

Tim Gatehouse

Three Generations of the Lazarus Family in Australia

SAMUEL LAZARUS WAS ONE of the thousands of British migrants who came to Victoria in the 1850s, attracted by the gold rushes and the chance to improve their circumstances. From relatively humble beginnings, through hard work and diligence, he did well in Victoria. By the time of his death from a car accident in 1923 he owned over a score of houses and left an estate valued at eleven thousand pounds.

During his lifetime Samuel Lazarus achieved minor public fame as the foreman of the jury in the 1880 trial of bushranger Ned Kelly. In post life he achieved short-lived fame as the supposed author of the ‘Lazarus Goldfields Diary’ when it was acquired by the State Library of Victoria in 2006. The diary was digitised and its contents and importance as a record of mining life in the 1850s well publicised. However, as Clare Wright showed conclusively in her recent article in this journal, the diary was not in fact kept by Samuel Lazarus, but rather by another English migrant on the gold fields, Charles Evans.¹

Samuel Lazarus’s life is still an interesting one. He is in a sense an exemplar of the successful hard-working nineteenth-century migrant. The State Library of Victoria recently acquired an extensive Lazarus family archive covering several generations of the family. This article will provide an outline of the careers of Samuel Lazarus, his son Julius, a soldier and respected shire engineer, and Julius’s son Hugh, who in contrast to his father and grandfather, led a more hedonistic life, mixing with artists associated with Heide and running several small businesses, in addition to being a photographer of minor note. He also changed his name from Lazarus to Frankland, and despite being married three times, he was childless. With his death in 1972, there were no direct descendants of Samuel Lazarus.

Samuel Lazarus

Samuel Lazarus’s parents, Joshua George, born in 1799, and Hannah Palota, born in 1804, were Russian Jews who were forced to leave Russia due to the anti-semitic policies of the Tsarist government.² They settled in Britain in 1833. Joshua George established himself as a stationer in Paradise Street, Liverpool, where a Jewish community had been in existence since the eighteenth century.

Since the early nineteenth century the conversion of the Jews had been one of the major activities of the Christian Evangelical movement. Missions to the Jews, dedicated to their conversion, were founded in the major English cities, including Liverpool. In December 1836 Joshua George and Hannah, and their three children Leah, Julius and



Julius Lazarus, in his volunteer uniform, with Hubert (Hugh), c. 1905. Lazarus Family Paper, State Library of Victoria.

Samuel were baptised at St Bride's Church of England, where they were recorded in the church register as being 'of the tribe of Judah'.³ When the stationery business did not prosper, Joshua George himself became a missionary to the Jews. By 1851 the family had moved to Manchester, where Joshua George conducted his missionary work in the Jewish quarter at Cheetham.⁴

Samuel Lazarus was still at school at the age of 14, unusual for the times, but when he was 16 he left home to face the hazards of a long sea voyage to the far-flung colony of Victoria. He was undoubtedly imbued with the same spirit of adventure which prompted many others to do likewise, but in Samuel's case there may have been an extra incentive. His prospects of advancement in Britain would have been more limited than for others with his relatively good education. As recent immigrants, his family would still have been on the outskirts of English society, and as converted Jews, they were no longer part of the Jewish community either. The prospects of life in a bustling new colony would have been far more attractive than in the small world of converted Jews at home.

Samuel arrived in Victoria in 1853.⁵ It is not known how he initially supported himself, but in all probability he tried his luck on the goldfields in the hope of a quick

fortune. If so, he was disappointed, and by July 1854 he was putting his education to good use as a schoolmaster at Bulla, a small hamlet to the north of Melbourne.

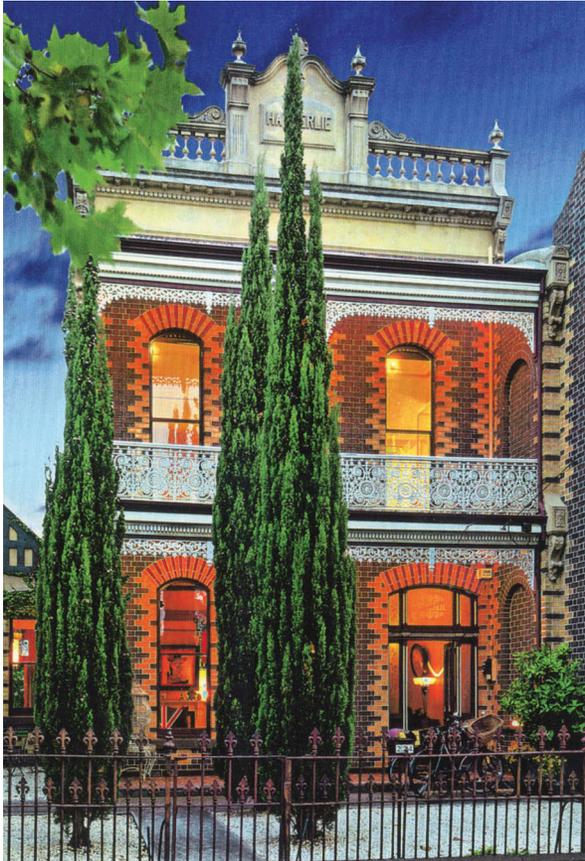
The school had been established by the Church of England in 1853 and was funded by the Denominational Schools Board.⁶ The teacher had to find his own accommodation for which he received a rent allowance. Perhaps the lack of suitable accommodation was the reason the first teacher, Edmund Harrison, and his wife, the needlework teacher, did not stay long. As a bachelor, Samuel's requirements would have been more easily met.⁷

In October 1855 Samuel was also appointed Deputy Registrar of Births, Marriages and Deaths at Bulla and Tullamarine.⁸ He was one of many such officials appointed throughout Victoria by the newly created Registrar General's Department to make administrative order out of the chaos caused by the huge influx of population into Victoria after the discovery of gold. This post would have provided Samuel with a small supplement to his schoolmaster's salary of one hundred pounds per year, and he held it until he left Bulla in 1868. Being the teacher at the Church of England school, Samuel was also the secretary of the Church of England at Bulla, which had been established by the Greene family on their nearby Woodlands estate.⁹

Life in the small farming community of Bulla must have been rather lonely for the young schoolmaster, so in November 1855 he was pleased to make the acquaintance of John Reid, the 20-year-old teacher at the nearby Tullamarine Island school. John Reid's father was the Presbyterian minister at Moonee Ponds, and his diary records many visits to and from Samuel Lazarus. The two earnest young men went on walking excursions, participated in fund raising activities for Rev. Reid's church, and met at the Galloway Arms Hotel at Essendon, to 'take tea' and read the newspapers.¹⁰

Samuel was still teaching at the Bulla school when, on Christmas Day 1858, he married Fanny Burney Cassidy, the governess of the children of a local farmer.¹¹ Her immigration to Victoria was due to the hard times on which her Irish Ascendancy family had fallen. In October 1859 a new school was opened on the Seafield estate at Tullamarine, where Samuel was now appointed teacher, and where the family lived for the next nine years. Four children were born to the marriage: Frances Mary in 1859, Julius Samuel in 1861, Elizabeth Hannah in 1862 and Henrietta Elizabeth in 1866. Elizabeth Hannah died when only six months old and Samuel not only had to register her death, but also personally carry out the burial in the absence of an undertaker.¹²

In 1868 the Lazarus family left Tullamarine when Samuel was appointed to the Emerald Hill [South Melbourne] school, where he remained for only one year. In 1869 he embarked on a new career as a dairyman. Before the invention of refrigeration, dairies were essential for the provision of fresh milk to Melbourne. The milk was transported daily from the country and then distributed from the dairies to residents. Samuel's first dairy was at the intersection of Madeleine Street (now Swanston Street) and Keppel Street, Carlton. In 1875 he moved to another dairy in Canning Street, Carlton, near the Carlton Gardens. It was while living here that Samuel earned his place in Australian history, as foreman of the jury at the Kelly trial, and where Fanny Lazarus was harassed



Samuel Lazarus's house 'Hatherlie', in North Fitzroy, as depicted on a real estate agent's brochure in March 2014. Author's collection.

by Kate Kelly in an attempt to persuade Samuel to sign a petition pleading for Ned Kelly's life.¹³ Other than a photograph taken when he was very elderly, published in the *Argus* newspaper after his death, there are no known photographs of Samuel. The only description of him comes from the *Argus* report of the Kelly trial where he was described as 'a small dark man from Carlton'.¹⁴

By 1886 Samuel had made yet another career change. In that year the Sands and McDougall's Directory recorded him as being a financier at Adderley Street, West Melbourne. In the late nineteenth century, 'financier' was a polite euphemism for 'money lender'. They dealt in larger sums than pawnbrokers but smaller ones than the banks.¹⁵

As to how Samuel accumulated the capital to establish himself as a financier is a mystery. He may have been able to save enough from his teacher's salary to purchase the dairy, but considerably more would have been needed to become a financier. He inherited nothing from his father. When Joshua George died in Liverpool in 1864, his estate was not sufficient to warrant a grant of probate.¹⁶ Perhaps the dairy was sufficiently profitable to finance the new venture.

Regardless of how it was established, the business was a success. By 1889 Samuel had built a substantial two storey house in McKean Street, North Fitzroy, and went on to acquire many more. By the date of his death he owned 24 houses in North Fitzroy, Carlton and Collingwood, let at rents ranging from 14 shillings per week for a three room cottage in Collingwood, to 30 shillings per week for a two storey brick house in North Fitzroy.¹⁷ He also owned some of the first motorised taxi cabs.

North Fitzroy, like so many of the once prosperous inner suburbs, did not recover after the 1890s depression. Those who could afford to moved to the more salubrious

eastern suburbs, and many of the larger houses like Samuel's became boarding houses or homes for the destitute. In 1920 Samuel sold the house in North Fitzroy and moved with his daughters Frances Mary and Henrietta Elizabeth, her daughter Muriel Mary, and their cousin Laura Harris to a spacious Victorian villa in Alma Road, Camberwell. In 1923 he died as a result of a motor vehicle accident near his home. As a memorial to him, his children gave the clock in the tower of the Camberwell Town Hall. The hopeful teenager who had set out from Manchester 70 years earlier had come a long way.

Of Samuel and Fanny Lazarus's other children, Frances never married and lived with her parents all her life. She died in 1927.¹⁸ Henrietta Elizabeth was married briefly to George Addey Wilson, a wine merchant. They had one daughter, Muriel Mary, who married George Perrotett, a renowned designer of bookplates.¹⁹

Julius Samuel Lazarus

Samuel and Fanny Lazarus's son Julius Samuel Lazarus was born at Tullamarine in 1861 and lived with his parents after they moved to Melbourne.²⁰ He was qualified in several fields, by the age of 19 as a land and a municipal surveyor, and later as a hydraulic engineer and teacher.²¹

Julius practised as a civil engineer from the family's home in North Fitzroy, from where Samuel also operated his money lending business. In 1895 Julius moved to Ballarat where in 1898 he married Eva Maud Bangsrove, the daughter of a Maryborough journalist, Jonathan Bangsrove.²² Julius and Eva lived at Buninyong, where in 1903 their only child Hubert Samuel Lazarus was born. In 1913 Julius commenced his career in local government as shire engineer and secretary at Rupanyup in northern Victoria, moving to the Shire of Bungaree near Ballarat in 1915. Later that year he went considerably further afield, to Gallipoli, as a member of the Australian Imperial Forces (AIF).

Julius had joined the Victorian Volunteer Militia in 1901, and after that date had been steadily promoted. By 1911 he had reached the rank of lieutenant-colonel. However, from the time he transferred to the regular forces, Julius's career was fraught with controversy. He later asserted that he had been promised the command of a battalion, and was considerably put out when he was assigned the relatively junior rank of major. This may well have contributed to an apparent lack of enthusiasm from the date of his arrival at Gallipoli in November 1915. His refusal to go on night patrol, or even to leave his dugout, on the grounds of ill-health, coupled with continuing complaints about his rank, eventually caused General Monash to lose patience with him. In a scathing letter in December 1915, Monash stated that Julius should 'cease to be a charge on the Commonwealth'. Julius was ordered to appear before a medical board where he was found to be unfit for duty, and in April 1916 returned to Australia.²³

Considering his blatant refusal to carry out his duties, Julius would appear to have been very leniently treated. However, it should be noted he was 54 years of age when he went to Gallipoli, and probably more susceptible to the chronic illnesses caused by



Hugh and Betty Frankland in the mid 1960s. Lazarus Family Papers, State Library of Victoria.

the insanitary conditions that affected so many soldiers. Moreover, the military training he received in the volunteer forces would have been quite inadequate for the reality of the war in which he found himself. Monash must have had the insight to recognise that Julius was simply not suited to the task, and that being found medically unfit for duty was the best way out for all concerned. It may also be of relevance that Monash had already had some personal acquaintance with Julius. Before the war, Julius, in his capacity as engineer to the Shire of Bungaree, had awarded contracts for the building of concrete bridges in the shire to Monash's construction firm.²⁴

Thanks to the decision of the medical board, Julius was able to return home with honour and resume his career as the shire engineer of various municipalities in northern Victoria. He retained his membership of the citizen forces until 1920, when he retired due to his age. His three service medals were carefully preserved, and remain today in the family collection. Despite having a degree of tactlessness in his personality, which led his sister Henrietta to deny him any part in the management of the real estate they inherited from Samuel, Julius and Eva were always active in the affairs of the communities in which they lived. They both worked to raise money for charity, and Julius was in frequent demand as a public speaker and also a regular correspondent to newspapers on subjects of interest to him, mainly politics, taxation and economic reform. They eventually retired to Frankston, where despite his chronic ill-health at Gallipoli, Julius lived to be 89, dying in 1951. Eva died the following year.

Hubert (Hugh) Samuel Lazarus/Hugh Frankland

Julius and Eva's son Hubert Samuel Lazarus, always known as Hugh, was born in 1903 at Buninyong. Having trained as an architectural draftsman and shire secretary, he seemed set to follow in Julius's footsteps, but after the collapse of his first marriage, he took a less conventional path.

In 1931 Hugh married Irene Macartney, but it soon became apparent that she was mentally unstable.²⁵ After living at various addresses in Melbourne, from all of which they were evicted due to his wife's behavior, Hugh left his employment with the Brighton Council and succeeded Julius as secretary to the Shire of Huntly, near Bendigo, where he lived with his parents. He and Irene were divorced in 1937.²⁶

Hugh's interest in art was stimulated when he moved back to Melbourne. His neighbour in East Melbourne was the painter and lithographer Ronald Skate, and through him Hugh gradually met other artists and writers. Amongst them were Gayfield Shaw, a print maker and art gallery director, and Frank Clune, an author, accountant and, with his wife, gallery owner. Clune²⁷ was as an early supporter of Russell Drysdale and later John Olsen. Hugh was particularly impressed by Clune's book *Try Anything Once*,²⁸ an account of his early wandering knockabout life. Shaw was a friend and admirer of the work of Norman Lindsay and also George Perrottet, the bookplate artist married to Hugh's cousin Muriel.²⁹

Hugh reinforced his connections with the art community when he remarried in 1942. His second wife, Margaret Horgan was an artist, and also the daughter of an artist. Her father, John Horgan, was employed as a draftsman in Canberra, but was a well known watercolour painter.³⁰ His paintings are now valued mainly for the historic interest of their depictions of the early years of Canberra. Horgan was the founder of the Artists Society of Canberra, established to foster art in the infant national capital, and to campaign for a national art gallery. Margaret's mother was president of the National Council of Women.

Hugh was appointed secretary to the nearby Shire of Glenlyon and for most of their married life Hugh and Margaret lived at Daylesford in Victoria. He designed their house, named 'Periwinkle', built on Wombat Hill, immediately adjacent to the botanic gardens, and commanding a broad view of the town and the country to the west. Hugh's developing interest in photography is demonstrated by his photographs of the house, garden, views and the stylishly dressed Margaret posing inside the house, elegantly furnished with Victorian pieces.³¹

An auction catalogue³² of some of the Lazarus papers includes correspondence between Hugh and Edna Walling, but whether this is in reference to his own large garden or to any work she may have done for the shire is not known. It seems unlikely that official correspondence would be kept amongst Hugh's private papers. The house, slightly altered, and the picturesque garden can still be recognised today from Hugh's photographs of the 1940s.

Perhaps due to the isolation of Daylesford from the life Margaret was used to, the marriage did not last. By 1947 she and Hugh had separated. They were divorced in 1951.³³

Margaret returned to Canberra, and Hugh made a complete break with his past, not only with his marriage, but with his family's heritage as well. He changed his name from Hubert Samuel Lazarus to Hugh Frankland. Documents in the Lazarus papers indicate that he wished to distance himself from his family's Jewish ancestry.³⁴

This was an issue with which the family had been dealing for three generations. While Samuel was the son of Jewish parents, he was baptised as an infant and raised in the Church of England. His father's activities as a missionary to the Jews must have kept him conscious of his Jewish heritage. Even after Samuel's marriage to Fanny Cassidy and their membership of the Church of England, he still had a Mezuzah, the cylinder containing the Shema and passages from Deuteronomy fixed to the doorpost of the North Fitzroy house. He maintained contact with members of Melbourne's Jewish community, and had his will drawn by Melbourne solicitors Lazarus and Lazarus.³⁵ Julius was certainly conscious of the family's Jewish origins. He is recorded as having introduced himself to a group of soldiers under his command, including the future winner of the Victoria Cross, Albert Jacka, with the words 'some call me the old Jewish bastard', in a jocular though misguided, and as it transpired, wholly unsuccessful attempt to establish a rapport with them.³⁶ But Julius was also an active member of the Church of England and proud of his mother's family's connection with the Irish Protestant establishment.³⁷ In Hugh's case, he made a complete break with the family's Jewish past, as well as with their adopted membership of the Church of England.

Having left his marriage and his family's heritage, Hugh, now at the age of 45, also discarded the staid life of the shire secretary, and embarked on a life reminiscent of Frank Clune's as depicted in *Try Anything Once*. He attempted to form a company to trade for pearl shell in the Pacific Islands, and advertised for fellow adventurers who could

make financial contributions. The only interested parties seemed to be those escaping domestic entanglements like Hugh, and the venture never materialised. But it enabled him to put his former life behind him, and he spent the next two years 'going bush' as he termed it, working as a deck hand, labourer and fruit picker, relishing the freedom but deploring the lack of intellectual stimulus.³⁸

By 1950 the boredom of this life prompted Hugh to return to Melbourne, where he turned his Daylesford hobby, photography, into a business, setting up a portrait studio, first in Queens Road, South Melbourne and later in Collins Street in the city.

In 1951 Hugh met Charles and Barbara Blackman and quickly established a friendship with them. He visited them at their first home, a tin shed behind a terrace house in Powlett Street, East Melbourne. He took many photographs of Barbara Blackman,³⁹ who worked as a life model for artists, in order to supplement their income. Hugh was the first to buy a Charles Blackman painting, and he bought many more subsequently. In Hugh's words, he believed that Blackman had an 'unusual and peculiar insight', which was reflected in his paintings. The early purchases were made at considerable financial sacrifice, the photography business being⁴⁰ in its precarious early stages, and Hugh admitted that he sometimes went hungry. He assumed the Blackmans did too.

Through the Blackmans, Hugh became friendly with other artists in their circle and began the practice of recording their work in photographs. Amongst these were John Yule, Ola Cohn, John Perceval, Arthur Boyd and Fred Williams. He was frequently paid by gifts of paintings, at a period when the artists were relatively unknown and the paintings of little commercial value. He also purchased many of the works of these artists, for the inherent quality of the paintings rather than for any expectation of future commercial gain.

The Lazarus Papers in the State Library of Victoria include many negatives of works of these artists. Amongst the works photographed were the murals painted by Arthur Boyd in the dining room of The Grange, the house at Harkaway in the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges, then owned by Boyd's uncle Martin Boyd. The photographs were taken soon after the murals were completed.⁴¹ When the house was demolished in 1968 the murals were removed and, although believed to be in storage in Canberra, have not been seen since.

In 1951 Hugh remarried. His third wife was Helen Betty Dunning, always known as Bet.⁴² With her, Hugh finally found happiness, describing her in a letter as a fine and loyal woman.⁴³ As with his previous two marriages, there were to be no children. Hugh was aged 48 and Bet 41 when they married. She had been a widow for three years. Bet was a clothing designer and may have met Hugh through shared artistic interests. Although born in Western Australia, she was descended from two well established Melbourne commercial families. Her father, Theophilus Kitchen managed the Perth branch of the family's soap manufacturing business which later merged with an English company to form Lever and Kitchen. The family firm had been operating in Melbourne since the 1850s. Her mother's family, the Dixons, had extensive interests in manufacturing and

gold mining. Bet was regarded as the black sheep of the family, a view reinforced by her marriage to Hugh.⁴⁴

They started married life in a flat in Elwood, where Charles and Barbara Blackman were frequent weekend guests. As an extension of Hugh's photography interests, he was also an enthusiast for motion pictures. He was the Melbourne agent of the French Cine Pathe film company, whose films he imported into Australia, and he enjoyed making home movies himself, including a blue movie with the Blackmans titled 'L' Coq d'Amour'.⁴⁵ Hugh also painted, and was a member of the Victorian Artists Society, being sufficiently confident of his skill to give his paintings as wedding presents.

Shortly after their marriage Hugh and Bet combined their entrepreneurial and design skills and established a clothing manufacturing business called the Pioneer Uniform Service. This happened shortly after the deaths of Hugh's parents and was most likely financed from his inheritance, as was the house they purchased in Cheltenham, which remained their home for the rest of their married lives.⁴⁶

The Pioneer Uniform Service operated from Collins Street in Melbourne and made women's office uniforms for banks, insurance companies and other large corporations. They were designed by Bet, and in advertisements, were frequently modeled by Barbara Blackman. They were described in the press as 'inspirational'. Up to 40 women were employed in their manufacture. The business provided a comfortable life for Hugh and Bet, who regularly entertained at home, dined out for relaxation, and made long, often impromptu trips to the country, on one occasion to visit Donald Friend at his studio at Hill End in New South Wales, as recorded by Hugh's camera.⁴⁷

One of Hugh's more unusual activities during this period was marriage counselling. He had been introduced to it by Stuart Watts, a Sydney clergyman and philosopher, whom Hugh had on occasion consulted over his own problems prior to his marriage to Bet. Watts saw potential in Hugh as a counsellor, and encouraged him to pursue it, which he did on an honorary basis, sometimes for clients of Watts, and sometimes for friends and acquaintances. Hugh regarded himself as an authority on sex and human relationships, having according to him, read everything written on the subject and been through the matrimonial mill, with numerous relationships between marriages. He regarded his success as being due to his ability to 'help people to know themselves'. He stated that his philosophy was based on doing to others as you would have done to you. Most of those who sought his help came from the artistic circles with whom he felt an empathy. Much of his advice was given by exchange of letters with the recipients, of necessity when dealing with interstate clients in the 1960s, but of somewhat doubtful efficacy considering the delicate nature of the subject.

Hugh's views on many issues were quite advanced for the 1960s, but were by no means always shared by his friends or appreciated by those who had sought his advice. He was completely accepting of homosexual relationships which, since they were not based on instincts of procreation, he believed were purer than those of heterosexuals.⁴⁸ This was certainly not the opinion of Joy Hester, who abhorred the 'homos' as she called them,

who frequented Heide.⁴⁹ Hugh also believed that some marriages could be improved by one partner taking a lover when their sexual requirements were not matched. He did not believe anyone could be healthy or happy without a satisfactory sex life, and considered that in some circumstances pornography played a beneficial social role.

In at least one case a well established friendship was ended when a husband discovered that Hugh had been giving advice to his wife on her dissatisfaction with their marriage, the husband not having perceived that there was a problem. Apart from advice on relationships, Hugh was also ready to assist in practical matters, and continued to encourage the wife in her ambitions to become a painter, and offered her the loan of some of his Blackman paintings to attract viewers to her first exhibition. He also assisted the painter Brenda Humble, who had been living unhappily in an isolated part of Victoria, to move to Sydney to pursue her painting career, and gave her much practical advice while she was establishing herself there.⁵⁰

The philosophy of doing to others as you would have done to you was carried by Hugh and Bet into their business lives. Hugh admired his women workers for their ability, humanity and loyalty, and he and Bet were, in turn, warmly regarded by their staff. Perhaps from both being childless, their latent parental instincts were directed towards their employees. They also enjoyed warm relations with younger people, who they frequently entertained at home.⁵¹

As their business interests developed, Hugh and Bet's contact with their friends in the art community diminished, but Hugh continued to correspond with Barbara Blackman and maintained his friendship with Guy Boyd. Some of Hugh's photographs were used to illustrate Barbara Blackman's autobiography *Glass after Glass*,⁵² and after Hugh's death Bet still received invitations to their exhibitions.

Hugh died suddenly in 1972 aged 69. At one point he had considered leaving his art collection to the National Gallery of Victoria, but instead gradually sold it. Bet continued to operate the clothing business until financial difficulties caused her to close it in 1978. She then moved to Rosebud where she died in 1987.

Whilst the lives of Samuel and Julius Lazarus have passed into oblivion, other than for Samuel's brief moment of fame during the Kelly trial and his putative authorship of the goldfields diary, those of Hugh Frankland, and his vibrant wife Bet are preserved in disjointed form in the Lazarus Family Papers in the State Library of Victoria. His photographs and letters are an important part of the record of the modernist painters and shed some extra light on their struggle to establish themselves in their formative years.