

News from the collections

Cultural Treasures Days

The Cultural Treasures Days event was held from Thursday 18 to Sunday 21 September 2008. This was a first for the University, with the aim of opening up the University's collections to the whole community. It was funded by the Russell and Mab Grimwade Miegunyah Fund, as part of its generous support for the University's Collections Renewal Project. The event was launched with a lecture by Associate Professor Robyn Sloggett, Director of the University's Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation, which vividly demonstrated the importance of the collections to the University's mission. Other highlights included tours of the campus, a family adventure with 'Professor Reynard Eastley (PhD, Stories & Adventures)', interactive displays such as *The nuclear mouse trap* in the Physics Museum, and special tours, talks and workshops with curators, librarians, archivists, conservators and students, featuring a wide range of the collections. The grand finale was a concert in Melba Hall, *Musical treasures from the Grainger Museum*, conducted by Professor Richard Divallo OBE.

Knowledge Transfer Award

Two University of Melbourne Archives staff were recognised in the 2008

Vice-Chancellor's Knowledge Transfer Excellence Awards. Michael Piggott and Jason Benjamin were acknowledged for the Howship Project, which as mentioned in the July 2008 issue of *University of Melbourne Collections* (p. 51) is a collaboration between the University and the Benalla and District Family History Group. The project made an important collection of historical photographs available to the wider community, via the internet.

The University's annual Vice-Chancellor's Knowledge Transfer Excellence Awards recognise staff who have contributed significantly to the two-way flow and uptake of ideas between the University of Melbourne and the broader community.

Moa rising

The 500-year-old skeleton of a New Zealand moa recently went on permanent display in the Tiegs Zoology Museum. The moa (*Dinornis robustus*) is an extinct flightless bird, and its fragile skeleton, which was preserved in a peat bog, stands almost 2.5 metres tall. The skeleton was obtained by University of Melbourne medical graduate, Dr George Armstrong, early in the 20th century. He presented it to the University in the 1930s and it was displayed for many years in the old

Zoology building (Baldwin Spencer Building). All of the ten known species of moa are believed to have been extinct by 1500 CE, mainly due to hunting.

The reassembly project was led by the Honorary Director of the Tiegs Zoology Museum, Dr David Young, with team members from the Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation, the Ian Potter Museum of Art and the Department of Zoology. The display received sponsorship from the Rowden White Foundation.

Support from 2007 Appeal

Several grants were recently made to a number of the University's 33 cultural collections as a result of the generosity of donors to the 2007 University Fund Annual Appeal. Projects include: cataloguing recently acquired rare and historic Chinese materials in the East Asian Library; conserving fragile costumes in the Grainger Museum; cataloguing the Rupp Collection of plant specimens in the University of Melbourne Herbarium; data entry in the Henry Forman Atkinson Dental Museum's new online catalogue; purchasing equipment to enable better monitoring and control of the heat and humidity conditions under which the various collections are housed; and providing materials for

'Professor Reynard Eastley' (actor Bernard Caleo) with two scholarly assistants, searching for the 'Secret of Melbourne University' during the Cultural Treasures Days in September. Photography by Les O'Rourke.



conservation students to use in treating a series of paintings by the early 20th century Australian artist Marion Jones, part of the collection of the Victorian College of the Arts.

For information on the 2008 University Fund Annual Appeal, or to make a gift, please visit www.unimelb.edu.au/alumni/giving/unifund.html. Donations directed to 'Library and Cultural Collections' support projects such as those listed above.

Baillieu Library turns 50 on 21 March 2009!

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Baillieu Library, a series of events is being planned for 2009. These include an exhibition and photographic display, online memory board, book launch program and author talks. More details will be available early in 2009 on the University Library homepage: www.lib.unimelb.edu.au, or contact Jane Garner on janemg@unimelb.edu.au.

Homes of the golden city

The Architecture, Building and Planning Library recently acquired a rare and important book about architecture in South Africa. *Homes of the golden city*, published in 1948, is the only record of its type of Johannesburg architecture, and many of the houses depicted no longer exist.

The book includes a chapter by the noted Melbourne architect and author Conrad H. Sayce.

Greek vases on display

Some of the most important pottery producing centres of the Greek world—Athens, Corinth, eastern Greece and southern Italy—are represented in the University of Melbourne Classics and Archaeology Collection. This important collection covers the period from the 13th to the 4th centuries BCE and is one of the most highly regarded collections of classical antiquities in Australia. A display of the vases, curated by Dr Andrew Jamieson, R.E. Ross Trust Curator and Lecturer, will continue in the Classics and Archaeology Gallery of the Ian Potter Museum of Art until 5 April 2009.

100 years of the Music Library

The history of what is now the Louise Hanson-Dyer Music Library at the University of Melbourne is also the history of orchestral music performance in early 20th century Victoria. The music library has existed almost as long as the music faculty, with orchestral music being purchased since at least 1903.

An exhibition to celebrate 100 years of the library, *Keeping Scores*, is

being held in the Leigh Scott Gallery in the Baillieu Library from 1 December 2008 to 1 March 2009. Displays range from a 13th century illuminated manuscript to the latest arrangement of the ABC news theme by Richard Mills, to musical instruments purchased by Nellie Melba for use by conservatorium students and a program for a 1956 Olympic Games concert which included works by Australian composers Dorian le Gallienne and Margaret Sutherland. The exhibition is curated by Evelyn Portek and Kerriane Stone with the assistance of Richard Excell.

Sowing a seed

Friday 19 September saw the official opening of the exhibition *Sowing a seed: Art inspired by the Herbarium*, in the Leigh Scott Gallery of the Baillieu Library. *Sowing a seed* combined scientific specimens and teaching models with works of art including drawings, paintings, stained glass, textiles, illustrated books, collectors' albums, photographs and poems. Most of the displays were from the collections of the University of Melbourne Herbarium, supplemented by items from the Grainger Museum, Baillieu Library Special Collections, and several private collections.