticated buildings this country has seen; inventing a language that was locally responsive and internationally admired. Riddel's claim that Dods is "up there" with Edwin Lutyens, Robert Lorimer, Walter Tapper and Charles Voysey is no overstatement'.

Robert Riddel's handsome and lavishly illustrated volume is, arguably, the finest monograph produced in Australia on the work of an historic architect.

Recommended Retail Price: \$90;

Online: \$75 [www.uromedia.com.au](http://www.uromedia.com.au)

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*Howard Tanner is a respected Sydney architect, a recent National President of the Australian Institute of Architects, and a Professorial Fellow at the University of Canberra. He has had a long standing interest in many aspects of Australia's built heritage.*

Quotes from:  
David Malouf, Johnno (1975) and 12 Edmondstone Street (1985)  
Elizabeth Farrelly, Sydney Morning Herald, July 5, 2012

# a significant Art Deco building

The Golden Barley Hotel  
167 Edgeware Road,  
Marrickville/Enmore

Architect: R.M. Joy & Pollitt

Builder: L. Donlan



Photos by Matt Stone

No other building type in this state was as constrained and regulated as the hotel in the years before and after World War I. In the face of concerted political pressure from the temperance movement, many older buildings were swept away, and the number of pubs reduced and upgraded throughout the state. Trading hours were also drastically curtailed during the war.

Ironically there was a boom in pub construction during the 1920s and after the Depression, when a short burst of Art Deco buildings gave way to the streamlined, modernist influenced structures, but these were still informed by Art Deco decoration.

The Golden Barley, opened towards the end of 1939, was designed by the architectural firm of R.M. Joy & Pollitt, a relative latecomer to the small coterie of architects consistently employed by the breweries; which demonstrated modern and distinctive buildings to actively promote their product.

The Golden Bartley was built for Tooth & Co., replacing an earlier hotel of the same name. It is a two-storey building situated on an awkward corner site where Edgeware Road, Llewellyn & Alice Streets coalesce.

A rectilinear central tower rises above an enclosed curved balcony and projects beyond the parapet line. Accentuated by three cement-rendered finials, the central one of which supports a flagpole, the two main façades consist of solid rectangular masses with high parapets onto which the name of the hotel has been placed with stylish free-standing letters.

The exterior of the building is constructed of red faced brick relieved by a contrast of colour and texture consisting of cream brick-works between first floor windows, protected by shallow painted



that were lined with cream and buff tiles accented by narrow bands of bright red.

The various spaces within the building were generous and contained a 'Ladies Parlour', albeit evidence of the ruthless segregation of the sexes in hotels of the time, together with a degree of comfort in this area of the building provided by cork tiles on the floor.

Evidently women were less boisterous imbibers than men! A dining room, bottle shop, public and saloon bars were located on the ground floor, with eight bedrooms and associated services on the first level.

Even given the unsupportable alterations to the ground floor facades by the removal of its original fabric, and changes to doors and windows supposedly demanded by customers, the Golden Barley Hotel retains enough original fabric to stand proud as one of the many significant Art Deco buildings in Sydney.

And so should it remain!

rendered hoods, and rendered copings at parapet level.

The interior of the building was characteristic of the era and contained four bars, more than many other pubs, and walls and counter fronts

Dr Roy Lumby



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Submissions may be sent to the Editor, John Dymond, at [john@dfv.net.au](mailto:john@dfv.net.au).

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