NOTICE OF GENERAL MEETING

The third General Meeting of the Society for 1979 will be held in the Museum Education Building, North Terrace, Adelaide at

8.00PM MONDAY 28 MAY 1979.

AGENDA

1. Apologies.

2. Minutes of General Meeting held Monday, 26 March 1979, to be confirmed. A copy of these minutes is attached. Note that the meeting on Monday, 23 April 1979 was held in conjunction with the University of Adelaide to hear an address by Rhys Jones.

3. New Members.
The following new members have been elected to the Society.
Professor John PRESCOTT
Mrs. Josephine PRESCOTT.

4. Papers and Journals.
Papers and Journals from other Societies and Organizations will be tabled at the meeting.

5. Business.
The Secretary to report on the following :-
(a) 'Field Project for 1979.
(b) 'Magic & Medicine' Seminar, 14 July 1979.

6. Speaker.
DOROTHY BENNETT will address the meeting on the subject of :-

"CENPPELLI ART." 900 pop.

Dorothy Bennett is a Field Officer in Arnhem Land. Her first contact with Aboriginals and their art was with Dr. Scougal's expedition to study Orthopaedic problems among Aboriginal people. Her interest in Aboriginal art stems from that expedition and has continued unabated since. The collection, documentation and promotion of Aboriginal art has become Dorothy Bennett's life. She accompanied the New South Wales Art Gallery expeditions in 1957 and 1958. Collected and exhibited a very large collection in Japan in 1966, which was an enormous success. Subsequently she became an Art Consultant with the Aboriginal Arts Board of the Australia Council.

7. Supper.
Coffee and tea with biscuits.

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MUSEUM CONSERVATION

The primary role of the conserver in a museum is in preventative rather than 'restorative' conservation, the emphasis being on the prevention of damage to the collections rather than repair after damage has occurred. To facilitate the preventative conservation process, museum conservation sections undertake extensive programmes of environmental monitoring, both in display and storage areas.

The most common parameters covered in environmental monitoring are relative humidity (R.H.), temperature and light intensity; the more unusual are measurements of pollutant gases and fungal spore counts. The continuous inspection for fungus and insects, although only indirectly connected with the environment, is usually the concern of the conservation section since it is from faulty control of the environmental conditions that infestations of the collections can arise.

The environmental monitoring is also important because of the sensitivity of much of a museum's collection to changes in R.H. and temperature, particularly rapid fluctuations, and also its susceptibility to the effects of high intensities of illumination, particularly if the light source emits a proportion of ultra violet radiation which can cause deterioration of certain materials.

Although the maintenance of a suitable environment for the collections of a museum is the major role of the museum's conservation section the most time consuming function is that of object conservation (cleaning and stabilising) and restoration.

Invariably, museums have amongst their collections material which has been received (or is received) in a damaged state or, particularly if the museum has an old collection, objects which have deteriorated in the museum with time. In all cases the artifacts must be saved from further deterioration, and where appropriate restored, to preserve them for the future.

It is this stage of the conservation procedure that is familiar to most people although possibly only restoration is really considered as 'conservation' in the mind of the public.

In the majority of cases, museum artifacts are rarely 'restored' in the same sense as an art gallery conserver would think of restoration, but rather repaired, which would include cleaning and, where necessary, reinforcing, and reassembly. Only restoration of an aesthetic nature, particularly where the object is to be displayed, is employed as the objects scientific authenticity must be retained at all costs for purposes of research.

As a general rule, all treatments have to be kept simple, easily reversed processes used and any restoration work undertaken always made detectable - but not too obvious. Thus, conservation with better techniques is possible at some later date.

To facilitate this stage of re-conserving, should it be necessary, full documentation of the original conservation process has to be maintained with both written and photographic records being made.

The process of museum conservation is therefore one of numerous facets each one interacting to preserve and maintain the collection of a given institution such that the cultural heritage of the community it serves is preserved for the study and interest of generations to come.