



Weekly Bulletin

Friday 26 June 2020

RIGHT ON THE BUTTON – PIECING TOGETHER SOCIAL HISTORY



Much family history focuses on digging around archives and web searches, but attics and cupboards can often hide a treasure trove of personal documents and ephemera. All can be invaluable sources of information about family history and can help in piecing together the everyday lives of one's ancestors. And so, tucked away in a small jar, box or neatly folded envelope you may discover buttons that once adorned your ancestors' outfits.

By examining these buttons and envisioning the type of garment they were originally made for, you can begin a picture of the wearer.

Ask yourself:

- How popular would the button have been at a particular time?
- Would it have been cheap or expensive to produce, hand or machine-made?
- Would the button add value to the garment, making it more expensive to purchase, or was it simply a practical fastening mechanism?
- Could your ancestor have purchased garments from overseas or expensive British made clothes that were embellished with fine porcelain buttons decorated with hand-painted designs or transfer prints of scenes or flowers? This type of button was usually made in France in the 1860s and although rare today, examples are highly sought after by collectors

Take a look in what you may have thought was a worthless box of buttons and is instead a link to your past and establish whether there are any examples that stand out due to their uniqueness, their decoration or the material from which they were made. You may have heard the phrase 'in my mother's button box' and some of us will remember our own mother sewing, perhaps 'making do and mending' garments during the war years when clothing was scarce and limited by rationing.



Can you picture her, or your grandmother, rummaging through their sewing boxes hunting for replacement buttons, collected over the years and cut from old and discarded clothes for use at a later date?

Could the buttons have once adorned the clothes of older generations in your family tree?

Are they individual enough to be able to compare them to garments worn by your forebears in old photographs? Study the images to get an idea of which styles were popular in different periods and unbutton your ancestor's social history!

Extract from 'Ancestors in the Attic: Making Family Memorabilia into History' – Karen Foy

URBAN SKETCHING TAKES ON THE WORLD

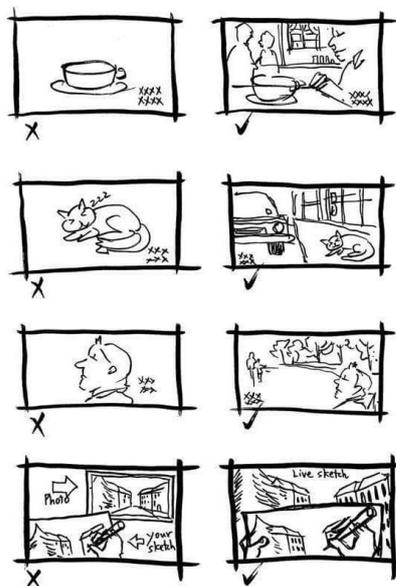
Have you ever spotted a group of people sitting around a local landmark sketching or painting?

Then you may have seen members of Urban Sketchers Canberra group.

Urban sketching (USK) is international non-profit group dedicated to fostering a global group of artists who practice on location drawing. Its motto is “see the world one drawing at the time”.

Canberra is one of a number of groups in Australia that meet regularly to draw together and to socialise. And we love getting new members/friends!!

What is an Urban Sketch?



Don't be daunted by the word “artists” in the official description of USK. People with all levels of skill are welcome to join the Canberra group, which usually meets on the second Sunday of the month to sketch together.

Drawing/painting is only part of it though, as we also share our work at the end of our session and usually finish with a cuppa or a bite to eat. It's a great way to make new friends and build skills.

Most the Canberra group met up to sketch Alexander the Bunyip statue outside the Gunghalin Library. Other local meet ups have included the Kambah Woolshed, National Gallery (inside and out), the Mint, Tidbinbilla Tracking Station, the Arboretum and further afield in Gunning and Yass. It's a great way to see Canberra and surrounds.

USK started in 2007 in Seattle and is now a global community which means you can have friends in many places you visit. In 2019, I sketched with some of the Urban Sketchers in Oslo. It's a great way to make new friends, build skills and see places from a local's perspective.

USK publishes a monthly free e-zine and hosts an annual symposium that features workshops and sketching events somewhere in the world. During Covid19 it has hosted talks with well-known artists around the world, with these talks saved to YouTube for you to watch anytime you like. Closer to home, Asia-Link also hosts an annual event somewhere in South East Asia each year.

And did I mention that membership is FREE – there is no activity fee, although occasionally you must pay to park. If you don't feel comfortable meeting with us just yet, you can always sketch from home (but not from photos) and share them with us.

USK Canberra uses Facebook to share its works and notify of events. However, for those members who prefer not to be part of Facebook we send event information by Gmail.

Click on these useful links for more info:

- [Urban Sketchers Canberra](#)
Email: urbansketcherscanberra@gmail.com
- [Urban Sketchers Australia](#)
- USK Org (parent body)
<http://www.urbansketchers.org/>
- [Drawing Attention \(free magazine\)](#)
- [Talks \(USK talks\)](#)
- [Reports from around the world](#)

Mandy Cox



PHOTO ESSAY

– Using your photos to tell a story

A 'Photo Essay' is a visual story that is told through a series of photographs. Most photo essays also include words – often, each image is accompanied by a caption or a short section of written text.

You can go beyond the limits of a single photograph and expand the storytelling power of images by:

- Putting images in sequence to create comparison, contrast, drama, narrative, or a sense of action
- Using words to add details that the images alone cannot communicate.

Photo essays can be a powerful way of telling stories. They can communicate and present information (such as details about your family history), or tell personal stories (about your family, your travels, your interests and hobbies).



Think about the difference between a single image (or "happy snap") of your family and a series of images that captures what a *day in the life* of your family looks like. Photo essays about family are an emerging way to preserve memories and can be more honest, authentic, and interesting than stand-alone images. They are also a lot of fun to look back on – and a lot of fun to make.

Photo essays can also be used in telling stories about the past and indeed, are a powerful tool for organising and sharing information about family history. Taking photos of places, people, or objects that are historically meaningful to you can be a fascinating way to explore the interactions between past and present.



PHOTO ESSAY OUTLINE

There are two types of photo essays: the narrative and the thematic. Narrative photo essays tell a story in chronological sequence, while thematic photo essays address a topic or issue.

Theme – consider ideas that are relevant to you and that you are passionate about – what subjects do you enjoy?

Structure – it is important that the order of your photos tell a story, in an interesting and logical sequence

Narrative Shots – your first photo should draw in your audience and follow the theme of your essay

- *Stabishing shots* are pictures that set the stage and describe the scene of your story
- *Detail photos* focus in on one element, they capture specific objects
- *Clincher photo or final photo* should evoke the emotion that you want the viewer to walk away with
- *Other shots*
 - *Portrait*: gives a face to your characters
 - *Medium shot*: includes both the subject and its surrounding
 - *Action/gesture*: your subject doing something.

Unity – creating visual coherence – allow all the pictures to tie together and be perceived as a whole, rather than individual images thrown together.

Dptychs and triptychs are brilliant for photographic storytelling. They present two or three images which can be from the same session or they can be polar opposites to show opposition or contrasting ideas. When two images are placed together, their individual narrative is altered as they enter a dialogue.



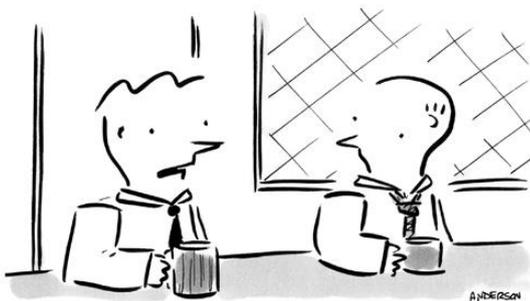


LOOKING THROUGH THE LENS with 'Shutterbug' Norm

- The National Portrait Gallery currently has a photographic exhibit on display - **"National Photographic Portrait Prize 2020"**. Entry is free but you will need to book because of the limit as to how many people can enter at a time. The exhibition is on until 26 July.
- A couple of interesting photographic books from the library:

"101 Top Tips for B&W Photography" - rather appropriate considering Shutterbug's upcoming Monochrome project. The author uses mainly Lightroom but does mention that any photo software program can be used as most (even the free ones) will have the functions he mentions. In any event there are some great images in the book which is a source for ideas.

"If Your Bored with Your Camera Read This Book" - I liked the opening comment - "You've heard the phrase, "absence makes the heart grow fonder" when it comes to relationships. Well, the same thing goes for your relationship with your camera. Uninspired? Stuck in a rut? Don't force it. Take a break. Put the camera down." Some of his tips include Forget - the rule of thirds, the rule of focus, the rule of exposure and the rule of lighting. He also has a stack of tips for creative shooting exercises. Again, full of great pictures and stacks of ideas.

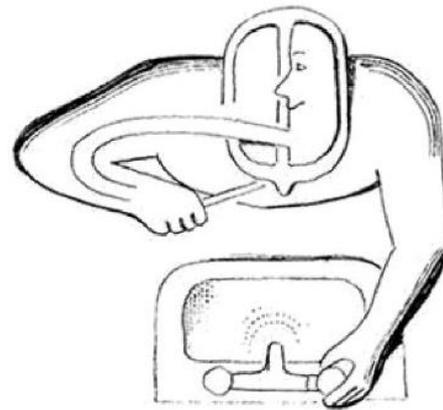


'I've got a photographic memory, but everything's out of focus'

BRUSHING ROULETTE

Brush your teeth with your nondominant hand (including opening the tube and applying toothpaste). You can substitute any morning activity – styling your hair, shaving, applying makeup, buttoning clothes, eating or using the TV remote.

This exercise requires you to use the opposite side of your brain instead of the side you normally use. Consequently, all those circuits, connections, and the brain areas involved in using your dominant hand are inactive, while their counterparts on the other side of your brain are suddenly required to direct a set of behaviours they usually don't participate in.



Research has shown that this type of exercise can result in a rapid and substantial expansion of the circuits in the parts of the cortex that control and process tactile information from the hand.

Variation: Use only one hand to do tasks like buttoning a shirt, tying a shoe, or getting dressed. For a real workout, try using just your nondominant hand.

Another exercise that associates unusual sensory and motor pathways in your cortex with a routine activity is to use your feet to put your socks and underwear in the laundry basket or pick out your shoes for the day.

From 'Keep your brain alive' by Lawrence C Katz, Ph.D. & Manning Rubin



SPOTLIGHT ON **UKE 55 – UKULELE GROUP**



Make Music Day is a global celebration of music which takes place every year on 21 June in over 1,000 cities across 120 countries. Due to the impacts of COVID19 social distancing measures, this year was a challenge. Digital and online performances took centre stage and all musicians and music lovers were encourage to play and sing on their patios, balconies, pavements and driveways for 20 minutes on Sunday 21 June at 2.00 pm to help keep the sounds of the city alive and celebrate music with the world.

Uke 55 – Ukulele Group leader Gary Owen and his 'side-kick' Lai, have been keeping the music alive each Friday fortnight at 4.15pm for Club members and beyond, using the wonders of technology and YouTube. With beautiful scenes as a backdrop, members have continued to strum and sing along with Garry and Lai to a variety of music from Glen Campbell to the Beatles. The odd glass of wine adds to the 'happy hour' atmosphere!

Known as "the people's instrument" and "the heart of Hawaii", the ukulele has played an important role in the everyday lives of Hawaiian islanders since its introduction by Portuguese immigrants in the late eighteen hundreds. Open to newbies and old hands alike, ukulele classes are tailored for all levels.

Musical arrangements are interpretations of existing songs and are made available for ukulele enthusiasts to play along. So, if you would like to be added to Gary's contact list and join the fun, email: ukesaliveaustralia@gmail.com



Garry's set up - Ready to rock!

FLASHBACK FRIDAY – UKE 55 PHOTO GALLERY



*Setting Up
Carols in the Hall - Dec 2019*



*Taking a Back Seat
Carols in the Hall - Dec 2018*



*Strumming at 'Spring Fling'
Sept 2018*



*Singing up a storm - Sausage Sizzle,
Wanniassa Shops - Aug 2017*



*First Gig as Uke 55 – 'What are we playing again?'
Carols by the Lake - Dec 2016*

