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Continuity of change: Cape Bowling Green Lighthouse project

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ABSTRACT

Cape Bowling Green Lighthouse is part of the Australian National Maritime Museum (ANMM) collection and is exhibited externally at Darling Harbour. An ANMM project to conserve the lighthouse partly funded by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority commenced in 2016. The project aims to research, understand and document the fabric of the lighthouse; address condition issues such as a structurally unsound front door, corrosion, mould, fuel tanks containing kerosene, a waterproof membrane and coatings which have reached the end of their service life; while returning the clockwork mechanism that drives the rotation of the lens to a level of function, lighting the lens and training volunteers to activate the lantern room for visitors. The project has involved collaboration with internal and external stakeholders and a range of specialists, and employed new technologies such as drone survey and 3D modelling. The project represents a continuity of adaptation and change in the lighthouse's long history, as well as the pragmatism required of conservators in the current context. However, it is acknowledged that Cape Bowling Green Lighthouse is partially an artefact of ANMM's intervention rather than simply an original historic structure.

BIOGRAPHIES

Agata Rostek-Robak is Conservation Manager at the Australian National Maritime Museum. She has over 25 years work experience, mainly in various Senior Conservator roles at the State Library of NSW. Agata obtained conservation qualifications from the University of Canberra in 1992 and is currently studying towards a Master of Business Administration.

Rebecca Dallwitz is Senior Objects Conservator at ANMM. During more than 12 years in the sector, she has been employed by Museum Victoria, Sydney Artefacts Conservation, Sydney University Museums, The Australian War Memorial and the National Gallery of Australia. She holds a BA Hons and an MA (Cultural Materials Conservation).

Jeff Fox is Objects Conservator at Australian National Maritime Museum. Prior to this he worked as the Archaeological Conservator at the Saruq al-Hadid Archaeological Research Project in Dubai U.A.E. Jeff graduated from the Master of Cultural Materials Conservation course at University of Melbourne in 2013 where he specialised in objects conservation.

Nicholas Flood is Objects Conservator at the Australian National Maritime Museum. He has previously worked at International Conservation Services, the Australian War Memorial and Artlab Australia. He holds qualifications in Cultural Materials Conservation, Chemistry and Philosophy and has contributed research in the characterisation of collection material, collection imaging and conservation advocacy.