



united service club

# history & heritage notes

## ARTWORKS and ARTISTS

### of the Club's ARTIST OF THE MONTH Programme



**An outline of the artists and their artworks that we display that were acquired during  
The United Service Club Artist of the Month Programme.**

*We thank the History Interest Group and other volunteers who have researched and prepared these  
Notes The series will be progressively expanded and developed. They are intended as casual  
reading for the benefit of Members, who are encouraged to advise of any inaccuracies in the  
material.*

## ARTWORKS of the ARTIST OF THE MONTH Programme

### Introduction

Many newer USC members may not be aware that the Club ran *The United Service Club Artist of the Month Programme* in the 1990s and early 2000s.

A number of artworks were acquired by the Club during this programme, and hang in various locations within the Club House.

This Note outlines the programme and the artworks we acquired through it.<sup>1</sup>

### The Programme

Following the acquisition of new artworks as part of the Centenary celebrations of the Club in 1992, (eg Jacarandas by Keith Wenzel, hanging in the Glasgow Room) the Club Committee decided to embark on an Artist of the Month Programme.

The objectives of this programme were to make the Club an outlet for emerging Queensland and Australian artists, to provide a regularity of change in the artwork featured in the Main Bar, and to give the Club the opportunity to acquire additional artworks.

Each new collection would be hung before the Monthly meeting of the Club Committee and would be appreciated the same day by the Committee. Unofficial guidelines were agreed for exercising the Club's right of first refusal for any of the displayed artworks. The key criterion was that more than one committee member had to agree that the work was likely to be of long-term value to the Club as a decoration and should be purchased.

The success of this programme can be assessed some two decades later. All of the works acquired during this period remain in very public areas of the Club.

The programme also inspired Club Honorary Member Captain George Hunt RN, DSC\*, DSO\* to commission and present the "The Rendezvous", a depiction of two submarines, that hangs in the Moreton Room. That painting has an interesting background and an interesting story; it is worth reading them in the separate Note<sup>2</sup>.

A summary of the artists and their artworks that we hold as a result of the programme commences overleaf.

The photographs are not of professional standard and are included only to help members to identify the artworks so they can appreciate them 'in the flesh'.

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<sup>1</sup> This Note is largely based on information provided by Colonel Rick Olive who was President in 2000-2001 and has first-hand knowledge and recollections of the decisions made at the time these paintings were acquired.

<sup>2</sup> See The Note titled "The Rendezvous" (Artworks. Painting. The Rendezvous. Revised Jan 2016.RM) on our webpage.

**Artist: Christine Porter**

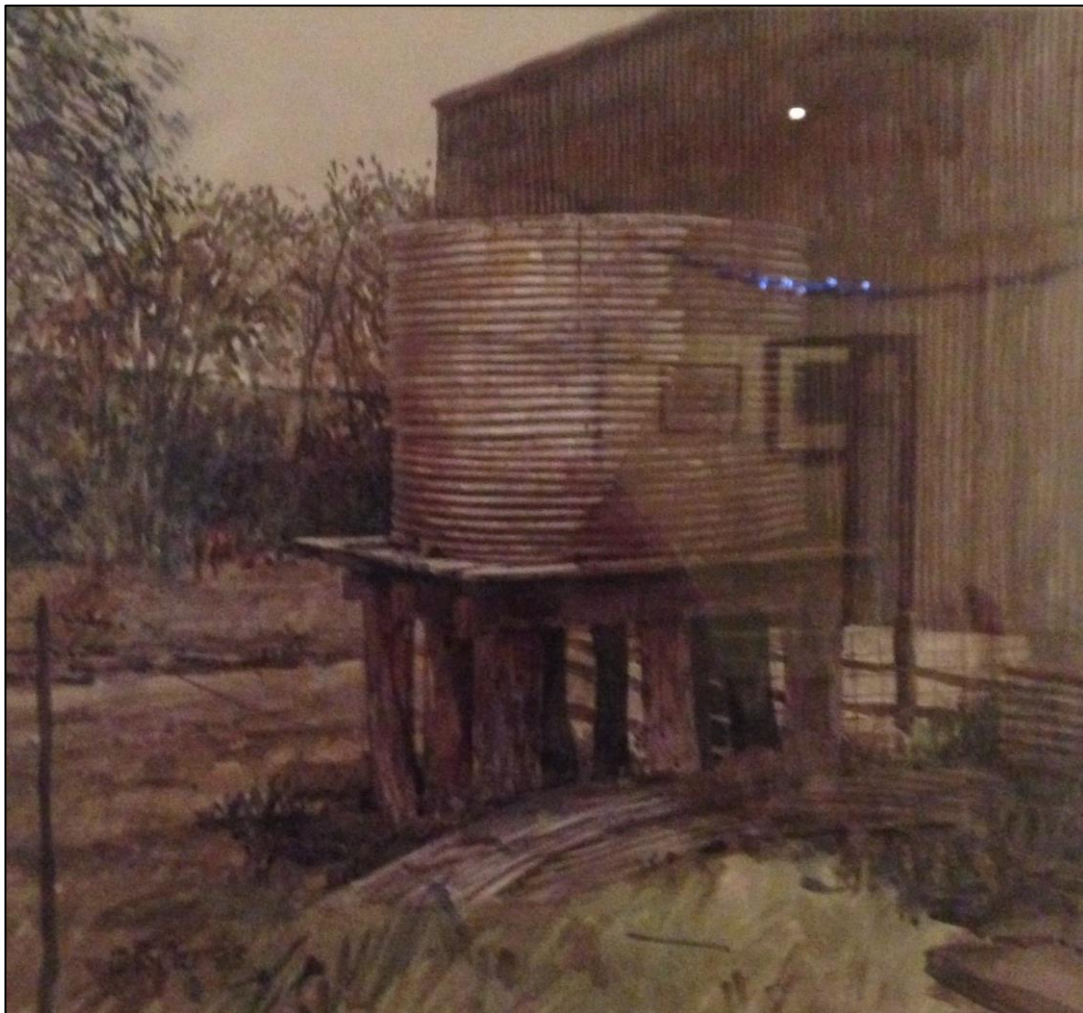
Christine Porter was and is a Lismore based artist whose website indicates she is a painter, printmaker, teacher and publisher. She specialises in creating artwork about Australian shearing sheds.

She was elected to the Australian Watercolour Institute as an exhibiting member in 1996 and to the Royal Art Society of New South Wales in 2007. She has exhibited widely in Australia and overseas and is the recipient of many prizes and awards. She established the publishing company *Full Moon Publications* in 1996 to create opportunities for showing her artwork in card and book form.

She has won many prizes and lists the USC artwork amongst her collections. Her work also features in collections in the Museo Nacional de la Acuarela, Mexico City, the National Gallery of Australia, Brisbane City Council, University of Southern Queensland, Queensland Arts Council, and galleries in many regional towns and cities in Queensland and New South Wales.

For the Club display she presented a collection of watercolours on paper featuring Australian farmyard scenes and particularly galvanised iron.

The Club purchased *The Water Tank* which now hangs in the Moreton Room.



*The Water Tank* (Moreton Room)



## Artist: Ron Van Gennip

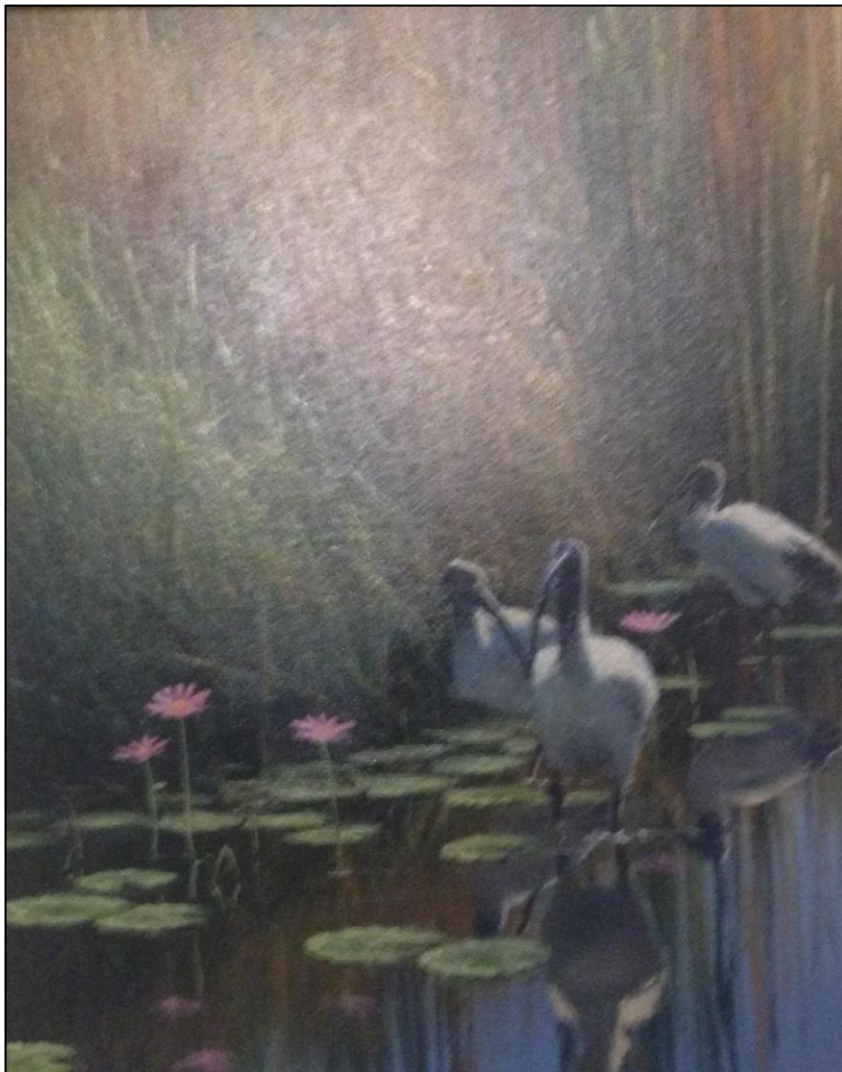
Australian impressionist Ron Van Gennip has for almost two decades painted rich canvasses that reveal his favourite subject - he emphatically affirms *children and their world*. *It's all about interpreting what lies just below the surface of their innocence.*

Born in Australia from parents of an artistic background who moved from Holland to Sydney, Ron was encouraged to draw, sketch and pursue the wonders of his childhood amid the majestic visuals of the famous Blue Mountains in the South of New South Wales. At the age of 18 years he accepted a three-year working scholarship with Sydney Technical College and also studied at the Drummoyne Art Society under Joshua Smith.

Ron has had numerous solo exhibitions in Australia as well as selected group exhibitions in Hong Kong (Wan Chai), Japan (Tokyo Austrade) and London (House of Dunhill)"

Wylde's *Australian Art* represents Ron Van Gennip and provides a useful biography. It presents him as follows: *Harmonious, graceful and elegant, Ron Van Gennip's work brings together the very best of impressionism. His recent works are sensitive, inspiring and timeless, presenting a natural gentle eloquence combined with rest and relaxation....*

Ron Van Gennip has the distinction of being the only artist of the month from whom the Club purchased three paintings. These are: an untitled painting of three ibis on the edge of a pond (hanging in the Norman Pixley Room), *Best of Friends*, and *Well, look at that!* (both of which hang in the Owen Room).



Untitled (hanging in the Moreton Room)



*Best of Friends* (in the Owen Room)



*Well, look at that!* (in the Owen Room)



**Artist: Christopher McVinish**

One gallery's website describes Christopher McVinish as *a master of light. It is essentially this element of his work, which invites us to see the commonplace as special and suffused with potential...His still life paintings convey a reverence for the Dutch Masters and draw attention to how memory and a sense of the divine can be evoked by 'ordinary' objects.*

The Club purchased *Two Green Apples* that hangs in the Owen Room.



*Two Green Apples* (in the Owen Room)

**Artist: Blair Wilson**

Blair Wilson, a Club member, was engaged and recognised as the Club Architect for many years. He was also an accomplished artist and his collection of watercolours *Bali 2000* attracted considerable attention.

The Club purchased one of these works titled *Bali Seaside* that now hangs in the rear porch of Level 2 (near the elevator).



*Bali Seaside* (Level 2, near the elevator)

