



## THE MASONIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

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### **Bro. Stanley Robert LIPSCOMBE, Antique Dealer.**

Stanley Robert Lipscombe was born on 15th December 1918 at Paddington, Sydney, one of twin boys. At the age of 2 years he and his brother were adopted by Samuel Lipscombe, an engine driver from England and his Australian born wife.

He was educated at Villawood and Lidcombe Commercial Schools and left at the age of 16 years. While still at school he was buying and selling furniture and could differentiate between antiques and reproductions. His first employer was Fred Naylor at the Antique Furniture Coy, at 40 Market street, Sydney. Here he learnt French polishing and got to know dealers and their clientele. His advice was always to seek quality not quantity and never be afraid to obtain advice from experts.

He soon learnt enough to open his own shop in Goulburn Street in 1942. Here he specialised in Victoriana and early Australian pieces, doing most of his own restoration work.

In 1943 Lipscombe moved to 240 Castlereagh Street, building a shop with an attractive neo-Georgian facade. By 1946 he had a specialist from Christie's silver department purchasing silver at English silver sales in England for him to sell in Australia. You can't mistake Victorian Silver, he claimed as it always had a lady's head on it. If a silver piece is numbered it is registered for mass production and made after 1814. Stanley Lipscombe recollected on going to Buxton to look at furniture and on calling in at a roadside cafe being given a cup of coffee with a George 3rd teaspoon in the cup. On enquiring he found there was a complete set of 6 in a box and he succeeded in buying them for about 4 pounds each.

By the late 1940s he had built up a large clientele and gave great support to the Australian Red Cross Society and other charities. He was also a generous supporter of the St. John's Ambulance Auxiliary. He had a regular column in the Australian Women's Weekly called Collectors Corner from 1960 to 1973.

Lipscombe visited England in 1962 and was described as "like a little boy in a lollishop shop."

In 1963 he opened another shop in Bathurst Street and here he handled paintings, furniture, silver and porcelain. Lipscombe was a founding member of the Ceramic Collectors' Society as well as being an adviser to the Art Gallery of New South Wales on antique Oriental ceramics and lectured between 1970 and 1979 on arts and crafts at the University of New South Wales. Reporters often visited his shops and reported on the many valuable items for sale.

In 1976 Lipscombe moved to live in an apartment in Park Regis in the city. Lipscombe had a great interest in horse racing and did not have many friends being described as a loner.

On 6th December 1980 he had a cerebral haemorrhage at Rosehill Racecourse and died the same day at Westmead Hospital, being survived by his twin brother, Edwin. He was described as an antique dealer and philanthropist. Lipscombe kept very poor records and very

