

## Holy grail of Australian photography in NSW State Library hands!

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The little-known 'other *Sunbaker*' photograph of 1937, ironically the one preferred by photographer Max Dupain over the known iconic version will go on public display from today [Saturday 1 March] at the State Library of NSW.

The only known original print of the first negative of the *Sunbaker* has been in a family album affectionately called the 'Camping Album' for over 60 years, until recently being donated to the State Library under the Cultural Gifts Program.

According to Alan Davies, the State Library's Curator of Photographs: "This album is the holy grail of Australian photography because it places for the first time the nation's most iconic photograph, the *Sunbaker*, in all of its versions and in the context in which it was taken in 1937."

The first *Sunbaker* had his hands clasped together and was published just once in 1948 in Hal Missingham's *Max Dupain: photographs*. But all known prints, which were made between 1975 and 1991 (when the image became popular) were taken from the second negative, showing the *Sunbaker's* right hand relaxed.

"In the album we also see the *Sunbaker* side on which provides hard proof that the man in the photograph is Englishman Harold Salvage – supposedly the 'quintessential Australian' - who joined Max Dupain, Olive Cotton and others including Chris Vandyke, Gladys Harrison and Una and Peter Dodd on their camping trips to Culburra Beach on the South Coast of NSW in 1937," says Mr Davies.

The album was compiled by Max Dupain's friend, the architect Chris Vandyke, and contains 108 original photographs taken by Dupain and his future wife Olive Cotton, including portraits of themselves and friends, humorous images of camping life and landscapes of the Culburra Beach area.

Tony Vandyke first discovered the album in his dad's darkroom as a teenager, and has fond memories of "Uncle Max" visiting their Warriewood Beach home after Chris died and looking through the Camping Album with his mum.

"Dad and Max had this great friendship which lasted until their last breath," remembers Tony, whose dad died in 1981. "They were great readers, into philosophy and Shakespeare, and used to write each other letters even though they lived just 30 minutes apart."

"The State Library is a natural home for dad's album and we're thrilled it can finally be shared with the public and preserved for the future," says Tony.

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# Media Release

“The album is a fantastic addition to the Library’s extensive Max Dupain collection, which also includes another album by Max Dupain that was sent to his best mate, Damien Parer, who was serving in the war in 1940,” says Mr Davies. “Having these two albums of such a personal nature by Australia’s most famous 20<sup>th</sup> century photographer is just extraordinary.”

The Camping Album and the Damien Parer album will go on public display from today in the State Library’s AMAZE Gallery. Visitors to the Library can also see a reproduction of the popular *Sunbaker* image in the *Behind the Truth* display.

**Alan Davies and Tony Vandyke are available for interviews**

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