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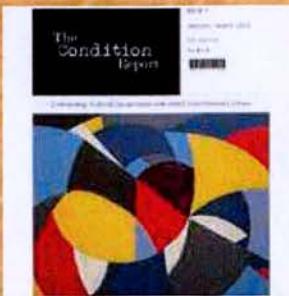
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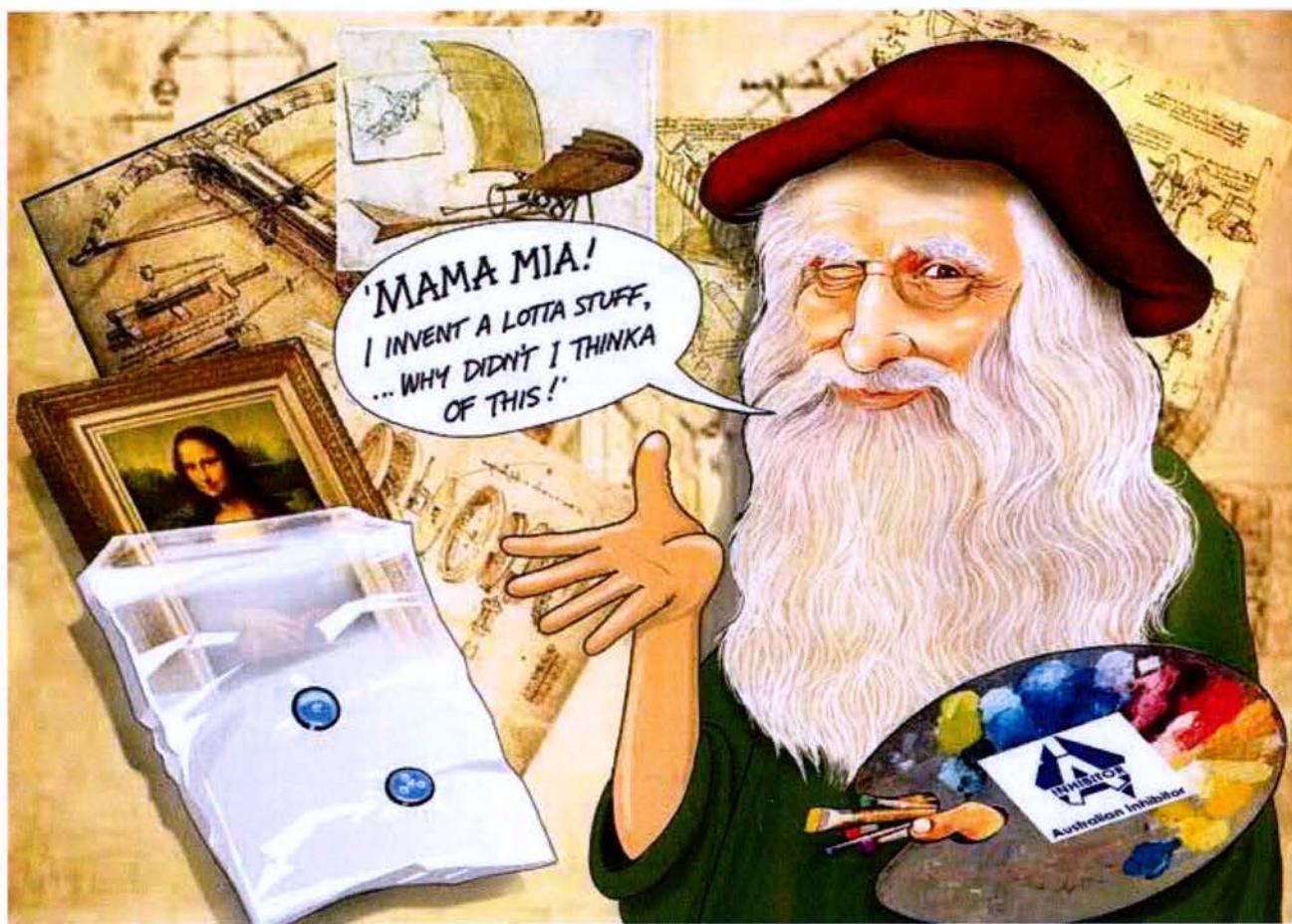
CAPS workshop



New social pages



The Condition Report



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President's Report

It is well over a month since the 2013 AICCM National Conference concluded in Adelaide. The conference, though smaller in attendance numbers than some previous conferences, was well regarded by many participants for its intimacy, diversity of engaging topics, and warm hospitality. The planning and preparation of such an event is no mean feat and the lion's share of credit must go to S.A. National Conference Organising Committee, spearheaded by the incredibly able and marvelously multi-talented Kristin Phillips, which ensured that the conference ran smoothly from its earliest planning stages to its final closing address.

Attendees of the conference commented on the breadth and diversity of topics that challenged and stimulated their understanding of conservation practice – as a senior professional with over three decades of experience as a conservator remarked to me, "I was blown away by some of the ideas and projects presented here!" On behalf of the organising committee I express my gratitude to all of the session chairs including Ian Batterham, Julian Bickersteth, Kay Söderlund and Kasi Albert and to the many speakers who presented informative, thoughtful, and passionate accounts of the work and projects with which they are engaged. Credit for the success of the conference must also go to Artlab and Andrew Durham, who generously shared with us the devilishly quirky humour and keen organisational skills of many of his crew. Thank you again to the S.A. Organising Committee members: Heather Brown, Jo Dawe, Anne Dineen, Justin Gare, Mary-Anne Gooden, Rosemary Heysen, Filipa Quintela, Jodie Scott and Amalia Alpareanu of State Library of S.A. and Elizabeth Long of Adelaide City Council.

As many of you will already know I was recently appointed to the role of AICCM National President at the A.G.M. in October. I have learnt a great deal from several years' experience in State and SIG roles and, most recently, as Vice President to the out-going President Kay Söderlund. I would like to thank Kay and out-going Treasurer Robin Hodgson for all the hours and energy they have invested over the past few years to progress the organisation on behalf of its members. I wish Robin all the best as she takes a well-earned sabbatical from AICCM to focus on local projects near her property in S.E. Victoria, and to Kay, who will be concentrating her energies into formalising and promoting AICCM-HEART. I would also like to welcome Anne Carter and Adam Godjin who have stepped in to fill the roles of Vice President and Treasurer respectively.

Over the course of the conference and A.G.M. discussion turned to several key projects of the AICCM including: the launch of the new AICCM website; revision of the environmental guidelines; and conservation training. In conjunction with financial sustainability and more integrated communications, these projects are central to our planning priorities for the next two years. Over the coming months, we look forward to being able to report on developments and provide updates on progress across these areas to all members via e-mail, the website and Newsletter.

MaryJo Lelyveld
AICCM President



ADFAS Patricia Robertson Scholarship

ADFAS (the Association of Australian Decorative and Fine Art Societies) has been supporting the conservation profession by providing awards for the outstanding student of both the Melbourne and Canberra courses over the last three years.

This year ADFAS significantly increased its' support by creating the Patricia Robertson ADFAS Scholarship of \$8,000 for a recent graduate of either the Melbourne or Canberra courses to gain conservation experience in the UK.

As Chair of the Selection Committee, I can announce that the Committee has unanimously agreed to award the scholarship for 2014 to Emily Jane Harris, a 2013 graduate of the Melbourne Masters course.

Emily plans to use the award to attend a short course at West Dean College in the conservation and repair of timber and then a further course and internship at Lincoln University on 'England's Hidden Treasures', followed by a visit to the University College London Centre for Sustainable Heritage. She will be focusing on how international institutes are using monitoring technology to inform preventive and interventionist strategies for outdoor artworks and significant heritage buildings.

Julian Bickersteth
Vice President Association
of ADFAS

AICCM Environmental Guidelines

..... finally an interim position

The AICCM Council established an Environmental Guidelines Taskforce in 2009 to provide conservators and the wider Australian museum community with an AICCM position on how to respond to the global debate on safe environmental parameters for the display and storage of objects and collections.

Four years on we have finally reached an interim position. What is that interim position, and why has it taken so long?

Firstly the position, which is as follows:

AICCM Interim Temperature and Relative Humidity Guidelines for Acceptable Storage and Display Conditions

The AICCM has developed interim temperature and relative humidity guidelines for acceptable storage and display conditions of general collection material based on those developed by professional conservation groups internationally, most notably by the American Institute for Conservation (AIC).

It should be noted that specific temperature and relative humidity requirements for sensitive or fragile collections and for collections on loan should be determined in consultation with a professional conservator. Some material will require different or tighter conditions which may be managed through, for example, the use of micro-climates. Additional specific environmental requirements, such as light levels, air-flow, and other conditions, should be determined based upon professional conservation advice.

The AICCM recommended Interim Temperature and Relative Humidity Guidelines for acceptable storage and display conditions of general collection material are:

- Temperature – between 15–25°C with allowable fluctuations of +/-4°C per 24 hr.
- Relative Humidity – between 45–55% with an allowable fluctuation of +/- 5% per 24 hr. Where storage and display environments experience seasonal drift, RH change to be managed gradually across a wider range limited to 40% – 60%.

Temperature and Relative Humidity parameters for preservation of cultural materials will differ according to their material, construction and condition, but stable conditions maintained within the parameters above are generally acceptable for most objects.

Secondly, why has it taken so long?

Relaxed environmental parameters for museums have been on the table for consideration by the conservation community for at least the last five years, promoted by building managers and directors alike.

Sir Nicholas Serota, director of Tate had joined a pivotal public dialogue hosted by the International Institute for Conservation (IIC) at the National Gallery, London in September 2008, stating that the issue of achievable and appropriate environmental levels had to be addressed, positing the concept that visitors to the Tate may have to wear overcoats in winter due to the collections being exhibited at lower temperatures. At the same time the Bizot Group, also known as the International Group of Organizers of Large Scale Exhibitions, had drawn up draft guiding principles covering the broad area of reducing carbon footprints, the relevant environmental guidelines principle reading as follows:

"Environmental standards should become more intelligent and better tailored to clearly identified needs. Blanket conditions should no longer apply. Instead conditions should be determined by the requirements of the individual objects or groups of objects and the climate of the part of the world where the museums is located."¹

Two and a half years ago it looked as though international agreement on relaxation of environmental conditions in museums and galleries to reduce energy consumption, whilst not compromising the preservation of collections, was close.

The AICCM Taskforce produced a draft document, which then went on to win the 2011 Museums Australia Overall Winner Museums and Galleries National Awards.

However, this has proved a little embarrassing, as shortly thereafter it became clear that the international conservation community was divided on this issue, and the document never saw the light of day. The Taskforce, whilst potentially able to provide parameters for Australia's permanent collections, was unable to do so for any collection space where international loans were likely to be housed, if the collecting institution wanted to continue to borrow artworks and objects from overseas.

Since then the debate internationally has become somewhat polarised between conservators who are not prepared to relax standards, particularly in Germany, Austria and Switzerland, and those that are, and between art conservators and museum conservators.

¹ Ibid

At one end are organisations such as Munich's Doerner Institute which in 2013 stated:

"a stable room climate with tight ranges for relative humidity and temperature has been largely responsible in the past for the excellent condition of sensitive art objects, including paintings of all types, in our collections. To depart from these values, would increase the risk for our collections and do little to help the environment."

Moreover, the relaxed Bizot 'Interim Guidelines' increase the risk for all lenders and will raise insurance premiums, perhaps very significantly. The institute is convinced that the goals of a "green museum" and "sustainability" can be achieved by means other than by abandoning globally accepted museum standards that are also applied generally to art in transit around the world."

At the other end of the debate, the proponents of a more liberal approach include Jim Reilly of the Image Permanence Institute in the US who recently stated "it's time to put a stake in the heart of the zombie of 20/50 for all collections, all the time. The standard is not ideal for all circumstances, doesn't meet the needs of many collection types, and is difficult and costly to maintain mechanically."

Jonathan Ashley-Smith, former Head of Conservation at the V&A in London, as long ago as 1994 stated "as far as environmental damage is concerned my thesis is that if you move a sound object from an environment somewhere in that middle range of 50rh plus or minus 15 to another environment that is also in that mid range, the risk of detectable additional deterioration is small."

In between the two extremes lies a variety of positions. The AIC issued guidelines in 2010 that were endorsed by the American Association of Museums Directors in May 2013 as follows:

"For the majority of cultural materials, a set point in the range of 45-55% relative humidity with an allowable drift of +/-5% yielding a total annual range of 40% minimum to 60% maximum and a temperature range of 15-25C is acceptable. Fluctuations must be minimised"

Meanwhile the new UK standard PAS 198 'Specifications for Managing Environmental Conditions for Cultural Collections' is not as prescriptive allowing 35-65% RH and 5-30C temperature as determined by a process best described as a risk-managed, holistic approach to environmental management. No "ideal" standard is presented—the goal is to help users make their own judgments based on local climates, an understanding of collection material vulnerabilities to agents of deterioration, the capabilities of the mechanical system and the building envelope, and the move toward energy reduction.

Finally there are also the non conservators weighing into the debate, such as Maxwell Anderson, currently Director of the Dallas Museum of Art:

"Throughout their history, art museums have spawned and fostered a subculture indifferent to developments in the world at large. Our ocean liner-like art galleries are slow to change course even in the face of evidence demanding it. A critical illustration of this habit is the rigid formula arrived at long ago that prescribes the set points of relative humidity and temperature in our museums."

It remains an unshakable conviction for most conservators and administrators that unless a museum can guarantee lenders that its interior climate is 20 degrees celsius and 50 per cent relative humidity (with an allowance for minor fluctuations), it has no business asking for loans, and cannot be trusted with its own collection. That conviction informs many facets of a museum's operations beyond the cost, including how art is borrowed, lent, shipped, installed and stored."

Where the profession goes from here is under debate. Perhaps the most important initiative is that being undertaken by a joint IIC /ICOM-CC working group charged by both these leading professional groups in finding a path forward. The working group will be providing an interim report on the issue at both the ICOM-CC Melbourne Conference and the IIC Hong Kong Congress, both in September 2014.

Julian Bickersteth is chair of the AICCM Taskforce on environmental guidelines, coordinator of the joint IIC/ICOM-CC working group on environmental guidelines and Managing Director of International Conservation Services, Sydney.

In reaching the AICCM Taskforce's Interim position, Julian would particularly like to thank the contribution of Taskforce members Catherine Earley, Trish Stokes, Jonathan London, Sarah Slade and Barbara Reeve.

Errata

The lovely tribute to Kay Söderlund that appeared in the last newsletter was not by Fiona Tennant as stated but written by Tamara Lavrencic, Museum Programs & Collections Manager, Museums & Galleries of NSW.

Cleaning Acrylic Painted Surfaces Workshop

Sydney, December 2013

The theory

In December 2013, the Getty Conservation Institute and the Art Gallery of New South Wales presented the fourth *Cleaning Acrylic Painted Surfaces* workshop (CAPS Sydney). 18 conservators from a range of geographical locations, specialisations and workplaces around Australia and the Pacific were selected from an application process through the Getty Conservation Institute (GCI).

The CAPS workshops grew out of the Modern Paints Uncovered (MPU) project, which was initiated in 2002 as collaboration between the Tate, the Getty Conservation Institute and the National Gallery of Art, Washington. The project hosted the 2006 MPU symposium in London, and later produced a set of post prints which remain the foremost reference on the conservation of modern paints. These post prints have an entire section on acrylic emulsion cleaning – with most focus on surfactant removal. Tom Learner noted in his introduction to CAPS Sydney that, from the MPU symposium, it became clear that conservators are waiting for the science to assist in their cleaning options. It was also clear that aliphatic solvents are the least swelling for acrylic emulsion paints, however they are also the least effective at soil removal, and it seems essential to include an aqueous component in a cleaning system.

The format of the CAPS workshops grew from a desire for scientists and bench conservators to work together. The CAPS scientists aim to provide options for improved cleaning systems, which are then trialled and discussed through the workshops. Dry cleaning techniques are not a focus of CAPS workshops. As the fourth in the series,



Workshop participants

CAPS Sydney was a well organised and focussed event with identified learning aims for participants and presenters. All participants were required to digest a weighty reading list prior to the workshop, and some teaching material (including videos and reading lists) can be found at http://www.getty.edu/conervation/our_projects/education/caps/index.html

The team sent by the GCI was awe inspiring: Bronwyn Ormsby (Senior Conservation Scientist, Tate), Tom Learner (Senior Scientist, GCI), Chris Stavroudis (Private Conservator, Los Angeles), Alan Phenix (Scientist, J.Paul Getty Trust), and Sean Charette (GCI education unit) who project manages the CAPS workshops. Unfortunately Richard Wolbers (Associate Professor, Winterthur/University of Delaware Program in Art Conservation) was not able to attend, but of course, he was there in spirit.

The presenters each have their areas of special interest and knowledge and presentations summarized the work being undertaken in the field by numerous researchers (including the presenters). The format of the four days included lectures in the morning and practical work in the afternoons. Tom Learner presented an overview to the CAPS project and outlined the history, molecular structure and ageing of acrylic paints. This included the distinctions between solution and emulsion acrylics – one important factor being that solution acrylics dissolve in aliphatic solvents, and emulsion paints do not. Interestingly, although they are both acrylics, the reason for this is the size of the acrylic polymer, for example, acrylic solution paint *Magna* (Acryloid F10 – poly nButyl Acrylate) is similar to *Paraloid B67* in that the length of the side chain makes the polymer less polar and more affected by aliphatics. Tom also summarised that

acrylic emulsions have no less than ten additives in the tin, many paints have up to 20 additives, and there is a significant difference in changing one component in a formulation. These paintings will need cleaning, and the lack of patterns between brands when cleaning is significant. Tom also noted that in FTIR-ATR, the surfactant peak at 1110cm^{-1} is lost when cleaned with water, but not when cleaned with stoddard solvent; and that comparative swelling rates include acetone (100%), water (40%), and aliphatic (0%). Also interesting is that surfactant has been found to 'disappear' from the surface with light exposure.

Chris Stavroudis and Alan Phenix took us through the chemistry of liquid cleaning. Chris talked about aqueous systems. He reminded us that solvent systems work on the mechanisms of 'like dissolves like' (i.e. that materials and solvents are mutually attractive) however, this does not apply to all aqueous systems, particularly in relation to pH. Low pH (i.e. acidic) aqueous solutions are recommended for cleaning acrylic emulsions to preserve acidic materials. Chris explained that a pH buffer (ammonia) is used at a pH of around 9 in the paint tin to keep acrylic emulsion deproteinated and in solution. A typical 1966 artist's acrylic emulsion in the tube is at pH 9.3 and 30% solids. Using a high pH cleaning solution on a dry acrylic emulsion film may put it back into solution – not usually the aim of cleaning! Chris also noted that some pigments are pH sensitive, so this is also a factor to consider.

Conductivity (ionic strength) was also introduced with discussion around whether acrylic paint film acts like a 'sponge' or a 'membrane' (or both) when it comes into contact with aqueous systems. The sponge model theorises that ionic based isotonic, hypo and hypertonic models operate on swelling and extraction of materials. The membrane model theorises that osmotic pressure is the driver, and thus swelling can be affected by materials that are non ionic. Basically, if using

an aqueous cleaning system on acrylic emulsions, low pH (5.5-6) and high conductivity ($6000\mu\text{S cm}^{-1}$) are the safest places to start. To this, chelating agents, surfactants and gelling agents can be added. Alan Phenix observed that acrylic emulsion paints are very ionic, and that many components are more much affected by water than was originally thought. He also described organic solvents and their effect on acrylic films.

On day two, Bronwyn Ormsby described the history of research into wet cleaning acrylic emulsions. Looking at water extractable components, research has found that older paint films show less extractable components, extraction is pigment and brand dependant, and the extractable material is mostly PEO surfactant. Bronwyn discussed the effects of temperature and RH on treatment, gave an overview of the migrated surfactant, described acrylic film and surface morphology, discussed issues of conductivity and colour and gloss change during cleaning, and touched on ethical issues of cleaning. Note was made that there can be solubility issues with some organic based colours, probably due to excess surfactant. It has also been found that aliphatic cleaning may cause blanching, possibly because there is incomplete removal of surfactant on the surface.

During Chris Stavroudis's discussion on applying the chemistry of cleaning to acrylic emulsions, he introduced the concept of cleaning with water-in-oil microemulsions. These differ to conventional emulsions as they are clear, isotropic, have low viscosity, and the oil/solvent base is used as a protective (non active) component. The microemulsions are a way to introduce water to the surface of a water sensitive paint film through a protective layer. They enable much more control of aqueous delivery than regular emulsions. Bronwyn has been working with DOW chemicals to develop water-in-oil microemulsions to clean off carbon based hydrophobic dirt, and these were trialled in the practical afternoon sessions.

Practical Sessions

Practical sessions were set between the lectures to enable use of the theory. We generally had a lecture then practice session and finished each day with a sum up of the results from our testing.

All the paint samples tested were pre prepared by Bronwyn Ormsby (or intern). The samples were made in a manner derived from Bronwyn's years of examining and testing paint samples and her work with the DOW Chemical Company. Bronwyn and the DOW scientists established a standard method of making the paint samples and applying a complex mix of chemicals to make up artificial dirt that we were attempting to remove.

On the first day, we had a practical session before lunch to compare the effects of water and solvents on (dirt free) sample swatches. Three paint samples tested were a *Talens* Titanium white, a *Liquitex* burnt umber and a *Liquitex* cadmium orange. Later, we also tested a white ground (brand not recalled). The tests demonstrated that if you leave deionised water on the surface of acrylic paint too long the paint swells significantly.

The other factors that we observed were the correlation between the polarity of the solvent and the surface tension of the drop. *Talens* paint brand for example, was found to be more polar than *Liquitex*, and the aliphatic solvent drop did not spread on the *Talens*, but completely spreading on *Liquitex*.

The session after lunch had us calibrating pH and conductivity meters; which was a task in itself. Once the meters were calibrated, we then set about testing the different samples for their pH and conductivity, comparing the clean to the dirty surfaces and trialling agarose as a delivery system for water sensitive surfaces. It was discovered that conductivity testing is an 'in-exact' science, with different readings being recorded on the same paint surfaces by different people. Customized water solutions were made

up, and the revelation for us at this point was the comparison of deionised water to pH and ionic adjusted water when left on the paint surface. Water customised at a higher conductivity showed less 'spreading' and less swelling. Less swelling can also minimise the dirt from being driven into the paint surface, and alternatively, intentional swelling can be used to release imbibed dirt. We found water spread less on the Liquitex inorganic cadmium orange colour.

At the end of the day, we collated our observations and discussed the results with the presenters and each other. The discussions were one of the most interesting parts of the workshop as we were able to discuss our level of understanding in detail with no judgment from the presenters. Because of this openness, the workshop became a fascinating exchange of ideas and information.

On day two we set up our dirt covered paint samples to map out tests of various cleaning solutions described in the lecture by Bronwyn. Everyone had different paint samples, and we soon discovered that, as discussed in the lectures, different paint brands and colours react quite differently to the cleaning solutions. Additional to the pH and conductivity customisation of solutions, we also introduced surfactants to the mix. Ecosurf brand surfactants were tested. These 'green' ethoxylate surfactants have replaced the Triton family as they are better for the environment. We tried three variations of the Ecosurf (EH3, EH6 and EH9) each had slightly different properties due to the different hydrophilic-lipophilic balance. Ecosurf EH 3 could be used with the aliphatic and silicone solvents.

In the afternoon, we trialled the microemulsions for dirt removal, although for some the alcohol smell was too much. The microemulsions tested were made using a base of either Shellsol D40 (aliphatic hydrocarbon) or D4 (cyclomethicone – silicone solvent). For most of us, this was our introduction

to silicone solvents. We learned that they have lower polarity than aliphatics, they are volatile methylsiloxanes, and they have no odour and are relatively safe for humans. They are very slow evaporating, and they remove silicone oil (and fresh tape and labels). They are used in cosmetics to give that 'slippery feeling' in moisturizers. Of course careful clearance is an issue with microemulsions, especially as they contain surfactants. The microemulsion solutions tended to be quick working and quite aggressive on some samples. We also tried some polymeric emulsifiers – *Velvessil Plus* – a silicone grease with silicone solvent and surfactant was also tested. It can easily be made into a water-in-oil emulsion by adding customised water. *Pemulen TR-2* is the opposite material – it acts as an oil-in-water emulsion – holding (or bringing) oily materials into its water based structure. *Pemulen TR-2* is in powder form, and so is easily obtained in Australia. *Velvessil Plus* comes already mixed with solvent, and thus is not easy to import into Australia.

On Thursday, Chris Stavroudis showed us through the changes he made to his Modular Cleaning Program to incorporate the cleaning of acrylics. We then tried to use the system to test and find a cleaning solution for a real painting (from the op shop). This was great fun and chaos as 20 conservators worked on one painting with a new computer program indicating the steps to take; it turned out to be easier than first thought. Once you understand where to start with the MCP and figure out what you will use as a rinsing solution, the program takes you through the testing sequence to find a result that you are happy with.

After lunch, Alan Phenix explained the use of phase diagrams to estimate a water-in-oil and oil-in-water microemulsion to clean acrylic paintings. As with most phase diagrams there is a lot of guessing and estimation, even with the maths and chemistry equations. We did use them to make new microemulsions blending the ones

we trialled the day before and testing the results. There were some excellent results and some strange looking claggy mixtures in the end. We tried to come up with one mixture that we found worked the best to clean our samples. At the end of the day, we compared everyone's results and observations and discussed the variants.

We only had a half day on Friday, so we all got in early to make the most of it. We started by recapping what we had learnt so far and then attempted to finish all the testing that we had not quite completed or understood the first time. The presenters wrapped up and we discussed how to source the new materials. General consensus was that we had all been provided with additional understanding and options for acrylic emulsion cleaning. With some reluctance, we acknowledged that no two paint surfaces will be the same. We also acknowledged the effects of water on the paint films, and the necessity for controlled aqueous application during cleaning. The attention brought by the presenters to developing our understanding of the current trends in research and cleaning was invaluable. Many thanks again to the GCI and the AGNSW and all the presenters and participants for an amazing workshop – we look forward to ongoing dialogues.

Anne Carter and Natalie Hewlett



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Paper Research

The National Archives of Australia launches a new web site

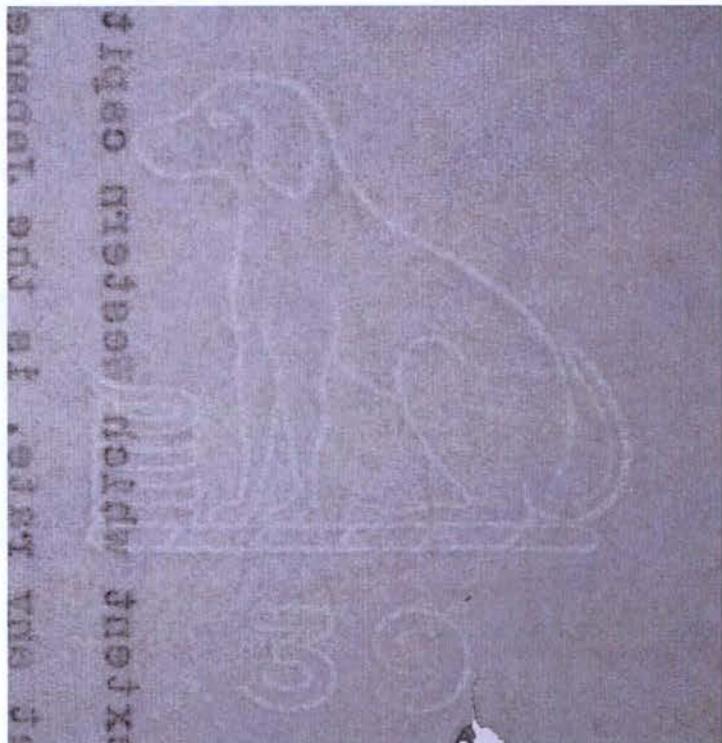
A website presenting a range of information regarding the quality and identification of machine made commercial papers has been launched by the National Archives of Australia. The website is the result of research into the collection of the NAA carried out by Travis Taylor, Caroline Milne and Ian Batterham.

The website can be accessed at:
<http://paper.naa.gov.au>

The website currently comprises a watermarks database, results of a survey into 20th century paper quality and a paper technology chronology.

It is hoped that the information on the site will help paper conservators in making better conservation decisions regarding the long term care of modern paper-based collections. It is also felt that the site will be of interest to a broader audience, including paper historians and forensic document examiners.

The NAA are interested in expanding the watermarks database to include information from other collections. If you have images and data on watermarks held in Australian collections we would be happy to consider their inclusion. Please contact Travis Taylor (travis.taylor@naa.gov.au) if you are interested in becoming involved.



What is this dog guarding? – a watermark from 1952



Yasscan watermark from 1931 – a mystery – is it a reference to Yass and Canberra?

The First Edition of *The Condition Report*

A New Australian Conservation Magazine

The start of 2014 welcomed the release of *The Condition Report*, a new Australian art conservation magazine.

The magazine started as a humble idea in October 2013, as first and second year conservation students from Melbourne University celebrated the end of the year at a local pub. The prospect of graduating and looking for work in Australia, coupled with a looming sense of limited opportunity and an acute awareness of the large number of graduating students, lead to the drive to create our own opportunities.

The fascination with conservation is apparent every time I speak of it with those outside the industry. As a student of conservation, I found the closed doors behind which much of the conservation industry operates frustrating; access was not easily obtained. To remedy this, I proposed a non-academic conservation magazine could make it easier for people from various backgrounds to access the dynamic and diverse world of cultural conservation. This form of communication could also effectively build the public awareness of conservation that is required for more funding to reach the industry.

Back at the pub, I spent the evening pestering my colleagues about possible names for the magazine. The list was quite long with none seeming quite right until another student joined in suggesting 'The Condition Report?' I dramatically declared 'Yes! That is it! The Condition Report!'.

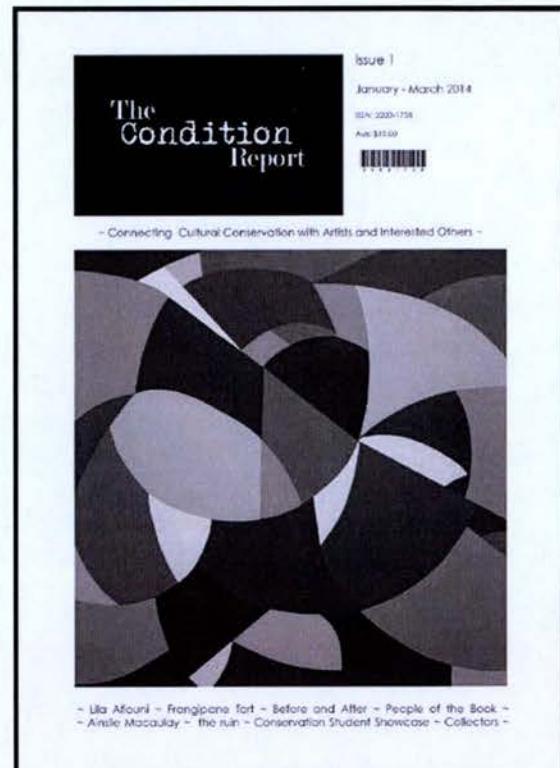
Armed with a name, I purchased the Adobe Suite (and started watching YouTube tutorials on InDesign), registered the business name and opened a bank account. I set up a Pozible crowd-funding project; unsure whether the idea could gain enough

financial support to progress. To my surprise, however within four days of the thirty day campaign we had reached the target. With thanks to the 72 supporters of the campaign, by the end we had generated more than double the target amount. The magazine would become a reality.

In the meantime I spread the word amongst university friends, established a Facebook group for contributors, created a list of topics for magazine content, and the writing began. The printing deadline came around quickly, however during this short time, we were fortunate to attract two businesses to advertise in Issue 1. In addition, we arranged for the magazine to be sold through the two NGV stores in Melbourne and the QAGOMA store in Queensland.

A website was established to expand the Pozible campaign; enabling people to purchase Issue 1, subscribe, and to pre-order Issue 2. With the generous support of AICCM who sent out email notifications to their members and with notices posted in the Conservation DistList, Issue 1 of the magazine has been posted around the world to destinations including: USA, Canada, Italy, Netherlands, Belgium, South Korea, New Zealand, UK, New Caledonia, Russia, Singapore, Switzerland, Taiwan, Portugal, and of course Australia.

The Condition Report is now preparing Issue 2 for print and is going from strength to strength, with new writers



*The First Edition of *The Condition Report**

joining the team and the reach of the magazine continuing to expand. The growing number of subscribers to the magazine includes individuals and institutions from around the world. We encourage you to subscribe to the magazine today so you will receive the latest issue *The Condition Report* as soon as it is released, visit our website at www.theconditionreport.com.au.

By visiting our website you can also find out more about our contributors and our mission. Don't miss out on this opportunity to share in our story.

By Shellie Cleaver

LinkedIn Groups

LinkedIn is a social networking website for people in professional occupations, it was founded in December 2002. LinkedIn facilitates discussion groups on a variety of topics. Many AICCM members are involved in LinkedIn groups as are associated professionals in Australia and around the world. The following is a list of current conservation-related discussion groups on LinkedIn.

- Maritime Archaeology & Conservation
- Collections Preservation and Care
- Conservator-Restorer
- Conservator-Restorer Book, Paper & Photograph
- The Institute of Historic Building Conservation
- Cultural Heritage Conservation Science. Research and practice
- International Association of Book and Paper Conservators
- Conservation Architecture
- Historic Buildings Conservation Research UK
- Art Historic Buildings Conservation Research UK
- Art for Conservation
- Conservation Picture Framing
- Building Conservation
- Metals conservation
- Conservation of glazed ceramics
- Art Conservation Resurgence Project Discussion
- International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)
- Heritage Conservation Society
- Conservation of historic concrete-research and practice
- Photography Conservation
- Stone Conservation and Restoration
- Heritage Conservation and Preservation
- Conservation or Preservation, which?
- Vintage photography
- Heritage salvage
- Old Masters Paintings and Works On Paper
- World News in Conservation of Cultural Heritage

Special Interest Groups

Conservation Framers Special Interest Group

We are in the early stages of planning for our first CFISG symposium and hope that we can make this a biennial event. Considering the crossover of interests with GOCSIG the conveners have decided to hold a combined CFSIG/GOCSIG symposium in early to mid November in Melbourne. The call for papers will go out soon so please put some thought into giving a paper. We also plan to have a mini trade fair at our symposium. If you have any ideas for a title for the symposium that will encompass the themes of conservation framing and gilded object conservation please send me an email at: loubradley@bigpond.com

Louise Bradley
Convenor, AICCM Conservation Framers Special Interest Group

AICCM Division News

AICCM Queensland Division

Professional Development Grants awarded

The inaugural AICCM Q Inc. Professional Development Grant application closed on 1 July 2013, and was awarded to Christine Ianna. Christine is an objects conservator and educator, with a long standing commitment to conservation in Queensland. She has had an extensive association with the AICCM and has held various roles over the years on the National Council and at the State Division level. Christine has worked as Senior Conservator at the Queensland Museum, as Manager, Preservation Services at the Queensland State Archives and has developed outreach programs on preventive conservation and disaster management for those working regionally through Museum and Galleries Services Queensland. Her current role is Publications Reformatting Coordinator at the State Library of Queensland.

Christine's grant of \$450 was used towards costs to attend Metal 2013, a five day meeting of the International Council of Museums Committee for Conservation (ICOM-CC) Metal Working Group that took place in Edinburgh, Scotland from 15th to 20th September 2013. Christine gave a lunchtime talk about her trip to AICCM Q members on Tuesday 18th February, where we learned about her love of all things metal as well as her introduction to new research and developing networks. Thanks to Christine for such an interesting review.

In this financial year, AICCM Q offered a second grant, and applications closed on February 1 2014. This grant has been awarded to Liz Wild, Sculpture Conservator at QAGOMA and will go towards the costs of delivering a paper at the IIC Congress in Hong Kong later this year. Liz will be presenting on an innovative treatment technique that she used to conserve a life-sized cloisonné figure by the Chinese-Australian artist Ah Xian. We wish her well and are looking forward to hearing all about the conference when she returns.

For more information about these grants please have a look at the AICCM website – Queensland Division page. Note that the availability of funds will be reviewed annually, and guidelines may change accordingly each financial year.

AICCM NSW Division

The NSW division is working out a plan to offer support to bush fire damaged communities. Our current focus is to raise awareness of the AICCM and conservation services within bush fire affected areas. The division is also consolidating a program of events, talks and social gatherings to hold throughout the year. I can foresee a fair bit of badgering/pleading/encouraging to get people to give talks. Having said that, we have already locked in two events so far. Big thanks to this year's committee for hitting the ground running!

Sheldon Teare President NSW Division



Beating tapa. Photo: Regina Meredith



The Social Pages

(For this issue of the Newsletter we are trying something new. We have divided the old Institutional News section in two. Separating the social stuff – staff comings and goings, births, deaths, marriages and other events – from the more professional stuff – exhibitions, treatments, conferences etc. We would appreciate feedback from readers on how you think this works.)

Art Gallery of NSW

Asti Sherring has been working on special projects in paper conservation during 2013, but left us in January of this year to begin a one year fellowship in photograph conservation at Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA).

Céline de Courlon finished up a one year internship in the painting conservation lab in October of 2013, but has returned to us in 2014 thanks to sponsorship through Women in Arts Group (WAGS), who are funding our Conservation Fellow in Modern Paintings Conservation for one year part-time. Céline has been working with a number of early acrylic paintings from the group of artists who exhibited in The Field exhibition in 1968, including Michael Johnson, Sydney Ball and Robert Rooney.

Andrea Nottage is saying goodbye for now after completing a four and a half month contract to perform a

full conservation treatment on Tom Roberts' Jealousy, 1889. This painting is considered the most important studio work by Roberts and is also extremely important in the AGNSW collection as the collection does not have strong holdings from this period. This project was sponsored by Friends of Conservation, a benefactors committee associated with the AGNSW which funds many of our larger conservation projects as well as enabling the purchase of much of our analytical equipment.

Australian National Maritime Museum

Jennifer Brian joined the ANMM Conservation team in October last year as an objects conservator.

Towards the end of last year the ANMM Conservation section had a morning tea for the three long term volunteers, **Victor Chiang, Geoff Tonkin** and **Jack McBurney** who were awarded the

AICCM Volunteer of the Year award for 2013. We followed the ANMM conservation department's tradition and had the tea table overflowing with homemade goodies of many sorts. A jolly morning was had by all!

International Conservation Services

Since the start of this year, the paper team at ICS has warmly welcomed a new head of department – senior paper conservator **Eliza Penrose** from the UK. Eliza holds a Masters in Conservation of Fine Art (Works on Paper) from Northumbria University and is an ICON accredited conservator.

Fiona Tennant is back from maternity leave and straight into a variety of projects including a Preservation Needs Assessment for Tamarama Surf Life Saving Club – a perfect job for the summer months!

Museum Victoria

Samantha Hamilton will be taking 3 years leave to undertake a PhD with the University of Melbourne from April. Her thesis is titled 'Best practice conservation programs for remote Aboriginal communities'. This PhD will see Sam's work with Aboriginal communities over the past 10 years and passion to create practical training programs come together. The team is very excited for Sam and wish her all the best in this undertaking. Recruitment to backfill Sam will commence shortly.



Victor Chiang, Geoff Tonkin and Jack McBurney proudly display their awards

National Archives of Australia

We have ANOTHER new baby! **Travis Taylor** and his wife Tomomi welcomed Karina on the 6th of December. The family are adjusting to each other and settling in nicely.

National Gallery of Victoria

The Conservation Department recently welcomed **Michael Varcoe-Cocks** to the position of Head of Conservation. Michael takes up the position with a broad understanding of the collections, programs and mission of the NGV and more than 15 years experience working with the department.

In September **Johanna Ellersdorfer** arrived to take up her H.D.T. Williamson Fellowship in paintings conservation, a two-year position which will see Johanna involved in all aspects of the studio's activities.

We said sad farewells to **Solitaire Osei** in December as she and her family have moved to the warmer climes of Brisbane where we wish them much happiness. Solitaire's contribution to the NGV over the past seven years has been extraordinary, and we miss her warmth and good humour every day.

Janelle Borig has extended her maternity leave from the Exhibitions conservation section for another twelve months, and sadly for us but wonderfully for her family we now expect her back in February 2015.

National Library of Australia

The National Library of Australia Preservation department welcomed in the new year with an extensive furniture re-arrangement. We have opened up the lab, it is now feeling lighter and more spacious and we can now see the bindery instead of only the tops of the book binders' heads!

Last year we welcomed **Cornel Platzer** as our new Branch Manager and **Denyl Cloughley** returned as the Preservation Manager after **Robin Tait** resigned with a keen eye on her bindery at home. We are excited to hear the changes that Cornel and Denyl have planned for our section. Our team includes: **Alexa McNaught-Reynolds**, **Lisa Jeong-Reuss**, **Janet McDonald**, **Sara Freeman**, **Melanie Sorenson**, **Susanne Wullen**, **Erika Mordek**, **Dave Roberts** and **Trish Crampin**.

Powerhouse Museum

Cath Akeroyd is a new member of staff. Cath is working on the Bromley collection of early computing and calculating devices such as slide rulers etc.

Hoa Huynh a conservation student from the Melbourne University Master's course spent 2 weeks in the department as a work experience student. Hoa's enthusiasm was fantastic and she worked on a number of preventative and conservation projects.

Dolla Merrillees has been appointed head of Collections.

Preservation Australia

The big event for the end of 2013 for Preservation Australia was the move to our new beautiful, sunny, historic, light and airy premises in Annandale. Our old building in Newtown was to be made into apartments so we were forced to find a new location. Our new premises has allowed for the product side (Conservation Resources) to be organized within its own space on the ground floor. Leaving the light and airy first floor as a gorgeous conservation studio space.

Our traditional Christmas party had to be postponed due to the move, but we are planning a studio warming party for around the end of March.

We are delighted to announce that we now share our studio space with textile

conservator **Tess Evans** of Heights Heritage Conservation. Our long-term intern, **Alex Robinson**, has returned after a brief stint with The Australia Council, and we have another intern from Germany commencing with us in early March.

Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art

Kim Barrett remains on leave until Easter looking after her gorgeous new baby Isabella. In the meantime, **Caroline O'Rourke** is looking after paper conservation tasks with **Sam Shellard**.

Queensland Museum

Cathy ter Bogt and **Jenny Blakely** hosted one of our favourite volunteers **Stephanie Smith** for a few weeks in January. Stephanie managed to deal with all of those objects that have been hanging around the lab for a few months – a great feeling to get them back into storage.

Cathy will be going on maternity leave soon and we have seized the opportunity to get work done on the non-object parts of our collection. As such she will be replaced by **Michael Marendy** and **Caroline O'Rourke**, both working part-time on our textiles and paper items.

Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office

Gaynor Tollard, collections library technician has been working in Conservation two days per week learning conservation technician tasks and preparing exhibitions. Gaynor has excellent aptitude for conservation work and is highly valued.

The Tasmanian Mercury Newspaper moved and downsized last year. **Janifer Smith** who had worked at the Mercury in the library for many years has come as a volunteer in Conservation.

Professional News



Art Gallery of NSW

Exhibitions

Frances Cumming, Exhibitions and Loans Conservator, has been busy over the last few months with our major summer exhibition, *America: Painting a Nation*. This included going on a courier trip to Korea to collect the works which had been exhibited there prior to coming to Sydney. She has since been overseeing installation of the current *Sol le Witt: Your mind is exactly on that line*, and *Afghanistan: Hidden treasures from the National Museum Kabul* (opening 7th March) exhibitions.

Kerry Head and **Donna Hinton** in the objects section have also been busy with the current *Sol le Witt* exhibition, helping to prepare the sculptures for display. They have also been involved with carpet installations for *Khadim Ali: the haunted lotus* (opening 6th March), condition reporting and exhibition preparation for *Afghanistan: Hidden treasures from the National Museum Kabul*, and treatment and mounting for *Plumes and Pearlshells: Art of the new Guinea highlands* (opening 30th May).

Analiese Treacy has just completed work on a number of photographs which have just gone on display in the Australian Vernacular exhibition at the AGNSW. Analiese has also been preparing works for a number of loans, including a selection of photographs by Sue Ford for an upcoming exhibition at the NGV.

Sarah Bunn completed conservation and exhibition preparation for the Yirrkala drawings, on loan from the Berndt Museum of Anthropology, University of Western Australia. The drawings were created in 1947 by clan leaders of the Yolngu community for anthropologists Ronald and Catherine Berndt, only a handful of which have

ever been displayed before. Sarah will travel with the exhibition to the Queensland Art Gallery in April and then to Darwin University Art Gallery for the installation and opening in August.

Treatments

Last November **Barbara (Basia) Dabrowa** started a major conservation treatment of the frame to the painting *The Upper Nepean, 1889*, by William Charles Piguenit (1836-1914). This is another project for which we are lucky enough to have sponsorship provided by our Friends of Conservation Benefactors.

This neoclassical cove (large cavetto) style frame was made by Sydney's great nineteenth century picture-framer, Henry W. Callan. The duration of the conservation treatment of the frame is scheduled for a period of 6 months, four days per week, and is due for completion by mid-April.

The funds provided by Friends of Conservation have also allowed for the employment of **Stephanie Limoges** to backfill Basia's regular position (for 4 months) as frames conservator in charge of loans.

Tom Langlands started the second year of the traineeship in reproduction frame making with David Butler at his workshop in the Blue Mountains. They work together on several projects; a frame for John Mather A Woolshed, Victoria, 1889, based on another 1889 Mather frame made by renowned Melbourne frame maker John Thallon, a frame for Lister Lister's *The Golden Splendor of the Bush* as well as a frame for the *Jealousy* by Tom Roberts.

Research

The Conservation Department has been cooperating with the University of Western Sydney on varied projects. **Paula Dredge**, **Margaret Sawicki**, and **Louise Allen** (Volunteer researcher) have been working with **Dr Richard Whurer**, Research Manager, Advanced Materials Characterisation Facility, looking at metallic paints used by artists since the late 19th century. These include: Charles Condor, Roy de Maistre, Ralph Balson, Eric Wilson and Roland Strasser. Paula has also initiated cooperation with Val Spikmans, Senior Lecturer in Forensic Science, School of Science and Health from Forensics, UWS. They have been looking at some samples from the Henry VIII painting as an honours student project. As a result of this work the possibility of a shared PhD or Fellow working with both the Gallery and UWS has been discussed.

In December 2013, **Paula Dredge**, **Louise Allen**, and **Margaret Sawicki**, in collaboration with the Australian Synchrotron scientist **Dr Ljiljana Puskar** were allocated 4 days on the infrared beamline at the Australian Synchrotron, Melbourne, to look at a number of metallic paint samples taken from art works in the AGNSW collection. The Synchrotron experiment aimed to investigate whether the type of metal, binder, drying time or viscosity of the binder in metallic paints affects the appearance, orientation and characteristics of the paint film. This research came out of the preparation for the Sydney Moderns exhibition and the notable presence of metallic paints on works by Roy de Maistre and Ralph Balson. The outcome of this research will be presented at the Joint ICOM-CC/ AIC Conference on Aluminum: History, Technology and Conservation, at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, April 7-10, 2014.

The Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) has entered into partnership with the AGNSW Conservation Department to investigate the application of neutron radiography/ imaging to the field of cultural heritage. Neutron radiography is a non-destructive examination technique used across a wide range of cultural heritage objects and is considered a complimentary technique to the more commonly available X-rays. Autoradiography is primarily used to determine the spatial distribution of different pigments within a painting, and can be used to visualise the artist's painting technique. The initial stages of this relationship are in progress and ANSTO are starting a research project in collaboration with Margaret Sawicki, Paula Dredge and Carolyn Murphy on the use of neutron radiography / imaging on specially-prepared mock-up paintings.

Training

The CAPS (Cleaning Acrylic Painted Surfaces) workshop held at the Art Gallery of NSW in December, 2013 was a great success, with the participation of 18 conservators from Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines. It was organised by Paula Dredge in collaboration with The Getty Conservation Institute. Three conservators from the Getty, a private conservator from Los Angeles and a Conservation Scientist from the Tate came to teach the group the emerging science of cleaning acrylic paints including many new cleaning systems developed by these scientists and conservators. It was much needed recognition that acrylic paint requires different methodologies for safe cleaning of dirt compared to traditional oil paintings and it offered solutions for the difficult problem of surfactants emerging from the paint film.

Margaret Sawicki has begun preparation for a course on identification of protein-based materials in art objects using the Enzyme-linked Immunosorbent Assay (ELISA) technique, planned for 9 -

11 September this year. The course at the AGNSW will be conducted by Dr Julia Schultz, conservation scientist at the Stuttgart State Academy of Art and Design, Stuttgart, Germany. (ELISA) technique is an analytical test that uses antibodies and colour change to identify a substance. By different antibody-based techniques complex mixtures of several proteins and gums can be distinguished down to a species level, and can be localized on cross sections. The optical density of the coloured reaction can be measured with a spectrophotometer, confirming the presence (or an absence, if the reaction does not occur) of the antigen of interest. The spectrophotometer for the ELISA technique has been purchased for the Conservation Department with the funds raised by Friends of Conservation. The course is organised as an event of the ICOM-CC Wood, Furniture & Lacquer Working Group, complimenting, but not a part of the ICOM-CC 17th Triennial Conference in Melbourne, 15 -19 September 2014.

The course is open to all conservators, conservation scientists, and MA conservation students, particularly to members of ICOM-CC and AICCM.

Conferences and papers

In October last year **Barbara Dabrowska** and **Margaret Sawicki** participated in the Joint Interim Conference on Heritage Wood: Research & Conservation in the 21st Century, which was organised by three ICOM-CC Working Groups: (Wood, Furniture, & Lacquer; Scientific Research, Sculpture; Polychromy, & Architectural Decoration) at the National Museum in Warsaw, Poland, 28-30 October 2013. Dr Malgorzata (Margaret) Sawicki, Coordinator of the ICOM-CC Wood, Furniture, & Lacquer Working Group, was involved in organizing this conference as a Coordinator of the Organizing Committee. This successful conference was hosted in collaboration with ICOM-Poland, the National Museum in Warsaw, the National Institute for the Museums and Public Collections

(NIMOZ), and the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw. The meeting was attended by over 200 conservators and conservation scientists from all over the world, including the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Netherlands, France, Egypt, Australia and Thailand. Over three days all participants listen to 40 lectures and debated on novel scientific methods and applied research into heritage wooden structures, as well as furniture, wooden sculpture, painted wood, gilded wood, varnished wood, lacquered wood, and paintings on wooden supports. Supplementary to the lectures, 25 posters were presented. Malgorzata and a few members of the Organising Committee work now on the editing of all papers and extended abstracts for the posters, which will be published in the form of proceedings from the conference later this year.

Arts Management WA

Exhibitions

Natalie Hewlett has been working full time at the Art Gallery of WA on Exhibition and Display Coordination.

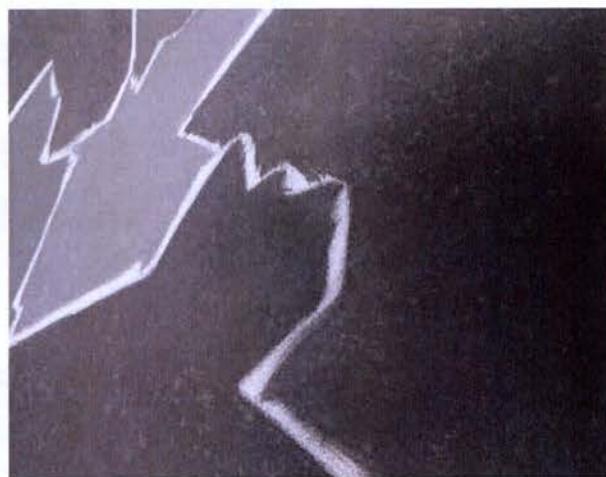
The other project that has her very busy right now is the Minnawarra Art Awards that she is curating for the City of Armadale. The exhibition will be opening on March the 28th and runs for two weeks.

Treatments

Natalie has done work at the Art Gallery of WA on mould removal and general cleaning of some paintings over Christmas. The photos below show an area where she did a test removal of the mould with a smoke sponge. She is currently working on cleaning and inpainting a serigraph on Masonite and its frame.



Test removal of the mould with a smoke sponge – before



After

Also occupying her time at the moment are a couple of Chinese watercolour pith paintings that have severe cracks to the pith support and the paint layers, this treatment is something she has been thinking about for a long time and she is still unsure as to what the best solution would be for them, any suggestions would be most welcome.

Australian Museum

Treatments

Sheldon Teare has begun a number of large scale treatment projects across the Natural Science collections. Major treatments from the fish collection include two 3m long Marlin specimens, a Great white shark, a Sun Fish and a Devil Ray (manta ray). **Megan Dean-Jones** and Sheldon will be cleaning, consolidating paint layers, carrying out structural repairs, infilling and inpainting the taxidermy fish specimens. New custom support cradles and hanging systems are in production offering each specimen much better support. The cleaning, consolidation and repair work on the first of the Marlin specimens has gone well. Infilling and inpainting will begin soon.

Madeline and Sheldon have devised a plan of attack to work through the cleaning of several large skeleton specimens which include a Beaked

whale, Pilot whale and large bottle nose dolphin. These specimens are a mixture of fully and semi articulated specimens making the job of cleaning them slightly more challenging. The bones will be dry cleaned and wet cleaned where needed. The wet surface cleaning is done with a mixture of ammonia and water, followed by ethanol to dewater. Several other large mammal skeletons may be tackled, such as a rhino, a juvenile elephant and camels, time depending.

Margaret has also been working on some whale skeletal material, this time a pygmy sperm whale. This specimen also holds very important scientific classification as a type specimen. The work involved dry and some selective wet cleaning. Old non-archival and damaging mounting of the flippers needed to be removed and done. Wires holding the individual bones in place where cut and the bones transferred to a padded archival board mount and stitched in place.

Surveys

Kate Jones and Sheldon have been surveying the large mammal specimens at our off site store. Specimens such as giant whale skulls or vertebrae were assessed for their readiness to be packed up and moved to new storage facilities. Kate took excellent notes while Sheldon scrambled amongst the bones identifying bones and looking

for registration numbers. Kate has also been working with Heather Mackay on an interesting Egyptian coffin. We will be undertaking a series of analytical testing, including dating, resin analysis and wood identification.

Colin Macgregor carried out a survey visit to the St Clair Museum in Goulburn as part of a series of visits commissioned by Museums and Galleries NSW.

Preventive

Heather Mackay is acting as an efficient gate keeper, ensuring that any potential pest problems are contained during our upcoming massive move. Heather has come up with a plan of action to make sure furry or feathered creatures are contained in high barrier bags. Heather has also been consulting and investigating one of our Egyptian mummy human remains.

Training

Colin Macgregor has initiated a series of disaster preparedness training seminars for collection staff. High staff turnover in recent years has resulted in a loss of knowledge in this area.

Australian National Maritime Museum

Exhibitions

It has been a busy start to the year with the closure and packing of Vikings – Beyond the Legend exhibition. This exhibition was produced by the Swedish History Museum in collaboration with Museums Partner in Austria. ANMM was the third venue and the only one in Australia. The exhibition travelled with couriers from both these organisations. The design of the display and crating was wonderful. The installation and demounting/packing was a smooth operation requiring very little input from ANMM conservation beyond assisting with light readings and reconditioning many tubs of Artsorb for the archaeological material.

Jonathan London has been spending time planning to lower, inspect, clean, replace cables and re-hang the Westland Wessex helicopter in the museum. The work will involve abseiliers, riggers, engineers and of course the conservation team.

Sue Frost has also been preparing textile loan objects for changeover display in some of the core galleries. These include 20th century immigration displays entitled Japanese War Brides, Chinese Seamen and Escape from Genoa- all personal stories of people who have migrated to Australia. As the objects are loans, conservation limits work on the items to documenting the object's condition and preparing supports where possible. Sue has also been framing up photos printed from the glass plate negative collection for Hoods Harbour a changeover display for the Tasman Light area.

Treatments

Jennifer Brian has been working through the backlog of objects treatments and carrying on the maritime archaeological conservation program with **Rebecca Dallwitz**. She has been using the lab's new Chloridometer to

analyse the backlog of samples from the ANMM's Maritime Archaeological program for chlorides and finalising the treatment of desalinated objects. She is also treating and surveying the Saltwater Barks collection, treating a large corroded cannon, rehousing the ANMM's large organic fish traps, treating objects for the upcoming Test of War exhibition and surveying large objects in storage.

Caroline Whitley has also been overseeing volunteer **Maddy Riley** repairing a large and degraded daily journal in preparation for its photography and possible transcription by a volunteer in our Registration department. The logbook was written by the lighthouse keeper at Booby Island in the Torres Strait, over a 30 year period 1893-1929, and provides a most interesting and rare overview of daily life, weather and work on the island, as well as having many inserted newspaper articles relating to wider political and social issues of the period. Fascinating stuff as we beaver away with its treatment.

Training

In January **Jennifer Brian** spent a week at the Narrabeen RSL Lifecare Museum where she was working with CCMC students and staff from the University of Melbourne. This involved teaching Preventive conservation and the treatment of pest infestations, running workshops and supervising students carrying out treatments.

Caroline Whitley mentored Melbourne Uni's CCMC paper conservation student **Jessye Wdowin-McGregor** for 2 weeks in January. Jessye performed treatments on paper and photographic materials using range of equipment and materials, mounted and framed photographs for the Hoods Harbour exhibition, worked with our volunteer Jack McBurney learning how to make book boxes and folders, and witnessed treatments of objects, textiles and the work happening with our maritime archaeology desalination program.

Acquisitions

The museum has instigated a new acquisition committee and Jonathan (or another conservator) will be representing conservation on a committee otherwise consisting of curators, educators and registrars. The aim of the new acquisition process is to enable rigorous appraisal of potential acquisitions and in some cases, consideration of 'whole of life' costs.

In order to assist collection management planning and allocation of resources, the Senior Registrar has developed an analysis tool using our collection management database to help us assign priorities for conservation intervention. This was partly as a result of enquiries from senior management but also because we realised that with our ever diminishing resources we need to find better ways to ensure our time is directed towards items in the collection most in need.

Research

Late last year **Sue Frost** offered assistance to Museum Studies student **Eloise Maree Crossman** who was researching a number of costumes from the textile collection for inclusion in the Australian Dress Register. These included the Margaret White WRAN uniform collection and a Chinese robe from the Boxer Rebellion.

Rehousing

The textile rehousing project continues through the help of our volunteers who are continuing the processes established by **Julie O'Conner**. These include rolling of flags and flat storage of costume from the Matthew and Dorothy Moore collection.

International Conservation Services

Treatments

The paper team continues to be busy with various projects. Wendi Powell (along with assistance from Eliza Forster and Katie Wood) has been working on a 6 panelled 'Forty Thousand Horsemen' movie poster, which was removed from a cinema wall last year and is currently in its final stages of treatment. Wendi and Eliza's most nervous moment of the project was assisting the National Film and Sound Archive filming a mini documentary on the conservation treatment. The pair were interviewed on camera and the work was filmed. We are all looking forward to watching this soon. Katie Wood has been doing great work with the team concluding treatments on 4 registers, including various tape removals and tear repairs. University of Melbourne student, Lucilla Ronai, also joined the team for a couple of days in January as part of her work experience.

Meanwhile, our new Objects and Outdoor Heritage team, made up of Katie Ross, Karina Acton and Arek Werstak, has spent the last few months working closely with personnel from the City of Sydney Council. They restored the Archibald Fountain in time for Christmas and the Sydney Festival, and simultaneously set to work on eight World War I Memorials that are located throughout the CBD. This project has predominantly involved cleaning, waxing and gilding, with the primary aim of improving the appearance of these landmarks in time for Anzac Day 2014. Most recently, works have been carried out to the Pyrmont War Memorial and Newtown Public School Memorial, with completion scheduled for the end of February.

Oliver Hull and Eoin O'Sullivan in the Furniture department are currently finishing work on a beautiful Regency, rosewood side cabinet. The cabinet has already undergone treatment for borer with the use of an anoxic chamber.

As a result of borer, some of the gilded elements also needed to be re-made. With all of its paper and porcelain panels now re-instated, the cabinet is beginning to reveal a sense of its original grandeur. In the meantime, Oliver continues to work on a side-table by English cabinet maker, John Cobb Several weeks ago. The team also recently completed treatment of several items from the set of iconic Australian TV show, 'Skippy the Bush Kangaroo'. This was part of a larger collections management project, which was primarily (and very successfully) coordinated by Meredith Lynch.

Claire Heasman and Arek Werstak have been working on-site re-gilding a number of War Memorials around Sydney in preparation for Anzac Day 2014, which will mark the centenary of the landing on Gallipoli. In-house, the Paintings team have been treating an array of artworks including a 13th – 14th century Icon attributed to Bernardo Daddi, an oil painting on glass and an official portrait of Charles Hoskins for Lithgow City Council, which required the removal of a top synthetic varnish to address some blanching issues.

From our Melbourne office, Skye Firth has been working on various textile items for Museums Victoria, while our Canberra representative, Doug Rogan, has been looking at various outdoor sculptures for ArtsACT.

Assessment

Fiona Tenant, freshly back from maternity leave will dive straight into a variety of projects including a Preservation Needs Assessment for Tamarama Surf Life Saving Club – a perfect job for the summer months!

Exhibitions

Matteo Volonté, Claire Heasman and Adam Godijn in the Paintings department have had a busy last few weeks de-installing a collection of oversized paintings from the Sydney Convention Centre, and preparing them for storage.

Doug Rogan has also been providing security options, including temperature and RH monitoring, for showcases that will be used in the National Gallery of Australia's upcoming exhibition, 'Atua: Sacred Gods'. ICS recently provided similar security provisions for the Queensland Museum's exhibition, 'Afghanistan: Hidden Treasures from the National Museum, Kabul', which is currently being shown at the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

National Archives of Australia

Interesting inquiry

Sally Kneebone received one of the best Agency inquiries ever, recently. She got a call from a department who had discovered 6 metal drums of preserved penguins with 3 intact cardboard tags inside (the rest had disintegrated). The labels were badly discoloured with what can only be described as fermented penguin goo. The pencil inscriptions on the labels had become obscured due to the goo, and the staff member was requesting advice on how they might read the inscriptions again. Sally suggested several non-intervention strategies such as looking at it under ultraviolet as the fats and oil may fluoresce but the pencil wouldn't; infrared photography or photocopying it through a blue filter to knock back the brown. Further suggestions included contacting a conservator to wash the labels in warm soapy water or solvents. Unfortunately, we haven't heard back on their success or otherwise.

Awards

Ian Batterham, Travis Taylor and Caroline Milne received NAA Australia Day awards for their work on the 20th Century Paper survey and website. See elsewhere in the newsletter for more information on the website.

Conferences and papers

A glaring omission from our last entry here was the contribution made by Peter Shaw to the AICCM National Conference in Adelaide. Peter gave a presentation entitled "Data visualisation: a new tool for conservation", in which he proposed new ways for conservators to use digital tools to enhance the way we work with large collections.

National Gallery of Victoria

Exhibitions

The textile conservation team Bronwyn Cosgrove, Kate Douglas and Annette Soumilas installed Art Deco Fashion in October, 2013. The section continues to prepare artworks for on-going light sensitive changeovers in the Asian, 19th and 20th century galleries.

Preparations continue for the forthcoming William Blake exhibition scheduled to open at NGV in April, as well as for the exhibition *Mid-century Modern: Australian Furniture Design* and the David McDiarmid exhibition *When This You See Remember Me*.

Treatments

In preparation for the forthcoming William Blake exhibition Ruth Shervington, and Louise Wilson have been undertaken treatments and technical examination of a variety of works by Blake including wood engravings depicting the pastorals of Virgil, watercolours depicting Dante Aligheri's *Divine Comedy*, etchings and engravings produced for Robert Blair's *The Grave, A Poem* and Chaucer's *Canterbury Pilgrims*.

In November the paintings conservation studio welcomed back Raye Collins, who has returned to help support Michael in the treatment of the iconic painting by Fred McCubbin, *The North Wind* (1891). This treatment has come about through sponsorship from Bank of America/Merrill Lynch. In late 2013

John Payne completed work on the large canvas *The Skittle Players* (c.1645) by David Teniers the Younger and has continued work on a number of smaller treatments on a group of Indian paintings. Sandi Mitchell has cleaned and restored Waller Paton's landscape *Entrance to Glen Etive* (1880). She will shortly be commencing work on the large painting by Luca Giordano, *St. Sebastian* (c.1653).

Waller Hugh Paton painting *Entrance to Glen Etive* was restored for the upcoming exhibition *For Auld Lange Syne: Images of Scottish Australia from First Fleet to Federation* at the Art Gallery of Ballarat. This treatment involved a large amount of structural work, removal of a very discoloured varnish layer and large amounts of fill and overpaint, which when removed revealed the date of the artwork. The treatment of this artwork will also form part of the Public Program schedule at the Art Gallery of Ballarat.

Catherine Earley is working on silver, ceramics, paper, photographs, lacquer, jewellery and maquettes for various exhibitions all converging fast.

MaryJo Lelyveld and Suzi Shaw are enjoying the challenges of working on Australian furniture for the exhibition *Mid-century Modern: Australian Furniture Design*, including crazed cellulose nitrate varnishes, hardened polyurethane foams, and cracked rubber stoppers. Our eighteenth century galleries are being re-hung and Holly McGowan-Jackson has been conserving a large late 17th century mirror, including working with a specialist glass beveller to create a replacement curved mirror section. The re-hang also includes the installation of a large marble mantelpiece, which has involved co-ordinating with NGV staff members from Assets and Facilities, Design, Curatorial, Registration, Art Services and Exhibitions Management, and private conservator Jude Schahinger, who has treated the mantel piece and will be leading the install.

The preparation of works for the upcoming David McDiarmid exhibition *When This You See Remember Me* (at

NGVA in May) has been an intra-departmental effort with paintings, paper, objects and exhibitions sections involved. Helen Casey is treating a large 'shower screen' collage piece and has had great results creating aged facsimiles of the original 'unaged' material to match and replace missing elements. The NGV holds the artist's archive of materials which have not been exposed to much light and are significantly less degraded than the materials in the artwork. The wide variety of holographic films and plastics in the archive and objects was analysed by Objects Conservator Trude Ellingsen using FTIR. Trude was able to achieve a 95% identifiable spectra for most of the carrier films and determined that they range in type from polyethylene, cellulose acetate, cellulose nitrate and acrylic. Small amounts of these archive materials were used to replace detached and damaged elements in two artworks. Sandi Mitchell has also been repairing two works with help from John Payne.

In the paper lab, Ruth Shervington, Louise Wilson and Sarah Brown are also preparing a suite of David McDiarmid collages.

Research

Since October, 2013 Bronwyn Cosgrove, Kate Douglas and Annette Soumilas have been busily researching for *Fashion Detective*, an exhibition that focuses on 19th century textiles and costume. The textile conservation team have developed a series of object case studies that investigate themes of poisons, identity and hidden materials for the exhibition e-publication. Using technical examination and analytical techniques, these case studies reveal material evidence that enhances curatorial provenance research.

Conferences and papers

Catherine Earley is organising the AICCM Exhibitions Special Interest Group conference in March with the help of Helen Casey, Helen Privett and MaryJo Lelyveld (see the SIG pages for more).

Sarah Brown is presenting a paper on the treatment of the collages at On Paper? The 8th AICCM Book, Paper and Photographic Materials Symposium being held in Sydney in May. Her paper will include discussion of the challenges involved in preparing inherently unstable works for display. The collages had numerous missing components and required extensive reconstruction in order for the artist's original intent to be conveyed.

Visiting Fellow

Between September and December **Carl Villis** was a Visiting Fellow at Harvard University's Center For Renaissance Studies at the Villa I Tatti in Florence. He was there to research and write a book on the discovery of the NGV's Renaissance portrait of Lucrezia Borgia. Since his return he has recommenced work on the seventeenth-century portrait of Sir John Rous, 1st Baronet of Henham Hall (1660).

Also in the paintings conservation studio, Johanna's first major treatment was the cleaning and restoration of Frederick McCubbin's portrait of his wife (1893). She is currently cleaning H.J. Johnstone's *Morning on the Murray near Blanchetown* (1882) and will shortly start work on Egbert van Heemskerk's *Family group in a landscape* (1666).

Database

The Artists Colourmen database on the NGV website will be joined shortly by another on-line digital resource of frames and frame makers in the collection also developed with funds from the Telematics Trust.

National Library of Australia

Exhibitions

The year is yet young but our major exhibition is almost done. 'Mapping Our World' has been a huge success and will have received over 100,000 visitors before its close on the 10th March.

'Mapping Our World' was a major undertaking for the National Library, with about six international loans and many more national loans our registration team did an amazing job on the planning and scheduling of everyone's arrival and install schedule. **Alexa McNaught-Reynolds** and **Lisa Jeong** worked extra hard at the install making sure all the condition reports were checked off and items installed. One of the star items that arrived came from the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana in Venice; the famous Fra Mauro map created in 1450 is an amazing and very large object. It had never before left the country so this was a new experience for everyone involved and it was too big to fit through any of our doors, so we knocked out a wall in the reading room! If you have not seen it, we have a YouTube link to this amazing journey: From Venice to the National Library of Australia: the Fra Mauro Story - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wnUl8fcaDpI>

Our Preservation team was not left out of the excitement, mere months before the exhibition was due to open the National Library purchased a map: *Archipelagus Orientalis, sive Asiaticus* (Eastern and Asian archipelago), which documents the discovery of Australia before the arrival of the British. Created by VOC cartographer Joan Blaeu in 1663, there are only four of these maps in the world so we are very privileged to have this in our collection. The map arrived in relatively poor condition so the team designed a staged treatment proposal and stabilised the map in preparation for the exhibition with further treatment to re-commence once it comes off display. If you would like to see it have a look at our YouTube video: Preserving Blaeu's 'Archipelagus Orientalis' (1663) at the National Library of Australia - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DQybe6alCUk>

We are in the final planning stages for the de-installation of 'Mapping Our World' and it is going to be a whirlwind of activity with all the couriers returning; the Fra Mauro will be the last to exit the building, through the wall.

This exhibition has been an amazing and interesting experience and although it has been such a fantastic show we will all be relieved to see the end.

Powerhouse Museum

Exhibitions

Gosia Dudek installed the 'Oppsatoreum: inventions of Henry A. Mintox- a fiction by Shaun Tan' an exhibition for children. 'The Beatles in Australia' exhibition has closed and will be relocated at the Arts Centre in Melbourne. Unfortunately the John Lennon suit from the Victoria and Albert Museum, the centre piece for our exhibition will not be travelling to Victoria. The 'Game Masters' exhibition from the Australian Centre for the Moving Image is in full gaming mode. Skye is preparing objects for the Jewellery exhibition. Frock Stars travelling exhibition was dismantled at the Museum of Western Australia, by **Vanessa Pitt** and **Suzanne Chee** installed Frock Stars at the museum of Tropical Queensland.

Collection work

Rebecca Main is working on the Benini collection of cellulose acetate photographs and the Worth's (circus) photographic archives. **Vanessa Pitt** continues apace with documenting and removing problematic batteries from objects in the PHM collection. Recently Vanessa checked a group of newly acquired radiation detectors and discovered one containing a total of ten batteries, each soldered in place. This has created an ethical dilemma for Vanessa – to document then remove and store all of the batteries separately, or leave the batteries in-situ and set up a program of annual checks to see if their condition changes over time. Tim Morris, with 3 volunteers is restoring an Astrograph telescope which will be designed at the entry of the new 3rd Dome for the Observatory.

Lorna Booker, a volunteer is working on cirkut panorama cellulose acetate

and cellulose nitrate negatives which are 40x10 inches. Condition reporting, cleaning and housing are under way.

Publications

Kate Chidlow is writing a book about Caring for Farm Machinery and has also written a couple of case studies about Restoration versus Conservation of large wheat wagons (available on website).

Documentation

Kate Chidlow is reviewing an internal document on Conservation Display guidelines. The final document will be used to inform design, workshop and exhibition staff of our needs, wants and areas of compromise. We have a new Collection Head, **Dolla Merrillees** and we hope these guidelines will help us work towards the exhibition process being more collaborative and efficient.

Outward Loans

Loans were prepared for the National Gallery of Victoria- David McDiarmid and Sydney Living Museums (formally Historic Houses Trust) – Celestial City.

Research

Sue Gatenby is working with **Frances Fitzpatrick** in a survey of the garments which has dress shields. Research into their material identification, deterioration and storage requirements will be investigated. Sue and Rebecca Ellis are investigating Plastic labelling methods for object registration purposes. XRF analysis was carried out to identify the original paint colour on the Astrograph telescope. Oddy testing was done for a number of new materials used in the Oppsatoreum exhibition.

Preservation Australia

Visits

Late in 2013 **Beate Yule** and **Tegan Anthes** conducted an extension reassessment of Department of Lands plans in Bathurst. During this week long

visit Tegan delivered several workshops focusing on new treatment techniques for the treatment of the plans, including tape removal, consolidation and repairs.

Disaster response

Early in 2014 **Kay Söderlund** responded to a disaster, which resulted in 100's of irreplaceable books requiring air-drying, interleaving and pressing. Beate and Kay have been working on this collection for several weeks and the books are nearly dry.

Treatments

Kay and Tegan have also spent many hours completing the conservation treatment of the Department of Lands Register 6. This Register had extensive adhesive tape over every page. The tapes included magic, cello, linen, glassine, cotton and paper tapes. Some pages were completely laminated in a variety of tapes with the paper fractured and fragile beneath. This project was both challenging in its intensity and satisfying to see the beautifully lined pages within polyester sleeves at the completion. Tegan presented a short talk at an AICCM NSW event on the tape removal techniques developed for this project.

Training

Kay conducted a specialised training session for Newcastle Maritime Museum volunteers and local community museums in Basic Paper Conservation. The 24 participants were delighted to experience the beauty of a Japanese tissue and wheat starch paste repair.

Museum Victoria

Exhibitions

Samantha Hamilton has been working on the Aztecs exhibition set to open on April 9. This exhibition involves loans from 30 lending institutions and will involve an install with multiple conservation teams and 6 couriers from Mexico.

Sarah Babister has been working on condition assessments for an exhibition on World War I focusing on the health costs of war, opening in August 2014. Erina McCann has been busy working on World War I material scheduled to go on loan to the Shrine of Remembrance for their WWI anniversary exhibition.

Karen Fisher has been busy preparing a suit of samurai armour to go on loan to the NGV, as well as preparing a selection of bushfire affected materials to go on loan for an exhibition marking the 5 year anniversary since the Black Saturday bushfires.

Conferences and papers

Samantha Hamilton and **Sarah Babister** will be presenting at the AICCM Exhibitions SIG's Symposium in March. Sam will be presenting on new procedures that were developed during the Ancestral Power and the Aesthetic touring exhibition. Sarah will present on the development opportunities blockbuster exhibitions present conservator, in particular related to her work on the Afghanistan: Hidden Treasures from the National Museum, Kabul exhibition. A number of other staff members will attend.

Rosemary Goodall presented her research on poisoned dart and spear tips at the 7th International Workshop on Infrared Microscopy and Spectroscopy using Accelerator Based Sources in Lorne in November. The research was conducted at the Australian Synchrotron facility. Rosemary and **Danielle Measday** are currently doing further analysis using the synchrotron facility, this time focusing on the distribution of heavy metal pesticides through examples of mounted specimens using a medical imaging beamline. This research is in partnership with CSIRO's **Deb Lau**.

Queensland Art Gallery/ Gallery of Modern Art

Exhibitions

Sam Shellard has been working with Nick Cosgrove and David Roussell on 'Transparent: Watercolour in Queensland 1850s-1980s' and has written a nice chapter in the catalogue outlining her survey of fine artist papers used by water-colourists in the exhibition. Caroline O'Rorke has been dealing with multiples for a recently opened exhibition "Trace: performance and its documents". Stuart Fuller has also been working on time based media for this exhibition.

A small exhibition of works by artist Sam Fullbrook is also being prepared, which is providing some interesting insights into his painting methods. An international touring exhibition of some large indigenous works has required significant attention from paintings technician Mandy Smith.

Liz Wild, Caroline O'Rorke, Amanda Pagliarino, and Michael Marendy have also been working on the demount of 'Californian Design' a LACMA exhibition of modern design, and Liz and Amanda have been working towards the closure of Cai Guo-Qiang's 'Heritage' – an installation of 99 life sized replica animals which may soon be off on tour.

Treatments

In paintings conservation, Gillian Osmond, Anne Carter and Kate Wilson are treating a rare group of 1990's oil paintings by Ah Xian for exhibition. These include finished and unfinished paintings, some with exposed ground and charcoal drawing. They have heavy layers of dirt and insect residue and the modular cleaning program theories are being tested for dirt removal. Makeup and PVA sponges have been used in preference to

conventional swabs to avoid catching on the finely textured paint and PVA ground layers. Robert Zilli and Damian Buckley are making new frames for this suite of paintings with Merv Brehmer.

In sculpture conservation, Liz Wild has completed treatment on an Ah Xian's "Human human – lotus, cloisonne figure 1".

Preventive

In the preventive program, Elizabeth Thompson continues with IPM and the freezer and low oxygen treatment programs.

Conferences and papers

A paper by Liz Wild outlining the treatment of Ah Xian's "Human human – lotus, cloisonne figure 1" has been accepted for presentation at IIC in Hong Kong later this year. Congratulations Liz!

Queensland Museum

Exhibitions

Cathy and Jenny have been particularly busy so far this year. In January we de-installed Afghanistan: Hidden Treasures from the National Museum Kabul, and sent it on its way to Sydney; while February has had us taking down the extremely popular Collectomania display – comprising of over 2000 objects. We are now having a small breather before Deep Oceans (AusMus) and Lost Diggers (AWM) arrive in March-April.

Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery

Exhibitions

2014 is ramping up to be a busy year in QVMAG Conservation with the main focus being exhibition related work. Charlotte Walker (QVMAG Conservator of Objects) and Amy Bartlett (QVMAG Conservator of Paper) have been busy preparing artworks and objects for a number of current and upcoming exhibitions.

Late last year they assisted with the preparation and installation of artworks for the annual ArtRage exhibition, as well as objects and artworks for David Keeling: a Dreamers Keepsake and Frank Hurley: Journeys into Papua which both feature significant QVMAG collection items not displayed for some time.

Charlotte Walker has been assisting with the installation of decorative arts objects in our Federation Gallery. Amy Bartlett has been preparing matchboxes and matchbooks for an upcoming exhibition, along with mounting works on paper for changeovers in the galleries. They are both currently cleaning, condition reporting and assisting with the installation of ceramics in the Mines of Memory: The Works of Vincent McGrath exhibition at the art gallery.

Amy has recently completed work for two outward loans including condition reporting and cleaning framed works on paper and oil paintings by Peter Trusler for display overseas. In addition, she condition reported, treated, framed and packed a number of artworks for loan to the Devonport Regional Art Gallery. The exhibition featuring Bea Maddock's Leaving a Mountain series of works on paper and paintings is being exhibited in Devonport from 15 February to 23 March 2014 and will be exhibited at the QVMAG from May 2014.

Treatments

Following the Christmas break **Charlotte Walker** has been focusing on the treatment of a brass badge, a wattle-work embroidery and a zinc plate.

Conferences

Charlotte Walker attended the AICCM National Conference in Adelaide in October 2013 and Amy will be attending the AICCM Conservation on Exhibition conference in March 2014 where she will be presenting a PowerPoint Poster.

The May 2014 Museums Australia National Conference will be held in Launceston with QVMAG hosting a number of lectures and activities.

Volunteer work

The QVMAG Conservation team would not be complete without our volunteers. Olive Bull continues to make a range of custom made boxes and folders. She has recently completed a rehousing project for the Fine Art sketchbook collection. **Margaret Barlow** has been sewing cloth covers for the framed Fine Art works on paper collection to minimise their light exposure in the store. She has also been rehousing paper labels and ephemera from the Natural Sciences collection. **Jim Carroll** continues to repair ship models from the History collection, some of which are intended for display in a future exhibition.

Awards

Our volunteer **Olive Bull** was recognised by AICCM in 2013 with an Outstanding Conservation Volunteer Award.

Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office

Exhibitions

Sandy Hodgson and **Gaynor Tollard** prepared the exhibition "The Sunday Painters" for the Allport Library and Museum of Fine Arts. The works featured are a selection from the largest donation of artworks made to the Allport Library of watercolours by a group of well-known Tasmanian artists. The group of artists painted together every Sunday since the 1950s.

All the works were removed from their frames, damaging attachments removed, re-mounted to conservation standards and re-framed in their original frames.

Treatments

Volunteer **Janifer Smith** is cleaning and rehousing the huge collection of glass plate negatives which came to the Archive late last year from the Tasmanian Mercury newspaper. The Tasmanian Mercury Newspaper moved and downsized last year. Janifer worked at the Mercury in the library for many years and her intimate knowledge and expertise at listing and describing the material has helped enormously in adding the items to the data base.

Acquisitions

The Allport Library and Museum of Fine Arts has recently acquired a watercolour portrait of Thomas Giblin by Thomas Griffeths Wainewright. It is a significant colonial work to add to the collection by a convict writer and artist known as "The Poisoner". Wainewright was convicted for forgery rather than the murders he was suspected committing. **Stephanie McDonald** prepared the work for temporary exhibition following acquisition.

New Conservation Studio in Victoria:

Book Conservation Services moves to Australia

Book Conservation Services (BCS) is a small Book & Paper Conservation business that has just washed-up (almost literally) on the sunny shores of Castlemaine, Victoria. The business began when Melbourne-born Bookbinder and Book Conservator, Karen Vidler, established Book Conservation Services in South-West London in 2006. She started by taking on conservation work from private collectors and book dealers, building a group of clients to include large institutions in London, Oxford and Cambridge. She also had a regular intern program, offered workshops to students of conservation and bookbinding in various aspects of book and paper conservation and tutored on the Books Program, West Dean College, UK.



Reinforcing mould damaged 16th text pages is the last intern at the British studio, Bram Van Den Broeke MA student Artesis University College Antwerp Conservation and Restoration program

In August 2013 the contents of the conservation bindery was crated or boxed into a shipping container bound for Melbourne via the Suez Canal. There were several anxious weeks following the progress of the ship via the shipping company website and friends telling horror stories of containers bobbing around in shipping lanes and being sunk.



Crating up Harrild the large nipping press for shipping

In January 2014 BCS was re-established at the Castlemaine site of Workspace Australia in the old Castlemaine Hospital building. The new conservation bindery is located on the second floor with great natural light (during the recent heat wave the curtains were never opened!) and enough bench space for 4 people. There is a coffee Roasters in the old hospital furnace located near the front entrance of the building and a friendly coffee shop onsite.



Workspace Australia, Castlemaine, the new home of BCS

The first intern for BCS Castlemaine is Peter Mitchelson who completed his Masters in Paper Conservation at The University of Melbourne in 2011. Subsequently he worked for Artlab Australia and more recently

at the National Library of Australia in Canberra. The focus of his training with BCS is bookbinding and book conservation skills for the conservation of cloth and leather bindings. His key project is the full book and paper conservation of a 17th century, full-leather, wooden boarded binding. It's a monster. You can follow the progress of Peter's internship and this project on the BCS Facebook page: www.facebook.com/bcsbindery



Book Conservation Intern, Peter Mitchelson

More details of the work they undertake can be found at the Facebook page or website: www.bookconservationservices.com



inside the new bindery, Harrilds new home

Karen Vidler & Peter Mitchelson



STERILISATION AS A CONSERVATION TOOL

Around the world, museums, universities, galleries and libraries are increasingly using industrial sterilisation techniques, such as irradiation, to strengthen their protections against mould, pest infestations and bacteria.

Irradiation is widely used in the medical, pharmaceutical and agricultural industries and is at the front line of Australia's quarantine system. It is a physical means of sterilisation whereby products are exposed to gamma rays. These rays act as a source of ionising energy that eliminates bacteria, pests and other pathogens, while having minimal impact on the treated item.

STERITECH

Steritech is a proud Australian family owned company and the leading contract sterilisation processor in the Asia-Pacific region. For more than 40 years, Steritech has been helping eliminate pests and disease, in order to make products safer for consumers and to protect the environment.

With plants in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane offering gamma irradiation, ethylene oxide and heat treatments, Steritech is the only contract sterilisation company in Australia.

Steritech is licensed and accredited by a number of Government authorities, including the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service, Therapeutic Goods Administration, Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority and the relevant State Environmental Protection Agencies.

BENEFITS OF IRRADIATION

Steritech has worked with a number of major Australian universities and State libraries to help manage pest and mould problems in archived materials.

The benefits of irradiation for professional conservators are:

- It is effective against mould and bacteria and depending on the dose will eliminate a broad spectrum of insect pests at all stages of development, including moths, booklice and silverfish.
- The gamma rays penetrate packaging and as such are the only sure way to obtain total penetration of archived materials.
- The process is chemical free and leaves no residues.
- It does not involve heating or cooling the treated products and does not expose the products to water.
- The process is relatively quick and simple and can be applied to archived materials in bulk.
- It is a recognised quarantine measure for goods travelling interstate or overseas.

Steritech is a member of the Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Materials and we would welcome the opportunity to discuss opportunities to help Australian conservators protect their materials.

For more information, contact Raymond Bryden in Melbourne on 03 8726 5514, Jamie Crighton in Sydney on 02 8785 4403 or Glenn Robertson in Brisbane on 07 3293 1566, or visit www.steritech.com.au.



Submissions for the newsletter

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

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

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

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

Thank you

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SIG convenor positions are open for election every two years.

For further information contact the SIG Convenor Helen Privett (hprivett@museum.vic.gov.au).

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