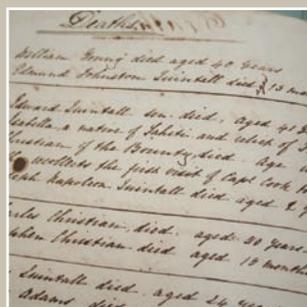


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**Conservator  
Ken at St Louis  
Art Museum**



Bounty mutineers at NAA



Moses brings down the law at NGV



Gajendra Rawat in New Delhi



# 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](http://www.steritech.com.au).**



# President's Report

By the time you receive this hot little newsletter in your hands (or on your desktop) 2015 will be well underway. Not only will summer be over (even if only technically) but the National Council will have met to plan its activities for the coming year at its annual Face-to-Face meeting. During the two day meeting, the National Council initially reviews some of the great work

that it, with the support of its membership, has achieved over the past year. So in case you're wondering what it is that the AICCM provides in return for you membership fees, and what the National Council gets up to during their bi-monthly meeting, the table below outlines a handful of some of the more interesting activities undertaken over 2014.



Area	2014 Outcomes
Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submission of response towards 'Green Army' Discussion paper</li> </ul>
Professional Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 new Professional Memberships were awarded across two application rounds in May and November</li> <li>• Review of first round of renewals by 8 Professional Members</li> </ul>
The Bulletin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful negotiation of publications contract of The Bulletin with Maney Publishing</li> <li>• Publication of The Bulletin Volumes 34 and 35 featuring a total of 19 peer-reviewed articles</li> <li>• Past editions of The Bulletin made available on-line</li> </ul>
AICCM Newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redevelopment of Newsletter format</li> <li>• Publication of three Newsletters in February, June and October</li> <li>• Past editions of The Bulletin made available on-line</li> <li>• A survey of the most popular aspects and preferred method of delivery for the AICCM Newsletter with 90 responses.</li> </ul>
AICCM website incl. social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research and preparation of the AICCM website transfer from Community Builders to Agilewear to better support technical needs of the organisation</li> <li>• Twice daily posts on Facebook that drew over 1338 likes</li> <li>• 171 Twitter followers @HeritageRescue</li> <li>• Established a paid casual Web Support position</li> <li>• Weekly updates to website pages and content</li> </ul>
Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Several SIG groups held events this year including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The inaugural Exhibitions SIG 17th – 18th March, Melbourne</li> <li>– Book and Paper SIG Symposium 7th – 9th May, Sydney</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Acted as partner organisation to the University of Melbourne to deliver the 17<sup>th</sup> Triennial ICOM-CC Conference in Melbourne</li> <li>• Confirmed venue and theme (<i>'Illuminating the New'</i>) for 2015 National Conference in November with planning well underway</li> <li>• Active State Committees with many holding monthly meetings and events (either almost or more than in the case of QLD)</li> </ul>

Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental Guidelines Taskforce             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Held a joint ‘Sustainability and environmental standards for cultural collections’ Symposium held in partnership with Council of Australasian Museum Directors Association (CAMD) and The University of Melbourne.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Education Standing Committee</li> <li>• Disaster Response Committee             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Established Twitter handle (@HeritageRescue) to manage preparation and salvage information pre-, during and post disaster events.</li> <li>– Updated and reprinted ‘Before a Fire’, ‘After a Fire’ and ‘After a Flood’ pamphlets (also available via the AICCM website)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Sponsorship and funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation by Colin Pearson of \$10,000 towards ongoing conservation research grant tied to The Bulletin publications</li> <li>• Presentation by the Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Societies (ADFAS) towards annual conservation training grant of \$8,500. A survey accompanying the news of the grant to ascertain the areas of greatest training interest received 75 responses from the membership.</li> <li>• \$1000 towards the Public Fund as raised from <i>The Monument Men</i> movie night with over 150 conservators attending the movie night in Canberra and Melbourne</li> </ul>
General Governance & Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of an Events Planning Toolkit including development and revision of budget and planning pro-formas for SIG activities, conferences and community events (available on-line)</li> <li>• Completion of AICCM Procedures Manual (available on-line)</li> <li>• Successful amendments to Constitution to update methods of communicating election material and length of Professional Membership tenure Several amendments to the Constitution allowing AGM documents to be sent electronically</li> <li>• Overhaul of business tools and archiving practices for more effective communication internally, with the membership and for archiving purposes</li> </ul>

But the primary concern of the two day meeting is preparing for the next twelve months of projects and activities, many of which may take several years in the planning to execute. Top of the list will be the future of the AICCM Newsletter, and underpinning our website discussions will the question of how best to integrate the various communications platforms by which the AICCM distributes content to not only its members but the wider profession and general public. In this issue, Ian Batterham (Newsletter Editor) provides results from the Newsletter survey to our membership that was distributed late last year. I will leave the details of the survey to Ian but some common comments confirmed what the National Council had suspected.

Firstly, more than ¾ of our members read the: ‘Technical articles’; ‘Conference and Workshop reviews’; ‘Notifications for upcoming events’; and ‘Technical notes and queries’ sections of the

Newsletter. Secondly, more members are interested in distributing the Newsletter more broadly on-line internationally through conservation networks and nationally, via industry networks to increase the profile of the innovative and critical work being undertaken by Australian conservation professionals. Some noted that this would require an overhaul of the content featured in the Newsletters, namely the social news – which traditionally has featured as one of the favoured publication items. In fact, according to the survey, more members will likely read this President’s Report than the social news (I’m shocked!?) which may be more a reflection of the availability of other information sites (such as Facebook and LinkedIn) to provide more timely information on this front than interest in the machinations of Council. It seems that our members would prefer to read the Newsletter for professional-technical news and social media sites for professional-social news.

Thirdly, it also seems that members are in agreement that the Newsletter need only be made available digitally – but in what format digitally is where the boundaries are drawn with half preferring it to be produced in PDF format (which is more easily downloadable, printable and archive-able) than an e-news format (which incidentally 40% would prefer) or a stand-alone, active website (17%). And this is where much of our time over will be spent. Determining the format of the Newsletter to ensure it can be widely distributed amongst different professional channels and remain relevant for our members as well as those we seek to inform.

**MaryJo Lelyveld**  
AICCM President

# Workshop review

## Paper Conservation Workshop, New Delhi

In January 2015 I had the opportunity to conduct a 2 day workshop in New Delhi, India. The workshop was organised by Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts (IGNCA) and National Museum Institute (NMI). The workshop was attended by the staff of IGNCA and students from NMI. There were twenty five participants for the workshop, 20 from NMI and 5 from IGNCA.

The workshop covered basic treatments in paper conservation. It was combination of theory and practical modules. The first day covered the following topics – visual examination, documentation, dry cleaning and humidification and flattening. The second day had the flow over from the previous day and covered these topics – mending / tears repairs and infill of losses. It was fantastic to have a very enthusiastic group in a very foggy, cold and miserable Delhi weather.

I also got an opportunity to give a talk to the students from NMI the day after the workshop. It was an interesting talk with very keen and passionate conservation students. It was a delight to talk to the students about the conservation profession in general and conservation in Australia. One thing I strongly recommended at the workshop



*Gajendra addresses the workshop*  
Photo: Gajendra Rawat

and the talk was the use of local resources and local knowledge. Overall it was a rewarding experience and a big learning curve for me to string together the link I had lost for a decade or so.

This workshop came about when I met the Indian delegate at ICOM-CC in Melbourne last year. The staff from IGNCA and Professor from NMI asked if I would be interested in running a workshop for their staff and students. Well there was no reason to say NO!!

I would sincerely like to thank the ICOM-CC organising committee especially Robyn Sloggett and Marcella Scott for hosting a very successful conference and this is a very productive outcome from the conference.

**Gajendra Rawat**  
State Library of Queensland

## Conservation Treatment of The Kevin Thiele Collection at the CCMC

*Isostylis, elegans, lindleyanae, cratistylis...* there are over 170 species of banksia, that Australian wildflower instantly recognizable by its flower spikes and fruiting 'cones'. Throughout the summer of 2014-2015, University of Melbourne students Gabrielle Fanning, Meg Ellis and recent graduate Kiah McCarthy became intimate with a very large banksia specimen collection under the supervision of CCMC paper conservator, Yvonne Hearn and Senior Manager, Jude Fraser. The Kevin Thiele collection, belonging to the University of Melbourne Herbarium, was collected around 1987 by Kevin Thiele for a revision of the genus for his PhD. It is a significant plant collection including leaves, flowers and fruits of the majority of banksia species, as well as specimens of seedlings grown from seed.

Stored in acidic, discoloured sheets of newspaper, the specimens required mounting in acid-free, archival material. The students worked on mounting over 400 'flat' specimens using different techniques. Just as unruly as May Gibbs' 'big bad banksia men' (which were modelled from *B. attenuata*), many of the specimens were difficult to mount. With protruding twigs and leaves that refused to sit flat, the students used a combination of gum-based paper-tape activated by deionised water, and unbleached linen thread with a needle to fasten the specimens to sheets of acid free archival card (secured with Tyvek® tape on the verso). These cards were then placed within 'flimsies' – folded sheets of paper annotated with the species information.

200 specimens of fruits, meanwhile, had been collected on field visits with samples of the environment and then wrapped in newspaper, paper bags and plastic. These specimens were brushed gently and placed in labeled polyethylene Zip-lock bags according to size. Excess fragments were also kept in sealed bags with the specimen for the purpose of future research.

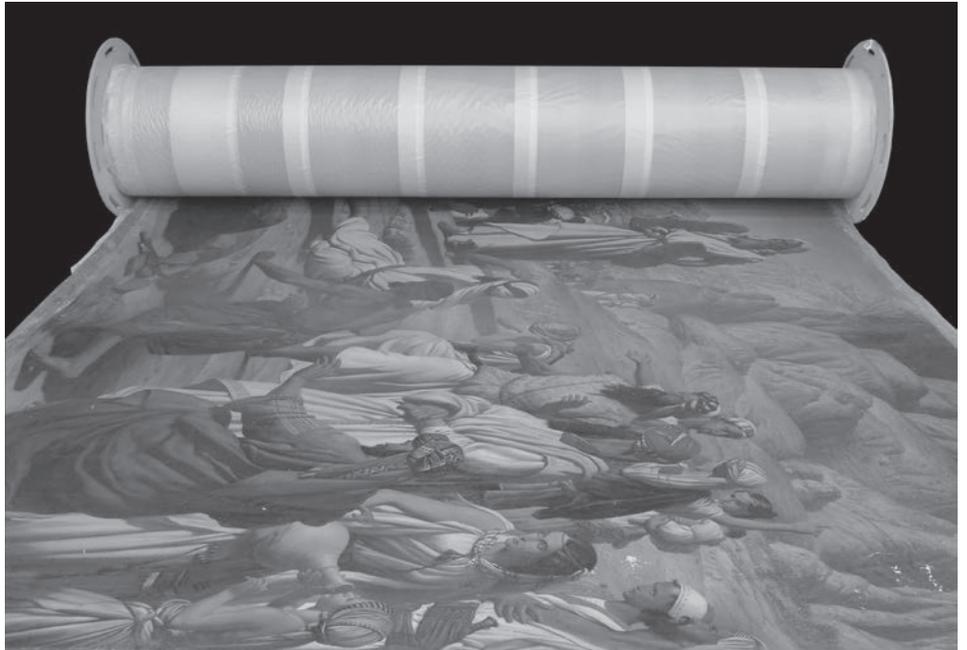
The Russell and Mab Grimwade Miegunyah Fund at the University of Melbourne provided funding for this project to cover CCMC staff time and materials costs.

**Meg Ellis**  
University of Melbourne final year  
conservation student

# Volunteer call out: John Herbert conservation at the NGV

Through the generous support of The Copland Foundation, visitors to the National Gallery of Victoria will have the opportunity to engage with members of the conservation profession and observe, firsthand, the treatment and reassembly of John Rogers Herbert's monumental painting *Moses bringing down the Tables of the Law* c. 1872-1878.

At 344.4 cm x 633.5 cm, Herbert's painting is one of the largest in the NGV collection, and represents the second rendering of a wall mural created by Herbert for the House of Lords at Westminster Palace in London. The frame, which is original to the work and composed of almost twenty metres of gilded timber and composition moulding, will also undergo treatment.



*John Rogers Herbert, Moses bringing down the Tables of the Law* c. 1872-1878, oil on paper canvas, 344.4 x 633.5 cm. National Gallery of Victoria.



*Part of the original frame for Moses bringing down the Tables of the Law by John Rogers Herbert.*

The painting, which has remained in storage for more than 70 years, will be treated within the gallery space behind a purpose-built enclosure that will house digital information panels. The treatment will involve stabilisation of the paint film through extensive

consolidation, aqueous cleaning of the surface, and strengthening the tacking edges to allow the canvas to be returned to the original stretcher. The massive frame members require minor repair and surface cleaning before being reassembled and hung for exhibition.

A significant aspect of this conservation project will be public engagement. In addition to the in-situ treatment of the painting and the frame within the gallery space, the project will include opportunities for the public to discuss the project and the profession more broadly with staff and volunteers.

## Want to be involved?

Due to the immense scale of the project the National Gallery of Victoria is calling for volunteer expressions of interest from members of the profession who are interested in contributing to

this project. Treatment is set to begin in early April at NGV International on St Kilda Road and will be completed by mid-May. Members of the profession and the broader public will also be able

to follow the project via social media and the NGV website.

If you would like to be involved in this project, please register your interest by emailing [toby.miller@ngv.vic.gov.au](mailto:toby.miller@ngv.vic.gov.au).

## A new home for CCMC: the Grimwade Centre for Art Conservation

The University of Melbourne has welcomed a major philanthropic gift of \$6.9 million to support the practice and teaching of art conservation. The gift is believed to be the world's largest-ever in support of this field, and was pledged by the Cripps Foundation to the University of Melbourne's *Believe* Campaign to support research, learning and teaching in the increasingly hi-tech field of art and cultural materials conservation.

The Cripps Foundation is a charitable organisation which supports projects in education, health and the Anglican Church. Their donation will be invested with additional funding from the University to provide a new Chair of Cultural Materials Conservation and create a new, state-of-the-art teaching and research facility that will become the leading centre in Australia for the conservation and preservation of important works of art, including culturally important pieces of Indigenous art.

The new facility, to be known as the Grimwade Centre for Art Conservation, will become the home for the University's Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation (CCMC) and, alongside undertaking vital restoration of treasured works of art, will be used to train future generations of specialist art conservators.

The Centre was founded in 1989 with support from the Ian Potter Foundation and the Sir Russell and Lady Mab Grimwade Miegunyah Fund. Until recently, it was housed within the Ian Potter Museum of Art, however demand for its services and increased numbers of students undertaking the Masters in Cultural Materials Conservation meant it had outgrown its facilities, and needed a new home.

Students and academic staff recently moved into their new state-of-the-art laboratories, while the inaugural appointment to the Chair is expected in early 2016. Vice-Chancellor Professor Glyn Davis said the University was indebted to the Foundation for its generous gift, and personally thanked Cripps Foundation Director, Amy Tennent, who is the daughter of the Foundation's Director of Philanthropy, Robert Cripps.

"Art conservation as an academic discipline is a field that brings together deep understandings of the theory, history and practice of art with chemistry and physics, and which relies on properly equipped laboratories. This gift allows us to ensure that the Grimwade Centre for Art Conservation has facilities equal to those anywhere in the world and enables practice leadership into the future," he said.

Director of the Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation, Professor Robyn Sloggett, said graduates of the Masters level programs were highly sought after in public institutions and as private practitioners, and that the Centre had developed particular expertise in the conservation of western art materials in tropical and subtropical environments. "It is also well-known for its work on art authentication, and its partnerships with Indigenous communities," she said.

The new facility will be launched on 17 March 2015, however students will be using the Centre facilities by mid-February.

**Meg Ellis**  
University of Melbourne final year  
conservation student

# A new mobile app on the block: Conservators' Kit

The Conservators' Kit (ConsKit) is a one-stop, multi-platform app designed with the busy conservator in mind. With a target audience of conservators and others caring for collections in Asia-Pacific, our main aim is to consolidate and make more widely available regionally-relevant resources and information from contributing groups and individuals. Some of the features of ConsKit will include: a calendar of events with a push notification function to alert users to upcoming calls for papers and registration deadlines to conferences; a crowd-sourced suppliers list of regional manufacturers of archival standards that will be indexed by categories for easy searching; a discussion forum for members of the collection-care community both to engage in discussions about the care of artwork and to make connections with relevant groups around the region; and a resource bank relevant to Asia-Pacific

that will include selected guidelines, codes of ethics, and solutions recipes, among others.

As ConsKit is still in its initial stage of development, the team has launched an Indiegogo campaign to crowd-fund the BETA phase of the app. In its BETA phase, ConsKit will be available as a mobile-based app with a web-based landing page. Thereafter, with the feedback gained from the BETA phase, a primary permanent app may be developed to accommodate even more features. Having received a number of messages from interested conservators outside Asia-Pacific, we are also considering the possibility developing ConsKit on a more international scale (while retaining its regional specificity) in its permanent phase. As the helpfulness of this app depends on users' contributions and activity, we hope that you, as members of the conservation community, will share



word about our new app and support our Indiegogo campaign, to help us develop an app to serve the whole community better. To learn more about this project or to support our campaign, visit [www.conservatorskit.com](http://www.conservatorskit.com) or our page on Facebook!



# Special Interest Groups

## Digital and Audiovisual Heritage Special Interest Group aka Electron

We would like to take this opportunity to introduce ourselves as the new convenors of the Digital and Audiovisual Heritage Special Interest Group, or **Electron**, as we like to call it.

**Stuart Fuller** is a sculpture conservator at [Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art \(QAGOMA\)](#) and [Artlab](#). His interest lies in the conservation of modern and contemporary art forms, in particular time-based media and installation artworks.

**Somaya Langley** is currently the Data Manager at [Design and Art Australia Online](#). She has previously been the Curator of Networked Media at the [National Film and Sound Archive of Australia](#) and worked in digital collecting at the [National Library of Australia](#). In 2012 the [Australia Council for the Arts](#) published her research into digital archiving for arts organisations entitled '[Archives in the Digital Era](#)'.

**Gerald Preiss** is the Manager of the Preservation Digitisation program at the [Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies \(AIATSIS\)](#), where he manages digitisation programs across the audiovisual and print collections.

We would also like to thank the inaugural Electron convenor, **Peter Shaw**, for initiating this Special Interest Group and for driving it forward over the past two years. This is an important area of contemporary conservation and preservation and we hope to further strengthen the digital/audiovisual collecting and preservation network in Australia.

We would love to hear about your challenges and solutions.

Join us on the Electron email list: <http://listserver.flinders.edu.au/mailman/listinfo/electron>, or contact us via [davhsig@gmail.com](mailto:davhsig@gmail.com)

For starters, here some conferences taking place in Australia and around the world in 2015, that may be relevant to people working with audiovisual and digital collections.

[FIAF Congress 2015](#) – Fédération Internationale des Archives du Film, 12–18 April 2015, Canberra and Sydney

[Linked Open Data in Libraries Archives and Museums \(LODLAM\)](#), <http://summit2015.lodlam.net/>, 29–30 June 2015, Sydney

[DH2015](#) – Global Digital Humanities conference, <http://dh2015.org/>, 29 June–3 July 2015, Sydney

[Disruption](#) – 21st International Symposium on Electronic Art, <http://isea2015.org/>, 1418 August 2015, Vancouver, Canada

[IFLA World Library and Information Congress](#) – 'Managing Born-digital audiovisual or multimedia collections', 81st IFLA General Conference and Assembly, <http://conference.ifla.org/ifla81>, 15–21 August 2015, Cape Town, South Africa

[International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives \(IASA\)](#) – 'All for One – One for All: Common Concerns – Shared Solutions', 46th Annual Conference, <http://www.2015.iasa-web.org/>, 27 September – 1 October 2015, Paris, France

[Re-create](#) – 'Theories, Methods and Practices of Research-Creation in the Histories of Media Art, Science and Technology', Media Art History conference, <http://www.mediaarthistory.org/recreate-2015>, 5–8 November 2015, Montréal, Canada

'Media in Transition: International conference on the implications for conservation of time-based media works of art and related practices', Getty Conservation Institute, Getty Research Institute and Tate, Date(s) TBC, London, UK

## The first decade of the Textiles Special Interest Group (1991-1996)

In 1991, Mary Jose representing the SA division wrote to Margaret Alexander then president of the AICCM, to express an interest in establishing a Textile Special interest group (TSIG) to foster regular communication about treatments, materials, publications and exhibitions between conservators and like-minded groups in Australia. In March of that year there was a proposal to hold a joint meeting with the New Zealand conservation group. On 17<sup>th</sup> April 1991, Wendy Dodd writing to Kristin Phillips, recently returned from England, added her support towards establishing the group following a meeting of conservators in NSW. She suggested any meetings to be aligned with the AICCM conferences would be preferable to separate meetings. Following this correspondence, the first meeting of the AICCM TSIG was held at the CAMA conference on the 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1991 to discuss possible topics for 1991 AICCM conference themed "Back to the Bench" to be held in Cairns.

Following a public meeting in November 1993, the Textile Network ACT was formed (Dodd, 07/1994). Three bi-monthly meetings were held in 1993 to distribute flyers and information to members. In late 1994, when a new committee formed, a proposal for speakers at meetings in 1995 was submitted. It included: Lesley

Mitcheson – Weaving and panting – Recent works by Lesley Mitcheson (11<sup>th</sup> August 1995), Michael Bogle – “First Contact” An illustrated talk on pre-industrial weavers and their first contact with mercantile traditions of Europe and America (13<sup>th</sup> October) and Anna Senior – “The language of clothing, adornment and textiles – Film clothing 1800’s-1920’s” (8<sup>th</sup> December).

In Late 1994, Sue Frost became the new Convenor of the TSIG (King-Smith 10<sup>th</sup> September, 1994). In a letter from Fiona Tennant to Sue Frost (18/11/1994), speakers for November meeting at the Kmart learning Centre at the Powerhouse Museum included Michael Marendy – Storage systems for one teacher school museum at QUT”; Debbie Ward from NGA “Packaging for large loans; Suzanne Chee – Installing “Christian Dior” at the Powerhouse; Gina Drummund – “50th Anniversary of the Bombing of Darwin” and Elizabeth Lahikainen ran an upholstery workshop.

On 24th Feb 1995, the focus of the regional TSIG meeting chaired by Gina Drummond and held at National gallery of Australia was dry-cleaning techniques. It included an update about the Canberra Institute of Technology training course for drycleaners, OHS issues associated with cleaning museum artefacts and a demonstration of spot cleaning (Dodd, 30/01/1995).

In Feb 1995, the AICCM Draft Corporate Plan was issued (Alexander, 14.09/1995). It included four goals related to membership, promotion, professional development and

community services. Colin Pearson responded to concerns raised by the TSIG group about textile conservation training (10/11/1995).

In 1996, two papers for Textile Conservation Manual were published through Museums Australia NSW branch (Frost, 02/1996). On 20<sup>th</sup> February, textile conservators from the Powerhouse addressed the Australian Costume and Textiles Society. In March, Susan Scollay ran a master-class “Demystifying rugs” at Authentic Decor located at 60 Duxford St, Paddington, NSW and a Preventive Conservation Manual was in editing phase. In June, papers were called for National AICCM Conference themed “The Profession and the Professional Body”.

**Julie O’Connor**  
TSIG Convenor

## Conservation Framers Special Interest Group

Planning for the first CFSIG symposium is underway. Our working title is ‘What’s in a Frame’, an open theme that allows for papers covering a wide range of topics that we hope will appeal to many Australian and international delegates. Because the CFSIG is one of the smaller SIGs, **Barbara Dabrowa**, Gilded Objects SIG convener, has agreed to make the event a combined CFSIG/GOCSIG symposium. A date has not been fixed yet but we are aiming for October or November 2016. The proposal and budget will be submitted to National Council for approval soon.

The organiser of ‘Art and Framing 2015’ has again asked AICCM to have a stand at the trade fair, held this year from 14-16 August at Royal Randwick, Sydney. **Sophie Brown**, CFSIG member and conservation framer, has kindly offered to co-ordinate the stand. We will need display material, posters on conservation treatments and take-away information on storage, preservation and conservation for the stand. We will also need volunteers to present short lectures on conservation. If you would like to present a lecture please contact Sophie so that we can have the information ready for inclusion in show publications. Closer to the date Sophie will put out a call for volunteers to help mind the stand and for material to stock the stand. Please mark the dates in your diary and help out if you can spare any time. This trade fair presents a great opportunity to raise profile of AICCM and to inform both the framing trade and the public about the work done by conservators.

Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation, University of Melbourne, master’s student **Hoa Huynh** is gathering information on the use of glazing in the display of works on paper with vulnerable colourants. If you would like to participate in this research study you can complete the questionnaire here: <http://goo.gl/forms/6Y4oEx70p8>

**Louise Bradley**  
CFSIG Convenor



# The Social Pages

## Tasmania

### Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery

**Amy Bartlett** and **David Thurrowgood** attended the AICCM Tasmanian Division Christmas lunch at the Man O Ross Hotel in Ross. The majority of the Tasmanian members attended the lunch and despite the heavy rain the day was enjoyed by all.

## Victoria

### State Library of Victoria

**Alice Cannon**, senior paper and photograph conservator, is working at Melbourne Museum where she has been filling the position of manager of Integrated Collection Processes since October 2013. While Alice has been sorely missed, **Marika Kocsis** has taken time from the Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation (CCMC) and backfilled the role with gusto. **David Harris** retired from the position of paper conservator in November 2014, having worked at the Library for the past four decades, taking with him an incredible wealth of knowledge regarding the Library's collections. In September 2014 we said goodbye to **Peter Block**, who has taken up the well-deserved position of senior conservation mount-cutter at the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne. **Enrique Tochez-Anderson** has joined us as our new mount-cutter. Sadly, **Noni Zachri**, **Leah Williams** and **Emily Keppel** are soon to finish up their contracts in Preservation.

While Conservation bid farewell to volunteer **Blake Fox** in 2014, we were fortunate in welcoming **Peter**

**Mitchelson** to the book conservation team, and **Leah Williams** and **Freya Merrell** to the paper conservation team. Freya has since accepted a contract as paper conservator at the National Library of Australia, Canberra, starting February 2014. Blake, Leah and Freya all completed professional placement with Conservation through the University of Melbourne Master Degree program. In September 2014 we hosted an internship focusing on photographic conservation with **Emily Mueller**, student of Preventive Conservation at the University of Applied Sciences and Arts HAWK, in Hildesheim, Germany. Emily presented a student paper on her course at the ICOM-CC Conference in Melbourne. In March we will be welcoming **Yvonne Hearn** as a volunteer with the book conservation team, and are very pleased to have **Noni Zachri** returning to volunteer across both Conservation and Preservation.

In June 2014, **Helen McPherson** undertook conservation work of a different kind, attending a National Trust for Scotland working party, on the island of St Kilda, Scotland. Maintenance work on the World Heritage site included carpentry, painting, roofing, dry-stone walling and some archaeology excavation. In December 2014 **Marika Kocsis** accepted an invitation to participate in the Advanced Restoration and Conservation of Japanese Scrolls at the Museum Fur Asiatische Kunst in Berlin, Germany. Marika enjoyed the course immensely, returning with many exciting new techniques and a great network of professional contacts. The book conservation team hosted a day's workshop with book conservator **Karen Vidler**, from *Book Conservation Services*, Castlemaine, looking at new

approaches to techniques and materials in book treatments. We also had a visit from bookbinders **Dominic Riley** and **Michael Burke** who later held a number of workshops in Castlemaine at *Book Conservation Services*. In other news, paper conservator **Danielle Woodward** (CCMC) collected eraser samples from six manuscripts from the Library's Rare Book collection for parchment testing and analysis at the University of York, United Kingdom. This supported the Masters research on parchment in Australian collections being undertaken by **Libby Melzer** (CCMC).

### National Gallery of Victoria

In December the Paintings section said farewell to **Helen Casey**. Helen made a wonderful contribution to the section during her time with us, and will be sorely missed. Prior to working the Paintings section Helen was Exhibitions Conservator for over three years commencing her time at the NGV as an unpaid volunteer. Helen is currently in U.S. with her partner and is continuing to assist the NGV with research related to an of David McDiarmid's studio materials housed at the NGV.

In mid-February **Janelle Borig** will be returning to her role of Exhibitions Conservator. Janelle has been on maternity leave from the NGV for the past two years.

**Emma Rouse** has stayed on volunteering in the Frames and Furniture conservation lab over the summer, and we're grateful for her work contributing to frame manufacture and treatments.

## New South Wales

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### State Library of New South Wales

The Conservation branch would like to welcome **Louise Anemaat** as our new manager starting at the end of January. Louise is a long-standing employee of the Library, most recently working as a Senior Curator of the Library's Research and Discovery branch.

### Preservation Australia

After missing 2013 through pressures of moving the studio, Preservation Australia was able to return to hosting its Christmas Party again in late December. Always a fun event, it was well attended this year as colleagues, clients and friends were keen to see the new(ish) premises.

We will be losing a staff member in June this year: **Sian Edwards**, jeweller and product person extraordinaire is pregnant with her first child and will have to leave us. Sian has been keeping the product side of the business (Conservation Resources) ticking over smoothly for over four years and we will sorely miss her expertise. Both Sian and a previous intern, **Alexander Robinson**, have exhibitions with Gaffa Studios in February. **Emma Radford**, another intern, has finished up with us and is now deciding which area of conservation studies to pursue along with volunteering with University Museums, University of Sydney.

### Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (MAAS) (formerly Powerhouse Museum)

In December we farewelled **Chris Lazdans** our clerical officer, in the final stage of our department restructure. In January we welcomed **Jonathan London** as our new Conservation Manager. We thank **Sue Gatenby**, who has been the Acting Manager, for ably guiding us through this difficult interim period. The Conservation Unit is now complete with staffing.

### Australian Museum

**Madeleine Snedden** continues to work with the department on a temporary contract. **Rebecca Barnott-Clement** still dedicates her Wednesdays to volunteering in the lab while waiting to hear back from a number of Conservation training courses. We are delighted that Rebecca will continue her studies and train in Conservation. We hope her two and a half years volunteering will be put to good use.

**Kate Jones** spent much of January in Paris. It was perfect weather to be inside warm cultural institutions, absolutely freezing! The highlights were the French National Museum of Natural History, the Centre Pompidou and of course shopping.

### International Conservation Services

We welcome **Nick Flood** to the ICS team, direct from working on the World War One galleries at the Australian War Memorial. We also welcome **Rob Williams** in a newly created role as conservation technician. Meanwhile in Dubai, two conservators have joined ICS to head up our archaeological conservation team: **Jeff Fox** (from Melbourne) and **Manuel Peters** (from Eindhoven in The Netherlands).

## Australian Capital Territory

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### Endangered Heritage

**Andrew Pearce** and **Victoria Gill** married on 10 December 2014, and after a honeymoon in Chiang Mai, Thailand, have returned to their business, Endangered Heritage Pty Ltd in Phillip, Canberra. Please note the name change and change of email for Victoria to [Victoria.pearce@endangeredheritage.com](mailto:Victoria.pearce@endangeredheritage.com)

We are pleased to announce that **Susan Hobbs** has joined our team as retail manager and we have **Jo Shore** with us part-time as our new graduate.

# Professional News



## Tasmania

### Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery

#### Treatment Projects

**David Thurrowgood** has commenced work on a volunteer run program to rehouse artefacts recovered from the Sydney Cove shipwreck site which will include conservation treatments of individual items and the encapsulation of vulnerable material for long term storage. He will be investigating the use of long-term storage using low cost preservation foil and argon environments. David is commencing work on the conservation of a 1924 Alfa Romeo with the objective of developing a preservation strategy and for operating the vehicle to enable filming for a new gallery interactive. He is also carrying out projects on the conservation of 17<sup>th</sup> century Japanese Armour and the repainting of outdoor sculpture.

**Amy Bartlett** has recently been conserving fragile 19<sup>th</sup> century drawings on paper for a changeover in our Colonial Gallery. She has also completed pest and mould treatments on a number of works on paper from the quarantine room so that the items can be safely moved to storage.

#### Exhibitions

**Amy** and **David** have both prepared numerous student artworks for our annual *ArtRage* exhibition, highlighting best practice throughout the state. This is one of QVMAG's most popular exhibitions as it always receives high numbers of visitors before it is toured to the north and south of Tasmania.

#### Loans

QVMAG recently loaned a Rosa Bonheur painting to the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art. **David**

has completed the conservation of a 19<sup>th</sup> century gilt frame to facilitate the loan and the treatment of the painting was outsourced to **Mar Gomez Lobon** of **Artco Services**.

**Amy** has been preparing a number of works for loan to the Art Gallery of New South Wales including a painted photograph, tintypes, daguerreotypes, x-rays and stereographs. Treatments have been conducted on some of the works along with mounting and framing. Custom supports are also being made to display items.

#### Research Projects

In conservation research **David** has continued to work with the Australian synchrotron in x-ray fluorescence mapping of large surfaces. In a December experiment the first application of the new MAIA detector after installation was a project aimed at detecting the distribution of silver ions in a cultural heritage object, a capability that has been long waited for amongst the XFM cultural heritage user community.

#### Conference Attendance

On 10 December **David** presented a paper as an invited speaker at the Royal Australian Chemical Institute National Congress, Adelaide on the topic of "Exploring the limits of non-destructive elemental detection in cultural heritage objects".

## Victoria

### State Library of Victoria

#### Conservation

There has been a steady stream of work in Conservation with numerous digitisation projects – such as the Coles Myer Collection, pre-1920s theatre programs and Capitol Theatre Architectural Plans. Staff have been

busy with internal exhibitions and outgoing loans – including *Mirror of the World* and *Changing Face of Victoria* changeovers and the current exhibition *Bohemian Melbourne*. **Jean Holland**, **Katrina Ben**, **Ian Cox** and **Helen McPherson** undertook to redesign the standard in-house Corex book cradles for the *Victor Hugo: Les Misérables from page to stage* exhibition in order to display books on a steeply angled base, and are now investigating the possible impact of this design. Numerous large outward loans are in preparation, including works to the Bendigo Art Gallery, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Queensland Art Gallery, Australian National Maritime Museum and the National Gallery of Victoria.

Our staff have had the opportunity to attend a number of conferences – including the AICCM Book, Paper and Photographic Materials Symposium in May 2014 and the ICOM-CC Conference in September 2014. A number of tours of Conservation and Preservation were concurrently conducted for the ICOM Conference focusing on books, digitising and photographic collections. At present **Katrina Ben** is preparing a talk and contributing to the State Library of Victoria blog discussing the major treatment of one of the Library's illuminated manuscripts, the tiny 13<sup>th</sup> century Vulgate Bible. Paper conservators **Marika Kocsis** and **Albertine Hamilton** are planning to undertake research regarding the watercolour practice of S.T. Gill to correspond with an exhibition currently being prepared.

#### Preservation:

Preservation continues to work on large Pictures and Manuscripts projects. One highlight has been the completion of an enormous photographic collection from the Coles Myer archive. We received the collection in 2007,

which included 19 filing cabinets of photographic material. Over the years many preservation technicians have worked on rehousing and listing the 26,000 photographic images (including prints, slides, 35mm & 120mm negatives and transparencies) that make up this collection – it's a great achievement. Another collection that has been resting quietly in storage has been the CUA (Committee for Urban Action) Archive. This collection of 35mm black & white negatives captures 1970s streetscapes of metropolitan Melbourne and parts of regional Victoria. The collection was identified as a potential digitisation project as it provides a snapshot of areas such as Fitzroy, Collingwood, South Melbourne and Prahran, as well as Castlemaine and Maryborough from this period. We have made the decision to cut the film into shorter strips to facilitate digitising. It is a time consuming and exacting job, but the images are invaluable and will prove popular when available online.

**Noni Zachri** and **Emily Keppel** have been diligently working through some large Manuscript collections. Sadly their time is nearly up in Preservation, but the Suncorp Insurance Archive, personal papers of Russell Beedles and Aboriginal Advancement League Archive are in better condition and more accessible now that they have been rehoused. **Kate Holloway** is working on the Dromkeen collection of original children's book illustrations and **Savina Hopkins** has rehoused the Firestone Collection which contains hundreds of advertising display cards in mint condition from the 1930s through to the 1970s. This collection has been a delight to work on and will be the subject of a staff fellowship to uncover more about this unique collection.

## Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation

### Treatments

Throughout the second half of 2014, CCMC staff were heavily involved in preparing objects for exhibition at the Shrine of Remembrance. During 2013

and 2014, a \$45 million Victorian Government redevelopment project saw the establishment of the Galleries of Remembrance, that utilise 1,600 square metres of undercroft space beneath the Shrine. Over 850 objects are included in permanent and temporary exhibition spaces which illustrate the experiences of Australians at war and in peacekeeping operations, from Pre-Federation to the present day, with a particular focus on individual and unit stories of Victorian service and sacrifice.

The exhibitions are framed by the original brick foundations of the Shrine, which were laid eight decades ago by ex-servicemen of the First World War. In addition to preparing the loan objects for display, CCMC staff also treated a number of the Colours from the Crypt, cleaned the finial heads of the pikes and reinstalled the 39 Colours and six Guidons which hang in the Crypt, which is centrally positioned under the Sanctuary.

Objects staff have been working on a number of WWI honour boards for various clients. During January they undertook two on-site projects: a large Robert Prenzel carved wooden honour board at a local state primary school; and a wall mural consisting of glazed tiles in three panels, at a Melbourne private school. Treatment of another wooden honour board for the Bureau of Meteorology, which includes 18 silver-gelatin photographs, is underway.

## National Gallery of Victoria

### Treatments

In November, Frames and Furniture conservator **Holly McGowan-Jackson** had the opportunity to work with Japanese artist Takahiro Iwasaki, in preparing for the display of his 'Itsukushima reflection model', based on a sixth-century Shinto shrine plus its reflection. The artwork consists of 15 intricate, interconnecting models made of Japanese cypress and basswood ply. Iwasaki's visit was very informative and provided us with an additional understanding of the artist's working

methods and materials. For information related to the installation of this massive artwork see **Suzi Shaw's** blog at <http://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/explore/blog/>

**Suzi** is also working on a number of furniture treatments for the exhibition 'Nordic Cool: Modernist Design from the NGV Collection', which will open in February. Most of these treatments involve cleaning of plywood and laminated surfaces, and integration of damaged oil and cellulose nitrate finishes. Stay tuned for a blog entry on her findings relating to plywood technology!

Between machining timber and making ornament moulds for frame-making projects, **MaryJo Lelyveld** has been condition reporting the Ikea furniture and object components of the new acquisition by New York artists Ryan Trecartin and Lizzie Finch entitled 'Available Sync'. The mixed media, large scale, immersive installation work will be featured in the upcoming 'Transmission: Legacies of the Television Age' exhibition.

Our two Hugh Williamson Conservation Fellows continued to hone their skills with some complex and extensive treatment projects. **Johanna Ellersdorfer** has commenced a major treatment on Sir Joshua Reynolds' portrait of Lady Frances Finch, and is making fantastic progress with the cleaning. Having recently completed a major eight-month-long treatment on Luca Giordano's 'Saint Sebastian Being Cured' by Irene, **Sandi Mitchell** is now tackling a very different treatment problem; the removal of bound grime layers from Streeton's 'Sunrise on Santa Maria della Salute' (c.1908) using Wolbers systems.

**Raye Collins** undertook a major treatment on Frederick Woodhouse Jr's 1901 portrait of the Fitzroy footballer, Geoff Moriarty, and is now in the final stages of treating Tom Roberts' 'Mary'. In December, **Helen Casey** performed a challenging consolidation and inpainting treatment on Jack Britten's 'Purnululu country'.

**John Payne** has been working intensively with the NGV's small collection of J.M.W Turner paintings. Having completed his major treatment on 'Walton bridges' (c.1806) last year, he is now in the final stages of treating 'Dunstanburgh Castle, north-east coast of Northumberland, sunrise after a squally night' (1798). **Carl Villis** has commenced the treatment of Jacques-Louis David's 'Head of a man', and is preparing articles on two other NGV paintings; the fifteenth century 'Italian Profile Portrait of a Lady', and Nicolas Poussin's 'The Crossing of the Red Sea'.

### Exhibitions

The Textile Conservation Lab is busy preparing for two upcoming exhibitions: 'Exquisite threads: English embroidery 1600s-1900' which opens in early April and 'Gods, Heroes and Clowns: Performance and Narratives in South and Southeast Asian Art' which opens in early May. To prepare for the English embroidery exhibition, works are being condition checked and treated, and display systems made. **Kate Douglas** and **Kate Maclaren** (textile conservation fellow) have also submitted a short article each for the exhibition publication and some of the raised needlework pieces in the exhibition are being studied using X-radiography and microscopy with the plan to use these to enhance the exhibition. Work for 'Gods, Heroes and Clowns' involves the preparation of narrative painted banners and the costume components of puppets. Many of these works, which have history of use, will require treatment and will keep us busy for the next few months. Textile conservators are also planning the de-installation of the large loan Gaultier exhibition which has been a big success as well as conserving works for 'Nordic Cool' and 'Pre-Raphaelite exhibitions'.

The Paper Conservation Team of **Louise Wilson**, **Ruth Shervington** and **Sarah Brown** is currently working towards an exhibition of work by the Australian painter John Wolesley.

**Catherine Earley** is overseeing conservation requirements for the exhibition 'Qianlong Emperor, 1736-1795' amongst others.

The Objects Conservation team of **Marika Strohschnieder**, **Trude Ellingsen** and **Di Whittle** are busy with preparations for the 'Nordic Cool' and 'Gods, Heroes and Clowns' exhibitions.

### Research

NGV Textiles conservators are also working on an ergonomic project with Dr **Ruth Stuckey** from La Trobe University to improve methods used to handle mannequins within the NGV. This is likely to be a complex but rewarding project.

## Australian Capital Territory

### National Archives of Australia, Canberra

#### Exhibitions

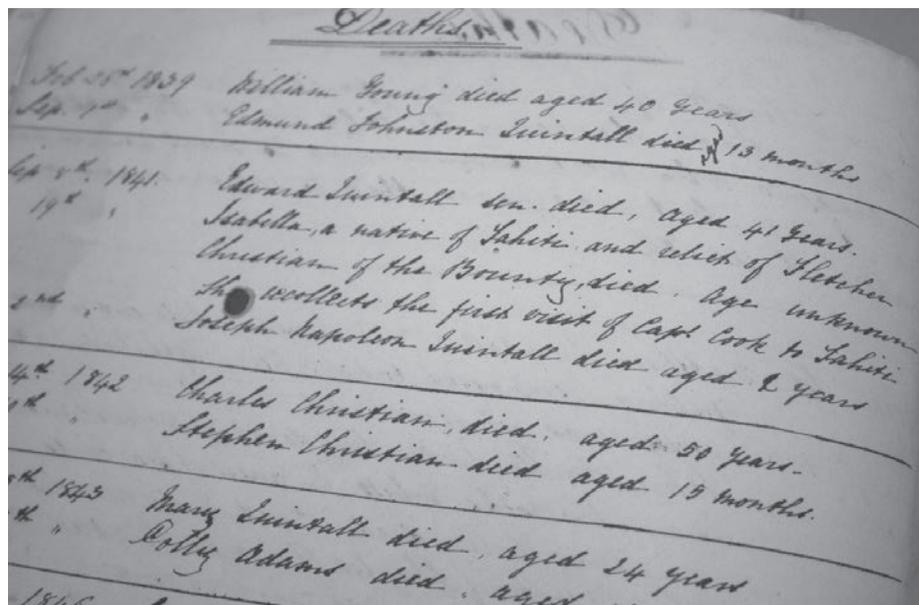
**Sally Kneebone** was in Grafton in early February, installing at the final venue for our travelling exhibition "Traversing Antarctica". The week before this, she deinstalled it in Hervey Bay, so it is slowly making its way south, and back home.

### Professional development

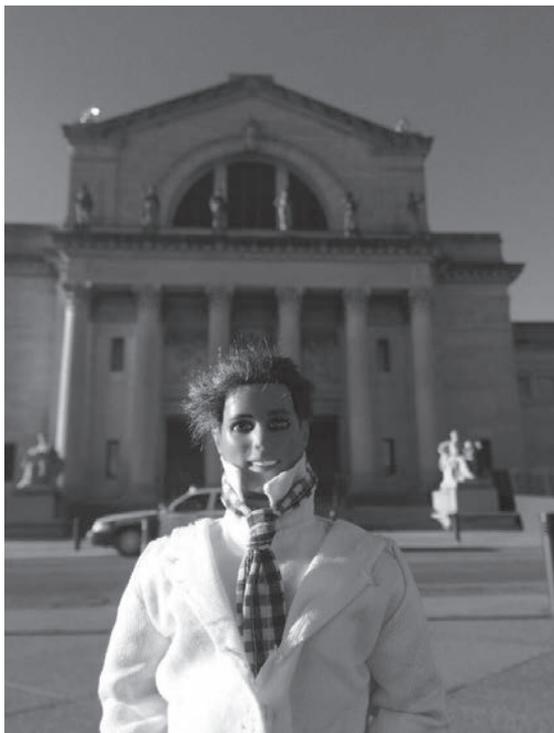
**Cheryl Jackson** and **Caroline Milne** are professionally developing themselves, with Cheryl signed up to do an online "Chemistry for Conservators" course through international Academic Projects, and Caroline having completed a weekend "Bookbinding for Beginners" workshop with the NSW Guild of Craft Bookbinders in Sydney.

### Treatment projects

**Prue McKay** has started investigating the Pitcairn Island births, deaths and marriages register (NAA: CP697/104). This fascinating document records births and marriages of Pitcairners from 1853 to about 1881, as well as deaths from 1814 onwards. Especially interesting is a handwritten account of "Pitcairn's Island" (sic) including the various uprisings, murders and mayhem that plagued the early settlement. The register is a bound volume that has had many repairs to pages and binding over the years, resulting in some text being difficult to read. The binding is failing in places, and some damage to pages has gone unrepaired until now. A treatment plan is being developed. A photo of one page from the death register is included, showing an interesting entry for the Tahitian widow of Fletcher Christian, and other surnames familiar to anyone who knows the story of the mutiny on the *Bounty*.



1841 deaths  
Photo: Prue McKay



Conservator Ken at SLAM  
Photo: Jane Wild

## National Gallery of Australia

### Exhibitions

Over the past few months, the NGA has hosted a number of exciting and varied exhibitions. Back in mid 2014, the exhibition 'Atua: Sacred god from Polynesia' brought together a fantastic array of Polynesian artefacts from collections around the world with items from the NGA collection. Objects conservators found it a great opportunity to connect with the conservators, curators and registrars from as far afield as the Vatican, St Petersburg and Tahiti who came as couriers for the show. The exhibition then travelled to St Louis Art Museum in Missouri, accompanied by loans conservator **Jane Wild** (and AICCM ACT mascot Conservator Ken!).

The retrospective show 'Arthur Boyd: Agony and Ecstasy' required input from all sections in conservation, with a huge number of paintings and prints, as well as some enormous tapestries and several ceramic tiles and sculptures. Many of

the works had never been shown before, so it was a great opportunity to get to know more about the work of this important Australia artist.

Paper conservation and conservation mount cutting sections also worked hard on the preparation for the recent exhibitions 'Robert Motherwell: at five in the afternoon' and 'Stars of the Tokyo Stage: Natori Shunsen's kabuki actor prints' and for the current exhibition 'Impressions of Paris: Lautrec, Degas, Daumier'.

Most excitingly at the NGA has been the construction of the amazing 'James Turrell: a retrospective'. Although most of the huge light installations were constructed from scratch in situ, there was still involvement from objects,

paper and preventive conservation. There were some fantastic plaster models of some of Turrell's previous installations, photographic prints from the recent exhibition at the Guggenheim and numerous artefacts from Turrell's incredible landscape work at Roden Crater.

### Treatment projects

The textiles section has been working on a number of outgoing loans. They are also preparing a number of beautiful and intricate Asian children's costumes for the up-and-coming children's costume show (name TBC!). They are also working on slowly unpacking and returning to storage the Ballets Russes costumes returned from exhibition at the National Art Centre Tokyo, Japan.

A generous donation to the gallery of paintings by key Australian artists has kept the paintings section busy. Throughout December and January **David, Sharon** and **Jocelyn** have been preparing paintings by Dorrit Black, Charles Blackman, Roy De Maistre, Sidney Nolan, John Olsen, John Perceval, Margaret Preston and Albert Tucker for display in the Australian Art galleries later this year.

With the start of the New Year, objects conservation is busy with the preparation of objects for several permanent gallery changeovers and upcoming exhibition. **Sarah McHugh** is continuing a long-term project to clean and stabilise a moulded plastic artwork by Claes Oldenberg so that it can be safely displayed again, while **Meg Absolon** is starting the repair of a very broken wooden shield from Papua New Guinea. **Kasi Albert** has now moved onto the condition checking, cleaning and conservation treatment of a huge new acquisition of over 900 items of early Australian silverware and jewellery for the purpose of storage and future display.



Meg and Kasi with the shield  
Photo: Meg Absolon

### **Conferences and papers**

Several NGA conservators were able to attend the fantastic ICOM-CC Triennial conference in September last year, so the department benefited greatly from being able to have representatives at most sessions that were presented. **Jocelyn Evans, Kassandra O'Hare, Lisa Addison and Kasi Albert** all attended, while **Beata Tworek-Matuszkiewicz** presented a paper about the treatment on one of the NGA's sculptural installation pieces, Heri Dono's 'Flying Angels'.

### **Endangered Heritage**

#### **Conservation supplies**

Endangered Heritage have recently added a number of international products to their range. These include Kremer pigments and binders and Liberon wood conservation treatments. A website is currently under development in the interim they can be contacted via Facebook or email.

### **New South Wales**

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#### **Australian National Maritime Museum**

We welcomed Rob McLeod to the conservation department last August for a six month contract. A graduate of Cardiff University Rob recently spent several months as an intern at Te Papa in Wellington. He is undertaking object conservation on ANMM collection material to help reduce the backlog of work.

All five permanent Conservation staff attended the ICOM-CC conference in Melbourne in November and gained a lot from the many wonderful presentations, as well as enjoying the opportunity for professional networking.

After 8 years, 11 months and 15 days, just prior to Xmas Jonathan London left his position as Head of Conservation at the ANMM to take up a similar role at the Powerhouse Museum. While very saddened to lose Jonathan, we wish him all the very best for his future career.

As part of our business planning process, the lack of condition assessments of some material in the collection was highlighted. To enable us to address this, we have interrogated our collection management database (The Museum System – TMS) to identify collection material that has not received conservation condition assessment. The information gained from the programmed assessments will help inform the future prioritisation of collection conservation programs.

The museum's WW1 centenary anniversary exhibition War at Sea – The Navy in WW1 opened last September after many months of intensive work by everyone in the conservation section.

2015 has begun very busily for Rob, Sue Frost, Rebecca Dallwitz and Caro Whitley with preparations underway for two new exhibitions X Ray Fish Inside Out due to open in late February, and Shackleton: Escape from Antarctica opening in early April, as well as the bump out of items from the Beautiful Whales exhibition in early February.

Additionally we are making boxes and preparing crates to travel the War at Sea exhibition in May on a four year tour of regional centres around Australia.

#### **Australian Museum**

##### **Treatments**

Sheldon Teare continues to coordinate the treatment of hundreds of Natural science specimens for the museums new biodiversity gallery. Recent treatments have involved wet cleaning years of dust and grime off of a juvenile elephant skeleton. Sheldon and Megan Dean-Jones worked with one of our talented preparators to rearticulate the elephant's broken hip and parts of the spine.

Madeleine has been working on a very delicate and complex treatment of an historical mini diorama of Tenrec (small guinea pig like creatures from Madagascar). This treatment has involved painstaking stabilization of broken skin, infilling with Japanese tissue and inpainting.

Michael Kelly has spent many long hours cleaning the feathers of several large birds, including a formidable looking Andean Condor and a regal Crowned Crane. Many of the feathers had been damaged by insects and required very careful wet cleaning.

Megan has undertaken a number of complex treatments for the Great Walk preparation, such as reattaching an Emperor Penguin head. Megan has also spearheaded much of the rehousing and construction of boxes for these specimens, which is often a very tricky task.

Penny Nolton has been jumping from Fish, to Marine Invertebrates, to Birds, and Mammals on the Great Walk team. Penny has carried out a very skillful treatment on a large historically mounted Colobus Monkey, repairing many areas of splitting, paint loss, and carrying out stabilizations.

##### **Exhibitions**

Sheldon is coordinating the logistics of 400+ natural history specimens for the Museums newest Gallery. This includes overseeing all the treatments in this specialist area of conservation. Another highlight for Sheldon was taking delivery of two new specimens bought in for the exhibition, a Zebra and a 5.2m high taxidermy Giraffe. Let's just say Sheldon is going to have fun condition reporting this towering creature in the days to come!

Kate Jones and Madeleine have recently prepared and installed cultural objects for a refurbished Aboriginal gallery, called Garrigarang: Sea Country. The exhibition has been very well received, particularly by local indigenous communities.

Heather Mackay will begin planning the bump out of the Aztec exhibition in the coming weeks. The Mexican couriers will arrive in early February to help pack up the amazing objects.

## Loans

Michael will be heading off to Bathurst Regional Art gallery at the beginning of February to condition check and pack up Menagerie, one of the AM's longest touring exhibitions.

## Research

The recent treatment of a badly flaking painted coolamon led Heather MacKay into researching the how to piece together an ultrasonic mister for consolidation. After reading articles published by the UCLA/Getty Conservation program (<https://uclagettyprogram.wordpress.com/2010/12/30powdery-paint-part1>) and the diagrams referenced therein, Heather constructed a mister using an ultrasonic humidifier, a LDPE sauce bottle, and a length of silicon tubing connected to the chopped off sauce bottle spout. Air input and output pipes were connected to the sauce bottle and air pressure was delivered through connected pipes using the air spray outlet built into our vacuum table generator. This worked with great success and further testing with a range of consolidants is expected.

## Elwing & Gurney Archival

James Elwing completed four one-day workshops for staff at the Waverley Municipal Library in Bondi Junction, Sydney, from 19 to 28 January, in response to an air conditioning malfunction in the archives repository, which had led to a mould outbreak on bookcloth spines. The purpose of the workshop was to give ownership of these issues to key staff in an environment where the mould outbreak had for some time passed unnoticed, and where Library management had recently discarded a network of disaster bins in a tidying up exercise with no alternative strategy. The workshop included sessions on structural supports for shelved volumes, analysis of threats to the collection, and the contents of a new disaster bin.

## International Conservation Services

### Treatments

At the end of last year, the paintings team returned a collection of treated icons to the Macedonian Church in Rosebery, South of Sydney. **Claire Heasman, Arek Werstak** and **Matteo Volonté** also worked very hard to get the church's altar ready for the Christmas season. Matteo has recently been working on a collection of smoke damaged artworks by various contemporary Australian artists. One of these artworks required a scrupulous consolidation treatment because of the fragile nature of the materials.

**Katy Ross** from the objects and outdoor heritage team has been working on numerous projects including the Sydney Harbour Bridge Memorial in Callan Park and the Great Synagogue Vestibule, where she recently finalised conservation work following the arrival of tailor-made encaustic tiles from the UK. She finished 2014 on a high note with the return of the Waverton coal loader skip after stabilisation works. The team were delighted to welcome **Nick Flood** in December. So far he has worked on a number of sculptures around Brisbane, removed concretions from 17th century Dutch and German silver coins and continued the desalination of a number of maritime archaeological objects. Meanwhile, **Wendi Powell, Eoin O'Sullivan** and **Oliver Hull** have been undertaking large-scale conservation work on a collection of maritime archaeological objects including cannons, a collection of cannonballs, and metal and stone ballasts. **Arek Werstak** and **Rob Williams** have been condition assessing and treating a large collection of Tang dynasty Chinese ceramics.

Our paper conservation team have been negotiating the complexities of working on various, large-scale paper based artworks.

**Oliver** and **Eoin** have described the last few months in the furniture

department as the season of honour-boards. They recently competed work on the Rockdale honour-board and are about to commence conservation work on honour-boards for Leeches Gully and Ashfield Council.

**Karina Acton** and **Julian Bickersteth** have continued the ICS work in the UAE, establishing an archaeological conservation laboratory and preparing for the arrival of two new staff members. Karina has spent four weeks on site, with Julian paying a flying visit on the one day in four years when it decided to rain, resulting in flooding, a rare phenomenon in that part of the world.

**Fiona Tennant** and **Adam Godijn** have been working with the National Trust resolving a range of issues with their permanent collection, including documentation, cleaning and rehousing. This has involved the collaboration of many ICS conservators along with the assistance of student interns, all supported by a dedicated group of National Trust volunteers. Everyone is pleased with the outcome and it should prove to be a useful model of how to maximise the conservation returns for a collection within a limited budget.

### Conference attendance

**Oliver** attended the Stichting Ebeniste Furniture Symposium in November in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. This is the third such symposium Oliver has been part of. Its focus was 'Furniture Finishes – Past, present and future of transparent wood coatings'.

## Heights Heritage Conservation

### Exhibitions

The second half of 2014 was particularly busy as **Tess Evans** completed the conservation and installation of 'Costumes from the Golden Age of Hollywood' for the Museum of Brisbane. The exhibition runs until the end of May and contains 85 stunning garments from a private collection, worn by iconic Hollywood stars such as Elizabeth Taylor, Ava Gardner and Richard Burton.

### Training

At the same time, Tess completed her studies and in November graduated from the University of Leicester with a Masters in Museum Studies.

### Research

Over the past few years Tess has been working with conservation scientists and students from the Courtauld Institute of Art, investigating treatments to remediate mould from collections and historic interiors, culminating in her Museum Studies dissertation *Breaking the Mould: Investigation into the effectiveness of current strategies for the remediation of mould from cultural heritage artefacts and historic building interiors*. This research continues and Tess is now collaborating with a manufacturer of a commercial disinfectant to develop a product for use on a variety of objects and materials.

### State Library of New South Wales

The Library has recently completed construction of a permanent cold store to replace two smaller cold stores. This new store will allow for growth of our film and photographic negative collection. Collection Storage Officer **John Kyriazis** co-ordinated the move

of the shelving and the cellulose acetate negative collection from the old freezers into the new store. John was assisted by team members **Nikki Ellis**, **Ana Soares Watts**, **Silvana Volpato**, **Bronwen Glover** and **Wendy Richards**.

The branch has been busy preparing for our next exhibition 'Pulp Confidential: Quick & dirty publishing from the 40s & 50s' exhibition. Under the guidance of **Agata Rostek-Robak** and **Cath Bartley**, the exhibition will be installed at the end of January. The show contains about 350 items including original artwork and printed material and will be on until 10 May.

**Cecilia Harvey** and **Kate Hughes** are preparing some of the Library's most significant photographs for loan to the Art Gallery of New South Wales exhibition 'Mirror to Nature'. Photographs for the loan include the earliest known surviving Australian photograph (a daguerreotype of Dr William Bland), carbon prints of Antarctica by Frank Hurley, platinum panoramas and a glass plate negative from the Holterman Collection.

Recently, book conservator **Steve Bell**, along with **Emma Bjorndahl** from our Digital Library Services department, co-ordinated the digitisation of the Library's copy of a Book of English

Statutes dating from 1330. The tiny fragile volume was handled by a rotating roster of conservators and supported by an ingenious adjustable jig created by Steve. The jig has a platform that slides, allowing the books cockled pages to be levelled for each photograph with minimal handling. It took almost a week to digitise completely. The volume will be featured in an upcoming event at the Library to celebrate the 800th anniversary of the first Magna Carta.

### Preservation Australia

#### Treatment

We have been enjoying a period of steady, interesting work – no real dramas or stressful deadlines (apart from a couple of exhibitions...). The only diversion from this was in January when the 1799 celestial globe that we treated in 2013 due to damage from a fall, came back into the studio due to damage from a fall! The mixed team of conservators that worked on the first treatment (presented as a poster at Book, Paper and Photographs Symposium 2014) – **Jeremy Granville Smith** (furniture/objects), **Anne Cummins** (objects), **Kay Söderlund** (paper) and **Beate Yule** (decorative surfaces) – will be working on it again. As Anne said – 'we're getting the band back together!'

#### Workshops

It looks like 2015 might be a year of overseas workshops with discussions underway with several different SE Asian countries – and **Tegan Anthes** currently in Chennai, India presenting workshops and undertaking Preservation Needs Assessments. Also, our first 'Tips and Tools' session is scheduled for March 5th – information has been sent through AICCM member email.



The book of English Statutes  
Photo: State Library of NSW. Safe/Richardson/14

## Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (MAAS) (formerly Powerhouse Museum)

A new internal course in Object Handling has commenced, initially for Registration and Curatorial staff. This will then progress to all members of staff including volunteers. This will eventually become part of the orientation training for new staff members at the Museum.

### Research projects

**Sue Gatenby** has started a Conservation Studies and Investigation (CSI) series of articles which will profile and highlight conservation issues related to a particular current exhibition theme. For example, CSI 1 for the 'Recollect Shoes' exhibition outlines the deterioration of a pair of 1970s men's shoes which have degrading polyurethane soles, and also a case study of the historical pest control treatment of a pair of shoes in the collection using mercuric chloride, a treatment which is obviously now known to be hazardous and therefore a potential OHS risk. The aim of this series is to promote an understanding of Conservation's work and raise our profile to the museum's visitors.

### Exhibitions

Up until Christmas the department was working on two large in house exhibitions. 'Recollect Shoes' is the third in our visible collection storage series, featuring more than 700 pairs of shoes from the 1500s to the present. Highlights include historic shoes from the internationally significant Joseph Box Collection, which contains remnants of leather shoes from the Middle Ages excavated from British archaeological sites, intact European shoes from the 1600s to the early 1900s, ethnographic shoes, shoe buckles, tools and spurs, as well as an extensive company archive. 'Circus Factory' is an exhibition of 60 circus costumes and props on loan from the Centre National du Costume de Scène (CNCS), France, as well as over 200 objects and photographs from the

MAAS collection, including items from the Wirth Circus collection and die-cast and tin toys from the early 20th century.

### Treatment projects

In preparation for the 'Circus Factory' exhibition, several complicated treatments were undertaken by **Rebecca Main**. In the first, a 19<sup>th</sup> century poster which was in pieces. The paper itself was very friable and mould-weakened. The pieces had stretched out of shape and had to be realigned over several weeks with humidification and flattening and then were resecured into place with Japanese tissue on the recto and lined with Japanese tissue on the verso.

Treatment was also carried out on a circus sign made of painted and collaged paper, supported on wooden board in a wooden frame. It had been eaten by termites and a lot of termite dirt was still covering it. Termite remains were removed mechanically and with cotton wool swabs dampened with deionised water. Torn, detached, and lifting areas of paper were flattened, repaired, and consolidated with starch paste and Japanese tissue between the wood and the verso of the paper. A margin of tissue has been left around the gaps to act as a support for further repairs in the future if resources allow.

### Loans

**Frances Fitzpatrick** is currently working on a large loan of photographic material to the AGNSW for their travelling show 'Mirror to Nature'. **Vanessa Pitt** is working on several loans including objects travelling to exhibitions in Victoria, Queensland, and NSW.

## South Australia

### Artlab

#### Paintings and Frames

Lisette Burgess, Rosie Heysen, Rita Costabile, Eugene Taddeo, Chris Payne and Marek Pacyna from the Artlab Paintings team completed the Adelaide

City Council Elder Park Rotunda gilding project in December last year. The project gained quite an amount of local media attention and thousands of revellers were able to take in the New Year and the recent Australia Day celebrations on the banks of the River Torrens around the completely restored rotunda.

Marek Pacyna and Chris Payne have been assisting with the final touches of the treatment of the historic Adelaide City Council outdoor bronze statue of Hercules. Renowned for being Adelaide's second piece of public sculpture, the 1892 statue is due to be relocated to the Adelaide Oval.

The question of attribution of the Carrick Hill owned The Grand Canal, Venice currently ascribed as being after J.M.W. Turner continues. Marek is in charge of the cleaning treatment stage currently underway. Public interest in the project has seen many interesting items associated with Turner being brought into Artlab for assessment and further research to try to answer questions of attribution.

### Paper and Books

Recent work in the Paper Lab has been dominated by exhibition preparation for Mirror to Nature at the Art Gallery NSW, a large exhibition of Trent Parke's photographs at the Art Gallery SA and for various other museums in Adelaide.

Aquila Evill has completed the very challenging treatment of an unfixed pastel portrait which was backed with acidic board using animal glue and which had become mouldy in its frame. The treatment included backing removal, removal of the mould and retouching damaged areas. The result was spectacular!

We've also been doing a lot of rehousing for various institutions – historic photographs and very early SA records for the South Australian Museum and a collection of political cartoons for the Migration Museum.

### **Projects**

Roman gods, giant thongs, memorials and other outdoor art are keeping the Projects team busy. Senior Metals Conservator Ian Miles arranged and oversaw the de-installation and transportation of a site specific artwork "Crossing the River" by David Jones (whose removal was required to enable building redevelopment and storm water improvements to the adjacent River Torrens). Meanwhile Conservation Project Manager Abby Maxwell-Bowen prepared a condition assessment audit for a city sculpture playground that includes a giant thong, dinosaur bone and a fish skeleton while Hercules is demanding an audience from both the Projects and Paintings teams for conservation treatment prior to his return outdoors. A popular talking point for the Artlab tour groups during his two year 'vacation' at Artlab, he will shortly be back on his plinth casting a stern bronze eye over the grounds of the revamped Adelaide Oval.

### **Textiles**

In exciting news, Kristin Phillips, Principal Textile Conservator has been awarded a Copland Foundation scholarship to attend the Attingham Summer School in the UK during July 2015.

The textiles team have welcomed Tessa Bell to the lab. Tessa is a recent graduate of the University of Canberra and will be volunteering with us as we prepare items for private clients and the Art Gallery of South Australia's upcoming Treasure Ships exhibition. Textiles for this exhibition range from large mordant dyed patolas and batik requiring treatment, mounting and display preparation.

In the meantime, Kristin has rehoused a large collection of academic gowns for the University of Adelaide and carried out a workshop for University staff on caring for their collections. Kristin is also continuing work at Carrick Hill historic house to mitigate against light damage to the curtains & blinds.

Mary-Anne Gooden, has the satisfying task of bringing order to an unravelling, spaghetti-like tangle of silk & gold metal threads on an 1873 banner. The silk base fabric of the banner is very split and shattered. The treatment has involved dis-assembling the banner to enable each component to be stabilised and stitched onto a full lining of silk fabric that has been dyed to match the object. Once stabilisation is complete, the banner components will be reassembled into their original arrangement.

### **Conference attendance**

During a visit to India last year, Heather Brown gave a presentation on Artlab's integrated approach to disaster preparedness across the GLAM sector at the International Conference on the Convergence of Libraries Archives and Museums (ICLAM) conference in Delhi in November <http://www.nift.ac.in/iclam-2014/>. The presentation was jointly prepared by Heather, Anne Dineen and Stuart Fuller.

We welcome your contributions to the newsletter, as well as any comments you may have.

Deadlines for submissions are:

- The last Friday in January
- The last Friday in June
- The last Friday in October

Please send your submissions to [newsletter@aiccm.org.au](mailto: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.

Please ensure all content, including photographs, has been approved by appropriate parties, prior to sending to the Editors.

Names in the text should be in bold the first time used, then in normal font afterwards.

Thank you from the Editors

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

1/2 page*	\$220 inc. GST
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10% for 2 issues, 15% for 3 issues, 20% for 4 issues.

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\* 1/2 page: 190mm (w) x 125mm (h) landscape

# Full page: 210x297mm portrait, with 3mm bleed all around

Notices pertaining to AICCM activities are free of charge.

Advertising for inclusion in body of Newsletter accepted until the 1st day of the month in which the Newsletter is due. Early booking preferable.

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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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