

ANU Collections

# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT



Australian  
National  
University



Research & Innovation  
Portfolio





The Australian National University acknowledges, celebrates and pays our respects to the Ngunnawal and Ngambri people of the Canberra region and to all First Nations Australians on whose traditional lands we meet and work, and whose cultures are among the oldest continuing cultures in human history.



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## Contributors to 2023 Annual Report

Thank you to the following people for their contribution to this edition of the ANU Collections Annual Report: Adina West, Charlotte Forbes, Georgia Pike-Rowney, Claudia Reppin, Claire Sheridan, Maggie Otto, Ute Rossner.

Special thank you to Teah Abdullah, RII Project Officer, for her assistance in researching articles and proof-reading submissions.

## Cover Image

Attic belly amphora, scheduled for repatriation from the ANU Classics Museum to the Government of Italy (Image: Bob Miller).





# STATEMENT FROM ANU FIRST NATIONS PORTFOLIO

The position of the First Nations Portfolio and ANU Collections is underpinned by the key principles outlined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP): self-determination, acknowledgement, respect (yindyamarra), and honouring and protecting First Nations Peoples' sovereign ownership of Country, Culture and Heritage.

The First Nations Portfolio is working with other ANU First Nations representation in sharing the responsibility for leadership, protection and management of ANU First Nations collections.

The First Nations Portfolio and ANU Collections seek to maintain a committed and ongoing partnership with First Nations communities that presents an opportunity to reframe the ANU as a world leader in the management and repatriation of First Nation Ancestors, objects and cultural material.


The First Nations Portfolio and ANU Collections will endeavour to work closely with all stakeholders to ensure professional engagement and culturally appropriate collection care and control processes are applied to all First Nation cultural heritage material housed in ANU Colleges, Schools, Institutes and Centres across all campuses.

The First Nations Portfolio and ANU Collections will work with First Nations communities to ensure free, prior and informed consent, sovereignty, and culturally-safe practices are embedded into the perspectives, decision-making, management and repatriation of First Nations Ancestors, objects and cultural material.

To ensure the ongoing care, control and repatriation of current and future collections of First Nations cultural heritage material, the First Nations Portfolio supports the development and implementation of policy, guidelines and procedures by ANU Collections in a manner consistent with items set out in UNDRIP Article 12, community expectations, and national and international legislation and best-practice standards.

In the spirit of Yindyamarra, the First Nations Portfolio looks forward to supporting the empowerment and self-determination of First Nations communities in their leadership, protection and management of Old People, objects and cultural material.



A close-up photograph of a traditional New Guinea wig, known as a 'Peng'. The wig is constructed from numerous bright green, beetle-like shells (likely from the genus *Peng*) arranged in a vertical, overlapping pattern. These shells are attached to a base of light-colored, fibrous material, possibly hair or plant matter. The background is a blurred, natural setting with brown and tan tones.

Detail of a *Peng* wig in the New Guinea Collection, School of Archaeology and Anthropology. Image: Maggie Otto.

# Letter from the Chair ANU Collections Advisory Group

## Professor Ute Roessner AM FAA

ACADEMIC DIRECTOR, RESEARCH INITIATIVES AND INFRASTRUCTURE, ANU RESEARCH & INNOVATION PORTFOLIO

Another exciting year has passed for the Collections team at the ANU. First of all, my deepest thank you to Claire Sheridan and the collections staff spread across the university for keeping all work on track in the world of ANU Collections.

Also, big thanks to the members of the Collection Advisor Group for your sustained support and advice throughout the year. We welcome Andrew Simpson, President of the International Committee for University Museums and Collections, as a new and ongoing member of the group. We look forward to meeting again in the new year to continue this important work.

This year was again packed full of activities and outreach events. For instance, we are now moving towards the implementation of a University-wide collection management system, thus ensuring that ANU is working towards meeting its responsibilities to collections, while also making material accessible for cross-disciplinary research and teaching.

The ANU Collections team has been engaging in and leading national and international discourse around university collection management and repatriation. In August, Claire organised a panel on “Discomfort in the National Capital” which discussed the role the university sector has in driving developments at the intersections between in anti-racism and decolonisation work, collections, data, research design and teaching pedagogy. This was a highly successful event, associated with the ICOM-UMAC 2023 conference, and brought together international and interstate guests.

A very important activity was on the repatriation of objects in the ANU Classics Museum to Italy and the Vatican. This was featured in many media channels nationally and also internationally. We were even able to see our wonderful Collections and Classic Museum teams on the ABC 7.30 Report! A very proud moment for us and a wonderful story for the ANU.

Last but not least, thank you to our wonderful collections team and the many academic and professional staff across the University working on or with collection material. We are looking forward to continuing developments and achievements in 2024.

# INTRODUCTION



# About ANU Collections

**At the Australian National University, collections are valuable assets that support the research, teaching and engagement activities of the Institution.**

In addition to the significant material held by the ANU Archives, ANU Library and Drill Hall Gallery, the University holds over 50 research, teaching, and heritage collections.

These include First Nations Ancestors, objects and cultural material as well as cultural material from the Asia Pacific and Africa, artworks, antiquities, a herbarium, geological and archaeological samples, biological specimens, scientific instruments, mid-century furniture and a wood library.

In many ways, these nationally and internationally significant collections represent untapped opportunities that — when curated and discoverable — can:

- be re-examined and actively built upon by researchers, students, Australian First Nations and Asia Pacific communities to allow for complex, multidisciplinary research and teaching;
- promote cross-College, cross-Portfolio and cross-Institution collaboration and engagement;
- allow the ANU to connect to rich networks of multi-generational stories while regularly featuring distinguished researchers, collectors and thought-leaders who have contributed significantly to their discipline; and
- present a tangible connection to the University's past as a window to explore and understand world-class research, teaching, design, and innovation.

Since 2015, the University has been actively working to strengthen its capacity to curate, manage and reimagine its diverse collections as a research and teaching infrastructure.

## Our Vision

**To curate our collections and make them available as research infrastructure to support the academic community with complex, multidisciplinary research, teaching and learning, and to actively recognise and embed First Nations sovereignty into our collection practices.**

Nipple-barrel flask, Dorothy Cameron Collection, School of Archaeology and Anthropology. Image: Maggie Otto.



# 2023: A year in review

**2023 was an incredibly rewarding year for the ANU Collections community, with a strong focus on engaging in national and international discourse on the future of university collections.**

ANU Collections had strong representation at number of national and international conferences this year. In April, Claire Sheridan presented at the Scientific Collections on the Move: Provincial Museums, Archives and Collecting Practices (1850-1950) conference in Barcelona. It was a great opportunity to network with European and South American colleagues and discuss future collaborative opportunities. In May, Claire also was a part of a Australian University Museum and Collections Council panel at the Australian Museum and Gallery Association conference, discussing the value of building a community around collections. In August, ANU Collections had strong representation at the International Council of University Museums and Collections conference held at the University of Sydney in August, with six ANU papers presented. This was a great opportunity for us to showcase the brilliant collections work happening at ANU and to connect with colleagues from Australia and around the world. Throughout the year, Dr Georgia Pike-Rowney, The Friends' Lecturer and Curator, presented about her outreach and object-based learning work at the ANU Classics Museum at the Mediterranean Archaeology Australasian Research Community annual conference and at the History Teachers Association of Australia national conference.

This was one of the most active years for repatriation and community engagement for the ANU Collections team. In May, the ANU Classics Museum returned material in our care to the Department of Antiquities of the Republic of Cyprus. In August, the ANU Collections team announced it is actively working with the Embassy of Italy in Canberra to repatriate two objects in our collection to Italy and one to Vatican City. In September, the School of Archaeology and Anthropology hosted a visit from representatives from the Taungurung Land and Waters Council to research the Isabel McBryde Greenstone material from Mt Camel, a site on Taungurung country. You can read more about all these exciting projects in this issue.



RSES  
Collection  
store. Image:  
RSES.

Projects on cataloguing and rehousing often make up the bulk of collection managers day-to-day work. This work is time-consuming and often less-than-glamorous, typically requiring many hours spent with dusty boxes in isolated storerooms. Ultimately this is the most important work required to make a collection accessible to researchers and students. Two cataloguing projects from 2023 are highlighted in this issue. Firstly, the huge undertaking begun at the School of Art and Design, led by Adina West, to consolidate the collections of all the art studios into one cohesive and well-maintained teaching and research collection. Secondly, the project by Claudia Reppin to catalogue and photograph the highly-significant collection of meteorite and tektites at the Research School of Earth Sciences.

Exciting changes is underway as we finish up the pilot stage of a university-wide collection management system and move towards implementation in 2024. A huge thank you to our stakeholders who have put a lot of work into determining how this system will work at ANU.

A huge thank you to everyone who has engaged with and supported ANU collections in 2023. Thank you in particular to all our collection managers; a group of people from across the university who are endlessly resourceful and dedicated in their stewardship of the university's significant collections.

From all of us in the ANU Collections community we thank Claire Sheridan for all her hard work and dedication over the past 4 years and wish her the very best on her travels. We wish the very best to Maggie Otto who will be stepping in as Senior Collections Advisor in 2024-5.



# ANU Collections Advisory Group

The Collections Advisory Group was formed in 2017 to provide advice and recommendations to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) on the management and use of Collections. This advisory body plays an instrumental role in supporting the University’s mission to manage its diverse collections in-line with industry best practice standards. The Group consists of internal and external stakeholders, including AIATSIS, the Australian Museum, CSIRO and the National Museum of Australia.

## 2023 Membership

Professor Ute Roessner AM FAA (Chair)	Academic Director, Research Initiatives and Infrastructure, ANU
Claire Sheridan (Secretary)	Senior Collections Advisor, Research Initiatives and Infrastructure, ANU
Professor Dorrit Jacob	Director, Research School of Earth Sciences, ANU
Peter Geerdink	Associate Director (Infrastructure and Planning), Facilities and Services, ANU
Maggie Otto	Collection Officer, Research School of Humanities and the Arts, ANU CASS
Kathryn Dan	University Archivist, ANU
Dr Maya Haviland	Lecturer, Centre of Heritage and Museum Studies, ANU CASS
Paul House	Senior Community Engagement Officer, ANU First Nations Portfolio
Sam Provost	Lead, ANU Indigenous Data Initiative, ANU First Nations Portfolio
Dr Ian Coates	Head, Collection Development and Information, National Museum of Australia
Heather Bleechmore	Manager, Collections Care and Conservation, Australian Museum
Dr Caroline Hughes	Executive Director, Collection Services Group, AIATSIS
Dr Andrew Simpson	President, Council of University Museums and Collections (UMAC) within the International Council of Museums (ICOM)
Dr Leo Joseph	Director, Australian National Wildlife Collection, CSIRO

# ANU Collection Managers Network

The Collection Managers Network is a collaborative ‘community of practice’ dedicated to the best-practice management and use of ANU Collections. Run by the Senior Collections Advisor, the Network meets quarterly and provides a platform to discuss the University’s collections, understand the challenges that are being faced by collection managers and seeks to increase cross-College and cross-Institution collaboration.

Currently, membership includes academic and professional ANU staff from College of Arts and Social Sciences, College of Asia and the Pacific, College of Science, College of Engineering and Computer Sciences, College of Health and Medicine, Facilities and Services, Scholarly Information Services, as well as from external organisations such as CSIRO, Australian Research Data Commons, Australian Museum, Geosciences Australia and the Australian War Memorial.

We welcome new members of the network. If you would like to join please contact [collections.anu@anu.edu.au](mailto:collections.anu@anu.edu.au)



Historic Keyboard Collection. Image: SOM.





# COLLECTION NEWS

Apulian red-figure fish-plate.  
Image: Bob Miller.

## Italian Repatriation From the ANU Classics Museum

2023 was a particularly eventful year for the ANU Classics Museum, with the announcement of the repatriation of two objects in the collection to Italy, and a potential third item to the Vatican City.

In March 2022, the museum was first notified of a repatriation request made by the Italian Government regarding an Attic black-figure amphora in the collection. This large, expertly painted vase dating from 530 to 520 BCE (pictured on the front cover) had been purchased by the museum from Sotheby's in 1984. The request came after the Italian Government's specialist art squad, the Carabinieri Command for the Protection of Cultural Heritage, connected the amphora to the dealings of a notorious antiquities smuggler, who trafficked vast quantities of material out of Italy from the 1970s to the 1990s.

Following this request, the museum cooperated with the Carabinieri, including handing over the entire museum catalogue and reviewing the provenance of the whole collection. This process identified one other item, an Apulian red-figure fish-plate, purchased in 1984 from Holland Coins and Antiquities in the United States. The dealer, David Holland Swingler, has since been revealed as a key player in the illegal antiquities trade in the 1980s and 1990s.

ANU has formally agreed to repatriate the amphora and fish-plate to the ownership of the Italian state, with an official ceremony to take place at a future date. We are very proud to play a part in righting these past wrongs and returning these objects to their rightful owners. We are very grateful for the collaborative and positive diplomacy of the Italian Embassy, and the Italian government's offer to lend the items back to the ANU Classics Museum for a four-year period, with the option of another four-year extension.

The black-figure amphora in particular is a cherished item in the museum, and we are very grateful for the opportunity to continue to display both items with the addition of new labels and interpretive material which will reflect the change in ownership and their true provenance.



An internal review of the collection's provenance identified a third item, which ANU was able to bring to the attention of the Italian government: a Roman marble portrait head bought by ANU from Sotheby's in London in 1968. The piece has been connected with a collection owned by the Vatican, that was on display in the Lateran Palace in Rome. How the head came to be for sale at Sotheby's is still uncertain. The museum is continuing to resolve this case in cooperation with the Carabinieri, who have been granted permission to act on the Vatican's behalf.



Marble portrait head. Image: Bob Miller

In August, the repatriation was publicly announced for the first time at the University Museum and Collections conference in Sydney. ANU collections staff were delighted to prepare that paper in collaboration with Police Col. Mario Argenio from the Italian Embassy. This was the result of the highly productive and positive relationship the museum has forged with the Italian Embassy as a result of this case.

A flurry of media attention followed the public announcement, demonstrating the high level of public interest in the topic of repatriation and the illicit antiquities trade. The story was covered by outlets including The Guardian, The Australian and the Financial Review, and was picked up by international art and antiquities news outlets. Perhaps the highlight was the piece by ABC's 7:30 which featured interviews with Curator Georgia Pike-Rowney, Senior Collections Advisor Claire Sheridan and President of the Friends of the Classics Museum Ros Jackson, as well as the Italian Ambassador to Australia and a representative of the Carabinieri Command for the Protection of Cultural Property.

In 2023 Dr Georgia Pike-Rowney began embedding discussions of provenance and repatriation in tours and presentations for ANU students and staff, schools, teachers, and the museum community. This work will continue in 2024.



Ros Jackson, President of the Friends of the ANU Classics Museum, being interviewed for 7:30. Image: Maggie Otto



Claire Sheridan, Georgia Pike-Rowney and Maggie Otto announcing the repatriation at ICOM-UMAC. Image: Claudia Reppin.



# Cypriot Repatriation

## From the ANU Classics Museum

In May 2023, the ANU Classics Museum returned 25 Cypriot antiquities to the Cypriot Department of Antiquities. The items consisted of pottery lamps, glass dishes, fragments of stone figures and a small jug.

These objects were taken into temporary custody by the museum in 2018, when they were deposited at the museum by a member of the public. Due to their uncertain provenance, these objects had never been formally accessioned into the collection or displayed at the museum and were not used in teaching or research. Seeking advice and an offer of repatriation, the Curator of the ANU Classics Museum, Dr Georgia Pike-Rowney, approached the High Commission of the Republic of Cyprus and the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

On the 15th May 2023, the Museum was pleased to be able to formally repatriate these objects to the Cypriot Government. We were delighted to host a delegation comprising Dr. Marina Solomidou-Ieronymidou (Director, Department of Antiquities Cyprus), Chief Police Inspector Michalis Gavrielides, Conservator Dr. Eleftherios Charalambous and His Excellency, Antonis Sammoutis (High Commissioner for Cyprus) in the ANU Classics Museum.



The objects packed for repatriation to the Republic of Cyprus. Image: Eleftherios Charalambous.

As well as the formal repatriation, Dr Solomidou-Ieronymidou and Chief Police Inspector Gavrielides presented to members of the Classics Museum community on the ground-breaking work on repatriation and the prevention of illicit trafficking of cultural material being undertaken in Cyprus.

This is the first step of a long journey, but we are very proud to have restored these items to their rightful home and we look forward to strengthening the relationship between ANU Collections and the Cypriot Government.



Left to right: Dr. Eleftherios Charalambous (Conservator), Claire Sheridan (ANU Senior Collections Advisor), Professor Ute Roessner (Chair, ANU Collections Advisory Group & Director, ANU Research Initiatives and Infrastructure), Michalis Gavrielides (Cypriot Chief Police Inspector), His Excellency, Antonis Sammoutis (High Commissioner for Cyprus), Associate Professor Caillan Davenport (Head of the Centre for Classical Studies), Dr. Georgia Pike-Rowney (Academic Curator, ANU Classics Museum), Dr. Estelle Strazdins (Lecturer in Classics) and Dr Tatiana Bur (Lecturer in Classics).



# A New Era for the ANU School of Art & Design Collection

## Adina West

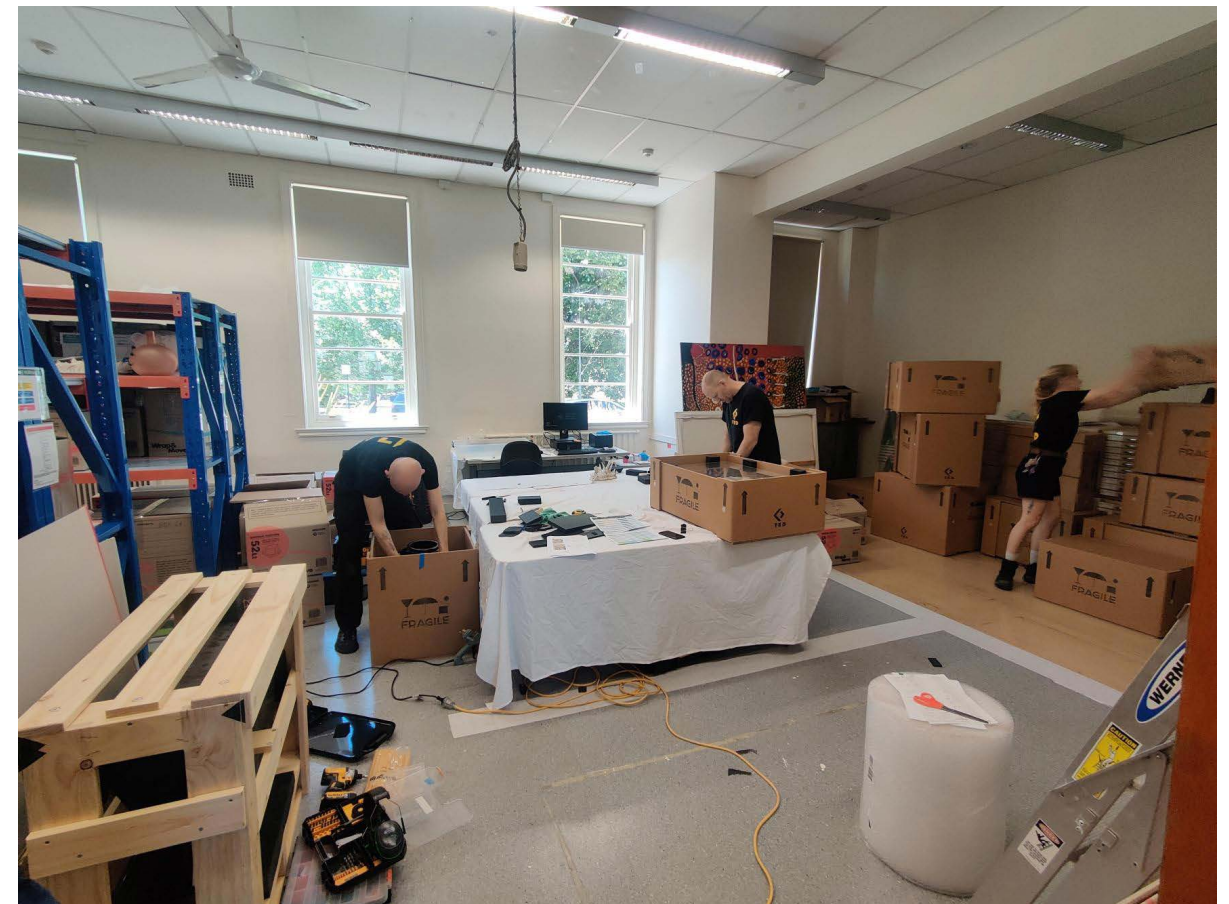
GALLERY AND COLLECTIONS OFFICER, SCHOOL OF ART & DESIGN, ANU COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

The ANU School of Art & Design has responded swiftly to the hail remediation works, implementing plans for the extensive and previously undocumented collection of over 1000 items, including ceramics, glass, jewellery, gold & silversmithing, painting, photography, printmaking & sculpture. 2023 has been a truly defining year for the School of Art & Design Collection.

With the assistance of student intern, Joyce Fan, 72 items have been catalogued to date. In September this year, Emeritus Professor and previous Head of School, David Williams AM, contributed a generous sum towards the appointment of a part-time Collections Officer. This position will be funded until 2026, which will make a significant difference to the ongoing task of cataloguing, rehousing and caring for the Collection.

Our most fragile objects in the Collection are now safely stored in custom frames and boxes, thanks to collaborative work between School staff, International Art Services and T.E.D. Fine Art Australia. Ceramics, painting, print media, photography and sculpture collections have been relocated and temporarily housed off-site during building remediation work.

Earlier this year in February, a location was secured within the School of Art & Design to house the collection long-term. Shelving, plan drawers and a workstation were installed, securing the location as a dynamic space to be used not only for storing the collection, but also for endless opportunities in access, research and display.



ABOVE: T.E.D. Fine Art building custom object boxes in the new School of Art & Design collection room. Image: Adina West.

LEFT: 160cm raw, unfired ceramic pot being prepared for relocation. Image: Adina West.



# Isabel McBryde Collection Report

**Charlotte Forbes**

ISABEL MCBRYDE COLLECTION ASSISTANT, SCHOOL OF ARCHAEOLOGY & ANTHROPOLOGY, COLLEGE OF ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES

Professor Isabel McBryde is considered to be one of the founding archaeologists of Australian Archaeology and devoted her life to studying Indigenous Australian culture. Professor McBryde continuously made efforts to protect and preserve Indigenous Australian culture, an uncommon practice for Australian archaeologists in the 1970s.

Throughout 2022 and 2023, I rehoused and catalogued over 220 boxes from the School of Archaeology and Anthropology's Isabel McBryde Collection. This collection consisted of a variety of excavated material, maps, archival documents and glass petrographic slides. This was an exciting step in preserving Isabel's legacy at the Australian National University and contributes towards reactivating the university's legacy archaeological collections.

The culmination of this project was a week-long visit to SoAA by representatives from the Taungurung Land and Waters Council (TLaWC). A large amount of Isabel's collection at SOAA came from quarry sites on Taungurung Country. The visit brought together individuals from a multitude of disciplines which allowed for the interdisciplinary sharing of knowledge and ideas. During the visit representatives from TLaWC and researchers and students from ANU, LaTrobe and the University of Wollongong came together to examine McBryde's assemblage of stone artefacts, petrological slides and research notes. The visit was an opportunity to use a pXRF (Portable X-ray Fluorescence) to scan a number of the greenstone samples. Once analysed, this data will reveal the elemental composition of the stone, which could be used to provenance the samples to the specific sites from which they were quarried.

During the visit we scoped future archival work and plans for reconnecting this material to Taungurung Country. The visit was highly informative and enjoyable and is hopefully the first of many.

The sorting and cataloguing of the McBryde Collection was made possible by a generous donation made by Professor McBryde in 2021 for work to be undertaken on her collection. We thank Professor McBryde for her generous support and Dr Mary-Jane Mountain for facilitating the donation.



Participants of the visit after a Welcome to Country by Paul Girrawah House. Image: Michelle Richards.



# ANU @ UMAC

In August 2023, the International Committee for University Museums and Collections (ICOM-UMAC) annual conference was held at the Chau Chak Wing Museum at the University of Sydney. This conference is held all over the world, so the proximity to Canberra of the 2023 conference offered a great opportunity for many from the ANU collections community to attend.

Run by the International Council of Museums, this conference brings together university collection practitioners from all over the world and offers an invaluable opportunity to discuss the unique challenges and opportunities of university-based collections and museums. The 2023 conference theme was 'Truth-Telling Though University Museums and Collections'. Many of the presentations focused on how universities were reckoning with the often difficult and confronting histories of their institutions and collections.

ANU was very well represented in the program with six papers presented by ANU collections staff and associates. These were:

- Acquisition to activation: evolution of community and philanthropic support of the ANU Classics Museum (Georgia Pike-Rowney)
- Restitution: the beginning of a new chapter for objects, for institutions, and for communities (Georgia Pike-Rowney, Claire Sheridan, Maggie Otto, Police Col. Mario Argenio)
- Reimagining ANU Collections: the pros and cons of rebuilding collections as research and teaching infrastructure (Claire Sheridan, Maggie Otto)
- To see the world in a marble toe: the new Graeme Clarke hands-on teaching collection at the ANU Classics Museum (Georgia Pike-Rowney)
- The Mount Stromlo Photographic Plate Collection (Brad Tucker)
- The challenges of legacy collections: the ANU Design Unit furniture collection (Claire Sheridan, Claudia Reppin)

The conference offered a great opportunity to visit our colleagues at Sydney-based universities. Throughout the week ANU representatives took the opportunities to visit and tour the collections of the University of Sydney, Macquarie University History Museum, the National Art School gallery, the University of Technology gallery and the University of New South Wales gallery.



Claudia Reppin and Claire Sheridan presenting at ICOM-UMAC. Image: Maggie Otto

ANU also hosted a Canberra extension to the conference, hosting a panel discussion 'Discomfort in the National Capital: How the university sector can drive developments in collections and research'. Facilitated by Claire Sheridan, the panel featured international guests Zandra Yeaman (Curator of Discomfort, Hunterian Museum, Glasgow University) and Steph Scholten (Director, Hunterian Museum, Glasgow University), and from ANU, Jilda Andrews (Research Fellow) and Sam Provost (Project Lead, Indigenous Data Initiatives). The panel was very well attended, both by ICOM-UMAC guests who made their way down to Canberra and by members of the ANU Collections networks. It was a great way to round off an energising week of discussions.



Discomfort in the National Capital panel discussion. Image: Claudia Reppin.



# Object-Based Learning Room and the Graeme Clarke Teaching Collection

**Dr Georgia Pike-Rowney**

THE FRIENDS' LECTURER AND CURATOR, ANU CLASSICS MUSEUM

In 2023 the ANU Classics Museum was pleased to launch its new Object-Based Learning Room, housing the Graeme Clarke Teaching Collection. The late Professor Graeme Clarke (1934-2023) generously handed over his collection of research materials to the ANU Classics Museum, which has now formed the core of the Graeme Clarke Teaching Collection. Most of the items stem from the Hellenistic site of Jebel Khalid on the Euphrates, excavated by a team led by ANU and the University of Melbourne between 1986-2010.

A little-used room adjacent to the Classics Museum was generously provided by the School of Literature, Language and Linguistics Executive for use as a dedicated Object-Based Learning Room. The room houses the Graeme Clarke Teaching Collection, and provides a dedicated space for object-based learning. Thylacine Design renovated the room to provide new storage drawers and display cases, generously funded through the Classics Endowment. This project was led by Friends Lecturer and Curator Dr Georgia Pike-Rowney and Senior Collections Advisor Maggie Otto. Trays and mounts for the teaching room were made by Maggie Otto with assistance from collection volunteers Roshelle Martin, Zach Martin and Emma Tuttle.

To date, the Object-Based Learning Room has hosted teacher training workshops, school groups, tutorials for ANU students, and provided a meeting space for the Classics Museum's Volunteer Guides. It has also served as a dedicated space for collections management, cataloguing and photography. The renovated display cases have been designed to house a range of student projects, responses and hands-on material. In September 2024 it will house the inaugural ARTEfacts exhibition, a project led by Dr Pike-Rowney and artist Julian Laffan, where Higher Degree by Research students from the ANU School of Art and Design will respond to the Classics Museum collection.



ABOVE: Refurbished display cases outside the Object Based Learning Room. Image: Georgia Pike-Rowney

LEFT: Storage trays for the Graeme Clarke Teaching Collection. Image: Georgia Pike-Rowney.



# Meteorite and Tektite Collection

**Claudia Reppin**

COLLECTIONS OFFICER, RESEARCH SCHOOL OF EARTH SCIENCES

When meteoroids enter the atmosphere of a planetary body at high speed they are referred to as meteors. Most meteors disintegrate in Earth's atmosphere giving us the bright flares or meteor showers we see in the sky. Meteorites are the material that survive this journey and make contact with the earth. This impact can also produce tektites which are the glasslike objects believed to be terrestrial rock affected by the impact.

The Research School of Earth Sciences (RSES) over the years has acquired over 300 meteorites and 450 tektites, possibly one of the largest collections at a university internationally. This collection contains large meteorite masses, meteoritic dust, and polished thin sections prepared as early as the 1700s, and has representatives of the three classifications of meteorites: iron, stony-iron and stony. In 2023 this material was officially recognised as the ANU Meteorite and Tektite Collection. Part of this project involved improving the cataloguing of the collection and taking high-quality photographs of each specimen. The RSES' mission is to continue making the Collection accessible for teaching and scientific research to build upon our knowledge and understanding of our solar system.

Visit the Jaeger 8 building to see a small display of meteorites and the different types of tektites available in the Collection.



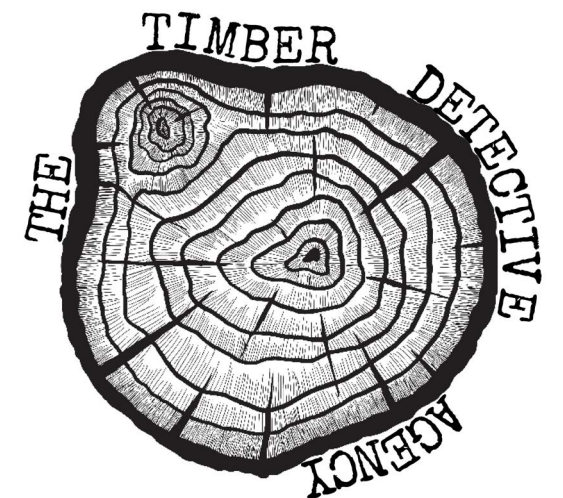
Sample of the Achilles meteorite, in the RSES collection: Claudia Reppin.

# Collections in Conversation

## The Timber Detective Agency

University Collections are strange things. By-products of research and teaching, they include everything from art and musical instruments to cultural specimens and archival records. They tell a story about how research developed in Australia and what was valued as credible knowledge in different eras. They show the problems that researchers have tried to solve and the communities we have worked with to address the nation's most pressing questions. But at the same time, the 'stuff' of our research pursuits is often forgotten or hidden away in cupboards, basements, behind locked doors, and even in disused catteries.

Australian National University  
COLLECTIONS IN CONVERSATION  
Humanities Research Centre  
ANU ODHI Research Initiatives and Infrastructure



[Listen to episode one here](#)

Join the Timber Detective Agency on a journey of discovery through some of the Australian National University's hidden collections as we learn how old things like an eighteenth-century piano or weird things like a library where everything on the shelves is a block of wood can be reanimated through new research, new technology and new art to inform, delight and intrigue.

This podcast introduces three extraordinary stories into timber-based historical collections that will change the way you think about objects, universities, and the world you live in.



# Teacher Training In the ANU Classics Museum

## Dr Georgia Pike-Rowney

THE FRIENDS' LECTURER AND CURATOR, ANU CLASSICS MUSEUM

In 2023, the ANU Classics Museum hosted a range of opportunities for teachers to learn about the museum's collection, object-based learning, Classical Studies, and the Graeme Clarke teaching collection.

Dr Georgia Pike-Rowney (Friends' Lecturer and Curator of the ANU Classics Museum) has accredited the Centre for Classical Studies as a provider of professional learning for teachers in the ACT with the Teacher Quality Institute. In 2023 teachers participated in the following exciting workshops:

- Women in the Ancient World (responding to the National Museum of Australia's 'Feared and Revered' exhibition) with Assoc. Prof Caillan Davenport, Dr Estelle Strazdins and Dr Georgia Pike-Rowney
- An Introduction to Object-Based Learning with Dr Georgia Pike-Rowney
- An Introduction to Latin on Coins with Assoc. Prof. Caillan Davenport

A wide range of teachers engaged in the workshops, including those specialising in history, but also languages, mathematics, teacher librarians, and generalist primary school teachers. These offerings were designed based upon feedback gathered at an informal gathering for ACT educators in the Classics Museum in 2022, where they were invited to fill out a survey to guide future programs and initiatives for schools. Professional learning workshops, access to hands-on materials, and tours of the museum with class groups were all high on teachers' lists of priorities. Teachers have asked for repeated sessions in order to encourage other colleagues to attend.

Proceeds from these professional learning programs, as well as fees from school tours, have been invested in the operation of the museum. This has included the provision of hands-on teaching resources, signage and mounting of archaeological maps, and other items used in the Object-Based Learning Room with the Graeme Clarke Teaching Collection.



Introduction session for ACT school teachers to the ANU Classics Museum. Image: Maggie Otto.



Hands-on professional learning session for teachers and museum educators. Image: Georgia Pike-Rowney.



# London Collection of African Objects

In 1975, Joy London bequeathed 348 hectares of her family property in Kioloa, on the south coast of New South Wales to the ANU. Now known as the Kioloa Coastal Campus, it is a unique ANU campus, surrounded by gum tree forests and with the sound of the waves crashing from the nearby beaches.

Along with the property came a large collection of primarily West African artefacts which had decorated the Kioloa homestead. Currently dubbed as the 'London Collection', the objects were acquired by Joy's father, Arthur London.

London acquired this large collection—through unequal exchange—during his time working for the British Empire at the Gulf of Guinea in West Africa. The collection includes Asante gold-weights from Ghana, musical instruments, fertility dolls, smoking pipes and basketry.

Following Arthur London's death in 1920, his wife Edith and two children—including Joy—had the intention of immigrating to New Zealand when a dockworker strike in Sydney led them instead to Kioloa. With Arthur's collection in tow, Edith made Kioloa her home until her passing in 1975. Joy willed her father's collection and the Kioloa property to ANU as an agricultural research station.

In 2022, the collection was moved from Kioloa to the ANU Acton campus, for work to begin on further investigating the provenance of the collection. Throughout 2022 and 2023, ANU collections staff have worked to re-catalogue, rehouse and photograph the collection. The next stage in the process is to make the collection available in-person and online to facilitate requests for access or possible future repatriation of the objects. Work has already begun to link the collection to African museum and repatriation networks as well as to researchers and lecturers at ANU.



Inventorying and packing the collection at Kioloa. Image: Claire Sheridan)



The collection now in improved, accessible storage at the Acton campus. Image: Claire Sheridan.





# UNIVERSITY COLLECTIONS



# List of recognised Collections

**The University has identified over 50<sup>1</sup> specialist research, teaching and heritage collections across its Colleges and Service Divisions that can be governed by the ANU Collections Policy and Procedure.**

Since 2015, the ANU has been working to improve the management of its collections so that they can be reimagined as research and teaching infrastructure and made accessible to Australian First Nations and Asia Pacific communities. As part of this process, the University has been assessing each of the identified collections and going through a process of formal recognition as ‘University Collections’.

In 2023, the ANU Meteorite and Tektite Collection was formally recognised as a University Collection.

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<sup>1</sup> This number is subject to change as collections are identified, merged or transferred to more appropriate institutions.

Selection of Wood Blocks in the ANU Xylarium Collection, College of Science (Claire Sheridan 2022)



## ANU Design Unit Furniture Collection

FACILITIES AND SERVICES

The ANU Design Unit Furniture Collection is a working collection of mid-century modernist furniture. The Collection was designed between 1954 – 1977 by the ANU Design Unit. A majority of the pieces were manufactured locally, with select pieces crafted by members of the Design Unit such as Hans Pillig. Many of the pieces are attributed to renowned Australian designers Fred Ward and Derek Wrigley. The Collection has local and national significance as an important example of integrated Australian mid-century design. Globally it is the only known example of furniture designed in-house by a university design unit. The collection demonstrates the value of ‘total design’ awareness and the commitment to excellence from the University’s inception.

## ANU Meteorite and Tektite Collection

COLLEGE OF SCIENCE

The Meteorite and Tektite Collection comprises over 300 meteorites and 450 tektites. This collection contains large meteorite masses, meteoritic dust, and polished thin sections from as early as the 1700s, and has representatives of the three classifications of meteorites: iron, stony-iron (including sub-classifications pallasites and mesosiderites), and stony (including sub-classifications chondrites and achondrites). The tektites are all Australites from the strewn fields in and around Oodnadatta, New South Wales. A significant portion of this Collection is the work of Professor John Lovering AO FAA FTSE. Lovering’s prestigious career included being one of the first researchers to have access to lunar samples from the Apollo 11 mission, owed in part to his time and experience at ANU where he worked with meteorites and electron microprobes. Highlights from this Collection include a sample and thin section of a Martian (shergottite) meteorite that was an observed fall in India in 1865. The collection also has a significant portion of the Henbury meteorite that fell 4,700 years ago, leaving 12 craters in the Northern Territory which eventually became the Henbury Meteorites Conservation Area. The Collection is a significant repository of immense scientific value for researchers to contribute to the scientific understanding of our universe and how planets are formed.

## ANU Xylarium Collection

COLLEGE OF SCIENCE

The ANU Xylarium is one of Australia’s only actively curated wood collections. From the first samples collected in 1926 for wood identification, science and teaching, the Collection has rapidly expanded to include wood samples from Australia and overseas, prepared microscopic glass slides, timber display pieces and physical index cards that are central to wood identification. The Collection has strong research significance with the potential to contribute to work in wood anatomy, archaeology, anthropology, furniture and decorative arts conservation, art history and forensic science.



## ANU Zooarchaeology Collection

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES & COLLEGE OF ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

The ANU Zooarchaeology Collection is a collection of mammal, bird, reptile, fish and invertebrate (shellfish) specimens. The Collection contains skeletal specimens of native Australian, common domesticated and introduced fauna, and a variety of species from across Southeast Asian and Pacific regions. The Collection is pivotal to the teaching and research activities of several archaeology sub-disciplines, including zooarchaeology, taxonomy, taphonomy, palaeobiology and human environments.

## Asia Pacific Maps Collection

SCHOLARLY INFORMATION SERVICES

The Asia Pacific Maps Collection is made up of more than 40,000 topographic, cadastral, aeronautical, tectonic, thematic and tourist maps and bathymetric charts. The Collection covers the world, with emphasis on Asia, Australia and the Pacific. The Collection is the largest University-held Asia Pacific map collection in Australia, with holdings that compliment those of the National Library of Australia. Through digitisation work and material archiving, the Collection serves as a primary repository for the University's rich past and is a resource for current and future research and teaching across disciplines and regions.

## Australasian Pollen and Spore Collection

COLLEGE OF ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

The Australasian Pollen and Spore Collection, originating from 1966, is the largest collection of modern pollen and spores from the Australasian and Pacific region, amounting to over 15,000 specimens. This Collection utilises the unique morphologies of pollen and spores to identify plants to various taxonomic levels. This scientific reference Collection is used as a comparative tool by researchers worldwide, playing a major role in attracting funding for several research projects in fields such as palaeo-environmental research, respiratory health and allergens, and the geographical origin of honey. The online catalogue of the Collection is freely accessible via [apsa.anu.edu.au](https://apsa.anu.edu.au).

## Biological Anthropology Collection

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

The Biological Anthropology Collection consists of casts and skeletal specimens that represent human and non-human primates. This Collection is a source of biological and anatomical data and information about human and hominin skeletal variation and morphology that characterised humans and our ancestral species over the past 8 million years. This Collection is significant as it is actively used in research and teaching within Bioarchaeology, Skeletal Biology, Forensic Anthropology, Palaeoanthropology and Primate and Hominid Palaeobiology.

## CAP Art and Artefacts Collection

COLLEGE OF ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

The College of Asia and the Pacific's Art and Artefact Collection contains significant cultural material from Australia, Asia and the Pacific, and forms an important record of College research activities. As a foundational school of the University, the provenance of the Collection represents historical continuity and connection to the University's continuing commitment to engagement with the Asia Pacific region. Many of these items are of great aesthetic, cultural and spiritual significance with some objects no longer produced by the cultures of origin.

## China in the World Art Collection

COLLEGE OF ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

The Australian Centre on China in the World (CiW) Art Collection has a high degree of artistic and aesthetic significance and houses diverse works including glass, photography, prints, furniture, maps, posters, calligraphy and sculptures. Displayed throughout the Centre, these pieces were selected to compliment the award-winning architectural design of the building. As the hub for China studies at the ANU, CiW aims to foster cross-campus, national and international research collaborations that promote greater understanding of the Chinese world – the People's Republic of China, Taiwan, and the Chinese diaspora. The CiW Art Collection aims to further strengthen this connection through the support of arts and culture relating to China and its region.

## Classics Museum Collection

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

The Classics Museum was established in 1962 at ANU and houses over 600 significant artefacts. From the wider Mediterranean world – from Britain to the Near East region – each of these items has a story to tell about how it was made, how it was used and the context in which it was used. The Collection has strong research significance with the potential to contribute to work in Classics and Ancient History, Archaeology, Art History and Visual Arts. The Museum's collection was enhanced in 2023 by the establishment of the Graeme Clarke Teaching Collection of hands-on object-based learning.

## Historic Keyboard Collection

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

The Historic Keyboard Collection is a unique collection of period instruments as well as custom-built copies of historical instruments, which includes: a clavichord, three harpsichords, and numerous square, upright and grand pianos. The collection also includes two organs, and a Mellotron M400. The Collection has strong historic significance due to its connection to the cultural history of Australia, the ACT, and the many people who established the Keyboard Institute at ANU. This collection has a high degree of research significance as the instruments are played and studied by students at the School, as per the original intention, as well as by visiting artists.



## Isabel McBryde Collection

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

The Isabel McBryde Collection is a collection of archaeological material held by the School of Archaeology and Anthropology. McBryde was a highly respected academic at ANU for twenty years and is best known for her work on exchange networks, her promotion of Indigenous heritage and her influence in training a whole generation of Australian archaeologists. The Collection holds a high level of historical significance due to its association with one of the Australia's foremost archaeologists. The collection contains a highly significant assemblage from McBryde's Victorian Greenstone Project, as well as excavated material and the associated documentation from other sites across Victoria, ACT and South Australia.

## John Mulvaney Collection

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

The John Mulvaney Collection consists of archaeological material acquired by pioneering Australian archaeologist, John Mulvaney. The Collection contains material from some of the most important and influential excavations Mulvaney conducted and was associated with. The Collection holds historical significance to the ANU due to Mulvaney's long association with the University and his position as Foundation Professor of Prehistory in the Arts Faculty. Of particular significance is the Mungo Peel, which is one of three latex stratigraphic peels taken by Mulvaney and shows the section of a trench wall exposed by the excavations at Lake Mungo in 1974.

## Mary Jane Mountain Collection

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

The Mary Jane Mountain Collection consists of archaeological and research material from Mary Jane Mountain, a retired archaeologist who has been associated with the University since 1979.

Mountain's primary research contribution is her work at the Nombe Rock Shelter in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea. The collection contains the complete assemblages of material collected from this site across four excavation seasons. This Collection has high research significance and contains archaeological evidence for:

- Continuous human activity at the site from the early-mid Holocene;
- Episodic human occupation during the Pleistocene (dating back to c. 25,000 cal BP); and
- Human interaction with multiple species of extinct megafauna, including three new species only documented at this site.



Hands-on learning in the ANU Classics Museum. Image: Rafael Florez.



## Mount Stromlo Photographic Plates Collection

COLLEGE OF SCIENCE

The Mount Stromlo Photographic Plates Collection consists of several thousand glass plate negatives. These images are some of the oldest of the Southern night sky, starting in the 1920s and are historically connected to Mount Stromlo Observatory's history of astronomy. The Collection includes negatives taken by notable astronomers such as Professor Jeremy Mould, Ken Freeman, Bart Bok and Gerard de Vaoucoulers. Other photographic plates are associated with high profile astronomy research programs. For example, the MACHO project involves the search for dark matter which includes one of the first detections of a planet orbiting another star, measurements of the Magellanic Clouds, measuring the size of the Universe and the rotation of galaxies, and even tracking the first satellites put in orbit. This Collection holds a wealth of scientific data and research potential – most notably, presenting a historical baseline to allow for looking at long-term changes in astrophysical objects such as exploding stars or moving objects in our solar system – while also maintaining a powerful connection to a historical site of local and national significance.

## New Guinea Collection

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

The School of Archaeology and Anthropology's New Guinea Collection is of historical and scientific significance as a representation of early anthropological and archaeological research in New Guinea and surrounding regions. It consists of 1,040 objects collected in the 1950s and 1960s, primarily from the Papua New Guinea (PNG) Highlands, as well as PNG's New Ireland province, Baliem Valley and Bokondini in Papua, Indonesia and a small amount of material from the Torres Strait. The Collection contains material from leading figures in the emergence of both disciplines in the region, including Marie Reay, Ralph Bulmer, R.M. Glasse and John Barnes in Anthropology, and Sue Bulmer in Archaeology. The Collection provides opportunities for new research on the material culture of the region and opportunities for collaboration with Indigenous groups and independent Pacific Island nations.

## RSES Collection

COLLEGE OF SCIENCE

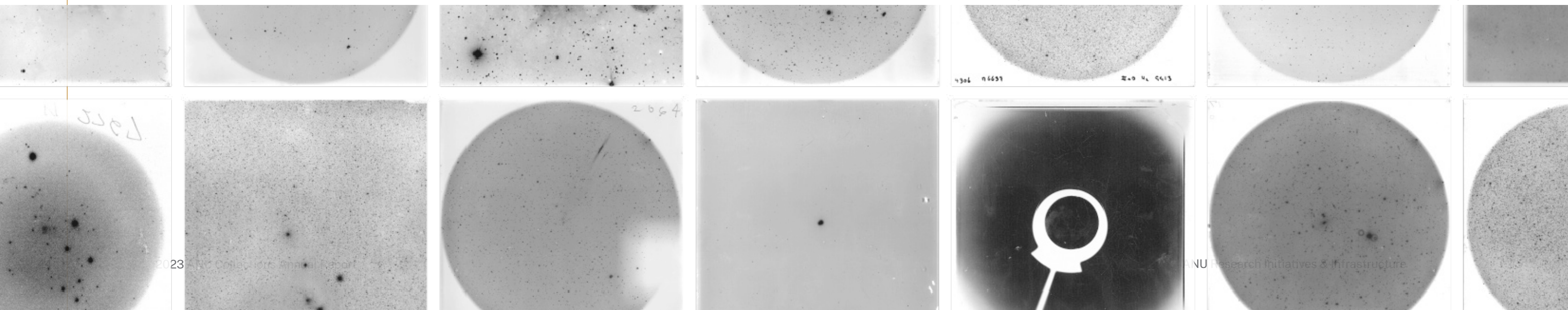
The RSES Collection consists of rocks, minerals and fossils that have been collected by and for the Research School of Earth Sciences and the former Geology Department, since the establishment of the Australian National University. The collection is of scientific and research significance as a major repository of material useful to the fields of paleontology, mineralogy, petrology, astronomy, marine science, geochemistry, biogeochemistry and palaeoenvironments. The Collection continues to be used in research (several fossils have been MicroCT scanned, with 3D modelling of the jaw of a placodem fish) and is involved in partnerships with other Universities.

## Seed Collection

COLLEGE OF ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

The Archaeology and Natural History (ANH) Seed Collection is a scientific reference collection of seeds and nuts from the Australasian and Pacific region, amounting to approximately 850 specimens. Many specimens were collected by researchers, while other samples are herbarium specimens or were purchased and/or donated from external organisations in Australia. The Collection includes samples from upwards of 30 countries. This Collection utilises the specific characteristics of seeds to identify the plant origin and potential use of seeds and nuts found in archaeological excavations and in environmental archives. Comparative collections like this one are a critical tool for archaeobotanical, (palaeo)ecological and agricultural research.

Selection of photographic plates from the Mount Stromlo Photographic Plates Collection, ANU College of Science.





## SoAA Art and Artefact Collection

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

The School of Archaeology and Anthropology (SoAA) Art and Objects Collection contains 320 artworks and artefacts which have been acquired by the School since the early 1970s. The Collection contains a diverse array of artworks and objects, including a collection of early Papunya Tula boards, WEH Stanner's collection of Nym Bandak Masonite board paintings, a collection of Warlpiri shields presented to the school by Gough Whitlam, a collection of Indian wax casting tools and a donated collection of classical antiquities. The collection reflects the evolving teaching and research priorities of the school throughout its history.

## Tikopia Collection

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

The Tikopia Collection consists of approximately 550 cultural objects collected by James Spillius from the Island of Tikopia, Solomon Islands in 1952 and 1953. These objects include wooden bowls, headrests, tapa beaters and clubs, palm leaf mats, fishing equipment, weaving equipment and shell adze blades. This Collection provides new research opportunities on material culture of the Western Pacific, the history of the Collection and the collectors, the ethics and contemporary significance of material culture collections and on developing collection management practices in consultation with independent Pacific Island nations.

## University House Heritage Collection

UNIVERSITY HOUSE & FACILITIES AND SERVICES

The University House Heritage Collection comprises of 4,000 pieces of bespoke mid-century furniture. This collection was designed and commissioned specifically for University House by Fred Ward between 1949 to 1953. In 2022, a small sub-collection of memorabilia associated with the history of the House was included. The collection has a high-level of historic significance to the University as it was one of the first planned buildings and consequently is an integral part of the University's design history. As well as displaying the work of notable Australian designer Fred Ward, the collection also features Australian entrepreneurs and textile artists Catherine Hardress (also known as Catherine Hardess) and Edith Grove. University House is an outstanding example of mid-century, integrated design.

## Wilfred Shawcross Collection

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

The Wilfred Shawcross Collection is a collection of archaeological, photographic and research material collected by Wilfred Shawcross who held various teaching and research positions at the ANU between 1973 and 1993. The archaeological material is from a 1992 Gerroa Field School and has research potential for an archaeologist studying Indigenous occupation patterns along the south coast of New South Wales. This site has since been destroyed, making this intact collection significant. The photographic, archival and research material has strong historic significance recording the University's involvement in key archaeological research at Lake Mungo, as well as the history of teaching in the Archaeology Department.



Pollen slide, Australasian Pollen and Spore Collection, College of Asia Pacific. Image: Ulrike Proske.





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