A Lasting Image Made of Cloth
The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection
Research Project, Masters of Art (Textile Design)
Book No. 1

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A Lasting Image Made of Cloth
The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection

Presented in these four books are materials supporting a Masters degree by project involving the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection situated at Lismore in the Western District of Victoria.

These research materials record the details of the researcher’s deep-hands on involvement in the project from its beginning in 2000 that involved the production of the catalogue Six Decades of Fashion From Flappers to Flares. A copy of this catalogue appears in Book 1 Appendix.1

During the progress of the project key actions were regularly undertaken by the researcher that included participation in events associated with the Collection and its Flappers to Flares demonstrations; many local and long distance field trips and a wide variety of interviews as well as ongoing communication with Dorothy Nicol and her supporters. These activities are described in detail including images within the four books and they are also listed in the bibliography that appears in Book 2.

In addition to a description of the direct, practical work in determining, testing and applying an appropriate cataloguing discipline, the researcher discusses a range of other collections, the motivation for collecting itself, and provides historical insights and references about collecting generally.

Practical aspects of the project included: the production of the second catalogue, Beyond Flappers to Flares; provision of sample cataloguing, instructions and focus group feedback; research and identification of specific garments’ places in local history; and finally presenting examples of selected garments packed to archival standards as a guide to secure the longevity of the collection.ii

At the conclusion of the project, the owner, Dorothy Nicol, was positioned to formalise her collection, seek additional support and funding and to take it to the higher level of sustainability. A diagrammatic representation of the four books that comprise this Masters degree by project follows.

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2. Walsh, Sylvia, 2006, Beyond Flappers to Flares, Book 1, A Lasting Image made of Cloth: The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection.
This research project is presented in four complementary books which together represent completion of the project and demonstrate the outcomes delivered.

Set out below is the structure of the project outlining the content of the components:

**BOOK 1**
Cataloguing Historic Fashion Collections
Collected Data applied:
- Case studies Nos 1 & 2
- Case study outcomes
- Catalogue 2, 2006 – *Beyond Flappers to Flares*

**BOOK 2**
Exegesis – Explanation of the Research
Collected Data theory:
- Introduction and Background to the Project
- Research Questions
- Collecting and Collections

**BOOK 3**
Research Project Support Materials (A)
- Background to Data collection
- Development of collection cataloguing
- Contributions to body of knowledge and organisation for the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection
- Action research references – records of selected publicity, community participation and focus group records.

**BOOK 4**
Research Project Support Materials (B)
- Methodology of data collection
- Collection research
- Research approach and process
- Research findings
- Examples of research of data collected
- Specific research references listing.

= this book
Introduction

This new catalogue, *Beyond Flappers to Flares*, page 54-100, flows from and carries through the sentiment expressed on the front cover of the original year 2000 catalogue iii which predated this study:

“All styles are historical styles with social, cultural, moral, economic and technological conditions stitched, sewn or printed into minutely detailed documents of a specific moment in time.” iv

In Book No. 1 two major case studies are provided of formal cataloguing formats, followed by more cost-effective, practical and time-efficient forms of cataloguing applied to a range of garments from the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection.

Detailed explanations of the research process and materials supporting this project appear in Books Nos 2, 3, and 4.
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Project Objectives:
The main objective of this Masters project has been to identify and explore the standards and conditions required to formalise private historic fashion collections, using one such collection as a model.

A series of research questions (Book No. 2) were posed to direct the progress and structure of the research project. The research questions taken up in this Masters project focused on the challenges of selecting, cataloguing, documenting and accessing private historic fashion collections.

The project was based on the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection, Lismore, Victoria, Australia. Formerly known as the Green Gables Historic Fashion Collection, it was the subject of initial documentation by the researcher in a catalogue prepared in the year 2000 for the Flappers to Flares parade, Terang'. Since the sale of the Green Gables property in 2001 all subsequent reference has been to the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection. This is the name that appears throughout the study.

As anticipated in the project proposal, there were parallel and overlapping themes of investigation involved in addressing the research question no. five. The questions directed investigation into the methods and standards necessary for successfully selecting, organising and documenting historic fashion costume collections. They also prompted research into the application of systems for useful access and dissemination of information about historic fashion costume collections. In the course of reviewing current trends in museum studies and collection cataloguing, traditional print methodology and state of the art electronic cataloguing were explored.

Both the above themes were originally pursued in seeking to establish a style and format complementary to the operation of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University (RMIT University) Frances Burke Textile Resource Centre (FBTRC). With a restructuring of the role of FBTRC within RMIT, this aspect of research became secondary.

The needs of all potentially interested parties have been kept in mind. These include teachers and students of costume history and fashion, those with a specific textile and

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fashion focus, and historians. The role of the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection as a model for other similar collections was in the forefront of consideration.

Project Background:
In 2000, the project researcher participated in producing the original *Flappers to Flares* catalogue covering part of the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection. The catalogue was published to accompany the first major parade of the collection at Rosebank, an historic house and garden in Terang, Victoria.

As a result of the parade and sales of the catalogue, the extent of interest in such collections became apparent. There was a demand for access and the need for cataloguing, organising and maintenance became urgent matters for the owner, Dorothy Nicol, and her supporters.

“A Lasting Image Made of Cloth—an ending continues” was a phrase taken from the 2000 catalogue *Six Decades of Fashion–From Flappers to Flares.*

This comment was where the 2000 story halted. The parade audience was left to reflect on their experience and read the catalogue in order to further their knowledge and complement their memories of the event.

In this sense, with the book still open, an ending became a beginning for this Masters research project. Hence, the title of the current project emerged.

The value in researching how to establish and maintain a system for organising the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection was given further impetus by a quotation in the *Flappers to Flares* catalogue. After a week at the Paris fashion shows, media and literary personality, Clive James, said:

“These dresses will always look good; there is such a thing as a lasting image made of cloth. As styles filter down and change everything, and as hems and collars ebb and flow we measure time. What better to measure it by?”

The research study, *A Lasting Image Made of Cloth–The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection*, has uncovered intriguing historical stories within the Dorothy Nicol Historic

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Fashion Collection. The stories provide insights into aspects of life in rural Australia. Fashion plays a part in the collective memory of many communities as they reflect nostalgically on their development, on local characters and on key events.

As the voice-over said in a 1991 BBC documentary on the Fashion Industry:

“All styles are historical styles with social, cultural, moral, economic and technological conditions stitched, sewn or printed into minutely detailed documents of a specific moment in time.”

In the case of the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection, the story is about the images that cloth, textiles, clothing and accessories make and the impressions dress, costume and textiles leave. During their active life, clothing and fashion make strong practical, aesthetic and psychological statements and provide a form of non-verbal communication. As the fashion life-cycle moves on, selected items make it to the care of costume museums while, at the other extreme, a very large number are, for example, unceremoniously shredded and pulped into mattress padding. There are a wide variety of destinations in between.

For the examples of past fashions, the degree of their commercial worth and/or sentimental value motivates humans to save them as keepsakes, souvenirs or for heirloom bequests. These chosen items may be displayed and admired. Sometimes they enjoy a practical economic recycling and reinvention as daily or special occasion wear – a renaissance in fact.

The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection had its origin in Dorothy Nicol’s strong interest in both fashion and history. Over time she accumulated an eclectic range of clothing, accessories, dolls and lifestyle memorabilia. As awareness of her collection grew in the Western District of Victoria, so did her collection, augmented by gifts and bequests.

Reflecting on her impetus for her collection to the local press in 2002, Dorothy Nicol explained:

“I started collecting clothes in the 1980s with a view to using the dresses to make clothes for some of the dolls at my shop called Green Gables in Lismore. I just couldn’t bear to bring myself to cut into the dresses and ruin the fabrics and

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consequently my collection started.5

The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection represents a Regional Victorian fashion perspective, with a particularly Western District emphasis. The extensive range of garments have been worn, loved and now loved again in this region. Garments have been enthusiastically revived for the public’s entertainment. This is not an academically precise collection but one with the charm and fascination of local history. Special warmth and personality permeates the collection through Dorothy Nicol, her close associated Judie Irving, and many supportive local identities.6

In her early collecting years, Dorothy made it known that she wanted her collection to be a source of shared pleasure. It was with this in mind that she and Judie Irving conceived the Flappers to Flares series of parades. These parades became a theatre of memories for local residents and visitors alike. The 2000 commemorative parade catalogue was designed as a commercially viable memento, as well as an enjoyable educational resource. As such, the catalogue, Six Decades of Fashion—From Flappers to Flares, breathed life into the garments by presenting them in their historical contexts.7

The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection is now housed in what was once the Lismore Masonic Hall. This facility provides an appropriate location for the ongoing housing and care of the expanding collection.8&9

Two selected garments from the collection were catalogued, to the recommended standard, to demonstrate the process of private collection formalisation. In so doing, it was shown how an accumulation can be upgraded and value added to transform it into an important, protected and organised resource of a professional standard.10

In the light of the foregoing, it is hoped that the thrust of this study towards formalising, organising and standardising the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection has been timely.

A LASTING IMAGE MADE OF CLOTH

THE DOROTHY NICOL HISTORIC FASHION COLLECTION – RESEARCH PROJECT CASE STUDY

Cataloguing Historic Fashion Collections.
Part A – Context and Guidelines for Cataloguing Historic Fashion Collections

Introduction to Cataloguing Historic Fashion Collections

This segment of study presents authoritative cataloguing guidelines drawn from world best practice recommendations. These have been tested and shown to meet the needs of the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection. As such, they are applicable to all non-professional, regional and minor collections of historic fashion throughout Australia. The model cataloguing template is shown, along with instructions for its completion. In addition, two fully completed examples of catalogued garments from the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection are presented.

Cataloguing Background –

The study commenced with a review of cataloguing methodologies employed by other collectors in their collections. Standing out among the data on cataloguing methods is the work of Naomi Tarrant. Tarrant is the current curator of costume and textiles at the National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh and former secretary of the Costume committee of the International Council of Museums. She is a widely-recognised authority on this subject.

The two seminal texts by Naomi Tarrant are, Collecting Costume – The Care and Display of Clothes and Accessories and The Development of Costume, National Museums of Scotland. The author defines the intent of her publications as being to provide practical manuals for the collector of historical dress, accessories and textiles. The texts contain useful, detailed descriptions and cataloguing instructions including ‘Making an Inventory’. This material was of specific assistance in regard to the needs of the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection. As well as inventory, numbering systems, descriptions and photography are among the areas discussed.

The overall cataloguing activities and considerations that Naomi Tarrant writes about are suitable for various sized and resourced collections. She explains from her experience, the difference in scale and scope that might be considered when applying systems to private, self-funded collections as opposed to mainstream, large public galleries, museums and major collections.

Cataloguing Criteria –

Making an Inventory:
Making an Inventory was stressed as the key activity to the successful organisation, conservation and display of historic fashion collections. It was emphasised that the information of importance should be able to be seen at a glance – for example, the number, the date, and exactly what the item is.

Dating and Identification:
Tarrant explains that the difficulty is often deciding the date and what the piece actually is. More often than not, the history of the item is a verbal one that may easily have been distorted by memory and time. The exact details may never have been recorded. When applicable, a range of estimated dating may be shown, for example: about 1840-1845, or circa(c.) 1840–1845.

Dating and identification can be aided by pictorial material. Useful sources recommended were: historic magazines and plates; reference books; special archives; libraries; displays; exhibitions; and museums.

As well as pictorial evidence from general museum collections, fashion plates and fashion reference books, old photographs and postcards were suggested resources. While painting as a source of dating assistance was considered useful, it needs to be kept in mind that some artists repeatedly use the same clothes as props for visual composition reasons rather than as true representations of the current dress styles.

Valuable dating and identification sources recommended by Naomi Tarrant from an United Kingdom viewpoint include: English Women’s Domestic Magazine of the 1850s and 1860s showing coloured fashion plates and drawings; Girls’ Own Paper of the 1880s; The Queen 1890s; 20th century paper sewing pattern books; World War 1, Vogue magazines; World War 2, couture and ready to wear trade magazines. Many textbooks on historic fashion use these references, so they are useful when access is not available to original fashion publications.

Dating costume often requires meticulous research. Details are identified that may relate to a range of dates when an item may have been produced and worn. In the Dorothy
Nicol Historic Fashion Collection, types of fastenings, types of fabric, types of sewing, manufacturers’ and makers’ labels, as well as provenance, assisted the dating. Photographs and illustrations of similar dated fashion items have been matched to sample garments from the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection. These are as set out in examples in the recommended cataloguing model that follows in Section 3, Part C of this paper.

**Numbering:**
At a basic level, numbering is done in simple numerical sequence – 1, 2, 3, etc. Normally, collection item numbering includes the year – 1981.1 or 1.1981. In larger collecting organisations the department or the collection name or item category may be included as numbers and letters.

It is essential to account for the number of pieces in one outfit. For instance, a dress may have a skirt and bodice as well as separate pieces like a belt and bustle, as was common in the majority of nineteenth century dresses. To maintain security, all removables should be numbered and accounted for separately.

**Gender and Age:**
The gender and age of the item’s wearer should be plainly recorded. For example, male/female/adult/child/baby can be used as multiple heading choices. The relevant ones can be circled and/or the non-relevant ones deleted.

**Styling Details:**
A full description of the style can start at the neckline and move downwards to the hem and include linings, fastenings, sewing techniques, shapes and silhouette, fitting, darts and seams. The inside detail should also be closely inspected and recorded. Identification of inside and outside features of items should be similarly thorough, since there is often variation.

Older style costumes, from the 18th and 19th century, for example, have design features helpful for identification that are clearly visible and recognisable such as: the position of the waistline; bustles and skirt silhouette; under skirts; separate or joined bodice and skirt; lining, boning and/or shaping; fabric types; colours; patterns; and dressmaking
techniques. Other historical fashion eras have recognisable design features along with styling and manufacturing techniques that aid in the identification and dating.

Materials:
All materials from which the item is made are important and need to be included. When the exact material is uncertain, it is important to note that the compiler has estimated the fibre content or fabric construction. This will enable future researchers to be aware that, in this area of identification, an estimate has been made and that it may need to be researched further. In this and other identification areas any doubt should be expressed and recorded as a matter of course.

Identification of fabrics as natural, man-made or synthetic has helped in the identification of garments in the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection year 2000 catalogue. Dates when man-made and synthetic fabrics were invented and became widely available can be helpful with dating.

Colour:
In general, colour is a difficult subject. Perceptions and descriptions vary greatly among laypersons. Amateur collectors clearly need basic, commonsense guidelines in this area.

Naomi Tarrant states that, to date, standardisation in the area of seeing and labelling colour has not been workable. Her suggested approach is to describe colours simply, with main colour themes like white, black, blue and red. The depth of colour can then be further specified as light, dark, dull or bright, for example. If the colour looks like a very well known colour, this may be added in brackets. For example, Wedgwood blue, forest green or chocolate brown. It is interesting to note that in a recent Australian Broadcasting Corporation television show covering the Banana Room Fashion Collection of Sophie van Rood, a featured garment was described as Wedgwood blue.13

To assist in identification of colour by sight, texts like A Dictionary of Colour provide detailed listings of names and descriptions of colour. For example: Marmalade Orange will be as the conserve made from oranges, Marmalade Jam; Marigold will be the bright yellow-orange as the flower, Marigold. In light of the foregoing it is interesting to note

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this publication’s listing for Wedgwood blue which is described as the blue (light or dark) characteristic of Wedgwood pottery.\textsuperscript{14}

A further recommendation by technical textile and fashion experts at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University, Textiles and Fashion Department, Brunswick, Melbourne is that colour should be identified and compared under the strongest possible glare-free light and that consistency of viewing approach and lighting conditions is essential.\textsuperscript{15}

While acknowledging the existence of universal colour guides such as the Pantone Textile Colour System, it is generally agreed that cost factors inhibit access to comprehensive, commercial colour guides and updates for relatively small, private collections.

Pattern:
Patterned fabric construction and patterned surface decoration should be briefly described as a design style, if appropriate. Madras check, paisley and hounds-tooth are good examples where the pattern may be clearly recognisable.

A printing method may be added – roller, screen print, heat transfer, for example. Well known names of textiles, weaves, knits and finishes may be used such as satin, watered, corded, moire, grossgrain, and damask, if known. Visual descriptions including lightweight silk or knobbly-surfaced fancy-weave wool are better than an incorrect guess.

Trimmings:
Trimmings should be noted and include ribbons, lace, embroidery and other, usually non-functional, surface decorations. If possible it should also be noted if the trims are handmade or machine produced. Historically, hand-sewing was used to attach most trims. Trims were often removable for laundering or to use on another garment.

Hooks and eyes in metal on tapes were developed during the 19th century. Individual brass hooks and eyes, as sets, or with the eyes sometimes made of sewing thread, had become established options within the range of traditional fastenings. In earlier times, drawstring fastenings, ribbon ties and buttons were the extent of garment closures.

\textsuperscript{15} There are references for British and American standards for defining lighting for colour matching such as, \textit{Theory and Practice of Color}, Frans Gerritsen, ISBN 028970521. RMIT Textile Testing Laboratory is a useful, commercial reference and RMIT Library is a helpful source of specialist information. Of particular assistance were Sue Scott, RMIT Textile Testing Laboratory and Grazyna Rosinaka, RMIT Textiles & Fashion Library.
Dressmakers also started to use factory-made laces, frills and pleated trimmings around the mid-1870s. These trimmings were used because they were removable and launderable protection for full-length hemlines and other areas of wear and tear.

Identification of trimmings and fastenings like buttons and zippers can be made based on the type and when that type was invented and became widely used. Buttons made from natural components like shell, horn, glass, gelatine or synthetic products indicate the date that the item was made and worn. The usage of plastic buttons helps establish a relatively recent age for the item. Zipper fastenings also help with dating garments parallel to information about the date of the historical invention and use of zippers. Whether zippers were made of metal, plastic, visible or invisible also indicates age. Information about the history and composition of buttons and zippers was used to identify garments in the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection year 2000 catalogue.16

Sewing Techniques:
The overall construction of the item can be observed and estimated as hand or machine production. Construction and sewing techniques to be noted include linings and attachment of fastenings, sewing types, fitting, darts and seam types.

In historical times, pinning, tying and hand-sewing were the methods of constructing garments and textile fashion items. Throughout the 19th century and up to the second decade of the 20th century fine inside finishing, often by hand-stitching, was the normal method favoured by leading dressmakers. Hand-sewing continued to be used to attach most trims until relatively recent times.

Machine sewn garments were not generally available until about 1850. The sewing machine was invented in 1840; initial cost may have been prohibitive and restricted its use at first. Sometimes hand-sewing was used together with machine-sewing in garments. This may tell a story of garment alteration and customisation as well as a lack of availability of the sewing-machine. Garments were often altered to suit other, later wearers. This was especially evident in the construction of children’s clothing.

The type of sewing methods used were available in estimating the age of the garments that

were included in the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection year 2000 catalogue. Examples of well-documented provenance are present in the sale catalogues for 20th century fashion and textiles from Christie’s Auctions, South Kensington, London. For instance, a selection of sale catalogue listings read:

“Personal wardrobe of Chanel; the Dior wardrobe of Olivia de Havilland; and the Balenciaga, Yves St. Laurent and Givenchy wardrobe of Mrs. De Osborne.”

In another list provenance was an important part of the sale item’s description. The Doyle New York catalogue highlights, within the category of Couture – Textiles and Accessories, a sales description with photo reading:

“$2,390 – two Chanel faux tortoise shell cuffs, 1985 property of Lena Horn.”

Clearly, in the above two examples, the ownership aspects of provenance added emphasis and interest to the garments in addition to their haute couture origins.

17. Costume, Fans and Textiles, 1997, July-September Calendar and Brochure of Sales, Christie’s South Kensington, 85 Old Brompton Road, London SW7 3LD, UK.
A Lasting Image Made of Cloth

The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection
Research Project Case Study

Cataloguing Historic Fashion Collections.
Part B – Recommended Cataloguing Model.

The following cataloguing model for historic fashion is based on guidelines provided by Naomi Tarrant in her book, Collecting Costume – The Care and Display of Clothes and Accessories.

Tarrant makes the following succinct recommendation about identification of costume and preparing catalogues:

"Ideally the description should be able to give anyone with some knowledge of costume history a mental picture of what the piece looks like."[19]

Identification details include: date, identification, numbering, age and gender of wearer, styling details, materials, colours, trimmings, sewing techniques, labels, dimensions, size and provenance.

These requirements have been met in developing a model template for cataloguing. The model template has been used to catalogue two samples from the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection that is the focus of this research.

Research indicates that, to ensure wide and easy application of the model, the cataloguing template should be available in print and electronic versions. At present some small private collectors lack electronic resources, as well as skills and confidence, in electronic applications.

By making the template accessible as an electronic document in the public domain, the opportunity would be provided for historic fashion collectors to utilise a previously unavailable method of documenting their collections. The adding of supporting picture material would be readily accomplished through the electronic document’s flexibility.

Electronic information storage opportunities have great appeal for the growing number of electronically literate collectors with appropriate technical resources.

In addition, updating of material in an electronic record will be a relatively straightforward task. A readily available electronic document of this nature has the potential to bring about uniformity, over time, throughout Australia’s broad range of historic fashion collections.

In the meantime, the hard copy document will provide a readily available guide towards

standardisation for smaller private collections without electronic documentation facilities.

The blank model template and completed templates for two selected garments follow.
CATALOGUING TEMPLATE:

Identification details –
Collection name, owner and location:

Collection type: (The overall category of objects, for example Historic Fashion)

Object name: (The particular object name within the category of objects, for example, Menswear, Dinner suit)

Object/sample number: (Allocate unique code number for each sample taking into account the collection name, collection type, object name, date or continue to use a numerical system established by the collection or the owner or organization to which the sample belongs)

Date identification:
Date acquired:
Date catalogued and cataloguer:

Object Characteristics and description: (Include styling details and sewing or construction techniques. All aspects should be completed in as much detail as possible)

Materials:
Trimmings:
Dimensions and size:
Condition:
Label:
Details of the wearer/owner:

Acquisition details:
Text and graphic references and consultant/s:

Photographs: (From several views including the inside of garments, as appropriate)

Exhibition History:
# A Lasting Image Made of Cloth

**The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection**

Research Case History –

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<tr>
<td>29. Dolman – whole garment close-up, front view</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cataloguing Historic Fashion Collections.

Part C - Cataloguing Case Study:

Set out below is a trial catalogue entry, using the recommended cataloguing template.

SAMPLE 1 –

Identification Details:

Collection name, owner and location: Dorothy Nicol Historical Fashion Collection, The Masonic Hall, Williams Street, Lismore, Victoria, Australia.

Collection Type: Historical fashion garments, accessories, textiles and related memorabilia.

Object name/sample number: Young child’s Dress. Number, 1.CLD/1.2003.

Date Identification: Estimated date produced and worn late mid-1800s to 1900.

Date Acquired: mid-2003

Date Catalogued: August 2003, S. Walsh.

Exhibition History: This garment has been on display on a stand in a cabinet at the Masonic Hall Lismore from mid-2003. During this research study, the garment was packed in an archive box. From 2007 it has been on view by appointment. (Book 4 pp100-101, Book 3 p90)

20. Recommended Numbering System is used here:
1.CLD/1.2003
1 = collection section 1, fashion garments. CLD = child’s garment, 1 = the first one of this category, 2003 = year catalogued, 2003.

Object Characteristics – description including styling details, sewing and construction techniques:

- Black dress, trimmed with white lace edges, black velvet ribbons, black rouleaux with jet bugle-beads sewn to both edges.

- Fitted bodice with a wide, rounded neckline, seamed at waist with very full, box-pleated skirt.

- Box pleats at waist of skirt have double fold underlay, which together with pleated hemline frill, accentuate the skirt’s fullness.

- Crisp skirt silhouette supported by stiffened linings with the quality of the main fabric, silk taffeta, also contributes to the dress’s definite crinoline silhouette.
• Pleated frill attached over bottom of hemline adds to the skirt fullness, frill edge is hand-pinked.

• Pleated head sleeves, short puffed, featuring unusual peaked-edge shape, with ribbed spinning-top profile glass buttons.

• Sleeve-edge fullness gathers into a lace-edged binding stitched and held in place by decorative glass buttons, one at the point of each of three peaks (non-peaked edges remain unattached).

• Mid-blue binding covers the seam between sleeve and lace-edge.

• Bodice and skirt back seam includes, inserted into it, three black flap-sections or peplum with mid-blue bound edges around each of loose three edges.

• Centre-back bodice opening and skirt placket fasten with metal-hooks and thread-loops, middle piece of peplum flaps over to cover skirt-placket when fastened.

• Decorative glass buttons are attached down centre-front bodice. (buttons not functional)

• Garment construction and inside garment features include raw edges and small, hand running-stitch seams.

• Black cotton-thread is used and extra wide allowances are made at the bodice side seams with a closed seam, which includes 3 cm wide seam allowance.

• The larger seam allowances may have been made for growth and adaptation of the dress for several children of different sizes and sexes for different occasions.
• Also, use of black colour may have been originally chosen for funeral or mourning wear. The blue binding and lace trims may have been added at a later date for another occasion.

• Hand-sewn throughout by a dressmaker or proficient home-sewer because of the degree of complexity of sewing techniques including piping inserted in seams, detailed trims, and creative, technical applications, especially on the sleeves.
Materials:

To assist in this area of research, the professional services and resources of Sue Scott, RMIT, Textiles and Fashion Department, Brunswick were employed. This garment was viewed under a textile microscope, on the 2nd of August 2004, to establish fabric fibre and construction details:

- Main fabric is thick, stiff, plain weave silk taffeta, plain dyed black
- Bodice lining is cotton calico plain weave, undyed natural-beige colour
- Skirt lining is cotton canvas plain weave.
- Skirt lining is stiffened to tailoring finish. Lining is a similar quality to fabric used to support inside of tailored garments, especially collars and lapels. This is undyed light-brown colour, including pocket-bag inside front left-side skirt.
Trimmings:

• White cotton yarn, machine-made lace, hand slip-stitched to neckline and sleeve edges under piped neckline, bound into seam inside edge.

• Mid-blue plain weave silk-taffeta edge-bindings, hand-hemmed around edges of three-piece backwaist peplum and around sleeve edges.
• Black velvet ribbons, silk and black silk-rouleaux with jet bugle-beads sewn to both edges, trim front and back bodice. (ribbon and rouleaux, 6mm wide)

7.

• Bodice trims, two rows of ribbon, parallel to centre front are hand slip-stitched on one of their edges on to bodice.

8.

• Ribbon is also hand-stitched in running-stitches, covering over the seam stitches between the skirt and the skirt frill.
• Black silk rouleaux-binding with jet bugle-beads sewn to both edges is attached, one row parallel to two rows of ribbons, tacked to each side of bodice.

• Three rows in all of these ribbon and rouleaux trims extend from shoulder to waistline at each side of centre-front and centre-back.

• Black glass, conical-shaped buttons have a ribbed top point, spinning-top shape, with metal shank.
• Six buttons are attached to centre front and held into position by a shank being forced through fabric and lining and knotted on the inside with narrow white cotton tape.

• One piece of tape looped and knotted through the bodice and each button shank holds all buttons in place.

• White cotton tape inserted as neckline drawstring that is inside lace-edge internal seam-neatening. The tape ties at centreback inside neckline.
• Black silk taffeta piping inserted in bodice-waist-shirt seam and armhole-seam between bodice and sleeve. (2mm piping)

• Lining pocket-bag inside left-front skirt, through a slit into skirt left-side-front, it features gusset shape fullness and edges hand-neatened with rolled-felled seam allowances.

• Decorative hand-cut edges finish the skirt hemline-frill. Box pleated frill is edged at bottom with scalloped cut hand-pinked edge.

• Frill edge closest to seam shows selvedge, which is left free 1cm above stitch-line.
Dimensions and size:
This garment was fitted on a contemporary size 4/age 4 child’s dressmaking fitting stand (chest 60 cm - waist 56 cm - hips 62 cm). It was unable to fasten completely at the back-bodice. It appears to be less than the contemporary size 4. On this basis, it may be estimated to be made to originally fit a smaller, younger child. However, this estimate should be tempered by indications that 21st Century western children are larger, overall, than their forebears.

Garment measurements, which are usually slightly bigger than body measurements are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chest, 55 cm</td>
<td>Centre back skirt, 35 cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waist, 54 cm</td>
<td>Centre front skirt, 34 cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length from shoulder to hemline, 63 cm</td>
<td>Skirt side, no seam, 35 cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Across back bodice, 25 cm</td>
<td>Shoulder, 4 cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Across front bodice, 22 cm</td>
<td>Skirt back placket, 12 cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodice side seam, 15 cm</td>
<td>Skirt circumference, 224 cm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Condition:
Despite its age and less than optimal storage conditions, the dress is in a fair state. It appears to have the potential for conservation and renovation.

Label:
This garment is hand sewn throughout without a commercial manufacturer’s label.
Details of wearer and owner:
Jenny Barr donated the child’s dress to Dorothy Nicol on behalf of her aunt, Janet Dawe. The dress was found in Janet Dawe’s family home in Belmont, Victoria. The child’s dress was stored with a small woman’s cape/jacket, in a trunk in the aunt’s house.

Janet Dawe, now in her 90s, has little recollection of this garment. Janet Dawe was a maiden lady from well-to-do country stock. She, along with her peers and forebears had been active in fashionable society and lived a comfortable rural lifestyle.

Jenny and her sister had never seen the dress before they prepared their aunt’s property for sale. Jenny Barr and her sister Barbara Denness continue to research the origins of this surprise find which is believed to have belonged to their aunt’s grandmother. There are mysterious gaps in the garment’s story which they hope to fill.

Acquisition details:
The dress was donated, along with others, by Jenny Barr of Lismore on behalf of her aunt, Janet Dawe. (See above.)

Text References:
In each of the text references listed below, photographs, sketches, paintings and descriptions were found of dresses similar to the sample dress. The following is an overview of text reference findings:

• The garments pictured from the 1840s to the 1890s, were the closest matches. During the Victorian era (1837-1901) the dominant women’s garment silhouette was the crinoline.

• The pictures show children wearing crinoline dresses that have fitted bodices, wide necklines, narrow shoulders, puff sleeves and very full skirts. The sample dress shares these characteristics.

• The crinoline style dresses and garments with similar silhouettes, appeared to be popular wear for young children, from about two years of age, upwards. Dresses were often worn with frilled pantaloons visible underneath the skirt.

• Older boys, up to about 4 or 5 years often wore a crinoline shaped tunic with trousers underneath. Older girls dresses, up to adult sizes, were styled very closely to women’s crinoline fashions.
• In addition to the overall crinoline garment shape, styling details, fabric usage and trimmings that were popular and shown in the text examples, are similar to the sample dress. Features, such as lace edging, piping inserts, decorative rather than functional buttons and use of woven silk fabric, seen in this sample, are well represented in the text pictures.

Ashelford, Jane, The Art of Dress
Plates 185 & 188
The child’s dress in this Case study 1, features hand-pinked cut edges of the skirt frill, similar to a method shown in the text reference plates. These references provided helpful date identification guidance for the sample dress.

Ewing, Elizabeth, History of Children’s Costume.
See figure 64.

Fletcher, Marion, Costume in Australia 1788-1901.
See pictures of note, 41, 57, 79, and 96. 2 plates

Fletcher, Marion, Costume and Accessories in the 18th Century. Costume Collection catalogue, National Gallery of Victoria, 1977.
See figure 64

The child’s dress in this Case Study 1, features hand-pinked cut edges of the skirt frill, similar to a method shown in the text reference plates. These references provided helpful date identification guidance for the sample dress.

This woman’s gown also has hand-pinked cut edges decorating the sleeve frills. Fashion trends in adults styling are often forerunners to usage in children’s wear and so aided date identification of the child’s dress in the case study.

Fletcher, Cedric, Clothes in Australia, A Pictorial History 1788-1980.

See Victorian era fashion silhouettes and styling, page 91.

Kybalova, Ludmila & Herbenova, Olga, The Pictorial Encyclopaedia of Fashion.
See Victorian era fashion silhouettes and styling.

Rose, Claire, Children’s Clothes. Of note, plates, 3, 5, 6 and Girls 1820-1890, fig.56.
• A garment photograph from this text is of special interest because of its similarity to the sample. A girl's dress from within the dates 1820 to 1890 features a fitted bodice, wide neckline, puff sleeves and full skirt with extra width created by gathered hemline flounces like the sample.

• The garment pictured is of black silk fabric, trimmed with ribbon and piping similar to the sample.

• The dress length is 79 cm, estimated for a four year old. This dimension compares to the sample that is 63 cm from the shoulder to the hem and estimated to be for a child four years old, or slightly younger.

Dawe family History References:

• A black and white photograph of the sample dress remains. The portrait of an unknown child wearing this dress has been located among Janet Dawe's possessions by Barbara Denness, Jenny Barr's sister. As custodian of family photographs, Barbara reports that the photograph was in a lockable, leather bound album covering the mid-1880s to 1900.

• This was the only photo in the album not bearing subject and photographic studio identification details. The photograph is black and white and the child's portrait of head and shoulders. The portrait may have been of the type and size kept in a wallet or displayed in a miniature frame.
The girl in the photograph appears to be between three and four years old. This is a similar age to the estimate for the wearer of the sample, considering the dress characteristics applied to the text references.

Consultants:

Patrick Snelling, Program Coordinator, Textile Design Higher Education, RMIT University.

Dr. Juliette Peers, Lecturer, Textile Design Higher Education, RMIT University.

Sue Scott, TAFE Teacher, Fashion and Textiles, RMIT University.

John Brash, Photographer, Fotografiti, Melbourne.

Laura Jocic, Registrar, Auckland Art Gallery, Toi Otamaki, New Zealand

Katie Somerville, Curator Australian Fashion and Textiles, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia.

Loel Thomson, Private Collector/Curator, The Costume Collection, Bulleen, Victoria.
Section 3 – Cataloguing Historic Fashion Collections.
Part C – Cataloguing Case Study:

Set out below is a trial catalogue, using the recommended cataloguing template.

SAMPLE 2 –

Identification Details:

Collection name, owner and location: Dorothy Nicol Historical Costume Collection, The Masonic Hall, Williams Street, Lismore, Victoria, Australia.

Collection Type: Historical fashion garments, accessories, textiles and related memorabilia.

Object name/sample number: Ladies’ Short Cape/Jacket, Number, 1.ADTW/1.2003.

Date Identification: Estimated date produced and worn 1880s-1900.

Date Acquired: mid-2003

Date Catalogued: August 2003, S.Walsh.

Exhibition History: This garment has been on display on a stand in a cabinet at the Masonic Hall Lismore from mid–2003. During this research study, the garment was packed in an archive box. From 2007 it has been on view by appointment. (Book 4 pp100-101, Book 3 p90)

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22. Recommended Numbering System is used here:
1.ADTW/1.2003
1 = collection section 1, fashion garments, ADTW = Adult women’s garment, 1 = the first one of this category, 2003 = year catalogued, 2003.

23. Archival Packing undertaken on advice of Abigail Hart, Textile Conservator.
Object Characteristics – description including styling details, sewing and construction techniques:

• Black silk jacket with cape sleeves with wide, generous, black lace-ruffles and frills, knife pleated around the collar, hemline, centre-front and wrist edges.

• The collar lace-edge frill is narrower than the other lace-edges.
• Fully-lined with black silk lining including self-lining ties to fasten inside waistline. Hand-stitched onto garment.

• The collar is a stand or mandarin style and fastens with metal hooks and eyes that continue down the centre front.

• Metal hooks and eyes from collar neckline downwards, three sets, black 10 cm apart.

• The sleeves are designed to be set-in and seamed at the shoulder line, around the top-armhole. They are seamed at each side into the lower side bodice but unattached across the under arm.

• The shoulder seam continues attached to the front and back section down to the waistline.

• The wristline is full, flared and unattached, forming a hand-opening and room for arm movement. It has lace ruffle edging.
• The side sleeve-cape extends from wrist-opening to lower hipline and is lace-ruffle trimmed.

• The sleeve-wrist and hipline-edge ruffles are as a double ruffle at the garment bottom silhouette edge, lower hipline.

• The sleeve wristline treatment and construction makes the garment appear at the same time like a cape and a jacket.

• Extra sleeve, underarm fullness provided by a front underarm gusset between bodice and sections.
• Centre-back seam extends and includes a box pleat from waist to hemline, with double
underlay to provide much fulness. This may be to accommodate a bustled skirt silhouette
and freedom of movement for the wearer.

• Construction of the garment is by a combination of hand and machine-stitching. Trims
hand-stitched into place. Matching black cotton sewing-thread used throughout.

• Stitching inside, where visible through wear and tear, shows evidence of mending and
alterations.

• Both hand and machine-stitching are used.

• Machine stitching may have been carried out at a later date, since some zigzag-machine-
stiches, a more recent innovation, are seen on inside seams.
The edges where the lace-ruffles are attached over the fabric have beaded-edging hand-sewn on top of them, for example, around collar. This method also features down along centre-backs and hemline and at wristline.

The beading consists of encrusted black jet, bugle-beads, hand-sewn onto cotton netting-strips on every edge except the centre-front.
A black braided, vine-leaf motif that is embellished with separate bugle-beads is attached along the centre-front edges.

Materials:
To assist in this area of research the professional services and resources of Sue Scott of RMIT, Fashion and Textiles Department, Brunswick were employed. This garment was viewed under a textile microscope, on the 2nd of August 2004, to establish fabric fibre and construction details:

• Main fabric is a plain-dyed black silk and features a compact, heavy grosgrain weave.

• Lining fabric, silk plain weave, soft texture, plain dyed black.

• Cotton organdie weave interlining is inside the stand collar and is visible through some wear and tear. Cotton organdie or other stiffening fabric may be inside centre-front edges supporting fastenings and beading trimmings - this cannot be seen but is indicated by relative stiffness

Trimmings:

• Black cotton machine-made lace with floral-motif and scalloped-edge, 12 cm wide, is a major trimming.

• Double lace-frills are at neckline and hemline, single at wristline.
• Frill fullness created by knife pleats and hand-stitched onto garment.

• Black jet beaded edge - bugle-beads hand-sewn onto net-base has a beaded-leaf motif - 4cm wide leaf motif.

• Hemline and wristline edges also feature beaded-leaf motif.

• Centre-front, each side has black, 6mm braid vine-leaf motif, embellished with black jet bugle-beads.

• Braid is attached over the seam where the 5 cm wide lace edges are attached.

• Two black jet beaded-medallions with floral-motif and beaded-drops, one each side of back waistline.

• Width of each medallion 5.5cm. Two beaded-drops from each medallion, 5cm long of round and fancy-cut jet beads.

• Black silk ribbon inside waistline, attached at centre-back between body-fitted panel seams and continuing loose as ties to secure around inside waistline.

• Ribbon is stitched down doubled over, across the back of the garment and ties are flat at 2.5 cm width; ties are 71 cm long.

• Elastic ties in black, from front to back bodice secure at waist, inside each cape sleeve.

• Metal hooks and eyes from collar neckline - three sets, black 10 cm apart.
Dimensions and size:

This garment was fitted on a contemporary size 10 women’s dressmaking/fitting stand (bust 80 cm-waist 60 cm-hip 85 cm). It was a snug fit around the body contact areas of the neck and shoulders. The garment has also been tried on by several small women who have found the shoulders particularly narrow and tight. It may be estimated that this garment was worn by a small, thin person, possibly a young girl. However, this estimate should be tempered by indications that 21st century western people are larger, overall, than their forebears.

Garment measurements, which are usually slightly bigger than body measurements are:
- Hemline width: 200 cm
- Centre sleeve length: 53 cm
- Centre front edge: 82 cm
- Centre back length: 73 cm
- Across back waist: 14 cm
- Across back shoulder line: 36 cm
- Shoulder line: 12 cm
- Collar width: 4 cm
- Collar length: 34 cm

Condition:

Despite its age and less than optimal storage conditions, the dress is in a fair state. It appears to have the potential for conservation and renovation.

Label:

This garment is hand sewn throughout without a commercial manufacturer’s label.

Details of wearer and owner:

Jenny Barr donated this garment to Dorothy Nicol on behalf of her aunt, Janet Dawe. The woman’s cape/jacket, with a small child’s dress was found in a trunk stored in Janet Dawe’s family home in Belmont, in regional Victoria.

Janet Dawe is now in her 90s and has little recollection of this garment. Janet Dawe was a maiden lady from well-to-do country stock. She, her peers, and forebears had been active in fashionable society and lived a comfortable rural lifestyle.

Jenny and her sister had never seen it before they prepared their aunt’s property for sale. Jenny Barr and her sister Barbara Denness continue to research the origins of this surprise find which they believe to have belonged to their aunt’s grandmother. There are mysterious gaps in the garment’s story that they hope to fill.
Acquisition details:
The dress was donated, along with others, by Jenny Barr of Lismore on behalf of her 90- 
year-old aunt, Janet Dawe. (See above.)

Text References:
In each of the text references listed below photographs, sketches, paintings, descriptions 
and particularly fashion plates were found of women's capes and jackets with similarities 
to the sample.

Fletcher, Marion, Costume in Australia 1788-1901.
•The clearest similarities were represented in image 129 on page 159 showing a range of 
garments called Dolmans. These outerwear garments reach to the hipline and cover the 
arms.
•They are fitted at the armhole over the shoulder with a hand opening providing arm 
movement at a wide cape-like wristline. The underarm seam is unattached.
•The black silk Dolmans sketched are similar to the sample's overall silhouette, 
construction and decoration. The pictured garments feature sleeve construction and 
shape, lavish ornaments, beads and generously trimmed lace edges shared by the sample. 
The sample has the same shaped and fitted backwaist, fanning out to hemline fullness. 
This silhouette allowed space to accommodate a bustle skirt underneath it.
•The Dolmans are shown worn outdoors with small, decorated bonnets tied under the chin.
•In the last third of the nineteenth century the crinoline skirt was replaced by the bustle. 
The crinoline was full from the fitted bodice waist with fullness distributed all the way 
around the waistline front and back. The bustle skirt however, featured a flatter front skirt 
with the back skirt extravagantly draped, gathered and decorated.
•This emphasis on the skirt back, over time, was extended to extremes. The back skirt’s 
size and shape was stiffened and supported and heavily decorated giving an upholstered 
look. Therefore, the outer garments needed extra allowances, as with the sample, to fit over 
bustles.
•The Dolman fashion plates show side-views of the garments that clearly match the 
characteristics, styling and fit of the sample. The fashion plate caption reads:
•Dolman 1881 - The summer dolman and dolman mantlet in cashemire or silk were heavily 
trimmed with fringing and passemeterie.
•It should be noted that passemeterie is defined in the Macquarie Dictionary as ‘a
trimming made of braid, cord, beads etc. in various forms.’ This description matches the highly decorative nature of the trims of this sample garment style.

Flower, Cedric, Clothes in Australia, A Pictorial History 1788-1901. See the bustle garment silhouettes, pages 108, 109, 110, 111.


Scandrett, Elizabeth, Breeches & Bustles, An Illustrated History of Clothes worn 1788-1901. Page 94 sketches a, b, c, d, and e.

• Dolman garment silhouettes and decorations were shown in a picture of the Ladies Dolman of 1884 (sketch b)

• Trimmed with deep, generous lace ruffles of gathered lace at the edges. The sample is highly trimmed and decorated in this particular way. The reference greatly assists with the identification of the sample.

Joel, Alexandra, Best Dressed, 200 years of Fashion. See full page 25 photograph of The Lawn at Flemington on Melbourne Cup day, an 1887 painting by Carl Kahler. Several ladies, particularly in the foreground of this fashion event scene, are wearing garments with Dolman silhouettes, styling and trimmings. The photograph caption reads:

“Jutting bustles, tightly corsetted silhouettes and flashing jewel-colours. Naturally the ladies are wearing their most dashing styles for Melbourne Cup that was and continues to be Australia’s premiere fashion event.”

An etching of this scene is part of the collection at the Treasury Building Gallery, Melbourne.

Dawe Family History References:

• A solid, leather bound, lockable family photograph album was located amongst Janet Dawe’s possessions by Barbara Denness, Jenny Barr’s sister. As custodian of family photographs, she reports that the photographs and album are in excellent condition and belonged to Ann Dawe, Janet Dawe’s grandmother.

• The range of family portraits mounted inside the album, are of Ann’s children and grandchildren and their spouses. The photos that have the studio and photographer details and dates noted on them cover the mid 1880s until 1900.
• No one is shown wearing the black silk caped-jacket Dolman. Investigations into this sample's origins are ongoing.

Consultants:

Patrick Snelling, Program Coordinator, Textile Design Higher Education, RMIT University.

Dr. Juliette Peers, Lecturer, Textile Design Higher Education, RMIT University.

Sue Scott, Tafe Teacher, Fashion and Textiles, RMIT University.

John Brash, Photographer, Fotografiti, Melbourne.

Laura Jocic, Registrar, Auckland Art Gallery, Toi Otamaki, New Zealand

Katie Somerville, Curator Australian Fashion and Textiles, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia.

Loel Thomson, Private Collector/Curator, The Costume Collection, Bulleen, Victoria.
This conclusion refers to a feedback survey undertaken. This involved distributing Section 3 of this paper, with a response sheet to a focus group of non-professional fashion history enthusiasts to establish the suitability of the template to their cataloguing needs. The response sheets were returned and collated and fine tuning of cataloguing guidelines followed this, where appropriate. Additional focus group participation, by experienced and qualified fashion history practitioners provided feedback on the template. All the feedback will be documented, analysed and evaluated in the Conclusion section and the feedback sheets are included in Book 3.

Outcomes – Background Activities and Findings:

Two challenging and particularly interesting garments from the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection were chosen for the trial cataloguing – a child’s dress and an adult woman’s jacket. The garments were of a category relatively difficult to catalogue because of their age and the lack of information about them. They are unusual and less common in private fashion collections in Australia.

In both instances, the researcher was able to demonstrate the ability to provide comprehensive cataloguing details with reference to locally available research sources. A model cataloguing template was created to assist in the clear documentation of these two garments’ characteristics.

The model cataloguing template has been the subject of review by a focus group interested and actively involved in fashion and textiles collections. All respondents reported in the feedback, the cataloguing requirements were readily comprehended and their application to a range of differing historical garments and fashions understood.

It was agreed among the trial focus groups that the availability of the cataloguing template as an electronic document would be of considerable assistance to private collectors. The
ability to catalogue in the knowledge that a universal, basic standard for minor historical fashion collections was being adhered to was considered to be a significant breakthrough for non-professional collectors.

Conceptually, the ability to readily update and enhance an electronic database of catalogued garments of historic interest was readily grasped and appreciated. The technology concerned is clearly of a basic nature and completely relevant to the cataloguing needs of private collectors. The initial outlay of set-up and associated maintenance was not considered major. The expertise needed to use the template was not considered intimidating for potential users. The flexible option of entering and storing data online or being able to print out hard copies of records was also welcomed.

Further enhancements to develop the system, including providing linkage through other broadly associated data bases and established web sites would not appear to be difficult, given appropriate resources and connections that already exist.

Based upon the research and demonstration provided here, it may be concluded that the model cataloguing template forms the basis of a useful cataloguing tool for cataloguing private historical fashion collections in Australia by amateur enthusiasts. This is proven here in the instance of the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection in Lismore, Victoria, Australia.

Key feedback follows. This is particularly valuable because it sums up points shared by several members of the focus group. The feedback has been used to amend the cataloguing template. The amended cataloguing template has been used as the basis of the mock-up catalogue, The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection Catalogue 2 that forms part of the support materials of this project. A blank amended cataloguing template appears at the end of this section as well.
Written feedback from Laura Jocic follows. This was confirmed at a meeting with Laura and the researcher in July, 2005. Recommendations in Book 2 are developed from the feedback.24

24 Correspondence extract from Laura Jocic 2005, Registrar Auckland Art Gallery, New Zealand, author of preceding research 1998 *The Digitised Field of the Cloth of Gold*, University of Melbourne
A Lasting Image Made of Cloth
Cataloguing Historic Fashion Collections

Section 3, Part A, B, C
Feedback Sheet 1

Historic Fashion Collections Cataloguing Survey Feedback Sheet:

Having read the attached extract of my paper, you are kindly requested to answer the
following questions.
Thank you, in advance, for your timely assistance.

My/Our contact details:
Name (title):
Company/Organisation:
Address:

Email, Tckphone, Mobile:

1. Do you consider that the availability of a flexible, electronic cataloguing template
would assist private, historic fashion collectors?

[ ] YES  [ ] NO

2. In your opinion, would having a basic cataloguing standard, as provided by this
template, assist private, historic fashion collectors?

[ ] YES  [ ] NO  (Please comment, if appropriate)

3. Do you think that being able to access this electronic template, on a personal
computer, without the financial investment in a specific cataloguing software
package, would be beneficial to private, historic fashion collectors?

[ ] YES  [ ] NO

4. Do you regard the use of this electronic template as a flexible enhancement and
addition to existing manual cataloguing for private, historic fashion collectors?

[ ] YES  [ ] NO

5. Can you foresee that a standard electronic template could be a useful tool for
appropriate work-experience, data entry/clerical or other interested helpers
engaged in cataloguing private, historic fashion collections?

[ ] YES  [ ] NO

6. Do you see advantages through access to an electronic system, with options to
link to other interesting and relevant on-line resources, for private, historic
fashion collectors?

[ ] YES  [ ] NO

7. Other comments – signature/date:

8 May 2005

* Please see comments emailed 9 May 2005

* One person should control the allocation of accession nos. & review the completed worksheets.
A Lasting Image Made of Cloth
Cataloguing Historic Fashion Collections

Section 3, Part A, B, C
Feedback Sheet 2

Dear Sylvia,
apologies for the delay. I hope my comments are useful.

Katie

Historic Fashion Collections Cataloguing Survey Feedback Sheet:

Having read the attached extract of my paper, you are kindly requested to answer the following questions.
Thank you, in advance, for your timely assistance.

My/Our contact details:
Name (title):
Company/Organisation: National Gallery of Victoria
Address:

Email, Telephone, Mobile:

1. Do you consider that the availability of a flexible, electronic cataloguing template would assist private, historic fashion collectors?
YES/NO:

2. In your opinion, would having a basic cataloguing standard, as provided by this template, assist private, historic fashion collectors?
YES/NO: (Please comment, if appropriate) * perhaps with a few additional fields of info (see below comments)

3. Do you think that being able to access this electronic template, on a personal computer: without the financial investment in a specific cataloguing software package, would be beneficial to private, historic fashion collectors?
YES/NO:

4. Do you regard the use of this electronic template as a flexible enhancement and addition to existing manual cataloguing for private, historic fashion collectors?
YES/NO:

5. Can you foresee that a standard electronic template could be a useful tool for appropriate work-experience, data entry/clerical or other interested helpers engaged in cataloguing private, historic fashion collections?
YES/NO:

6. Do you see advantages through access to an electronic system, with options linking to other interesting and relevant on-line resources, for private, historic fashion collectors?
YES/NO:

7. Other comments - signature/date:
   It may also be worth adding a few more fields of information to this template - eg: 0 condition - notes as to, stains, tears, handling, fragility, loss, fraying etc.
   2 exhibit history - notes as to whether it has been on display, and for what length of time in what situation.
   3 photography - notes on whether the work has been photographed as part of cataloguing process

PTO
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Section 3, Part A, B, C
Continuation of Feedback Sheet 2

In the ‘label’ field, it is worth expanding this to include name of maker, and physical description of label (e.g. woven, black on white [Mr. P. Jones] )

and any info known about the history of that company/maker (e.g. birth dates, establishment dates, location etc.)

In terms of setting up a framework that relates to best practice, it would be important to make sure that images taken of the wabo are not modelled on people (for conservation reasons) but on mannequins or flat if no mannequin avail.

I hope these comments are useful. I would be happy to discuss them further with you on the phone if that would be of any use.

Kind regards
Katni
A Lasting Image Made of Cloth
Cataloguing Historic Fashion Collections

Section 3, Part A, B, C
Feedback Sheet 3

Historic Fashion Collections Cataloguing Survey Feedback Sheet:

Having read the attached extract of my paper, you are kindly requested to answer the following questions.
Thank you, in advance, for your timely assistance.

My/Our contact details:
Name (title):
Company/Organisation:
Address:

Email, Telephone; Mobile:

1. Do you consider that the availability of a flexible, electronic cataloguing template would assist private, historic fashion collectors?
   YES/NO:

2. In your opinion, would having a basic cataloguing standard, as provided by this template, assist private, historic fashion collectors?
   YES? NO: (Please comment, if appropriate)

3. Do you think that being able to access this electronic template, on a personal computer, without the financial investment in a specific cataloguing software package, would be beneficial to private, historic fashion collectors?
   YES/NO:

4. Do you regard the use of this electronic template as a flexible enhancement and addition to existing manual cataloguing for private, historic fashion collectors?
   YES/NO:

5. Can you foresee that a standard electronic template could be a useful tool for appropriate work-experience, data entry/clerical or other interested helpers engaged in cataloguing private, historic fashion collections?
   YES/NO:

6. Do you see advantages through access to an electronic system, with options linking to other interesting and relevant on-line resources, for private, historic fashion collectors?
   YES/NO:

7. Other comments – signature/date:

   [Signature]  May 21st 2006
The Costume Collection,
Bolleto, 3105

23rd May, 2005.

Dear Sylvia,

Thank you for the opportunity to read your work on your research project.

I love your description of the "why and wherefore" of this, or any other costume collection similar to my own - page 4 - 5.

Your cataloguing principles are all excellent standard procedure, but I would put more emphasis on the cross referencing area. Finding an article within the collection, or finding samples of a certain technique e.g. heading, style e.g. Art Deco, or element e.g. cut steel, are the most used reasons for searching on the computer, I find.

For example a beaded jacket with a lace frill edge might be entered under - costume - female - jacket - evening, needlework, beading, lace Maltese. These could all be factors for which you might wish to search when the need arises.

Your detailed description of your sample garment is meticulous and extensive, BUT I question whether any museum counting the cost of time could afford to spend so much time on each article in the collection.

And so many photographs - consider the cost!

You want a description for identification purposes and all particular characteristics need to be noted, perhaps include a dressmaker's sketch and a photo, but all this is for identification within the collection. Special study is another area.

You obviously have good dressmaking knowledge. Would you have the knowledge to explore the next article you might catalogue with as much detail, e.g. workman's boots, parasol, rhinestone earrings etc.?

Of course, all your cataloguing headings are spot-on, provenance, materials, date, condition etc.

There are already a number of software packages available suitable for use by professional museums and yet user friendly for amateurs too. But I'm sure you know this. Personally I keep my old card indexing system going as well as the computer system - I find each has its own advantages. It is much easier to walk around with the card in my hand when looking for information, but the cross referencing on the computer is invaluable.

I am only speaking from experience here and not as a qualified professional in the museum field, but I hope these comments are what you are looking for and may help.

Good Luck with your Master's Research Project.

[Signature]

[Handwritten note:]

[Signature]
**Revised Template 2:**

**Collection Identification details** –

- **Collection name:**
- **Collection owner:**
- **Collection location:**
- **Object/sample number:**
- **Object/sample Date:**
- **Collection type:**
- **Object Category:**
- **Object name:**
- **Main material/textile/fabric:**
- **Main visual feature/component:**
- **Object Characteristics and description:**
  
  - Material details:
  - Trimmings:
  - Dimensions and size:
  - Label:
  - Maker:
  - Condition:
  - Care and conservation requirement:
  - Details of the wearer/owner/cultural context:
- **Related objects within the collection:**
- **Acquisition details – Date acquired:**
- **Credit:** *(acknowledgement of donors, as appropriate)*
- **Date catalogued:**
- **Cataloguer details:**
- **Photographs:** *(from several views including the inside of garments, as appropriate)*
- **Cataloguing Advisers and Consultants:**
- **Exhibition History:**

*(allocate unique code number for each sample taking into account the collection name, collection type, object name, date or continue to use a numerical system established by the collection or the owner or organisation to which the sample belongs)*

*The overall category of garments.*

*The particular category of objects and object name within the category of objects.*

*(include styling details and sewing or construction techniques. All aspects should be completed in as much detail as possible)*

*e.g. Historic Fashion Menswear Dinner Suit*
A Lasting Image Made of Cloth
The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection

Appendix
Catalogue 2. 2006 Beyond Flappers to Flares.

Bibliography

Historic Fashion collecting organisations –


Cataloguing historic fashion –

Fletcher, Marion, 1968, Costume in Australia 1788-1901, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, Australia.

Fletcher, Marion, 1977, Costume and Accessories in the 18th. Century, National Gallery of Victoria, Australia.


Joel, Alexandra, 1984, Best Dressed, 200 years of Fashion in Australia, William Collins, Sydney, Australia.


Irving, Judie and Walsh Sylvia, 2000, Six Decades of Fashion - From Flappers to Flares, Star Press, Terang, Victoria, Australia.
Adjustments to Beyond Flappers to Flares are not appropriate at this time. Beyond Flappers to Flares is a draft outline of an approach Dorothy Nicol may choose to take in the future promotion of her historic fashion collection. Its intention is indicative only. The primary audience is envisaged as layperson enthusiasts in the Western District of Victoria.

Timing and completion of this possible production is outside the scope of this study and is dependant on local issues, including funding.
Beyond Flappers to Flares

The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection
Catalogue 2

A Selection From the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection
Dorothy Nicol in the Ex Masonic Hall, Lismore

Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection, Old Masonic Hall, Williams St, Lismore. 
*Corangamite Shire Brochure*
TOWNSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Lismore was proclaimed a town by His Excellency, Sir Henry Barkly, on 25th of February, 1861. Known in the 40’s as Brown’s Water Holes, it was situated on the Gala Estate, originally leased by John Brown from Galashiels, Scotland. In 1863 it was renamed Lismore, possibly after a town in County Waterford, Ireland. The aboriginal name for the locality was Bongeriminnin.

The township area and the suburban allotments were first surveyed by Robert D. Scott. Investigation of his field books reveal that he marked the greater portion of Lismore which he then called Brown’s Water Holes on Thursday, 15th April, 1862.

The plan of the township of Lismore at Brown’s Water Holes was laid before the executive council and approved on the 4th March, 1853, and on 28th September of the same year the first sale of town allotments of two roods each was held at the rooms of J. B. Hutton & Co., Yarrow Street, Geelong. Twelve allotments were sold bringing £174. These lots were in the area bounded by Addis, Perrens, Gray and Cunningham Streets.

Suburban allotments one to ten which were offered the next day comprised an area of 69 acres north of the township. John Aitken purchased the first allotment of 10 acres for £42/10/.
Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection, Lismore, Victoria
Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection, Lismore, Victoria
Introduction

This Catalogue 2 is envisaged as the first of several steps towards the formal organisation, cataloguing, preservation and maintenance of the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection.

Dorothy Nicol’s personal enthusiasm has attracted participation of her collection’s community and many other supporters, mainly located in rural Victoria’s Western District. It is from this community support and interest that the need for Catalogue 2 emerged.

The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection is progressively increasing in size as relevant publicity leads to donations. With the growing collection comes an increase in knowledge, the information and stories about each item, its wearers and its history. The collected stories of the cultural and regional history has become of complementary importance to the aesthetics of the fashion styling of the items. It is these stories that have intrigued and attracted a regional audience and supporters for the collection and that continue to encourage local and wider ranging participation.

Given the dynamic nature of Dorothy Nicol’s collecting, it is not possible to forecast when or if the cataloguing will be completed. Instead, it is planned that allowances to the cataloguing methodology will facilitate ongoing up-dating. An example of ongoing formalisation will be the opportunity for Dorothy to continue cataloguing on site in Lismore, by adding information such as the display history, for example, the occasion and date when the items in Catalogue 2 are exhibited, paraded and featured in publicity. Also background data about newly acquired items can be progressively entered. The search in historic costume texts, pictorial and other references that are used to find examples to help substantiate an item’s historical dating is another area where ongoing data entry could continue as additional resources are identified and accessed. This approach, along with other cataloguing concepts and formats, was evaluated by a focus group whose feedback is included in Book 3.

To further explain the lively nature of the cataloguing process of the Collection, I refer to a recent (2006) and very typical story reported to me by Dorothy Nicol. A new acquisition
was a particularly attractive dress that was presented to Dorothy by the enthusiastic staff of her local Opportunity Shop who were thrilled to pass on the garment’s history as well. It appears that the dress was originally purchased to wear during formalities at a local Agricultural show. When Dorothy next exhibited her collection at Coleraine, in rural Victoria, the story of this dress was scripted into the parade commentary. The assembled audience were delighted when a relative of the dress’s original wearer, who was in the audience, was able to verify the history and added other interesting details of the garment’s history.

It has been suggested that the constant input of information, facts and stories, could be carried out by Dorothy and her local supporters on audio tape to be progressively entered into the historical records in writing. When Dorothy was interviewed on local radio, the idea of the collection of oral histories was warmly received and encouraged. The planned continuation of the cataloguing process is realised in part by *Beyond Flappers to Flares* – Catalogue 2, a selection from the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection 2006.

Further examples of the stories of the collection and individual items are included in Catalogue 1 – *From Flappers to Flares* and in Book 3 and 4 Research Project Support Materials.
# A Lasting Image Made of Cloth

## The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection

### Research Project – Book 1:
**Catalogue – Beyond Flappers to Flares** 2006

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Research Project – Book 1:
Catalogue – Beyond Flappers to Flares 2006

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Collection Identification details –
Collection name: Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection
Collection owner: Dorothy Nicol
Collection location: Lismore, Victoria, Australia
Object/sample number: 2005.1.1
Object/sample Date: 1920s
Object Category: Women’s Fashion Accessories
Object name: Delicately Hand Embroidered handbag
Related objects within the collection: Lang family accessories
Main material/textile/fabric: All over embroidery on suede leather with decorative clasp
Main visual feature/component: Bright coloured embroidery

This item was pretty, fresh and original accessory to brighten up any Flappers outfit. It would add a dressy, formal touch to outfits worn for country socialising as well as having functional uses. The handbag is made from dark chocolate brown coloured suede leather and the all-over embroidery is stitched in multi-coloured cotton thread. The stylised, floral swirls of embroidery in bright colours add a modern design flair to the pattern. The handbag, with the hat (2005.1.2), the description of which follows, has a shallow crown and a narrow brim. Embroidery is the main trim of both of these items. These items are constructed by hand. The handbag is stitched and the hat is crocheted, woven and stitched. The handbag is a round pouch shape with a short matching strap handle and decorative clasp fastening.

Credit – Donor/Source: Acquisition Details: Lang family of Lismore, Victoria. Comprehensive information follows under listing 2005.1.2
Photographs: S. Walsh, C. Lang, J. Irving
Date catalogued: 2004
Cataloguer details: S. Walsh, D. Nicol