

FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETIES INC

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Website: <http://www.history.org.au/>

E-BULLETIN No. 46 – 10 February 2009

Hon Editor, Dr Ruth S. Kerr

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1) Salvage of fire and flood damaged material

The following information has been provided by the professional conservators' organisation in Australia.

Links to online resources about salvaging fire and flood-damaged material can be accessed via the front page of the AICCM website (www.aiccm.org.au).

If you know of someone who is looking for assistance in such matters, please direct them to this website or suggest that they call a State or National cultural organisation, and ask to speak to someone in the Conservation Department.

Private and consultant conservators can be located via the AICCM's Directory of Members in Private Practice - go to www.aiccm.org.au and follow the link to "Find a Conservator".

Health and safety should remain everyone's top priority:

- * Anyone attempting to salvage their possessions should wear protective clothing - especially gloves, masks and eye protection.
- * Never attempt to salvage belongings at the expense of your own safety.
- * Avoid breathing in or touching hazardous materials.
- * Risks in fire-damaged areas can include particulates, exposed asbestos, lead-containing building materials and chemical residues. Some objects themselves can pose health hazards when damaged - e.g. lead-containing glass, lead paint, objects treated with pesticides etc. If water has been used to put out the fire, mould may also be an issue.
- * Risks in flood-affected areas include mould, bacteria, disease pathogens and exposure to waste matter and effluents carried with flood waters.

General handling advice:

- * Minimise handling of damaged material - handling surfaces can drive soot and other particulates further into fabrics and other porous materials and make them impossible to remove.
- * Avoid handling objects by damaged or weakened areas - e.g. support ceramics from the base, rather than lifting by handles.
- * Avoid placing pressure on blistered or lifting surfaces - e.g. on paintings and photographs.
- * Place items in supportive boxes or plastic containers until you can obtain further advice.
- * Keep dirty, wet or fire-damaged items separate from cleaner/drier items to prevent contamination.
- * Place wet items in areas with good air circulation to aid drying and to help prevent mould growth.

The Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Materials (AICCM) is the professional organisation for conservators in Australia.

www.aiccm.org.au
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(03) 9013 0933

(Source: Aus-archivists@archivists.org.au – 10 February 2009)

2) Engineering heritage and conservation guidelines

The new edition of the Engineering Heritage and Conservation Guidelines can be found on the Engineers Australia website at <http://www.engineersaustralia.org.au/learned-groups/interest-groups/engineering-heritage-australia/conservation-and-management/conservation-and-management.cfm>. The publication is in PDF form with hyperlinks to the various referenced documents and is intended to be continually updated. Some of the material will be outdated frequently and almost inevitably after any elections.

(Source: ticih-in-oz@googlegroups.com – 29 January 2009)

3) Fire at Melba Studios, Gladesville, Sydney

Melba Studios in Sydney (established in 1917) was destroyed by fire on Friday night, 30th January 2009. Melba Studios was the preferred photographers for a number of schools in NSW, as well as organisations like the NRL (Rugby League). Barker College has been a client since the early 1930's and only the previous week received all their 2008 team photographs on DVD. A number of organisations may have lost very significant collections in the fire as Melba Studios had an extensive photographic negative and digital archives. For those who regularly use Melba Studios and rely on their services for photograph reproduction this fire will probably have significant repercussions on the integrity and value of our collections. This fire is a horrible reminder of how quickly a business and an archives can be destroyed. It seems they will remain in business.

On their website they have announced

‘As you may be aware, we were been devastated by fire on Friday night, however if you can just give us a day or so to regain our composure and get some things sorted, we would love to hear from you.

We will be operational and shooting on Monday, and hope to have phone lines and an alternate location working this week.’

(Source: <http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/photo-studio-and-manager-gutted/2009/01/31/1232818801514.html>;
aus-archivists@archivists.org.au 2 February 2009)

4) Cultural heritage conservation – ‘Redundant industrial heritage: the challenge and the solutions!’

Australian Journal of Multi-Disciplinary Engineering Vol 26 No 1

Redundant Industrial Heritage: the challenges and the solutions!

Abstract

Over the past few years considerable effort has been made around Australia to identify, list and conserve places of industrial heritage significance that have played a major role in the economy and development of the Country.

There are some excellent examples around Australia where this has been achieved such as in the case of the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney and the old Melbourne Sewage works at Spotswood now part of the “Scienceworks” museum.

These, are however the exceptions. Today the challenge is to conserve places that have little potential for government funding either capital or recurrent, are often in private ownership and can only be conserved in the context of an economic return often against quite extraordinary odds.

This paper sets out the fundamental issues involved and how they have or can be addressed in respect of any place, using specific examples from Western Australia

Baxter I. Redundant industrial heritage: the challenges and the solutions! *Transactions of Multi-disciplinary Engineering, Australia, 2002;GE26:17-24.*

(Source: ticcih-in-oz@googlegroups.com 3 February 2009)

5) Re-use of industrial heritage

The episode, "Germany 2" of the television series "Pilot Guides" (also known as "Globe Trekker") was screened on ABC1 on Friday 30th January night at 6pm.

This showed some spectacular re-use of some large Industrial Heritage sites now included in parkland.

Of particular interest was the re-use of some very large derelict buildings for 'extreme' adventure - climbing, rope work, abseiling, flying foxes between portions of buildings, etc. etc. – with licensed tour guides.

It was said to be much more daring than Sydney or Brisbane 'bridge walks'.

Duisburg-Nord, in the Ruhr, an old iron factory that is now a sort of industrial theme park is a good example where there are diving tanks complete with shipwrecks in the

gasometer. Rock climbers are supervised by the Duisburg Group of the German Mountaineering Association. There are also function rooms, and Alpine climbing gardens in old bunkers.

(Source: ticcih-in-oz@googlegroups.com 4 February 2009)

6) United Kingdom 30 year rule for records

Recently a review of the UK 30 year rule was completed and the final report was posted online on 29th January 29th. Mr Steve Bailey on his blog Records Management Watch found this recommendation”

"We recommend that electronic record capture should be an integral part of the IT infrastructure of government, and not a 'bolt-on' activity. Work on creating an IT strategy to ensure that records are automatically kept needs to be accelerated."

To read Steve's observation about the above item go here

<http://rmfuturewatch.blogspot.com/2009/02/end-of-rm-as-profession-in-its-own.html>

To obtain your own copy of the review go here

<http://www.30yearrulereview.org.uk/default.htm>

(Source; aus-archivists-bounces@archivists.org.au 4 February 2009)

7) Australia Day award – Mitchell Librarian

Ms Elizabeth Ellis, who retired in 2008 from the position of Mitchell Librarian and Assistant State Librarian, Collection Management Services, State Library of New South Wales, was awarded an Order of Australia Medal in the General Division `for service to librarianship through a range of professional roles with the State Library of New South Wales.

In her career Elizabeth worked at:

- National Library of Australia from 1971 to 1978 in the Maps Section;
- Antiquarian book and art dealers, Timothy and Anne McCormick in Sydney 1978 to 1984; and
- Mitchell Library, Sydney as Pictures Librarian from 1985 to 1988, then as Curator of Pictures (1988), Manager of the Original Materials Branch (2001) and Mitchell Librarian and Assistant State Librarian, Collection Management Services (2001).

At the Mitchell Elizabeth worked conscientiously to develop the collection and to facilitate access to it, especially through the development of PICMAN, the State Library's Original Materials database. She promoted this work through national

initiatives such as the Australian Pictorial Thesaurus, Pictures Australia and the Register of Australian Archives and Manuscripts, as well as the NSW History Council.

Her exhibition and associated book and CD-ROM, *Conrad Martens: Life and art* in 1994 is widely acclaimed. On retirement, she was appointed Emeritus Curator at the Mitchell Library.

During the period of uncertainty about the future of the Mitchell Library the Federation promoted her work and made representations to the then State Librarian about the value of the Mitchell Library in Australia.

(Source: aus-archivists-bounces@archivists.org.au – 4 February 2009)

8) Preservation of Canadian petroglyphs

- **Sacred sites are defiled by misuse**
Times Colonist, Canada
Dustin Walker: 1,000-year-old rock petroglyphs are rapidly vanishing.

<http://www.timescolonist.com/Sacred+Island+petroglyph+sites+defiled+misuse/1201300/story.html>

This experience has relevance to the Australian scene at Burrup.

(Source: *Times Colonist* (Canada) 20 January 2009 quoted in ICOMOS News 6 February 2009)
