

Newsletter of Papermakers of Victoria Inc.

Registered No. A0018775V

*For all those with a love and understanding  
of paper as a medium in its own right.*

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Marama Warren displaying one of her waterfall books Photograph Christine Smith See article page 5

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## PAPERMAKERS OF VICTORIA INC MINUTES of the General Meeting held at Box Hill Community Arts Centre on 10 October 2015

**PRESENT** 25 members present as per sign-in book.  
**WELCOME** New members Jenny Laidlaw, Kathy Taylor and Rebecca Mayo

**APOLOGIES** Andrew Prince, Carol Downey, Wilma Furphy and Dineke McLean

### 1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

That the minutes of the meeting held on 1 August 2015 be confirmed.

Moved: Judith Lawler  
 Seconded: Dorothy Simpson  
 Carried

### 2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

2.1 Biennial Year Book *Barb and Chris R*

'Images of Light' the theme Barb reported that diverse pages have been submitted already- please don't give too much detail in the pulp description. Binding day 22 November at the Stables open to all and a shared workshop if needed. Binding is similar to Silver Anniversary Book. Barb and Chris are making the cover paper.

2.2 Lost Trades Fair in Kyneton  
 Jenny waiting for response to

email enquiry. Cecilia suggested the possibility of stall fees being waived if PoV is demonstrating. She will follow up with contacts.

2.3 Demonstrations at the Atrium at Federation Square  
*Tricia McG*

The group agrees that demonstrating paper related activities (not papermaking) at The Atrium (Fed Square) on the third Monday of the month from 10am - midday would be a creative way of advertising PoV. Tricia distributed a list for volunteers- two each month- which was enthusiastically filled for the first half of the year. (Jan and Dec not required)

2.4 Nag Hammadi book binding day  
*Chris S*

This day was a great success and Jim Finger from the Victorian Bookbinders Guild an excellent workshop demonstrator. The display of leather bound books filled with papyrus paper made at our previous shared workshop was inspiring to see.

2.5 Report from trading table at Geelong forum  
*Antje*  
 \$400 worth of cards, Dineke's cards, paper packs and bone folders were sold. Antje has a tally of various items for future reference. Thanks to Tricia A, Antje and Barb.

2.6 Antje reported to the Alcove Art Shop meeting on 19 September following the Ken West \$500 Award that was applied to our Mapping Common Ground exhibition in November 2014. Her presentation about our exhibition was well received.

2.7 Grant Applications/ Revenue Raising  
 An application for discount

support for venue hire during 2016 has been lodged. Members were asked to spend 2 minutes jotting down ideas for raising funds. The committee will consider all ideas, perhaps not robbing a bank! One thought was that some members might like to make items for sale at the Alcove Art Shop for PoV.

3. CORRESPONDENCE REPORT (full copy available on file) (Next month, the Secretary will pin on the notice board the list of all correspondence that has been sent/received since the previous meeting)

4. TREASURER'S REPORT  
 Tricia McG advised that she and Tania had been working on setting up accounts in a monthly format. Procedures will be changed to assist Tania. There will be no petty cash money given unless a request is submitted at the meeting prior and approved by the committee. At the committee meeting, payments for the previous two months (in this instance August /September) will be approved and known commitments for the next two months (October/ November) will be authorised for payment. Only the Executive are authorised to sign cheques (i.e. President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer) and two people are required as signatories. Bank Transfers are preferred where possible.

1. Balance as at 30 September 2015 General Account: \$282.25  
 Exhibition Account: \$1855.22  
 2. Current membership: 65 members at 30 September 2015  
 That the payments for August/



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**Deadline for all copy:**  
 1 January, 1 March, 1 May, 1 July, 1 September, 1 November

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of individual contributors and are not necessarily those of Papermakers of Victoria Inc.



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 Alexander and Robyn Holmes

**Trading Table**  
 Antje Bauer

CITY OF



WHITEHORSE

BOX HILL COMMUNITY ARTS CENTRE



*Papermakers of Victoria is supported by The City of Whitehorse and the Box Hill Community Arts Centre.*

September be approved, the known commitments for October/November be authorised for payment and the financial report be received.

Moved: Tania Di Bernardino Seconded: Alix Johnston Carried

## 5. WORKSHOPS & DEMONSTRATIONS

### 5.1 Workshop Program – Jenny

Gail Stiffe's workshop on 25 October fully subscribed. Liz Powell's *Altered Books* 14-15 November has 2 places available. Gail showed her work from Marama Warren's workshop in September and we were all impressed at the content. The Workshop Program for 2016 will be discussed at the committee planning meeting tomorrow and published in December's Deckle Edge.

## 6. PUBLIC RELATIONS: WEB, NEWSLETTER

### 6.1 Web report- Angela

Nothing to report

### 6.2 Deckle Edge – Gail/Cecilia

Cecilia reported that the transition from Tony to Gail has been very smooth. The next issue deadline is **1 November** and promptness is implored and appreciated. Tricia requested that only **one** additional hard copy be printed- for the archives, not the library.

## 7. LIBRARY- Jo

Borrowing has been slow. It was suggested that three books for \$2 might be adopted?

## 8. STABLES STUDIO

8.1 The sign-in book has a list at the front of members who have paid their \$30 Stables fee. All other members need to pay \$10 when they use the facility.

### 8.2 Maintenance

Testing and tagging of electrical equipment- to be discussed at the December meeting.

### 8.3 Working Bee at the Stables and BHCAC Antje

Summer Clean Up Day at the Stables is to be held on Sunday 10 January 2016. Assistance from members would be hugely appreciated. Please add your name to the list of volunteers that will be distributed at the December meeting. We really need help in this area.

## 9. YABBERS REPORT – Dorothy

At the last meeting there was a demonstration of iris folding cards. The next meeting is at Marie's on 21 October and the activity is paper jewellery.

## 10. PAPERMATES REPORT – Barb

The next meeting is at Eastbridge on 12 October and the group will be folding kimono. BHCAC has agreed to provide half of the Gallery to the group during Matzudo week in May 2016 at which the paper kimonos the group has been working on will be displayed.

## 11. OTHER BUSINESS

### 11.1 Christmas Meeting

It was decided to have a Kris Kringle (replacing the 12 Days of Christmas). Bring a small wrapped gift; preferably paper-related and costing just \$5. When you hand it in at the door you'll receive a raffle ticket entitling you to receive a gift in return. Participation is voluntary. Members are asked to bring a shared lunch and small envelopes containing donations for whatever charity the group decides to support this year.

Rapt Up- as in previous years, please bring along a piece of your work to show fellow members. It does not need to be paper related, but a creative endeavour you have been working on in 2015. Seeing what others are doing is always enlightening!

11.2 Mary reported that the Christmas books are due on 30 November. Make 7 if you wish to keep a copy. Details in the September/October Deckle Edge

### 11.3 Membership Renewal - Judith

A general email will be sent to the membership reminding them that subscriptions were due 1 July 2015 and will need to be paid to receive the December Deckle Edge

11.4 Next year Barb has suggested a *Tips and Tricks* meeting in which 9 or 10 members could pass on handy hints that experience teaches e.g. Successful image



a penchant  
for paper



One of the great strengths of Papermakers Vic. is the sharing and cooperation underpinning so many of our activities. Various members contribute content, including photos, for the Deckle Edge; Cecilia and Gail collaborate to produce the printed and email versions; Jan prints the mailing labels for Beverly, who adds the samples and mails the newsletters; while Gail sends the email version to Judith for the group email. We tend to take the final result for granted – it is actually the result of a very smooth, coordinated operation by a group of dedicated Papermakers.

There are many other examples including Antje, Helen and Andrew who manage the layout, materials storage and maintenance at the Stables Studio; Barb and Chris Rose who are bringing the *'Images of Light'* to a successful conclusion; Helping Hands who prepare for our meetings so we feel welcome. The small groups, Yabbers and Papermates, collate our collage packs; create many small books and cards for sale and provide a presence at events such as Ruffy and Geelong Forum.

In 2016 we have two major commitments – the third Mondays at Federation Square and our biennial exhibition, which we are delighted to confirm will be held again at Mont De Lancey in Wandin. We already have two suggestions for an exhibition theme that would attract a range of interpretations and techniques, and more are welcome. The organisation for Federation Square is well under way. Please check the November group email for more detail and contact information so we can finalise our program for the Papermakers and Federation Square websites.

Six varied workshops have been negotiated by Jenny, who will confirm the details shortly. Also four informal Playdays are planned for members wishing to explore some of the more unusual equipment or different techniques with experienced papermakers at the Stables Studio. We are seeking input about what you wish to try and if there is sufficient interest we can add more Playdays.

As a lovely end to a busy year we have the December meeting with all its delights – a shared lunch (papermakers are wonderful cooks); *'Rapt Up'* for displaying a work we created in the past year; the collection envelopes to support a nominated charity; the Christmas miniature books exchange; displays from Gail's and Liz Powell's workshops and the Kris Kringle where participants bring a wrapped present to the value of \$5 (we like a challenge!) and choose a gift in return. We look forward to sharing in all the fun with everyone. Best wishes for a very happy holiday season and a wonderful year in 2016.

**Tricia McGaughey**

*Continued on page 4 >*

> from page 3

transfers onto handmade paper. She also advised that she will be at the Stables on the first Monday of the month next year working on projects but is happy to show others where things are etc. and share coffee

11.5 Tricia thanked previous President Chris Smith for guiding her committee through the last 12 months and everyone's best wishes go with her as she plans to live in India. She was presented with a handmade concertina folder with postcard inclusions from her PoV friends. Tricia also thanked Chris and Judith Potter who were helping hands today.

11.6 Dorothy thanked the committee for the time commitment since the previous meeting.

#### 12. NEXT MEETING - COMMITTEE and GENERAL MEETINGS

**Date: 5 December 2015,**  
Committee Meeting at 10am;  
From Midday General Meeting and shared Christmas lunch  
**Venue: BHCAC** - am Dry Craft East and pm Dry Craft West  
**Meeting Activity:** Kris Kringle and Rapt Up  
**Helping hands:** Angela, Barb and Kaye  
**MEETING CLOSED AT 2.17 pm**

**FIVE-MINUTE FORUM**  
Exhibition opportunity Contemporary Art Society of Victoria. Entries close 20 November. [www.contemporaryartsociety.org.au](http://www.contemporaryartsociety.org.au)  
Click Art@Burnley Harbour  
*AS IF: 40 Years and beyond*  
Celebrating the Women's Art Register. For event information and bookings visit [www.womensartregister40years.info](http://www.womensartregister40years.info) from August 11 to November 7, 2015

*An Illumination* at The Ian Potter Museum of Art, The University of Melbourne, Swanston Street, Parkville [unimelb.edu.au/illumination](http://unimelb.edu.au/illumination) from 28 August to 15 November  
Open Country The Murrumbidgee Boyds at Glen Eira City Council Gallery [www.gleneira.vic.gov.au](http://www.gleneira.vic.gov.au) 30 September to 6 December

**Welcome to  
New Members**

**Bronwyn Bell  
Belmont Vic.3216**

Wild Louise Saxton at Gould Galleries 270 Toorak Road South Yarra [www.gouldgalleries.com](http://www.gouldgalleries.com) 12 November - 6 December

## Flag Book

The activity after our meeting for October was presented by Gail Stiffe. The flag book is an interesting way of presenting postcards, photographs, pamphlets etc. Gail's examples showed seven identical cards which gave an eye catching display and is such a surprise when the book is unfolded for the first time.

We were asked to bring along seven cards which could be different or all the same, some light card the height of the postcards x 30cm, and of course our



usual kit. Each card was cut along its length into three parts, all the same width or of varying widths. The 30cm light card was folded into a concertina. This was when some of us realised our card was too thick to fold the number of times required and had to resort to a thinner card or not make as many folds!

After some individual tuition we then were instructed to glue the top slice of the postcards to the right of the top section of the concertina fold, the second slice to the left and third slice to the right, down the folds - as shown in the photographs. A cover was then added back and front.

## Next Meeting 5 December 2015



Please come and join us for our end-of year celebration, arriving in plenty of time for our shared lunch at 12 p.m. midday

Where: Box Hill Community Arts Centre, corner of Station and Combarton Streets, Box Hill  
Times: 10.00 a.m. Committee Meeting

12.00 p.m. midday Shared lunch. Please bring 'finger food' (that does not require a plate) to share. Library, trading table and chat with other members.

1.30 p.m. General Meeting followed by afternoon tea.

Entry: \$5

### Activities:

**Kris Kringle:** Please bring a small wrapped present (preferably paper-related) and costing just \$5. When you hand it in at the door you'll receive a raffle ticket entitling you to receive a gift in return. Participation is voluntary.

**Christmas donation envelope:** Please bring a donation of any size in an envelope and leave it in the basket at the door. This way the PoV members share some Christmas goodwill with a charity they will choose on the day.

**'Rapt Up'** As in previous years, please bring a piece of work to show fellow members for our 'Rapt Up' table. It need not be paper related, but something you have worked on during 2015. Seeing what fellow members are doing is always enlightening.

**Christmas Book Swap:** The results of the Christmas Book Swap will be on display and as well participants will receive their collection.

**'Images of Light'** 2015 Limited Edition: Copies will be available for collection by participants and you will be able to see the results of all that work!

Helping Hands: Barb Adams, Kaye Cross and Angela Vetsica

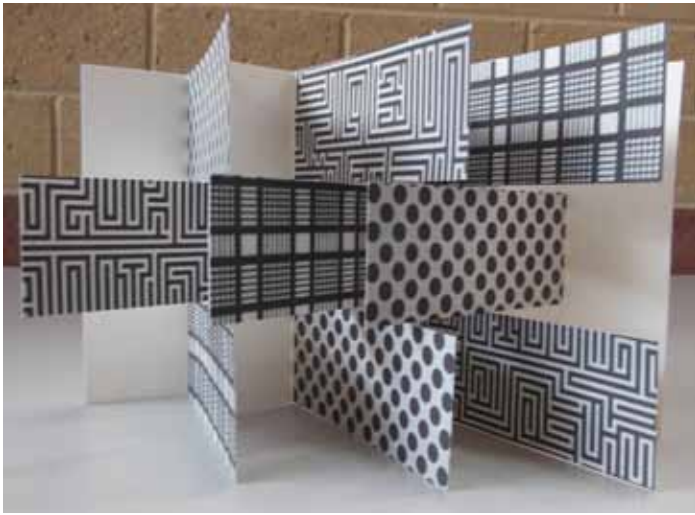


### Finding Content: a 2 day workshop with Marama Warren

Before we even started on the weekend's activities, our group was somewhat agog to hear Marama's self introduction: this sweet looking mild mannered woman with a background in journalism, had at one time worked for an arts magazine in New Zealand and then was a publicist for touring music groups - she had in fact toured with the likes of the Rolling Stones - we had a roadie in our midst! After a few years of life on the road she decided to settle down and grow herbs in country NSW. Paper-y interests developed there, and combined with her writing background she is well placed to help those of us who tend to have trouble adding content to book structures and other artistic endeavours.

Some of us have so much trouble with content, that when Marama invited us to bring along "any half-finished projects (we) have lying around", I was hard put to make a selection from the myriad number of UFOs I have stashed away around the house - good thing the sons have vacated their rooms so I have more storage space. Fortunately I found two unfinished projects with a related theme, leftover from two previous workshops - this was to be my focus. Other participants came with their own projects, or ideas for projects, all very different, but Marama was up to the challenge.

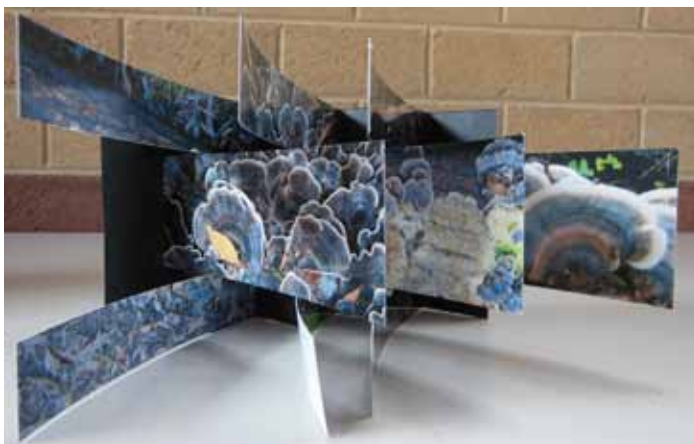
We started off with warm up writing exercises, which were timed and called a "writing dash". We were not to stop writing, even if we had to keep writing the last word over and over again if we couldn't think what to write next, oh, and we weren't to think! In one exercise we had to write with the non-dominant hand, which put a whole new perspective on things. At first the topics were more general, but by the second morning we were asked to write about our projects, to try to elicit what we had thought about it overnight. For me



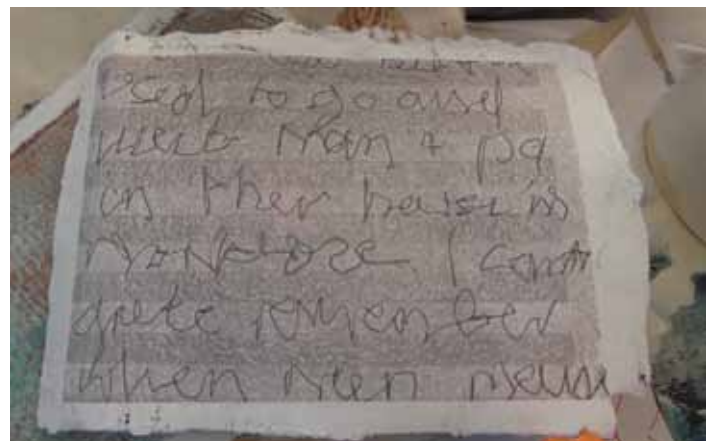
When the book was unfolded the top and bottom slices of card opened to the right and the middle slice to the left. The book can be displayed open in a straight line or folded back on its covers to show a zigzag of colour and shapes. Now I can see why using seven cards the same is so effective.

I used seven of my brother's postcards sent from around the world and was quite pleased with the result, in fact I now have an idea for my Christmas Book swap! Thanks Gail.

**Christine Tyrer**



Flag books displayed at the meeting Photographs Christine Smith



Gail's scanned left handed writing. Photograph Christine Smith

this produced a wealth of words I can use to add to my project, as well as suggesting other projects that just popped out of all this non-thinking writing dash. At the end of each day we had a debriefing, where we outlined what we had done and where we were heading, and we all got to know each other better too.

Despite our widely differing projects, we all benefited from the very relaxed atmosphere Marama created, as she spent time with us individually, giving us concrete hints as well as helping us to come to our own decisions, be it content, structure or materials. Marama had brought along samples of her books for ideas, and in response to our interest, she showed us how to construct the waterfall book structure. There was also a foray into paste papers where a couple of participants were caught up in a flurry of paste colours and swirls. All told it was a fruitful and satisfying weekend. Thank you, Marama!



Marama and Gail holding a woven book structure

### Val Forbes

Some comments from others:

*Marama was inspiring: a very smart, skillful, & empathetic woman...The writing exercises were an emotive & effective stimulus to ideas, & even helped to suggest content – how clever is that? Marama made all things possible. Then she introduced her stylish technique of applying paste & colour to paper – I lost my way in a frenzy of colour play! To make a book from the starting point of text addresses unfulfilled creative needs. I have much homework to do!*

*I did come away from the workshop inspired and I finished off my woven structure with some covers and my waterfall book. I have ideas for a flag book and my concertina with sections but haven't found the time to go any further; hopefully I will have them done in time for show and tell at the meeting.*

*The helpful exercises and techniques open up far too many ideas for the 'Diary/Record Book'. Another book subject also developed out of the overnight break, but a wonderful idea on a mockup production has set the*

*groundwork for my final piece when I have all the physical components ready for assembly - one day SOON.*

*Between play and words we oscillated, unlocking deep -seated memories, childhood impressions, subconscious feelings, thoughts, pleasures and fears. Special connections to physical locations, events and people were captured in time....Marama cleverly and perceptively engaged each participant in a journey of self-realisation and we gained the confidence to construct a book of substance.*



Andrew with his book.

## Making Paper from Plants - Workshop with Gail Stiffe

Sunday 25 October was one of Melbourne's challenging hot and windy days, but this did not deter eleven class members from 'doing it all'! In fact such was the enthusiasm that some participants had driven from Ocean Grove, Geelong and Lorne.

The class description outlined that we would be shown how to turn common garden plants and weeds into paper and learn techniques for harvesting, preparation, cooking, beating and sheet forming, all between 10am and 4pm!

To achieve this outcome requires careful planning and Gail's was very evident.

We started by cutting the leaves of the New Zealand flax plant into slices and placing them into stainless steel pots, covering with water and then carefully adding caustic soda to the brew and bringing to the boil (lid on)



Mulberry prunings cooked up in steamer pot

and simmering for about an hour. Testing would then reveal whether further cooking was required - (it was). Next we soaked some chopped ochra (ladies fingers) to use as a formation aid. This slows down the drainage and ensures that fibres are evenly spread over the sheet when pulling a sheet of paper. Prickly pear can also be used as well as a synthetic formation aid.

We were not the only visitors to Bundoora Park. Our workshop coincided with an Open Day Heritage Village Expo and we had numerous interested onlookers. Of particular intrigue was the sight of us peeling the outer bark off steamed mulberry tree twigs and then removing the remaining bast that went into a pot with a tablespoon of caustic soda to be transformed into paper after lunch. My notes recorded that the remaining twigs were 'beautifully bare' and I am sure will be used in other creative endeavours!



*Inner bark stripped from the mulberry twigs*

Once the various fibres were cooked and strained through nylon bags until the water was clear, we learnt why our materials list included a wooden or rubber mallet or a piece of thick dowel. Gail even had an old rounders bat, which evoked memories for some of us! The cacophony of eleven of us pounding away to separate the fibres was not dulled by the suggestion to put our pounding boards on foam matting. We were all impressed by Andrew's unique plastic bucket with concrete at the base and a firmly fitting circle of wood on top. Here the fibre could be pounded with his purpose built, large mallet.

Gail showed us the Hollander Beater and demonstrated how to use the Valley Beater. We also used a blender to prepare some of the pulp.



*Andrew's beating apparatus*

After lunch we made sheets of paper from many different fibres including mulberry bark, bluebell flower stems, ginger lily, cordyline, kenaf, kangaroo paw flower stems, fishbone fern with mulberry, montbretia and philodendron bracts. Once our sample posts were completed, they were pressed to expel excess moisture and to amalgamate the fibres into a strong bond. We were then shown how to transfer the paper to a sheet of fibro cement to dry.



*Ann using wooden mallet to pound fibre*

Many thanks to Gail for a wonderful day of shared learning.

**Judith Lawler**



*Restraint drying a sample of fishbone fern and handbeaten mulberry paper on cement sheeting*

## Join Barb At The Stables - 2016

I will be at The Stables on the first Monday each month (except March 14) 10am - 3pm

If you would like to join me, let me know a few days before, just in case I have to move the day for some reason. I will be working on my own projects and would love some company. You could bring your papermaking/printing project and have a pleasant day too. I can help you with beater use or show you the equipment that is available for your use.

The usual cost of \$10 per visit will apply.

Dates: 4 January, 1 February, 14 March, 4 April, 9 May, 6 June, 4 July, 8 August, 5 September, 3 October, 7

November, 5 December.

Email: [barb@barbadams.com](mailto:barb@barbadams.com)

Phone: 9890 9447

**Barb Adams**

## Nag Hammadi Binding Day at the Stables

Nine papermakers were enthralled in the process of creating a Nag Hammadi codex on a sunny spring Sunday in September at the Stables. Master bookbinder, Jim Finger, President of the Victorian Bookbinder's Guild, led us through the steps of making the model from pre-cut leather and our own handmade paper. At the same time he immersed us in the history of the fascinating book form.



*Christine Smith's complete book showing the papyrus*

A codex is a collection of folded sheets of papyrus, parchment or paper bound together in a cover. It was a form that replaced the scroll. The first mention of a codex dates back to the 1st century AD. By the 5th century the codex became the primary writing medium for general use. The earliest known codices come from Egypt.

So far, the most important discovery of this form of binding is the group of codices known as the Nag Hammadi codices, unearthed in 1945. They are believed to date from the mid fourth century AD and were found in a cave near the town of Nag Hammadi in Egypt.



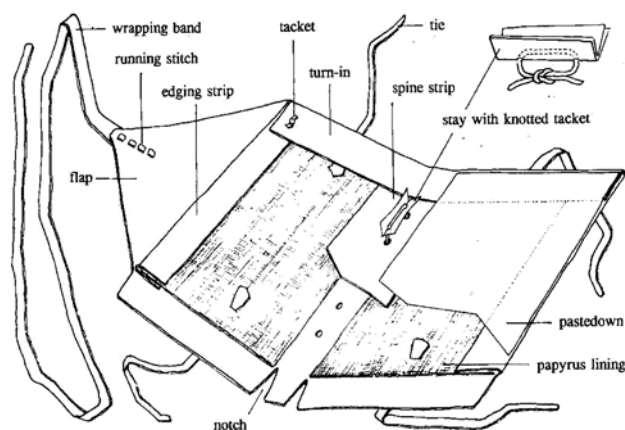
*Completed bindings by Christine Smith and Anne Pitkethly*

The story of the discovery of the Nag Hammadi codices is remarkable. In December of 1945, two brothers found a large earthenware vessel that contained twelve leather-bound manuscripts and one unbound quire, while working on their farm. At first the find went unreported because the brothers wanted to profit from the discovery. The brothers' mother burned several of the manuscripts for fear of supernatural consequences. The discovery was only made public several years later.

To learn of this fascinating background to the models we were making increased our motivation. We were fortunate indeed to be guided by such a passionate professional. To make the task easier, Jim provided us with all manner of equipment and notes to follow. He gave us step-by-step instructions along the way, was attentive to all and patient with any difficulties encountered by individuals.



*Antje positioning pages of her book onto the leather covers*



*Diagram: J. A. Szimai, The Archaeology of Medieval Bookbinding*

The diagram shows the details of the structure that we made. Within the form of the codex, participants introduced their own creative ideas. Each model was unique. Carol, Chris Smith and Anne worked with Egyptian papyrus; Chris Tyrer lined her cover with traditional papyrus and bound papyrus pulp pages; Gail bound handmade paper on which she had imposed gelatine-printed leaf designs; Antje worked with handmade bamboo paper. Tricia made sure she maintained a deckle edge on her pages; and Andrew made his own mark by polishing his leather with bees wax. Barb worked with paper she had made



from papyrus fibre, and afterward was inspired to experiment with the form. As we worked, we learned more and more from Jim on the history of the book form, gleaned from his research on his extensive travels. The knowledge and experience that he shared was fascinating.

With so much packed into the day, it was just not long enough. Motivated, we took our book structures home to complete. That we all completed the task is testament to Jim's enthusiasm and encouragement. A sincere thank you for your generosity, Jim.



**Anne Pitkethly**



*Jim using the paring device and the tools for making holes in the cover*

## Clean up Day at the Stables

We all know about the many hands that make the hard work disappear in a puff of smoke – but that doesn't happen if the hands don't turn up!

Antje Bauer has spent many long hours beavering away on her own, sorting and assessing everything stored in every nook and cranny of the several PoV stables we occupy.

If enough members turn up, the workday will be short, and there will be time for fun and frivolity.

So please mark your calendar for 10 January, bring your lunch, and help Antje get the Stables organised for a full 2016 list of activities.

If you promise to come – I promise to bring a large batch of Anzac biscuits to sustain you.

**Cecilia**



## Paper Sampler

### The Gallipoli Oak

Last year while living on campus at Geelong Grammar, I collected an oak leaf for each Papermaker, in commemoration of this Centenary year of the landing at Anzac Cove. (1915-2015).

The tree at GGS is significant as the acorn from which it was grown was sent back from Gallipoli by a survivor -Winter Cooke and the acorn was planted near the Chapel at the Grammar.

As a mature tree, the acorns are now being collected for propagation purposes in conjunction with the National Trust. The intention is that primary students in more than 500 schools around Victoria will be involved in planting new seedlings.

The handmade paper is composed of cannalilly fibre, plus 50:50 Eucalyptus pulp and rag board.

The pocket was formed using chopped up woollen blankets as resists.

The bookmarks comprise photocopied images of oak leaves on Thai, handmade, bamboo paper.

**Christine Smith**



THE ACORN FROM WHICH THIS TREE WAS GROWN WAS SENT BACK FROM GALLIPOLI BY AN OLD GEELONG GRAMMARIAN, CAPTAIN WILLIAM LEMPHRE, WINTER COOKE U.C. WHO WAS AMONG THE MEN WHO WERE SENTENCED TO THE SCHOOL BY HIS UNCLE THE HONOURABLE SAMUEL WINTER COOKE OF MURDOCH HAMDON AND PLANTED HERE ON 6 AUGUST 1916 BY HIS BROTHERS C. AND H. WINTER COOKE AND BY J. A. DE VILLUCK, SENIOR PREFECT.

# Securing raw materials for Victorian paper manufacturing

Thirty sheets of handmade paper, each prepared from a different Victorian plant fibre, were on display at the Intercolonial Exhibition, held in the Great Hall built on a site behind the State Library's Queens Hall in Swanston Street Melbourne, in 1866. The sheets were made by Mr Christian Hoffman, under the direction of Baron Ferdinand von Mueller, Victorian Government Botanist and Director of the Royal Botanical Gardens. Throughout the early 1860s von Mueller had devoted attention to ways to secure local raw materials for paper manufacturing.



The Intercolonial Exhibition: interior of the rotunda State Library of Victoria

A paper manufacturing industry in Victoria was overdue and rag collection strategies and substitutes for rags formed part of public discussion. Paper manufacturing machines were available, water supplies had been identified, but as rags as raw materials were becoming increasingly scarce, science needed to find substitute vegetable products for use as paper fibre. Experiments on exclusively Australian plant materials had been limited. As one of Australia's most prominent 19th century scientists, von Mueller had the interest and ability to inquire into the adaptability of vegetable substances for paper manufacture. In his small laboratory, attached to the Royal Botanical Gardens, he supervised the making of sheets of unmixed fibre, pressed and dried "without action of bleaching or glutinising substances thereon." He selected only those plants that could be obtained in great abundance in Victoria, for this experimentation.



Baron Ferdinand von Mueller Public Domain

The Intercolonial Exhibition showcased manufacturing, mineral, agricultural and timber resources of Victoria, New South Wales, Tasmania, South Australia,

Queensland, Western Australia, New Zealand, Mauritius, Netherlands-India and New Caledonia. In the catalogue to the exhibition, in the 'Vegetable Products' section, von Mueller identifies each of the Victorian fibres used to make his samples and evaluates their suitability for the manufacture of different types of papers. I quote from von Mueller's catalogue entry:

## 1. Paper from Barks

1. *Eucalyptus Obliqua*: The *Stringybark Eucalypt* ... The paper prepared from the bark of this tree is not merely suited for packing, but also for printing, and even writing. It may also be employed for mill and paste boards. The pulp bleaches readily. I regard it as the most important material drawn on this occasion into use ... The whole thick stratum of the bark was employed. It yields readily to mechanical appliances on account of its lax and loose texture, and is also easily acted on by caustic soda for conversion into pulp.
2. *Eucalyptus Rostrata*: The *Red Gumtree* The paper prepared from the bark of this tree proves much coarser than that of the *Eucalyptus obliqua*; the pulp may be either used as admixture to that of packing paper and pasteboards, or in the composition, or perhaps as sole ingredient, for blotting and filtering paper.
3. *Eucalyptus Amygdalina*: One of the so-called *Peppermint-trees* ... The inner bark is adapted for the preparation of all kinds of coarser paper.
4. *Eucalyptus Globulus*: The well-known *Blue Gumtree* ... Paper prepared from the bark of this tree answers for packing and perhaps for printing.
5. *Eucalyptus Goniocalyx*: One of the *White Gum-trees*, called in some districts the *Spotted Gumtree* ... The bark yields a good packing paper, but hardly material for any good writing paper.
6. *Eucalyptus Corymbosa*: The *Bloodwood-tree* ... The paper from the bark of this Eucalypt is remarkable for its great firmness. It makes thus a very strong wrapping paper.
7. *Eucalyptus Leucoxydon*: This tree passes in various districts under varied names, for instance ... the *Mountain Ash* and *Ironbark-tree* ... The bark can be converted into rough packing paper.
8. *Eucalyptus Longifolia*: The *Woollybutt* ... The fibre of the bark again adapted for packing paper.
9. *Eucalyptus Stuartiana*: One of the *White Gumtrees* ... The bark of this often very big tree furnishes again good material for packing paper, and like others, for pasteboard.
10. *Acacia penninervis*: ... The bark of this acacia was chosen merely to demonstrate, that also from the bark of very many species of this great genus a rough kind of packing paper can be produced.
11. *Melaleuca ericifolia*: The so-called *Swamp-Teatree* ... The friable lamellar bark can be converted into an excellent blotting paper—perhaps, also, filtering paper. It is worthy of record that many species of this genus yield a very similar bark, formed of innumerable membranous layers.

## 2. Paper from Foliage

12. *Casuarina quadrivalvis*: The *Drooping Sheoak* ... The stringy foliage formed by the cylindrical concretion of the branchlets with the leaves can be converted into an excellent pulp for packing, and even printing paper and millboard. The mechanical contrivances for preparing the pulp are of particular ease.
13. *Casuarina leptoclada*: The *Erect Sheoak* ... The foliage in its use is akin to that of the former species. ... none of the species has been employed before for paper manufacture.

## 3. Paper from Grasses, Rushes and Allied Plants

14. *Scirpus maritimus*: The *Soltmarsh Clubrush* ... It seems like the following previously not yet tried, or at all events not yet extensively used for paper manufacture, for which it is singularly well adapted, being, like most rushes, so readily converted into pulp. The amount of bleaching material for all these rushes is trifling. ... Apparently the paper is firm enough to stand the impressions of type.
15. *Scirpus lacustris*: The *Lake Clubrush* ... The paper from it is remarkably good, and hence well adapted at least for printing and tissue paper, but probably also for writing.
16. *Cyperus lucidus*: The *Shining Gallingale* ... shown to be adapted both for printing, tissue, and writing paper. All these rush-like plants bleach with great facility.

17. *Cyperus vaginatus*: The *Sheated Gatingale* ... Its fibre is extraordinarily tough, and accordingly can be formed into a very tenacious paper, which, moreover, proves one of great excellence.

18. *Heleocharis sphacelata*: The *Stout Spikerush* ... It yields a paper as good for printing as for writing and tissue.

19. *Heleocharis acuta*: The *Slender Spikerush* ... has seemingly never yet been converted into paper. The local experiments here show this and many other cyperaceous plants exquisitely adapted for good printing and tissue paper, and a by no means very inferior writing paper. Better appliances will necessarily improve on the quality of the paper.

20. *Lepidosperma gladiatum*: The *Sword-Rush* ... It was, nine years ago, subjected by Mr. Tolmer, of Adelaide, to successful tests for paper-fabrication. The article produced from it is of strong texture, and inasmuch as the plant can be collected in enormous quantities on ground not arable, it should find its way deservedly into factories with the many other kinds of material now pointed out. ... It grinds largely into pulp, like many other rushes.

21. *Juncus vaginatus*: The *Sheated Rush* ... worth collecting as material for printing, tissue, and likely also fair writing paper. The pulp is of equability.

22. *Xerotes longifolia*: The *Toothed Dry-Rush* ... can be employed both for printing and writing paper. It is, however, scarcely so readily collected as many of the other plants just referred to. It has the recommendation of great tenacity for it. Several allied species will yield similar material

23. *Dichelachne crinita*: The *Horsetail-Grass* ... yields a tenacious paper, especially fit to be used for a thin packing or wrapping paper. Whilst, under disadvantages, working with small quantities of the pulp, the operator found it not needful to separate fragments of the *arista*, *glumæ*, &c., which appear as an admixture; but as in this instance it was not the aim to procure an elegant paper, no such provisions which machinery provides were adopted to separate the interspersed particles. It is not unlikely to make fair printing and the less costly kinds of writing and tissue paper.

24. *Stipa semibarbata*: ... The paper from this grass is very substantial, though not so strong as that of the preceding kind. On these two grasses only experiments were made to demonstrate their adaptability for the purpose in view. There are several other stipæ and besides grasses of other genera, which may finally be introduced with these into factories.

25. *Xanthorrhæa minor*: This stemless liliaceous plant is of the particular genus which produces the different grass-trees of Australia ... The broad rigid tufts approach each other to the exclusion or gradual suffocation of most other plants of the spot. The harsh foliage ... is shown to be easily converted into an excellent printing and also good writing paper; the percentage of pulp is large. This experiment teaches us also, that the wiry leaves of the different grass-trees may all be collected for paper mills, because all have a similar tissue.

26. *Typha augustifolia*, The *Bulrush* or *Reedmace* ... The pulp of the weighty foliage is easily to be pressed into good printing, tissue, and an acceptable writing paper. So far as I have been able to ascertain, the plant has previously not received any attention in paper factories.

27. *Phormium tenax*: The *New Zealand Flax-Lily* Paper has been placed in the Exhibition from material grown in Victoria. The readiness with which the large richly fibrous leaves can be turned into pulp for a very substantial paper, entitles the plant not alone to our consideration, but also the fact that it may be permanently established with the greatest ease ... it is to be hoped that a local mill will ere long utilise so excellent a material. The paper here obtained from *Phormium* is the strongest of all.

28. *Confervaceous Algæ*, with *Oedogonium* and other allied freshwater weeds ... The paper obtained from these *Algæ* would serve well, on account of its strength, for packing. The application for the purpose appears to be a new one.

29. *Musa Banksii*: ... yields a fair paper for almost all purposes, according to the methods employed in reducing the fibre of the leaves and stalks to pulp ... The Banksian banana here operated on was grown in Victoria. The bleaching process, however, is not an easy one. Banana leaves yield approximately 40 per cent of fibre for pulp. The treatment to which these fibres were subjected has been the same as that by which the esparto—or sparta—grass (*Lygeum Sparteæ*) is reduced to pulp. They were immersed in a solution of caustic soda, obtained from quicklime and common carbonate of

soda, varying in strength according to the requirement of the fibre, but always inexpensive. In operating on Victorian raw fibres, it may be of advantage to know that the Mediterranean esparto, which contains about 56 per cent, ligneous fibre, needs application of a caustic liquid, prepared from one-eighth of soda in proportion to the grass. The process of boiling is extended over six or eight hours, whereby oil, albumen, resin, gum, and starch are abstracted. Von Mueller concluded his exhibition catalogue entry: "As substitutes for rags, all the materials indicated here deserve preference over many of the articles elsewhere tried or employed." His results offered much needed input into the question at hand.

The prize-winning essay of 1860 had prompted discussion on ways to secure sufficient raw materials to maintain a viable paper manufacturing industry in Victoria. The *Argus* and the Australian newspapers published the views of interested citizens. A correspondent in the *Argus*, 14 February 1860 argued that scientific research was needed to find local raw materials to substitute for rags. This was exactly von Mueller's undertaking. An alternative view, expressed in a letter to the Editor on 1 July 1861, was to increase the supply of rags. The writer suggested the goldfields would be a ready source of rags because clothing did not last long, due to the nature of the work there. The writer then went on to suggest an interesting method of collecting rags: a rag bag in every household should be mandated. A rag department at the Melbourne Hospital should be established, and rags should be delivered there to be sold to create revenue for the hospital. However, the prevailing view expressed in the letters and articles that were published over ensuing years was that alternative, plant-based raw materials were the way forward.

Following von Mueller's exhibit at the Intercolonial Exhibition, the Australasian 15 December 1866 drew attention to the importance of his findings, anticipating that steps would quickly be taken to open up this new source of wealth. To make this happen, the following creative course of action was proposed: "families should be induced to settle in the neighbourhoods where fibrous plants are most abundant, that they should grow their own grain, potatoes, and vegetables, and keep goats and a few cows, to support themselves while obtaining the materials for paper mills here as well as abroad." The new source of wealth was not extensively exploited. Each of the plants successfully trialled by von Mueller was widely available in Victoria; however, plant fibres were only used as a supplement to rags in the manufacture of paper, in the local mills that were to follow.

In 1863, there had been a failed attempt to secure land for a paper mill near the Queen Street Bridge. At about the same time, capitalist Thomas Kenny took prudent steps to found Victoria's first viable paper mill. To begin with, Kenny visited Europe to acquaint himself with the business of papermaking and obtained a lease on Dight's Mill and a piece of ground at Dight's Falls on the Yarra River.



*Kenny's Mill (late Dight's), Yarra Yarra Falls 1863  
The Australian Art Sales Digest*

Kenny then put in place plans to add to existing buildings and construct races. In the middle of 1865, he imported Scottish machinery that could produce paper seventy-two inches wide; recruited a Scottish engineer to set up the machinery; and employed an experienced papermaker from Ireland. Unfortunately, before he could fulfil his goal he died in July 1866, which gave Samuel Ramsden, a well-known Melbourne business man, the opportunity to buy Kenny's business, plant and machinery. The story of Ramsden's enterprise will continue in a future edition of the Deckle Edge.

Anne Pitkethly

*I gratefully acknowledge Alexander Romanov-Hughes for generously sharing information contained in my writing. I refer to Alexander's website: <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~paper/>. I acknowledge the New Zealand Electronic Text Collection, Pamphlet Collection of Sir Robert Stout: Volume 6, Creative Commons License, <http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-Stout06-t17-body-dl-d16.html>*

## UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

### Sculptural Kozo

13 & 14 February 2016  
Gail Stiffe

A two-day workshop using kozo to make sheets and to make sculptural works like boat shapes. The class will prepare the kozo from the bark and will make an armature that will be lined with gauze then dipped into a vat of kozo. I last taught this workshop in 2009 and wrote about it on my blog. [papergail.blogspot.com.au/2009/07/workshop-and-new-work.html](http://papergail.blogspot.com.au/2009/07/workshop-and-new-work.html)



### North Country Shifu

12 & 13 March 2016  
Velma Bolyard (U.S.A.)

Experiment for two rich days with spinning and weaving papers on small looms to create four selvage cloths. We will make a book with Iowa Case Paper to hold our sampling. Expect to try a number of colouring techniques as well as learn to simplify and sharpen your technical skills as you bring your ideas into the haptic experience of creating story. You will bring words, papers, colour, thought, stitch, and weave together into personal and class-wide narratives that serve as a map of your learning.



### A Case for your Casting

10 April 2016  
Barb Adams  
One day workshop  
Paper casting, box making and simple book making.

This is an opportunity to try some paper casting over interesting objects. You will make suitable paper, cast the paper over your objects and make an artwork to display your paper work. The display box will be made with a book cover from a discarded book which you will transform into your box. You will also make a book or two, related to the idea you choose, to include in the box.



### Procedures for Funding: Purchases and Maintenance

\*Send requests to purchase supplies or services in writing (email) to President or Secretary

\*Include all relevant details - description, supplier and pricing

\*The committee decides which requests to authorise

\* All accounts or receipts for authorised expenditure are forwarded to President/ Secretary for committee approval for payment

\*Preferred reimbursement or payment is by bank transfer or cheque, providing a clear audit trail. Petty cash is not readily available but may be arranged.



### Betta Milk Burnie Wearable Paper Art Competition 2016 - Paper on Skin

Wednesday, 8 June 2016 to Sunday, 26 June 2016

Following the great success of the inaugural 2012 'Paper on Skin' competition, our aim is to further foster and promote the cultural paper heritage of our town by presenting innovative and wearable paper apparel. The Burnie Arts Council in partnership with the Burnie Regional Art Gallery proudly presents the third biennial paper on skin.

Entry forms available  
[www.burniearts.net/Whats-On/Exhibitions/Betta-Milk-Burnie-Wearable-Paper-Art-Competition-2016-Paper-On-Skin](http://www.burniearts.net/Whats-On/Exhibitions/Betta-Milk-Burnie-Wearable-Paper-Art-Competition-2016-Paper-On-Skin)

### Hand Papermaking Portfolio

Hand Papermaking magazine is celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2016. In honour of this, a number of exciting projects are in the works. One of those is the twelfth limited edition portfolio, which will showcase collaborative pieces created by artists at different stages in their career. Artists born around the time the magazine was founded will be paired with artists who were already committed to paper as an art form at the time (essentially artists over 60 and under 30). The Hand Papermaking board and I will select 15 intergenerational teams to produce the pieces together (30 collaborators).

Our hope is that this portfolio will showcase the exceptional work being done in paper by up-and-coming talent and established artists, and our field's strong collaborative spirit across generations. Please contact Tatiana Ginsberg [tsginsberg@gmail.com](mailto:tsginsberg@gmail.com) Tom Bannister [tom@handpapermaking.org](mailto:tom@handpapermaking.org) with any questions.

Wishing all our  
members all  
the very best  
for the festive  
season and a  
paperful New  
Year.

