



Name
Heather Stewart

Current Position
Conservator

Education and Qualifications

2015 MA Conservation of Museum and Archaeological Materials, University of Durham
2010 MA Archaeology, University of Glasgow

Selected Career Summary

2020 – present: Conservator at MSDS Marine Ltd.
2019 – 2020: Conservation Technician, The David Livingstone Trust
2015 – 2017: Conservator, Esmerelda Project
2016 – 2016: Conservation Supervisor, Rutgers University Field School
2012 – 2014: Conservation Placement, York Archaeological Trust

Key Expertise

Heather is a conservator with a specialism in marine archaeological finds and additional experience of working on terrestrial sites and museum objects. She has extensive experience working in the UK and internationally.

Heather is skilled in the research and analysis of objects and has experience of sampling methodology and chemical testing. Heather has experience in treating many types of artefacts and materials from waterlogged wood, leather and textiles through to metals from the marine environment. She is proficient in the use of X-radiography (X-ray) and has worked with specialists to test samples using X-ray fluorescence (XRF), X-ray diffraction (XRD), Fourier-transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR), and scanning electron microscopy (SEM-EDX).

Heather is the project conservator for the *Rooswijk*1740 project. In addition, Heather was responsible for running the conservation lab of the *Esmerelda* Project in Oman where she gained experience of managing budgets, sourcing materials, organising archival work, teaching, and training.

Sector Specific Experience

Conservator, MSDS Marine Ltd.

Heather is joined MSDS Marine in February 2020 as a Conservator and is responsible for conservation of the

artefacts resulting from the 2017 and 2018 excavation seasons on the *Rooswijk* as well as working on other MSDS Marine projects as required. Notably, she is involved with our work on conservation assessment and conservation management plans.

Conservation Technician, The David Livingstone Trust

Heather's main duties and responsibilities included locating objects for display, packing objects for transport, conserving objects and cataloguing objects on Modes Software.

Heather worked with volunteers to produce archival book sleeves for the Blantyre works Library. She enacted conservation cleaning on basketry, hide shields and wooden instruments. Her role involved working with the Museum team to prepare items for display and assisting others in successfully achieving their goals.

Conservator, *Esmerelda* Project, Oman

During the excavation stage of work Heather took part in finds cataloguing and the preparation of finds for transport and treatment of the *Esmerelda* wreck in the Al Halliyinah islands of Oman. During this time, she worked with Oman's Ministry of Heritage and Culture, Bournemouth University and Blue Water Recoveries.

Following the excavation, Heather was tasked with the set-up of a laboratory for the treatment of objects within Oman and had to work within a budget and source materials. She recorded and conserved various objects including Cu-Alloy breech chambers, Cu-Alloy Arquebus gun stocks, Fe-Alloy cannon balls, Pb-Alloy shot and large stone shot.

Heather provided training for Ministry of Heritage and Culture staff in basic conservation methodologies such as object photography, finds recording, health and safety, the use of archival storage materials and object handling. She had the opportunity to work with the staff of the National Museum of Oman and took part in a lecture series intended to inform the public of the work.

Heather made connections to provide practical solutions for object care. This included working with Sultan Qaboos University to enact testing of samples and to access facilities for X-Ray. She initiated communications between Museum departments to set up an archive and find volunteers.

Upon completion of the project Heather worked with the relevant Ministry departments to organise paperwork for the transport of items to be treated and analysed within the UK. She worked with specialists to record the collection including laser scanning artefacts with Warwick University and the excavation and sampling of sealed breech chambers.

Conservation Supervisor, Rutgers University field school, Vancone, Italy

The site of Vancone was a Roman Villa excavated as part of a teaching excavation for students of Edinburgh University and Rutgers University. The villa had numerous rooms with standing decorative wall plaster and complex mosaics. Heather was employed as the conservation supervisor for the site working with a conservation assistant and two Getty interns. The team were tasked with in-situ preservation of the walls and mosaics prior to reburial at the end of the excavation. This involved the use of lime plaster and varied techniques. The interns were trained in conservation techniques and then tasked with supervising students with an interest in conservation. Staff were also required to block lift stucco fragments for consolidation and cleaning as well as various small finds where possible within the field laboratory.

Placement, York Archaeological Trust

As part of her Masters course, Heather completed a nine-month conservation placement. During her time at YAT she conserved various objects including a prehistoric ash paddle with an outbreak of acidic salts related to PEG treatment, a composite grapeshot canon-ball from a marine environment and various wood, leather, glass, and metal-alloy objects from shipwreck excavations. This included assisting in the cleaning of large waterlogged wooden items such as early railroad tracks.

Heather had the opportunity to stabilise a waterlogged wood assemblage with PEG and was given training in wood identification with wood specialist Steve Allen. In addition, Heather undertook wood density measurements and PEG calculations. She also tested waterlogged prehistoric bone to investigate a conservation methodology.

During the placement Heather learned to produce assessment reports by testing cleaning methodologies for a large assemblage of archaeological stone and provided recommendations for further work. Heather also produced desktop assessments including an investigation into the construction of a wooden support for a Roman lead coffin burial by analysing the mineralised organics on nails and relating these to their positioning within a grave. Heather also provided the initial report on environmental monitoring for the YAT store using tiny tag data and plans. She also had the opportunity to assist in the block lifting of material from a site and take part in the repackaging of an archaeological archive in Barnsley. Her experience working with YAT has provided numerous transferable

skills for working within archaeological units and archival settings.