

The David Roche Foundation House Museum



**Flowers: Passion. Pain. Nation.
Tuesday - Saturday 10am - 4pm
Until 8 August**

TDRF: Club Fermoy #6

Dear friends and supporters,

As the new level of 'normal' resumes in Adelaide this week, it has been fantastic for us to be able to welcome even more of you back to our exhibition *Flowers* and it was particularly wonderful to hold our first event with Studio Vino to paint your own floral masterpiece! We are now working toward reopening Fermoy House for limited tours beginning Tuesday 14 July so that we can share with you again David's extraordinary home and collection.

In a previous edition we included a short video of a superb French Empire bed gifted by Martyn Cook (1958-2019), our inaugural Director. I am now delighted to share with you the news that his Estate has granted a bequest of 29 items to the museum, along with his extensive reference library on antiques and art. I thank the Estate for this generous bequest which enriches our collection and increases our capacity to foster the study of the decorative arts – something that both Martyn and David Roche held dear.

I am also pleased to announce the launch of our online shop through our website, so that those of you who can't visit just at the moment can select from books on our collection, or choose a scarf or umbrella featuring items from the collection, amongst many other things. I know this will make it much easier for anyone wishing to purchase from our shop.

A heartfelt thank you to all those who responded to our recent appeal and kindly donated to TDRF. Your support helps fund our exhibitions, public programmes and so much more!

Best wishes,

Robert Reason
Museum Director

TODAY'S TREASURE

Now showcasing the favourite pieces of our fantastic volunteers in The David Roche Collection. This edition with Yvonne M. looks at the *Travelling Menagerie*, a c.1800-10 English work showing a kangaroo in England. A number of kangaroos were transported from Australia to Europe in the late 18th/early 19th century, another ending up in the Empress Josephine's Malmaison menagerie in Paris.



Britain, *Travelling Menagerie from the Strand at Exeter Change, London, with kangaroos, c.1800-10, oil on canvas*

Our Favourite Pieces

The Menagerie, acquired by David Roche in London in 2007, was painted in 1800-10, and depicts a variety of caged animals, mostly wild and exotic. These cages formed part of a private business called the Royal Menagerie, which occupied the top floors of the Exeter 'Change (Exchange) Building, on the north side of The Strand. The building, since demolished, was erected on the site of the former home of the Earls of Exeter. The menagerie itself was operational from early 1770s to the late 1820s. The public were invited to view the menagerie at a cost of 1/- or admitted to feeding time in the evening at a cost of 2/6d. Sometimes, in the summer months, menageries were taken on tour in the English countryside, as seen in this painting, which is set in a tent; with its torn canvas roof and the huckster out front. While considered a cruel practice by modern day standards, it is nonetheless valuable as a historical record.

The presence of two kangaroos in the extreme right-hand corner and maybe a bandicoot, extreme left, make the piece of particular interest as an early European depiction of Australian wildlife, though their being depicted in a menagerie in England might cause us to wonder how and under what conditions these animals were transported - probably by sea, a distance of some 22000km, over approximately 100 days. How many, one wonders, would not have survived such a deplorable, tempestuous journey?

- Yvonne M. 2020



[View in the online collection](#)



Did you know...

This handsome cast iron model of a Pointer was a favourite sculpture of David Roche. He acquired it from a dealer in Sydney in 2004, and thought it a most fantastic depiction of the breed. It is French c. 1870 by the Barbezat & Co. Val D'Osne (France 1835-1986) foundry, after an original by Henri-Alfred Jacquemart (France 1824-1896). The first cast of this model was shown by Barbezat & Co. at the London 1862 International Exhibition.

One might notice the patina on the top of the head is slightly worn. This is because during David's lifetime, it sat at the top of the stairs that lead to his personal entrance, and every morning he would give it a pat. He also would use it as a support to climb the stairs when coming back from a day out. It now sits at the front door to the museum, greeting visitors as they enter.



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Although David Roche's Fermoy House remains much the same as it was during David's lifetime, the gardens surrounding the house have undergone a number of quite significant changes. Perhaps foremost among these is the disappearance of David's swimming pool and the neoclassical temple facade that stood at the back of Fermoy House. Along with the Roman room, the pool and temple facade were constructed as a single concept by David in the early 1970s.

The pool, immediately outside the Roman room of Fermoy House, was on a north-south axis and was lined with shining blue tiles. It was surrounded by a garden with perfectly trimmed lawns, well-kept box hedges and roses, while the temple facade overlooked the pool at its southern end. In this segment of the garden, David had his love of the neoclassical on full display, with numerous statues, urns and vases in marble, bronze and cast-iron thoughtfully placed around to recall an ancient Roman villa. The temple facade itself was replete with four columns, a pediment adorned with a laurel wreath, and an alcove in which sat a marble statue of Diana, the goddess of the hunt (now in the Roman Room), flanked by two finely carved 18th century marble neoclassical replicas of the ancient Roman 'Borghese' vase.

The neoclassical-style of the temple facade was inspired by the work of the early 19th century Prussian neoclassical architect, Karl Friedrich Schinkel (1781-1841). David was very fond of Schinkel's works, particularly the Pomona Temple in Potsdam, and when in Europe, he would seek out and visit Schinkel's works, in addition to which, he also collected a number of books on Schinkel.

The swimming pool and the temple facade both had to be demolished in 2015 as part of the Foundation's new build. However, although the original temple is no more, it is not forgotten - it was considered too much a part of the fabric of the original design of David's property, and so it was decided that there had to be a new temple facade somewhere in the new build. Consequently, a new temple facade (in black rather than white) was placed just beyond the foyer of the museum wing, though on an east-west axis rather than north-south. Like its forebear, it is complete with four columns, a pediment and two large urns, as well as a pair of stunning Irish mahogany doors. In addition, the malachite urn in which David's ashes rest is now also regularly to be found in the centre of the temple facade.



SHOP

We are now online!

The David Roche Foundation is very excited to announce some marvellous news - our shop has gone digital! We've been working on this for a while now, and it's finally ready to go, with all 40+ items up and ready to be ordered. From books to mouse pads to pens, we've got something for everyone, and we can ship to anywhere in Australia, it's all just a few clicks away!



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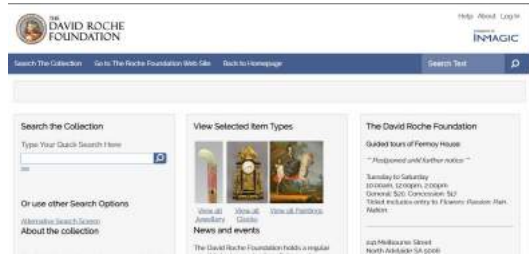
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DIGITAL COLLECTION

Did you know that many of the items in The David Roche Collection are available online? Find your favourite piece or discover something new. Click the Search button below.



Work has continued apace on the collection database since our last newsletter, with another 33 items added in that time, including a splendid 'Kedleston' vase by Derby decorated with floral reliefs and writhing gilded snake handles, some fine English 18th and 19th century porcelain dishes by Worcester, Coalport and Nantgarw, as well as more of David's incredible collection of Staffordshire Pottery, including some sweet figure groups.

[View the new additions](#)

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LINKS WE LOVE

The Wallace Collection is an exceptional collection of fine and decorative arts in London built up by the Marquesses of Hereford, and Sir Richard Wallace, an illegitimate son of the 4th Marquess. Like many galleries during the coronavirus pandemic, the Wallace Collection is offering patrons the opportunity to 'visit' their Collection remotely, via their 'Wallace from home' website. A wonderful resource, particularly if you are interested in French *ancien régime* art:

<https://www.wallacecollection.org/>

Curious about what happened during the period of the Bourbon Restoration in France after the first defeat of Napoleon in 1814? This page has an fascinating illustrated essay about the French armies during the reigns of Louis XVIII and Charles X:

<https://weaponsandwarfare.com/the-bourbon-restoration-armies/>



**The David Roche Foundation
House Museum
241 Melbourne Street
North Adelaide 5006**

T: [+61 8 8267 3677](tel:+61882673677)

E: info@rochefoundation.org.au

W: www.rochefoundation.com.au



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