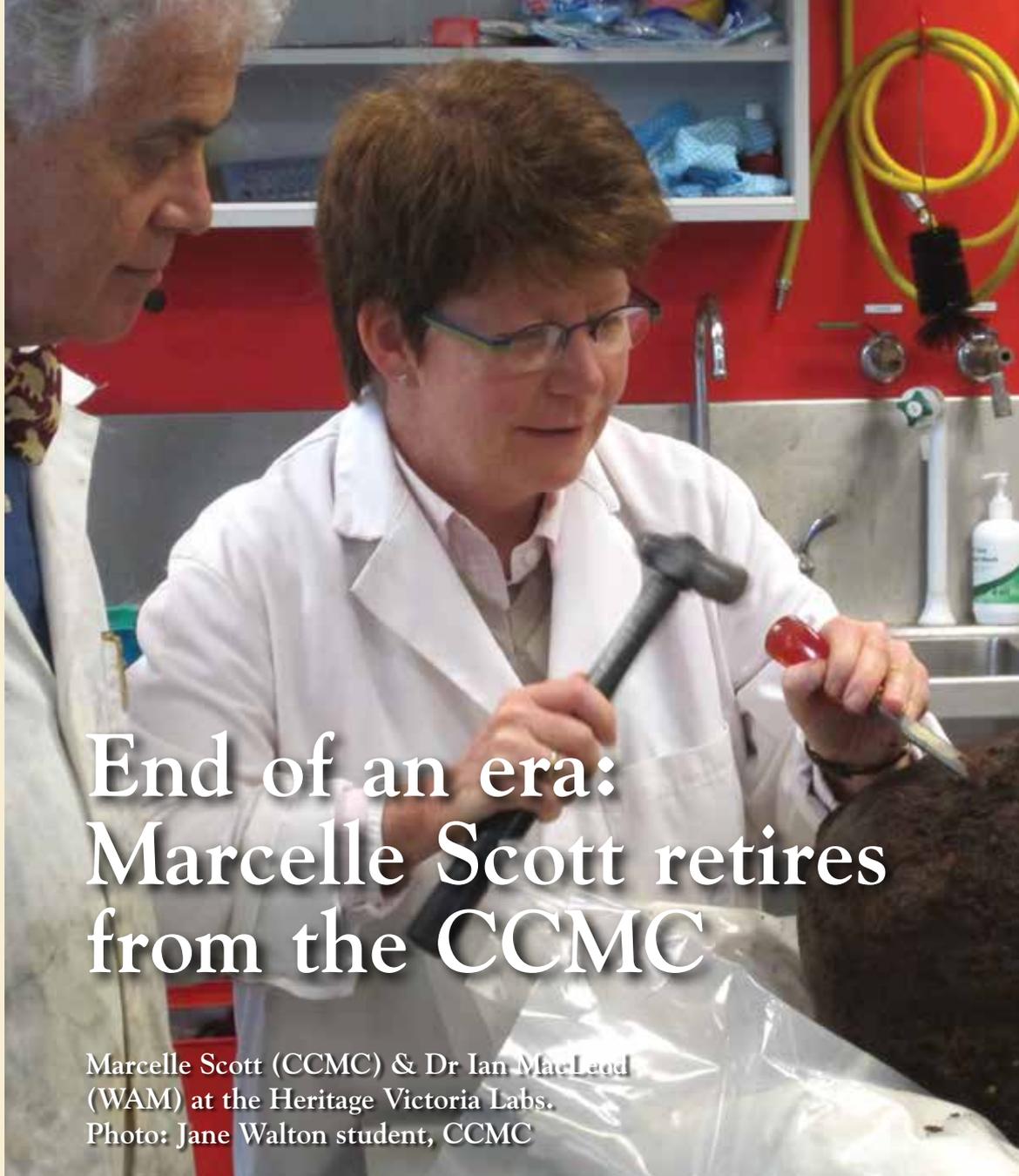


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End of an era: Marcelle Scott retires from the CCMC

Marcelle Scott (CCMC) & Dr Ian MacLeod
(WAM) at the Heritage Victoria Labs.
Photo: Jane Walton student, CCMC



Photographic Conference,
Te Papa, Wellington



Objects SIG meets in
Melbourne



Konservator Ken finds love

President's Report

In early March, National Council met in Melbourne for our annual two day, face-to-face meeting. We use these two days to develop a focus for the coming year and to choose some projects that provide a balance – some that are relatively easy to finish and some that are more of a challenge for a volunteer organisation such as ours (the 'big, hairy, audacious' type, as Mary Jo calls them). Mary Jo Lelyveld is now National Vice President, having stepped up into the role when Vicki Humphrey had to resign suddenly for personal reasons – and we are all grateful to her for being prepared to make that commitment.

On the first day of the meeting, two representatives of Creative Partnerships Australia (an amalgamation of the Australia Business Arts Foundation and Artsupport Australia) addressed the meeting and presented options

that Council can explore to further the association. Creative Partnerships Australia aims to be a 'one-stop-shop' to promote, encourage and facilitate business, philanthropic and donor support for the arts. Mary Jo and myself will work closely with Creative Partnerships Australia and its volunteers to develop strategies that can speed our work in critical areas of our strategic plan.

Council also considered options regarding our website and decided to go ahead with upgrading the site, using a new service provider. This will give us better options for the website and address some of those niggling problems that have developed over the last few years. If you have any thoughts about what our website should look like or offer, please contact Michelle Berry.

Other major events coming up soon are our National Conference – in Adelaide in October this year. A very interesting and challenging theme – Conservation and Conservators in a Wider Context – which gives a lot of scope for some exciting papers.

And in 2014 we are hosting ICOM-CC in Melbourne. This is being organised jointly with University of Melbourne and AICCM, with Victorian members of AICCM doing most of the heavy lifting – if anyone wants to volunteer to help please contact Susie Collis.

So lots going on, and plenty of activity to keep us all very busy. See you all in Adelaide in October, if not before.

Kay Söderlund
March 2013

Submissions for the newsletter

We welcome your contributions to the newsletter, as well as any comments you may have. Deadlines for submissions are: **25 February, 25 April, 25 June, 25 August and 25 October.**

Please send your submissions to newsletter@aiccm.org.au All submissions will be acknowledged by email. If you haven't heard from us, we haven't heard from you!

We encourage the use of images wherever possible. Please send separate to your text in either .jpg or .tif files.

All text should be sent in .doc or .docx file, in 12pt Times New Roman font, with no editing. Names in the text should be in **bold** the first time used, then in normal font afterwards.

Thank you

Advertising is accepted.

Positions vacant

1/2 page*	\$110 inc. GST
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Commercial

1/2 page*	\$220 inc. GST
full page#	\$300 inc. GST

Discounts

10% for 2 issues, 15% for 3 issues, 20% for 4 issues.

Inserts

Positions Vacant	\$110 inc. GST
Commercial	\$220 inc. GST

Advertisers must supply their own inserts.

Classifieds

\$0.88 per word including GST.

* 1/2 page: 190mm (w) x 125mm (h) landscape
Full page: 210x297mm portrait, with 3mm bleed all around

Notices pertaining to AICCM activities are free of charge. Advertising for inclusion in body of Newsletter accepted until the 1st day of the month in which the Newsletter is due. Early booking preferable.

Disclaimer: Publication of technical notes or articles with reference to techniques and materials does not necessarily represent an endorsement by AICCM. The Editors and AICCM National Council accept no responsibility for the content or opinions expressed in the AICCM National Newsletter which are solely those of individual contributors. It is the responsibility of authors to ensure content has been approved by appropriate parties, prior to submission to the Editors.

A new vision: redesigning the UC conservation course

A phoenix with problems

The conservation course at the University of Canberra was closed down in 2003 in the face of furious industry opposition. In 2009 it rose again like the proverbial phoenix, but with a new structure that depended heavily on teaching input from heritage institutions in Canberra.

The institutions involved in this new course rose to the challenge and provided some truly excellent and dedicated teaching. Teaching, however, is not the core business of collecting and exhibiting institutions and it can be politically difficult to argue that teaching should take priority over the urgent needs of the next big exhibition or collection management project. Each unit taught through an institution also became a “placement”, which created a major administrative burden as each student had to take multiple placements. Finally, and perhaps most significantly, the traditional model of teaching in the four key specialisations of paper, textiles, objects and paintings split the already small student body into tiny class sizes that were not economically viable.

The viability issue is a worldwide problem, as universities and other teaching institutions are pushed to operate on a cost recovery basis. The near demise of the Textile Conservation Centre (TCC) in the UK shows the vulnerability of courses that have low student numbers and high costs, no matter how good their reputation or how excellent the skills of their graduates.¹ The recent upheavals at the ANU School of Music have also shown that it is not a problem restricted to conservation. Under current funding arrangements in Australia each student brings in a certain amount of money, so if student numbers are low, funding for the course or unit will also be low. A total of 20-22 students in a unit is

reckoned to be necessary to break even, and below this number the unit must either receive funding from elsewhere or be cancelled.²

The University of Canberra needed a course that was sustainable from both a teaching and a financial point of view, and to achieve this David Hallam and myself were invited in 2011 to assist the staff at UC to redesign the conservation course.

A new vision

When David and I began to think about the way conservation was taught we began to wonder whether the traditional model of teaching conservation through the major specialisations of paper, textiles, paintings and objects was really that useful at an undergraduate level. Not only did it divide the student body into tiny (unviable) specialist classes, it divided what the students learnt into silos of knowledge and expertise. Many students also commented that, as beginners in the world of conservation, they felt called upon to decide on an area of specialisation before they were ready to do so, and regretted that they had not had the opportunity to experience working on more diverse types of material and objects before making that choice. Furthermore, a degree at undergraduate level should provide a good, general education rather than highly specialised skills, and it should include a solid grounding in the intellectual and ethical debates of the wider world of heritage, which ultimately form the context – and the boundaries – for the practice of conservation.³

We began to look at the concepts and skills that were common to all areas of conservation, and that could deliver a graduate with a broad set of skills and understandings that they could apply in whatever further study or employment they undertook. Such

a graduate would understand how to work safely in a laboratory or on-site, how to observe carefully and document what they saw, and how to handle and move objects safely. Such a graduate would understand the basic formation, structure and mechanisms of deterioration of a broad range of materials, and have a good working knowledge of how different materials respond to different interventions. They would have good hand-skills and be able to use the typical range of tools and equipment found in conservation laboratories competently and safely. They would be familiar with the principles of scientific reasoning and analysis, and understand the fundamentals of preventive conservation and risk management. They would understand the importance of values and significance in determining an appropriate treatment for an object. And most important of all they would understand how to proceed with care when treating an object, and how to recognise the points where they needed to stop and ask for advice and assistance. A graduate such as this would be an easy person to have in a team, fully equipped with a general skill set, self-pacing, and ready to absorb specialist knowledge as required.

A new curriculum

Armed with this idea, and with close co-operation from Tracy Ireland and John Greenwood at UC, we set about designing a course that would provide these skills. The course we have designed provides core conservation knowledge through five themed units – Materials in Heritage Conservation, Preventive Conservation, Dirt and Cleaning: Philosophy and Techniques, Surface, Colour and Completeness, and Sustainable Repair and Restoration (which focuses on joining materials, and the theory and ethics of repair and restoration).

These units have been combined with existing units in the heritage and museums sections of the course. A Cultural Heritage Field School teaches recording techniques such as photography and drawing, as well as the ability to look at a site, place or object, assess it, and plan for its future. Several units provide students with a wider understanding of the heritage context, including Heritage Philosophy and Ethics, Objects as Material Culture, and People, Place and the Past. Students who want to be conservators will also take a minor in science, which incorporates chemistry and forensic science units, and they have the option to take an Internship Unit in a conservation laboratory. They are also encouraged to take electives from other courses, such as design, which can complement and extend their skills.

One aspect of the course that had proved a stumbling block for many students was the compulsory requirement for them to take first year chemistry. For those with no previous science background, first year chemistry was daunting, and they struggled to connect what they were learning in chemistry with what they were learning in conservation. John Greenwood investigated a number of different options for providing students with the science they needed, but in the end we came to realise that one of the main problems was not the chemistry itself but its timing – hitting students with chemistry in their first year was overwhelming. The most effective solution was to remove chemistry as a compulsory subject and allow students to come to their own understanding of why chemistry is so important to the profession of conservation. Students who want to be professional conservators are still expected to do the science minor, but they can choose when they take it, and it is not a pre-requisite for the conservation units.

New opportunities

Removing pre-requisites from the conservation units has also opened up the opportunity for students who do not intend to be conservators to

take conservation units as electives. In practice this has already allowed students from Architecture and Design to take conservation units. These students feel that a basic understanding of conservation principles and practices will enhance their practice as professionals in other areas, and the Design student has mentioned that the material has induced him to reflect on the longevity and future performance of the materials he uses in his designs. These students do not just add the bums on seats that make units viable; they also add new perspectives and provide new ways of understanding materials.

Input from the many highly skilled conservators in Canberra and around Australia remains a crucial part of the new degree, but that input will be sought in ways that are less onerous for individual institutions than the previous teaching structure, and in ways that will provide more diverse opportunities for students and professional conservators to come together. Skilled conservators, for example, will be sought as mentors and advisors for students, and invited to visit the UC labs (or be visited in their own labs) to discuss objects or treatments with individual students in a one-on-one sharing of ideas and expertise. Paintings conservator David Keany recently visited to talk with three students working on varnished and painted objects, and enjoyed himself so much that he stayed considerably beyond the half hour we asked of him! Jane Wild, of Textile Heritage Conservation, has also visited to talk to students about a painted Indian textile and a flag, and will be returning soon to give a workshop on sewing techniques. We would like to extend these opportunities for students and professional conservators to get together, and would love to hear from any professional conservators who would like to drop in and spend some time with students in this way. This does not require preparation of lesson plans – the important thing is the shared interaction, as students and conservators handle, examine and discuss objects together.

Opportunities will also be sought for professional conservators to give individual lectures or 2-hour workshops on particular aspects of their professional areas. Such workshops would be organised to support and extend other aspects of the unit being taught, and UC staff would be available to help prepare laboratory exercises for the students as necessary.

The tradition of providing opportunities for students to visit professional laboratories will also be continued, and UC will work towards the establishment of a formal mentoring program to link students with professional conservators. These opportunities will provide students with knowledge and contacts, and will offer professional conservators opportunities to meet up and coming students, to canvas projects that might benefit from the research facilities and connections available at the University, and to enjoy the new contacts that these activities will bring.

Action and results

The new course and conservation units were approved in 2012 by the Course Advisory Group (a group of senior conservators external to UC), and UC's Academic Board. They are being delivered for the first time in 2013, as part of the Heritage, Museums and Conservation degree at UC. The new units will provide students with a sound general education in conservation and a solid base on which to build future specialisation, either through workplace experience or through formal postgraduate studies. We envisage that these students will require some workplace training in the specialist requirements of the lab or institution that they join, but they will be equipped to learn quickly, and to be productive members of the team while they undertake that learning journey.

The University has invested strongly in the new course, and from March this year the conservation units will be taught in a dedicated lab in the new laboratory building that is being completed on the UC campus. This will also give students access to knowledge

and equipment from other scientific disciplines, which will particularly useful to students undertaking honours or postgraduate research.

Finally – David and I would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who helped us in doing this redesign work. Conservators around the country took the time to fill out questionnaires about what had been most valuable in their own training, and to fill out logs that gave us an idea of the roles and tasks that most commonly occupy conservator's days. Conservators and students at the 2011 AICCM conference attended a workshop session to brainstorm what a conservator would need in the 21st century to do their job effectively. The staff at UC made us welcome, gave us coffee, and helped us navigate the labyrinthine tracks of university policy. And everyone we have talked to has demonstrated their interest, concern and commitment to the future of the conservation course at UC. It has been a really exciting and uplifting experience, and has given us a vision for the future about which we feel incredibly positive.

If you would like to discuss anything about this article further, we would love to hear from you. Please contact us as follows:

Alison Wain: alison.wain@anu.edu.au

David Hallam: zzdhalla@gmail.com

(Endnotes)

- 1 Samuel Jones and John Holden, 2008. *It's a Material World*, Demos, <http://www.demos.co.uk/publications/materialworld> p. 41.
- 2 The TCC, it should be noted, has survived by being relocated to Glasgow University, but it still does not support its teaching on student funding alone. It now has a significant fundraising program as well, to meet its high teaching costs. See the TCC website at <http://www.textileconservationcentre.co.uk/glasgow/successful-fundraising-campaign-support-glasgow-development>
- 3 The authors of the Getty report *Values and Heritage Conservation* comment that: "Traditional conservation remains the core of the field's activity and its raison d'être, but... the conservation process is best seen more inclusively, encompassing the creation of heritage, interpretation and education, the many efforts of individuals and social groups to be stewards of heritage, and shifting economics and political tides, as well as more traditional practices of conservators, preservationists, curators and other professionals. E. Avrami, R. Mason, and M. de la Torre, M, 2000. *Values and Heritage Conservation*, Los Angeles, CA: Getty Conservation Institute.

Alison Wain

University of Canberra update

– a new laboratory

The University of Canberra is currently constructing a new building which will be home to the laboratories for the Cultural Heritage course. The building, which will also house medical sciences laboratories, is hoped to be complete mid-2013. For those of you who remember the UC campus the building is located on the car park side of Building 3.



Artists impression of the new laboratory building

Marcelle Scott

– an appreciation by two former students

In early 2004, 15 aspiring conservation students began their studies in the new Master of Arts in Cultural Materials Conservation at the University of Melbourne at the Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation (CCMC), it wasn't officially so-named until July that year. Most of us had probably already spoken with Marcelle on a number of occasions as we waited to hear whether a conservation course was going to be available again in Australia and whether Melbourne would take up the mantle. Happily for us and for the profession, Marcelle Scott, Robyn Sloggett and the rest of the team of the Ian Potter Art Conservation Centre as well as Victorian based conservators such as Jenny Dickens pooled their considerable resources to develop the Masters by coursework program to train future conservators.

Our memory of Marcelle from that time is as a dedicated, thoughtful and knowledgeable educator with an unswerving professionalism. This we observed as a student group from the very start of the MA course as she guided us through Conservation Professional Practices, the very first subject we completed. This was an essential subject that presented us with many facets of ethics in conservation, the importance of collegiality within the profession and across allied professions and the public, reminding us of both the big picture and the micro worlds of the profession.

As the Academic Programs Coordinator then and until very recently before she retired from that role, Marcelle was the major contact person for all current and prospective students and despite carrying a phenomenal work-load she always had time for everyone. We all recall having had detailed discussions about conservation issues with Marcelle alongside our recollections of her extremely dry wit.

Marcelle's research into inter-disciplinary pedagogy made certain that we stretched our minds and skills across numerous disciplines within what was already a demanding and challenging course. We came through our training more enlightened than exhausted and we loved every minute of it, so thank you Marcelle Scott.

Alex Ellem and Susie Collis

Two of the inaugural group of CCMC Masters of Cultural Materials Conservation students.

Special Interest Group News

Launch of Electron Special Interest Group

A message from Co-ordinator Peter Shaw, NAA

Hello

I just want to let you know, that at long last the Digital and Audio Visual Heritage SIG has a new website presence and name – Electron. http://www.aiccm.org.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1209&Itemid=210

Why Electron? Well, to mirror Photon and differentiate the aims and activities of the two SIGs.

Why am I contacting you now?

When the SIG was proposed you expressed interest in joining.

Secondly, the AICCM National Conference is being held in Adelaide this year and you are invited, and I encourage you to consider submitting an abstract for a paper that fits the following theme: Digital conservation and conservation of the digital. Other activities are being considered for this year and will be announced on the Electron page of the AICCM website.

Thirdly, please go to the web page and if you wish to contribute content in the form of links to papers, standards. If you know of upcoming events, workshops, conferences...

Contact me through the Electron email address: davhsig@gmail.com

Fourthly, a local group of people will be gathering at the Fellows Bar, (because it's central and has seats) at the ANU on Tuesday 26th of February, 6-7pm to discuss strategies and activities for the group.

Finally, please let me know that you wish to formally join the DAVHSIG by sending your reply to: davhsig@gmail.com

A very final note: for active membership of this or any AICCM SIG you are required to be a financial member of the AICCM

Regards,

Peter

AICCM Bulletin Editor

– Farewell to the old and welcome to the new

Marcelle Scott has retired as Editor of The Bulletin. Marcelle has edited The Bulletin since Volume 29 in 2004. The quality and diversity of papers in Volumes 29 to 33 reflect Marcelle's broad understanding of the profession, her ability to engage others (particularly referees) and her commitment to the highest standards. It is easy to forget that the editorship of a publication such as The Bulletin is complex, particularly a volume such as Special Conference Edition 32 which contained nineteen referred papers. The job is purely voluntary and in her spare time Marcelle was also Academic Programs Coordinator at the Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation (CCMC) at the University of Melbourne. I would like to thank Marcelle on behalf of the membership for her tremendous contribution to the profession as Editor of The Bulletin, and the CCMC for their support. On a personal note I will miss our phone conversations punctuated with laconic wit and words of wisdom. On an up-side Marcelle has volunteered to work with our new Editor Nicole Tse on Volume 34 so the transition will be smooth and seamless.

Nicole has worked alongside Marcelle for many years at CCMC so has a good idea of what the role, and work load, involves. In 2013 Nicole returns to teaching CCMC's Master's program but was previously an Australian Research Council (ARC) Post Doctorate Research Fellow on the ARC Linkage Project 'The Twentieth Century in paint'. Nicole undertook her PhD on 'The Characterization of Canvas painting in Tropical Southeast Asia'. Both projects included strong institutional partnerships in Australia and Southeast Asia, which provided impetus for the founding of the Asia Pacific Twentieth Century Conservation Research Network (APTCCARN). Nicole hopes to engage some of these networks in future issues of The Bulletin. Volume 34 of The Bulletin will showcase papers from the recent 'Meaning of Materials in Modern and Contemporary Art Symposium' co-organized by ARC 'The Twentieth Century Paint' Project and the AICCM SIG at the Gallery of Modern Art/Queensland Art Gallery. The majority of papers are from Australian authors but research from the Philippines,

Netherlands, UK and USA is also represented. Volume 34 will include research on a wide range of topics pertinent to conservators in all fields dealing with contemporary artists, their working methods, and their materials.

The Editor of The Bulletin is supported by the Editorial Committee consisting of myself as Publications Officer and two interested nominated members, currently Amanda Pagliarino, Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art and Catherine Thomson, State Library of New South Wales. We are always looking for contributions, either in full draft format (please consult the AICCM website or past Bulletin's for style guidance) or in early developmental form that may require some assistance to bring to referee stage. We all look forward to bringing you many more volumes of your Bulletin.

Cobus van Breda
(Publications Officer)

The ICOM-CC 17th Triennial Conference in Melbourne 2014

– an update from the Victorian State division of AICCM

The Victorian State division of the AICCM will provide assistance to the ICOM-CC 2014 Conference National Organising Committee by providing on the ground support to the committee in Melbourne. This has been made possible via the establishment of eight sub-committees which will operate as discrete working groups undertaking various planning and administrative tasks which will in turn support the ICOM – CC National Organising Committee in their delivery of the 2014 conference.

The sub-committees have now been established and now on behalf of AICCM Victorian division, I invite the broader AICCM membership to get involved too; please review the outline of the sub-committees which has been provided care of the National Organising Committee. Certain sub-committees will definitely need our membership represented from the other states in order to deliver some of the outcomes, especially around regional engagement and also for technical visits and the planning of outreach programs and workshops. Should you wish to express your interest in joining one of the sub-committees, please contact the Victorian division chair on the email address provided at the end of this article.

The involvement of the Victorian AICCM membership and more specifically, the Victorian state division of AICCM came about because we launched our popular 2013 *Off-the-Record* evening lecture series in February with a 'brainstorming' workshop which aimed to generate and collect ideas about the kind of conference that we not only wish to participate in but also help to deliver. The evening was a



Conference brainstorming meeting

great success, with nearly 40 Victorian AICCM members in attendance and many of those (if not all) indicating a willingness to assist in the conference planning and delivery.

The 17th Triennial ICOM-CC Conference in September 2014 will be our chance to draw the attention of our international colleagues to AICCM, the excellent work that we do as conservation professionals in all of the State and National Cultural institutions and in private practice, and we mustn't forget to mention that we can show-off the beautiful countryside of Australia to our international visitors. For those members who have had the opportunity to experience an inspirational conference in Europe, Asia or North America please now consider how you can contribute to the 2014 ICOM-CC conference so that the Australian conference experience is a fantastic one for our visitors.

May I take this opportunity to remind **AICCM** members that taking out a membership with **ICOM Australia** will

entitle you to discounted conference registration for the conference in September 2014. This is not the only benefit of membership; being an **ICOM Australia member** entitles you to free entry to many museums and galleries across Europe and North America (and some in Australia) which represents considerable value for the membership fee of \$140.00 per year.

Susie Collis on behalf of the AICCM
Victorian division
Email: susanna.collis@dpcd.vic.gov.au

Web Links:

The 17th Triennial ICOM-CC conference website <http://www.icom-cc.org/254/triennial-conferences/17th-triennial-conference,-melbourne,-australia/>

Join ICOM Australia and ICOM-CC <http://icom.org.au/site/membersjoin.php>

<http://www.icom-cc.org/171/create-an-account/>

The ICOM-CC 17th Triennial Conference Sub Committees

The Trade fair sub committee

- Think of trade shows you have been to; what did they do well? What wasn't done well?
- Can you suggest any companies or types of companies that should be asked to participate?
- What would you like to see at a trade show that you may not have seen before?

Receptions and outreach events sub committee (during and post conference)

We are anticipating an attendance of at least 600 people for the opening night drinks and dinner

- What activities are on your top 5 for international visitors? Both in Victoria and interstate
- What places are on your top 5 for international visitors? Both in Victoria and interstate
- What are your favourite dining and drinking places in Melbourne?

Fundraising subcommittee

Which companies/businesses both locally in Victoria or Nationally might sponsor different aspects of the conference including printing, transport, food?

The Printing, product and promotion sub committee.

This includes the creation of the conference satchels and associated product

What items should we include in the satchels?

- What is the best satchel gift you have received at a conference?
- How can we advantageously incorporate the use social media into this conference?

Technical visits and associated programs

Things to consider for technical visits: if in Melbourne (during the conference) expect up to 40 persons per visit; and must be no longer than a return trip of 4.5 hours from the Melbourne Convention Centre and it must have a reasonable cost attached to it (or be free if possible)

- What types of technical visits would you like to see on the program?

- Which organisations, cultural heritage practices or programs do you think would be of interest to visiting cultural heritage professionals?
- Think about one technical visit you really enjoyed. What was it about the experience that made it a positive one?
- Think about one technical visit you did not enjoy. What was it about the experience that made it a negative one?

Regional engagement

- How can we embody the theme of the conference: *Building Strong Culture through Conservation* through our engagement activities?
- Which organisations in the Asia-Pacific are key to cultural heritage preservation? What types of regional engagement activities could we include?

Information and communications management

- Documenting organising processes, keeping files and records
- Maintaining a database of useful contacts

The Meaning of Materials in Modern and Contemporary Art

AICCM Painting SIG + 20th Century in Paint Symposium, December 2012

Symposium Review

Alex Ellem
Conservator of Paintings, CCMC

The 2012 Painting SIG Symposium 'The Meaning of Materials in Modern and Contemporary Art' was a grand success. The event coincided with the opening weekend of the 7th Asia Pacific Triennial (APT7) at QAG | GOMA, which was a hive of activity with swarms of curators buzzing through exhibition galleries.

The proceedings commenced with keynote addresses by the **Director** and the **Assistant Director** of the **National Museum of the Philippines**, namely **Jeremy Barnes** and **Ana Labrador** that touched on themes of the Symposium and APT7. They spoke about ethical and practical conservation issues concerning historic and contemporary artworks in the museum in the tropics. Barnes' exploration of strategies for preventive conservation highlighted the necessity of preserving both tangible and intangible elements of art works and cultural heritage. Ana drew from anthropology and her interest in the intersection of indigenous and contemporary art to develop a scientific approach to artist interviews within the museum context combining traditional and innovative strategies. Together their presentations reflected the spectrum of complexities in conservation today.

Although the symposium papers looked at conservation issues in different contexts and times, they often revealed repeating patterns and problems. In a bracket of talks focused on understanding artist materials from 1940 to 1970, **Sarah Hillary**, **Principal Conservator, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki**, and **Helen Weidenhofer**, **Assistant Director, Paintings, Objects**



Robyn Sloggett addressing the December symposium. Photograph by Natasha Harth, QAGOMA 2012

& Projects, Artlab Australia, spoke about how experimentation with new materials, especially synthetic emulsion paints, was encouraged at art schools in Auckland and Adelaide from the mid-twentieth century. Exposure to international contemporary art stimulated the exploration of new materials, which now provide today's conservators with a host of issues to grapple with.

Among the presentations a strong contingent of papers emanated from research at the University of Melbourne with findings from 'The Twentieth Century in Paint', Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Project, the ARC Centre of Excellence for Free Radical Chemistry and Biotechnology, and staff and students of the Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation.

Nitroxide and nitric oxide were the subjects of three papers by PhD candidates of the **ARC Centre of Excellence for Free Radical Chemistry and Biotechnology**. **Melina Glasson** explored the ability of profluorescent

nitroxides to switch fluorescence on and off, which could make them highly useful in research to identify materials or chemical or biological processes. Nitroxides were discussed by **Stefanie –Ann Alexander**, who is researching their use in controlling biofilms that damage cultural materials. **Caroline Kyi**, on the other hand, talked about her research into nitric oxide and its use to reduce bio-deterioration of cultural materials and thus the need for toxic chemicals. We will continue to watch this space with interest!

Robyn Sloggett, **Director, Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation (CCMC), University of Melbourne**, presented a keynote address co-authored with **Marcia Langton**, **Professor and Chair of Australian Indigenous Studies, University of Melbourne** highlighting an exhibition that revealed the ongoing influence in 20th century Aboriginal art of trading and cultural links between the Chinese, Macassans and Indigenous Australians that started in the 18th century.

Echoing this historic cultural exchange, the exhibition was shown in Shanghai as part of the ‘Year of Australian Culture in China’. Two other papers dealt with Aboriginal art. **Jenny O’Connell, Paintings Conservator, CCMC**, spoke about her thesis project that centered around developing a conservation/preservation strategy to meet the needs of Aboriginal community art centres in preserving their collections in a culturally appropriate and effective manner. **Sharon Alcock, Paintings Conservator, National Gallery of Australia** explored the use of traditional materials in contemporary Aboriginal art, providing insights into the artist intention, technique and conservation problems of works by River Thomas, Lindsay Harris and Christopher Pease. Their research has made important contributions to our understanding of contemporary Aboriginal art and associated conservation issues.

Gillian Osmond, PhD candidate, University of Queensland and Paintings Conservator, QAG | GOMA, has been investigating the deterioration of zinc oxide in oil paintings for some time. Her research concerning this issue in five paintings of the 20th century Vietnamese artist, Nguyen Trang Kiêm, revealed works rich in ZnO and obvious deterioration. Even as a minor component, ZnO is strongly reactive and drives deterioration. She discussed the likelihood that the formation of zinc stearate is a trigger for instability. Some of her comments had all of us thinking we should revisit our cross-sections for zinc.

Nicole Tse, ARC Post Doctoral Fellow, CCMC used a case study of Yong Mun Sen’s use of materials in his oil paintings to highlight the complexities of accessing archival material in Malaysia thanks to the destruction of war. She outlined a full palette of strategies to identify artists’ materials, ranging from oral histories through economic histories and directories of trade and tariffs in other countries to scientific analysis. She recounted a magic research moment

of finding a massive repository of useful documents when going to an interview. Moments like these are treasures that keep researchers enthralled after so many lost files, missing pages and other negative results.

The Symposium wrapped up with reflections on the ‘The Twentieth Century in Paint’ ARC Linkage Project. It started by bringing many partners together to fill some of the gaps in knowledge of 20th century paints and has resulted in the broad array of findings discovered at the symposium. Matters for future exploration include the archiving of information and enabling access to it, finding our links with scientists, developing partnerships across disciplines and cultures, and the need to grow the discipline and advocate for it in institutions and to the public. It is just a matter of time, one imagines, before the next CCMC project kicks off.

Overall, it was an excellent symposium: a feast of ideas and information. Presentations highlighted and promoted the collaboration between conservators and curators, scientists, artists, artists’ assistants, and indigenous communities in word and practice. The event ran well thanks to the labours of the

organizers. No small feat as many were preparing and installing artworks just prior to the opening of the APT.

The symposium was a joint venture between AICCM, QAG | GOMA, and ‘The Twentieth Century in Paint’, Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Project headed by the Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation (CCMC), University of Melbourne.

Another view

Jennifer Walker, Asian Paintings Conservator

Australia’s place on the world map among arts experts has been highlighted again in this remarkable symposium. The Meaning of Materials in Modern and Contemporary Art at Queensland’s Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA) brought together presenters from the Twentieth Century in Paint Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Project, and the AICCM Paintings Special Interest Group, along with national and international arts specialists. Celebrating diversity and connections between Asia-Pacific and Australian arts, evolving perspectives



Tour of QAGOMA Conservation lab with Paintings Conservator Anne Carter, December 2012. Photograph: Sarah Hillary

were presented regarding cultural influences on artists' choice of materials, their techniques, and scientific case studies for preserving contemporary arts.

The audience of nearly 80 people was taken for a tour of continuing influences on Aboriginal arts, activated along early trade routes between Sulawesi and northern coastlines of Arnhem Land, by University of Melbourne Professors Robyn Sloggett and Marcia Langton. Travelling vicariously with curator of Pacific Art, Ruth McDougall, we discovered how QAGOMA commissioned Papua New Guinea artists to create spirit house exhibits for the 7th Asia Pacific Triennial, with consideration for future conservation needs. I remain impressed with the significance of these artworks which carry creation stories, as outstanding examples of active preservation of contemporary arts from their inception.

With New York MoMA paintings conservator Michael Duffy, we experienced sub-surface X-ray views for treatments on the encaustic wax sculpture and painting techniques of artists including Jasper Johns. From the Getty Conservation Institute, Tom Lerner presented conservation repairs for viscous surface texture of a large (12 x 8 feet) cast resin sculpture, aligned with a living artist's original intent. TATE Britain's Senior Conservation Scientist, Bronwyn Ormsby, detailed research strides and aqueous cleaning impacts on modern acrylic paintings, sparking discussions about slating

the next Cleaning Acrylic Paintings (CAPs) Workshop in Sydney in late 2013.

Australian conservators contributed informative dialogues on 20th century painting materials used by local artists. Advances in Synchrotron imaging of Streeton (and Degas) paintings in the National Gallery of Victoria collection, conducted by senior conservator David Thurrowgood, revealed unexpected underpaintings. National Gallery of Australia conservator, Sharon Alcock, discussed Rover Thomas' techniques for ochres, binders, and the use of local resins and gums. Art Gallery of New South Wales' head of paintings conservation, Paula Dredge, in detecting binders using Fourier Transform Infrared (FTIR) and Gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC-MS), has confirmed that Sidney Nolan's iconic painting of Ned Kelly's black helmets required a departure from his usual Ripolin® brand oil based paint. QAGOMA conservator Anne Carter gave a behind-the-scenes tour of the conservation lab. Her presentation discussed unconventional artist Ian Fairweather's life in relation to his use of some unstable artist pigments. Conserved Fairweather paintings now on exhibit illuminate degrees of overlap between disciplines of paintings and paper. These information exchanges on recent artist materials, techniques, and developments in conservation science, are significantly complementing conservation treatment processes.

Having previously attended an international symposium on Conservation Ethics held in Seoul, the American Textile, and Art Conservators' conferences held in Honolulu, I consider this symposium in Queensland highlighted the value of actively engaging in dialogue with our colleagues near and abroad. As my first time attending an AICCM Paintings Group conference, I gained a new appreciation for sharing information between artists, curators, scientists, and art conservators. Further, gaining new resources inspires my own research and work on early arts traditions of passing on skills and knowledge for conserving paintings on paper and silk. Many thanks for the excellence that organizers and participants brought to this noteworthy symposium.

Conference Report

AIC Photographic Materials Group & ICOM-CC Photographic Materials Working Group Joint Meeting, Wellington, NZ

11-15 February 2013

Cheryl Jackson with Pip Morrison, Andrea Wise, Jennifer Lloyd, Alice Cannon, Kerry Yates and Shingo Ishikawa

For one week in February, the second EVER Joint Meeting of the AIC Photographic Materials Group, and the ICOM-CC Photographic Materials Working Group was held between several venues in Wellington, centred around the National Library of New Zealand and the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.



Figure 1: Te Papa Tongarewa

The week started with a choice of workshops and tours on the Monday and Tuesday. The workshops I attended were both on modern colour photographic materials and were presented by Sylvie Penichon from the Amon Carter Museum of American Art in Fort Worth, Texas.

The first day saw a small group of us having a review of colour photographic techniques, their physical make-up, their identification and their preservation needs. This was followed by a practical session in the Te Papa Paper Conservation Lab where stations were set up to practice our identification skills, have a play with solvents and surface cleaning and also to try retouching chromogenic materials.



Figure 2: Colour photo ID session, Te Papa Paper Lab

Tuesday's workshop was held at the National Library of New Zealand to a larger audience, and concentrated on contemporary photographic materials and their preservation, eg. how does one conserve an image made of grass? One interesting observation from this talk is that with digital materials, new products are being produced and becoming obsolete before any permanence testing can be carried out, and before their components can be analysed. The science of preservation can't keep up!

The Joint Meeting was officially opened that night at the Library – a Mihi Whakatau was performed to welcome us all. A female Maori elder sang us into the Library foyer, and was, in return, welcomed by another elder singing us into the space. Speeches followed from a local Maori elder, the Minister responsible for the Library, the Director of the Library, and Mark Strange, the Head of the organising committee.

Wednesday brought the start of the papers, and they hit with a bang. We were introduced to Electron

Backscattered Diffraction (EBSD) which allowed the examination of the orientation of gold crystals on a gilded daguerreotype surface, used in combination with Energy Dispersive X-ray Spectroscopy to show the chemical composition of the surface. These two analytical techniques allowed, for the first time, the mapping of the crystal structure on the daguerreotype and how these crystals may allow silver particles to migrate between them, which explains why gilded daguerreotypes still tarnish (I think). This was followed by extraordinary images of mould growth on daguerreotype plates:

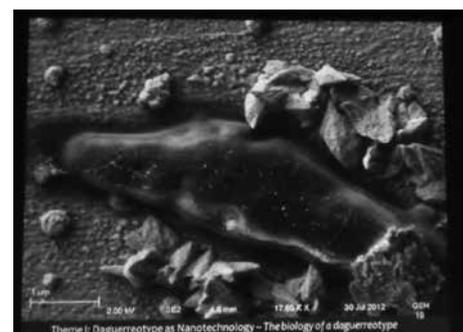


Figure 3: The bio-receptivity of the Daguerreotype surface

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Workshop Review

AICCM Objects SIG Conservation of Outdoor Sculpture and Monuments Workshop

November 13-16 2012, Melbourne, Victoria

In November 2012, I attended the workshop on the **Conservation of outdoor sculpture and monuments** organized by the AICCM Objects SIG with the support of the Gordon Darling Foundation and hosted at Museum Victoria. Aimed at the mid-career conservator, participants for this workshop came from a range of backgrounds and across Australia and New Zealand for this rare opportunity to work with Katharine Untch, Director of Conservation at ARG Conservation Services, who has over 25 years experience in the conservation of three-dimensional art, architecture and archaeological materials and has conducted similar workshops of this nature in the USA as professional development for AIC members.

The workshop covered topics including the current best practices for preserving outdoor sculpture, preventive conservation measures and working within the varied contexts of museums, galleries, public art and private collections, as well as, graffiti protection and removal, cleaning, coatings and materials substrate repair. Utilising a number of traditional (face to face lectures, seminars and group

discussions) and digital (streamed webinars) formats with hands on lab sessions and walking tours, the workshop was designed to keep all participants highly engaged and active over the intensive four-day period.

The first two sessions on Day 1 were presented in a traditional format, with guest presenter Eddie Butler-Bowdon, Program Manager of the City of Melbourne's Art and Heritage Collection, speaking on his experience dealing with managing a public outdoor collection and some of the specific issues faced by public art managers such as the lack of funds and staff, developing and ensuring the performance of maintenance plans and importantly for us, where and how conservators fit into that process. It was great to gain a different perspective on how public art collections are managed, especially for those of us who work primarily within the museum environment. Session 2 emphasised the importance of conservation methodology and the decision-making process in preserving outdoor sculpture collections: that the final treatment was not the focus as much as how the decision was arrived at and why.

These intensive sessions were followed by a walking tour of some Melbourne city sculptures so that the theory gained in session 2 could be applied practically. Walking around the city was a fantastic opportunity to reacquaint oneself with the diversity of sculpture available to the inhabitants of Melbourne and its surrounds. Animated discussions took place at each of the sculptures addressing their condition and the subsequent decision-making processes that would take place when developing a conservation plan. No wonder a well-deserved break was required at a local café for afternoon tea!



Group discussions on walking tour
Photo: Michelle Berry

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Fortunately, it all got easier from there – fantastic papers about collaborative outreach programs assisting to preserve the documentary photographic history of countries all over the world, various exhibition mounting techniques from daguerreotypes to contemporary large format prints, more achievable analytical techniques using XRF on image forming materials and FTIR on varnish layers on tintypes and digitisation and photographs in the digital era.

All of the Australian papers were fantastic, of course, imparting information not just on their topics, but also on how different the environment for preservation activities and research is here in the southern hemisphere compared to our far better funded northern cousins. We just don't have the luxury of time, staff or money to carry out such in-depth analysis of the materials in our collections. For example, the Library of Congress has 150 staff in its Conservation Division,

including 25 conservators, four of whom are dedicated Photo Conservators.

The opportunity to catch up with friends and colleagues from here and overseas is always welcome, and the informal exchange of information over morning coffee is as valuable as the talks themselves.



Group discussions on walking tour
Photo: Michelle Berry

Days 2 and 3 began with online webinar sessions with Andrew Lins, Head of Conservation at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, who is a leading expert in metals corrosion and protective coatings and Lorraine Schnabel, a private conservator specializing in stone and masonry conservation. As a first timer to the use of webinars, I found it an incredibly effective method for accessing expertise outside of Australia with workshop participants able to ask questions freely of the presenters which were answered in real time. It certainly appeared to open up avenues for further collaboration and an exchange of ideas with the use of such technology becoming more widely available.

The afternoons on these days consisted of heading out to Museum Victoria's Moreland complex to conduct hands on testing of anti graffiti materials and protective coatings and doing some practical work at a number of sculptures located at the University of Melbourne. In the lab, a number of products had been sourced for testing on pre-made mock-ups involving different media on various surfaces. Working in small groups, it was great to step away from the theory and look at the practical aspects of cleaning and evaluating coating systems to determine how well these could be applied, removed and maintained in a number of situations. At the University of Melbourne, again, the workshop participants were divided in to small groups to discuss a sculpture and come up with a treatment and maintenance plan for the object. This session was invaluable as it provided

a situation in which all aspects of the object was discussed with a view to creating a plan that was functional and had scope to cater to different levels of resources available to the owner of the object.



Hands on lab session
Photos: Michelle Berry

The last day of the workshop was spent reviewing the various treatment and maintenance plans that each group had developed and had time to discuss other sculptures and objects that workshop participants had previously worked on at various institutions. All in all, the four-day workshop proved to be very intensive with a lot of material that was covered but was so rewarding in terms of the knowledge that was obtained from the presenters and our fellow professional colleagues.

I would like to thank Helen Privett, Objects SIG Convenor for her time in organizing this workshop, as well as all the volunteers who helped make this workshop run smoothly and cater to all of the participants needs. Special thanks to Katy Untch who was so generous with her time and knowledge, as well as, to all the other presenters who took part in the workshop.

Reviewed by Isa Loo
Objects Conservator, Western Australian
Museum

Course Review

Preserving Outdoor Sculpture and Monuments

Preserving Outdoor Sculpture and Monuments, Presented by the AICCM Objects Special Interest Group with the generous support of the Gordon Darling Foundation, Melbourne Museum, 8-9 November 2012.

I attended this two day course with the hope of learning more about outdoor sculpture and monument preservation as a possible occupational field. The course was aimed at individuals responsible for the care of outdoor sculpture and monuments and while the majority of participants were collection managers from local government councils I was glad to see a small number of conservators in the group. This two-workshop was led by Katherine Untch, a San Francisco based conservator who has worked in the field of outdoor sculpture and monument conservation for over 25 years. The first day of the course was devoted to understanding the preservation issues of outdoor work. Katherine covered issues such as maintenance programs, commissioning new works as well as what to look for when seeking conservation advice.

The second day of the course began by breaking the participants into small groups, ensuring the conservators were equally dispersed. Our groups then set about creating a process for assessing a proposed sculpture installation. Groups considered possible installation, preservation and maintenance guidelines as well as discussing the stages at which conservation advice should be sought. Katherine Untch led an informative and often entertaining course which created a fascinating opportunity for conservators and council collection managers to discuss and share ideas.

Jane Manallack, Objects Conservator

The 2012 winners of the ADFAS/AICCM Prize

for Conservation Student of the Year

The Association of Australian Decorative and Fine Arts Societies (ADFAS) generously sponsors awards for Conservation Student of the Year for both university programs, Canberra and Melbourne.

The prize is awarded to a student who achieves a high academic standard in their studies, and who has also been actively involved in the profession in a meaningful way.

In 2012 the awards were presented to Lisa Yeats from Melbourne and Sara Freeman of Canberra.

We asked each of them some questions about themselves, the profession and their aims and ambitions.

Lisa Yeats

Give us a brief biography of yourself

I am a recent graduate of the Masters of Materials Conservation course at the Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation, The University of Melbourne, Australia, where I specialised in objects conservation. I have a passion for textiles and Southeast Asian art and artefacts, and am specifically interested in the conservation of home wares and domestic objects. I am also interested in the relationship between the conservation of cultural materials and development and as have recently returned from a research trip to Timor-Leste. I have completed an internship in the textile conservation laboratory at Artlab Australia in Adelaide. I have also held volunteer positions at Heritage Victoria, The Australian Institute of Archaeology, The Melbourne Jewish Museum, and RSL ANZAC Village War Museum. I have an undergraduate degree in History and after graduating hope to secure an internship at a museum or gallery in the USA.

When did you first find out about conservation?

When I was an undergraduate volunteering at the Australian Institute of Archaeology wondering what an earth I was going to do with an Arts degree in History and Archaeology. The Director there suggested the course, initially I was put off by the chemistry component but I found out about the Chemistry Bridging Course and the rest is history!

What made you decide you wanted to be a conservator?

I have always loved museums, artefacts and learning about different cultures. Growing up I wanted to be an



archaeologist but after my undergraduate degree I was a bit disillusioned with what that actually involved. When I found out about conservation it seemed to combine many different areas I really love and the prospect of being able to make a career doing something I am passionate about was extremely appealing.

Why is conservation important?

I think conservation is important as a way of establishing, celebrating and maintaining connections with our histories and cultures.

What was your favourite student experience?

It's too hard to choose just one! Being involved with the RSL ANZAC Village War Museum Narrabeen conservation and cataloguing project throughout the last year has been a really unique and rewarding experience. It was such a privilege to be allowed access to the Village museum collection, residents and staff to complete my thesis research.

I was also fortunate enough to travel to Timor-Leste in January of this year as part of the Building Legacy in Contemporary Art Programs in Timor-Leste research

project. The whole trip was incredible but the highlight for me was catching a 6-seater plane up into the hills to help with an exhibition Timor Aid had organised in Maliana.

Both very different but very amazing experiences that gave me a great insight into the wide applicability of conservation training.

What do you see as the big issues facing the conservation field?

As a recent graduate job availability and job security seem to be issues of valid concern, I guess this reflects the undervaluing and underfunding of the arts in general.

Finding new and improved ways to raise the profile of the profession is important also.

What are your future plans?

I am heading off to America in May to present a poster on my thesis research at the AIC Conference in Indianapolis. I am currently applying to do a few internships at different institutions while I am over there and I will just see where the year takes me.

Where would you like to be in 10 years?

I'm not entirely sure, hopefully still enjoying my work!

I hope to have spent some time working in the American South, at the Historic Royal Palaces in the UK and in Southeast Asia.

What would you tell a young person thinking of entering a conservation course?

Don't let the chemistry deter you, if you're passionate about it then go for it.

Sara Freeman

Give us a brief biography of yourself

I was born in London, and grew up in Melbourne in a family of writers and painters. Studied music until halfway through a BA I realised I wanted to paint more than anything. So I set off to see the world, travelling and painting throughout my 20's living in Europe, India, Japan before returned to live on the far south coast of NSW, painting, exhibiting and working part time. In 2002 I came to Canberra School of Art to study print media and drawing. In 2009 I enrolled in the first intake of the new UC Conservation course. Within a year of commencing the course I was lucky to work as a preventive conservation assistant with Lisa Addison at the NGA for a year, then as an assistant conservator at Art and Archival with Kim Morris, and on various other projects in wallpaper conservation with Rosemary McDonald and Sarah Bunn in Sydney. I still have a few more units of the UC course to complete this year, and now work full time as a paper conservator at the National Library of Australia. I still find time to paint and have one or two exhibitions a year as well.

When did you first find out about conservation?

After art school, while concentrating on my career as a painter, I had a stint of working at the National Gallery of Australia in visitor services. This is when I learned about this wonderful out of bounds place called the conservation laboratory, where works were examined microscopically and restored for exhibition or preserved to save them from disintegration. I was determined to get into that lab!

What made you decide you wanted to be a conservator?

Conservation was the first job that I ever heard of that could use the 20 years of knowledge gained from an art practice, plus had the qualities of focused, patient, quiet work including investigation and problem solving. I love the ongoing quest for mastery of materials and refinement of



treatments that enables us to do our job of preserving endangered objects to forever finer levels. It complements my endeavours as a painter.

Why is conservation important?

Objects hold memories and significance that can make them important to preserve for as long as possible. I think cultural memories are important to all of us, giving shape and richness to our personal lives in countless ways. Whether we are talking about an exquisite painting or a letter or a map, these things might be very important to someone in the future, trying to unravel something lost. It is amazing how much can be learned from a forensic examination of a physical object.

What was your favourite student experience?

There were so many! I loved the chance the UC course gave us to do a semester of practical training in so many different institutions, giving us experience of the different approaches to conservation work in archives, museums, galleries, libraries and private practice.

What do you see as the big issues facing the conservation field?

There seems to be a lot of conservation institutions and training facilities closing down around the world as part of the GFC insecurities, but at the same time I think we are moving into an era where climate change and extreme events are causing more threat to cultural materials. I believe

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Christmas in the divisions

NSW AICCM 2012 Christmas party

Sheldon Teare, Silvia da Rocha,
Adam Godijn

The 2012 NSW AICCM Christmas party was held at History House; a beautiful heritage listed building located on Macquarie St, Sydney across from the Botanical Gardens. The event itself was held in their Victorian drawing room amongst period furniture, grand oil paintings, antique pianos and excellent company. The turnout was far greater than anticipated, some fearing we would need to turn people away!

The committee had a difficult task ahead of them when organising the party, feeling the strain of meeting high expectations set by the success of the 2011 Christmas party held in Darling Harbour aboard the tall ship James Craig. While the venue didn't have the view of the James Craig, it certainly made up for it in atmosphere. Nearly half of NSW members turned up! An

incredible 60 plus people attended the event, representing a wide range of professions and workplaces. It was great to see the diverse members of our profession mingling and socializing, seeing skilled professionals, sole privateers, dedicated institutionalists, new blood and old blood chatting away over cosmos and quiches. The food itself was a spectacle to behold, with dishes prepared by a number of keen committee member chefs. The plates were numerous, varied and delicious.

A huge thank you must be said to those who provided the committee with prizes for the raffle. Your support is greatly appreciated! One last thank you

everyone who attended and to all NSW committee members. We look forward to the 2013 party and hope it will be as enthusiastically attended.



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the skills of conservators will be needed more and more to preserve what remains important to us through changing times.

The threat to conservation education is growing as universities become primarily driven by economic motives. As the universities are demanding unlimited class sizes, maybe we have to accept that we supplement broader conservation training with apprenticeships and ongoing master classes to keep the skills being handed on. I think having a wider base to ones initial conservation training has definite advantages over diving straight into a narrow specialized field.

What are your future plans?

I am hoping to find somewhere in India to do an internship on Indian miniature painting conservation with the help of my ADFAS prize money. I hope to open up conservation connections into asia, where I would love to have the chance to work on occasional projects.

Where would you like to be in 10 years?

I would like to have enough good training and experience under my belt to be working as a private conservator on periodical projects in exotic locations and closer to home, with good chunks of time in between to focus on

painting in my south coast studio, or pottering in the garden!

What would you tell a young person thinking of entering a conservation course?

Go for it! If you like fine, focused, detailed hands on work, I think we conservators have one of the best jobs in the world. Take advantage of being a student to offer yourself as a volunteer everywhere you can think of. The more experience you can get the more appealing you'll be as a prospective employee.

ACT Division Christmas Trivia Night (and introducing Konservator Ken...)

The Canberra AICCM community gathered at the National Archives for their traditional quiz and pizza night on the 27th of November, hosted by Ian Batterham, Trivia Master.

The party itself was a great success with more attendees than usual. The quiz was judged to be a difficult one, but contestants rose to the occasion and ultimately the team from the University of Canberra were declared victorious.

For their efforts, the UC students received our perpetual trophy: Konservator Ken!

For non-ACT people, here is a potted biography of Konservator Ken:

His origins are now lost in the mists of time, but we think Ken became the Trivia Night Prize sometime around the year 2001. Following his presentation to successive winning teams, it has become traditional for Ken to travel widely, and as a result he has been to such far-flung places as the middle east, Europe, the US and New Zealand, returning with photographic evidence (much of it scandalous).

Ken's personal life has been varied and sometimes troubled. He has experimented with a punk period and being a Bali beach bum as well as facial glitter and guyliner, before trying to settle down with Polynesian dancer Leilani whom he met on a previous visit to the UC Conservation labs. However, Leilani failed to hold Ken's interest, and he has now gambled his future happiness on mail-order bride Paleontologist Barbie.

So, once again, UC is proud to be hosting Ken as a guest scholar, and his new partner will also be encouraged to participate in research and scholarship. Will this new relationship be a solid rock or will Ken will once more leave the straight and narrow path...we will find out at this year's Christmas party!

Emails

Ken has a new home and a new girl!

Romance was in the air last night when confirmed bachelor Conservator Ken met Palaeontologist Barbie at the AICCM ACT Division Xmas party. Ken and Barbie will have plenty of time to get to know each other in their new home at the UC Cultural Heritage laboratory. It is hoped that they might also spend some time 'in the field' in the coming year. It might be too early to say, but do we hear wedding bells? Will Ken, with trembling voice, pop the question over a brontosaurus femur? Only time will tell. You can see the chemistry between the two in the attached photo. Pay no attention to the Polynesian floozy (Leilani) lurking behind the couple - she was never in the race!

All the best for the Christmas Season!

Ian Batterham, AICCM ACT Division President



Konservator Ken meets Paleontologist Barbie with Leilani looking on



Ken in Paris - when he was single

Open Letter to Ken,

Oh Ken, what have you done? I know when you met Leilani it seemed like some casual holiday fling, but she left her home and family and deferred her

ethnomusicology degree to be with you. I know the language barrier has been an issue, but from things she has said to me, she truly loves you Ken. I know she is a little older, she's been around and maybe she needs a new battery, but she is such a sweet person. I have never seen her without a smile on her face, even in the most unpleasant circumstance (AICCM Christmas party for example, where you behaved very badly flaunting your new "relationship").

Wake up and smell the methyl cellulose Ken! This Paleo Barbie, what has she got that Leilani doesn't? Fine, she has nicer legs and looks good in khaki micro-shorts but have you seen the accessories? Who will be carrying her bags at the airport and in the field? Who is going to pay for her hand-made stiletto desert boots? And do you really know who she is? Does she? How many well documented careers has she had over the years? Teacher, doctor, vet, astronaut, starfleet officer, for God's sake she's even been a mermaid! It says Paleontologist on her shiny, new box, but that's just a label. Show me the piece of paper. None of it is real Ken, not even her looks. We all know she's had "work" done. How much of her is plastic, eh? Don't let her perky breasts and tiny waist fool you, she's over fifty. Bet she hadn't told you that.

Still I know Leilani can stand on her own one foot, and she will always have a home at UC. Let's hope this Barbie girl can keep up with your non-stop, party lifestyle. Don't come limping back if it all goes horribly wrong, that's all I can say.

From A Friend

After the great meeting of minds last night, we are now proud to be hosting Ken as a guest scholar. His new partner will also be encouraged to participate in research and scholarship.

Somewhat disappointed in Ian's floozieist remarks. We have a very strong equal opportunity policy here, back to some awareness work for Ian!.

All the best for Christmas and watch this space.

John Greenwood

Institutional News

New South Wales

Sydney University Museums

In support of the Macleay Museum's "Victorian Taxidermy" project we have been able to employ two conservators for short term contracts in the Conservation Lab. Sasha Stollman is working full time, assessing natural history specimens and proposing conservation treatments. From early March, she will start treating those with high priority, both in terms of curatorial significance and conservation needs.

Ana Barros Soares has been working two days a week, using an XRF analyser loaned by Bruker Elemental, gathering data on residual chemicals on bird, mammal and fish skins. While Ana has been running the data collection, **Alayne Alvis** has been pointing the analyser at the points of interest. Once the data analysis is complete, Ana will move onto devising and fabricating storage and handling supports for selected natural history objects. Alayne is now finishing off preparation of objects for the Macleay Museum's "True to Form" exhibition of teaching models from the 18th to 20th centuries. Her next project will be preparing for the re-working of the Nicholson Museum's Middle East section, which will feature archaeological sites associated with the University.

Art Gallery NSW

Frame Section

As of January 2013 **Basia Dabrowa** has returned to her permanent part-time employment of 2.5 days per week. Currently she is working on frames for the *Sydney Moderns* exhibition in the middle of the year, and is continuing

to take care of frames for the Gallery's photographic collection.

Marina Terwald, a student from the University of Applied Sciences and Arts Hildesheim (HAWK), Germany, is completing her five month internship in both the Frames and Paintings sections. She is currently working on a complicated frame treatment for Lamberts painting *Still life (Pan is dead)*. After removal of several layers of over-painting, Marina is now working on replacing missing ornamentation, after which she will commence the final stage of treatment; gilding using non-traditional techniques.

Malgorzata Sawicki is finishing treatment of the frame of Etienne Dinet's painting *Snake Charmer* in addition to managing the Frames Conservation Section. Margaret is also coordinating frame conservation/reproduction projects for the *Sydney Moderns* exhibition. Regretfully, **Stephanie Limoges** has finished her contract employment in the Frames Conservation Section, although we all hope that her departure is temporary.

Tom Langlands (conservation department mount-cutter), has commenced a part-time traineeship with **David Butler** (conservation department reproduction frame-maker), making reproduction frames for the AGNSW collection. His three-year training, which has been sponsored by the AGNSW benefactors, involves two days per week working at David's workshop in Katoomba. **Lydia Dowman** has joined the conservation team in mount-cutting two days per week, replacing Tom while he is training.

Paintings Section

Paula Dredge has returned to full time work with her thesis almost complete. She is currently working

on paintings for the *Sydney Moderns* exhibition including researching Roy de Maistre's complex colour music works. **Simon Ives** has been examining Frederic Leighton's painting *Winding the Skein* and using the Gallery's new IR camera technology has revealed much information regarding the artist's working practice. **Andrea Nottage** and **Michelle Wassall** are currently working on a Society funded project involving the conservation of some large decorative panels by Roy de Maistre. Four of the six panels are to be hung in Society to coincide with the upcoming *Sydney Moderns* exhibition. **Melissa Harvey** has been busy fitting out a Braque work going on loan in addition to preparing works for the upcoming *Sydney Moderns* exhibition.

Paper Section

Carolyn Murphy has been busy in the role of Acting Head of Conservation in addition to working on a number of new acquisitions and collections conservation projects. **Analiese Treacy** has recently been preparing works for display in an exhibition on *The fashion of Helmut Newton and Bettina Rheims* in addition to preparing works for changeover in the Kaldor Contemporary Galleries. Analiese is also working on a number of regional and international outward loans. **Sarah Bunn** is preparing works on paper for an exhibition to coincide with the launch of a Gallery publication on our Lloyd Rees collection. Sarah is also planning the upcoming exhibition of Aboriginal drawings from Yirrkala, on loan from the Berndt Museum of Anthropology in Perth.

Asian Section

Lily Yang has been working on a number of Asian new acquisitions, including a collection of scrolls. Lily is also completing treatment of a Helen

Johnson artwork consisting of four panels on paper which were previously adhered to a wall at a private home.

Exhibitions Section

Frances Cumming has recently been involved in the installation of the exhibition *We used to talk about love* in the contemporary galleries, and is now preparing for de-installation of the Francis Bacon exhibition.

Objects Section

Kerry Head is managing the conservation work for the Gallery's New Guinea Highlands exhibition, due to open in May 2014. As part of this work, **Kristel Smits** has conserved a ceremonial *sing sing* mask, with funding provided by the Gallery's Conservation Benefactors. This object was made by villagers from Nupatha and Kaveve, Goroka district, Eastern Highlands Province and was danced in the 1968 Goroka Show. **Donna Hinton** continues to prepare objects for outgoing loan, assesses objects for proposed acquisition and handles the day to day conservation needs of the objects collections.

State Library of NSW

The Library will shortly be opening its new Amaze gallery. This space which runs along the back of our existing gallery spaces will enable the Library showcase its treasures, and also maintain an open gallery space while major changeovers are happening in the Dixon and Mitchell galleries.

The Amaze gallery has been purpose built with the total renovation of an area once used for staff accommodation and has involved new flooring, ceiling, and air-conditioning systems. The fitout involved custom built Designcraft showcases to give us a flexible display system for the very large and small items in the collection. In addition to being involved with the project control group and having input on materials used for the build and the showcases, Preservation staff, led by senior conservator **Nichola Parshall**, are actively completing the preparation of the items to be seen when the Amaze gallery opens in April with *Dixon 60*.

Dixon 60 celebrates the 60th anniversary of Sir William Dixon's bequest to the State Library of New South Wales. This exhibition will showcase 60 treasures from Sir William Dixon's extensive and diverse collections, which he donated to the Library upon his death.

In preparation for the exhibition, the Library's book conservator, **Guy Caron**, has carried out treatments on some original artists' sketchbooks. Amongst them are three sketchbooks belonging to Norman Lindsay, Lionel Lindsay (patronized by Sir William during his lifetime) and Arthur Ernest Streeton. Mostly of figure studies, the sketchbooks depict the daily lives of the three Australian artists: characters, members of their own family, actors, fellow artists, and situations. The three sketchbooks reflect Streeton's and the Lindsays' keen sense of observation, composition and ideas. The drawings are fresh and intense in their executions. They are a rich collection of studies made for

the art works for which the artists are renowned.

The sketchbooks require extensive treatment and rehousing for proper display, as they are in poor condition.

Conservator **Kate Hughes** commenced work on the Garling Conservator Project in January. This is a year-long project that will include treatment of and analytical research into the *TAL Dai-ichi Life Derby collection of natural history watercolours* (PXD 1098) and related First Fleet-era pictures collections. Kate has begun condition reporting the 900-plus individual watercolours included in the project. This project is funded by the State Library Foundation.

Dana Kahabka has treated two watercolour panoramas for the upcoming *Dixon 60* exhibition and completed preparation for the display of glass plate negatives and accompanying albumen photographic contact prints for the current exhibition *The Greatest Wonder of the World*.

Dana has begun work in her new position as Senior Conservator, Digitisation Project as part of the Library's Digital Excellence program. This project focuses on the conservation activities required for the digitisation of a large selection of the Library's historic collections.

The *Queen Mary 2* is scheduled to return to Sydney Harbour again this year on 7 March before its inaugural circumnavigation of New Zealand calling at the Bay of Islands, Auckland, Wellington, Akaroa and Milford Sound.



Streeton sketchbook before treatment



Streeton sketchbook after treatment

For this voyage Cunard have requested a number of items from the State Library's collection to travel on board the vessel, including Captain Cook's tea caddy and spoon used on board H.M.S *Resolution* during his voyage around New Zealand in 1770. Other items include correspondence from Captain Cook to John Walker describing his voyage, Cook's personal notes describing events in the Cook Islands and New Zealand, and correspondence in 1768 in preparation for Cook's voyage on the *Endeavour*. **Aileen Dean-Raschilla**, **Steve Bell** and **Anna Brooks** have been busy preparing the items for loan including the preparation of condition reports and the design and manufacture of custom supports for display of the items on board QM2. Steve and Anna will also install the items on board the vessel and we hope that this year it will take less than two hours to clear Security. The registration component for this loan, including the Outward Loan Agreement, has been meticulously prepared by **Catherine Thomson** and **Agata Rostek-Robak**.

Trish Leen and **Agata** travelled to Newcastle to install material for *Treasures of Newcastle from the Macquarie Era* (2 March – 5 May 2013), a State Library of New South Wales and Newcastle Art Gallery partnership exhibition. The exhibition provides an insight into the early colony of Newcastle, and includes significant items such as the Macquarie Collectors Chest, *Corroboree at Newcastle* by Joseph Lycett, *Panorama of Newcastle* by Edward Close, ivory miniature portraits of Lachlan, Elizabeth and Lachlan junior, as well as various works by colonial artists James Wallis, Joseph Lycett, Richard Browne and Edward Close depicting scenes from around the Newcastle region. A highlight of the exhibition is the Library's recently acquired Wallis album which has had an extensive three month conservation treatment by book conservator **Steve Bell**. Other items were prepared by **Aileen**, **Silvana Volpato**, **Bronwen Glover**, **Jessica O'Donnell**, **Cathryn Bartley**, **Trish** and **Agata** under the coordination of **Cecilia Harvey**.

Powerhouse Museum

Object preparation for the Powerhouse 25th Anniversary celebration is underway. There will be two main exhibitions: *Upcycled*, which will celebrate the Museum's quirky and diverse collection; and *Technology that changes our mind* with a selection of items with mind-changing technologies.

Objects were installed at the Australian Cinematography Society, Macquarie Group Banking Chambers. Objects were collected from Alstonville, ANMM and NGV.

Travelling exhibitions are on the move. **Vanessa Pitt** dismantled *Odditorem* and **Suzanne Chee** installed *Frock stars* at the GEO Centre in Broken Hill.

Exhibition installations of *Access to Life* and *30 years of HIV/AIDS in Australia and Aids quilts* were carried out by **Rebecca Ellis**, **Teresa Werstak** and **Gosia Dudek**. *Wallace and Gromit's World of Invention* was installed by **Skye Mitchell** and **Vanessa Pitt**.

Bronwen Griffin dismantled the Powerhouse Museum's permanent music gallery, *Music Made and Played*, to coincide with building works in the Museum. Now that the construction work is over and the dust has settled, she has reinstalled the larger keyboard instruments and several showcases. **Gosia Dudek** and **Teresa Werstak** are also working on objects for the exhibition, including a number of violin maker's tools and materials relating to Australian makers. We expect to install the remaining cases shortly.

Kate Chidlow and **Teresa Werstak** attended a seminar at the AGNSW. The topic was "Managing the unexpected: Collection Management and disasters", given by Gina Irish a Registrar from the Christchurch Art Gallery. This fascinating talk gave us lots of information which will be useful with our disaster preparations. Before this meeting Kate attended the DISSYD meeting. These events gave us the opportunity to promote the 'All is not Lost the collection recovery book' produced by Conservation. This book

is also available through the Museum's book shop.

Every two years a fashion conference is held in Florence Italy. It is an interdisciplinary meeting where numerous aspects of fashion, history, museology, conservation and reproductions are discussed and explored. Onsite visits and excursions to several museums around Florence after their closing hours are always greatly appreciated. The newly opened Gucci Museum invited the conference goers to a viewing and cocktail party on the first night!

This year, we were fortunate to have 2 Powerhouse staff members present their papers to an international audience. **Sarah Pointon's** talk on the Australian Dress Register (ADR) drew much attention and praise. The ADR team received many congratulations from all. The audience was absolutely amazed of the work and the coordination of this project at large.

Suzanne Chee presented her paper *Speedo a Race against Time* alarmed people on the fragility of some man-made fibres. The audience was interested in the research of the deteriorating 1980s swimmers and were pleased that a solution was found. Many did not realise that Speedo was originally Australian! The next Costume Colloquium in 2014 will have the theme of colour in fashion.

Following on from the research into the Speedo collection and the deterioration of the polyester polyurethane or PUR(ES) components. **Sue Gatenby** has been assisting the MUDE – *Museu do Design e da Moda*, in Portugal with their research into the Halston's swimwear collection and their Conservation Options for Polyurethane Garments

Sue Gatenby and **Teresa Werstak** have finalised a Conservation Display Guidelines. This will be heavily scrutinised by the department before it is circulated.

Over the previous eighteen months, **Rebecca Main** and **Amir Mogadam** (Intern at PHM and Conservator at

University of Newcastle) have been condition reporting, cleaning and rehousing a collection of large (515 x 415mm) 19th Century glass plate negatives produced by the Freeman Brothers Studio.

Amir reassembled the image on one blank plate from pieces of separated emulsion, and with the assistance of **James Elwing**, conducted re-adhesion tests using gelatine and Klucel on sacrificial non museum object samples. **Michael Myers** took documentation photos and recreated the original images using Photoshop.

From this project **Rebecca** and **Amir** produced a poster “Preservation of historic glass plate negatives with limited resources” which was shown at the joint meeting of the AIC Photographic Materials Group and the ICOM-CC Photographic Materials Working Group which was held at Te Papa New Zealand from 11-15 February 2013. The poster covered the stages of testing and treatment, and showed before and after treatment images of the “Mr Taylor” plate.

Dave Rockell and **Dee McKillop** have returned to work. With another round of Voluntary Redundancies hitting the museum we regretfully said goodbye to four of our greatly valued colleagues, who had all worked at the museum for many years: **Margaret Juraszek**, 27 years as Paper Conservator; **Nadia McDougall**, 16 years as Assistant Objects Conservator; **James Elwing**, 17 years as Archival Conservator; and **Ross Goodman**, 28 years as the Head of the Steam team.

Australian Museum

Kate Jones is currently reconstructing two archaeological ceramic pots that were excavated from Palau last year. The pots are estimated to be 3000 years old, an extraordinary find for that location. The restoration process is being filmed with a view to include the footage in a display of the pots once the treatment is complete. The vessels will be then be returned to Palau later this year.



Kate Jones repairs a ceramic pot from Palau



Sheldon Teare repairs a Japanese Kabuto

Sheldon Teare is currently coordinating a range of objects for a display on Armour due in March. Armour combines man made armour pieces next to animals with plates, spines, scales and other defensive adaptations. Larger animal mounts are being prepared for Wildlife Photographer of the Year, and Sheldon is looking forward to touching up at least one of the rhinos in the collection.

Silvia da Rocha has been helping to install Menagerie after its long tour around Australia. Silva has just started the mammoth task of carrying out a type specimen condition survey put together by Sheldon. Silva and Sheldon will be physically inspecting every type specimen in the collection, a task they will have for quite some time to come.

Over the past few months **Megan Dean-Jones** has been diligently working through the painstaking process of creating bespoke rehousing for the Blaschka glass marine invertebrate collection. Fifteen full boxes later, she has declared the job done. Since then, she has been assisting Heather Mackay in preparing material for the Indigenous Australians Gallery upgrade.

Heather Mackay has recently worked on a Crocodile mask from the Torres Strait Islands made from tortoise shell, bamboo, wood, feathers, goa nuts, cloth and plant material. The plates of tortoise shell which have been heated and shaped over a wooden armature are partially secured with a natural resin which had cracked and become loose. A Japanese tissue pulp was used to stabilise these areas to allow the mask to go on display in the Indigenous Australians Gallery.

Michael Kelly has been working on the installation of Menagerie which went into the refurbished Indigenous Australians gallery in February. Michael is also helping with the preparation of objects and specimens for the upcoming Armour display.

Australian National Maritime Museum

We are hosting a USA Gallery Fellowship recipient, **Rebecca Torsell** from Ohio, USA, who is spending four weeks in conservation working on maritime archaeology-related projects. Rebecca will also be visiting other institutions around Australia as part of her research into maritime archaeology conservation methodology.

Planning for upcoming exhibitions and core gallery object changeovers continues.

As part of the new museum structure all position descriptions have been drafted into a new format and a new performance management system will be introduced later this year.

During the first quarter of this year **Julie O'Connor** completed a hat survey and storage of footwear from the collection for the textile storage project. With the continuing assistance of our volunteers the textile project is 80% complete excluding approximately 300 textiles in other storage areas. Mark Hayes from msclogistics.com has converted the remaining shelving in the compactus for boxed, hanging and/or rolled storage as required. During December last year,

Julie also attended the “20th Century in Paint” symposium at in Brisbane.

Paper conservation student **Leah Williams** from Melbourne University’s CCMC Masters program spent two weeks in January doing work experience with **Caroline Whitley**. Leah spent her time working on a variety of treatment types, condition reporting and photography that will hopefully prepare for her well for the year of study ahead.

Caroline is also continuing to prepare paper-based items from the ANMM collection for our June 2013 temporary exhibition *East of India: forgotten trade with Australia*, prior to many loan items arriving.

Rebecca Dallwitz is preparing to work on an anchor retrieved from the wreck of HMS *Sirius* in the 1980s. The anchor is on display in the Museum building. The project will be undertaken during museum opening hours and will be visible to and interpreted for visitors. The existing coating will be removed and replaced, and a range of other conservation interventions undertaken. HMS *Sirius* was the flagship of the First Fleet. The loss of the vessel at Norfolk Island in 1790 was a major blow to the new colony of New South Wales and posed a serious challenge to the settlement’s viability. The anchor is on loan to ANMM from Norfolk Island Museum. Rebecca is also contributing to *East of India: forgotten trade with Australia*, and continues to work on ANMM’s recent maritime archaeological finds.

This month **Sue Frost** has been catching up on backlog, condition reporting objects removed from display and preparing them for storage. This will clear the way for work on the forthcoming *East of India: forgotten trade with Australia* exhibition which will have a number of beautiful textiles on loan from various institutions. Many prop (unregistered) textiles will be included in the display. Preparation of these objects will include mannequin manufacture and the application of hanging mechanisms.

ACT

National Archives of Australia – Canberra Office

The Conservation team, and in particular **Tania Riviere** and **Emily Birks**, has been extremely busy for the past few months as preparations for the Canberra Centennial exhibition *Design 29: Creating a capital* got into full swing. This exhibition features the original and rarely displayed designs for Canberra by the 1911 Federal Capital City Design Competition finalists – these intricate artworks and plans include the winning entry Number 29 submitted by Walter Burley Griffin.

All of the Griffin designs, as well as the entries of the other placegetters, were removed from their frames and condition-checked. Each one was digitised at high resolution to enable the development of an iPad app that will be used within the exhibition. The works were then reframed in new, matching mouldings. Supplementary material related to the search for a site for the nation’s capital, and paperwork sent to competition entrants, has also been prepared. All the works will be on display at our Parkes building from 1 March – for further information see <http://www.naa.gov.au/visit-us/exhibitions/design-29/index.aspx>

Cheryl Jackson was lucky enough to attend the AIC – PMG/ICOM – CC (PMWG) Joint Photographs Conservation Meeting held in Wellington, NZ in February. The week long event started with two days of workshops and/or tours of the cultural institutions in and around Wellington, then moved in to three days of papers presented at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. The papers were diverse, encompassing full-on analytical investigation of the corrosion of gilded daguerreotypes, exhibition mounting methods from daguerreotypes to large format modern prints, and outreach programs around the world

attempting to salvage the photographic history of strife-torn nations.

Cheryl’s trip was fully funded by the National Archives of Australia, and she thanks them for their support.

South Australia

Artlab Australia, SA

Artlab has already had a busy start to the year, with much activity across all of the labs. The Paper Lab has been heavily involved in exhibition preparation over the last few months and has recently received quite a few works from various grants to arts and historical organisations. Many of these jobs have quite tight deadlines and so most of the Lab is involved in meeting these. **Anna Austin** and **Aquila Evill** have been busy preparing works for the major rehang in the Elder and Melrose Wings of the Art Gallery of South Australia.

Almost all of the Paper Lab staff members were involved in the very speedy and complicated rehousing of a major work by Gilbert and George, *Dark Shadows No 9* which consists of 19 photographs hand cut to varying sizes. Anna and Aquila are now working through the conservation of a collection of etchings by Piranesi, which is a delightful experience. **Peter Mitchelson** has been making numerous and complicated book supports for rare books now on display in the Maritime Museum and is currently preparing several items for the National Motor Museum’s *Sunburnt Country*.

Andrew Cuch (conservation assistant) has recently finished the conservation of two elephant-sized volumes of etchings of Egypt and is currently cleaning and rehousing a group of bound editor proofs of etchings made after William Light’s drawings of Pompeii. **Jodie Scott** has been working on a group of cased daguerreotypes and collection maintenance for the SA Museum. **Helen Halley** and **Liz Mayfield** enjoyed

condition checking watercolours and sketchbooks in *Turner from the Tate* before it opened on the 8th of February and Liz has also been working through her regular list of books and bibles.

Members of the paintings team at Artlab have commenced a project at Ayers House, the sole surviving 19th century 'grand' mansion on North Terrace, named after the five-time Premier of South Australia and wealthy industrialist, Sir Henry Ayers. The decorative internal surfaces display a high level of technical accomplishment and are considered rare in South Australia. During the initial stages of the project, a number of specialist consultants have been engaged to assist with investigations into the cultural significance, substrates and fabric, and causes attributing to the deterioration of all decorated surfaces. Treatment will focus on the State Dining Room and Summer Sitting Room, where monitored deterioration has been observed.

Preventive conservators **Anne Dineen** and **Kasi Albert** have been applying their now well-honed Disaster Preparedness training skills to the staff at the South Australian Museum. They have also been assisting the Art Gallery of South Australia to prepare for the major *Turner from the Tate* exhibition by producing a special disaster plan for the loaned items and by ramping up the environmental monitoring in the space. Some Preservation Needs Assessments are also on the cards this month, with Kasi surveying the Nora Heysen Foundation collection at the Cedars in Hahndorf, and Anne travelling to Naracoorte to survey the collection of the Sheep's Back Museum.

Projects said two good byes this month: to the Favourite motorcycle, a long term project finally returned for display to the National Motor Museum, Birdwood; and to **Nick Flood**, who commences a post in Canberra.

Abby Maxwell-Bowen attended the four day AICCM Outdoor Sculpture & Monuments Conservation course in Melbourne as well as getting her Dogman High Risk Work ticket. Artlab now has two licensed staff, Abby and

Justin Gare, who can sling, load and direct a crane load move by use of walkie talkie, hand signals or whistles – should prove useful for some of the big memorial moves anticipated later this year, as well as when reorganizing the treatment lab!

The Textiles Lab is presently still undertaking the treatment of a Trade Union Banner for the Coachbuilders South Australian Union on behalf of the Australian Manufacturers Union. They have devised a unique head support to enable them to work face down over the large and extremely fragile banner from a physiotherapists' massage table.

Mary-Anne Gooden is undertaking the treatment of a large tiger skin in need of tooth repair and tail reattachment. The next exciting textile is from Wangaratta, the Marianne Gibson Crazy Quilt, which is in need of support where weighted silk has degraded in a number of patches. The story goes that Mrs Gibson's husband owned a hardware store and the quilt is decorated throughout with little embroidered hoes.

Kristin Phillips is carrying out a survey of the blinds and curtains at Carrick Hill in order to determine treatment priorities for the collection. New sacrificial blinds and curtains are being hung behind originals to protect them from light.

In the Objects lab **Justin Gare** has won a Copland Foundation Scholarship for the Attingham Summer School, which means he will be departing Adelaide in July for 18 days to attend a series of lectures and tours of approximately 25 stately English homes. Whilst there he will have the opportunity to examine the architectural and social history of the historic house in Britain, study the contents of these buildings, and participate in debate on problems relating to the conservation and presentation of the country house and its contents.

Victoria

National Gallery of Victoria

John Payne has completed work on all five paintings which make up the NGV's Netherlandish Triptych with the Miracles of Christ of the late fifteenth century. The treatment has been timed to coincide with its inclusion in an exhibition entitled "The Heritage of Rogier van der Weyden" in Brussels later this year. **Michael Varcoe-Cocks** has been busy preparing works for the upcoming exhibition dedicated to Australian Impressionist painters in France, including paintings by J. P. Russell and E. Phillips Fox's *The Bathers*, which he has recently cleaned. **Carl Willis** has completed treatment on Correggio's *Madonna and Child with the Infant St. John the Baptist*, and recently gave a presentation on the painting to the international symposium entitled "The Power of Luxury: Art and Culture at the Italian Courts in Machiavelli's Lifetime" held at the University of Melbourne. He is about to start work on a seventeenth-century portrait by Sir Peter Lely.

Holly McGowan-Jackson undertook treatment of the very large original cushion frame for a landscape painting by Alexandre Nozal, prior to its return to public display after many years. The frame, in which the painting was displayed at the Paris Salon in 1891, largely retains its original gilded surfaces. The treatment focussed on the repair of cracking in the ground layer due to the separation of frame components, and splitting wood at the inner flat. The simple frame styles used by artists such as John Peter Russell and have provided **MaryJo Lelyveld** and Holly McGowan-Jackson a chance to work on their frame-making skills. Under the guidance of **Rob Murdoch** MaryJo, Holly and Michael Varcoe-Cox have machined the moulding for several frames in the lead up to the *Australian Impressionists in France* exhibition. **Suzi**

Shaw has been preparing Burmese lacquered betel boxes for display, and assisting with the development of hazardous materials documentation associated with some of them. Also, many of the gallery spaces in both buildings have been rehung in recent months with almost all of the furniture collection being changed over or moved, keeping Suzi on her toes with complex deinstalls and installs.

In the Paper and Photographs conservation studio **Pip Morrison** and **Sarah Brown** have just returned from Wellington, after presenting a paper 'Re-visiting Strip Lining of Large Format Photographs' at the AIC & ICOM-CC Photographic Conservation Joint Meeting 2013. The paper received a wonderful response and has opened up a new dialogue in regards to this hinging system, which is regularly employed by institutions around the country and the world. A working group is currently being devised to continue this discussion.

Heritage Victoria's Conservation Centre

The conservators of Heritage Victoria (**Susie Collis** and **Lauren Keating**) have been 'heads down' working on the artefact management process for the latest archaeological excavation that is taking place in Melbourne's CBD. The (former) Carlton and United Brewery site takes up the entire block at the junction of Swanston and Victoria Streets, Melbourne, and is currently being developed into a new public space. The scale of the development at the site has triggered The Heritage Act in that the archaeological heritage of the site must be fully investigated and any significant artefacts must be retained and conserved. Heritage Victoria has been ably assisted in this pursuit by **Karina Acton** of ICS.

There's not much show and tell at this stage seeing as we are at the half-way point of the project which involves on-site conservation of artefacts as well planning for some more complex in-lab treatments which will be conducted at the Conservation Centre after the dig is completed in early March.

Museum Victoria

Davina Hacklin has taken several months leave from Museum Victoria and will be returning in April 2013. In her absence **Helen Privett** is acting Manager and **Elizabeth McCartney** is backfilling Helen as Senior Conservator, Collection Development and Access.

In other recruitment news we are currently undertaking interviews for the Conservator, Natural Sciences position. **Erina McCann** and **Danielle Measday** have recently filled two contract positions in the team, working on a variety of loan and exhibition projects.

Sarah Babister has recently completed treatment of the 1975 Ilinga sports car for long term display at Melbourne Museum. The treatment, which took place over several months, involved extensive cleaning, stabilisation, retouching and preparation of the engine for display. Sarah was assisted by volunteer **Jill Lythgo** who recently completed her Masters in Cultural Materials Conservation. Thanks to Jill for her valuable contribution.

Sarah has also been occupied with preparation for the upcoming touring Hall exhibition *Afghanistan: Hidden Treasures from the National Museum, Kabul*. The exhibition features 230 objects, but over 1500 pieces! The artefacts date from the Bronze Age through to the rise of trade along the Silk Road in the first century AD, and include a collection of priceless gold objects from the famed Bactrian Hoard

which is considered to be one of the greatest archaeological finds of the 20th century.

Sam Hamilton participated in a workshop hosted by Museum Victoria in association with the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency [VACCA] for children in foster care aged between 5 and 13. Forty children and carers attended the day-long event which included the opportunity to wear 'museum gloves' and touch and hold objects from their own country. The children were very interested and excited about the role the conservator had in caring and treating objects and thoroughly enjoyed this unique experience. This workshop is part of a greater possum skin cloak project which will see the children make their own possum skin cloak with inspiration from the Museum's collections. The cloak will be on display in the temporary exhibition space *Birrarung* when *Bunjilaka* is reopened to the public in July 2013.

Sam also participated in the final deinstallation of the travelling exhibition *Ancestral Power and the Aesthetic* which saw twenty highly significant and fragile bark paintings from the Donald Thomson collection return home after two years on the road. Sam reports that the barks travelled extremely well with minimal loss and no real damage due to the levels of protection put in place for this tour.

Trawling the Internet



Bringing you useful, interesting or provocative sites on the Web.

This time we have a number of sites to let you know about:

1. **In the Artifact Lab – Preserving Egyptian Mummies**
(<http://www.penn.museum/sites/artifactlab/>)
This blog is a companion to *In the Artifact Lab* at the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. *In the Artifact Lab* is a new exhibit at the Penn Museum featuring a working conservation space. In this space, visitors have the opportunity to watch a conservator at work conserving Egyptian mummies and related funerary items. The exhibit also includes cases of Egyptian artefacts, a Proscope station, where visitors can view samples of new and deteriorated materials under magnification, and a Smartboard, with information about the conservation process and ongoing activities. Twice daily, the conservator is available to speak with the public and answer questions.
2. **Conservation Reel**
(<http://conservationreel.org/>)
Sharing the knowledge to preserve and conserve works of art, cultural objects, and historical artefacts through video content developed by museums and conservation organizations internationally to educate one another. Recent additions include: Examining a 17th Century Frame, Lab Tour: Conservation Science and The Light Bulbs in Robert Irwin's Light and Space III.
3. **The Iraqi Institute for the Conservation of Antiquities and Heritage** (<http://www.artcons.udel.edu/public-outreach/iraq-institute>)
The Iran-Iraq war of the 1980s, the 1991 Gulf War, decades of disinterest in cultural heritage on the part of a repressive government, and the sanctions of the 1990s resulted in a precipitous reduction in Iraq's professional heritage staff, and neglect and deterioration of museum collections and archaeological and heritage sites. Iraq's heritage crisis culminated with the highly visible looting of the Iraq Museum in 2003. The Iraqi Institute for the Conservation of Antiquities and Heritage is training Iraq's museum and heritage professionals in the preservation and conservation of their national treasures, ranging from Babylonian archeological sites to exquisite ivory figures from Nimrud and golden jewelry from Ur. A great model of collaboration between governments and universities.
4. **The Memory of Paper**
(http://www.memoryofpaper.eu:8080/BernsteinPortal/appl_start.disp)
A website created by the Bernstein Consortium, Commission for Scientific Visualization (VISKOM), Austrian Academy of Sciences. The website is about paper, paper study, and paper history. It provides various resources in the following areas: historical research
- of paper in Europe, expertise for paper documents, measurement of structural characteristics of paper, support for the creation of new paper databases and introduction into digital paper studies.
5. **Museum of Australian Democracy at Eureka**
(<http://www.made.org/>)
Located in Ballarat, this Museum will open in May 2013. With the evocative Eureka Flag as its centrepiece, M.A.D.E's interactive and immersive exhibitions will explore the evolution and the future of democracy – looking at culture, civics, history and citizenship.

This is a regular newsletter segment. If anybody knows of sites that may be interesting to the membership please let us know.

List of SIG Convenors

As all SIG convenor positions are open for election every two years, over the past 6 months there has been numerous elections and nominations with the following results.

SIG	Contact	Election
Antarctic Heritage	Julian Bickersteth	SIG cancelled 2011
Book & Paper	Caroline Murphy	Elected 2012
Conservation Framers	June Andersen	Election 2011
Conservation Science	Deborah Lau	Re-Elected 2011
Education	Eric Archer	SIG Cancelled
Exhibitions	Catherine Earley	Re-Elected 2011
Gilded Objects	MaryJo Lelyveld	Re-Elected 2011
Objects	Helen Privett	Re-Elected 2011
Paintings	Andrew Durham	Elected 2011
Photon	Stephanie Bailey	Elected 2011
Preventive Conservation	Sarah-Jane Rennie	Elected 2011
Private Practice	Kay Söderlund	SIG cancelled 2011
Textiles	Jessie Firth	Re-elected 2011
Digital & Audio-visual Heritage	Peter Shaw	Established 2011

The SIG convenors listed here are congratulated on their commitment to the ongoing activity of their group. As a member of several SIGs I look forward to all the upcoming events in 2013 and encourage all forms of activity that will enrich our membership of AICCM.

It was decided this year that 3 SIGs (Antarctic Heritage, Education, Private Practice) were to be dissolved due to various reasons.

A new SIG has also been formed by Peter Shaw regarding the Digital & Audio-Visual Heritage. Please contact Peter to be a part of this SIG.

Tegan Anthes
SIG Coordinator

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