

Jana Stefan, Conservator and Exhibit Arts Technician, Royal BC Museum

Jana Stefan is a Royal BC Museum Conservator and Exhibit Arts Technician who has lived and worked in Antarctica for two seasons, enduring extreme conditions in order to preserve the world's most remote historic sites, including R.F. Scott's Expedition Hut. Four expedition parties built bases in the Ross Sea Region of Antarctica. The bases still stand and are cared for on behalf of the international community by the New Zealand-based Antarctic Heritage Trust.

Stefan's work as a conservator focuses on prolonging the lifespan of historical artifacts. During her two six-month conservation trips to Antarctica, her work involved cleaning, repairing, and stabilizing objects, and creating a healthy long-term environment for them (by controlling lights, temperature, and UV radiation).

Daily activities included:

- Conserving artifacts including food cans, scientific equipment, a stove, postage stamps, candles, soap, socks, mittens, etc.,
- Packing up 1000 artifacts to take to the conservation lab
- Creating a monitoring program to track conditions in the huts
- Sleeping on the sea ice, in tents similar to those used by explorers
- Working and eating in converted shipping containers as part of an international team

During her most recent trip, from August 2012 to March 2013, Stefan narrated her adventures and answered questions from school children via a blog on the Royal BC Museum website:

<http://explore.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/transmissions-from-antarctica>

Stefan is considered a Canadian expert on the practical methods and challenges of the conservation of Antarctic heritage and history. She has been an exhibit arts technician and conservator at the Royal BC Museum since 2005, where her work has included diverse tasks such as conserving fragile artifacts, flensing whale skeletons and vacuuming the woolly mammoth. She holds degrees in Conservation (Sandford Fleming College) and History in Art (University of Victoria), and has worked extensively with youth leadership programs.