

# Universitas Collegii Mac Gilliani

## UNIVERSITATI MELBURNIENSI.

S. P. D.

Gratias vobis, viri doctissimi, agimus maximas, quod fecias jubilaeas post quinquaginta feliciter peractos annos celebraturi nos quoque, toto orbis terrarum spatio divisos, in partem gaudii vestri adsciscere voluistis. Nos vestra comitate oblatam libentissime arripimus occasionem fraterni in vos animi testificandi. Quamvis enim diverso habitantes caelo sentimus nos vobiscum artissima quadam conjunctos esse propinquitate, quippe qui, communis utrorumque originis vinculo et civitatis foedere Britannicae conexi, eadem insuper scientiae ac litterarum humaniorum studia exerceamus. Ergo ut in hoc laetamur, quod munus artium in terra Australi colendum per tot annos prospero successu sustinueritis, ita optamus ut per multa in posterum saecula Universitas vestra omnibus mentis bonis florens reipublicae nobis minime alienae decus adferre pergat.

Prohibet longinquitas utineis quominus quemquam in hac Universitate hodie commorantem ad vos delegemus qui amicitiae interpret nostrae vobis intersit festos dies celebrantibus. Sed domicilium in terra Australi habet alumnus noster Thomas P. Strickland, Sydneiensis, quem octo abhinc annis gradu magistratus in scientia ornavimus; habet etiam e nostratibus vir praestantissimus Thomas Tait, qui eodem fere tempore ex hac urbe demigravit ut toti quam vocant viarum ferratarum rationi in vestra colonia praeficeretur. Hos igitur impense rogamus ut praesentes velint nostram ergo vos observantiam rite declarare. Sed si quid impederit quominus pro nobis rem agant, hisce saltem litteris mandatum gratulationem iam nunc significamus.

Dabamus Monte Regio,

*Guilielmus de Macdonald* e Gubernatoribus.

Die vicensimo Mensis Februarii,

*Guilielmus Peterson* Rector.

Anno Salutis MCMVI

*J. A. Nicholson* Tabularius.





## 1906 – THE UNIVERSITY'S JUBILEE

BY Cecily Close

**W**HEN THE CENTENARY of Australia's Federation has passed the University of Melbourne will be approaching its 150th anniversary, and already a committee is considering the time and manner of its celebration. It is a reminder of earlier such events: the Jubilee, (the subject of this article); and the Centenary, of which records in the University Archives preserve memories and (if we wish so to regard them) precedents.

The University's *Annual Report* for 1905-1906 recalled in connection with the Jubilee some significant dates in the University's establishment: 22 January 1853 when the Act to establish the University of Melbourne received the Royal Assent; the proclamation of 6 April in the same year appointing the first University Council; the laying of the Foundation Stone on 3 January 1854; and the formal opening to students on 13 April 1855. We might add at least one other: 3 November 1852, when the estimates put before the Victorian Legislative Council by H. C. E. Childers included a sum for the foundation of a university.

The University of Sydney had commemorated its opening to students with a jubilee commencing on 30 September 1902, during which Professor T. G. Tucker of Classical Philology presented the University of Melbourne's congratulatory address, which he and the Warden of the Senate had drafted in Latin, and

which the Council had authorised to be "printed or engrossed in simple style". As was customary universities from many countries had been invited to send delegates; but the distance being great, these universities usually nominated a distinguished local graduate or other connection and Tucker also represented Cambridge. Among his University colleagues there were Professor Baldwin Spencer, representing Oxford and Owens College, and Dr Alexander Leeper, Dublin. All three men would be prominent when Melbourne's turn came to celebrate.

The University of Melbourne regarded its own opening in April 1855 as the proper occasion to commemorate, but on 2 November 1903 settled on a year's delay. It was seriously in debt, most due to a former accountant's defalcations, the rest to the inadequacy of state government support, and was the subject of a Royal Commission of Enquiry. The Council had been preoccupied with economies and submissions to the government. Dr. Leeper moved that 1906 be decided upon "provisionally", but Council resolved that 1906 would indeed be the jubilee year.

In 1904 prospects improved. Thomas Bent's government accepted the royal commission's recommendations of

May that the debt be wiped out and the University's income increased, and granted funds for buildings and equipment for courses in those areas of evident practical value, agriculture and mining. When Leeper raised the question of the Jubilee in August, Council promptly appointed a committee to arrange it. Chaired by the Chancellor, Sir John Madden, with Professor Baldwin Spencer as Convener and Organising Secretary (soon assisted by the Registrar, W. E. Cornwall), the committee included Leeper himself, Sir Henry Wrixon, Vice-Chancellor (who in Madden's absence overseas would represent the University during the Jubilee), Professors H. B. Allen, T. G. Tucker and D. O. Masson, the Rev. E. H. Sugden of Queen's College and J. H. MacFarland of Ormond, and T. P. McInerney, Warden of the Senate. The Finance Committee authorised the expenditure of £250.

The program as first drafted by the committee was in the main carried out. Two social events and a conference for Australasian delegates were added, a "Henley on the Yarra" and two lectures dropped, and proposals for a Pindaric Ode by Tucker with music by Professor Peterson, and a garden party, considered and abandoned. The trustees of the Public Library, also to celebrate its

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Above: "Universitas", illuminated lettering in gold, silver, red and green, Jubilee address from the University of Kobzsvár, 1905. (University of Melbourne Archives.)

Jubilee in 1906, agreed to cooperate in holding this in the same week the University had selected for its own, at the end of April. Apart from exchanging invitations (the Library held an exhibition of "Old, Rare and Curious Books, Manuscripts, Autographs, etc"), and opened a new museum building in the planning of which Spencer was deeply involved as honorary museum director and trustee), the two institutions organised a joint *Conversazione* for Saturday, 28 April.

The Chancellor and Professor Tucker prepared two addresses in Latin, one asking overseas universities and colleges (selected from those prominent in *Minerva: Jahrbuch der gelehrten Welt*) to send delegates to the festivities, the other inviting distinguished individuals from overseas suggested by the Professorial Board. An invitation was composed in English for individuals in Australasia. Thirty institutions sent delegates, but apart from those from the University of New Zealand and Victoria College, Wellington, only two came from abroad; Professor Alexander Vasiljev, representing the Universities of Dorpat and St. Petersburg and the Women's Pedagogical Institute of St. Petersburg, and Professor Chiyomatsu Ishikawa of the Imperial University, Tokyo. Both, especially the latter, attracted much attention. A third overseas visitor, mentioned by Ernest Scott and in the press but not appearing in official lists of invited guests, was Professor Schachner of Heidelberg. Mrs W. A. (Ethel) Osborne, representing Leeds, was the only woman delegate. Australian institutions were of course well represented. Of the 104 gentlemen overseas listed as invited, all who replied refused, usually pleading distance as their excuse, but with congratulations on the occasion.

The Governor-General and Governor of Victoria were secured as guests for particular functions, the former promising "to take a degree *ad eundem*". The editors of the Melbourne dailies and most weeklies were added to the guest list; and whether or not this

gesture influenced the result, we must be grateful for the detailed press reports and photographs so redolent of the times. Even *Table Talk*, the editor of which appears not to have been invited, and which referred to the University as a "pampered, sapless growth" in an editorial, devoted considerable space to the show. A holiday from lectures was declared for the week, the office closing from noon each day. Tickets for the events were snapped up.

The formal program commenced at 3.00 pm on Monday 23 April 1906 at the state Parliament House with the Vice-Chancellor and Lady Wrixon's reception to the Governor and Lady Talbot. In the event, Lady Wrixon acted as hostess without Sir Henry, who was unwell. *The Australasian* noted the decoration of the long corridors "with palms and flowers, the doorways outlined with greenery and groups of flags towering above them", and a refreshment room with "large mirrors enframed in flowers" and buffets decked with dahlias and chrysanthemums. Musical selections were played by the Princess Theatre orchestra. On the arrival of the state Governor Sir Reginald Talbot in "a large red motor", Lady Talbot in a landau, this reporter's pen ran to capture the ensembles of the wives and daughters of notables including professors. As it was Lady Wrixon's day, let us remember her in "very deep blue glace, embroidered with pompadour clusters of roses, the bodice arranged with a pelerine of lace falling from a yoke of mother-o'-pearl and silver paillettes" and black toque with long plumes.

That same evening the government held a *Conversazione* for over 1,000 guests to meet the delegates in the University grounds. Entering by carriage or foot through the Grattan Street gate, wearing academic or evening dress, they arrived at an awning at the north-west corner of Wilson Hall under which Premier Bent stood to greet them. In describing this approach *The Argus* evokes for us their delighted surprise on turning the corner at the sight of lake, islands and main walks fringed by

hundreds of coloured lamps and lanterns. Colleges and lecture halls were lit in every window and doorway. Many attended a concert in Wilson Hall by the University Choral Society, Mme Agnes Jansen, Miss Eileen Castles and Mr H. T. Thomas; others saw Aristophanes' *The Wasps* in dress rehearsal at Ormond College. There were also the congratulatory letters and addresses, many handsome and elaborate, to inspect in the Biology School (now the Baldwin Spencer Building). Afterwards refreshments were served in the Conservatorium (formerly the National Museum and later the students' Club House), decorated with greenery, the tables glowing with scarlet salvia. Undergraduates had their supper in a marquee after breaking into dance (males only) to the military band playing on the lawn.

On Tuesday afternoon delegates with their addresses were received by the Vice-Chancellor and the Governor of Victoria in Wilson Hall after a brief program by the University Choral Society and the Conservatorium Orchestra playing music of Mozart and Haydn, Sir A. C. Mackenzie's song "The Empire Flag" and "Gaudeamus". It was an unforgettable moment when Professor Vasiljev, his country recently defeated by Japan and greatly disturbed, spoke of the independence of science from political strife and extended the hand of friendship, metaphorically, to his Japanese colleague who at once left his seat to take the hand and shake it warmly.

Women students, in demand for floral decoration and for sewing costumes and banners, were early engaged to provide refreshments after the reception. Arranged by a committee of past and present students called together by the Princess Ida Club, their "At Home" was pronounced by *The Australasian* one of the most picturesque of the events, with the brilliant colour of the men's robes and the many-hued hoods of the hostesses, the hundreds of yards of evergreen and electric lights, bamboo and grasses by the pillars and chrysanthemums in the club's colours of lilac and

yellow. Music was provided by the Zingari Amateur Septet Orchestra. A little ceremony was held on the balcony when the women presented the long-serving attendant Marcham, now celebrating his golden wedding anniversary, with "a handsome arm-chair" and book of their autographs. Many of the young women had added to their own autograph collections that day, crowding about the Russian and Japanese delegates in particular with programs to sign.

The busy afternoon was followed by a University Dinner in the Masonic Hall. The recent financial troubles, the competing claims of the arts and more utilitarian subjects and government expectation were recurring topics during Jubilee week. Here Prime Minister Deakin's toast to the universities, incorporating a hope that the humanities including the classics would not be driven from their proper place in the universities, was followed by Bishop Stretch's slighting reference to the demand for commercialism and the practical in education. Premier Bent, a good humoured guest at the festivities, reminded all present that practical results were exactly what the government expected from its investment. At the impressive Annual Commencement in the Exhibition Building on the 26 April Lord Northcote, one of nine to be specially admitted to *ad eundem gradum* degrees, both emphasised in his speech the value of the humanities and acknowledged the need of training for development of the country. Professor Spencer tactfully conveyed the University's thanks to the government for extending training in agriculture and mining, with no intention of belittling the arts. The Premier regretted that he had seen only one mining degree conferred that day and hoped that "electricity" would soon be taught.

The Australasian representatives took the opportunity to discuss numerous matters of mutual interest, including the possibility of arranging common vacations to allow for future similar conferences and the advisability of



In March 1905 Professor W. Baldwin Spencer suggested to the newly-formed Sports Union that the new pavilion for which the Cricket Club had been saving should be built in time for opening during the University's Jubilee. The new pavilion was opened on 25 April 1906, the University architects Reed, Smart and Tappin having supervised the building without fee. (Photo: Melbourne University Magazine, Vol II, No. 3, October 1908, opp. p. 86.)

requiring a *bene discessit* from students entering *ad eundem statum* from other universities. One decision made, following a separate meeting between Adelaide and Melbourne and soon acted upon, was their amalgamation in the conduct of public examinations in music (a move which, with the gradual inclusion of other institutions, led to the formation of the Australian Music Examinations Board in 1918).

The students' songs, cheers and interjections were highly audible at the Annual Commencement, but they had their own program and indeed informally inaugurated the festivities. Professor Spencer was well placed to suggest and guide as chairman of the Sports Union Council which, with the Union, the Medical Students' Society and the Engineering Students' Society, chiefly organised these events. Holding a Theatre Night at the Princess Theatre which they hired for Friday, 20 April, they had festooned the auditorium liberally with large red and yellow roses and greenery. Students in caps and gowns with rose buttonholes crammed the gallery, their leader wearing "an immense rose and moustache and beating time with a baton like the drumstick of a fowl". Between the acts, which

were in the main allowed to proceed without interruption, student singers sang "Varsity" songs with "emphatic choruses" from the gallery.

The press was tolerant of the students, in the main enjoying the fun and reporting their excesses without comment (though the *Leader* mentioned that the words "licensed larrikinism" had been uttered); but *The Age* before and after the event dismissed as absurd the colleges' performance, in Greek, of Aristophanes' *The Wasps*, indeed questioning the status of Greek itself in the University. However, it joined other papers in praising the acting and clowning, and the dancing and singing of the wasps dressed in costumes designed by F. Maurice-Carton, "with yellow and brown striped and shaped wasp bodies, gossamer shimmering wings fixed to arms, big brown heads and large red eyes" as *The Australasian* noted. The two dress rehearsals and two performances of this abridgment, directed by Alexander Leeper with choruses trained by H. Darnley Naylor and with E. H. Sugden as conductor, the music having been specially written by F. M. and C. M. Haydon, played to full and enthusiastic houses at Ormond College.

The suggestion of E. D. Ulrich (later University Librarian), that this year's torchlight procession be historical, was lukewarmly received by the students — especially by medicals interested in Caesar only "for the way he came into the world, not for his exploits or the manner of his exit" (as "Susianna" explained in her report on Jubilee activities in the Medical Students' Society journal *Speculum*, May 1906). So, while the University Dinner was in progress, a procession with "grotesque costumes, weird choruses and deafening strains of the Bung Band", each school taking part after its fashion, made its way from Grattan Street through the city and across Princes Bridge to the amusement park Prince's Court for a "fete". Arts students seem to have pursued an historical theme, in dress "mainly sheets", representing among others Brutus and Mark Antony "making up that old quarrel over a glass of Colonial port", but *The Australasian* reported the spectators to have been particularly taken with the railway engine, the medical students' monster skeleton and the fire brigade. The last-mentioned, according to "Victim's" letter to *The Age*, later left some bystanders drenched and angry after some horse play with a fire hose. At Prince's Court prizes were awarded for the best costumes and tableaux.

A students' Smoke Night in Wilson Hall with music and recitations was an occasion for showing appreciation both to Marcham, who received a purse of sovereigns; and to Spencer, who received a replica of the football cup won in the previous year with a warm tribute to his efforts during the celebrations, his sportmanship and friendship. A reminder of his guidance and generosity can still be seen in the sports pavilion. Introducing the students to the idea of building this long-desired facility in time for opening at an inter-varsity athletics meeting during the Jubilee, he donated £50 to the fund and negotiated with the architects of the pavilion, Reed Smart and Tappin.



W. Baldwin Spencer, Professor of Biology, 1887–1919, with the lake and Wilson Hall in the background. The lake was filled in over a period in the late 1930s; Wilson Hall was destroyed by fire on 25 January 1952. (Photo: University of Melbourne Archives.)

After an afternoon of inter-college sports the annual, but this year special, University ball at the Town Hall was hosted by the Boat Club and Sports Union, whose emblems and colours appeared with those of visiting teams. The young medical student "Susianna" set down her happy impressions of the evening in *Speculum*, and a program in the Archives lists with the accompanying popular tunes — most now forgotten — the lancers, waltzes, polka, two step and gallop she danced under the canopy formed of strings of paper poppies, each shading an electric light, radiating from the ceiling to the balconies.

The week closed with the joint *Conversazione* with the trustees of the Public Library, National Gallery and Museum, held in the library buildings on Saturday night, and a service of solemn thanksgiving on Sunday afternoon, 29 April, when all who wished processed in academic dress into St. Paul's Cathedral to "Praise the Lord Your Heavens Adore Him".

*continued on page 14*

## SOURCES

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- G. Blainey, *A Centenary History of the University of Melbourne*, Melbourne, 1956.
- D. J. Mulvaney and J. H. Calaby "So Much That is New": *Baldwin Spencer, 1860–1929, a Biography*, Carlton, 1985.
- "Our Ladies' Letter" by "Susianna" *Speculum*, May 1906, pp. 13–19.
- W. B. Spencer "The History of the Sports Union", *Melbourne University Magazine*, October 1908, pp. 83–87.
- *The Age*, *The Argus*, *The Australasian*, *Herald*, *Leader*, *Table Talk*, and *Weekly Times* (all of which contribute to our picture of the Jubilee but not in equal degree and with some variation in the detail. The first three are chiefly used above).
- *Sydney Mail*, 8 October 1902. (Sydney University Archives).
- Records in the University of Melbourne Archives: University Council Minutes, 1902–1907; Registrar's Correspondence, 1908/39; Jubilee Committee Minutes; Jubilee record books (a copy of the second volume is also held by the Library's Special Collections) and addresses; Sports Union Minutes; Medical Students' Society Minutes; Women Medical Students' Society Minutes; Union Minutes; Princess Ida Club Minutes and the Secretary's Report for 1906.
- Thanks are due to my former colleagues for checking items of information, to Dr A. Brown-May of Monash University for a description of Prince's Court, and to Mr A. Turner of the Centre of Ancient Languages at this University for translating the Latin invitations into English.

On 25 September the Jubilee Committee wound up its accounts and forwarded to Council a recommendation that a "record of the Jubilee Celebrations together with a short history of the University be compiled for distribution to Universities and invited Guests". Council's response was favourable and chapter headings and estimates were drawn up. Spencer was to be the general editor of a history to be written by selected authors without fee; the Registrar the editor of a Jubilee record to be written by someone chosen by the committee. Two rounds of invitations to contribute to the history resulted in five definite acceptances (by John Monash, Ernest Robson, T. S. Hall, John Lang and Felix Meyer), insufficient for the project. No publications appeared, but a less ambitious record of the proceedings was produced. Letters, texts of some speeches and invitation lists were pasted in one volume and programs, invitations and other memorabilia in another, to be stored with the Committee's minutes and the congratulatory addresses. A selection of the last-mentioned was displayed during a University open day many years ago. Perhaps they will reappear during the University's Sesquicentenary. ■

Cecily Close was the Acting University Archivist until her recent retirement.

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## GRAINGER ON PHOTOCD

BY **Alessandro Servadei**

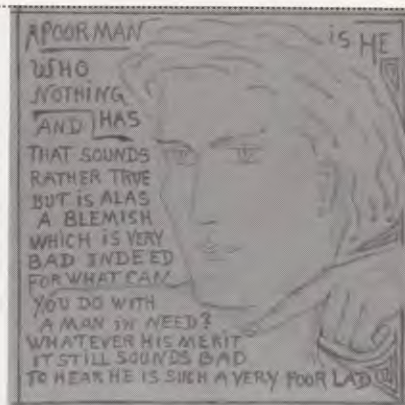
**O**N 22 JUNE 1999, a presentation was given to the University Library staff about the many outcomes of the recent digitising project that took place at the Grainger Museum. This article is a brief synopsis of the entire project, which began in early 1998 and was delivered via the World Wide Web in February.

### THE SOURCE MATERIAL: PERCY GRAINGER'S "LEGENDS"

When Percy Grainger visited his museum in Melbourne for the very last time in the mid-1950s, he decided that his visitor must be able to totally immerse themselves in his world. Without the advantage of today's computers or multimedia kiosks, Grainger created his Display Legends — large wall panel displays that used different media to help contextualise his life and that of his contemporaries. Each of the 34 in the collection is on a separate topic and has a title (the lettering of Grainger's own design) at the top of the display, such as "Cyril Scott, Musical Originator" or "A. E. Aldis, Painter & Linguist". The actual content consists of a short, typewritten essay or commentary by Grainger on the topic, as well as a variety of visual materials — often a combination of drawings, photographs, letters, music, concert programs and copies of manuscripts.

Grainger fixed the documentary and visual material to each display with pins or glue. This was then covered with a sheet of glass, cut to size and surrounded by a frame attached with nails. The frames were either left unpainted or were painted in what Grainger considered to be "Saxon and Scandinavian" colours — sky blue, scarlet, yellow or bright green.

The problem: decades of exposure to the sun's ultra-violet rays have taken



Rime-tile design for "Poor Man" (undated) by Ella Grainger. Drawn with china paints on the glazed surface and re-fired. Actual size: 6" x 6". (Grainger Museum Collection.)

their toll on the Legends' contents, from peeling adhesive to fading photographs.

### A DIGITISING GRANT AND RESTORATION

A recent (and generous) grant from the University Library, provided the Grainger Museum with the necessary funds not only to restore these valuable objects, but then to photograph and store them in a more permanent, digital form. The staff of the nearby Ian Potter Conservation Centre, in particular Robyn Sloggett and Rosemary Freemantle, lent their paper conservation expertise to the project and then had the Legends delivered to the University's Multimedia Unit for a session in the photographic studio. The sheer size of the Legends (ranging from a typical A3 size to beyond A2) meant that, in some cases, items within the Legends themselves required individual photographs.

Although funding did not permit all objects to be so photographed, most of the remaining objects can be scanned from copies elsewhere in the collection. Grainger, of course, always ensured there were copies of almost anything in case of the unthinkable.

### ENTER THE PHOTOCD

Once the Legends were in photographic form, it was possible to have them



*Seais*