The David Roche Foundation House Museum

War and Pieced:
The Annette Gero Collection
of Quilts from Military Fabrics

Opens Thursday 10 September

TDRF: Club Fermoy #9

Dear friends and supporters,

At the time of writing this letter, we are busy installing our new exhibition *War and Pieced: The Annette Gero Collection of Quilts from Military Fabrics*. Opening on Thursday 10

September, this stunning exhibition of quilts spans the mid-18th to early-20th centuries and is the first of its kind in South Australia. Gero, a leading world expert on intarsia quilts, has collected many of the finest examples, which in 2017 led to her major exhibition, 'Wartime Quilts' at the American Folk Art Museum in New York. As our museum is devoted to the display and promotion of the decorative arts, David Roche's lifetime passion, I am delighted that Gero has entrusted us with these extraordinary quilts for people to marvel at in Adelaide.

In this edition one of our volunteers looks at the origin of rosettes and how they came to be awarded at canine shows. David Roche was phenomenally successful in the dog ring and we are fortunate to permanently exhibit some of his numerous rosettes, ribbons and trophies accumulated over 60 years. We also share with you David's passion for Afghan Hounds and embroidery. Older residents vividly recall coming across 'packs' of Afghans returning from parkland walks – quite a sight in the 1970s.

David's appreciation of Russian art found a willing participant in his friend and art advisor Martyn Cook, who went on to exhibit important items of Fabergé in Sydney in 2005. Martyn's generous bequest to the Foundation includes several Russian works of which the striking portrait of Dmitri Pavlovich is illustrated here.

Spring has arrived at Fermoy garden, which is looking beautiful – I always find the fleeting beauty of blossom one of life's little pleasures to behold!

Best wishes,

Robert Reason
Museum Director

EXHIBITION

Image: (detail) Prussia, Intarsia with soldiers, 1760–80, wool, probably from uniforms, all hand-sewn, intarsia, 140 x 110cm.

War and Pieced: The Annette Gero Collection of Quilts from Military Fabrics

War and Pieced brings the art form of 'military intarsia' quilts back to vivid life with some 25 breathtaking examples primarily from the Napoleonic Wars through the Crimean War of the mid-19th century to the late 19th century British colonial wars in India and southern Africa. In Adelaide, they are joined by military portraits, uniforms and Napoleonic prisoner-of-war items.

'Military intarsia' quilting is a craft that was widely practised in European armies of the 18th century before spreading to Britain in the 19th century. Scraps of discarded military and dress uniforms made from felted wool – often no more than a couple of centimetres in size – were repurposed to construct spellbinding textile mosaics with the most intricate and beautiful geometric patterns. Each piece is laid flat, in a fashion similar to marquetry or intarsia woodwork, and in some examples the quilt is built-up with layers of fabric, embroidery or beads to create flags, uniformed figures, coats of arms and more.

These rare military quilts stand as a testament that beauty can still be derived from the most terrible of circumstances.

Details:
Only at The David Roche Foundation
10 September to 19 December 2020
Open Tuesday to Saturday 10am to 4pm
Exhibition tickets Adult $10. Concession $8.
No booking required.

TODAY'S TREASURE

Showcasing the favourite pieces of our fantastic volunteers in The David Roche Collection. This edition with Susan M. looks at the canine rosettes won by David, now on display with his many ribbons and trophies in the Dressing room of Fermoy House.

Our Favourite Pieces

Mr Roche is described as having two passions, collecting art and exhibiting purebred dogs. In the process of researching awards and rosettes for a personal art project, I was surprised to discover a further connection between these two worlds.

The rosette: the eight petalled rosette appeared in early art from the 8th and 9th centuries CE and was based on the cycle of eight solar years; birth, death and rebirth. It was also believed to be a symbol of the king's power of life or death over his subjects.

In 1802, Napoléon created the Legion of Honour (*Légion d'honneur*) rosette as the

award for excellence in military or civic service. The award was given for 20 years of civil achievement in peacetime and for military bravery and service in times of war. In instituting the award, Napoléon recognised the positive effect an award had on the morale of his men, once saying, "that a soldier will fight long and hard for a bit of coloured ribbon".

The inaugural Legion of Honour carried a motif of a crown with oak and laurel wreaths and a portrait of Napoléon on the reverse. During the period of the Bourbon Restoration (1814-1830), these images were replaced by the head of the first Bourbon King Henry IV and the royal fleur-de-lis. In 1870, Napoléon III reverted to the original crown design and the female head of the republic.

From these civil and military beginnings the rosettes and ribbons became used for different types of awards in recognition of a variety of achievements or participations, including at dog shows across the world. The prize ribbons can be flat, folded or a variety of manipulations and carry the name of the event, sponsor, placement and date.

Typically the placement colours of awards are:
1st Blue   2nd Red
3rd Yellow   4th White
Best in Show: Red, white and blue

In the dog world, there is a prestige in winning at Crufts. The reward is small, with Best in Show receiving a cash award of £200, sash, ribbon and replica Kendall trophy. Charles Cruft ran his first dog show in 1891 and this continued until his death in 1938. Crufts was then sold to the Kennel Club (London) in 1939. The Club was founded in 1813 by thirteen gentlemen for the purpose of establishing breed standards and rules for the showing of dogs. The breeding of dogs had become a popular pastime in Britain from the early 19th century, and Mr Roche showed the world what was possible from Australia.

Susan M.
Volunteer
September 2020

Ch. Dzum Pollyannah (with David) going Best in Show at the Adelaide Royal Show under Pam Cross Stein

CANINE TIDBITS

Did you know...

Throughout his life David Roche hunted far and wide in the pursuit of the finest of precious objects for his Fermoy House.

This passion was only equalled by his assiduousness for finding and breeding the best and most beautiful dogs. 1971 was a particularly important year in this regard, as it saw the arrival of Dzum Pollyannah, perhaps the most stunning of David's Afghan Hounds, into the Fermoy family. Pollyannah was sired by David's exciting American import Coastwind Holyman, and was bred by Peter and Cathy Frost of Dzum Afghan Hounds.

David and Polly formed a strong bond, she was quite the princess and they were a formidable show team, culminating in Pollyannah winning Best in Show at the prestigious Adelaide Royal Show for three years in succession.

Without doubt, Polyannah was one of the dogs of whom David was most proud throughout his entire career, as shown by the multitude for photos David had taken of her in various locations around Fermoy House.

Britain, *Needlework biblical scene*, c.1810, silk, wool

FROM THE ARCHIVES

David Roche was fascinated by embroidery, in his youth practising this art and making his own pieces, indeed, a young David (aged just 7 years!) was singled out for note in the Southern Cross newspaper on Friday 17 December, 1937, for a piece he displayed at Loreto Convent Ladies' College (where his elder sister, Diana, attended school), which reads:

In the card embroidery work there were many very gaily tinted flower and animal designs, also some quaint little specimens of raffia work. One New Year calendar carried out in tones of blue wished all beholders "A Happy New Year." This last was the effort of small David Roche.

David's interest in needlework and embroidery continued into his adult life, and there are a number of pieces in The David Roche Collection that stand as a testament to his continued love of the craft, including: *Needlework fox* in embroidered silk (Britain c.1890, TDRF 2480); *Needlework map* by Ann Neate (Britain c.1800, TDRF 42); *Rooster with hens* using the Berlin wool work-style (Britain c.1860, TDRF 2793); the intricate *Needlework biblical scene* (Britain c.1810, TDRF 771); the gorgeous *pair of Regency chinoiserie face screens* (Britain c.1820, TDRF 17); and the fine *Louis XVI-era embroidered waistcoat* (France 1780-1789, TDRF 2716).

However, it is perhaps most telling in this regard that one of the only two items with which David was interred is a beautiful and finely embroidered cushion that his mother had given him as a gift.

ACQUISITION

Russia, Portrait of Grand Duke Dmitri Pavlovich, c.1905–16, paper, ink. TDRF 3820.

The Martyn Cook (1958–2019) Bequest 2020

In this edition, we are looking in more detail at one of the pieces from Martyn Cook's bequest - the portrait of Grand Duke Dmitri Pavlovich (1891–1942). This is a haunting piece with the young Grand Duke depicted in dry point engraving outline with shading of hair and face, as well as outline of neck and collar. In the lower left is the subject's Russian signature. It is the gaze of the subject that truly captures the attention of the viewer. Strangely, the reason for the portrait is unknown as is the artist.

Grand Duke Dmitri Pavlovich was the only son of Grand Duke Paul Alexandrovich (1860–1919), youngest legitimate son of Alexander II, and Princess Alexandra of Greece (1870–1891). Dmitri and his sister, Marie (1890–1958), were brought up by Paul's brother, Sergei (1857–1905), and his wife Elizabeth Feodorovna (1864– 918). In the years leading up to World War One, Dmitri became close to the Emperor Nicholas II and his family, and there were even rumours that Dmitri would marry Nicholas' eldest daughter, Olga (1895–1918).

Dmitri Pavlovich is primarily known to history as one of the murderers of the 'mad monk' Rasputin (1869 – 1916). Dmitri believed that he was acting for the good of the Emperor and the state in killing Rasputin. The deed was carried out on 30 December 1916, also involved were Prince Felix Yusupov (1887–1967), Felix Purishkevich (1870–1920) and Sergei Sukhotin (1887–1926). For his involvement, Dmitri was banished by the Emperor to the Persian front, an act that would ultimately save his life as he gained asylum in Britain after the Russian Revolution. He would go on to live in both Europe and America, have an amorous relationship with the famous Coco Chanel, and a son, Paul, by an American heiress, Audrey Emery. Dmitri died of tuberculosis in Switzerland aged 50 in 1942.

DIGITAL COLLECTION

Did you know that many of the items in The David Roche Collection are available online? Find your favourite piece or discover something new. Click the Search button below.
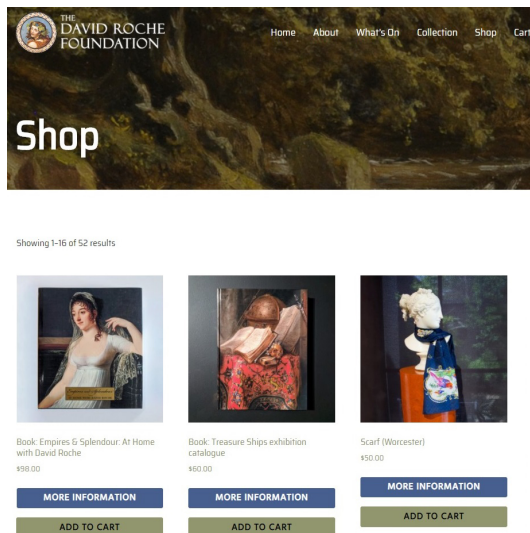
Search the collection

SHOP

The David Roche Foundation shop is online. We are open for business with all 40+ items ready to be ordered. From books to mouse pads to pens, we've got something for

everyone, and we can ship to anywhere in Australia.

Today we are featuring our fantastic new Portraits compact umbrella, perfect for the art lover with exquisite portraits of eight powerful women from The David Roche Collection, that it's also tough and lightweight makes it a wonderful and convenient accessory any time of year!

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Buy the Portraits umbrella

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LINKS WE LOVE

Hosted by friend of TDRF, Jolyon Warwick James, the Antiques Radio Show is a

monthly podcast from Sydney's radio station 2RPH (100.5 FM) in which Jolyon explores the news, reviews, events, objects and goings on in the world of antiques and the decorative arts:
https://www.2rph.org.au/listen/podcasts/antiques-radio-show

Coming to talk at TDRF in September is Adelaide-based quilter Pam Holland, who for the past 30 years has lived quilting. And she has a website dedicated to her passion, which includes a regular blog (with a fascinating section on her mission to recreate the world famous Bayeux tapestry), quilting designs, online lessons, and a podcast! If you're into quilting, there's something here for you:
https://iampamholland.com/

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