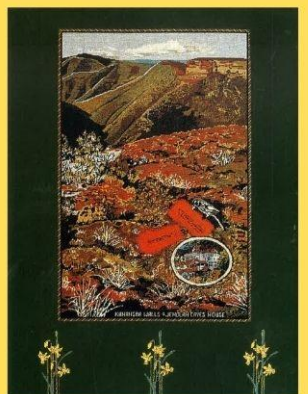
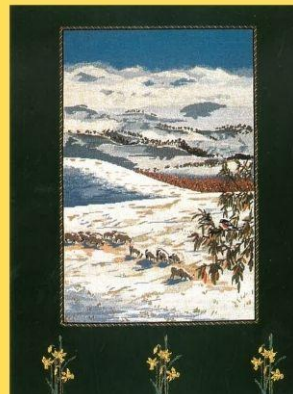
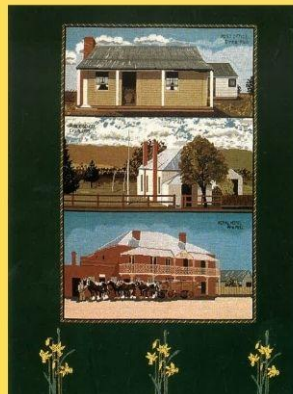
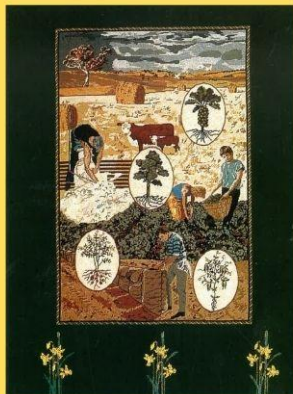
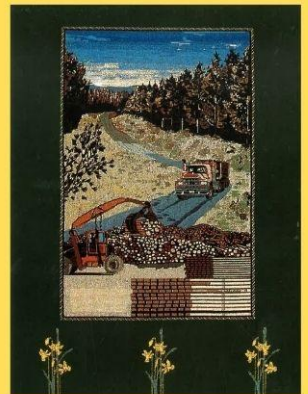
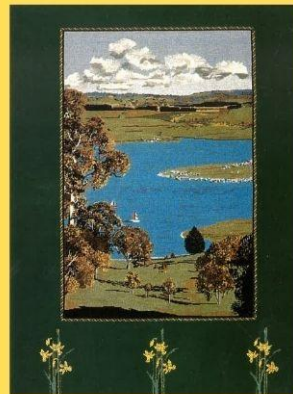
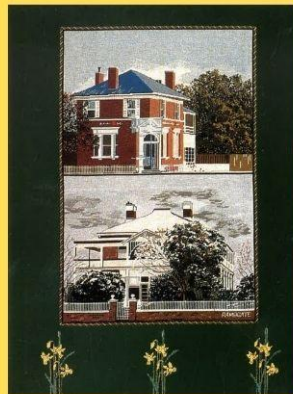
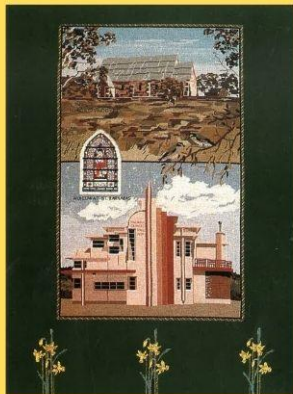


The Story behind the Oberon Bicentennial Tapestries



“The wonderful Oberon Bicentennial Tapestries – such significant textiles. These tapestries have an important place in the lives of so many people and this has been recognised by Council and its management, which is shown in the prominent place where they are displayed.” Alison Snapp

The Oberon Bicentennial Tapestries

Introduction

The Oberon Bicentennial Tapestries are owned by Oberon Council on behalf of the people of Oberon. Council provided the original funding in 1986 and financed the cost of repair and reframing between 2019 and 2021 (Veolia Mulwaree Trust awarded a grant of \$5000 towards the reframing). Council remains the guardian of the tapestries.

The Tapestries Project was driven by local resident Brenda Lyon, ably supported by local artist Kim Woods Rabbidge and talented needleworker Mary Clancy. This trio, working in conjunction with the Oberon Needleworkers group, were able to mobilise people across the community in a two-year project which resulted in the production of 8 outstanding tapestries.

The tapestries featured on the following pages depict these scenes:

- Oberon in Winter
- Kanangra Walls and Caves House
- The Lake Oberon Dam
- The Pine Forests and Timber Industry
- Ramsgate, National Australia Bank
- A heritage panel depicting old buildings, some of which are no longer standing
- The Rural Industry
- The Avoca Church, Malachi Gilmore Hall, St Barnabas' Church Window

The reproduced images are taken from the postcards produced to coincide with the unveiling of the tapestries. The photos were taken by local photographer Paul Ferry.

It has been a delight to go behind the scenes and compile the following record of what is a significant part of Oberon's story.

Shirley Arrow (October, 2026)

The Tapestries are now on permanent display at the Oberon Library and Community Centre, and can be viewed during opening hours (Monday to Friday 9.30am to 5.30pm and Saturdays 9.00am to 1.00pm).

The Story of The Tapestries



Brenda Lyon



Mary Clancy

In 1986 Oberon Council was looking for a suitable project to commemorate the Bicentenary in two years' time. The Oberon Needleworkers Group mulled over various suggestions including the idea of a wall hanging. In the end they settled on the idea of a tapestry as tapestries are able to withstand the test of time, with some famous tapestries having been around for hundreds of years. Brenda Lyon pitched this idea to Council along with the request for a budget of \$2000 and it was duly approved.

Brenda then approached local artist Kim Woods Rabbidge for assistance and direction with painting the tapestries, and local high school teacher Mary Clancy for technical support with yarn selection and stitching. Brenda was familiar with Kim's work through her local exhibitions, and she knew Mary as she had been babysitting her two young children. Mary had experience with canvas work and had won prizes at the Royal Easter Show in Sydney for some of her earlier projects, while Kim's work had featured in a number of local exhibitions.

There was much discussion about the images which would be depicted on the canvases but the overarching idea was they should reflect what makes Oberon unique, incorporating its history, well known buildings and natural attractions plus important local industries. The daffodil frieze connecting each panel represented the annual Oberon Daffodil Festival. Mary commented that "the deep green borders and the daffodil frieze tied together a whole lot of images that were really quite disparate". The Council had promised the coordinators of the project that the finished tapestries would be housed in a community centre so they envisaged them in the foyer of the proposed centre and that's how they settled on the idea of doing eight.

Kim painted the images directly on to the canvases "using acrylic paint heavily watered down so as to penetrate the tapestry material" (Oberon Review 28/05/1986). There was much excitement when Brenda and Mary went to visit Kim's studio and saw the canvases pinned up. Brenda speaks

about having to temper Kim's artistic exuberance regarding colour selection so they didn't have to use the whole range of 800 coloured threads on each canvas!

Painting directly onto the canvas was a huge time saver for the project but provided some challenges as the sewing went over the image without any record of what had been there. Mary mentioned that this was before there were smart phone photos, there was some regret that more photos weren't taken to record the process.

Before any stitches could be sewn there were discussions to be had about the best threads to use. The wool needed to be stranded, not too thick, and they wanted a good range of colours so the decision was made to go with Appletons Crewel Embroidery Wools. Samples then had to be stitched so that Mary could make the calculations about the amount of wool required for each tapestry, allowing for wastage and repairs which were occasionally necessary. Instead of using a half cross stitch common in many tapestries they opted for a slanted stitch, which was longer at the back and gave better coverage. It uses more wool but keeps stitches at a much more even angle. Brenda and Mary decided to order wool for each tapestry separately as it was easier to manage, for example no two skies were the same and some tapestries had two different images with two different skies.

When the first order for the deep green border was placed with Owl's House in Bathurst it was for 68 boxes. The Appletons factory in England thought there had been a mistake and the order should have been 68 skeins. The 68 boxes ordered required a 'special run' at the factory as they did not normally produce that number of skeins in each dye lot, but that's what they had to do in order to complete the attractive green borders.

So, there had already been months of work by the time the first stitch was sewn by the Shire President, Lance Armstrong, at a Council Meeting on June 16, 1986.

As people volunteered, lessons were conducted using sample pieces of canvas, often in the needleworkers' rooms at 19 North Street. It was essential that people felt confident to work independently. Techniques such as shading, particularly for the sky and water, were also taught, usually on Tuesday nights or some Saturdays. One of the reasons for choosing Appletons was that the yarn had three strands, allowing colours to be graded using two strands of one colour and one of another when necessary. Mary would draw lines across the canvases to assist with this process.

Each tapestry had its own drawstring bag to help keep it clean. Gary Lyon made rollers for each tapestry as they were quite difficult to manage. He also made wooden thread holders for the wool with each colour carefully labelled, for example dam water - dark/medium/light. Spare wool was kept at Brenda's house where the door was always open for people to pick up wool.

Mary and Brenda monitored each tapestry to ensure a consistent standard was maintained. Very occasionally, work had to be unpicked and redone. This was not generally known as they did not want the volunteers to lose confidence.

Three months out from the September 1988 deadline there were still five tapestries to be finished. At this stage enthusiasm for the work by volunteers was beginning to wane as people felt they had done their bit or shied away from the harder sections such as the heath on Kanangra Walls or the snow scenes. At the same time Mary was teaching four days a week and managing a home life with three small children and a husband working long hours in Bathurst. Brenda also had four children and was coordinating the annual Daffodil Festival (which continued until about 2003).



Cecily Fitzpatrick, and daughter Karina, working on the NAB building circa 1988

Brenda kept a record of who was working on each tapestry and how long they spent on it. Each tapestry could have allocated up to eight sewers working on a roster basis, however some were completed by one or two people. Brenda spent much of her time coordinating the pickup and delivery of tapestries in those final months. At times the process was conducted with military precision coming to a head in the final week before the unveiling.

Kim had the idea of placing different local birds at the front of each image although this wasn't possible in all cases. The birds, including the New Holland honeyeater, red breasted robin, striated pardalotes and black and white cockatoos, were oversewn in a different stitch so they didn't disappear into the background. The idea was they would be another dimension, "Part of the artistic image but not part of the scene being painted," Mary said. The church window was worked in silk, making finer stitches, while other images were stitched in a type of long stitch, for example the logs, to give a rounded effect. The grevillea was particularly challenging. Most of this work was done by Mary. Both Mary and Brenda worked on all the tapestries, largely behind the scenes.

Kim made all the frames and completed the framing in time for the September deadline.

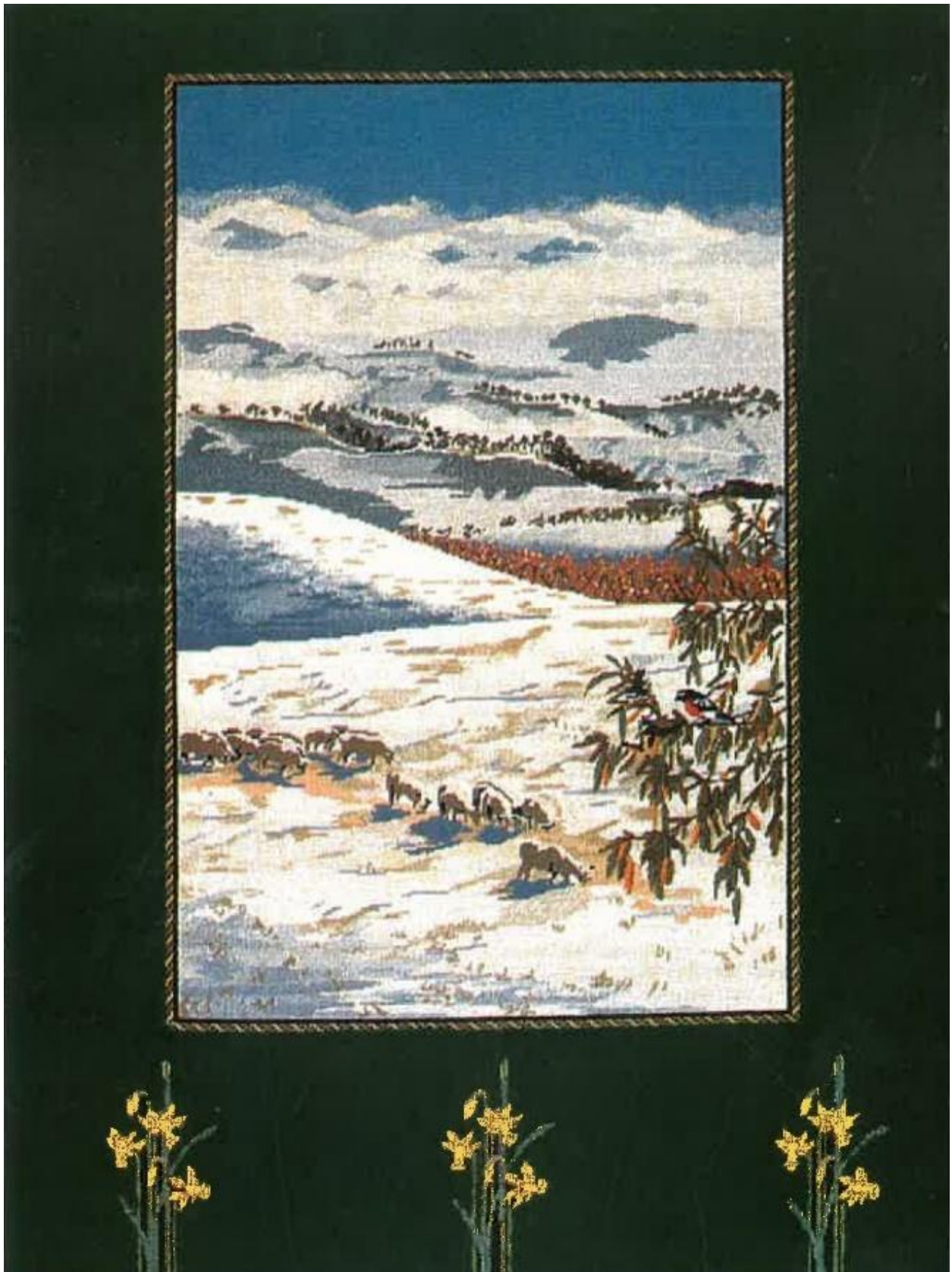
Thus, eight amazing tapestries were produced over a 20-month period, with up to 100 residents working 13000 hours and making 1.5 million stitches. In September 1988 the tapestries were unveiled by 97-year-old Oberon resident Aunty Ollie Cunynghame in a ceremony at the Oberon Golf Club.

After the tapestries were unveiled they were put on display at the Cobweb Craft shop, located in the foyer of the Malachi Gilmore Hall, where they remained until 2018. (Go to Youtube – The Malachi Gilmore Hall "The Stories Behind Oberon's Tapestries" to see Brenda Lyon's memories)

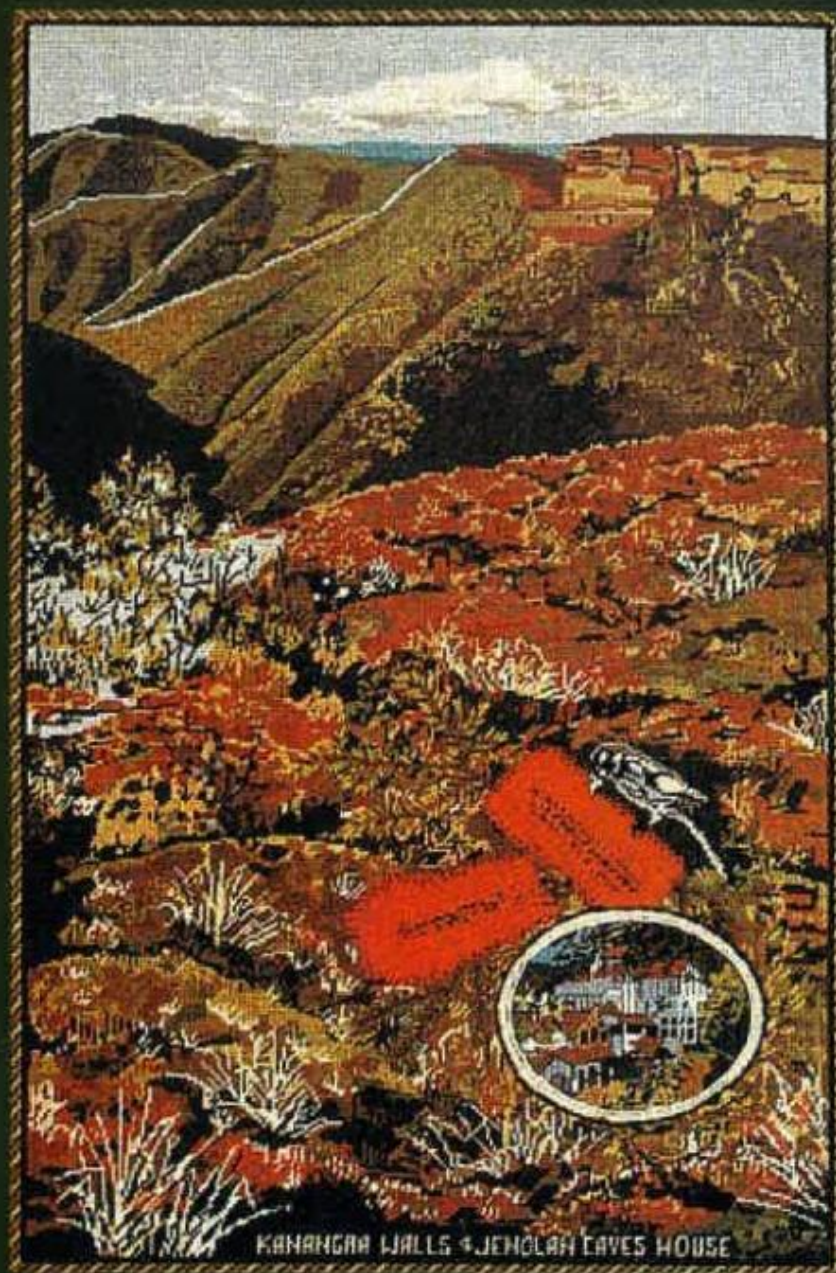
In 2018, the Cobweb had to close as the Malachi had been sold. Then Mayor, Kathy Sajowitz, along with senior Council staff, went to inspect the tapestries to consider where to store them until a new community facility was built. Kathy commented that it was immediately evident that some tapestries had faded and others were in need of some repair. Kathy approached Alison Snepp to provide a quote for repair and storage (see Alison's report).

When design work began for the new Library and Community Centre provision was made to house the Bicentennial Tapestries with the appropriate environmental conditions as recommended by Alison.

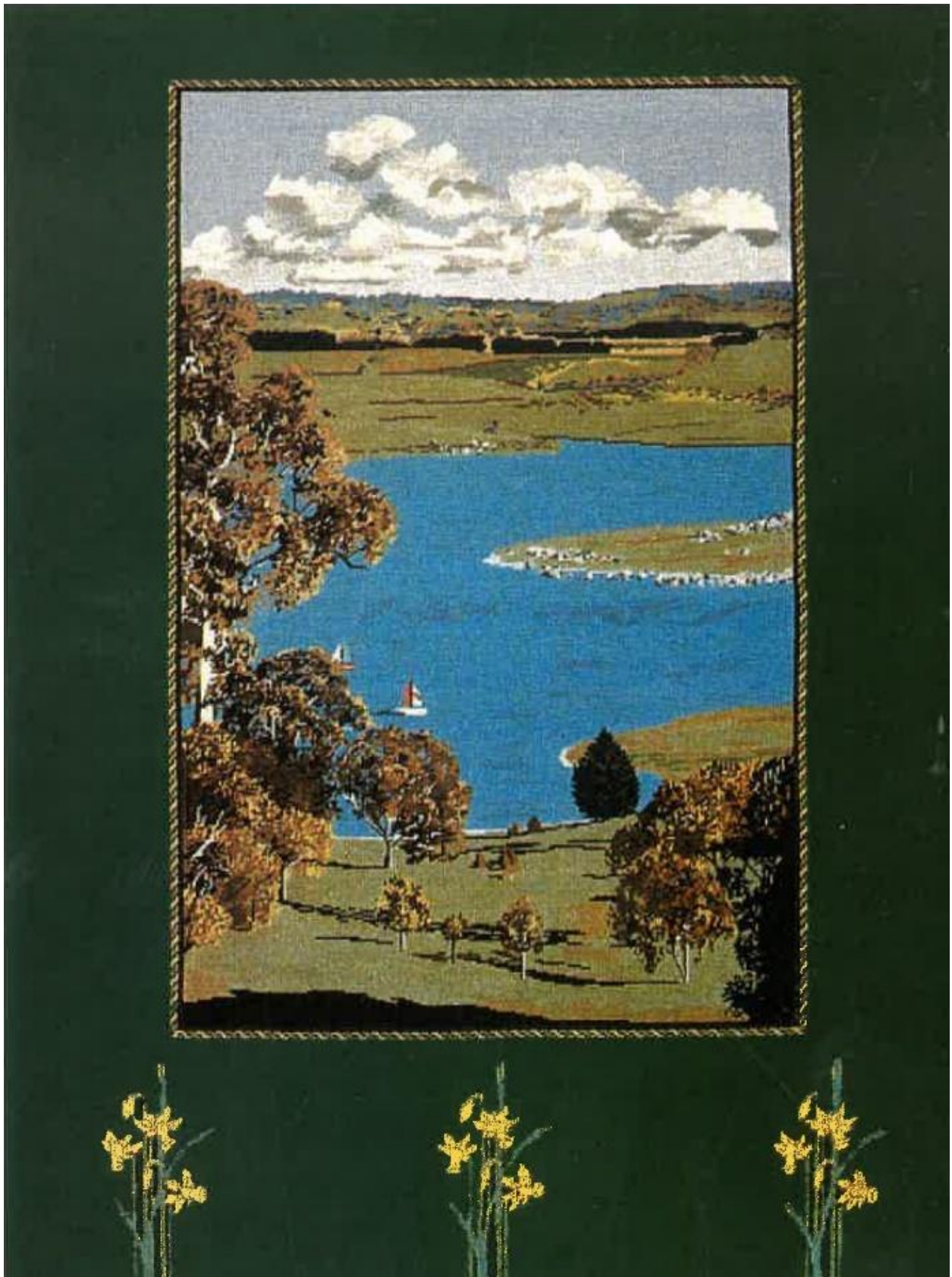
The tapestries are now housed in the Oberon Library and Community Centre which was officially opened on July 4, 2023.



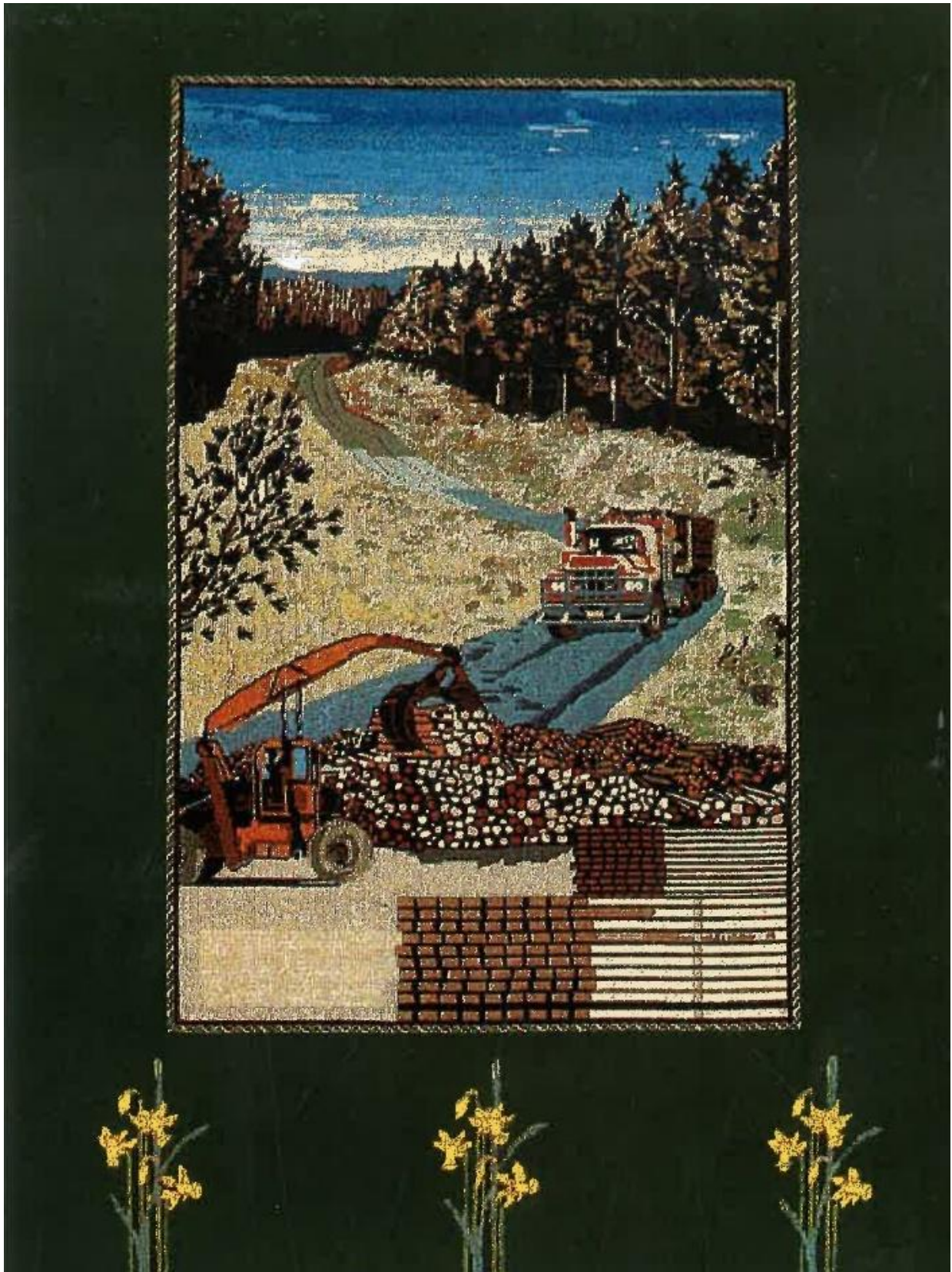
Oberon is quite often shrouded by mist, frost or snow. All wintery images contribute to its appeal, especially for visitors! The male red breasted robin is a bright little visitor.



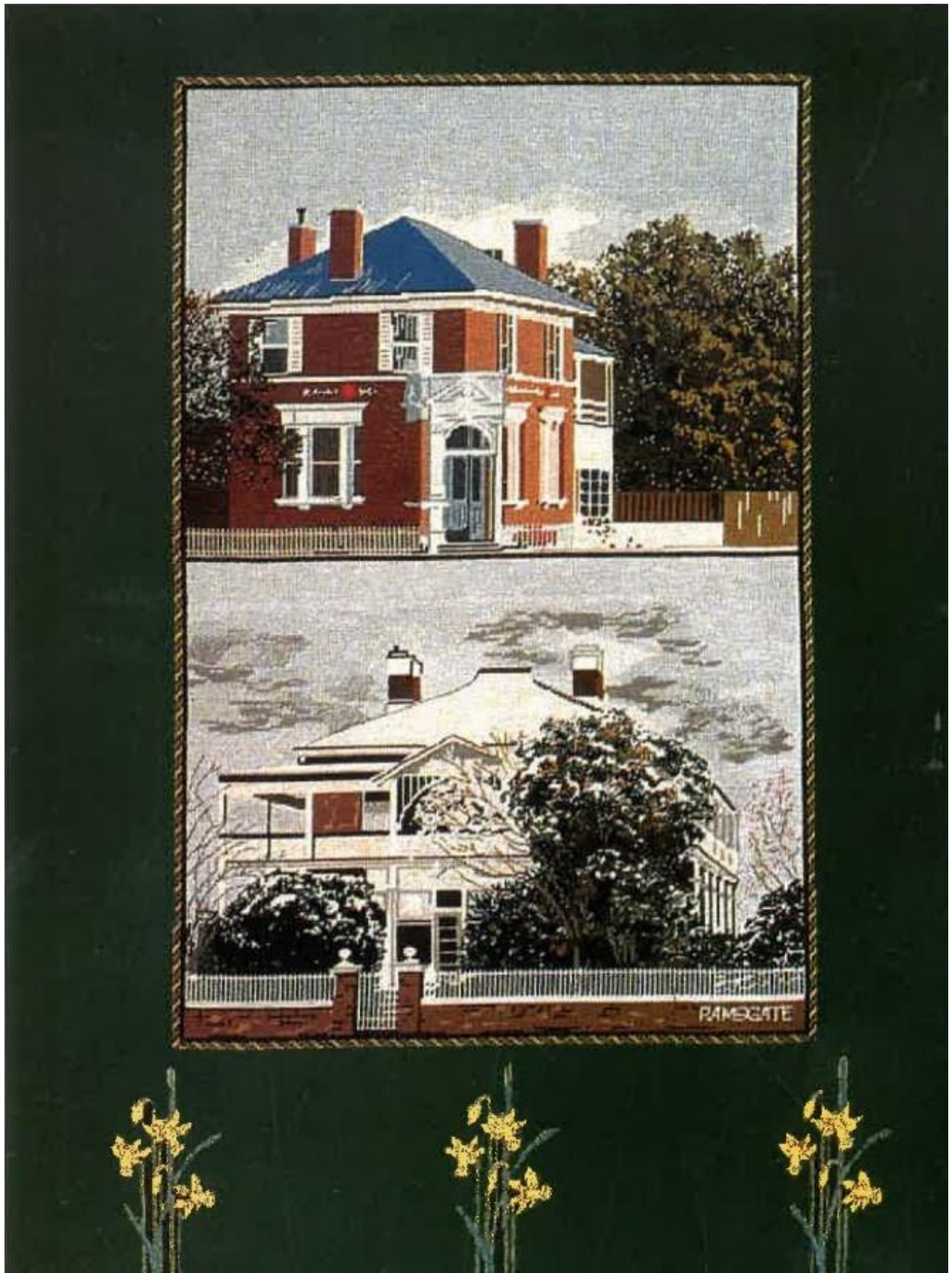
Kanangra Walls and Jenolan Caves are two spectacular tourist attractions in the Oberon district. The New Holland honeyeater is feeding on banksia ericifolia



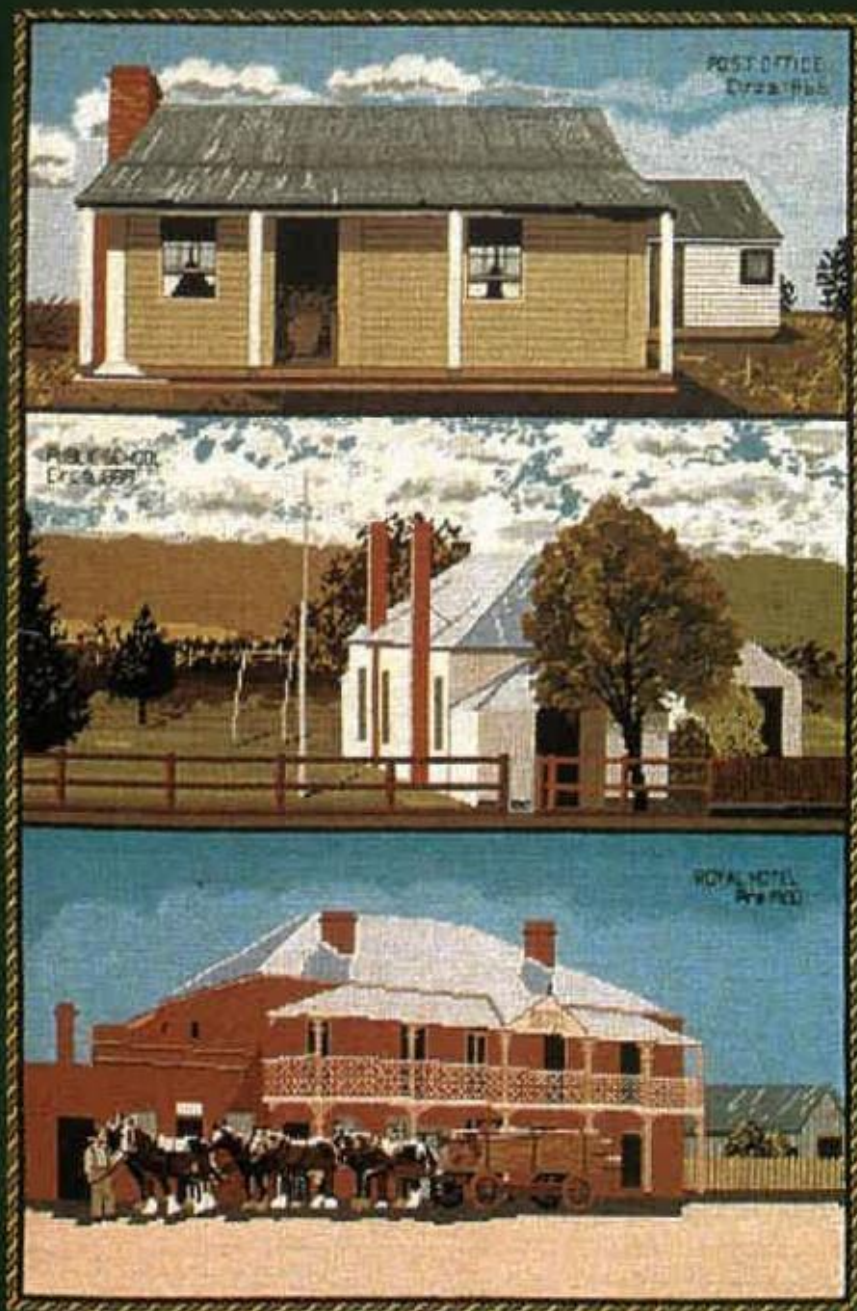
This view of Lake Oberon is from the old golf clubhouse. It overlooks the golf course, the lake and the distant grazing lands.



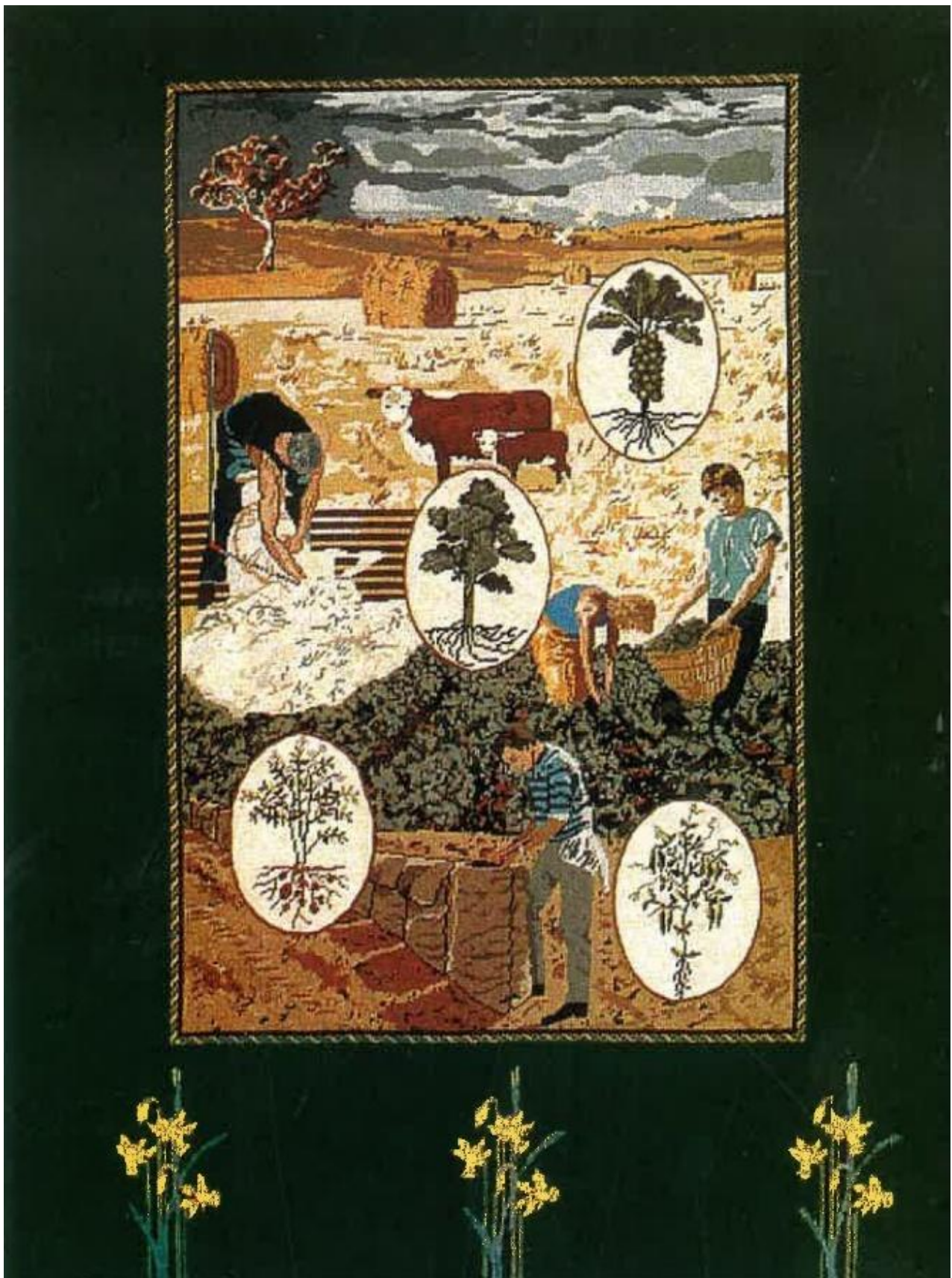
The Forestry industry has been significant in the Oberon district for many years. The bird featured is the black cockatoo, which feeds on pine seeds.



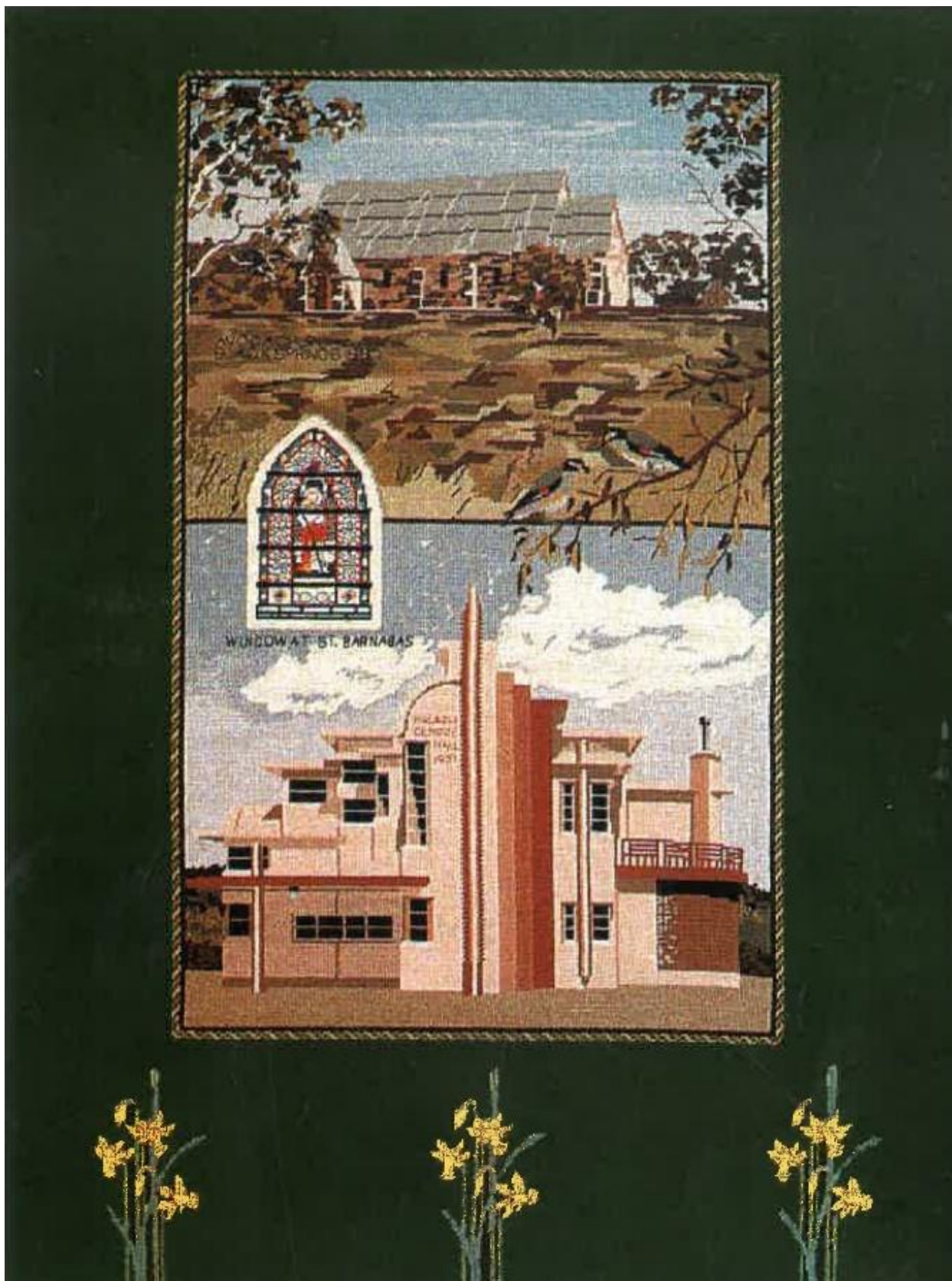
The National Australia Bank is one of Oberon's more classical buildings. Besides the bank stands an enormous walnut tree, which has since been removed and a new one planted at the Common. Ramsgate was for many years the home and surgery of Dr Robey.



This heritage panel depicts some of Oberon's oldest buildings. While the post office no longer exists, both the school house and the Royal Hotel (less its ornate verandah) are still standing.



This agricultural panel includes a shearer, a farmer sewing up potato bags, and a couple of broccoli pickers. The vegetables featured are broccoli, brussel sprouts, potatoes and peas. White cockatoos over a freshly baled hay paddock seem to herald the approaching storm.



The Avoca Church at Black Springs and the art deco Malachi Gilmore Hall are featured here. The stained-glass window is in St Barnabas' Church. The birds are striated pardalotes.

Brenda Lyon's speech on the day of the unveiling of the Tapestries - 17th September, 1988



Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome tonight on this very special occasion.

Oberon may be climatically one of the coldest places in New South Wales but I find the people here have the warmest hearts. A project of this size would not have been at all possible without the tremendous support of so many people. When I first got involved with the Tapestries three years ago, Wendy Doldrum first suggested we make something as a special memento for the bicentennial years. At first, we thought we would make a patchwork wall hanging, then we decided a tapestry would take just as long to make but it would be around for a lot longer.

I didn't realize what I was getting myself into! I will be the first to admit it was a mammoth task but I've never been sorry I started it.

After establishing a small committee from the Oberon Needleworkers' group, I would like to take the opportunity to thank you.

First, to my husband Gary who uncomplainingly made all the tapestry frames and wall holders and installed lighting and made endless cups of tea to support me while I sewed. Plus, all the other jobs around the house that needed doing while I was busy.

Also, to my children.

Two, to Oberon Shire Council for supplying the grant to make this project possible. Thank you, Lance. He sewed the first stitch. Also, thank you to Col Pritchard for support.

Three, special thank you to Mary Clancy for her expertise in tapestry. She kept the standard from the first. She spent many hours sorting wool. Thanks for the excellent standards she set and maintained.

Four. A few people have a special mention here as they did the lion's share of the sewing. One, Peggy McIntosh, two, Heather McLennan, three Anne Arnold, four, Doreen McCusker, five Sybil Hewer, six Rona Gallard.

Five, to the Oberon Needleworkers who handled all the paperwork and accounts.

Six, to the Cobweb ladies for assisting us to hold the function tonight and agreeing to look after the tapestries now they're finished.

Seven, a special thanks to Barbara Webb for having the sewing days at her place.

Eight, for the financial support of Commercial Marketing for the colour brochures.

Nine, last but not least, to Kim Rabbidge. Kim painted the magnificent tapestries, plus she did all the framing and attended to all the worry associated with our lovely brochures.

The brochures are for sale for two dollars.

Ten, thank you to Paul Ferry for the photos.

There is a list of names and, if your name doesn't appear on this list or the spelling is incorrect, please print the correction so it will be correct on the scroll.

A very big thank you to each and every one who participated in the sewing of these magnificent tapestries. I can't thank you enough for your wonderful support in such a mammoth project.

I'd like to hand over to Miss Olive Cunynghame who will perform the official unveiling.

Oberon Bicentennial Memories

Kim Woods Rabbidge



“When I was approached to create an artwork for Oberon’s Bicentennial celebrations, a tapestry or as it turned out, a series of tapestries, seemed to be a good solution. It meant the whole community could be part of the project.

I planned the eight panels as a narrative, reflecting Oberon’s past and present. The daffodil frieze connecting each panel represented the annual Daffodil Festival begun by passionate local gardener, Brenda Lyon, to celebrate the emergence of Spring after Oberon’s very chilly winters.

Once I’d completed painting the designs directly on the canvas, it was such a joy to watch each one emerge as over one hundred local stitchers wove over 400 Appleton wool colours. Sometimes I’d drop into where a group of stitchers would be working together. There’d always be chatting and laughter- spinning yarns while working on yarns. Such joy.

It was then a thrill some years later when Fran Charge asked if the designs could be used for the Oberon Common. Our years of living at Oberon were incredibly special. Our three sons were born in the Oberon Hospital. You could be born at one end and, in your dotage, be cared for at the other. I have such warm memories of the people - and the stunningly beautiful countryside.”

Note: In 2008 the Oberon Arts Council received a Regional Arts Fund Grant to re-create the tapestries as terrazzo panels to be laid as flooring for the Rotunda at the Oberon Common. The panels were designed by artist Gabriella Hegyes. This project drew on volunteers from across the town and district, some of whom were involved in the original textile work.

The Restoration and Reframing of the Oberon Bicentennial Tapestries

by Alison Snepp

(In 2018 the Tapestries were showing signs of insect damage and fading, so Council commissioned then local resident, Alison Snepp, to carry out the necessary repairs. Alison has been a professional freelance embroiderer, teacher, lecturer and designer for over thirty years. She has taught classes and lectured all over Australia, New Zealand and the UK and has written a number of books and numerous magazine articles on embroidery. The restoration project was a painstakingly long process, with the completed tapestries returned to Oberon Council in 2021. Alison's detailed report is below.)



In 2018, I was asked by Kathy Sajowitz, who was Oberon Mayor at the time, to evaluate and provide a quotation for the restoration and reframing of the Oberon Bicentennial Tapestries.

The 8 Tapestries had been hanging on the walls above the staircase in the Cobweb Craft Shop (now known as the Malachi Hall) in Oberon Street. I understand that position was selected as it allowed the beauty of the tapestries to be appreciated while keeping them out of reach of their viewers.

This location achieved its aim of keeping them out of reach, but had the consequence that the positions of some of the embroideries were in direct sunlight at some times of the day and, being out of reach, they could not be cleaned or inspected for insect damage. The framed tapestries were not protected by glass, allowing insects access to the woollen embroidery threads.

Condition of the Bicentennial Tapestries prior to restoration and conservation

Each of the tapestries is 1200 x 820mm in size. They were originally framed in gold wooden frames with no glass or other covering for protection. As the tapestries and their frames were so large, framing with the glass available at the time would have made each one very heavy.

A variety of canvas work stitches were used for the embroidery on the tapestries. The embroidery was done with Appleton's Crewel embroidery wool, which is an English wool with an extensive colour range and the most appropriate and available thread for this kind of project. Most of the stitching in the centre fields of the panels was worked in Continental stitch with accents of other stitches used well to give the effects required by the artist. The green borders of all eight tapestries are the same and are worked in Large Diagonal stitch (reference Mary Rhodes *Dictionary of Canvas work stitches*, Batsford, London, 1980). The canvas on which the embroidery

was worked is Zweigart 12-count (48 stitches per 10 cm) white interlock cotton canvas. The artist handpainted the design onto the canvas with permanent textile markers and touches of paint.

For framing, each embroidered canvas was stapled over a plywood board to which some foam rubber was adhered to add some padding. A layer of tissue paper was placed over the top of the foam. The tissue was held in position by the placement of the embroidery over the top.

The tapestry canvases were stapled to the edge of the plywood board using staples. These staples are made from a thin layer stainless steel over steel. They are not meant to rust, but they do.

The stapled canvases were placed into their frames and held in position with flat framing tacks. A piece of particle board was inserted into each frame behind its canvas to hold it in position. This board was also held in position with flat framing tacks. Plastic packing tape was placed over the edge of the boards and onto the back of the frames. None of the materials used in the original framing was archival quality and the framing did not seal in the embroideries.

Today, the principles of restoration and conservation of textiles revolve around only using techniques that are reversible for the work. Therefore, any work carried out on an old textile should be able to be undone. So, all the stitching in the restoration of the Oberon Bicentennial Tapestries has been done by hand and can be unpicked, if necessary, in the future. No glues or other products have been used by me in the restoration. The only materials used have been green and white polyester thread (coated with pure beeswax) and calico fabric. All the stitching has been worked by hand with a needle.

Condition of the Tapestries on opening the frames

The condition of the tapestries could not be fully assessed on receipt. At this stage the only evident problems were some fading, dust and several patches in the embroidered borders where insects had eaten the wool embroidery thread exposing the canvas beneath. There was also serious degradation of the packing tape used on the back of the framed works.

Several problems were evident on opening the frames and removing the flat framing tacks and staples:

- The tapestries had faded since they were worked. This was due to the framed needlework not being covered with glass and also having been hung in varying amounts of sunlight. The fading was not consistent across all eight tapestries.
- The packing tape had become old and no longer prevented dust and insects entering the back of the frames.
- A lot of the flat framing tacks had rusted and left rust marks on the white canvas edge to the embroideries.
- The stainless-steel staples had rusted in many places.
- The staples caused significant damage to the canvas as they cut the cotton threads frequently.
- There was clear evidence of insect attack on receipt of the framed canvases. This was even more evident once the frames were removed, the canvases taken from their

plywood boards and a thorough examination undertaken. This can be seen in the photographs below. There were empty insect carapaces in the embroidery but no evidence of any active insects. The insects only ate the green wool used for the border.

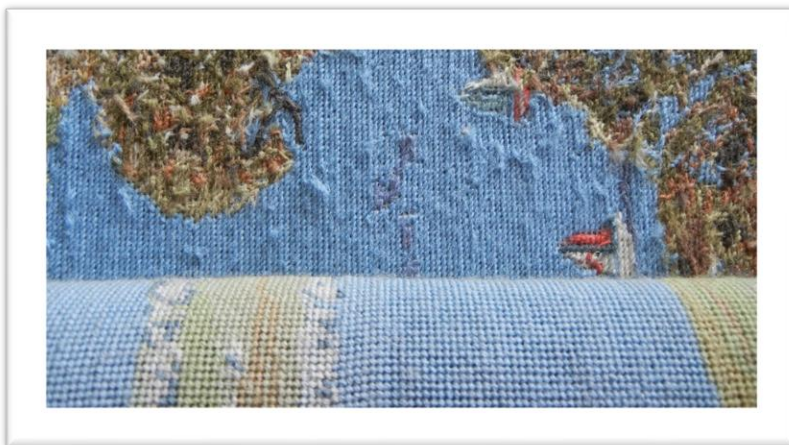
- Most of the damage to the embroidery was around the periphery of the green embroidered border, but there were some eaten patches in the border area away from the edges.
- All the embroidery on the rectangular images in the centre field of all pieces was in good condition.

The main forms of damage to the Tapestries were:

1. Fading:

Cause: The tapestries were hanging unshielded in various amounts of sunlight. (Refer to *Photograph 1.*)

Remedy: Not possible.



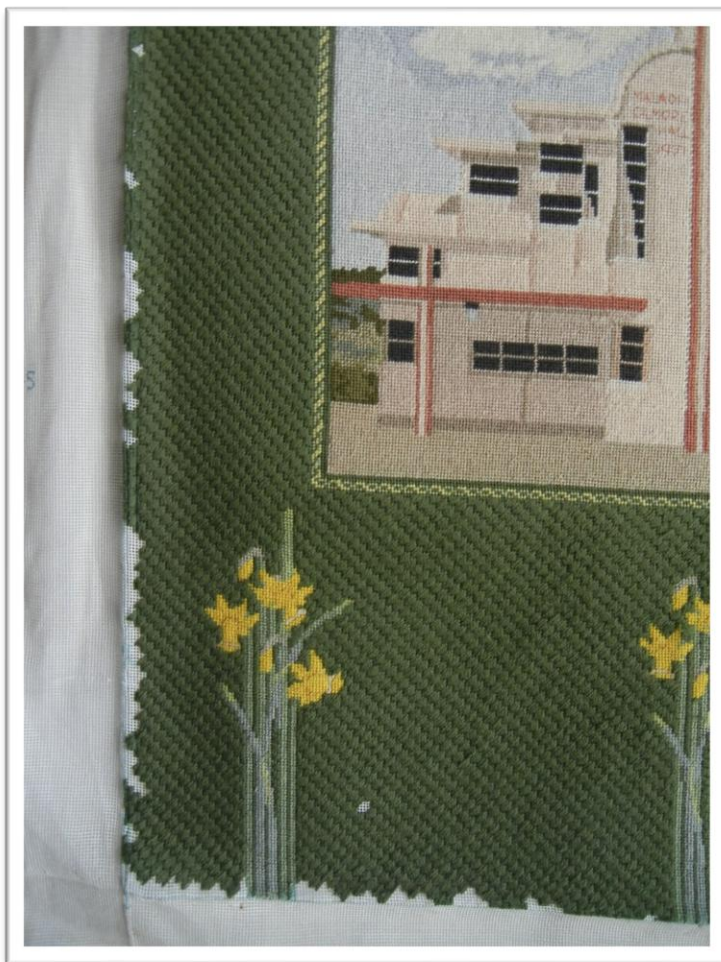
Photograph 1: Fading of the embroidery. The top part of the photograph shows the wrong side of the embroidery where the wool is the original colour. The lower part shows the right side of the embroidery during restoration.

2. Insect damage to embroidery stitches:

Cause: The tapestries were not put behind glass at the original framing, allowing insects to damage the stitching by eating the woollen thread, laying their eggs and adding to the insect larval infestation. There was no evidence of active insect infestation. All the insect carapaces found were empty.

Remedy: (1) Removal of damaged stitches and ending off of each thread before replacing the stitches with the new matching thread. Some of the original threads were supplied to me. As the original embroideries had faded some replacement stitches appear to be different shades.

Remedy: (2) Cleaning the tapestries with controlled vacuuming (a recommended conservation technique).



Photograph 2 and 3: Insect damage to the green embroidered border. The irregular edge shows where insect-damaged embroidery stitches had been removed. The white tapestry canvas can be seen in the gaps.

3. Framing:

Cause (1): The tapestries were mounted over plywood. This was occasionally done in the 1980/1990s but is not acceptable today because of the acids in the plywood and the glues used to make it. Plywood is not an acceptable conservation material.

Remedy (1): The Bicentennial Tapestries were mounted after restoration and conservation over acid free, archival-quality Coreflute™, which is the accepted conservation material. I cannot say whether the original framing materials will cause problems to the works in the future.

Cause (2): The metal staples and flat framing pins used in the initial framing. These staples have rusted damaging the tapestries in two ways. Firstly, they have cut the white cotton tapestry canvas leaving holes that vary in size from a single thread to 2cm holes.



Photograph 4: The edge of the *Agriculture* tapestry showing the damage done to the canvas during the original framing. This damage did not happen after the framing was complete. It happened during the framing.



Photograph 5: The edge of a tapestry once it had been removed from the original plywood board showing the torn and distorted canvas.

Secondly, the rusted staples and pins have stained and damaged the tapestry canvas. Once iron particles from rust spots get into a textile they cannot be removed. Over time they will continue to corrode and stain the textile. Rust spots are irreversible. This will progress over time.

Remedy (2): The cut and torn canvas threads can be mended by darning in the case of single threads if the break/s are a short distance from the embroidery.

If the holes are larger, patches of doubled calico has to be applied to the back of the embroideries. Each patch was placed in position half behind the green border and half behind the unworked white canvas (refer to *Photograph 8*). Calico was used for this stabilising as it is a natural fibre with insect-repelling properties that is traditionally used for this purpose. Using a waxed polyester green thread, small stitches were worked to lie out of sight in between the green wool-embroidered stitches. Outside the embroidered area where the canvas was damaged strong white polyester thread was used to make back, cross and darning stitches. All the mending stitches were done by hand to ensure that the canvas threads were not split (as would happen if a sewing machine was used). Splitting canvas threads would be likely to cause further damage to the canvas in years to come.



Photograph 6: A corner of the *Lake Oberon* tapestry showing the gaps left where insect damaged stitches had been removed and mended canvas where the original staples had broken a canvas thread. The threaded needle is shown ready to replace the removed, damaged stitches.



Photograph 7: A lower corner of the *Agriculture* tapestry showing the cross and darning stitches hand stitched into the canvas around the edge of the embroidery. Close examination of this photograph also shows the tiny green stitches worked between the rows of green wool stitches. The fading of the embroidery wool is also evident.



Photograph 8: The wrong side of the tapestry shown in *Photograph 6*. The green back of the tiny green stitches can be seen clearly as well as the back of the cross and darning stitches. The vertical stitches are worked between the vertical daffodils stems along the lower border of the tapestry. Note the top edge of the calico strip shows the raw edges of the folded strip. The folded edge is at the bottom in the photograph. The raw edges are flatter and did not create a ridge when the tapestry was re-mounted for framing.

Condition of Individual Tapestries

Details of the condition and restoration work on each of the eight canvases are as follows:

1. **Timber Industry**

Restoration and Conservation hours taken: 5 hours

The damage was mainly by insects at the corners and beneath the frame rebate. There was a considerable amount of damage from rusted staples and flat framing pins.

2. **Old Buildings**

Restoration and Conservation hours taken: 19.25 hours

There was evidence along the bottom edge of the embroidery that the framed textile had been damp at some stage/s. This had caused severe rust on both the staples and flat framing pins. There were a lot of tears in the canvas caused in the initial framing.

3. **Avoca Church**

Restoration and Conservation hours taken: 16 hours

There was some insect damage to the embroidery and some staple damage around the edges of the embroidery as seen on other canvases.

4. **Kanangra Walls**

Restoration and Conservation hours taken: 10 hours

The main damage on this piece was caused by the staples and flat framing pins used in the original framing. Patches of calico were attached over the holes caused by the framing. There were only a few patches of insect damage on this textile.

5. **Snow**

Restoration and Conservation hours taken: 16.75 hours

There was very little insect damage on this tapestry. There was some fading of the green wool embroidered border. During the original framing the corners of the canvas were badly torn and there were many holes around the edge of the embroidery.

6. **Agriculture**

Restoration and Conservation hours taken: 114.25 hours

This piece of tapestry was so badly damaged during the original framing that it was almost unmendable. The holes and tears in the canvas were so numerous that if I had given the

outside edge of the work a pull, the centre embroidered panel would simply have dropped out. This would have ruined the textile.

In order to salvage the tapestry, I applied doubled calico strips to the wrong side all around the edges of the canvas. These were intensively hand stitched using the method described above both to mend the holes and also to stabilise the embroidery so that it could be put under tension when the new framing was done at the next stage.

This restoration stitching caused some buckling of the embroidery, which could not be avoided when the conservation lacing was done at the next stage.

7. Ramsgate/NAB buildings

Restoration and conservation hours taken: 22.5 hours

The original framing had not damaged this canvas as much as the others. There was some rust on the flat framing pins and staples. This has stained and will continue to mark the tapestry canvas in the future.

Mending of the embroidery was required where insects had eaten the wool embroidery stitches. No living insects were found.

8. Lake Oberon

Restoration and Conservation hours: 21.5 hours

There was considerable fading of the wools all over the embroidery (see *Photograph 1*). There was insect damage to the embroidery all around the edge but particularly along the lower edge with many empty insect carapaces. There were a few 'eaten' areas in the green embroidered border.

Time taken for the Restoration and Conservation of the Oberon Bicentennial Tapestries

The time taken for the restoration and conservation of the eight Oberon Bicentennial Tapestries was 225.25 hours. An additional 10 hours were spent on reports and reporting meetings.

Framing the Oberon Bicentennial Tapestries

Each of the restored tapestries were laced and tied around two thicknesses of 8mm Coreflute™. There was no padding used between the tapestries and the Coreflute™. The lacing was done with a double thickness of white heavy-weight Rasant machine thread. The lacings were inserted at 1cm intervals so the tapestries did not 'scallop' between lacings. Each lacing was tied off in a double weavers' knot. Each lacing was done individually by hand.

The framing of the tapestries was done by Ben at Pigments and Palettes in Bathurst. I consulted with him prior to and during the restoration process. He used appropriate archival framing techniques. The frame was selected because it was plain and allowed the embroideries to be the feature of each work. The glass that was used on each tapestry was of museum quality. It was lightweight and UV resistant, both of which are important for conservation of these textiles.

Ben used spacers in between the edges of the tapestries and the glass so that there was an airgap between the embroidery stitches and the glass. The backs of the finished framed tapestries were appropriately sealed to protect the tapestries from insect entry in the future.

Alison Snapp

28 May, 2026

Acknowledgements

- Particular thanks go to Brenda Lyon and Mary Clancy for sharing photos, personal records and memories as well as essential feedback over the course of this project.
- Thanks too must go to Alison Snepp, for her prompt and detailed responses to requests for information and, in particular, for her detailed report.
- Thanks to Paul Ferry for generously allowing me to use his photos.
- Special thanks to Maree Arrow for the time spent formatting this document as well as providing valuable feedback during the research project.

Shirley Arrow