Reference number: MS 5577

Guide to the Papers of Thomas Shapcott

National Library of Australia

Canberra
2000

Contact information:
Manuscript Section, National Library of Australia
Parkes Place, Parkes ACT 2600, AUSTRALIA
Phone: +61 (02) 6262 1259
Fax: +61 (02) 6262 1516
Email: manuscripts@nla.gov.au

Prepared by:
Manuscript Section, National Library of Australia

Date completed:
November 1988

Encoded by:
Allette Systems

This finding aid is published as part of the Australian Literary Manuscript Collections Project, which has received funding from the Australian Research Council's Research Infrastructure Equipment and Facilities (RIEF) Scheme.

©2000 National Library of Australia. All rights reserved.
Summary

Creator: Shapcott, Thomas W. (Thomas William), 1935-
Title: Papers of Thomas Shapcott
Date range: 1949-1997
Reference number: MS 5577
Extent: 98 cm. (7 boxes)
Repository: National Library of Australia Canberra
Location: Manuscript Reading Room

Scope and Content
The earlier papers are largely comprised of draft and typescript manuscripts of *Time on Fire, A Taste of Salt Water, Shabbytown Calendar, Begin with Walking* and many uncollected poems, together with correspondence with Charles Blackman and writers such as R.A. Simpson, Craig Powell, Chris Wallace-Crabbe, Peter Skrzynecki, Douglas Stewart, James McAuley, Richard Tipping, John Tranter and Robert Adamson. Also included is a group of correspondence with Gwen Harwood and Rodney Hall, which incorporates drafts of the latter's *The Law of Karma, Heaven in a Way* and *Romulus and Remus, a progression of poems*. The 1998 addition relates principally to Shapcott's directorship of the National Book Council and includes correspondence and notes documenting his role in the Council's activities. Also represented is Shapcott's participation as a judge in many Australian poetry and literary competitions and delegate at overseas festivals, as well as a number of photographs of the poet and his family.

Biographical Note
For much of his career a practising accountant and part-time writer, Tom Shapcott has published more than 36 titles including collections of poems, essays, short stories, novels and books for young readers. In 1992 he was appointed Executive Director of the National Book Council, a position which he held until 1997 when he accepted the post of inaugural Professor of Creative Writing at the University of Adelaide.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>Born Ipswich, Queensland, 21 March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940-48</td>
<td>Educated West Ipswich State School and Blair State School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949-50</td>
<td>Attended Ipswich Grammar School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951-61</td>
<td>Employee of H.S. Shapcott, Public Accountant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Married Margaret Hodge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>Publication of <em>Time on Fire</em> for which he is awarded the Grace Leven Prize for Poetry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963-68</td>
<td>Part-time Bachelor of Arts degree student, University of Queensland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td><em>A Taste of Salt Water</em>, which was awarded the Sir Thomas White Memorial Prize and the Myer Charity Trust Award</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td><em>Begin with Walking</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972-78</td>
<td>Sole practice, Shapcott &amp; Shapcott, later specialising in taxation for writers, creative artists and academics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974-76</td>
<td>Deputy Chairman, Literature Board of the Australia Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td><em>Shabbytown Calendar</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978-83</td>
<td>Receives the Canada-Australia Literary Award</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978-80</td>
<td>Full-time writer, including Senior Writing Literature Board Fellowship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Divorced Margaret Hodge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-83</td>
<td>Treasurer, Australian Society of Authors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>Married Judith Rodriguez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Travel in Europe and Canada on literary research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983-90</td>
<td>Director, Literature Board of the Australia Council and member of a number of its specialist committees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Awarded Order of Australia, Honorary Doctor of Letters, Macquarie University, Golden Wreath of Struga International Poetry Festival, Yugoslavia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-92</td>
<td>Full-time writer, Category A Literature Board Fellowship and Treasurer, Australian Society of Authors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991-97</td>
<td>Executive Director, National Book Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992-</td>
<td>Director, Copyright Agency Ltd</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1995  Received Christopher Brennan Award, Fellowship of Australian Writers

1997-  Professor of Creative Writing, University of Adelaide

**Administrative Information**

**Access**
Restricted access to Boxes 1-2, 4-7; Box 3 available for reference.

**Restrictions on Use**

**Preferred Citation**

**Provenance**
The collection has been received in five instalments in 1970, 1973 (two consignments), 1977 and 1998.

**Additional Information**

**Related Material**
Letters by Shapcott are also contained in a number of other literary collections held in the Manuscript Section. Recordings of a 1959 reading by the poet and an 1974 interview are held in the Oral History Collection at ORAL DeB 240 and ORAL DeB 754 respectively. Portrait photographs taken in 1983 and 1990 are housed in the Pictorial Collection.

**Separated Material**
In addition to items deposited in the National Library, other collections of Shapcott's papers are located in the Australian Special Research Collection of the Australian Defence Force Academy and the Fryer Library at the University of Queensland.
Access Terms

Personal Names

- Blackman, Charles, 1928-
- Simpson, R.A. (Ronald Albert), 1929-
- Powell, Craig, 1940-
- Wallace-Crabbe, Chris, 1934-
- Skrzynceki, Peter, 1945-
- Stewart, Douglas, 1913-1985
- McAuley, James, 1917-1976
- Tipping, Richard, 1949-
- Tranter, John, 1943-
- Adamson, Robert, 1943-
- Harwood, Gwen, 1920-1995
- Hall, Rodney, 1935-

Corporate Names

- National Book Council (Australia)
- National Word Festival

Container List

Early consignments, 1970-77

Folder 1
Correspondence with Gwen Harwood, 1964-70

Folder 2
Correspondence with Ron Simpson, 1962-76

Folder 3-4
Correspondence with Charles Blackman, together with typescript interview and part of a manuscript on Charles Blackman 1966-75
Folder 5
Correspondence with Bruce Beaver, Douglas Stewart, James McAuley, Geoffrey Dutton, Beatrice Davis and typescript interview with Beaver

Folder 6
Correspondence with and manuscript about Rodney Hall, 1965-68

Folder 7-8
Correspondence with Craig Powell, 1970-77

Folder 9
Correspondence with V. Viidikas, R. Adamson, R. Tipping, G. Hutchinson, 1971-74

Folder 10
Correspondence with Peter Skrzynecki, 1968-74

Folder 11
Correspondence with Chris Wallace-Crabbe, 1962-76

Folder 12-14
General correspondence, 1964-75

Folder 15-16
Juvenilia, 1949-57

Folder 17
Manuscript of Time on Fire

Folder 18
Manuscript of A Taste of Salt Water

Folder 19-20
Manuscript of Begin with Walking

Folder 21-23
Manuscript of Shabbytown Calendar

Folder 24
Uncollected poems

Folder 25
Dummy manuscript for Experimental Songs

Folder 26-27
Uncollected poems
Addition, 10 July 1998

Folder 28-29
Diary of visit to Canada and Europe, 1980

Folder 30
University of Sydney Theatre Workshop-Department of Indonesian and Malayan Studies production of 'Dhuang Hyang Kapulungan', 1981-83

Folder 31
Fourth draft of 'Dhuang Hyang Kapulungan'

Folder 32
Transcripts of interviews with Shapcott and associated correspondence, 1986-97

Folder 33
Libretti for 'Quasimodo' and related papers, 1991

Folder 34
Manuscript article 'America and the poetry circuit', 1972; papers relating to compilation of proposed 'Of Poetry and Place' anthology for the National Library of Australia, c. 1990?

Folder 35
Typescript manuscript of 'A Beach at Alberese', 1997

Folder 36
Appointment as Executive Director, National Book Council, 1992

Folder 37-38
National Book Council correspondence and papers, 1992-97

Folder 39
National Book Council correspondence and papers, including annual reports 1992-95

Folder 40
National Book Council correspondence and papers, 1993-97

Folder 41
National Book Council correspondence and papers, 1993-95
Folder 42
  Papers relating to Rosemary Sorensen and controversy over October 1994 issue of the *Australian Book Review*

Folder 43
  Drafts and correspondence concerning the *Writer's Guide to Tax*, 1992-95

Folder 44
  Taxation seminars, 1994-95

Folder 45
  Notes and correspondence relating to booklet *How to Host a Successful Author Tour*, 1994-95

Folder 46
  Classification Review Board hearing on classification of *Rabelais*, 1996

Folder 47
  Judging of literary competitions and awards, 1990-96

Folder 48
  Kuala Lumpur World Poetry Reading, 1990

Folder 49
  Correspondence with Alison Crook, State Library of New South Wales, 1992-93; Asia-Pacific Library Conference, 1995

Folder 50

Folder 51
  Creating Culture : the New Growth Industry, 11-12 August, 1994

Folder 52
  2nd National Book Summit, 1995

Folder 53
  Australia-Korea Foundation Cultural Delegation to the Republic of Korea, 9-15 October, 1995

Folder 54
  Gwen Harwood tribute, Adelaide Festival, 1995

Folder 55
  Photographs and copies of photographs of Shapcott, 1946-1992
Folder 56
Small photograph album of Shapcott and family, 1958-96

**Box List**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Folder</th>
<th>Box</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-16</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17-27</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28-32</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33-40</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-48</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49-56</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>