

**AICCM**

# NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Material (Inc.)

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

**Robyn Sloggett**

1998 represents some major milestones for the conservation profession in Australia, being the twenty-fifth anniversary of the inaugural meeting of the AICCM and the twentieth anniversary marking the beginning of tertiary training in conservation in this country.

For conservators in Australia both anniversaries are important (even if you didn't study at the University of Canberra), for they mark the beginning of the definition and the growth of the profession. The Piggott Report, delivered to Parliament in 1975, recognised that professional training had to take place in Australia if any real attempts were made to stem "The silent, scarcely visible damage to items in Australian museums..." (Piggott 1975). The National Conservation and Preservation Policy for Movable Cultural Heritage (which was endorsed by the Cultural Ministers Council in 1995) and the National Conservation Strategy (which was endorsed by the Heritage Collections Council in 1997) both indicate the distance we have travelled since that time. That is not to say, however, that the distance left to travel is inconsequential. For a profession just twenty-five years old the journey has only begun.

There are a number of landmark activities taking place within the AICCM during this year. The reworking of the Code of Ethics and the development of a Code of Practice are critical activities requiring input from all conservators. The Collections Management and Conservation Working Party of the HCC has recognised the importance of this activity by making funds available to support the trialling of the Codes. The AICCM has also received funds to undertake an examination of current training in conservation which is available in Australia. Both of these projects present an excellent opportunity for the profession to think about what it means to be called, or to be using the title, conservator.

Last month all AICCM Presidents met, through teleconferencing, to discuss these issues as well as a number of others including the development of the Web page, and the production of the *Newsletter*. These issues will be discussed at State level over the next month and I would urge you to take part in these discussions. The next National Council meeting is scheduled to be held immediately before the Anniversary Conference in Canberra in July.

Finally on behalf of all members of the AICCM I would like to express heartfelt thanks to Gina for her incredible contribution to the organisation over the past years. This is Gina's last *Newsletter* as Editor and I am sure that you will all agree that under her stewardship the *Newsletter* has become a very professional publication. Gina has contributed enormously to the AICCM in her capacity as Secretariat, Publications Officer and *Newsletter* Editor, and her input has helped shape the organisation in recent years. While I know she will continue to be an active member we will certainly miss her input and hard work in these areas. Thank you Gina.

### Inside This Issue

President's Report	1
From the Editor	3
AICCM Notices	4
People & Projects	5
New Members	5
Special Interest Groups	14
Equipment & Products	15
Reviews	16
Technical Notes	17
Publications	19
Positions Vacant	20
<b>Calendar</b>	

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This is the last piece of writing from me as the *AICCM National Newsletter* editor. I have decided that it is time for someone else to take the reins and steer the *Newsletter* for a while. Putting together a complete set of *Newsletters* for my own record, it is hard to believe that I took on the task with issue No 40 September 1991 and now this issue is No 67 July 1998. It has been a difficult decision and unfortunately at the time of going to print, National Council has been unable to find someone who is prepared to shoulder the responsibility of the *Newsletter*. Vicki Humphrey at Artlab Australia (also the current AICCM Publications Officer) has agreed to take on the role of interim editor for the September *Newsletter*; however unless someone agrees to take on this role, it would appear that the *AICCM National Newsletter* may cease to exist.

The AICCM is a comparatively small organization of around 480 members. Around 380 of our members reside in Australia and this includes institutional members. This doesn't leave us with a very big pool of people to call upon to undertake AICCM's various tasks. The majority of members will always be conservators and unless there is a marked increase in the demand for conservators in the public and private sector the membership is unlikely to become much larger. In addition, members are also reluctant to pay the sorts of fees that would be necessary to pay people to do most of the tasks the AICCM undertakes. Therefore we are dependent on people volunteering their time and having commitment to make things happen.

I took on the *Newsletter* because I was asked to consider it and at the time I thought 'we all like getting it and if no-one takes it on we won't have one so someone had better do it'. We are now looking for someone else to realize that they may be just the person we are looking for. If you think you may be interested, please contact Robyn Sloggett, AICCM President. The work is hard but the rewards immense.

Just to clarify one point. The *Newsletter* is a completely voluntary task and is not part of the paid work I undertook as the AICCM Secretariat Officer. Whilst the overlap of information made both tasks more straightforward, the *Newsletter* editor is not a paid position.

There are many people I need to thank for supporting me in this role. Cheryl Jackson who assisted in the first few years; my colleagues at the AWM who have collated and bagged the *Newsletter* for the past seven years; my supervisors at the AWM for giving me the

opportunity to take on the *Newsletter* and to gain new skills and experiences; Alice Cannon, the only member who responded to an ad asking for assistance in last December's *Newsletters*; and all of our contributors especially those who didn't need reminding and those who sent unsolicited material or made useful suggestions about the *Newsletter* and let us know that we were doing a good job. I would particularly like to also thank Jennifer Anderson who took on the typesetting but who has played a much greater role in the *Newsletter* by persevering with my sometimes cryptic scribble (which a commercial typesetter would never have tolerated) and Jennifer's husband David (who sorted out all our tricky problems) and Tristan and Claire, Jennifer's children whose Mum was tied up for hours on end with me as we tackled each issue of the *Newsletter*.

Lastly this task could not have been done without the support of my husband Trevor, who must have wondered at times if he were a solo parent between my *Newsletter* and Secretariat roles, and also to Cecilia, our very unsleepy baby and now unsleepy toddler who still doesn't understand that sometimes Mum just needs an hour or four to do something on the *Newsletter*.

It has been hard work squeezing the *Newsletter* into any spare time between work, family, and trying to build a house. When I took on the *Newsletter* I knew nothing about publishing a *Newsletter*. Through doing the *Newsletter* and steering it to the publication it is today, I have gained a valuable insight into the publishing world, learnt lots about computers and printing technology, and got to meet a great number of AICCM members and other people.

I will miss the deluge of phone calls, faxes and e-mail messages around *Newsletter* deadline time and my constant contact with the AICCM membership but who knows, I might actually have time to write a contribution for the *Newsletter* some day.

Gina Drummond  
AICCM National Newsletter editor

### Have you seen this badge?



You should have - although it is discreetly small (15mm diameter), it is very apt and all financial professionally accredited members of AICCM have recently been sent an individually numbered copy of the badge. This is just one of the benefits of being a professional member.

The badge design is based on an early Greek coin showing an owl, a symbol of Athena (Minerva in the Roman pantheon) the goddess of wisdom and all the liberal arts. She also presided over sense, taste and reason. The other symbol, a microscope indicates the strong scientific aspect of conservation. Of course a professionally accredited member may also use the post-nominals PMAICCM for business and professional purposes.

It is not difficult to become a professional member but the list so far is only in the early 40's. Why so few in a listed membership of 480+? Can it be that the fee is seen as being too high for the benefits received? Surely not! The standard membership has already increased to \$75 while the professional fee is only \$105, which it has been since inception some eight years ago. Surely this tangible recognition by your peers and your institution is worth the small increase from standard to professional fee?

A large number of recent graduates make enquires about becoming professional members but they cannot be admitted because of the lack of experience - what is the excuse for the old and bold among us? Maybe the paperwork is too involved - you just can't seem to find the time to locate the old academic qualifications and get your experience verifying documents together!

Any conservator who is working in a federal public institute or state body who has the responsibility for other conservators or for dealing with public enquiries should consider the image of professionalism they are trying to project. Wouldn't that image be better served if you could say your professional institutional body professionally accredited you?

For the good of the conservation profession and community and the AICCM join up now!

**Please.**

### 1998/1999 Membership Renewals

Membership renewal notices for the coming financial year are being sent out to all currently financial members. Membership fees become due on 1 July and members must pay by 30 September to continue to receive AICCM publications. If you do not receive a renewal notice in the next few weeks, please contact the AICCM Secretariat Officer, Maureen Walsh.

### New AICCM Secretariat Provider

The AICCM Secretariat Provider has recently changed and the service is now being provided by the Institution of Engineers. The new Secretariat Officer is Maureen Walsh.

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(Please note that the email address has changed from that printed in the notice advising changes to the Secretariat arrangements that was forwarded with the 1998 AICCM Membership Directory).

## Australian Capital Territory

### National Archives of Australia

As you will notice from the above, the Australian Archives is now the National Archives of Australia. This name change coincides with the occupation of our new National building, the old East Block, in the Parliamentary Triangle. This is a heritage building which was refurbished under the watchful, but extremely busy eye of **Jennifer Anderson** on secondment from Preservation. Jennifer was Project Officer for the refurbishment and has done a fantastic job within tight parameters - it just goes to show what versatile people conservators are. We are now preparing items to be exhibited in the two new galleries in this building and are quite excited about some of the material that will be shown there. So we would encourage those of you in Canberra to come along and see some of our previously hidden treasures.

Everyone in Preservation is now undertaking training in one form or another. **Ian Batterham** and **Tania Riviere** continue studies with the University of Canberra, while **Karen Caldwell**, **Suellen Bailey**, **Kylie Scroope** and **Cheryl Jackson** have been involved with a national branch-wide training programme being undertaken by the Archives' Government Services staff. We are each studying two days a week in a programme designed specifically for the Archives by Monash University. The programme starts right from the beginning with "What is a record" and winds its way through records management, appraisal, disposal, access, storage etc. It is designed to make all Government Services staff fully aware of the complete range of Archives activities and to equip us to deal with new issues that are arising in relation to managing and maintaining electronic records so that we can be better informed when dealing with government clients, and more broadly skilled within the Archives structure.

There are major movements in staffing in the section at the moment. Cheryl has taken long service leave and gone to see Australia, and **Elizabeth Donovan** (from our Melbourne office) and **Karen Caldwell** will be alternately filling her position until she returns in October. Kylie has temporarily transferred to Public Programmes, and **Robyn Lowe** (from our Sydney Office) and **Ian Batterham** will be sharing responsibility for Kylie's job as Assistant Director, Preservation.



The northern facade of the new building for the National Archives of Australia, Parkes, Canberra

## NEW MEMBERS

### Ordinary Members

ACT:	Georgina Element Emma Gwynn Helen Privett Suzanna Shaw Catherine Smith
NSW:	Jennifer Anne Butler Newcastle Region Library
Qld:	Maria Kubik
Tas:	Gregory Jackman
Vic	Sally Carew-Reid Sean Loughrey Bryan Steenhuis
WA:	Kate Major

## National Gallery of Australia

The big news from the NGA conservation lab is that **Geoffrey Major** is currently acting Assistant Director, whilst remaining the head of the conservation department, with **Suzie Bioletti** being the coordinator for immediate conservation problems.

The Paintings section has been busy with the exhibitions program, however we have managed to squeeze a few treatments into our work programs. **Trevor Hoyne** finished his treatment on the Monet *Waterlilies*, a strip lining, blind stretcher, and consolidation. He is now looking at the treatment of Jackson Pollock's *Totem Lesson Two*. **Bronwyn Ormsby** has been on an exhausting condition checking trip of America for the exhibition *New Worlds From Old*. She is now working towards the treatment of Jackson Pollock's *Blue Poles*. Natalie and Bronwyn are getting ready for the take down and movement of *New Worlds From Old* to the NGV. The exhibition has been interesting as it shows the similarities and differences between Australian and American 19th-century landscape artists. It was also the first exhibition to be held in the new extension of the NGA. We had to develop a new set of installation and dismantling strategies for the new spaces.

**Natalie Scoullar** and **Cushla Hill** were helping to ensure that the Gallery rehang which occurred with the opening of the new extension included all the paintings that were asked for and that they all were in exhibition condition. This meant that there were approximately 200 minor treatments such as consolidations, surface cleaning, filling, inpainting, and frame repairs. **Sheri Roberts** is volunteering with us for a while and has been working on the padded backing board for the Lichtenstein that is to travel soon.

It's all hands to the pump at NGA Paper Conservation. Our main project, for which the conservators have full installation responsibility, is the show *Read My Lips* which will open here on 27 June. It is a challenging assembly of work by three contemporary New York artists - Jenny Holzer, Barbara Kruger and Cindy Sherman. Holzer and Kruger use advertising technologies in the form, for example, of prints, posters, LED signs and billboards. The challenge lies in devising forms of presentation which mimic or are in sympathy with the original purpose and ambiance of the works. Sherman will be represented by her in your face pix of women in film and fashion photography, fairy tales, high art and pornography. Lips will share gallery space with *Beauty and Desire* - Japanese woodblock prints, hanging scrolls, fans, kimonos from the NGA holdings and from public and private collections at home and abroad.

Susie Bioletti and **Andrea Wise** are continuing research on Hyderabad works in the Gayer-Anderson Collection and aim to publish results soon. Selected Indian miniatures from the Collection are currently on tour under the title *A Stream of Stories*. Watch for it!

Also to hit the road soon is a collection of costumes from Diaghilev's Ballet Russe. Andrea and Susie are engaged in the examination and treatment of the watercolour design sketches which will accompany the gear.

After successful shows here the *Vollard Suite* (100 etchings by Picasso) will shortly be on its way to Heide, Brisbane, Sydney and Adelaide; and *Romanticism to Realism* (British and French prints 1800-1870) is soon to do the rounds of the regional galleries. The latter includes gems by Delacroix, Blake, Constable, Goya and Benjamin West - including his *The Angel of the Resurrection* (1801) which is believed to be the first art lithograph ever pulled. Fiona Kemp continues to bravely face the constant demands of exhibition report preparation.

**Bill Hamilton** creeps his petty pace through the Harry Rosengrave research collections of Australian prints and is currently working on the exotic coloured linocuts made in Melbourne (c.1930-1940) by Florence Higgs.

Amid the incessant flurry of condition reports and profanities, it is good to see major projects concluded. Another 'all hands to the pump' episode saw an 11 metre bite of the *Dufour et Cie* panoramic wallpapers of the peoples of the Pacific (designed by Charvet and printed from woodblocks and stencils in gouache at Maçon, Paris c.1805) on the wall early in March. Though the final consolidation and infilling phase was demanding, the present team recognised all the way that, relatively, they had the fun part. They were conscious that the splendid foundation built by their predecessor colleagues was the substantive in bringing these brilliant panels back to life. Susie will be presenting research findings on the Dufour enterprise in poster form at the Dublin IIC Conference in September.

Lizi's efforts have focused on the bringing on line of the New Exhibition wing and pushing the revised Pest Plan through for approval by the new Director and Council, plus centralising what have been shared resources and responsibilities for pest management up to now. She will shortly be on secondment to the NMA on a share basis to assist with development of their Disaster Plan and is looking forward to having the services of an assistant at the NGA for the period of her absence.

The Textile Department have been inundated with Folk Art for a new exhibition which has just been installed. They had to conserve and prepare for display amongst other things, 15 quilts including the Rajah quilt. The *Stitch in Time, Everyday Art, Quilt* seminar will coincide with the Folk Art show. **Debbie Ward** will give a lecture on the fabric and history of the Rajah quilt which was made by convict women on board the *Rajah*, transporting them to Australia in 1841. **Micheline Ford** and Debbie will conduct workshops on the storage and display of quilts. All this is being done whilst work continues on the Ballet Russe costumes for an exhibition due to open in September this year.

### National Library of Australia

Its congratulations to **Alison Duck** on her marriage to David Graham not once but twice. Alison and David were married in Narrandera on March 21st then, just to make sure, again two Saturday's later in David's home town Dublin, Ireland. Alison's wedding dress must have been very adaptable coming from a 40°C wedding to a chilly Dublin service.

While in the UK, Alison paid visits to several Dublin cultural institutions and worked as a volunteer for a week in the conservation department at the British Library.

During Alison's leave **Amelia Arcidiacono** and **Linda Bunn** coped admirably, monitoring the Library environment, repairing books and treating special collection material.

**Kim Morris** returned to the Library from the Australian War Memorial after his 10-month swap with **Bernard Kertesz**. Preservation Services would like to thank Bernard for all his good work. Since his return Kim has been involved in several projects including the survey of 50 Donald Friend diaries for treatment, the preparation and updating of two pamphlets (*Caring for Your Collections* and *Suppliers of Preservation Services and Materials*) for publication by the Library, and conservation of a Banks letter to Morton (1768).

**Colin Webb** has been busy working with **Laurie Salter** on the Australian Co-operative Digitisation Project. Colin has also been invited to participate in a panel session at a joint RLG/NPO Preservation Conference on Guidelines for Preservation Digitising in the UK in September.

In the ever developing world of electronic reformatting **Deborah Woodyard** has been trying to fathom the best method for preserving digital publications. Deb also reports that the PANDORA project to preserve internet publications is thriving. Details are available at <http://www.nla.gov.au/pandora/>.

Deborah and Colin presented papers on electronic digitisation issues at the January

VALA Conference in Melbourne. If you wish to read them the URL's are: <http://www.nla.gov.au/nla/staffpaper/valadw.html> and <http://www.nla.gov.au/nla/staffpaper/mjcwv ala.html>

Preservation Services' manager **Maggie Jones** has returned to the section after acting as Director of Reader Services Branch for several months.

**Lydia Priess** contributed to the development of an article for the NLA News. The article examines counter emergency planning in the NLA.

The Library's exhibition program has been in full swing with **Chesley Engram** condition checking and treating 22 works on paper by William Westall. These form part of an additional display to accompany the borrowed exhibition *An Exquisite Eye*.

Chesley also completed work on two major travelling exhibitions which left the Library during March - *dance people dance* (to Launceston) and *Captive Lives* (to Brisbane) beginning a year on the road.

Preparation for the travelling version of *dance people, dance* also occupied much of Chesley's time with travelling condition reports for all 163 items completed. The exhibition left Canberra at the end of March for its first venue - the Queen Victoria Museum and Art gallery in Launceston - opening on April 11. The full version of the exhibition will be on the road until the end of 1999.

Chesley and Alison spent a considerable amount of time drying and flattening material wet during a flood from a damaged fire sprinkler head in November.

Its farewell to the Library's vacuum freeze drier after 12 years of service. Kim Morris prepared a document for Emergency Planning Committee members comparing the cost of running the VFD service in house and sending material for treatment to outside providers. Based on the results it has been decided to dispose of the VFD.

### National Museum of Australia

The design of the new building (to open at Acton in 2001) continues at an ever faster pace. There has been a continual parade of politicians, department officials and consultants to view our collections and to assess our current limited facilities at Mitchell (which were always intended to be temporary). It is proving a challenge to gain acceptance for the concept of an on-site laboratory but progress is being made with issues concerning the rest of the new building.

The consultancy by the Consortium of experts from the University of Canberra, the CSIRO Division of Building Construction and

Engineering, the University of NSW and the Australian Museum has produced a useful report establishing criteria for environmental control and other conservation concerns for the building design. This consultancy advice to the Department of Communications and the Arts supports and extends information from the Conservation and Registration departments of NMA without which it would be more difficult to achieve our requirements.

The development of exhibition programs is well underway although object lists appear to be some way off, despite having less than three years until opening. Instead of issuing ever more desperate requests for object lists we have made a strategic decision to select whole collections which we know require conservation work and which are highly likely to be extensively used at Acton. These selected collections (including the 'wet' biological specimens, bark paintings, Aboriginal sculptures, stone tools, etc) will be programmed to have essential work done such as improving storage, preliminary studies of exhibition support requirements and basic cleaning (where required). All of this work should assist with Acton development and hopefully in the meantime some object lists may appear.

As part of the exhibition programme development the Conservation and Registration departments have given 'consultancy' sessions with curators and education staff to comment on aspects of their plans which impact on us. This includes assessments such as changeover requirements for light sensitive materials, transport considerations for big things, information on their programme which will have a bearing on room data sheets (eg floor loading, power requirements) and many more issues which will determine our staffing and other resource requirements to 2001 and beyond. These consultancies have been an excellent means of getting curators and other staff to consider workload implications and also demonstrate how our knowledge of the collections can help them with their programmes.

Our next plan to win the hearts and minds of our colleagues at NMA is to continue to provide informative sessions on conservation issues concerning their collection areas. Our first presentation was a great success- **Benita Johnson** of the University of Canberra kindly came and gave a practical demonstration on 'Handling Objects'. This was informative and amusing and senior management kindly funded a generous morning tea to provide an extra incentive to attend. Further sessions will discuss special needs of bark paintings, steam-driven objects, cartoons, firearms and more general issues such as how conservation requirements influence exhibition design.

Apart from participating in Acton developments we have spent a fair share of time in the lab and storage areas. **Ros Wight** and **Carmela Mollica** have assessed a wonderful collection of clothing and hats owned by the late Dame Pattie Menzies. **Ellie McFadyen** is continuing assessment of toxic and hazardous materials in collections and is ever-vigilant in pest control. **Mark Henderson** has done much preparation for the slipping of our Paddle Steamer *Enterprise* but the lake levels are so low we will have to delay awaiting rain. **Peter Bucke** is on secondment at the Canberra Museum and Gallery and is doing the CIT Certificate in Cultural Preservation.

### Ranson Davey

A six panel folding screen is taking priority in Ranson Davey's studio. It has required a complete re-make of the papered cores, new paper hinges and some repairs to the painted panels. **Kate Woollett** has been assisting with covering the cores, and in the process has been honing her skills with paste and paper. Other projects include the treatment of an interesting collection of Hans Heysen watercolours.

## New South Wales

### Art Gallery of New South Wales

**Matthew Cox** has commenced employment with us as an assistant conservator responsible for reframing and display supports- moving between paintings, paper and objects and frame conservation- faster than a speeding bullet.

**Vanessa Griffiths** has commenced part-time employment in objects conservation to fill in for Donna Midwinter who has commenced reduced hours. Amongst other things, Vanessa will be undertaking a condition survey of the marble works in the collection.

**Jolanta Grzedzielska** continues her part-time employment working with the Aboriginal bark collection.

**Su Yu** and **Yang Yan Dong** have almost completed a major treatment on a Ming Dynasty Chinese painting on silk by Qiu Ying (16th century). The silk is very brittle and broken into many tiny pieces. Treatment has included removing silk from old backing, washing and relining.

**Stewart Laidler** has been working with the new infrared vidicom, achieving some spectacular results on the Bronzino and the Master of the forties panel paintings. He is hoping to develop a web site to show these images.

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**Barbara Dabrowa** patiently strips the bronze paint from the original frame for the Elloth Gruner painting *Spring Frost*, 1919, (the painting of which **Paula Dredge** is working on in paintings conservation). The frame was originally oil-gilded with metal leaf and coated with heavy patination. A few decades later the thick coat of bronze paint was applied, which has now become badly oxidised and dark. Unfortunately because of the poor condition of the original gilding, the frame will have to be regilded, but enough information remains to enable us to duplicate this original finish.

**Malgorzata Sawicki** is undertaking the conservation treatment of the original frame for a 16th-century painting of Mary Magdalene by Bernardino Campi. This carved and water gilded frame has been selectively regilded and repainted with bronze paint many times through the centuries. Malgorzata has been successful in removing these secondary coatings revealing the original burnished surface. Malgorzata is also busy preparing the Conservation of Picture Frames Course, which will be held at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in August.

**David Butler** has finished his major carving project on the new reproduction frame for Hugh Ramsay's *Lady in Blue*. The design of the frame is based on an old photograph of the work in its original frame, and the frame on Ramsay's *Fall*. This same moulding was used also for the original frame on Ramsay's other painting, *The Sister's* which we hope to also reproduce.

### International Conservation Services

**Sarah Slade** is providing the preventive conservation input into the design of the National Portrait Gallery in Old Parliament House, Canberra, whilst also undertaking collection management surveys for Campbelltown Historical Society and the Allport Library, Hobart. **Cath Akeroyd** has been managing the development of a new exhibition for the Westpac Museum. **Catriona Angus** has been busy commuting to Brisbane to clean the Daphne Mayo sculpture on the Brisbane Town Hall facade whilst also completing reports on the tiled floor in St. Andrews Cathedral, Sydney and documenting monument condition at St. Thomas Cemetery, North Sydney. **Fiona Tennant** has been working on a 9.5 metre pennant for the State Library of NSW, whilst continuing to co-ordinate the AICCM textile special interest group. **Detlev Lueth** has taken on Photon, the photographic special interest group.

**Arek Werstak** continues to accumulate his frequent flyer points, having been working on murals in Geraldton, W.A. and Palmerston

North, N.Z. He has also completed work on the University of Technology's Haymarket facade. **Michelle Wassall** continues to spend most of her week conserving the original paintwork in an eastern suburbs mansion assisted by Canberra graduates, **Liz Yuda**, **Alice Fuller** and **James Crawford**.

**Gillian Mitchell** has been working out of the Australian War Memorial, conserving the *Ascot Lifeboat*, recovered from the shores of Gallipoli. Meanwhile **Julian Bickersteth** has continued his work on the mosaic in *the Hall of Memory*, surveying the condition of the half currently accessible by scaffold, assisted by Canberra students **Kent Jarman**, **Julia Saliveri**, **Karina Acton** and **David Thoroughgood**.

### State Library of New South Wales

After almost eleven years at the State Library of New South Wales, **Alan Howell** has taken up a position at the State Library of Victoria as their Manager, Preservation and Storage. Over the years Alan has made a huge contribution to Preservation at the State Library of New South Wales. He takes with him the best wishes of his NSW colleagues and we know that Victoria will present him with a new and interesting set of challenges. **Heather Mansell** is the acting Manager of Preservation until the position is advertised in the new financial year.

Like many Sydney institutions the library leaked over the Easter break due to the torrential rain. The galleries in which the William Yang photos were displayed were water damaged but due to the fast thinking of security staff the photos were unharmed and only required remounting. This serves as a timely reminder that disasters always happen over long weekends or holidays! With this in mind **Anna Higgs** has been re-establishing a training schedule with security staff in immediate disaster response.

### Conservation Access

**Avryl Whitnall** commenced as Acting Manager of Conservation Access on 11 May until November 1998 whilst **Audrey Wilson** is on maternity leave.

Conservation Access are currently involved in recovering thousands of water damaged policies in a warehouse in Erskineville as well as carrying out the steady stream of treatments, workshops and consultancies. The current staff members of Conservation Access are **Tim Adams** (bookbinder), **Holly Guinness** (part-time paper conservator), **Tegan Henderson** (paper conservator), **Catherine Thomson** (paper conservator) and **Alex Philp** (assistant conservator and odd-job-er!).

## Queensland

### International Conservation Services

**Peter Maxwell** has been supervising the cleaning of the tympanum on Brisbane City Hall, and the repatination of the doors and lamps assisted by **Warwick Cutler** and **Catriona Angus** from the Sydney office. In between times he has found time to conserve the cenotaph in Christchurch, N.Z. and visit the Australian War Memorial, where **Gillian Mitchell**, also from the Sydney office, is conserving the *Ascot lifeboat*.

### Queensland Museum

We have recently undertaken autumn cleaning on a grand scale as we surveyed and cleaned the large technology objects currently on display in the Museum including trains planes and automobiles. This event saw **Tasha Brown** and **Kate Jones** join us once again (we needed some students to sacrifice up on the cherry picker!)

**David Hallam** and **Jessica Turner** returned from the *Pandora* trip in early March and we are now swamped by the enormous number of artefacts recovered from the latest trip (over 1200 objects). David and Jessica presented a talk where they discussed the highlights of the trip including the raising of a cannon and the discovery of a number of medicine bottles still with contents intact. Other highlights included going completely insane in the middle of the Pacific Ocean.

**David Hallam** has been very busy planning and attending meetings for the extensions to MTQ and also for the Queensland Cultural Centre 2000 (QCC2000). As a diversion, he thoroughly enjoyed being glued to the controls of the cherry picker during the cleaning of the large technology items.

Jennifer Blakely is still deeply entrenched in the survey of the social history collection and its storage. She is currently creating a number of prototype storage systems with a view to housing objects ready to move and identifying any problems in preparation for the move to the new building in 2000. Jennifer travelled to Townsville to meet the *Pandora* expedition team as they returned and to set up the temporary display of *Pandora* objects in Townsville. She has also installed the display of *Pandora* artefacts currently on exhibition in the Museum foyer. Jennifer has also been involved in an outreach program for the Postal and Telecommunications Historical Society. This collection is relocating from Virginia to Albion and the Queensland Museum's involvement may develop into a consultancy contract. An interesting collection of Jewish religious artefacts, some of which survived the holocaust, has been donated to the Museum

and Jennifer has surveyed these objects. **Tasha Brown** helped Jennifer with the storage system for these objects while she was up.

**Amanda Pagliarino** and **Christine Ianna** were the main thrust behind the large technology items project. They spent a great deal of time planning to arrange for Tasha and Kate to come up, access to the objects on display, the ghost-buster type backpack vacuum cleaners and of course the much loved cherry picker.

Amanda and Christine have also worked together on a review of treatment technique for tapa. This review will be used in an article being written by **Rowena Hill**. Rowena has worked with Christine in the past at the Queensland Museum and she is currently a lecturer at Bournemouth University in the UK.

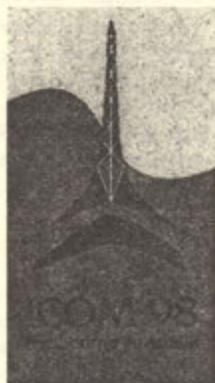
Amanda has been hard at work writing a chapter for an up-coming book on the history and conservation of plastics. Amanda will cover current research in plastics conservation and a review of interventive and non-interventive techniques applied to plastics conservation. Amanda has been surveying and carrying out flattening treatments on the matt-work collection for the past twelve months. This project has been very successful and has been extended so that more of the matt-work collection can be treated.

**Jessica Turner** is deeply immersed in the ocean of new *Pandora* artefacts. The planning and treatment of 1998 expedition material will be a more straightforward task due to last year's experience. Jessica has spent a great deal of time developing procedures and ironing out data base problems for the expanding *Pandora* project. Jessica has been finalising arrangements for her Masters study in analytical chemistry, which she will commence in second semester of this year at the Queensland University of Technology (QUT). She will be focusing her study on bi-mineralised material from the *Pandora* wreck site. In addition to maritime Jessica has been involved in the upcoming natural history exhibition *Endangered Species* at the Museum.

# CALENDAR



## AUSTRALIA



### International Council of Museums Conference (ICOM '98)

10-16 October 1998. Melbourne.

The triennial conference of ICOM will be held in Melbourne this year and it is a unique opportunity for Australian museum and gallery professionals to enjoy meaningful cultural and professional exchange at a truly international level.

The conference program includes six international speakers on the opening plenary day -

Dr. Richard West, Smithsonian Institution, Washington;

Mr. Fumio Nanjo, Nanjo & Associates, Tokyo;

Ms. Marian Pastor Roces, TAO Management, Manila;

Mr. Emmanuel Kasarherou, Tjibaou Cultural Centre, Noumea;

Mr. Antoni Nicolau, Museo de Historia de la Ciudad, Barcelona;

Dr. Mutumba Mainga Bull, National Museums Board of Zambia, Lusaka;

These speakers will address the theme of the conference which is -

*Museums and Cultural Diversity - Ancient Cultures, New Worlds*

Over the next three days of the conference, the specialist committees of ICOM meet. These committees cover all aspects of museum activity. The program also includes some concurrent sessions. Of interest to AICCM members would be the Conservation specialist committee and the all day session on "Tourism and the Protection of Cultural Heritage." These proceedings will be complemented by an extensive social program of receptions, events and site visits.

In order to attend the conference, you must be a member of ICOM, however, accompanying persons are welcome. Membership inquiries - Andrew Moritz, Tel: (03) 5227 0704.

Early registration up to 30 June 1998 is \$450. Normal registration is \$530.

Accompanying persons early registration is \$230 and normal registration is \$270. The information brochure and registration form is available on website

<http://www.mov.vic.gov.au/icom/>

For further details contact Ms. Noelene Galloway, Executive Officer, ICOM '98 Limited, Telephone 03 9651 6783, Fax 03 9651 6321.

email [nagallow@mov.vic.gov.au](mailto:nagallow@mov.vic.gov.au)

C67

### Professional development workshop on the Conservation of Asian art and artefacts

23-25 September, 1998. Sydney.

The workshop is for conservators and conservation scientists who work with Asian collections. Our aim is to strengthen communications between conservators regarding current approaches to treatment of Asian collections. During the workshop we will identify key issues concerning conservation of Asian art and artefacts and brainstorm ideas for future research projects.

Sara Watkins, Head of Ceramics, Glass and Metals Conservation at the British Museum has been invited to participate in the workshop. We are seeking expressions of interest from AICCM members. This is the first call for papers.

On Friday September 25, 1998 Ms Jessica Rawson will present the inaugural Patron's lecture at an evening hosted by The Centre for Asian Art Studies.

Location: Art Gallery of New South Wales Sydney New South Wales

Contact: Donna Midwinter (02) 9225 1735 [donnam@ag.nsw.gov.au](mailto:donnam@ag.nsw.gov.au)

C66

### Silver Anniversary Celebrations for AICCM and the Conservation of Cultural Materials Programme

17 July, 1998. University of Canberra.

Come and join the celebration of the 25th year of the formation of the AICCM and the 20th year of the foundation of the Conservation of Cultural Materials course at the University of Canberra.

All members of the AICCM, past students and lecturers of the CCM course are invited to join the celebrations at the

University of Canberra, Ginninderra Drive, Canberra.

The day will comprise a mixture of speakers, meetings of the AICCM special interest groups and a celebratory dinner in the evening.

#### Morning Events:

**Welcome Address** by Professor Allan Cripps, Dean, Faculty of Applied Science, University of Canberra.

**Evolution of the Profession:** Robyn Sloggett, President AICCM; Professor Colin Pearson, University of Canberra.

#### Life After the University of Canberra:

Narelle Jarry (paper), Penny Edmonds (objects); Nicole Tse (paintings); Bronwyn Ormsby (paintings), Mary Gissing (textiles).

C64

#### Place, Interface and Cyberspace:

##### Archives at the Edge

##### Australian Society of Archivists Inc.

6-8 August, 1998. Fremantle, Western Australia.

How are archivists, records managers and other information professionals using leading edge strategies and technology to meet the wide range of challenges facing them, including management of electronic records and increased demands for effective access?

The conference will explore this through the following:

**Place:** Custodial and non-custodial issues including authenticity, accessibility and ownership; functional appraisal, recordkeeping and competency standards.

**Interface:** How are access arrangements changing to meet the needs of various client groups? What do clients think of the new archival information systems? Technology now gives us the potential to record more data about the content and context of records than ever before. How is this being used?

**Cyberspace:** The existing opportunities for improving access to information using communications technology including the Internet and intranets. The role of metadata.

Contact Roy Watkins, Tel: (08) 9470 7510; e-mail: [royw@aa.gov.au](mailto:royw@aa.gov.au)

C66

## The Conservation of Picture Frames

18-21 August, 1998. Sydney.

The Art Gallery of New South Wales is pleased to offer a workshop on The Conservation of Picture Frames.

Slide lectures, demonstrations and practical sessions will cover traditional and non-traditional methods of frame conservation, focusing particularly on removal of overpaintings, and ingilding and inpainting methods. Course topics will additionally include examination and documentation techniques, consolidation and structural stabilization, surface cleaning, filling losses and replacement of missing ornaments, the factors determining the condition of a picture frame will be analysed, and preventive conservation procedures will be demonstrated.

The traditional and non-traditional gilding methods and materials will be discussed.

The four-day course will be taught by Malgorzata Sawicki, senior frame conservator at the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

The course will be held at the Art Gallery of New South Wales. The slide lectures will be given in the Theatre, level 4, while demonstrations and practical sessions will be carried out in the Frame Conservation Studio, level 1.

**Fees:** The fee for the four-day course is \$400. The cost includes instructional fee, materials, and morning/afternoon tea.

The workshop is limited to 15 participants. Applications will be processed in order of receipt. A deposit of \$100 must be returned with the application by 15th July 1998. It is expected that the full amount will be paid by 14 August 1998. Cheques should be made out to the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

### Contact:

Malgorzata Sawicki, Conservation Department, Art Gallery of NSW, Art Gallery Road, Domain, Sydney NSW 2000. Tel: (02) 9225 1766; Fax: (02) 9221 6226; e-mail: Margarets@ag.nsw.gov.au

C67

## Tradition and Change: The Heritage Conservation of Religious Property

4-6 September, 1998. Sydney.

The theme of the conference is *Tradition and Change*. Key sessions at the conference will include presentations on:

- Religious Property and Local Government;
- Adaptive Reuse of Churches;
- Movable Heritage;
- Church History and Culture;
- Liturgical Change;
- Religious Heritage - the community issues.

The international guest speakers at the conference will be:

- Dr Roderick O'Donnell, English Heritage, United Kingdom.
- Matthew Saunders, Friends of Friendless Churches, United Kingdom.

Other speakers from around Australia will

also be presenting papers at the conference.

For further information contact: Capital Conferences Pty Ltd, PO Box N399, Grosvenor Place, Sydney, NSW 1220. Tel: (02) 9252 3388; Fax: (02) 9241 1220; <capcon@ozemail.com.au>

C67

## Records Management Association of Australia, 15th Convention

6-9 September, 1998. Brisbane, Australia.

Hosted by the Queensland Council, Records Management Association of Australia.

The convention business programme has been designed around the theme 'Making Information Work'. The programme will feature two concurrent streams focussing on technology and personnel issues. The technology stream will include imaging, workflow, future of the mail, e-mail, data warehousing, and voice as data entry. The personnel stream will include competency, recruitment and quality, selecting your training platforms, performance monitoring, outsourcing and getting the message across.

For further information contact: Records Management of Australia 15th Convention, c/- Intermedia Convention and Event Management, PO Box 1280, Milton Qld, 4064. Tel: (07) 3369 0477; Fax: (07) 3369 1512.

C65

## C67Pest Control in Museums: A Workshop Emphasising Non-Toxic Fumigation Techniques

26-30 October, 1998. Sydney, Australia.

This course will be an updated version of the previous successful courses with a half day addition on control of mould. The five day course is designed for Museums, Libraries, Archives, and Herbarium personnel. Topics covered through both lectures and practicals will include integrated pest management, insects and their identification, trapping, modified atmospheres (low oxygen), heating, freezing, and insect growth regulators. There will also be a brief review of available chemical methods. The emphasis of the course will be on training the participant to solve pest problems using non-toxic methods wherever possible. There will also be special sessions dealing with issues pertinent to developing countries especially Asia-Pacific, and a half day session on prevention and control of mould. Instructors include experts from museums, universities, and pest control industries from both Australia and overseas.

Contact: Vinod Daniel, Head, Research Centre for Materials Conservation and the Built Environment, Australian Museum, 6 College Street, Sydney, NSW 2000, Australia. Tel: 61 (0)2 9320 6115, Fax: 61 (0)2 9320 6070, Email:

Vinodd@amsg.Austrmus.gov.au

C66

## Metals Conservation Symposium

December, 1998. Melbourne.

Expressions of interest are sought for participation in a two-day symposium being planned by AICCM Victorian Division on the conservation of ferrous and copper alloys. Speakers will include Dr Ian Macleod and Jennifer Dickens, and the symposium will be aimed at practicing conservators who would like to update their knowledge.

If you are interested in attending or speaking, please contact Sally Groom, Museum Victoria, Level 10, 108 Lansdale Street, Melbourne Victoria 3000. Tel: (03) 9291 2102; Fax: (03) 9291 2159; e-mail: sgroom@mov.vic.gov.au by 31 July 1998.

C67



## INTERNATIONAL

### Science Refresher: Plastic or Elastic?

16-17 July, 1998. Camberwell College of Arts.

Contact: Camberwell & Chelsea Short Course Unit, Camberwell College of Arts, Peckham Road, London SE5 8UF, Tel: (181)514 6311; Fax: (0181) 514 6315.

C65

### Care of Photographic, Moving Image and Sound Collections

20-24 July, 1998. College of Ripon and York St John.

Contact: Susie Clark, Conference Co-ordinator, 3/4 Hill Top, Grafton, York YO5 9QL.

C61

### Preservation Fundamentals I: Humidity

20 July, 1998.

Humidity will be taught by Lew Harriman, author and illustrator of *The Dehumidification Handbook* and active member of ASHRAE (American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Engineers). (possible 2nd session #C98-14 July 21) \$125

For further information email: mwb@cal.si.edu

C66

### Preservation Fundamentals II: Mold and Mildew

22 July, 1998.

Mold and Mildew will be jointly taught by several microbiologists: Dr. Robert Planchette will review the microbiology on organic materials; Dr. Robert Koestler, the microbiology on inorganic materials; and Lt. Col. Ted Hatfield from the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, the pathogenic potential of these organisms. (possible 2nd session 23 July 1998) \$125

For further information email: mwb@cal.si.edu

C66

### Preservation Fundamentals III: Pests

24 July, 1998

Pests will be taught by Keith Story, author of *Approaches to Pest Management in Museums*, general editor of *Maill's Handbook of Pest Control*, and member of the Royal Society of Health. (possible 2nd session 25 July 1998) \$125

For further information email:  
mwb@cal.sl.edu

C66

### Montefiascone 1998

July, August 1998. Montefiascone, Italy.

This summer marks the 10th anniversary of the project. During this time, we have secured the fabric of the building in which the library is housed. In particular the problems of damp/mould and vermin have been successfully tackled and the collection secured using sound preservation principles. Running parallel with this is a teaching programme, which draws upon international experts with specialist knowledge in various aspects of the archaeology of the codex and care of collections.

To celebrate our 10th anniversary a special programme has been designed. This year offers an opportunity to attend a series of lectures and workshops from well-known speakers who rarely, if ever, teach in parallel.

27-31 July: Medieval pigments and the technique of their application to manuscripts.

3-7 August: Parchment: history, features and new techniques of repair.

10-14 August: The medieval book: structure and recording evidence.

The cost is £295 Stirling per week (£900 for the four weeks). This covered accommodation in dormitory-style rooms (within the walls of the medieval city), continental breakfast and all teaching, which is in English. All courses have limited numbers.

Contact: Cheryl Porter, 7 Venice Lodge, 55 Malda Vale, London W9 1SD, Tel/Fax: (0044) 171 266 0800. James Black: e-mail: james.black@ucl.ac.uk

C67

### Introduction to Conservation of Outdoor Bronzes

August 1998. New York, USA.

New York Conservation Foundation 4th annual workshop with John Scott. Contact NYCF, PO Box 20098LT, NY, NY 10011-0008, USA. Fax: (212) 714 0149, email: jscott@panix.com.

C66

### Textile and Paper Materials American Chemical Society

23-27 August, 1998. Boston, USA.

Contact: Dr. Jeanette M. Cardamone, USDA-ARS-Eastern Regional Research Center, 600 East Mermaid Lane, Wyndmoor, PA 19038, Tel: (215) 233 6680; Fax: (215) 233 6795; email: jcardamone@arserrc.gov

C65

### Non-Destructive and Micro-destructive Analytical Methods for Conservation of Works of Art - AMC 98

September-October 1998. ICCROM, Rome.

Application deadline: 30 April 1998.

C65

### Reversibility - Does It Exist?

8-10 September 1999. London, UK.

Contact: Sara Carroll, Department of Conservation, The British Museum, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3DG, Fax: (0171) 323 8636;

email:  
conservation@britishmuseum.ac.uk

C65

### Conservation and Utilization of Industrial Heritage

8-10 September 1998. La Habana, Cuba.

Contact: Consejo Nacional de Patrimonio Cultural de Cuba, Calle4, num. 8-10, esquina A 13, El Vedado, Ciudad de La Habana, Cuba. Tel: 53 7 43 1 93; Fax: 53 7 66 21 06.

C66

### Society of Archivists Annual Conference

8-11 September 1998. Sheffield University.

*Past Present and Future* will be the theme for the 1998 Society of Archives' Annual Conference and Conservators' Training Conference, to be held at Sheffield University, Ranmoor Hall, from Tuesday 8th September to Friday 11th September 1998.

The Conference will have: Plenary, Joint and Separate Sessions and Seminars for Archivists, Conservators, and Records Managers, A Trade Fair, Social Events and Visits.

Subjects covered will be: Archive Buildings, Funding, Training and Further Professional Development, Current Practices and Changes, Textiles in Archives.

Preliminary details available from either: Margaret Turner of Teresa Januszonok, Sheffield Archives Office, 52 Shoreham Street, Sheffield S1 4SP, Tel: 0114 273 4756/273 4236; Fax: 0114 273 6066. E-mail: sheffield.archives@dial.pipex.com E-mail: we.preserve@dial.pipex.com

C66

### ICOM-CC Working Groups: Paintings I and Paintings II Joint Interim Meeting

12 September, 1998. Dublin, Ireland.

An informal, one-day joint Interim Meeting of the two Paintings Working Groups of ICOM-CC will be held in Dublin on Saturday 12 September 1998 (the day after the IIC Congress finishes). The title and theme of the meeting is *Image or Object? The Influence of Conservation Treatment on the Interpretation of Paintings*. The venue will be announced shortly.

The theme is intended to attract

contributions from historians, curators or conservators who may be attending the IIC Conference. It is hoped to embrace all aspects of the treatment of paintings and to create a forum for lively discussion. Papers should be short (not more than 20 minutes) and may present ongoing working hypotheses and ideas. There will be no post-or preprints. If you would like to participate in the meeting, draft papers or abstracts should be submitted to the ICOM-CC Paintings Working Group co-ordinators, Alan Phenix and Jergen Wadum, or to Caroline Villers by 15 March 1998.

Contact Alan Phenix, FOM Institute, Postbus 41883, 1009 DB Amsterdam, Netherlands. Tel: \*\*31 20 608 1234; Fax: \*\*31 20 668 4106; E-mail: aphenix@amolf.nl

C66

### Image or Object?

### The Influence of Conservation Treatment on the Interpretation of Paintings

12 September, 1998. Dublin, Ireland.

Contact: Caroline Villers, Courtauld Institute of Art, Somerset House, Strand, London WC2R 0RN, Great Britain. Tel: (44 171) 873 2192; Fax: (44 171) 873 2878.

C65

### ICOM-CC: Glass, Ceramics and Related Materials

13-16 September, 1998. Helsinki.

Contact: Mr Rikhard Hordal, Department of Conservation Studies, Espoo-Vantaa Polytechnic University, Lummetie 2, Vantaa, Finland. Tel: 3589 4178 7206; Fax: 3589 4178 7202.

C63

### International Congress, Contribution of Chemistry to Works of Art on "Art and Chemistry: Color"

16-18 September, 1998. Paris.

Contact Societe de Chimie Industrielle, 28 rue Saint-Dominique, F 75007, Paris, France. Ph: 1 53 59 02 10; Fax: 1 45 55 40 33.

C63

### Laser Technology in Art Conservation

28 September - 2 October 1998. Lisbon.

This course aims to demonstrate new laser-based technologies and methods for use in the conservation of a wide range of objects of cultural importance, including paintings and items of marble, stone, terracotta, plaster, parchment and ivory. Tutors have been drawn from three research centres in Europe; National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside (UK), Foundation for Research and Technology Hellas (Greece) and Instituto Superior Tecnico (Portugal), to provide a specialised course covering all important aspects of laser technology in conservation.

The course comprises five days of lectures, demonstrations and practical work and will cover five main areas:

- An introduction to lasers.
- Laser cleaning (at both IR and UV wavelengths).
- Laser-based analytical techniques and imaging.
- Three-dimensional scanning and non-contact replication of artworks.
- Holography and holographic interferometry for non-destructive testing of artworks.

The course will be held at Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon, Portugal and is aimed at conservation professionals who play an active role in the introduction of new techniques, teach students and practice or oversee the conservation of a wide range of materials. Trainees will be experienced conservation professionals with little or no experience in the field of laser technology applied to artworks and who wish to expand their professional and/or academic activities in this field.

For further information contact: Laser Technology, Conservation Centre, National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, Whitechapel, Liverpool L1 6HZ UK, Tel: 0151 478 4904; Fax: 0151 478 4990; e-mail: sculpture@nmgmcccl.demon.co.uk

C67

#### ICOM-CC: WOAM Working Group Interim Meeting

19-23 October, 1998. Grenoble, France.

Contact: Celine Bonnot, Conference Administrator, ARC-Nucléart, CEA/Grenoble, 17 rue des Martyrs, 38054 Grenoble cedex 9, France, Fax: 33 (0) 4 76 88 50 89.

C64

#### Building Projects and the Conservator Conference

29-30th October 1998. Leeds, UK.

This multidisciplinary conference will explore the development of major capital projects, particularly during the crucial design stages. The conference speakers will include both building and museum professionals. The aim is to improve communication and understanding of the expectations and the needs of the museum client and the design team during major construction work.

The conference has the support of the Museums & Galleries Commission, the Museums Association, the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation and is being hosted by the Royal Armouries. It is being organised by May Cassar (Museums and Galleries Commission), Velson Horie (The Manchester Museum) and Bob Smith (Royal Armouries).

For further details contact: Bob Smith, Tel: +44 113 220 1920; Fax: +44 113 220 1917; e-mail: Robert.Smith@armouries.org.uk.

C67

#### Introduction to Laser Cleaning in Conservation

23-25 November, 1998. National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside.

The laser provides the conservator with a tool of exceptional precision and versatility and is rapidly becoming established in a wide range of applications. NMGM is committed to the development of laser technology in a conservation environment. This three-day course, comprising lectures, demonstrations, practical work and individual tuition, provides an opportunity to gain hands-on experience in this important field.

The course provides an understanding of the use of lasers for the conservator. An appreciation of conservation is assumed but no scientific background is required. The course is given by specialists from the field of lasers and conservation drawn from the staff of NMGM. The number of participants for the course is strictly limited.

Course fee: 3-day course: £540 per person.

A 1-day introductory course is also available which will provide an insight into the possibilities offered by laser cleaning. This course can be arranged at a time to suit the participants.

Course Fee: 1-day course £180 per person.

For further information contact: Laser Technology, Conservation Centre, National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, Whitechapel, Liverpool L1 6HZ UK, Tel: 0151 478 4904; Fax: 0151 478 4990; e-mail: sculpture@nmgmcccl.demon.co.uk

C67

#### Restoration 98

10-12 December, 1998. Amsterdam RAI.

Restoration 98, the international exhibition of techniques for the restoration and conservation of cultural heritage, will be held at the Amsterdam RAI on 10-12 December 1998.

The exhibition is intended for both trade visitors and members of the public. The programme of Restoration 98 will include providers of services and methods for restoration and conservation and suppliers of materials. It will also feature specialised service providers such as contractors and laboratories, together with foundations, government bodies and educational institutions.

The 1998 Restoration will also incorporate *Art Collecting & Protecting*, a trade fair that was previously held at the MECC in Maastricht.

For further information contact: Loes Roos or Claartje van Mol. Tel: +31 205491212.

C67

#### Fourth International Symposium on Wood and Furniture Conservation

12 December 1998. Amsterdam.

Call for Papers.

The Fourth International Symposium on Wood and Furniture conservation, organized by the Netherlands Institute for Cultural Heritage and the Association of Professional Conservators (Veres), will be held on Friday 12 December 1998 in Amsterdam. The Symposium coincides with Restoration 98, the international trade fair for conservators, from 10-12 December 1998 in the RAI, Amsterdam.

Papers are invited on following subjects: case studies, conservation research, historical techniques, ethics in conservation. The papers will be included in the Proceedings of the Symposium.

Anyone wishing to present a paper should submit an abstract of approximately 250 words, to be sent by 1 May 1998 to: Mr Jurjen Creman, Netherlands Institute for Cultural Heritage, Gabriel Metsstraat 8, 1071 EA Amsterdam, The Netherlands, Tel: (003120) 6767933; Fax: (003120) 6755191.

C67

#### Looking at Paper: Evidence and Interpretation

13-16 May, 1999. Toronto, Canada.

Call for papers.

Historical and bibliographical examination of paper, including production, usage and significance of particular papers and the methodology of paper analysis. Submit abstracts by 15 January 1998 to: Looking at Paper, Box 956, Station F, Toronto, Ontario M4Y 2N9, Fax: (416) 203 2692, e-mail: john\_onell@ago.net. Sponsored in part by CAC and the Institute of Paper Conservation.

C66

#### ICOM-CC

##### 12th Triennial Meeting

29 August - 4 Sept, 1999. Lyon, France.

Contact: Françoise Rosier, ICOM-CC Secretary, Institut royal du patrimoine artistique, 1 parc du Cinquantenaire B-1000, Brussels, Belgium.

C66

#### Association of British Picture Restorers Triennial Conference

Autumn 1999. London, UK.

Call for Papers.

Abstracts are invited on the subject of filling and retouching of easel paintings. One objective of the Association has been to provide practical advice for real situations; submissions should reflect this. As a general guide, speakers should have sufficient material for a forty-minute presentation.

The venue is yet to be announced, but is expected to be in central London.

Contact: Jan Robinson, Association of British Picture Restorers, Station Avenue, Kew, Surrey TW9 3QA, Tel/Fax: 0181 948 5644.

## Victoria

### Archer Fine Art Preservation Pty Ltd

**Eric Archer** and architect **Peter White** recently introduced a range of environmental monitoring equipment into Australia at a workshop attended by the National Gallery of Victoria, the Museum of Victoria, the National Archives of Australia, Australia Post, the State Library of Victoria and other organisations. The new company, Hanwell Asia Pacific Pty Ltd distributes the Hanwell range of hard wired and radio telemetry data loggers, and a small portable temperature and humidity logger.

Eric has also been treating a collection of gouache landscapes by Fred Williams, and a watercolour landscape by John Glover, making an interesting contrast in style, materials and technique.

**Candida Baskcomb** has been working on a series of nineteenth-century Australian and English watercolours, as well as the normal (and abnormal) range of material that finds its way into a commercial conservation facility. While Candida is on leave, paper conservator **Alison Holland** will be relieving on a part-time basis. Alison is also finishing a fine arts degree at the University of Melbourne.

Recent Canberra graduate **Ute Strehle** has left us to take up her appointment as paper conservator at the Auckland City Art Gallery. We shall miss Ute very much and wish her every success in her new position.

### Heritage Victoria

**Paul Hunt** is doing experiments in our laboratory as part of his Heritage Conservation Project for the Conservation of Cultural Materials programme in Canberra. He is testing various solutions to re-alkalise carbonated concrete so as to passivate corroding reinforcement steel. For the experimental work, he will be using concrete from the Barwon River Ovoid Sewer Aqueduct, one of the most important early reinforced concrete structures in Victoria; Bare Island Fort in Botany Bay National Park, Sydney; and the concrete silos on Maria Island in Tasmania.

**Nicki Smith** and **Andrew Viduka** have recently completed the lifting of artefacts from the *City of Launceston* shipwreck survey and test excavation. They found that enclosing glass and ceramic objects in seawater-filled plastic bags and placing these into padded boxes was the most effective method to prevent fragile items knocking against each other as they came to the surface. Once back on dry land they continued working with **Jenny Dickens** on the Myer glass and ceramic exhibition. When the exhibition was finally

installed in all its glory, we all returned to continue the on-going desalination treatments in the lab.

Nicky is working on a leather shoe from an 1853 shipwreck, the *Prince of Wales* off Greencape, NSW. The shoe is covered in concretion which contains large amounts of feathers and textile fibres which she is in the process of identifying. Andrew is working on large numbers of ceramics from the excavation of *Viewbank*, an early Melbourne homestead dating from circa. 1849. Jenny is buried in paperwork and polycy.

### Museum of Victoria

Head of Conservation, **Marcelle Scott** continues in her tasks of advocating, planning and scheduling. She has begun developing an investigation and treatment strategy for *Phar Lap*. *Phar Lap* has 'icon' status in the mind of Victorians, and there are regular enquiries from media regarding any planned work, so the strategy also needs to take the PR component very seriously.

In her other role as Head of the Regional Museums Advisory Unit, Marcelle has had the pleasure of being involved in the great showcase give-away, in which about 150 showcases have been supplied free of charge to small museums. While happy to take the glory for this very well received project, she must confess that **Jenny Whitelaw** and **John Clarke** did all the work and she takes this opportunity to thank them for their input, professionalism and good humour throughout the process.

**Penny Edmonds** is working with the Indigenous Rights programme team for the creation of the new Aboriginal Centre which will be at the Melbourne Museum, involving input into design meetings and treatment of objects. A project for the treatment and mounting of seventy-four bark paintings identified for exhibitions has begun. She is also involved in developing a bark painting storage strategy for the eventual movement and rehousing of the Museum's 500 bark paintings to the new Melbourne Museum.

Penny and **Jude Fraser** gave an in-house workshop on disaster salvage techniques for objects and paper to conservation staff in preparation for the next inevitable mishap.

**Michelle Berry** has been working on the accelerated relocation programme with the collection conservation preparation team of **Fiona Lawry**, **John Clarke** and **Jane Guthrey**. The work has included making new field jackets for unexcavated fossils, repairing Moa bones, making a support for a roof taken from a hut and repairing a diprotodon bone. Michelle has also been working with the primary designers for the Melbourne Museum

on the 'lateral display system', a broad term for showcases, lighting, graphics and object support, providing guidelines for materials and construction details.

The opening date of the Immigration Museum and Hellenic Antiquities Museum is fast approaching and the team of **Barbara O'Brien**, **Liz Wild** and **Jude Fraser** are hard at work preparing objects. Liz has reverted to her childhood and has been seen playing with a Gaucho doll, a Nurnberg peg doll and paper doll's dresses. Barbara has been researching treatments of a sealers trypot and marine chronometer from a shipwreck and she and Liz have been carrying out the work. Jude has spent many hours in meetings with the programme team and the designers, discussing the finer points of appropriate display techniques. The focus of work over the forthcoming months will be the condition reporting and the preparation for exhibition of over 150 loan objects for the Immigration Museum.

**Catherine Lovelock** has been busy conserving objects for new exhibitions and preparing for deinstallation of other major exhibitions, at the Museum's Scienceworks campus as well as being involved with building restoration and object conservation issues related to the historic Pumping Station site.

**Sally Groom** and **Margaret Perkins** have been treating and installing ceramics for an exhibition of glass and ceramics at Myers. Margaret is also treating household porcelain and ceramics from the archaeological dig at Little Lonsdale Street for the *Melbourne* exhibition at the Melbourne Museum.

Sally Groom has been working on two major treatment projects for the Melbourne Museum objects. One is the mask, wig and chest plate of the Egyptian mummy *Tjeby*, which required stabilisation, backing and a new support. The other is the skeleton of a rare example of the megafauna species *Zygomaturus tasmanicus*, related to the Diprotodon, which was excavated from a swamp in northern Tasmania in 1911. The treatment has involved removal of adhesive and metal armature used to mount the specimen in 1966 and consolidation of spongy tissue.

### National Gallery of Victoria

Technical Assistant **Fiona Lawry** left us in February to go to the Museum of Victoria from whence she came. Fiona created a lot of wonderful storage boxes and greatly improved the Aboriginal and Asian storage areas. **Yvonne Kendal** has taken over from Fiona and is currently working on the rehousing of Asian costumes, having survived her trial by fire with the great chandelier pack - an object of close to 500 pieces.

**Catherine Millikan** is in the objects conservation department and is very busy with loans, repairs to objects that require stabilisation before moving (the collection will be moved off-site next year during the redevelopment of the Gallery), conservation in general, supervisor to both *Ralki Wara* textiles conservator and the Asian storage project, plans for the new objects and textiles labs, and planning new storage areas and furnishing for the refurbished building.

**Carol Campbell** has begun work on the preparation of 90 flat textiles for the *Ralki Wara Aboriginal Long Cloth* exhibition. **Jude Schahinger** recently completed her tenure as Art Foundation Development Conservator of Objects. Jude made a guest appearance during the installation of the *Imperial Austria* exhibition and has now returned as the 'Relocations Project Conservator'.

In the paintings lab **Carl Willis** has completed his treatment of *Clarkson Stanfield's St Michael's Mount, Cornwall* (1830). Carl is also currently examining (including x-radiography) several European paintings in the collection.

**Linda Waters** is working on 19th-century paintings from the collection. **Michael Varcoe-Cocks** is assisting her with the Cecil Gordon Lawson painting *Marshlands* (1876). Michael is also handling numerous loans. **John Payne** continues work on the anonymous 16th-century Flemish panel painting *Descent from the Cross*, including the design and construction of a suitable period frame.

In the Frames and Wooden Decorative Arts studio **Holly McGowan-Jackson** has recently treated two marquetry tables. Hide glue and 'high tack fish glue' were used for repairing broken areas while diluted fish glue was used to consolidate areas of lifting veneer.

Exhibitions conservator **Catherine Earley** has been involved in the installation of the *Imperial Austria* exhibition, the huge *Beyond Belief: Modern Art and the Religious Imagination* and the ever challenging *Möet and Chandon*.

In the paper lab **Lyndsay Knowles**, **Ruth Shervington** and **Cobus van Breda** are busy preparing for an exhibition of prints by Goya from the collection to be held in September.

**Tom Dixon** and all conservation staff took part in an information open day for VCE students organised by the NGV's Education Department. Tom has also been active with the Museum Accreditation Programme and the Museum of the Year Award with Museum Australia.

## Western Australia

### Western Australia Museum

**Jon Carpenter** was the on-site conservator involved in the fourth expedition to Sri Lanka led by **Jeremy Green**, Head of Maritime Archaeology. A conservation laboratory dedicated to maritime archaeological artefacts is currently under construction there and some of the readers may recall the paper presented by Jon on this subject at the AICCM conference on Rottnest Island in 1997. During that expedition at Galle Harbour an interesting discovery was made whilst preparing for the recovery of a stone anchor. Remains of two wooden arms were found. This is the first time that such finds were made in association with a stone anchor. The age of the 3.17metre Arab-Indian anchor may be 500 years and the two finds will help to resolve the mystery of the shape of the arms and how they were fitted to this particular type of anchor.

Jon has also been working underwater on the new 'wreck' of *HMAS Swan* which was deliberately sunk off the Busselton coast of Western Australia. He and **Dr Ian MacLeod**, along with maritime archaeologist **Dr Mike McCarthy**, will continue to monitor the decay of the vessel as the seawater penetrates the paint and the aluminium superstructure and interacts with the steel hull. It is anticipated that this work will take more than 100 years to complete so there should be a continuing role for local conservators for some time. Prior to the sinking of the vessel Ian MacLeod and **Richard Garcia** attached a series of stainless steel reference measuring bolts to the metal so that they have reproducible points to measure once the marine growth has covered the ship.

**Ulli Broeze-Hörnemann** has been busy with the preparation and presentation of workshops and lectures on textiles and paper conservation at the Museum of Childhood and the Centre for Cultural Heritage Studies at Curtin University. She also finished a project for the Geraldton Regional Museum. This involved the conservation of two severely damaged three dimensional paper church models which were crafted by the priest-architect Monsignor John C. Hawes in 1933 and 1936. Ulli is currently working on a project comprised of 14 Stages of the Cross which were recovered from the chapel of the Fremantle Prison Museum.

Ian MacLeod presented a plenary address at the Murdoch University Science Summer School. He spoke on the role of applied science in the preservation of our underwater cultural heritage and how the corrosion and conservation studies can tell us about the way

in which the local environment has been changing over the past few hundred years.

**Bridie Kirkpatrick** who has been assisting the Textiles Conservation Department for a number of months has left for Canberra to participate in the Conservation of Cultural Materials Course at the University of Canberra. Good luck to Bridie.

**Maggie Myers** has joined the WA Museum's conservation team as a full-time staff member. She was the successful applicant for a position that became available some time ago. Maggie will divide her time between the conservation of textiles and maritime archaeological artefacts.

**Anne-Sophie Romanet** has also joined the team for her internship of six-months duration. She enrolled as a student of materials science at the University of Pointiers in France. During her stay at the Department of Materials Conservation, Anne-Sophie is undertaking research to establish optimum condition for the stabilisation of heavily corroded copper and bronze artefacts during their treatment. This work will involve simulated corrosion experiments and the use of scanning electron microscope analysis of the aged and corroded surfaces.

## EQUIPMENT & PRODUCTS

## SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

### Special Interest Group

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vacant

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## Paintings

### Hamilton Kerr Internship Report

Bronwyn Ormsby, a paintings conservator on staff at the NGA, left the National Gallery of Australia in August 1995 to begin an Internship in Conservation Science at the Hamilton Kerr Institute at Cambridge University, England. The Internship consisted primarily of a scientific experiment using the analytical technique, gas chromatography, generally used in conservation to help identify the media used in oil and synthetic paints. The experiment was designed by Alan Phenix from the Courtauld Institute of Art (and MOLART Project) and Dr. Spike Bucklow, of the Hamilton Kerr Institute and involved the immersion of artificially and naturally aged paint samples in alkali solutions such as ammonium hydroxide and tri-ethanolamine. The aim of the experiment was to ascertain whether these alkalis saponified the oil media in the paint and the results will be published in a leading UK conservation journal by the end of 1998. This experiment will contribute to a growing body of knowledge and research into the effects of chemicals used by conservators on paintings, which serves both as an ethics 'check' for conservators and also as an educator for greater confidence and understanding about conservation practice, particularly in the light of the continuing 'cleaning debates' which are more active in the UK and USA.

At the end of July 1996, I was asked to stay on for another year at the Institute and I am very grateful for the financial support provided by the National Gallery of Australia, which enabled me to stay and to complete the second year. This year consisted of the completion of the experiment as mentioned above and of practical conservation work. Two paintings were fully conserved, a 17th-century French-Italian battle scene and an 18th-century genre painting belonging to the Royal Collection. The treatments involved varnish removal, overpaint removal, tear repairs and extensive retouching. During the course of the treatments, I gained greater knowledge of cleaning practices and was introduced to the art of retouching in egg tempera paint, which is particular to the Institute. Also in my second year, I completed 3 essays in art history with a Cambridge

based historian, David Oldfield, one of which - written about 6 paintings by Sir William Beechey - will be edited by Christopher Lloyd of the Royal Collection and published in the Hamilton Kerr Institute Bulletin No. 3.

In addition to the formal requirements of the Internship, I visited a great number of galleries and Museums within the UK, London in particular and also visited Paris, Madrid, Dresden and Vienna where I toured the famous museums and galleries. I also completed extensive travel and condition reporting for the NGA for both the *Turner* and *Vision of Kings* exhibitions.

The highlight of the two years for me was without a doubt, the thrill of exposure to so many art professionals and also to so many beautiful paintings, so once again I thank the National Gallery for agreeing to and providing me with the support I needed in order to take up the opportunity.

**Bronwyn Ormsby**

**National Gallery of Australia**

### University of Canberra research titles

The following is a list of working titles for proposed research projects by the final year painting students at NCCCHSS. Any information, expressions of interest or offers of assistance should be forwarded to the University.

#### Julie Whittlam

An examination of the traditional materials and techniques used in the stencilling of Government House, Sydney.

#### Siân Griffiths

An investigation into Regalrez 1094 as a suitable inpainting medium.

#### Georgia Larkey

An investigation into the ageing properties of lining adhesives, with particular reference to pressure-sensitive adhesives.

#### Sophie Brain

An investigation into the effect enzymes have on paintfilms and their clearance.

#### Catherine Nunn

An investigation and analysis of proprietary paint removal systems (paint strippers) and their feasibility for use in the conservation profession.

## Photon

As you will have read in the National Archives of Australia news, I'm taking off on long service leave and as such have handed over the job of co-ordinating PHOTON to Detlev Leuth and Kim Tough. Detlev can be contacted at International Conservation Services on (02) 9417 3311, while Kim is currently at the National Maritime Museum on (02) 9552 7778. Thanks to everyone who helped me with PHOTON over the last few years and I look forward to coming back refreshed and ready for action.

To continue the series on little known photographic processes taken from that fantastic volume of Luis Nadeau's *the Encyclopedia of Printing, Photographic and Photomechanical Processes*, I have picked out three more obscure terms to highlight. Mr Nadeau has kindly given his permission for me to paraphrase his text:

**Ceramic Paper** - The paper used for the production of one of the types of Photoceramics, invented in 1891. The paper was sensitised with a solution which was kept a trade secret. It worked like a Carbon Transfer technique, ie the paper was printed, washed and then squeegeed into contact with a vitrifiable plaque, then striped. The plaque was then treated with potassium permanganate, washed dried and then fired to produce the final product. Other photoceramic processes

used metallic salt images which when fired produced images with outstanding permanence.

**Foxtype** - Patented by Thomas Fox, England, 1864. Ordinary writing paper was sensitised with a solution of one part potassium dichromate, 2 parts copper sulfate and 32 parts water. The sensitised paper was exposed in sunlight, then developed in a bath of hot developer made from logwood shavings which had been boiled for about 2 hours. After development the print was washed, dried and then varnished. Print tones ranged from blue, purple, light black and deep black depending on the strength of the sensitiser and developer solutions.

**Larjachrome** - a process developed by the Larjachrome Corporation of New York in 1949. It consisted of taking a conventional slide, like Kodachrome, stripping the emulsion from the base and stretching it onto paper. A 2x enlargement could be achieved.

For further information on these processes and more, BUY THE BOOK. Mr Nadeau has his own home page with ordering details at <http://www3.nbnet.nb.ca/nadeau/>. He also told me he is working on an online Museum based on his Encyclopedia. This is still being constructed, but you can visit it at <http://www3.nbnet.nb.ca/nadeau/CollectionNadeau>.

## EQUIPMENT & PRODUCTS

### Digital Imaging System for Microscopy

The new Leica DC-100 is a digital camera in which the whole system - optics, hardware and software - have been designed for microscopy. The result is a powerful, competitively priced system, compatible with PC and TWAIN driver.

Image quality is enhanced by direct digitization at the CCD sensor and direct transfer to the PC. Real-time images are displayed on the monitor and exposure control is by integral or spot sensing. Progressive scanning, gain and synchronization of pixels between camera and monitor produce sharp images with good resolution (up to 900F quadratic pixels), with quick image takeup times of less than 1 second and live image representation at 25 full images/second.

High colour fidelity is provided by an RGB primary-colour mosaic filter and 24 bit colour resolution. Image integration allows optimum images even from low-light techniques such as fluorescence and darklight.

The DC-100 system may be used with microscopes, macroscopes and stereomicroscopes, for image acquisition and recording in medical, scientific and industrial applications.

Contact:  
Dermot Allen  
Leica Microsystems Pty Ltd  
PO Box 21  
North Ryde NSW 2113.

Tel: (02) 9886 3018; Fax: (02) 9888 7526.

Check out Leica's home page for more details.

**Book Reviews****Restoration: The Rebuilding of Windsor Castle**

Adam Nicolson

Published by Michael Joseph, Penguin, 1997

Reviewed by Julian Bickersteth

As the Royal Collection's conservators were initially thought to have caused the fire that destroyed a substantial part of Windsor Castle on 20th November 1992, this book had an extra dimension of interest. Whilst the cause of the fire was photographic spotlights igniting curtains in the private chapel where conservators were working, and the alarm was first raised by the senior paintings conservator for the Royal Collection, Viola Pemberton-Pigott, they are exonerated before the first chapter is complete.

What follows is a most interesting account of how so major a disaster to the oldest continuously inhabited royal palace in the world was assessed and ultimately benefited from. Chapters in turn detail the extent of the fire, assessment of the damage, options for restoration, what the fire revealed about the castle, how the building was made stable and the redesign and restoration of the interiors. The options chapter is particularly interesting, discussing the three main options that were arrived at after an exhaustive report, namely Authentic Restoration (deemed to be too expensive and unnecessary), Equivalent Restoration (looks authentic but has a modern structure behind), and Contemporary Redesign. The latter was initially canvassed, but after a plethora of wacky ideas came forth (how about a 120 foot long wave machine in St. George's Hall with a crown bobbing on it (the Royal wave) or a gold foil edged slit one metre wide aligned with the main runway at Heathrow), Equivalent Restoration was chosen as the preferred solution.

The process of restoration itself, whilst told comprehensively, focuses on the key players in the five-year project on both the Royal Household and contractor sides, and the architectural decisions underlying it all. Whilst this makes for fascinating reading, especially some of the tendering knots sub-contractors found themselves in, the result is not an entirely satisfying book for conservators. The vast salvage operation, which was undertaken by architectural archaeologist, Maureen Lovering, who lectured on the subject in Australia two years ago, is only briefly alluded to, and is worthy of a book in its own right. Likewise, the process of ridding the fabric of the medieval building of the effects of the fire are lightly covered. Photographs, though glossy and

dramatic, do not provide much more enlightenment in this area.

However, the book is geared for general readership, and we must wait for others to follow that detail the conservation issues. As such, the excitement of finding exquisite wall paintings by Antonio Verrio, commissioned by Charles II hidden behind nineteenth-century panelling alone make this a book very well worth reading.

Sennotype Photography, Historical Context and Conservation

Julia Donaldson, State Library of Queensland

The Sennotype was introduced to Australian photography in 1862 by Mr Charles Wilson who held the patent rights from Mr Senno. Mr Wilson then sold the rights to this process to photographic studios in New South Wales, South Australia and Tasmania.

This process consisted of two identical albumen prints, one being waxed and faced onto an upper glass plate making it transparent and the other adhered to a lower glass plate. The prints were quite often broadly enhanced through colouring with water colour and pastel or chalk media. When the two plates were placed in register, the effect was quite extraordinary, producing the impression of a third dimension to the image. The photographic system which ranged from the quarter plate size up to 9" x 11" was then displayed in a custom made frame.

A rather confusing aspect to this 'Sennotype' in conservation was that although the upper print was a waxed albumen print faced to the upper plate, the lower print was not albumen and was identified as a platinotype because the image was binderless, continuous tone with excellent image stability within the characteristic deteriorated, primary support.

There are two schools of thought to explain this apparent deviation from the standard Sennotype process. One thought is that the lower plate has been recycled in the photographic studio as it has the obvious sign of breakage and subsequent mending with fibrous pulp. The studio photographer has then experimented with the process using two different photographic mediums to avoid the waste of an expensive glass plate.

The other thought is that a great deal of time was spent by those studios holding a patent for the Sennotype defending their rights to this process, whereas many Sennotypes were produced by studios who would not be able to produce a patent licence to this process. An assumption can be made that this object was produced with obvious deviation from the true Sennotype process hence avoiding any potential embarrassment for the studio with the absence of the patent for the Sennotype. The image is of a gentleman who resided in or near Dunedin, New Zealand as recorded by other genealogical evidence.

The presence of a platinotype print would date the image close to the turn of the century due to its popularity in photographic portraiture from 1880 - 1930's.

References

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During Treatment. Showing replacement photomount corner pads separating the glass plates in Sennotype system.



Sennotype system in register before reframing.

## Creepy Memories: The Return of the Stressed out Bark Painting

Liz Radford, National Gallery of Australia

The author recently returned from a six-month professional development internship spent in the preventive conservation laboratory at the Canadian Conservation Institute, under the supervision of Stefan Michalski: a training opportunity made possible with financial assistance from Museums Australia Inc and the NGA.

The main focus of the internship was a brief research project into why Australian Aboriginal bark paintings return to their original pre-harvested shape over time. This "memory" of shape is believed to be due to creep, a rheological phenomena which is time-dependent behaviour often seen in polymeric materials.

Rheology has not received a lot of attention in conservation circles in the past and is probably more familiar to engineers and polymer scientists. For example, in cold climates, engineers have much anecdotal evidence of wooden structures failing under much lower levels than predicted, due to the effects of prolonged snow loads, due to creep.

Creep occurs when a material is kept under a constantly applied load over time. When a load is applied, as in a routine static test, there is some initial deformation which occurs just due to the load, which is normally recovered if the load is removed immediately. If the load is sustained however, the deformation increases as the material undergoes flow. This resultant strain can increase to the point where complete failure occurs, even though the load has not been increased - just sustained.

At some intermediate point, if the load is removed, some, but not all of the induced deformation (strain) is recovered, in a process called creep recovery. For a fully elastic material, all of the deformation is recovered. Being a viscoelastic material, wood can undergo some plastic flow, and therefore creep.

Many Australian Aboriginal bark paintings are prepared using the same principles and processes used in traditional European wood forming, such as the steam bending of timber, and to some extent the making of plys and veneers. Heat and moisture may be used to plasticise the material. A physical restraint applied and maintained as it cools and dries is intended to permanently lock in a new shape. But since wood and bark are not fully plastic, they are prone to memory or creep recovery.

Adhesives are used to restrain veneers and plys after forming, and knowledgeable joinery prevents steam bent elements from springing back. Splints applied sometimes to bark

paintings, along with all types of restraints may lead to problems during the life of the artefact as they induce stresses if the material undergoes strain.

The aim of the project was to demonstrate creep recovery and to assess the effects of temperature and relative humidity on it, in order to predict the rate and extent of memory at normal museum conditions. Samples of bark (*Eucalyptus Tetrodonta*) and samples of seasoned cedar (*Thuja plicata*) wood were subjected to various forming treatments, and then their movement and relative shape recovery were measured over time, during exposure to elevated temperatures and at mid and high moisture contents. Although full testing was not completed, some consistent and useful data was obtained.

All of the formed samples remembered their original shape, but the extent of recovery was less than predicted, even when forming strains were small and well within accepted elastic limits. Shape recovery was also monitored on a microscopic level, to assess cell collapse, and initial results confirm data obtained macroscopically. Elevated moisture contents and elevated temperatures increased and accelerated creep recovery, and bark samples behaved in the same way as the wood.

Other known conservation problems revealed themselves during testing which will be the subject of ongoing projects at the NGA. Bark samples became extremely mouldy, even at biocidal temperatures which surprised staff at CCI who sometimes attempt to deliberately mould items. Bark samples also caused astonishing corrosion, even to stainless steel fittings inside test enclosures. Clearly the bark paintings in a collection are a potential source of off-gassing. Further research is also underway to establish the chemical composition of the bark.

Although not the focus of the study, the bark sample examined has a fascinating microanatomy, being very different from wood and other bark products encountered in collections, such as birch bark and cork. The sample tested was shown to be primarily phloem, or inner bark and can be best compared to a natural fibre board. Whereas wood and cork have classic open and uniform cellular solid (honeycomb-like) structures, the bark phloem consists of bundles of dense, heavily sclerosed fibres, encased in a weak, thin-walled cellular solid matrix. Being mainly parenchyma cells, they do not have the same degree of axial elongation seen in wood tracheids. Several other anatomical features are present including various oil gland systems and periderm layers demarking the phloem

from the rhytidome, which run like protective, water-proof sheaths throughout the sample.

The work done by Chattaway in the 1950's is commonly cited in conservation articles on bark paintings, but focused more on rhytidome formation than phloem tissue. The latter has not been well represented in the past in conservation. Like chemical composition, more information appears in biological, forestry and wood sciences.

Unfortunately there was not enough time during the internship to pursue all of the areas of interest and basic information on bark's thermohygroscopic behaviour is still badly needed. Although a full profile of bark is still a long way off, it is hoped that the data obtained during the project on creep behaviour will be useful, and will supplement valuable work done by others into this fascinating and unique material. A full project report and bibliography are available from the author on request.

#### Selected Reading

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## PUBLICATIONS

### Australian Microfilming Guidelines

The Information Preservation Section of the National Library of Australia has recently published *Guidelines for preservation microfilming in Australia and New Zealand*.

In an electronic environment it is sometimes easy to forget that microfilm still has an important role to play as a preservation reformatting medium. This publication explains how microfilm can be used to its greatest potential for long term storage of information.

*Guidelines for preservation microfilming in Australia and New Zealand* have been developed in response to a resolution of the 1994 National Preservation Office Conference: *Preservation Microfilming: Does It Have a future?* At this conference it was apparent that there was a need for an authoritative document providing guidance in preservation microfilming matters relating to Australia.

The information included is based on authoritative sources from overseas and practical experience from all sectors of the microfilming industry in Australia.

The publication has been written in simple language and contains relevant information for those with any involvement in preservation microfilming projects or preservation management. Useful topics covered include: establishing a preservation microfilming project, selecting and preparing material for microfilming, preparation of target sequences, selecting microformats, preparation of technical specifications, quality control inspection, bibliographic control and storage. The publication also includes a number of appendices containing sample forms and useful lists.

Copies are available at a cost of A\$30.00 from :

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National Library of Australia  
Canberra ACT 2600  
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## POSITIONS VACANT

### CONSERVATOR



The Otago Museum invites applications for the position of Conservator, responsible to the General Manager - Research & Collections. The successful applicant will be involved with the ongoing conservation needs of a wide variety of organic and inorganic materials from the Museum collections, which include ethnography, archaeology, decorative arts, textiles and natural history. You will also be responsible for designing, implementing and monitoring preventative conservation strategies for the Museum, and for conservation requirements for special and travelling exhibitions. The successful applicant will have:



- \*A recognised qualification in conservation or the equivalent training and experience
- \*Practical experience in a museum conservation laboratory
- \*The ability to apply preventive and interventive conservation skills to a wide variety of objects
- \*The ability to organise and problem solve
- \*Excellent written and oral communication skills
- \*Familiarity with computers and information technology
- \*Proven ability to work within a team environment



A job description is available from the Otago Museum, Phone (0064 3) 477 2372, Fax (0064 3) 477 5993, e-mail: mail@otagomuseum.govt.nz. Please forward a letter of application and your CV by 5pm, 29 June to: General Manager-Research & Collections, Otago Museum, P.O.Box 6202, Dunedin, New Zealand.  
The Otago Museum is an Equal Opportunity Employer



### Australian War Memorial

The Memorial can offer you challenging and rewarding work and will help you maintain your employability.

### CONSERVATOR, OBJECTS LABORATORY

\$28,890 - \$40,531

Professional Officer Class 1, Conservation Sub - Section

The Australian War Memorial needs a specialist objects conservator with experience in metals, modern materials or technical objects to work in its Objects Laboratory at Mitchell. You will be energetic and committed in your approach to work and must have good communication skills. A creative and innovative approach to conservation challenges is essential.

**\*Mandatory qualifications, preferably completion of a tertiary qualification in the conservation field, apply to this position**

#### The job offers:

An opportunity to work with a variety of objects and materials from the Memorial's collections. In addition you will be required to advise on preparing exhibitions from the inception phase as part of our major Gallery Development and Travelling Exhibition programs. You will foster close relationships between conservators and other Memorial staff and will be required to train and supervise conservation students and volunteers.

The contact officer is Ms Alison Wain on (02) 6243 4437.

Applications will be expected to address selection criteria which are available from the recruitment area on (02) 6243 4304 (24 hour answering service) and our Home Page, <http://www.awm.gov.au>.

Applications close on 25 June 1998. Late applications may be accepted if an expression of interest is lodged with Alison Wain by the closing date.

The Australian War Memorial is an equal opportunity employer and maintains a non-smoking work environment.