

1978.0073 PAPERS OF CLIVE HAMILTON FITTS 1921-1977

Creator	Fitts, Sir Clive Hamilton
Creator's Activity/Occupation	Medical practitioners

Biography:

Sir Clive Hamilton Fitts was born in 1900 and educated at Scotch College, Melbourne Grammar and the University of Melbourne (MB, 1926; MD, 1929; BS, 1931), entering Trinity College in 1919. Despite residencies at the Alfred and Children's hospitals, Fitts failed to gain further appointments before the Depression worsened his prospects. He was employed as a medical officer with the Commonwealth Department of Health, working successively at the School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine at the University of Sydney (DTM, 1930), the Commonwealth Serum Laboratories, Melbourne, and the Quarantine Service, where he so enjoyed the hazards of boarding ships that in 1931 he became surgeon in a tramp-steamer, bound eventually for Europe. In London he secured appointment as house physician, surgeon and assistant-superintendent at the Brompton Hospital for Consumption and Diseases of the Chest, and, after three months as acting-superintendent of the British Sanatorium in Switzerland, became medical superintendent (1933-34) at the National Heart Hospital, London, with (Sir) John Parkinson as mentor and later friend. In 1933 he was made a member of the Royal College of Physicians (fellow 1938). On his return to Melbourne Fitts persuaded the warden of Trinity College to create the post of resident medical tutor. He gained appointments as honorary physician to out-patients at St Vincent's Hospital (1935-40), to the thoracic department at the Austin Hospital (1939-66) and to out-patients (1939-47) and in-patients (1947-60) at the Royal Melbourne Hospital.

Fitts had served with the Australian Army Medical Corps, Militia, from 1927 (major 1934), but was prevented by a stomach ulcer from joining the Australian Imperial Force. In June-November 1941 he carried out full-time service as staff officer to Major General Rupert Downes [q.v.8], accompanying him on his tour of inspection of medical facilities in North Africa, the Middle East and the Far East. Fitts championed cardiology as a separate discipline, guiding the creation of the Royal Melbourne's cardiac department. He also welcomed the establishment of clinical chairs in the faculty of medicine, although it ended the dominance of hospital honoraries over clinical training. In 1948 he held a Carnegie travelling fellowship in the USA, and in 1959 undertook a Colombo Plan assignment comparing medical conditions in Malaya, Thailand and Burma. He was also active in many medical organisations, including the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (foundation fellow 1938; councillor 1952-61; vice-president 1956-58) and the National Heart Foundation of Australia, which he helped to establish in 1961. On his retirement (1960) from the RMH he became an honorary consulting physician. He was knighted in 1963.

An eloquent speaker, Fitts gave many public addresses, including the Sir Richard Stawell, the (Joseph) Bancroft and the (Lord) Lister orations, and the Tudor Edwards memorial lecture at the Royal College of Physicians, London). He conducted his large private practice from rooms in leafy Parliament Place, a pleasant walk from the Melbourne Club, of which he was an assiduous member (president 1965), as he was of the Savage Club and the less formal Beefsteak and Wallaby clubs and the Boobooks. He was also a member of the councils of the University of Melbourne (1951-53, 1955-71), MCEGS (1960-69) and St Hilda's College, and became a fellow of Trinity College in 1980.

Fitts was also a passionate book lover, active on the board of Melbourne University Press and with the Friends of the Baillieu Library. His encounter in 1946 with a young patient, Margaret Stones, prompted him to recruit his friends (Sir) Russell Grimwade and (Sir) Daryl Lindsay to help launch her career as a botanical artist. In turn, Lindsay recruited him as founding president (1947) of the National Gallery Society, and in 1955 he joined the Felton Bequests Committee (chairman 1965-75), the functions of which he reformed by introducing selective grants for medical research and projects for social betterment, while defending its reliance on overseas advisers for art purchases for the gallery. Sir Clive Fitts died on 7 February 1984 in East Melbourne and was cremated.

Reference Number	1978.0073
Collection/Series Title	PAPERS OF CLIVE HAMILTON FITTS
Date Range of Collection/Series	1921-1977

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Size/Extent	1 box (0.06m)
Access Conditions	Access: Open
Scope and Content of Series Addresses by Sir Clive Fitts (2) and Professor Joe Burke re. Sir Daryl Lindsay; Sir Clive's Richard Stawell Oration Medal, 1958; Lister Oration Medal, 1961; programme of Daryl Lindsay Memorial Exhibition, 1977; correspondence and etchings from Lionel Lindsay mostly re. his design of book-plate for Sir Clive; etching invitation to Lionel Lindsay's gallery exhibition, 1921; Vic. Centenary celebrations medal, 1934; unidentified photographs; Toorak Gallery brochure of Neil Douglas paintings, undated; degree certificates.	
Archival History These records listed by Mark Richmond 18 May 1978. Original typescript list converted to item data by Christine Elias in October 2019.	
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To request access to records on the list below via the University of Melbourne Archives Reading Room, quote the Unit/Box reference in full.				
Unit/Box	Item number	Title	Date range	Description
1978.0073 Unit 1	1978.0073.00001	Certificates	1926	Bachelor of Medicine, University of Melbourne, 5 July 1926. Previous Control Number: 1/1
1978.0073 Unit 1	1978.0073.00002	Certificates	1926	Bachelor of Surgery, University of Melbourne, 5 July 1926. Previous Control Number: 1/2
1978.0073 Unit 1	1978.0073.00003	Certificates	1926	Medical Registration Certificate, Medical Board of Victoria, 8 July 1926. Previous Control Number: 1/3
1978.0073 Unit 1	1978.0073.00004	Certificates	1929	Doctor of Medicine, University of Melbourne, 15 April 1929. Previous Control Number: 1/4
1978.0073 Unit 1	1978.0073.00005	Certificates	1948	Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians, London, May 1948. Previous Control Number: 1/5
1978.0073 Unit 1	1978.0073.00006	Medals	1934	Victoria Centenary Celebrations 1934. Previous Control Number: 2/1
1978.0073 Unit 1	1978.0073.00007	Medals	1958	Sir Richard Stawell Oration Medal 1958. Previous Control Number: 2/2
1978.0073 Unit 1	1978.0073.00008	Medals	1961	South Australian Branch, British Medical Association, Lister Orator 1961. Previous Control Number: 2/3
1978.0073 Unit 1	1978.0073.00009	Material relating to Sir Lionel Lindsay	1945	This material concerns the design and execution by Lionel Lindsay of a bookplate for Dr Fitts. Letter from Lionel Lindsay, Wahroonga, New South Wales, to Daryl Lindsay, 26 September 1945. Previous Control Number: 3/1/1
1978.0073 Unit 1	1978.0073.00010	Material relating to Sir Lionel Lindsay	Undated	Letter from Daryl Lindsay to Clive Fitts, 14 October 19? Previous Control Number: 3/1/2
1978.0073 Unit 1	1978.0073.00011	Material relating to Sir Lionel Lindsay	1945	Letter from Lionel Lindsay to Clive Fitts, 16 October 1945. Previous Control Number: 3/1/3
1978.0073 Unit 1	1978.0073.00012	Material relating to Sir Lionel Lindsay	1945	Letter from Daryl Lindsay to Clive Fitts, 20 October 1945. Previous Control Number: 3/1/4
1978.0073 Unit 1	1978.0073.00013	Material relating to Sir Lionel Lindsay	1945	Letter from Lionel Lindsay to Clive Fitts, 30 November 1945. Previous Control Number: 3/1/5
1978.0073 Unit 1	1978.0073.00014	Material relating to Sir Lionel Lindsay	1978	Letter from Robert C Littlewood, South Melbourne, to Clive Fitts, 15 February 1978. Previous Control Number: 3/1/6

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Records Description List

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1978.0073 Unit 1	1978.0073.00015	Material relating to Sir Lionel Lindsay	1978	Letter from Robert C Littlewood to Clive Fitts, 6 March 1978. This and the preceding letter (3/1/6) refer to the reproduction of Fitts bookplate in a publication of Lionel Lindsay Ex Libris compiled by the correspondent. Previous Control Number: 3/1/7
1978.0073 Unit 1	1978.0073.00016	Material relating to Sir Lionel Lindsay	1921-1945	Etched steel plate for printing bookplate; Six autographed and annotated proof prints of bookplate; Lionel Lindsay's printing instructions, 1945. Small Lionel Lindsay print inviting recipient to an exhibition of his etchings at Decoration Galleries, Melbourne, 18 July 1921. Previous Control Number: 3/2
1978.0073 Unit 1	1978.0073.00017	Material relating to Sir Daryl Lindsay	Undated	Fitts, Clive, 'Daryl Lindsay', text of an address at a dinner for Daryl Lindsay, at an unidentified club, with guest list and seating plan. Previous Control Number: 4/1
1978.0073 Unit 1	1978.0073.00018	Material relating to Sir Daryl Lindsay	1961	Burke, Professor Joseph, 'Speech at the Opening of Sir Daryl Lindsay's Exhibition, The Australian Galleries, 30 May 1961', with covering letter from Professor Burke to Clive Fitts, 28 June 1961. Previous Control Number: 4/2
1978.0073 Unit 1	1978.0073.00019	Material relating to Sir Daryl Lindsay	1977	Fitts, Clive, 'Daryl', signed at end and inscribed at front 'The memorial exhibition at Mornington - in place of Joe Burke!'. Previous Control Number: 4/3
1978.0073 Unit 1	1978.0073.00020	Material relating to Sir Daryl Lindsay	1977	Exhibition catalogue, Daryl Lindsay 1889-1976 Memorial Exhibition, Mornington Peninsula Art Centre, 15 July - 1 August 1977, with introductory note by Professor Joseph Burke. Previous Control Number: 4/4
1978.0073 Unit 1	1978.0073.00021	Toorak Art Gallery Brochure	Undated	Double sided annotated folio produced by Toorak Art Gallery, featuring reproductions of four paintings by Neil Douglas. Previous Control Number: 5
1978.0073 Unit 1	1978.0073.00022	Photograph	Undated	Unidentified group, women and two male children, hand tinted sepia in a slip frame, possibly dates to late 1870s on evidence of the costumes. Previous Control Number: 6

End of list