



In this Issue

8 July 2025

Cover Story

Notes from the 10th World Archaeological Congress

By Madalyn Grant

From cleared towns and returned Ancestors to art collectives and technofossils, this issues cover story explores the ideas and debates that shaped the 10th World Archaeological Congress in Darwin. It reflects on how delegates, communities and institutions came together to (re)negotiate what ethical, inclusive heritage practice can look like today.

Read more on **Page 5**

Opportunities

Rethinking Relationships & Engaging Communities

Opportunities through the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology to build meaningful partnerships with communities, support innovative research, and help shape more inclusive ways of caring for collections are now open.

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Cover photo: Turtle at Ubirr Rock within the East Alligator region of Kakadu National Park

By Tourism NT
(<https://tourismnt.com.au/>)

Heritage, Shame & Medicine

Sofia Bourantoni at the Shame and Medicine Conference

At this year's conference, Sofia Bourantoni, PhD researcher with the CHRC at the University of Cambridge, invited researchers to look closer at places that many would rather forget. Her poster explored the complex histories of former leprosaria—places of isolation for people living with Hansen's disease, or leprosy—and how their difficult pasts still shape how they are seen and felt today. While advances in medicine led to the closure of leprosaria in the 20th century, these sites remain powerful reminders of stigma and suffering. Drawing on insights from Medical Geography, Heritage Studies and History, Sofia positioned these sites not as 'just' places of shame, but as spaces that can help confront and understand the legacies of disease and exclusion.

[Learn more](#)

Beyond the Pitch: Football, Class and Community

Josh Bland on the FootPol Podcast

In a recent episode of The FootPol Podcast, titled "Class Act: Football and the English Working Class," hosts Francesco Belcastro and Guy Burton spoke with Josh Bland, a PhD researcher with the CHRC at the University of Cambridge whose work focuses on football culture and industrial heritage. The episode shed light on the multifaceted, but often overlooked bond between football and the English working class, showing how the game has long been a cornerstone of community, belonging and pride. The conversation reflected on how modern commercialisation, especially in the Premier League, has reshaped this connection and raised questions about what genuine fandom means in an era of global brands and billion-pound clubs. Together, they considered whether the true heart of working-class football now beats strongest in the lower leagues, and what this story reveals about class and identity in contemporary Britain.

[Learn more](#)



A Polyphony of Emotions

William Wright and Josh Bland at the Conference of the Amsterdam School for Heritage, Memory and Material Culture

At the recent *A Polyphony of Emotions* conference in Amsterdam, CHRC members William Wright and Josh Bland each brought fresh perspectives on how emotions shape our understanding of heritage. William Wright's paper examined how affective narratives are constructed within heritage sites, exploring the ways in which emotions are intentionally embedded to influence collective memory and identity. His analysis highlighted the performative aspects of heritage, demonstrating how emotional frameworks can shape public engagement with the past. Josh drew on his work with football communities in the North East of England, arguing that the deep emotional ties of football fandom deserve to be seen and protected as living heritage.

[Learn more](#)

The Second World War: 80 Years On

Oliver Moxham at the Royal Historical Society's Second World War Research Group Annual Conference

At the *Second World War: 80 Years On*, Oliver shared a presentation exploring the complex realities of public war memory in Japan today. Focused on the contrasting narratives presented by sites like the Yushukan and the Kyoto Museum for World Peace, the paper highlighted how these museums reflect and shape conflicting understandings of Japan's wartime past. Oliver also demonstrated the value of newer data sources, such as Google Maps reviews, for revealing how visitors respond to these narratives both within Japan and internationally. By examining how dissonant and consonant interpretations emerge—and how thoughtful translation can mediate these—the presentation opened up new ways of thinking about how public memory travels, shifts and resonates in a global context.

[Learn more](#)





Nkali and Kolo-collecting in Eastern Nigeria

Stanley J. Onyemechalu in the *International Journal of Heritage Studies*

In recent months, CHRC PhD researcher Stanley J. Onyemechalu, with J. Kelechi Ugwuanyi, published in the *International Journal of Heritage Studies* on how sacred Igbo objects like *Ọfọ* and *Ikenga* have travelled through histories of colonial collecting and museum care. The paper explores how these powerful symbols of sovereignty and authority were removed from their original contexts by colonial anthropologists and are now held at the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology in Cambridge. Stanley reflects on how these objects lost or transformed their meanings over time, caught in what he describes as imprisonment and exile within the museum walls. By unpacking ideas like Kolo-collecting, an insatiable colonial urge to possess the “other”, and nkali, the will to dominate, he highlights the power dynamics that shaped these collections and invites readers to consider how Western museums might reckon with these legacies and engage more fully in debates on restitution and decolonisation.

[Learn more](#)

"What is football heritage?"

Josh Bland in *The Blizzard*

Last month, CHRC member Josh Bland fulfilled something of a lifelong dream by publishing an article titled “What is football heritage?” in *The Blizzard*, one of the UK’s most influential football publications. In the piece, Josh examines the growing calls to treat football as heritage, a conversation gaining traction among supporters, the media and politicians alike. Using the government’s proposed Independent Football Regulator as a central point of critique, he draws on his research with football communities in the North East of England to show how ideas of heritage are often narrowly defined in this context. Rather than focusing only on protecting physical elements like badges, stadiums or kit colours, Josh argues for the need to recognise and safeguard football fandom itself as a living, breathing tradition. In doing so, he brings key insights from Critical Heritage Studies to a wider public audience, encouraging policymakers and supporters to think more deeply about what it really means to protect football’s rich cultural life. *The Blizzard* can be purchased through following the link below, where a sample PDF of Josh’s work is available for download.

[Learn more](#)



Notes from the 10th World Archaeological Congress

Power, place, and responsibility:
what WAC-10 can tell us about the future of the past

By Madalyn Grant

Set against the backdrop of Darwin's balmy coastlines and lush, tropical greenery, the 10th World Archaeological Congress (WAC-10) brought together over 2,000 participants from around the world across June 22–28, 2025. In Australia's Top End—where humidity arrives before your luggage, mozzies treat sunscreen as a condiment, and swimming without a nod from a local is basically an extreme sport—delegates gathered to share ideas and debate pressing issues in archaeology, including cultural heritage, repatriation, museums, and conflict studies. This year's conference placed a strong emphasis on anti-colonisation, ethical stewardship, and ensuring that Indigenous, First Nations, Descendant and communities of implication are not just consulted but actively lead the way in shaping how their histories are communicated, transformed, and altered through evolving heritage practices.

Museums' roles in heritage stewardship were critically examined, particularly concerning the ethical management of human remains. The session *Ethics and Human Remains in Museums and Other Institutions* provided a platform for Descendant Communities to share experiences and strategies for respectful engagement with Ancestral Remains. *The Dilemma of Disharmony at Heritage Sites, Museums and Historic Towns* highlighted conflicts arising from differing stakeholder perspectives on heritage value. In both sessions, case studies demonstrated how inclusive approaches and community participation can mitigate tensions and promote sustainable heritage practices.

Complementing these discussions, the session *Technofossils of the Anthropocene* offered a critical examination of industrial and technological infrastructures as enduring markers of human impact on the planet. Papers presented included Christine Finn's *Computer Classics: Rebooting Artefacts for the Next Generation*, which discussed the transformation of obsolete technology into subjects of academic interest, and Lara Lamb's study of Acland Mine in Queensland, which used industrial heritage frameworks to examine how the systematic depopulation and transformation of the townscape reveal complex layers of abandonment, memory, and industrial reconfiguration under extractive regimes.



Repatriation emerged as a central theme, with sessions like *Emotion and the History and Practice of Repatriation: “The Universally Sensitive Area”*, co-chaired by CHRC PhD member Madalyn Grant, exploring the emotional complexities surrounding the return of Ancestral Remains. Presenters highlighted how scientific zeal historically justified the collection of Indigenous remains and continues to shape conversations about their repatriation, sometimes disregarding the spiritual and cultural significance of these Ancestors for Descendant Communities—a point that was powerfully underscored by Edward Halealoha Ayau’s paper on the profound responsibilities and emotional burdens carried by Indigenous practitioners working to bring their Ancestors home. Picking up this thread, the session *Balancing Obligations and Recalibrating Ethical Approaches* addressed the urgent need for anti-colonial archaeological practices in contexts where colonial legacies continue to shape heritage management. Papers in this session examined the tensions archaeologists face when balancing national laws, international frameworks such as UNDRIP, and local community protocols, and highlighted practical pathways for reconciling these sometimes-conflicting obligations.

In the session titled *Neutering the Narrative: Exploring the History and Heritage of the Nigeria-Biafra War*, CHRC PhD researcher Stanley J. Onyemechalu’s paper entitled “Reclaiming Memory: Youth Art, Visual Heritage Performance and Memory Activism in the Nigeria-Biafra War” examined how artistic expression serves as a mnemonic device and counter-narrative to state-sponsored cultural amnesia. Drawing on a youth-led art competition run by the Legacies of Biafra Heritage Project (LBHP) in southeastern Nigeria, the research showed how young people used creative mediums to reflect on and give new shape to the memory of the war’s painful history. The presentation emphasised how these grassroots efforts help young generations question official histories, keep community memories alive, and open dialogue across generations through visual and artistic expression.

Across the globe, other examples of locally driven heritage work reinforced the value of community voices. In the session titled *The Local Voices of Community-Based Archaeology in Ecuador: Case Studies from Carchi, Manabí, Tungurahua, and the Galápagos Islands*, researchers presented collaborative projects that centred on community engagement in archaeological practices. These case studies showcased how local communities actively participate in preserving and interpreting their cultural heritage, leading to more inclusive and sustainable heritage management strategies. The session highlighted the importance of integrating indigenous knowledge systems and local narratives into archaeological research and heritage conservation efforts. The session *Building an Anti-colonial Archaeology and Digital Heritage* similarly presented projects where Indigenous communities utilised digital mapping and storytelling to assert control over their cultural narratives. These initiatives demonstrate how technology can support sovereignty and facilitate cross-cultural understanding.



In *Exploring the Archaeology of Nigeria: Unearthing the Past, Enriching the Present*, convened by Kingsley Chinedu Daraojimba (Marie Curie Fellow at the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, University of Cambridge) and Kolawole Adekola, presenters traced how archaeological research in Nigeria deepens our understanding of heritage as a living resource, not just a static record of history. Papers ranged from early Stone Age settlements to the rise of complex societies, showing how trade, craft production and cultural exchange have long shaped the region's identity and continue to do so today. By foregrounding local knowledge and community involvement, the session underlined how Nigerian archaeology is about more than uncovering history: it enriches present-day cultural pride and strengthens stewardship in communities whose stories have too often been sidelined.

Beyond the dig site, the role of museums as evolving spaces of engagement was revisited in *Rethinking Global Perspectives on Museums: Heritage Management, Community Engagement, and Innovation*, which brought Southeast Asian scholars and practitioners together to examine challenges from rapid urban development to illicit trafficking and climate threats. Speakers stressed the need for museums to embrace digital tools and community-led programming to build stronger public connections and keep heritage relevant. The plenary session *Archaeology and Conflict: Debate Continued* similarly tackled urgent questions of protection and preservation in crisis contexts, underlining the importance of international cooperation and conventions like the Hague Convention, and highlighting the work of organisations such as Blue Shield International.

Alongside panels and workshops, the WAC-10 keynotes offered clear calls to rethink what heritage work should do in a world still marked by colonial legacies and deep social divides. Kisha Supernant's keynote, *Indigenous Archaeology as Restorative Justice*, framed archaeology as more than the study of what lies buried: it can be a practice of repair and care. Drawing on her work with Indigenous communities in Canada, Supernant argued that heritage stewardship must shift from extraction toward service, where archaeologists help communities reclaim stories, Ancestors and lands disrupted by colonialism. Building on this, Alfredo González-Ruibal's keynote, *Learning to Live Together: An Archaeology of Tolerance*, asked what happens when we focus not only on conflict and inequality but also on how diverse communities have coexisted and exchanged ideas. Using examples from the Indian Ocean world, he showed how telling these stories of shared spaces and mutual respect can help heritage work push back against division and foster more inclusive futures.

Taken together, WAC-10 highlighted an archaeological community reckoning with its responsibilities and possibilities. From repatriation and industrial legacies to community museums and digital futures, the conference foregrounded a shared commitment to ethical practice, meaningful partnerships, and amplifying voices too often marginalised. As the conversations continue beyond Darwin's shores, the work of transforming how heritage is cared for and by whom is far from finished.





Registration

**Transnational Conversations:
Heritage, Memory, Climate,
and Reparatory Justice in the
Caribbean, Europe, and
Beyond**

Amersfoort and Leiden

**Conference: 23–25 Sept 2025
Registration: 1 Aug 2025**

Many museums and institutions across Europe are custodians of objects and collections originating from colonial contexts. As professionals managing these collections, and recognizing our shared responsibility in addressing historical injustices, how can we best fulfill this role? What can we learn from each other's experiences?

The Consortium Colonial Collections in the Netherlands warmly invites museum and collection professionals across Europe to participate in The European Working Conference on Collections from Colonial Contexts.

This three-day conference aims to foster ongoing dialogue and collaboration, helping build a sustainable network of professionals committed to transparent, responsible stewardship.

[Learn More](#)

CfP

**Transnational Conversations:
Heritage, Memory, Climate,
and Reparatory Justice in the
Caribbean, Europe, and
Beyond**

Leiden University

**Conference: 29–30 Oct 2025
Abstracts due: 15 July 2025**

This interdisciplinary event will explore how legacies of colonialism, climate coloniality, and evolving heritage and memory practices influence contemporary understandings and mobilisations of reparations. Bringing together scholars, activists, and practitioners, the conference aims to foster dialogue on reparatory justice beyond Eurocentric frameworks, emphasising grassroots perspectives and ecological dimensions. Keynote speaker Professor Ana Lucia Araujo of Howard University will contribute her expertise on the history and memory of slavery and the Atlantic slave trade. The program will include keynote lectures, research presentations, and panel discussions, offering a platform for critical engagement with the intersections of history, environment, and justice.

[Learn More](#)





Registration

National Conference on Cultural Property Protection Leveraging Partnerships: Collaborative Approaches to Cultural Property Protection

Smithsonian

Conference: 22–24 Sept 2025
Registration: Rolling

Hosted by the Smithsonian Institution, this annual gathering brings together professionals from museums, libraries, universities, and cultural institutions worldwide to explore innovative strategies for safeguarding cultural heritage. This year's agenda features a diverse range of sessions, including case studies from the Smithsonian's National Museum of Asian Art, discussions on disaster risk management, insights into art crime, and explorations of how global events impact local cultural sites. Attendees will also benefit from site visits to prominent institutions like the National Gallery of Art and the National Museum of Asian Art.

[Learn More](#)

Talk

Vanished: An Unnatural History of Extinction

British Society for the History of Science
Department of History and Philosophy of Science

9 July, 18:00-19:15
Babbage Lecture Theatre

Why do some lives and histories disappear from view — and who decides what is remembered? In this keynote lecture, historian Sadiah Qureshi shares insights from her acclaimed new book *Vanished*, which explores how empire, race, and power shaped what the past was allowed to keep — and what it chose to forget. Drawing on stories of lost people, places, and knowledge, *Vanished* asks urgent questions about memory, erasure, and the making of history. The lecture will be introduced by Helen Macdonald, author of *H is for Hawk*, and followed by a discussion led by Sarah Qidwai.

[Learn More](#)





Talk

Unpacking Provenance | A Kakiemon Model of an Elephant

Smithsonian, National Museum of Asian Art (NMAA)

15 July, 17:00-18:00

Join a distinguished panel of international experts for an online seminar exploring the provenance of a 17th-century Japanese Kakiemon porcelain elephant, currently housed at the National Museum of Asian Art. This event delves into the object's historical journey from Japan to Europe, examining the broader implications for provenance research and the narratives of those connected to its past.

[Learn More](#)

Training

Starting Your Research

The London Archives

July, August, September

In this general introductory session to using The London Archives, you'll tour the Information Area to find out about the on-site research facilities and a range of digital resources too. Discover the types of records that we hold in our vast collections (over 100km of shelving and spanning from 1067 to the present day) and how to access them efficiently yourself. Whether you are new to exploring archival materials or looking for a refresher on using our collections for your own research, this session is for you!

[Learn More](#)





Registration

Doha Conference on Combating the Illicit Trafficking of Cultural Property: Crisis Preparedness and Cultural Heritage Protection – Prevention to Recovery

UNESCO's Regional Office for the Gulf States and Yemen and the Embassies of the United States, France and Italy in Doha

Conference: 21-24 Sept 2025
Registration: rolling

In light of the growing challenges facing cultural heritage in the region, Qatar National Library is pleased to invite you to participate in the 4th edition of the Doha Conference on Combating the Illicit Trafficking of Cultural Property — a leading regional platform for safeguarding heritage and fostering collaboration among local and international stakeholders.

[Learn More](#)

CfP

A Critical Study of Training in the Field of Heritage

In Situ. Au regard des sciences sociales

Proposals due: 15 Sept 2025

This issue seeks to examine how heritage training programs—through their curricula, pedagogical approaches, and institutional contexts—construct and transmit “authorised” narratives about heritage. It encourages analyses of the historical, political, and disciplinary influences that have shaped these programs, as well as their evolution in response to globalisation, standardisation, and the professionalisation of the heritage sector. Contributions may explore the balance between theory and practice, the role of internships and professional networks, and the ways in which national traditions and international standards intersect in heritage education.

[Learn More](#)





CfP

Entangled Histories, Emerging Futures: South Asia in a Multipolar World

Journal of South Asian Exchanges

Submissions due: 20 Aug 2025

The Journal of South Asian Exchanges invites submissions for its upcoming special issue dedicated to the rich, layered, and dynamic terrain of South Asian Studies. This issue seeks to cultivate cross-disciplinary conversations that explore both the historical depth and contemporary complexities of South Asia, from its ancient entanglements to its evolving place in the 21st-century global order. We are especially interested in papers that foreground interdisciplinary approaches and prioritise marginalised perspectives—scholarship that moves beyond binaries and embraces the messy, hybrid realities of the region.

[Learn More](#)

CfP

A Critical Study of Training in the Field of Heritage

Theoretical Archaeology Group
University of York

**Conference: 15-17 Dec 2025
Abstracts due: 1 Aug 2025**

This year's TAG theme is 'theory in action', a broad theme in which we want to be inclusive to everything that makes this conference wonderful: fringe theory that you think needs more attention, bringing untold stories and objects to light, critical reflection on the field, giving voices to diverse communities, and presenting creative crossovers between archaeology and the arts. We are hosted in the School of Arts and Creative Technologies, there is a stage, a cinema, a rehearsal room at our disposal, meaning that we have a great space to bring theory into action in non-traditional ways, and we would like to encourage participants to think about creative ways of presenting papers and hosting sessions.

[Learn More](#)





Opportunities

Community Participation Assistant (Part Time, Fixed Term)

Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology

Application deadline: 15 July 2025

MAA is seeking to appoint a part-time fixed term Community Participation Assistant. The role will support the Senior Curator in World Archaeology in a project funded by an Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund, entitled From the Caribbean to Cambridge: Reimagining Pre-Columbian Archaeology Collections Together. The role responsible for building and maintaining relationships with the Caribbean diaspora in the East of England, coordinating community-led workshops, and supporting co-curation activities. The Assistant will ensure that participants are actively involved in decision-making processes, contributing to the interpretation and presentation of pre-Columbian Caribbean collections as part of a project.

[Learn More](#)

Project Curator: Endangered Material Knowledge Programme

British Museum

Application deadline: 10 July 2025

The Endangered Material Knowledge Programme (EMKP) at the British Museum is seeking to recruit a project curator to support the day-to-day operations of the programme. This will include budget records, logistics and general enquiries from prospective applicants and grantees; digital repository content review including grantee asset checking; dissemination of project results through digital media (website, social media and newsletter); and support planning and organisation of EMKP events including training, board meetings and workshops.

[Learn More](#)





Rethinking Relationships Community Researcher Proposals

Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology

Application deadline: 20th July 2025

The Rethinking Relationships project is working across five African countries and four UK museums to develop new museum practice based on equitable collaboration. It is an Arts Council England funded project that began in Summer 2024 and runs until December 2026. It is working in partnership with members of the African Diaspora and people from Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Nigeria and Ghana to explore collections and develop museum practice that better serves their needs. The project also works across four UK museums; the Horniman Museum, the Pitt Rivers Museum, (University of Oxford), the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (University of Cambridge), and the World Museum in Liverpool. Collaboration is at the heart of what this project does, and partners include heritage professionals, community members, researchers, artists, diaspora groups and academics. The project's work and outcomes are tailored to the specific contexts of the museums and partners.

The Rethinking Relationships project is looking to work with four community researchers to explore the African collections at the University of Cambridge's Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. This is an excellent and unique opportunity to engage deeply with the museum collections and be reimbursed for your time. This will be especially exciting for people who really want to develop their knowledge and expertise around African collections and heritage. The Rethinking Relationships project is working towards a small re-display of African Collections in the museum over the next nine months and are particularly keen to work with people who want to be part of the process.

[Learn More](#)





Contribute

We would be especially interested in hearing from you about events and opportunities. Contributions in the form of short reviews of conferences, exhibitions, publications or other events/material that you have attended/read are also welcome. Please note that advertisements for any non-CHRC events, jobs, or programs do not imply endorsement of them.

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www.heritage.arch.cam.ac.uk

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