News from the collections

Michael Buxton donates art collection
The University of Melbourne will soon receive the largest ever arts gift to an Australian university, with the donation of the Michael Buxton Collection of Contemporary Australian Art. The Michael Buxton Collection is one of the most important private art collections in Australia, and features over 300 works by 55 of the country’s most influential contemporary artists, including Howard Arkley, Tracey Moffatt and Bill Henson.

The university’s Southbank campus will house the collection in a new purpose-built museum which will be endowed as part of the gift. Sitting alongside the Faculty of the Victorian College of the Arts and the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, the display of the Michael Buxton Collection will be a significant addition to the Southbank campus, and will equally enhance and contribute to the vitality of the Melbourne arts precinct.

The gift will be a great educational resource for students and the people of Melbourne as, under the guidance of staff from the Ian Potter Museum of Art, it will play an important role in teaching and learning across disciplines, and help foster an appreciation for contemporary art among future generations.

Germaine Greer’s archive now available
The Germaine Greer Collection, recently acquired by the University of Melbourne Archives, is now available for research. Extending over more than 70 shelf metres, the collection is one of UMA’s largest personal collections. It documents Greer’s work over more than 50 years through manuscripts and typescripts of published (and occasionally unpublished) works, research notes and working papers, personal and professional correspondence, unsolicited correspondence from members of the public, awards, honours and photographs. It also includes files for academic research and publications, on subjects including women artists and 17th-century women poets. Now available online are a detailed finding aid of the collection (http://tinyurl.com/k3tnut8) and a digitised version of the first draft and editorial file of Greer’s best-known book, *The female eunuch* (http://tinyurl.com/n8db76a). To use the collection, contact archives@archives.unimelb.edu.au.
Plants, poetry and prodigies

The university’s collections of rare botanical texts, English literature and Italian humanist works were all enhanced by recent acquisitions. *Rariorum aliquot stirpium per Hispanias observatarum historia*, written by Flemish botanist Charles de l’Ecluse (1526–1609) and published by Christopher Plantin in 1576, is one of the earliest studies of the flora of Spain and Portugal. The descriptions are based on the author’s personal observations made during his visit to the Iberian Peninsula in the mid-1560s, and the volume includes 233 woodcut botanical illustrations drawn by Pieter van der Borcht and cut by Gerard Janssen van Kampen. The work also includes references to plants in southern France and an illustrated appendix of flowers from south-east Europe.

Added to our holdings of 19th-century poetry was the two-volume first edition of *Poems* by Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809–1892), published in 1842 by Edward Moxon. This was Tennyson’s most substantial collective edition of his work to date, with significant new material, such as *Ulysses* and *Locksley Hall*, appearing for the first time, as well as revised versions of poems published previously. The volumes were handsomely bound in gilt-ruled green...
Malcolm Howie, *Tremella fuciformis* Berk. and *Tremella mesenterica* (Retz.) Fr., 1934, watercolour on paper, 30.5 × 23.0 cm. Commissioned by Dr Ethel McLennan c. 1934, University of Melbourne Herbarium.

First published in 1591, *Delle relationi universali* by humanist scholar, priest and secretary to the Duke of Savoy, Giovanni Botero (1543–1617), is a multi-faceted work on demography, geography, political history and economics. Botero’s text proved so popular it was published in 17 editions within a decade. The edition purchased by Rare Books was printed in Venice by Alessandro Vecchi in 1622. It comprises five of the seven parts published, with folding maps of Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas. The copy also includes the *Aggiunta* (supplement) of 1623, known for its 33 woodcut illustrations of African, Arabian and Indian peoples, and fantastical monsters or ‘prodigies’ thought to inhabit the undiscovered lands further to the east and south of Europe.

**Depictions of fungi**

The exhibition *From botanical illustrations to research: Watercolours from the University of Melbourne Herbarium* was held in the Noel Shaw Gallery of the Baillieu Library from 27 March to 28 June 2015. It combined intricately rendered watercolours of fungi with actual specimens from the University of Melbourne Herbarium. The morocco by the London bindery of Wallis & Lloyd.
watercolours, also from the herbarium, were produced by gifted commercial and natural history artist Malcolm Howie (1900–1936) in the mid-1930s. He worked in tandem with his brother-in-law Jim Willis, an eminent botanist at the National Herbarium of Victoria, who collected and identified the specimens Howie painted. Their collaboration contributed to a greater understanding of endemic and introduced fungi. Also included in the exhibition were books depicting mushrooms and toadstools, from the Baillieu Library’s Rare Books Collection, including the elegant herbal Hortus sanitatus, printed in Mainz in 1491. A series of public lectures accompanied the exhibition, on topics ranging from truffle-like fungi, the University of Melbourne Herbarium past and present, and the science and art of depicting fungi.

Souvenirs of the Grand Tour

A selection of books and prints from the Baillieu Library Print Collection and Rare Books forms an integral part of the exhibition Souvenirs of the Grand Tour: The Vizard Collection of Antiquities, which opened in April at the Ian Potter Museum of Art. These complement 60 antiquities (such as Egyptian faience figurines, Greek and Cypriot ceramics, Roman glass and Byzantine jewellery) from the Vizard Foundation Collection. The exhibition explores the theme of the antiquarian imagination and the historical practice of collecting antiquities.

The Grand Tour became fashionable from the late 16th century, particularly among upper-class young men from Britain and northern continental Europe. Many travelled to the Netherlands, some to Switzerland and Germany, and a few adventurers to Spain, Greece or Turkey. But the must-see destination was Italy, particularly Rome. Classical taste and an interest in exotic customs and ancient art and architecture shaped travellers’ itineraries and interests, while many painters, printmakers, sculptors and craftspeople benefited from the patronage of Grand Tourists eager to take home mementos of their travels.


Art and medicine

Heather Gaunt, curator of academic programs (research) at the Ian Potter Museum of Art, recently returned from a week at Hong Kong University, sponsored by the Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine. Heather and three colleagues from Melbourne’s medical faculty contributed to a full-day symposium and related activities in the field of medical humanities. The symposium and the visit as a whole explored fresh pedagogical approaches in medical education through linking the arts to medicine, ethics and humanities. Hong Kong University, which has established a rich program in medical humanities, was a fertile environment for discussion on how the arts in general, and the visual arts in particular, can improve students’ observational and interpretive capacities, deepen their creative critical thinking, encourage different possibilities for leadership and stimulate new ways to explore
ethical issues in health care. From the perspective of the University of Melbourne, the symposium provided an invaluable opportunity to consider how to enrich and extend our current programs, where students across the medical, dental and health sciences are exposed to the visual arts through a variety of teaching experiences, both on campus (at the Ian Potter Museum of Art) and offsite (using digitised resources from the Baillieu Library Print Collection).

**Magna Carta**

Melbourne Law School, in conjunction with the School of Historical and Philosophical Studies and the University Library, held a Miegunyah Distinguished Fellowship Lecture on 15 April 2015. Professor Paul Brand delivered a presentation titled ‘The first century of Magna Carta and the law: The diffusion of texts of Magna Carta and their use and citation by litigants, lawyers and justices, 1215–1315’. Professor Brand is a distinguished scholar of medieval legal history at the University of Oxford, a vice-president of the Selden Society, and a publisher devoted to promoting research in English legal history.

The Magna Carta (‘great charter’) is the medieval statement of liberties that defended the rebellious English barons against the arbitrary and unjust actions of King John. Over the centuries it has become a symbol of the rule of law and the cornerstone of liberty. Our Miegunyah Lecture was held to celebrate the 800th anniversary of this iconic document. Four copies of the Magna Carta from 1215 are known to have survived: one each in Lincoln and Salisbury Cathedrals and two in the British Library. Recently the University of Melbourne Library acquired a facsimile of one of the British Library’s copies, and it was displayed at the lecture.

On 1 January 1629 Humphrey Wyems (Wymes), a barrister of the Inner Temple, gave the original document to Sir Robert Cotton, who assembled the Cotton Library, one of the foundation collections of the British Museum, later incorporated into the British Library. The story goes that Wyems found the document in a London tailor’s shop. Fortunately, it escaped the fate of being used to make suit patterns.

**2015 Melbourne Law School Rare Books Lecture**

On 23 July Dr Julie Evans will deliver this year’s Melbourne Law School Rare Books Lecture, ‘Attending to place in academic life: Telling the story of the 1881 Coranderrk inquiry’, which will explore the question: how can legal archives help Victorians understand the history of their own backyard?

The minutes of evidence of the 1881 parliamentary inquiry into conditions at the Coranderrk Aboriginal Station near Healesville are at the heart of an innovative research project that tells a very local story of collaboration between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to secure self-determination and rights to land. The lecture will demonstrate the significance of legal archives in increasing community understanding of how we might live together justly in settler societies.

Dr Evans is a historian and senior lecturer in criminology in the School of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Melbourne. She is lead chief investigator of the Australian Research Council-funded ‘Minutes of evidence’ project, which promotes new and collaborative ways of understanding Australia’s past and engaging with structural justice.

**The 2015 Melbourne Law School Rare Books Lecture will be held on Thursday 23 July 2015, from 6.30 pm to 7.30 pm, at the Melbourne Law School, University Square, 185 Pelham Street, Carlton. For information call (03) 9035 1111 or book online at http://go.unimelb.edu.au/93kn.**