

WELCOME TO THE FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM

The Museum launched its Friends of the Museum on May 1 2018 with an encouraging response. We have 84 Friends from every State in Australia. Welcome to you all. We expect the number to grow. Our purpose is to have a group interested in history that we can keep informed about the Kett Optometry Museum, its recent acquisitions and the stories behind them.

It's not just one-way. We want your feedback too. If you have something to say at anytime just email acomuseum@aco.org.au or give us a [telephone call](#).

PUBLIC EXHIBITION GALLERY UNDER WAY



After more than two years of planning, the construction of a public exhibition gallery is now underway. It is to be opened to members and the general public late this year. You will all be invited.

The cost of the project was higher than expected so we asked a few people who we knew were interested in the Museum to help out. The response was quick and generous. A total of \$123,000 was donated, which is about 2/3 of the cost of the project. The rest is provided by the ACO. However, be assured that the purpose of the Friends of the Museum group is not to fund raise – it's just about communication. If we ever attempt to tap your wallet it will be a rare event and for a good cause.

The Gallery will display some of the best heritage items held by the Kett Optometry Museum to illustrate the historical development of the profession of optometry over the last 200 years.

HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPHS

In February this year, Optometry Australia donated a large number of photographs that mark important events in the history of Australian optometry.

This collection includes the official photographs of the representatives of the State Optometric Associations for 11 of the national conferences, including the first eight between 1918 and 1927.



OPTOMETRY AUSTRALIA IS 100 THIS YEAR

The first photograph above is significant because at that meeting from December 3 to 6, 1918 it was agreed a national body, the Australian Optometrical Association, be established as a federation of the six State Optometric Associations. Did you know that the Australian Optometrical Association, now named Optometry Australia, celebrates its 100th birthday in December this year?

The second photograph above is of the fourth conference held in Brisbane in 1921. This meeting was significant in that it demonstrated the early aspiration for optometry to be a respected and trusted profession. A code of ethics prepared by Mr R. S. Padman from Tasmania was unanimously adopted and concern was expressed about unethical advertising by some of members of the profession.

THE ORDINARY CAN BE INTERESTING

History intersects. Last year honorary archivist, Pamela Sutton, was browsing eBay and spotted a pair of late 19th century gold plated spectacles in a leather slip-in case. The case was marked C, W. PUGH OPTICIAN FITZROY MELBOURNE and was stamped with a crown indicating vice-regal patronage of the Victorian Governor, Lord Brassey.

We knew about Charles Pugh so Pamela bought it for \$38. How did we know about this man? We had previously bought a nice spectacle case of another 19th century Melbourne optometrist, Thomas Procter and our subsequent research showed he was the first person in New Zealand to measure astigmatism and make glasses to correct it. He started doing this in 1881, about the same time as did Charles Sawtell, an instrument maker and optician from Adelaide. Procter returned to Australia in 1888 to practise in Albert Street, East Melbourne.

The Pugh connection? Procter made cylindrical lenses in New Zealand with the help of William Pugh, a lens maker who trained with Dollonds in London. Charles Pugh (1853-1902) was his son and was trained by his father and Procter. Charles migrated to Australia in 1889 and set up a practice at 13 Gertrude Street Fitzroy. The practice was sold in 1907 to Ernest MacFarlane and continued by his son, Ken MacFarlane. The entrance to the premises at 13 Gertrude Street still has tiles at the entrance proclaiming "C. W. Pugh Optician".

Read more: Read the paper we wrote about the extraordinary Thomas Procter – copper miner, gold prospector, goldsmith, jeweller, showman, bankrupt and self-taught optometrist.



MAKING THE KETT MUSEUM BETTER KNOWN

The Museum has its workrooms and storage buried in the ACO basement. It is out of sight and hard to find. The new exhibition gallery will be located near the Nathan Library and the Amies lecture room and this will give the Museum greater prominence. We hope the Museum's Friends will tell others about the Kett Museum.

The Museum also makes itself known through its website and through public use of its online catalogue. The website has over 6500 visitors a year. Half the visits are from outside Australia.

Last year we entered into an agreement with the National Library of Australia to become a content partner with Trove, the national aggregating platform for libraries, newspapers, museums and galleries. The Kett Museum catalogue is harvested monthly into Trove. At the same time we opened the catalogue to Google searches. Visits to the Kett Museum website have doubled since we took those two steps.