QUEENSLAND WOMEN’S HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT OF THE COLLECTION

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Cover: Gold and emerald bracelet presented to Lady Bowen in 1867 by the young women of Queensland
(Image by Tim Nemeth)
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PART 1

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Significance Assessment of the Queensland Women’s Historical Association (QWHA) collection was undertaken under the guidelines of the National Library of Australia’s Community Heritage Grant program, which are accepted as a benchmark for assessing cultural material. The project involved consultant Dr Judith McKay visiting ‘Miegunyah’, the QWHA’s premises in Bowen Hills, Brisbane, between March and June 2016 to study the collection and related documentation and to consult members. In particular, she worked with the president and collections manager Jennifer Steadman.

The QWHA, established in 1950, is one of Queensland’s leading historical societies and has the distinction of owning its own premises, ‘Miegunyah’, which it purchased in 1967 and has since maintained as a house museum. A self-funded voluntary organisation, it is governed by an elected committee which oversees a team of volunteers. Besides maintaining ‘Miegunyah’, the QWHA has an outstandingly significant museum collection comprising about 15,000 objects as well as a substantial library and archives, most of which has been acquired by donation. The collection has particular strengths in costume and textiles, but also includes furniture, domestic artefacts, artworks, medals, souvenirs, manuscripts, photographs, etc. Much of the collection furnishes several recreated rooms of the house while the remainder is held in a purpose-built store beneath.

From its inception the QWHA has promoted women’s history however its early collecting activities demonstrate a broader interest in white settler history. Many of the association’s early members were related to notable pioneers, enabling it to collect material associated with early premiers and other politicians, professionals, senior public servants, pioneer pastoralists and the like. Other material was given by members who were notable in their own right, while some material was obtained by making direct approaches to descendants of governors, etc. At the time the QWHA had few competitors in Queensland actively collecting historical material hence it managed to secure material of outstanding significance that would normally have gone to state collections.

Of the material collected by the QWHA in its early years, two collections are particularly significant:

- the Bowen Collection, relating to Sir George Ferguson Bowen (1821–1899), Queensland’s first governor and later governor of Victoria, etc., and his wife Diamantina, Lady Bowen; this comprises personal papers, artworks, photographs, books, jewellery, domestic items and memorabilia; and

- the Herbert Collection, relating to Sir Robert Herbert (1831–1905), Queensland’s first premier and later imperial statesman as under-secretary of the British Colonial Office; this comprises personal papers, artworks, photographs and books.

In recent years the QWHA has adopted a more focused collecting policy, focusing on women and the furnishing of ‘Miegunyah’, and has begun transferring to other public collections, particularly state collections, material that is beyond the scope of the present policy and more appropriately housed elsewhere. This is a complex and time-consuming process, especially for a voluntary organisation, and the QWHA should be applauded for its enlightened efforts.
Over the years various attempts have been made to catalogue the QWHA collection and, to make it more accessible, an eHive web-based collection management system has been introduced. So far 286 items have been added to the eHive database, however this represents but a fraction of the total collection and such significant material as the Bowen Collection remains unrecorded. The lack of a comprehensive catalogue, covering all collection categories and incorporating all known information, has kept the collection relatively inaccessible and made undertaking this Significance Assessment difficult. Experience suggests that achieving the goal of a comprehensive catalogue is more than can be expected of a group of volunteers, and will require considerable outside assistance.

Though the QWHA is well managed and actively involved in fund-raising, it lacks the resources to properly care for the collection. It receives no ongoing public funding and, like many women's organisations that were once flourishing, its membership is declining. Whereas women of previous generations sustained voluntary and charitable organisations, today's women are mostly in the paid workforce or have other interests. Increasingly, the QWHA's limited resources are spent in maintaining the house rather than the collection, placing significant material at risk of deteriorating and remaining inaccessible.

This report makes various recommendations relating to the collection however most would be beyond the QWHA's ability to implement without external assistance. The first recommendation is to apply to the National Library's Community Heritage Grants program for a Preservation Needs Assessment of the entire collection; this would be undertaken by a conservator and would offer further advice on the collection's care.

For more than half a century the QWHA has been active in collecting and preserving important aspects of Queensland, and Australian, history. Not only this, it has pioneered heritage protection in Queensland and the professional conservation of historic buildings. Without its valiant efforts much of our history and heritage would have been lost, and such significant material as the Bowen and Herbert collections would never have come to Queensland. Moreover, costume and textiles, perhaps the most vulnerable of all moveable heritage, are poorly represented in state collections hence the QWHA's holdings are especially significant.
Sadly, the QWHA and its outstandingly significant collection are little known within the Australian museum and historical community, a situation which hopefully this report will help to redress.

2 METHODOLOGY

In undertaking this Significance Assessment, the consultant made a series of visits to ‘Miegunyah’, the QWHA’s premises, between March and June 2016 to study the collection and related documentation and to consult members. In particular, she worked with the president and collections manager Jennifer Steadman, who made collection items and documentation available and generously assisted throughout the project. Also, Jennifer and other members assisted with covering areas of the collection in which they have particular expertise.

To gain an overview of the collection, the consultant searched selected QWHA newsletters dating back to the 1950s, old catalogue cards dating to the 1980s, and the various forms of documentation used presently; and made general inspections of material on display and in storage. In dealing with the most significant items, she searched family files held in the QWHA archives, as well as undertaking her own research using Trove and other sources. In assessing comparative historical collections, she searched museum websites and drew on her own knowledge of collections in Queensland.

Finally, throughout the project she drew on her own wide experience as a museum curator and historian, including as a senior curator at the Queensland Museum and as consultant for significance assessments of such comparable collections as those of the Queensland Country Women’s Association and the Embroiderers’ Guild Queensland. The assessment is based on the guide *Significance 2.0: A Guide to Assessing the Significance of Collections*, 2009.

3 OVERVIEW OF THE ASSOCIATION AND ITS COLLECTION

The QWHA, established in 1950, is one of Queensland’s leading historical societies, with members drawn from across the state. A self-funded voluntary organisation, it receives government grants for specific projects, but relies mostly on its membership, donations, admissions, and providing tours and teas for its income. It is governed by an elected committee which oversees
a team of volunteers. It has the distinction of owning its own premises, 'Miegunyah', a traditional timber residence which it purchased in 1967 and has since maintained as a house museum. Besides maintaining 'Miegunyah', the QWHA has an outstandingly significant museum collection comprising about 15,000 objects as well as a substantial library and archives, most of which has been acquired by donation. Much of the collection is on permanent display in the house while the remainder is held in a purpose-built store beneath.

The QWHA's mission is to document and interpret women's lives and achievements through 'Miegunyah' and its collection 'so that current and future generations can have a better understanding of pioneering life in Queensland'. Many of the association's early members were related to notable pioneers or were notable in their own right, enabling it to collect material associated with early premiers, governors, pastoralists and the like. At the time the QWHA had few competitors in Queensland actively collecting historical material hence it managed to secure material of outstanding significance that would normally have gone to state collections. The collection has particular strengths in costume and textiles, but also includes a range of domestic artefacts which furnish the house, as well as artworks, medals, souvenirs, books, manuscripts, photographs, etc., and the QWHA’s own archives.

Presently, the QWHA opens 'Miegunyah' to the public on three days a week and makes the library / archives accessible to researchers by appointment. In addition, it holds monthly historical lectures, hosts regular exhibitions and events, provides children’s activities, produces monthly bulletins and quarterly newsletters, and maintains a publishing program relating to women. Though it has no paid staff, it has a resident caretaker who occupies the former 'Miegunyah' stables.

4  BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ASSOCIATION

The QWHA was established on 18 April 1950 as a branch of the state’s oldest historical society, the (later Royal) Historical Society of Queensland, which had been founded almost four decades earlier.1 Though the Historical Society had always included a few women members, it provided no activities especially for women and some found its evening lectures difficult to attend. The QWHA's founding goals were to interest women in Queensland history, particularly that of pioneer women; to organise social functions at Newstead House where it was based along with the Historical Society; and to provide outings to places of historical interest. The QWHA's first president was Pauline Morrison, the wife of the Historical Society's president Allan Morrison, a University of Queensland history lecturer, while its first treasurer was Darthea Neale, the wife of fellow lecturer R.G. Neale. Lady Lavarack, the wife of Queensland’s governor, agreed to become patron, establishing a tradition that was to continue until recently.

Women from across Queensland were invited to join the new association, especially those related to pioneers. Many of the early members were related to notable pioneers, such as Edith Dickson, the daughter of former premier Sir James Dickson; Sylvia de Winton, the granddaughter of early crown solicitor Robert Little; Joyce Darvall, the granddaughter of early surveyor-general William Alcock Tully; and Joan Hirschfeld, the great-granddaughter of early parliamentary Speaker Gilbert Elliott. Other members were notable in their own right, such as medical scientist Dr Josephine Mackerras, medical practitioner Dr Eleanor Bourne, educationalist and philanthropist Josephine Bedford, nursing administrator Eunice Paten, architect Beatrice Hutton, artist Bessie Gibson, hospital matron Sadie Macdonald, Federal politician Annabelle Rankin, and Brisbane’s first female alderman, Petronel White.

1 Initially, until 1957, the QWHA was called the Women’s Historical Association.
Besides organising lunch-time lectures and coach trips to historic places, the QWHA soon began collecting historical information and objects. In September 1950 it held its first exhibition ‘Before 1900’ at Newstead House, the first of several exhibitions featuring both collected and borrowed ‘antiques’. In 1954 Martha Young became president, holding office for twelve years while at the same time serving as honorary recorder. A woman of enormous energy and organisational ability, she gave the QWHA new impetus: membership, activities and collecting expanded greatly. She was also able to contain the tension that was beginning to develop between the QWHA and the Historical Society over the use of Newstead House, and began steering the QWHA towards independence; the cordial relationship that had existed during the Morrisons’ presidencies was over. Despite their differences, the two organisations managed to cooperate in 1959, Queensland’s Centenary, in hosting a Pioneers’ Luncheon at Newstead, to which they invited descendants of pre-Separation pioneers.

As president, Martha Young introduced a range of initiatives. She oversaw the QWHA’s first publication, *1859 and Before That - 1959 and All That*, a compilation of its lectures for the Centenary, and instigated the commemoration of Pioneers Sunday in Brisbane, an annual event involving church services and placing flowers on pioneers’ graves. More remarkably, in 1961 she instigated a project to mark places of outstanding significance to Queensland by fixing plaques explaining their history; this was inspired by a similar practice she had observed during a recent visit to London. In September–October 1964 she and assistant recorder Gyneth Campbell travelled around England and Scotland to fix plaques to several places there, including the home of Queensland’s first premier, Sir Robert Herbert. In all, before the project ended in the 1980s, some 90 places were marked, most of these in Queensland. The project was unique in Australia and preempted official heritage protection in Queensland by three decades.\(^2\)

By 1966 relations with the (now) Royal Historical Society of Queensland had deteriorated and the QWHA was asked to leave Newstead House on the pretext that the room it was occupying was to be turned into a museum. Fortuitously, just as the association was looking for a new home, a colonial house, ‘Beverley Wood’ in nearby Bowen Hills, came on the market. Under Martha Young’s leadership, the QWHA took on a state-wide appeal to purchase the house as a memorial to Queensland’s pioneer women. The appeal succeeded but in March 1967, just as Mrs Young was finalising the purchase, she died of a heart attack. Following this setback, the QWHA began furnishing the house in the era of its original occupants, the Perry family, who had occupied it from 1866 to 1922; its original name, ‘Miegunyah’, was also reinstated. In June 1968 the house was opened as the QWHA’s headquarters and Queensland’s first ‘folk’ museum. Flushed with success, the QWHA now reached its greatest strength with over 1000 members.

Though opened earlier, it was not until Lorraine Cazalar’s presidency that the professional conservation and interpretation of ‘Miegunyah’ was embarked upon. In 1979 she obtained a grant through the National Estate program to engage Richard Allom Architects to undertake a study and survey of the house. The subsequent reports have guided all the building conservation work and interpretation of the house to this day, the most recent example being the restoration of the western verandah which was completed in 2009. The work at ‘Miegunyah’ not only represented best practice heritage conservation but was also pioneering, for in 1979 the heritage movement in Australia was in its earliest stages. Though the Commonwealth had recently introduced heritage legislation (1975), Australia ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites), the country’s leading organisation of heritage professionals, was still drafting its Burra Charter.

\(^2\) The National Trust of Queensland not established until 1963 and state heritage legislation not enacted until 1992.
The QWHA continues to work actively to promote interest in Queensland history, particularly women’s history. Its current mission is to document and interpret women’s lives and achievements through ‘Miegunyah’ and its collection ‘so that current and future generations can have a better understanding of pioneering life in Queensland’. Besides holding monthly lectures, it hosts regular exhibitions and events. Its exhibitions are mostly collection-based and in recent years have included two major projects: ‘The Bride Wore White’ (2013) featuring 200 years of wedding fashion, and ‘We Remember’ (2015) featuring material relating to World War I, the latter sponsored by the Queensland Anzac Centenary grants program. Both exhibitions were accompanied by substantial catalogues. The QWHA also maintains its publishing program, its publications ranging from books on Lady Bowen and the Perry family to, most recently, biographies of Queensland women.

5 HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE COLLECTION

As previously mentioned, historical collecting has always been an important part of QWHA activities. Over the years much archival material has been collected as a by-product of the association’s lectures, publications, historical outings, the fixing of plaques, etc. Martha Young, the first recorder, set up the QWHA’s archives and never missed an opportunity of adding to them. For instance, in 1955, with the cooperation of the Sunday Mail social editor, she appealed for the gift or loan of photographs of Queensland governors’ wives; needless to say she was successful. In 1959 invitees to the Pioneers’ Luncheon were asked to supply their family histories and evidence of their families’ early arrival in Queensland.

Besides collecting archival material, the QWHA has been remarkably successful in collecting artefacts. As many of its early members were related to notable pioneers, it was able to collect material associated with early premiers and other politicians, professionals, senior public servants, pioneer pastoralists and the like. Other material was given by members who were notable in their own right, while some material was obtained by making direct approaches to descendants of governors, etc. At the time the association had few competitors in Queensland actively collecting historical artefacts, for it was not until 1966 that the Queensland Museum established a history section and for years this was more concerned with technology than social history, and other specialist museums were yet to emerge. Hence the QWHA managed to secure material of outstanding significance that would normally have gone to state collections. The fixing of plaques in the UK in 1964 also led to important acquisitions, with Martha Young and Gyneth Campbell returning from their travels with gifts including the christening gown of pioneer settler Patrick Leslie.

Of the material collected by the QWHA in its early years, two collections are particularly significant:

- the Bowen Collection, relating to Sir George Ferguson Bowen (1821–1899), Queensland’s first governor and later governor of Victoria, etc., and his wife Diamantina, Lady Bowen; this comprises personal papers, artworks, photographs, books, jewellery, domestic items and memorabilia; and
- the Herbert Collection, relating to Sir Robert Herbert (1831–1905), Queensland’s first premier and later imperial statesman as under-secretary of the British Colonial Office; this comprises personal papers, artworks, photographs and books.

The Bowen material came in various consignments from 1957 to 1973, most of this given by the Bowens’ granddaughter Mrs Roma Lloyd Browne of London, while the Herbert material was received after the fixing of a plaque at Caldrees Manor, Sir Robert’s residence in Ickleton, Cambridgeshire where he

Lorraine Cazalar (1934–2009), joined the QWHA in 1967 and, following her retirement from nursing administration in 1978, took a key role in its activities. For eighteen years she served either as president or vice-president, and later served in other roles, but is best remembered for her contribution to the preservation of ‘Miegunyah’. In 2005 she was awarded a Medal in the General Division of the Order of Australia for her work for the QWHA. (QWHA archives)
lived in later life. As is evident from the above, much of the material collected by the QWHA in its early years related to men—important men—rather than women and demonstrates a broader interest in white settler history than just women’s history.

With the purchase of ‘Miegunyah’ in 1967 collecting activity expanded to furnish the house and some items, such as a kitchen dresser and table, were purchased to supplement the donated material. In 1977, as the collection continued to expand, a ‘museum room’ was established under the house in the former laundry to display material that could not find a place upstairs, including laundry equipment, tools and Indigenous artefacts. The museum continued until the 1990s when, under Lorraine Cazalar’s guidance, financial assistance was sought from the Queensland Government to turn the space into an air-conditioned collection store. In December 1999, before the new store was fully sealed, a severe hailstorm struck, flooding the back section and damaging some material. Unfortunately, the house was closed for the Christmas recess so the damage was not discovered until weeks later, by which time the material had deteriorated so badly that it had to be discarded.

From the outset, donations were recorded in the QWHA’s newsletters, initially the News Sheet and later Historical Happenings, and until about 1982 a hand-written subject index was also kept. Also, correspondence with donors was kept on family files hence these also serve as object files. Sadly, there was no registration system and little attempt was made to match items with their donors by means of labels, etc. Consequently, only about a third of the collection has provenance, mainly larger items and those more easily identified. The deficiencies in documentation have been compounded over the years by the disposal of some items, often to raise funds, without due records being kept.

Professional management of the collection began in 1983 when the QWHA received a Small Museums grant from the Queensland Museum, enabling it to engage an experienced museum curator, Judith McKay, for a short time. Using acquisitions information recorded in the newsletters, an annual single number registration system was introduced for the object collection, with a hard-copy accessions register, catalogue cards and donor index. Also, guidelines were proposed for more focused collecting, and, drawing on the memory of former recorder Gyneth Campbell, sample items were

QWHA president Martha Young receives from Queensland premier Frank Nicklin a silver spade which had originally been presented to Sir George Bowen in 1865 when he turned the first sod of the Great Northern Railway. The spade, donated by Bowen’s granddaughter in 1957, was sent from London with the help of Queensland’s agent-general. (QWHA archives)

The old ‘museum room’, displaying laundry equipment. With its closure ‘Miegunyah’ was no longer called a ‘folk’ museum. (QWHA archives)

‘Miegunyah’ in 1886, soon after it was built for William Herbert Perry and his wife Leila. It is listed on the Queensland Heritage Register as a fine example of a substantial single-storied 1880s residence, including stables and garden. (State Library of Queensland)
labelled. The system was maintained until about 1998 however, with Miss Campbell’s declining health and subsequent death in 1991, much knowledge of provenance and donors was lost.

In 2010 QWHA member Jennifer Steadman, then a museum studies student, took up the challenge of finally bringing the object collection under control. Instead of using acquisition records as a starting point, she decided it was more feasible to work from collection audits. With the help of other members, items in each room were recorded and photographed, and any items not already registered were given new numbers, again following the annual single number system. In addition, the book collection was catalogued using the Dewey system, and some of the material in storage was also recorded, notably the costume collection. However, little acquisition or provenance data was included in the records assembled at this time and such significant material as the Bowen Collection remains unrecorded. The QWHA’s own archives is also unrecorded apart from a basic listing of the family and subject files.

More recently, various items have been researched for exhibitions and publications and, to make the collection more accessible, an eHive web-based collection management system has been introduced using existing registration numbers. So far 286 items have been added to the eHive database, representing but a fraction of the total collection. The lack of a comprehensive catalogue, covering all collection categories and incorporating all known information, has kept the collection relatively inaccessible.

Besides recording the collection, the QWHA has now adopted a strict collecting policy to limit its expansion, focusing on women and the furnishing of ‘Miegunyah’. It has also begun de-accessioning collection items that are beyond the scope of the present policy and has begun transferring to other public collections, particularly state collections, material that is more appropriately housed elsewhere. Items in this category have included a collection of Sir Samuel Griffith’s ceremonial uniforms to the Queensland Museum, Sir George Bowen’s GCMG medal to Government House, and Gilbert Elliott’s parliamentary Speaker’s uniform to Parliament House.

Paisley shawl owned by Sarah Webb and brought from Scotland in 1846

QWHA president and collections manager Jennifer Steadman, 2016

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3 The Griffith material given to the Queensland Museum includes chief justice, privy councillor and lieutenant governor robes/uniform as well as an academic gown.
Jennifer Steadman, now a Master of Museum Studies, still oversees the collection and is helped by other QWHA members who take on caring for particular categories according to their interests; some of these have also undertaken museum training. Through Jennifer’s ongoing connection with the University of Queensland’s museum studies course, opportunities are offered for students and graduates to be involved in collection-based projects.

The QWHA collection highlights the important contribution of women to preserving Queensland’s history and heritage. Without its valiant efforts over the years much of this would have been lost, and such significant material as the Bowen and Herbert collections would never have come to Queensland. Moreover, costume and textiles, perhaps the most vulnerable of all moveable heritage, are poorly represented in state collections hence the QWHA’s holdings are especially significant.

6 DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION

QWHA’s large and diverse collection comprises about 15,000 objects as well as a substantial library and archives. Much of the collection—such as furniture, soft furnishings, artworks and household equipment—furnishes the various recreated rooms of ‘Miegunyah’: drawing room, dining room, hall, bedroom, dressing room, nursery, kitchen and scullery. Other material—such as costume and textiles—is in storage but shown in temporary exhibitions. The collection dates mostly from the late 19th and early 20th centuries and relates to Queensland’s dominant cultural group of that time, settlers of British extraction. There is little material relating to other groups of early settlers, such as Germans or Chinese, or to Indigenous people; Indigenous material formerly shown in the downstairs museum has mostly been de-accessioned. The collection includes many family heirlooms—such as bridal costume, christening robes, shawls, quilts and Bibles—that have been passed through families for generations; some of these were brought on sea voyages to Queensland, providing tangible links to pioneer settlers.

The following outline of the collection is presented by category, however it should be noted that some categories overlap hence many items are equally applicable to more than one category.

6.1 COSTUME AND COSTUME ACCESSORIES

This is the largest category of the QWHA collection, comprising about 1500 items, many of which have been collected in recent decades. Mostly women’s, children’s and babies’ wear, the collection dates from the 17th century to the 1980s and is an eclectic mix of British, Australian and Queensland items. It ranges from elaborate trousseau garments, fancy dress and evening gowns and to more utilitarian items, such as nightwear, underwear, maternity wear, uniforms and bathing costume. It includes items that record social conventions and occupations of previous eras, such as parasols, court presentation outfits and maids’ uniforms. Within this assemblage, the collection has particular strengths in bridal fashion, aprons and christening robes. The bridal fashion, including wedding gowns, headpieces, veils and shoes, has been featured in various displays. The aprons, about 40 examples, include 19th-century embroidered satin aprons, tea aprons, nurses’ aprons and hessian washing aprons. The christening robes, about 50 examples, half of these with provenance, are one of the best collections of its type in Australia.

Notable examples are:
• an embroidered silk waistcoat made ca 1680, owned by the Allender family of Tunbridge Wells, England;
• a late 18th-century ball gown, silk polonaise, reputedly worn by Mrs Robert Vernor to a ball given by the Duchess of Richmond in Brussels on the eve of the Battle of Waterloo, 1815;
• an 18th-century wedding gown;
• a christening robe dating from 1789 and incorporating Indian embroidery; this was used by a British family who were part of the Raj;
• an 18th-century silk parasol owned by Sir George Bowen’s grandmother, Sarah de la Chambre; this came from the Bowen family home, Bogay House, in Northern Ireland;
• a christening robe and other baby clothing worn in 1815–20 by Patrick Leslie and his brothers; the Leslies later became pioneer settlers of Queensland’s Darling Downs (see Part 2);
• a cream silk wedding gown worn in 1821 by Rebecca Rusher at her wedding to John Wilkins of Wiltshire, England;
• the lace bridal veil of the Connah-Thomas Blacket Stephens family, worn in 1856–1958 (see Part 2);
• cream silk wedding shoes worn by Mrs A.J. Mack in 1865;
• an elaborate black jacquard bodice made ca 1880s by Mrs Stratton of Balkin St, London;
• six men’s smoking caps, mostly with provenance;
• three 19th-century paisley shawls brought by families emigrating from Scotland;
• brassieres dating from the late 19th and early 20th century;
• an ostrich fan carried by Lady Tozer, the wife of Queensland’s agent-general in London, for her presentation at court, ca 1899;
• the bridal veil of the Brock-Hollinshead family, Limerick lace with small cap headpiece, first worn in Yorkshire, England, and handed down to be last worn in the 1950s;
• a beaded evening bag worn by Lady Griffith, the wife of former Queensland premier Sir Samuel Griffith, early 20th century;
• a grey cotton fancy dress, the fabric printed with newsprint from the Mount Morgan Chronicle of July 1906;
• a woman’s side saddle skirt, made in 1908 in Brisbane by B.G. Burt Ltd, a ladies’ tailoring firm; the skirt was made for a member of the Gore family of Yandilla Station, Darling Downs;
• a hand-embroidered linen dress made in 1908 by young Brisbane woman Marjorie Wilson as a gift for her sister; this is being added to the Australian Dress Register maintained by Sydney’s Powerhouse Museum;
• the uniform worn by Queensland army nurse Winifred Croll during World War I (see Part 2);
• an apron and cap worn by the ‘Blue birds’, members of the Handcraft Section of the Queensland Division of the Red Cross Society, formed in Brisbane in 1915 to help convalescent war veterans;
• an ecru georgette day dress with hand-embroidered poppy motifs, probably dating from World War I;
• a spectacular theatre coat made from burnout velvet, 1920s;
• a black silk shawl owned by the noted Queensland sculptor Daphne Mayo (1885–1982);4
• a black woollen Jantzen woman’s swimsuit, complete with original box, ca 1930;
• a court presentation outfit, including green velvet gown, veil and ostrich fan, worn in 1934 by Queenslander Jessica (Mrs Alexander Gardiner) Aiken for her presentation to King George V and Queen Mary at Buckingham Palace; these were made by Contessa Gowns of Knightsbridge, London;
• a bridal veil of World War II era, made from mosquito netting due to the shortage of dress materials;
• various uniforms dating from World War II, including those of the Australian Women’s Land Army, the Women’s Auxiliary Transport Service, the Australian Army Nursing Service and the Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD);
• an evening gown worn by Queensland’s first female Federal parliamentarian, Senator Annabelle Rankin, during the royal visit in 1954 (see Part 2); and
• the dress worn by Queensland’s first female governor, Leneen Forde, at her inauguration in 1992.5

6.2 QUILTS
There are eighteen quilts, dating from the early 19th century to the 1990s. Three of these have been assessed as being of national significance by quilt historian Dr Annette Gero and the Queensland Quilters Study Group; moreover, two of the quilts have featured in reference books on Australian quilts and one has also been shown in a national quilt exhibition held at the

Ipswich Art Gallery in 2010. The quilt collection was featured in an exhibition held at ‘Miegunyah’ in 2011 in cooperation with the Kenmore Schoolhouse Quilters which meets regularly at ‘Miegunyah’.

The nationally significant quilts are:

- the Kent quilt, a large medallion style quilt made in England ca 1808 by Elizabeth Kent and kept by her family in Australia for more than one and a half centuries (see Part 2);
- the Lawless quilt, a large hexagon style quilt, the hexagons forming 150 diamond shapes, made by Mrs Rice Price of Hertfordshire, England ca 1839 and later given to Mabel (Mrs John Paul) Lawless of Boobyjan Station, Goomeri; the quilt is unfinished and has some of the paper templates over which the hexagons have been hand-pieced, so providing a good example of the English paper piecing technique; and
- the Page quilt, a hexagon style coverlet quilt, the tiny, fussy-cut hexagons forming approx. 1159 rosettes, made in England in 1821 by M.A. Page, as recorded by an embroidered inscription, some newer fabrics have been added.

Other quilts include:

- the Trotman quilt, a large medallion style quilt made by Mary Trotman in Bristol, England, ca 1870;
- a crazy patchwork quilt made from velvet pieces, ca 1890;
- a wagga made from suiting fabric, 1920s;
- a Depression-era quilt made from typical fabric pieces of the 1920s and 30s and backed with a blanket;
- a tumbling blocks style quilt made from woollen fabric pieces, 1938; and
- a quilt commemorating Australian women, made in 1993−94 by a group of Queensland women and including blocks for the McLeod Golf Club, the YWCA and the QWHA.

6.3 OTHER TEXTILES

This material comprises about 300 hand-worked textile items, including table and tea cloths, tray cloths, serviettes, doyleys, runners, cushion covers, samplers, hangings, tea cosies, milk jug covers, pot holders, handkerchiefs, guest towels, sachets, pillow shams and cases, testers, bedspreads and crochet rugs. The collection of samplers, numbering about 25, includes various 19th-century examples worked by young girls, featuring verse, letters, numbers or decorative motifs; others are Queensland school samplers made for teaching practical hand sewing, demonstrating various stitches and techniques. Also, there is a substantial collection of lace, both commercial and hand-worked.

Notable examples are:

- a framed embroidery of a sailing ship with the lettering ‘Charlotte England Kingstone 1815’;
- a decorative cross-stitch sampler worked in Peterborough, England by Elizabeth Thompson, aged 9 years, in 1834;
- a decorative cross-stitch sampler with religious verse, worked by Ann Elks in 1846;
- a pair of embroidered linen pillowslips owned by Sir George and Lady Bowen;
- a crochet bedspread worked by Mrs Clarkson in the 1880s;
- a fire screen with raised Berlin wool work depicting a bunch of flowers, ca 1880s;
- a framed raised Berlin wool work picture of a vase of flowers, ca 1880s;
- a hand-blocked cashmere tablecloth owned by Lieut. Colonel George Mant who commanded an infantry unit in India in the 1840s; this was brought to Australia by his family;
- a framed long-and-short-stitch embroidery of the British clipper ship *Blackadder* which serviced the London–China–Australia runs from 1870 to
until wrecked in 1905; this was worked by one of the ship’s crew;
• a tea cloth in filet crochet depicting Brisbane’s Exhibition Building, worked by Mrs C. Smith, ca 1890s;
• a cross-stitch sampler worked by F. Walker in 1894;
• a point lace handkerchief worked by Brisbane craftswoman Agnes Sinclair in 1895–96; this was given by her daughter Dorothy Brennan, a pioneer Queensland woman architect;
• a signature cloth worked in Brisbane by Ida Boyd in the 1890s, with the embroidered signatures of, among others, Nellie Melba and Archdeacon Montague Stone-Wigg;
• five samplers worked in 1900–04 by schoolgirl Evelyn McNulty at Angellala School, far south-west Queensland;
• an embroidered pillow sham exhibited at the Proserpine local agricultural show in 1911;
• a signature cloth worked in 1912 by schoolgirl Amy Charles, then a pupil of the Brisbane Girls’ High School (later Somerville House), with the embroidered signatures of fellow pupils;
• a ribbon embroidery picture frame made in 1912;
• patriotic tea cloths, linen with filet crochet inserts and borders incorporating flags, battleships and slogans, worked during World War I;
• a patriotic cross-stitch sampler commemorating the Allies’ victory in World War I, worked in 1918;
• an embroidered wall hanging worked in 1959 by Llewellyn Paterson for Queensland’s Centenary, to celebrate 100 years of progress; and
• a signature cloth worked in 1958–59 by elderly Brisbane craftswoman Clara (Mrs Falconer) Hutton, née Holt, with over 500 embroidered signatures; this was worked as a QWHA fund-raiser and includes the signatures of many members.
6.4 ARTWORKS

This category comprises about 30 original artworks, mostly Australian and some British, dating from the mid-19th century to the late 20th century and including works by notable artists. Many of the works are portraits associated with people who were major players in Queensland’s early history hence have outstanding historical significance. These include a series of works relating to Sir Robert Herbert, Queensland’s first premier:

- a watercolour portrait of Robert Herbert as a young man, by the famous English portraitist George Richmond RA (1809–1896), dated 1851;
- a miniature portrait of Hon. Algernon Herbert, Sir Robert’s father;
- a watercolour portrait of Marianne Herbert, Sir Robert’s mother;
- a miniature portrait of Jane Herbert, Sir Robert’s sister; and
- a painting of Caldrees Manor, Sir Robert’s residence.

Another series of works relates to the Bowen family:

- engraved portraits of Sir George Bowen;
- a watercolour portrait of Lady Bowen;
- a pastel drawing of Zoe Caroline Bowen, the Bowens’ daughter; and
- a series of silhouettes of Sir George Bowen’s mother and other members of the Bowen family.

Other notable artworks are:

- a miniature portrait of Sir Thomas Brisbane, early NSW Governor after whom the city of Brisbane is named, ca 1815; this was acquired by auction in England in 1963, one of the QWHA’s few purchases;
- a pastel portrait of Mrs Anne Gray, ca 1800; the sitter was the mother of Colonel Charles Gray, the first Usher of the Black Rod in Queensland’s Legislative Council;
- an oil portrait of Gilbert Elliott, the first Speaker of Queensland’s Legislative Assembly, attributed to the Sydney artist Joseph Backler (1813–1895); this was probably painted in 1866 when Backler visited Brisbane to undertake another portrait of the same sitter for Parliament House;
- an oil portrait of Matthew Buscall Goggs (1809–1882), a pioneer of the Chinchilla district and second owner of Wolston House, a historic house at Wacol;
- a pair of oil portraits of William Adams Brodribb (1809–1886), a pioneer NSW pastoralist, and his sister Lavinia Zenobia Ann Brodribb Hassall;
- a 19th-century oil painting of Brisbane House, the home of Sir Thomas Brisbane, in Largs, Ayrshire, Scotland;
- an oil painting of the Toowong reach of the Brisbane River by the local artist Isaac Walter Jenner (1836–1902);
- a watercolour painting of the historic house ‘Fernberg’, Brisbane (now Government House) by the local artist Robert Rayment (1839–1893), dated 1890;
- two watercolour paintings of houses in West End, Brisbane by Edward Fristöm (1864–1950), a local artist and photographer, dated 1893;
- an oil painting of Waterworks Road, Brisbane by A.R. Sewell, dated 1894;
- a miniature portrait of a Jewish Rabbi by the noted Queensland expatriate artist Bessie Gibson (1868–1961), dated ca 1914 (see Part 2); and
- a plaster relief portrait of Glenda Jones, modelled in 1960 by her sister, the well-known Queensland sculptor Rhyl Hinwood (1940–), as a student at Brisbane Central Technical College.

6.5 FURNITURE

Notable examples are:

- a sideboard owned by Colonel Charles George Gray, mentioned above, who came to Australia with his regiment in the 1830s; this was made in 1837 after he took up a property, Huntingdon, at Port Macquarie, NSW; the panel on the back was carved later by his daughter;
• a portable wine chest owned by Colonel Charles George Gray; this accompanied him to the Battle of Waterloo in 1815;
• a campaign style portable chest of drawers used by Sir George Bowen early in his career;
• a pembroke table owned by parliamentary Speaker Gilbert Elliott;
• a chiffonier with fretwork ornament, also owned by Gilbert Elliott;
• a pier glass owned by John Hardgrave, Mayor of Brisbane 1868−69;
• a davenport made in Brisbane in 1873 for sawmiller William Pettigrew by craftsmen John Wilson Carey and Matthew Fern (see Part 2);
• a bookcase owned by the Brodribb family of early Darling Downs pastoralists;
• a chair from the Lucinda, the Queensland Government’s yacht built in Scotland in 1884 and remaining in service until 1921;
• a cane bassinette used from 1899 by a farming family at Toogoolawah, Queensland; used for all the family’s six children;
• a 19th-century piano stool used by Mary Jane (Mrs Charles) Foster at her residence, Shafston House, East Brisbane;
• a beaded footstool from the Marks family of Brisbane medical practitioners; and
• a spinning chair carved by Leila Perry of ‘Miegunyah’ as a gift for her sister Gertrude, early 20th century.

6.6 SILVER
This category comprises an assortment of silver items, from epergnes, table silver service, match boxes and snuff boxes to trophies and railway and civic memorabilia.

Notable examples are:
• a cup presented in 1846 to sub-inspector Thos Arthur by friends at Ballynahinch, County Down, Ireland;
• a Moreton Bay annual regatta cup won in 1856 by the yacht Wyvern owned by pioneer settler Thomas Jones; this was made by Hayne & Carter of London;
• table silver brought to Queensland by Sir George and Lady Bowen;
• a silver trowel presented to Sir George Bowen when he laid the foundation stone of the Brisbane Bridge in 1864; the trowel was made in London;
• a silver trowel presented to Sir George Bowen when he laid the foundation stone of the Brisbane Town Hall in 1864;
• a silver spade presented to Sir George Bowen when he turned the first sod of Queensland’s Great Northern Railway, at Rockhampton in 1865; this fine example of 19th-century Australian silver, ornamented with local flora and fauna, was made by Walsh Bros of Melbourne;
• a racing trophy made by Hilliard & Thomason of Birmingham, 1870s;
• a silver trowel presented to Queensland premier Sir Arthur Palmer in 1881 when he turned the sod of the Brisbane–Sandgate Railway;
• a collection of silver from the family of Brisbane solicitor and politician Andrew Joseph Thynne (1847–1927);
• a meat cover with the crest of the Scottish Beveridge clan;
• a claret jug awarded in 1898 to Trooper Newman of the Royal Berks Yeomanry Cavalry for swordsmanship;
• a coffee pot presented in 1899 to George Bedwell, West Maitland by the inmates of Rosslyn Gaol; this was made by Shaw & Fisher of Sheffield; and
• an ink stand presented to Sir Samuel and Lady Griffith in 1904 on their 34th wedding anniversary by governor-general Lord Northcote and Lady Northcote; this was made by Hardy Bros of Sydney and Brisbane.

6.7 CHINA
Notable examples are:
• a meat platter and five dinner plates, part of a dinner service owned by George Augustus Constantine Phipps, the 2nd Marquess of Normanby, who was Queensland's governor in 1871–74;
• a Doulton fruit bowl owned by Queensland suffragist and social reformer Margaret Ogg (1863–1953); and
• a teaset owned by Rev. William Baddeley, Dean of St John’s Cathedral, Brisbane, 1958–67.

6.8 ORNAMENTS
Notable examples are:
• a Parian ware figure group made by England’s Copeland Pottery, said to be a wedding gift in 1859 to Captain Louis Hope, the original owner of Ormiston House and pioneer sugar grower in Queensland;

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• a stuffed Australian red-winged parrot, mounted by a London taxidermist ca 1859; the bird had died after being taken to England a few years earlier by Frances Jones, the daughter of Queensland parliamentarian Richard Jones;
• a stuffed bull terrier born in England in 1861 and later brought to Australia;
• a carved emu egg;
• a plate painted by the Brisbane artist Isabel Townley and raffled for patriotic purposes during World War I; and
• a small ceramic head of the Roman slave Nydia, in the style of L.J. Harvey, early 20th century.

6.9 SOUVENIRS

These include an assortment of World War I memorabilia, which was shown in the recent (2015) exhibition ‘We Remember’.

Notable examples are:
• a souvenir of the Siege of Paris during the Franco-Prussian War, 1870–71; this is a small frame containing morsels of bread;
• a china mug commemorating Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee, 1897;
• a ruby glass mug and jug commemorating the First Australian Exhibition of Women’s Work, Melbourne, 1907;
• a china mug and teapot commemorating the coronation in 1911 of King George V and Queen Mary, manufactured by Tuscan China, England;
• a brass plaque that was used to mark the various medical rooms of Queensland’s first female doctor, Lilian Cooper (1861–1947);7
• an Australian Comforts Fund writing kit issued to soldiers on active service;
• a Princess Mary tin given to soldiers on active service at Christmas 1914 and originally containing treats such as tobacco; this was given to B.G. White of the 2nd Light Horse while serving in Egypt;
• World War I trench art vase made from an artillery shell casing and ornamented with profile portraits of Britannia and a soldier;
• a pair of candlesticks collected in Rouen, France by Queensland army nurse Sadie Macdonald during World War I;

• a woven fan collected in Egypt by Queensland army nurse Eunice Paten (1883–1973) during World War I; later, as principal matron, Northern Command, attached to the Military Hospital at Enoggera in 1924–41, she enlisted the first Queensland army nurses to go abroad in World War II.\(^8\)

6.10 KITCHEN EQUIPMENT

This large and diverse collection is displayed in the kitchen, demonstrating housekeeping practices of earlier times. It includes a variety of food preparation, storage and serving equipment: cooking utensils, pots and pans, kettles, mincers, kitchen scales, a mortar and pestle, teapots, jugs, butter pats, an ice cream maker, mixing bowls, jars, canisters, crockery, serving dishes and platters, etc. There are some good examples of Australian pottery, from ant stands and butter coolers to lidded storage jars. Two items date from World War II: a hessian flour bag supplied by the Brisbane merchants R.M. Gow & Co. and labelled ‘temporary war time pack’ and a small cardboard box of tablet-form tea, presumably supplied to solders, labelled ‘war emergency packing’.

Notable examples are:
• a two-spout kettle used on Ruthven Station on the Barcoo River in western Queensland, ca 1880s;
• a large stoneware water filter made by G. Gheavins of Boston, Lincolnshire, England;
• a picnic basket complete with contents manufactured by Drew & Sons of London; this was owned by George Perry of ‘Miegunyah’;
• a face jug, labelled ‘Beenleigh Rum’, modelled by Queensland sculptor Charles Lowther for Brisbane’s Bristol Pottery, 1920s;
• a pickle jar given to Edith Campbell of Brisbane as a wedding gift in 1926; and
• a stoneware pickling crock made by R. Fowler Ltd of Sydney and used on a station at Windorah, western Queensland.

6.11 LAUNDRY EQUIPMENT

This material, displayed in the scullery, also demonstrates laborious housekeeping practices. It includes coppers, tubs, laundry baskets, a 19th-century manual washing machine, a mangle, buckets, a laundry trolley, Mrs Potts flat irons, iron stands, an ironing stove, an ironing board, trousers presses, and lace and ruffle irons.

6.12 SEWING EQUIPMENT

This equipment includes sewing tables, sewing baskets, sewing kits, needle cases, pin cushions, scissors, thimbles and darning mushrooms.

Notable examples are:
• a sewing table used to hold yarn for tapestry and embroidery; this was owned by Daniel Herbert Killikelly and his wife Marion, née Eyre, and was brought out from Ireland in 1876;
• another 19th-century sewing table complete with needle cases, etc.;
• a 19th-century pin cushion;
• buttonhole scissors made by L. Rodgers & Sons, ca 1903; and
• a soldier’s ‘housewife’ sewing kit.

6.13 PERSONAL ITEMS AND MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

These items include wash sets, dressing table sets, trinket and jewel boxes, bed warmers, scent bottles, curling tongs, powder compacts and puffs, hair clips, hat pins, safety razors, shoe molds, chamber pots and hat boxes.

Notable examples are:
- a vanity box, ca 1850s;
- a medicine chest used by Henry Lucock and his family who travelled to Queensland on the *Saldhana* in 1862; the chest was used on the ship and for many years later;
- a 19th-century tin sitz bath;
- a riding crop owned by the Brisbane educationalist and philanthropist, Josephine Bedford (1861–1955); this has a silver ferrule bearing her name; and
- a medicine chest used by Alec Symonds, the YMCA representative in Milne Bay during World War II; the chest, containing about 61 items, some dating back to the war, was later used by his family.

6.14 TOYS AND NURSERY EQUIPMENT

These items include feeding bottles, children's furniture, dolls, dolls’ tea-sets, dolls’ miniature furniture and various other toys.

Notable examples are:
- a Noah's Ark painted wooden toy, a house boat with 50 pairs of animals; this was purchased from the Army and Navy Stores, London ca 1896 and given to a Townsville woman when she was four years old, later used by three generations of her family;
- a doll’s cot made in 1898 as a Christmas gift for Ivy Philp, the daughter of Queensland’s premier Robert Philp;
- a Humpty Dumpty soft toy made in 1903 for Miss N. Hutchinson by Lady Chermside, the wife of Queensland’s governor;

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• a Mr Punch child’s rattle, Birmingham silver, used by Queensland’s first female Federal parliamentarian, Annabelle Rankin, as a child, ca 1908;
• a toy elephant on wheels; this belonged to Robert Frederick Reid of Calverton Manor, Buckinghamshire, England and was brought to Australia with him as a child in 1926; and
• a Depression-era hand-made timber kangaroo.

6.15 HANDICRAFTS

Notable examples are:
• a carved Nautilus shell with Queen Victoria's portrait, carved by prisoners of Boggo Road Gaol, Brisbane in 1897 to commemorate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee;
• a beaten pewter jewel box made by Brisbane craftswoman Winifred Scott Fletcher (1871–1962);
• two floor mats made by Gwladys Macaulay Turner, a Brisbane Red Cross crafts worker of the 1920s;
• a riding crop carved by a brumby shooter who was given shelter at Yarrol station, western Queensland, in the early 20th century; and
• the ‘Miegunyah’ house name plaque carved by Beatrice May Hutton (1893–1990), a pioneer Queensland woman architect and an early QWHA member.10

6.16 JEWELLERY
These items include lockets and pendants, wedding and other rings, hat pins, wrist watches, necklaces, bracelets and brooches.

Notable examples are:
• a carved mutton bone necklace made by French prisoners of war held in British prisons during the Napoleonic wars, ca 1800;
• a gold and emerald bracelet presented to Lady Bowen in 1867 by Queensland women (see Part 2);
• an old Chinese brooch with coral inserts and Chinese script;
• a wedding ring engraved ‘Carl Engel Emily Hughes Brisbane 4 August 1883;
• a 19th-century silver chatelaine;
• a jet mourning brooch;
• a shell necklace made at Emu Park, central Queensland in 1902;
• a gold identity bracelet worn by Queensland army nurse Gladys Ivy Echlin during World War I; and
• the jewels worn by Queensland soprano Gladys Moncrieff (1892–1976) in the musical comedy The Merry Widow, probably worn in the 1920s; these were given by the wearer in 1975.11


6.17 MEDALS

There are about 35 medals, comprising mostly military service medals; school and university medals; nursing, St John’s Ambulance and Red Cross medals; medals awarded at local agricultural shows and distant international exhibitions; and medals commemorating the reigns of British monarchs.

Notable examples are:
- medals awarded to pioneer Queensland surveyor James Warner (1814–1891) for coffee and other tropical products at exhibitions in London in 1862 and Brisbane in 1866;
- medals awarded in the 1880s to pioneer Queensland paediatrician and entomologist Dr Jefferis Turner (1861–1947) by University College, London, along with manuscript material;
- medals awarded to Eleanor Elizabeth Bourne (1878–1957), later a pioneer medical practitioner, in the University of Sydney’s Senior Public Examination of 1896;\(^{12}\)
- a Queen Victoria Diamond Jubilee medal, 1897;
- a medal awarded to Ester Lewin by the Brisbane Girls Grammar School for music, 1892; this was in memory of Annie Wight who died in the sinking of the SS *Quetta* in 1890;
- an Australian Federation medallion, 1901;
- a medal awarded to Scottish schoolgirl Agnes Jean Patterson in 1911 in a Queensland Government essay competition;
- World War I military service medals of Queensland army nurses Sadie (Sarah) Charlotte Macdonald and Gladys Ivy Eichlin;
- World War I military service medals of Arthur Harcourt Perry, son of William Herbert and Leila Perry of ‘Miegunyah’;
- a medal awarded to the noted artist Godfrey Rivers at the British Empire Exhibition, London in 1925;
- hospital matron Sadie Macdonald’s Florence Nightingale medal, awarded in 1953; this is the highest honour a nurse can receive;

the medals of Dame Annabelle Rankin (1908–1986), comprising World War II service medals, a Commonwealth of Australia jubilee medal, 1951, and the insignia of Dame Commander of the British Empire, awarded in 1957; and

• a Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee medal, 1977.

6.18 BADGES
This is a small collection, including nursing and Red Cross badges, Royal National Association, Brisbane badges, and RSL and patriotic badges.

Notable examples are:
• Sadie Macdonald’s Queensland Trained Nurses Association badge;
• an AIF female relative’s badge issued by the Department of Defence to Australian women for ‘duty done’ during World War I; and
• a World War II VAD badge and epaulet.

6.19 INDIGENOUS ARTEFACTS
There are three Australian Aboriginal breast plates, all from regional Queensland, which have been included in a reference book on the subject, Poignant Regalia, published by the Historic Houses Trust of NSW in 1993.

These are:
• ‘Billy Coonangu King of Eidsvold 1857’, from the Burnett district;
• ‘Jackey Hippi King of Eurella’ from the Warrego district; and
• ‘King Bally Surbiton Belyando’ from the South Kennedy district.

6.20 LIBRARY
The library collection is intended as a resource on Queensland women however its scope is much broader. Note that the manuscripts, ephemera, and photographs categories cannot be assessed properly because much of this material is not held separately but, rather, on family and subject files which are part of the QWHA’s own archives.

6.20.1 MANUSCRIPTS
Notable examples are:
• an account book dated 1760 and receipt books dated 1815 of the Leslie family of Warthill, Aberdeenshire, Scotland;
• one archival box of personal papers of Sir George Bowen, including his sketch book dated 1835–36 containing his drawings at the age of 14–15 years, an 1849 passport, a diary of his journey from Constantinople to Corfu, a manuscript of his book on Mt Athos, press clippings relating to his service in Victoria in the 1870s, and correspondence, 1849–80s;
• one archival box of personal papers of Sir Robert Herbert, 1860–90s, including correspondence with such notables as Cecil Rhodes and colonial governors;
• personal letters of the British prime minister William Ewart Gladstone, his wife and daughter Mary; Mary was a friend of Mrs M.L. Marsdon of Brisbane who gave the letters;
• the cash ledger of Mount Brisbane Station, Esk, 1852, then owned by F.W. and F.E. Bigge;
• account books kept by R.F. Gore of Yandilla Station, Darling Downs, 1851–57;
• account books of Barambah Station, Eidsvold, kept 1864–69;
• records of Maryland Station, near Stanthorpe, including an indenture

agreement between a Chinese labourer and the squatter Matthew Henry Marsh, 1850;
• an outwards letter book of the Brisbane sawmiller William Pettigrew, kept 1864–73;
• a hand-written recipe book inscribed 'Maud Challinor, Brisbane, 1881';
• a letter of 20 February 1890 by Mrs Alexander Archer who died days later in the sinking of the SS Quetta; the letter survives because it was posted from Keppel Bay on the ship’s northward journey;
• the hand-written manuscript of 'My life story' by Henry Plantagenet Somerset (1852–1936); this was later published as the book Trombone’s Troubles: Experiences of a Queensland Jackaroo in Early Pastoral Days;
• papers relating to Miss F.A. White’s migration to Australia in 1911 in the ship SS Perthshire;
• a letter from the author Jeannie (Mrs Aeneas) Gunn, dated 1939, accompanied by an original photograph;¹⁴
• correspondence of Mrs L.H. Pike, wife of Queensland's agent-general in London, relating to food and clothing sent by Queensland women’s organisations for distribution in Britain during World War II; and
• about ten Queensland school exercise books with hand-written contents.

6.20.2 EPHEMERA
This large and diverse category comprises postcards and greetings cards; invitations; concert and dance programs; menus; advertising material and suppliers’ catalogues; various certificates, such as baptismal certificates, nurses’ registration certificates, and certificates awarded at local agricultural exhibitions; 18th- and 19th-century banknotes; fund-raising tickets; cigarette cards; World War II rations cards; and old calendars. Some of the programs and menus are printed on silk, making them beautiful objects as much as historical documents. Much of the ephemera collection relates to World War I and was included in the recent (2015) exhibition ‘We Remember’.

Notable examples are:
• a convict remission certificate issued by Sir George Franklin, governor of Van Diemen’s Land, to Henry Squire in 1845;
• certificates of appointment of Thomas Blacket Stephens, a Brisbane

tannery proprietor, politician and newspaper proprietor, to various public offices in Queensland in the 1860s and 70s;

- a program of a concert held at Buckingham Palace, London on 10 June 1874;
- a silk program of a concert presented by Mrs Thompson’s Academy for Young Ladies, Brisbane on 29 June 1867 in the presence of Lady Bowen;
- a silk menu for a banquet held at Normanton in 1886 in honour of Queensland’s premier Samuel Griffith;
- registration papers and nurses’ certificates of various Queensland nurses, mostly early 20th century;
- the medical degree of Eleanor Elizabeth Bourne (1878–1957), the first Queensland woman to study medicine; she graduated from the University of Sydney in 1903;
- an invitation to Miss Philp, daughter of Queensland premier Robert Philp, to attend the opening of Commonwealth Parliament in Melbourne in May 1901;
- the program of a concert held in Brisbane’s Exhibition Concert Hall on 23 May 1901 during the visit of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York;
- a souvenir of Queensland’s Jubilee celebrations held in Brisbane’s Bowen Park in 1909;
- a certificate from the city of Brisbane to R.N. Hendry acknowledging his services as a special constable during the Brisbane General Strike of February–March 1911;
- the postcard album of Queenslander Marie Schwarz, containing 173 postcards dated 1911–18; and
- the program of a Women’s Thanksgiving and Dedication Rally held at the Brisbane City Hall on 26 February 1959 as part of Queensland’s Centenary celebrations.

6.20.3 ILLUMINATED ADDRESSES

These are also beautiful objects and mostly represent the work of local artists.

Notable examples are:

- two addresses presented by Queensland’s Parliament to Sir Maurice Charles O’Connell, President of the Legislative Council, in 1871;
- an illuminated address presented in 1894 to Mrs Parsons, Matron of the Girls’ Friendly Society Lodge, Sydney; this was produced by John Sands, Sydney;
• an illuminated address presented in 1905 to Sir Horace Tozer as a tribute to his service as a government minister and Queensland’s agent-general in London; and
• an illuminated address presented to Reginald Heber Roe in 1917 at the end of his appointment as Inspector-General of the Queensland Department of Public Instruction; this was made by Watson Ferguson Ltd, Brisbane.

6.20.4 SHEET MUSIC
There are 107 pieces of sheet music and nine bound collections. Again, much of this is World War I patriotic music and was included in the recent (2015) exhibition ‘We Remember’.

Notable examples are:
• ‘Cornstalk Polka’ composed by George Thornton, the Mayor of Sydney, 1852 and given by the composer to Brisbane businessman Albert J. Hockings;
• ‘Queensland National Anthem’ composed by R.T. Jefferies, with words by poet James Brunton Stephens and illustrations by artist Joseph Augustus Clarke, published by Watson & Co., Brisbane, ca 1880s; and
• the song ‘Our Boys at the Front’ composed ca 1918 by Queenslander M. Egan Mulry (1863–1934); this was dedicated to Lady Goold-Adams, the wife of Queensland’s governor.

6.20.5 AUTOGRAPH BOOKS AND SCRAPBOOKS
There are about fourteen autograph books and many scrapbooks.

Notable examples are:
• an autograph book of Catherine Macarthur Leslie of Parramatta, NSW and the Darling Downs, Queensland, kept 1835–67 (see Part 2);
• a scrapbook of Katherine Twisden-Bedford, kept while living in Normanton in the 1880s;
• a scrapbook of Lady Norman, the wife of Queensland’s governor, kept 1889;
• a scrapbook relating to the Brisbane Musical Union, 1891;
• an autograph book of Agnes Dickson, the daughter of politician James Dickson, who accompanied the Australian Delegation to England in support of Federation, kept 1900–04 (see Part 2);
• a scrapbook kept by Winifred (Mrs C.H.I.) Cox for nearly 60 years relating to both World Wars; it includes coloured streamers thrown from the troopship Aeneas in 1915;
• a press clipping book of the Stephens family of ‘Cumbooquepa’, South Brisbane, kept 1912–75;
• a scrapbook of Irene Longman, the first woman member of Queensland’s parliament and also a QWHA member; and
• sixteen photograph albums/scrapbooks of Annabel (Mrs R.C.) Philp relating to the Australian Women’s Land Army, the Women’s Auxiliary Transport Service and the Women’s National Emergency Legion, 1939–53; during World War II, Mrs Philp was state commandant of the Women’s Auxiliary Transport Service and founder of the Queensland Women’s Land Army.

6.20.6 MAPS
The map collection, though small, includes such significant examples as McKellar’s Official Map of Brisbane & Suburbs, 1895 and early 20th-century

Isles Love auction maps relating to Brisbane suburbs. There are also 19th-century maps of the Queensland coast, but at least some of these are duplicates sold by Watson Ferguson, Brisbane in the 1940s.

6.20.7 BOOKS

There are about 2500 books, including rare old books and books with significant provenance, family Bibles and prayer books, Queensland school readers, cookery and dressmaking books, needlework pattern books and souvenir booklets.

Notable examples are:
- various books owned by Sir George Bowen, Sir Robert Herbert and Sir Samuel Griffith;
- the family Bible of the Leslie family of Warthill, Aberdeenshire, Scotland;
- the Bowen family Bible, published in London in 1839, 3 vols, bearing the bookplates of Sir George Bowen and his son George William Howard Bowen;
- John Hunter’s *Historical Journal of the Transactions at Port Jackson and Norfolk Island with the Discoveries that have been Made in New South Wales and the Southern Ocean since the Publication of Phillip’s Voyage - Illustrated with Seventeen Maps, Charts, Views* ... published in London 1792;
- a NSW Post Office Directory, 1834;
- Charles Sturt’s *Two Expeditions into the Interior of Southern Australia* ... published in London in 1834, vol. 2;
- James Dawson’s *Australian Aborigines: the Languages and Customs of Several Tribes of Aborigines in the Western District of Victoria, Australia*, published in Melbourne in 1881;
- William Coote’s *History of the Colony of Queensland*, published in Brisbane in 1882, 2 vols;
- W. Frederic Morrison’s *The Aldine History of Queensland*, published in Sydney in 1888, 2 vols;
- Oscar de Satge’s *Pages from the Journal of a Queensland Squatter*, published in London in 1901 and owned by Sir George Bowen’s son, George William Howard Bowen;
- *Souvenir of the Inauguration of the Australian Commonwealth*, published by John Sands, Sydney in 1901;
- Tom Petrie’s *Reminiscences of Early Queensland*, dating from 1837 by Constance Campbell Petrie, the first edition published in Brisbane in 1907;
- *The Jubilee History of Queensland*, published in 1909;
- *Mr Punch’s History of the Great War*, published by Cassell & Co. Ltd, London, 1919; and
- a Book of Common Prayer owned by the Brisbane educationalist and philanthropist, Josephine Bedford.

6.20.8 PERIODICALS

These include the soldiers’ magazine, *The Link*, a weekly circular linking Queenslanders at home and abroad during World War I.

6.20.9 PHOTOGRAPHS

This extensive collection records Queensland people, including Aboriginal people, places and events. There are several valuable daguerreotypes.

Notable examples are:
- a daguerreotype of the daughters of Major John Kent;
- the Bowen family photograph album and loose photographs of Sir George and Lady Bowen and other family members;
• a photograph album of Reginald Heber Roe, Headmaster of the Brisbane Grammar School, recording school life and including the school's Whirobo camp on South Stradbroke Island, 1885–89;
• original group photographs of the Queensland Women's Electoral League, 1903 and 1913;
• a presentation photograph of Queensland Governor Lord Chelmsford and his Ministers of State, in an illuminated silk folder, 1908;
• framed photographs of Captain William Collin (1834–1914), an early Queensland shipping company owner, and his wife Eliza;
• the Robert Guthrie photograph album, including images of Chinese and South Sea Islander labourers in the Geraldtown (later Innisfail) area, early 20th century;
• the Marsland photograph album recording Queensland's 11th Light Horse during World War I, kept by two of its members;
• a photograph album recording Aboriginal settlements and missions in Cape York Peninsula, 1931, compiled by Queensland's Home Secretary; and
• a folder of photographs of a historical re-enactment for Queensland's Centenary celebrations, 1959 (QWHA president Mrs Young was on the organising committee).

6.21 QWHA ARCHIVES

This material dates back to the 1950s and includes material of outstanding significance, notably ca 5000 family and subject files.

The family files, on various families and individuals, contain photographs, artworks, original documents, press clippings and correspondence, including correspondence with the QWHA relating to donations to the collection and the fixing of plaques. To illustrate the precious contents of these files, the McArthur family file has original photographs of family members dating back to the mid-19th century and the Kent-Moreton-Brissenden family file had a daguerreotype (which was removed to safety).

The subject files, relating to associations, clubs, hospitals, schools, governors, cemeteries, churches, Brisbane suburbs and buildings, country houses and properties, have similar contents.

Other material held in the archives includes:
• membership rolls;
• minute books;
• quarterly newsletters: News Sheet, 1952–November 1960, and Historical Happenings, December 1960–;
• transcripts of lectures delivered to the QWHA over the years;
• files and scrapbooks on QWHA activities; and
• the QWHA's own publications.

Besides the above, there are 29 boxes of QWHA papers (ms M 590) in the State Library of Queensland, including correspondence, scrapbooks, press clippings, transcripts of lectures, and duplicate copies of Historical Happenings and publications. The association has no memory of how this material got to the library and would like the correspondence and other archival material returned.

7 CONDITION OF THE COLLECTION

The condition of the collection varies greatly and should be assessed by a professional conservator. As a house museum of the 1880s 'Miegunyah' lacks any environmental control in the upstairs rooms and some material there would be deteriorating accordingly. For example, the stationery case of the Pettigrew davenport is warped and cracked, possibly a legacy of the days when it was located against the western wall of the dining room. Attention
should also be given to works of art on paper and other fragile items that have been on display for decades. Some artworks, notably Bessie Gibson’s miniature and Robert Rayment’s painting of ‘Fernberg’, are faded while others require re-mounting and framing to archival standards.

Storage conditions also vary. The costume collection is relatively well stored, reflecting the efforts of conservator and QWHA member Dr Michael Maready who in recent years has overseen the packing of the collection into archival boxes, etc. Other collection categories such as ephemera, photographs, jewellery, badges and medals are poorly stored, lacking the specialised storage materials needed for their protection.

The collection is also at risk from standards of security and fire protection far below those offered by state institutions.

8 COMPARATIVE MUSEUM COLLECTIONS

As ‘Miegunyah’ has almost none of its original contents, it is more useful to compare the QWHA collection with those of other historical museums and collecting organisations rather than those of house museums.

Looking at other women’s museums in Australia, there are two obvious examples, both of which were established later in the wake of the international women’s movement and are more feminist in intent. The first is the Pioneer Women’s Hut at Tumbarumba, NSW, which opened in 1985 as a small, self-funded community museum committed to preserving rural women’s heritage. Innovative in approach, it records the everyday lives of ordinary rural women through displays, publications and projects such as the National Quilt Register which it initiated in 1995 to encourage women to care for their own heritage.16 The museum maintains a collection of domestic objects, including aprons, bush quilts, kitchen utensils, rag rugs, patched clothing, etc. and specialises in material demonstrating the ingenuity of bush women.

The other example is the National Pioneer Women’s Hall of Fame in Alice Springs. Founded in 1993, it originally focused on women pioneers (in the traditional sense) and their contribution to the development of outback Australia, but has since expanded its brief to include Australian women who have been pioneers in their fields, from the 19th century to the present. As a tourist attraction, the museum receives government support and now occupies the former Alice Springs Gaol. The museum has a collection of over 2000 objects and documents and maintains a ‘HerStory Archive’ of stories and photographs. It celebrates International Women’s Day each year with activities attracting women from afar and takes an active role in the International Association of Women’s Museums, hosting its 2012 congress.

While both the above women’s museums operate at a national level and are better known within the Australian museum community than the QWHA, their collections are smaller and more specific and were begun much later. Moreover, the collecting ethos of the Pioneer Women’s Hut is quite different, as the QWHA collection has relatively little material celebrating the ordinary. It can be concluded that the QWHA collection is the largest and most significant held by any of Australia’s women’s museums.

Looking more locally, the QWHA collection is probably the most significant held by any of Queensland’s historical societies and also one of the largest, being surpassed in size only by those of places like the Miles Historical Village. The parent society, the Royal Historical Society of Queensland, has a smaller museum collection though its library collection is larger. As mentioned earlier, the QWHA had few competitors in Queensland when

16 The National Quilt Register, initiated and coordinated by the Pioneer Women’s Hut, is now archived by the National Library of Australia.
it began collecting in the 1950s hence it managed to secure material of outstanding significance that would normally have gone to state collections.

The QWHA collection of costume and textiles, with about 2000 items, is probably Queensland’s second largest, though it could be the most significant. The largest collection of such material is held by the Templin House of Fashion, part of a historical village near Boonah, which began in 1975 and now has about 3000 items; it continues to expand rapidly. The Queensland Museum did not collect actively in this area until the late 1980s, thereafter focusing on the work of outstanding local dress designers and craftspeople, such as Gwen Gillam, Paula Stafford and Elsie Wright, rather than attempting to collect comprehensively. Some local historical museums also have important costume collections, including the Gold Coast Historical Society which has a large number of Paula Stafford garments. The Embroiderers’ Guild Queensland has the state’s largest and most significant collection of needlework.

9 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE COLLECTION

The Queensland Women’s Historical Association (QWHA), established in 1950, is one of Queensland’s leading historical societies and maintains its premises, ‘Miegunyah’, a traditional timber residence in Bowen Hills, Brisbane, as a house museum. Purchased in 1967 as a memorial to the state’s pioneer women, ‘Miegunyah’ is one of Australia’s few museums devoted specifically to women. Besides the house, the QWHA has an outstandingly significant collection, much of which furnishes the house’s several recreated rooms. The collection is the largest and most significant held by a women’s museum in Australia and is one of Queensland’s major historical holdings. The QWHA’s mission is to document and interpret women’s lives and achievements through ‘Miegunyah’ and its collection ‘so that current and future generations can have a better understanding of pioneering life in Queensland’.

QWHA’s collection comprises about 15,000 objects as well as a substantial library and archives, most of which has been acquired by donation. The collection is diverse, with costume and textiles forming the largest component. The collection of costume and costume accessories, numbering about 1500 items, has particular strengths in bridal fashion, aprons and christening robes. The latter, comprising about 50 examples, is one of the best collections of its type in Australia. The textiles collection, comprising about 300 hand-worked items, includes many quilts and girls’ samplers. Other collection categories are: artworks, numbering about 30 original works; furniture; silver; china; ornaments; souvenirs; kitchen; laundry and sewing equipment; personal items; toys; handicrafts; jewellery; medals; badges; and a few Indigenous artefacts. The library collection is also large and includes manuscripts; illuminated addresses; sheet music; autograph books and scrapbooks; maps; books, including books with significant provenance; periodicals; and photographs. In addition, the QWHA has its own archives dating back to the 1950s, which include its publications, lectures, and about 5000 family and subject files.

From its inception the QWHA has promoted women’s history however its early collecting activities demonstrate a broader interest in white settler history. Many of its early members were related to notable pioneers, enabling it to collect material associated with early premiers, senior public servants, pastoralists and the like. Other material was given by members who were notable in their own right, while some material was obtained by making direct approaches to descendants of governors, etc. At the time the QWHA had few competitors in Queensland actively collecting historical material hence it managed to secure material of outstanding significance that would normally have gone to state collections. Of the early acquisitions, two collections are particularly significant: the Bowen Collection, relating to Sir George Bowen, Queensland’s first governor, and his wife Diamantina, Lady Bowen; and the
Herbert Collection, relating to Sir Robert Herbert, Queensland’s first premier and later an imperial statesman.

The collection dates mostly from the late 19th and early 20th centuries and relates to Queensland’s dominant cultural group of that time, settlers of British extraction. With its links to early governors and others, including soldiers, who served all over the British Empire, the collection records Queensland’s origins as an imperial out-post. It also documents other aspects of Queensland history, including the development of Brisbane and early pastoral settlement, as well as such important events as World Wars, royal visits, the building of railways, the Federation of Australia and Queensland’s Centenary. A major function of the collection is to record the changing lifestyles of Queensland people over the years, particularly changes in housekeeping practices and social conventions; this has always been a QWHA priority. The collection includes many family heirlooms—such as bridal costume, christening robes, shawls, quilts and Bibles—that have been passed through families for generations; some of these were brought on sea voyages to Queensland, providing tangible links to pioneer settlers. Some items also have aesthetic significance; these include superbly crafted quilts, paintings, furniture and illuminated addresses. Other items, such as daguerreotypes and silk programs, are significant for their rarity.

Collection highlights include a gold and emerald bracelet presented to Lady Bowen in 1867 by the women of Queensland; silver trowels presented to Sir George Bowen in the 1860s when he turned the first sods of Queensland’s earliest railways and laid the foundation stones of Brisbane’s Town Hall and bridge; a chest of drawers used by George Bowen early in his career; personal papers of George Bowen and Robert Herbert; original portraits of various members of the Bowen and Herbert families, including a portrait of Robert Herbert as a young man by English portraitist George Richmond RA; the christening robe and slippers worn in 1815 by Patrick Leslie, later to become the first settler of Queensland’s Darling Downs; a davenport made in Brisbane in 1873 for William Pettigrew by noted craftsmen John Wilson Carey and Matthew Fern; a silk menu for a banquet held at Normanton in 1886 for Queensland’s premier Samuel Griffith; the plaque that marked the medical rooms of Queensland’s first female doctor, Lilian Cooper; the complete outdoor uniform, including a rare bonnet, worn by Queensland army nurse Winifred Croll during World War I; an evening gown worn by Queensland’s first female Federal parliamentarian, Senator Annabelle Rankin, during the royal visit in 1954; the dress worn by Queensland’s first female governor, Leneen Forde, at her inauguration in 1992— the list is endless.

About a third of the collection has provenance, nevertheless it has great potential for interpretation and research. The lack of a comprehensive catalogue has kept the collection relatively inaccessible and it remains little known within the Australian museum and historical community.

10 KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

These are listed in order of priority, however most would be beyond QWHA’s ability to implement with its limited resources and would depend on assistance being received from external sources.

1. Apply to the National Library’s Community Heritage Grants program for funds for a preservation needs assessment of the entire collection.

2. Aim to complete a comprehensive electronic catalogue, covering all collection categories and incorporating all known information, as soon as possible. Give priority to cataloguing significant material such as the Bowen Collection.

3. Store digital images of collection items together in a logical sequence—
presently they are stored at random throughout the QWHA's administrative files and some held at home by members.

4. Continue to transfer to other public collections material that is beyond the scope of QWHA's present collecting policy and inappropriate to the furnishing of 'Miegunyah'. This applies especially to material of outstanding significance that would be more appropriately housed in state and local government collections offering higher levels of professional care, security and accessibility, for instance: material relating to Sir George Bowen and Sir Robert Herbert to the State Library of Queensland; the portrait of former Speaker Gilbert Elliott to Parliament House; the medals of surveyor James Warner to the Queensland Museum and the railway souvenirs to its branch, the Workshops Rail Museum, Ipswich; the civic souvenirs to the Museum of Brisbane; the medals and papers of paediatrician Dr Jefferis Turner to a medical museum; etc. In return for such major items, it would not be unreasonable to expect that the state collections would give the QWHA some financial or in-kind support in caring for its collection; also that the State Library would return QWHA correspondence and other archival material that is part of the QWHA archives.

5. Engage a professional archivist to sort the QWHA archives, where necessary removing and independently cataloguing important manuscripts, ephemera, photographs and artworks that are presently held on family and subject files, making them inaccessible and in some cases causing damage.

6. The archivist should also sort outstandingly significant manuscript material, such as the personal papers of Sir George Bowen and Sir Robert Herbert, to remove any QWHA correspondence with the donors (usually family members) of this material; such correspondence should be kept with the QWHA's own archives.

7. Establish a series of object files to contain all hard-copy material available on specific collection items, especially significant items, to complement the data held on the catalogue. The files would contain material such as photographs, condition reports, letters from donors, references from publications, valuations, display captions, etc.

8. Provide better interpretation of the house by means of audio guides, iPhone apps, or other unobtrusive means. This should explain the house's history, the rooms and their original uses, and key contents.

9. Establish guidelines for the rotational display of works of art on paper and other fragile items that have been on permanent display for decades.

10. Engage an art conservator to check the condition of significant artworks, including the Bessie Gibson miniature and the Bowen and Herbert family portraits, and advise on future care.

11. Obtain specialised storage materials such as Mylar sleeves for ephemera, photographs, badges and medals; and solander boxes for artworks on paper.

12. Provide more information on the collection, or possibly this report, on the QWHA website, though recognising that this could increase the risk of theft.

13. Do not reupholster furniture or reframe artworks without first undertaking research. For instance, a couch has been reupholstered inappropriately using present-day fabric and some artworks are in modern frames.
PART 2

11 ASSESSMENT OF THE COLLECTION’S MOST SIGNIFICANT ITEMS

The following ten items have been chosen in consultation with QWHA members. They are listed roughly chronologically and are but a sampling of the collection’s riches.

11.1 PIONEER PATRICK LESLIE’S CHRISTENING ROBE AND SLIPPERS WORN IN SCOTLAND IN 1815

The christening robe and slippers were worn by Patrick Leslie (1815–1881), born on 25 September 1815 at Warthill, Aberdeenshire, Scotland, the second son of William Leslie, ninth laird of Warthill, and his wife Jane, née Davidson. The Leslies were members of the Church of Scotland and Patrick was christened at the local Rayne Parish Church on 30 September, shortly after his birth. The church, a stone structure dating from the 18th century, had a private gallery built by the Leslies. The christening robe is of fine cream cotton and made in the traditional style with a yoke, puff sleeves and long skirt; it is ornamented with fine surface stitchery and lace edgings. The cream satin slippers have colourful butterflies stitched on to the vamps and ribbon embroidery.

As a young man Patrick Leslie decided to try his luck in Australia, arriving in Sydney in May 1835. After learning about flock management and colonial agriculture under the tutelage of the Macarthurs of Camden, Leslie managed the property of an uncle at Collaroi and later took up a farm at Penrith. On the arrival of his younger brothers Walter and George from Scotland, he opted to look for land beyond the limits of settlement. In January 1840 Leslie set off northwards to inspect the rich grasslands of the Darling Downs, which had been discovered thirteen years earlier by Allan Cunningham. With a convict as companion, he traversed the southern and eastern downs and chose the area that was to become Toolburra and Canning Downs for his first station. His brothers soon joined him with the flocks thus in 1840 the Leslies became...
the Downs’s first white settlers. Patrick returned briefly to Sydney where in September 1840 he married Catherine Macarthur, whose family he had befriended earlier.

Patrick Leslie set about making Canning Downs a fine property but had the misfortune to start its development during a depression; by 1844 he was ruined and had to sell the property to his brothers. Later he moved to Brisbane, building the nucleus of Newstead House, while depasturing his flocks on Canning Downs. In 1847 he sold the Brisbane house to take up the neighbouring Goomburra run, by which time others had taken up runs in the area. Patrick and his brothers remained leading settlers of the Darling Downs, not only building up their properties but also taking an active role in politics. After selling Goomburra in 1859, Patrick returned to Britain, but later moved to New Zealand and finally to Sydney where he died in 1881.

Patrick Leslie’s claim to fame lies in his rediscovery of the Darling Downs and pioneering its settlement. His explorations of 1840 were a feat of bushcraft. Of the sons of British gentry who settled the Australian bush, few adapted themselves to their new surrounds as well as Leslie. A man of courage and tenacity, he paved the way for Darling Downs squatters to bring their supplies through Brisbane, previously a closed penal settlement, and in 1857 represented the Moreton, Wide Bay, Burnett and Maranoa districts in the NSW parliament. He became a leader of the Separation movement which sought to make NSW’s northern districts a separate colony. Beyond his grazing and political interests, he was a stud breeder and raced horses. Leslie Dam, near the city of Warwick, is named after him.

Patrick Leslie’s christening robe and slippers, described above, were also worn by his brothers. They were given to the QWHA in 1964 by Violet (Mrs N.) Arbuthnot-Leslie of Warthill, Scotland, her gift resulting from the QWHA fixing a plaque in the Leslie burial ground at Warthill in September that year; they were actually brought back by Martha Young and Gyneth Campbell on their return journey from the UK. The robe and slippers have historic significance for their association with Patrick Leslie, a pioneer pastoralist of Queensland’s Darling Downs, notably the district’s first white settler and the father of wool growing and stud breeding in Queensland.

REFERENCES:

11.2 AUTOGRAFP BOOK OF PIONEER CATHERINE MACARTHUR LESLIE, 1835–67

The book was kept by Catherine (Kate) Macarthur (1818–1894), the third of six daughters of Hannibal Hawkins Macarthur, pastoralist, politician and businessman, and his wife Anna Maria (Annie), who in turn was a daughter of the former NSW governor Philip Gidley King. Catherine spent her early life on the family’s farm, The Vineyard, Parramatta; it was there in 1835, at the age of 17, that she was given her book by her mother, as recorded by an inscription inside the front cover. The book, measuring 276 x 219 mm, has a dark red embossed cover.

Catherine’s family the Macarthurs were colonial aristocrats, being large landholders with impeccable connections and political influence. Her father, Hannibal, was a nephew of John Macarthur of Camden Park, the founder of Australia’s wool industry. By 1835, when Catherine received her book, Hannibal Macarthur was a member of the NSW Legislative Council and chairman of directors of the Bank of Australia; with his financial and political
interests, he was one of the colony’s leading citizens. Though his fortunes were to decline in a depression of the 1840s, the family enjoyed a privileged lifestyle during Catherine’s childhood. Their hospitality, bringing many visitors to The Vineyard, is reflected in her book. Following her marriage on 9 September 1840 to pastoralist Patrick Leslie, she maintained her book, taking it with her when she and her husband settled on the Darling Downs, becoming the region’s first white settlers. They settled first at Canning Downs and from 1847 at Goomburra, punctuated by a short stay in Brisbane in 1845–46 during which time they built the nucleus of Newstead House, later to become a grand residence.

The autograph book’s pages contain an assortment of contributions, mostly transcribed verse but also original sketches and signatures; these have been added by family members, visitors and friends. Besides these contributed items, there are photographs, press clippings and illustrations taken from books, etc. which presumably were added by Catherine herself. The first contribution, dated July 1835, is by Catherine’s mother Anna Macarthur who contributes throughout the book. Most of the regular contributors are members of Catherine’s close family, including her husband Patrick Leslie and his brother Walter; her eldest sister Elizabeth and her husband Philip Gidley King (the governor’s grandson); another sister Anna and her husband John Clements Wickham and their son Charles. Both brothers-in-law King and Wickham have contributed sketches; as both had served as marine surveyors on the British Admiralty ship HMS *Beagle*, it is not surprising that they were good draftsmen. One of the press clippings relates to Charles von Hügel (1795–1870), an Austrian aristocrat and botanist who toured Australia in 1833–34 to observe the flora; presumably he visited the Macarthurs.

Other contributors to Catherine’s book include more distant relatives including her second cousin James Macarthur of Camden, and various members of the King, Davidson, Lethbridge and Gordon families; as well as officers of the 4th and 17th British Regiments based at Parramatta and the visiting botanist-explorer Allan Cunningham. The contributions have been added randomly rather than chronologically, with most dating from Catherine’s early years in Parramatta when she would have had more time to keep her book. The contributions from the later Darling Downs era include a sketch by George Knight Erskine Fairholme (1822–1889), a Scottish aristocrat and sometime artist and adventurer, who assisted the Leslies in droving their stock northwards and later worked for a time at Canning Downs. The book also has references to other Darling Downs pioneers, including J. Bell, a Goomburra stockman, the Deuchars of Glengallan, and H.E. Clinton, a
government road surveyor. The book's final addition is a loose needlework pattern for a 'work pocket'; this was taken from the Young Ladies Journal of August 1867 when Catherine and her husband were living in England. They then moved to New Zealand and finally to Sydney where Catherine died in 1894, more than a decade after her husband. There is no evidence that she maintained her book into her later years.

Catherine Macarthur-Leslie's autograph book was probably given to the QWHA in 1977 by Mrs W.J. Scott, a Hannibal Macarthur descendant. The book has historic significance for the evidence it provides of the lifestyle and the social and family connections of the early Australian squattocracy, notably the Hannibal Macarthurs of Parramatta and the Leslies of the Darling Downs.

REFERENCES:
11.3 QUILT MADE IN ENGLAND BY ELIZABETH KENT AND KEPT BY HER FAMILY IN AUSTRALIA, CA 1808–1976

This is a large, multi-coloured medallion style quilt made of cotton chintz and measuring 375 x 228 cm. Hand stitched and quilted, it has wool batting and cotton backing, with the quilting forming a diamond pattern. The quilt has a central octagonal motif of floral chintz, which is bordered by strips of Egyptian hieroglyphic fabric and then the corners squared off with triangles. Around this central medallion are alternating squares of dotted and print fabric, including two fussy-cut motifs of the Sphinx. This in turn is surrounded by alternating frames of plain strips, diamonds, squares on point and herringbone using various fabrics; one of the frames has a fussy-cut motif of an amphora vase. Corner patches within these frames include square in square designs and six-pointed stars. Upon acquisition the quilt had metal rings attached along one edge, suggesting that at some time it had used as a wall hanging or curtain.

The quilt was made in England ca 1808 by Elizabeth Kent (1786–1815), née Rickards, who lived in Shrivenham, Berkshire. Elizabeth married John Kent (senior), a grazier, in 1808, so possibly she made the quilt for her wedding. Sadly, she died only seven years later after giving birth to her fourth child. The quilt is of special interest because of its Egyptian and other ancient motifs; such motifs became fashionable for furnishings in the early 19th century following recent archaeological discoveries in Egypt and the Mediterranean. According to quilt historian Annette Gero, most of the quilt's fabrics were printed by Dudding & Co. of London, a firm that operated in the early years of the century.

According to family legend, the quilt was brought to Australia by Elizabeth Kent’s eldest son, Major John Kent (1809–1862). Kent junior joined the British Army as a young man, serving in various parts of the Empire before being appointed in 1833 as an officer in the Commissariat Department in NSW. In 1839 he was sent to Moreton Bay, near end of penal settlement, as Deputy Assistant Commissary General. Here in 1842 he married Marjory Ballow. After some years Kent returned to England and worked in South Africa before returning to settle in Brisbane, bringing with him plant for a sawmill which he established at Kangaroo Point. Later working as a journalist, he moved to Ipswich and took over editorship of the North Australian newspaper.
for several years. In 1861 he became police magistrate at Maryborough; he
committed suicide there in December 1862 following a controversial case
that had resulted in his suspension. His wife Marjory Kent died in Brisbane
in 1890 aged 80. Presumably the quilt accompanied Kent and his wife on all
their travels.

After Marjory’s death, the quilt passed to two more generations of the Kent
family: to her youngest daughter Mary Ellen who married Hon. Seymour
Moreton, son of the 3rd Earl of Dulcie, in 1869 and later lived in Brisbane;
and then to the Moretons’ youngest daughter Ida Jeanette who married Dr
E.M. Brissenden in Sydney in 1928. The quilt was donated to the QWHA
in 1976 by Miss M. Brissenden, along with photographs and other material
relating to the Kent, Moreton and Brissenden families.

The quilt has featured in two reference books on Australian quilts: Jenny
Manning’s *Australia’s Quilts: A Directory of Patchwork Treasures* (1999)
and Annette Gero’s *The Fabric of Society: Australia’s Quilt Heritage from
Convict Times to 1960* (2008). The quilt is significant for its aesthetic merit as
an outstanding example of English patchwork and design of the early 19th
century, incorporating Egyptian and other ancient motifs that were popular
at the time. The quilt is also of historic significance as a fine example of an
heirloom brought to Australia by British immigrants and carefully kept by the
same family for more than 150 years.

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of Society: Australia’s Quilt Heritage from Convict Times to 1960* (Roseville,

11.4 VEIL WORN BY ANNE CONNAH AT HER WEDDING TO
THOMAS BLACKET STEPHENS AND LATER WORN BY
DESCENDANTS, 1856–1958

The full-length bridal veil is of cream Brussels lace with scalloped edges;
the beaded satin headpiece was added later. It was brought to Australia,
along with other trousseau items, by Anne Connah when she sailed from
Liverpool, England to marry Brisbane tannery proprietor (and later politician
and newspaper proprietor), Thomas Blacket Stephens (1819–1877). Anne,
the daughter of an early love of Stephens, arrived in Sydney in December
1855. Their wedding took place seven months later, on 10 July1856, being
celebrated at the Sydney home of Thomas’s cousin, the noted architect
Edmund Blacket.

Following their marriage, Anne and Thomas Stephens established their
home ‘Cumbooquepa’ in South Brisbane, where they were large landholders
(remembered in the naming of Stephens Rd and the former Stephens Shire)
and took an active role in public life; Thomas was an alderman and represented
the area in the Queensland parliament. Following his death in 1877, Anne
survived him by almost 30 years and, on her behalf, his estate was managed
by their eldest son William, also a successful businessman and politician. In
1890, the Stephens family moved to a new, grander house designed by the
Brisbane architect G.H.M. Addison, where they lived until 1919. This house,
also called ‘Cumbooquepa’ and built near its predecessor, is excepcional for
its architectural merit and opulence: entered on the Queensland Heritage
Register, it is now part of Somerville House girls’ school.
Anne Stephens’s bridal veil was handed down through several generations of her family, being worn by various granddaughters, great-granddaughters and in-laws, and adapted to suit the fashions of the day. One of the first to wear it was Anne’s daughter-in-law Gladys Ryan at her wedding to her son Llewellyn Stephens on 24 October 1905. It was also worn by Anne’s granddaughter Ann Stephens, the daughter of her youngest son Stephen, at her wedding to Edmund Francis Finlay on 9 October 1928; on this occasion it had sprigs of flowers attached to each side of the head. The veil was worn for the last time by Anne’s great-granddaughter Frances Ann Finlay, the daughter of the previously-mentioned bride, at her wedding to Ross Hosking on 4 January 1958; at this time the headpiece was added.
The veil was donated to the QWHA in 1959 by Ann (Mrs Francis) Finlay, along with other Stephens family material. In recent years it was featured in QWHA’s exhibition of wedding fashion, ‘The Bride Wore White’, held at ‘Miegunyah’ in 2013. The veil is of historic significance for its long association with the Stephens family, which has made a major contribution to public life in Queensland, and particularly for its association with pioneer settlers Anne and Thomas Blacket Stephens. The veil is also significant as a fine example of an heirloom brought to Australia by a British immigrant and worn by members of her family for more than a century.

REFERENCES:

11.5 GOLD AND EMERALD BRACELET PRESENTED TO LADY BOWEN IN 1867 BY THE YOUNG WOMEN OF QUEENSLAND

The stiff bracelet is made from 15-carat gold and has eleven emeralds which are scalloped grip box set with vine textured plait surround. Though lacking a maker’s mark, the bracelet was almost certainly made by Poile & Smith, court jewellers of Oxford Street, London, whose name is inscribed on the custom-made leather case. The gold is said to have come from Gympie, Queensland, but this is unlikely as gold was not discovered there until October 1867, which would have left little time for the bracelet to be made before it was presented, even if it had been made locally.

The bracelet was funded by ‘the young ladies of Queensland’ and as a token of their affection and regard for Lady Bowen, the wife of Queensland’s governor; together with an address, this was to have been presented on 4 December 1867, just prior to her departure from Queensland. However, the bracelet had not arrived in Brisbane by then so only the address was presented; the bracelet was ‘expected by to-day’s steamer’, indicating that it certainly was not made locally. According to the report of the presentation in the Brisbane Courier of 5 December, about 30 young ladies, representing nearly 120 subscribers, attended at Government House where they were received by Lady Bowen, her husband and children.

Diamantina, Lady Bowen (1833–1893), was a Greek countess, the daughter of Count Candiano di Roma, president of the Senate of the Ionian Islands. As an aristocrat, Diamantina enjoyed a privileged life before her marriage in 1856 to (Sir) George Ferguson Bowen, secretary to the government of the Ionian Islands, then under British rule. In 1859, on Bowen’s appointment as Queensland first governor, Diamantina accompanied him to Brisbane, soon becoming popular. A gracious hostess and tireless worker for charity, she ably fulfilled her role as governor’s wife. She helped to found Brisbane’s Lady Bowen Lying-In Hospital and is remembered in Queensland in the naming of the town of Roma and the Diamantina River. The Bowens left Queensland in January 1868 on Sir George’s appointment as New Zealand’s governor, but later returned to Australia in 1873 when he became Victoria’s governor. After his retirement from the civil service in 1886, the Bowens settled in London; there Lady Bowen died in 1893, survived by her husband and five children.

The bracelet was given to the QWHA in 1973 by the Bowens’ granddaughter, Mrs Roma Lloyd Browne of London, who has also given other Bowen treasures. One of the emeralds has been replaced and at some time the bracelet has...
been cleaned, losing some of its original patina. In 2011 it was featured in the Museum of Brisbane exhibition 'Cabinet of Curiosities'. The bracelet is of outstanding historic significance for its association with Lady Bowen, the wife of Queensland’s first governor, who made a major contribution to public life in Queensland and is still remembered with affection.

REFERENCES:

11.6 DAVENPORT MADE IN BRISBANE IN 1873 FOR WILLIAM PETTIGREW BY CRAFTSMEN JOHN WILSON CAREY AND MATTHEW FERN

The davenport (writing desk), featuring spectacular inlay work and carving, was made in 1873 to the order of Brisbane sawmiller William Pettigrew. It was made by the noted local cabinetmaker John Wilson Carey, whose steam joinery was located near Pettigrew’s mill, with console supports carved by the noted local woodcarver Matthew Fern, and brass locks supplied by local ironmongers Brookes & Foster. According to family legend, the masks at the top of the console supports are portraits of Pettigrew’s daughter Margaret who was then 14 years old; at the base of the supports are lion-paw feet. The davenport is made of Queensland timbers, using 37 species, making it a triumph of local materials as well as craftsmanship. Its dimensions are 100 x 67 x 65 cm.

The Queenslander newspaper of 23 August 1873 has the following description: 'The framing of the davenport … consists of deep tinted yellow-wood, which, being well polished, presents a beautiful appearance. The trusses are of plum tree, and the manner in which they are carved reflects great credit on Mr Fern, George Street, who executed this portion of the work. The lid of the stationery case is of lignum vitae and tulip wood, tastefully inlaid in the form of cubes and triangles, surrounded by a border of forest oak and muskwood. This lid is in itself an exquisite specimen of workmanship, but undoubtedly the most striking parts of the whole davenport are the front and back panels, which exhibit great skill and patience on the part of the workman, while affording specimens of the most useful and ornamental Queensland woods. The front panel is especially interesting in this respect,
the design being a “star” composed of pieces of the following woods [34 listed] … The back panel is of equal beauty, also containing a large number of woods. Although of course the chief interest attaches to the production on account of its composition, beauty is by no means sacrificed to utility…’

Scottish-born William Pettigrew (1825–1906) established Brisbane’s first steam sawmill in 1853; located in William Street on the riverbank, it operated until 1900. From the early 1860s Pettigrew began exploring the coast north of Brisbane to expand his timber operations, eventually operating six sawmills extending to the Mary River and owning a fleet of ships. Interested in the characteristics of Queensland’s native timbers, he gave lectures on the subject to the local Philosophical Society, of which he was a member; these were published as a booklet in 1878. Not only a successful businessman, Pettigrew was active in public life, serving as, among other things, Mayor of Brisbane in 1869–70 and a member of the Legislative Council from 1877 until bankrupted in the 1890s depression.

John Wilson Carey (1828–1902), the davenport’s maker, also from Scotland, was a cabinetmaker, fret cutter and venetian blind manufacturer in Brisbane during the 1870s and 80s. Also a promoter of native ornamental timbers, he exhibited his work at local and international exhibitions. Matthew Fern (1831–1898), also from Scotland, arrived in Brisbane in 1864 and soon established himself as a leading cabinetmaker. His exceptional skill led to his appointment in 1895 as the first instructor of wood carving at the Brisbane Technical College however he died soon afterwards.

Pettigrew intended to give the davenport to his half-brother Robert in Scotland, but Robert, who was elderly, asked that it be given instead to
Pettigrew’s daughter Margaret for her 18th birthday. Margaret, later Mrs Philip Hardgrave, kept the davenport till her death in 1942, after which it passed to her daughter Margaret (Mrs Paul) Eckhoff. In turn, Mrs Eckhoff, who was a QWHA committee member, bequeathed it to the QWHA at her death in 1976. Presently it graces the ‘Miegunyah’ drawing room and retains its original patina. It has featured in two reference books on Australian furniture by Kevin Fahy and Andrew and Christina Simpson: Nineteenth Century Australian Furniture (1985) and Australian Furniture: Pictorial History and Dictionary (1998).

The davenport is of historic significance as an outstanding example of Queensland colonial furniture and of the work of noted local craftsmen John Wilson Carey and Matthew Fern; and for its association with one of Brisbane’s leading pioneer citizens, William Pettigrew. It is also of aesthetic significance for the quality of its design and craftsmanship, and of scientific value as a record of the timbers collected and used by Queensland’s earliest sawmills.

REFERENCES:

11.7 AUTOGRAPH BOOK OF AGNES DICKSON WHO ACCOMPANIED THE AUSTRALIAN DELEGATION TO ENGLAND IN 1900 IN SUPPORT OF FEDERATION

The book was kept by Agnes Dickson, a daughter of the Queensland businessman-politician James Robert Dickson, who accompanied her father to England in May–June 1900 when he was a member of the Australian Delegation in connection with the passage of the Australian Commonwealth bill through the Imperial parliament. The book, a so-called ‘Forget-me-not’ floral album, has coloured pages ornamented with flowers. It measures 180 x 138 mm and has a dark red cover with gold lettering. On the title page Agnes has written the date 30 April 1900, indicating when she began it; she was in her thirties at the time.

Agnes obtained many of the signatures that fill her book’s pages when the Australian delegates were being entertained at Warwick Castle by the Duchess of Warwick, a popular hostess of her day. The signatures include Australian notables, such as Sir Edmund Barton, leader of the delegates and soon to become Australia’s first prime minister, Tasmanian premier Sir Philip Fysh and singer Dame Nellie Melba. British notables are also included, such as Prime Minister Joseph Chamberlain, London Lord Mayor Alfred Newton and Prince George, Duke of Cambridge. In addition, there are former Queensland residents, such as former premier Sir Robert Herbert, former agent-general Sir James Garrick and former governor Sir Henry Norman. While mostly kept in England, Agnes continued to use her book until December 1904, long after she returned to Brisbane. Signatures from this later era include Queensland governor Lord Lamington and his wife May, former premier Sir Samuel Griffith and his wife Julia, current premier Robert Philp and well-known poet George Essex Evans.
Agnes Melanie Dickson (1866–1944), was born at Toorak House, Brisbane, the fourth daughter of Dickson and his first wife, Annie, née Ely. During Agnes’s early life Dickson was an auctioneer and acquired enough wealth to extend his residence twice to become one of Brisbane’s grandest. In 1873 he entered the Queensland parliament and rose through the ministerial ranks until defeated in 1888. In the following year he retired from his business and travelled widely in Europe; at this time Agnes was presented at court in London. In 1892, soon after Dickson’s return, he again entered parliament, eventually becoming premier in 1898–99 and later chief secretary. An enthusiastic Imperialist, he was proud that during his brief term as premier Queensland became the first colony in the British Empire to offer troops for the Boer War. In Agnes’s book he has written ‘James R Dickson 18 May 1900 / Reported relief of Mafeking’, recording one of the war’s best known actions. In England, Dickson again showed his Imperial loyalty in dissenting from the rest of the Australian Delegation on the question of appeal to the Privy Council. Nevertheless, he was appointed a minister in the first Federal administration, serving only days before he died in Sydney on 10 January 1901 after participating in the Federation celebrations. Knighted just before his death, he is remembered in the naming of the Federal seat of Dickson, based north of Brisbane.

The autograph book was given to the QWHA in 1962 by Edith Dickson, a younger sister of Agnes, who was an early QWHA member. After their father’s death, the two unmarried sisters had lived together in England and the south before returning to Brisbane in 1939. The book is of historic significance for its association with events leading up to Australian Federation in 1901 and for the insights it provides into Queensland politics at the time.

REFERENCES:
11.8 MINIATURE PORTRAIT OF A JEWISH RABBI BY QUEENSLAND ARTIST BESSIE GIBSON, ca 1914

The miniature, oval-shaped portrait is painted in watercolour on ivory and mounted in a black lacquered frame. The work measures 103 x 80 mm and has no visible signature. It depicts a Jewish Rabbi whom the artist encountered in Paris, where she lived for 42 years; impressed by his ‘extraordinarily fine face’, she persuaded him to sit for her. Though undated, upon acquisition it was said to have been painted ca 1914.

The artist Elizabeth Dickson (Bessie) Gibson (1868–1961) was born in Ipswich, Queensland, the daughter of bank manager James Gibson and his wife Anne, née Blair, and sister of the well-known doctor John Lockhart Gibson. In 1906, after studying art at the Brisbane Technical College, Bessie went to Paris to further her career. Living in the artist’s colony of Montparnasse, she studied at Colarossi’s and other famous ateliers, and mixed with fellow Australian expatriates. Never part of the avant-garde, she specialised in portraits, including miniatures, genre studies and landscapes which she exhibited at the Paris Salon and London’s Royal Academy. She won an honorable mention from Société des Artistes Français in 1924 and a bronze medal at the International Exposition for Miniatures in 1937.

After spending the war years in England, Bessie Gibson returned to Australia in 1947 and began exhibiting in Sydney and Melbourne. In her later years she lived in Brisbane where she died in 1961. Her work is represented in public and private collections across Australia, and in 1978 a retrospective exhibition was held at the University Art Museum, University of Queensland.

The miniature was given to the QWHA by Bessie Gibson in 1954 when she became an honorary life member. To mark the occasion, she asked Robert Haines, the then Director of the Queensland Art Gallery, to choose a suitable offering. The work was included in the artist’s retrospective exhibition in 1978. The miniature is of historic significance for its association with Bessie Gibson, one of Queensland’s leading artists of the early 20th century. It is also of aesthetic significance as an excellent example of her work, particularly her skill in miniature painting.

REFERENCES:

11.9 UNIFORM WORN BY QUEENSLAND ARMY NURSE WINIFRED CROLL DURING HER WAR SERVICE, 1914–16

These items are part of the uniform worn by Sister Winifred Croll of the Australian Army Nursing Service (AANS) during World War I. They are as follows:

Outdoor (or walking out) uniform:
• an outdoor dress—a grey wool serge dress, ankle-length, with a blouson bodice and gored skirt, the sleeve cuffs have two brown stripes indicating the rank of sister while the right sleeve has an embroidered AANS badge and enamel unit badge, the stand-up collar is edged with a white linen liner, the bodice is fastened by five silver Australian Military Forces buttons;
• a grey wool serge cape, hip-length, with a red collar, fastened by a tab with two silver AMF buttons;
• a nurse’s cloak—a grey wool serge overcoat with a red stand-up collar, fastened by five silver AMF buttons while other buttons are used on the sleeve tabs, back tab belt and shoulder straps, the straps also have curved ‘AUSTRALIA’ titles; and
• a grey silk bonnet, with a brown silk velvet foundation and a grey silk bow at front, tied under the chin with grey silk ribbons, a grey silk veil extends down the back.

Working (or ward) uniform:
• a scarlet cotton drill shoulder cape, fastened at the neck with a silver AMF ‘Rising Sun’ badge.

Sister Croll would have purchased these items from her uniform allowance of £19.10.00. They would have been made in Brisbane, probably by Finney’s department store which specialised in tailoring nurses’ uniforms, except the bonnet which was made in Paris.

Sister Croll, born Marion Winifred Payne (1886–1954), was the daughter of Arthur Peel Payne and his wife Julia Finch, née Batchellor, and younger sister of the well-known Australian artist Frankie Payne (later Mrs A.P. Clinton). Following her education at the Brisbane Girls Grammar School, Winifred undertook her nursing training at the Brisbane General Hospital, of which her father was later secretary, and in 1912 married a Sydney-trained doctor, David Gifford Croll.

On 11 November 1914, soon after the outbreak of war, Sister Croll joined the AANS and later that month sailed on the hospital ship Kyarra with the first
major contingent of Queensland nurses to leave Australia. On arrival in Egypt, she and her colleagues staffed the 1st Australian General Hospital which was established in the grand Palace Hotel, Heliopolis. The hospital received the sick and wounded from Gallipoli, including hundreds of casualties from the landing of 25 April 1915; to cope with the influx the hospital took over a nearby amusement park, expanding to 1500 beds.

While in Egypt, Sister Croll sometimes met with her husband who was also serving in the Middle East, first as Commanding Officer of the 2nd Light Horse Field Ambulance and later as Assistant-Director of Medical Services for the Anzac Mounted Division.18 In December 1915 Sister Croll, described as ‘small and frail’, contracted pleurisy and in the following month was invalided back to Australia. Upon her return she worked at the 6th Australian General Hospital at Kangaroo Point, Brisbane, however she remained sickly and in June 1916 was discharged as medically unfit.

Later Sister Croll became the first secretary of the Queensland War Nurses’ Fund, which helped returned nurses, and became involved in other community organisations, including the Red Cross, the RSL Returned Sisters’ sub-branch, and the Girl Guides. Her husband became a well-respected doctor at Sherwood, Brisbane, where he practised for 35 years until his death in 1948. Sister Croll was killed in a plane crash at Singapore in 1954 while on her way to a holiday in Japan. In that year, just before her death, she gave her uniform items to the QWHA; she was an early member.

Sister Croll’s uniform items, which are in remarkably good condition, have historic significance as reminders of the work of the Australian Army Nursing Service in caring for the sick and wounded during World War I. The uniform, reflecting respectable women’s fashions of the day, reinforced the authority and professionalism of the service. The items are also significant for their rarity, for few comparable examples have survived in Australia, even in the collection of the Australian War Memorial, Canberra.

18 In 1919 Colonel David Croll was appointed CBE for his services in the Middle East.
Besides the above items held by the QWHA, the State Library of Queensland has a collection of Sister Croll's photographs recording her service in Egypt, as well as the papers of her husband.

REFERENCES:

11.10 EVENING GOWN WORN BY QUEENSLAND SENATOR ANNABELLE RANKIN DURING THE ROYAL VISIT IN 1954

The ballerina-style gown has a long, voluminous skirt and a ruched bodice with shoe-string straps. Made of layers of nylon tulle, the gown’s outer layer is coffee-coloured lace dotted with sequins, while the three underskirts are of coffee-coloured and lemon tulle. The lining is apricot taffeta. Three clusters of matching fabric flowers ornament the skirt and bodice. As the gown does not have a label, the maker is unknown.

The gown was worn by Senator Annabelle Rankin to the Royal Ball held in the Brisbane City Hall on 10 March 1954 during the visit of Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh. On this, the first visit to Australia by a reigning British monarch, the royal couple spent two months touring the continent visiting centres from Cairns to Fremantle. Though Senator Rankin had already attended celebratory functions in Canberra for the royal visit, she was back in Brisbane in time to attend the gala ball, the highlight of her home city’s festivities. According to Brisbane’s Truth newspaper of 14 March 1954, her gown was ‘one of THE frocks of the night…Her colouring provided all the appeal of an apricot chocolate ice cream’. This was not the first time she wore her spectacular gown, as Brisbane’s Courier-Mail of 13 March 1953 has a photograph of her wearing it a year earlier.

Annabelle Jane Mary Rankin (1908–1986) was Queensland’s first female Federal parliamentarian. She was the daughter of Scottish-born parents Colin Dunlop Wilson Rankin, mining engineer and Queensland parliamentarian, and his wife Annabelle Davidson, née Thompson. Raised on her family’s sugar-cane farm at Howard, young Annabelle was destined for a life of community service. After completing her education at the Glennie Memorial School, Toowoomba, she travelled widely. During World War II she was commandant of a Brisbane Voluntary Aid Detachment and in 1943 became Queensland assistant-commissioner of the YWCA, overseeing its welfare efforts for servicewomen.

In 1946 Annabelle Rankin stood as a Liberal-Country Party candidate for a Queensland Senate seat; successful, she became, at 38, Australia’s second female senator and was soon to achieve other milestones for women. Remaining in parliament until 1971, she was government whip in the Senate (1951–66) and when appointed minister for housing (1966) in Harold Holt’s government, she became the first Australian woman to administer a government department. After retiring from politics, she was appointed high commissioner to New Zealand (1971–74), the first female to head an Australian diplomatic mission. She had been appointed Dame of the British Empire in 1957.
In later life Annabelle Rankin returned to Brisbane. Maintaining her commitment to public service, she supported a range of community organisations, including the QWHA which she had joined in 1953. She died in 1986 and is remembered in the naming of the Federal seat of Rankin, based south of Brisbane.

In 1963 she gave her evening gown, which is in excellent condition, to the QWHA; her medals were given after her death. The gown is of outstanding historic significance for its association with Dame Annabelle Rankin, a remarkable woman of her time, who, in 1946, became the first female to represent Queensland in the Federal parliament. The gown is also significant as a representative example of the ‘New Look’, a luxuriously feminine style that transformed women’s fashion in the 1950s following years of wartime austerity; the style was characterised by sweeping skirts, fitted waists and the use of new fabrics such as nylon.
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Dr Judith McKay, June 2016

Images: QWHA, Judith McKay and Tim Nemeth unless otherwise credited.