

EDITORIAL

The State Library's collections reflect the history of Victoria, from the grandest of events to aspects of our daily lives. In this issue, researchers and writers share their discoveries from the collections, the paths their investigations took and their observations and interpretations of what they found. Artist Eric Thake was an astute observer of the minutiae of daily life, which he represented in his work in clever ways. In her article on Thake's use of windows, reflections and shadow play in his art, Alisa Bunbury says that in many of Thake's works the true subject is often not seen at first glance, but we are rewarded for close investigation. This is evident, for example, in the works where Thake used the motif of the shop window.

The iconic Georges store in Melbourne was known for its shopfront window displays. It was innovative fashion businesswoman Reta Findlay who introduced these elegant window displays in the mid-20th century. Annette Cooper was intrigued by Findlay and went in search of evidence of whether she had ever crossed paths with surgeon Florence Cooper, Annette's own late great-aunt, who also lived in Melbourne in the same period. Both women were gifted leaders and practitioners in their respective fields, and both were admired for their business acumen and were committed to advancing women in politics and their professions.

The history of Australian Rules football is often told through the game's development in urban areas and at major league level. Tim Hogan introduces us to the rich collection of football material at State Library Victoria which illuminates the less explored story of football in rural and regional Victoria – from the first published book about football in the state, to the diary entries from the 1890s of a country football fan, photographs of rural teams and football grounds, and the story of one controversial game that became a public slanging match in the columns of a local rural newspaper.

Opposite: *Our match with the Wallaby Flat football club* (detail), print, 1884, Pictures Collection, A/S28/07/84/supp, in *Australasian Sketcher with Pen and Pencil* (Melbourne), supplement, 28 July 1884, pp. 2–3



Two articles explore works from the Library's Rare Books collection. Anna Welch investigates how a 13th-century manuscript leaf came to be within the binding of a 16th-century volume and traces how this volume ended up in Melbourne. Allison O'Connell opens up a series of exquisite illustrated Japanese fairy tale books that have pages made from textured crepe paper and tells the story of how they were produced in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and published internationally.

At this time, postcards were widely produced and were a popular means of communication in Japan and in many other countries. Gabrielle McMullen shares a German-Australian collection from this golden age of postcards, with which she has a personal connection. Collected by the author's grandmother, Gertrude Berres, these postcards illuminate how, across the seas and locally, postcards were the 'social media' of the era. Frequent postal deliveries made daily interaction possible within local regions, and with developments in lithography and then photography, beautifully illustrated postcards became collectable.

Simon Plant brings us George Coppin's 'face book' – an 1860s photograph album of carte-de-visite portraits of celebrated people – which this enterprising Australian theatrical manager brought back from a business tour in America. It is another form, as Simon suggests, of what we might consider the social media of the period. Alongside extracts from Coppin's diaries, journals and letters, the haunting portraits put faces to the names of some of the leading personalities Coppin either encountered or admired and give insights into his own fixations and follies.

We hope you discover something new and intriguing in this selection of articles that inspires you to look deeper into the Library's collections and make investigations of your own.