

Not just a gilded bowl.  
A pleasant surprise for  
the team at WAM

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Using items in your collection: what do you think?

## President's Report

The new National Council met on February 15<sup>th</sup> in Sydney and had a very productive meeting. There were a few apologies as it is a busy time of year and many people had recently returned from leave. For this reason, we will change the timing of the first face-to-face meeting to late February. However, all those present worked very hard through a hot and sticky Sydney day.

AICCM is in a parlous financial state, with an estimate from our auditor that we will only last another 4 or 5 years if we don't come up with some effective strategies to reduce the costs of running the organisation. So this was the main theme of our discussions – how can we increase our membership (revenue) and also improve the structure of our association so that it doesn't cost so much to administer? Each commercial secretariat that we have used over the years has been struck by the complex structure of the organization and the difficulty (and therefore expense) of administering it as a whole.

The main reason for this are the State Divisions, with their own elected committees, and incorporated status – which leads to bank accounts, auditor's fees, PO Box fees, incorporation reports and fees, yearly AGM's and elections etc. And, of course, this all means a lot of work for each State committee.

So we threw our current structure up in the air, opened our minds, thought laterally and considered various options of how our association might operate in a more streamlined, less complicated fashion. A couple of years ago, Alice Cannon wrote an interesting piece for Council, called 'The Case For Change', and this document provided an excellent starting point for our discussions. To summarise a long day, we have sketched out a new structure which we believe will alleviate the current difficulties. We

still need to meet with some advisory bodies such as ArtsLaw regarding this structure, particularly to ensure that it meets incorporation, insurance and association legislations.

Of course, the main group that needs to approve it is you – the membership. If these changes go ahead, there will need to be constitutional amendments that will be presented at the next AGM for voting, but we would like to get some initial thoughts and reactions from you about the proposal. There may well be some problems with it that we have not thought of – so all comments are very welcome.

Basically the proposal is a simple one – we replace the State Divisions with 'Working Groups' of the national association instead. They would run like the SIGs currently do, but would have a state representative on Council (elected by the state members). The state Working Groups would continue to organize and run events as they normally do, without being burdened by all the necessary tasks and costs of being incorporated (as outlined above). Finances would be simplified as much as possible, with the more basic activities such as evening talks run on a petty cash/reimbursement basis. The more complex workshops would be dealt with in a similar way to the SIG workshops now – simple budget proposal to Council and all finances run through Council. SIGs will essentially remain the same.

We need to be clear that this is not an attempt by Council to 'control' the states or restrict activities of the states. This has been an ongoing issue for the association for years and our financial concerns are very real. This system would be implemented with the utmost good will, with a view to encouraging more state activity. We imagine that it will encourage more members to

become involved in AICCM activities as it will be less onerous to sit on the state committees and the structure will encourage more individual activity in single projects for the benefit of the profession.

More information about the proposal will be disseminated as we work through the changes, but please feel free to offer ideas and comments. This will all need to be finalized for presentation at the AGM that will be held in November in Melbourne.

Another decision at the meeting was to change all membership renewals to July 1<sup>st</sup> of each year – mainly to simplify the current membership process which is a nightmare to administer. More news of that coming also!

Oh, and regarding the Bulletin – feedback so far is overwhelmingly in favour of keeping it so I will bow to the consensus. But I assume that this means there will be a lot more original research papers being submitted for consideration?

Kay Söderlund

## From The Editors

A new year, and as we return from the end of year break, we are reminded both of the passing of time, and the challenges and opportunities that is provided by our professional lives. The untimely passing of AGNSW's Mark Stryker and Sun Yu are marked by Rose Peel's memories. We also mark the closure of the Collections Council of Australia with an interview with its director, Margaret Birtley. Margaret and her colleague Veronica Bullock have been tireless in championing the cause of conservation in the wider sphere of the collecting sector, and we thank them for being such active friends of our profession.

More broadly, we reprint an article by US conservator Joyce Hill Stoner on conservation burnout and what causes most stress in conservator's lives. The results may surprise you – is it paperwork, money, meetings or just other conservators? Joyce has some good advice to help you move forward whatever the cause.

And we also look on the more positive side with news about what you are all up to, Kava drinking ceremonies at the Australian Museum (so that's what they get up to), diving adventures in Port Phillip Bay with Ian Macleod, and Ian Batterham's ongoing 'identify the conservator' spot.

Alice Cannon reminds us how young we are as an organisation (only 37) in an easy to read history of AICCM, whilst the Victorian Division reflects on where we might go next and what's important to us. This is a timely response to the President's Report, with both documents reminding us we must continue to evolve to survive.

What do you think of the new front page? If you like it, we'd love you to send in more photos with your submissions.

Finally in conjunction with the National Council, the editors have made the decision to publish the newsletter three times a year, rather than four, in March, July and November. The reasons for this are various. Firstly the need for a quarterly publication to advertise job vacancies has now been replaced by the website and regular email postings. Secondly, we're aware that the constant reminders for content are becoming laborious, with the frequent refrain; 'gosh, is it that time again already?' And thirdly of course, it reduces our costs at a time when the organisation is financially stretched.

So lots to read in this edition, but keep the news and ideas coming – we love hearing from you, and we will be back again in July!

Julian Bickersteth and Fiona Tennant

## Conservator of the Year

**A reminder that the deadline for 2010 award nominations is July:**

- Conservator of the Year
- Service to the Profession
- Outstanding service to AICCM
- Outstanding research in the field of materials conservation

Please contact Fiona Tennant, Membership Services Officer, for more information: [f.tennant@icssydney.com](mailto:f.tennant@icssydney.com)

## Mark Stryker – 31.10.1949 - 3.8.2009 Laos

Mark arrived in Australia as an artist in 1978 having sailed from Hawaii via Papua New Guinea. His love for travel remained with him as he not only spoke about his dreams but he made them happen.

Mark gained his first degree in art in San Francisco and then as part of his artistic training painted in Mexico City where he became interested in Mexican art history and culture. Introduced to the Conservation Department at the Art Gallery of New South Wales he was inspired to change direction and study for his masters degree at the Canberra College of Advanced Education (University of Canberra) and was awarded his degree in Materials Conservation in 1981.

Mark was later employed by the State Library of New South Wales establishing a preservation program for the unemployed who wanted to develop new skills – training in three monthly blocks – a scheme funded by the NSW government for several years. The program, designed and implemented by Mark provided a system that addressed basic conservation requirements for the Library's vast collections. For several years he also taught conservation theory and practice at the College of Fine Arts, Sydney where he was by all accounts an engaging teacher. In

1987 Mark joined us at the AGNSW initially to prepare works on paper for Bicentennial exhibitions. It was at that time we curated the first major conservation exhibition *Art to Last* that reached out to an audience who became aware of and intrigued by our profession.

Mark's apparent languid air often disguised his sharp mind and articulate writing skills that could cut to the chase by refining policy statements, developing exhibition and conservation procedures as well as resolving union issues. He moved to New York with Abi in 1994 and established a successful independent conservation business but a few years ago lived once again in his beloved Mexico and for the last two years in Laos where he reconnected with his dear and loyal friend Maz – Marion Ravenscroft. They were known at the local swimming pool as Mr and Mrs Mark – entering on a family ticket.

Mark loved beautiful objects and over the years was a collector of indigenous art from Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, Australia, Mexico and Laos the majority of which are

now in international collections. Wherever he lived Mark immediately created an aesthetic space and had recently developed land in Don Det building cabins he planned for intrepid travellers.

As Susie Bioletti and Ranson Davey recently recalled; 'Mark marched to a different drum but never lost sight of those he loved ... and those legs, how we loved them'. Mark's easy smile, great sense of humour, creativity, non-judgemental approach to 'difference' within various cultures enabled him to explore this complex world with an unquenched curiosity. Oh, but those margaritas Stryker, where one was not enough, two were too many and three were not nearly enough! His zest for life inspired all who loved him.

Mark died unexpectedly in Vientiane. His cherished daughter Eva and his brother Dave survive him.

It is difficult to write these obituaries as though independent of each other without bringing Mark and Sun Yu together in a final statement. The Art Gallery of New South Wales had been negotiating with the Chinese government through the Australia China Friendship Society for a couple of years from 1987 with the idea of bringing out a specialist to mount the growing

number of contemporary works in the collection. Having abandoned all hope it was with some surprise that Sun Yu and Yang Yan Dong suddenly appeared one morning in June 1989. Of course their English was nonexistent and needless to say so was our Mandarin. I procured a small dictionary immediately and with that we pointed our way throughout the days, months and years ahead with

much gesticulation, slapstick and even at times handstands from Mark when on a get fit program. It was not unusual to have Spanish, English and Mandarin spoken at once in the same room.

The mounting table was the first major acquisition built by the workshop and from then on Sun Yu and Lily worked like the clappers. He was amazing, his skills had similarities to that we

## Sun Yu – 2.1.1959 - 7.2.2010

Sun Yu and his wife Yang Yan Dong (Lily) arrived at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in 1989 after the tumultuous events in Tiananmen Square where they had supported the 'artists for democracy'.

Sun Yu was an extraordinary calligrapher and scroll mounter who enriched the AGNSW as a centre of excellence with his intellect, practical skills and deep knowledge of Chinese art. Within the two thousand year old tradition of art on paper and silk, Sun Yu practiced as an artist exploring the beauty and strength of the brush stroke that expressed his poetic thought. His skill as a scroll mounter, that belies its complexity, was a joy to observe and enabled many paper conservators through demonstrations and workshops to explore the techniques and apply them to western conservation practice. Sun Yu was different; he broke from the constraints of tradition, always open to learning, experimenting and adopting western techniques if required. There was always an easy exchange of ideas as Sun Yu in his measured quiet way resolved problems pertaining to the conservation and display of both Asian and western collections.

Sun Yu gained his degree in Chinese art history at the Central Academy of Fine Art in 1989 having first qualified as an artist and scroll mounter at the Beijing Academy of Art from

1979-1984. He was also editor from 1984-1989 of *Chinese Painting* the official publication for traditional professional Chinese painting. Sun Yu received a grant from the Australia Council in 1996 to research the history of papermaking in China. He often couriered exhibitions to and from China and visited Japan in 2002 when awarded an Art Gallery Society professional development grant to undertake a two week internship with Professor Masuda from Showa University in Kyoto as he was keen to explore Japanese techniques. In 2003 the Friends of Conservation at the AGNSW funded *Zhuangbiao* a comprehensive visual study of scroll mounting where Sun Yu shared his knowledge for those who want to understand its historical and contemporary development.

Sun Yu in his designated space was one of the few scroll mounters employed by a western museum. His international reputation and his love of driving attracted many visiting artists and dignitaries from China who were relieved to have an expert in Sydney to interpret and with Lily entertain them. His interest in



Buddhism, Daoism and feng shui gave Sun Yu a spiritual direction that was integral to his everyday life. Any important event was first researched to identify the most auspicious date for its success. Sun Yu and Lily brought another dimension to the Conservation Department by opening our eyes to their culture, often extending that by exploring Chinatown restaurants, with their wide variety of yum cha.

There are many conservators, artists, curators, public programmers, historians, collectors and volunteer guides who have benefited from his knowledge, a calm authority that was always given graciously. Sun Yu battled cancer for the past year and is survived by his loving wife Lily, his beloved daughters Emily and Rebecca, their many friends and colleagues from the Art Gallery of New South Wales. His loss as a friend and colleague is immense.

had learnt from Mr Masuda in 1984 but it was incredible to observe Sun Yu and Lily work together like some kind of Chinese opera now having the opportunity to occasionally break with tradition and experiment. We learnt about the history of Chinese art, papers, inks, brushes and the connection to Korean and Japanese art and they learnt about western papermaking, printing

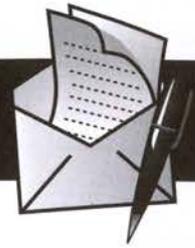
techniques and of course our differing Australian and American cultural histories.

This disparate team, including mount cutter Bill Lamont, managed through misunderstandings, misinterpretations and humour to find a mutual respect for each other's skills and responsibilities until finally independent spaces and

professional structures were achieved. It wasn't always easy but the journey was interesting and rewarding. It is with a heavy heart that I bid farewell to Mark and Sun Yu.

Rose Peel  
(Senior paper conservator AGNSW  
1985-2008)

## Letter to the President



Dear Kay

The Queensland member signatories to this letter would like to congratulate you on your recent appointment as President of AICCM. We read your inaugural President's Report in the 2009 December issue of the National Newsletter with much interest, but were disappointed to read that you question the validity of *The Bulletin* because of the low rate of submissions.

*The Bulletin* is a very important peer review publication for AICCM and is a recognized and respected Australian voice in the wider international conservation community. A voice that may occasionally be slender in volume, it stands alongside other conservation journals in relevance and quality of content.

The Australian Conservation profession is small in membership when compared with other international professional bodies but our annually distributed journal is stacked in bookshelves alongside the likes of *Studies in*

*Conservation*, *Journal of the Institute of Conservation* and *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*, to name a few. Papers published in *The Bulletin* are catalogued and can be searched via e-resources extending its reach to vast conservation, museum and general audiences.

To read that *The Bulletin* could come to conclusion on the basis of an underwhelming number of submissions is a terrible shame. Yes, on occasion the Editor has had to solicit articles to bolster a small number of submissions but the quality and relevance of the end product continues to be achieved through the meticulous review process. *The Bulletin* is the only national peer reviewed publication relevant to Conservation and as such it is an important source of local research and information. The membership needs to get behind the publication but this can only be achieved if there is support within the National Council.

A professional body that wishes to have its opinion considered in the wider community needs a peer reviewed journal, like *The Bulletin* to demonstrate that their research and practices have scholarly credibility. This in itself should be justification enough for continued support of *The Bulletin*.

We give a vote of thanks to the current Editor, Marcelle Scott and past Editors who have given their time to nurture editions of *The Bulletin* from first submissions to bound publications. We look forward to future editions.

Amanda Pagliarino  
Anne Carter  
Christine Ianna  
Davina Hacklin  
Gillian Osmond  
Kim Barrett  
Liz Wild  
Lydia Egunnike  
Michael Mareudy  
Samantha Shellard

### Salzburg Declaration on the Conservation and Preservation of Cultural Heritage

We reported in the December 2009 AICCM Newsletter on the important Salzburg Declaration, which Australian conservators Vinod Daniel, Ian Cook and Marcelle Scott were instrumental in drafting. The final report of the Salzburg global seminar is now available.

The report summarizes practical recommendations from a gathering of sixty cultural heritage leaders from thirty-two countries including representatives for Africa, Asia, the Middle East, South America, Australia, Europe and North America who gathered in Salzburg, Austria, October 2009. The forum supported by the Salzburg Global Seminar and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) developed a series of practical recommendations to ensure optimal collections conservation worldwide.

# Professional Membership

The first round of applications for the revised Professional Membership category of AICCM was assessed by the Professional Membership Assessment Committee, Vicki Warden, Ian MacLeod and Tamara Lavrencic, on December 4 2009. The following members have been approved as professional members:

Cristina Albillos (WA)  
 Davina Hacklin (QLD)  
 John Kemister (ACT)  
 Jonathon Schmidt (WA)  
 Karina Acton (NSW)  
 Kate Papierniak (NSW)  
 Kay Söderlund (NSW)  
 Lydia Egunnike (QLD)  
 Maria Kubik (WA)  
 Stephanie Baily (WA)  
 Tamara Lavrencic (NSW)  
 Tegan Anthes (NSW)  
 Vicki Warden (QLD)

In assessing the applications, the committee kept to the published guidelines of how applicants must demonstrate the nature and extent of conservation specific training/education programs undertaken (i.e. their commitment to Continuing Professional Development), their involvement in AICCM activities and evidence of application of the AICCM *Code of Ethics* and *Code of Practice*. Not all applicants were successful. As a final check,

the committee members contacted a referee for each successful applicant and recorded notes of the interview.

While on the whole the quality of the applications was good, there were some differences in interpretation about how much information to provide.

In reporting on the assessment process to National Council, the committee made a number of recommendations that aim to make both the application and the assessment processes simpler and more efficient. The key recommendations are as follows:

- Develop an online application form or a word document.
- Develop a generic example of a completed application for future reference.
- Clarify the point score system. Maximum 40 per event means that you can only claim 40 points for a conference, whether it be 1 day or 3 days. Similarly, the maximum 10 per annum for professional reading means that you can only claim 10 points per annum, no matter how many journals/books you read.
- Request written references be supplied (signed and dated and to be kept on file) instead of just nominating referees. Note that 2 of the 3 referees must be recognised

## Professional membership

National Council is planning to require members in private practice to be Professional Members prior to inclusion on the AICCM list of Conservators in Private Practice. So get your applications in ASAP!

conservators (preferably AICCM members).

- Develop guidelines for the length of *curriculum vitae*. They should be condensed, no more than 5 pages long, and focus on their activities in the past 10 years.
- The next round of applications will be called for by email in April 2010 for assessment in May. Members who wish to apply for Professional Membership but who do not have an email address can notify Maria Kubik as the elected Professional Membership Officer to post a reminder to them.

**Tamara Lavrencic**  
 (on behalf of the Professional Membership Assessment Committee)

### Are you up to date?

It's worth checking your details are up to date on the AICCM website. The more details you put in, the easier it is for colleagues to find you in the *Online Member Directory*, and the public to find you if you are on the list of *Conservators in Private Practice*.

It's easy – just log in on the site and click on 'My account' on the right hand side!



# A History of the AICCM

## A (brief and incomplete) history of the AICCM

This history was put together by the Victorian Division in preparation for an 'Off the record' session held in January, about the future directions of AICCM. The information in this history was largely drawn from available National AGM minutes and Executive reports from the National Newsletter. It includes significant AICCM activities and decisions as well as relevant events from the Australian cultural sector.

There are many gaps and no doubt some inaccuracies, however we thought it might be of interest to the membership as a starting point for a fuller and more accurate history. It will also be posted on the AICCM website, where it can be regularly updated. Please email your comments, corrections and additions to the website editor at [website@aiccm.org.au](mailto:website@aiccm.org.au).

When	What
1973	ICCM is formed (Perth meeting). Interim constitution adopted. Anticipated that ICCM would later merge with IIC.
1974	
1975	The <i>Bulletin</i> first produced. Published quarterly. Partially paid for by ANU? Memberships first opened. Museums Inquiry report tabled in Federal Parliament (The Piggott Report) – recommended establishing conservation training course.
1976	Revised constitution presented. Based on rules for incorporated association under the Incorporated Association Ordinance 1953-1962. ICCM becomes incorporated.
1977	\$1 per member paid to each division for operating costs. Student membership rate approved (3/4 of full membership) First regional divisions created.
1978	Reciprocal memberships first introduced ICCM becomes an incorporated body with a constitution ICCM Library first suggested Conservation training course opens at the CCAE – two-tiered program
1979	First graduates from CCAE

When	What
1980	Canberra PO Box obtained National Newsletter first published Travel grants system for members initiated
1981	Bulletin no longer produced by Dept Prehistory, ANU. Council resolved to hold national conferences biannually instead of every year. Submission by ICCM to Department of Home Affairs & the Environment re legislation to protect cultural property
1982	Code of Ethics/Practice and By Laws first proposed Bulletin changes to twice yearly publication
1983	Conservation research survey conducted First paid ICCM employee – Country Museum Conservator for WA (funded by WA Lotteries Commission) Membership list on word processor for first time Calls for paid Secretariat Grants received from Australia Council and Australia Japan Foundation to bring speakers to conferences Possibility of affiliating with CAMA raised – pros: greater influence, improved government backing; cons: annual fee payable, conservators less visible?
1984	

When	What
1985	
1986	Professional membership panel elected to review new membership category 'Conservation on the move' project begun (continues until at least 1990)
1987	ICCM <i>Code of Ethics</i> and <i>Code of Practice</i> adopted and distributed ICOM 8 <sup>th</sup> Triennial Meeting held in Sydney Name changed to AICCM Recommended that state divisions become incorporated in their own right (SA Division becomes incorporated) Part-time administration officer employed
1988	Australian Bicentennial Exhibition tours all states and territories Professional membership category established Conservation of Rock Art Graduate Diploma (1 year) offered by CCAE (in conjunction with Getty)
1989	
1990	The 90s declared the Decade for Natural Hazard Reduction by the UN (natural and man-made)
1991	
1992	
1993	AICCM Membership votes not to amalgamate with CAMA affiliates to join the new association MA HCC formed
1994	Conservator of the Year award launched
1995	<i>National Conservation and Preservation Policy for Moveable Heritage</i> published
1996	Bulletin copy and production commercially outsourced Credit card payment available
1997	<i>Asian Pacific Directory</i> developed with grant from AH

When	What
1998	25 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of AICCM; 20 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of UC course (event at UC) \$3000 received from HCC to develop and trial a Code of Practice \$7500 received from HCC to conduct a Skills Gap Audit
1999	DEI approached for grant for Secretariat services IE transfers member database to Access (Y2K compliant) Development of new training courses at US and UWS
2000	IIC Conference hosted in Melbourne, managed by AICCM Skills Gap Audit presented and Research Activity Audit and Needs Assessment in progress; both funded by HCC New Code of Practice accepted <i>reCollections</i> and <i>Be Prepared</i> published by the HCC (content written by conservators), published online via AMOL
2001	Reconciliation statement adopted Publications Committee established HCC closes Privacy Act came into effect – members required to authorise the publication of some personal details (e.g. for membership directory)
2002	<i>Guidelines for Environmental Control of Cultural Institutions</i> published by the HCC, published online via AMOL UC announces closure of conservation course – no new student intake
2003	National Training Summit organised by AICCM, in response to UC course closure; outcomes referred to CMC; contributions by UM, UNSW, UWS & CIT GVEHO grant obtained for administrative activities
2004	Moved to web-based Secretariat Production of SIG Procedures Manual (converted By-Laws) UM Masters by Coursework program begins

When	What
2005	<p>Unsuccessful application to Getty Foundation to establish professional membership (joint AICCM &amp; NZ)</p> <p>Renewals due 12 months after last payment (instead of by calendar year)</p> <p>CCA established</p> <p>Last UC students finish</p> <p>CIT developing 2 year diploma syllabus</p> <p>First graduates from UM Masters by Coursework program</p>
2006	<p>Committee to oversee Public Fund established; applied for Government Register of Cultural Organisations and Tax Deductible Gifts</p> <p>Agreement signed with CCMC to provide AICCM ongoing professional development program</p> <p>Became a CAN partner (have own page on CAN site)</p> <p>CCA conducted survey to determine conservation skill requirements of Australia's collecting institutions over the next 3 years. Published October 2006 on CCA website.</p> <p>Bushfires in Canberra – ACT Division response</p>
2007	<p>Public Fund committee established</p> <p>Secretariat services no longer outsourced to commercial company; review of Secretariat services begun.</p> <p>Final instalment of GVEHO grant (for administrative activities)</p>
2008	<p>New AICCM website launched – online renewals; online payment via Paypal, online membership directory, list of members in private practice, publications archive</p>
2009	<p>UC starts new undergraduate Conservation course</p> <p>Bushfires in Victoria – Victorian Division response</p>
2010	<p>CCA closes</p>

## Abbreviations

AH:	<i>AusHeritage</i>
AICCM:	<i>Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Material Inc.</i>
AMOL:	<i>Australian Museums OnLine</i>
ANU:	<i>Australian National University</i>
CAMA:	<i>Council of Australian Museum Associations</i>
CAN:	<i>Collections Australia Network</i>
CCA:	<i>Collections Council Australia Ltd</i>
CCAEC:	<i>Canberra College of Advance Education (became UC)</i>
CCMC:	<i>Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation (University of Melbourne)</i>
CMC:	<i>Cultural Minister's Council</i>
CIT:	<i>Canberra Institute of Technology</i>
DEH:	<i>Department of Environment and Heritage</i>
DEI:	<i>Department of Environment and Infrastructure</i>
GVEHO:	<i>Grants to Voluntary Environment &amp; Heritage Organisations (administered by Department of Environment, Water, Heritage &amp; the Arts)</i>
HCC:	<i>Heritage Collections Council (initial Heritage Collections Working Group); active 1993-2001? AICCM represented on the Collection Management and Conservation Working Party.</i>
ICCM:	<i>Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Material</i>
IE:	<i>Institute of Engineers</i>
MA:	<i>Museums Australia</i>
SA:	<i>Secretariat Australia</i>
UC:	<i>University of Canberra</i>
UM:	<i>University of Melbourne</i>
UNSW:	<i>University of New South Wales</i>
US:	<i>University of Sydney</i>
UWS:	<i>University of Western Sydney</i>

# What does AICCM mean to you?

## 'WHAT DOES YOUR PROFESSIONAL ORGANISATION MEAN TO YOU?'

Kay Soderlund requested that AICCM State Divisions hold meetings to discuss what we value about AICCM and where we would like to see our professional organisation develop in the future. The following notes are a summary of the discussion held and the views expressed during at the Victorian Division *Off The Record* Session held on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2010. If you would like to add to these comments, please contact the National Council directly.

There was a panel who lead the discussion: Detlev Lueth (chair), Marcelle Scott and Alice Cannon.

Issues and questions that were put forward for consideration:

- What do you value most about the AICCM?
- What should the AICCM value/focus/work towards?
- How do you feel about the proposal to stop publishing the Bulletin?
- The Secretariat: how does the structure of the AICCM impact on this issue? How do others manage it?
- Professional membership and development
- Developing a national disaster response capability
- The website
- Inter-organisational networking with Museums Australia, ALIA, ASA, Blue Shield, etc.
- Fundraising and what it could enable

The main points that came out of the discussion were:

### The Bulletin

- Everyone bar one voted to keep a peer-reviewed Bulletin.
- We believe that for us to exist as a profession it is necessary for us to maintain a peer-reviewed journal.
- We acknowledge that the format may change, but the intellectual rigour of the peer-review process must remain as an important aspect of our professionalism.

### The Website

- Displeasure with aspects of the website were expressed, specifically the fact that the problem of membership administration had not been solved.

### Membership Issues

- Why do people join/not join: some people join because they think it is the right thing to do (e.g. they believe in the importance of the existence of a professional organisation), others may base their decisions on services and financial benefits, eg they may join to receive discounts for a conference then let their membership lapse.
- Some people do not believe the AICCM offers them enough for the membership fee.
- The problem with declining membership is that though not everyone must be a member the more members you have the more money there is to provide members services.
- The opinion was also expressed that, as an organisation, we do pretty well. We are a volunteer organisation, run by people who are committed to the profession, and we have achieved a lot.

### AICCM Administration

- The desire to simplify the structure and therefore the administration of AICCM was expressed.
- It was thought that if the administration could be simplified, the AICCM (as a whole, not just National Council) could spend more time focused on other things.

### What do we value about the AICCM?

- The publications are valued.
- The events are valued: workshops, conferences, talks, the chance to network, the chance to learn outside your specialisation.
- The existence of the AICCM as a professional body is valued.
- The role the AICCM plays in the establishment and continued development of education and professional practice within conservation is valued.
- The networking and friendships developed through involvement in the AICCM are valued.

### Future directions of the AICCM

- People would like to see the AICCM look further outwards in the future – to look not only at how are we servicing our members, but also at what are we contributing beyond this. This will, of course, always be a balancing act.
- There is great potential for the AICCM to be a voice, to advocate.
- People would like processes to be streamlined so that more energy can be directed toward projects and development while general administration is maintained.

# Lab and People News

## Victoria

### Museum Victoria

#### Lab News

We are about to embark upon several major exhibition developments; the redevelopment of the Bunjilaka Indigenous Cultures gallery at Melbourne Museum and the development of a new Immigration Museum exhibition, currently titled *Personal Identity in Contemporary Australia*. The team are busily working on a large number of other loans and touring exhibitions, including the exciting regional tour of *Ancestral Power and the Aesthetic*; an exhibition of previously unexhibited barks and artefacts from the Donald Thomson collection. Work continues on a survey of the type specimens in the wet invertebrate collection and the pyrite collection.

#### People News

We are very pleased to welcome **Davina Hacklin** as our new Manager, Conservation. Davina comes to us after several years at Queensland Museum; we only hope that the change of climate is acceptable! Davina's training in paintings conservation and previous roles in preventive conservation are an added bonus, rounding out the skills of the conservation team.

We would also like to welcome **Sarah Gubby** as our inaugural Conservator (Paper, Images and Audiovisual). Sarah worked in the conservation team several years ago in the lead up to opening *Melbourne Story* and has since been working at the National Archives of Australia (Burwood).

We welcome **Sheldon Teare** back to the team (again!); Sheldon is backfilling

Marion Parker (currently on maternity leave) until the end of June.

**Helen Privett** will be taking a year of maternity leave from February. We wish her, Sean and their new family member all the best for the future.

### National Gallery of Victoria

#### Lab news

After a long delay, the Objects Lab is now running at full strength with **Marika Strohschnieder** at the helm. **Trude Ellingsen** has been trialling some interesting polymer and pigment combinations in the infill of both ivory and mother of pearl fans. **Sharon Grigg** has been busy cleaning a range of Asian and English ceramics for the upcoming *Tea and Zen* exhibition and other cataloguing projects. **Di Whittle** has spent some quality time cleaning a particularly dirty early 17<sup>th</sup>C marble bust and has otherwise been working on hot glue removal from the rear of bark paintings. The team is now gearing up for the challenge of the NGV 2011 anniversary exhibition changeovers.

In the Paper Conservation section, **Belinda Gourley** has been treating a diverse selection of works including collages by Robert Klippel and Gareth Sansom, and Indian miniature paintings. As Convenor of the next AICCM Symposium on the Conservation of Paper, Books and Photographic Materials, Belinda is immersed in a range of activities to ensure the success of the symposium, which will be held at the NGV, is a great success. **Louise Wilson** is undertaking research into the supply of art paper in Australia in the 19<sup>th</sup>C. **Amy Bartlett** has joined **Pip Morrison** in photograph conservation for the next two months, to assist with the loans programme and conservation treatment of the photographs required for the next

two photograph exhibitions. **Albertine Hamilton**, a student from the MA (Cultural Materials Conservation) course at Melbourne University, has joined us recently as a volunteer. Albertine will be working on a range of projects including relining solander boxes and boxing photograph albums.

With the exception of minor treatments of frames for painting loans and gallery changeovers, both **Holly McGowan Jackson** and **MaryJo Lelyveld** have been focused on a number of re-framing projects. These include the re-framing of two Robert Dowling works, two Édouard Manet works as well as research into the framing preferences of John Peter Russell works and Grace Cossington Smith. The two Dowlings, *Early Efforts*, *Art in Australia* and *Tasmanian Aborigines*, are to be included in the National Gallery of Australia's *Robert Dowling: Tasmanian Son of Empire* travelling exhibition. The frames were produced by **Rob Murdoch** based on original frames from other Dowling works. **Suzi Shaw** presented a paper on a component of her research on Chinese Qing dynasty lacquer at the conference *Crossing Borders: The Conservation, Science and Material Culture of East Asian Lacquer* held at the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, in late October 2009. Sharon Grigg has commenced treatment of two large, late 18<sup>th</sup>C Carlo Maratta frames. The frames from two William Beechey portraits retain an early restored finish, likely Victorian, that employs alternating matte and burnished water gilding (on a black bole) and oil gilded surfaces across the frame ornament.

The Textiles Conservation lab is busily working towards two costume exhibitions. **Kate Douglas** is coordinating the conservation for *Australian Made 100 Years of Fashion* (28 May 2010 – 23 January 2011) and **Christina Ritschel** is working 3 days a week coordinating the conservation

requirements for *Lace in Fashion* (23 July 2010 – 23 January 2011). We have been busily conserving priority costumes for catalogue photography and **Annette Soumilas** has been producing a large number of underpinnings during her 3 days a week in the lab. **Bronwyn Cosgrove** has been involved in exploring options for dye analysis, C-14 dating and treatment of a large oriental carpet in the NGV collection. **Mary-Anne Gooden** has been steadily working on her thesis project which is the complex treatment of a Buckley and Nunn Bodice and skirt (1903-1907). The treatment is well underway with the bodice being completed. **Charlotte Walker** has been volunteering in the lab on Thursdays and been of great help working through some of the items on the *Australian Made* checklist.

**Raye Collins** is in the final stages of inpainting William Beechey's *Portrait of Lady Rous*, 1796, and is soon to commence work on its companion *Portrait of John Rous*, also by Beechey. **Alex Ellem** is putting the final touches to the Studio of Kneller's *Portrait of a Lady*, after conducting repairs to damage and old restorations associated with the painting having been cut down and restretched in oval format. **Helen Gill** is currently conducting structural and aesthetic treatment of a portrait of King George IV. **John Payne** and **Carl Willis** have commenced treatments of two works by Joseph Wright of Derby, a Self-Portrait and a painting of the artist's daughter reading by candlelight that are recent gifts to the Gallery. Carl is also writing a book on his research into Dosso Dossi's portrait of Lucrezia Borgia. **Michael Varcoe-Cocks** has completed work on several Robert Dowling paintings in preparation for the travelling exhibition, *Robert Dowling: Tasmanian Son of Empire*. Helen has also worked on the Dowling paintings. Michael's work on Von Guerard is a constant leitmotif. A group of Bernard Hall paintings have undergone analytical examinations revealing useful information about his working processes.

**Helen Casey** has joined the Exhibitions Conservation team on a short term contract until the end of June. A recent Melbourne University graduate she is bringing managerial skills to bear on the labyrinthine world of loans and touring exhibitions. **Janelle Borig** is currently helping de-install our touring Brack exhibition at AGSA, and **Catherine Earley** is contemplating Conservation policy and the AICCM taskforce on environmental guidelines. We are ALL daily clucking over the Ron Mueck sculptures proving very popular with our visitors...

### People news

The Objects Lab welcomed two new conservators to the team in December. Di Whittle joined us fulltime and Sharon Grigg came on board as a valuable part time resource, shared with the Frames and Furniture Lab.

The NGV Conservation family is expanding again with **Ruth Shervington** and family welcoming Hector Evelyn Pontonio into the world on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2009. Also, Holly McGowan-Jackson is looking radiant, expecting baby number 2 in early June, and will begin maternity leave in late April.

As members of the AICCM Victorian Division Committee, Raye Collins, MaryJo Lelyveld and Alex Ellem worked with others on the committee to develop an Information Sheet on measures individuals can take to reduce risk to their possessions from fire damage during bushfire season. It can be found on the AICCM website. The Victorian Division would like to thank the NGV Media Team for sending out the AICCM press release in early summer, continuing the NGV's support of AICCM's response to the 2009 Victorian bushfires. The information sheet was also sent to local councils, fire authorities and collecting institutions. On December 12<sup>th</sup>, Alex was interviewed on ABC 774 to discuss the issue.

## Heritage Victoria Conservation and Research Centre

Late last year Heritage Victoria's conservation lab underwent a corporate identity change; the lab is now known as the **Heritage Victoria Conservation and Research Centre**. Conservation still has an archaeological focus at Heritage Victoria, but **Jenny Dickens** and **Susie Collis** will look forward to more research based projects in their professional lives from here on in. In other news, there is likely to be another archaeological excavation in the Melbourne metro area during 2010, with an as yet unknown quantity of archaeological artefacts to be recovered. This project is likely to be underway in the latter half of the year. Until then, we have several community loan and exhibition projects to keep us busy and a whole lot of maritime artefacts in treatment that continue to be monitored.

## State Library Victoria

### Lab news

**Shelley Jamieson** and **Catherine Marklund** have prepared material from the Victorian Bushfire Messagebook Collection for display. Sixty volumes of messages and twelve boxes of letters, ephemera and objects from the Black Saturday memorial service were handed over to SLV from the Victorian Premier John Brumby. A small selection of this material is to be displayed in front of the 19<sup>th</sup>C painting *Black Thursday* for one month, in commemoration of last year's devastating bushfires.

Late last year we installed the exhibition *'Til you drop: Shopping – A Melbourne History*. Soon we will be in the midst of preparation for our next temporary exhibition, which will feature original illustrations for children's books. (Working title: *Growing Up! Australian Picture Books Now*). In between we are taking the chance to catch up on some general collection conservation work. **Jane Hinwood** has been working on

some architectural drawings drawn in soft pencil on tracing paper. **Alice Cannon** has removed a number of damaged land auction plans (from the Troedel collection) from scrapbook pages. **David Harris** has been working on the original diaries of Joseph Jenkins, a 19<sup>th</sup> century Welshman who kept daily entries of his experiences working on the land in Australia for over 30 years. (These have been published as *Diaries of a Welsh Swagman*). The original manuscripts will be digitised following treatment. He has also found a reference to himself in the manuscript! Clearly David has been time-travelling...

23 July 1873 Mount Bolton ... It appears that the Intercolonial ploughing match was numerously attended. 41 champion ploughs were engaged... three from this neighbourhood were the best. Ross Draffin and **David Harris**, my countryman, who is in fact the most useful ploughman in this colony. He always packs his land firm with thin soils and there is nothing artificial about his work. It will harrow well and the seeds are well covered. ...

**Virginia Dahlenburg**, **Peter Block** and **Shelley Jamieson** have been preparing oil paintings and watercolours for a temporary exhibition of works by Rick Amor. The paintings are all of Melbourne scenes. This material will be on display in the Library's Blue Rotunda.

**Ian Cox** has been awing us all with his mail-merge skills. With hundreds of items going on exhibition, it is useful to be able to auto-fill information on our treatment assessment forms from our existing databases and spreadsheets. We all enjoy a little less administrative grunt work as a result!

**Katrina Ben**, **Jean Holland** and **Helen McPherson** have discovered, amongst other things, old remedies for biliousness while working on our extensive newspaper collection. Will advertisements from today's newspapers seem as hilarious to our descendents as these do to us now? The book conservators have also begun to assess material for the next changeover of our *Mirror of the World* exhibition, including material that was on the very first

rotation and has now been 'rested' for five years.

**Jane Manallack**, a student from the University of Melbourne materials conservation course (and also a curatorial assistant here at SLV) volunteered with us for a little while, working on the collection of Victorian Parish Plans with Alice Cannon. These plans require cleaning and repair prior to digitisation.

### People news

Our congratulations to **Catherine McFarlane**, who was married last year to Anthony and is now to be known as **Catherine Marklund**. Hurrah!

**Sarah Haselton** is our Assistant Registrar for the next six months, to help Catherine manage the loans for our upcoming exhibition of illustrations from children's books.

**Sarah Slade** has started a PhD with University of Melbourne. The title of her research topic is *The cost of exhibiting* and will look at developing an instrument to objectively assess and manage the level of risk to collection material on exhibition and the resources required to control that level of risk.

We are very glad to have **Helen McPherson** safely back with us after an exciting month of motorcycling around India. Other exciting staff holidays have included New York (Shelley), France (Alice), New Zealand (Jean), Cambodia (Catherine) and Las Vegas (Virginia). We'll be happy to tell you all about our trips, next time you see us!

### Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation

Two PhD candidates at CCMC have recently successfully completed and are due to graduate. **Liz Hinde** completed her thesis identifying the mechanisms relating to fading of daylight fluorescent artists paints. She determined the formulation of these pigments and described deterioration mechanisms, including colour-shifts and fading. She

also designed in-painting methodologies for paintings comprising fluorescent paints. Liz is now working at the Optical Biology Centre at the University of California, Irvine.

**Ahmad Abu Baker** investigated the technological development and cultural relationship in the history of copper production, and assessed corrosion mechanisms and corrosion inhibitors for copper based archaeological material. His research analysed corrosion mechanisms and assessed processes for developing effective non-toxic approaches to corrosion inhibition in archaeological copper-based objects. Ahmad will return to Jordan to manage teaching and research responsibilities at Yarmouk University.

Three other PhD candidates are into the final year of their study. **Elaine Miles** has been examining methods for the non-destructive testing techniques for cultural material. This has included Electronic Speckle Pattern Interferometry, Laser Speckle Contrast Method and Laser Speckle Correlation. Working with **Nicole Tse** and students in the Masters by Coursework, she has applied these methods to a variety of cases including:

- Monitoring movement in painted canvas as it acclimatises to various temperatures and humidity
- Investigating subsurface layers of paper objects
- Viewing the drying process of Liquol (paint additive)
- Monitoring the dimensional change in acrylic paint as it cures

**Suzanne Spinner** is assessing the oeuvre of Rover Thomas and investigating the historical context, archival material and provenance that relates to his oeuvre. She has developed a database relating to his work and has undertaken extensive interviews with key individuals. She was awarded an AITIS grant to undertake fieldwork for this project.

**Lyndon Ormond-Parker** is examining the role of digitisation as an access tool for online collection development. This

research involves a current project eMob: an online guide to overseas collections pilot project with Murray Lower Darling Rivers Nations (MLDRIN) and case studies with Knowledge Centres in the Northern Territory. Lyndon is assessing the way Indigenous communities are using new technologies in preserving their cultural heritage and traditional knowledge, as well as the way cultural institutions are digitising their collections and interacting with source communities online. He was awarded an ARC Indigenous Discovery Project Grant and an AITSIS fellowship to support his research.

Of the seven PhD candidates studying at CCMC, four are qualified conservators.

**Dr. Petronella Nel** is teaching the CCMC Chemistry Bridging course over two weeks in February. The course has been specifically developed to teach the fundamentals of chemistry to those entering the Master of Arts in Cultural Material Conservation. The course is recommended for students who lack a background in chemistry or who wish to revise its basic concepts and practice.

Two subjects in the Specialist Certificate in Preservation of Photographs; Photographic Materials and Techniques and Preventive Care of Photographs and Film are being delivered in February. Lecturer, **Clara von Waldthausen**, is a leading international expert in photographic conservation running her own photographic conservation consultancy business, The Fotorestaauratie Atelier C.C. in the Netherlands. She is an experienced educator and researcher, and has published several articles on the practice of photographic conservation, as well as more technical work on the Autochrome process and coatings on early photographs.

The Modular Cleaning Program, being delivered by **Chris Stavroudis** in February, is fully subscribed. The MCP is a systemic approach to cleaning artworks and decorative surfaces, developed to assist conservators in cleaning with solvents, solvent gels, and water-borne systems. The MCP consists of a series of concentrated stock solutions and

a computer database. The database assists the conservator in combining the stock solutions and provides information about the solutions and their components. **Chris Stavroudis** is a paintings conservator in private practice in Los Angeles. He has developed the computer program and the concept of the modular cleaning program.

## Tasmania

### Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office

**Stephanie McDonald** has completed the flattening and storage of more Mt. Lyell Mining Company maps and plans – we're not sure that there'll ever be an end to them! She has also constructed her largest storage box – measuring 1800 x 1350 x 118 mm – for the 1859 Map of Tasmania by James Sprent. It involved delaminating and gluing together double-corrugated archival board and the careful positioning of etha-foam support blocks.

Ongoing work for Stephanie in monitoring the ageing storage building has included co-ordinating with a mechanical engineering contractor to try to improve conditions for the master microfilm storage vault.

## New South Wales

### Australian Museum

The Materials Conservation Unit has been pre-occupied with a range of exhibition installations and storage problems. In mid-November **Kristel Smits**, who was appointed to a permanent conservator position last year, and **Michael Kelly**, took down, condition reported and packed *Menagerie: Contemporary Indigenous Sculpture*, an exhibition that had been displayed across two venues,

the Australian Museum and Object Gallery, Surrey Hills. The exhibition displays the work of thirty-three artists with 70 works portraying Indigenous perspectives of animals. Some of these fragile works posed challenges for the packers as the exhibition commenced a national 2 year tour.

**Kate Brotherston** and **Kristel** worked with couriers from Vienna for the installation and pack up of the major exhibit *Egyptian treasures: art of the pharaohs* which included some major handling headaches with very large stone sculptures. The stringent environmental conditions laid down in the contract gave us the opportunity to test the buffering capabilities of our showcases with extensive internal and external monitoring of the cases. Great success was achieved with minimal movement of RH.

In November the Unit co-hosted with AICCM the *Pest Control for Museums* seminar presented by Alex Roach. Pest Control has been much on our minds with outbreaks of carpet beetle activity in our off-site storage. This highlighted the difficulties of monitoring taxidermied specimens stored on 4 metre high racking in the main store. **Tanja Bernd** and **Heather MacKay**, upon her return from maternity leave, have been wrestling with this problem and extensive examinations and treatments are underway.

Further problems at the off-site store caused by the air-conditioning resulted in some mould growth on collection material. Analysing the monitoring data highlighted major differences in the set-up of the "office comfort" air handling units leading to high relative humidity in one area.

At the end of last year, **Colin Macgregor** completed experiments in the 3-D scanning of some collection objects and an animation was created for the new museum webpages, using the skills of 3-D designer. The museum website 2.0 was launched mid-2009 and the Materials Conservation pages are being gradually migrated into the new format. The Microscopy Unit run by

**Sue Lindsay** became part of an enlarged Materials Conservation Unit in June. This merger will hopefully stimulate opportunities for conservation research projects utilizing the scanning electron microscope and the X-ray diffraction equipment.

**Vinod Daniel** has been working closely with the Salzburg Global Seminar on a final report and recommendations from the session *Connecting to the World's Collections: Making the Case for the Conservation and Preservation of our Cultural Heritage* (November 2009). Vinod also coordinated a very successful Australia India Heritage Week in Kolkata, India, January 2010. He is currently working on the Virtual Museum of the Pacific project which would be a major initiative to unlock Australian Museums Pacific collections. Vinod is also undertaking a study to evaluate energy savings from turning off air conditioning systems at selected collection stores for short periods (working with Colin McGregor, Ngaire Richards and Steve King (UNSW))

## Art Gallery of New South Wales

**Dr Málgorzata (Margaret) Sawicki**, Coordinator of the International Council of Museums – Committee for Conservation Wood, Furniture, and Lacquer Working Group is on the Organising Committee for the ICOM-CC Joint Interim Conference on *Multidisciplinary Conservation: a Holistic View for Historic Interiors*, Rome, 23-26 March 2010. In this role she has been reviewing papers and preparing the conference program. Two conservation staff are contributing to this conference: **Donna Hinton** has completed a paper about Donald Friend and the conservation of the Gallery's two decorated doors and **Barbara Dabrowa** has completed a poster about the frame for Rorke's Drift, *The impact of the frame: one painting's journey within the Art Gallery of New South Wales*. Margaret and Donna attended the Laser Heritage Conservation Linkage Project meeting

at the Australian National Gallery in Canberra, the research team resolved to write two papers and present a seminar by mid year.

An Australian Research Council (ARC) grant on *Twentieth Century in paint* has been in place for 6 months now, and the Art Gallery of NSW is an industry partner on the project. **Paula Dredge** (Australian Postgraduate Award) is engaged on research into Sidney Nolan's studio materials belonging to the gallery. She is currently organising a meeting of all project partners to be held at the Art Gallery of NSW 15-16th February.

**Simon Ives** has given several talks on Rupert Bunny's use of colour to the Colour Symposium, Teacher training, Gallery Guides and the general public. **Sarah Bunn** gave a presentation on research into paintings from the 1948 Arnhem Land Expedition at the International Symposium *Barks, Birds and Billabongsheld* at the National Museum of Australia. **Analiene Treacy** gave a talk on Indian miniature techniques and materials for the exhibition, *Garden and Cosmos*.

**Lisa Charleston** and Sarah Bunn completed a course in integrated pest management at the Australian Museum.

Barbara has been restoring the frames for *Golden Fleece* by Tom Roberts and *Cafe Scene* by Frank Medworth, 1933 (former recto of the painting *Miraculous draft of fishes* by the same artist). **David Butler** made reproduction frames for three panorama photographs by Melvin Vaniman. He has also started research for the design of a new frame for the William Strutt Painting *David's First Victory*, 1868. Margaret has been restoring the frame for the painting *Winding the Skein*, circa 1878, by Lord Frederic Leighton that is required for loan to the Galeria Nazionale D'Arte Moderna, Italy, in June 2010.

77 Indian textiles have been unpacked and condition checked by **Kerry Head** and **Tasha McFarlane** in preparation for display. Volunteer, **Ingrid Farago** has surveyed 25 rank badges and conservation treatment of five badges is underway. Cleaning of large sculptures

on display continues. Maintenance work on James Angus' Bugatti is in progress following technical advice. Ron Mueck's Old woman in bed was installed at the National Gallery of Victoria.

The new acquisition, *La Marée Haute à Saint-Malo* by Ethel Carrick Fox, has been cleaned and is being prepared for display. Several works from the British Collection are being cleaned by **Stewart Laidler** and Simon in preparation for a change of display. These include *The Lemnians – Russel Flint* (715); *Filling Water Jars – Henry La Thangue* (7208); *Richmond Castle – Phillip Wilson Steer* (8031); *Matinee Rehearsal – Henry Tonks* (6521). Maintenance on furnishing loans continues. Condition reporting was completed for two John Brack paintings on loan in Adelaide and Canberra.

The treatment of a number of Australian prints and watercolours is underway in preparation for a Focus Room exhibition and rehang in March. Assessment of Indian material belonging to a private collector is underway in preparation for *Indian Empire*. Condition reporting was completed for the closure of *Garden and Cosmos*.

A successful fundraising evening was held by 'Friends of Conservation' in the Conservation Department. As well as a talk about the use of colour by Rupert Bunny, guests were treated to a tour of the laboratory. Money raised by the Benefactors have enabled Conservation to order new digital x-ray equipment to replace the use of film and chemicals. Margaret prepared the latest *Conservation Benefactors Newsletter* commemorating the 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Friends of Conservation.

**Sun Yu**, the Gallery's much loved Senior Conservator of Asian Art and Scroll Mounter passed away on Sunday 7 February after a long battle with cancer.

**Andrea Nottage** went on maternity leave in November 2009 and **Carolyn Murphy** returned from maternity leave in January 2010.

## Powerhouse Museum

### Lab News

The 80s are back exhibition opened mid December, with great fanfare. This spectacular exhibition looks back at Australian life & popular culture through the decade, revisiting the music, the fashion, the parties, the politics and the people.

This object dense exhibition (nearly 1,000), of which 85% were loans, included a large number of LP records & posters that were displayed suspended, with invisible mounting on board. Each poster/cover had Japanese tissue hinges attached, these were then attached to black acid free mount board, cut to the same size of object, to achieve a floating appearance. **Terese Werstak**, **Margaret Jurasek**, **Dee Mckillop**, **Nadia Mcdougall**, **Skye Mitchell** were very busy for months with this task.

Seventy five mannequins display the fashion & fads, care of **Suzanne Chee**. A composite artwork, named "Young Einstein Smoking Guitar", by Yahoo Serious, had several detached parts which were repaired by **Bronwen Griffin**.

The 100 year anniversary of the Bakelite patent was marked by 16 early plastics being assessed & installed in the Recent Acquisition showcase. It is considered a significant part of the collection.

The Engineering Excellence awards, 2010 was installed in January. Each year, the Sydney Division of Engineers Australia conducts an awards program to showcase outstanding engineering projects. This includes the Gemmological Digital Analyser which is an automated vision system, which objectively assesses, quantifies and reports the complex colour characteristics of cut and polished opal. Also included is One Shelly Road, Kings Wharf, a building awarded the highest rating by the Green Buildings Council of Australia. This is a fascinating exhibition.

**Bronwen Griffin** is starting work on 35 chairs for a travelling exhibition called *Take a seat*, which will go to Bathurst in May.

**Carey Ward** has conducted routine maintenance on the object display drawers at Powerhouse Discovery Centre, Castle Hill. The replacement of all plastic pallets with new steel pallets with plywood tops is continuing.

**Rebecca Maine**, working on the TAM (Total Assets Management) project, has completed the treatment, storage & report writing of the Early Photos & Ambrotypes. She is also doing a survey of the Weatherly Sisters Circus & Vaudeville Archive and a collection of photographs and newspaper cuttings relating to the 19th century artist **Lucien Henry**.

### People News

**Jennifer Brian**, a conservation student from the Masters of Cultural Materials Conservation course at the University of Melbourne, is condition reporting the simple system flutes in the collection for her thesis, which will make recommendations for the conservation of simple system flutes in collections.

## State Library of NSW

The entire focus for the Collection Preservation and Storage team has been the work for the Library's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. The Library will open a 5 gallery exhibition on the 9<sup>th</sup> March entitled *ONE Hundred: 2010 the Mitchell Centenary* – so it's all hands on deck. The project has been divided into teams, one for item support: **Cecilia Harvey**, **Jessica O'Donnell**, **Aileen Dean Raschilla**, **Martin Bongiorno**, and another for framing **Cath Bartley** and **Martin Polkinghorne**, with help from others in the Branch. Perhaps the most challenging item to support is the Holterman panoramic c. 1870s negative which is the largest glass wet plate collodion negative – 1600mm x 965mm. The item is complicated by its size and fragility and to see the image requires light box within the support.

**Agata Rostek- Robak** has now commenced duties as Acting Manager Collection Preservation and Storage and **Catherine Thomson** has now returned to her duties as the Preservation Project Coordinator with a special focus on storage, especially at our offsite store at Moorebank. In this endeavour she is working closely with **Richard Chester**. We have also welcomed **Anna Brooks** back after her maternity leave and she too has been enlisted in *ONE Hundred* looking after the Living Collections part of the show, which involves 2 week change overs for items sourced by guest curators which illustrate the relevance of the Library's Mitchell collections today.

## Preservation Australia

### Lab News

2010 has got off to a great start at Preservation Australia – the Slim Dusty Project is underway, with **Kay Soderlund** sighting the famous caravan and discussions with the curator on content and display. Of course the never-ending Lands project continues to evolve with assessment and treatment of plans playing a large part in the week. Kay is consulting on several fronts in Perth, working with Museums Australia WA in developing workshops for the north and conducting Preservation Needs Assessments. **Tegan Anthes** stayed closer to home with Preservation Needs Assessments in Bowraville on a Max Coward collection of cartoons and drawings, which is expanding to a treatment and rehousing project.

### People news

The team at Preservation Australia is expanding, we currently have **Beate Yule** working as a volunteer one day a week. Beate has extensive experience in decorative surfaces, and is looking to develop her skills in paper conservation. Due to the influx of orders we also employ **Alex Soderlund** on a part-time basis.

## International Conservation Services

### Lab news

After the Christmas break ICS has returned to business, starting the new decade with many new and interesting projects. **Karina Acton** is very busy in Objects, x-raying a large sculpture to identify old restorations and determine the stability of the armature before flying to Norfolk Island to conserve items from the HMS *Sirius*. Together with **Rachael Crompton** they are also preparing one of the four Sydney Harbour Bridge cranes for the NMA.

In paintings, **Anna Diakowska Czarnota** and **Matteo Volonte** are investigating a mayoral portrait which has a suspicious mayor who may have been painted into the scene at a later date. UV, x-ray and IR investigations are underway which will inevitably create more questions and hopefully some answers.

**Adam Godijn** has been managing the conservation of a variety of paintings and antiques in a fire damaged house and has travelled out into country NSW to condition report a unique 19<sup>th</sup>C mural. **Arek Werstak** has been working on two decapitated sculptures, "Spring" and "Summer" which will be returned to their homes in the Royal Botanic Gardens in February. The furniture team **Oliver Hull**, **Eoin O'Sullivan** and **Kat Edghill** have gone back to school refurbishing the chapel at SCEGGS College.

In the Paper lab **Kate Papierniak** has been working on many diverse projects including a drawing by Rembrandt, an Italian artist sketch book from the 16<sup>th</sup>C, and an early edition "Rupert" comic book. With the valuable assistance of **Wendi Powell** and **Skye Firth**, Kate is managing the conservation of up to 15 projects this month. **Skye Firth** in textiles has been keeping busy with the conservation of Calthorpe House's soft furnishings for the ACT Historic Places.

## State Records NSW

### Old Register 6 – one of the earliest Land Grant Registers

In the June 2009 edition of the AICCM Newsletter State Records' reported on the investigation of tape removal on the earliest Land Grant Registers for the colony of NSW. The Conservation team at State Records have been undertaking a treatment trial on what is colloquially referred to as "Old Register Number 6" – one of the 9 Department of Land registers. State Records agreed to undertake the trial in order to provide the Dept of Lands with treatment recommendations for the volumes, as well as an estimate of the time involved, so that they could go to tender on the remaining conservation treatment with some concrete idea of the costs involved. The treatment trial has involved the removal of various types of self-adhesive and gummed tapes – it took approximately 30 hours to remove all the tape from the one section (22 pages) of the register that we are treating. We have almost finished the final phase of the treatment trial in which we have been investigating whether or not washing, deacidifying and re-sizing the pages is significantly beneficial to recommend, and what repair techniques are both the most effective and time efficient. We hope to have the trial completed by the end of February.

### Sydney University Museums

**Julie Taylor** has returned from deinstalling our first travelling exhibition *Unearthed Tales* at Bathurst Regional Art Gallery. She is currently working with a photographer for an upcoming publication, retrieving, moving and returning many objects from the entire collection spectrum.

**Megan Dean-Jones** continues to plug away at constructing ever larger boxes for large, fragile and vulnerable objects as part of the on-going upgrading of storage. This follows on from last years

reorganisation of the ethnographic stores.

**Alayne Alvis** is working on the cleaning of the Hathor column capital – a single piece of granite weighing over 3 tonnes. This piece was placed outside the original Nicholson Museum and when the museum relocated in the 1920's to its current location, Hathor stayed put. After over 100 years the capital has been moved into the Nicholson Museum. Early work cleaning work shows some quite satisfying results – surfaces that were mid- to dark grey before cleaning have turned out light pink!

**Alayne** and volunteer **Victor Chiang** continue work on the large papyrus collection – providing better supports for the glass encapsulated papyri and reducing the risk of insect infestation.

All of Collection Management is preparing to move the Natural History wet collection to a new purpose-built store. The store is in the last stages of being fitted out and we have been fortunate to have lots of improvements built in to make storage, handling and maintenance of the collection better. The next step is to retrieve the collection from its current difficult-to-access location.

## South Australia

### ARTLAB

#### Lab News

The Paintings Conservation team has just completed some exquisitely-executed, thread-by-thread tear repairs on four large canvases painted by artists from the Canning Stock Route area of WA which had been severely damaged by the proverbial fork-lift truck. It was an excellent collaboration with a colleague from the CCMC in Melbourne.

Objects Conservation, and Paper and Books Conservation have all been preoccupied during the last couple

of months by the preparation of the travelling exhibition *Quest, In Search of the South Pole* curated by the SA Maritime Museum and travelling to venues in Queensland, NSW and the ACT, as well as to Port Pirie here in SA.

**Kristin Phillips** travelled to Kolkatta and to Shillong in the North East States of India in January as part of an AusHeritage delegation, to deliver training workshops in counter-disaster planning and collections care. She is to return to Kolkatta in February to attend a textiles conservation conference and **Sophie Parker** is travelling to Wales and England to attend the ethnographic conservation symposium in Cardiff and to visit the Leather Conservation Centre in Northampton.

**Louise Stack** is currently finalizing the development of Artlab's new website which we hope to launch in early March.

### People News

Artlab's impressive delivery record has been maintained so far this year with the birth of Sylvie to **Liz Mayfield**. Congratulations and best wishes to Liz and Hilton.

Having said goodbye to **Di Whittle** and **Zandria Farrell** in December and January, it has been good to welcome back **Abby Maxwell-Bowen** from London who joins the Projects team and **Joanna Romanos**, herself recently returned from maternity leave.

We also welcome **Shima Gholami**, a paper and photography conservator who trained in Teheran and at the V&A in London.

**Anna Austin** is currently undertaking a print-making residency in Barcelona having been awarded a Helpmann Academy travelling fellowship, and **Charlotte Park** who has been travelling across Asia and Europe has decided to stay in the UK where she has found work with Museum Conservation Services in Cambridge. We wish her well for the future.

## QLD

### Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art

December 2009 marked the opening of the 6<sup>th</sup> *Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art* at QAG | GoMA much to the relief of conservation staff who worked tirelessly to prepare artworks for installation. Over the following months of January and February 2010 most of the conservation staff took leave so the lab has been a quiet place.

There were so many highlights from behind the scenes of APT6. **Anne Carter**, senior painting conservator, **Robert Zilli**, conservation framer and **Mandy Smith**, senior conservation technician, lead a team to complete a blister-raising, knee-crushing, back-aching project to stretch 6 canvas paintings of monumental proportions in the space of 4 weeks. **Amanda Pagliarino**, acting head of conservation, and **Liz Wild**, sculpture conservator, became proficient overnight in the handling, mapping, cutting and installation of glass mosaic to have the North Korean Mansudae Studio mosaic up in time for the exhibition opening. Work continued on the mosaic up to the very last minute but had to stop during the media preview because the hammering and chiselling was making too much noise. **Kim Barret** and **Samantha Shellard**, works on paper conservators, treated and mounted over 50 artworks including the design and manufacture of an innovative hanging system for 5 oversized ink on paper drawings from the Mansudae Studio. **Lyn Streader**, conservation technician, sewed a pink, frilled eight metre table cloth with the facility to hide structural supports for a 'levitating' table. **Nick Cosgrove**, conservation assistant; **Merv Brehmer**, conservation workshop co-ordinator; and **Damian Buckley**, conservation technician manufactured frames and framed over 230 artworks on paper.

During the lead up to APT6 the conservation staff welcomed **Kelly Leahey** and **Stuart Fuller**, both students from the CCMC at the University of

Melbourne who were undertaking their work placements. Also during that time **Vanessa Kowalski**, painting conservator from CCMC, joined us to undertake work in the paintings conservation section.

**Gillian Osmond**, painting conservator, has taken 3 years leave from her position at QAG | GoMA to complete a PhD as part of the Australian Research Council grant *The Twentieth Century in Paint*.

## ACT

### Australian War Memorial

#### Lab news

The Memorial is in the final stages of achieving compliance with ARPANSA legislative requirements for its holding of radioactive materials in the collection. **George Bailey** will begin packing collection material to background levels prior to the relocation of the collections into a single storage area. **Andrew Pearce** has relocated from the Large Technology team into the Small Objects Lab where he has taken up the position of New Acquisitions Conservator. **Frances Cumming** is co-ordinating the treatment of the Servicewomen's Memorial.

Conservation is preparing a range of collection material in preparation for the upgrade of the Second World War galleries after ANZAC Day this year.

**Barbara Reeve** is on leave for 5 months in Cambridge, UK, where she is also compiling information relating to passive storage areas and variable climate conditions for cultural institutions. **Laura Kennedy** is acting Head, Collection Services in Barbara's absence.

**Alana Treasure**, **Janet Hearne** and **Kathryn Ferguson** have begun the treatment of thirty paintings chosen for the Second World War galleries refurbishment. They look forward to applying practices learnt in the upcoming CCMC Modular Cleaning Program workshop. Janet and Kathryn

have recently completed treatments on three Social Realist paintings for temporary display. Alana has demounted and condition checked travelling art exhibitions 'Framing Conflict' in Brisbane and 'George Lambert landscapes' in Adelaide as well as the road-trip retrieval of seven paintings from Victoria Barracks as part of the Memorial's downsizing to maximum eight paintings on loan to each venue. David Keany and Alana have begun the humidity controlled, localised canvas expansion and paint consolidation treatment on the first of three paintings with severely tented paint caused by direct water damage.

Jessie Firth, Bridie Kirkpatrick and Sarah Clayton have been redressing a mannequin in a full sized diorama in the First World War galleries. The original clothing was adhered to the mannequin with fake mud which had meant that it could not be easily cleaned or inspected for insects. After 21 years on display, and with little crotch left, the uniform has been removed and replaced with a 'new' uniform complete with conservation grade fake mud!

## Western Australia

### Western Australian Museum

Conservation staff at the WA Museum checked out an unusual gilded eagle bowl that had been brought to the museum for identification. Using their new Bruker XRF unit it was readily discerned that the bowl was a gilded brass that had been in an archaeological burial environment for some years before recovery and being made available through the antique markets.

Fascinated by the designs and beauty of the object Ian MacLeod contacted his metals conservation colleague Johanna Thiele in Santiago, Chile who sent images and analyses to her colleagues. It turned out to have been made in the early contact period between the colonial Spanish forces and the Mexican

people and was in effect a baptismal jug. The jug had on it all the Mexican iconography of the eagle, symbol of purity and power, and the water from its wings which has never touched the ground, was like the dew from heaven and so used in connecting the power of the Trinity to the new life emerging as the old and new religious practices were merged.



The brass metal would have come from a melted down Spanish weapon and then was most likely sugar gilded, as there was not a trace of mercury in the X-ray spectrum which would have indicated use of a fire gilding process involving mercury amalgam. The owner of the object is delighted to have discovered its full provenance. The attached images show elements of the gilded brass object.

### Western Australian Museum - Albany

The Residency Building at the Western Australian Museum site in Albany is going through a total refit. Late in November artefacts were removed from the old displays and most of the cases were removed taking it back to the original building. The old carpets have been lifted, the floors sanded and polished ready for the refit.

Conservators have been involved in the removal and storage of the artefacts taken off display and preparing artefacts for the new interpretation which range from 1855 wooden plough to small wartime badges. The environmental conditions in the Residency are not controlled, but within the display cases the buffering is adequate to minimise changes.

The new interpretation will be a sequential progression from the geology, fauna and flora of the area, the first peoples and European discovery. This is followed by settlement and the impact of the World Wars on local persons. New stories are being told with a suite of artefacts currently being prepared by conservation. The new exhibition will be open mid 2010.

### Corkill Conservation

Corkill Conservation is a new private paper conservation studio in Perth, providing paper conservation and consulting services to collecting institutions, art galleries, private individuals and collections. **Felicity Corkill (née Turner)**, had a busy year in 2009, getting married in March, then sadly leaving International Conservation Services in August and moving to Perth (as her husband relocated for his job) where she established her studio in October. At this stage the lab set-up is coming along very well and the hunt for clients is about to begin!

## An Interview

The Collections Council of Australia has been an important part of the national cultural scene in Australia for the last six years, and a strong supporter of AICCM. Their forthcoming closure was announced in October 2009.

*Julian Bickersteth caught up with CEO Margaret Birtley and her staff.*

*Staff of the Collections Council in 2009 (left to right): Development Officer Veronica Bullock, Executive Assistant Charlotte Smith, Project Officer Alexis Tindall and CEO Margaret Birtley.*



### **Where is the Collections Council at, and what are you most proud of?**

The Collections Council of Australia Ltd (CCA) was initiated by the Cultural Ministers Council (CMC), an intergovernmental forum for ministers responsible for culture and the arts in Australia and New Zealand. Following a decision by CMC on 9 October 2009 to cease funding the CCA, the Board has decided to wind down activities and is now working towards winding up its affairs. We expect to close our doors on 30 April 2010.

To recap: the CCA was established in 2004 with the aim of advancing the stability and the sustainability of the Australian collections sector, particularly in relation to the archive, gallery, library and museum domains. Among the CCA's achievements are *Conservation Survey 2006* which researched employment in the conservation and preservation field, and the development of several major publications, including *Significance 2.0* (2009), *Collections Law* (2008 and ongoing), and *Standards and Guidelines: An E-directory* or SAGE (2008 and ongoing). We are proud that we were able to provide 2,900 copies of the *Significance 2.0* book to a wide range of collecting organisations around Australia. All of the above resources will continue to be available online via <http://www.collectionscouncil.com.au>.

We are working hard to finalise several large projects and transfer some of these to other organisations before our closure.

This will include the publication, in April, of an *Australian Collecting Organisations Register (OzCOR)* – a database of collecting organisations classified according to collecting domain (archive, gallery, library, living, museum – and hybrid, where the organisation includes two or more domains). We have invested a lot of effort in the creation of OzCOR and are proud of our plan to make the data available to everyone on our website before we close.

*CollectionsCare* is just getting off the ground, with the first *CollectionsCare* Region being launched in the Western Australian Goldfields in early March 2010. We hope that others will pick up this concept which advocates the support and use of Australia's significant and surprising regional collections.

We have received positive feedback on the quality of our submissions to government on behalf of a united collections sector, and there is good evidence that parts of government are starting to take account of this sector as a significant and coherent segment of the Australian economy.

We are confident that our ongoing discussions with the Australian Bureau of Statistics will yield better statistics about the Australian collections sector in due course. The launch of the 'Towards Comparable Statistics for Cultural Heritage Organisations 2008' (ABS Cat. No. 4916.0) is the first clear evidence of these negotiations.

We feel that our ground breaking work in drawing attention to digital collections has paved the way for other operators in the sector to move forward with this important agenda. We are also happy to have helped get Blue Shield Australia off the ground – particularly its MayDay campaign.

CCA staff are actively seeking new positions: Ms Charlotte Smith has already departed to a prestigious new position at the Art Gallery of South Australia. The CCA also congratulates its Development Officer, Ms Veronica Bullock, on her selection as a Fellow of the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) in Rome, Italy – commencing in mid March 2010. (Ms Bullock is also the Secretary / Treasurer of the SA / NT Branch of the AICCM; she will be farewelled at a Branch event in Adelaide on 5 March.)

In mid-February, the CCA wrote to all Australian collecting organisations with advice about its 'legacy' and forthcoming closure. The CCA's website and e-Bulletin will convey fresh news, so be sure to sign up here: <http://www.collectionscouncil.com.au/e-bulletin.aspx>.

### **Where does the future of the sector lie?**

Good question! Obviously, without a single peak body to keep up with developments in each of the major collecting areas the value of a

'collections sector' concept is weakened. This will reduce the sector's bargaining power on matters of shared interest and concern. It has taken a while to build up contacts in many different subject areas within the sector. It is now inevitable that such valuable tools will generally lapse.

Although the Cultural Ministers Council has decided to cease funding the Collections Council of Australia, it has set up a Working Group to examine the next steps for Australia's collections. It may be possible for AICCM members to contribute ideas on this subject to the Working Group. Perhaps a differently structured peak body is required to bring the collections sector together?

**Should the conservation profession be worried?**

Yes, but conservation is sufficiently at arm's length from collecting domain politics that it should be able to continue its valuable work as before.

What the demise of the Collections Council means is that there is reduced opportunity to promote conservation via a respected independent voice within Australia and internationally. The main impact of this will be a reduction in the likelihood of unlocking new funds for cultural heritage generally.

Once again, a way to ensure that the investment made by the Collections Council is not lost, might be via contributing to the Cultural Ministers Council Working Group deliberations.

**Do you think the conservation profession is more or less engaged with the sector as a whole since the Collections Council of Australia began?**

This is difficult to answer. The Collections Council has worked hard over the last five years to promote our work to conservators through the AICCM and other avenues. One of the biggest challenges for us has been drawing together the disparate domains, sub-domains and professions in the collections sector, because they haven't traditionally regarded themselves as a coherent sector. That has caused a real struggle for us, but we are reassured by some of the things we see happening in the sector, and were very pleased that

the AICCM was well represented at our Round Table for peak bodies in the collections sector in May 2008.

A small number of individuals practising conservation / preservation have congratulated us about some of the things we have done, and this has been heartening. It could be that these particular people understood the bigger picture – the fit of conservation within a collections sector – but this is hard to prove.

An achievement of which we are very proud is *Conservation Survey 2006*, which raised awareness about emerging employment shortages in conservation, and increased universities' confidence about offering appropriate courses. The survey report was distributed and promoted widely, so we would like to think that we have helped the 'sector as a whole' to be more engaged with the 'conservation profession – and perhaps it worked the other way round as well.

The letter of support posted by the AICCM in response to the announcement of the Collections Council's closure was prompt and much appreciated. This response indicates perhaps that there is ultimate awareness within conservation / preservation of the existence and value of an Australian collections sector, but this also is hard to demonstrate.

**Where should the profession concentrate its resources?**

1. Continue to provide high quality expertise to the Australian community.
2. Contribute ideas to the Cultural Ministers Council Working Group on the future of collections in Australia.
3. Publish interesting papers in internationally recognised publications. Read the November 2000 report by the AICCM entitled 'National Conservation Research Audit and Research Needs Assessment' for ideas on where to start. Update this report if necessary.

Consider the journal ranking system introduced this year: 'Excellence in Research in Australia' at [http://www.arc.gov.au/era/era\\_journal\\_list.htm](http://www.arc.gov.au/era/era_journal_list.htm)

to locate publication opportunities. AICCM could usefully prepare a short list of conservation / preservation related journals as an easy reference guide to encourage potential authors, put it on the website, and send it to the membership periodically as further encouragement. (Note: Currently the Bulletin of the AICCM has a 'C' ranking. Aim for an 'A\*!')

4. Promote 'research in progress' on the AICCM website and through e-Bulletins.
5. Pass more resolutions at annual conferences similar to the environmental guidelines example at the 2010 Conference in Fremantle. Focus on intellectual advances by consensus at conferences.
6. Promote Australian conservation / preservation (including non-university trained practice) to the world through popular and specialist media.
7. Participate in broader cultural heritage and digital heritage debates by preparing submissions to relevant Inquiries and opening new lines of communication to colleagues elsewhere in the collections sector, in built heritage and beyond. (This means keeping on top of national and international developments and literatures, including in the areas of innovation, university research, environment, statistics etc).
8. We know that yours is largely a volunteer-run professional association, but this is not unusual. Keep up connections with similar bodies e.g. the Australian Society of Archivists, to extend your reach and to learn from each other.
9. If / when a new collections sector peak body is established, liaise with it as a priority. Sharing information, volunteering input, and working collaboratively will help all of the organisations and professions in the collections sector.

Good luck to you all from the Collections Council. We have enjoyed working with you and wish that we could have done more for materials conservation in Australia.

## Special Interest Group

### Book and Paper SIG

The 6<sup>th</sup> Book, Paper and Photographic Materials Symposium is to be held in Melbourne at the National Gallery of Victoria, 17-19 November 2010.

A call for papers was sent out late last year and thank you to everyone who responded to this.

In the near future the organising committee will be seeking proposals for poster presentations, and an email will

be sent out to members regarding this.

Any enquiries regarding the Symposium please contact **Belinda Gourley**, Book and Paper SIG Convenor, via email on [belinda.gourley@ngv.vic.gov.au](mailto:belinda.gourley@ngv.vic.gov.au) or phone on +61 (3) 8620 2116.

### When can an object be used?

#### From an Object to a Ceremony: The Journey of Kava Bowl

As part of an Intangible Heritage Forum that was held at the Australian Museum, a Kava Ceremony was held. The Wooden Circular Kava Bowl that was presented to former Prime Minister Bob Hawke in 1988 (E82267) was used for the Ceremony.

The process in pursuing this included close consultations with a number of Museum staff including Finton Mahoney (Intangible Project Officer), Colin McGregor (Manager, Materials Conservation) and Dion Peita (Coordinator, Cultural Collections). This bowl was chosen out of a group of three as it was the most modern and robust. The older bowls displayed signs of splitting. Finton was keen to document its Intangible Heritage value through a ceremony where its traditional custodians were involved as well as to activate the Collection (to paraphrase him his words were "A kava bowl that is not used is a lump of wood").

Having been strongly involved with conservation practices in the Asia Pacific region and being a strong advocate of both intangible as well as

tangible cultural heritage practices, I was very keen to explore this and Dion Peita worked very closely with the Fijian community on this project. Our Director Frank Howarth was very supportive of us doing this.

Colin Macgregor pre-conditioned the object by increasing the moisture content overnight in a humidity controlled environmental chamber to reduce the risk of splitting, as the wood had been dry for so many years. He also cleaned off the kava residues after use the ceremony and examined the bowl. There was no sign of damage to the wood but the surface appeared different after contact with the kava.

I look forward to hearing back from the materials conservation community on their views on an object being used in a ceremony where a certain physical change is always going to happen, but the intangible benefits are very valuable to the Museum world especially as we strive to rejuvenate cultural traditions and practices as well as work closely with Diasporic Communities.

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# Conservation Matters – What do you think?



## “Conservation of Our Careers” by Joyce Hill Stoner

The eminent US art conservator and educator Joyce Hill Stoner gave the following paper at an AIC conference in 2001. Re-reading it nine years on, the editors believe its content is still as relevant today. Joyce has kindly agreed for this edited version of the published in the AICCM Newsletter.

### Introduction

As a member of the “baby boomer group” of art conservators, I had been thinking for some time about preparing a talk on conservation “burnout”—why people become unhappy and sometimes actually leave the field. Walter Henry allowed me to post a distlist survey asking, “what causes you the most stress in your daily professional life?” I received more than EIGHTY responses—from 11 countries, covering all specialties, and reflecting various training backgrounds, but hasten to add, this was NOT a scientific study!

I expected that the winning stress cause would be deadlines, low pay or treatments that back fired, but I was VERY SURPRISED at the actual results—the hands-down winner for causing stress was “THE PEOPLE I WORK WITH,” and there are a LOT of unhappy conservators out there. The immediate unhappy responses came from U.K. conservators, who noted that their supervisors did not understand what they did, that their colleagues were quarrelsome, that there was no outline of career structure for advancement or sabbaticals, and that they felt the pay was not commensurate with their years of training. The lack of a defined career structure for promotion or mobility in assignments was also noted by respondents from France, Australia,

**“BEING HAPPY IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN ANYTHING ELSE.”**

and U.S. museums. I also asked in the questionnaire “What was missing from your original training that you’ve had to teach yourself?”

“A LITTLE KNOWLEDGE CAN GO A LONG WAY.” (headings by conceptual artist Jenny Holzer). The majority of responses for that question fell into the area of management, including interpersonal communications, and politics. I came up with the working hypothesis that the profession of conservation may attract somewhat introverted people who hope to spend their daily lives alone with objects but then find instead that much of their time must be spent with clients or curators, preparators, riggers, shippers, HVAC specialists, or unhappy co-workers. “ALL THINGS ARE DELICATELY INTERCONNECTED”

One respondent wrote that she had been happy working alone but needed more help—when she got the co-workers she asked for she couldn’t play her music anymore and now had to deal with lab politics.

One of the few situations that might provide a majority of time alone with works of art is if you are in a sort of monarchy where one autocratic conservator deals with the clients or curators and you are never even introduced, but I’ve heard plenty of complaints about that. “ABUSE OF POWER COMES AS NO SURPRISE”.

I did not ask “are you happy?” but most respondents made it quite clear that they were or were not. One stopped in the middle and wrote, “this has become too painful to complete...sorry.” About ¼ of the respondents sounded happy. “BEING HAPPY IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN ANYTHING ELSE.”

Most of the happy respondents could probably be categorized as “people persons,” and they worked in both museums and private labs; a slight majority came from private labs. Another satisfied group contained those for whom conservation is a second or third career—they have already seen other worlds.

One conservator who left the field noted that she was basically a people person and didn’t mind interruptions and multitasking, but was worn out from dealing with the conservators who were non-people persons. “ANGER OR HATE CAN BE A USEFUL MOTIVATING FORCE.” There were many mentions of colleagues’ lack of courtesy, negativity, and an assumption that normal rules of professional behavior did not apply to conservation. “LACK OF CHARISMA CAN BE FATAL”

To the question “what part of your job demands would you most like to assign to someone else?” the most repeated answer was PAPERWORK—including condition reporting, supply ordering, taxes, and slide labeling, followed closely by going to meetings and answering the phone.

So why are we even in this sometimes unfriendly paper trail field? Let me mention some of the reasons that came up on the questionnaire responses:

The absolute majority of respondents most love doing TREATMENTS – sometimes mentioning just starting a treatment first thing in the morning, or completing a treatment and putting it on display or returning it to an owner who feels that a “miracle” has been performed.

How are we doing regarding money?

About a quarter of the respondents reported low pay and lack of job security as a major cause of stress. One respondent called conservation a “trust fund career.” We are roughly commensurate with veterinarians and marketing directors.

We must all personally equate issues of security and job-related stress vs. satisfaction. Actors and journalists are among the professionals who die young—and they have far less job security than conservators. Tenured professors and supreme court justices live long. It IS possible to grow old in this profession. I asked the question—“Can you see yourself doing what you’re doing now until you’re 90?” Seventeen respondents said a thumping no; 18 a pretty strong yes including one who said, “if I want to eat.” Another 12 said they would if their bodies allowed them to do so. Eighteen said they’d like to stay in the field writing, teaching, or consulting. Textile Conservator Pat Reeves told Catherine McLean she wanted to die with a needle in her hand, and Richard Wolbers says that he plans to drop in place.

What are other approaches we can take to our job? I have spent the last year reading many books on burnout, job satisfaction, and approaches to life to see if I could find any useful tips.

**I will take three approaches to conservation of your own career:**

1. Stay where you are and adjust your expectations.
  2. Stay where you are and try to change what you have,
- or
3. Go somewhere else!

**On the first choice: 1. Stay where you are**

Before I left Richmond, VA, where I was teaching at Virginia Commonwealth University about 25 years ago, a friend came to visit, and we decided to go on the tour of the Philip Morris cigarette factory. We rode around in a little cart. We watched a woman in a white coat whose job it was to grab and crush a handful of cigarettes periodically to make sure there were no foreign things in the tobacco. We were told all the benefits the employees received—breaks, music, decorated lunch rooms, and so forth. I thought, “Well, as long as I live I’m going to be glad that my job is NOT to make cigarettes, no matter how beautiful the lunch room may be.” I think no matter how bad it gets watching out for works of art and culture—it’s better than THAT! That’s one of my personal bottom lines.

I found much to like in the book by Stephen R. Covey, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. One of my favorite principles therein is “You cannot choose what happens to you—but you can always choose how you react to it. It’s not what happens to us, but our response to what happens to us that hurts us.” The book calls this “RESPONSE-ABILITY.”

Covey writes:

“Of course, things can hurt us physically or economically and can cause sorrow. But our character, our basic identity,

does not have to be hurt at all. In fact, our most difficult experiences become the crucibles that forge our character and develop the internal powers, the freedom to handle difficult circumstances in the future and to inspire others to do so as well.” We have all known inspiring people in difficult situations. *The Seven Habits* and a number of other books I’ve now read use the case of Victor Frankl, in a concentration camp—the only freedom his captors could not take away was his identity and how all of this was going to affect him—using memories and imagination he became an inspiration to those around him, even to some of the guards.

Going back to the questionnaire and personal choices others have made—Jane Sugarman, a paper conservator in North Carolina, once my pre-conservation intern, recounted a lesson from a famous Zen teacher, Thich Nhat Hanh—when you are washing the dishes don’t think about what you are going to do next—focus on what you are doing now—when you are washing the dishes—JUST WASH THE DISHES. Or gently and methodically pick off the glue; there can be great comfort and serenity in our tasks. “A RELAXED MAN IS NOT NECESSARILY A BETTER MAN.”

Along with paper work, there is great dislike of interruptions—while we are methodically, gently and contentedly picking off the glue the phone will ring, the client or curator needs to talk, and the student has a question. Actually dealing with curators and clients was cited almost equally as a *most enjoyed* and *least enjoyed* activity—but interruptions are UNIVERSALLY hated.

*“You cannot choose what happens to you—but you can always choose how you react to it. It’s not what happens to us, but our response to what happens to us that hurts us.”*

Back to the *The Seven Habits*:

Here is Covey's chart of THE TIME MANAGEMENT MATRIX (p. 151)

	URGENT	NOT URGENT
<b>Important</b>	I	II
	Crises	Prevention
	Pressing problems	Relationship building
	Deadline-driven projects = stress, burnout	Recognizing new opportunities Planning, self-development A personal "mission statement" = vision, perspective
<b>Not Important</b>	III	IV
	Interruptions, some calls	Trivia, busy work
	Some mail, some reports	Some mail
	Some meetings Pressing matters = feeling victimized	Some phone calls Time wasters Pleasant activities = getting fired

The top section is what is "important," and the bottom is what is NOT important. The left column is "urgent" and the right "not urgent." Conservators are probably spending much time in quadrant three, with what is "urgent" but not really important, and thus they feel victimized. We should be controlling our lives so that we are spending "quality time" on what is IMPORTANT—finishing the treatment, yes, but also attending a conference or seminar that will enrich us—as in Quadrant II. One management book suggested that at least 5% of your income should be spent on conferences or enrichment seminars—that's \$2500 annually if you make \$50,000—even if your institution gives you no travel money.

If we are "crisis managers" we are spending TOO much time in Quadrant I, and then probably relaxing briefly in quadrant IV, and not giving ourselves enough time in II because it is not urgent. Quadrant II is the heart of effective personal management—things that are not urgent but are important. Separate out the "urgent" that it is NOT important and don't let that tail wag your dog says *Seven Habits*.

From the questionnaire it is clear that conservators are being bedeviled by both I and III and not doing enough

"II." There may be people in the world who are NOT conservators but LIKE paperwork and like art or objects; Let's find them and hire them as administrative assistants who can do the paperwork and channel the interruptions!

**Choice 2. Stay where you are and try to change certain things around you**

The lines between this and the first option are blurry. You could hire the administrative assistant as mentioned above and do more long-term planning—back to that in a moment.

The questionnaires revealed a great need for developing and using interpersonal communications skills. Carolyn Rose noted recently that a course at the Smithsonian in negotiations, using William Ury's *Getting Past No: Negotiating your way from Confrontation to Cooperation*, was one of the most important she took in her life. It has great advice in it—and I recommend it highly—how to stay in control when under pressure, how to defuse anger and hostility, and how to reach agreements that satisfy the needs of both sides.

There are many such books—especially in airports—you may find another that you like.

I also liked Linda Austin's *What's Holding You Back: Eight Critical Choices for Women's Success*, recommended by Katie Holbrow, objects conservator at Williamstown. Two thirds of the respondents to my questionnaire were women, and there are principles here of using traditionally female skills to better advantage. This may be needed as the world of higher management is largely male. I found useful things in this I had not read elsewhere—no time to elaborate now!

Some books recommend moving around within your institution for refreshment and happiness—a new job every 5-7 years or so. "CONFUSING YOURSELF IS A WAY TO STAY HONEST."

I've now parked in the Winterthur parking lot for 25 years but have had six different job titles within two institutions—paintings conservator, head conservator, associate director and then director of the conservation program, chair of a university of Delaware

*How to stay in control when under pressure, how to defuse anger and hostility, and how to reach agreements that satisfy the needs of both sides.*

department, and now full professor. I think this has kept me challenged, confused, and generally quite happy. My father, a newspaper editor who ran personnel seminars at Columbia, said that the most important element in job happiness is your immediate supervisor I have a good one!

As in Quadrant II of *Seven Habits*, The very nature of our increasing emphasis on **preventive conservation principles** points to increased emphasis on long-term planning. This SHOULD theoretically cut down on deadlines and pressure (unless the complete storage re-design plan is due TOMORROW!) However, the collaborative nature of preventive conservation may be frustrating for conservators who went into the field to treat objects but now find themselves always at meetings, advising or managing—again the importance of PEOPLE SKILLS! When the Getty Conservation Institute was sponsoring courses in Preventive Conservation, Marta de la Torre came to refer to lectures on Management as “the M-word”—a subject she found was dreaded by many conservators. “PEOPLE WHO GO CRAZY ARE TOO SENSITIVE.”

Reading the results of the questionnaire has made me question whether our training programs are spending enough time on negotiation and management skills—or is this something left to a distance-learning Web course or airport reading? The other areas where training seemed to be most sought were science for apprentice-trained respondents and computer and digital technology for everyone—perhaps those are areas for formal refresher courses.

Do you want to re-tool yourself or your surroundings—or is it time to look elsewhere for satisfaction?

### Choice number 3. Go somewhere else

Richard Wolbers laughingly told me about this book—*Who Moved My Cheese*, by Spencer Johnson. I found it to be a hoot—it’s maybe a 30-minute read and is apparently of use to people

with very short attention spans who work at AT&T, General Motors, Xerox, and the like. Its core principle is about being ready for change, “reading the writing on the wall”—when your cheese is getting smaller—and being ready to put on your running shoes to find new cheese. I’m almost embarrassed to admit that I *have* ended up quoting it to friends and students.

SLIDE: Cheese principles: “Change Happens,” “Anticipate Change,” “Monitor Change”

There are many books on seeking alternative careers which may be one way to find your “new cheese”. One that I liked especially suggested that you form your own “personal advisory committee” which must NOT include people from your own workplace. Meet with these people singly, for a lunch, etc., or in a group as you debate life decisions. One respondent had actually *found conservation* through *What Color is your Parachute*—a traditional resource for career change decisions that helps you assess your skills and proclivities. “A SENSE OF TIMING IS THE MARK OF GENIUS”.

I asked in the questionnaires both “have you thought about an alternative career” and “do you know someone who left.” Top choices of alternative career fantasies include—painting, music, and gardening—followed by “but I have to pay the bills.” One respondent said she had seriously considered becoming a commercial airline pilot but then decided it would be same combination of tremendous responsibility and near absolute lack of authority she found so frustrating in museum work. Another conservator who used to fly her own plane noted that piloting, like conservation, involves hours of boredom punctuated by moments of sheer terror. *The Kill Artist* is a novel about a paintings conservator who becomes a hired assassin. The author notes that both professions require a good memory and attention to detail.

The most popular career changes for former conservators include: curators, museum or heritage administrators, Webmasters, and Ph.D’s in science.

**Do you want to re-tool yourself or your surroundings—or is it time to look elsewhere for satisfaction?**

Others have become teachers, librarians, and journalists. A former conservator who is now an investment manager, Paula Volent, said she benefited from her ability to work with her conservation clients. One respondent said she’d like to make shifts but she feels that conservation is a “deep and non-transferable rut”—where else could she use her arcane knowledge of the properties of adhesives and varnishes?

But Sherry Blank, an objects conservator who now works part time as an insurance adjuster, said that FBI agents were highly impressed with her diagnostic skills—she could tell how something was made, what it was made of, and what has happened to it. She also said that she loved the interruptions and variety of life in a museum and that this taught her people skills that she hadn’t known she had!

Barbara Ramsay has continued her private practice as a paintings conservator while establishing a new division within ARTEX, a highly successful art handling firm which can manage conservation projects, undertake treatments, and subcontract or refer treatments to other conservators in the private sector.

Carole Milner of the UK, left conservation for international heritage management.

She wrote:

I knew I would miss those lovely quiet days, working away at a painting, but above all, I wanted to make a bigger difference for the objects in our care. I am a people person and love working with others when there is a common goal and something worthwhile to be aimed for. I decided to keep my eyes open and to do some international heritage consultancy work. Doing that made me realize what a lot I had learnt by osmosis about museums and heritage in general – conservation, preservation, but also marketing and

education, multi-cultural diversity, customer expectations, policy planning, budgeting, and resource management—all turned out to be eminently transferable skills. I am now dealing with international development issues, skills-sharing, fair trade and tourism, looking after human beings, identifying and attempting to meet their basic needs, whether in India, China, Africa or Eastern Europe. What I have loved is discovering how much these two

worlds have in common. Preserving cultural heritage means preserving identity. In a developing, perhaps war-striven country, holding on to one's cultural and spiritual identity—knowing where you come from, who you are, and where you are going—is almost as basic a need as food, shelter, and medication. I can now put conservation fair and square into that fundamental context and that brings me full circle and puts everything into perspective. If one day I ever find

another role in conservation I shall know very clearly and tangibly why I am here.

The *Seven Habits* also suggests that in writing your personal mission statement and deciding where you want to go, you should write your own eulogy and then work backwards.

What do you want said about YOU in your conservation distlist obituary??

## Shipwrecks in Port Phillip Bay

Under the auspices of the Maritime Heritage Unit of Heritage Victoria, Ian MacLeod conducted training workshops in their Abbotsford laboratories and in Port Phillip Bay on a number of shipwrecks. Arriving in Melbourne in 44°C, the first training session involved calibration and checking of all their underwater housings, meters and electrodes and this resulted in several “dead” units being resurrected.

The next day was still hot with waters surrounding the J7 WWI submarine hulk at the Sandringham Yacht Club being a balmy 29°C, but the dissolved oxygen levels were naturally quite low. This submarine provided plenty of good experiences for the staff and dedicated volunteer divers from the Maritime Archaeological Association of Victoria with Pete and Des quickly catching onto the challenges of drilling underwater, getting the readings and making sense of the data. We all disappeared into clouds of silt at times and had to move to other parts of the long submarine to get access to clear water.

The history of the HMVS Cerberus, which was built in the 1870's but sunk as a breakwater at Black Rock in 1926, is a long saga, but funds are available for possible use of anodes on the site. Thus armed with an underwater

resistance meter, the team of four divers did the corrosion potential (Ecorr) and pH measurements and then checked for electrical continuity every five meters along the length of the starboard side. This work was at times technically challenging but the training workshops proved their weight in gold and great information about which bits of the ship are connected and which are isolated will be of great assistance. We also checked on the in-situ treatment of the four gun barrels which are being conserved with anodes while on the seabed and they were in an excellent state of health.

The final day saw the winds die down for the trip out to the middle of the Bay to the site of the wreck of the *City of Launceston* (1865) to check on the efficacy of the five massive anodes that were attached to the bow, stern, port and starboard amidships and to the engine. I nearly cried for joy underwater as the data showed that all the anodes were working very well and that in the

six months since they were attached to this historic and wonderfully intact iron shipwreck, they have dropped the corrosion rate by around 58%! This demonstration illustrates that it is always possible to intervene on a wreck site with good outcomes for relatively little cost. At the end of the measurements, Peter Harvey and Hanna Steyne documented the work with superb underwater photography. Special thanks go to Hanna, Peter and Rhonda from Heritage Victoria for all their logistical planning and support, and to my new diving mates Pete and Des who were simply brilliant underwater, and on the top side, the jokes were amazing.

**Ian MacLeod**  
[ian.macleod@museum.wa.gov.au](mailto:ian.macleod@museum.wa.gov.au)



Photo courtesy of Hanna Steyne

## Conservation Matters – Can you help?



### Mystery picture from the Archives

In this issue our mystery photo from the National Archives collection comes from field of Maritime Archaeology and the conservation of metals. The photo is dated 1977 and has the following description – Restoration of HMS 'Sirius' and HMS 'Bounty' cannons in WA. If anyone knows the gentleman pictured or the circumstances of the photo please let Ian Batterham know ([ian.batterham@naa.gov.au](mailto:ian.batterham@naa.gov.au)).



### Mystery unsolved!

Unfortunately we have had no response to the photos of the restorers working in Hobart in 1986. Here's another look at the photos. If the penny drops in your mind please let Ian Batterham know ([ian.batterham@naa.gov.au](mailto:ian.batterham@naa.gov.au)).



## Book Review

### Plant Biology for Cultural Heritage *Biodeterioration and Conservation*

Edited by Giulia Caneva, Maria Pia Nugari and Ornella Salvadori

Translated by Helen Glanville

Published by The Getty Conservation Institute, Los Angeles, 2009

US\$70.00

<http://www.getty.edu/bookstore/titles/plant.html>

The moment I saw this publication advertised, I knew that it was destined for my library. As a materials scientist specialising in stone who now runs a company dedicated to conserving cultural heritage (and who just happens to have majored in botany during his university days), I had always struggled with the shortage of good reference material on the interaction between plants and buildings. Sure, there were many excellent papers on particular aspects of biodeterioration, but there was no seminal text in the field.

Let me be clear – this book is that seminal text.

Structured in two parts, the first is all about biodeterioration. What, how, where and why. It covers everything except the Animal Kingdom – ranging from bacteria and fungi through cyanobacteria and algae to mosses and vascular plants.

With my botanical background, I was impressed by the second chapter on the ecology of biodeterioration. The next chapter on the types of biodeteriogens (plants that cause biodeterioration),

also provides a fundamental grounding necessary to understand the explanation of the mechanisms of biodeterioration covered in the following chapters. Subdivided by types of cultural heritage material, and also by microclimate or environment, these explanations open windows into a field that has too often been considered 'too hard' to understand.

The second part of the book moves onto questions of conservation. There is an excellent section on preventive conservation, which ranges widely between internal and external situations. Not surprisingly, there is considerable emphasis on understanding of thermal, moisture and light conditions, and many useful case studies are drawn upon. This section even extends to considerations of risks to health of people working in spaces subject to biodeterioration.

In the section on the control of biodeterioration, there is an extremely useful review of the range of biocides which have been considered for use on stonework over the years.

These sections are accompanied by shorter sections addressing the use of bioremediation techniques, and methods of investigation and analysis of biodeteriogens.

However, don't think that this book is solely about plant growth on or around buildings. It covers the full range of biodeterioration on cultural material, and has sections that address mould growth and fungal attack on artworks and artefacts.

Now for a warning. This book is a dense production. It is solid, and heavy to the hand, despite being a paperback. And that density extends to the content.

However, with the density comes richness in detail, information, and breadth of coverage.

I am sure that part of the density is due to the process of translating the book from its original Italian incarnation as *La Biologia Vegetale per I Beni Culturali*. Part also will have come from the challenge of drawing together contributions by 37 authors, all specialists in their particular field, and from the rigour imposed by the editors and translator to meld these contributions into a single style such that it is only the presence of author bylines above each section that tells the reader this book was not written by one person.

I think it is fair to say that this book is easier reading for those with previous knowledge of the topics discussed, particularly the biological material, even if only at undergraduate level. But do not let that stop you from tackling the book. This is a book that will reward perseverance. Regardless of your interest or background, every chapter and every section contain gems that will explain things that you've noticed but never understood.

This book belongs in the reference library of all who deal with the conservation of cultural heritage.

David West  
Executive Director  
International Conservation Services



## MayDay 2010

This May, take at least one of the following steps to prepare your organisation for emergency prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.

• ARCHIVES • HISTORIC PRESERVATION

LIBRARIES • MUSEUMS



### MayDay

SAVING OUR HERITAGE  
MAY 1 • 2010

HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

PREPAREDNESS PROTECTS OUR HERITAGE

- Register for *Disaster Proofing Heritage Collections: the Blue Shield Australia & DISACT Symposium 2010* on matters relating to emergency-preparedness for cultural heritage. This will be held at the National Library of Australia, Canberra, on Thursday 6 May 2010. For further details, contact [info@blueshieldaustralia.org.au](mailto:info@blueshieldaustralia.org.au)
- Dust off your counter-disaster plan and make sure it's current, or make a timeline for developing one, using *Be Prepared: Guidelines for writing a disaster preparedness plan*: [http://www.collectionsaustralia.net/sector\\_info\\_item/2](http://www.collectionsaustralia.net/sector_info_item/2)
- Identify and prioritise your important collection items and heritage sites
- Identify the three biggest risks to your collection or heritage site
- Get to know your local firefighters, police and SES – invite them to tour your organisation to give you pointers on safety and preparedness
- Find a 'partner' heritage organisation to work with in case of an emergency. A model for collaboration is DISACT: <http://www.anbg.gov.au/disact>
- Arrange or participate in an emergency response training day on firefighting, crowd control, flood water management etc.
- Attend a course on business continuity planning, a conference on resilience, or a workshop on emergency preparedness
- Host a morning tea to raise funds for Blue Shield Australia
- Consider the protection offered by your storage facilities – and plan to build safer repositories
- Familiarise yourself with Blue Shield Australia's webpages – particularly the one providing 'Useful links' regarding emergency prevention, preparedness, response and recovery – and share the information with your colleagues
- Contact Blue Shield Australia ([info@blueshieldaustralia.org.au](mailto:info@blueshieldaustralia.org.au)) in early April to request a media kit for promoting your MayDay activity and to register your participation in MayDay 2010

*Promote MayDay to your colleagues by posting this flier on your notice boards and intranet, and facilitate discussion with colleagues about what you will do to mark MayDay on 1 May 2010, and throughout the month of May.*

The AICCM National Newsletter is the quarterly newsletter of the Australian Institute for the Conservation of Materials (Inc.)

It is issued to all members as part of a membership entitlement in March, June, September and December.

Deadlines for copy are:

1 February  
1 May  
1 August  
1 November

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