

**ICCM NEWSLETTER**

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**NEWS  
LETTER**

**Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Material Inc.**

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**EDITORIAL**

A decade has passed since a national organisation for the conservation of cultural material was formally established.

A National Seminar on the Conservation of Cultural Material was held in August 1973, hosted by the Western Australian Museum in Perth. It aimed to review the existing situation of conservation and restoration in Australia and to discuss the fundamental problem of its development as a discipline and a profession. The Seminar also aimed to assess the requirements for staff and facilities and evaluate available resources. It further aimed to establish a national organisation. The resulting organisation was named "The Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Material".

One hundred delegates attended that Seminar, which was supported financially by the Australia Council through a grant from its Visual Art Board. Ten years later, the Australia Council through its Crafts Board has again shown its support for conservation by making a grant available to ICCM (Inc) to bring a keynote speaker from overseas. Sponsorship has grown. The 1983 Conference will also be sponsored by the Australia-Japan Foundation and Mr and Mrs Harry Haxton, Conservation Resources International (Australia).

The Brisbane Conference, with its title "Conservation: The Art, The Craft and The Science" has sought to further the stated aims and objectives of the ICCM, which are "to promote the advancement of the science and art of the conservation of cultural material" (1) "to promote co-operation and an exchange of information and ideas between those concerned with the conservation of cultural material. In particular to improve scientific and technical knowledge and disseminate information within the field" (2).

We urge you to recognise the progress made by ICCM in the past 10 years and show your continuing support by attending the 1983 Brisbane Conference. It promises to be a grand occasion. See you there.

**The Editor**

(1) Paragraphs 1.1 and (2) 1.1.2 Aims and Objectives of the ICCM from the Constitution of the Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Material (Inc).

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### FRANKLIN DAM ISSUE

Until five years ago, I was closely involved in related matters in Tasmania, becoming keenly aware of the complexity of the issues upon which any management decisions must be based. At the same time, the public debates commonly spread far beyond technical issues to subjective judgements on preferred life style, modes of public decision making, political philosophy and recreational preferences.

My private views have not been expressed publicly and I will not do so here.

However, I would urge the Members and Executive of the ICCM to preserve the professional credibility of the organization by exercising care in taking positions on matters outside the range of its expertise. In addressing the Tasmanian Wilderness Society on behalf of the ICCM, you regret that "we may not pack the same punch as the Amalgamated Metal Workers and Shipwrights Union". To me, this suggested a drift of direction by the ICCM from its proper purposes. I have no wish to trail "red herrings" but cite the enforcement of correct and ethical practices in conservation as a prerequisite for continued membership and a critical review of employment prospects for Australian conservators against the evidence delivered by Institutions to the Piggott Committee as examples.

W F Ellis

*Director, The Art Gallery of Western Australia*

## NEWS FROM THE DIVISIONS

### AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

#### March Meeting

Alan Peascod, a ceramicist and lecturer at Canberra School of Art presented a talk with slides, entitled "The History and Technology of Islamic Pottery". The talk was a fascinating ramble through the Middle East covering such things as the production and history of lustre ware and the problems of modern day potters in Cairo.

#### April Meeting

A forum on Conservation Ethics, the first part of the meeting consisted of short talks by Colin Pearson, Michael Bogle, Nathan Stolow, Tony Martin and Ian North; followed by an open discussion and questions. The entire proceedings were recorded and a synopsis is being prepared.

There have been 3 meetings in the past few months to discuss forthcoming annual one day seminars in the ACT. These meetings have been attended by representatives of the National Council, the ACT Regional Council and the Interim Council of the Museum of Australia.

A provisional programme has been drawn up for early July. More details will be released when they are finalized.

#### Australian Archives

Staff are at present working on a projected Automated Data Processing system that is to be introduced into Archives. It is hoped the Conservation lab will have a sub-system to be used for recording information on items in the collection such as handling precautions, condition, special storage conditions, treatments, etc. It is also hoped that information on equipment, materials, inventories, environmental monitoring, and disaster planning could be included in the sub-system.

Colin Webb has joined the lab on a three month contract whilst Dara Rome is in Thailand.

#### Australian National Gallery

Nathan Stolow is preparing a conservation policy for the ANG as well as assisting with the preparation of a Conservation Policy for ACNAC. He is also preparing items for a Museum Manual in America, and a publication on exhibitions technology in the UK.

**Painting Conservation Pre 1940:** Work continues on the three cartoons by Napier Waller.

**Painting Conservation Post 1940:** Helen and Jacquie MacNaughtan are preparing work for an exhibition to be shown in Melville Hall. Allan Byrne has been stretching three 3m x 4m paintings by Arthur Boyd with the assistance of Ian Urquhart. Allan gave a seminar to ANG staff on the application of the microscope.

**Paper Conservation:** Seumas, David and Ian have completed work for the French Photography and Modern Australian Photography exhibitions, and are currently preparing work for the next Paper Works exhibition to be opened at the end of May.

**Textile Conservation:** Josephine, Carol and Debbie have just completed the treatment of six principal costumes for the Ballet Scheherazade Ca 1910 - 1937. They are now commencing work on costumes which will be displayed for the first time in a fashion exhibition.

#### Australian War Memorial

**Metals:** Wayne Masters, conservator of models, is attending the Canberra School of Art course on sculpture casting techniques, as well as participating in a silversmithing course at the same school. Dr Dudley Creagh, senior lecturer in Physics, Duntroon, has been assisting with analysis of the aluminium used for the Japanese Zero being restored at Wagga. The electron microscope work shows a most unusual collection of trace metals as contaminants in the aluminium, and tends to explain why such extensive corrosion has occurred within the aluminium sheets.

**Photographics:** Mark Nizette is experimenting with chemical carrying poultices for use on mounted photographs when normal immersion techniques are not suitable. This alternative approach is being utilised for the carrying out of intensification and chemical removing processes.

**Paper:** Debbie Breen will be leaving the Annex to take up a position as Conservator Grade 1 in paper at the Commonwealth Archives in Melbourne. Debbie and fellow conservation student, Robyn Sloggett, started equipping the paper lab there last summer. Robin Tate is still in the process of setting up the W M bindery, with a few projects already under way.

**Textiles:** Michael Bogle is currently on holidays in Indonesia. The textile lab will be enlisting assistance from all War Memorial conservation staff in the restoration of First World War animals - the camel from the Camp Corps, and the stuffed horse of the Australian Light Horse. A few custom-made slings, a bit of muscle, and considerable care will be observed.

**Paintings:** The Australian War Memorial framing team (Paintings conservators in disguise) announce the incredible (but true) rate of five oil paintings framed between lunch and "smoko". This rate was maintained in a period of 2 weeks to cover a wall area of 110 sq m during the re-assembly of the Aeroplane Hall. Quality was guaranteed.

**General:** The second Annex Open Day was held on April 10, some 1800 visitors came to the conservation annex to observe conservation activities.

The Paper lab hosted a successful ICCM Workshop on Traditional Japanese Techniques. Demonstrations were given by Sunao Gazzard, David Button, Robin Tait and Kerry McInnes on various techniques including knife sharpening, paste making, tissue preparation, lining and mending techniques. The use of the drying screen (Kari-ri board) was also discussed. The demonstrations were followed by a practical session involving about 20 conservators (that's 40 hands and 200 fingers).

#### Canberra College of Advanced Education

On June 3 - 4 the Materials Conservation staff will be presenting a workshop seminar to the History Society of the Department of Aviation.

Graduations were held on Friday 13 May, amongst those graduating were conservators with Master of Science, Bachelor of Science or Associate Diplomas.

In an attempt to improve communication between staff and students and to increase the dissemination of knowledge, a series of seminars have been organised to be

held on a regular basis. The time set aside for this is from 4.30 – 6.00 pm each alternative Friday in 7D25B. The remaining seminar in this series is:

10 June: Treatments done at Australian National Library and Australian Archives – Lesley Richards, Bernard Kertesz, Kate Eccles-Smith, Linda Water, Eva Castle.

### Museum of Australia

Five Conservation students worked at the Museum of Australia store over the three month summer vacation. Marg Alexander, Jane Lawrencic, Jan Fox, Douglas Leitch and Thea Peacock. To assist with their work a basic conservation facility, designed by Therese Mulford, was created in part of the Museums store.

The Interim Council's Report has been with the Government for some time now and the Museum is hoping for an early decision to be passed (as promised by Prime Minister Mr Hawke, in his policy speech). The Museum has commenced negotiations with the Public Service Board for the appointment of permanent staff, including conservation staff.

### National Library of Australia

The National Library Conservation Laboratory has been busy preparing 13 Ellis Rowans for exhibition in Sydney and 77 Adam Forster watercolours for the Library.

There have been problems with flooding due to the building of the extensions.

Jan Lyall is to attend the 5th Australasian Schools Conference on X-Ray Analysis with sessions on Surface Analysis. She is preparing a poster on the application of X-Ray analytical methods for paper conservation for this conference.

## NEW SOUTH WALES

### February Meeting

Gill McMillan, paintings conservator, Art Gallery of New South Wales, gave a very comprehensive talk on the treatment of several paintings, carried out while she completed a one year internship at the Intermuseum Laboratory, Oberlin, Ohio, USA in 1981/82. The talk was illustrated with slides and crammed with valuable information.

The evening ended on a light note with a film called "The Technique of Tempera and Oil Painting", Glasgow University 1974, which illustrated techniques based on the writings of Cennini and Vasari; and several glasses of wine.

### April Meeting

Ranson Davey and Susie Bioletti, paper conservators, Art Gallery of New South Wales gave a talk illustrated with slides on the materials, methods and uses of Japanese hand-made paper. A selection of decorative and conservation papers, and paper objects were on display along with the raw papermaking fibres. The large number of people attending enjoyed tumblers of warm sake prior to listening to the enthusiastic ravings of the speakers about their experiences in Japan.

### Australian Museum

The Museum has three new temporary members of staff, all predominantly working on Aboriginal objects for the new Aboriginal Gallery due to be opened next year.

Thurid Clark from the Division of Conservation, National Parks Service, Harper's Ferry, USA, will be with the Museum until Sue Walston's return in December.

Kay Soderlund a recent graduate of the Canberra College of Advanced Education Materials Conservation Degree course is working on the removal of inks used to record registration numbers on objects.

Anne Gaulton is working with Sue Phillips on the consolidation of pigments on thirteen Pukamani Poles, and a storage system for the poles. They will be on display for the opening of the Aboriginal Gallery.

Karen Coote is going full steam ahead organizing conservation programmes, and David Horton-James has at last

achieved the successful operation of the new computerized monitoring system.

### Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences

Brigette Pears has recently joined the Conservation department, and is presently working on a special project to conserve wallpaper samples from historic buildings. Brigette studied at Camberwell School of Arts and Crafts, and worked at the Holborn Library, London, on the Keats Collection of Memorabilia prior to returning to Australia.

Kate (Tessa) Chedlow has finished a pilot project with the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences on the conservation, storage and display of lace. She is now working on textiles for 'Curators Choice' display.

Antonia Syme and Marian Landau are working to conserve (not restore) the last handsome cab to operate in the City of Sydney.

Geza Martin attended the Pacific Science Association 15th Congress at the University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand from 1 – 11 February this year. The Congress covered the whole gamut of Science, Art and Anthropology with papers on topics such as energy conservation, agricultural conservation programmes, and the prevention and control of diseases. Geza presented a paper on the Conservation of Tapa, which has recently been submitted for publication in the ICCM Bulletin.

All other members of the Conservation lab are busy working on replacement items for the Mint, and objects for the next section of the Powerhouse Museum.

### Art Gallery of New South Wales

Ranson Davey and millions of slides, tools, books, papers and presents returned from the IPC Conference in Japan; regenerating the departments keen interest in Japanese culture. The Koto rings loud and clear through the lab, interspersed with JJJ, Pavarotti and Dame Joan.

Gill McMillan has been effective in her attempts to make the administrators of the Art Gallery of New South Wales see the light regarding U.V. filtering films for the Gallery's vast window spaces. The test area was a success and a credit to her perseverance. The other bane of Gill's life will also be removed with the installation in a couple of weeks of a spray booth for varnishing paintings.

Susie Bioletti has just achieved her first and very successful B-Radiograph of a watermarked print. The source measuring 21.5 x 18.5 cm has been long awaited for, and it is hoped will be useful in combination with other labs to produce a comprehensive file of watermarks. Susie has also spent some time at Sydney Tech compiling a file of S.E.M.'s of Japanese papers.

Peter Gill is working with a volunteer Peter Crocker on the cleaning and consolidation of a large basketry mask. Peter Crocker was one of the students of the W.E.A. Conservation Course in January/February inspired enough to give up one day a week to assist in the lab.

Alan Lloyd is battling away once more with a review of salaries, reclassification, and applications for more staff.

### Regional Galleries NSW

Cathy Lillico spent 3½ weeks in Armidale in March preparing paintings for exhibition in the "First Show" in the newly built New England Regional Art Museum. Tom Roberts' painting 'Mosman Bay', was a major work conserved for the opening.

### Conservation Art and Library Services

Rosemary Peel and Tony Chadwick continue with lectures to the NSW University School of Librarianship. They are presently involved in a series of 8 workshops, with 12 students. Their programme includes general paper conservation, dealing with flood damaged materials; and storage, mounting and display systems for library materials.

Geoff Major has also been involved in the lecture programme.

Tony Ameniero is assisting Rosie with the Conservation of wallpapers from Parliament House. These will be used as working samples for the redecoration of Parliament House.

## The Textile Museum of Australia Association and The National Trust of Australia (NSW)

Elinor Wrobel has been involved in the preparation of an exhibition of textiles to be opened on Friday June 24 at "Lindesay" Darling Point. This collection includes 18th Century court costumes; and examples of lace, needlework, embroidery and domestic linen spanning three centuries. There is also a section devoted to early sports clothes. This entire collection has been donated to the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences by the Australian Costume and Textile Association.

### Maritime Museum

Mauri Flapar, newly appointed as ship conservator, is presently involved in the restoration of the James Craig a three masted Barque to be completed for the Bicentenary of Australia. Mauri, restoration leader for the Waratah, recently received a Churchill Fellowship funding him to carry out a study of ship restoration programmes around the world.

Harlan Hall, in the capacity of Secretary of the Technology Restoration Society, is spending much of his spare time involved in the restoration of the oldest rotary steam engine in the world, designed by James Watt in 1785. Owned by the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences this engine arrived in Australia in 1888, and is being restored to working order for its Bicentenary. We hope to print a profile of the conservation programme and history of this engine in a later edition of the Newsletter.

### NORTHERN TERRITORY

Linda Clark has arrived home to take up the position of Curator of Conservation at the Darwin Museum and Art Gallery.

A Tasmanian, Linda studied Archaeological Conservation at the Institute of Archaeology, London University, completing the course in 1979. Since that time she has been working in archaeological conservation in England, Scotland and Thailand.

### QUEENSLAND

We have no news of divisional meetings in Queensland this quarter, as their time has been fully occupied with Conference planning.

### Queensland Art Gallery

John Hook is planning a workshop on Traditional Hand-lining methods, including techniques he experienced during his visit to Belgium. This will be held at the Canberra College of Advanced Education later in the year.

Judy Dunlop visited the Conservation laboratories of Regional Galleries Association, Victoria, and the National Gallery of Victoria in March this year. She has also been in contact with Cathy Lillico (Regional Galleries NSW) as part of her investigations into Regional Conservation Programmes.

### SOUTH AUSTRALIA

The South Australian Branch held its Annual General Meeting in February. A summary of the President's report reads:—

Membership has improved from 13 to 23 persons which is hoped to improve with the new government initiatives now occurring in South Australia and the increased awareness of the needs for conservation amongst rural and urban museum custodians.

The South Australian Branch Council for 1983-84 was constituted as follows:

President: David Tilbrooke (South Australian Museum)  
Secretary: Brian Drake (State Library)  
Treasurer: Marie Robinson (Barr-Smith Library, University of Adelaide)  
Councillors: Robert Wilmot (Art Gallery of South Australia)  
Tony Zammit (State Library)

Following the Annual General Meeting Mr P Hyde gave an interesting talk on the construction, repair and restoration of concertinas.

## VICTORIA

Aman Siddique a graduate of the Courtauld Institute London has been newly appointed as Paintings Conservator for the Regional Galleries Association of Victoria, based at Ballarat, where he and Ian Fulton have embarked upon a programme of collecting equipment for their laboratory.

### WESTERN AUSTRALIA

#### February Meeting

Sally Hasluck, the curator and President of the Federal Museums Association, talked about her views and problems in running the Shire Museum for the town of Claremont. She also touched on difficulties of which she has become aware in other small museums. This opened the way for a general discussion from various view points on maintaining small museum collections. It was also possible to discuss with experts present, specific artifact problems found in the collection.

#### May Meeting

Sylvia Bass will be speaking on the care of paper objects such as documents, letters, cards and prints. The meeting will take the form of a short lecture followed by a demonstration of a few basic techniques. People attending are invited to bring along any smallish items they want examined.

#### Western Australian Art Gallery

Sylvia Bass attended the International Paper Conference in Kyoto, Japan under the combined auspices of the Visual Arts Board and the Western Australian Art Gallery.

#### Western Australian Museum

Nancy Kay Mills joined the museum in February as Research Officer. She is working on problems of waterlogged leather, rope and ivory as well as studying the tricks of timber identification. Nancy has just graduated with a B.Sc Hon (first class) in chemistry from the University of Western Australia — the top student of the year.

Ian and Ruth MacLeod have a second daughter, Shona Margaret Rae MacLeod, born 8 March 1983.

A correction to the February issue, David Butcher is at the Museum not the Art Gallery.

#### Western Australian County Museums

\$25,000 from the Instant Lottery Distribution grant for a cultural project has been awarded to the W A County Museums to employ a Conservator for 12 months.

Rod Van der Merwe has taken 12 months leave from the Western Australian Museum, and accepted the appointment as Conservator. His duties entail training local Museum personnel to undertake simple treatments on their own collections; advice on storage and display; reporting on long term conservation requirements of regional museums; selecting important items to be treated at the Western Australian Museum; and acting as the agent for contracting work on items which cannot be treated by Rod or the W A Museum staff.

### OVERSEAS NEWS

#### SPECIALIST IN HISTORIC CONSERVATION JOINS NATIONAL PARK TEAM IN BOSTON

The National Park Service is pleased to announce the addition to the staff of its North Atlantic Regional Office in Boston of Janet Stone as the Paper and Ethnographic Materials Conservator. Formerly at the National Park Service's Harpers Ferry, W.Va., Center Conservation Laboratory, Ms Stone most recently was lecturer in Ethnographic Materials Conservation at Canberra College of Advanced Education in Canberra, Australia.

Ms Stone will have as a primary responsibility the professional development and implementation of preservation programs and direct conservation in both areas of her disciplinary expertise. She joins Edward McManus, the Region's Metals Conservator, in shared quarters at the North Atlantic Historic Preservation Center, Charlestown Navy Yard, Boston.

## INTERNSHIP AT THE CANADIAN CONSERVATION INSTITUTE

Therese Mulford, a former Canberra College of Advanced Education student, is currently participating in a 6 month internship at the Canadian Conservation Institute, in the Ethnology Laboratory under the supervision of Tom Stone. She is funded primarily by the Crafts Board of the Australia Council and by the Potter Foundation.

Practical conservation work includes organic and inorganic materials with special emphasis on problems likely to be encountered in Australian museums.

Therese finds the environment at CCI stimulating because of its large staff of conservators and conservation scientists, its excellent library, regular series of seminars and access to unpublished work.

The conditions of her internship are flexible enough to permit her to work in other sections at CCI such as in Archaeology and the Mobile Lab programme. Before returning to Australia she plans to visit other conservation labs in Canada and attend the IIC - CG Conference in Banff.

## NEWS FROM OTHER ORGANISATIONS SOCIETY FOR CULTURAL CONSERVATION INC - NEW ZEALAND

The Second Photographic Conservation Workshop was held at the Alexander Turnbull Library in February. Speakers included Jeavons Baillie whose topic "Environment, Handling and Bulk Storage"; Graeme Simpson who spoke about "Examples of Poor Storage"; Mark Strange's topic "Special Artefacts" discussed artefacts needing special care such as albumen prints and colour materials; Bronwyn Simes brought a display of archival photostorage materials available through the SCC Bulk Purchase Scheme. The Workshop also included a tour of the Alexander Turnbull Library's Photo Section.

The National Co-ordinator of Conservation, Georgina Christensen, based at the National Museum Conservation Unit, Wellington, is to develop legislation for organisations and policy to replace the Interim Advisory Committee.

## SCOTTISH SOCIETY FOR CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION

SSCR has offered exchange membership with ICCM (Inc) so as a member we should expect to hear more about their activities. They have recently published a loose leaf book entitled "Chemicals in Conservation: a guide to possible hazards and safe use" by Amanda Clydesdale. The book costs £9.50 Postage rates are £1.06 surface mail or £7.60 airmail. Anyone interested may contact:

Joyce Townsend  
Treasurer SSCR  
Conservation Officer (Scientific)  
Art Gallery and Museum  
Kelvingrove Glasgow G3 8AG  
Scotland

## MASTER PICTURE FRAMERS ASSOCIATION

This group has also offered to exchange newsletters with ICCM. In the February issue they announced their 1983 Convention that will feature Paul Frederick, a past President of the Professional Picture Framers Association (USA). Their Newsletter also features an interesting article on "Lighting", writing about the new fluorescent light-bulb manufactured by Philips, called the Philips SL80, which claims to use only one quarter the power of the ordinary filament globe and last five times as long.

## REPORTS AND HAPPENINGS

### ICCM ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1982

The ICCM Annual Conference was held at the Conservation and Storage Annex of the Australian War Memorial on 28 - 30 July 1982. The conference proceedings, with the theme "Conservation Laboratories: Design and Equipment" were formally opened by Dr Sam Richardson, Principal of the Canberra College of Advanced Education. Approximately 140 delegates attended and, on Thursday, listened attentively to a number of papers delivered in the shadow of the great V.2 Rocket. The fact that it had snowed in Canberra that morning, and that the heating in the warehouse could not cope with the cold snap, did not seem to diminish interest. Icicles were thawed out with hot water bottles and bubble packaging, frozen limbs regained circulation with some excellent hot soup at lunch.

The formal session began with a panel discussion, chaired by Michael Bogle, Textile Conservator, Australian War Memorial, on the problems with organization and planning of conservation laboratories. Although 1½ hours had been scheduled for this discussion, it proved far too short as panel members outlined architectural pitfalls, funding schemes, and equipment selection.

Subsequent papers dealt with specialist topics such as the use of dry ice for sand blasting, the design of a frame to stretch water damaged canvas paintings, and contract restoration of museum objects.

The Annual General Meeting, held on Thursday night, was the best attended in the history of the ICCM, with 57 members enthusiastically endorsing your Council's reports.

Friday was earmarked for inspection tours at the Conservation Laboratories of the Australian Archives, Australian National Gallery, National Library, and Canberra College of Advanced Education. Being able to compare the five major Commonwealth laboratories at the one opportunity proved to be most valuable to the many conservators who were in the throes of designing and modifying conservation laboratories.

The Annual Conference Dinner was preceded by a reception at the National Gallery, where the Australian collection was open for preview. The Dinner, at a Turkish restaurant, was well attended, and was addressed by Professor John Mulvaney, Professor of Prehistory at the ANU, on the past problems of conservation in relation to archaeology, and on the more immediate problem of the desecration of one of the world's great wilderness areas in the Franklin river area of South West Tasmania.

A small group of people retained enough enthusiasm to hire a bus to Smiggins Holes for a days skiing on Saturday. An absolutely perfect day, no wind, plenty of sun and snow, was laid on and made an excellent finish to a pleasant and productive conference.

Antoon Bos

## TOXICOLOGY DATA BANK

The Conservation Laboratory at the National Library has recently begun using the Australian Medlars Service to search the Toxicology Data Bank of the US National Library of Medicine.

The Toxicology Data Bank (TDB) is an online, interactive file of chemical, pharmacological and toxicological data, extracted from textbooks, handbooks, criteria documents and monographs. It contains information on over 3,600 substances.

TDB can be used by conservators to obtain such information as toxicity values, antidotes, occupational exposure, fire potential, storage and disposal methods, manufacturing data, stability, solubility, and spectral and other physical properties of particular chemicals.

The National Library's Life Sciences Section will provide a few sample TDB records free of charge to interested organisations, after which it will apply its standard charge of \$1.00 per record.

For further information and search requests, please contact:

Sandra Henderson  
Life Sciences Section  
National Library of Australia  
Canberra ACT 2600  
Telephone: (062) 621 524

## CONSERVATION RECORDS SURVEY

The Director of the Preservation Services Branch at the National Library of Australia, Mr Ian Cook, wishes to thank all those who responded to the request for information on conservation record systems employed in Australia. 46 of the 47 Government institutions replied to the request and 2 of the 11 private conservators. The Library was very pleased with this response and believes it to be indicative of the widespread concern for improving conservation activities in Australia.

General dissatisfaction was expressed with current conservation record systems and considerable interest was shown in the possibility of establishing a conservation treatment data base. It is hoped that such a data base will be developed in the near future.

## CONSERVATION PROFILE 1: HARPERS FERRY CENTER, HARPERS FERRY, WEST VIRGINIA, USA

Harpers Ferry Center is the umbrella for many specialized functions within the US National Park Service. It is a training center for park rangers, a design center with its production shop, it also produces Audio Visual material as well as publications. All these departments are housed in various buildings in the historic town of Harpers Ferry, W.V. at the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers.

The focus of this article will be on the Harpers Ferry Center Division of Conservation, which is housed in an old, unassuming school building. The conservation facility is closely associated with the Design Center, where all Park Service exhibits are conceptualized planned and designed.

There are complete facilities for building all exhibits, but much of this work is contracted out for fabrication closer to the site. All objects to be newly exhibited are first sent to the Division of Conservation. There, Conservators assess their condition and perform necessary treatments. While this process is underway, exhibit designers and curators have access to the objects. Under most fortunate circumstances, conservators design the exhibit mounts in accordance with conservation principles, working closely with the very able production shop staff.

It should be noted that the Division of Conservation also answers requests for treatments of objects already on display or objects anywhere in the park system. For which a conservation priority has been established. Conservators often travel to various parks to determine conservation needs and methods. The Park Service also hires outside conservators to do treatments on objects that for various reasons cannot be transported to Harpers Ferry. All contract conservators have to submit treatment proposals to the Division of Conservation for review and evaluation to assure their adherence to the Center's conservation standards.

It is estimated that the Park Service has about 10 million objects in its collection. This number appears less staggering, when one considers the wide range of sites over the entire country. Some examples are: historic houses and their furnishings, statues in city parks and historic battlefields, museums with exemplary collections of American Indian artifacts, the Statue of Liberty, Alcatraz and the Liberty Bell, etc. Other collections of artifacts are associated with prominent historical, political or artistic figures.

Many of the objects under discussion have little or no intrinsic value but serve to symbolize various aspects or

periods of American culture. Other objects are preserved because of their association with an historic person or event. An example is the hundreds of utilitarian objects produced by George Washington Carver, an outstanding black leader, inventor and founder of Tuskegee Institute. The objects consist of experiments and examples that utilize humble materials such as cornhusks and raffia. He also mounted hundreds of biological specimens on cardboard, now in an advanced state of deterioration. Other examples of the wide range of objects treated at the Center include two of George Washington's tents, President Lincoln's furniture, Chief Red Cloud's coat, the polyester suits of President Lyndon Johnson and all the furniture in the White House.

The heart of the Division of Conservation is a very able staff of 9 permanent conservators who are assisted by technical, administrative and support staff totalling from 20 to 30 persons. A unique aspect of this Conservation Center is its conservators work in 8 different labs, each specializing in a particular conservation field. There is a separate lab for each of the following materials: paintings, paper, ethnographic objects, ceramics and glass, furniture, textiles, archaeological materials and metals. There also is a Registrar with his support staff and a photographer.

The interaction and synergistic benefits of all these specialized conservators working together under one roof makes this a unique facility. Not many questions go unanswered, if one is persistent enough to make the rounds.

Since many objects are of composite materials, they are often treated in more than one lab, by more than one conservator. Because there are individual labs, each equipped to handle different materials, there is a most complete assemblage of equipment, tools and supplies available and expert advice on how to use these.

Due to the Centers proximity to Washington's Smithsonian Museums, and the many museums in cities along the Eastern Seaboard, there is much exchange of knowledge and discussion among conservators. Harpers Ferry is located in a remote, peaceful, wooded area and as a result the atmosphere is relaxed and informal. It combines the best of two worlds.

Thurid Clark  
*Conservator Australian Museum*

## AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY EXCAVATION

Nancy de Demyttenaere who worked for a period at the Australian Museum in 1982 is back in the USA about to embark on an excavation with the American Museum of Natural History. The excavation is on a late 16th century Spanish Mission site on an isolated island off the coast of Georgia.



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## CONFERENCES

Reminders — Details in previous News-letter.

SEPTEMBER 6 — 9, 1983

ICCM Brisbane Conference

CONSERVATION — THE ART, THE CRAFT AND THE SCIENCE

Registration forms available now from:

Dr Neville Agnew  
Hon Sec ICCM Old Division  
C/- Conservation  
Queensland Museum  
Gregory Terrace  
Fortitude Valley QLD 4006

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

ICCM SYDNEY CONFERENCE  
1984

April 17 — 19, 1984

CONSERVATION AND  
CONTEMPORARY ART

\* NB: The venue and dates are provisional to approval by the National Council.

### Aims of the Conference:

It is hoped that the Conference will cover a broad range of topics concerning aspects of the conservation of all types of contemporary and modern objects. The conference is to be staged to coincide with the 5th Biennale of Sydney — a biennial exhibition which surveys International Contemporary Art. We hope to encourage participation from artists, craftsmen, educators, conservators, curators and manufacturers of artists' materials and promote discussion between them.

The aim is to promote the conservators role in increasing awareness in the construction, conservation, preparation, display, packaging, transportation and handling of contemporary works. It will also be concerned with the special problems related to contemporary materials and techniques used by the artist/craftsman and the conservator.

The 1984 New South Wales Committee are seeking contributions of papers in the following areas:

- Papers related to the treatment of modern works
- The contemporary artists/craftsman's attitude to Conservation of their work
- The modern conservator's materials and techniques
- The special problems related to the documentation of modern works
- Touring exhibitions — "A modern problem?"
- Conservation research

Correspondence should be directed to:

1984 ICCM Conference Committee  
c/- Conservation Department  
Art Gallery of New South Wales  
Art Gallery Road  
Domain Sydney NSW 2000

## ICCM ACT DIVISION ONE-DAY SEMINAR

5 July 1983, Theatrette, National Library

The Australian Bicentennial Celebrations 1988 and Conservation: Past, Present and Future.

The Australian Bicentennial Authority and other organisations are in the process of developing programmes, exhibitions and other activities for celebrations in 1988. In order to provide a wider understanding of the role conservators will play in the Bicentenary Exhibition programme, the need for involvement by conservators in preplanning and to allow for an appropriate analysis of resources required for conservation purposes, a seminar has been organised by the ACT Division.

After an introduction by James Mollison, Director of the Australian National Gallery, the Hon Barry Cohen, Minister for Home Affairs and Environment, will formally open the Seminar. Ian Cook, President of ICCM, will speak on: *Conservation: Australian Bicentenary*; Dr D Griffin, Co-Chairman of the Council of Australian Museums Association: *The Role of the Museum in the Australian Bicentenary*; Dr D Armstrong, Director of the Australian Bicentennial Authority: *The Australian Bicentenary Celebrations*; Len Amadio, Director, Department of the Arts, South Australia: *State Requirements for Conservation*; and Dr Colin Pearson, Principal Lecturer, Conservation of Cultural Materials, C.C.A.E.: *Resource Requirements for Conservation*. These papers will be followed by a panel discussion, the panel members are to be Dr W D L Ride, M H Bryan, Director-General National Library of Australia, Dr D Armstrong, Dr D Griffin, Ian Cook. Enquiries concerning this Seminar should be addressed:

Bicentennial and Conservation Seminar  
ICCM (Inc)  
PO Box 1638  
Canberra City ACT 2601 or phone:  
Josephine Carter  
Australian National Gallery  
(062) 712 418

AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF  
ARCHIVISTS SEMINAR  
18 June 1983

Archives: Arrangement and description

To be held at:  
The Archives of Business and Labour  
12 Balmain Crescent  
Australian National University  
Canberra ACT 2600

Registration closes 3 June

Enquiries to:  
Peter Moore  
(062) 494 066  
or  
Colleen Pritchard  
(062) 477 094

## MASTER PICTURE FRAMERS ASSOCIATION

16 — 19 June 1983

Third Annual Convention

To be held at:  
Exhibition Convention Centre  
Royal Exhibition Building  
Nicholson Street  
Carlton VIC 3053

Registration closed May 15, but late enquiries may be made to:  
Master Picture Framers Association  
PO Box 21  
Hawthorn VIC 3122

MATERIALS SCIENCE AND  
RESTORATION SYMPOSIUM,  
STUTTGART, W. GERMANY  
6 — 8 September 1983

Topics to include the decay mechanism of porous building materials such as stone, brick and concrete and techniques of maintenance and restoration.

Enquiries to:  
Dr G Frohnsdorff  
Centre for Building Technology  
National Bureau of Standards  
Washington DC 20234 USA

## CRAFTS COUNCIL OF THE ACT

17 — 19 October 1983

Crafts Built to Last

To be held at:  
Australian War Memorial Annex  
Callan Street  
Mitchell ACT

Registration fee \$50. Registration closes October 1, 1983.

Enquiries to:  
Meredith Hinchcliffe  
Crafts Council of the ACT  
1 Aspinall Street  
Watson ACT 2602  
Phone: (062) 412 373

FIRST INTERNATIONAL  
CONFERENCE ON NON-  
DESTRUCTIVE TESTING IN  
THE CONSERVATION OF  
WORKS OF ART — ROME  
27 — 29 October 1983

Organised by the Italian Society for Non-Destructive Testing (AIPnD) and the Istituto Centrale del Restauro.

Topics are to include defining methods for studying and measuring the chemical and physical characteristics of ancient artifacts; environments; identification of new materials and procedures in conservation; relative testing methods.

Enquiries to:  
AIPnD  
Via Foresti 5  
I-25126 Brescia BS  
Italy

**UNITED KINGDOM  
INSTITUTE FOR  
CONSERVATION —  
LONDON  
27 February 1984**

**Corrosion Inhibitors in Conservation**

A one-day meeting at the Museum of London. Papers are now invited from conservators and conservation scientists working in this field.

For further information:  
Suzanne Kenne  
Conservation Department  
Museum of London  
London Wall  
London EC2Y 5HN  
U.K.

**THE INSTITUTE OF  
INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY  
DIPLOMA COURSE**

The Institute of Industrial Archaeology, the Ironbridge Gorge Museum and the University of Birmingham cooperate in organising research and course programmes which will advance understanding of industrial history and archaeology and provide the professional skills necessary for recording, conserving and managing industrial monuments and collections of artifacts.

For further information:  
Mr Michael Stratton  
Ironbridge Gorge Museum  
Ironbridge, Telford  
Shropshire TF8 7AW  
U.K.

**PUBLICATIONS**

**Our Heritage: A Directory to Archives and Manuscript Repositories in Australia** (Australian Society of Archivists Inc).

\$15.00 per copy including postage. Cheques may be made payable to Australian Society of Archivists Inc. Available from:

The Treasurer  
Australian Society of Archivists Inc.  
PO Box 83  
O'Connor ACT 2601

**APPOINTMENTS VACANT**

**MINISTRY FOR THE ARTS,  
VICTORIA NATIONAL GALLERY  
OF VICTORIA, MELBOURNE**

**Senior Conservator of Art**

**Salary: \$33,730**

**Duties:** To be responsible to the Director for the development, implementation and management of a conservation and restoration programme for the State collection of works of art; to supervise professional and technical staff engaged in conservation and restoration duties; other duties as directed.

**Qualifications:** An appropriate tertiary qualification or relevant professional training in the conservation and restoration of works of art; ability to develop, implement and manage an ongoing conservation and restoration programme; extensive experience in the conservation and restoration of works of art and a wide knowledge of the techniques and materials used in the conservation and restoration of such works; ability to direct staff.

**Note:** A person with extensive experience and demonstrated achievements in managing art conservation programmes may be eligible for appointment with a level of remuneration of \$38,044 a year.

Normal Victorian Public Service conditions of employment apply including:

- four weeks annual leave with leave loading;
- cumulative sick leave;
- liberal long service leave provisions;
- compulsory contributory superannuation scheme.

Provisions also exist for the payment of reasonable expenses in taking up the appointment, and in which case the successful applicant will be required to enter into a bonding agreement.

**Applications** detailing qualifications and experience, stating Position No. S08/10/0156/4 and including the names and addresses of at least two professional referees should be forwarded by close of business on Wednesday 29 June 1983 to the Personnel Officer, Ministry for the Arts, 186 Exhibition Street, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia 3000.

For further information regarding this position contact Professor Patrick McCaughey, Director, National Gallery of Victoria, 180 St Kilda Road, Melbourne, Australia, telephone (03) 62 7411.

**MINISTRY FOR THE ARTS,  
VICTORIA, NATIONAL MUSEUM  
OF VICTORIA**

**Senior Conservator**

**Salary: \$33,631 Class S08/ST-9A**

Applications are invited for the position of Senior Conservator at the National Museum of Victoria. The Successful applicant will be responsible for the development of a conservation programme for the Museum and will initially focus attention upon the Museum's Australian Ethnographic collection.

**Duties:** To be responsible to the Director for the development and implementation and management of a conservation and restoration programme for the National Museum; to supervise professional and technical staff engaged in conservation, preservation and restoration duties; to direct re-

search in the conservation, preservation and restoration field; other duties as directed.

**Qualifications:** An approved degree in Science or other appropriate qualifications, preferably a higher degree; experience or training in materials conservation and a knowledge of techniques and materials used in conservation, restoration and preservation of artifacts and natural history material; ability to develop, implement and manage a conservation programme and to undertake research; demonstrated managerial skills desirable.

Normal Victorian Public Service conditions of employment apply including:

- four weeks annual leave with leave loading;
- cumulative sick leave;
- liberal long service leave provisions;
- compulsory contributory superannuation scheme.

Provisions also exist for the payment of reasonable expenses in taking up the appointment, and in which case the successful applicant will be required to enter into a bonding agreement.

**Applications** detailing qualifications, experience and including the names and addresses of at least two professional referees should be forwarded by June 30, 1983 to the Personnel Officer, Ministry for the Arts, 186 Exhibition Street, Melbourne, 3000.

For further information regarding this position contact Dr Barry Wilson, Director, National Museum of Victoria, telephone (03) 669 9871.

Do you want to see your name/  
laboratory/division in print? If so please  
send all articles to the Editor:

Cathy Lillico  
Art Gallery of New South Wales  
Art Gallery Road  
Domain Sydney NSW 2000  
Australia  
(02) 221 2100

The deadlines are January 31,  
April 30, July 31, October 31. The  
Newsletter will accept photographs.  
These should be Black and White and  
no larger than 9.5 cm sq.

**EDITOR:** Catherine Lillico  
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