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**Lightning talk: *The War Heritage Roadshows: sharing knowledge, preserving history***

Presenter: Sophie Lewincamp

Co-authors: Jude Fraser, Marcelle Scott

**ABSTRACT**

*Background*

During 2017 Grimwade Centre staff, students, alumni, and war heritage experts delivered the Victorian State Government's *War Heritage Roadshow*, an initiative of the *Veterans Heritage and History Strategy*. They travelled to 15 different locations throughout Victoria to host open days, conservation workshops, and individual consultations with community members about their own war-related heritage.

The Strategy recognises the role of local heritage to wider society, stating that it 'will support communities to recognise and protect our significant war heritage, so that it is valued for its historic and ongoing role in the social and civic development of Victoria'<sup>1</sup>.

This paper presents a case study analysis of the War Heritage Roadshow to provide insights into how participatory conservation activities can deliver the kind of outcomes identified in the Government strategy.

*Approach*

Based on the RSLifecareWar Museum project model, which uses teams comprising experienced conservators, new graduates, and current students to connect and collaborate with community members, a year-long, State-wide program was developed. A focus on the importance of local histories and personal connections was central to the programme approach, and a media campaign was designed with that message in mind.

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<sup>1</sup> War Heritage and History Strategy <http://www.dpc.vic.gov.au/index.php/veterans/strategy>

These types of activities conform with what Gibbons et al (1994)<sup>2</sup> term Mode 2 forms of knowledge production; a type of distributed knowledge generation, transmission, and transformation, which, they argue, raises society's familiarity with and expectations of specialist professions, and can lead to the creation of new knowledge-based opportunities.

### Analysis

Quality analysis of participant's feedback indicates that community demand for conservation advice continues unabated, and confirms the frequently reported preference for 'meeting people on their own ground' remains a constant. An unanticipated finding is the surprise expressed by community members that both 'experts' and 'young' people were so interested in what individual owners saw as something of only personal significance.

These early findings identify a social, civic, and pedagogical argument for the inclusion of participatory activities and intergenerational collaboration in conservation professional, curricula and extra-curricula activities.

### Conclusions

The paper concludes with an analysis of how and under what conditions the extended professional outcomes identified by Gibbons et al can be realised by the cultural materials conservation profession.

## **BIOGRAPHIES**

Sophie Lewincamp is a PhD candidate, and academic teacher at the Grimwade Centre, specialising in paper conservation and community engagement. Sophie's research examines the theory of 'Contact zones: as a new model for conservation community-engagement'.

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<sup>2</sup>Gibbons, M, Limoges, C, Nowotny, H, Schwartzman, S, Scott, P & Trow, M 1994, *The New Production of Knowledge; the dynamics of science and research in contemporary societies*, SAGE Publications Limited, London, UK.