

Leadlights by Starlight by Helen Wheeler

The stars shone brightly on a clear night for the APA's 'Leadlights by Starlight' community event on Sunday 5th April. Over 150 Artarmon residents and visitors took the opportunity to view Artarmon's leadlights and the southern sky at night. The evening celebrated the culmination of the APA Heritage Committee's 'Leadlights of Artarmon' project and the National Trust Heritage Festival – 'Our Place in Space - Under the Southern Cross'.

Adults were taken on a guided torchlight tour of two of Artarmon's oldest streets, Tindale and Muttama Roads. Homeowners lit up their stunning Art Nouveau and Art Deco leadlights for walkers to view, while Heritage Committee guides gave an informative commentary on the history of Artarmon, its residential architecture and the style and designs of its leadlights.

On a perfectly cloudless night, children and adults were able to stargaze with a telescope guided by their own personal astronomer, Christie Nelan, from Sydney Observatory. Views of Saturn's rings and the craters of the moon were fabulous. The ARTY team, led by Ross Dickson, entertained the children with chalk street-art, easter egg hunts and activities.

The APA Heritage Committee, comprising Marianne Nestor, Margot McKay and I, has been working on the 'Leadlights of Artarmon' community project for the last eight months and has photographed the windows and doors of nearly sixty homes. We have created an exhibition of these Art Nouveau and Art Deco leadlights which will be on display in Artarmon Library for several more weeks.

With the help of Sonia Powell, we have also produced three stunning posters and a set of greeting cards featuring Artarmon leadlights that may be purchased.

An exhibition launch with a 1920s theme was held on the evening of Friday 3rd April for APA members and invited guests. Before officially opening the exhibition, Eva Czernis-Ryl, the Curator of Decorative Arts and Design at the Powerhouse Museum, delivered a fascinating



The APA Heritage Committee celebrating Artarmon's leadlights in 1920s style

talk. In her presentation Eva outlined the artistic features of Art Nouveau and Art Deco design and related them to Artarmon's leadlights.

The photographic images of Artarmon's leadlights are now an archival record for future generations. They have been given to the Willoughby City Library and the Powerhouse Museum and will also feature on the APA's website. The photos will aid current and future Artarmon residents wishing to restore or reconstruct their leadlights in a style in keeping with their house's age and architecture and the heritage streetscapes of Artarmon.

The Heritage Committee would like to thank the residents of Artarmon for their enthusiasm and contribution to this community project. Many thanks also to Artarmon Framing and Sonia Powell of Zohannia for their support.

Since the exhibition, there have been many comments from Artarmon residents and visitors to the area such as "I'm now noticing the richness and variety of Artarmon's leadlights". We believe that the project has led to a greater appreciation of the beauty and diversity of our leadlights and the need to conserve these amazing heritage features – the 'Leadlights of Artarmon'.

To view and order your leadlight cards and posters, go to the APA's website at: www.artarmonprogress.org.au ■

Quiz No 13 Answers

Questions on page 5

1. Art Deco (geometric) and Art Nouveau (curving lines).
2. Leadlights typically focused on the front door in order to impress visitors.
3. Leadlights typically focused on the front door and front windows because the trend towards very simple interiors required more window decoration.
4. There was a move to incorporating Australian flora such as waratahs and wattles and fauna such as emus and kookaburras into some leadlight designs.

