



A Decimal Reformation

THE INTRODUCTION
OF DECIMAL CURRENCY
TO AUSTRALIA

POCKET GUIDE TO AUSTRALIAN BANKNOTES



RESERVE BANK OF AUSTRALIA



A Decimal Reformation

THE INTRODUCTION OF DECIMAL CURRENCY TO AUSTRALIA



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are respectfully advised that this booklet includes the names of people who are now deceased.

Pocket Guide 3 describes the introduction of decimal currency to Australia in 1966. By this time, the Reserve Bank of Australia had evolved from the Commonwealth Bank to become the nation's central bank. The Reserve Bank began operations on 14 January 1960 with the objectives of maintaining the stability of the country's currency, full employment and the economic prosperity and welfare of its people. Dr HC (Nugget) Coombs, Governor of the Commonwealth Bank since 1949, was appointed the Reserve Bank's first Governor.

A new series of banknotes and coins was designed for the release of decimal currency, with imagery that enhanced a sense of the country's distinctive identity. The coins were designed by Stuart Devlin and minted by the Royal Australian Mint, Canberra, which opened in 1965. The Reserve Bank oversaw the production of the new banknotes for the \$1, \$2, \$5, \$10 and \$20 denominations, issued between 1966 and 1967. As inflation increased, two higher denominations were introduced: the \$50 and \$100 banknotes issued in 1973 and 1984 respectively.

A DECIMAL REFORMATION

In the late 1950s, the Australian Government began to give practical consideration to the introduction of decimal currency. The new currency would replace the denominations of pounds, shillings and pence and simplify calculations, thereby increasing financial efficiency. The government, led by the Liberal-Country Party coalition of Prime Minister, Robert Menzies, announced in 1963 that it would introduce decimal currency in 1966. The Decimal Currency Board was established to oversee the conversion, and the Reserve Bank had responsibility for production of the decimal currency banknotes.

The name of the new currency unit became the subject of a public competition that elicited nearly 1,000 suggestions. They ranged from the sober recommendations of the Austral, Dollar, Crown, Pound, Regal, Royal and Tasman, to more outlandish ideas based on fauna (Goanna and Magpie), Australian pastimes (Phar Lap and Schooner) and national identities whose names might lend drama to the currency, such as bushranger Ned Kelly. Prime Minister Menzies announced in June 1963 that the new

banknotes would be known as the Royal, so maintaining a link with the United Kingdom and shared aspects of British culture. The choice of the term proved to be unpopular with the public and, in September 1963, the decision was reached to call the new unit the Dollar.

PRIME MINISTER MENZIES ANNOUNCED IN JUNE 1963 THAT THE NEW BANKNOTES WOULD BE KNOWN AS THE ROYAL, SO MAINTAINING A LINK WITH THE UNITED KINGDOM AND SHARED ASPECTS OF BRITISH CULTURE.

The Reserve Bank began operations on 14 January 1960 as the nation's central bank. The new Head Office in Sydney's Martin Place was completed in 1965. Dr HC (Nugget) Coombs, Governor of the Commonwealth Bank since 1949, was appointed the Reserve Bank's first Governor.

Front entrance of the Head Office of the Reserve Bank of Australia, with sculpture by Margel Hinder, 1964, watercolour and ink.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, PA-000269.



The Bonds and Stock Banking Chamber of the Reserve Bank's Head Office, 1964, watercolour and ink.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, PA-000272.





Preliminary design for the back of the Australian 1 Royal banknote, showing a stylised image of a woman, boomerangs, buildings, stalks of wheat and a wheel, circa 1963.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-002811.

Four Australian designers were selected to prepare preliminary designs for the decimal currency banknotes: Gordon Andrews, Richard Beck, Max Forbes and George Hamori. They were advised by the prominent artist, Russell Drysdale. The designers were required to include Queen Elizabeth II on the \$1 banknote, but they were otherwise free to choose historical figures and themes in consultation with the Bank.

While Max Forbes' designs were admired as being "quite beautiful" and "romantic", the individuality of Gordon Andrews' banknotes was considered better suited to the new currency and he was announced as the winning designer in April 1964.¹ "We believe that the climate of visual opinion in Australia has changed profoundly during the past few years ... to a nation which likes to think of itself as progressive," wrote Alistair Morrison, Chairman of the Design Committee, in support of the choice of Andrews' designs. He commended the designs for their "qualities of freshness, originality, elegance and technical competence".²

Design work began with the specialist firm, Organisation Giori in Milan, Italy, and new note printing machinery was obtained from the United Kingdom. Gordon Andrews continued to receive advice from a design panel, comprising distinguished fellow designers, Alistair Morrison and Douglas Annand, and the Director of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Hal Missingham. The artist Russell Drysdale remained as artistic adviser for the panel and consultant for the Bank.



Max Forbes, preliminary design concepts for the \$1 banknote, showing Queen Elizabeth II with Australian flora, a cockatoo and a kookaburra, ink and wash with pencil on paper, 1964.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-004202.



Max Forbes' design for the \$10 banknote relates to the theme of flight and aviation, featuring a portrait of Sir Charles Kingsford Smith with Australian birds on the back.



Max Forbes, preliminary design concepts for the \$10 banknote, ink and wash with pencil on paper, 1964.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives,
NP-004201.

“WE COMMEND, IN PARTICULAR, THE DESIGNS SUBMITTED BY MAX FORBES... THEY ARE, WITHOUT DOUBT, EXCELLENT AND QUITE BEAUTIFUL. THEY ARE ROMANTIC IN CONCEPTION AND TREATMENT ... THE DESIGNS, EXCELLENT THOUGH THEY ARE, ARE NOT OF THE PRESENT DAY.”

Alistair Morrison, Chairman of the Design Committee, to AC McPherson,
Secretary of the Reserve Bank of Australia, 6 April 1964.



Max Forbes, preliminary design concepts for the \$10 banknote, ink and wash with pencil on paper, 1964.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives,
NP-004201.

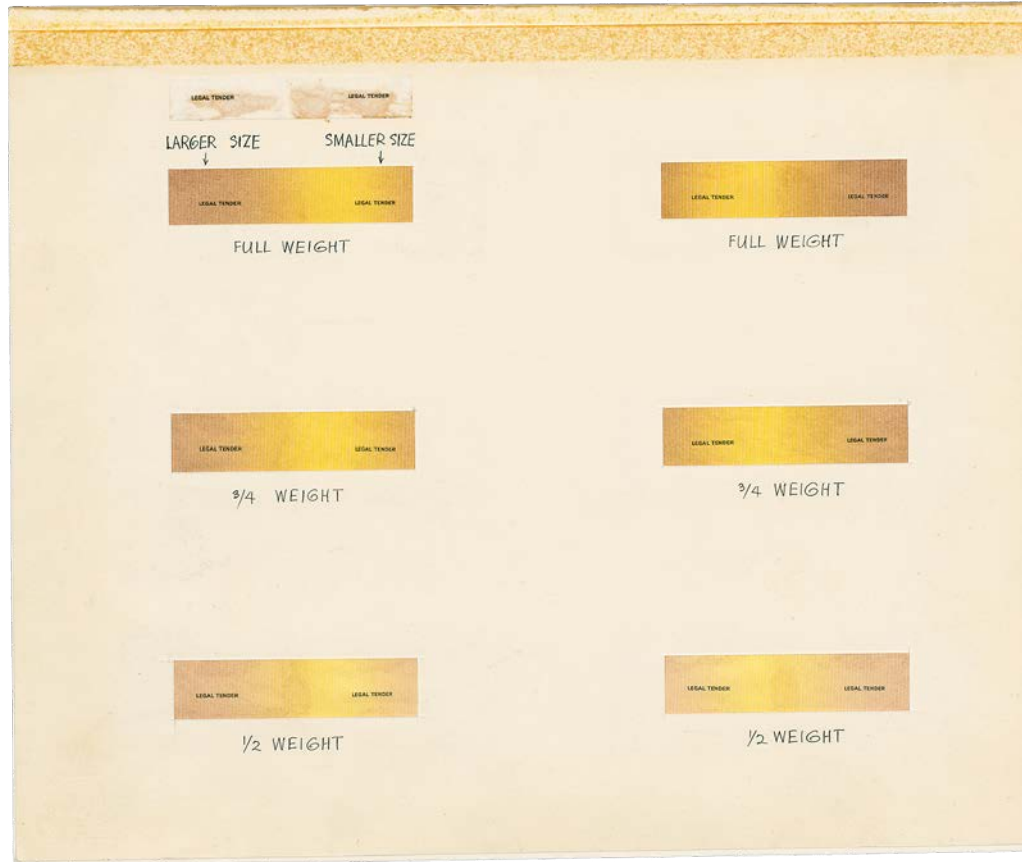
A COLOUR REVOLUTION

The colours of the new banknotes were determined by those of equal value in the previous series of the 1950s. The association of value through the banknote's colour assisted the public in adjusting to the new decimal system. For example, the brown tone of the 10 shillings banknote was transferred to the new \$1 banknote, and the green of the £1 banknote was assigned to the \$2 banknote as they represented equal monetary values.

10

Chart of six alternative colour intensities for the background of the \$1 banknote.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives,
NP-002013.

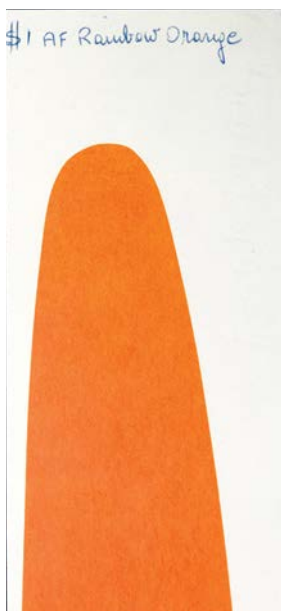


While complying with this requirement, Gordon Andrews varied and enlivened the colour palettes, introducing contrasting tones that imparted more vibrancy than the relatively subdued tones of the previous series.

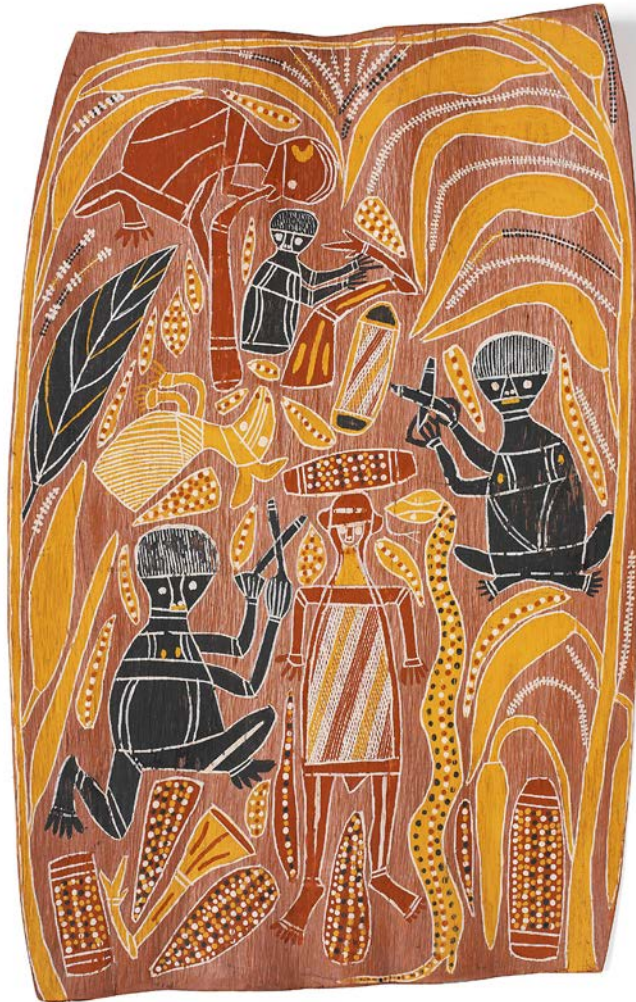
Andrews formulated his inks and tested each colour and density by applying a sample on card with a palette knife and labelling the tone.

Gordon Andrews, colour samples for the \$1 banknote: light orange, rainbow orange, brown, khaki, ink on card.

© Estate of Gordon Andrews.
Museum Applied Arts & Sciences.



For the \$1 banknote Gordon Andrews developed a more prominent expression of Aboriginal culture than had been shown previously on Australia's currency, relating the required colour for the banknote to tones associated with Aboriginal bark painting. The designer reimagined the Australian coat of arms in a way that seemed compatible with the idea of Aboriginal design, improvising its style.



**David Malangi Daymirringu (Manharrnu),
Funerary rites of Gurrmirringu
Photograph © Musée du quai Branly –
Jacques Chirac, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais
Patrick Gries.**

© Estate of the artist licensed by Aboriginal Artists Agency.

Rock paintings and carvings adapted from secondary sources appeared on the banknote, together with a reproduction of the contemporary painting *Funerary rites of Gurrmirringu* by David Malangi Daymirringu (Manharnu). Surrounded by kinsmen with clapsticks, the ancestral hunter Gurrmirringu receives funeral rites, following his fatal bite from the snake shown by the white berry tree. A photograph of David Malangi's bark painting was supplied to Russell Drysdale by the collector Karel Kupka, who had acquired the work on behalf of a French cultural institution.³

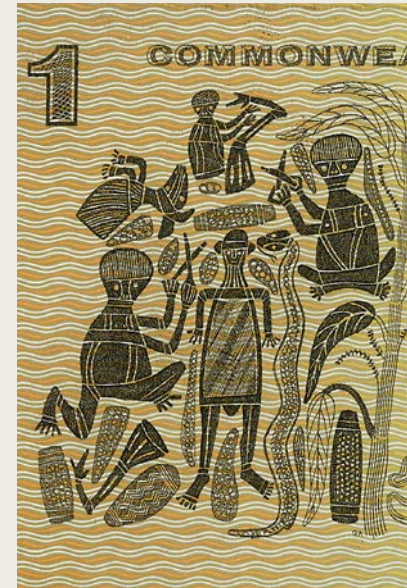
Photograph of *Funerary rites of Gurrmirringu*, reproduced from negatives supplied by Karel Kupka, 1963.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, PN-013745.



Detail from the back of the \$1 banknote showing designs based on a bark painting by David Malangi Daymirringu, 1966.

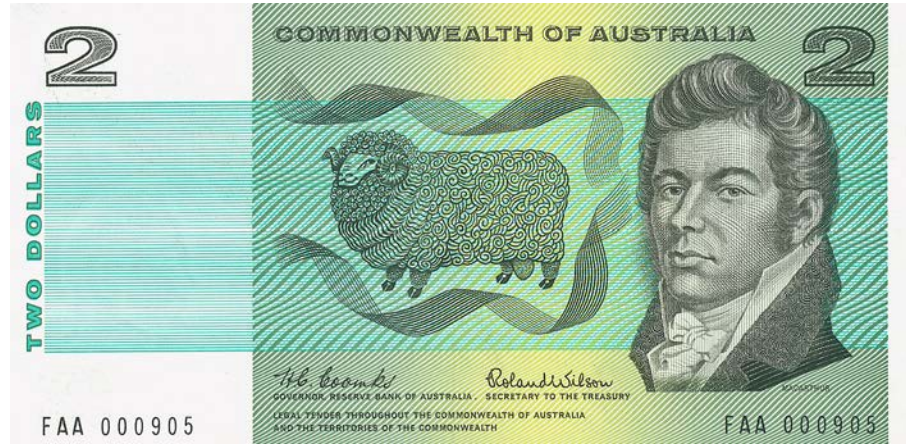
Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-003835.



The new designs for the decimal currency series reduced the banknotes' previous emphasis on economic prosperity but continued to acknowledge the country's pastoral and agricultural industries, which were selected for the green tones of the \$2 banknote. As Gordon Andrews remarked, "It would have been suicide to have left the sheep out."⁴ In contrast with earlier versions of these activities, Andrews placed attention on the innovations of individuals, a theme throughout the decimal series.

The wool and wheat industries are represented by John Macarthur and William Farrer.

Stalks of wheat are arranged across the \$2 banknote with a portrait of William Farrer, who developed species more resistant to drought and disease. Whereas flocks of sheep had been depicted on previous banknotes, a single specimen becomes emblematic



Front of the \$2 banknote showing John Macarthur, 1966.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives,
NP-003855.

of the wool industry in the new series. The ram is framed by undulating lines that suggest both ribbons awarded in agricultural competitions and the swags of Regency textiles, so complementing the age of John Macarthur, who contributed to the colonial wool industry with his wife, Elizabeth.

Compared with the intricate designs of other banknotes in the series, the \$2 banknote appears more conventional in both its choice of subject and treatment. The designer's inventiveness, however, is reflected in its detail; for example, his stylisation of the sheep's fleece creates dynamic

patterns that distinguish his rendition from previous versions. The design also shares similarities with the 1963 Woolmark logo for Pure New Wool, an emblem that was associated, like the banknote, with enduring value.



Gordon Andrews, stylised sketch of fleece for the design of the \$2 banknote, black felt-tipped pen on tracing paper.

© Estate of Gordon Andrews. Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences.



PURE NEW WOOL

Woolmark logo for Pure New Wool

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Gordon Andrews, colour samples for the \$2 banknote: rainbow green, deep green, rainbow yellow, light green, ink on card.

© Estate of Gordon Andrews. Museum Applied Arts & Sciences.



A HISTORY REVIVAL

The new banknotes' gallery of portraits exhibited more varied subjects and more sophisticated renderings than previous series. Andrews brought vitality to the series' portraits through decisive line treatment and contrast between the use of black and the luminous facial tones and white collars, cravats and ribbons worn by various identities. He portrayed the majority of the figures from a three-quarters view that balanced the formality of the profile with insight into the personal characteristics of the face.

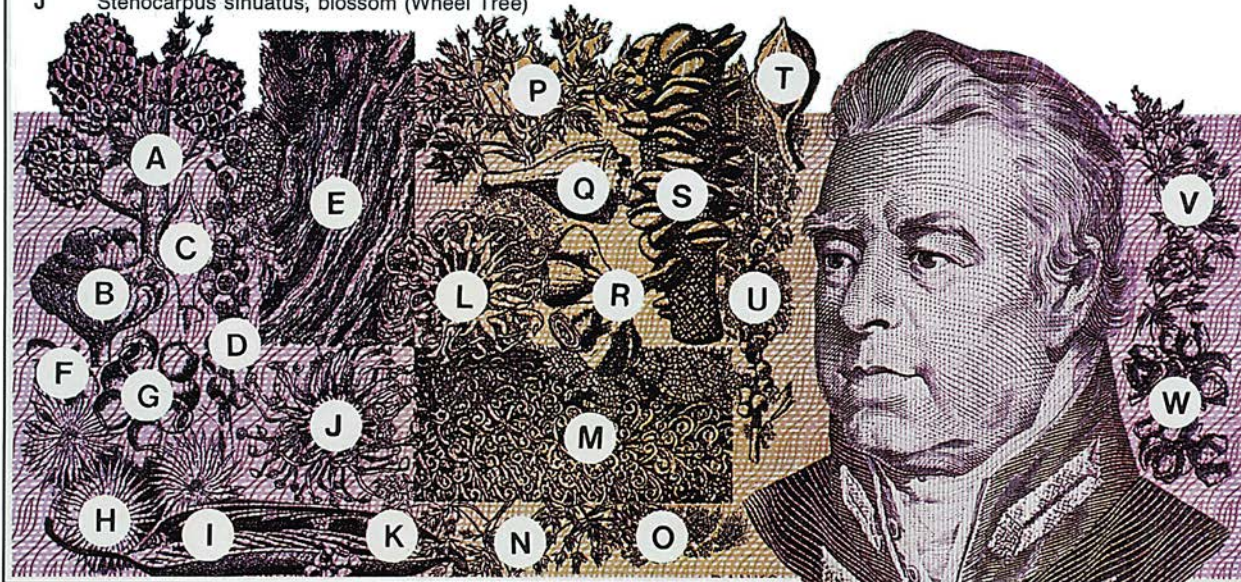
The new series presented a broader range of enterprises than previous banknotes, which had focussed on economic development and select colonial identities. The new banknotes reflected an emerging sense of Australia's diversity and increased awareness of the history of women, the country's environment, its arts and international contributions in fields such as aeronautics.

THE BANKNOTES' GALLERY OF PORTRAITS EXHIBITED MORE VARIED SUBJECTS AND MORE SOPHISTICATED TREATMENTS THAN PREVIOUS SERIES.

The plants featured on the \$5 note are:

- A Casuarina littoralis, fruit (Black She-oak)
- BQ Eucalyptus pyriformis, fruit (Pear-fruited Mallee)
- CT Eucalyptus pyriformis, bud
- DU Callistemon citrinus, fruit (Red Bottlebrush)
- E Weathered wood grain
- F Eucalyptus comitae-vallis
- G Eucalyptus fraxinoides, fruit (White Ash)
- H Phebalium squamulosum (magnified scales)
- I Telopea speciosissima, seed pod (Waratah)
- J Stenocarpus sinuatus, blossom (Wheel Tree)

- K Eucalyptus stellulata, fruit (Black Sally)
- L Stenocarpus salignus, blossom (Beefwood)
- M Xylomelum pyriforme, blossom (Woody Pear)
- NPV Cladium procerum (Sedge)
- O Leaf skeleton
- R Eucalyptus luehmanniana, fruit (Yellow-top Mallee-ash)
- S Banksia integrifolia, fruit (Coast Banksia)
- W Callitris rhomboidea, cones (Port Jackson, Cypress Pine)



Key to plants shown on the \$5 banknote, 1967.

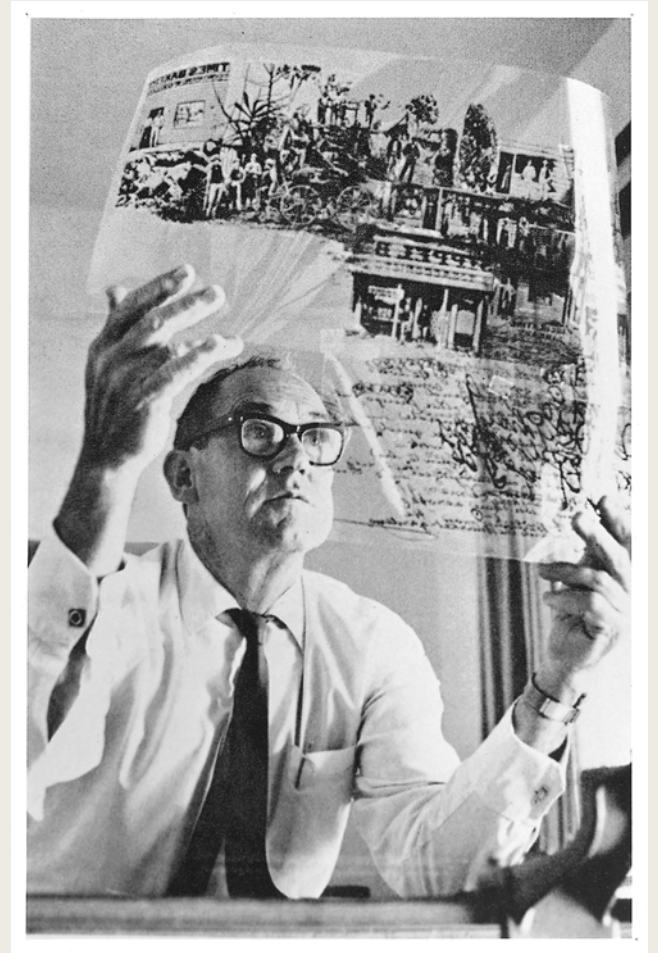
Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, P13/1044.

Sir Joseph Banks
(1743-1820)

The excursions into Australian flora made by the 1950s banknotes appear restrained in comparison with the assemblage of species featured on the \$5 banknote with the botanist, Joseph Banks. Unlike the decorative examples of the earlier series, Andrews' treatment suggests appreciation of both the individual species, including Banks' namesake of the banksia family, and their place within the environment. In fact, the \$5 banknote's selection of flora became an actual garden within the Bank's new note printing facility, established at Craigieburn, Victoria, in 1981.

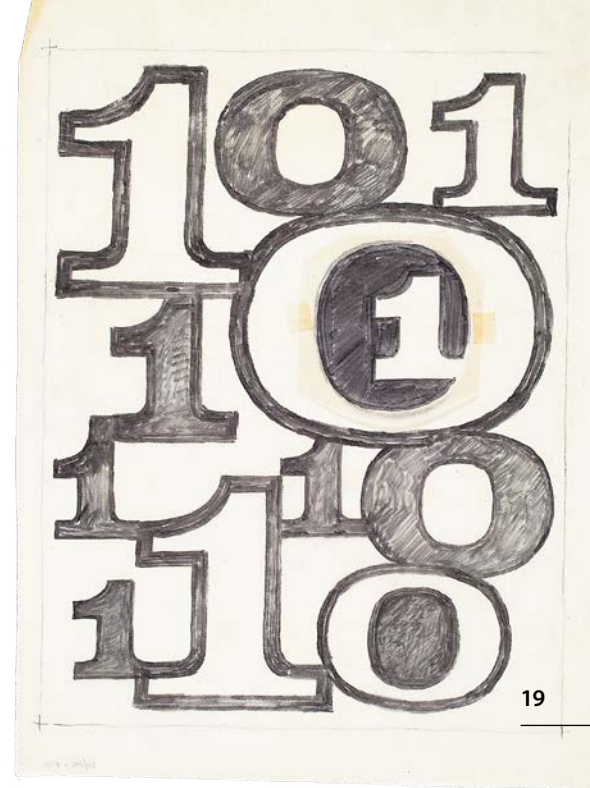
**Gordon Andrews
checks a transparency
of the layout for the
Henry Lawson side
of the \$10 banknote,
1965.**

Reserve Bank of Australia
Archives, PN-006808.



Caroline Chisholm's portrait on the \$5 banknote represented the first occasion that an identified woman other than the monarch appeared on Australian currency. The background of the women and children, sailing ships and Sydney's foreshore narrates her involvement in assisting young migrant women with employment and facilitating emigration by establishing the Family Colonization Loan Society.⁵

The arts are acknowledged for the first time on an issued Australian currency with the \$10 banknote. A montage of architectural details by the convict architect, Francis Greenway, accentuates their harmonious Georgian traits. On the reverse side, the profile of writer Henry Lawson is joined by a palimpsest of his manuscripts and scenes of his childhood years, mainly from the gold town of Gulgong, New South Wales. In contrast with the decorum of Georgian architecture, the patchwork of vernacular buildings evokes the settings of Lawson's outback stories and his use of the Australian idiom.



Gordon Andrews, preliminary drawing of the number 10 for the \$10 banknote, black felt-tipped pen on tracing paper.

© Estate of Gordon Andrews. Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences.

The choice of subject for the \$20 banknote reflected not only the past but also the current and future significance of aviation. Lawrence Hargrave's experiments in flight had been validated by Charles Kingsford Smith's epic journeys demonstrating aviation's potential.

On the banknote, Lawrence's kites and flying devices are partnered with confident representations of flight in harmonographic studies that evoke futuristic qualities.

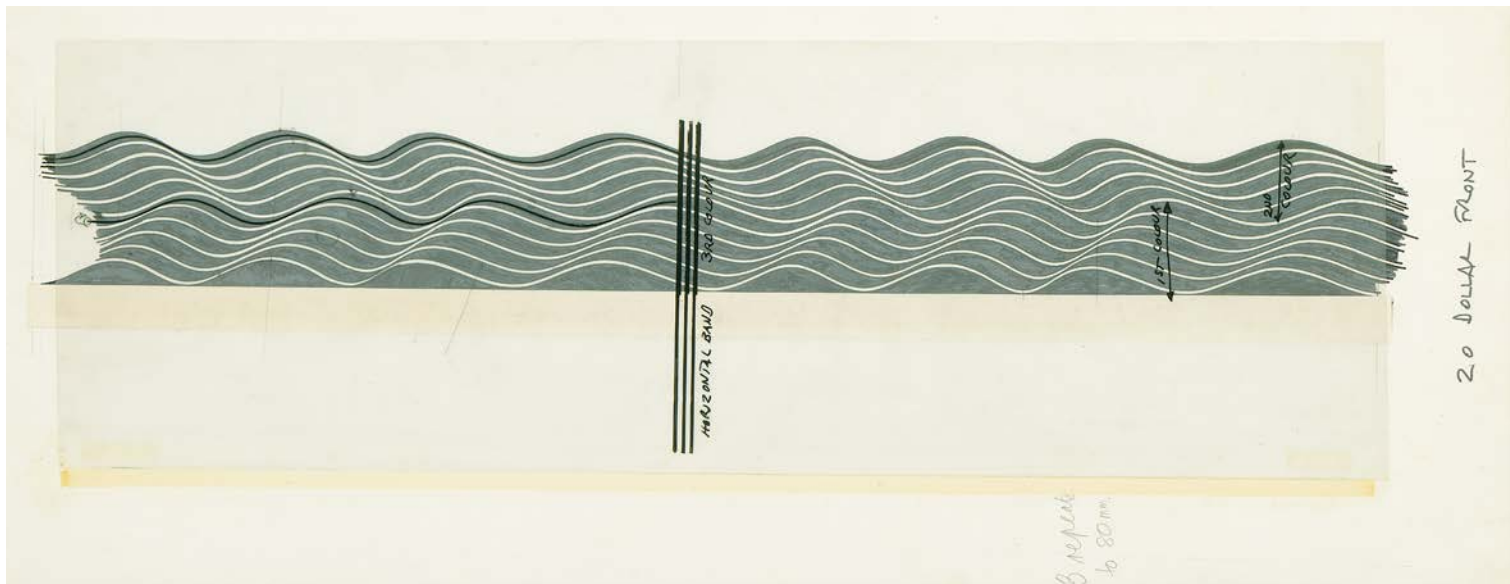
Although Gordon Andrews sought to avoid the traps of fashion that could limit the banknotes' enduring appeal,

he brought his contemporary sense of design to the currency's requirements. His stylised depictions of historical identities and their attributes chimed with 1960s popular culture, especially its posters and covers of albums that portrayed individual musicians and bands against kaleidoscopic collages and psychedelic effects. The apparent



**Gordon Andrews,
colour samples for
the \$20 banknote:
rainbow golden yellow,
rainbow rich gold, brown,
bright red, ink on card.**

© Estate of Gordon Andrews.
Museum Applied Arts & Sciences.



spontaneity of his draughtsmanship also disguised a means of protecting the banknotes against replication. Its alternating widths meant that if the counterfeiter's camera was exposed for the thick lines, the fine lines disappeared; if exposed for the thin ones, the thick lines flared and closed over the thin.

Preliminary design of background lines for \$20 banknote.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-002048.

**THE APPARENT SPONTANEITY OF HIS DRAUGHTSMANSHIP
DISGUISED A MEANS OF PROTECTING THE BANKNOTES
AGAINST REPLICATION.**

Decimal Series | 1966-1967

The banknotes for the decimal currency series, 1966–1967, were printed in Melbourne at the Bank’s note printing branch at Victoria Parade, Fitzroy, where the printing operations had been established in 1924. They remained at this address until transferred to Craigieburn, outside Melbourne, in 1981.

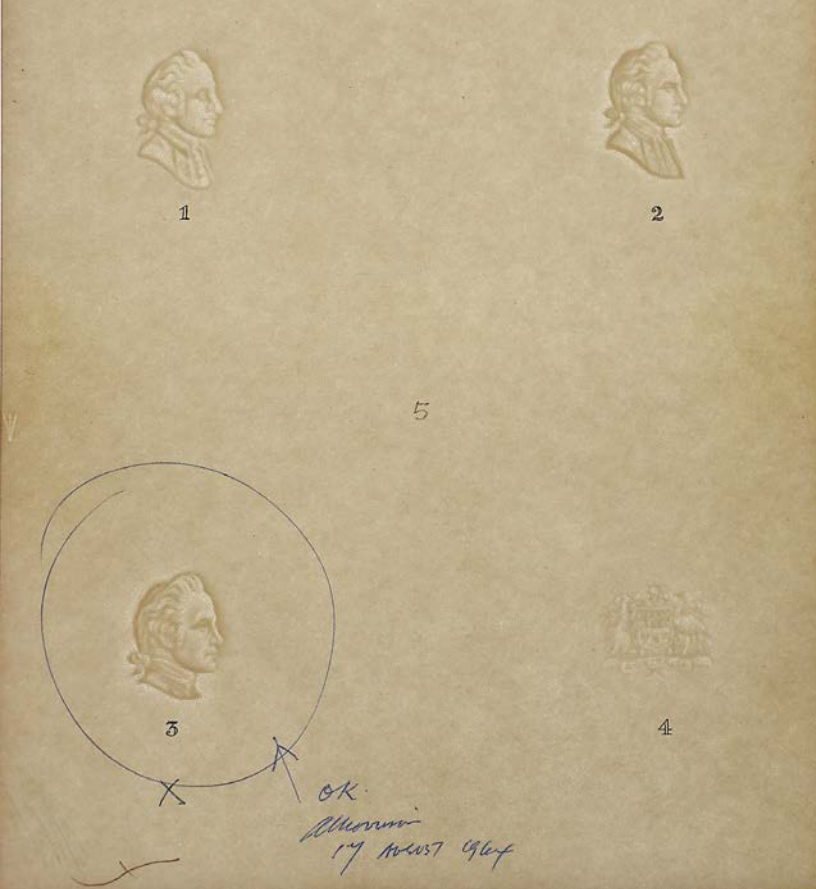
The security features of the first decimal currency banknotes included a watermark of Captain James Cook’s profile, and an internal metallic thread through the banknotes. The banknotes’ intaglio printing resulted in a raised ink film that gave an embossed feeling, especially evident on the front side of the

banknotes. The British firm, Portals, developed versions of the watermark for the series, including images of the Australian coat of arms and portraits of James Cook. The portraits were based on the Royal Society’s commemorative medal of James Cook, 1784, which was also the basis of the watermark for the previous two series of banknotes.

Front of the \$1 banknote showing Queen Elizabeth II, intaglio with dry offset printing, with watermark of Captain James Cook; concept design by Gordon Andrews, first issued in February 1966.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-003835.





Proposed watermarks by Portals for the decimal currency series; version 3 of James Cook's portrait was selected.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-a1-121.

The photograph was intended to portray the Queen as regal and majestic, with rich tonal details suitable for engraving on the banknote.

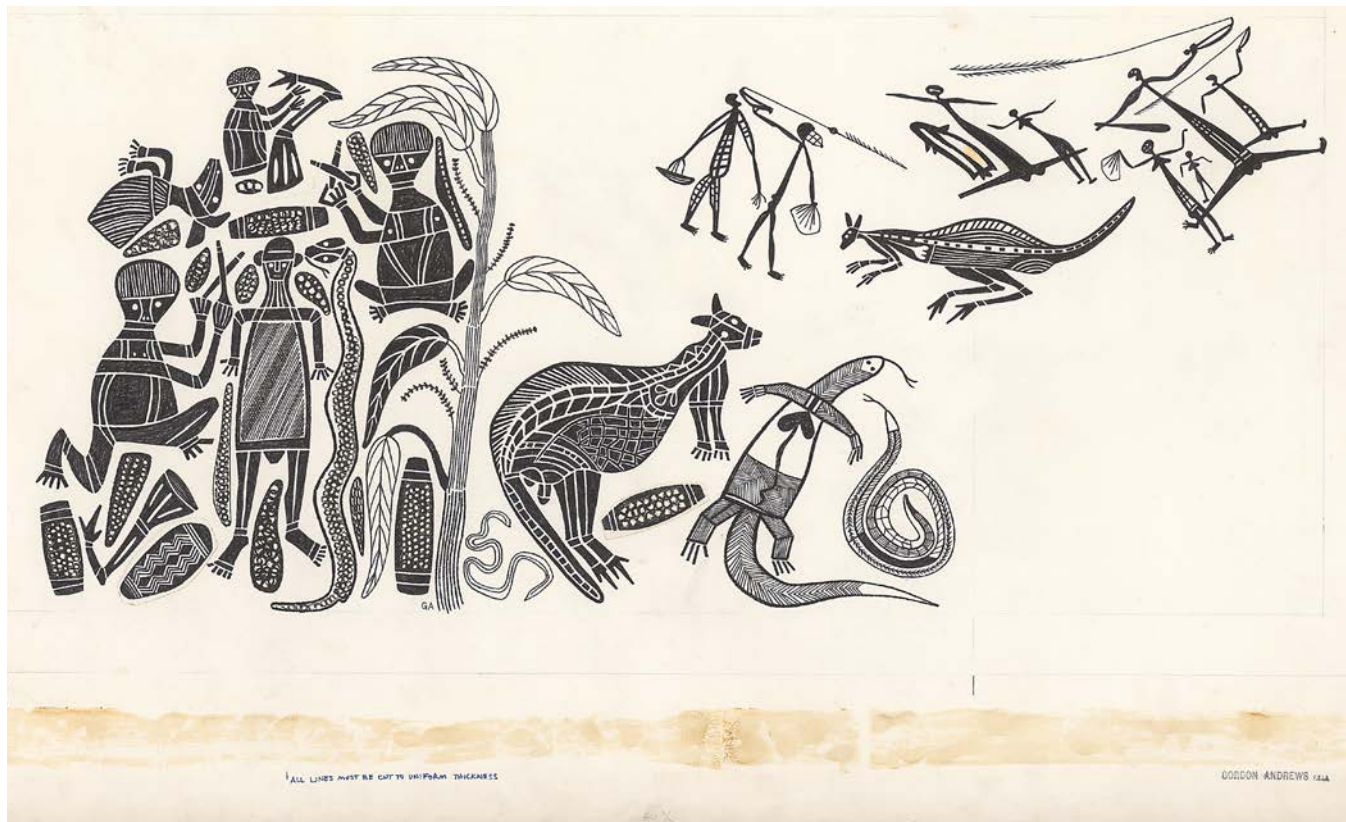


Douglas Glass, photograph of Queen Elizabeth II, 1964.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-002567.

Gordon Andrews, reproduction of ink drawing for the design of the \$1 banknote.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-002015.



Designs based on a bark painting by David Malangi Daymirringu (left-hand side) and rock paintings and carvings appeared on the \$1 banknote, representing a more prominent expression of Aboriginal culture than shown on Australia's previous currency.

David Malangi Daymirringu's bark painting describes the funeral rites of Gurrmirringu, one of his creation ancestors.



Back of the \$1 banknote showing designs based on a bark painting by David Malangi Daymirringu and Aboriginal rock paintings and carvings to the right, intaglio with dry offset printing, with watermark of Captain James Cook; concept design by Gordon Andrews, first issued in February 1966.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-003835.



Guy Warren, portrait of John Macarthur, as a preliminary design for the \$2 banknote, ink and wash, 1965.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-002827.

Front of the \$2 banknote showing John Macarthur, intaglio with dry offset printing, with watermark of Captain James Cook; concept design by Gordon Andrews, first issued in February 1966.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-003855.

The photograph was one of Gordon Andrews' references for the image of the sheep on the \$2 banknote.



'Merino Stud Ewe at Mr A. Armstrong's St. Kilda Stud, Grenfell', from *Country Life* magazine.

Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences.



Gordon Andrews, keyline drawing of the wheat design on the \$2 banknote.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-002027.



Specimens of wheat used by Gordon Andrews as models for the \$2 banknote.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, MU-000375.



Back of the \$2 banknote, showing William Farrer, intaglio with dry offset printing, with watermark of Captain James Cook; concept design by Gordon Andrews, first issued in February 1966.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-003855.

Sir Joseph Banks
by Thomas Phillips,
oil on canvas,
circa 1814.

National Portrait Gallery,
Australia.



Front of the \$5 banknote, showing
Sir Joseph Banks, intaglio with
dry offset printing, with watermark of
Captain James Cook; concept design by
Gordon Andrews, first issued in May 1967.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-003885.



**Keyline drawing of
Sir Joseph Banks for
\$5 banknote, 1967.**

Reserve Bank of Australia
Archives, NP-002835.





Back of the \$5 banknote, showing Caroline Chisholm, intaglio with dry offset printing, with watermark of Captain James Cook; concept design by Gordon Andrews, first issued in May 1967.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-003885.

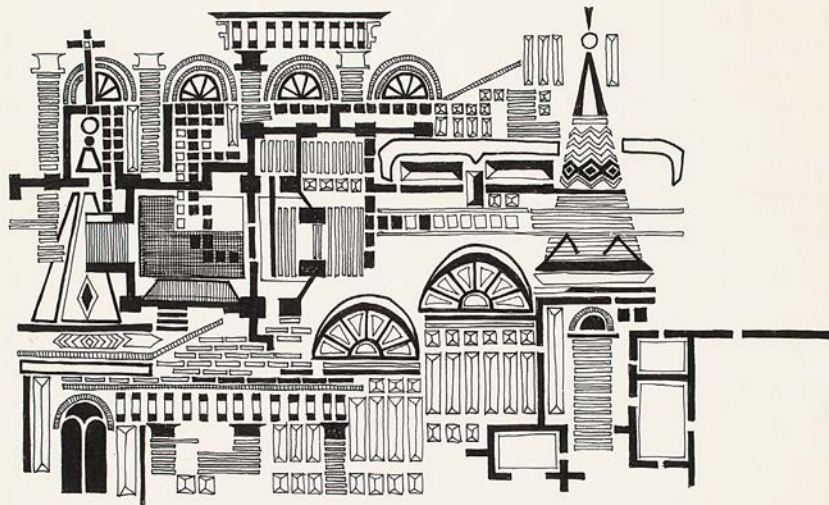
Keyline drawing of Caroline Chisholm for the \$5 banknote, 1967.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-002562.

Caroline Chisholm by Angelo Collen Hayter, oil on canvas, 1852.

Dixson Galleries, State Library of NSW.





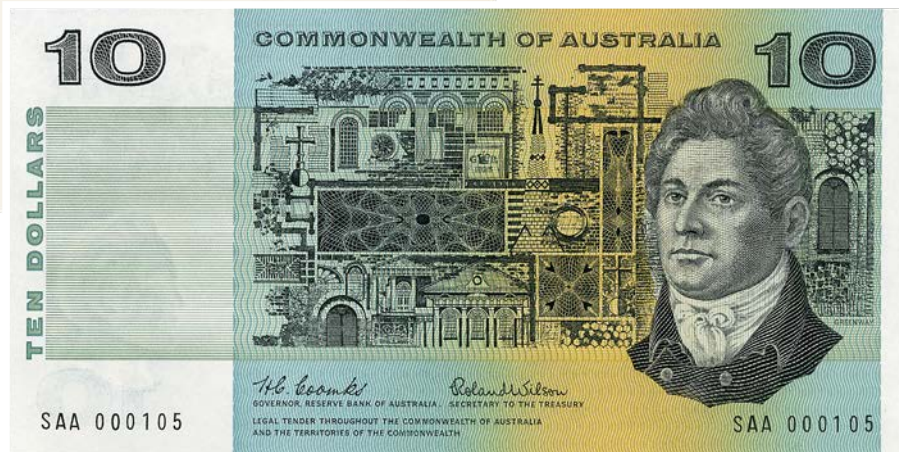
Gordon Andrews, composite sketch of Francis Greenway's architecture, including St James' Church, Sydney, for the \$10 banknote, black felt-tipped pen on tracing paper.

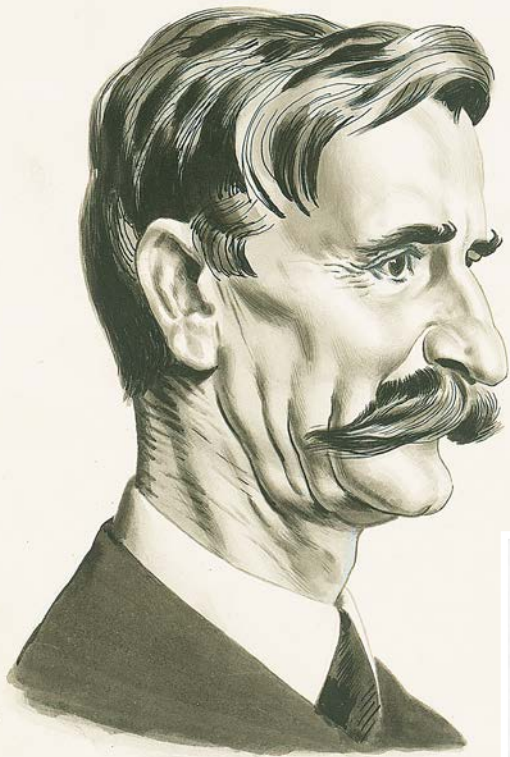
© Estate of Gordon Andrews. Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences.

Front of the \$10 banknote showing Francis Greenway, intaglio with dry offset printing, with watermark of Captain James Cook; concept design by Gordon Andrews, first issued in February 1966.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-003912.

The portraits of John Macarthur, William Farrer, Francis Greenway and Charles Kingsford Smith were prepared originally by the artist Guy Warren. The remaining portraits of the banknotes were rendered by Alfred Cook, who also assisted in the portrait of John Macarthur.





Alfred Cook, study of Henry Lawson for the \$10 banknote, ink and wash, 1965.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-002040.



Back of the \$10 banknote showing Henry Lawson, intaglio with dry offset printing, with watermark of Captain James Cook; concept design by Gordon Andrews, first issued in February 1966.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-003912.





Front of the \$20 banknote showing Sir Charles Kingsford Smith, intaglio with dry offset printing, with watermark of Captain James Cook; concept design by Gordon Andrews, first issued in February 1966.

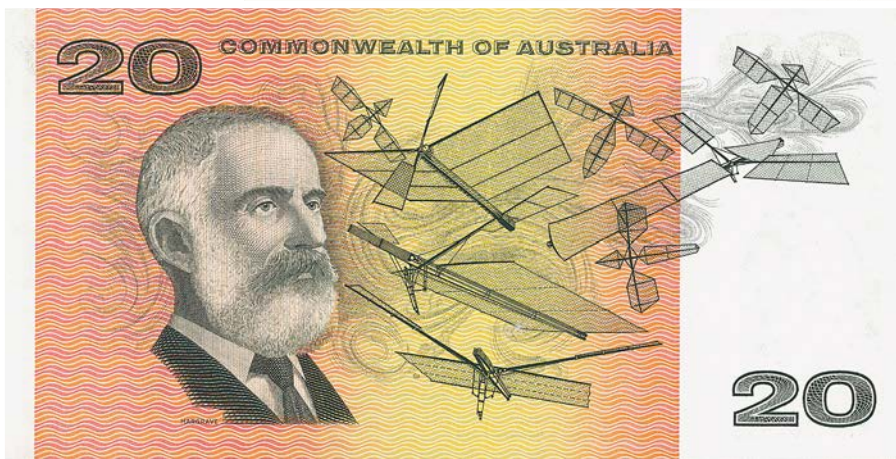
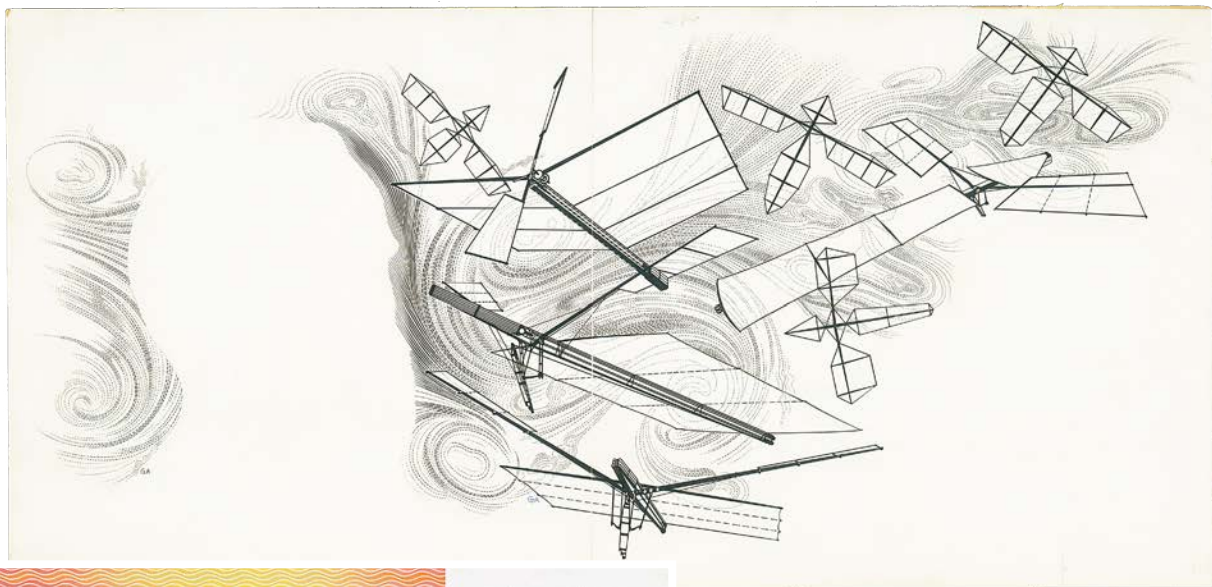
Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-003928.



Keyline drawing of the portrait of Sir Charles Kingsford Smith.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-002052.





Gordon Andrews, study for the background of the Lawrence Hargrave side of the \$20 banknote.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-002875.

Back of the \$20 banknote showing Lawrence Hargrave, intaglio with dry offset printing, with watermark of Captain James Cook; concept design by Gordon Andrews, first issued in February 1966.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-003928.

A PUBLIC REASSURANCE

The introduction of decimal currency meant a fundamental change to the nation's daily transactions. A prominent educational campaign familiarised the public with the new currency before it was introduced on Monday, 14 February 1966, known as 'C-Day' (Conversion Day). In order to increase the public's awareness of the new values of decimal currency, a number of educational strategies were employed, including television advertisements, posters and brochures. Comics, crossword puzzles and play money were created for children.

*In come the dollars and in come the cents
To replace the pounds and the shillings and the pence
Be prepared folks when the coins begin to mix
On the 14th of February 1966*

Central to the publicity campaign was the animated character of Dollar Bill, created by Monty Wedd and drawn by animator Laurie Sharpe. Dollar Bill was voiced by the actor Kevin Golsby, who drew inspiration for his voice from the character's stout stature and authoritative demeanour.⁶ In the television commercial, Dollar Bill explains the new system of decimal currency to Percy Pound, voiced by fellow-actor Ross Higgins. The commercial concludes in their duet of an infectious jingle, set to the tune of the Australian folk song *Click Go the Shears* with new lyrics by Ted Roberts. Its rhyming refrain ensured that the date of conversion remained memorable:

Dollar Bill, created by Monty Wedd and drawn by Laurie Sharpe.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, D12/226724.



AUSTRALIA'S DECIMAL CURRENCY

Will ...

Be better understood overseas

- 95% of the world's population buys and sells in decimal currency.

Simplify our money calculations

- Only the movement of a decimal point is involved in many calculations.
- Be a time saver in schools and in business.
- The same arithmetical calculation will apply to operations in both money and ordinary numbers.
- Money transactions involving mental calculation, e.g. in purchasing goods—will be simplified.
- Government and commerce will make better use of modern business machines—which are primarily designed to suit decimal systems.

Which would you rather calculate?

- 4 milkshakes at 1/4d. each
- 4 sundaes at 2/7d. each

OR

- 4 milkshakes at 13c each
- 4 sundaes at 26c each

OR

- £29/16/10½ x 89

OR

- \$59.69 x 89

40,000 copies of each poster were distributed to Australian schools.

'Australia's Decimal Currency' and 'Our New Money' posters, produced to explain decimal currency to children, 1965.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, 15/4618, 15/4617.

OUR NEW MONEY

Bob and Jane are buying fruit at the greengrocer's shop. Bob buys 4 apples at 4 cents each and Jane buys 5 oranges for 12 cents. This comes to 28 cents.

They have a 50 cent piece which they give to the greengrocer.

He gives them these coins in change—

One dollar will buy us—

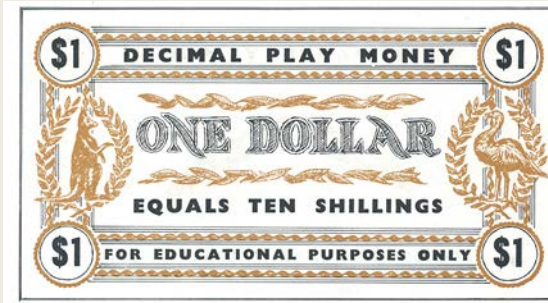
- a pound of butter at 51 cents
- half a dozen eggs at 29 cents
- a quarter of a pound of cheese at 20 cents

Bob and Jane were given a coin each to spend. Here are some things they could buy—

- an ice cream at 5c
- a packet of sweets at 10c
- a ball at 20c

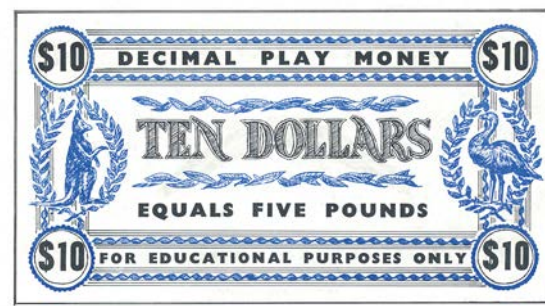
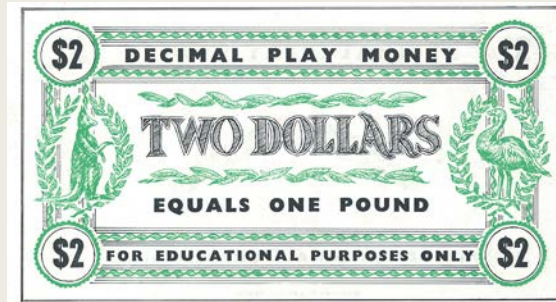
If they bought one of these articles what coins would they get in change?

When the designs of the decimal currency banknotes were released in 1966, architect and author Robin Boyd considered that it was “most unusual to find a Government department in any country of the world going forward with such advanced designs”.⁷ Although the art critic Donald Brook found elements of Andrews’ design to be overworked, he commended certain portraits, noting that the “greatest success is almost certainly Francis Greenway on the front of the ten, against a background of flattened and patterned architectural fragments. Henry Lawson on the other side looks startlingly three dimensional in his dramatic chiaroscuro ...”⁸



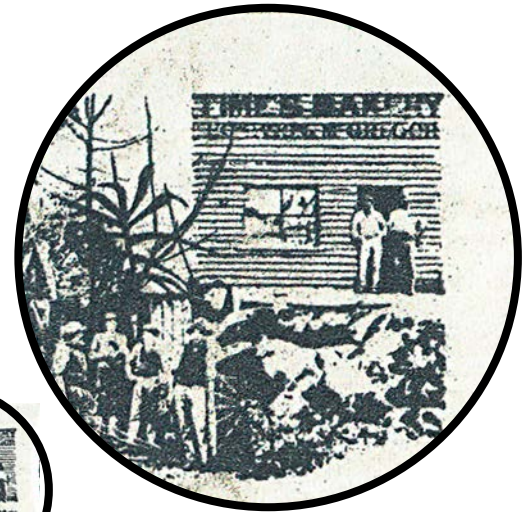
**Decimal Play Money,
One Dollar, Two Dollars
and Ten Dollars, 1966.**

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives,
NP-002486, NP-002487, NP-002488.



While the new decimal banknotes were received well, the public's trust was tested when counterfeit \$10 banknotes began to circulate at the end of 1966. The incident became known as the 'Times Bakery' forgery as the building's reproduction was misaligned on the counterfeit banknotes. The forgers were soon

apprehended and the Bank began the process of developing more sophisticated technology to prevent future counterfeiting.



Counterfeit \$10 banknote, showing the unequal horizontal lines on the right-hand side of the Times Bakery building. In authentic banknotes, these lines are flush with each other.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-004208.

A DECIMAL RESTORATION

As inflation increased in the 1970s and 1980s, new coins and higher-denomination banknotes were introduced. The condition of the \$1 and \$2 banknotes deteriorated quickly owing to their rapid circulation to make transactions, and so their replacement by coins – a \$1 coin in 1984 and a \$2 coin in 1988 – reduced the costs of maintaining the currency. The printing of the \$50 banknote in 1973 and \$100 banknote in 1984 were the first occasions that higher-denomination banknotes had been issued since the First Series (1913–1914).

Designed by Gordon Andrews, the \$50 banknote's theme of scientific innovation reflected Australia's increased public investment in research. The design focussed on Howard Florey, the Adelaide-born

pathologist who progressed penicillin as an antibiotic drug, and Ian Clunies Ross, a leading figure of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO). The intricate backgrounds of the banknotes include scientific miscellanies of *Penicillin notatum*, white blood cells and colonies of bacteria accompanying Howard Florey, while the portrait of Ian Clunies Ross is supplemented by images of a microscope and telescope, chromosomes and snow crystals, cellular structure in plants and transistors in computer circuitry.

The \$100 banknote was designed by Andrews' colleague, Harry Williamson, who extended the scientific theme and introduced his own style of distilled clarity. Underpinned by the idea of discovery, the banknote portrayed the astronomer John Tebbutt and Douglas Mawson,



Reproduction of snow crystal structure adapted for the \$50 banknote, 1973.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-002077.

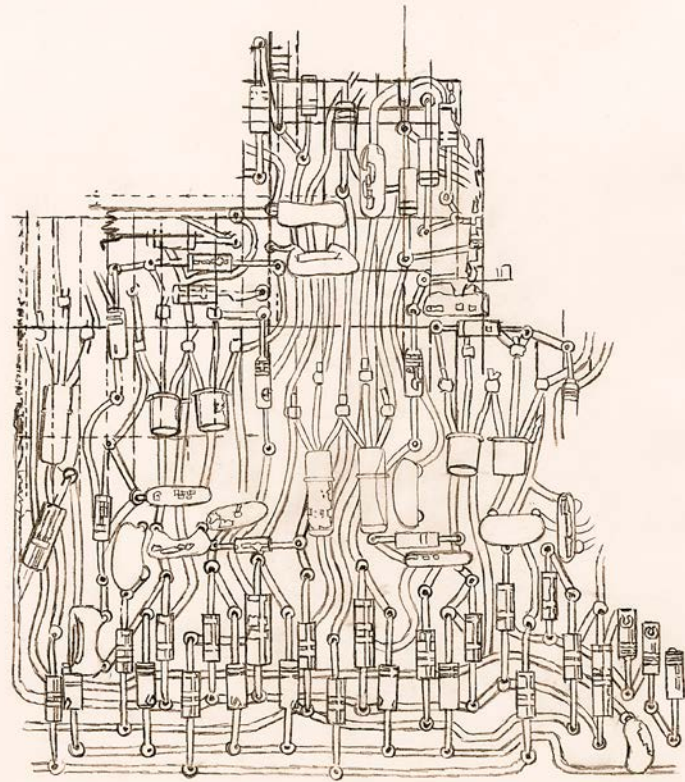
whose scientific contributions included three Antarctic expeditions. The design portrays Mawson in Antarctica against a background of geological strata formations that he studied in the Flinders Ranges of South Australia. John Tebbutt is pictured beside his observatories at

**Image of transistors in computer
circuitry, used on the \$50 banknote.**

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-002075.

Windsor, New South Wales, where he helped to lay the foundations for Australia's involvement in astronomy with the discovery of major comets.

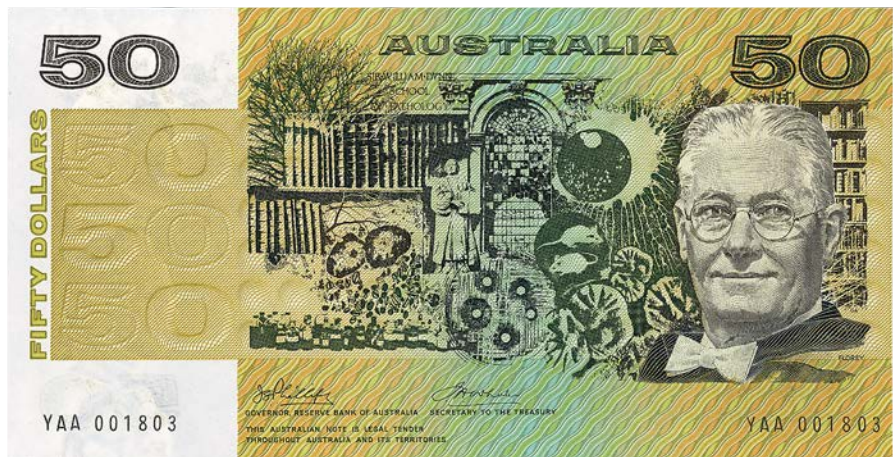
The \$100 banknote was the first new banknote printed at the Reserve Bank's printing works at Craigieburn, Victoria. Opened in 1981, the facility anticipated the industry's growth and evolving technical requirements. As mentioned previously, the counterfeit of the \$10 banknote in 1966 had prompted the Reserve Bank to investigate technology that might prevent future counterfeiting. The Bank began a process of scientific collaboration with the CSIRO and some two decades later, its progress was evident in an Australian invention – polymer banknotes, the subject of the next guide in this series.



Decimal Series | 1973; 1984

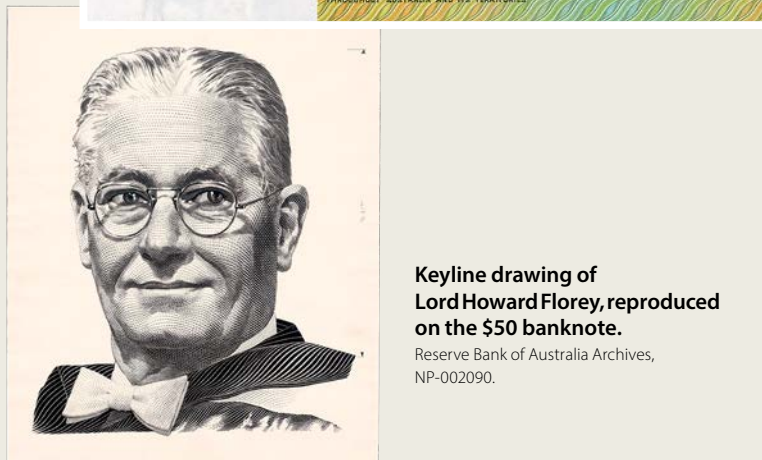
Front of the \$50 banknote, showing Lord Howard Florey, intaglio with dry offset printing, with watermark of Captain James Cook; concept design by Gordon Andrews, first issued in 1973.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-003949.



Photograph of Lord Howard Florey, reproduced on the \$50 banknote.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-002521.



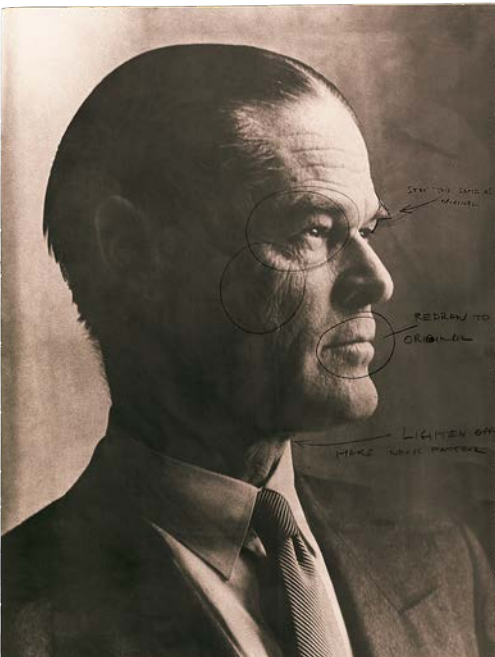
Keyline drawing of Lord Howard Florey, reproduced on the \$50 banknote.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-002090.

Back of the \$50 banknote, showing Sir Ian Clunies Ross, intaglio with dry offset printing, with watermark of Captain James Cook; concept design by Gordon Andrews, first issued in 1973.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-003949.

The banknote includes a representation of the radio telescope of the CSIRO's Parkes Observatory, New South Wales, which has become one of the symbols of the country's scientific advancement.



Photograph of Sir Ian Clunies Ross, marked for reproduction on the \$50 banknote.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-002524.



**Frank Hurley, photograph
of Douglas Mawson aboard
the *Discovery*, 1931.**

National Library of Australia.



**Keyline drawing of Douglas
Mawson's portrait reproduced
on the \$100 banknote.**

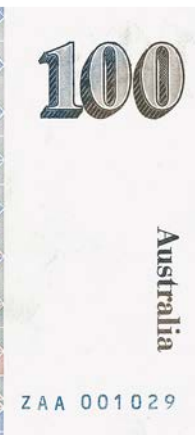
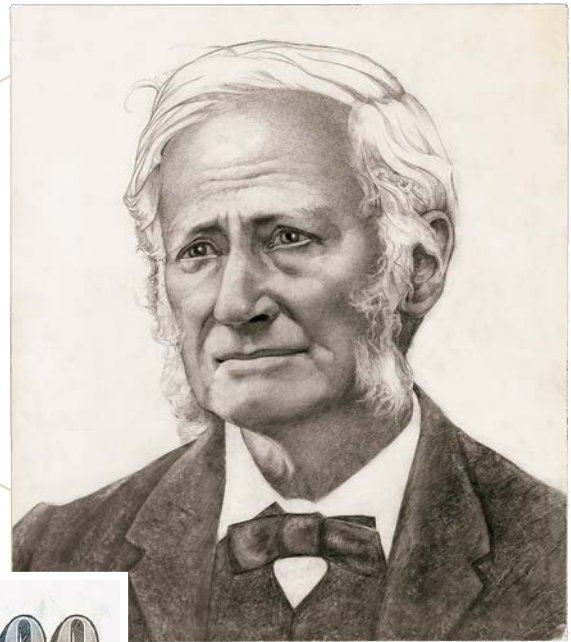
Reserve Bank of Australia Archives,
NP-002898.



**Front of the \$100 banknote, showing
Sir Douglas Mawson, intaglio with
dry offset printing, with watermark of
Captain James Cook; concept design by
Harry Williamson, first issued in 1984.**

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, 16/2681.

\$100



Pencil drawing of John Tebbutt's portrait reproduced on the \$100 banknote.

Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, NP-002988.

Back of the \$100 banknote, showing John Tebbutt, intaglio with dry offset printing, with watermark of Captain James Cook; concept design by Harry Williamson, first issued in 1984.

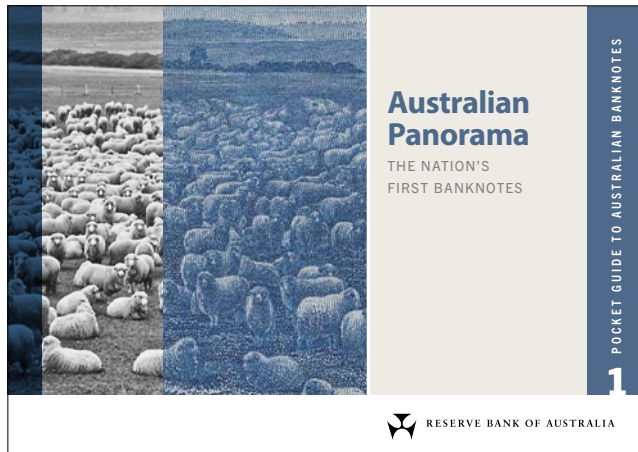
Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, 16/2681.

REFERENCES

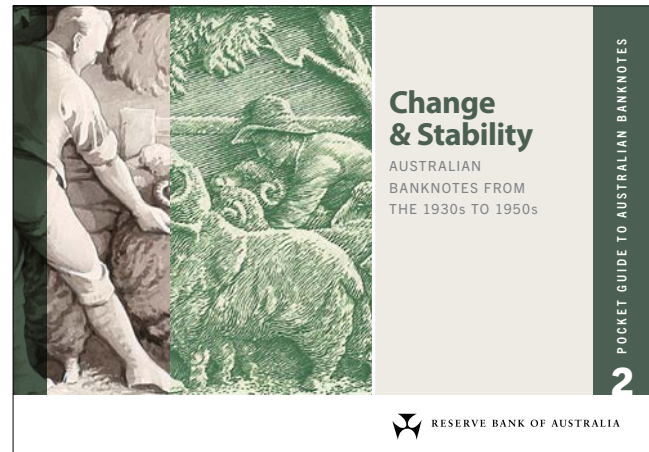
1. Alistair Morrison, Chairman of the Design Committee, to AC McPherson, Secretary of the Reserve Bank of Australia, 6 April 1964. Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, S-a-768.
2. Ibid.
3. David Malangi Daymirringu (Manharrnu), *Funerary rites of Gurrmirringu*, natural earth pigments on eucalyptus bark, 1963, is held in the collection of *Musée du quai Branly*, Paris. Regrettably, David Malangi Daymirringu's agreement for its reproduction was not sought before the issuance of the banknotes. The contributor's fee was paid retrospectively to the artist and Dr Coombs visited him in the Northern Territory, presenting a commemorative medal and a personal gift of fishing equipment.
4. Gordon Andrews, 'The Contract Was Mine', *Currency*, February 1966.
5. The banknote's scene of Sydney's Rocks area originally included the name "G. Andrews Plumber" on a shop's shingle. Unable to sign the banknotes, the designer planted a furtive quip on his role in the currency's circulation.
6. Kevin Golsby, '100 seconds with Dollar Bill', interview by the Reserve Bank of Australia, August 2015, Reserve Bank of Australia Archives, D15/430333.
7. *The Age*, 11 January 1966.
8. *The Canberra Times*, 11 January 1966.

POCKET GUIDES TO AUSTRALIAN BANKNOTES

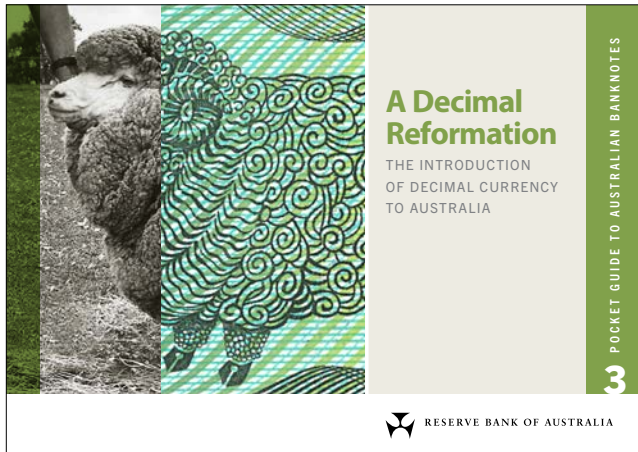
Pocket Guides to Australian Banknotes is a series of booklets that represents a complete catalogue of Australia's issued banknotes.



Australian Panorama
the Nation's First Banknotes
(1913–1914; 1923–1925)



Change and Stability
Australian Banknotes from the 1930s to 1950s
(1933–1934 and 1938–1940; 1953–1954)



A Decimal Reformation
 the Introduction of Decimal Currency to Australia
 (1966–1967; 1973; 1984)



The Reinvention of Banknotes
 the Australian Innovation of Polymer Banknotes
 (1988; 1992–1996; 2001)



A New Vision for Banknotes
Next Generation of Banknotes
(2016–2020)

The guides are a companion to the Reserve Bank of Australia Museum, where visitors can view examples of Australia's banknotes within their social and economic context.

Further information concerning the identities who have been represented on the banknotes, coupled with photographs or paintings of the individuals, may be found in the publication, *Notable Australians, Historical Figures Portrayed on Australian Banknotes* (Reserve Bank of Australia, 2016). See museum.rba.gov.au/exhibitions/notable-australians.

More detailed information concerning the banknotes is contained in Michael P Vort-Ronald's *Australian Banknotes* (published by Michael P Vort-Ronald, second edition, 1983).

Reserve Bank of Australia Museum Visitor Information

10.00 am – 4.00 pm
Monday to Friday

Closed Public and NSW Bank Holidays.

Admission to the Museum is free.

Lifts are available for entry to
the Museum.

Hearing loops are available for
booked presentations.

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museum.rba.gov.au

