A LASTING IMAGE MADE OF CLOTH

THE DOROTHY NICOL HISTORIC FASHION COLLECTION

Research Project, Masters of Art (Textile Design)

Book No. 2:

CANDIDATE:

Sylvia Walsh
Bachelor of Education
Diploma of Technical Teaching
Diploma of Fashion Design and Production

EDUCATIONAL ORGANISATION:

Department of Fashion & Textiles
RMIT (Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology)
Brunswick, Melbourne, Australia

2007
A LASTING IMAGE MADE OF CLOTH

THE DOROTHY NICOL HISTORIC FASHION COLLECTION

Masters of Arts (Textile Design)

Declaration

I certify that except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the exegesis is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; and, any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party, is acknowledged.

Listing of Acknowledgement:

Mrs. Dorothy Nicol, Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection, Lismore, Victoria.

Mrs. Judie Irving, Rosebank, Terang, Victoria.

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

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

Mrs. Loel Thomson, The Costume Collection, Bulleen, Victoria.

Janette Wotherspoon, IDesign, Brunswick, Victoria.

Charlotte Fraser-McGurk, Avail Secretarial Services, Camberwell, Victoria.

Sarah Bunting, Graphic Design, Parkville, Victoria.

John Brash, John Brash Photography, Prahran, Victoria.

Triangle Printing, Hawthorn, Victoria.

Alice Best, Kew, Victoria.

All the Western District, Victoria contributors to, Beyond Flappers to Flares, 2006 catalogue and From Flappers to Flares – Six Decades of Fashion, 2000 catalogue of the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection.

All the Melbourne contributors to the above catalogues and the other research documents and activities including those participants from RMIT Fashion and Textiles, Brunswick campus.
A Lasting Image Made of Cloth
The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection

Research Project Abstract:

This research project is based on the hypothesis that private historic fashion collections have a cultural significance that should be maintained, now and into the future. The case of one such collection, the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection is the core focus of the project.

The project developed from the researcher’s long term interest in the broad field of costume history. The research questions that emerged from this hypothesis directed the researcher’s specific involvement with the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection.

During the investigation of the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection it was necessary to identify and develop some particular resources and information that would contribute to the existing body of knowledge in the field of Costume history studies.

The major research contribution took the form of a catalogue of a range of thirty-one historic fashion items from Dorothy Nicol’s Historic Fashion Collection on the basis of information accumulated during the course of the research investigation.

The justification for this research project emerged from the interests of owner, and associates who needed to organise and preserve Dorothy Nicol’s historic fashion collection in its specific regional context as well as its wider social and historical environment.

When the researcher was introduced to the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection in 1999 its relevance within its community was beginning to gain momentum. The Flappers to Flares fashion parade and catalogue publication in Terang, Victoria in 2000 were important for the growth of the collection’s public profile. A copy of this original 2000 catalogue is included in Book 1 of this project.

During 2000, sustaining the growth of interest in the collection’s activities and developing organisational systems was a challenge identified by the owners and supporters. The need for realistic solutions, tailored to the collection’s organisation, cataloguing and conservation requirements provided a major impetus for this research project and the reason that the researcher was nominated as a consultant to assist Dorothy Nicol.

The identification of the resources and relationships needed to assist Dorothy Nicol became the foundation and action of this research project. Following the original cataloguing that was required to produce the 2000 catalogue, a further catalogue (Catalogue 2) was produced during this project. Catalogue 2 advances the formalisation of the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection and adds to the wider range of knowledge in the field of costume history studies.

Catalogue 2, entitled *Beyond Flappers to Flares*, is the main outcome of Book 1 of this research project. Catalogue 2 was developed from case studies nos 1 and 2 which are also included in Book 1 of this project’s research documentation.
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.ii

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.iii

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.

---


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

Research Project Structure of the Research Activities and Documentation

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
• Preceding Research
• 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.
Table of Contents

Introduction to Book 2 ............................................. 1

Section 1 – Research:
Action research frame of reference, directions, sources, project activities.
Research Introduction .................................................. 2
Part A – Research questions and research undertaken .................. 3
Part B – Preceding research ............................................. 8

Section 2 – Collecting and Collections:
Investigating the theory and practice of collecting and collections.
From a Hoard to a Collection ......................................... 13
Why People Collect ..................................................... 14
Types of Collections – Formalising a Collection ....................... 17
Contemporary Trends ................................................... 20
Psychological Motives .................................................. 21
The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection in context .......... 25

Section 3 – Summary – Addressing the Research Questions:
Application of research findings to selected samples from the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection.
Project conclusion ....................................................... 35
Recommendations ......................................................... 38

Section 4 – References and Bibliography:
Specific Research References listed in Book 4 ......................... 39
Literature search ........................................................... 39
Investigation into digital cataloguing
A Lasting Image Made of Cloth
The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection
Research Project, Masters of Art (Textile Design)

Book No. 2:

A. Theoretical references Used for Books 1, 2, 3, 4 –
   1. Articles, Books & Catalogues  40
   2. Electronic, online, websites and digital resources  53
   3. Audiovisual, video, film, television  59

B. Action research references –
   1. Organisation and cataloguing of a sample collection  60

Section 5 – Appendices:  70

Book 1 – Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection Catalogues
Book 3 – Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection People Story – Research Support Materials A

A diagram to explain the contents and components of the four complementary books which make up this research project is on page vi of this Book 2 and is included in each of Books 1, 3 and 4.
This book provides an introduction to the research, its background and objectives along with research questions and details of practical and theoretical resources. Additional explanations and resources are contained in Books Nos 3 and 4. Included in this book are text and photographs documenting the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection in terms of its origins, its owner, and its activities.

The first section of materials focuses on action research and includes the research project's frame of reference, directions, research sources and investigative activities. There is an overview of directly relevant preceding research.

The second section of materials records an investigation of previously documented research on the theory and practice of collecting and collections. The third section investigates considerations and standards for cataloguing historic fashion and applies the investigation's findings in cataloguing case studies using two garments from the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection. The final section in this book is a summary with conclusions and recommendations stemming from the research activity.

A comprehensive listing is provided of specific references and a detailed bibliography of the sources that contributed to the research project. This section includes text references in the form of books and articles as well as electronic online, internet, and digital references.

Navigation of the four books comprising the record of this project is aided by the table of contents and a listing of appendices, which are set out in this book.
Research Introduction:

A series of research questions were proposed at the commencement of this research project. These questions and the research carried out are listed below.

The basis for the research questions is the 2001 research project proposal titled, *A Lasting Image Made of Cloth – The Green Gables Historic Fashion Collection Formalised, a Research Study of the Dorothy Nicol Collection*. The collection subsequently became known as the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection. It is referred to as such throughout this research study.

Answering the research questions led to the identification of key preceding research and frames of reference. These pre-existing resources are the starting point for this research project, leading to the outcomes that are presented in this paper.

Research activities involved:

- A comprehensive print and electronic literature search.
- Identification of useful publications and other data.
- Identification of potential benchmark standards nationally and internationally.
- Determining existing expertise and available resources.
- Interviews.
- Field trips.
- Participation in relevant events and functions.
Research Questions:

Question 1.

How to create an informative, durable, up-to-date, professional catalogue to aid the study of historic fashion collections, using the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection as a model?

Research Undertaken:

Search for methods of cataloguing historic fashion collections.

Question 2.

What considerations need to be taken when developing small-scale private, collections such as the model?

Research Undertaken:

Search into existing collection and collectors’ organisational criteria and operational requirements to identify the considerations that may be appropriate to apply to the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection.

Question 3.

What are the necessary requirements to make an historic fashion catalogue durable, relevant and accessible, using the selected sample model?

Research Undertaken:

Many examples of historic fashion catalogues were identified and reviewed to ascertain cataloguing methods applicable to the selected sample model.

Question 4.

What are the standards, limitations and conditions necessary to implement a pilot system for cataloguing and documenting, for easy access, historic fashion costume collections?
Research Undertaken:

A process of comparative observation was undertaken of other organisations’ modus operandi and the needs of the collection, its proposed facilitators, and clients.

Question 5.

What are some philosophical, historical and social aspects of collecting and collecting fashion that may apply to organising the model collection, including what aesthetic, chronological, social history and cultural considerations about the optimum development of collections should be taken in this case?

Research Undertaken:

The need to answer this multifaceted question emerged as significant to the research and became a key factor. The importance and interrelationship between inanimate objects such as clothing and textiles when brought to life by wearers and the utilization of textiles in a social and geographic context was found to be significant to the development of historic fashion collections. Interaction with the collectors, curators, and enthusiasts, and through study of leading writers in this field, provided important insights and stimulus for this research.

Research Process: Further descriptions and examples of the research undertaken appear in Books 1, 3 and 4.

As the research proceeded, the first four questions proved to be interrelated. Accordingly, they were tackled together in consideration of this close relationship. The fifth question opened up and extended the area of study by identification and investigation of the social context that underpins the four other questions.

Specific aspects of practical concern and interest have been researched, questioned, and addressed by formalising sample garments from the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection in terms of their cataloguing.

The question of what an historical fashion collection is and how it should be recorded was
addressed. The resources, standards, composition and style required that make historic fashion collections informative, workable, and entertaining were identified. Demonstrated in the findings of this research is the development of cataloguing processes that used a cataloguing template and guidelines developed in the course of this study. This supported the established rationale and methodology of collecting and documentation of historical fashion collections.

Leading authorities on the development of historic fashion collections and cataloguing of historic fashion garments were consulted. Research focused on traditional resources and methodologies as well as contemporary and emerging methods. New technology was reviewed, including digital, electronic documentation and graphics as applied to historic fashion collection catalogues. A range of computer technologies and other electronic information systems were investigated.

Existing computer software, systems of access and other relevant technological developments were identified and evaluated. Particular consideration was given to the cataloguing needs, as perceived, for the collection that is the subject of this project. The broader aim to provide wide and easy access to private historic fashion collections in general was an active secondary consideration.

In responding to the research questions, international as well as national and local examples and models of historic fashion collection catalogues and databases were identified and appraised.

Preliminary research, presented in the 2001 research project proposal, suggested the possibility of adapting aspects from a range of similar textiles and fashion databases, particularly those connected to universities.

Identification, collecting, selecting and documenting of research data was a major requirement of this project. The main objective was to identify and explore the standards and conditions that are required to formalise private historic fashion collections. Evaluation of the research findings identified applications of relevance to the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection.
The evaluation highlighted the need to develop accessible cataloguing tools for historic fashion collections and emerged as specifically relevant to the main objective of this project. This process included devising a cataloguing method to apply to two selected garments from the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection. The model catalogue template was created to demonstrate relevant text and photographic recording of the garments concerned that met the required standards. The template has the flexibility to be used either online and/or in a hard copy print format.

The model cataloguing template is presented in the Cataloguing Historic Fashion Collections in Book 1 of this Research Project. There is a blank template with instructions for completion. Templates have been completed for two sample garments from the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection.

The model template, along with the Cataloguing Historic Fashion Collections section of this paper, has been presented to a focus group for feedback. The survey analysis is included in the Cataloguing Historic Fashion Collections section. Completed survey forms appear in the Project Support Materials A, Book 3.

This project’s products are the model cataloguing template with guidelines for completion. A catalogue continuing and refining the approach adopted for the 2000 Flappers to Flares catalogue forms Book 1. A Flappers to Flares catalogue is located at the end of Book 1 in the Appendix while the extension from this catalogue titled Beyond Flappers to Flares is also in Book 1 Part E pages 14-140. As the second catalogue developed from the 2000 one, Beyond Flappers to Flares is also a key outcome of this research project.

Research has helped identify that particular emphasis on the cultural context and the social connections is required in the new catalogue. It will focus on personal stories and histories of the selected garments.

Two books accompany the two garments used for the cataloguing case studies numbers 1 and 2 that appear in the research case study section of this document. The garments have been packed in costume archive boxes to the required standards that were determined by investigation as part of this project. Returned to Dorothy Nicol, all these materials will
assist the moving forward of *A Lasting Image Made of Cloth – The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection project*.

The research process demonstrated and recorded the development from a hoard of old fashion garments towards an informative, durable, up-to-date, private historic fashion collection of a professional standard as in Book 1.
Preceding Research Studies:
This Masters project by research has been undertaken with the objective of expanding and developing earlier cataloguing work conducted on the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection. In doing so, the intent has been to review comparable projects and to survey earlier research. Assessment of published material on this and allied subject areas were a key aspect of the research.

The Laura Jocic Study and Resource:
The work of Laura Jocic was identified as particularly relevant to this project. Jocic’s thesis, is titled *The Digital Field of the cloth of Gold.*\(^1\)

Concepts presented in Laura Jocic’s research thesis were given consideration, particularly her recommendations about the potential future application of electronic and digital systems to textiles and fashion collections. The suggestion that new technology be used to enhance traditional methods provided a link between preceding research studies and the research activities and outcomes relating to the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion collection project. The significance of the social and cultural context, for textiles and fashion collections, was also researched, in order to build on and advance the earlier research study by Jocic.

Since Jocic’s investigation was carried out and her thesis was published in 1998, the advancement of digital technology has been rapid. Significant development has occurred with access, complexity and scope of digital resources now including electronic documentation and the Internet. Without pursuing technological innovations for their own sake, this project has sought to identify how technology can play a helpful and realistic part in the cataloguing and maintenance of non-professional, private historic fashion collections.

Among the key aspects that Laura Jocic researched and discussed were the founding and development of three costume and textiles collections in Australia. The collections that Jocic researched were from major, mainstream Australian organizations: the Powerhouse Museum of Arts and Sciences, Sydney; the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) Melbourne;  

\(^1\) Jocic, Laura, *The Digital Field of the Cloth of Gold,* 1998, Masters Thesis, the Ballieu Library, University of Melbourne, Australia.
Laura Jocic pointed out that textiles, as such, started to be collected significantly earlier than costume. Costume has only gained status as a distinct entity within collections generally during the twentieth century. For example, the cataloguing category ‘fashionable dress/dress’ was included with textiles only recently. The Victorian and Albert museum in London set up their Textiles and Dress Collection Display as recently as 1979.²

Laura Jocic concluded from her research that interpretation of costume in museums has been historically restricted to the specific focus of the institution in which the collection is located. Problems of bias and exclusion arise which are rarely acknowledged by curators. In order to address the limitations of collecting and conceptual simplification of the study of dress, Jocic identified that computer technologies could be used to offer multiple viewpoints and alternative approaches to interpretation.³

However, Jocic is cognisant that the preparation, expense and time required to arrange costumes for digital display is considerable and the appropriate level of ongoing funding would be essential to assure successful outcomes and the maintenance of traditional collections utilizing electronic systems. The requirement for adequate time and funding was confirmed by the researcher when preparing the digital images of the two garments catalogued in Section 3 of this paper.

Relevant to this research study was Jocic's qualification that digital cataloguing should not be a replacement for earlier methodologies. Technology was advocated as a medium to extend access and exposure in relation to individual items and collections. It was seen as providing the opportunity to support museum display and to provide additional access points.

Additionally, Laura Jocic concluded that with digital technology there was the potential to link previously isolated collections together and to arrange to provide information and the

³ ibid Jocic
viewing of objects outside the traditional systems of museums. Nevertheless, she warned that a danger lies in translating inherited forms of understanding and categorisation into new media. She stressed that museums need to be aware of the historical background to costumes and textiles. What survived the passage of time and why, were seen as important issues in the interpretation of the story of historical costume. This has ramifications for how the past will be presented in the future when objects are placed within a contextual setting. At this point they necessarily become part of a greater story, linked to other objects, people, places, social mores and historical events.

Laura Jocic draws support for this part of her thesis by summarising fashion writers Valerie Steele and Claudia Brush in their work, *Men and Women: Dressing the Part*, to the effect that:

“An article of clothing has no inherent meaning. It is the history of clothes and the context in which they are worn that determine the meanings that we ascribe to them.”

This research study’s findings support Laura Jocic’s proposition that there is rarely a single meaning that can be attached to an individual article of clothing. Instead, Laura Jocic found that questions surrounding personal connections of garments were often played down or overlooked. Jocic concluded that the who, what, why, when and where of garments were sufficiently significant to be documented in the garment catalogue. Indeed, it was this information that created a garment’s history and public interest.

Essentially, Jocic advocates that the conventional, chronological and aesthetic listing approach to cataloguing be re-evaluated and expanded to include other matters such as social and cultural characteristics.

Since completing her Masters research, Laura Jocic has consolidated her professional experience working with costume and textiles collections, particularly as a registrar at the Auckland Art Gallery – a position where she deals with collection management and cataloguing on a day-to-day basis.

In correspondence during May 2005, Jocic made valuable observations with regard to her research findings and their application to this research. Salient points provided in correspondence from Jocic are as follows:

“The crux of what I was arguing, (is that) new technologies (be used) to move beyond the traditional classification systems and viewing restrictions of the museum. The potential of the new media needed to be explored by museums to enhance interpretation and access of types of collections, which I maintain are particularly suited to being presented through digital media. The integration of text and images is vital.”

Commenting on the premise that “… digital technologies should not be a replacement for earlier methodologies”, Jocic recommended that:

“What I wanted to emphasise was that when utilising the new media, it is important not to just merely replicate manual systems, but to push the access to information (including images) further, such as making links within discrete collections and through the Internet, across wider collections. I’m interested in the type of information offered, bearing in mind that maintaining standardised cataloguing procedures is the basis for being able to manipulate data.”

Reporting on digital developments since her thesis was published as referred to in this exegesis, Jocic explains that:

“You mention correctly that since my thesis was published, digital technology has advanced, however, I’d like to stress that in investigating the topic, I deliberately did not focus on the specifics of current developments, such as discussing particular software, but instead wanted to explore the concepts behind the utilisation of new media for costume collections. Hence I state in the Conclusion that the challenge for museums will be to “…drive the technology to present the collections in intellectually and visually stimulating ways”. (p112 of my thesis)

In a final comment relating developments in use of digital technologies, Jocic mentions
that:

“I have been interested to see that, in the time since I submitted the thesis, museums have actually been remarkably slow in harnessing the new technologies to allow the public greater access to their collections. The Auckland Art Gallery committed to placing its entire collection on-line, but it is more usual to see only a limited selection of works from museums on the Internet, with or without images”.

Laura Jocic’s findings were a useful starting point and valuable reference for this study’s research activities and provided guidance for the application of research outcomes to the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection.

Theoretical underpinning of the development of the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection catalogue was gained from Jocic’s thesis. Laura Jocic also provided feedback on Book 1 Cataloguing Case Studies 1 and 2 where her contributions have been incorporated.
A Lasting Image Made of Cloth

The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection Formalised

Section 2 – The Theory and Practice of Collecting and Collections Related to Historic Fashion:

This part of the project study relates to research question five, Section 1, Part A, addressing philosophical, historical and social aspects of collecting, with particular reference to historical costume.

From a Hoard to a Collection – The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection:
This story is about a journey of discovery and development that commenced in 1999.

It centres on the evolution of the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection and the role of its custodian, Dorothy Nicol, and the community of Lismore, Victoria. The research project has raised questions and found answers about the personal urge to collect as well as about the fashion collecting community in general.

The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection has a unique story, as does each garment and accessory that contributes to the collection. It is a fascinating conglomeration - quiet emblems of the past, lovingly arranged in the old Lismore Masonic Hall, yet quite frequently, springing to life as features in historical lifestyle re-creations and local fashion parades.

The subject of this study has proven a valuable example of a growing trend for fashion collecting and of the broad range of historic fashion collectors pursuing diverse objectives. Each time the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection receives publicity, other collectors make contact and new networks emerge and grow.
Why People Collect:
Collecting as a human pursuit is intriguing. Collectors themselves often prove interesting on a personal basis because of their almost fanatical depth of knowledge and the vigour with which they pursue their special interests.

Different collecting motives that may relate to collecting fashion include: collecting items of beauty for future reference; collecting items of value as an investment; and collecting in order to belong or emulate various types of style systems. By collecting style leaders’ designs, the collector may enjoy reflected glory from the fashion icon through the items concerned. 

Other strong motives for fashion and general collecting are: to fulfil desires for increased wealth and control over things and people; to own more things; to occupy recreational hours; and to educate and entertain present and future generations.

To understand the relative cultural significance of private collections such as Dorothy Nicol’s, other fashion collections have been identified and their collecting rationales investigated. In order to decide on the methodology required to formalise the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection it was necessary to study the wider themes, motivations and activities of collecting.

The most useful information flowed from the small clues that collectors gave in discussion about their collections. These insights directed the research into the history, philosophy and the psychology of collecting.

Divergence from Museum Rationales:
Official museum collecting methodology imposes standards and limitations and provides formal guidelines to collectors for their collections. Private individuals may, however, take quite individualistic approaches.

It was clear that a private collector’s personal bias gives uniqueness to their particular collection. This reflection of the collector’s personal prejudices and compulsions is not always readily admitted. Indeed, the presence of a personal bias was at times strongly

denied. As one collector remarked, as if in an excuse for the unique bias, emphasis and themes of her collection, “of course, I’m a collector”. Indeed, the act of collecting would appear to imply a specific bias.7

In private collecting circles the comment, “I’m a collector, but not a serious one”8 is frequently heard. Those qualifying themselves and their activities this way appear to mean that their collecting is a light-hearted, happy, and sporadic saving of memorabilia. Family custodians of heirlooms, in an unstructured way, save and preserve one-of-a-kind items of family memorabilia for posterity. An example may be seen in the keeping and cherishing of family christening or naming gowns and items of ceremonial dress and uniform.

Another often heard reference to collecting is, “I still have it, even though I’m not a collector”.9 This frequently indicates an activity not as serious, or seemingly as odd, as real collecting. It is about saving single items of significance relevant to personal, professional, or family milestones. For example, a baby’s first shoes that have been bronze-plated, random certificates, prizes, awards and wedding dresses. All these are essentially of the once-only memento variety of collections.

Beyond this is what has been dismissively described as ‘rat’s nest’10 collecting. This takes the form of simply keeping large quantities of things, squirreling, or stockpiling. Enjoyable and even compulsive for the collector, this can be infuriating for partners and family members.

The Enjoyment Factor:

All of the above-mentioned compulsions in some measure, relate to collecting fashion. They touch on collecting for the enjoyment of beauty and the pleasure of shared interests and passions. This certainly appears to be the case with the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection. Developing a hoard of historic fashion items into a collection with the potential for many more people to enjoy it is the key consideration for those involved with the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection. Clearly this was apparent to the editor of the Western Plains Advertiser who headed an article on Dorothy’s collection “Masonic Lodge Hoards Fashion History.”11

A Historical Perspective:

Many writers on the interesting, complex, multi-faceted, topic of collecting and preservation point to Noah as the first collector. The Old Testament book of Genesis 6.19-20. This bible story relates that Noah was a collector who achieved the ultimate goal of assembling a complete set. Noah’s quest as set out in Genesis, was to collect, “two of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female.”

Allied to the story of collecting was research into the process and the defining the rationale that occurs during the passage from accumulating and hoarding to becoming a genuine collector. To tackle the question of what might be “serious collecting,” several relevant texts were identified and their themes considered. Establishing how the various definitions and motives may relate specifically to collecting historic fashion began with the study of the works of leading writers on the subject.

Collecting as a Significant Pursuit:

Writing on the subject of collectors, Russell W. Belk refers to an estimate that one out of every three Americans is a collector. 12

By numbers alone, collecting would seem, a serious and significant human pursuit. Belk further expounds the notion that collections seldom begin purposefully, often starting as a spontaneous childhood pleasure and curiosity to learn, or introduced by family or friends. Belk tells us that:

“Despite their incidental start, many collections are seen as becoming an addictive activity in which adding items to the collection constitutes a ‘fix’ – socially acceptable and a ritualised belonging addiction, legitimised with the label ‘collecting.’” 13

A number of texts researched charted the story of collecting throughout human history. It is a long story and the possible motives for collecting over the centuries are extensive and complex. Frequently, several motives operate simultaneously during the pursuit of collecting.

13. ibid, p319.
Humans are complex – we collect lots of things for a variety of reasons and we accept that we have done so for a long time. However, collecting costume, dress and fashion specifically is widely agreed to be a twentieth century phenomenon. In the case of fashion collections, experts agree that the official collecting of dress in museums began in the twentieth century.14

From early times certain religious fabric relics have been fiercely protected and adoringly admired. This passion continues today. Shrouds and fabrics said to originate from ancient tombs are revered and form their own unique part of the collecting story.

Research by Roger Cardinal and John Elsner demonstrated that little mention of fashion or dress was made in early collections. Until the 1800s, items allied to apparel mentioned in collection catalogues included: costumes of different lands; decorative items of value; armour; jewels; ornaments; gems; and precious metals. Sometimes artefacts such as tapestries, carpets, and significant heraldic/religious/state textiles of the day appeared in the inventories of collections.15

Types of Collections – Formalising a Collection:

Direction for formalising the model collection was taken from the philosophy and activity of present and past collectors of fashion.

The renowned, twentieth century, French Couturier, Gabrielle (Coco) Chanel has been attributed with the observation that, luxury is necessity that continues as a necessity when actual necessity stops. Collections almost by definition go beyond necessity.

Allied to the concept of luxury as applied to fashion and the psychology of fashion behaviour, there is an increasingly popular movement of collecting fashion as art. This involves collecting for resale, profit and/or for investment. Collecting and behavioural consumerism concepts are dealt with in the 1996 work of Jean Baudrillard Systems of Objects. In this book, the questions of necessities and commodities versus luxuries are discussed at length.16

Systems of consumer behaviour that involve the keeping, desiring and acquiring more

items than are required to survive is one close to the heart and the hip pocket of the fashion victim. For example, just how many pairs of shoes, or hats, or gloves is it strictly necessary for one to own and wear?

**Emergence of ‘Collections’:**

Fashion leaders, during the last century, presented collections of their own styles as historical work. Their current commercial ranges of styles are now also called collections. The collections of their earlier work and designs are of nostalgic interest and provide reference to their creative development. They have also been used to create popular entertainment and publicity when milestones of the businesses are reached and celebrated. For instance, the commemoration of thirty years of Yves Saint Laurent’s business was a parade of his fashions over those three decades.\(^{17}\)

We are witnessing the emergence of the Fashion Halls of Fame that recognise fashion leaders’ contributions with celebration collections, parades and exhibitions. Special galleries dedicated to fashion have mushroomed. Increasingly there are designated sections within major museums, including the Metropolitan Museum of New York, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and the Musée de la Mode et du Textile in Paris.

There are recent local examples of high profile fashion collections. The Vivienne Westwood collection featured at the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra in November 2004. As the gallery website explained:

> “Vivienne Westwood is one of Britain’s best known and most admired designers. This exhibition will present a highly accessible and visual exploration of the culture of fashion from the 1970s onwards through one designer’s vision.”\(^{18}\)

It is interesting to note the respect that Vivienne Westwood commands as recognised in the 2006 New Year’s Honours awards (Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire).

The new National Gallery of Victoria, International and the Ian Potter Centre both opened with fashion exhibitions. They continue to display historic and contemporary fashion and

---

textiles collections. This historic and artistic interpretation of fashion is now an established and widely accepted feature of the Melbourne Fashion Festival.19 & 20

Another high profile and well-regarded fashion exhibition featuring collections opened at the National Gallery of Victoria in October 2004. Titled Hunters and Collectors, the exhibition was described in this way in its publicity:

“Four Australians have captured treasures from their favourite designers that reflect their admiration. Collector Neil Taylor was dedicated to the early work of Vivienne Westwood and Malcolm McLaren, and even had their label tattooed onto his back; Mrs. Mavis Powell filled three wardrobes with her Chanel clothing; and two art collectors, Gabrielle Pizzi and Sandra Velik, wore Yves Saint Laurent for many years.”21

On sale at the Sydney Auction House, Menzies-Lawson in November 2004 was the impressive collection from the Banana Room – the Fashion Collection of Sophie van Rood of Adelaide. In the catalogue for this collection of vintage and antique clothing and accessories, Kate Butler, the curator, put the collection in a cultural and artistic context by writing:

“The collection presented in this catalogue, is the combined trading stock of The Banana Room and Sophie’s private collection. It comprises over eight thousand items, dating from 1850 to 1980, and includes dresses, accessories, furnishings and trimmings, and household items. It is a magnificent testament to Sophie’s collecting and her passion for, and appreciation of, fashion and history.”22

Butler went on to quote Alexandra Joel, author of Best Dressed 200 years of Fashion in Australia:

“Fashion is part of all our lives, and through its story and those that have worn, made, and created it, much of our past is revealed – our taste, economic health, emotional wellbeing, attitudes towards sexes and public morality.”23
Hollywood celebrates the history of its screen fashion designers in museums such as the one housing the collection of designer to the stars, Adrian. Individual designers present their collections, as demonstrated by British fashion designer, Zandra Rhodes, who in 2003 opened her new London Gallery to the public. Clearly the layperson is increasingly drawn towards collections with a familiar and glamorous name attached.24

Contemporary Trends:
To understand more about the growth in popularity of collecting, a brief review of the contemporary daily newspaper columns, particularly in the finance and investment sections, is enlightening. Articles containing investor advice expound collecting as a viable and lucrative investment. Additional valuable information for those involved in investment collecting is provided in catalogues and advertising from Christie’s Auctions and other major auction houses. The private collector now vies with the serious, mainstream museums and other official institutions in the auction milieu.

In an interesting crossover, Britain’s Royal Academy, London, has announced a forthcoming exhibition of Matisse, His Art and His Textiles: The Fabric of Dreams. During his long life Matisse attributed significant inspiration to dress and fabrics. This exhibition is briefly discussed on p. 29 of this paper in the light of a 2005 visit to this exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

A recent article in the Australian Financial Review Magazine had a fashion industry focus. The changing importance of historic fashion outside the rarefied realm of the mainline museum or gallery was covered in text and photographs. Laura Demasi wrote under the heading The New Old:

"If there is one certainty in this land of consumerism, it is that we are a culture obsessed with the shiny and the new – but while our desire to be up to the minute continues to grow, a countermovement is also flourishing. In the world of fashion, it is now the old, the worn, the pre-loved that carries most cachet. Once considered a passing fad, vintage clothing is now a bona fide fashion staple that is increasingly proving as collectable as art or that rare bottle of wine.”25

The cashmere overcoat that entices one from the boutique window or the pages of a glossy fashion magazine is put forward as an opportunity for investment dressing. Exclusive gems and jewellery have traditionally topped the Melbourne list of desirable collectables. It may well be that the recent trend towards investing in very specific fashions has put clothing in the same hallowed collecting category as investment in jewels.

**Popular Appeal:**

At the popular end of the collecting scale, Leonard Joel’s, a well known Melbourne institution, describing itself as “Australia’s Eclectic Auction House”, has advertised its sales forcefully, enticing collectors and the general public alike to buy their “great stuff”.26

The trash and treasure paradox touches on fashion collecting. There persists a very strong place for the concept of rich treasures sourced from humble origins; one person’s trash being another’s treasure. Items of previously unrecognised value may be found in the likes of the Paris Puce, flea markets, the Oxfam shop, deceased estates, and the Salvation Army Thrift Shops. Family cast-offs may transform into treasures. This attractive, accessible rags-to-riches side of collecting fashion widely features in the best of collections. It is an integral part of the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection, particularly in its regional context. It accommodates exciting opportunity shop finds, farm sale bargains, and bequests.27,28&29

**Psychological Motives – Reflected Glory Collecting:**

Avarice and fame through ownership-by-association can apply to the persistent desire to acquire renowned fashion label items. The need to make more and more purchases, taking provenance into consideration, is usually the making of collections. There is a significant appeal in collecting vintage fashions at the present time. Prospective owners are driven by the desire to keep, enjoy, to wear and bask in the reflected fame-by-association flowing from the item’s or garment’s previous owner/s. Desirable items frequently have an haute couture fashion pedigree and status independent from and enhancing the status of the original owner.

This impulse to be touched-by-fame because of the historical nature of the fashions and their celebrity lineage is actively being promoted. There is popular, current appeal in

The wearing and collecting of old, expensive, high fashion items. The quest for vintage garments is keen. A keynote speaker at the Business Seminar of the 2004 Melbourne Fashion Festival, Cameron Silver, created strong interest among the hardcore fashion business audience with his success stories of his vintage couture boutiques in Los Angeles. These epitomise the trend for fashion collection promotion through the feature and fashion sections of the popular media.30&31

The concept of being touched by fame and history also relates to the pleasure experienced by audiences, students and all those involved with the performing aspects of the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection. They are provided with an unique opportunity to wear, see and touch real historical items outside the protective standards of the professional gallery environment. Additional satisfaction is gained from the opportunity to meet the families and to hear the stories of fashion items’ original owners.

Celebrities and heroes – past and present – play a role in contemporary motivations for collecting vintage clothing. This is apparent in the naming of some commercial fashion collections. Labelling current fashion looks with an historical perspective has become commonplace. We accept trends by the era and or personality, for example Victoriana lace ruffles, Renaissance gold embroidery, Jackie Kennedy suit or Doris Day dirndl skirt.

The Darker Side of Collecting:
Some experts identify a darker side of collecting. That is collecting for control, ownership, leadership, mastery and recognition for one’s wealth, taste, education and culture.
Historically, the possession of an admired collection could symbolically represent imperial majesty.

The idea of collections being used by rulers to display conquests, riches and dominion is explored through the examples investigated by Philip Blom.32 They considered collecting behaviours and motives such as of trophy amassing – collecting objects to celebrate triumphs, achievements, sporting teams vanquished and other indulgences such as collecting animal skins, tusks, or scalps.

Collecting novel artefacts of exotic cultures appears to have similar motivation. This type

30. Cuthbertson, Kathleen, 6th March, 2004, His Tyres May be Missing but Cameron Silver is Purring on All Fours, The Age, Weekend, Melbourne.
of collecting found its form in the removal from their source of sacred items, and, in some cases, the remains of indigenous people, with the purpose of making them museum exhibits. The European voyages of discovery, conquests and colonialism, in the name of science, art, exploration and wealth can be seen in this light. Explorers and conquistadors often collected native people as concubines and/or slaves. The quest for knowledge and new experience was a justification for some of these less desirable aspects of imperial expansion.\textsuperscript{33}

**Philanthropic Considerations:**

Blom also discuss the plunder and legacy of collecting dynasties. They identify collecting behaviour as related to recognition after death considerations. The human desire for immortality may be demonstrated by the building of collections designed to outlive the original collector. The motives behind the amassed collections of the twentieth century philanthropist, industrial barons like the Gettys, Guggenheims and Hearsts, is said to be about a desire to use their riches and power to leave their mark for the betterment of the nation, as well as their own pleasure. Wealthy collectors of this type share a human keenness to leave their legacy while adding meaning and reality to their own lives.\textsuperscript{34}

Major benefactors usually ensure the continuity of their collections and bequests through clever, and sometimes complex, legal arrangements and estate planning. At the other end of the social scale problems of continuity upon death of the founder/collector are often left unaddressed. Dilemmas of this nature confront the likes of the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection. Planning what to do with collections after the collector’s demise and having the hoard, accumulation, and collection in a fit state to leave as an official or family bequest are important issues. If arrangements are not made, these treasured collections might find their way back to the opportunity shops or suffer worse fates at the hands of the unappreciative.

**Fetishism:**

Apart from the above-mentioned, largely tangible, public view of collections, collectors and collecting, there are many secret and sometimes perverse psychological collecting motives.

\textsuperscript{33} ibid, Blom, pp109-123.

\textsuperscript{34} ibid, pp124-136.
Gender and fetish are influences on collecting behaviour. Men and women collect different things. One husband’s collection of football cards can be balanced by his wife’s china sugar bowl collection, while the costume collector’s husband may collect motorbikes, cars or vintage farm implements. In the area of fetish collecting, the Imelda Marcos phenomenon of shoe collecting has been widely commented upon.

Unfathomable urges dwell in the human psyche. Items of decoration have historically come into the category of fetish and often follow and inspire fashion trends. Multiple piercing and tattoos come immediately to mind. Murderers often give themselves away by the trophies collected from victims – not exactly fashion, but often items of clothing or body parts. The urge to collect items or garments that the majority of people view as unattractive or tasteless may be regarded as fetish collecting.

Freud as a Collector:

Many other psychological considerations may come into play in the act of collecting. Pioneer psychoanalyst, Sigmund Freud, collected extraordinary dream texts, drawn from the study of his patients. Freud’s major work, The Analysis of Dreams, continues to be referred to by professionals in the field. A less well-known fact is that, parallel to his psychoanalytical work, Freud progressively expanded his personal collection of ancient statuettes, many of which can be viewed in his London home, now a museum.

In a 2005 visit to the Freud Museum the Researcher was impressed by the range of display cabinets and their contents. Every room of the spacious home, which was Freud’s consulting rooms, housed an array of collections empathetically arranged within the overall décor.

Through the presentation of the themed collections, for example, there was one devoted to small, ancient phallic and fertility totems, the cabinets formed a collection of interesting furniture in its own right. Freud’s display cabinets were reminiscent of the specially built exhibition furniture created by European collectors like the royal members of the Habsburg dynasty. The “treasure” collections of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were organised inside, often richly decorated, cupboards featuring many drawers and

compartments. In Italy, beginning with Piero de Medici, who developed “studiolo” to display his collections, the Medici descendants continued collecting and exhibiting with style and gusto.38

The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection in Context – collecting for enjoyment of a popular human pursuit, as fashion renaissance and posterity:

In terms of psychology of collecting fashion, clothing and textiles are all part of the special human interest that costume has, the nostalgia it evokes, the sentiment and popular cultural aspects and theatre of memories it provokes.

The other collecting motivations and passions that also relate to collecting fashion are the desire to save, the urge to erect a permanent and complete system against the destructiveness of time. Further to just collecting, there is the urge to organise and classify collectables for present enjoyment and education with an eye to posterity.

Items accumulate meaningful interest through their past associations and the meanings are interpreted further, as time goes by. Individual objects gather revered and/or practical meanings in changed contexts.

Many other scenarios, true and fictional, show the cultural place of clothing. The popular influence of movie can depict history and achieve wide distribution and social impact. Changing meanings of fashions and clothing may be seen in re-creations. In the film Cold Mountain, set during the American Civil War, a poignant scene featured the gathering up of uniforms from corpses for redistribution to surviving troops – ultimate practical re-cycling.39

Similar re-cycling out of sheer necessity was depicted in another historically themed film – The Pianist. Set in the Warsaw ghetto during the Second World War, the removal of garments from corpses to redistribute to Jewish and other internees was depicted. Moviegoers saw men wearing high fashion, expensive women’s fur coats, combined with a range of other mismatched garments.40

This effect created in The Pianist was not stylish but the result was, in the circumstances,
practical. This scene was a very stark contrast with how vintage fur trims have been important desirables in the 2005 winter fashion ranges.

Today we witness items of clothing not regarded or desirable the first time around in the fashion-cycle being mixed and matched with current haute couture and thus gaining a new fashion credibility. Some examples are seen in an acceptance of garish costume jewellery, active sports wear garments and parts of military uniforms.

We have also seen unglamorous garments become fashion desirables when, for example, pre-worn and damaged Levi jeans from U.S.A. prisons were marketed in Australia in the 1980’s. Clearly, clothes can be revived and live in different contexts.

By contrast, other items are more lovingly preserved and endure into the future. One example provided in Susan M. Pearce’s book, *Interpreting Objects and Collections*, there is the story of the Red Jacket.41

The text explains that in the collections of the National Army Museum, London, there is an infantry officer's red jacket. It is of the type known as a coatee, and was worn by Lieutenant Henry Anderson at the battle of Waterloo, in what is now Belgium, on Sunday 18th June 1815. This garment today is part of three permanent collections on display, lovingly preserved from that June day two centuries ago to the present. It clearly carries a powerful significance for generations of military buffs. The nature and implications of this jacket's survival are intriguing. Within the broad fields of social and military history, the appearance, style, materials and trims are similar to many uniforms of the times but the individual story of its history and reverent conservation are unique.

In the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, there is a complete young gentleman’s wardrobe of the 1980’s. The wardrobe is selected from the collection of the leading British fashion designer, Vivienne Westwood. Comprehensive documentation about its provenance including sales dockets is presented. Explanation of these garments significance was featured in the 1991, BBC Television series, *The Big Picture* Television Series.42

In the book *To Have and to Hold*, Philip Blom tells us that:

> The fascinating concept, the idea of collecting, the simple question, what drives people to amass things, often of no use, has great interest as a strange and beautiful obsession.

> “Every passion borders on chaos, that of the collector on the chaos of memory.”

We all keep things beyond our immediate needs and many collect as a hobby, occupation or obsession. We collect to belong or to stand out. Some of us enjoy and others shun the social side of collecting. Collecting can be motivated by the desire to educate, entertain, prove theory and understand the world by seeking out our objects of special interest and categorising them in an historical context. There always appears more to discover. The thrill of the hunt goes on and there are many willing participants.

During the course of this study Dorothy Nicol personally has added numerous articles to her collection. A devoted and growing group of enthusiasts share her passion and are excited to find a safe place with Dorothy to house their treasured fashions. The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection involves collecting in its purest sense. The collection and those connected with it represent a microcosm of private historical fashion collections and collectors throughout Australia. The Dorothy Nicol historic fashion collection has stories of similar nature to the ones mentioned above.

Garments in the original *Flappers to Flares* paraded collection had similarities particularly in the wartime wedding ensembles and other ‘uniforms’ worn during personal milestone events and significant, community activities. The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection contains many garments with intriguing stories. The interest in piecing together the garments’ stories is likened to the increasingly popular pursuit of collecting family history and genealogy in recent times. People keenly tracing their family history often follow-up on the background to photographs in order to establish dates and historical activities. Sometimes the actual garments from the photographs have been preserved and provide added reference and interest.

The examples from the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection studied in some detail,

---


in this research paper, are the Dawe family child’s dress and woman’s cape. Using the cataloguing template, Book 1, cataloguing information was collected that describes and evaluates these garments as well as possible, in light of the mystery surrounding the detailed history of these items. Also, using this template, family history enthusiasts added to the investigation. This cataloguing trial provides guidance for the further cataloguing of more garments from the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection.45

As with these Case Studies 1 and 2 experiments in cataloguing sample garments, the proposed second catalogue of the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection will have its focus on the cultural and personal story of the garments as much as their exact chronology and precise physical characteristics. The beginning of this process is seen in the Catalogue 2, Book 1 Beyond Flappers to Flares, of this project. In many cases the cultural significance outweighs the purely aesthetic qualities in terms of academic interest and posterity.

**The Handling and Wearing of Historic Costume:**

Until now the popularity of the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection has stemmed from public showings and displays involving wearing of key garments by selected local enthusiasts. While this interest and involvement with the collection is commendable, it is recognised that the wearing of historic garments does not sit comfortably with those formally trained in the conservation and preservation of historic fashion.

Public collections held in professional, formal environments are subject to strict policy regarding care, conservations, wearing and exhibition. Standards set out by organisations such as the ICOM, MDA, AMOL for example, specify clearly and strongly that historic collections should not be worn and the care, conservation and display should be carefully controlled.46, 47, 48

Writers such as Tarrant, Finch and Putnam also advocate limited handling and well supervised display.49,50

Curators including Somerville, Jocic and Thomson adhere to official standards but are prepared to consider the special requirements of collections such as the Dorothy Nicol

---

45. ibid Irving, Judie and Walsh, Sylvia.
Historic Fashion Collection.\textsuperscript{51}

Several experts concede the desirability for limited handling of garments in specific circumstances to meet community and educational needs. Organisations including the Bath Museum of Costume have been founded on a private collector’s philosophy and strategy regarding their collections. Doris Langley Moore’s costume collections formed the collection at Bath, UK. It is promoted as an accessible, valuable educational resource requiring flexible standards regarding handling and display as originally set out by Doris Langley Moore.\textsuperscript{52}

At the present time, electronic information storage and three-dimensional display of historic fashion garments is beyond the resources of smaller private historic fashion collections. Discussion about historic presentation is covered elsewhere in this research.\textsuperscript{53}

This thesis does not set out to challenge the official policy for historic fashion collections. Instead it aims to open discussion and to stress the importance of careful consideration of appropriate practices in order to ensure sustainability.

\textsuperscript{51} Feedback information \textit{Book 1}: Somerville p47, Jocic p46, Thomson p50.  
\textsuperscript{52} Bath Museum of Costume, \url{http://museumofcostume.co.uk} Book 4 p18.  
\textsuperscript{53} Drexel University Costume Collection Online, \url{http://www.drexel.edu/designarts} Book 4 p10.
A Lasting Image Made of Cloth
The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection Formalised

Section 3: The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection Formalised – From a Hoard to a Collection.

It is advised that Books 1, 3 and 4 be read to fully appreciate the following summary, conclusions and recommendations.

Reflections on the Research – Research Project Future Context, Motivation and Implications:
As a hoard the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion collection may seem to the uninitiated, like a mass of old clothes of little use. However, garments and fashions worn in Australia during previous decades have a role in shaping our view of life in these times. Examples of the appearance of our ancestors are of great popular and cultural interest as was proposed at the beginning of this research project.

The search is on for a New Authenticity –
“Our thirst for the authentic has fuelled a booming market for vintage clothing, jewellery and accessories. From second-hand threads, the pre-loved have become art-world collectibles, a trend that has luxury goods companies mining their vaults.”

In this article Owens presents the wide range of motives that contribute to the current interest in the lucrative and highly satisfying pursuit for the collectors of collecting and wearing vintage fashion. While definitions of what constitutes vintage fashion vary, it is generally agreed that anything not of this season has now become generally recognised as vintage. The avid collector and professional though, tend to view the current vintage era as between the 1920s to 1970s. Of particular value to the vintage cognoscenti are items with rare, interesting, well documented provenance regarding the previous owner, wearer and haute couture designer fashion labels are favoured.

The piece being wearable is also a much in demand quality of vintage with confident wearers delighting in creating an individual look and often combining vintage with contemporary items.

Kerry Taylor, who conducts twice-yearly auctions in London in conjunction with Sotheby’s, says:

“Nobody has charted the rise in prices, vintage is moving so fast, there’s not the time to compare the sales. It’s bought women who want it to wear, not cellar. The wish list includes Balenciaga from the late fifties and sixties when he was at his peak; Christian Dior in the late forties and mid-fifties when he was the enfant...”

terrible and introduced the New Look. Chanel’s greatest period was the thirties.

They’re very wearable in every colour.”55

This trend for the wearing of vintage rather than having historic fashions admired is strong but the look don’t touch philosophy applied, challenges museums practice and begs the question, will there be enough garments surviving for posterity?

However, the vintage collector and wearer of today has become a conservator willing to put a lot into preserving garments and protecting their investment.

As London dealer, Mariad McClean said:

“It’s their investment not only in the intrinsic value, but in the knowledge that nobody else at the party will be wearing the same piece.”56

Robert Bell, at the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra – ascribes the vintage mood to a thirst for authenticity. Authenticity is an emerging idea that surrounded by the shoddy and unreal people start to look for the qualities of honesty, sustainability, rooted and human. Further to this to this in regard to fashion, Jane Roarty, a Sydney stylist points out that the quest for authenticity has spread to many aspects of lifestyle. Roarty sees a renewed keenness for elegance, etiquette and gracious living. It seems that the dominant trend for a low-quality, disposable lifestyle is spawning its opposite desires.57

In this search for a new authenticity, a de facto museum-ship industry has emerged. Additional ways of collecting, appreciating and exhibiting historic fashion collections has a growing following.

For Australian fashion and costume historians, new resources of quality collections are always welcome. In the eyes of leading Australian Art historian, Margaret Maynard of the University of Queensland, collections such as the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection are of special value because their focus is wider and more personal than the present collecting rationales.

In her writings and lectures, Margaret Maynard endorses the value of good access to collections for all those studying dress styles, further than just elite fashions.58

56. ibid
57. ibid
mainline collections usually concentrate on collecting solely prestige items at the expense of collecting more mundane items with valuable social and technical significance.

In principle, Australia is committed to the good management of Cultural Heritage. The year of 2002 was the United Nations’ Year of Cultural Heritage. During the year, time was set aside for key organisations to focus on tangible and intangible elements which combine to make up cultural identities. Conferences were held, information disseminated and political and legal initiatives agreed to and implemented. The journal of Museums Australia (Victoria), Insite, discussed definitions and issues in its newsletter.

One of the most accessible definitions of Cultural Heritage was presented by the Editor of this newsletter, Roisin O’Dwyer who concluded that,

“In short, Cultural Heritage allows us to make connections between our immediate environment and the big picture.”

The wearing and use of textiles, clothing and fashions can identify distinct cultures at particular times and may be both tangible and intangible. In 2002 Nations united to agree that workers in the cultural heritage field should be supported to ensure that these pieces of our heritage are not only conserved, but also appreciated and hopefully understood.

As noted by David Demant, the curator of information technology at the Museum of Melbourne, at the end of the Insite newsletter of October-November 2002:

“Cultural Heritage is to society as memories are to an individual. At best, cultural heritage and memory illuminate some aspects of the past, enabling us to deal with the present and to more prepare for the future; at worst, both are rationalisations of sentimentality and blind nostalgia. Cultural Heritage is the name given to anything that confirms the myths groups have built up about themselves, just as memories confirm our current view of ourselves. What is regarded as cultural heritage is a creature of a particular social grouping in a particular time and place that is subject to change as circumstances alter. One person’s cultural heritage is another person’s leavings.”

Demant also sees the recording of data about Heritage items as a valuable accumulation of layered information, each layer equally significant to each other, forming a diary of the object.

These Cultural Heritage sentiments are readily applicable to the preservation of costume collections such as the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection.

As shown by the continued support given to Dorothy Nicol, formalising the Dorothy Nicol Historical Fashion collection and recording the collection will be of community benefit. The anticipated primary community benefits will be the availability of increased information about and ready access to this historical resource. Researchers, subject specialists, educationalists and general public all will have wider and easier access because of the proposed specially developed catalogue system.

Increased demand for access to fashion educational resources was a trend followed by the British Textile and Fashion designer Zandra Rhodes when she opened her extensive Gallery space to the public in 2004.

The Zandra Rhodes Textile Museum is a lively venue in London's inner south where the culture of renaissance abounds and trendy renovation goes on 24-7. Zandra's collected archives of her fashion and textile designs are on display and accessible as part of the resources of a design education centre and fashion industry commercial support and promotional service for design students, beginning designers.

Like textiles themselves, the records about historical fashions at a private, non-professional level are not particularly lasting. The project has the potential to increase the knowledge in the field of Australian fashion history with useful applications in education and industry in order to instruct and inspire contemporary fashion students, creators and producers.

The many supporters of this research project agree that it is important to keep up the momentum of passionate collectors such as Dorothy Nicol, to maximise and share the experience of collections like Dorothy Nicol’s, some sense needs to be made to support their enthusiasm.

As noted in other sections of this project (Book 4), Andy Warhol left us his Time Capsules which are said to respect a modern day archaeological journey of discovery and thus is the investigation of the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection. Dorothy Nicol,

---

61. Textile Museum – Zandra Rhodes, August 2005, author visit, Bermondsey, London, [http://www.zandrarhodes](http://www.zandrarhodes) (27.05.03)(18.07.05)(23.05.07)
as a passionate Historic fashion collector, shares with many others and expressed by Rudi Nureyev in explaining his rich eclectic accumulation of textiles – "I know what I like and have to have it." This collecting passion goes much further than a personal enjoyment for Dorothy who, like Zandra Rhodes, is passionate that her collection is a valuable resource for young designers and the wider community.

The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion collection already exists. It is an important collection in the field of Australian history. Already it is proving a model resource which is consistently demonstrating interest by the public. To move to the next stage in the collection’s development, it is necessary to ensure that creators and stakeholders receive professional support in formalising and recording the collection.

The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion collection could become a working library – “bibliothèque travail” like Matisse’s Textiles and as such it deserves being given the resources to sustain it. The resources needed, mostly in regard to the time involved in cataloguing, were practically demonstrated by making an inventory of the two sample garments from the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection. From an evaluation of the effort needed for cataloguing these two samples, it is anticipated that to catalogue further garments and perhaps the whole collection will require extensive time and resources. Aspects of the cataloguing experiment showed that many useful resources are readily available in a major city. Libraries, museums, professional photographers and other consultants were of course easier and less costly for the researcher to access than might be in the case from a rural Victorian location such as Lismore.

Incidental to passionate collecting but of great significance, collections such as Dorothy Nicol’s, similar to Matisse’s Textiles is the formation of an important visual memory and to a fragile cultural heritage.

To embark on cataloguing further garments to the standard of the cataloguing cases studies, in Book 1 of this project, would be a major project, requiring time, funds and education. Collections such as the Dorothy Nichol Historic Fashion Collection do not usually have such resources. Suitable expertise, funds and resources for conventional

64. Nureyev, Exhibition Notes, 2005, The Museum of Costume and Assembly Rooms, Bath, UK, authorised guide in association with the National Trust UK.
cataloguing are traditionally considerable.

For this research project, informal, inexpensive advice and consultation were conveniently available through the researcher’s association with RMIT Fashion and Textiles Department, Brunswick campus. The researcher was able to draw upon many years of experience with fashion and textiles as well as knowledge of contemporary and historic garments. Alternative methodology requiring less physical and financial resources would be recommended to be developed.

Also, given expertise, funds and resources; ideas for the alternative methodology emerged from the research findings presented in this paper. This alternative methodology would ideally centre on an electronic system that could be customised to the specific needs of this collection and similar ones. This is seen as a valuable future development and considered in favourable terms by the feedback survey respondents (Book 3).

The range of research findings identified in this project show a heightened, general interest in appreciating and understanding Historic Fashion. Collections such as the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection are a valuable resource and aid in our search for authenticity and the preservation of our cultural heritage. The textiles, clothing and fashions amassed by private collectors provide us and future generations with a rich, though fragile legacy, without which our world would make less sense and be a less authentic place.
A series of research questions were proposed at the commencement of this research project. Addressing the research questions lead to the documentation and activities of this project and producing new contribution towards the formalisation of the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection. Book 2 Catalogue Beyond Flappers to Flares represents this contribution.

The seeking of answers to the research questions led to the identification of key preceding research, expertise and frames of reference. The body of formal references relevant to collecting, cataloguing and organising access specifically for private historic fashion collections was supplemented by resources providing ‘live’ experience and human expertise. Formal references are set out in Book 1.

Significant action research is reflected in this project’s examples which appear in the Support materials Books numbered 3 and 4. The outcomes that are presented in this research work rely on both theoretical research and action research. Establishing personal contacts with the author of recent preceding research and liaison with a selection of experts in the field proved was / is ongoing.

Review of Research Addressed:

The Research activities undertaken during this project included:

Research activity 1:

Search for methods of cataloguing historic fashion collections.

Research activity 2:

Search into existing collection and collectors’ organisational criteria and operational requirements to identify the considerations that may be appropriate to apply to the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection.

Research activity 3:

Many examples of historic fashion catalogues were identified and reviewed to ascertain cataloguing methods applicable to the selected sample model.
Research activity 4:
A process of comparative observation was undertaken of other organisations’ modus operandi and the needs of the model collection, its proposed facilitators, and clients.

Research activity 5:
The need to answer this multi-faceted question emerged as significant to the research and became a key factor. The importance and interrelationship between inanimate objects such as clothing and textiles when brought to life by wearers and the utilization of textiles in a social and geographic context was found to be significant to the development of historic fashion collections. Interaction with the collectors, curators, and enthusiasts, and through study of leading writers in this field, provided important insights and stimulus for this research.

The research questions were addressed identifying relevant data and compiling the data and the research findings into four complementary books which, together, represent completion of the project and demonstrate the outcomes delivered. Refer to Research Project Structure of the Research Activities and Documentation.

In Book 1, Cataloguing Historic Fashion Collections, research data is applied in the development of case studies numbers 1 and 2, featuring two key garments from the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection. The case study outcomes are demonstrated in Catalogue 2, titled Beyond Flappers to Flares also included in Book 1.

In this Book 2, Explanation of the Research, the collected research data theory is reviewed, including references to the preceding research and theoretical context of the project.

Data collected during this research project is displayed in the two Books 3 and 4, Support Materials A and B. These support materials include records of the project’s background and developmental information and activities. Comprehensive records of action research references and the research approach process and findings are included in Books 3 and 4. The contents of Book numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4 are explained in each of their introduction sections.
From this research the argument emerged, developed and proposes that—in a social history context, the value of the cultural aspects of private, historic fashion collections is equivalent to the aesthetic qualities of the overall collection content and individual item characteristics.

Furthermore, this research finding proposes that sustaining private historic fashion collections is culturally more important and that for this to happen particular considerations, resources and actions are necessary.

Support for this argument is found throughout the four Books that comprise this research project. These books contain a collection and analysis of research data; application of cataloguing and collecting theories and systems of two specific case studies and implementation of the combined research findings producing Catalogue 2 of the Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection, *Beyond Flappers to Flares*, included in Book 1.

**Recommendations towards finalisation of the Collection:**

Considering the context of the Private Historic Fashion Collections such as Dorothy Nicol’s, some recommendations towards ongoing formalisation can be made. Within Dorothy’s location and resource base achieving the recommendations is seen as a progressive and ongoing venture.

The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection operates on limited funds and expertise and unlimited enthusiasm. It is Dorothy’s intention to increase her expertise and resource by increasing her network of supporters. Based on recent publicity, Dorothy’s collection has gained increased and influential attention from which funds may flow. In October 2006, as part of a Western Victorian exhibition at Parliament House, Canberra, some of Dorothy’s collection was displayed. An audience of National and International guests were invited to the exhibition promoting the Culture, Agriculture and Geographical attractions of the Western District Region. Using aspects of this Research project, particularly Book 1 Catalogue, *Beyond Flappers to Flares*, the impact of Dorothy’s submission to fund granting bodies has been strengthened.
Key Recommendations that require discussion and development include:

• The need for Dorothy to develop a collection policy as part of formalising and shaping the quality and direction of her collection and further acquisitions. Such a policy would also include further development in the standard, style and methods of cataloguing the collection.

• Consideration of digital imaging as part of the collection policy and activities also needs action to assist in the protection and cataloguing of the Collection.

• The issue of wearing costume needs to be considered in light of the aim of upgrading and protecting the collection to professional and durable standard.

• Finally, preservative and conservation policies and procedures need to be studied and adopted as appropriate.
## Section 4: Guide to Bibliography and Other Research Sources:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full Bibliography: Book 2—Theoretical reference</td>
<td>40–59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Print Books, Catalogues and Articles</td>
<td>40–53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Electronic Websites, online and digital resources</td>
<td>54–59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Audio visual, video, film, television references</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action References – Book 2</td>
<td>60–70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action diary—</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Field Trips and Visits</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Collection Parades</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Project Publicity</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Interviews and Communication</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Lismore Region Contributors</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Project Feedback Focus Group</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendices</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific Research References – Book 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific Research References – Book 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Lasting Image Made of Cloth
The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection

Section 4: Full Bibliography – Theoretical References:

1. Articles, Books and Catalogues –

2. Electronic Websites, Online and Digital Resources –

3. Audio Visual, Video, Film, Television References –

1. Articles:
Alderson, Maggie, 13th March 2004, *This is my Quest*, Style Notes, The Age, Good Weekend, Melbourne.


Breen-Burns, Janice, 10th September 2005, *Back on the Street Where They Cut Their Cloth, the Fashion Icons of This City Have Reunited*, The Age, Melbourne.


Clohesy, Bernadette, 20th-28th March 2005, *Childhood Treasures*, The Melbourne Times,
Melbourne.

**Coslovich**, Gabriella, 7th December 2004, *Farewell to the Woman who Brought the Dreaming in from the Desert*, The Age, Melbourne.


**Cuthbertson**, Kathleen, 6th March 2004, *His Tyres may be Missing but Cameron Silver is Purring on all Fours*, The Age Weekend, Melbourne.


Editorial, 14th February 2004, *Build your Collection, Our Australia*, Herald Sun, Melbourne.


Griffen, Michelle, Halliday, Claire, Krien, Anna, March, 2005, *Behind the Scene*, The Age (Melbourne) Magazine issue #5, Fairfax magazines, Sydney NSW.

Hardy, Tony, 27th December 2003, *Addicted to his Hobby this Collector is Really Worth his Salt*, The Age, Melbourne.


Trzcinski, Joanne, 14th February 2004, *The Swinging '60s, Forty Years Ago, Life was Much More Colourful and Exciting, and This Devotee to the Era is Now Eager to Experience it*, Interiors, Herald Sun, Melbourne


Books and Catalogues:


Barclay, Amy, 2005, Andy Warhol’s Time Capsules, the Council of the Trustees of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Victoria.


**International Textile and Apparel Association**, 2000, vol. 18 #4 Clothing and Textiles Journal, USA

**Insite**, March/April 2003, *Digital Features*, Museums (Victoria) issue, Museums Australia, Australia


Joicic, Laura, 1994, *From Stage to Storage? The documentation and preservation of theatrical costume*, Library of the Fine Arts Department, University of Melbourne.


Laver, James, 1963, *Costume through the Ages*, Thames and Hudson, London

Lurie, Alison, *The Language of Clothes*, Random House, New York,


Somerville, Katie, 2003, *Top to Toe*, National Gallery of Victoria


2. Electronic, Online, Websites and Digital Resources:


CAUMAC, Council of Australia University Museums Collections, News online, 2001 http://aumol.usyd.edu.au (22/08/01)

Colonial Williamsburg Costume Design Center, 2001, U.S.A. http://www.history.org/life/clothing/designcenter (25/02/01)


http://digimuse.cis.drexel.edu/home.html (21/05/03) (15/09/05)


Frances Burke Textile Resource Centre, 2001. Melbourne Australia http://www.cyberfibres.rmit.edu.au (05/08.01)

Getty Museum and Research Center, 2001, U.S.A. http://www.getty.edu/research/institute (14/07/01)


Hong Kong Polytech. 2004, Hong Kong, http://hongkongpoltec.edu (06/05/04)

IMS Global Learning Consortium Inc. http://www.imsproject.org (14/07/01)


Kent State University – Ohio, 2003, Fashion Library, U.S.A. http://www.library.kent.edu/branches/fashion/history.html (21/05/03)


Leeds University, 2004, http://www.leeds.ac.uk/textiles U.K. (07/05/04)

Macquarie University, Museum Studies, 2044, The Department of Museum Studies established in 1966, Sydney, N.S.W, electronic links –
http://www.cultureonline.gov.uk (08/02/04)

http://www.enrichuk.net (08/02/04)

http://www.cosprop.co.uk (08/02/04)

http://www.adlibsoft.com (08/02/04)

http://www.asis.org/Bulletin/Aug1999 (14/07/01)

http://www.museumnetwork.com (14/07/01)


Martin, Kathi, 2001, University briefs: Drexel University, Interactions, volume 8, issue 2, pages 85-91. ACM Digital Library, U.S.A. http://www.acm.org (15/05/01)


Milstead, Jessica, & Feldman, Susan, 1999, Cataloguing by any other name, Metadata project online journal, Meta Resources cataloguing services department, University of Virginia,
U.S.A. http://www.dlib.org (14/07/05) (28/07/05)


Museums Australia, 2001, Australia http://www.museumsaustralia.org.au (17/02/01)

Museums Australia (Victoria), http://www.vicnet.net.au/~museaust


http://www.gbacg.org/collection.htm

http://www.uk-spot.co.uk/fashion-history/ (18/05/04)

Nottingham Trent University, 2004, http://www.ntu.ac.uk, U.K. (06/05/04)

National Quilt Register, 2002, http://amol.org.au/nqr, Australia (03/10/02) (06/05/04)


RMIT University, 2001. Melbourne Australia http://rmit.edu.au/departments (05/08.01)

Rusty Zipper Vintage Clothing. USA, http://www.rustyzipper.com (08/06/03)


And adviser network, http://www.mda.org.uk/specads.htm (07/03/02)

And Advice Point, http://www.mda.org.uk.ap (07/03/02)


The Kyoto Costume Institute, 2003, Japan http://www.kci.or.jp/collection/list-e.html (21/05/03)


The London College of Fashion and The London Institute http://www.lcf.ac.uk (05/06/05) (18/07/05)


The University of Queensland Library, 2001, http://library.uq.edu.au, Australia (04/08/01)


University of Texas – Austin, Texas Fashion Collection: Collection Highlights, 2003 U.S.A. http://www.utopia.utexas.edu/features/scenes/dresses (03/09/05)
http://www.art.unt.edu/tfc/collections.htm U.S.A (22/08/03) (13/09/05)

University of South Carolina, 2044, U.S.A. http://www.usc.edu (06/05/04)

University of North Carolina, 2004, U.S.A. http://www.unc.edu (06/05/04)

VADS – Visual Arts Data Service U.K. http://www.vads.ahds.ac.uk/vads_uk/searchhtml (04/06/01)


And http://www.popula.com/docs/whysell.htm (05/07/03)

Virtual Library, Museums around the world and country by country, 2001, http://www.icom.org/vimp/usa.html (22/08/01)


3. Audio visual, video, film, television Resources:

James, Clive — *At the Paris Fashion Show*, 1981, British Broadcasting Television (BBC)
Documentary Series.

Documentary series, National Video Resource Centre, Australia.
Organisation and cataloguing of Sample Collection:
Selections from – Action research diary – Including Field Trips, Study tours, associated activities and workshops.

Overview of Listing:
1. Fieldtrips and Visits
2. Collection Parades
3. Project Publicity
4. Interviews and Communication
5. Lismore Region Contributors
6. Project Feedback Focus Group

1 Significant Field Trips, Visits and Activities – 2006:
Exhibition Presentation at The Johnston Collection, East Melbourne, January.


Exhibition Curator floor talk, Bravo, celebrating 50 years of Opera Australia, April, The Arts Centre, Melbourne.

Annual Costumes and Textiles Symposium, March, Poster of Research Project part of a symposium display, Auckland New Zealand.


Visit to New Zealand, June, Cataloguing and display of Historic Fashion research, featuring interview with Davina Davis, curator of Textiles South Canterbury.

Visits to Timaroo Galleries and exhibitions, June including Museum research – textiles and fashion, Tehuanas: Fashion of Frida Kahlo and Under the skirts of Erebus: Frocks about Science,
Aigantighe Art Gallery, Timaroo, New Zealand.


Visit to Dorothy Nicol, Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection, Lismore, Victoria.

Visit to Judie Irving for Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection, Terang, Victoria.

Interview on ABC Radio National, July, Ballarat.

Exhibition Launch and panel presentation, *Thomas Harrison Milliner*, NGV The Ian Potter centre, Federation Square, Melbourne


**2005:**

*Overseas Study Tour – July, August and September –*

**London –**


**Victoria and Albert Museum,** Exhibition – *Style and Splendour – Queen Maud of Norway’s Wardrobe* as worn by Maud (daughter of Edward VII and Queen Alexandra) 1896-1938.

**Buckingham Palace,** *The White Wardrobe*, designed for the Queen Mother by Norman Hartnell for the State visit to France in July 1938.

**Tate Modern,** *Frida Kahlo*, first UK solo show of this celebrated Mexican artist.

**The Theatre Museum,** *500 years of the Performing Arts in the UK*, Covent Garden.

**Bath Costume & Assembly Rooms,** *The Nureyev style*, A special display of Rudolf Nureyev’s costume, fashion and textiles, and 

The Costume and Textiles Collection and The Development of the Historic and Film Costumes of Jane Austin, Bath.
Paris –

Musée national du Moyen Age – Themes & hotel Cluny, The Lady and the Unicorn tapestries.

Musée de la Mode et Musée des le mode du Textils – Historic Collection and Japanese Retrospective.

New York –

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Matisse, His Art and His Textiles.


National Gallery of Victoria, Gallery Society Activities, exhibitions and workshops related to exhibitions – Andy Warhol’s Time Capsules; Hunters and Collections; Flair: from Salon to Boutique, Australian Fashion labels through the ‘60s; Everlasting – the Flower in Costume and Fashion; Akira Isogawa: Printemps-Ete; Flashback: Australian photography in the 1960s; Dutch Masters and British Art of the ‘60s.

Exhibition Launch and curator presentation, Martin Grant, Paris, Fashion and Textiles Gallery, The Ian Potter Centre; NGV, Federation Square Melbourne.

2004:

Sydney Opera House, 2004, Sydney Style at the Opera House, Sydney. (16/01/04)

Macquarie University, Museum Studies Research Library, 2004

Hobart, Historic Properties, Tasmania, 2004, visits, Narryna, 1836 House Museum, Runnymede, 1850s, House and Garden, Islington, 1845 (02/01/04)


ADLIB Information Services Software demonstration, International principles from Holland visiting Melbourne 2004 “IT systems, comprehensive functionality and interfaces for professional collections management” (13/02/04)

Lismore visit, Easter 2004 Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection

The Racing Museum, July, Federation Square, Melbourne.

Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection, Lismore, July (09/07/04)

2003:

Brisbane, Textile and Costume Collection, Art Gallery of Queensland

Benalla and District Costume Museum, 2003, Interview and Tour by Truus Gribben, April.

Lismore, June

Rosebank, Terang, July

Abigail Hart, Textile Conservator, 2003 conservation project, the young gentleman’s highland outfit, in consultation, Abigail, David Windsor, Leather, expert including visits to Zetta Florence conservation suppliers

The National Gallery of Victoria, Ian Potter Centre, 2003, Swish, Fashionable Melbourne in the 1950s, Exhibition Launch, (08/08/03)

Eldridge family, 2003 Terang, (19/09/03)

Colac, Flappers to Flares parade September.


Deconstruct and Reconstruct Workshop, 2003, International Specialist Skills Institute workshop Claudio Tomaselli, Director, Design and Development, Texcontrol an associated company of Benetton, Italy
Frances Burke Textile Resource Centre, monthly lecture series, 2003 and Special Events; *Turn to Face the Change*—lecture by Margaret Maynard

RMIT Visual Merchandising, interview regarding Lectra systeme's potential of Cad (07/05/03)

Computer Skills Course, 2003, RMIT University, Melbourne.

2002:
Lismore, February, October.

Melbourne Museum, *Collecting Seminar, What the curators collect.*

Powerhouse Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Sydney 2002, Interview with curator, Chris Sumner 2002

Winifred Mott Historical Fashion Collection, 2002, Mt. Eliza, Victoria, July 2002

Ballieu Library, University of Melbourne, 2002

The Costume Collection Yarra Park, Interview with Loel Thomson, 2002, (4/05/02)

Research Day, Faculty Art Design and Communication 2002, (22/11/02)


Performing Arts Museum, Melbourne.

The National Racing Museum, Melbourne.

2001:
Research Methods, RMIT, April.

Lismore/Terang, June

Sydney, Brisbane, Powerhouse Museum, Brisbane Art Gallery

Frances Burke Textile Resource Centre, (FBTRC) monthly lecture series, 2001 and Special Education and Industry Events.
National Wool Museum, Museums Australia workshop Geelong, April.

2000:
Lismore/Terang, February, June.

Sydney, Powerhouse Museum


Prior to 2000

First Lismore Visit to Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection:
November 1999.

2. Collection parades and performances – Flappers to Flares –
Selections from – Action research diary –
Collection Parades and Performances, Flappers to Flares, Parade Highlights:
Inaugural Parade, February 26th, 2000, Rosebank, Terang.
Windsor Hotel, Melbourne, 2001, 24/03/01
Craig’s Hotel, Ballarat, 2001, 18/03/01
Erskine House, Lorne, 2001, 06/11/01
Lismore Community Centre, 2002, 18/10/02
Colac Art Centre, Colac, 2003, 19/09/03

3. Flappers to Flares specific publications and publicity highlights (copies can be seen in Book 3):
Western Plains Advertiser, 10th October 2002, Masonic lodge hordes fashion history.


Terang Express, 22nd March 2001, Flappers to Flares road trip

Western Weekly Wednesday, 23rd February 2000, Fashions of the Century.

The Weekly Times, 16th February 2000, Terang’s in a flap over fashion.
Terang Express, 10th February 2000, Flappers and Flares offers a taste of the past

Warrnambool Standard, 7th February 2000, Time trip through fashion collection, Parade in Terang

Terang Express, 9th December 1999, Local Women model with ‘flare’

Western District Farmer, November 1999, Special Fashions from an earlier era.

Terang Express, 11th November 1999, Models needed for Flappers to Flares


Warrnambool Standard, 5th October 1999, Dorothy’s ‘rags’ turn to riches

4. Selections from – Action research diary –

Interviews and communications/correspondence:

Kathi Martin, Associate Professor, Director of Graduate Studies in Fashion, Drexel University, Philadelphia, P.A. 19104, U.S.A.

Peter Carman, President, Paris American Academy, Paris France.

Julia Gaimster, Fashion and Textiles Lecturer, London College of Fashion, London and Chair London and South East Section of the Textile Institute.

Abigail Hart, Costume and Textiles Conservator, Victoria, Australia.

Edwin, Edwin@NL.ADLIBSOFT.com for Chris Szabo-Bencze, ABLIB systems:

Judie Irving, Rosebank, Terang, Victoria, Fashion/History and community Events management and production

Dorothy Nicol, Lismore, Victoria; Fashion Collector, Historian.

Truus Gribben, Manager Benalla and District Costume Collection, Benalla Victoria.

Christina Sumner, Curator Powerhouse Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Sydney, N.S.W.
Katie Somerville and Robyn Healy, Curators, Ian Potter Centre and NGV International, Melbourne Victoria.

Kaye Ashton, Director and Dr. Juliette Peers, Cultural Art Historian, FBTRC, RMIT University, Melbourne.

Laura Jocic, Assistant Registrar, Auckland Art Gallery, Toio Tamaki, New Zealand.

Mrs. Winifred Mott, Fashion Collector, Historian, Writer and Fashion Creator, Victoria, Australia.

Mrs. Loel Thomson, Fashion Collector, Curator, Historian, Victoria.

Peter Jago, Milliner and Fashion Collector, Melbourne, Victoria.

Christopher Horne, Fashion Events manager/producer and Fashion Collector, Melbourne Victoria.

Adrian, Curator, Library of Costume and Design, Melbourne Victoria.

Peter Richardson, Managing Director, Lectra Systemes, Australia.

Kerry Dickson, CEO Texskill, Melbourne, Australia.

Noel Emselle President, Textile Institute, Australian Southern Section.

Carolynne Bourne, CEO, ISSI, Melbourne, Victoria.

Ann Williams, Director Colanna Services, Victoria.

5. Lismore and region fashion, family and social history enthusiasts – correspondence and interviews:

Contributors to Book 1 The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection Catalogue 2006 – Beyond Flappers to Flares:

Barbara Eldridge and family

Val and Chris Lang and family
Jenny Barr  ) for the Dawe family
Barbara Denness  )

Pat Nicol and family

Claire Drylie and Paul Sheedy from Alternate Antiques, Warrnambool, Victoria

Fran Dickson

Joyce Egan

Lynne Stammberger

Jane Savage

Louise MacCrae

Dawn Grant

Alison McBean

Margaret McBean

Judie Irving

Dorothy Nicol

6. Project Feedback focus group – correspondence and interviews:
Contributors to Book 3, The Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection, Culture and People – live action resources.

Laura Jocic – Registrar, Auckland Art Gallery, Toi Otanaki, New Zealand

Loel Thomson – Private Collector/curator, The Costume Collection, Bulleen

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

Judie Irving – Collector/enthusiast, Costume, Rosebank, Terang
A LASTING IMAGE MADE OF CLOTH
THE DOROTHY NICOL HISTORIC FASHION COLLECTION

Appendices:

Book 1 – Dorothy Nicol Historic Fashion Collection Catalogues:
1. Beyond Flappers to Flares
2. Flappers to Flares

Book 3 – Research Support Materials A
Book 4 – Research Support Materials B

Costume Boxes containing archived garments and mock-up catalogues:
1. Dawe Family Child’s Dress
   Catalogue of Case Study 1

2. Dawe Family Women’s Jacket | Dolman
   Catalogue of Case Study 2