

Australian Enamel Newsletter

Issue 2
June 1990

Enameller Profile: Glenice Lesley Matthews

July 1989 Glenice Matthews returned to Australia.

She had grown up in the jewellery industry. Her father, Ken Matthews, is a well-known and respected jeweller who for forty odd years had a business in London Court, Perth. Although Glenice had never played an active part in her father's business, she claims much was absorbed by osmosis.

The return home of Matthews culminates a journey that spans fifteen years. In 1975 she travelled to the USA as a student enrolled in a Bachelor of Fine Arts programme, having spent five prior years in a variety of design and metal courses at Curtin University (then WAIT), Fremantle and Claremont Technical Colleges. On completion of a BFA she was accepted as a Master of Fine Arts candidate at Washington University, St Louis, under the tutelage of Heidi Seppa.

At the time of completing the MFA degree, Matthews was invited to exhibit at the Spencer Museum of Art in Lawrence, Kansas. This exhibition, entitled "Personal Epic - Allegorical Metalsmithing", was held in conjunction with an ongoing museum programme - "Musing in the Museum". This exhibition was the culmination of research and the focus of Matthew's fascination for all things Hellenic, love of the ocean and the search for logic behind personal odyssey - the journey of discovery which appears repeatedly in most ethnic mythologies.

Matthews had spent the prior summer in Greece studying the ancient metalwork and culture which had formed the basis of her MFA dissertation.

With formal studies completed, Matthews was still not ready to return to Australia. She accepted a university teaching position in Wichita, Kansas. Also in the city was the Wichita Art Association - an old established private non-profit cultural centre. Enamelling had been taught there since the Thirties. Such enamellists as Margret Craver, Mary Kretsinger, Margaret Seeler, Rudolf Bron and others had taught there over the years.

Matthews was also invited to teach at the Association and a strong enamelling programme was quickly re-established. From these enthusiastic students the Midwest Enamelist Guild was formed in the early 1980's.

A lucky break came when the Chilton Book Company of Pennsylvania approached Matthews to write an authoritative enamelling text. It was agreed that it should be written as she taught beginning students, with a view to a further book at a more advanced level to follow. Enamels, Enameling, Enamellists is now in its third edition and still selling well. (The second book is still in its infancy.)

Kansas was kind. The midwest is an excellent central location and the gently rolling prairies reminded Matthews of home. During the ten years in Kansas several return trips to Europe were made along with a number to South America - always with the purpose of gathering material for interpretation into imagery for enamels and researching ancient techniques and philosophies.

The odyssey has remained the central theme of Matthews work. Under the umbrella title of "Fragments of a Lost Memory", the fragmentation of bilateral thought coupled with this inner searching produces small cloisonne enamels which are like shards from some bygone time. Occasionally, diversions to more literal representation of flora and marine life prevail.

Since Matthews' return to Australia she has produced a series of Australian Northwest Coastal fish. The cloisonne enamel brooches are mounted in 18ct gold from Kalgoorlie and feature Argyle diamonds from the Kimberlies for eyes. Some have Broome pearls in their mouths. These fish are the product of the instant re-establishment of a sense of place and identity to her home environment.

The decision to return to Australia has been an excellent choice. Although Matthews is planning another circumnavigation early 1991, she claims she is back where she truly belongs and is ready to be an active contributor to enamelling in Australia.

Glenice Lesley Matthews' book, Enamels, Enameling, Enamellists published in 1986, is now available in Australia for \$45.00 plus postage from:
Glenice Lesley Matthews
7 Renown Avenue
Claremont WA 6008 Telephone 09 384 9408

Editorial

It seemed for a while that this issue may not make it to Issue 2. Response was very slow, but quite suddenly, towards the end of May, the minimum number of subs was reached and so, here it is.

I'd like to thank enamellers who subscribed for their enthusiasm and encouragement. This is your newsletter. Please keep the information coming.

I hope this issue, predominantly on supplies and suppliers, will help solve some of the difficulties facing us all. Things are not good however. We may just have to accept that many items, especially enamel, will have to be ordered from overseas. Supplies are becoming fragmented - a little here and a little there. Gemrock in Melbourne, who supply Schauer enamel, though not the full range, appear to stock most enamelling supplies. Two suppliers in WA also stock a wide range of enamelling needs. Jackson Ceramic Crafts carry Ball enamels from England plus copper forms and shapes and Ward kilns. Meg Sheen Craftsman Supplies stock a small range of Thomson, Schauer and Degussa enamels as well as copper sheet and shapes and Ward kilns. I hope to print more information from these suppliers in Issue 3. Copper and copper forms are a problem for enamellers on the east coast of Australia, and it seems that things will not improve in the near future with the recent news that Austral Bronze Crane, the only Australian supplier of copper, is to close. All copper, including even the blanks of our minted coins, will have to be imported. Madness.

I would appreciate any information enamellers can forward on suppliers not listed or changes to the listing so I can keep the information current. I haven't pasted up the list yet but hope to leave spaces so extra entries can be added as they're printed in future issues.

I have not been able to include suppliers from SA or Tas as I didn't get replies to enquiries. In future perhaps.

A few tips for anyone who has not previously ordered overseas. Use of a Mastercard or Visa (not Bankcard) credit card simplifies and speeds the procedure. The exact amount, including postal charges is debited to your account in \$Aust., avoiding the cost of a bankdraft. Urgent orders can be telephoned to reduce the delivery time - if brief an overseas call is not prohibitive.

I would like to thank the following people for their help in compiling the suppliers list: Helen Parker, Biddy Fraser-Davies, Glen Henke, Glenice Lesley Matthews, Heron Fiedler, Mary Raymond, Val Annear, Jacque Sprgoe and Wendy Hall.

Carolyn DeZoppo Editor

VS. Enamelist Society Membership drive

The Enamelist Society in United States is currently making a special drive to extend its membership. The latest list shows that of over 1300 members from 29 countries, only 10 are Australian and receive the magazine Glass on Metal. This magazine, in colour and issued bi-monthly is a good source of information and technical advice. Over the years it has covered a wide range of topics - historical enamel techniques, photography, optical properties of enamel, liquid enamel and spray techniques, enameller profiles, special commissions, enamelling in other countries.

The membership drive offers 3 additional issues to current members who sign up a new member - so if you're planning to subscribe and know someone who already does, then get together.

Subscription details are:

Regular \$US35.00 per annum plus \$US14.00 for airmailed postage. Send to -
The Enamelist Society
P.O. Box 310
Newport, Ky 41072 U.S.
Telephone 606 291 3800
Fax 606 291 1849

Around the Magazines

MetalSmith Winter 1990 Vol 10 No 1 pp18-25
Color, Construction and Change. The Inventive Jewelry of Earl Pardon. -four decades of work from this master jeweler and enameler.

American Craft April/May 1990 pp68-69
Enamel work of Sydney Jo Scherr.

Ornament Spring 1990 pp40-42
Enamels by Alison Howard-Levy
(one incorrectly labelled)

Craft Arts International March/June 1990
Article with photos of International Enamel Exhibition, Adelaide 1990.

Limoge

Three members of the Sydney based Enamellers Association, Heather Calnan, Heidi Wellings and Barbara Lund will be in Limoge, France in early July for the L'art de L'email Internationale exhibition. Jenny Gore from S.A who is exhibiting will also be there.

Views

~~Australian Silvercraft Centre~~ Thompsons Silvercraft Centre

It was with great alarm that last year enamellers heard of the imminent closure of Handcraft Metals/Australian Silvercraft Centre, who had been our main supplier of enamel and enamel extras for more than 2½ decades.

David Thompson, the previous manager of the city retail part of the business, and son of the founder Doris Thompson, took over A.S.C., now called Thompsons Silvercraft Centre, on May 1 and has streamlined the business dropping many old lines (including unfortunately enamels, Neycraft kilns, copper forms shapes sheet and wire) and adding new items to give emphasis to quality.

-T.S.C. is now a direct agent of Johnson Matthey, selling silver and gold sheet and wire on the day price, in large or small quantity. A variety of size gauge sheet and wire are kept in stock including fine silver, and 9 and 18 carat gold.

-Fine silver cloisonne wire, standard and deep is stocked as before, as is IT solder and fluxes suitable for enamelling.

-A new range of precious metal and base metal findings from the US are now stocked along with most previous standard findings.

-A range of hand tools and polishing requirements.

-A wide range of gemstones and semi-precious beads.

A catalogue is now being prepared and will be available upon request at a charge of \$5.00 which is refundable from the first order.

I'm sure former customers of HM/ASC join in wishing David great success in this new venture.

Thompsons Silvercraft Centre
Suite 15, 1st Floor,
104 Bathurst S
Sydney 2000
Telephone 02 264 1667
Fax 02 261 8920
Tollfree 008 25 2437

Glenaeon Craft Expo

Sydney enamel artist Mary Raymond was the only enameller of 100 exhibitors at the annual juried Glenaeon Craft Expo in Sydney in May.

The Expo was held over a weekend and a wide range of works and crafts was represented. Mary reported a good response and sales for her work.

Enamellers Association Prouds Exhibition

The 9th annual Prouds Christmas Exhibition of work of the Sydney Enamellers Association will be held this year from December 6 - 24. In 1989 the exhibition was very successful. Sixteen enamellers exhibited a wide range of enamels in this mid-city venue, and approximately \$16,000 sales were recorded during the two weeks it was open.

Congratulations to the members for this excellent result.

The Enamellers Association was formed in Sydney in 1979 and has gradually expanded to include members from Victoria, S.A. and Tasmania.

The Association aims to promote enamelling as a craft and create public awareness and understanding of the medium, and to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas amongst enamellers.

Membership is \$20.00 per annum and is open to any person interested in working with enamel.

The Enamellers Association meets regularly in The Rocks, Sydney. Next meeting - July 3.

Enquiries: Heidi Wellings, 15 Dewrang Ave, Elanora Heights 2101. Telephone 02 913 9130.

Australian Exhibition of Enamel

It has been announced that Ken Lockwood, editor of Craft Arts International magazine has agreed to be the third juror for the upcoming First National Juried Exhibition of Enamels to be held in April 91. Other jurors already announced are Robyn Tudor and Ian Wers.

Enamellers are reminded that the closing date for slides for pre-publicity for this exhibition is 8th October 1990.

Invitation

Joyce Henry of Launceston, an enameller for 16 years, invites visits and enamel conversation from mainland enamellers travelling to Tasmania.

USSR Enamels

Carolyn Delsoppo was recently in Sydney and gave an address and slideshow on Soviet enamelling to the Enamellers Association on June 5 and to the Jewellers and Metalsmiths Group on June 6.