

Object Name: Tromp-l'oeil painting (*The Hermitage*, 1941)

Description: Acrylic painting on fibreboard sealed with clear acrylic that depicts the front of the Hermitage Cottage showing a photo of George Boyes on the wall through the open door, wallpaper on the walls inside the house, rust on the roof, chair with a book on it behind the porch post, weeds in the gutter, boots outside the door, a wood box with an axe handle protruding. The wood box has Chinese characters which mean 'Chinese Silks' – artistic licence on the part of the artist. The painting was completed in 2004. The artist has used the technique of tromp-l'oeil i.e., a painting technique the tricks the viewer into perceiving painted objects or spaces as three dimensional and real.

Dimensions: 2100mm(h) x 2400mm(w)

Condition: Excellent, no obvious deterioration.

Provenance: In the 1970s *The Hermitage* was nominated to the Register of the National Estate and later automatically went on to the Tasmanian Register when the Tasmanian Heritage Act was proclaimed but it was never assessed and so stayed on the Interim list. The cottage was never repaired.

The then owner, Gerald Tattersall, made several attempts to give the building away. In 2001 Gerald verbally gave Simon McCulloch the cottage.

Simon conceived the idea of relocating the cottage to the Furneaux Museum and presented his thoughts to the FHRA committee.

Between 2001 and 2003 relocation ideas, site plans and grants were negotiated. The Bicentenary Office and the Heritage Council agreed to jointly fund a visit from a Heritage Officer, Mary Knaggs, to assess the situation.

In July 2003 recommendation, from Mary's report, was not to move the building but to build a replica on the Museum site using original ceiling and some fittings and then boarding up the rest

of *The Hermitage*. The FHRA committee decided against building a replica because of the cost. The quote was twenty-five thousand dollars. In the meantime, Peter Waterhouse relisted *The Hermitage* to the Heritage register.

Mary Knaggs suggested a Tromp-l'oeil of *Hermitage* in 1941 and negotiated with artist Peter Gouldthorpe to undertake the commission.

In 2013 it was noted that Gerald Tattersall had passed away and his son became the new owner of the property. The cottage continued to deteriorate, losing part of its corrugated iron roof, exposing the wooden shingles. The property has since changed hands and the new owner has endeavoured to arrest the deterioration of the cottage.

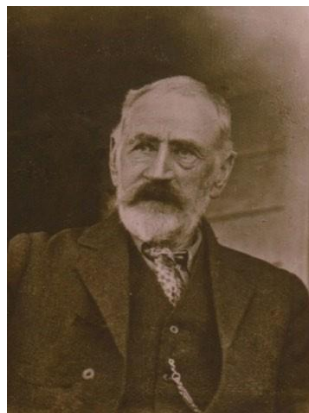
The painting was unveiled at the Furneaux Museum on 20 November 2004.

Context: *The Hermitage* at Palana, Flinders Island was built in 1895 by George Boyes and built on the first title issued for land on Flinders Island when the island was opened for selection in 1889. George Boyes was a retired Tasmanian Public Servant.

The artist, Peter Gouldthorpe, was sent photos of the cottage and artefacts. The painting is of the front of the cottage in 1941. The year was chosen because it was the year George Boyes died and Annie Eden moved into *The Hermitage* cottage.

George Boyes³⁰

George was a Customs Officer in Hobart, he came to Flinders Island with his brother Frank, a surveyor, and the two worked together on the early subdivisions of the northern part of the Island. George was granted an allotment of 31 acres, and he became the first person to be granted freehold title to land on Flinders Island. He farmed this land for many years, and it is said that he never came as far south as Emita, nor did he ever leave the Island again. His closest neighbours were Jack and Emily Eden and their three daughters, Amy, Annie, and Mary.



George Boyes

(Image source: George Boyes and Hermitage, Album 37, Furneaux Museum Reference Library)

³⁰ *George Boyes and Hermitage, Album 37, Furneaux Museum Reference Library*

The Eden Family³¹

Jack Eden built the cottage for his family on the adjoining property and was employed as boatman by the Blyth brothers who had the lease of the West Sisters Island. When Jack died, Emily, Annie and Mary continued with their almost self-sufficient farming life. They grew onions and potatoes, farmed sheep, and cattle, sold cream to the Butter Factory, often transporting the cream as far south as the Quoin by horse and cart. They supplied eggs to the Interstate Hotel in Whitemark. Annie sheared the sheep with hand shears. Amy married and lived in Launceston and other parts of Australia, later settling in Perth with her second husband Patrick Walsh.

In 1941 George Boyes died and the property was left to the Eden sisters. At this stage Annie moved into the Boyes cottage, The Hermitage. In later years, after their mother Emily died, Annie moved back to the Eden cottage to live with Mary. Both women lived into their 80's.

The Eden cottage is close to Eden's Creek in Eden's Road and has been maintained by successive owners. Unfortunately, the small timber cottage of The Hermitage, which stands closer to the creek, is somewhat weathered by the years and has now fallen into disrepair. Its red iron roof is still visible from Palana Road as you drive east. The ruin is on private property.

Annie and Mary kept diaries. The Museum has many of the original diaries, some of which have been transcribed for easier reading.



*From left: Annie and Mary Eden in their later years
(Image source: The Eden Family, Album 17, Furneaux Museum Reference Library)*

³¹ *Eden Family, Album 17, Furneaux Museum Reference Library*



The Hermitage in 1988

(Image source: George Boyes and Hermitage, Album 37, Furneaux Museum Reference Library)

Peter Gouldthorpe³²

Peter Gouldthorpe is a well-known Tasmanian painter and author. He was born in Melbourne, Victoria, on 30th July 1954, but most of his childhood was spent in the Northern Beaches of Sydney. After leaving high school, he studied art at East Sydney Technical College (now the National Art School), before moving to Tasmania at the age of nineteen. He taught at the Devonport and Launceston TAFE colleges, and began painting landscapes, holding several early solo exhibitions in Devonport at The Little Gallery (which then became the Devonport Regional Gallery). He has also exhibited with Colville Gallery and is currently represented by Handmark Gallery. Peter has been a Glover prize finalist numerous times, winning the People's Choice in 2010.

Peter has also written and or illustrated eighteen children's books many of which have been shortlisted for awards. Apart from painting and illustrating Peter has also worked in a number of other areas including murals, stamps, advertising, film, television and live performance. Several of his murals, employ the Trompe-l'œil technique. Peter's paintings and illustrations are in Public and Private collections throughout Australia.



Peter Gouldthorpe beside the painting of The Hermitage

(Image source: Furneaux Museum, Album 37, Furneaux Museum Reference Library)

³² Peter Goldthorpe, viewed 23 October 2023 < <https://petergouldthorpe.com/about> >