

## The Paper Conservator delayed

An apology from the editor of The Paper Conservator, February 2006

Dear ICON members and book and paper group,

I'm writing to let you know how things are proceeding with volume 29 of The Paper Conservator. You may remember that this is a special themed issue on Asian art, materials, and conservation. In this issue we will revisit many topics that were covered in volume 9, published 20 years ago. As volume 9 is now out of print we will be including this sought after volume on CD ROM with volume 29.

Philip Meredith has been working with me on this issue. I am extremely grateful to him for joining me in a project that has occupied us both since December 2004. During that month we had an initial meeting in Oxford after numerous telephone discussions, and just before Philip moved to the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. Despite all appeals to reason, he was enthusiastic and agreed to collaborate!

Putting together a special themed issue is difficult and dealing with such a specific subject area, even more so. Instead of the usual journal which contains a mixture of unsolicited submissions on a whole variety of subjects, papers which could not be processed by deadline, and articles which have been bullied out of people, the themed journal is completely different. For volume 29 we have had to contact specialists in the very narrow field of Asian conservation and commission papers on specific subjects. Philip, in particular, has done all the preparation work, defining the subject areas, approaching the appropriate conservators or curators, explaining the project and deadlines, and then following up, with plenty of encouragement and advice. The shape of the journal reflects his expertise in this field. The papers when received then go through the usual review process, being read by two referees who are not identified to the author. Choosing appropriate referees is not easy when the pool of expertise is small and people are already so busy. Feedback is then conveyed to the authors and revisions are made and a final text produced. In this way we guarantee the standard of our publication and hopefully encourage authors to try even harder.

But all this takes time and I've not even mentioned copy editing, reading for language and style, and putting things into the house style. When this stage has been completed and the page layout has been set, first proofs are sent to the authors, final changes made and the issue finally goes to press. We are working very hard on volume 29 and regret that its publication has been delayed. I hope you will appreciate the amount of hard work and dedication that has gone into the next issue of The Paper Conservator and that you will find it a valuable tool in your work.

Sincerely,

Jane Eagan  
Co-editor with Philip Meredith  
The Paper Conservator, volume 29