NSW Dickens Society.
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Household Words

Issue 74 (April, 2019)
PO Box 3024, West Lindfield NSW 2070, Australia
Patron: Miriam Margolyes OBE
President: Louise Owens

NSW Dickens Society 2019 Books of the Year; *American Notes* and *Pictures from Italy*

Letter from the President:

I would like to thank the 2018 Committee of the NSW Dickens Society for their tireless work last year; Walter Mason, Catherine du Peloux Menagé, Andrew Owens, Lynn Clayton and Michelle Cavanagh. Together we created a year of great talks, publications and events for the NSW Dickens Society including a very successful and happy 112th International Dickens Fellowship Conference in Sydney last October.

We thank Michelle Cavanagh who has decided to step down from the Committee for her work over the last 9 years including 3 years as President.

It gives me great joy to introduce the new Committee for the NSW Dickens Society as voted in at our AGM on Saturday, 2nd February, 2019:

President:	Louise Owens
Vice President:	Walter Mason
Liaison and Publicity Officer:	Catherine du Peloux Menagé
Treasurer:	Andrew Owens
Marketing and IT:	Claudette Palomares
Membership Secretary:	Lynn Clayton

I am looking forward to working with this dynamic Committee as we continue to celebrate the work, life and time of Charles Dickens.

STOP PRESS:

Have you booked for the Weekend Away that the NSW Dickens Society is hosting May 18th and 19th in Manly? Don't miss out!

Tom Keneally AO will be speaking on a panel and Lucinda Hawksley (Dickens' great great great granddaughter from London) will be giving a talk each day. Anne Schofield will be speaking about mourning jewellery, our very own effervescent Walter Mason will be giving a talk and facilitating a panel, our very own knowledgeable Catherine du Peloux Menagé will be facilitating another panel and interviewing prolific author Kate Forsyth, foodie Charmaine O'Brien will be speaking about the delights of the Victorian breakfasts and afternoon teas,

architectural specialist Kaye Remington will give us some pointers on Victorian architecture and homes and the wonderful Chris Browne will be travelling up from Melbourne to talk about books and Dickens' family heritage!
With options to attend one or both days and to stay overnight at the hotel venue or return home or stay at friends' and delicious morning teas, lunches and afternoon teas all included, this is an event you won't want to miss out on! We have lined up a fascinating range of speakers and talks, so print the form from the website: https://dickenssydney.com/2018/10/25/our-2019-weekend-by-the-seaside/ or contact me immediately at: louiseo@bigpond.net.au if you have misplaced your form.

A very warm welcome to our newest members **Carmel Bendon, Gordon Lindsay** and **Teresa Petersen**. We hope you will enjoy being part of the NSW Dickens Society as much as we do.

It is with much excitement that I announce that the Christmas Lunch this year will be on Saturday, 7th December. We will have *A Christmas Carol* theme to tie in with the new movie which will be released around this time. Watch out for further details for this event, meanwhile please make a note of the date in your diaries.

I look forward to seeing you at our next Saturday meeting on the 6th April: A talk by Louella Kerr; The Fun of Collecting Dickens. Antiquarian book expert, Louella will speak about the various kinds of collectors. Are you a completist or are you interested mainly in the highlights of Dickens? Are you motivated by pleasure or profit? Do you want to have fun or to collect with investment in mind? Before the talk Jane Fulton will show and speak about her fascinating collection of Edith Russell Dickens dolls. Sounds like fun! Please meet at 10.30am in the Nangamay Room, 2nd Floor, City Tattersalls Club, 194 – 204 Pitt Street (near the Market Street end), Sydney. No bookings required. $5 entry fee for NSW Dickens Society members. $10 for non-members.

By Louise Owens

Vale Dr Max Lawson

Dr Max Lawson, a member of the Australian Dickens Association for some years, has sadly passed away. His wife Ginna wrote 'My sweet, loving, curious, clever, delightful husband of eight years … has just departed for the heavenly library, leaving peacefully, and fittingly on Australia Day'. Max had been born in Sydney in 1938, beginning his education at Fort St School.

Max's passion for literature became evident very quickly when you spoke with him- his knowledge and insight adding to any conversation, and always accompanied by a gentle smile.

Most of us will remember the talk he gave on 'Dickens and Teachers' at our Dickens Society meeting in February 2013. Max had spent his working life teaching; firstly as a high school English master, and later after gaining his PhD - as a university lecturer. He wrote his PhD thesis on 'The Influence of John Ruskin on Education'. He retired from his last teaching position at the University of New England in 1998, where he had lectured upon the History of Education for some years. During his time at UNE, he also co-founded the Dept of Peace Studies - a subject always dear to his heart. Upon retirement he moved to Elsinore in Denmark where he taught at the International Peoples College, (teachings at this

establishment supporting global citizenship, globalisation and creativity) remaining there for almost 10 years.

Upon returning to Australia around 2008, Max focussed upon exploring his love of literature, often travelling overseas on literary tours with his beloved wife Ginna, and continuously re-reading and enjoying his favourite authors. When fading vision made reading a problem, Max turned to 'talking books' and even in his final months of life was still able to gain much joy by having his books read to him in this way.

In celebrating the life of Max, we acknowledge his gentle, human qualities, together with the contribution he made to teaching and the history of Education. A funeral was held for Max at Christ Church St Laurence on 5 February where sandwiches and champagne were enjoyed in the church hall afterwards as he had requested.

We express our sincere condolences to wife Ginna and family.

By Jacqueline King

Susannah Fullerton – Queen Victoria & Charles Dickens – Saturday February 2

The sublime Susannah Fullerton, as well as being an internationally acclaimed literary historian and President of the Jane Austen Society of Australia, is also a founding member of the NSW Dickens Society and a tremendous supporter and active member. We were so fortunate (and grateful) to have her kick off 2019 for us with her fascinating talk on Queen Victoria & Charles Dickens. We learned so much about these two, perhaps the most famous figures in England in the 19th century. Along the way Susannah let slip that her favourite Dickens novel is *Bleak House* (time to pick it up again, members!). It would appear that Dickens was rather showy about his enthusiasm for the new young Queen, expressing a great deal of uncomfortable sentimentalism when called upon to discuss her beauty or manners – it was all rather odd. Even more so when we learn that the two barely met in real life, and that Dickens held a very low opinion indeed of the older Queen's literary output. The Queen saw Dickens act on several occasions, and though we don't know much about what she thought of him as an author, she was very keen on his talents as an actor! There were so many enthralling anecdotes, and so many unexpected connections made in a manner that only Susannah can achieve. There is certainly a book to be written on this subject, and I shall be petitioning Susannah to do it.

By Walter Mason

Our 2019 Weekend by the Seaside

The fantastic Manly event is even closer than you think, and now is the very time to book, if you have not done so already! We have spent a lot of time preparing the May weekend; allowing flexible bookings (one or two days).

And what a fantastic couple of days it is going to be! For starters we have as our very special guest the amazing Lucinda Hawksley. Lucinda is a direct descendant of Charles Dickens, and even more importantly she is an acclaimed author and historian in her own right. She has written extensively on 19th century history, and I know many of you have enjoyed her books over the years. She is coming to Australia just for this event, so do make sure you are there to hear her.

In breaking news we have just found out that Tom Keneally AO will be a special guest on our Saturday panel, an immense privilege and another great opportunity for members to be entertained and educated by a fascinating writer and thinker. The theme for the weekend is "Dickens and the Family" and you can expect to hear some really intriguing talks: Dickens' children, children in the novels of Dickens, mourning jewellery and Victorian housing and many more.
We just need you! So please make sure you have that weekend blocked out (18 & 19 May, 2019) and send through your forms as soon as possible.

By Walter Mason

Member Interview: Lucinda Hawksley

1. **When were you first aware that you are a descendant of Charles and Catherine Dickens?** I have known for a very long time, I don't remember being told precisely, but I knew I had to learn how to write Dickens when I was at primary school and learning to write my name.

2. **How did Dickens feature in your childhood?** My grandmother used to take my sisters and I to see 'Oliver!' in pretty much every school holiday and I also knew about *A Christmas Carol* from a very young age. I had children's versions of Dickens' novels to read, which had been written by one of my grandfather's cousins, Doady Danby (sister of Monica Dickens). I also knew that my father used to go to Dickens-related events and gave speeches and readings.

3. **Who is one of your favourite Dickens characters?** I really like Betsey Trotwood, because she is feisty and unusual and because she is simply so memorable. She stayed with me long after I finished reading *David Copperfield*. I also really like Abbey Potterson in *Our Mutual Friend*. Too many of Dickens' women are dismissed as irritating or as idealised, but I think Abbey is a proper example of a Victorian working woman, something that is lacking in most 19th-century British fiction.

4. **How has Dickens featured in your career?** Hugely! Initially I only ever intended to write one Dickens-related book, because I wanted to write a biography of his artist daughter Katey. When I wrote that I became enticed by the theme of Dickens and his family and friends. It is not only Dickens who is fascinating, but the age in which he lived. There was so much happening, so many new inventions and social changes. I find the era continually inspiring. At the moment I am writing a book on Dickens and Travel, and it is intriguing to see just how much the Victorians travelled.

5. **What would you most like to ask Dickens?** I'd like to talk to him about his depressions and how that affected the end of his marriage and his treatment of Catherine. Obviously I would like to ask him about his intended ending of *Edwin Drood*, and I would like to ask about the tour he had been thinking of undertaking to Australia (where two of his sons were living) and if he had considered going to India (where two of his sons lived).

6. **What are you most proud about regarding your great great great grandfather, Charles Dickens?** His social campaigning. So much of the good he did has been forgotten, such as his brilliant work with what is now Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital – that

amazing place would not have survived had it not been for the help given by two authors: Dickens and J.M.Barrie. That is such a legacy.

7. **How is Dickens celebrated in your family?** There are annual family lunches – though initially this was only for the men in the family. (I know! Ridiculous!) I set up a women's lunch as well, but it would make much more sense to have one in which the whole family got together. It is 2019!

8. **If Dickens could visit today's world, what do you think he would be most surprised by?** I think he'd be shocked to see how much society is going backwards, especially (in the UK at least) with how much the gap between the rich and the poor is widening again and at how necessary services such as foodbanks have become. I think he would be astounded by high-speed trains, including the Eurostar between Britain and France, and by air travel. I would love to know his thoughts of computers and of how he could imagine he would have worked differently if he had been writing today.

9. **What are you reading at the moment?** I'm reading *Daughters of Britannia* by Katie Hickman and *The Two-Pound Tram* by William Newton.

10. **What is something that most people might be surprised to know about you?** I am passionate about cetaceans (whales, dolphins and porpoises) and my life goal is to visit every place in the world where I can see them. I think Dickens would be surprised to know I'm a vegetarian – those of your readers who know his article 'Whole Hogs' will understand why!

    Facebook: Lucinda Hawksley Author
    https://www.facebook.com/LucindaHawksleyauthor/
    Twitter & Instagram: @lucindahawksley

Coordinated by Louise Owens

<u>Update from The Charles Dickens Museum</u>

<u>The Lost Portrait Appeal</u>

The lost portrait of Charles Dickens by Margaret Gillies, described in detail in the last newsletter, attracted significant worldwide attention when it was unveiled in London last November and formed the centrepiece of a special exhibition at the Philip Mould Gallery. It was the perfect opportunity for the Charles Dickens Museum to launch a campaign to acquire the portrait for its permanent collection. The Appeal has raised £65,000 (at 15th March) and we are keen to keep up the momentum. To that end, Philip Mould is kindly loaning the portrait to the Museum for a short time – 2nd to 7th April – to give a further boost to the campaign. Although this display is only a fleeting one, we are confident of raising the remaining funds needed to bring the portrait to the Museum permanently. I'm most grateful to everyone who has donated to the cause so far and would urge those with a love of Dickens to help us reach our fundraising goal.
More information can be found here:
https://dickensmuseum.com/blogs/news/the-lost-portrait

Dickens and van Gogh

The Museum is delighted to be supporting the forthcoming exhibition, *Van Gogh and Britain*, at Tate Britain, London, with a number of loans including an 1870 print of Luke Fildes' *The Empty Chair.*

Van Gogh and Britain presents the largest collection of Van Gogh's paintings in the UK for nearly a decade. Some of his most famous works will be brought together from around the world – including *Shoes*, *Starry Night on the Rhône*, *L'Arlésienne*, and two works he made while a patient at the Saint-Paul Asylum, *At Eternity's Gate* and *Prisoners Exercising*.
Van Gogh lived in England as a young man for several crucial years, during which time he fell in love with British culture, especially the novels of Charles Dickens and this forms an important strand of the exhibition. It opened on 27th March and runs until 11th August 2019.

When Dickens met Tolstoy…

Sadly, these two great novelists never met, although, like van Gogh, Tolstoy greatly admired Dickens' writing and was inspired by his tireless efforts to improve the conditions of the poor. However, not to be outdone by history, the Museum has brought the current generation together. When the Museum's Director, Cindy Sughrue, learned that Fekla Tolstoy, great-great-granddaughter of Leo Tolstoy, was going to be in London for a couple of months, she jumped at the chance to meet.

Fekla began her career a journalist, working as a presenter on television and radio, and writes for a number of newspapers and magazines. Since 2012, Fekla has been working at the Leo Tolstoy State Museum in Moscow as Deputy Director and has created a number of digital projects to encourage people to engage with literature.

The meeting with Fekla was timely, as the Museum prepared for its next special exhibition, *Global Dickens: For Every Nation upon Earth.* Fekla kindly donated her time and expertise to the Museum, resulting in a new audio guide in Russian and material for a section of the next exhibition. But perhaps best of all – certainly the most joyful – was introducing Fekla to Lucinda Dickens Hawksley, great-great-great granddaughter of Charles Dickens. The common ground between these two descendants was remarkable, and we took advantage of Fekla's last few days in London to host a hastily organised 'in conversation' event at the Museum.

Global Dickens: For Every Nation upon Earth.

Charles Dickens was a well-travelled, dynamic, global writer. Although he is often seen as quintessentially British, Dickens viewed himself as a global author who wrote for 'every nation upon earth.' Like their author, Dickens' works were not static things. His ideas travelled, mutated and were translated, and his characters live on in the imaginations of people throughout the world.

The exhibition, which runs from 14th May to 3rd November 2019, explores Dickens as a global writer, both in his own lifetime through his travels abroad and international fame, but also through the nomadic nature of his writings and their afterlives. Dickens himself was a seasoned traveller: he lived in Italy and Switzerland, visited France often, and travelled to North America twice during his life time. Dickens also was a travel writer with an unflinching eye for satirical accounts of people and places, and descriptions of landscapes pulsate

throughout his writings. The pull of travel and the world around him were a recurring influence in his fiction and non-fiction writings throughout his life.
Like their author, Dickens' works were not static things. His ideas travelled, mutated and were translated, and his characters live on in the imaginations of people throughout the world. We will trace the impact of these stories in a handful of locations, including twentieth century Russia, nineteenth century France and contemporary Japan. In assessing the impact of Dickens' legacy we will zig-zag across the world and temporal frameworks just as Dickens' words do.

By Dr Cindy Sughrue, Director of the Charles Dickens Museum

Answers to Quiz A; *American Notes* Chapters I – VIII

1. 1842
2. Britannia
3. A paddle wheeler
4. "Rather a heavy sea on, sir, and a head-wind."
5. The Tremont House
6. Dr (William Ellery) Channing
7. The quiet influence of the University of Cambridge
8. Laura Bridgman
9. Dr Howe
10. "Warren, the en-gine driver"
11. The denouncement of all innocent and rational amusements
12. Transcendentalists
13. Lowell
14. No fewer than 978
15. The Lowell Offering
16. New Haven
17. Diedrich Knickerbocker's History
18. Five Points
19. The Tombs
20. Pigs
21. The Eastern Penitentiary
22. The practice of incessant spitting in public
23. Being waited on by slaves
24. The City of Magnificent Intentions
25. The President's daughter-in-law

By Geoffrey R Usher

Quiz B; *American Notes*

Chapters IX - XVI

Answers shall be published in Issue 75 (June 2019).

1. What was the name of the "most comfortable of all the hotels of which (Dickens) had any experience in the United States"?
2. What word did Dickens call "the Caleb Quotem of the American vocabulary"?
3. What was the name of the western steamboat which was recommended as the safest for the journey from Pittsburgh to Cincinnati?

4. What was almost as good for the digestion as a kneaded pin-cushion?
5. What great event took place in Cincinnati the day after the Dickenses arrived there?
6. Pitchlynn, who sent in his card to Dickens on the Pike steamboat to Louisville, was a chief of which tribe of Indians?
7. What did Pitchlynn send to Dickens soon after they had parted?
8. In which splendid hotel did the Dickenses sleep in Louisville?
9. What was the name of the "breeding-place of fever, ague, and death" at the junction of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers?
10. What was the name of the large hotel where the Dickenses stayed in St Louis?
11. Who introduced the Roman Catholic religion to the area of St Louis?
12. What was the name of the phrenologist whom Dickens met in Belleville?
13. What was the name of the duelling-ground of St Louis, named in honour of the last fatal combat there?
14. What did Dickens have a desire to do at the small town of Sandusky in Ohio?
15. What ordinary and unpromising phrase, repeated over and over and over again to the most extraordinary extent, was adapted to every variety of circumstance?
16. What was the name of the very large unfinished hotel where the Dickenses stayed when they arrived in Columbus?
17. What was the "extra" which Dickens hired to take them from Columbus to Tiffin?
18. What tribe of Indians inhabited the village of Upper Sandusky?
19. What was the first and enduring effect on Dickens of the tremendous spectacle of Niagara Falls?
20. What was the name of the British General who was slain in a battle with the American forces and in whose memory the Provincial Legislature erected a monument?
21. What had run high in Toronto, and led to most discreditable and disgraceful results?
22. What was the name of the American boat - a "perfectly exquisite achievement of neatness, elegance, and order" - which carried the Dickenses on Lake Champlain from St John's to Whitehall?
23. Who were said to be good drivers of bargains, but to be honest and just in their transactions?
24. In which beautiful place was the Military School of America situated?
25. On what date - a fair Monday morning - did old Cape Clear show in the mist of early morning?

By Geoffrey R Usher

Contributions to NSW DS Publications

We welcome submissions for consideration for our publications: *Household Words* (published six times per year) and *Boz in Oz* (published once per year). For *Household Words,* please email articles maximum of one typed page to louiseo@bigpond.net.au Deadline for submissions is: 20/5/19, 22/7/19, 16/9/19, and 11/11/19. For *Boz in Oz*, please email articles maximum of three typed pages (including photos) to; louiseo@bigpond.net.au Deadline for submissions for *Boz in Oz* is: 3/12/19. Please use Chicago-style referencing for footnotes in these articles.

The NSW Dickens Society Facebook Page and Twitter Stream

Are you following us yet? We know for certain you are on Facebook, but our follower numbers are quite low – it would be really terrific (and a great help to the Society) if you could "Like" our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/NSW.Dickens.Society/

We post all kinds of fascinating information there. From our upcoming events and whispers of future activities to great articles of interest to all Dickensians. Where else can you keep your finger on the pulse of lost portraits, obscure Dickensian journalism and forgotten luminaries in the world of Dickens studies? Your committee scours the internet so you don't have to, constantly in search of new articles, mentions and connections. Do follow us on there, "Like" our articles and posts and share them on your own pages. Tell your friends and family about the page, too – it is free, and it is a simple but important way to spread the news that NSW has a thriving Dickens Society.

Now, fewer of you are on Twitter, but things are just as interesting on our Twitter stream, which you can follow @NSWDS. As well as posting similarly fascinating and useful stuff, we also re-post and interact with Dickensian people and associations all around the world. People we chat with on there, and whose info we share, include the Dickens Fellowship in the UK, the Dickens Museum in London, Gerald Dickens and Lucinda Hawksley. If you sign up to Twitter just to read our stream it would be worth it! And of course, following us and sharing our posts is also easy, fast, free and of tremendous importance to our growth and profile, not just in Australia but around the world.

Don't forget to follow NSW DS on our Social Media

Website:	https://dickenssydney.com/
Facebook page:	https://www.facebook.com/NSW.Dickens.Society/
Twitter:	https://twitter.com/NSWDS @NSWDS

Calendar of Dickens-Related Events:

Saturday, 6th April: A talk by Louella Kerr; The Fun of Collecting Dickens

What kind of collector are you? Are you a completist or are you interested mainly in the highlights of Dickens? Are you motivated by pleasure or profit? Do you want to have fun or to collect with investment in mind? The field open to the would-be collector of Charles Dickens is enormous. *The New Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature* [1970] lists Dickens editions from 1833 to 1970 in over 70 columns. So the first consideration for the collector must be – what's my goal? Whilst this talk is geared towards the former, there is no reason why a Dickens collection should not be a sound investment. There is a wealth of treasure to be found by the adventurous collector – plays, speeches, magazine articles, Association copies, ephemera, sets, Australian editions, illustrated editions, fakes and forgeries, to name but a few directions a collection might take. Louella Kerr will discuss all these and more in her talk.

Before the talk Jane Fulton will show and speak about her collection of Edith Russell Dickens dolls.

10.30am – 12noon in the Nangamay Room, 2nd Floor, City Tattersalls Club, 194 – 204 Pitt Street (near the Market Street end), Sydney. No bookings required. $5 entry fee for NSW Dickens Society members. $10 for non-members.

Saturday, 18th May and Sunday, 19th May: ***NSW Dickens Society Weekend by the Seaside. Theme; Dickens and the Family.***

A celebration of the works, life and times of Charles Dickens on the broad theme of Dickens and the Family. On offer are fascinating talks by Lucinda Hawksley, Charles and Catherine Dickens' great, great, great granddaughter, fine antique and period jewellery specialist and speaker Anne Schofield, prolific author Kate Forsyth in conversation with Catherine du Peloux Menagé, wonderful talks by antiquarian book aficionado Professor Chris Browne, travel writer, speaker and lecturer Walter Mason, food historian Charmaine O'Brien and historical architecture and interiors authority Kaye Remington.

Novotel Sydney Manly Pacific, 55 N Steyne, Manly NSW. Separate cost. For information, please email; louiseo@bigpond.net.au

Saturday, 1st June: ***A talk by Walter Mason; Nineteenth Century Journeys through America and Italy***

The NSW Dickens Society has chosen Dickens' two travel books, *American Notes* and *Pictures from Italy* as our Books of the Year for 2019. NSW Dickens Society Vice President and travel writer, Walter Mason, will examine what drove Dickens to travel, and the distinctively 19th century obsessions that shaped his itinerary while abroad. These books managed to infuriate and offend as much as they delighted readers, and we will spend some time looking at the assumptions and prejudices that Dickens took with him along with his wife, his family and his travel trunks. From phrenology and burning books to smouldering volcanoes and street carnivals, this will be a wonderful opportunity to visit two of Dickens' less well-known texts and look at what it means for a writer to travel, to observe and to record things seen. Walter's witty and informed talks are always a great favourite of Society members.

10.30am - 12noon in the Nangamay Room, 2nd Floor, City Tattersalls Club, 194 – 204 Pitt Street (near the Market Street end), Sydney. No bookings required. $5 entry fee for NSW Dickens Society members. $10 for non-members

Saturday, 3rd August: ***A talk by Dr. Vasudha Chandra; Prescription for Mr. Dickens***

What ailed Charles Dickens, the man? What about some of his sickly and invalid characters? What medical conditions did they suffer from? This talk delves into such diagnostic dilemmas and explores some of the treatments used in Dickens' time, including taking a holiday, which many Victorians believed to have health-giving benefits.

10.30am – 12noon in the Nangamay Room, 2nd Floor, City Tattersalls Club, 194 – 204 Pitt Street (near the Market Street end), Sydney. No bookings required. $5 entry fee for NSW Dickens Society members. $10 for non-members.

Saturday, 5th October: A talk by Isabel Deeble; Charles Dickens and his American Reading Tour

Social media creates celebrities overnight but Charles Dickens was arguably the first international celebrity over 150 years ago. He attracted fame particularly though his paid readings in the later part of his life, and especially during his second trip to America (1867/68). There was a rapturous public reception to the 'British lion'. His dramatic readings, their staging and scripting were highly praised. He made a 'multitude of new friends', some of them eminent figures like himself. On his second tour he noted illuminating observations and experiences. We will explore this triumphal reading tour and the responses it drew from his audiences.

10.30am – 12noon in the Nangamay Room, 2nd Floor, City Tattersalls Club, 194 – 204 Pitt Street (near the Market Street end), Sydney. No bookings required. $5 entry fee for NSW Dickens Society members. $10 for non-members.

Christmas Lunch: date and location to be confirmed. Please check our website closer to the date: https://dickenssydney.com/ Separate cost.

Information was correct at time of printing.