

a personal deck of playing cards

Dianne Longley



Suit of Cats

King of Cats

Queen of Cats

Jack of Cats

Ace of Cats

Joker

Claudia Raddatz

Sue Lorraine

Louise Dauth

Pamela Zeplin

Dianne Longley

Cat Icon Sinbad, cat of unequalled devotion 10 of Cats Kimba, a gentle giant, a noble cat 9 of Cats Zeppo, cross-eyed and independent 8 of Cats Sweet Pea. sweet in name and nature 7 of Cats Tia, cat of Jeff Rosen, tiny and elegant 6 of Cats Kitty, so like the 'lucky' cats in Japan Beatrice, cat of Lisa Young 5 of Cats 4 of Cats Boston, another cat of Lisa Young 3 of Cats Patchinko, cat of great intelligence 2 of Cats Zabi, cat of amazing personality 1 of Cats Equinox, cat of Neville & Candy



Suit of Cakes

King of Cakes Olga Sankey

Queen of Cakes Catherine Truman

Jack of Cakes Christine McCormack

Ace of Cakes Isobel Kindly

Joker Dianne Longley

Cake Icon A tiny birthday cake

10 of Cakes Fairy Cakes, with fresh cream and icing sugar 9 of Cakes Brownies, with pecan nuts and dark chocolate 8 of Cakes Chocolate Eclairs, filled with crème patissière

7 of Cakes Pikelets, a quick treat for afternoon tea

6 of Cakes Tiramisu, decidedly delicious, soft and sexy

5 of Cakes Cinnamon Tea Cake, hot from the oven

4 of Cakes Crème Caramel, a favourite for any occasion 3 of Cakes Pineapple Upside Down Cake, a past delight 2 of Cakes Butterscotch Cream Pie, heavenly texture

1 of Cakes Pavlova, with cream and lots of summer fruits



Suit of Clothes

King of Clothes Mary Patricia Mitchell

Queen of Clothes Christine Grubits

Jack of Clothes Kitka Hiltula
Ace of Clothes Penelope Jack

Joker Dianne Longley

Clothes Icon A tiny glove

10 of Clothes Socks, never enough socks

9 of Clothes T-Shirts, are fun

8 of Clothes Blouses, considered but casual 7 of Clothes Tunic Dress, cool and bright

6 of Clothes Underwear, cotton and comfortable

5 of Clothes Trousers, fit plus fabric equals fantastic

4 of Clothes Winter Coats, warm and snugly

3 of Clothes Evening Jackets, in chequered satin

2 of Clothes Summer Suit, coconut ice revisited

1 of Clothes Gloves, in gorgeous bright colours



Suit of Cups

King of Cups Julie Blyfield

Queen of Cups Julianne English
Jack of Cups Amanda Poland
Ace of Cups Anne Brookfield

Joker Dianne Longley

Cups Icon Small hand-painted cup and saucer

10 of Cups Hand-painted China, from my great aunts

9 of Cups Fine Japanese China, a gift from Shaw

8 of Cups Royal Doulton, England, from my great aunts

7 of Cups Japanese China, from a bric-a-brac shop

6 of Cups Lady Luck, Queen Anne, a gift from Shaw

5 of Cups Japanese Tea Cups, a present for Shaw

4 of Cups Grindley, England, from my great aunts

3 of Cups Minton, England, my very favourite cups

2 of Cups Cup of Knowledge, Aynsley, a gift from Louise

1 of Cups Bunnykins, Royal Doulton, from my childhood



Cats

I like the warm soft feel of cats and the way they animate my studio and garden. They are elegant animals and totally unselfconscious. One sad part of cat ownership is that the life of cats is much shorter than that of humans.

My first cat, a lilac Burmese called Zabi, was named after the Italian dessert Zabligone because she was a similar colour. I asked my friend Louise to mind Zabi and her offspring Magoo for a year while I worked interstate. When I returned I couldn't ask for the cats back because Louise had become far too fond of them. She promised to give me a kitten from Magoo's first litter. This cat was Patchinko, a handsome cat with spots and stripes.

Unfortunately I only had Patchinko for a few months. He was really intelligent (not all cats are). During the autumn of 1992 Patchinko spent a lot of time looking at our lounge room wall and cocking his ears from side to side. Shaw and I couldn't understand why he was so interested in the wall. As it turned out, he could hear termites behind the wall. We should have realised he was onto something! Early one morning part of the ceiling in the lounge room fell down. He would bring a toy mouse to me in the morning and I would throw the mouse as far as I could down the hallway. He would chase after it and bring it back to me to throw again. It was great fun. Sadly Patchinko was run over. He was the first cat to be buried in the back garden near my studio.

Magoo, then had two more kittens, which Louise entrusted into our care. We named them Sweet Pea and Kimba. Two kittens always seem happier than one. Sweet Pea was, as she was named, the sweetest, most empathetic cat ever. Despite the best vet care, Sweet Pea became sick after two years and died. Her brother, Kimba was a big, gorgeous chocolate Tonkinese cat. He died of a spider bite. It was a very sad occasion. Our vet sent us a condolence card.

Sinbad replaced Sweet Pea and Zeppo replaced Kimba cat. And so, at the time of printing, these two cats happily inhabit my studio and garden. Sinbad always comes over to say 'hello' and he is generally not far from me when I am in the studio. Zeppo is a more independent cat, but often sits on my lap when I work on the computer late at night. Zeppo likes to roll in the dust and leaves in the garden. It takes Sinbad most of the night to clean him up. It is only in the mornings that Zeppo is clean and soft to touch. At other times if you pat him dust wafts into the air.

Cats are good companions.

Cakes

My childhood was punctuated by both special and everyday cakes. Everyday cakes were chocolate and orange cakes, boiled fruit cake and a range of slices including a delicious chocolate and walnut fudge. Mum made these treats regularly. Her cake recipe was one used by my great aunts. The 2-2-4 recipe, was simply, 2 ounces of butter, 2 ounces of sugar and four ounces of self-raising flour, with 1 egg and half a cup of milk. The butter and sugar were creamed, the egg added and beaten well. Lastly the milk and flour were added alternately and stirred gently. At this stage cocoa powder was added to make a chocolate cake. My favourite cake was, and still is, an orange cake which Mum made using orange juice instead of milk, making butter icing with orange juice, and decorating the cake with orange zest.

For birthdays we were able to request our preferred special cake. A marbled cake, banana cake, pavlova, or sherry log were our favourite special cakes. Mum's banana cake with caramel frosting was a dream. The banana cake was cooked and cooled and then filled with fresh cream. A mixture of brown sugar, egg whites, and water were then beaten with a rotary beater over boiling water to create a delicious, delicate, caramel merinque frosting.

Cakes have always been part of my eating experience and they fall very much into the category of comfort foods. I recall that as a child of eight the experience of baking my first cinnamon teacake without adult supervision. I grew up with my three sisters on a sheep and wheat farm in the central west of New South Wales, near Forbes and Parkes. Our farm was about seven miles (eleven kilometres) out of Bogan Gate, a town of about three hundred people. It had a small army base and there was a golf club where my mother and father played. It was a basic facility, with sand greens. My mother and father played golf most weekends and we either went with them to the golf course or stayed at the farm.

It was on one of these parent-free days that I decided to make my first cinnamon tea cake. I carefully weighed the ingredients and made the cake mixture. I checked that the wood stove was burning nicely and after placing the cake mixture into a greased cake tin I placed it in the oven. I waited nervously while it cooked. The cooking time was always a bit variable as a wood stove is hotter when it is fully stoked. I took the cake out of the oven after what seemed a long enough cooking time. I gently pushed down on the surface of the cake to see if it was cooked. I thought it was. I turned it out onto the cake cooler. Unfortunately the cake wasn't cooked in the middle and the runny cake mixture ran onto the table through the cake rack. I thought very quickly. My only chance to save the cake (and the pleasure of eating it) was to flip the cake over again and scoop the runny mixture back into the tin on top of the cooked cake. I did this as well as I could and then put the messy cake back into the oven. I cooked it for another fifteen minutes. When I took it out, turned it over, brushed it with butter and sugar and cinnamon and offered it to my sisters. No one noticed the peculiar texture.

For many years my cinnamon tea cake was my stand-by cake. This has more recently been superseded by a lemon tart, crème caramel or a butterscotch meringue pie. Also the sherry log that was a family favourite has resurfaced and I am currently thinking seriously about

baking a pavlova and piling it with cream and summer berries and lots of passionfruit.

Cakes are delicious and wondrous.

Clothes

Sewing has also been part of my life since I was very young. I began by making dolls' clothing and graduated to garment sewing in high school. I always looked in fabric shops, and if I thought a favourite material was disappearing quickly I purchased a number of yards on lay-by. I have in previous times been known as the Lay-by Queen. This method of shopping allows you to place a small deposit on the purchase and pay the balance over 3 months (less for fashion items).

I love shopping for patterns and the notions (cottons, zippers, buttons, or press studs) needed for each project. During high school I sewed most days, or knitted or crocheted. I enjoyed sewing best as the finished project could be completed in a few working sessions.

When I was at high school I had an enterprising business sewing up uniforms for fellow players in our weekend hockey teams. I would get the brightly coloured material from the student, and take her bust and length of uniform measurement. I would make a tunic with a lined bodice and three box pleats front and back and have it ready for the client the next day. In return she would give me a payment of \$4 which would help pay off my lay-bys.

I continue to buy materials, although my sewing days are now less frequent than I would like. When I do get the opportunity to sew, I plan my sewing days carefully. I hire classic videos which have good dialogue. This way, when I am sewing I can still follow the story-line. Nowadays I sew garments that are quickly completed. I leave the lined jackets and trousers to professional tailors.

I remain in awe of the enormous range of sewing fabrics from which to choose. Colour, texture, weave, pattern, creasability, and laundering attributes are the main considerations when I purchase materials. I have a preference for natural fibres such as cotton, wool and silk, and some rayons but a good pair of pants made from a serviceable polyester can be a godsend when travelling. They don't crease, and they wash and drip dry overnight.

Shopping for clothing accessories is also an exciting activity. I particularly love scarves, in all sorts of colours and textures. My absolute favourite is a large, brightly coloured hand embroidered black voile scarf from India. It really dresses up any outfit and I often reflect on the skill of the woman who created it. Other accessories that are practical as well as stylish are gloves and hats. I have a wonderful pair of bright purple lambskin gloves that look and feel sensational on wintry days. Hats can be fun too, and most appropriate to ward off intense summer rays or keep in the warmth on cold days.

Clothes are fun.

Cups

My love for tea cups and china was excited by family visits to our great aunts' house in Mosman, Sydney. We were a farming family from the bush, but my mother had been brought up by maiden aunts as her mother and father died when she was quite young. My great aunts Linda, Anne and Doris inherited enough money from their father so that they didn't have to go out to work. They lived modestly but very comfortably. They didn't have television, and they did spend a great many hours working for organisations like Red Cross. Aunt Anne was still living in her own home and making batches of biscuits for Red Cross stalls in her eighties. She died at the remarkable age of ninety four, having lived all but the last six months independently in her own home.

My aunts, like my mother, always had home baked cakes and biscuits in the house. These were served more graciously than in our house where my mother would tell us to eat outside to prevent crumbs in the kitchen. At the aunts' we would eat from beautiful plates, and have cups of tea from their wonderful collection of cups and saucers.

When Aunt Anne died, her collection was shared between we four sisters. It was done very fairly. We created sets of china. Some sets were complete and others were just one cup and saucer which the aunts probably purchased on their many trips. We drew straws to see the order in which we could make our first selections. Then we took turns to select either fine china or crystal glasses. After the sets were chosen, we did a few exchanges sometimes giving up a set of cups for a pair of glasses or a cup and saucer we really liked.

From this cherished selection of china my collection has grown. I now have some fine china. One of my favourite sets is by Fitz and Floyd. I was fortunate to see this dinner set on sale at David Jones in Newcastle in 1989. It was initially marked down 50% but then it was further reduced to 25% of its original price, which at that time would have covered a return trip for two people to Bali for a week. It was expensive china. I was so delighted with this price reduction, I immediately placed the set on lay-by. It was some months before I had the set in my possession and even now, many years later, I still adore it.

To show off my collection, which I love to do occasionally, I have a sweet and sticky supper (which often doubles as a birthday party). I cook a delicious assortment of cakes and assemble my china in rows. Guests can choose not only their favourite cake but complement it with their choice of fine china cups.

And in the tea cups and coffee cups? Good quality tea or expresso coffee. I have been addicted to Twinings Earl Grey tea for some time. It is this tea that is most likely to be found in my teacup.

Cup of tea?

Origins of the Game of Cards

The history of playing cards is a rich and colourful one. Playing cards illustrate social history, the history of costume, touch on politics and religion, and feature wars and revolutions. Cards in recent times have been used to promote sporting teams and popular television shows.

Theories about the origins of playing cards are diverse. One belief is that both chess and cards were first played in China. Other theories site India or Persia as possible sources. Despite all research to date there remains no irrefutable evidence of European cards having any historical connection with China or India or Persia. It is still a possibility that playing cards may well have originated in Europe, and there is much continuing debate as to which European country shall be credited with the invention.

Playing cards were first documented in Europe in AD 1377 by a German monk named Johannes. He wrote in a Latin manuscript which is preserved in the British Museum that "a certain game called the game of cards has come to us...[but] at what time it was invented, where, and by whom I am entirely ignorant." Other writings of that time indicate that the original pack of cards consisted of a foursuited pack of fifty two cards from about AD 1370 and that a tarot pack appeared as a distinct entity in about AD 1470.3

Much of the early information about playing cards documents them being banned or forbidden. Gaming with cards became popular very quickly and very often money was separated from participants by card-sharps, swindlers at card-games. The problem of gambling with playing cards became such a problem that in Italy, St. Bernardino of Siena on the steps of the Church at San Petronio in Bologna condemned publicly the evil pastime in a sermon in 1423. He moved the townsfolk with his sermon so much that they lit bonfires and burned their games and playing cards. Condemnation of gaming is perennial and the current debate in South Australia about poker machines is illustrative of this.

Considering the turbulent history of playing cards it is very fortunate that early examples of cards have survived. Paper was still an expensive commodity in the fifteenth century and so bookbinders used waste printed sheets of playing cards in the binding of books. Because of this the early history of playing cards can be traced.

Printed Playing Cards

The first playing cards made in Europe were hand-painted. These cards were a luxury of great beauty. Their use was confined to the upper classes, and they were favoured by the rich for wedding presents. The cards were produced by professional painters who were paid handsomely for their work.⁵

As card-playing became more popular and the demand spread, the production of cards was accelerated by a process called stencilling. Sometimes only the outline was stencilled, and the image was hand-painted or the whole process of creating different colours was carried out using stencils. The stencilling process greatly reduced the price of playing cards and they became available to many more people.

Despite religious denunciation the whole of Europe took to card-playing and card-making became a profitable occupation. Currently it is thought that the first playing cards known in Europe were Italian.⁶



Italian Suit-marks

Packs of cards with Italian suit-marks of the Cups, Swords, Money (Coins), and Batons, spread to Spain where they assumed local colourings and the suit markings became bolder and clearer.

As playing cards spread into Germany the production and appearance of cards changed. Germany introduced new suit-marks. Acorns, Bells, Leaves, and Hearts. Early German card-makers didn't only use the national symbols on their cards. They indulged their imaginations and used unicorns, dogs, rabbits, monkeys, lions, parrots and peacocks as suit-marks. They also used flowers, vases, drinking-cups, books, fishes, crowns, shields, and knives.



German Suit-marks

Another change in card production in Germany was the introduction of the new technology of wood-engraving⁷ to print playing cards. It is interesting that the development of printing in both Europe and China had both religious and gambling origins. In China, the Confucians, Buddhists, and Taoists were keen to preserve the authenticity of their sacred texts. Copying by hand is always fraught with errors. Engraved texts on wooden blocks ensured accuracy.

In Europe, in the late fourteenth century, pilgrimages for the granting of indulgences were very popular, and religious woodcuts were distributed to the pilgrims. Because the playing of cards was also popular, both religious images and playing cards were produced by early printers.



15th century woodcut. *St Quentin*. German, c 1470-3.



Hand-coloured woodcut playing cards. *Valet of Spades, Hogier and Valet of Clubs, Lancelot.* French, c 1540.

The woodblocks printed in relief were simple graphic images, being either coloured by hand or by stencilling. More expensive cards were produced from engravings in copper, and these images have greater details and a more naturalistic use of line.

The earliest copper engraver, known as the Master of the Playing Cards, printed the first playing cards from intaglio⁸ plates. The engraved playing cards, drawn by the Master of the Playing Cards, are fine examples of naturalistic drawing.

There is a link between painted illustrations in Gutenberg's Bible and the Master of the Playing Cards. The famous 42-line Gutenberg Bible in Mainz, printed between 1452-3, is the first book to be printed in Europe using movable type. Many of the small painted animals in the Bible are very similar to the animals on the Master's playing cards.

German designs on playing cards eventually lost popularity to Swiss designs. Shields and Flowers replaced Hearts and Leaves. The new designs were very popular and are still in use today.



Swiss Suit-marks

France succeeded Germany in card production and French card design has spread worldwide. It was the famous French knight Etienne de Vignolles, early in the fifteenth century, who is credited with the development of Diamonds, Hearts, Clubs and Spades, the suits we are most familiar with in Australia.



French Suit-marks

The Belgians were great producers of playing cards and exported enormous numbers of them, especially to England. The reason for this was that a lot of French card-makers emigrated to Belgium due to a heavy French tax on playing card production.

The English card printers translated the names of the suits, but left the French designs intact. Authorities tried (in vain) to stamp out the use of playing cards in England, but in 1628 the Worshipful Company of Makers of Playing Cards was formed. They wrote a Charter which served to limit the importation of foreign playing cards into England and to promote local printing companies. They also agreed to pay a tax to the King on their packs of cards: An early use of tariff protection. These taxes on playing cards paid to the King are similar to the taxes paid by casinos and gaming agencies to State Governments in Australia.

America imported playing cards from England until Jazaniah Ford of Milton, Massachusetts, produced his first pack in 1832. In 1835 he invented a special printing machine for printing multi-coloured cards.

America added the Joker to the pack of cards which became in some card games the highest value card. It could be argued that the Joker is the 'wild-card', or the card of opportunity, not unlike the ethos of opportunity and individuality that has been the driving force behind America's pursuit of greatness.

Developments in the printing industry have seen major changes since the early relief printed woodblocks of the fifteenth century. Until the Industrial Revolution, most printed work was done in relief, and intaglio printing was used for fine work. It was in the late nineteenth century that Alois Senefelder, in Prague, invented a new printing process called lithography which was neither a relief nor an intaglio process. Lithography is described as a planographic process and is based on the principle that oil and water do not mix. Commercial printing is now done predominantly on offset lithographic presses. In

fact, most modern playing cards are printed in this manner. In Adelaide, the Queen's Slipper Playing Card Co will print promotional packs of cards for organisations and for company advertising using this printing process.

The invention of movable type in the mid-fifteenth century enabled an information revolution. At the end of the of the twentieth century we are experiencing a new information revolution. Electronic technologies in the developed world allow information to be broadcast globally in fractions of a second via satellite or via the Internet, or captured on CD-ROM and sent to distant destinations.

New digital technologies have had an enormous impact on gaming. The card game Patience was supplied on the operating systems of both Apple Macintosh and IBM personal computers when they were introduced. Computers also drive poker machines flashing up digital images of playing cards to seduce the player to keep feeding their coins.

Interactive games such as the award-winning Myst, a quasi-religious quest for a book from a destroyed world, have become enormously popular. In Riven, the sequel to Myst, the players become heroes who must save a beautiful world using their intellect and intuition. It seems that leisure time spent in such holy pursuits alleviates the need for church on Sundays.

It is interesting that games and religious metaphors have combined in contemporary times. When games and religious images were printed in the fifteenth century they were entirely separate entities.

Card playing is still a fascination for contemporary people. The USS Starship Enterprise-D of TV's Star Trek fame, has a poker game every Thursday night. Star Trek is set in the twenty third century. Data (the ship's analytical android) initially believed poker to be a fairly simple mathematical game, but he failed to consider the human element of

bluffing. Data eventually came to regard the game as a fascinating insight into human nature. 10

My personal deck of playing cards, *Cats, Cakes, Clothes and Cups* celebrates both the notion of chance and the social interaction which is a wonderful aspect of card-playing. I am not a gambler in the monetary sense but I do chance my hand on each artwork I embark upon and appreciate the part chance plays in life.

Notes

- Tilley, Roger. *Playing Cards*. London: Octopus Books Ltd, 1973 pp. 19-22
- Beal, George. Playing Cards and their Story. London: David and Charles, 1975 p. 7
- ³ Tilley, Roger. op. cit., p. 22
- 4 Hoffman, Detlef. *The Playing Card, An Illustrated History.* Greenwich, Connecticut: New York Graphic Society, 1972 p. 12
- 5 Tilley, Roger. op. cit., p. 27
- 6 Beal, George. op. cit., p. 11
- Wood-engraving or relief printing is a process where the ink lies on the raised surface of the woodblock and is transferred to the paper by pressure.
- Intaglio printing is a printing technique in which the ink is contained in the grooves below the surface of the plate and transferred to dampened paper by pressure.
- 9 Lehmann-Haupt, H. Gutenberg and the Master of the Playing Cards. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966 p. 4
- 10 Okuda, M, Okuda, D & Mirek, D, *The Star Trek Encyclopedia*. New York: Pocket Books, 1994 p. 258

Illustrations

Unknown artist, *St Quentin*, c 1470-3, German woodcut, 7.9 x 7.0 cm Art Gallery of South Australia, South Australia Government Grant, 1972

Unknown artist, *Valet of Spades, Hogier* and *Valet of Clubs, Lancelot.* c 1540 French, Hand-coloured woodcut playing cards.

Cincinnati Art Museum. (John Onwake Playing Card Collection)
Saff, D & Sacilotto, *Printmaking: History and Process*. New York: Holt,
Rinehart and Winston, 1978 p. 10

Creating Cats, Cakes, Clothes and Cups

The images for Cats, Cakes, Clothes and Cups were brought together from a variety of sources. The Cats suit was made from photographs of mine and others generously loaned by friends. Many of the cake images in the Cakes suit came from recipe books. Who has time to photograph cakes before eating them? I spent a fun evening dressing up in a range of outfits and Patricia clicked away with a digital camera to create the Clothes images. I photographed my tea cups for the Cups suit on my kitchen table, again with the digital camera.

I created the court cards by initially drawing the King, Queen and Jack with a technical pen. I scanned the drawings and then added colour and collaged faces using Adobe Photoshop.

The individual card images were then placed into suits using Adobe PageMaker. Each suit comprised of the usual court cards: King, Queen and Jack, ten number cards and a Joker. The images were then printed through an inkjet printer.

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Dianne Longley

The images and booklet cover for Cats, Cakes, Clothes and Cups were printed with an Epson Stylus Color 800 onto Celcast photo gloss 205 gsm paper. The essay was laser printed onto 118 gsm Pageantry Porcelain paper using Klang MT type.

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