

Sydney Morning Herald June 30, 1977

When Rod Taylor posed in the nude

"ROD TAYLOR was a clumsy, overgrown young boy, who always looked as though his clothes didn't fit him," recalled Dorothy Thornhill.

"That boy, when he stripped, was like a Greek god."

Miss Thornhill, who spent 40 years teaching drawing at the National Art School, remembers teaching the Australian-born film star long before he began his acting career doing Tarzan calls on Sydney radio nearly 30 years ago.

Rod Taylor, an aspiring artist, was in Miss Thornhill's war-time class: "I can still remember this great overgrown, clumsy boy holding up a tiny little plant in one hand and tracing it on to the board in front of him.

"One day he came up to me and said he was short of cash and asked if he could model for my night classes."

Most of her artist's models — including Rod Taylor — who were prepared to pose nude for the art classes at East Sydney Tech at three shillings and sixpence an hour, needed the extra money.

Her pupils have included the painters John Coburn, Margaret Olley, David Strachan, Freddie Jessup and John Olsen.

Miss Thornhill, who is married to the painter Douglas Dundas, the former principal of the National Art School, has spent her retirement (since 1975) drawing at their home in Woollahra.

She is preparing for her third exhibition — the last was in 1948 — at the Macquarie Galleries on July 13.