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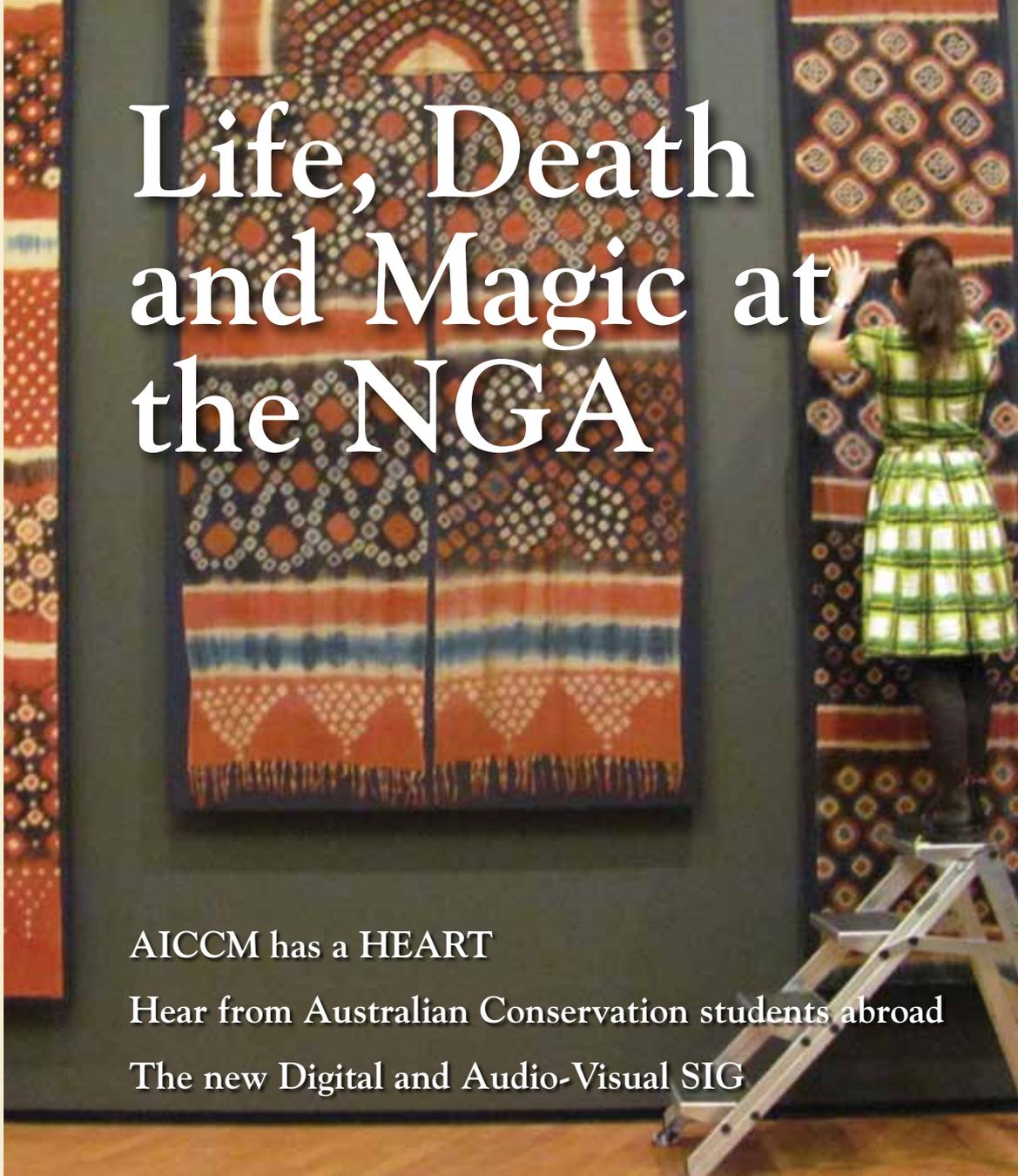
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Now it's Istanbul, not Constantinople...



A Megamouth at WAM!



...just a dash more sulphurated potash...

President's Report

It seems like a long time since I wrote the last report, and I am sure that a lot has happened, but I find it difficult to recall much of it so that I can recount it here. I am always full of good intentions to note things as they happen in my AICCM diary, so that I can accurately report in each newsletter – but...there is an unattributed saying, about the road to hell...Besides, I think it would be much more interesting for us all if we received snippets of news in a more timely manner, rather than reading about them in a dry, old President's report. To this end, we have been discussing how best to communicate with members in a more immediate manner.

You may recall the Forum, on our last website, which we endeavoured to use as a discussion/chat site. We could do something similar on our new site, which would require logging into the website to chat, post messages etc. Or we could try something like Ning, which at least comes into your mailbox but still requires logging in to respond. Or how about a list serve like CanTalk, or the ConsDistList, which comes into your mailbox and that you can respond to directly? This is my preference, as I find that if I have to remember to go to a site and log in to find out what is happening, well....it is a bit like my AICCM diary – a good idea at the time but...

Still, that is just me – what would you all prefer? I do think we need to find some way of communicating quickly, easily and regularly as there are a lot of interesting discussions going on in the conservation world in Australia – and still more we should be talking about. Any suggestions are welcome – either email/call me directly, or talk to your State president/representative, or any other Council members.

One of the main activities taking up the time of the executive in the last few months has revolved around securing our finances. To this end we have altered (slightly) the membership renewal (and joining) process, to make it clearer to the bookkeeper when a member has renewed. This has resulted in a much clearer picture of the status of our membership – financial, lapsed, recently renewed etc – and a more efficient membership processing. To support this financial clarity and reduce work for the secretariat, we have also changed your membership year to that of the financial year (July 1-June 30th), requiring everyone to renew in the same period. While this required a little bit of juggling on our part, and goodwill and patience (and a spirit of generosity on the part of some of you) from you as members, it is all going very smoothly. As a result, our membership has increased (along with our financial well-being) and we are able to track our financial information with far greater ease and clarity. For this we need to thank the Treasurer Robin Hodgson, Michelle Berry (Secretariat), Hilary Newsome (our book keeper) – and, of course, Davina Hacklin, our Secretary.

Over the last month or so I have been working on the presentation that I will deliver on behalf of AICCM in early November in Seoul, at the conference organised by the National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage, 'Conservation Ethics for Rational Decision Making: Dialogue between the East and the West'. AICCM was invited, along with AIC and ECCO (European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers' Organisations), and several institutional case studies from around the world, to present a paper outlining the development of our Code of Ethics and Code of Practice and how we use them in our professional

life. Being forced to spend some time researching this has been very rewarding and interesting, and prompted not a little 'navel gazing'. So much so, that I think the profession as a whole should revisit our Codes, particularly in light of changes within the profession over the last 10 years (since our last revision). The 2011 National Conference, to be held in Canberra in October, will provide an excellent opportunity to discuss the codes and their ability to aid and guide us in our work. Hopefully, we can have some useful discussions through the newsletter and the State divisions, leading up to the conference in order to make our conference time fruitful. I would like to thank all of you who responded to the email request for comments and views about our Codes, and to those who I contacted directly to request information. I will see if the Editor is interested in publishing the paper in full in the next newsletter – assuming I remember to note it in my AICCM diary.

A start could be made in our navel gazing at our next AGM, in Melbourne, on November 18th. As this is not the year for our large, national conference we will be having the AGM one evening during the Book and Paper SIG symposium, followed by a National Council meeting the following day. While our time will be limited, we are planning to leave as much time as possible for open discussion on the current structure of AICCM, and possible changes.

For some time National Council has been discussing various possibilities for re-structuring both the Council and the State Branches, in order to facilitate the work of the Institute. At the moment, we spend a great deal of time simply administering the association, while the State branches appear burdened

by perhaps unnecessarily complex structures. We have been considering several possibilities for a new working Council, along with changes to the state branches and would like to begin some open and on-going discussions with the membership. During the following year, we are hoping to be able to work through the changes, re-draft the Constitution if necessary, and present the final form to the membership at the 2011 Conference and AGM.

At the AGM this year in Melbourne, one possible suggestion for a different structure will be circulated in order to stimulate discussion, and we are encouraging as many members as possible to attend with an intention to contribute their own views and ideas.

Finally, it is time to farewell Davina Hacklin as our Secretary. Davina has devoted an enormous amount of time, energy and commitment to AICCM and it is not over-stating the situation to claim that the Institute would not be where it is today were it not for her dedication. Work demands have caught up with her and she is unable to continue in her role as Secretary. However, she does intend to continue to contribute through other forums. On behalf of Council, and the entire membership – thank you, Davina.

Hope to see you in Melbourne.

Kay Söderlund

From The Editors

A range of interesting articles and letters will keep you stimulated in this edition. You will read of the grisly fate of the occupants of the world's first submarine to sink an enemy warship, but as we are constantly reminded, it is the stories around the artefacts and artworks that we conserve that make our profession both so satisfying and so challenging.

Interaction with issues of environmental conservation is something that many materials conservators both find comes naturally, but also results from constant misapprehension in the wider community about what we actually do. And having for years patiently explained the difference between the two professions, it is interesting to read in the report on the recent IIC Istanbul Congress of Professor David Lowenthal's exhortation to the delegates to get involved in both. As he says, the environment is the context in which all our work happens, and we need to care for it as carefully as we do for the objects we look after within it. That all ties in with reports on two IIC Dialogues that we bring you that are well worth detailed reading. One looks at the latest on changing environmental guidelines for collections and the other the broader issue of interaction between conservators and related professions, a dialogue driven by the demise of the Textile Conservation Centre in the UK. Happily it looks as though this important training organisation will rise again in Glasgow.

As you will have seen from the President's Report, Kay is busy leading us to pastures new both in the way we communicate with each other and as importantly how we operate as conservators within our Code of Practice and Ethics. Her invitation to advise the newly formed professional conservation group in Korea on this matter, reflects the respect with which Australian conservation is held around the world.

On which confident note, we thank you for your ongoing articles and snippets of information, and look forward to hearing from you again for the March 2011 edition.

Julian Bickersteth and Fiona Tennant

Letter to the Editors



As a conservator in private practice I would like to raise a specific concern about our current Code of Practice. I have discovered that according to the AICCM Code of Practice it is not a requirement in treatment documentation to identify the person who conducted the treatment. Article 40 *Documentation of Treatment* omits the requirement that the date and name of the conservator be on the report. However, it is a requirement for the person preparing a condition assessment and treatment proposal to be identified. Article 38 *Documentation of Examination* appropriately states that documentation “must identify the date of examination and the name of the examiner”.

In my experience, when an artwork requires re-treatment, the documentation of previous treatments conducted by others is often non-existent or cursory, and when documentation is provided the name of the practitioner conducting the work is often absent, which regrettably is supported by our own Code of Practice.

As a Professional Member of the AICCM this is very worrying as there appears to be no in built accountability in our own Codes for treatment, which is often the most interventive procedure an artwork is likely to undergo in its life.

I recently became a professional member to uphold the most appropriate and ethical approach to conserving our valuable cultural heritage. However, I

feel our own Codes do not support me in this endeavour.

I propose an amendment to Article 40 of the Code of Practice to include the requirement for the conservator to include their name/s and the date/s of treatment in their documentation, to be included as an agenda item in the November AGM.

I would also value a response from Council as to how the AICCM deals with individuals or companies who do not provide treatment reports at all, which is a breach of the Code of Practice.

Regards
Anne Cummins
PMAICCM

Note to the editors

AICCM Bulletin Editor, Marcelle Scott, has sent in the following note in reply to National President Kay Söderlund's reference to the ranking of the Bulletin, in her letter published in the July 2010 edition.

It is correct that that the Bulletin is ranked 'C' according to Australian Research Council ERA rankings (the measure by which all Australian research outputs are ranked and therefore funded), however Studies and JAIC are also ranked 'C', not 'A' as mentioned. Rankings are based on several criteria, probably the most important being the number of citations – explaining why journals in small specialised fields struggle to be ranked more highly. In defining the ranking category for a journal, ARC states that it is “... defined in terms of how it compares with other journals and should not be confused with its relevance or importance to a particular discipline.” (http://www.arc.gov.au/era/journal_list_dev.htm)

Marcelle Scott

And Kay has responded:

In writing my reply, I had referred to Margaret Birtley's interview in the previous edition of the Newsletter where she had mentioned the rankings – “Currently the Bulletin of the AICCM has a 'C' ranking. Aim for an 'A!' I based my comments on Margaret's view that we could improve our ranking from C to A, without checking the ranking system myself – which clearly I should have. I maintain, however, that the point I was making is correct (even though the ranking of Studies in Conservation was not!) – that when an Australian conservator has original, world-class research to publish it is not The Bulletin that they generally submit their papers to. But I am more than happy to work with the Editor of The Bulletin, and the membership, to change that situation.

Kay Söderlund



National Disaster Response Network – 'HEART'

National Disaster Response Network – 'HEART' (Heritage Emergency Action Response Team)

Kay Söderlund

Many of you will be aware that AICCM has begun work on developing an emergency response network of conservators to assist communities and museums with recovery and salvage procedures after a disaster. While we are still working on the fundamentals (ie funding!) we have made substantial progress. The text below provides an outline of the project and progress made to date.

State groups are currently putting together a short list of conservators who are prepared *now* should there be a need in their area. These conservators will already be experienced in disaster recovery, and be able to leave their work place for up to a week with very short notice. Once we have secured funding for training, we will be calling for expressions of interest from other conservators who would be willing to be part of 'HEART' but require training in salvage procedures and disaster recovery. If you are interested in either of these teams, please contact Kay Söderlund.

Outline

When a disaster strikes a community or a small collecting institution in Australia, there is no immediate assistance available with regard to protecting or salvaging damaged cultural material. It is left to the conservation community in the area to pull together what support it can, on a fairly ad hoc basis – fully dependent on the good will of employers, and the conservators themselves. There is no infrastructure to support their efforts in regional and remote areas, and often this assistance

cannot be offered outside the main cities of Australia.

This situation was underlined in a dramatic and distressing manner in 2009 when regional Victoria and Queensland were hit with disasters that had a major impact on those living in these areas – and damaged or destroyed much of the cultural material held in these areas.

While the professional conservation community responded valiantly in both situations, it is the view of The Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Material (AICCM) that we can do much better in our efforts to protect and preserve Australia's cultural heritage, whether it is held in collecting institutions such as museums, libraries and archives, or in the community in private and family history collections.

AICCM has started work on a project to develop a national response network – HEART (Heritage Emergency Action Response Team) – that will consist of teams of conservators based around Australia who are prepared to volunteer their services when disaster strikes a community or institution that does not have conservation expertise readily available. These conservators will be well trained and experienced in salvage procedures for cultural material, through the HEART network.

We envisage an ongoing register of: conservators, regular training workshops, a 24/7 'hotline' for monitoring situations (weather alerts, bush fires etc), a part-time co-ordinator, as well as dedicated funding for travel, accommodation, and equipment for the response team.

How would it work?

There are several models of these sorts of networks operating around the world, but the one that AICCM

is most interested in is AIC-CERT. This is a network developed by the American Institute for Conservation and called the Collections Emergency Response Team (AIC-CERT). AIC-CERT has now trained 60 conservators from around the country in recovery procedures for cultural material. They have established a 24/7 hotline that is manned on a volunteer basis. If there is a disaster that has an impact on a museum, the museum contacts the hotline and requests a salvage team (generally 3 people) to come and assist. Or the hotline volunteer contacts the museum and asks if they would like assistance, as not all museums will be aware that there is this assistance available. There is a paid, part-time co-ordinator for AIC-CERT who organises the team and their equipment, and liaises with the affected museum. The conservators organise their own travel, which is later re-funded. Once the conservators arrive they assess the situation, establish the recovery plan and salvage procedures, ensure that the museum understands fully how to proceed, and that everything needed to complete the recovery is in place. As a rule, this takes less than one week, depending on the size of the disaster. The museum is then left to finish the recovery on their own, with contact from AIC-CERT on a regular basis.

All of these procedures take place after the first responders have declared that it is safe and appropriate for others to enter the affected area. AIC-CERT only works with museums, libraries and archives – not the private sector.

AICCM imagines that our network will operate in a similar manner, with the major exception being that we will offer our services to communities affected, not just a museum or collecting institution.

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Obituaries

Tubuka Raikaci (November 1960 – September 2010)

Tubuka started working at the Fiji Museum in 1990 where he worked as a cleaner and groundsman. Between 1997-1999 he trained under myself in Fiji as the conservator at the museum. In early 2006 he spent six weeks training in Sydney continuing and building on existing professional relationships with fellow staff at the Powerhouse Museum and the Australian Museum.

Many of you would have met Tubuka when he visited Australia on a number of training sessions and internationally, through his involvement with PIMA (Pacific Island Museum Association), and UNESCO and his attendance at ICOM-CC conferences in Brazil 2002 and the Hague 2005.

He had a wonderful smile and laugh, and a great singing voice too.

He passed away suddenly and unexpectedly at home with his family. He leaves behind his wife Lisi and five children.

He will be sorely missed by family and friends.

Frances Fitzpatrick
(Conservator, Powerhouse Museum)

Correction

The author of Sunao Gazzard's obituary was incorrectly acknowledged in our last edition. Thank you to **Dara Rome** for sharing memories of Sunao.

from page 5

Initial steps

Through National Council, AICCM has established a small committee to develop this project and see it through to completion. We are seeking funding to develop and maintain the network – being a small, volunteer run membership organisation, we do not have the funds to do this on our own.

However, we have established a register of interest for state based teams of conservators in an effort to at least be more prepared than we currently are for disasters in the immediate future. These teams will form the basis of the national network once we have secured funding for the initial set-up.

We are hoping that the network will be up and running by the end of 2011.

Future possibilities

While we are initially only considering training conservators in this programme, it is conceivable that other professionals involved in the heritage community would also be interested. Certainly, if we had others prepared to assist in times of disasters it would ease the strain on Australia's small community of professional conservators.

Once the network is well-established, AICCM intends to develop it further and work with local communities,

councils, emergency services, insurers and loss adjusters – all those involved when disaster strikes – in an effort to prevent unnecessary loss of cultural material, and our distributed national collection.

Once we have established the network in Australia, it is something that we could promote in the Asia/Pacific region through working with the conservation and heritage communities of that area and assist in further developing the response and recovery abilities of this region. The ASEAN group of nations has already started looking at developing a similar network spread throughout the member countries.

Research

Box making survey

Cristina Albillos

The State Library of WA is currently reviewing its box making programme, mainly due to OH & S related injuries. The Conservation team sent out a short questionnaire through the AICCM to other conservators across the country. We received ten replies in all, two coming from the same institution and the answers were quite similar.

Some institutions asked if we could correlate the answers received and send the information back to AICCM. Our institution has also been included in the survey so the findings will be based on 10 replies. I would like to take the opportunity to thank AICCM, the institutions and people who participated in our questionnaire; it was very helpful for us.

QUESTIONS	YES	NO	Sometimes	Rarely	In the Past
1. Do you make custom hand made boxes?	8	0	1	1	-
2a. Do you have OH & S related problems when making boxes?	4	4	1		1
3a. Do you use pre-made boxes instead of custom made?	6	0	3	1	-
4. Do you have a box making machine?	-	10	-	-	-

Questions number 2 and 3 both had an additional section. The information gathered does not translate into a table form.

2b) If you do have associated OH & S problems, how have you overcome them?

Occupational Health and Safety issues were reported as a variety of injuries. They ranged from arthritis, repetitive strain injury, carpal tunnel syndrome, cuts, burns and back injuries due to heavy lifting or bending. Four institutions did not experience any OH

& S issues because either they were not aware of any, or were making a small number of hand made boxes and/or had preformed a risk analysis.

Out of all the institutions that had experienced or were experiencing related health issues, three had overcome or reduced them by acquiring different pieces of equipment: for example a creaser machine, a floor standing board folding machine, a wall mounted cutter and/or an electric guillotine (which only caters for small size boxes). Two institutions had tried to diversify and vary tasks to reduce

physical strain to the hands and wrists, but had not resolved the problem of damage caused by repetitive hand use.

3b) How do you fit pre-made boxes?

Pre-made boxes which were sought out and purchased externally were fitted with Ethafoam, corrugated board, double-wall corrugated board, card, Corex, wooden batons, plastic bags, tissue paper, Tyvek lining, close cell polyethylene foam to covered Dacron pads. One institution did not fit their pre-made boxes; they had them made to specific sizes to fit the items exactly.

The Megamouth Shark at WA Museum

Otherwise known as *megachasma pelagios*, and only third specimen of the species found by the time of discovery on a Mandurah beach in 1988, the Megamouth Shark is an iconic object of the WA Museum. Having previously washed it free of formaldehyde we then had to work out how to move it into a non flammable and non dangerous storage medium.

Thanks to contacts with Andries van Dam from the University of Leiden Medical Centre, where he is the conservator in charge of their anatomy collection that dates back 350 years and more, we worked out that it was theoretically possible to move an alcohol stored specimen into an aqueous glycerol environment by stepwise addition of glycerol from 30 to 45 to 55 to 65 volume %. Tests were recently completed on a small reef shark and a hammerhead shark which showed that the glycerol treatment greatly increased the flexibility of the specimens, otherwise rock hard after a decade or two in 70% ethanol, and improved their colour and removed a lot of their wrinkles as the shark weight increased by 25% over a period of 11 months.



Being more than 700 kg in weight and greater than 5.5 metres long Megamouth III presented some conservation nightmares but the museum team worked out the design of a new 9,000 litre storage tank made of stainless steel (304) with a series of glass portholes in it to allow all round viewing of the shark. Lifting the shark onto a custom made support cradle was a challenge since these deep sea dwelling animals have not the same muscles as their shallow water cousins so as it emerged from its alcoholic home of 13 years it was very floppy. It travelled OK the 20 km to the Maritime Museum on Victoria Quay and was craned into the museum with a 20 tonne BHB crane and lowered into a tank containing 30 vol% glycerol that had been made up the week before. Two tonnes of glycerol were used in the initial part fill of the tank so it is not a small scale operation. After some anxious moments the shark was supported in the solution and once tied down, as it is less dense than the solution, more glycerol was added and then the lids put back on and monitoring began. By recording the density of the solution the amount of alcohol coming out of the shark, and the volume of the same, can be



determined and the impregnation program monitored. It is anticipated that the first incremental change in glycerol will take place towards the end of January 2011 and the treatment should be completed by the end of June 2011. The work is being done in full view of the public who saw your correspondent diving in the tank to make some adjustments to the support system.

Conference and Workshop reviews

AICCM WA division patination workshop September 4, 2010

Isa Loo, President, WA Division

A one day patination workshop was held by the AICCM (WA) Division and Andrew Kay, sculptor at his Roleystone studio on 4th September 2010. Andrew is a prominent sculptor in Western Australia and casts his own sculptures at his studio using the lost wax technique before patinating them himself.

The workshop was held in response to a suggestion made by WA Division committee member Vanessa Wiggin, who organised the day with Andrew to cover the following topics:

- A brief history of bronze casting
- The various patination methods used over the centuries
- Some issues regarding patination of different metals

A demonstration was given by Andrew of his patination techniques after lunch and participants (Vanessa Wiggin, Seth Wiggin, Suellyn Lockett, Maggie Myers and Isa Loo) watched him prepare the surface of his cast bronze object by sandblasting glass beads at the firescale before applying the patination

chemicals (Figure 1). Sulphurated potash (sodium sulphate (hydrated)) was applied to the bronze (using a spray bottle under heat and then rinsed under running water) to add dark tones (Figure 2) and copper (II) nitrate was applied with a brush to provide that well known green patina (Figure 3). Finally, ferric chloride (anhydrous) was sprayed subtly to give warm orange brown highlights. Wire wool was used to work back the green patina as desired before coating with a microcrystalline wax and Inctalac.

After the demonstration, all participants conducted their own practical hands on work by patinating a cast bronze and it was great to see that all objects turned out differently even though the same process and chemicals were used! (Figure 4) Participants were able to keep their patinated bronzes... a very generous gesture by Andrew and a lovely reminder of the day!

A great day was had by all participants and I would like to thank Vanessa Wiggin for her excellent suggestion and subsequent organisation of the workshop, Andrew Kay for inviting us into his home and studio and all the participants of the workshop.



Figure 1: Participants watching Andrew Kay during his demonstration



Figure 2: Maggie Myers applying sulphurated potash to her cast bronze sample



Figure 3: Vanessa Wiggin applying copper (II) nitrate to her cast bronze sample



Figure 4: Participants with their finished sculptures!

Metals 2010 Conference

Ian MacLeod was at the Metals 2010 Conference in Charleston in South Carolina. During the conference he attended a tour of the Warren Lasch Conservation Laboratory in which the H. L. Hunley submarine is being conserved. It sank in February 1864 after successfully sinking the Union ship Housatonic and so it went down in history as the world's first submarine to sink an enemy war ship. The crew of 8 perished after the event when the Canidagua (union steam ship) raced to pick up survivors and unbeknownst cut off the rudder and damaged the prop. This sent the Hunley to the bottom mud and so she became stuck and her crew perished from asphyxia etc and were recovered 10 years ago.

IIC 2010 Congress Conservation and the Eastern Mediterranean. Istanbul, September 20 – 24, 2010: Report

Fiona Kemp and Sara Freeman

Over 300 delegates came from far and wide to attend this year's IIC Congress in the 2010 European Capital of Culture, Istanbul. It was great to meet colleagues from Turkey and other countries such as Egypt, Iran, Cyprus, Greece, Malaysia, Germany, USA, UK and Italy. The Australian contingent was understandably small but with four of us, pretty well represented given the travelling distance. The Congress was held in the Business District in the north of the city – about a twenty minute metro ride from Taksim and each day delegates entered the Sabanci towers after going through two security points.

Jerry Podany, President of IIC, welcomed the delegates before handing the stage to Professor David Lowenthal, Professor Emeritus, Department of Geography, University College London, who opened the conference with the Forbes Prize lecture. His lecture echoed the Congress theme *Conservation and the Eastern Mediterranean*. This was a broad vision of conservation and its role linking the conservation of art and history to the care of the wider environment and



emphasising the importance of both. Professor Lowenthal challenged us all as conservators to “care for the past and the future...to have a partnership with the dead, the living and those to be born”.

During the course of the week, delegates heard a diverse range of papers which included earthquake research related to museums collections in Istanbul and in-situ preservation of a deep sea wreck site in the Black Sea with the ambition of creating a deep water museum. Other topics covered the intricacies of the structure and materials used in Ottoman manuscripts; bio-deterioration at the acropolis in Athens; conservation of a 12th century illuminated manuscript at Saint Catherine's at Sinai; laser cleaning of corrosion products on Greco-Roman glass; in-situ treatment of Greek *proskynitarion* – roadside shrines, and the capping of walls in archaeological sites to prevent moisture from degrading excavated walls.

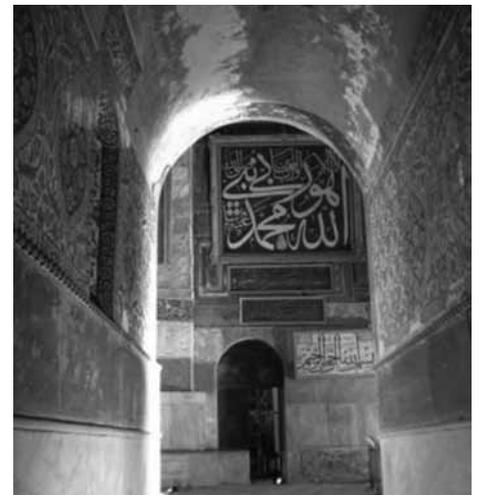
Tatiana Kousoulu a Textile Conservator and lecturer from Athens spoke passionately about the treatment of a Mount Athos *epitaphios*. This exciting project highlighted an important religious textile, concealed for many centuries in the remote St Paul Monastery where women are excluded. The venture required extensive collaboration between the monks, conservators and archaeologists to bring the textile into the public domain and the treatment to a successful conclusion.

Another inspiring paper presented by Hande Kokten, Director of the Conservation program at Ankara University discussed the transformation of museums in Northern Cyprus, where difficult politics have contributed to a lack of conservators and resources. This preventive project addressed the preservation of the ever-increasing, neglected collections of important icons and ceramics through the provision of educational conservation workshops, surveys and re-housing, with an emphasis on ensuring that locally available materials and resources

were fully utilised with spectacular results.

Susan La Niece a metals expert from the British Museum addressed the special approach conservators must take when treating delicate copper-based Islamic metal work from archaeological excavations, warning conservators to undertake thorough analysis prior to treatment.

Nora Kennedy (who has an interesting personal connection with the Middle East, having been born and raised in Lebanon) and Debra Hess Norris both from the USA reported on an alliance with the Arab Image Foundation (AIF) and the Middle East



Photographic Preservation Institute (MEPPI) about the promotion of the preservation of photography in the Eastern Mediterranean region. Their collaborative efforts have resulted in intensive training in several countries and there are plans for future workshops in the region.

The wide range of subjects covered by the papers and posters and a timetable that enabled attendance at all talks, made the conference a fascinating window into many fields of research and endeavour.

The beautifully located Sakip Sabanci Museum was the venue for a Round Table on Tuesday evening *Between Home and History* with six panellists that included authors, architects,

anthropologists and activists. The discussion focussed on questions about conservation and consumption, preservation and use in relation to the protection and development of living historic buildings and neighbourhoods; and commenced with a video interview with the Nobel Prize winning author Orhan Pamuk. Following the Round Table, delegates were treated to a party at the museum on a spectacular patio overlooking the Bosphorus.

Delegates had an opportunity to tour Istanbul on Wednesday with boat rides on the Bosphorus, excursions to Hagia Sophia, the Blue Mosque and Topkapi Palace amongst those on offer. We visited the Istanbul Conservation Lab housed outside the Topkapi Palace. From what we understood, it is the official conservation lab in Turkey and services the entire country with treatments, conservation advice and analytical research. Housed in an older facility with a staff of only nineteen people, they are keenly anticipating their relocation to a new purpose-built lab next year which will accommodate many more staff and students.

The area of Sultanahmet, where many of Istanbul's iconic places of interest are found, offered a spectacular location

for the Congress Gala dinner which was held at the Cistern of a Thousand and One Columns. This was once an underground Byzantine water storage area which is now dry but has been transformed into a stunning venue especially fun for dancing the conga in!

Overall Istanbul was a superb setting for the conference, having such a rich history, the 2010 European Capital of Culture selection (the first time it has been awarded to a non European Union country) has injected funding into many cultural heritage works including restoration projects which were visible at various buildings and sites around the city.

The conference ended with the announcement of the winners of the 2010 Keck Award. The recipients are the Wallraf-Richartz Museum and

Fondation Corboud in collaboration with the Cologne Institute for Science for the project 'Painting Techniques of Impressionism and postimpressionism'. This valuable resource can be viewed online at www.museenkoeln.de/impressionismus.

The location of the next congress is Vienna, to be held on 9 – 14 September, 2012.



Special Interest Groups

Digital and Audio-Visual SIG – *proposed*

Call for expressions of interest for the establishment and participation in a Digital and Audio-Visual conservation/preservation Special Interest Group within the AICCM.

There is a need for the conservation profession to embrace digital preservation particularly associated with photographic media. For all practical purposes using traditional photographic processes to duplicate deteriorating images are no longer available. Digitally produced and copied images in collections are subject to ethical concerns of authenticity and reliability. Contemporary visual artists' work in gallery collections is now common and conservators cannot rely on traditional tools and techniques to preserve and conserve them.

Moving image and recorded sound are common in public and private collections and the conservation profession needs to engage with these cultural materials and documents. There is expertise in both audio-visual and digital preservation across many State and Commonwealth cultural institutions, often linked to the conservation areas of those institutions. There are professional bodies within Australia that are

concerned with sound preservation and digital imaging. However, it is rarely conservators who drive or fully engage with these functions.

I believe that there is a pressing need to convene a special interest group within the AICCM for these significant areas. I propose that a single SIG is most appropriate for the two areas, because there is so much convergence these days between AV and the digital world.

If you are interested in the establishment and participating in a special interest group within the AICCM that focuses on sound and moving image media and digital media then please contact: **Peter Shaw**
Email: peter.shaw@naa.gov.au

If there is sufficient response it is hoped to formalise the establishment of the group at the National Council meeting in mid November. There are two initial steps; to appoint a convener for the group, and to agree on a name for the group.

Textiles SIG

TSIG is pleased to announce that the 2011 AICCM TSIG symposium will be held 16th-18th of March 2011, at the National Gallery of Australia's new conference facilities. This is the first time we will have a three day program, due to our productive group (and some international friends) contributing around 20 presentations. The theme *On the Body* has proved to be popular, spawning a variety of papers from case studies of individual treatments through to papers dealing with entire exhibitions and collections. We will also have a focus session on *Ballets Russes* costumes to tie in with the NGA's exhibition *Ballets Russes: The Art of Costume*. I hope that all of you will be able to join us in Canberra in the autumn for what is shaping up to be a brilliant conference.

Working Parties

Mould Remediation Working Group

Update

In the last newsletter a call for interest was broadcast for those interested in participating in a newly established Working Group to focus on mould remediation issues in the museum, gallery and archive sectors.

A group of 6 enthusiastic individuals have been in contact with Elizabeth – five from Sydney and one from Melbourne. We would certainly welcome participants from other parts of the country!

The Group will be meeting in late October with a fungal ecology expert from the University of Sydney. The intention is to draw on such expert knowledge in a variety of fields to establish how mould interacts and damages materials and how we can best prevent and remediate that damage. We would also like to establish some benchmarks for a number of factors following flood incidents and mould outbreaks. For example the establishment of baseline moisture levels of various material types following flood and mould remediation so that clients and remediation companies are working from a common grounding. The question of baseline 'spore loadings' for mould infestation also routinely comes up in enquiries from organisations following flood incidents – at present there appears to be no base-line levels available.

Continued call for interest

Elizabeth Hadlow would be interested to hear from anyone who would like to join the working group and/or anyone who could provide information about relevant publications and contacts with other professions.

Elizabeth can be reached by email at elizabeth.hadlow@records.nsw.gov.au or by telephone on (02) 9673 1788.

Lab and People News

Queensland

QAG/GoMA

In August **Amanda Pagliarino**, **Liz Wild** and **Michael Marendy**, along with Stephanie Guarneri representing Les Arts Décoratifs, Paris, installed the Valentino exhibition in the main galleries of GoMA. Mannequins were soft padded and temporary undergarments were constructed to support 100 garments using methods devised by Stephanie. Michael continues to make weekly assessments of the garments on display and attends to cleaning and undergarment modifications as required.

The QAG has recently undergone a major relocation of galleries with the International collection moving to the entry level and thus becoming the first gallery off the Melbourne Street entrance. The Asian collection has now been integrated into the back galleries on the watermall level. In preparation for the new International rehang **Kim Barrett** has removed backings and cleaned a series of prints by Hogarth. **Robert Zilli** and **Merv Brehmer** have constructed, carved and gilded reproduction frames for this series.

Samantha Shellard and **Anne Carter** have been treating and preparing artworks for two exhibitions in the Queensland Artists' Gallery; *Joe Rootsey: Queensland Aboriginal painter 1918-63* and *Vida Lahey: Colour and Modernism*. Anne has also been working on the forthcoming exhibition *Scott Redford: Introducing Reinhardt Dammm* which includes a range of contemporary artworks that bridge the divide between painting and sculpture.

The GoMA Conservation laboratory and the Cinémathèque pipe organ pit were opened to the public on Saturday 2nd October as part of *Brisbane Open House*, an initiative of the Queensland Government and Brisbane Development Association. This event offered an opportunity for the public to see some of Brisbane's less accessible sites.

South Australia

Artlab

Exhibition preparation and treatments are preoccupying the paintings and paper sections who are working on objects and artworks for *Desert Country*, a major exhibition of indigenous art at the Art Gallery of South Australia and *Lost Gardens of Adelaide* at Carrick Hill. Textiles have just commenced treatment of the *Eureka Stockade Flag* belonging to the City of Ballarat, and arrangements are being made for AICCM's Paintings SIG symposium *Dialogues with Artists* that will include a visit to the studios of Hans Heysen and Nora Heysen at The Cedars in Hahndorf and a competitive match of petanque on the Carrick Hill piste.

Western Australia

Art Gallery of WA

All conservators have been busy readying for *Peggy Guggenheim, A Collection in Venice*, the first of a series of Great Collections of the World coming to Perth under director Stefano Carboni.

Senior conservator **Maria Kubik** is very pleased to see the wilting end of the 2010 Art in Bloom exhibition. This four day event poses major risks to the collection every two years, with 120 local celebrities asked to respond to key works in the galleries. Thanks to the hard work of gallery staff and volunteers, the floral installations were safely installed and deemed to be a great success both in terms of visitor numbers and avoiding damage to the collection. When not travelling to remote indigenous art communities, Maria is preparing paintings for loan and display, and is retouching drying cracks on a 200 x 400 cm Peter Booth painting with the assistance of volunteer **Phillipa Moir**.

Object Conservator **David Graves** is focusing on preparing a number of historical works for the upcoming state art collection changeovers.

2010 AICCM AGM

The AGM will be held on the evening of Thursday 18th November, NGV Auditorium, at the Book and Paper SIG symposium, from 5:00 - 6:00pm. Drinks will be served, followed by the conference dinner for those wanting to attend.

He also been working on the ongoing conservation of Antony Gormley's *Inside Australia* installation piece located at Lake Ballard in outback Western Australia.

Paper Conservators **Stephanie Baily** and **Kate Woollett** have been busy preparing works from the historical collection for the new exhibitions focusing on the State Art Collection (SAC). Apart from the *Peggy Guggenheim, A Collection in Venice* currently on exhibition, the regular intake of incoming shows are largely a thing of the past for AGWA. Preparation of large numbers of works from the SAC now dominates the treatment schedule and as a result the new suction table has proved to be well worth its weight in gold!

WA Museum

In 2004, the contents of one of the main buildings on the Perth site of the WA Museum were relocated as the five-storey-and-two-basements building (known fondly as the 'Francis Street Building') built in 1972 was condemned due to the state of the asbestos content. As a result of the Occupational Safe and Health issues raised, the administration, curators, displays and collections were packed and relocated to the current WA Museum Administration, Collection and Research Centre in Welshpool. Whilst the Francis Street Building has stayed closed to the public since this time, the remaining exhibitions at the Perth site have continued to be open to the public. Since the relocation in 2004, the WA Museum management has been negotiating with the WA State Government for a New Museum.

Funding was allocated to demolish the Francis Street Building in this year's WA State Government budget. As this building is in close proximity to the other museum buildings, an assessment was made as to the vulnerability of the collection on display during the demolition period. Curators, together with conservators and exhibition personnel, identified artefacts that were at risk and a program developed for a) the removal of those at greatest risk,

b) ascertaining which objects required additional support, c) obtaining anti skid pads for those artefacts that might move off shelves and for the remainder, nothing.

A number of displays of glass and china in a cultural history exhibition in the Old Gaol building, as well as a collection of pharmacy jars with glass labels were considered vulnerable and a decision was made by the Museums' Executive Management Team that the entire exhibition would be removed in readiness for what might be the first phase of a New Museum. All artefacts in the Old Gaol were assessed, packed ready for storage, treated where recommended by conservators and relocated to the Welshpool Collection and Research Centre.

In addition, a collection of 304 natural history specimens on open shelving in Hackett Hall were relocated to the Welshpool Collection and Research Centre. This involved analysing each specimen for the presence of toxic chemicals using a portable XRF device, labelling them accordingly, cleaning, boxing and preparing the specimens for freezing before they were incorporated into the rest of the Terrestrial Vertebrates collection.

The demolition is programmed from December 2010 to July 2011. Vibration and dust monitoring will be carried out during this period.

This work was carried out in August and September 2010 by a team staff with the assistance of very able contract staff.

Corkill Conservation

Business is starting to arrive as clients find their way to my door. The 'introduction' process to the Perth art scene has been good. It has been fun getting to visit the galleries in Perth and see lots of beautiful exhibitions. At the moment, **Felicity Corkill** is working on a number of watercolours by R. Sidney Cocks, Rolf Harris and others, as well as a badly water-damaged photograph and a charcoal portrait.

ACT

Australian War Memorial

The Large Technology team have started two major projects, the Lockheed Hudson Mk IV bomber and Japanese Type 95 Ha-Go light tank. **Jamie Croker, Mark Aitken** and **Kim Wood** have begun work on fabricating the support structure in preparation for the retro-fitting of a Boulton-Paul turret in the Hudson, while **John Kemister** and **Dean Willis** have begun repairs to Ha-Go tank components that were damaged due to either mine testing or advanced corrosion and stress cracking post Second World War.

Laura Kennedy is presenting a paper co-authored with **Alison Wain** at *Big Stuff 2010* at IWM Duxford in early October.

George Bailey, Eileen Procter and **Laura Curtis** from the objects lab, along with **Jessie Firth, Bridie Kirkpatrick** and **Sarah Clayton** from Textiles, are busily preparing medals and other objects for the opening of the refurbished Hall of Valour in December, 2010.

The Textiles Lab is gearing up for the installation of a large compactus unit for the storage of all the uniforms in the collection, and are busy teaching the very enthusiastic University of Canberra students **Deborah Lane** and **Michelle Newton-Edwards**.

The Paintings Lab have welcomed two University of Canberra students, **Hayley Munro** and **Kerry Yates**, with **Alana Treasure** and **David Keany** teaching this semester. After the pressure of Second World War redevelopment has eased, **Janet Hearne** and **Kathryn Ferguson** have been able to spend more time on long term conservation treatments. David and Alana are also preparing their presentation on insights into some of the less traditional contemporary artists in the Memorial's collection for the upcoming AICCM Paintings SIG symposium.

Alana presented at the Synchrotron Science for Conservation day on iron gall inked parchment analysis and was involved in analysis on the infrared beam-line of Mayan temple paint samples along with **Rosemary Goodall**, an analytical research associate of Queensland University of Technology.

National Gallery of Australia

Textile conservation

The textile conservation team, led by **Micheline Ford**, has focused on conserving and installing 80 south East Asian textiles in preparation for *Life, Death and Magic* which opened last month in August.

Hannah Barrett has recently presented a talk on Preserving Ritual Textiles whilst **Chandra Obie** spoke on the Textiles of the Toraja. Both talks were very well received by AICCM members, conservation students and members of the public.

Jane Wild, Hannah and Chandra presented a paper at the Hanging by a Thread conference held in New Zealand. The paper entitled **From Dance to Display: Conservation of costumes from the Ballets Russes** focused on some of the NGA most complex and time consuming treatments.

The textile team have all been involved with the installation of 36 textiles in the new Indigenous Australian Art galleries which are part of the exciting and beautiful building extension and refurbishment.

Conservation technicians **Blaide Lallemand** and **Dave Mc Roberts** are preparing mannequins for the upcoming *Ballets Russes* exhibition which will showcase over 100 costumes, many of which haven't been exhibited before.

The NGA conservation team sadly farewellled **Stefanie Woodruff**. Stefanie has contributed to the loans and textile conservation sections over the years and we wish her well with her new adventures.

Victoria

Museum Victoria

Elizabeth McCartney has been working with a racing legend! The skeleton of Phar Lap is now on display next to his hide in Melbourne Museum. Elizabeth assisted with reassembly and installation with MV preparators and installers, under the guidance of a Te Papa representative. Phar Lap's skeleton is on loan from Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa in Wellington. This is the first time the racing legend's hide and skeleton have been reunited since his death in 1932. The exhibit is in celebration of the 150th anniversary of the running of the Melbourne Cup as well as the 80th anniversary of Phar Lap's 1930 Melbourne Cup win. Check out this link for a video of the installation:

<http://museumvictoria.com.au/about/mv-news/2010/phar-laps-skeleton-goes-on-display/>

University of Melbourne Conservation Masters students, **Sylvia da Rocha** and **Maria Bonet**, have completed their 3 week internship with the Conservation team. During their time here they got to work on everything from pyrites to paper. The three weeks went so quickly and just as we were getting used to their smiling faces they are gone again. Big thank you to both Sylvia and Maria for their hard work!

The museum has commenced a review of current taxidermy preparation techniques in relation to their suitability for long term preservation. To this end **Felicity Bolton** travelled to the United Kingdom to attend a Small Mammal Taxidermy Course. In this course Felicity learnt about current taxidermy techniques used in the UK and applied them to a specimen – in her case a squirrel. And while Felicity is now sure that she doesn't want to do taxidermy full-time she has collected some interesting comparative data for our own work practices. Sadly the squirrel had to remain in the UK.

Sarah Babister has been working on an interesting statuette – a fertility figure from Cameroon, most likely made around the middle of the 20th Century. Much of the delicate metal-work of this large bronze is obscured by thick corrosion product and Sarah has been patiently reducing this to reveal the brilliant surface detail. The object will soon be appearing in *West Africa: Rhythm and Spirit* exhibition at Immigration Museum but you can also check it out in the Melbourne Museum Treasures publication.

Conservation has another new baby! **Karina Palmer** and partner Shane welcomed Astrid into the world on 14 August 2010. Astrid is very cute and everyone is doing wonderfully.

National Archives of Australia – Melbourne

The National Archives of Australia joined with the Department of Immigration and Citizenship to hold a Citizenship Ceremony for thirty conferees and guests at our North Melbourne premises on 9th July 2010. **Carey Garvie**, **Debra Parry** and **Amy Bartlett** prepared and installed items for exhibition at the ceremony including a range of immigration related documents and photographs.

The team have carried out a range of Outreach activities over the last couple of months including introducing a library student from RMIT University to the world of preservation during her internship with the NAA Access & Communications section. In addition, we have provided tours of the lab to Postgraduate Cultural Heritage and Museum Studies students from Deakin University and to a delegation of five representatives from the Sultanate of Oman.

In other Outreach news, Carey Garvie presented a talk on the conservation of fragile materials at the Veterans Heritage Workshop at the Public Records Office of Victoria in August.

The services program continues to provide staff with a steady flow of work. Amy Bartlett and Debra Parry have

been conducting a range of treatments including separating adhered folios in preparation for digitisation on demand and rehousing interesting items such as metal printing plates.

Albertine Hamilton has joined the team to complete her internship for her studies in conservation at the University of Melbourne. Alby has been surveying and repackaging Australian Broadcasting Commission production drawings and photographs.

Our Preservation Digitisation staff **Liam Ryan** and **Tha Iem** have been busy digitising photographs and negatives of Commonwealth building sites.

The Archive's family welcomes a new addition. A son, George Walter Lueth, was born to parents **Detlev Lueth** and Bronwyn Cosgrove in August 2010. We wish them all the best.

National Gallery of Victoria

The staff of the Textiles lab, **Kate Douglas**, **Christina Ritschel** and **Annette Soumilas** have been overrun by male mannequins as we lead up to the *Manstyle* exhibition, including work to conserve and mount 18th century gentlemen's coats and military costumes. **Solitaire Osei** has re-joined the team to cover **Bronwyn Cosgrove's** maternity leave and swiftly took over the *Trinitarias carpet* treatment, completing the removal of the wax deposits (with much help from numerous colleagues) and escorting it to Belgium to supervise the wet-cleaning treatment at De Wit Royal Manufacturer of Tapestry's specialist washing facility. The carpet has returned rejuvenated and its display in early 2011 is highly anticipated.

MaryJo Lelyveld organised a successful workshop on traditional gilding techniques, taught by Hubert Baijia, Senior Conservator of Frames from the Rijksmuseum. Hosted by the NGV and sponsored by the AICCM, the course was well attended and received by conservators and framers from Australia and New Zealand. Hubert was very generous with his knowledge and returned to the Netherlands with

a freshly gilded boomerang. MaryJo and the rest of the Frames and Furniture Conservation team, **Suzi Shaw**, **Noel Turner** and **Sharon Grigg** are kept busy with preparing works for major rehanga of several galleries at NGV:International.

In the Objects lab, **Trude Ellingsen** attended the *Contemporary art, who cares?* 2010 conference in Amsterdam in June. More recently Trude, **Marika Strohschnieder**, **Di Whittle**, **Sharon Grigg** and **Georgia Harvey** have been occupied with the planning and preparing of objects required for the many projects associated with the NGV 150th anniversary in 2011.

In the Paper and Photographs conservation lab, **Louise Wilson**, **Belinda Gourley** and **Elisabetta Polidori** have been busy with preparations for works included in *This wondrous land: colonial art on paper*. Louise carried out an extensive survey of the papers used in colonial art, the results of which will be published in the exhibition catalogue. Belinda has been very busy with the demanding but satisfying task of organising the next AICCM Book, Paper and Photographic Materials Symposium, to be held in Melbourne this November. **Pip Morrison** surveyed a large group of photographs by Julian Smith, which present interesting challenges from the point of view of techniques identification owing to the experimental and versatile approach of the artist to his work.

Catherine Earley, of Exhibitions Conservation, is deep into risk and disaster management at present. **Helen Casey** is off to Swan Hill Regional Art Gallery to install our touring *Imagining the Orient* exhibition and **Janelle Borig** has just returned from a courier trip to Paris taking paintings to a Monet show at the Grand Palais and doing research for next year's Moreau exhibition, and the Melbourne Winter Masterpieces 2012 *Napoleon* exhibition.

Carl Villis and **John Payne** have undertaken treatments on paintings by Joseph Wright of Derby, and John is currently utilising the brand new x-ray

scanner in the Paintings conservation lab to update the NGV's database of digital x-rays. He and **Helen Gill** are building a digital database of Colourmen stamps and canvas stamps from paintings in the NGV collection. **Michael Varcoe-Cocks** and **David Thurrowgood** are involved in a collaborative project between CSIRO-NGV developing methodologies for the application of the Australian Synchrotron to the safe examination of easel paintings. **Raye Collins** has begun retouching the Beechey portrait of the *Earl of Stradbroke* for the Regency room. Helen Gill and **Alex Ellem** are working with John on an extensive range of primarily 19th century paintings, many of which have not been displayed for decades, in preparation for the new displays associated with the NGV's Sesquicentenary in 2011.

Bronwyn Cosgrove and Detlev Lueth have welcomed baby George to their family, and a month prior **Holly McGowan-Jackson** and her partner Claudio welcomed little Orlando. We wish them well for the (no doubt) tiring year ahead with their new bundles of joy.

With great sadness of her colleagues, Belinda Gourley left the NGV and will be working in the position of Paper Conservator at the University of Melbourne. The Paper and Photographs laboratory would like to take this opportunity to thank her once again for her work with us and wish her the best for her future.

Centre for the Conservation of Material Culture

Recent staffing changes in the paper lab are in progress. Senior Paper Conservator, **Libby Melzer**, is taking time out to undertake a Masters degree. Libby is the recipient of an API Scholarship and is working within an Australian Research Council (ARC) project, which brings together research on Illuminated Manuscripts in Australia. Libby will be focusing on the materials aspect of the manuscripts. This project is a partnership between the

University of Melbourne and the State Library of Victoria. While Libby is busy with her research, **Briony Pemberton** will be stepping up to fill the senior position and **Belinda Gourley** will be joining us to fill Briony's position. We are very pleased to welcome Belinda to the team.

Recent CCMC Masters graduate **Kelly Leahey** is assisting in the Paper section and is also working with **Marcelle Scott** and first year CCMC Masters students on a Knowledge Transfer Grant project to prepare Racing Victoria's 16mm film archive for digitisation. We are also lucky to have **Katy Glen** back with us two days per week, having spent several years in Russia.

Together the team has busy, as usual, with fee-for-service work. They have been treating a number of works that were damaged in the March Melbourne floods.

Jennifer Lim, a colleague from the National Archives of Singapore, will be undertaking an intensive training program in the paper lab in the first two weeks of October. The program will focus on the conservation of maps, books and photographs.

In the paintings lab **Catherine Nunn** and **Caroline Fry** have been busy in the working on some large-scale projects. Recent graduate **Olivia Cranstone** has been working with the paintings team treating some paintings from The University Of Melbourne art collection. Recent graduates **Benita Dass-Grasse** and **Johanna Ellersdorfer** have been volunteering in the lab, assisting with a considerable lining project. Caroline and **Vanessa Kowalski** presented conservation-related papers at the recent Museums Australia Conference at The University Of Melbourne.

Between July and September, Thailand's Silpakorn University (SU) in the Nakhorn Pathom province, engaged the CCMC to undertake a conservation treatment, training and workshop program. The program was developed to celebrate and coincide with the auspicious occasion of His Majesty the King's 84th Birthday Anniversary in 2011.

The program was delivered in three stages, in addition to a preliminary visit from **Associate Professor Robyn Sloggett**. Heading the program was **Dr Nicole Tse**, currently an Australian Research Council Post doctorate Fellow at CCMC, and a team of CCMC conservators including Libby Melzer, Senior Paper Conservator, Vanessa Kowalski, Paintings Conservator, **Cushla Hill**, Senior Paintings Conservator and **Jacinta Brown**, Assistant Objects Conservator.

The aim of the program was to treat and rehouse a number of significant paintings on canvas and paper from the Silpakorn University Art Collection and to present a conservation-training program to invited guests and the SU conservation team. The *Seminar and Workshop Program on the Conservation of Paintings on Canvas and Paper* was delivered over a continuous 7-day period. Participants were supplied with a book of notes in English and Thai and the power point presentations that followed the chronology of the course. All demonstrations were filmed and projected onto a screen for easy viewing by the participants.

The program included:

- Days 1-3: General introduction to Conservation. Delivered by Nicole to 75 participants. Thai experts Mr. Somsak Tangpun, Senior Paintings Conservator, and Ms Kwantjitr, Senior Paintings Conservator, both from the Fine Arts Department, also joined Nicole on the first day to present lectures. The remaining 4 days continued to deliver lectures and practical sessions to a slightly smaller group of participants, between 25-40.
- Days 4-5: The Conservation Treatment of paintings on paper, delivered by Libby.
- Days 6-7: The Conservation Treatment of paintings on canvas, delivered by Vanessa.

State Library of Victoria

Conservation is gearing up for its busiest time of the year, with changeovers due for both the *Mirror of the World* and *Changing Face of Victoria* exhibitions. **Helen McPherson** will be overseeing the former as acting Senior Conservator – Books, while **Jean Holland** is on leave. Our *Shop til you drop* exhibition will also be coming down in November, to be replaced by an exhibition of contemporary children's book illustration. This exhibition consists mostly of framed works of art on paper, which will be hung somewhat lower than usual to cater for a shorter-than-average viewing audience. We have had had many of our existing Fini Frames refitted with Fini's aluminium backings, which we hope will make future exhibition preparation more straightforward.

For a library, we seem to move a lot of objects around. Of late this has included marble busts, church models, guns and Ned Kelly's armour, mostly for external loans. They have been keeping our new Registrar **Sarah Haselton** very busy. Sarah is filling in for **Catherine Marklund** who is on maternity leave.

Ian Cox has been inducting our new Conservation Technician, **Siya Purohit**, into the ways of archival box-making. In book conservation news, Jean Holland is working on Sowerby's *Coloured Figures of English Fungi* (c1800), using a toned Japanese tissue to complete an underbacking. The tissue was toned using dilute acrylic paints and an airgun. The book will go into a future changeover of the *Mirror of the World* exhibition.

Virginia Dahlenburg prepared a number of paintings for the rehang of the library's Blue Rotunda. Her current project is a portrait of John Thomas Nightingale Rowell by Harold Freedman. Harold Freedman was the senior lecturer in illustration at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology for 22 years and an appointed war artist during World War II. In 1972 he was appointed as the State Artist of Victoria, the only such

position in Australia, which he held for 11 years. His sitter, John Rowell, studied at the National Gallery School under Bernard Hall and Frederick McCubbin and went on to be the Senior Painting Master at the School of Applied Art, Melbourne Technical College. The painting entered our collection as part of the Harold Freedman archive and appears to have suffered water damage and has a sub-optimal lining onto board. The painting requires extensive filling and inpainting.

Paper conservation staff continue to work on maps, posters and journals for digitisation. **Albertine Hamilton** recently washed and lined a World War I poster and is repairing a number of other posters from the same collection, under the supervision of **Jane Hinwood**. **David Harris** and **Alice Cannon** continue to repair the journals of Joseph Jenkins (the Welsh Swagman).

A small but extraordinary collection came into the lab recently; small bundles of papers tied up with string and stitched into fabric wrappings, written by an inmate of Pentridge Gaol during the 1870s. The papers were found in a wall cavity when Pentridge was demolished. Many of the bundles were unwrapped and transcribed prior to them coming to the Library. We are now going to un-wrap the remaining bundles (after extensive photographic documentation). The decision to unwrap them is difficult as the bundles are such unusual objects as they are. The papers contain notes of the prisoner's trial, verse, letters from other prisoners and much cursing of the detective who put him in jail (the somewhat famous Detective John Christie, "Australia's own Sherlock Holmes" or, according to our prisoner, "SCOUNDREL CHRISTIE...that PERJURED PERJURED DOG").

Vanessa Ross and **Felicity Garrigan** are figuring out the logistics of relocating over eleven kilometres of books from the general collection, which will occur during December and January. This work is part of a reconfiguration of the library's Trescowthick Information Centre, which will see reference books

re-housed into the Redmond Barry Reading Room and into closed stacks. This will also require a complete reshelving of the books in Redmond Barry. Many hard days' work ahead!

Preservation is processing some new donations, namely the Peerless Glass collection, which consists primarily of rolled stencil designs, and the Joseph Brown collection of manuscripts papers. The Peerless Glass collection also contains some unusual objects, stencils made by dipping sheets of blotting paper into a mixture of animal glue, glycerine and sugar. The sheets remain flexible but appear to have mould damage and aren't the best-smelling things we've ever come across. These collections are currently in our Quarantine area while staff check them for insects and mould and clean away dirt, dust and other unsavoury animal-based materials.

Preservation has also been enjoying a rather more entertaining donation, copies of the 'Nation Review' magazine. These advertisements are from the 'Dwellings' section of the classifieds – guess the decade...

Desperate creative human, balanced Piscean, needs cheap big studio/living space to unleash intense paroxysm of mind light onto canvas.

Communal home w/ 7 adults, 2 kids, needs persons any age. Moving away from meat, chairs, TV toward sharing feelings, massage, Sufism.

Girl librarian, 24, seeks large, unfurnished room/s in house full of freaks, preferably in Carlton (Melbourne) vicinity.

Kate Holloway is also beginning a project to identify the extent of nitrate film within our photographic collections, to gauge how easily it can be separated from other material and placed in cold storage.

New South Wales

Australian National Maritime Museum

Jonathan London is attending a workshop entitled *Energy Efficient Museum Buildings* in Copenhagen from 4 – 8 October 2010. The purpose of the workshop is to inform conservators, curators and museum managers about the science of climate control and building construction, so they are better equipped to discuss technical details of building projects with architects and engineers. The lecturers are: Poul Klens Larsen (National Museum of Denmark) and Tim Padfield (consultant in museum climate), with contribution from Morten Ryhl-Svendsen (National Museum of Denmark). The course is being held in association with the School of Conservation of the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts and the National Gallery of Denmark.

We recently welcomed **Rebecca Dallwitz** to the ANMM conservation team. Rebecca is with us on a fixed term contract until April 2011. She has taken on responsibility for the development of our IPM, re-assessing our disaster supplies and developing a treatment proposal for a large anchor.

Sadly **Victoria Bramwell-Davis** is leaving the ANMM to join the staff of the Art Gallery of NSW in early November. Victoria has been at the ANMM for two and a half years and has made a valuable contribution to the work of the museum. She will be missed, especially by her immediate colleagues and of course, her boss.

Julie O'Connor is continuing work on the textiles re-housing project. This project is now about 45% complete and we are delighted with the progress. On the 22nd July, Julie attended a National Gallery of Victoria members talk on the conservation of a medieval tapestry from the Cloisters Museum in Manhattan, NY. While in Melbourne she visited

the Australian Tapestry workshop and the fabulous Tim Burton exhibition at the Australian Centre for the Moving Image.

Penny Nolton has been focused on the 'Lot 41' kayak project – documentation and stabilization of the kayak and its contents.

National Archives of Australia – Sydney

The team including **Fiona Vaughan**, **Silvana Volpato**, **Nina Thornton** and **Victoria Clarke** continue to work on the Trademark Registers project. The twenty-three bound volumes contain trademark records for NSW, which date from 1865. Two registers have undergone intensive treatment, including cleaning, paper repairs, and backing removals and linings of the trademarks themselves. Many of the trademarks in these two registers have been digitised and made available on the NAA website, on the PhotoSearch page. Work on a third register will soon commence in the Melbourne paper conservation lab.

Ian Batterham visited the Sydney lab from the Canberra office to assist the Sydney team in trialling various consolidation methods for a trademark with unstable surface media. The trademark, a cigarette packet design from 1899, was eventually consolidated using Paraloid B-72.

Kirsty Johnson and **Silvana** are about to commence a project to repackage a small collection of cellulose nitrate still film and motion picture film.

Our team has also recently completed repackaging a series of ABC publicity files and photographs into archival storage materials. Transparencies, negatives and colour prints were removed from the 'parent' files to be placed in cold storage.

We have welcomed two new members to our team over the last few months – **Silvana Volpato** and **Victoria Clarke**. They are a very welcome addition!

Kirsty Johnson and **Joanna Mead** have joined us from Audio-Visual Preservation and will be working on several projects.

Nina Thornton is back with the team after maternity leave. **Robyn Gamble** is back from completing special project work and is now Assistant Director of Paper & Photographs and AV Conservation, Sydney.

Lynn Sisopha and **Kathryn Brennan** are temporarily acting in other sections within the Archives Sydney office.

Australian Museum

Heather Mackay recently travelled to Vienna to de-install and pack artifacts from the James Cook collection. The artifacts were on loan to the Kunsthistorisches Museum as part of a major exhibition entitled *James Cook and the Exploration of the South Pacific*. Heather travelled with the crates back to the Australian Museum and did a wonderful job ensuring their safety during the long and arduous journey.

Kristel Smits has been working on 8 oil on panel paintings, portraits of Aboriginal figures, for a loan to Penrith Regional Gallery.

Sheldon Teare and **Kristel Smits** have started work on feathered items from the Pacific collection and mounted bird specimens for the upcoming Birds of Paradise exhibition that will be held in-house next year.

Kate Brotherston has been consolidating bark paintings by artist **Wamud Namok**, in preparation for an exhibition that is being held at the Museum of Contemporary Art. **Wamud Namok** (deceased) lived in the stone country of the Arnhem Land plateau and the exhibition will explore the stories and places depicted in **Namok's** work.

Colin Macgregor and **Heather Mackay** have been investigating the potential purchase of a digital x-ray machine. Part of this investigation involved conducting tests with the digital x-ray

machine owned by the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

Sheldon Teare took four weeks leave to travel across Scotland, Ireland and England. Sheldon had a fabulous time and may well be the first person to return from a holiday in these parts looking incredibly tanned.

Welcome to **Adrian Carter** who recently joined our department. **Adrian** is working as a taxidermist, preparing vertebrate specimens whilst **Katrina McCormick** is on maternity leave.

Preservation Australia

This is proving to be a very busy travel year for **Kay Söderlund**. In June Kay conducted a series of workshops for Museums Australia WA branch in Broome. The workshops were Disaster Planning and Recovery and a Care of Collections session. These were followed by a workshop in Kalgoorlie for the Collections Care Regional Hub in the Goldfields WA, again on Disaster Planning and Recovery. Back on the east coast for a short stint before a well earned holiday in Scotland with her travelling daughter. Back from her travels Kay is engrossed in preparing for a presentation on the AICCM Codes of Ethics and Practice (which she discussed in her President's Report) for a conference in Korea. Kay will be representing AICCM at this conference.

Tegan Anthes and **Beate Yule** have continued to work on the Lands project with many interesting challenges to overcome which are typical to large projects and large objects. Enough bench space seems to be the biggest problem with many plans over several metres long. **Tegan** completed a cleaning and rehousing project of over 100 black and white photographs for a regional gallery.

During the months of June, July and August we were lucky enough to have two students work with us, **Kerryn Wagg** from University of Canberra and **Rebecca Matthews** who was visiting

from Scotland prior to studying at Gateshead College. The students worked as a team on a conservation project of a series of plans from a Council. The plan project including identifying plan types, developing condition reports, and conducting the simple treatments. We encouraged the students to work independently to determine the logistics of the project, including formulating spreadsheets and scheduling of the tasks. The conservation was closely supervised and the making of starch paste became a desirable job, with the texture described by one student as “that is just beautiful”.

This is just one example of how refreshing it was to have young enquiring minds within the conservation business. With many questions of “why do you do it that way?” which lead to stimulating discussions and reminder of the fundamentals of why we are in conservation.

State Records NSW

Frances Cumming has re-joined the State Records NSW team after a 4 year adventure including the National Library of Vietnam and the Australian War Memorial. Frances has been enjoying the opportunity to do more hands-on conservation treatment, but she has also started work on a long overdue pest strategy for State Records’ storage facilities at Western Sydney.

Carol Marsh and **Clara Cesarone** have been powering through archives requiring conservation prior to issuing in our Reading Room. Most of these records have sustained damage in the past by flood water and consequent mould growth. These records usually require consolidation with a cellulose ether and then in some cases additional lining with Japanese tissue and wheat starch paste to make them stable enough to handle. State Records’ has inherited a large quantity of records in this condition and we are not in the position of being able to copy them all for access – we therefore treat them on an as-needed basis for readers.

Dominique Moussou has been working on a large plan of the County of Cumberland that was transferred to us stuffed into a packing crate with a large number of other plans. It had been repaired many times with various types of self-adhesive tape and had sustained severe physical damage. The plan measures about 4 x 5 metres and is presently in two main sections. We do not intend to re-join the sections as this will create storage issues.

Elizabeth Hadlow has been focusing on re-organising the space in the conservation laboratory so that we can better accommodate our new staff. She is also working on the 2011 action plan.

Jill Gurney and Elizabeth have been writing content for the Archives Outside web blog which provides basic conservation and archive advice for small archives and agencies. This month’s blog is focusing on a simple book support for damaged volumes to maintain them vertically in storage.

Powerhouse Museum

The Exhibitions Team recently installed *AC/DC Australia’s Family Jewels* – a touring exhibition from the Arts Centre Melbourne. **Teresa Werstak**, **Dee McKillop** and **Nadia McDougall** were involved in condition assessing and preparing paper objects for the exhibition *Creating the look: Benini and fashion photographs*. Drawing on the archive of Australian fashion photographer Bruno Benini, the exhibition features vintage and recent photographic prints, colour transparencies, black-and-white negatives, contact and proof prints with original crop marks, newspaper clippings and other biographical material. Early July saw the dismantle of the *Tinytorem* Cafe showcase and August was the dismantle of *Inspired*, the decorative arts exhibition and the partial dismantle of the *Ecologic* exhibition.

Tim Morris has been involved the installation of large objects in our Australian International Design Awards Display. **Skye Mitchell** and Tim are presently preparing objects for this year’s

Regional Services Display which will be taken to at least 3 weekend events around regional NSW.

Dee has also been re-housing of the *Cross Currents* contemporary jewellery collection from the 80s, navigation maps & early Australian correspondence letters.

Sydney Design 2010 Underground Tours kicked off in August with **Suzanne Chee’s** tour, ‘In the Fashion Vault’. Conservation staff gave talks and tours for attendees of the NSW Museum and Galleries conference *Can you handle it?* in July. Close to 40 people around regional NSW participated.

The Collections team consisting of Skye Mitchell, Nadia McDougall **Margaret Juraszek** and **Frances Fitzpatrick** continue primarily to work on outgoing loans, including textiles for *Annan* at the Mosman Art Gallery, and a collection of underwear for the *Alarming Bras* show at NERAM.

Nadia is currently preparing a number of exquisite die-cast model cars, produced by the Franklin Mint USA, for display in the museum’s recent acquisitions showcase. The collection comprises of 22 Corvette models and 19 other models. On each of the Corvette models the doors, bonnets and boots can be opened. There is a number of supporting paper documents for the models.

Kate Chidlow continues work on the *Australian Dress Register*. The website is currently at the designers and should be going live in November. It will be launched early next year. Kate has also been helping finish off the resources for the ADR and is currently completing a detailed information sheet on scanning photographs. A video on the same topic is being edited and will be up on the site shortly. The ADR team has been running workshops for the last two years in key regional areas about the register, promoting and assisting interested museum workers.

Kate has also been working on the *Rural Technology Project* – another register currently being built. It consists of thousands of examples, photos and information on rural technology. Kate

has been assisting with providing resources for this website.

Conservation news stories are now placed in the 'Conservator's Corner' in the 'Object of the Week' page of the PHM's website. Kate and other conservators take photos and write about interesting conservation treatments here.

Sue Gatenby and Kate are working on the Conservation disaster plan. They are currently writing a disaster salvage flip book for the department and will run training workshops for the department in October.

James Elwing and Kate Chidlow undertook a visit to the Turkish Bath Museum in Mt Wilson to give advice on storage and display. James also undertook two visits related to the unenviable task of preserving large collections of deteriorating cellulose acetate negatives, a local newspaper collection in Orange, and a power generating company collection in Lake Macquarie. James and volunteer **Joanne Ritchie** are double-bagging cold storage negatives.

State Library of NSW

The *Mari Nawi : Aboriginal Odysseys 1790 -1850* team have completed the preparation and the installation of all the original and loan material for this show. Interestingly for us this has included the newly constructed Bark Canoe (2 were made, a prototype and the one on display). In the spirit of collaboration, the team including **Trish Leen**, **Anna Brooks** and **Dr Martin Polkinghorne**, have worked with the HHT, AGNSW and Australian Museum as well as Alex Roach on providing the pest control for the items. Our colleagues in other cultural institutions have generously provided advice, training as well as lent us the equipment for the low oxygen treatment of the canoes and the 10 wooden tree poles in this show.

Agata Rostek-Robak has also been working on the negotiations for the travelling Khalil Gibran exhibition from Lebanon. This exhibition will showcase

the work of the Lebanese American artist and poet whose work *The Prophet* remains one of the worlds best loved books of poetry. The exhibition will comprise original artworks in Gibran's hand, manuscripts as well as personal effects and the logistics of getting the material to Sydney in November and its safe display will take the work of many members of the State Library team.

International Conservation Services

At International Conservation Services the end of winter has allowed conservators **Karina Acton**, **Liz Holt**, **Eoin O Sullivan** and **Kat Edghill** out into the spring air to conserve outdoor sculptures. Work commenced on the James Cook Fountain and while the weather may have been warmer in Newcastle, it was not dryer as they persevered, working in the rain. The large fountain was cleaned, corrosion removed, repatinated and given a protective wax coating, all while battling the elements.

In the furniture conservation **Oliver Hull** and Eoin O Sullivan have completed work on a beautiful and important collection of early Australian sideboard furniture dating to 1830. They also travelled to Brisbane to commence work on heritage Honour Rolls, and brought a large one back to ICS for more in depth treatment. Oliver is currently attending the Stichting ebenist symposium and Rijksmuseum master class during October.

Kate Papierniak and **Wendi Powell** have been busy completing 3 major conservation projects; conservation treatments on the collection of nearly 20 Conrad Martens artworks, preservation of 270 plans in preparation for digitisation and disaster recovery of large size artworks on paper for one of our corporate clients. In between these large projects some highlight conservation treatments include a Picasso, Williams, Whitely and Olsen. The Olsen ink drawing proved quite challenging due its severe state of deterioration and media instability.

Paintings conservators **Anna Diakowska-Czarnota**, **Matteo Volonte** and **Adam Godijn** have been investigating a modern painting with severe discolouration. The oil painting most probably has a printed canvas as a base in which the dyes are fading. The skin tones in the portrait have turned bright green and have disfigured what was previously a beautiful painting. The now slightly gangrenous pretty lady has been raising questions around modern materials and the ethical issues around treating such problems, physically and ethically. With this technology now available to all, is this a problem we are likely to see more of in the near future?

Textile conservation has been busy with **Skye Firth** working on a large hand sewn cloth from Auburn Historical Society. This important historical record depicts historic houses of the area, most of which have been since demolished. She is also working on an embroidered linen piece from Gallipoli.

Karina Acton is currently working with the MONA team preparing items for display. **Fiona Tennant** is also working with MONA, and is working on the museum environment aspects. Fiona is also looking at gallery maintenance systems for the museum.

Art Gallery of NSW

In the paper lab, **Carolyn Murphy** has been working in collaboration with Curatorial updating the policy for the preservation of new media items within the Galleries collection. Carolyn has also been involved in preparing a number of Japanese Ukiyo-e prints for display in the Asian Galleries. **Analiese Treacy** has been busy treating a number of recently acquired Indian Miniatures, in addition to preparing works for outgoing loan. Analiese has also been busy working with **Melissa Harvey** who has recently joined the team to prepare works for the new 'Kaldor Wing' due to open in May 2011. **Sarah Bunn** and **Tom Langlands** have been preparing sketches and sketch books for an exhibition of Kevin Lincoln's work in the Asian Galleries opening in October, as well as continuing

condition reporting and preparing new acquisitions. Sarah went to the Top End in August to visit the 3 communities where the 1948 Expedition to Arnhem Land was based to meet with artists and art centre representatives. Sarah will be presenting recent research into the Gallery's collection of paintings from the expedition at the upcoming Book and Paper Symposium at NGV in November.

In the Asian art lab, **Lily Yang** has been preparing for the upcoming 'First Emperor' exhibition due to open in the Gallery in early Dec 2010. For the purpose of this project Lily will be wearing the hat of 'translator'!

In the paintings lab, **Stewart Laidler** has been involved in the x-ray analysis of a number of oil paintings including a collection work by Vincent Van Gogh requested for outward loan. Stewart has also been busy organising a number of events and talks for the Conservation Benefactors. **Simon Ives** has been involved in the dismantle of the Rupert Bunny show in Adelaide, in addition to working on a colour project involving interviews with artists including: Robert Rooney and Michael Johnson. **Lisa Charleston** has been assisting in the preparation of frames and paintings for various loans as well as carrying out many low oxygen treatments and keeping the Gallery's environmental monitoring system up to date. Lisa has also been practising gilding skills since participating in the AICCM's *Traditional Gilding Workshop* held at the NGV in August.

In the frames lab, **Margaret Sawicki** has been invited as a keynote speaker for the NZCCM annual conference on *Making Miracles Happen: The Art of the Conservator*, Christchurch, New Zealand, 20-22 October 2010. Margaret will present a lecture on *Loss compensation in gilding conservation: past and present methods and practice*, which will draw from her recently published book on *Non-traditional Gilding Techniques in Gilded Objects Conservation: Research into loss compensation in water-gilded surfaces using synthetic polymers*, as well as her work at the AGNSW. **Barbara Dabrowa** has been preparing for the International Conference on *Technology and technique in the research of works of art*, at the Nicolaus Copernicus University, Torun, Poland. At this conference, she will be presenting her work on the *Gilded frame for "The defence of Rorke's Drift, 1879" by Alphonse de Neuville in the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia. Technical, technological and conservation aspects.*

In the objects lab, **Donna Hinton** and **Kerry Head** have been extremely busy preparing a number of bark paintings for outward loan, and Kerry has also been involved in the preparation of items for display in the Yiribana Gallery. The team also welcomes **Kat Edghill**, who has recently joined the department to work on objects from the Kaldor Collection, in addition to fabricating supports for display.



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Student News

Australian Conservation Students studying abroad

Julie Sommerfeldt

Julie studied at West Dean College 2008-2010, gaining a Graduate Diploma (Distinction) and Postgraduate Diploma (Distinction) in Conservation of Books & Library Materials, and a Masters in Conservation Studies (results pending). In 2010 Julie received the West Dean College President's Prize for the best student work across all disciplines. Currently, she has applied for a one year conservation internship at The British Library, and is awaiting the results.



Julie working on a seventeenth century limp parchment stationery binding at The National Archives, UK.

Natalie Harding

Natalie's initial studies in Gold and Silversmithing at the ANU Art School, Canberra began her interest in conservation. "As my fellow students and I were making objects, I began to think about the future possible collection and care of those objects. Investigation into conservation studies led me to West Dean College in the South West of England, where I completed a specialist course in Metalwork Conservation along with an MA in Conservation Studies in September 2010. I am now employed at the National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh as Assistant Conservator".



Natalie conserving a temple lantern at the National Museum of Scotland.

Rachel Sawicki

Rachel began her training as a book and paper conservation technician in 2006 at the Bodleian Library, Oxford. After three years of work based training, Rachel left to attend the MA course in book conservation at West Dean College, UK. In 2010 she won the University of Sussex Vice Chancellor's Prize for best MA Conservation Project. Rachel was also this year's recipient of the Nicholas Hadgraft memorial scholarship which enabled her to study at the Montefiascone Conservation Summer School with conservators Cheryl Porter and John Mumford. Rachel is currently undertaking a 2 year Irish Heritage Council sponsored book and paper conservation internship at the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin.



Rachel carrying out paper repairs on a sixteenth century Persian concertina binding in preparation for an exhibition of Islamic manuscripts at the Chester Beatty Library, Ireland.

Call For Interest

Contact Peter Shaw at peter.shaw@naa.gov.au if you are interested in the establishment and participating in the new Digital and Audio-Visual SIG.

Conservation Matters – What do you think?



IIC dialogues: Conservation in Crisis and The plus/minus dilemma.

Julian Bickersteth

IIC, the International Institute for Conservation, began a series of dialogues on matters that are directly pertinent to the profession, with Climate Change and Collections at the IIC Congress in London in 2008.

The dialogues are described as 'Discussions on the conservation of cultural heritage in a changing world' and are posted on IIC's website (www.iiconservation.org). Two of the more recent ones are summarised below, as they directly relate to Conservation issues in Australia.

'*Conservation in Crisis – Communicating the value of what we do*' took place in March 2010 in London. Described as a conversation between Anna Somers Cocks, Editor of *The Art Newspaper* and Samuel Jones of the Demos Think-tank and co-author of "It's a Material World: Caring for the Public Realm", it sought to explore why the Conservation profession is especially susceptible to cutbacks and budget reductions during times of economic downturn. The questions posed prior to the conversation were whether the profession lacks influence due to its small size, whether we have been too insular and not explained the value of what we do, or indeed whether we have been unwilling to involve others in our decision-making and therefore lack external support.

Anna Somers Cocks explained how she had automatically included pages on conservation when she established *The Art Newspaper* as she saw it as an essential part of the world of art, archaeology and museums. Samuel Jones started from the premise of 'Does Heritage Matter?' and the problem of justifying such in economic terms. It needs to be justified in the concept

of social capital. Conservators care about physical things, and these things are increasingly vital for facilitating the formation of new geographic communities in times of significant change.

Anna Somers Cocks identified one problem with conservators in her view, namely their ability only to be able to communicate information in scientific terminology. She gave an example of a six foot high crucifix in Venice, on the conservation of which she recently went to a dull scientific presentation, only to discover afterwards that the crucifix was carried in front of men being marched to their execution for some centuries, i.e. it was the last thing condemned men saw. She emphasised the need for and the opportunity to tell stories about the things we work on.

Private conservator, Frances Halahan, countered by saying in her experience conservators in institutions spend a lot of time communicating with the public through open studios, exhibitions and conservation websites.

Samuel Jones moved to how we can sell conservation funding more effectively. On the one hand he cited the example of a newspaper headline which read "30,000 pounds for one statue, for that you could pay the salary of one and a half nurses" and on the other hand he repeated the observation of the Editor of the *British Medical Journal* that transferring a fraction of 1% of the UK Health Care Budget to fund culture would effectively double the culture budget and achieve savings in health care through more general well being at the same time.

As IIC President, Jerry Podany, said in summing up, there is no doubt that the conservation profession needs to expand its influence and efforts beyond the containment of its own immediate concerns and issues.

The full transcript is at http://www.iiconservation.org/dialogues/conservation_in_crisis_transcript.pdf

'*The Plus/Minus Dilemma: The way forward in Environmental Guidelines*' dialogue took place during the American Institute for Conservation Conference in Milwaukee in May 2010. This dialogue used a slightly different format with Maxwell Anderson, director of the Indianapolis Museum of Art acting as Moderator and five specialists giving their view before engaging with the audience. The dialogue was framed in the context that the existing standard for collections environment of 20°C and 50% RH is consistently difficult to meet and indeed met much less often than might be wished, and may no longer be "the truth" when considered in the broader world of budget restraints, environmental change and empirical observation.

Maxwell Anderson began proceedings by proposing there are three areas which require particular discussion, namely firstly the longevity of cultural heritage, i.e. how long should conservators seek to preserve it, secondly the budgetary climate in which the process of conservation operates and thirdly the broader moral dimension of energy efficiency and carbon footprint.

He then identified three things in short supply in the broader debate. The first is candour, i.e. being truthful about what environmental conditions are really being achieved, the second is flexibility in the working environment among each other's communities, conservators, engineers and administrators, and the third the technical capacity of HVAC systems in being able to achieve the necessary adaptations.

Nancy Bell, Head of Collection Care at National Archives, London, provided an update on developments in the UK that have given rise to rethinking

continued from page 24

environmental standards. She provided the background to the rethink as being driven by firstly a challenge to the conservation sector by museum directors in 2008, secondly the

introduction of government regulations around reducing carbon emissions and thirdly a European funding program to undertake research known as EGOR (Environmental Guidelines, Opportunities and Risks).

Karen Colby-Stothart, Deputy Director, Exhibitions and Installations at the National Gallery of Canada spoke next on the time consuming and emotionally charged aspects of trouble shooting and resolving emerging difficulties with non-compliance when working with loaned material for exhibitions. She also detailed how the National Gallery works on a seasonal sliding basis with a two month ramp up and ramp down period, which has been in place for over twenty years with no apparent harmful effects to the collections.

Next Cecily Grzywacz, Conservation scientist at the National Gallery in Washington DC recounted how the 'standard' that we all adhere to is no more than a perception of the best conditions we can provide, and we must move to a non-blanket approach. Rather we must customise to the particular building, situation and collection.

Stefan Michalski, Senior Conservation Scientist at the Canadian Conservation Institute talked concisely about his long experience in dealing with the dilemma, concluding by saying the advice he drafted for the ASHRAE Guidelines 12 years ago still stand namely:

- plus/minus 5% RH means no risk of physical damage
- plus/minus 10% RH means a small risk of physical damage, but only to highly susceptible objects

Finally Terry Drayman-Weisser from the Walters Art Museum concluded panel session advocating a judicious use of wider RH and temperature parameters and seasonal settings wherever possible and practical.

For the full transcript and subsequent questions from the floor, view:

http://www.iiconservation.org/dialogues/Plus_Minus_trans.pdf

An Interview

The Australian conservation profession is particularly well represented internationally at present, where Australians hold the position of Vice President within two professional peak bodies. Vinod Daniel, Head of Collections at the Australian Museum is Deputy Chairman at ICOM CC, and Julian Bickersteth, Managing Director of International Conservation Services, is Vice President of IIC.

Fiona Tennant caught up with them both to discover more about these organisations and their roles.

Vinod Daniel

What is ICOM-CC?

ICOM-Committee for Conservation (ICOM-CC) is the largest international committee of ICOM with over 1,800 members. During the triennial period (2008-2011), ICOM-CC will be guided by the following four strategies:

- Continue to be an organisation that provides its members increased opportunities to communicate both amongst its own members and with external heritage professionals
- Develop closer links with other conservation organisations to better pool resources as well as to improve services for its members
- Promote ICOM-CC and the conservation profession
- Continue to manage day to day operations in a consistent, professional and efficient way

How does it operate?

ICOM-CC is managed by an eight-member board, chaired by Marie-Claude Corbeil from Canada. Marie-Claude is known to many Australians

as she was the guest speaker at the AICCM Conference in Perth in 2009. I am the



deputy Chairman. The engine of the organisation is the working groups, which are what most conservation professionals are familiar with. There are many working groups, and four Australians are involved as working group coordinators or assistant coordinators. The Triennial conference is one of ICOM-CC's flagship events and attracts a large number of papers and participants. It is the largest event in the conservation calendar and the next conference is scheduled for September 2011 in Lisbon, Portugal.

How did you get involved?

I have been an active participant and presenter at all ICOM-CC Triennial meetings since 1993. The vibrancy of the membership along with my strong interest in the broader global conservation profession is what prompted me to stand for elections to the Directory board. I was elected at

the triennial meeting in Hague (2005) and then re-elected for a second term at the Triennial meeting in New Delhi (2008). I was particularly delighted that New Delhi was the venue for the 2008 conference which had a very positive impact on the conservation community in that part of the world especially India.

What are the particular issues ICOM-CC is currently dealing with?

I should predicate my response by saying these are my personal views. ICOM-CC, like most conservation organisations, is more European and North American based in terms of its membership (nearly 85% of its approximately 1,800 members). One of the big challenges is to make conservation more relevant in other parts of the world including Africa, Asia and the Pacific. ICOM-CC has a role in this.

The other big internal challenge for ICOM-CC will be to balance procedural aspects (including managing the large triennial meetings) with aspirational and leadership issues that can transform conservation globally. Key issues include conservation education and improving the status of conservation in some parts of the world. Doing this has its challenges; being mindful that ICOM-CC is managed by dedicated board members and working group coordinators who work voluntarily.

ICOM-CC's membership has been growing steadily over the last decade and it truly is an international body. Its voice in the international arena will get stronger and the organisation needs to continue using this strength to make the global conservation professional stronger.

Julian Bickersteth

What is IIC?

IIC or more fully, the International Institute for the Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works, is the older of the two organisations founded in 1950, with currently about 3,000 individual and institutional members world wide. It is an independent international organisation supported by its members. It serves as a forum for communication among professionals with responsibility for the preservation of cultural heritage. It advances knowledge, practice and standards for the conservation of historic and artistic works through its publications and conferences. It promotes professional excellence and public awareness through its awards and scholarships, most notably the technical publication *Studies in Conservation* and the newsletter *News in Conservation*. There are about 60 Australian members, a number of whom are regular attendees at the Biannual IIC Congresses. Vicki Humphrey, based in Adelaide, is currently the Editor of the popular *News in Conservation*.

How does it operate?

IIC has a paid secretariat in London and a Secretary General who guides the operations of the Institute. It has various affiliate groups around the world known as Regional Groups including those in the Nordic countries, Austria, Japan and Greece. AIC was originally an affiliate group and then grew to become its own entity. The Council currently has sixteen members, and is chaired by the President, Jerry Podany of the J.Paul Getty Museum.

How did you get involved?

Colin Pearson had served two three-year terms as Vice President, after which under the Institute's rules he had to stand down. I had had a fair bit to do with IIC through chairing the IIC Congress committee in Melbourne in 2000, so when Colin encouraged me to stand as an ordinary member of IIC Council in 2002, I was happy to do so. I served two terms as an ordinary member,



came off the Council in 2008, and stood for and was elected Vice President earlier this year for a three-year term.

Council meets three times a year, most recently at the IIC Istanbul Congress in September 2010. Although I attended that meeting most meetings involves me on the end of a phone for some hours.

What are the particular issues IIC is currently dealing with?

IIC has a number of initiatives currently underway, all of which are about fulfilling its charter to extend conservation knowledge and discussion. *Dialogues for a New Century* is one way this is being achieved, establishing a forum in which notable heritage figures from both within the conservation profession and outside it can discuss issues critical to cultural heritage conservation. These began in London in 2008 since then there have been a further four, the latest at the Istanbul Congress on the conflicts that emerge when pressures of development or regeneration challenge our desire to preserve places of historic value that are also home to living communities.

We are also trying to encourage conservation to grow in countries where traditionally there has not been a conservation profession. We are doing this by providing free membership for two years to selected institutions so that a nucleus of knowledge through IIC publications and communication with fellow conservators can be established from which to grow.

In summary, I would certainly encourage conservators to engage with both ICOM-CC and IIC. Although Australians are good at travelling to international conferences, being actively involved in these bodies brings a level of relationship with conservators around the world that has been enormously rich for me.

Thank you Vinod and Julian

Can you help?



Mystery photo

This issue our photo is dated 1977 and has the caption: *Conservator of Aboriginal rock art*. If anyone can identify the two people pictured and the circumstances of the photo please let Ian Batterham know (ian.batterham@naa.gov.au).



Mystery solved!

Mystery photos from the NAA collection

Thanks to **Dr Colin Pearson**, **Kay Söderlund** and **Ulli Broeze Hornemann** for identifying the picture in Newsletter 115 of July 2010 as showing conservator Rinske Car working on a Japanese Samuria head-dress and full costume which is part of the WA Museum collection.

Rinske was trained as a conservator of textiles in the Netherlands and then studied under Karen Finch, OBE in England at Hampton Court textile conservation centre. She migrated to Perth after meeting her West Australian husband, Eric, in London. In Perth she joined the WA Museum as textile conservator, at the time the only professional textile conservator in Australia. During her years at the museum she trained many textile conservators before moving in the late 1990s to teach at Edith Cowan University in the Textiles and Graphic Art Department. Rinske was one of the first textile conservators to develop designs of rugs using CAD techniques and then moved from local manufacturing of Albany Woolen Mills' yarns and her own carpet making machines that produced mechanically tufted carpets to using traditional hand-knotting methods in Vietnam.

As a conservator, she thought through complex conundrums of how to remove apparently inert iron minerals from fragile lace and woollen textiles recovered from the *Batavia* (1629). She pioneered the use of enzymes to dissolve termite debris affecting archaeological textiles. Now free of teaching commitments Rinske is developing creative responses to the natural dyes found in native plants and vegetation and how they can be harnessed to capture the unique elements of the South West region of Western Australia. She is currently based in Denmark nurtured by the creative energies of the forest, beach and her family. Future engagements include workshops where she will share creative responses to stitching, dyeing and weaving with communities in the Pilbara and the Kimberley.



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