

## Editorial

The PIA committee is delighted to bring you the first Special Volume in this journal's 17 year history. It has come about through a happy coincidence: Suzanne Keene, Reader in Museum and Heritage Studies at the Institute of Archaeology, had assembled and edited her MA students' papers on museum collections and was looking for a viable way to publish them. Meanwhile three members of the 2006 PIA committee, Hilary Orange, Megan Palmer and Ian Richardson, were available and willing to put another volume into production almost immediately after Volume 17 was published. The swift translation of Suzanne's first approach in December 2006 into a complete volume in time for the Museum Association's "Crowded House: rethinking stored collections" conference in March 2007 is entirely due to their hard work.

Although the Special Volume is a departure from the usual publication schedule, it is entirely in the spirit of PIA: with one exception these papers originated as MA dissertations. It is a path that I hope more students at the UCL Institute of Archaeology will be willing to follow since too often a summer's hard work disappears into a spiral-bound volume on an inaccessible shelf. What could, with a bit of time and effort, be a valuable contribution to its subject is instead forgotten. I am very grateful that the authors of this collection of papers, with the encouragement of Suzanne Keene, took their dissertations out of storage to show us that there is much to see on inaccessible shelves. I would like to thank the authors and editor, an anonymous referee and the current PIA committee for their contribution to our first Special Volume. May it become a collector's item.

Andrew Shapland, Senior Editor  
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