

## President's Report

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The Minister for the Arts and Sport, Senator the Hon George Brandis SC and the Minister for Revenue and Assistant Treasurer, The Hon Peter Dutton MP have agreed to enter the Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Material Inc and its public fund to the Register of Cultural Organisations (ROCO) from 17 July 2007. We are immensely grateful to Lorrelle Mandaru and Ivy Loh of Freehills for their advice and assistance in putting the application together and to Jenny Dickens for her continuous support. The Public Fund will be administered by a committee of three, comprised of Maria Kubik, AICCM's representative, Jan Lyall and Jane Lennon. Eric Archer will continue to be involved with the fund-raising aspects of the Fund.

The website redevelopment committee is continuing to weigh the pros and cons of two different website providers, one based on open-source software and the other a proprietary software package. The new site will have a search function to find members in private practice and an online payment facility, amongst other features. Ease of use and navigation will be improved, from both a member and administrator perspective. It is anticipated that the new website will be up and running by Christmas.

Prue McKay has resigned from the position of Special Interest Group (SIG) Coordinator. Maria Kubik has agreed to take on this role until the next council election in October 2007. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Prue for her work with the SIGs and her contribution to council meetings.

With the AGM looming it's time to start thinking about nominating members for council. As you'd be aware if you read the last newsletter, the position of Secretary has been vacant for sometime with a number of council members generously filling in to take minutes of council meetings. The current Vice President and Publications Officer have indicated that they intend to stand down, so please put on your thinking caps for replacements. Being on Council offers opportunities for:

- Connecting with colleagues across the country, especially if you're working in private practice, or in an isolated organisation
- Keeping abreast of what's happening in conservation on a national level
- Influencing the direction of your profession
- Professional development
- Raising the value of conservation to your organisation by being seen to contribute to a national agenda

Finally, welcome back to Ann Carter, who has agreed to step into the role of Chair of the Education Standing Committee.

*from the editorial committee*

**Maggie Myers** from the Western Australian Museum reports on display solutions for the Coolgardie Diving Suit, work carried out for the Coolgardie Museum for a display celebrating the centenary of the rescue of Modesto Varischetti from the flooded mine in March 1907. The project was a team effort from many members of the Department of Materials Conservation. **Carolyn Murphy** discusses the decision making process around retaining or replacing mounts and frames for the Art Gallery of NSW's exhibition *Modern British Watercolours and Drawings*.

A reminder to members that registration for the AICCM National Conference is open and that registrations must be sent to the conference organisers Con-sec Conference Management, PO Box 3127, BMDC ACT 2617, not to the AICCM Secretariat. A registration form was sent out with the June newsletter or can be downloaded from the AICCM web site. Early bird registrations close on 14<sup>th</sup> September. This is the first large scale National Conference to be held for many years and we encourage members to show their support and attend what promises to be a great conference. The program is available on the web site and has something for everyone. As well there is the opportunity to catch up with colleagues from interstate and to see the Queensland Art Gallery's new Gallery of Modern Art and the refurbished State Library of Queensland.

Everyone's favourite, the People and Projects section, is full of news from all over the country and our National President brings news of National Council's activities. The Calendar keeps us up to date with courses and workshops around the world.

Another gentle reminder to check your Profile on the web site to confirm your membership status. If you have been unfinancial for some time, you will not receive your newsletter. The newsletters are available on the web site and are usually posted well in advance of you receiving your copy in the mail. The printing, packing and posting of the newsletter adds 2-3 weeks to the whole process of getting the newsletter out to you. So if you are keen to get the newsletter hot off the press, we suggest you check the web site.

Alex Ellem, Jude Fraser, Marika Kocsis,  
Helen Privett

# The Coolgardie Diving Suit - Construction Of Internal And External Supports

Maggie Myers

Department of Materials Conservation  
Western Australian Museum

On 19 March 1907 a very sudden rain storm hit the Coolgardie area in the Eastern Goldfields of Western Australia. Nineteen kilometres north of Coolgardie a shift of gold miners were at work in the Westralia Mines NL at Bonnievale, unaware of the change in the weather above. A small creek running near to the mines burst its banks and approximately fifty four million litres of water flooded into three mines. The miners on the shift were able to get out with the exception of Modesto Varischetti. He was working 328 metres below ground level in a small semi-vertical shaft and was trapped by the rising water.

The rescue of Varischetti took nine days and involved a high-speed train journey from Fremantle to Coolgardie, transporting an underwater rescue team to the mine site. Divers managed to provide Varischetti with sustenance while the flood waters were pumped out. Nine days later Varischetti was able, with guidance from a diver, to wade through the neck high waters to freedom.

To celebrate the centenary of this heroic rescue of Varischetti, the Shire of Coolgardie, in conjunction with the Federal Department of Environment and Heritage, has established a new display of the Varischetti rescue at the Coolgardie Museum. To this end the Western Australian Museum Department of Materials Conservation was asked to quote for the conservation and display work required to exhibit the diving suit and accessories. A quote was provided in November 2002 from photographic documentation and was accepted in January 2006 when funding was confirmed. The suit and accessories were delivered to the Department of Materials Conservation in March 2006, completed in January 2007 and installed in the Coolgardie Museum on 13 March 2007 ready for the centenary celebrations of the Varischetti rescue.

The conservation and display work of the Coolgardie diving suit was a collaborative project; six members of the Department of Materials Conservation contributed their specific skills to the project. The conservation work included the treatment of the helmet, corselet, boots and diving suit. The display work involved the fitting of an internal support for the diving suit and an external support to enable the diving suit and accessories to be displayed standing. The project also included the transportation of the finished diving suit and accessories to Coolgardie and the installation of these in the display case.

The diving suit and accessories were not an integral set but rather cobbled together over the years. It is questionable if any of the components were used in the rescue. It is known that the diving suit was collected in Broome at a later date to form a display some 30 years ago. The components are:

- Heinke helmet to connect to a 12-bolt square corselet, a so called 'Pearler helmet', most likely from 1922-1961, though it does have an early style air inlet.



Diving helmet before treatment showing artificial patination and polyurethane lacquer

- Corselet with 12 bolts did not have a makers name; it fitted the helmet but was not an integral set.
- Diving suit is R.H. Davis' patent Diving Dress (British Admiralty Pattern) made by Seibe, Gorman & Co. Ltd. There is a date inside the suit collar written in ink 9/5/52. The diving suit is equipped with a rubber collar for use with R.H. Davis' Patent 6-Bolt Helmet (British Admiralty Pattern). To fit on the 12-bolt corselet, six holes have been sliced into the rubber.
- The boots are not a pair but both are well worn with no makers' marks. When the paint was stripped off one boot, a speck of gold-like material was found embedded in the leather which might indicate that boot was used in the rescue.

With the best intentions at that time, the helmet had been patinated green and lacquered with polyurethane, the corselet painted with gold polyurethane paint and the metal and leather parts of the boots painted with alkyd black paint (FTIR spectrometer analysis of paint layers).



Diving boot before treatment showing the leather, rubber, metal components painted with alkyd paint

The diving suit and components had been poorly supported internally and exposed to dust and light for 30 years. The result was that the outer canvas layer of the suit was faded, excessively fragile with multiple splits and areas of loss. The para rubber layer between the two canvas layers had deteriorated from brittle to powdery. The inner canvas layer was complete and quite robust. In the past there had been some attempts to adhere parts of the decaying diving suit together with what looked like liquid nails; this was not analysed nor was any attempt made to remove it.



Diving suit showing damage and loss of outer canvas layer and an earlier repair

This article focuses on the innovative internal and external supports for the diving suit and accessories, rather than the conservation treatments of the diving suit and accessories.

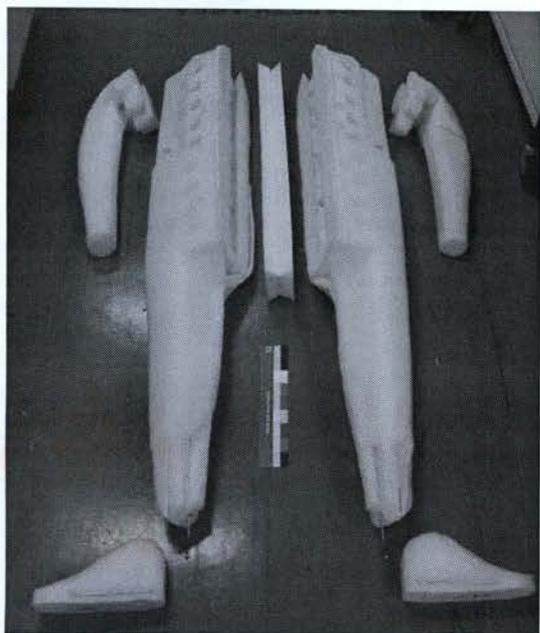
## Construction of the Internal Support:

carried out by Kalle Kasi

Considerable amount of thought, planning and experimenting went into the design of the internal support for the diving suit. The aim was to provide an internal support that was totally self supporting without putting any strain on any part of the fragile diving suit. The challenge was to accomplish this through the only access into the diving suit, namely the neck, with a circumference of about 100 cm, through which the diver would have got into the diving suit. The result was a seven part internal support that was locked together as the components were installed. The seven components were:

- Left leg/ torso
- Right leg/torso
- Left arm
- Right arm
- Left foot
- Right foot
- Fishtail central locking piece

Need for a lightweight, strong and neutral material pointed to Ethafoam 220, a hard polyethylene foam and adhered together with low melt hot glue. Body parts of the internal support were made hollow and where possible excess foam was further removed to reduce the weight by drilling out holes using a circle saw bit.



The seven components of the internal support shaped in Ethafoam 220

For internal strength and to take the weight of the internal support and the diving suit, two 6 mm stainless steel rods were built into the internal support. These rods connect to aluminum plates built into the internal support feet and run through the legs and torso to the neck where they bolt through a suspension plate bridging across the inside of the helmet opening. These rods and the suspension plate carry the weight of the vertically displayed diving suit.



The Ethafoam 220 internal support with the 6 mm rod inserted from neck through each leg to ankles

All Ethafoam 220 parts of the internal support were covered with Tyvek before being inserted into the diving suit. The Ethafoam 220 components were assembled within the diving suit. First the left arm was inserted, and then the left leg/torso was inserted into the diving suit. The left arm slotted into the left shoulder by the fishtail cuts into the components. This was repeated with the right arm and right leg/torso. A unique double fishtail central component locked the two sides of the internal support together in situ.

The feet with the internal aluminum plate were then fitted and bolted onto the end of the rod. The diving suit foot seams were made good again.

Once the internal support components were assembled inside the diving suit, the corselet was installed into the neck of the diving suit. The helmet was fitted and the suspension plate bolted in place through the face plate (front window) of the helmet. The diving suit and the internal support were self supporting from the helmet. The helmet was then suspended from an external support.



The internal support installed with the two rods bolted to the suspension plate. The external support is fitted around the flange of the corselet and bolted to the square rod that slots into the upright stand

### Construction of the External Support:

carried out by Richard Garcia

A support stand for the diving suit was constructed from a 6 mm thick 700 mm<sup>2</sup> steel plate base with a 50 mm<sup>2</sup> profile tubing upright welded towards the centre back of the plate. Three triangular gussets were manufactured and welded to the upright and the base for added support. A short section of 40 mm<sup>2</sup> profile tubing slotted into the internal section of the upright. The height of the diving suit can be adjusted by raising and bolting this short section as required.

Two pieces of 16 mm mild steel rod were shaped to fit under the corselet flange to take the weight of the suit. This involved shaping the rods into three complex curves to fit into the eyelets at the front of the corselet. Flat mild steel plates were welded to the ends of these rods and bolted at a particular angle to the short square section tubing. This angle was critical to ensure that the diving suit/internal support assumed the correct stance. These rods were covered with black rubber tubing to prevent metal to metal contact with the corselet. The stand was painted with two coats of black matt oil based paint.

The diving suit, accessories and external stand were transported the 600 km to Coolgardie in parts and assembled inside the display case - this was challenging but successfully achieved. To assemble the diving suit with its internal support, the shaped rods covered with rubber tubing, attached to the short 40mm<sup>2</sup> section tubing were bolted together and fitted to the corselet. This was assembled onto the upright stand by slotting the two square section tubing into one another. This was adjusted so the feet of the diving suit were flat on the floor of the case and bolted in position.

The diving suit and accessories are now the centre piece of a display of the Modesto Varischetti rescue interpretation in the Coolgardie Museum, Western Australia.



The installed diving suit as the centre piece in the Coolgardie Mine rescue of 1907

## Acknowledgements

- Shire of Coolgardie for giving permission for this article to be published on their icon.
- Grateful thanks to colleagues Kalle Kasi who made the internal support, Richard Garcia, who made the external support, Alex Kilpa, Don Cockrell and Genevieve König who assisted in the project

## References

- T. Austen: Entombed Miner, St George, Perth. 1984
- Siebe, Gorman & Co Ltd Diving Apparatus catalogue, c 1920
- [www.divingheritage.com](http://www.divingheritage.com)

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# AICCM Professional Membership

The latest discussion paper on Professional Membership of AICCM, along with the Survey seeking feedback on the Discussion Paper, has recently been posted to the AICCM website. If members have not received information on the survey or the link to the latest discussion paper, please contact Christine Ianna for further information. Christine can be reached at [christinei@uq.net.au](mailto:christinei@uq.net.au) or mobile: 0407 112 991.

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# Education SIG

The Education Special Interest Group has set up a discussion link through Education Australia to promote discussion between conservators and Technology educators in the school sector. The list is [conserve@edna.edu.au](mailto:conserve@edna.edu.au). Members can subscribe to the discussion link by sending a blank email to [join-conserve@edna.edu.au](mailto:join-conserve@edna.edu.au). If you have any suggestions for a themed EDSIG meeting next year please contact SIG Coordinator, Julie O'Connor with your ideas or use the discussion link on the AICCM website.

# People & Projects

## ACT

### National Archives of Australia

In June we welcomed **Travis Taylor** to our lab. Travis undertook an internship at CCMC after graduating from the University of Melbourne conservation course and has also studied calligraphy in Japan. Travis has already proven himself able to undertake the varied jobs that crop up in an Archives lab, as well as coping with being the only male on our all-woman conservation team.

We also had the pleasure of offering permanent positions to three existing NAA staff: **Jess Wignell** and **Clair Murray** were promoted to Conservators from Conservation Assistants, and **Alana Treasure** became our fourth new Conservator, as well as continuing to assist **Rajani Rai** with paper testing and conservation science tasks. Jess returned to the NAA in July after a six-month posting to the conservation section of the National Library. While at the NLA Jess was able to learn and practise new skills, and since coming back to the NAA she has run a half-day workshop to show us some of the lining techniques she learnt.

**Ian Batterham** has moved for 12 months to the newly-created Operations Development and Training section, where he will be taking responsibility for developing policy and procedures to do with Preservation work at the NAA. He has also been part of a team providing Preservation input to specifications for a proposed new NAA building, developing the design and fit out of Preservation work areas and providing advice on the specifications for storage environments for various media types ranging from sub-zero to normal temperatures. **Cheryl Jackson** has been investigating issues associated with the acclimatization of material into and out of these storage environments.

## NEW SOUTH WALES

### Art Gallery of NSW

Reflecting on the challenges of the last three months: **Donna Hinton**, **Kerry Head** and **Matt Cox** have been reviewing methods used to secure sculptures and other 3D collections on display. They are seeking simple and effective, yet unobtrusive attachments that may be used as standard systems. The intention is to create a workbook of designs and materials that will be helpful to the conservation community. More about this project can be found on the conservation page on the AGNSW website. Working with a jeweler, the *Goddess (Asian art)* and *Art of Islam* exhibitions were installed and sculptures for the *Bertram MacKenna Retrospective* are being secured.

Matt Cox's most laborious task has been the bagging and fumigation of a large number of Papua New Guinea works that came off display while the Library was renovated. The size of the objects combined with their fragility posed some difficult obstacles in the making of sealed bags and the evacuation of oxygen as required by the anoxic treatment of pests.

**Paula Dredge's** challenge has been to complete the conservation treatment of the 17th century Flemish painting, *Boar Hunt* by Frans Snyders, in time for the sponsors launch. Banque Nationale de Paris (BNP) provided the funds to enable Paula to work on the painting and for **Basia Dabrowa** to restore the frame, including replacement of corner ornaments. Soiling on the gilded surface was successfully removed with the Compact Phoenix laser. This has been our first corporate sponsorship of a conservation treatment. We will be working on a focus exhibition to open sometime in 2008 discussing the outcomes of research on the painting and the dramatic conservation treatment that revealed a dog leaping through the air. The dog had, at sometime in the 19th century, been over-painted with a tree.

**Kristel Smits** recently prepared 17 George Lambert paintings for loan to the NGA for their *George Lambert Retrospective*. This involved a few major conservation treatments including *Red Shawl*, 1913, an exotic looking portrait of a seated woman. The thick, yellowed varnish was removed to improve the delineation of the sitter's hair against the dark background and to reveal the artist's brushwork. Cleaning was indeed 'hair-raising' and had to be done through tissue paper. Severe cupping of the paint in the hair needed consolidation despite having been impregnated with wax-resin in the past. There was a big sigh of relief when the lid of the crate was screwed shut.

**Beth McCarthy** has been treating a Sidney Nolan painting, *Storm over the Pilbara*, a 1982 spray paint on canvas work, in preparation for the *Nolan Retrospective*. The painting exhibited severe bloom with initial FTIR tests suggesting that the bloom may be a type of shellac. Solvent testing of the bloom and assessment of various methods of applying solvent to minimize paint lifting were undertaken. Gore-tex was placed over the area of bloom, followed by blotting paper dampened with ethanol and then a layer of Mylar. This treatment method reduced the bloom effect significantly without affecting the paint layer.

The greatest challenge for **Malgorzata Sawicki** was preparing frames, many of which had been over-painted, for the *Modern Britain* exhibition as well as undertaking laser cleaning research of gilded surfaces with **Victoria Davies-Bromwell** and Basia. **David Butler's** new challenge was making a

frame for Breton Riviere's painting *Requiescat*, 1888, which is ready for gilding. Its design is based on original Riviere frames held in the Tate collection, London. The Tate's frame conservator, Alastair Johnson, kindly provided detailed photographs.

The treatment of a John Piper watercolour, *Y Farn in Mist* for the *Modern Britain* exhibition has been quite a challenge for **Carolyn Murphy**. The acidic backing had to be removed from the watercolour but soon after this was begun it became clear that there was another watercolour on the back of the paper sheet. Infra red imaging could not penetrate the cardboard layer to establish the nature of the second watercolour and so the backing removal proceeded carefully to ensure that as much of the discovered watercolour could be preserved.

**Rose Peel** is compiling a form, *Proposed Acquisitions Object Information AGNSW Contemporary Art*, with curator Natasha Bullock and interested conservators. It is hoped that it will gather information from artists that will not only document technical data and working practice on the making of the work but their current philosophy and future reading. Artist's ideas of, and meaning of the work (as it inevitably ages), is often reinterpreted by curators and conservators within another cultural-historical context, particularly when there are no clear guidelines. Collecting data from living artists through initial documentation and interview will ensure artists intellectual property rights are acknowledged within museum practice.

## Australian National Maritime Museum

**Jonathan London** has been preparing a new Collection/Preservation plan for the Minister. Jonathan is also involved in preliminary work towards setting up a new, networked environmental monitoring system, to replace the current data logger system.

**Daniel Wardrop** recently had the unusual task of cleaning/sterilising a bucket full of sand which Navy divers had recently taken from the immediate vicinity of the remains of the Japanese midget submarine, found in November 2006 north of Sydney Harbour in 20 meters of water. The sub, known as M24, was one of three, which attacked Sydney on 31 May 1942. At a Garden Island memorial service, two commemorative jars of the sand will be presented to the families of the Japanese submariners whose remains have stayed within the sub. Daniel has also completed cleaning the external and internal surfaces, and all objects within *Blackmore's First Lady*, the yacht in which Kay Cottee single-handedly circumnavigated the globe. He has also been installing a fragile 18<sup>th</sup> century mutton bone ship model in a loan exhibition at the Historic Houses Trust, as well as objects for the *Escape-from Fremantle to Freedom* exhibition.

**Sue Frost** continues to work on the preparation of textiles for the Museum's busy changeover exhibition schedule. **Kathryn Yeates**, in addition to her regular preventive conservation work, has been preparing and installing the *Jellyfish* exhibition. **Caroline Whitley** is helping to train up two recent graduates who are planning to undertake postgraduate study in conservation next year. We are providing them with an overview of conservation principles and lots of hands-on practice in all areas of specialization. This should be good background knowledge for their future studies and decision-making regarding their preferred areas of specialization. Caroline is also undertaking treatment of a large and much degraded, rare 1863 lithograph of Richard Green, Australia and England's first sculling champion. Green's descendants have donated the work to the ANMM collection and once treated it will be placed on public display.

## ICS

August marks the end of the winter season in Antarctica where our team of conservators **Chris Calnan**, **Phillipa Durkin**, **Emily Fryer** and **Fiona Cahill** having survived the darkness, the polar plunge, and hundreds of rusty cans of food, to return to the joys of fresh milk and vegetables. The two conservators who take over for the next six months are **John Greenwood** from the UK and **Megan Absolon** from Queensland. Back in warmer waters, **Fiona Tennant** presented a joint paper written with **Julian Bickersteth**, on *Conserving in the Deep Freeze* at the ICOMOS *Extreme Heritage* conference held in Cairns.

**Rachael Crompton**, **Arek Werstak** and **Karina Acton** worked with **Peter Maxwell** to transport and treat three bronzes for the NGA's *George Lambert Retrospective*. ICS removed the Lawson Memorial from the Botanic Gardens for conservation, along with the Fallen Soldier from St Mary's Cathedral and the Geelong Grammar School War Memorial. The textiles team of **Miriam Wormleaton** and **Skye Firth** have cleaned a Coburn tapestry in-situ at the Australia Square building on George Street, treated an insect infestation in a private collection of global ethnographic costumes and assisted the Supreme Court with textile storage and the conservation of a robe and a horse hair wig and its case. A nervous calm has descended over the paintings section while **Anna Diakowska-Czarnota** undertakes a difficult and involved treatment removing a card backing board from a Severin Roesen still life painting. Meanwhile **Adam Godijn** and Arek Werstak are restoring the façade of the historic State Theatre, after it had an unfortunate encounter with a truck.

We nearly had to bring **Adrian Warren** and Rachael Crompton from the furniture department home in buckets after suffering in 99% humidity when they headed to balmy Singapore last month to install a canopied bed. Back in temperate Sydney they have received a lovely French silver gilt *necessaire de voyage*, c 1798 by Martin-Guillaume Biennais.

**Felicity Turner** has finished preserving a large plan from Belltrees Estate and has salvaged what was left of a water damaged stamp collection. **Nicole Rowney** has undertaken the treatment of 12 paper backed Japanese silk paintings and is working with an artist on various public art commissions.

In Canberra, **Doug Rogan** and his team are continuing to work on the Old Parliament House heritage collection including relocating various elements into improved storage conditions. Meanwhile in the broader heritage environment, ICS has undertaken a major survey of awareness of the digital environment in the cultural and creative sectors for DoCITA, reviewed the National Museum of Australia's web site, surveyed the fabric of St John's Cathedral in Hong Kong and helped the RTA resolve a range of moveable heritage issues, particularly to do with the redundant Sydney Harbour Bridge cranes.

### Powerhouse Museum

After seven years at the helm of the Powerhouse Museum we said farewell to our director **Kevin Fewster**, who has taken up the position of director at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, England. From our department we also said goodbye to **Susanna Edwards**, **Chris Hibble** and **Glynis Scowen**. On a brighter note, congratulations to **Frances Fitzpatrick**, husband Tim and baby Zoë who welcomed twins Stella Madeline and Jack Alexander into this world in July. We wish them all well.

Exhibition team members, **Teresa Werstak** and **Tim Morris**, with the help of **Analiese Treacy**, worked on the colourful *Cinema India* exhibition which charts the flamboyant history of one of the world's most prolific film industries. *Sydney Design Week* is annually launched at the Powerhouse Museum in August and many events and exhibitions were opened. **Keith Potter** and **Gosia Dudek** were involved with the Museum's annual *Australian Design Awards* and **Suzanne Chee** worked on a display for *Home Beautiful Product of the Year Awards 2007*. Gosia and **Dee McKillop** installed industrial design objects for another design related exhibition, *Improving Life: The Design of Swedish Innovation*. In collaboration with the Australian Wool Institute (AWI), *Fashion from Fleece* was launched with much fanfare in July. Suzanne was part of the team on this exhibition, which celebrated 200 years of wool in Australia and showcased the use of Australian wool mainly through dress and images from the 1880s to 2007. *The Great Wall of China* exhibition has finally closed in Melbourne and Gosia and **Skye Mitchell** have accompanied the objects back to Beijing. **Mary Gissing** has been involved with the traveling exhibition *Greening the Silver City: Seeds of Bush Regeneration*, in collaboration with Broken Hill City Council and community, and supported by Movable Heritage NSW.

Since the opening of Castle Hill, the Total Asset Management (TAM) conservation team (**Skye Mitchell**, **Analiese Treacy**, **Rebecca Main**, **Lynn Sisophia**, **Kate Pollard** and **Chris Brothers**) has been focusing their efforts on a number of projects within the Museum's collection. In May/June the team spent a number of intensive weeks working on the Museum's Heritage Wool Collection, approximately 5000 samples of wool dating from 1886-1906. This project, carried out in conjunction with AWI, involved the sorting, cataloguing and rehousing of the entire collection. AWI Funding was also given for the scientific analysis and testing of the wool samples. Following on from the wool, the TAM team began work on a significant collection of glass plate negatives relating to the Clyde Engineering Company. This project involved the cleaning, treatment, photography and rehousing of over 1400 plates. Work was also carried out on items from the extensive and significant Lawrence Hargrave and Sydney Observatory Collections. We sadly said goodbye to **Lyn Sisophia** who returned to her position at the State Archives in Chester Hill; she had been a great addition and we will miss her. For the past 6 months she worked with the TAM team and with **James Elwing** on preventive conservation on the Museum's Collected Archives.

The collections team has been busy with **Dee McKillop** finalising the last of the old Jones Street storage boxes. Many old treasures stored in old cardboard boxes saw the light of day again...for a little while anyway, before being safely rehoused. The crossover from collections team to exhibition team often occurs when extra staff is needed. **Nadia de Wachter** and **Dee** are currently at work on the exhibition *Toys in the Attic*. To document how toys work and to capture them on digital video, **Tim** had fun working on many wind-up toys. **Nadia** has also worked on a number of objects for loan to the Hawkesbury Regional Museum. Objects included 29 sets of plaster casts of horse teeth, plus a hat and binoculars owned by well-known horse trainer T.J. Smith.

**Kate Chidlow** has been preparing for a quilt workshop that she will be running in September in Orange. She continues work on the del.ici.ous website which will be launched at the end of November. **Sue Gatenby** has been identifying historical plastic materials in a collection originally gathered together by Arthur de Raymond Penfold, the Museum's Director from 1929-1955. This collection is being studied with the aid of FTIR with a universal ATR accessory. Another similar system of testing is found at CCI, lead by R. Scott Williams. He has been assisting with our project and continues to be a great support. Plans for a museum-based plastics reference library will also be developed.

The Powerhouse Museum's steam locomotive reconstruction, maintenance and operations team won a prestigious RailCorp/Office of Rail Heritage Volunteer award, in the category of *Lifetime Achievement*. This award recognised the contribution of

this dedicated team on railway preservation throughout NSW. Congratulations to **Ross Goodman**, **Jennifer Edmonds**, Chris Hibble and **Rob Smithers**. Congratulations also to Jennifer for being awarded a Churchill Fellowship to travel around the UK, Europe and USA studying steam locomotives.

## Preservation Australia

Having missed the last couple of newsletters there is a bit of catching up to do. **Frances Cumming**, who was working with Preservation Australia last year, left Australia in January to take up a VIDA project position as conservator for the National Library of Vietnam, in Hanoi. VIDA projects are funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and this particular project was auspiced by CCMC. Rumour has it that things are going well – but Frances is an infrequent communicator! Over summer **Nick Zihrul**, a student from the University of Melbourne, worked with Frances on a large group of flood damaged registers from the Department of Lands – the project seemed never ending. Another interesting job recently was the conservation clean of the Arthur Boyd collection at Bundanon. **Carolyn Whitley** was happy to come and help, even though it was in the middle of winter, and we spent three fabulous, cold days cleaning the collection in the house and studio. Not only did we get to work on the collection, but we were able to stay in the house – and **Kay Söderlund** even slept in Arthur's bed! **Gill McElroy** has recently joined Preservation Australia to work part-time as a paper conservator. Gill trained and worked at State Records and the Art Gallery of New South Wales, and has worked as a paper conservator for 25 years. She has kindly agreed to help out while we keep looking for a full-time paper conservator. A bit of good news for us (sort of) was that our archival, lipped clamshell box was selected as the presentation box for the official gift of artworks to the APEC delegates. And as for the ongoing digitisation project at the Department of Lands, it looks to continue until I retire (if not longer) and I don't think I need mention it again.....

## State Library of NSW

This year is the centenary of the bequest of David Scott Mitchell (1836–1907). On his death in July 1907, his collection was bequeathed to the Public (now State) Library of New South Wales and led to the establishment of the Mitchell Library. To celebrate this bequest the SLNSW has been running a series of public programs. Collection Preservation's horticultural skills were recently required at Mitchell's gravesite in Rookwood cemetery, in preparation for one event - a visit from the Governor in celebration of Mitchell's bequest. On a cold June morning, **Aileen Dean-Raschilla**, **Trish Leen**, **Marika Kocsis** and **Nichola Parshall** visited Rookwood cemetery to clean and weed Mitchell's final resting place. Marika left sunny Sydney in June returning to Melbourne. We would like to thank Marika for her valued contribution this past year and wish her all the best at the CCMC.

**Silvana Volpato**, **Cathryn Bartley**, **Jessica O'Donnell**, **Lisa Charleston**, **Martin Bongiorno** and Aileen Dean-Raschilla have been treating a David Scott Mitchell album of watercolour sketches. There were 52 items in this album and they have removed the backings from each sketch and performed minor repairs to them. All these sketches will then be rehoused and mounted for storage.

To celebrate the horses' birthday this month, **Cecilia Harvey** has been working on exhibitions with equine themes. Cecilia recently prepared and helped install several items on loan at the Hawkesbury Regional Gallery's exhibition, *Bloodlines: Art and the Horse*. This exhibition celebrates the horse and its contribution to Australian culture through art, music and heritage. Cecilia has also been working with **Tegan Anthes** on the *Equinity* exhibition opening in October. This exhibition of nineteenth century art works depicts the horse from refined portraits of thoroughbreds to dramatic scenes of competition in grand steeplechases, kangaroo hunts and other sporting pursuits. The exhibition features works by professional artists renowned for their equine subjects - such as Joseph Fowles, John Frederick Herring, Thomas Balcombe, Samuel Thomas Gill and Edward Winstanley, alongside those by talented amateur artists.

The State Library's digitisation project continues. Trish is working on twelve items which will be part of the online journey, *Goldrush* on the Library's website. Items in this project include Surveyor General Thomas Livingstone Mitchell's specimen box. This box is a wooden chest with 48 species of gold bearing rock from Australia. **Lang Ngo** has been preparing a series of mounted silver gelatin photographs of Hugh Buhrich domestic interiors, for the *Architectural Modernism* journey.

## QUEENSLAND

### Eden Ceramic Restorations

**Geoff Lewis** is back in business having relocated from Adelaide to Noosa in Queensland. Geoff has run Eden Ceramic Restorations since 1980 and ended up teaching ceramics restoration at the Workers' Educational Association of South Australia Incorporated. He is keen to continue his work and teaching, thus referrals from Institutions and expressions of interest for week-long residential courses are welcome. For more information, phone 07 5449 1851.

### Queensland Art Gallery

The Gallery is gradually settling into its new two-site mode and with a new Director, Tony Ellwood, at the helm since July. Our second conservation lab at GoMA is gradually becoming operational, and we are progressively finding time to arrange for installation and training associated with new equipment. Many of us are also heavily involved in preparations for the AICCM National Conference planned for Brisbane in October.

We are pleased to welcome back **Anne Carter** from maternity leave. With Anne on leave, and following the retirement of **John Hook** from the Gallery late last year, **Gillian Osmond** had been the sole paintings conservator, juggling the demands of the paintings collection and programs across the two sites. Anne has promptly completed a challenging retouching job on a painting by George Mung Mung *Turkey Creek, WA*, involving hand preparation of a watercolour retouching medium using traditional ochres. Work is due to commence shortly on preparation for the international tour of a major work by Takashi Murakami, painted using layers of resin and synthetic polymer paint in *Nihonga* technique. Conservation technician, **Mandy Smith**, with the help of Anne and Gillian, have been stretching 4 m long canvases in preparation for the Katharina Grosse installation at GOMA.

Congratulations to **Robert Zilli** who has just received a Pratt Foundation/ISS Institute Fellowship to undertake a two week workshop on conservation gilding in August at the Campbell Center for Historic Preservation in Mount Carroll, Illinois USA. The workshop instructor will be Hubert Baija, the Senior Conservator of Frames at the Rijksmuseum Paintings Department in Amsterdam. Robert also plans to visit other conservation labs in Chicago while there.

In the paper lab, **Belinda Gourley** and **Samantha Shellard** have been busy with the deinstallation of works from the *Asia-Pacific Triennial*, the preparation of Australian political posters for display at QAG, and the preparation of a large number of watercolours by Australian artist Kenneth Macquenn that are planned for a major exhibition at QAG in late 2007. Belinda has also been examining and documenting a series of six engravings by William Hogarth that require lengthy treatment. **Liz Wild** has been preparing artworks for display in the *Xstrata Coal Emerging Indigenous Art Award* at GOMA, and completing other treatments such as corrosion removal and stabilisation of the bronze sculpture components of Mike Parr's *Radio daze*. **Jaishree Srinivasan** has joined the department temporarily to carry out the complex treatment of *Words*, an aluminium sculpture/installation by Fiona Hall. **Amanda Pagliarino** has been working on building and lab issues in both gallery sites. Objects technician, **Lyn Streader** has devised a new and improved method of cleaning 1.8 cubic metres of white Lego blocks that comprise Olafur Eliasson's interactive artwork *The cubic structural evolution project*.

## SOUTH AUSTRALIA

### Artlab Australia

**Colin Brown, Elizabeth Mayfield** and **Michael Veitch** have been conserving a collection of beautiful c.1667 vellum bound *Blaeu* atlases and a pair of John Glover sketchbooks. The vellum covers on the atlases appear to have been a tasty snack for some rodents. The sewing of the Glover sketchbooks

had broken down and the vellum covers damaged with some pages having been previously torn out. The atlases' conservation treatment includes surface cleaning and repairs to the missing areas. **Anna Austin** is assisting with creating custom made boxes for each volume.

**Fred Francisco** and **Charlotte Park** are currently working on a collection of watercolours and prints from the ANZ Bank. All works are showing deterioration caused by poor display and storage materials and as such require backing removals, washing and stain reduction treatments, and improved re-housing. **Jodie Proud** is conserving a collection of Arthur Boyd, Brett Whiteley and John Olsen artist's prints. These prints have come from Darwin and all are showing signs of damage from the humid environment including cockling and foxing. Treatment includes tape and backboard removal, washing and stain reduction. The works will be flattened and hermetically sealed before their return.

The paintings team has been preparing a number of works for loan to the NGV for the *Modern Britain* exhibition. **Christiane Varchmin**, our conservation intern from Neuss, Germany, has been treating 21 Western Desert acrylic paintings for the South Australian Museum. The unstretched canvas paintings had been poorly stored and water damaged. They required consolidation, flattening, cleaning and a storage system devised to house approximately 120 unstretched paintings in a very small space. **Marek Pacyna** and **Eugene Taddeo** have recently treated a large Arthur Boyd painting, *Nebedcadnezzar Dreaming of Gold*. This painting has an extremely thick paint film on canvas and is attached onto a lightweight auxiliary timber support. There was significant distortion of the canvas and a high risk of damage to the paint film existed. Unfortunately due to the complex nature of the paintings construction, the auxiliary support was unable to be removed. Therefore an additional support structure was fixed within and connected to the original, allowing us to carefully remove the distortion and strengthen the overall structure. **Gillian Leahy** and **Chris Payne** have recently carried out conservation treatments on a set of two oil paintings by Robert Dowling, *Rev. Henry Dowling* and *Hannah Dowling*. Both required cleaning to remove discoloured varnish, some consolidation and minimal inpainting of minor damages. **Rita Bachmayer** is undertaking treatment and repairs to a gilt frame for the painting, *At Mandalay Burma* by Mortimer Menpes.

An on-site job based in the Barossa Valley, meant an overnight sojourn for members of the Objects lab. **Justin Gare, Mary-Anne Gooden, Sophie Parker** and **Renita Ryan** spent a couple of very cold July days attending to 20 painted plaster Nativity figurines at the St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Tanunda. Their size (approximately 1 m tall), weight and surface fragility meant that they were awkward to move, hence the need for this in-situ treatment. The figurines, dating from c.1910, were imported from Germany for display in the window of a local general store where they were displayed from the 1920s until 1984 when they were donated to the church. Since that time they have

## AUSTRALIA

**Courses: Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation - University of Melbourne**

2007, Melbourne VIC

See <http://www.culturalconservation.unimelb.edu.au/> (C101)**Courses: Deakin University - Cultural Heritage and Museum Studies**

2007, Melbourne VIC

See <http://www.deakin.edu.au> (C101)**Courses: International Specialised Skills Institute**

2007, Melbourne VIC

See <http://www.issinstitute.org.au/> (C101)**AICCM National Conference: Contemporary Collections**

17-19 October 2007, Brisbane

The Queensland Division is hosting the National Conference in 2007, aiming to attract a larger cross-section of members by providing a program of papers from across all specialisations. Contact: Liz Wild, [liz.wild@qag.qld.gov.au](mailto:liz.wild@qag.qld.gov.au) or see <http://www.aiccm.org.au> (C100)

**Symposium on the Care and Conservation of Middle Eastern Manuscripts**

26-28 November 2007, University of Melbourne VIC

The symposium will explore cultural sensitivities related to the display, handling, storage and conservation treatment of Middle Eastern manuscript collections and outline materials and techniques of manufacture that impact on their condition. As part of this Symposium, there will be two workshops available for conservators and other professionals wishing to enhance their knowledge and practical experience of Islamic manuscripts and Indo-Persian miniature paintings. Both workshops are limited to 15 participants.

**Practical Masterclass for Conservators and Bookbinders**

29-30 November 2007

Presented by David Jacobs, Senior Conservation Officer, British Library.

Preventive and interventive conservation of Islamic Manuscripts based on traditional materials and methods.

**Indo-Persian Painting Workshop**

3-7 December 2007

Presented by Anita Chowdry, artist and illustrator. The aim of this practical 5 day workshop is to provide participants with the experience and resources for a deeper understanding of the practical aspects of Indo-Persian painting, and a basis from which to undertake further personal study.

Contact: Robyn Sloggett, Symposium Coordinator, [rjslog@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:rjslog@unimelb.edu.au) or see <http://www.culturalconservation.unimelb.edu.au/events/manuscript.html> (C101)

**Crossing Cultures: Conflict, Migration and Convergence**

13-18 January 2008, Melbourne VIC

The 32nd Congress of the International Committee of the History of Art. Of particular interest to conservators will be the session *Materiality across Cultures*. See [www.cihamelbourne2008.com.au](http://www.cihamelbourne2008.com.au) (C101)

**UNESCO Memory of the World 3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference: Communities and Memories - A global perspective**

19-22 February 2008, National Library of Australia, Canberra ACT

See <http://www.amw.org.au> (C103)

## INTERNATIONAL

**Courses: The American Academy of Bookbinding**2007 Ann Arbor and Telluride USA  
<http://www.ahhaa.org> (C103)**Courses: American Institute for Conservation (AIC)**

2007, USA

<http://aic.stanford.edu/education/workshops/index.html> (C101)**Courses: Art Innovation**

2007, THE NETHERLANDS

Courses in lasers in art conservation. Contact: Art Innovation, [info@art-innovation.nl](mailto:info@art-innovation.nl), [www.art-innovation.nl](http://www.art-innovation.nl) (C101)

**Courses: Campbell Center for Historic Preservation Studies**

2007, USA

Contact: [campbellcenter@internetni.com](mailto:campbellcenter@internetni.com), <http://www.campbellcenter.org> (C101)

**Courses: Centre for Photographic Conservation**

2007, London UK

Contact Angela Moor, [cphotoconservation@cpc-moor.com](mailto:cphotoconservation@cpc-moor.com), <http://www.cpc.moor.dial.pipex.com/> (C101)

**Courses: Centro del Bel Libro**

2007, Ascona SWITZERLAND

Contact: Centro del Bel Libro, [info@cbl-ascona.ch](mailto:info@cbl-ascona.ch), <http://www.cbl-ascona.ch> (C101)

**Courses: Conservation Centre, Institute of Fine Arts NYU**

2007, USA

Contact: The Conservation Centre, [conservation.program@nyu.edu](mailto:conservation.program@nyu.edu) (C101)

**Courses: Heritage Conservation Network**

2007, ITALY, USA, CANADA

Building conservation. Contact: [workshops@heritageconservation.net](mailto:workshops@heritageconservation.net), <http://www.heritageconservation.net> (C101)

**Courses: ICCROM**

2007, Rome, ITALY

Contact: [training@iccrom.org](mailto:training@iccrom.org), <http://www.iccrom.org> (C101)

**Courses: Illinois Digitisation Institute**

2007, Illinois USA

<http://images.library.uiuc.edu/project/IDI/Index.HTM> (C101)

**Courses: Institute of Conservation (ICON)**

2007, UK

Contact: [info@icon.org.uk](mailto:info@icon.org.uk) or see <http://www.icon.org.uk> (C104)

### **Courses: International Academic Projects**

2007, UK, DENMARK, ITALY, USA, SPAIN  
Contact: info@academicprojects.co.uk,  
http://www.academicprojects.co.uk  
(C101)

### **Courses: Malta International Excellence Courses**

2007, MALTA  
Contact: Mr Joseph Schiro, Heritage Malta, joseph.schiro@gov.mt or see  
http://www.heritagemalta.org/> (C101)

### **Courses: Montefiascone Project**

2007, ITALY  
Contact: Cheryl Porter,  
info@monteproject.com,  
http://www.monteproject.com (C101)

### **Course: National Conservation Centre - Laser Cleaning**

2007, Liverpool UK  
http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/conservation/technologies/trainingcourses/ (C101)

### **Courses: Perugino Institute**

2007, ITALY  
Contact: studyabroad@ilperugino.org,  
www.ilperugino.org(C101)

### **Courses: Shepherds Bookbinders**

2007, London UK  
Contact: shepherds@bookbinding.co.uk,  
http://www.boobinding.co.uk (C101)

### **Courses: SOLINET**

2007, USA  
See http://www.solinet.net (C101)

### **Courses: Textile Conservation Centre**

2007, UK  
Contact: The Textile Conservation Centre, University Of Southampton, askwsa@soton.ac.uk, www.wsa.soton.ac.uk(C101)

### **Courses: University of Victoria**

2007, CANADA/Distance Education  
Contact: Cultural Resource Management Program, Division of Continuing Studies, University of Victoria, crmp@uvcs.uvic.ca, http://www.uvcs.uvic.ca/crmp (C101)

### **Courses: West Dean College**

2007, UK  
Contact: Liz Campbell, liz.campbell@westdean.org.uk, www.westdean.org.uk (C101)

### **24th International RMAA Convention: Influence with Integrity**

9-13 September 2007, Wellington NZ  
Care of indigenous cultural records and treasures will be a focus among the 30-plus presentations and workshops being prepared for the Records Management Association of Australasia (RMAA) International Convention, *Influence with Integrity*. www.rmaa.com.au/natcon2007/index.cfm (C103)

### **WOAM 07: ICOM-CC Wet Archaeological Organic Materials Working Group Meeting**

10-15 September 2007, Amsterdam THE NETHERLANDS  
Contact: h.huisman@archis.nl or see http://www.woam2007.nl/index.html (C101)

### **MaSC Gas Chromatography Mass Spectroscopy Workshop and Meeting**

10-15 September 2007, Philadelphia USA  
See http://www.mascgroup.org/meetings.html (C103)

### **COST: an Interdisciplinary Training School on Science and Technology for the Cultural Heritage**

10-15 September 2007, Genova  
The school aims to give young students the most updated overview of the advancements allowed by the COST actions and improve their cultural background with specific training on the forefront techniques and on the opportunities open by European activities in the field. http://www.cost.esf.org/2007-ts-genova (C104)

### **BigStuff 2007**

11-14 September 2007, Dortmund GERMANY  
BigStuff 2007 will be devoted to discussing "monument-appropriate" preservation strategies and interaction with large industrial objects and infrastructure. Contact: BigStuff07@bergbaumuseum.de (C100)

### **Art, Conservation, and Authenticities: Material, Concept, Context**

12-14 September 2007, Glasgow SCOTLAND

The purpose of the symposium is to discuss and debate the notion of 'authenticity' within the context of the conservation of art and the production of art, in the past and at present. Contact: Erma Hermens, Glasgow University, e.hermens@arthist.arts.gla.ac.uk (C102)

### **Architectural Records, Inventories and Information Systems for Conservation - ARIS07**

12 September to 12 October 2007, Rome ITALY

This international course on architectural records, inventories, and information systems for the conservation of cultural heritage will address the needs, methodology, and techniques for acquiring and using this knowledge. Contact: ICCROM - Sites Unit, aris07course@iccrom.org, www.iccrom.org (C102)

### **Metal 07: ICOM-CC Metals Working Group**

17-21 September 2007, Amsterdam THE NETHERLANDS  
See http://www.metal07.org (C102)

### **XIth IADA Congress: 50th Anniversary of IADA**

17-21 September 2007, Vienna AUSTRIA

Presentations focusing on latest developments in the profession such as collection risk management, outcomes of scientific research projects, art technology and ethical considerations in conservation. Contact: birgit.reissland@icn.nl (C99)

### **Residential Bookbinding course**

17-21 September 2007, FRANCE  
This is a unique opportunity to work with two leaders in their different fields and combine a five day stay in rural France with a period of research and training into the qualities of handmade papers required for book conservation, endleaves and covering. Contact: Denise Troughton, denise.troughton@cxdltd.com (C104)

### **Characterisation of Organic Materials in Paint Cross Sections**

20-21 September 2007, Bologna ITALY  
This two day meeting will focus on the exchange of information on developments in techniques involved in the characterisation of organic material such as varnishes, binding media and organic pigments. Contact: Dr Silvia Prati, [silvia.prati@unibo.it](mailto:silvia.prati@unibo.it) (C103)

### **Plaster Casts: Making, Collecting and Displaying from Classical Antiquity to the Present**

24-26 September 2007, Oxford UK  
Issues addressed will cover the plaster casts and the history of copying; the technologies of plaster casts making; the history of plaster cast collections; display and conservation and artists' uses of casts from classical antiquity to the present day. [www.plastercasts.org](http://www.plastercasts.org) (C100)

### **Symposium 2007: Preserving Aboriginal Heritage: Technical and Traditional Approaches**

24-28 September 2007, Ottawa CANADA  
The focus of this Symposium is on presenting information useful for those who care for Aboriginal objects and collections in Canada, both in a museum setting and in the Native communities. [http://www.cci-icc.gc.ca/symposium/index\\_e.aspx](http://www.cci-icc.gc.ca/symposium/index_e.aspx) (C99)

### **Fourth Forbes Symposium on Scientific Research in the Field of Asian Art**

27-29 September 2007, Washington USA  
Topics include technological innovation, common technologies, raw material selection and usage, trade and technology transfer or other questions of a technical, historical, or art historical nature. <http://www.asia.si.edu/visitor/dcsrSymposium.htm> (C100)

### **Imaging Techniques, Interpretation and Digitisation**

2-4 October 2007, Bradford UK  
Course on cultural material x-radiography aimed at conservators. Contact: Sonia O'Connor, [s.oconnor@bradford.ac.uk](mailto:s.oconnor@bradford.ac.uk), <http://www.brad.ac.uk/acad/archisci/events.php> (C103)

### **Nineteenth-Century Silver-Based Photographic Print Processes**

8-12 October 2007, New York USA  
This workshop will cover the technical aspects of creating positive images in salt stabilized photogenic papers, salted papers, albumen paper, and both gelatin and collodion printing-out papers. Emphasis will be on the hands-on re-creation of these processes under the guidance of Doug Munson and Toddy Munson. Practical will be complemented by sessions with scientists, curators and art historians to understand the image formation, deterioration and possible analysis, to examine premier examples of these works from the Metropolitan Museum of Art collection, and to explore the social implications of photography in the mid-nineteenth century. Contact: Elaine Johnson, [ejonsonc@udel.edu](mailto:ejonsonc@udel.edu) (C104)

### **Recent Trends in Imaging Techniques used in Art Conservation**

13 October 2007, Cambridge USA  
Contact: Jens Stenger, Straus Center for Conservation, Harvard University Art Museums, [jens.stenger@harvard.edu](mailto:jens.stenger@harvard.edu) (C102)

### **Workshop on the Care and Treatment of Portrait Miniatures**

15-19 October 2007, Gatineau CANADA  
This workshop will address the history, manufacture, care and treatment of portrait miniatures. See [http://www.collectionscanada.ca/preservation/13\\_e.html](http://www.collectionscanada.ca/preservation/13_e.html) (C103)

### **From Gray Areas to Green Areas: Developing Sustainable Practices in Preservation Environments**

1-3 November 2007, Austin USA  
This three day symposium will examine sustainable practices in cultural heritage preservation environments. Topics to be addressed include policy and politics, costs and benefits, engineering, adaptive reuse and new buildings, indoor environments, practicalities and practices. See <http://www.ischool.utexas.edu/kilgarlin/gaga/> (C101)

### **Facing Impermanence: 6th North American Textile Conservation Conference**

6-10 November 2007, Washington USA  
The sixth biennial North American Textile Conservation Conference (NATCC) will focus on theory and practice of preventive conservation. Contact: Suzanne Thomassen-Krauss, [ssk@cox.net](mailto:ssk@cox.net), <http://www.textilemuseum.org/natcc/main.htm> (C100)

### **Furniture Design and Manufacture, 1970-2000**

16 November 2007, London UK  
The conference will focus on those who worked in the period 1970-2000 who can provide perspective on furniture based activities that are representative of this time and those people who have experience of conservation and/or curation of furniture produced at this time (1970-2000). It is also an aim of this conference to provide a collective forum for designers, makers, curators and conservators where issues can be raised, articulated and discussed through presentation with opportunity for questions/discussion. Contact: Professor Jake Kaner, [jake.kaner@bcuc.ac.uk](mailto:jake.kaner@bcuc.ac.uk) (C104)

### **Museum Microclimates**

19-23 November 2007, Copenhagen DENMARK  
This conference aims to present a coherent picture of our knowledge of the environmental influences on rates of degradation, the environmental standards derived from this knowledge, the active and passive methods of maintaining a protective microclimate conforming to these standards and the ways of ensuring the durability of the microclimate itself. <http://www.natmus.dk/microclimates> (C99)

### **Persistence of Memory: Stewardship of Digital Assets**

28-29 November 2007, Seattle USA  
Taught by a faculty of national experts, this two-day conference on digital longevity provides information about the latest developments in digital preservation to help you with the life-cycle management of your institution's collections. <http://www.nedcc.org> or contact Julie Carlson [Carlson@nedcc.org](mailto:Carlson@nedcc.org) (C103)

**Cultural Heritage  
Between Conservation  
and Contamination:  
The issue of biocidal  
products in museum  
collections and monuments**

29 November to 1 December 2007,  
Berlin GERMANY

The seminar aims to raise general awareness of biocidal contamination of cultural heritage, compiling state of the art analysis and mitigation approaches and eventually contributing to the identification of possible gaps in current and future researches. See <http://www.smb.spk-berlin.de/smb/forschung/index.php?lang=en&n=1> (C103)

**Modern Materials**

January 2008, Los Angeles USA

This two-day conference will aim to foster increased dialogue between the fields of art history and conservation by presenting papers, panel discussions, and joint research projects, as well as intensive dialogues between professionals from both fields. Contact: [modernmaterials@getty.edu](mailto:modernmaterials@getty.edu) (C100)

**Third International  
Architectural Paint Research  
Conference 2008**

17-19 January 2008, New York USA

Topics of interest include cultural significance, paint materials, health and safety, analytical and instrumental techniques, practical applications. Contact: Mary Jablonski, [maj152@columbia.edu](mailto:maj152@columbia.edu). See <http://www.apconference.us> (C102)

**IS&T/SPIE International  
Symposium on Electronic  
Imaging: Computer image  
analysis in the study of art**

27-31 January 2008, San Jose, USA

This inaugural conference on computer image analysis in the study of the art will present leading research in the application of image analysis, computer vision and pattern recognition to problems of interest to art historians, curators and conservators. A number of recent questions and controversies have highlighted the value of rigorous image analysis in the service of the analysis of art, particularly painting. The value of image analysis to these and other questions strongly suggests that current and future computer methods will play an ever larger role in the scholarship of visual arts. See <http://electronicimaging.org/call/08/conference/index.cfm?fuseaction=E1122> (C104)

**Terra 2008: The 10<sup>th</sup>  
International Conference on  
the Study and Conservation  
of Earthen Architecture**

1-5 February 2008, Bamako MALI

The program will focus on the latest research and best practice in the study and conservation of earthen architecture around the world. It also represents a unique occasion to discuss conservation issues particular to sub-Saharan Africa. See [http://www.getty.edu/conservation/field\\_projects/earthen/earthen\\_2008\\_conf.html](http://www.getty.edu/conservation/field_projects/earthen/earthen_2008_conf.html) (C103)

**Conservation of Paper  
Manuscripts and Documents**

18-21 February 2008, New Delhi INDIA

Contact: Vaibhav Chauhan, 16A Ashoka Apartments, Devli, New Delhi 110062 India, 91 09868936158 (C103)

**Holding it all together:  
ancient and modern  
approaches to joining,  
repair and consolidation**

21-22 February 2008, London UK

Contact: [science@thebritishmuseum.ac.uk](mailto:science@thebritishmuseum.ac.uk) (C102)

**IRUG8 Conference 2008:  
The Eighth Biennial Infrared  
and Raman Users Group  
Conference**

26-29 March 2008, Vienna AUSTRIA

The conference will present papers and posters pertaining to the use of IR and Raman spectroscopy for the preservation and understanding of the world's cultural heritage. Contact: Chris Wasson, Records Coordinator - Conservation, Philadelphia Museum of Art, PO Box 7646, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7646 (C104)

**AIC 36th Annual Meeting**

22-25 April 2008, Denver USA

See <http://aic.stanford.edu/> (C100)

**IPH Congress 2008**

27-30 May 2008, Stockholm SWEDEN

The overall theme of the Congress will be The Birth of an Industry from Forest to Paper during the 19th Century and it will concentrate on describing the huge structural changes that took place during this period when the papermaking changed from a handicraft type of activity to a continuously operating process industry. See [http://www.icconservation.org/conferences/london2008/congr\\_index.php](http://www.icconservation.org/conferences/london2008/congr_index.php) (C102)

**9th International  
Symposium on Wood and  
Furniture Conservation**

Autumn 2008, Amsterdam

THE NETHERLANDS

CALL FOR PAPERS

Regional, country, rustic, folk, rural, to name but a few: vernacular furniture goes by many names. It designates furniture that is made following local traditions of design and construction, addressing local needs with local products. Sometimes simple and raw, other times finely tooled and highly imaginative. Being less refined than many of its academic or high style counterparts, vernacular furniture has received little interest for a long time. As a consequence, many artefacts have been lost and knowledge regarding historic techniques is threatened as well. Fortunately, due to a growing awareness, attempts are being made to save what is left of an important part of our cultural heritage and identity. Submissions are due by 15 November 2007. Contact: Stichting Ebenist, [info@ebenist.org](mailto:info@ebenist.org) or see [www.ebenist.org](http://www.ebenist.org) (C104)

**IIC Congress 2008 -  
Conservation and Access**

15-19 September 2008, London UK

This congress will examine the central role of conservation in the presentation and protection of the world's cultural heritage. It will explore the many ways that conservation professionals engage in the worldwide sharing of art and heritage, whether through people going to see that heritage or the heritage itself travelling the globe. See [http://www.icconservation.org/conferences/london2008/congr\\_index.php](http://www.icconservation.org/conferences/london2008/congr_index.php) (C102)

**ICOM-CC 15th Triennial  
Meeting: Diversity in  
Heritage Conservation -  
Tradition, Innovation and  
Participation**

22-26 September 2008, New Delhi INDIA

See <http://icom-cc.icom.museum/TriennialMeetings/> (C98)

been assembled and displayed inside the church at Christmas time. Handling and the open nature of the display had resulted in the figurines being dirty, dusty and having suffered numerous chips and losses to the painted surface and plaster body. As the figurines are significant to the church and to the township as a whole, a public awareness campaign and community fundraiser was orchestrated to raise funds to pay for their conservation. In preparation for Artlab's visit (and to help reduce costs), members of the St. Paul's congregation undertook basic cleaning, with advice from conservators. This included gentle brush vacuuming and swab cleaning. The Objects team was then able to undertake repairs such as re-adhering any loose pieces, filling areas of loss and in-painting fills to blend with the surrounding painted surface. Once treatment was completed the figurines were returned to their original positions within the Nativity scene in the church's foyer, for ongoing display.

**Joanna Barr, Zandria Farrell and Sarah Babister** have nearly completed the treatment of *Alice* by John Dowie, a delightful bronze sculpture and frieze of Alice in Wonderland and they've survived many a cold day by trying to remember the names of all the characters. Joanna and Zandria have also repaired a broken arm on a sculpture at a student college. The sculpture sustained the damage when students upended a wheelie bin onto it. Fortunately it went back together well and we hope the students will now restrict their pranks to hats, togas and similarly soft and innocuous materials. In the textiles department **Charlotte Jenkin** and **Kristin Phillips** have been working on a collection of 17 rolled river charts belonging to the State Library of South Australia. The work involves stitch and adhesive repairs, removal of sticky tape and packing for storage. **Bee Flynn** is working on repairs to the silk edging of a 19<sup>th</sup> century scrapbook.

## VICTORIA

### The Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation, University of Melbourne

**Marika Kocsis** and **Diane Whittle** joined the CCMC team in July for a twelve-month internship. Marika (Paper Conservator) and Di (Objects Conservator) will be working on a variety of projects based around the University of Melbourne collections. **Jocelyn Evans** has left to take up her ten month training program at the Strauss Centre at Harvard University. **Cushla Hill** is also taking leave to deliver paintings conservation teaching program at Queens University in Canada for two semesters. **Marcelle Scott** will also be taking leave for the next three months to take up a research opportunity at the Getty. Professor Joy Damousi, Head of the School of Historical Studies, recently visited the CCMC off-campus labs to meet staff and to discuss the University of Melbourne's Melbourne Model. Suggestions were raised encouraging cross-disciplinary research and CCMC hosting some of the school's seminars at CCMC's off-campus site.

Lois Waters, a year 10 student at Williamstown Secondary College, spent a week in the labs for work experience, and Alexia Soldano, a paintings conservation student at Ecole de Condé in Lyon, France, was introduced to some of the working methods of the different departments of CCMC, during her month long internship. Alexia was given the opportunity to carry out simple treatments – such as cleaning, consolidation, varnishing – on paintings by Australian artists. She also worked with the paper conservation team on the thread mounting of an irregular shaped parchment.

**Catherine Nunn** has completed the treatment of an unlined 18<sup>th</sup> century British portrait of a mother and child. The painting has suffered from two large complex tears but, having spent most of its life in Australia, it escaped the glue-lining fate that befell most paintings of this period in England during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Consequently, the delicate peaks of impasto in the elaborate silk and lace dress and the faces of the sitters have been retained and the restoration of the work has been very satisfying. The tear repair method involved the use of Prof. Winfried Heiber's 'trekker' to realign the edges of the tears and polyamide welding powder and polyester sutures were used to repair the tears. Retouching was carried out in egg tempera medium. Catherine has also continued cleaning a 17<sup>th</sup> Century Dutch landscape on panel and has discovered a flock of birds in the sky of the composition that had been obscured for centuries under thick grey over-paint. Remnants of a possible original varnish layer have also been discovered underneath the over-paint.

In June, Ronnie Li, Deputy Chief Radiographer at the Royal Melbourne Hospital and Dr. Beverley Woon, Radiology Registrar at RMH, assisted **Alex Ellem** in capturing X-radiographs of a portrait by Ambrose Patterson which appeared to have undergone compositional changes after its primary completion. The painting was X-rayed with technology typically used for human patients, thus the radiation levels were different to those that tend to get the best resolution with paintings, nonetheless the resulting X-ray images clearly reveal significant alterations, which will be the subject of further research.

Cushla Hill, **Holly Jones-Amin, Petronella Nel** and Catherine Nunn attended a GCMS Workshop for Conservators at CCMC in June. The workshop attended by several CCMC students and conservation scientists was an intensive two days of theory, followed by a day of familiarisation with the instrument. Participants had the opportunity to run their own samples, with encouraging results. Thanks to **Caroline Kyi** for organising this event and to Dr Gerard Sharp, for his patient explanation of the system.

**Libby Melzer, Briony Pemberton** and Marika Kocsis recently completed treatment on a large framed multimedia work on paper by Leonard French. Brittle areas of paper that had lifted and cracked were consolidated through the careful insertion of methylcellulose using a variety of tools including small Mylar

strips and syringes. **Nick Selenitsch** has been preparing a presentation on mould for PROV staff. **Nola Orr** and Nick have been cleaning, repairing and consolidating a set of 1860's Rate books from Ballarat and have been attending to the seemingly endless supply of damaged 19th Century prison registers. Nick is pleased he no longer lives in a city that would put him in prison for being "idle and disorderly". **Jude Fraser** recently delivered a day-long workshop to University collection managers on preventive conservation, conservation planning and handling.

The objects team has been busy with a number of projects. Holly Jones-Amin has been managing a large project for the Melbourne Cricket Club, involving a range of sporting memorabilia for the opening of their National Sports Museum. Holly and **Kate Shepherdson** have been undertaking these treatments since earlier in the year. Holly and Kate treated a violin from Changi, which was signed by a large number of Australian, American, British and Dutch POWs who belonged to concert parties. The violin and case required cleaning and minor repairs. Due to the significance of the object, a minimal intervention approach was taken, with treatment focusing on the stabilisation of the object for future generations. Other treatments include the humidification, filling of losses and mounting of two tapa, repair of a bark painting and adhesion of chips and filling of losses on a scrimshaw.

**Thea Peacock**, with the assistance of **Jordi Casasayas** and **Sean Loughrey**, has been working on an ongoing project for the RAAF Museum on the Battle of Britain lace. This large piece of lace (over 4m long) has been sewn to a fabric support in preparation for mounting on-site at the RAAF Museum ready for display. She has also been undertaking treatments on a variety of textiles for the opening of the National Sports Museum. **Jessie Firth**, a student of the Masters in Arts (Conservation of Cultural Materials) at the University of Melbourne, has completed her two-week industry placement alongside Thea, assisting in the treatment of the City of Yarra's Mayoral robe collection. August sees Thea's departure to Vietnam where she will be helping in the development of a survey of the textile collection at the Museum of Ethnography in Hanoi.

**Helen Gill, Elizabeth McCartney, Marion Parker, Kellie Slape** and **Nick Zihrul**, students of the Master of Arts (Cultural Materials Conservation) at the University of Melbourne are carrying out a survey of the collection of artworks on paper in the Cunningham Dax Collection. The project involves surveying approximately 9000 works on paper and is expected to take 6 months. It has been funded by a grant from Heritage Victoria to the Cunningham Dax Collection and Jude Fraser is acting as a consultant on the project.

## National Gallery of Victoria

**MaryJo Lelyveld** and **Holly McGowan-Jackson** have been inspecting and treating frames on works flagged for the *Modern Britain* exhibition. In preparation for this exhibition, they have been identifying examples of original or early framing for inclusion in the exhibition catalogue. Assistance has been given by **Marion Parker**, from the University of Melbourne, who has been undertaking an industry placement over several weeks. Marion has also assisted **Suzi Shaw** in the treatment of a Bugatti *Throne chair*, which has involved the replacement of missing bone decoration and the reduction of metal cleaning residues. Suzi and Holly have both been tidying up loose ends before going on leave. Suzi will be undertaking an Annette de la Renta Conservation Fellowship for 12 months at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and Holly will be going on 12 months maternity leave.

**Solitaire Sani** has been appointed to the position of Acting Senior Conservator of Textiles, and will be replacing **Bronwyn Cosgrove** while she takes 12 months maternity leave. **Kate Douglas** continues to oversee the preparation of works for major exhibitions opening at NGV: Australia and NGV: International in February of 2008. The exhibitions, titled *From Mourning to Night: Black in Fashion*, contain over 50 costumes from the mid 19th century to the present day. Kate has been undertaking a number of complex treatments on works from the 19th and early twentieth centuries, while working with the curators and **Annette Soumilas** to create historical underpinnings for the exhibitions. Bronwyn completed the conservation of works from the NGV collections for *Super Bodies: Heroic Fashion of the 1980s* prior to departing on maternity leave.

In the paper studio, **Louise Wilson** and **Ruth Shervington** are continuing research into printmaking papers used by Fred Williams in the 1970's. The project has involved comparison with an archive of papers given by Williams to James Mollison, former Director of NGV and checking old artist materials invoices kept by Williams to determine which papers were in stock in his studio at the time. Employees of paper merchants supplying to Williams have been interviewed and much has been learnt about the importation of quality European papers into Australia. Information relating to William's papers will be published in the 2nd volume of his *Catalogue Raisonné* in 2008. **Pip Morrison** has been treating a large colour photograph by Graeme Hare, which has been water damaged, and consequently has its interleaving tissue paper adhered to the surface. Pip has also been preparing works for the photograph exhibition *Role Play*, and is beginning preparations for an exhibition of large format Chinese contemporary photographs.

The Exhibitions section is reluctantly farewelling Solitaire Sani who moves to the Textiles section. Over the last few months **Janelle Borig** has helped coordinate the installation and

first successful running of the new Mobigas fumigation system, and has just returned from a courier trip to Rome and Florence. **Catherine Earley** has seen in the Guggenheim exhibition and expansion of the lab. She and Janelle are working on nine exhibitions scheduled to open or close in the next few months.

With the appointment of **David Thurrowgood** as Head of Conservation, **John Payne** has returned to the Paintings Conservation studio and has commenced treatment of Louis Duffy's *Christ turning out the money lenders* for the *Modern Britain* exhibition. **Michael Varcoe-Cocks** is also involved in preparations for the show and has just completed treatment of Paul Signac's *Gasometers at Clichy*. **Carl Willis** is researching and treating a North Italian 16th century oval portrait. **Melanie Carlisle** is treating *Miss Offy Palmer*, a portrait attributed to the studio of Reynolds and **Raye Collins** is treating Louis Buvelot's *Macedon Ranges*.

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA

### Patricia Moncrieff, Textile Conservator, Consultant and Educator

In March, Patricia surveyed the entire collection of the Ravensthorpe Museum on behalf of its Historical Society. Ravensthorpe is a small agricultural centre, located 540km southeast of Perth,

Western Australia. Renowned as the *Welcoming Wilderness*, Ravensthorpe has a rich history of mining, specifically gold and copper in the early 1900's, which resulted in a legacy of interesting cultural, historical and industrial relics. The survey included assessment of the collection along with the buildings in which it is housed. As a consultant to the Art Gallery of Western Australia, Patricia advised on the conservation of an installation artwork entitled, *Rise and Fall* by artist Julie Rrap.

Other projects include the conservation and display of: several exquisitely embroidered Asian textiles; a 19th century Chinese Imperial Rank Badge; early 19th century silk panel from India and a 19th century Chinese Robe. One of the most unusual and perhaps unique projects to date is a pair of drawers worn by Queen Victoria! The drawers are superbly hand-tailored cotton white work, complete with finely embroidered crown and initials VR along the waistband. Owned privately and inherited, their provenance is well documented. Currently, work is continuing on the conservation of a Nazi swastika flag from World War II and a woven, rattan sleeping mat from North Borneo from the collection of the Kalgoorlie War Museum, Western Australia.

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# Framing works on paper for the exhibition, *Modern British Watercolours and Drawings*, at the Art Gallery of NSW

Carolyn Murphy, Paper Conservator

Every decision a conservator makes about the treatment and display of an artwork will have some impact on the appearance of the work and consequently on the viewer's appreciation of the work. Conservators routinely make treatment decisions that will have an impact on the appearance of a work such as whether to treat a work or leave it untreated, whether to remove stains or leave them, whether to infill losses to the support or whether compensating for media losses is appropriate. These decisions are made on the basis of a number of factors such as conservation, curatorial and exhibition priorities, time available, institutional policy. Questions regarding the appearance of artworks also arise when mounting and framing is considered. Any decision regarding the mounting or framing of a work is necessarily a choice that will have an impact on its appearance. The decision to mount and frame works on paper in standard mounts and frames is a choice that standardises the shape, size and appearance of the works hanging on the walls while at the same time making the storage and handling of the works more space efficient. Equally, retaining original mounts for display when they are stained and discoloured does not mean that the work is presented the way the artist intended.

When works on paper are acquired at the Art Gallery of New South Wales they are often in mounts and frames but these may or may not be original to the work. Some works are in original mounts and frames chosen by the artist; others are in mounts and frames roughly contemporary with the work itself even if not necessarily chosen by the artist. Other works are in mounts and frames chosen more recently by previous owners, or dealers. These mounts and frames may or may not be in good condition and may or may not be structurally suitable to support the work they are meant to house. In deciding which mounts and frames should be kept, a number of factors must be considered such as the provenance of the work and its mount and frame, the condition and suitability of the mount and frame, and the capacity of the Gallery to conserve and store framed works.

Most of the works on paper in a current exhibition, *Modern British Watercolours and Drawings*, required treatment, mounting and framing. The following discussion looks at the approach that was taken in the preparation of some of these works.



Lily Yang (left) and June Andersen making a wrapped mount.  
Rose Peel in background.

*The Alhambra, Spain, 1914* by William Lee-Hankey and *The Candle for the Cup, 1932* by David Jones were both framed in their existing frames when they were acquired and had never been unframed or treated since that time. *The Alhambra*, acquired in 1914, was mounted in a line wash mount made using poor quality board that was now stained and discoloured. Its frame was an ornate gilded frame that was in need of treatment. Since the work was made and acquired in the same year it seemed reasonable to consider the mount and frame as original. *The Candle for the Cup* by David Jones, acquired in 1958, was mounted in a wrapped mount that was also made with poor quality board that was now stained and discoloured. Its frame was a simple wood frame with a painted and patinated surface finish that probably dates from the 1950s when the work was acquired. Both of these works had to be removed from their mounts to allow conservation treatment to proceed but the mounts were removed intact and so could have been reused. However, because of their stained and discoloured appearance and the poor quality materials from which they were made, it was decided that retaining them for display was not appropriate. Instead, the two mounts were reproduced by conservation framer June Andersen of Andersen, Shaw and Associates during two short workshops to teach some of the Gallery's conservation staff how to do line wash and wrapped mounts. Since the retirement of a previous mount cutter, Bill Lamont, in 2006 there was no one on the staff trained to do this sort of work. Samples taken from the two mounts were kept on the conservation file to document the original mounts. The two frames were treated by frame conservator, Margaret Sawicki.



(From left) Lily Yang, June Andersen, Rose Peel, Sophia Elze and Sun Yu during the mounting workshop for Art Gallery of NSW staff conducted by June Andersen.

Another group of five works in the exhibition were framed in identical thin plain wooden frames. Initially it was thought that these frames were an old version of a standard Gallery frame and it had been decided that the works would be remounted in standard mounts and frames. After further investigation, however, it was found that these works were part of a group of nineteen that had been acquired from an exhibition, *British Contemporary Watercolours and Drawings* at the David Jones' Art Gallery, Sydney in June 1945. The Gallery's records were not detailed enough for us to be certain if the works were framed in these frames for the David Jones exhibition, or if they were framed this way after they were acquired. Since no other Gallery works were identified in these sorts of frames, however, it was decided that the frames were probably from this exhibition. Although the 1940s frames were not chosen for the works by the artists, they are still approximately contemporary with the works (1920s-1930s) and serve to document the shared history of these works. Will Ashton, Director of the David Jones Gallery at the time, wrote in the foreword to the catalogue for the David Jones exhibition that:

"It is the first collection of its kind to be seen in Sydney since the War. The last important collection from overseas was the French and British Modern Art Exhibition, which was sponsored by the *Melbourne Herald* and shown in our George Street Store in November, 1939. Since that date, owing to the War situation, it has not been possible to arrange for an exhibition from abroad to be brought into this country. Now that peace in Europe is at last achieved, transport difficulties will gradually become easier, so that in the future we may hope to see more work by overseas artists exhibited in Australia." (Ashton, 1945)

As a result, it was decided that all of these frames would be kept. Because the frames were quite thin there was some concern that they would need to have build-ups added to the reverse to make them sturdier and to allow the various layers of mount board and backing board to fit into the frame. This would then have affected the appearance of the frames hanging on the walls, as the frame profile was so narrow that any build-up would be visible at the edges. After some careful measuring by

Lily Yang, the Gallery's mount cutter, it was determined that as long as the works were framed with 4-ply window mounts and single wall corrugated board backings then the mounted works would fit into the frames. Conservator, Matt Cox then suggested the addition of metal corner brackets that would not be visible when the works were on display but would make the frames more stable. Most of these works had been treated in the past and remounted. Some of them had reproduction line wash mounts made previously by Bill Lamont using the same design as the original mounts, samples of which had been kept on the conservation files. Others did not have line wash mounts and unfortunately the conservation records did not indicate the style of the old mounts.

Graham Sutherland's *Devastation: Burnt out offices*, 1941 was officially commissioned by the British Government during World War Two and was presented to the Gallery as a gift in 1948. Painted on a thin fragile paper sheet that was fully adhered to a masonite support, the work had creases, tears and infilled losses scattered throughout. The work had a painted wood mount and was framed in a heavy painted wood frame that had a number of paint layers and was chipped and soiled throughout. It was thought most likely that the painting would have been framed when the gift was made. The acquisition records, however, did not mention a frame and there were no conservation records indicating if the work had ever been treated or framed. Current and past staff was asked if they recalled anything about the watercolour. Bill Lamont thought, based on his memory of past practices, that it was possible the masonite backing and wood mount had been done at the Gallery though he had no recollection of this particular work. After much debate it was decided that since the mount and frame style seemed appropriate for a 1940s work and since the frame did not conform to any past Gallery style frame, it was quite possible that it was the original and therefore should be kept.



Exhibition view, *Modern British Watercolours and Drawings* currently on display at the Art Gallery of NSW.

The thinness and fragility of the paper support coupled with the potential fragility of the media layer meant that any thoughts of removing the masonite were quickly put aside. The watercolour itself therefore received only minor treatment: dry cleaning, some tear repairs, infilling of a few losses and inpainting of the infilled areas.

The conservation of the frame was a much larger project and more complicated. The question was which of the many paint layers on the frame should be viewed as the original? Another work in the collection by Sutherland, *Study for Painting 5 – Tree Form*, 1946 was acquired the year it was made framed in a nineteenth century frame and so it was thought possible that Sutherland may have chosen to reuse an old frame for *Devastation*. This possibility was conjectural as only very limited information about Sutherland's approach to framing was unearthed in the course of preparing for the exhibition. Since it was possible, however, that the frame for *Devastation* was a reused frame, Margaret Sawicki set about examining the various paint layers for evidence that might clarify the situation. The result, after much consultation and consideration of the relationship between the various paint layers and areas of loss and layers of soiling, was to remove the top layer of cream paint (which appeared to have been applied since the work was acquired) but to leave all the other paint layers intact. This would expose another layer of cream paint beneath and also an irregular decorative pattern scraped into the surface of the blue paint layer beneath. The decision not to go back to the blue layer itself was based on a number of factors: patterns of damage and soiling that indicated the cream layer was quite old, a concern that we were not sure and did not want to remove the cream paint layer without being sure and because the cream colour seemed aesthetically more appropriate.

Two works by Jacob Epstein, *Dahlias in a glass vase*, 1930s and *Sunflowers*, 1930s had not been treated or unframed since they were acquired in the 1980s. Both works were framed in commercially manufactured mouldings that dated from the 1980s. Epstein was known to have made many watercolours of flowers in the 1930s and so attempts were made to find similar works in original frames. Although we were able to locate Epstein flower watercolours in public collections in Australia and England, we did not find any that were framed in original frames. In the absence of any specific information David Butler, the Gallery's reproduction frame maker, made two new frames (plain wood with polished toned gesso finish) in a style that was considered more complementary to the works than standard timber exhibition frames.

The various uncertainties associated with the mounting and framing of all of these works mean that although the works are now conserved, and look pleasing to our twenty-first century eyes, we might not have ended up with anything like the original presentation of the works. The problem we face though is that the works are going to be displayed. Any choice about mounting and framing, even doing nothing, involves its own set of assumptions about the artworks and how they were meant to look. Through examination, documentation, and historical research, however, we can make an educated choice about how to proceed with the mounting and framing of each work. By keeping samples of old framing materials such as window mounts we are able to reference the framing choices we make into the future. While anecdotal evidence of staff who have been at the Gallery for a long time is valuable, it is a resource that is necessarily limited and therefore we aim to document original mounting and framing methods in conservation files and to document the reasons why changes to methods of mounting and framing are made. Finally it is interesting to note that although some of the original frame styles were not what we might have chosen for the works, the impact of these frames, once the works and frames were conserved and the works remounted, was surprising and supportive in their effect.

### Acknowledgements

Preparations for an exhibition of this kind necessarily involve the work of a number of people. I would like to acknowledge the work of all the people who were involved in the conservation, mounting and framing of these works for exhibition: June Andersen, David Butler, Matt Cox, Sophia Elze, Elizabeth Hadlow, Rose Peel, Peter Raissis, Margaret Sawicki, Paul Solly, Analiese Treacy and Lily Yang.

### References

Ashton, Will (1945) *Exhibition of Drawings and Water-colours by Contemporary British Artists*, Waite & Bull: Sydney.

# The Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation invites members of the AICCM to Presentations by students of their Thesis Research

At Old Geology Theatre 2, The University of Melbourne

**Thursday 1st November 2007**

**9.00am – 4.00pm**

Student	Thesis Title
Isa Loo	"The investigation of UV fluorescence as a means of detecting the presence of cardiac glycosides (hunting toxins) on ethnographic objects"
Erin Chapman	"Preparation, Storage and Care of Queensland Museum's Bat Collection"
Karen Fisher	'Kikuyu Barkcloth: Manufacture, History and Ethnographic Conservation'
Elizabeth McCartney	Awaiting title
Jessie Firth	"The Use of Dry Cleaning-Sponge for the Conservation of Textiles"
Alice Cannon	"Adhesives in paper-based heritage collections: Late nineteenth and early twentieth century recipes and proprietary products"
Nola Orr	"The Use of Triammonium Citrate for Cleaning Works on Paper"
Joanna Mead	"A Mobile Unit for the Conservation of Cultural Materials in Regional Australia"
Nick Zihrul	"Analysing the nature and extent of the Reversibility of Inpainting onto the surface of an original paper object using an isolating layer"

**Friday 2nd November 2007**

**9.00am – 2.15pm**

Student	Thesis Title
Raye Collins	"Materials and Techniques of John Longstaff's Paintings"
Sabine Cotte	"Conservation of Tibetan Paintings in Australia"
Helen Gill	"Clarice Beckett 1887-1935: Her Materials and Techniques"
Selina Halim	"Ageing Characteristics of Winsor & Newton and Marie's Artist Oil Paints in Humid Tropical Climates"
Elizabeth Hinde	"Assessing the Aging Characteristics and Inpainting Potential of Fluorescent Paints"
Elaine Miles	"Non-Destructive Imaging Techniques for the Investigation of Subsurface Structure in Artwork"
Lisa Nolan	"Polyvinyl Acetates and Polyvinyl Alcohol in Asher Bilu's Heaven"
Katherine Rosenthal	"Investigation into the causes of blistering of alkyd resin paints films in the work of Stieg Persson"

# AICCM National Conference Program

17 - 19 October 2007

State Library of Queensland and Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, Queensland

## Tuesday 16th October

3:00 - 5:00PM	Early registration	SLQ - Outside Auditorium 1
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## Wednesday 17th October

8:00:00 AM	Registration	SLQ - Outside Auditorium 1
8:45:00 AM	Welcome address	
9:00:00 AM	Ian Macleod	Contemporary collection management in a state museum: relocation of collections, increased access and public engagement.
9:30:00 AM	Liz Wild, Amanda Pagliarino	Documentation of installation art at GoMA
<b>10:00:00 AM</b>	<b>Morning tea</b>	
10:30:00 AM	Vanessa Roth Wiggin and Seth Wiggin	Set in Concrete? Conservation of Howard Taylor's <i>Black Stump</i>
11:00:00 AM	Elizabeth Hinde	A photographic method for documenting fluorescent paint
11:30:00 AM	Somaya Langley, Gerard Clifton	New forms, new techniques: challenges of preserving digital materials
<b>12:00:00 PM</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	
<b>12:30:00 PM</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	
<b>1:00:00 PM</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	GoMA Conservation lab tour - limited numbers
1:30:00 PM	Maria Kubik, D.Creagh, R.Tait	New analytical methods for the provenancing of red ochre
2:00:00 PM	Roger Heady, Kylie Roth, Nicola Smith	A study of the bark used as a substrate for Australian Aboriginal paintings
2:30:00 PM	Deborah Lau, Kim Brunoro, Michael Varcoe-Cocks	Preliminary investigations into crystalline efflorescence on Australian and Indigenous paintings in the NGA and NGV collections - research in progress.
<b>3:00:00 PM</b>	<b>Afternoon tea - poster presentations</b>	The recovery of mould contaminated mammal specimens by Melissa Gunter, Michelle Berry
		The National Indigenous Art Triennial by NGA Paper and Paintings Conservation
		Framing of the <i>Assembly Hall</i> series by Belinda Gourley & Samantha Shellard
		Maya blue in Cuba: physical and chemical characterisation of this pigment by Miriem Santander Borrego and Manuel Rodriguez Valle
3:30:00 PM	Eric Archer	Towards a sustainable theory of conservation
4:00:00 PM	Veronica Bullock	A new deal for Australian conservation training and employment
4:30:00 PM		GoMA Conservation lab tour - limited numbers
5:00:00 PM	Welcome function	GoMA River Terrace

## Thursday 18th October

9:00:00 AM	Alexandra Ellem	More than meets the eye: utilising oral history to enhance our understanding of Hugh Ramsay's works and their history
9:30:00 AM	Sarah Hillary, Tom Learner, Rachel Rivenc	Traction reaction: severe deterioration of household and paving paints used by Colin McCahon
<b>10:00:00 AM</b>	<b>Morning tea</b>	
10:30:00 AM	Bronwyn Ormsby, Patricia Smithen, Tom Learner	Translating research into practice - evaluating the surface cleaning treatment of an acrylic emulsion painting by Jeremy Moon
11:00:00 AM	Alison Wain, Deborah Lau	Progress and potential: lasers for conservation in Australia
11:30:00 AM	Petronella Nel, Deborah Lau, David Hay, Natasha Wright	Micro x-ray diffraction analysis of painted surfaces
<b>12:00:00 PM</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	
<b>12:30:00 PM</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	
<b>1:00:00 PM</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	GoMA Conservation lab tour - limited numbers

1:30:00 PM	Alice Cannon	The conservation and display of comic books
2:00:00 PM	Lydia Egunkike	Consolidation techniques for gelatine opalotypes
2:30:00 PM	Julie McCarthy and Sarah Gubby	Examining the use of surfactants in the treatment of water-damaged black & white silver gelatin prints
<b>3:00:00 PM</b>	<b>Afternoon tea - poster presentations</b>	No food in the Library! by Rhiannon Walker, Shane Bell
		A threat of PEST? – "Foodstuff" as components of installation art for a museum exhibition by Angela YK Cheung, Evita S Yeung, Shing-wai W Chan
		Gold or Black? – the secret behind a Chinese wedding document (Study and Treatment of a Chinese Wedding document) by Wing-Fai Lai and Man-Wai Tang
		Conservation input for fabricating a contemporary artwork by Wing-Fai Lai
3:30:00 PM	Renita Ryan, Sophie Parker, Kristin Phillips	Using risk as a survey tool for the Foreign Ethnology Collection at the South Australian Museum
4:00:00 PM	Kay Söderlund, Elizabeth Hadlow	Between a rock and a hard place
4:30:00 PM	Barbara Reeve, Dave Fitzgerald, Laura Kennedy	Environmental parameters for long-term collection preservation at the AWM
5:30:00 PM	SIG dinners	

**Friday 19th October**

9:00:00 AM	Michael Marendy	Beyond conservation: recreating historic costume for museum displays
9:30:00 AM	Nicola Smith, Judith Andrewartha	Treatment of wet archaeological organics from a Bronze Age site, Vietnam
<b>10:00:00 AM</b>	<b>Morning tea</b>	
10:30:00 AM	Petronella Nel, Deborah Lau, Pamela Hoobin, Carl Braybrook, James Mardel, Iko Burgar, Ming Chen, Peter Curtis, Cheryl McHugh	Analysis of adhesives used to repair archaeological pottery
11:00:00 AM	George Bailey	The corrosion of a World War One Maxim gun mount after 20 years on display
11:30:00 AM	Andrew Viduka and Vaimua Muliyava	Figier le Temps: a conservation approach
<b>12:00:00 PM</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	
<b>12:30:00 PM</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	
<b>1:00:00 PM</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	GoMA Conservation lab tour - limited numbers
1:30:00 PM	Darby Johns	Format improvements for archival document storage
2:00:00 PM	Patrya Kay, Tessa Ivison	Management and conservation of the Mackenzie Collection at the National Museum of Australia: a traditional fluid preserved (wet) specimen collection in a modern museum
2:30:00 PM	Laura Kennedy, Megan Jordan-Jones	Assessing food in the AWM collection
<b>3:00:00 PM</b>	<b>Afternoon tea - poster presentations</b>	IPM risk assessment by David Coxsedg
		On-site collections management: NIR characterisation and condition monitoring of modern textiles by Emma Richardson, Graham Martin, Paul Wyeth
		Design and manufacture of passive humidity controlled storage cabinets by Dana Kahabka
3:30:00 PM	Hypothetical	
4:00:00 PM	Hypothetical	
4:30:00 PM	AICCM Annual General meeting	
5:00:00 PM	AICCM Annual General meeting	
5:30:00 PM		

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

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