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ARTS REVIEW FRANKSTON

Summer Edition

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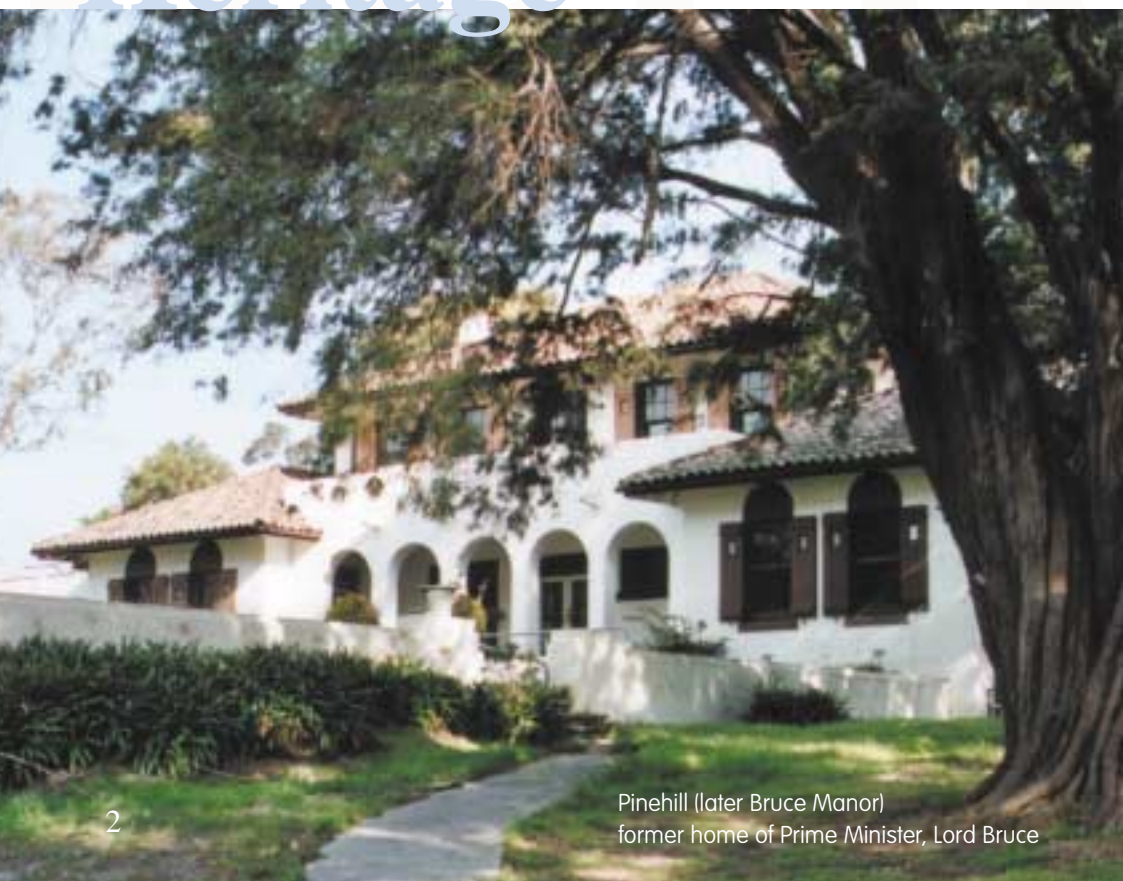
What do we mean by the term “heritage”?

It seems there is a broad perception that heritage relates generally to places and specifically to the built and natural environment; but heritage is much more than these mundane, tangible things.

Although we may be aware of some of the stories and reminiscences of the past within our families and community, we do not always recognise these as important components of our cultural heritage.

Heritage is a living concept that contributes to the identity of the community. When it comes to defining who we are and where we are going, we need to value, capture and celebrate more than just the places and structures we consider to be important.

Heritage



Pinehill (later Bruce Manor)
former home of Prime Minister, Lord Bruce

History is written by the victor, as the saying goes, but we are all defined in some intrinsic way by our social and cultural heritage. Heritage in this sense is a very human attribute, a multifarious concept that cannot be contained in exclusively tangible forms.

A fascinating example of the impact and importance of heritage upon a community is illustrated by the cultural cohesiveness of Australia's indigenous people. Heritage here is less than likely to be contained in built edifices or structures than it is in tradition, stories, artefacts and artwork, human relationships and spiritual belief. The natural environment – the sense of place – is intimately knitted into the fabric of the community.

The notion of **heritage** embraces the historic and the traditional, but is essentially about **who** we are today and what informs the contemporary lifestyle and ideas of our age and, which in turn, informs the aspirations that we have for the future. Heritage can consist of many things: objects, collections, documented records, community narratives and traditions, as well as the built and natural forms.

The **Planning and Environment Act 1987**, which is administered by local councils through their planning schemes, protects historic, indigenous and natural heritage places at the local level.

At a State level, historic, indigenous and natural heritage are administered separately. **The Heritage Act 1995** and earlier legislation covers non-indigenous cultural heritage and is administered by Heritage Victoria. Aboriginal or indigenous heritage is protected by the **Archaeological and Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act 1972** and Part IIA of the **Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984**, administered by Aboriginal Affairs Victoria and Aboriginal communities.

Natural environment heritage is protected in part by the **Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988** and the **National Parks and Crown Lands Reserve Act**, administered by the Department of Sustainability and Environment.

Internationally, the World Heritage List covers places of cultural and natural values and recognises that many places have both values.

Frankston City Council's position is informed in a technical sense by the **City of Frankston Heritage Study 1995** and the **Frankston City (East) Heritage Study 1997** – both prepared by Graeme Butler and Associates – and the **Frankston Aboriginal Heritage Study 1998** prepared by Brendan Marshall. These documents underpin the heritage and indigenous overlays that accompany the **Frankston City Planning Scheme** and are often consulted when an issue arises in terms of development or change effecting heritage sites.

Greening Frankston

There are a number of other initiatives undertaken by Council in the past 12 months or so that will have an impact on the kind of urban and suburban environment that will prevail in Frankston.

The **Neighbourhood Character Study** was developed in consultation with various communities across the municipality to determine suitable profiles of the micro-environment and accord with the aims of the State Government's 2030 vision planning structure for Melbourne.

Frankston City

Council is also currently developing a significant tree register and has recently introduced local laws covering the protection of local flora under the Greening Frankston initiative.

Ballam Park Homestead



Ballam Park Homestead, the jewel in the crown of heritage facilities in Frankston, celebrated its 150th anniversary in November this year. Situated approximately 5 kilometres from the centre of Frankston on Cranbourne Road, Ballam Park is an oasis of tranquillity where the visitor steps back in time to experience the ambience of the days of early European settlement.

Early records refer to Ballam Park as a run of 8,000 acres and a pastoral lease shows Frank Evelyn Liardet as being the lessee of "Ballam Park Frankston" from September 1843 to April 1850.

In July 1855, Land Title records reveal that Frank's brother, Fredrick Evelyn Liardet, purchased Allotment 3 of Section 6, Frankston North, which consisted of a property of 320 acres which he called Ballam Park ("Ballam" is derived from an Aboriginal word meaning "butterfly").

Frank and Fredrick Liardet were the sons of Wilbraham Fredrick Evelyn Liardet (1799-1878). Wilbraham was the founder of Sandridge, now Port Melbourne after he landed in the colony in 1839 with his family.

Wilbraham and his sons established the first hotel and pier at Sandridge, and built the first road from Sandridge to Melbourne to run the first carriage service along the route. They also set up, and operated for 18 years, the first postal service in Victoria.

The homestead was built for the Liardets by Thomas Cogger Allchin of Mornington with bricks reputed to have been made of clay from a pit on the site. Recent excavations have revealed that the house was built on a foundation of unevenly sized sedimentary rocks.

Since the Liardets several families have passed through Ballam Park, modifying the house slightly, adding some sections and gradually disposing of the original acreage.

The property and gardens are listed on the **Victorian Heritage Register** and with the National Trust Australia (Victoria). A number of trees in the grounds are on various heritage listings. These include a grove of nine olive trees, two quite rare carob trees, fruit trees, roses and the famous Ballam Park oak. This magnificent tree, described by some as the largest oak tree in the Southern Hemisphere, along with the others mentioned are believed to have been planted at the time the homestead was established.

Ballam Park Homestead and its grounds are owned by Frankston City Council which has an ongoing program of restoration and repair overseen in partnership with Heritage Victoria and the Frankston Historical Society Inc. Frankston City Council also received support from the Federal Government during the celebration of Federation in 2001 to reinstate the cottage garden and orchard.

The property was purchased by Frankston City Council in the early 1960s. The Historical Society has been the key advocate and guardian of this precious resource since 1967. The Society is based at Ballam Park and operates a resource centre and tea rooms adjacent to the house. Members also regularly conduct tours and open days on the property.

For further details contact the Secretary on 9789 5529.



Coastal Arts Discovery Trail

The cultural heritage and history of Frankston is intrinsically connected to the grand environmental scenarios despite the distractions provided by the sprawling urbanisation of the contemporary city.

The near perfect location on Port Phillip Bay, the wetlands at Seaford, the meandering stream that is Kananook Creek and the reserves of remnant vegetation are elements that stand as markers of many past stories.

The indigenous people of the region, the Boonerwung, had inhabited the area for thousands of years prior to European settlement and were known to have capitalised on the natural assets of the land. They feasted on shell fish around the coastal inlets and the abundant wildlife of the Peninsula.

Frankston City Council's Cultural Development team devised a project called the **Coastal Arts Discovery Trail** as an attractive way of engaging people with the wealth of cultural heritage material available, while at the same time supporting the Council's objective of re-establishing the community's connection with the bay and awakening interest in the foreshore.

The project began with extensive research in 2001. The response taken was to develop a non-linear trail intended to be experienced in various segments at different times. A number of artists were engaged to interpret the sites and the associated research data, giving a contemporary perspective on the rich vein of material.

Eight sites will receive special treatment:

Gulls Way

Overlooking the cliff top at Daveys Bay adjacent to the Kackeraboite Creek, Gulls Way has long been a prized address with a number of surviving mansions from the 19th Century. The subdivision of the impressive **Yamala** property became the impetus of a spate of adventurous modernist architecture in the 1950s by local architectural firm Chancellor & Patrick.

The examples of interest today are:

- No 1 Gulls Way
(once David Chancellor's home)
- No 6 Gulls Way

Polpero

- No 14 Gulls Way
Tilba Tilba, gutted by fire in 1989 and now painstakingly restored.
- No 17 Gulls Way
Built in 1927 for Rupert Hamer's family. The garden (and possibly the house) was designed by Edna Walling, the important 20th Century landscape gardener.

Gumnuts

Located at 619 Nepean Highway, **Gumnuts** is a simple unadorned cottage and the first fully Walter Burley-Griffin designed dwelling built in Australia. It is classified by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) as a building of national significance.

Kananook Creek Entry, Long Island

The Kananook Creek has always been integral to the area providing fresh water, a transport route, drainage of the surrounding swamp land, and a site for many other activities connected with the water and the pier.

Artist Evangelos Sakaris has been engaged to research the cultural and social heritage of the site where Kananook Creek meets Port Phillip Bay. A wealth of fascinating material has been condensed into a poetic statement that will be transferred into a series of lines of text stencilled into metal and placed on the timber uprights along the creek wall.



Gumnuts - One of a few surrounding Walter Burley-Griffin designed homes.

Boonerwung Cultural Trail

The second stage of the foreshore boardwalk, on Long Island will be implemented in 2006. A number of opportunities exist to use the viewing decks and other features along the walk to tell the story of the region from an indigenous perspective.

McClelland House, Palm Court, Long Island

McClelland House was the home of brother and sister Nan and Harry McClelland who moved there in the 1920s and established themselves at the centre of a bohemian group of artists, writers and other creative people. They were also the benefactors of the renowned McClelland Gallery + Sculpture Park in Frankston at Langwarrin.

David Murphy and Cameron Robins of Down Street Studios were asked to respond to the eccentricity of the building, once famously described as “a rare example of Anglo-Swiss-Fijian picturesque eclecticism” subtly referencing the rustic, organic style that incorporates raw timber, thatched roofs, stone, attics, finial and gargoyles.

Mile Bridge Entrance to Long Island

In many of the anecdotal histories of Frankston, the stories of childhood are among the most joyous. It was felt that such memories would be best acknowledged by a sculptural structure that appealed to different senses and contained functional, as well as aesthetic, qualities.

Sand Castles & Kelp was the response to the challenge by sculptor, Velislav Georgiev. The sculpture takes its inspiration from the universal act of children playing at the beach, building sandcastles and using flotsam and jetsam, kelp and sea shells to add detail to their play. The sculpture uses the forms of sandcastles made

from cast coloured concrete sandblasted to expose seashells, driftwood and other elements. The kelp straps are to be made of stainless steel fluidly strung between the sandcastles and supporting the shells, or seating components, made of weathered finish cypress pine.

Mile Bridge Entry Marker

A significant marker sculpture is also being commissioned for the edge of the Nepean Highway at Mile Bridge to signify the entrance to the City Centre of Frankston. The sculpture will reference the distinct iconography associated with the sea and seaside activities.

The Hermitage, Seaford Foreshore

One of the most intriguing stories of foreshore life is the tale of the hermit who lived among the ti-trees on Seaford Forshore for almost 20 years in the late 19th early 20th Century.

John Maddox, who died in 1917, was the brother of an eminent English legal identity and a former ship’s captain who had reputedly been in charge of a vessel that sank at sea taking many lives. Taking responsibility for this upon himself he removed himself from polite society and eked out an austere existence in the dunes. But, at the same time, he constructed what can only be described as a fantasy world of shells, bottles and driftwood. Maddox would exchange fresh fish and basic labour for foodstuffs, often baked especially for him by local housewives.

To commemorate this wonderful chapter in local folklore, Jacki Staude has designed the **Hermitage**, a bower-like structure to be located along the pathway leading out of the picnic area on the Seaford Foreshore south of Station Street.



Seaford Road Bridge

Sections of the Kananook Creek, especially around Seaford provide a vision of what the area must have looked like before European settlement. Artist Julie Squires has designed a series of creative metal panels that will replace the plain balustrading on the Station Street bridge in Seaford Village inspired by the structures made by indigenous people as part of their eel trapping practices.

The **Coastal Arts Discovery Trail** project will be largely completed by the end of 2005. A high quality publication with expanded interpretive information, maps and illustrations will be developed to accompany the visitor to the trail. Over time, the trail will be enlarged to incorporate other fascinating material – the ghost at Mile Bridge; the filming of **On the Beach** at Davey’s Bay; **Henty House** (the Round House) at Olivers Hill; and so on – and to connect with some of the many public art pieces and other cultural attractions of the City.



Arts



Paul Jameison

Life in the City

Outdoor Arts and Cultural Program 2006



Quality time with family and friends, the great outdoors and exciting art and culture are all on offer in the 2006 *Life in the City* outdoor program.

Now in its third year, the program continues to highlight the amazing talent and diversity on offer from a range of local and metropolitan artists, art organisations and community groups.

There is something suitable for all ages to experience and enjoy and the program is particularly family friendly with a wide range of workshops, performances and activities on offer.

King Bell

Life in the City will continue to build on the extremely popular children's day held early in 2005 with two on offer in 2006. Children's days provide opportunities for parents and caregivers to spend quality time with their children while participating in exciting and engaging art activities and performances, **all for free.**

For those wanting to try something new without committing a great deal of time or money there will be free South American dance sessions and for a small cost, Arthritis Tai Chi, to fine tune your mind, body and soul.

OZACT, one of Australia's leading environmental Shakespeare companies, will return to the exquisite George Pentland Botanic Gardens with another highly acclaimed and professional performance of **As You Like It.**

World music and dance at its best from Sudan to The Congo, East Timor to Mexico as well as good old fashioned jazz and folk. **Life in the City** caters for all in a welcoming and safe atmosphere, whether it's at the Frankston foreshore on a Saturday afternoon, or at Ballam Park on a Sunday, or even the beautiful George Pentland Botanic Gardens on a Tuesday, we guarantee something for everyone.

The program will be launched in December and performances and activities will take place from January through to April. Just about all of the events in the program are free and presented in an informal setting, ideal for a lazy summer afternoon with a delicious picnic, good company and quality entertainment.

For further information contact Frankston City Cultural Development team on 9784 1888.

McClelland Contemporary Sculpture Survey and Award

Where would you go to experience a complete survey of the best contemporary sculpture in Australia today? Of course, the answer must be to Frankston in Victoria.

The biennial McClelland Contemporary Sculpture Survey is on again at the McClelland Gallery + Sculpture Park at Langwarrin. The works of 35 of the most exciting Australian artists are set along a beautiful bushland trail that meanders through eight hectares of the McClelland Sculpture Park.

The McClelland Survey is a biennial event featuring two significant Awards, the acquisitive \$100,000 McClelland Award (the richest Award for sculpture in Australia) and the \$15,000 Frankston City Award which is based upon the result of votes cast for their favourite work by people attending the Survey.

A prestigious coup for the organisers of this year's Survey is to have the Director of the Yorkshire Sculpture Park in the United Kingdom, Dr Peter Murray judge of the major Award. Peter oversees this internationally famous facility in Leeds which displays works over a site more than 500 hectares.

The 35 artists selected from 240 applicants represent Australia's best emerging, mid-career and established practitioners. The finalists are Tom Arthur, Ashika, Stephen Birch, Peter Blizzard, Jessie Cacchillo and Craig Waddell, Carla Cescon, Endra Che-Kahn and

Marco Mattucci, Philip Cooper, Kate Cullity with Ryan Sims, Darrin Davison, William Eicholtz, Richard Goodwin, Nigel Harrison, Paul Hay, Nigel Helyer, David Howell, Greg Johns, John Kelly, Yvonne Kendall, Jarred Kennedy, Roman Leibach, Donna Marcus, Clive Murray-White, John Nicholson, Adrian Page, James Parrett, Louis Pratt, Phil Rice, Lisa Roet, Andrew Rogers, Anne Ross, Alexander Seton, Marie Sierra, Laurens Tan, and David Wilson.

The winner of the \$100,000 Award was announced by global media magnate Rupert Murdoch at a glittering function on Sunday, 13 November. Lisa Roet, a Mornington Peninsula based artist was presented with the \$100,000 prize in front of a large audience in the grounds of the sculpture park. Lisa's winning piece is a large fibreglass bust titled **White Ape** which will be displayed along with the other 35 entries until June next year.

The \$15,000 Frankston City Award will be announced on Sunday, 28 May 2006, approximately one month before the close of the Survey. Visitors to McClelland Gallery + Sculpture Park will be able to vote for their favourite piece.

Visitors to the Survey can enjoy the beautiful grounds of the Sculpture Park with the added bonus of meals and refreshments at Harry's Licensed Café on site overlooking the lake.



Profile: Rick Amor

The creative response over the years to the Mornington Peninsula region reads like a who's who of Australian art.

But, among the distinguished artists, the work of Rick Amor stands out as being unique in the way that he recalls and creatively manipulates the stories, images, personalities and the iconic features of Frankston, particularly the city edge and foreshore, to inform his work.

Rick Amor was born in Frankston in 1948 and spent his formative years on Long Island, a narrow strip of land between the beach and Kananook Creek.

Amor completed a Certificate of Art at the Caulfield Institute of Art and studied at the National Gallery School from 1966 to 1968. He has also worked in London, New York and Barcelona and was appointed as official war artist to East Timor in 1999.

Amor is the grandson of Charles William Morris who migrated from Southampton in the United Kingdom in the 1880s and settled in Frankston around 1927. His aunt, Myra Morris, was a renowned Australian writer who also studied painting under Archibald Colquhoun.

The seminal years in the bayside environment on Long Island had a significant impact on the later mature works of the artist. His recollections of the stories and experiences in

Frankston and his associations of life around McClelland House along Gould Street would become an inspiration for his work from the early 1980s on.

A facet to Amor's painting that distinguishes his work from others with this sense of place is the sombre, uneasy vision emanating from the paintings and the particular intellectual approach he has to marking the passage of time within these locations, even if it takes some radical reconstitution and reorientation of the actual physical reality of the streetscapes, landscapes and people.

The landscape, the location is important but must meet the artist's need to formalise these memories and serve the remonstrations of this multi-layered emotional and intellectual pastiche of history and the elements.

In some cases, establishing the precise point of view taken by the artist reveals tantalising revisions of the physical elements. For example the **The beach**, 1995, where the sea dramatically intrudes onto Long Island – and the placement of identities in time and space that aggregates memories rather than slavishly conforming to historical fact – as in **Artist's House, Long Island, Frankston, 1992**, where the house is represented in its present condition and yet depicting the figure of his aunt, Myra Morris, who died in 1966.



Artist's House, Long Island, Frankston, 1992

Image courtesy of the artist and Niagara Galleries, Melbourne.

Gary Catalano in his writing on Amor points out rather astutely that: "Amor has almost totally dispensed with the present-day reality of Frankston... consciously evoking a sense of detachment from the present."¹

While it is tempting to agree with this statement, it would be foolish to underrate the impact that living in Gould Street, on Long Island in Frankston, has had upon the artist. It is here that he first started to paint and where the wealth of stories, the sights, sounds, smells and the characters – the very unique atmosphere of the place – have been imbibed and embedded into the artist's psyche, inspiring many fascinating works of art.

1. Art & Australia, 'Rick Amor – Returning to Long Island', Gary Catalano (1999)

This summer edition of ARF highlights a small number of the many fascinating heritage features of Frankston.

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