

## **Internship in Nicholson Museum**

In the summer of 2017, thanks to the Department of Anthropology and Nicholson Museum, I was given the opportunity to work in Nicholson Museum as an intern from 19<sup>th</sup> June to 11<sup>th</sup> August. In this nearly-two-month internship, I am grateful for being able to engage in different tasks, gatherings and meetings, getting in touch with specialists from diverse professional backgrounds. The experience in Nicholson Museum enriched my understanding of the operation and functions of a museum.



*Figure 1 The Main Quadrangle in the University of Sydney, where Nicholson Museum is situated.*

### Documentation

I worked on documentation for most of the time during the internship. There are a huge amount of artefacts stored in Nicholson Museum. Some artefacts were being registered in a group, without their own individual registration number and record. My work was to document these artefacts separately. This work included different processes. I first assigned a new number to every artefact under the group number, then I took photos of every object, and reported to my supervisor of which numbers' records should be created. After the records of new registration numbers were created, I would edit and upload the photos to the database named EMu, while typing in the description of each artefact about its features and condition.



*Figure 2 Taking a photo of an artefact.*



*Figure 3 Discovering artefacts through photo-taking.*

### Research

Sometimes I would be assigned to do research on the history of Nicholson Museum on Trove, an online newspaper archive operated by National Library of Australia. I searched and saved any news about Nicholson Museum published in past newspapers. Some news went into great details of how an artefact was found, collected, or donated to the museum, giving the museum more information on its collections. When I found artefact-related news, I would add it to the database under the record of that particular artefact, enriching the context in which this artefact lied within. By collecting the news, we can better understand the collections and the development of the museum.

### Conservation

I was too fortunate to be able to work with the conservation team for several days. In the conservation lab, my task was to remove the paint and adhesive on sherds with the help of a shape craft knife and acetone. The conservation team was a separate unit under Sydney University Museums, I am very thankful to my supervisor for arranging this opportunity for me to experience conservation work.



*Figure 4 Working in the conservation lab.*

Education officer

In Nicholson Museum, there were several events that lasted for a whole day for school children during school holidays. There were activities stationed in various parts of the museum, allowing children to explore the museum while playing. I worked as an education officer and rotated to different stations from time to time. Activities included colouring and cutting, board games that were from ancient time, craft-making, hand-on sessions where artefacts were taken out of the education room for children to touch and study. These activities allowed the children to learn about the artefacts and the context where these things came from in a relaxed and fun way. It encouraged the children to observe and think about the artefacts as activities often involved tasks asking them to create or decorate their own versions of an artefact. During these events, I had a great time playing with the children and exploring different ways to engage children in the museum and transmit the knowledge.



*Figure 5 The sarcophagus, ready for children's decorations.*



Figure 6 One of the activity stations, for children to play Senet, a board game from ancient Egypt.

## Design exhibition information sheet

In the last week of internship, I was assigned to design a new information sheet for the exhibition, Death Magic, for the visitors to better understand the artefacts which are on show. It was quite challenging to include all the information of every artefact in one exhibition room with two A3 pages. Yet it was also an exciting try for me to design an information sheet for an exhibition, figuring out which design would best assist the visitors to see the exhibition while not to overwhelm them by a sea of words.

**DEATH MAGIC**

1. Mummy of a boy named Huneb
2. Mummification
3. Pectoral of a woman of the Pharaoh Haremhotep
4. Scarabs
5. Scarabs
6. Scarabs
7. Scarabs
8. Scarabs
9. Scarabs
10. Scarabs
11. Scarabs
12. Scarabs
13. Scarabs
14. Scarabs
15. Scarabs
16. Scarabs
17. Scarabs
18. Scarabs
19. Scarabs
20. Scarabs
21. Scarabs
22. Scarabs
23. Scarabs
24. Scarabs

Figure 7 Information sheet designed.

## Reception desk

Nicholson Museum recruited volunteers to take up some museum works, one of them is to be on duty at the reception desk. There are morning shift and afternoon shift. Volunteers have to refill merchandises, handle the transaction in the souvenir shop, answer questions about exhibitions, events and guided tours, and count the number of visitors. Volunteers in the morning shift will also have to do some basic cleaning of the showcases. When the volunteers could not come, I would cover their place and work at the reception desk. By working in volunteer's position, I realised

Fung Lok Shan Sonia  
1155048871

that volunteers involve a lot in the daily operation of the museum and have to know the museum well in terms of its collections, exhibitions, history and events. It shows how important volunteer scheme can engage more people in museum work and allow more people to better understand the function and purposes of museums.

I was lucky to be invited to join many other events and gatherings throughout the internship, including monthly meeting of Sydney University Museums, where all units of Sydney University Museums come together for report and discussion, the public lecture held in Nicholson Museum, visiting the lab where photos of artefacts are professionally taken, and so forth. There were too many events and gatherings which I was asked to join, and places where I was brought to visit, that I cannot list out all of them one by one. I had a very great time at Nicholson Museum, and I would like to express my appreciation to my supervisor, Candace, Assistant Curator and Jamie, Senior Curator of Nicholson Museum, for their efforts in arranging different works and opportunities for me, and also to museum staffs from other units and volunteers for making this experience fruitful, amazing and unforgettable.



*Figure 8 Public lecture held in Nicholson Museum.*



*Figure 9 Photo-taking setup in the lab.*



*Figure 10 Farwell Party with supervisor, museum staff and volunteers.*

Fung Lok Shan Sonia  
1155048871



*Figure 11 With Ms. Suzanne Kortlucke, Education & Public Programs Assistant (Left) and Mr. Jamie Fraser, Senior Curator of Nicholson Museum (Right) in Nicholson Museum.*



*Figure 12 With my supervisor, Ms. Candace Richards, Assistant Curator of Nicholson Museum.*