

200 HUNDRED YEARS OF WEDDING FASHION IN AUSTRALIA

VILLA ALBA MUSEUM
26 APRIL – 11 MAY



2025 AUSTRALIAN HERITAGE FESTIVAL

200 YEARS OF WEDDING FASHION IN AUSTRALIA

How have the glamour and rituals of weddings changed in Australia over the last 200 years? What elements of fashion, fabrics and accessories have Australian brides and wedding parties adopted? Explore elements of continuity and change in the gowns and accessories worn by brides in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

This major exhibition is mounted from the extensive costume collection of the Kew Historical Society, and is augmented with a number of gowns from private collections.

When you walk in the door of the historic Villa Alba Museum, and enter the richly ornamented 1880s rooms, you will be immersed in evolving elements of fashion and design through a curated collection of wedding dresses and accessories, arranged by era in the major rooms of the house.

In the grand drawing and dining rooms, wedding fashion from the nineteenth century will be showcased, and as you progress through the remainder of the ground floor rooms and ascend the stairs to the former bedrooms of Villa Alba, the fashion of different periods will be displayed.

In the exhibition, you can view a number of nationally significant dresses including the wedding dress of Mary Ann Lawrence, worn at her marriage to Francis Henty in 1842, which has just been conserved by staff at Grimwade Conservation Services (University of Melbourne).

In addition to the nineteenth century gowns, made by private dress makers on the ground floor, the exhibition includes twentieth century gowns, produced by staff working in major fashion houses of the twentieth century.

The exhibition runs for three weekends and will be supplemented by midweek lectures that will explore the history of wedding dresses, how these are best conserved and stored, as well as the art of making bridal bouquets.

VILLA ALBA MUSEUM

44 Walmer Street, Kew, 3101

26 April - 11 May

Saturdays & Sundays 10.30am-12pm,
1pm-2.30pm

Prices range from \$20 for general entry,
to-\$30 for midweek lectures. Tickets can
be purchased on Eventbrite (see link on
Villa Alba website)

MIDWEEK LECTURE PROGRAM INCLUDES A VIEWING OF THE EXHIBITION

Wednesday 30 April

- * The art of bridal floristry
- * Conservator's talk on the costumes in the exhibition

Wednesday 7 May

Conservation and storage of wedding
dresses and accessories

Illustrated (over) Bridesmaid's dress of Alice Henty, 1874