

*Waterhouse Club Members were privileged to take a tour of the Aboriginal Collections at Netley. The visit was part of the Club's Coming Out Series and the second sold out Netley tour offered to our members.*

*Dr Jared Thomas, the W and M Geary Curator of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art and Material Culture, led the tour of the facility with Tara Collier, Aboriginal Collections Manager. Kate Rice, Projects Coordinator provided organisational support.*

*Since our first visit there has been considerable work done to catalogue and prepare items ready for a new purpose-built facility. The huge assembly of items is the most important Aboriginal artefacts collection in Australia, and ranks in significance with the great international anthropological collections in the Louvre and the British Museum.*

*We were given an appreciation of how precious these items are and how they can be brought to life with informed interpretation.*

*Jared began the tour in a room with the spear collection. There are over 5,000 spears all with a story to tell although the provenance of many is unknown. Jared is advocating for an 'Elders in Residence' program to connect the collection to country and unlock some of the stories these objects hold.*

*Tara Collier has a special interest in the jewellery collection and told how privileged she feels to see younger members of communities visit and hold for the first-time objects made by their family elders and ancestors. It was an emotional experience to learn how so many precious objects were removed without permission. It was also interesting to see a range of items made especially for the museum, many decades old.*

*Members were absolutely captivated by the objects and the story each one told, and were moved by the scale and significance of the collection as a whole.*

*Led by Rose Dow with organisational support from Margie Heylen.*