

Clarice Beckett Timeline

21 March 1887

Clarice Marjoribanks Beckett is born in Casterton, Victoria. She is the second of three children, the first being Thomas Alfred Joseph Beckett (1882–1899) and the third, Hilda Raby Beckett (1891–1980).

1900–03

Beckett is a boarder and later a day girl at Queen's College, Ballarat. During this period, she attends outdoor drawing excursions with her teacher, Miss Eva Hopkins.

1904

The Beckett family moves to South Yarra in Melbourne, where Beckett completes her education at Melbourne Church of England Girls Grammar School. She has her 'coming out' in Ballarat and continues to pursue her interests in drawing, reading and music.

c. 1906

Beckett befriends artists Beatrix Hoile and her husband Alexander Colquhoun, with whom she shares an interest in spiritualism and theosophy. She becomes associated with their artist circle, which includes influential artist and teacher Max Meldrum.

1907

The Beckett family move from Melbourne to Bendigo. In the ensuing years, the family regularly holidays at Beaumaris on Port Phillip Bay.

1914–16

Beckett and her sister reside in Melbourne where they study drawing with Frederick McCubbin at the National Gallery School (Clarice from 1914–16 and Hilda from 1914–15).

1917

Beckett undertakes a nine-month period of study with Max Meldrum, attending classes at his newly established school at Hardware Chambers in Elizabeth Street, Melbourne.

1918

Beckett begins exhibiting with the Victorian Artists Society, which she continues to do until 1923.

1919

Upon Joseph Beckett's retirement, the family moves to their newly built home in Beaumaris. Beckett lives there for the remainder of her life, working as an artist while attending to her domestic responsibilities caring for her parents. She constructs a cart to transport her materials on near-daily painting excursions through Beaumaris and the neighboring suburbs and beaches.

Beckett's work is included in the first Meldrum Group exhibition at the Athenaeum Gallery, Melbourne.

1923

Beckett presents the first of ten annual solo exhibitions at the Athenaeum Gallery and is invited to exhibit with the Twenty Melbourne Painters, an invitation-only group that has split from the Victorian Artists Society.

1926

Beckett stays at the Western District property Naringal Station, owned by William Rowe, the brother of her artist friend Maud Rowe. The siblings were collectors of Beckett's work. For approximately five months, Beckett works from a studio located on the upper level of the property's shearing shed.

1931

Beckett's work is selected for inclusion in the first exhibition of Australian artists in New York, *First Contemporary All-Australian Art Exhibition*, at the International Art Centre of the Roerich Museum.

1934

Beckett's mother dies.

7 July 1935

After painting in the rain, Beckett contracts and dies of double pneumonia in a hospital at Sandringham, Melbourne. She is buried in the Cheltenham cemetery.

1936

A memorial exhibition of Beckett's work, organised by the artist's sister and father with Max Meldrum, is held at the Athenaeum Gallery.

Beckett's father dies. Works from the artist's estate are left in the care of her sister who gifts *Silver morning (Near Beaumaris)* (c. 1931) to Castlemaine Art Museum that year.

1937

The Maud Rowe Bequest sees works by Beckett enter regional Victorian collections. These include *Misty evening, Beaumaris* (1930) and *The beach* (c. 1930) to Art Gallery of Ballarat, and *Wet evening* (c. 1927) and *Boatshed, Beaumaris* (c. 1928) to Castlemaine Art Museum.

1944

More than thirty of Beckett's works are destroyed in a house fire at Naringal Station.

c. 1946

Many of the paintings held by Beckett's sister are moved to a farm near Benalla, in regional Victoria. Some are hung inside the farmhouse and around 2000 are stored in an adjacent open-sided shed.

c. 1970

On the invitation of Beckett's sister Hilda, Rosalind Humphries (now Hollinrake) visits the shed near Benalla. Approximately 370 of the stored canvases are retrieved, the remainder are found to be beyond repair due to exposure to the elements.

1971–72

Two exhibitions, both titled *Homage to Clarice Beckett (1887–1935): Idylls of Melbourne and Beaumaris*, are held at the Rosalind Humphries Galleries in Melbourne. On the recommendation of artist Fred Williams, James Mollison, Director of the Australian National Gallery [now NGA], acquires eight works from the 1971 exhibition; the first of Beckett's works to be purchased for a public collection. These include *Beaumaris seascape* (c. 1925) and *Collins Street, evening* (1931).

1973

Geelong Gallery purchases *Rainy day* (1930) from the 1972 Rosalind Humphries Galleries exhibition.