

The Hidden Killers of Collections

Many younger staff and students who have grown up in a work safe environment, have little idea of how Radium was in everything including toothpaste and how loose Asbestos was used for fake snow on film sets. Each generation makes new and surprising use of materials with valuable properties however it usually takes a few decades for us to realise the positive properties have a dangerous counter point. Materials like asbestos end up being banned for new materials, but what of the old historic artefacts which we collect all into one place, our museums. Collections do harbour dangerous items and many which become more dangerous over time as they breakdown, chip, break or off gas. Some contemporary plastics and materials break down very very quickly. Learn about the hazards to look out for in our collection stores, and acquisition of them should be part of a broader policy discussion. Specialists know a lot about their own area of expertise but can be put at risk for not looking at items just sitting on nearby shelves.

Learn about which of these materials should not be part of artistic reuse or renewal either as it is poor form to sell art which may harm the owner (and the maker).

This talk is aimed at people working with all sorts of art or historic collections. This talk is a must for all interns, students wanting to do a placement, curators, intake officers, registration staff, artists, collectors and of course archaeologists working inside our collections.

A FREE National Archaeology Week
2019 Lecture

22nd May 2019, 11:30am – 12:30pm

Sir Roland Wilson Bld. Theatre, ANU,
Acton, ACT 2601

Victoria Pearce



Victoria Pearce is the Director of Endangered Heritage Pty Ltd Canberra's only conservation laboratory serving the public and private collectors. Victoria has worked in museums and galleries and auction houses around the world mentoring and teaching in best practice for the

conservation of movable heritage. Victoria project managed the Establishment of the National Textiles Museum of Malaysia. Victoria went on to do conservation needs assessments on built heritage in China and has subsequently worked on the economic benefits of using heritage for income growth during large scale infrastructure development projects with particular emphasis on income growth for custodians of heritage built and movable.

Endangered Heritage has a team covering all areas of conservation including archaeological preservation backed by an extensive retail line in materials which should be of great assistance for all field work projects!

