

Dr. Christine Garnaut

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Filed away in the Architecture Museum at the University of South Australia are over 200,000 documents, books and publications, donated by private practitioners, which represent the diverse aspects of South Australia's architectural history.

Looking for technical expertise and fresh ideas about how to utilise and present items in this extensive collection, Christine Garnaut, Senior Research Fellow and Director of the Museum at the School of Art Architecture and Design at the University of South Australia, reached out to eResearch SA.

Working in conjunction with one of the Museum's research collaborators, History SA, Christine and her colleagues came up with the idea of putting together a 3D representation of a historical South Australian property.

They chose Joseph Elliot's cottage built in 1856 in Jeffcott Street, North Adelaide.

"Joseph had described the cottage and its furniture and contents as well as its garden in a highly detailed letter which he wrote in 1860 to his mother in England," Christine says.

"The letter is published in a book called *Our Home in Australia*. The book includes a commentary and sketches by architect and academic Stefan Pikusa and a foreword by Joseph Elliott's grandson, Brian.

"Through the letter and significant interpretative material from these two authors, we were able to get a real understanding of the cottage and how it might look in 3D form."

Christine submitted a proposal for the project to eResearch SA.

"In no time at all they had organised for Lyndon Warren, a communications student from Flinders University to assist us, through the eResearch SA scholarship program," she says.

The eResearch SA scholarship program is designed to match university students with researchers and supervisors, to assist with research projects that use eResearch techniques and facilities.

Lyndon Warren applied for a summer scholarship with eResearch SA and was matched with Christine and the Architecture Museum because of his knowledge of the 3D graphics program Maya. ▶

"Working with eResearch SA has been a really positive experience – the staff have been incredibly enthusiastic and supportive of our vision"



With Christine's and Julie Collins' (Collections Manager) help, Lyndon began delving into the architecture of Joseph Elliot's cottage, documenting every detail from the windowsills to the veranda.

"Lyndon was very keen to learn more about architecture and quite happy and capable to work independently with the sources we had given him, just coming back to us with questions when he needed to," Christine says.

After coming to a good understanding of the layout of the cottage, Lyndon used the Maya program, (which is also used to create special effects in films) to build an interactive, photo image model of the home – transforming simple sketches and floor plans into an interactive 3D experience.

"What we have now is a computerised model that allows us to experience the Elliott house beyond just words on paper – it's also given us a better understanding of that particular era of architecture," Christine says.

"You can walk through the door and around the rooms and really get a sense of the layout and the scale of the house.

"Not only do we now have a means to help promote visual understanding of 19th century cottages, we now have a practical example of how we can use digital technologies to bring to life items in our collection – it's been a great outcome." 🎧

