

# Introduction

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The primary purpose of many of the University of Melbourne's collections is as a resource for teaching and research. The University of Melbourne Herbarium is an essential tool for budding botanists; the Harry Brookes Allen Museum of Anatomy and Pathology is unique in the instruction it offers to doctors and other health professionals; while the University of Melbourne Archives is a laboratory for historians. Further, many of the collections record, whether through objects, photographs or documents, the history of a profession or academic discipline.

However, a number of collection items serve another, perhaps equally important function: to enrich the university environment for all students, staff and visitors, regardless of their specialised area of study or employment. This is particularly true of many of the large outdoor sculptures dotted around the grounds. Their history is inextricably entwined with the broader history and development of the campus, its landscaping and buildings. In this issue of *University of Melbourne Collections* we have the final in the series of four interviews with Dr Ray Marginson AM, in

which he recalls his decades as vice-principal of the university, when his many responsibilities included commissioning buildings, improvements and artworks, establishing a university art gallery and putting in place systems for the better care of many of the collections. The economic ups and downs of the university as a whole, fluctuating fortunes and influence of individual faculties and departments, and changing tastes and values of society more generally, are all reflected in the successes and failures of his and other university leaders' attempts to beautify the campus.

On a related note, this issue includes a discussion by Dr Helen Billman-Jacobe and Dr Ann Westmore of *Flying capital, Sydney Dattilo Rubbo memorial*. This tribute to one of the university's eminent medical scientists will be re-instated in its rightful place early next year, following the major building works that have been taking place in its vicinity. The reappearance of this significant piece by one of Australia's major modernist sculptors, Norma Redpath, will enhance the already greatly improved pedestrian precinct behind the medical building and new neurosciences centre.

Also in this issue are articles exploring prints on morbid and frightening subjects; the Dookie Campus Historical Collection; George McArthur, one of the earliest donors of rare books to the Baillieu Library; some tiny marsupials preserved in the Tiegs Zoology Museum; the discovery of some unknown works by one of Australia's most important women composers; and clues to the origins and whereabouts of some quintessentially Melbourne icons—Melbourne Cup trophies.



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