

Icon NEWS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION • NOVEMBER 2013 • ISSUE 49



Pinpointing pigments on marbled paper

Also in this issue

Tools can be cheap and effective

Volunteering can broaden your education

Comparing professions: archaeology and conservation

conservation register

Are you thinking of joining the Conservation Register?

The Conservation Register is the recognised source for finding professionally qualified conservator restorers in the UK & Ireland.

Practices that are included in the Conservation Register will benefit from:

- Referrals from organisations including the National Trust, the V&A museum, the Council for the Care of Churches;
- An individual entry providing full contact details and including automatic links to a website and email address; Inclusion in all UK and Ireland searches for your discipline;
- An opportunity to showcase examples of work to potential clients;
- Provision of information on the accreditation and skills of you and your staff;
- Login access for feedback on how often your own entry is viewed
- Practices in which the lead member is an accredited conservator-restorer (ACR) of Icon, or ARA, or BHI, accredited through PACR (Professional Accreditation of Conservator-Restorers) are eligible for a 15% discount with Heath Lambert insurance brokers.

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THE INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION

NOVEMBER 2013

Issue 49



From the Editor

The review of our professional practice assessment scheme – commonly known as PACR – is nearing completion and some of the interesting issues to emerge from it are reflected in the opening articles from our CEO and Susan Bradshaw, our Professional Development Manager. I am amazed and

impressed by the sheer number of accredited conservators – well over two hundred of them – who voluntarily contribute their time and labour to operate the scheme. It is their efforts which make ACR the hallmark for high quality, ethical conservation and Icon the home of the professional conservator. It is also remarkable that the entire operation is coordinated by just Susan with one and half other colleagues.

The Nigel Williams prize is open for entries again, so come on all you ceramics and glass conservators, write up your projects and submit them. There is a student prize as well this time around. To spur you on, Lynne Edge ACR has written a piece about how important winning the prize was to her and her business.

Lynette Gill



2 NEWS

The CEO on the PACR review; a new clock register; comparing archaeology & conservation; the Nigel Williams prize

12 PEOPLE

14 A GRAND FOUNTAIN

Episode 2 of this Paisley project

**16
SHOPPING IN POUNDLAND**
Inexpensive materials can do the job well

**18
A VOLUNTEER'S DAY**
Getting to grips with collections care at Osterley House

**20
AROUND & ABOUT**
Digitising, disassembling, celebrating a sculpture anniversary, performing in public

**26
REVIEWS**
Paper making, silicon mould making, using the vacuum table, the Country House

**31
IN PRACTICE**
A preliminary investigation into marbled paper pigments with **In Training** on conserving a bridal crown



Institute of Conservation
1.5, Lafone House,
The Leathermarket,
Weston Street
London SE1 3ER
T +44(0)20 3142 6799

admin@icon.org.uk
membership@icon.org.uk
www.icon.org.uk

Chief Executive
Alison Richmond
arichmond@icon.org.uk

Conservation Register
conservationregister@icon.org.uk
www.conservationregister.com

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Icon News
Editor
Lynette Gill
news@icon.org.uk

Printers
Calderstone Design & Print Limited
www.calderstone.com

Design
Rufus Leonard
enquiries@rufusleonard.com

For recruitment and all other
advertising
Rebecca Hendry
020 3142 6788
admin@icon.org.uk

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Marbled paper from a mid 18th
century French paper binding - the
subject of preliminary pigment
analysis in In Practice on page 31

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professional update

From the Chief Executive

ICON'S GOLDEN EGG

Alison Richmond ACR FIIC comments on the outcome of a recent review of our professional practice assessment process (PACR)



Photo: Matt Wreford

Something to be proud of
Icon's professional accreditation framework, PACR, is rigorous, it is robust, it works well. PACR has been going since 2000 when the first conservators were fast-tracked and we have just undertaken a second Quinquennial Review of the scheme. We know that the profession generally feels positive about it.

Assessing practitioners against professional standards means that our profession is open to everyone. There is no single

route into the profession – a graduate route, say, or an apprenticeship or the requirement for a degree from a particular course – one can come at it from any angle. The important thing is to meet the professional standards at the 'Proficient' level.

Setting up our profession in this way is an amazing achievement that we should all be proud of. When I talk to people about Icon, amongst all of the things that we do, people latch onto accreditation. They understand that PACR is the lynchpin of our professional development. It is what makes us a professional body.

Something to nurture

It appears to be the case that accreditation has been working so well that we have been taking it for granted. The enormous volunteer contribution of the Accreditation Committee, assessors, CPD readers and mentors and the PACR Management Board is all co-ordinated so seamlessly by Icon staff, that we forget that PACR needs to be nurtured in order to thrive. The Quinquennial Review carries out a health check on PACR, takes stock of what we have achieved since the last Review and sets the agenda for the next five years. The Review has revealed some home truths: that Icon at the highest level needs to acknowledge and work to embed PACR at the heart of Icon.

Something to shout about

PACR is still considered by some as an 'optional extra'. Not all conservators are convinced that PACR is an essential component of their career or understand that becoming accredited is the point at which one becomes a professional conservator. This may be because the benefits are not clear or have not yet materialised, for example in higher salaries for accredited professionals.

The Review has also highlighted the fact that accreditation is

not widely known amongst employers and is almost unheard of at the level of institutional directors. While Icon's recent Conservation Labour Market Research indicates that employers are willing to support PACR, by contrast the low response rate from employers to the Review study indicates otherwise.

The loudest message coming from the Review is that more effort should go into promotion – a campaign, in fact – to educate employers, large and small, public and private, about the value of accreditation. Time for this has to come from somewhere and we have been urged to review, at the same time, the input of both staff and volunteers to make the process more efficient and thus free up more time for promotion and marketing. A major shift in awareness has to occur if we are going to ensure that accreditation is perceived as the industry quality mark that we know it to be.

SOME PACR FACTS AND FIGURES

PACR: a way of demonstrating a recognised standard of professional expertise in the care of cultural heritage beyond qualifications gained from training

Professional Standards: the foundation stone of PACR, providing published common standards created by the conservation profession

Participating bodies: Icon, ARA (Archives and Records Association) and BHI (British Horological Institute)

Administration: undertaken by a small Icon team: the Professional Development Manager (Susan Bradshaw), a part-time Accreditation Officer (Shulla Jaques) and a Professional Support Officer (Kath Whittam)

The PACR Management Board*: its **6** members represent the three participating bodies. Its job is the overall management and policy setting of PACR.

The Accreditation Committee*: reviews applications and accredits members. Its **17** members represent all the conservation disciplines and both private and institutional practice.

87 Assessors*: assess an applicant's professional practice against the Professional Standards. Between them they cover all the conservation specialisms and different types of practice.

59 PACR mentors*: advise and guide PACR applicants and Pathway members towards submitting their applications.

50 CPD Readers*: provide feedback to accredited members on the reviews they submit periodically to demonstrate their ongoing learning and professional development (cpd)

* All these roles are filled by volunteer accredited members, who undergo training for their tasks and whose support for and commitment to the profession is exemplary

Susan Bradshaw, Icon's Professional Development Manager, sets out some thoughts arising from the review

Photo: Matt Wreford



Taking it forward

The PACR Quinquennial Review 2013 was undertaken by external consultants. Their report was considered in early September by an Advisory Panel which was set up for this purpose to represent a wide range of perspectives within and outside Icon. The purpose of the Panel's meeting was to prioritise recommendations, to form a strategy, delegate actions and consider the resources required to implement actions. The aim is

for the Icon Board of Trustees to consider its recommendations at its meeting on 2 December and for actions in due course to be incorporated into Icon's Business Plan for 2014–16.

Some messages from the Review survey

Since the last review took place in 2007/08, the landscape of the profession has changed significantly. Icon itself is a much stronger, confident and organised professional association. This is reflected in the high response to the Review survey sent out to Icon members in June. It was a credit to the Review team and to Icon members and demonstrates an encouraging level of engagement. On the other hand the response from employers was very low, a fact which was thought to be significant by the Advisory Panel.

There were no great surprises in the survey, though some of the findings were disappointing or perhaps harsh: in particular, the perception of accreditation as a 'closed shop', even though considerable efforts have been made to avoid this. Part of this may come from some members of participating bodies mistakenly perceiving conservation members to be an 'elite' group. There will always be a small percentage which finds change difficult but, on the other hand, an archivist from ARA reported that PACR has a prestige value in the wider ARA membership and accredited conservators are held in high regard.

It's up to us all

One strong theme in the Report is that delivering key messages about PACR could and should be the role of Icon's membership as a whole and not just the Icon team. For example, the fact that the PACR process is flexible and should attract conservators from both public and private sectors is not being fully communicated. This is something that can be done now by all ACRs – to advocate accreditation as widely as possible.

Lobbying

One recommendation for institutional members is to work with their Human Resource (HR) professionals to shape accreditation to fit with their internal HR procedures. Although the Icon team informs job advertisers about accreditation, it may be too late at this stage of the recruitment process to influence the role specification. Members are therefore encouraged to promote accreditation internally, before filling vacancies reaches the final advert stage. Conversely, those applying for positions could ask about how the organization or business supports professional development and its understanding of Professional Standards.

Private practitioners can be proactive in illustrating how the business addresses the Professional Standards, in order to demonstrate the competences that non-accredited conservators may not have. Promotion is also linked to the role of ambassadors and endorsement from other organisations and professional bodies.

Owning our 'golden egg'

One of the clearest themes of the Quinquennial Review survey was to bring accreditation more fully into the Icon fold. PACR is owned by Icon and its membership. It is something to use and be proactive about in demonstrating to employers, clients and anyone engaged with heritage conservation. As the report states, it is Icon's 'Golden Egg'. As noted in the 2012/13 CLMI report on the conservation workforce, employers are impressed by the rigour of the PACR process. Therefore the apparent separation of PACR from Icon should be rectified and the association with the Icon brand should be strengthened. Central to Icon is high professional standards, which form the basis of accreditation. Being 'professionally' accredited is key and should be synonymous with credibility.

The new Pathway scheme

Icon's new initiative, the PACR Pathway, has attracted one hundred and twenty members. Signing up to the Pathway demonstrates a commitment to working towards accreditation, starting from as early as initial qualification through to the time the participant is ready to apply for accreditation. The PACR-trained mentors are now fully engaged in supporting Pathway members. The value and commitment they bring benefits not only the person planning their personal development towards ACR status but also the mentors themselves, as it aids their own professional development.

A lifetime's learning

The value of continuing professional development can be underestimated; it is there to demonstrate the continuity of one's level of ability. PACR is not a 'one off' achievement – it is ongoing and a crucial part of the PACR framework, in order to demonstrate how an individual grows throughout their career. Even if one is approaching retirement, learning is still a key part of a professional's life. It will not look the same as for someone in their mid-career and will address different needs but it is still showing continuous professional development.

THE CLOCK REGISTER

The Clock Register (www.clockregister.org) has just made its debut on the internet as a conservation register for clock professionals and enthusiasts. It offers the infrastructure for everyone interested in clocks – conservators, collectors, dealers, tutors, students, curators, auctioneers, in short anyone who cares about clocks – to contribute information for everyone's benefit today and for future generations. The more clocks that are entered, the more valuable this new resource will become.

Developed with a lot of enthusiasm, but born out of frustration, The Clock Register appeared as the brainchild of Marc ter Kuile, a West Dean College clock graduate. Working on many different clocks for clients from his workshop at home, Marc explains:

'I missed the ability to find quickly who had worked on a clock before, who had owned it and what a previous conservator had decided to act upon and why? Just as a doctor wants to access the medical history of his patients, so should a clock conservator have all previous work on that clock at his fingertips. This way, the conservator can more easily come up with an accountable, and preferably reversible, approach to the conservation of that clock. At the same time, a collector, dealer or auctioneer will gain respect and credibility if a



clock's pedigree can be verified and explained. Many museums already offer information about their collections online. That's great. What's missing, though, is an overarching database that will hold information about all clocks, regardless of their ownership, nationality or physical whereabouts. This is the reason The Clock Register has sprung up. I see it as a further professionalization of the way we work and organise ourselves as clock professionals. In particular, it will enhance our reputation vis-à-vis our clients.'

Marc realised that if this type of information is tracked over time and stored in a database that everyone – interested in, or working with, clocks – can access, a hugely valuable resource will be created. For now, and for future generations.

The Clock Register stores more than one hundred and forty items about a clock including conservator work reports, ownership history, photos and sound recordings. You can search The Clock Register with Google-like searches for whatever minute detail you need to know about a clock. The service is free (you only have to register at www.clockregister.org) and aims to store information about all clocks in the world.

The site's Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page is a good place to find out more about this service.

AWARDS NEWS FOR SCOTLAND

Awards available

The Gordon Fraser Charitable Trust's Paper Conservation Fund aims to help accredited museums in Scotland, in particular small and medium-sized independent ones, to work with conservators to undertake projects that conserve their collections of works on paper. Projects can be treatment, surveys, training courses and skills development workshops. The fund awards £6,500 a year in two rounds (July and January) and aims to support up to six projects a year.

The Trust is particularly keen to fund a training course for museum staff/volunteers in paper conservation and successful applications for courses will be awarded 100% funding.

Please note that the next deadline is the 30 November 2013. For an Application Form and Guidance, please email enquiries@gfct.org.uk.



Awards announced

The June Baker Trust, which helps conservators in Scotland, is pleased to announce the awards that it has been able to give out this year:

- Zoë Lanceley: £100 towards the costs of a three-day leather conservation course in Glasgow for textile conservation students
- Rosie Chamberlin: £200 towards the costs of travel to and from a textile conservation student summer placement
- Nick Wright: £275, towards the cost of attending the BAPCR meeting in London 'The Picture so far...50 years of Paintings Conservation'
- Hal Jacob: £275 to attend the 'Metal 2013' conference in Edinburgh
- Will Murray ACR: £150 towards the costs of attending the 'Metal 2013' conference in Edinburgh

The June Baker Trust was set up in 1990 to help individuals working in the conservation of historic and artistic artefacts in Scotland, or training with the intention to do so.

Awards are available towards travel, attendance at conferences and on short courses, purchase of equipment, or other suitable projects. Awards are made once a year, in June.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I am writing to say thank you for including the article by Jane Henderson in issue 48 of Icon News ('Intervention'), as it really made a connection with me and, I am sure, with many other job-seeking conservators.

I am not a recent graduate, but have an MA, an internship, plenty of experience volunteering at various museums/stately homes, and a recent freelance project. I have, however, yet to achieve success at a museum job interview. I have encountered most of the problems outlined in Jane's article and was heartened to hear these being highlighted by someone who is impartial and therefore less likely to be dismissed as having 'sour grapes'. Jane has, in short, given the interviewee a voice.

I would add one particular bugbear, which is the non-payment of expenses to attend these interviews. When we are being asked to pay anything up to £100 or more for a train journey (plus time off from any work we have), it would be nice to be let down a little more gently than with a standard email from the HR department.

With the pitiful amount of posts actually being advertised, it is more important than ever that interviewees get the relevant feedback they need in order to build upon their performance the next time. I hope employers take note and realise that their institutions are also under the spotlight here. How someone is treated when they are invited to interview is a reflection on the organisation itself, and I have (sadly) found myself re-evaluating some of my views after the experience.

Many thanks again for printing Jane's article, I hope it gives heart to my fellow job-seeking conservators.

Name and address withheld



Intense debate at the last Conservation Methodology course

CONSERVATION METHODOLOGY & MANAGING CHANGE

Conservation methodology and managing change is a welcome repeat of the very successful course reviewed in Icon News issue 26. Inspired by ICCROM's *Sharing Conservation Decisions* course but tailored to the concerns of UK conservators, this West Dean course, run in collaboration with Icon, takes place 2–5 December. It explores the relationship between theory and practice and is essential training for all conservators.

The course will examine the study of 'the object' in the context of differing global cultural values and, with reference to a wide range of case-studies, will examine how conservation decisions are made and the role of the professional conservator in the process.

COLLECTION CARE TOOLS

The Museum of London has developed a series of Collection Care E-Learning Tools which have been funded by ACE (Arts Council England). They cover the basic principles of Emergency Planning, Pests, Handling and Packing and are free to use at the web address below. The message from the Museum is: please feel free to share them and spread the word.

www.museumoflondon.org.uk/collections-research/conservation-collection-care/

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

Archaeology Group

The Icon Archaeology Group would like to take this opportunity to update our membership on changes to the committee agreed at this year's AGM. We would like to thank Karla Graham, who stepped down as chair, Sharon Penton, who stepped down as treasurer, and Rob Lewis, who stepped down as communications officer, for all their hard work. Both Karla and Rob will be staying on as ordinary members; Sharon is remaining as a co-opted member. We would like to thank existing members Beth Werrett, Evelyn Godfrey and Deborah Magnoler for taking up the roles of chair, communications officer and head of the events team respectively. We would like to welcome Sarah Morton as treasurer and Alaina Schmisser, Ellie Rowley-Conwy and Bronwen Roberts as the new events team. Thank you to all members of the committee for your continued commitment

and welcome to what will certainly be another successful year!

We are pleased to announce that the annual Archaeology Group Christmas event will be held at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery on Friday 13 December 2013 (afternoon only). The theme for this year's talks is *The Good, The Bad and The Ugly*. A visit to the conservation department and to one of the local pubs for a pre-holiday toast will be part of this friendly event, within the festive and vibrant setting that is Birmingham at Christmas. Look out for more information on the Icon Archaeology web pages closer to the date. Contact: deborah.magnoler@birminghammuseums.org.uk

Book & Paper Group

As you all know I will be leaving the committee at the end of December and therefore this is my last piece for News from the Groups. This has been an intense period for me and the rest of the committee and I am in many ways looking forward to my 'retirement'! But I am very pleased to say that our new Chair, Isabelle Egan, will start her role in March 2014, after an interim period in which Victoria Stevens has kindly agreed to step in as Acting Chair. Isabelle is an experienced member of the committee, with a firm grasp of the challenges faced by our profession in the present climate. One of her main priorities will be to respond to the increasing demand for access to professional development opportunities by building on the excellent track record of the Co-operative Training Register (CTR). I and the rest of the committee have every confidence that Isabelle will be an active and effective Chair, and a strong advocate for the interests of Book & Paper Group members.

The CTR sub-committee has co-opted two more enthusiastic conservators: Maartje Schalkx and Sarai Vardi, who will provide much-needed assistance with the current CTR programme and will help to organise the 2015 Book & Paper Group Conference.

The response to online registration for the *Innovation in Conservation Mounting* workshop was outstanding, and the eighteen available places were fully booked in less than five minutes! All 135 places for the evening lecture with Hugh Phibbs have now also been filled. These are very good signs and point to a desire for more events along the same lines. We hope to be able to run a similar workshop next year.

A film of Richard Wolbers' lecture *The use of Gels in Aqueous Conservation of Paper* is now available to view on the Book & Paper Group section of the Icon website.

If you have any questions for the committee, or ideas regarding projects, or if you would like to attend a committee meeting as a special guest or to raise a specific issue, please remember that you can contact me at s.signorello@wellcome.ac.uk. Our next meeting will be on 6 December at the Chantry Library. The committee members would like you to feel that they are approachable, and would really like to hear from you.

Stefania Signorello ACR, Book & Paper Group Chair

Metals Group

The Metals Group committee welcomes a new member - Katrina Redman of Hall Conservation Ltd.

We are planning a group tour of the Cutty Sark in Greenwich for May/June 2014. For planning purposes we need to get an idea of the number of people interested in participating in this event, which is expected to cost around £15 per person. If you are interested in attending please email Jacqui Ready (jacqui.ready@hants.gov.uk) to express your interest; there is no commitment at this stage. More details to come.

Textile Group

The Textile Group now has a facebook page. This provides an opportunity to keep up with news and events but it is also a forum for discussion enabling the sharing of thoughts and ideas. Photographs of events attended can also be posted. Do have a look and please contribute anything that you feel would be of interest. The page can be found by searching Icon textiles group.

A very successful visit to Toye, Kenning and Spencer in Bedworth, Warwickshire, took place in September. A review of the afternoon can be found on page 29. Thank you to Rosamund Weatherall for organising this event.

Also very successful was the study day held at Ham House looking at the conservation of the late 17th century wall hangings from the Queen's Antechamber. A review of this event will be in the next issue of Icon. May Berkouwer, who has carried out the conservation treatment on the hangings, and led the day, was delighted with the positive feedback she received.

Thank you to everyone who submitted abstracts for next year's forum, under the theme of, 'Joined up Thinking: Textiles and the Historic Interior'. The committee are busy selecting speakers and organising the event so look out for further information soon, confirming the date and venue.

WINNING THE NIGEL WILLIAMS PRIZE

I trained in the Conservation of Ceramics, Glass and Related Materials at West Dean College, Chichester, 1990–1992. During this period I was incredibly fortunate to have Nigel Williams as one of my external tutors. Nigel was always so open, generous and passionate in disseminating his vast knowledge and experience. He had the fantastic ability to explain techniques simply and with clarity; I learnt so much from him. To this day I still use some of the unwritten techniques he shared. It was fitting in 2002 that an award was established in his honour to celebrate excellence in the Conservation of Ceramics, Glass and Related Material.

In March 2008 I left my position as Section Head of Ceramics and Glass Conservation at the National Museums Liverpool to set up in private practice. Soon after, I began work on the project for which I won the award in 2010: the Conservation of a World War I/I Glass Opus Sectile War Memorial. It was clear from the outset that this project would present many complexities and challenges, not least that very little reference material existed on the conservation of this type of



The Glass Opus Sectile war memorial after conservation in-situ at St James Church, West Derby, Liverpool

glass panel. From the early stages of the project I was mindful that it may well fit the criteria of the Nigel Williams Award and so I kept detailed digital images and notes as work progressed.

When it came to applying, I collated and edited all this information to present the project as clearly and concisely as possible. The application process provided a great opportunity to reflect upon the work achieved, new things learnt and areas of skills and knowledge that could be developed further. Given all the pressures that private practice presents, I had to be very disciplined with my time in order to earn a living and achieve the application deadline. I found the application process to be rewarding on both a personal and professional level.

My business has certainly benefitted from winning this award; I sent out a press release, gained local press coverage and detailed it on my website; all of which has generated more work. In itself, the award is a great testimonial. Recently, I have received work from a client in South America; he informed me that the award was a major factor in his decision to send the work to me.

As conservator-restorers, the nature of our work is often inward looking and we seldom 'blow our own trumpet'. We could do much more to showcase the tremendous skills, knowledge and expertise that exist across our profession. The Nigel Williams Award is one way in which we can demonstrate the amazing work that is carried out day to day throughout our discipline. I would urge and encourage conservators in

both the private and public sector to apply for this award. In doing so there are tremendous benefits to be gained; it can help raise your profile, the profile of your business or organisation and enhance its reputation by promoting the great work you are doing.

Lynne Edge ACR

EDGE Conservation-Restoration Services

The call for entries for the 2014 Nigel Williams Prize can be found on page 11

LIBRARY NEWS

Icon has a valued asset in the Chantry Library and the associated Beatrix Chantry Fund, established in memory of Judith Chantry. Recognising that the restricted fund that supports the Chantry Library would run out in the next few years (depending on the rate of expenditure) the Board of Trustees of Icon commissioned a Task & Finish Group, which included the Library & Information Manager, two Trustees and members of the Library Advisory Committee, to consider the future of the Library. The Group reported in June 2012 recommending that the Board consider a number of options which included: doing nothing and running down the fund; adopting a proposal to review the role of the Chantry and extend the Beatrix Chantry Bequest; reducing the operating costs of the library to extend the bequest by approximately two years; and finding a new home for the library that was accessible to members.

At this time, the Trustees decided, in order to inform themselves fully on the T&F Group's proposal to develop a 'Chantry Learning and Research Centre', to commission a research project. The Brief was:

'to provide a business plan and a compelling case for financial support, including a review of potential funding sources, for developing information and learning resources for Icon's members and allied professionals (for example, heritage scientists and conservation educators) nationally and internationally.... This project would produce a business plan that will include a sustainable model to fund the delivery of new and enhanced access to learning resources.'

At the same time, the Board decided to reduce the expenditure of the restricted fund by reducing the hours of the Library & Information Manager.

The Trustees met on 25 September and considered the report as well as my recommendations. While the Trustees acknowledged that there were many positive ideas for development, including a new web platform and e-learning portal, research-to-user services and on-line courses, the Board concluded that the proposed business plan carries too much uncertainty and risk for Icon to attempt at this time. The reasons for this were: we could not rely on external grants for this sort of activity in the current climate; the business plan relied on increasing membership income for which there is no guarantee; there was not a convincing case that the market exists to justify the huge investment involved to develop the proposed services. It is therefore the view of the Trustees that

there is no sustainable business plan. It has also been recognised for some time that in order to keep the Chantry Library with even the current level of service beyond 2015 requires a commitment of funding that cannot be justified for the small number of users. Therefore, the difficult decision was taken, with deep regret, to cease the operation of the Library. At this point, the Trustees are considering the next steps following on from this decision. For the time being, in terms of services to members, it is 'business as usual'.

I would like to thank the members of the Library Advisory Committee, Kate Collieran, Jane Eagan, Michael Williams, and Nancy Bell for their help, commitment and hard work over many years.

Alison Richmond, Chief Executive

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Kenneth Aitchison examines the similarities and differences between professional archaeology and professional conservation



Photo: Matt Wreford

In 2012-13, research was carried out into the UK's professional labour markets of both archaeology and conservation, two similarly sized and comparable parts of the wider cultural heritage sector. The archaeological research was undertaken by Landward Research Ltd and the conservation study was undertaken by Icon, the Institute of Conservation. Both research projects were led by me.

How many people

The first point of reference for these studies was the estimated head-counts: how many people worked in these sectors. There were estimated to be 4,792 people working as professional archaeologists in the UK in 2012-13 and 3,175 conservators. Of course, some of these people will have been counted by both surveys – at least eighty eight people are archaeological conservators.

Changes over time

The way the data on archaeologists were gathered was consistent with the three previous Profiling the Profession surveys, and so reliable time-series datasets allow us to see real changes over time. From the first Profiling the Profession snapshot in 1997-98, archaeology grew and grew until the 2007-08 survey captured data at the peak of the economic boom – and by 2012-13, the economic impacts of the post-2008 changes meant that archaeology as a profession had shrunk considerably, having reduced to being smaller than it was even ten years previously.

Some previous work had been done estimating the size of

professional conservation, but the way those numbers had been gathered – and the target populations they covered – varied. There had been no data collection exercise since 1998, and the estimated total population presented then was comparable with 2012-13, perhaps suggesting that conservation was a slightly smaller profession than it had been fifteen years before.

Professional association memberships

In June 2013, the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) had 2,151 corporate members (plus 908 non-accredited Student or Affiliate members), representing 44.9% of the profession. 2,051 conservators were full members of Icon – so Icon members make up 66.7% of professional conservation (in March 2013, the total membership of Icon was 2,357, including 306 student or trainee members).

So the majority of working conservators were members of their professional association, and very nearly half of archaeologists were members of their professional association.

Pay

The median salary (50% of individuals were paid more than this and 50% less) for archaeologists was £26,000 – and remarkably, that was exactly the same figure that was calculated as the median salary for conservators. By comparison, £26,500 was the median figure for the UK workforce as a whole – and the median for all professional occupations was £36,359.

So archaeologists and conservators are rewarded very similarly, and slightly less well than the whole UK working population – and far less than the professional occupations which both sectors would like to be compared with.

Gender and age

The 'average' archaeologist was aged 42 in 2012-13; five years previously, the average age of a working archaeologist was 38. This suggests that the workforce, while much smaller in number, had not been refreshed in terms of who worked in the sector – people leaving archaeology at the end of their careers had, by and large, not been replaced by young people coming in at the start of their working lives. Most (54%) archaeologists are men, but over time, the percentage of archaeological jobs that have been held by women has been increasing (fifteen years before, 65% of archaeologists were men). Most archaeologists under the age of 30 are women. By contrast, 65% of conservators in 2012-13 are women – and this profession is also becoming 'more female' – forty years ago, in 1973, 62% of conservators were men; in 1987, only 40% were. And by comparison, the average age of conservators is 43.

Qualifications

In both professions, it is normal to be a graduate. 78% of conservators hold at least one degree, as do 93% of archaeologists. Indeed, it is increasingly normal for archaeologists to hold post-graduate qualifications, with 47% holding a Masters degree or higher.

Attitudes to training

While individuals are highly qualified, organisational approaches to training are patchy.

In conservation, the overwhelming majority of organisations identify training needs for individual members of staff, with nearly as many identifying organisational needs. But most organisations in conservation do not have a training plan or a training budget. Only a minority record how much time is spent in training or evaluate the impact of training on individuals, and even fewer evaluate the impact of training upon the organisation. The overwhelming majority encourage individuals to engage in their own continuing professional development.

In archaeology, organisations typically identify training needs for individual members of staff and for the organisation as a whole and they also encourage individuals to engage in continuing professional development. They are likely to have a training budget but they do not normally have a formal training plan. While they will normally record the amount of time employees spend on training activities, they then do not typically evaluate the impact of that training on either the individual or the organisation as a whole.

So – in both sectors, employers recognise that there are needs; in archaeology there will normally be a budget to help address these needs, although that is not the case in conservation – and in neither sector is it normal for there to be a training plan. So money is spent in an unplanned way, and then the impact of that spend is not then evaluated, so organisations cannot tell whether this expenditure has represented value for money or not.

Attitudes to business

While there are many similarities between the two sectors, attitudes to business is one where there are real differences. 59% of archaeologists work in the private sector, as do 38% of conservators, but the degree of engagement with the market, together with the understanding and attitudes that accompany that differ significantly. A telling comment from a respondent to the Conservation LMI survey showed confusion over what is income, what is profit (and no doubt what is cashflow) 'We are a non-profit organization. We don't have "income" as such.'

A revealing figure – not reported in either report – is that of the 241 practices (organisations or individual conservators) listed on the Conservation Register maintained by Icon, approximately 75% do not present website addresses. By contrast, only one of the 73 IfA Registered Organisations listed on the IfA's Directory does not have a website (and that is because that organisation has been recently incorporated into another business on the Register). Unlike archaeological practice, conservation has a limited engagement with technology and its use as a promotional tool, which must hamper opportunities for business development.

The future

Slowly and unsteadily, a post-crash rebound is underway. Both archaeology and conservation collectively and cautiously expect to grow over the next three to five years – but there is

not a sense of this taking place in the context of these being high-growth industries. Business models in both sectors are changing in line with expectations of low levels of growth – such as commercial practices delivering increasing numbers of 'community' projects to ensure turnover rather than surplus, alongside an increase (or return) of social enterprises as a commonly adopted model for new practices.

The bigger picture

Many of the issues identified in archaeology and conservation are shared by professions across all of 'cultural heritage' but collective work across the entire sector would be difficult, as individual professionals do not typically associate themselves with such a broader 'cultural heritage sector'. Instead they strongly identify themselves with their own individual profession, which they do not see as a subsector of a greater whole. If pan-sectoral work is a non-starter, then joint working between closely related professions – such as archaeology and conservation – could strengthen these areas. It might also support skills development overall if means were found for specialists to share their expertise – but this is going to be hampered by the problems in the ways that training is planned, budgeted and delivered in both sectors.

Opportunities

There are still real opportunities – qualifications can be aligned. If comparable vocational qualifications are placed on the Qualifications and Credit Framework – such as the EDI Level 3 NVQ Certificate in Archaeological Practice, which is on the QCF, and the Conservation Technician Qualification, which is currently not – then there would be potential for new entrants to the cultural heritage professions to go through workplace learning experiences that would first introduce them to the broader experience of working in cultural heritage and then to specialise in specific, technical routes. These learning and skills accreditation experiences could then potentially be formalised as Apprenticeships

Shared training opportunities and communication activities can enhance understanding between the professions; and archaeology and conservation can lead the way across cultural heritage, as we already have the extremely unusual crossover of some people – archaeological conservators – who have shown that they understand and appreciate the needs and approaches of working embedded within two professions.

Kenneth Aitchison is Icon's Skills Strategy Manager and Executive Director of Landward Research Ltd

kaitchison@icon.org.uk kenneth.aitchison@landward.eu

This article will also appear in *The Archaeologist*, Issue 90, Winter 2013.

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Icon Trustee Lara Artemis writes about your Icon from her perspective



Lara Artemis

After reading Frankie Halahan's life of a Trustee in the last issue, I felt 'what more could I really say that would be of interest to the membership'? But I soon realised that it's different for everyone. My experience as a relatively new Trustee (so far two years) has been challenging, rewarding, occasionally frustrating and sometimes sad. Nonetheless, it is still one of the most necessary roles within any professional body with charity status – to ensure that our voice is heard when making

the case for safeguarding our cultural heritage and that our profession continues to develop yet remains intact.

I should begin by telling you about my own experiences as a conservator. I left Camberwell nearly twenty years ago and since then have always been lucky to find work in the field of book and paper conservation, both in the public and private sectors. I have been a collection care manager for nearly five years now looking after the UK Parliamentary Archive's collection. I have always been involved in conservation beyond the 'working day' whether it is mentoring new conservators, researching conservation practice either for training or for committee based initiatives, or my recent advisory editorial work on the vellum and parchment issue of our *Journal*.

I love collaborative working and have managed to use this to achieve various conservation goals. Conservation to me is a profession with a strong sense of vocation and I believe it draws those who want to 'safeguard'. I became a Trustee with this 'safeguarding' principle in mind. I was keen to use my communication and change management skills to help advocate the profession beyond ourselves to those in power who make decisions that affect the preservation of our heritage and, in turn, our profession. I really honestly wanted to make a change. Ultimately the role of a charitable Trustee is having responsibility for ensuring that the charity is solvent, well-run and delivering outcomes for the benefit of the public, and as part of this we do spend a great deal of time helping the CEO develop strategies and standards that are going to secure our profession into the future. I wanted to help embed the need for conservation – to make us a necessity and not simply a luxury to the outside world.

Is being a Trustee what I expected or not? I recently pulled out my election manifesto to see if I had reached some of those goals and ideals – and realised that I had achieved them in some way. In essence, becoming a Trustee was the next step for me to help get the conservation message out there. So in many ways being a Trustee is what I expected. We do make those high level decisions that will have an effect on how others perceive us as a valid profession and

are constantly aware of the positive and negative impact of decisions made that affect our members.

Nonetheless the amount of involvement for an Icon Trustee is more than necessary, with many of us chairing a group/committee, regularly reviewing how we can improve membership services, as well as leading on various tasks and initiatives – we are all voluntary. The Book and Paper Group committee asked me recently 'why do Trustees get so involved?' As with the Groups, so far the Board has been made up of conservators (elected Icon members or co-opted) who have an in-depth understanding of the conservation landscape. I think in reality we are so involved because it is in our nature (we are an investigative profession!) to scrutinise and want to help wherever we can. We have a dedicated bunch of Trustees, many of whom are multi-skilled, but we need a balance with more people from outside (including non-conservators) who can manage rather complex areas of governance, such as finance, marketing, communications and of course those who are great at finding funding. We haven't done so badly, but we can always do more in all these areas and hopefully we will soon have the mix of skills we need on the Board. We are presently looking at a governance review, which should help manage this better, including the process of communications, supporting the office and final decision making.

I still find myself catching my breath with what we have to do. I am presently chairing the JIC Task and Finish Group* (my mug shot seems to be a regular image at the moment!), which again is very challenging but necessary if we want to have the *Journal* fully prepared for the future and of relevance to all our members. In addition to strategy building, as a Trustee, we plough through decision making on various work streams managed by the Icon office, including budgeting and prioritising.

The evolving nature of the work we do presents so many challenges. The areas now that really matter to me are to ensure that we focus on outreach and developing diversity within the profession wherever we can. We have vastly strengthened our education strategy and the numbers in training but we need to begin to re-address the balance, matching those educated with jobs (where they have not been lost in these austere times); this can only be done by reaching out to our stakeholders, including the public, and reminding everyone that we are needed to keep our heritage alive for that bit longer!

I never get bored being a Trustee – frustrated occasionally – but never bored! I only have another year to go and really am just getting my head around the complexity of the role but of course can stand for re-election. I could do with more time but it is amazing what good you can achieve even if others don't always realise it; in such a short time we can still make a difference.

* *The Journal of the Institute of Conservation* Task & Finish Group is undertaking a review of the *Journal's* performance and future direction.

THE NIGEL WILLIAMS PRIZE 2014



Nigel Williams working on the Portland Vase 1988

- Have you recently (or within the last three years) completed a conservation/restoration project in ceramics, glass, or some related material that might be of interest to others in the profession?
- Did it present some interesting challenges, technically and/or ethically, perhaps requiring a bit of lateral thinking?

If so, why not apply for the Nigel Williams Prize 2014!

The **Winner** receives **£1000**, together with a “virtual” presentation of a gilded ceramic copy of the **Portland Vase** (kindly donated by Wedgwood and kept on permanent display in the Museum).

A **Secondary Prize** of **£400** may, at the judges' discretion, be awarded to any application considered to be a close runner-up.

A **Student Prize** of **£250** will be awarded for the project judged to be the best of those completed while the applicant was still a full-time student.

For all details regarding the prize, conditions and how to apply please see the Icon web-site: www.icon.org.uk (under: Groups/Ceramics&Glass/Nigel Williams Prize)

Or contact the Co-ordinator: ronaldpile37@btinternet.com



Retirement



Jennifer discussing the conservation of an oriental ceramic with Angelica Isa Adaniya, a student on the MA in Conservation of Archaeological and Museum Objects course, August 2013.

At the end of September Jennifer Jones retired as the archaeological conservator at the Department of Archaeology at Durham. After thirty four years she gets a well earned rest from the demands of students and archaeologists, their corroding ironwork and their crumbling pot.

Jennifer's initial degree was in archaeology from the University of London. Then from 1976 to 1979 she was one of the first five students who took the Postgraduate Diploma in Archaeological Conservation, which had just been started in the Department of Archaeology at Durham, run by Janey Cronyn. Jen's dissertation was on the conservation of coins, an interest which has stayed with her throughout her working career.

She subsequently started to work in the department at Durham undertaking conservation for English Heritage (EH) sites in the north and east of England. This continued until 2003 when EH began gradually reducing its support until the post passed over to Archaeological Services, University of Durham (ASUD), later Durham Archaeological Services, in 2005. Finally, in 2008 English Heritage support ceased altogether, by which time Jen was supporting the excavation work of Durham Archaeological Services both as conservator and finds manager, as well as undertaking commercial archaeological conservation contracts for the archaeological units and museums of the north east of England.

When the MA in Conservation course was re-launched in 2009 Jen became responsible for teaching the practical conservation skills aspects of the course. She has continued in these roles up to the present - the end of the summer of 2013 when the latest cohort of students went off to their industrial placements.

In her time at Durham Jennifer has conserved thousands of objects, written and published papers in conservation conferences, written and edited numerous artefact reports and helped develop the conservation skills of a multitude of students. She has been active in developing the professional standing of conservation throughout her career. When we introduced professional accreditation in 1999, Jennifer was amongst the first cohort of senior conservators to be created an Accredited Conservator Restorer. She has subsequently supported the professional association in maintaining the professional standards as an assessor on the CPD review panel.

Though Jennifer is stepping back to enjoy a well earned retirement, she will continue to write occasional object reports for Durham Archaeological Services. and the University is appointing a new conservator to support the MA in Conservation at Durham and undertake conservation for Durham Archaeological Services and other archaeological units of the North East of England.

All her friends and colleagues wish Jen well in her retirement; we will miss her sound advice, her extensive knowledge and above all her calm, sensible, pragmatic and supportive approach both to conservation and to life.

Dr Chris Caple Senior Lecturer in Archaeological Conservation

In appreciation



Icon's CEO Alison Richmond writes:-

I was very sad and shocked to hear that **David Bell**, the Chief Executive of the National Association of Decorative & Fine Arts Societies (NADFAS), had died suddenly in September at the age of 50. David was a great supporter of conservation and of Icon. We met often to discuss how our organisations could work more closely together. He was full of ideas and pushed through some really innovative ones at NADFAS.

Working with Tate, NADFAS supported a programme for teenagers to get behind the scenes at the museum and learn about conservation. 'Why save anything?' was a success but David was keen to multiply the effect of this programme and when he died NADFAS and Icon were working with Historic Royal Palaces on a project that would develop the schools programme into an online interactive.

David was always very excited about the potential to reach more young people. Consequently, NADFAS has set up a memorial fund in David's name to encourage young people to develop and enjoy a career in the arts, conservation and related disciplines. If you would like to make a donation please visit the NADFAS website <http://www.nadfas.org.uk/david-bell-memorial-fund>

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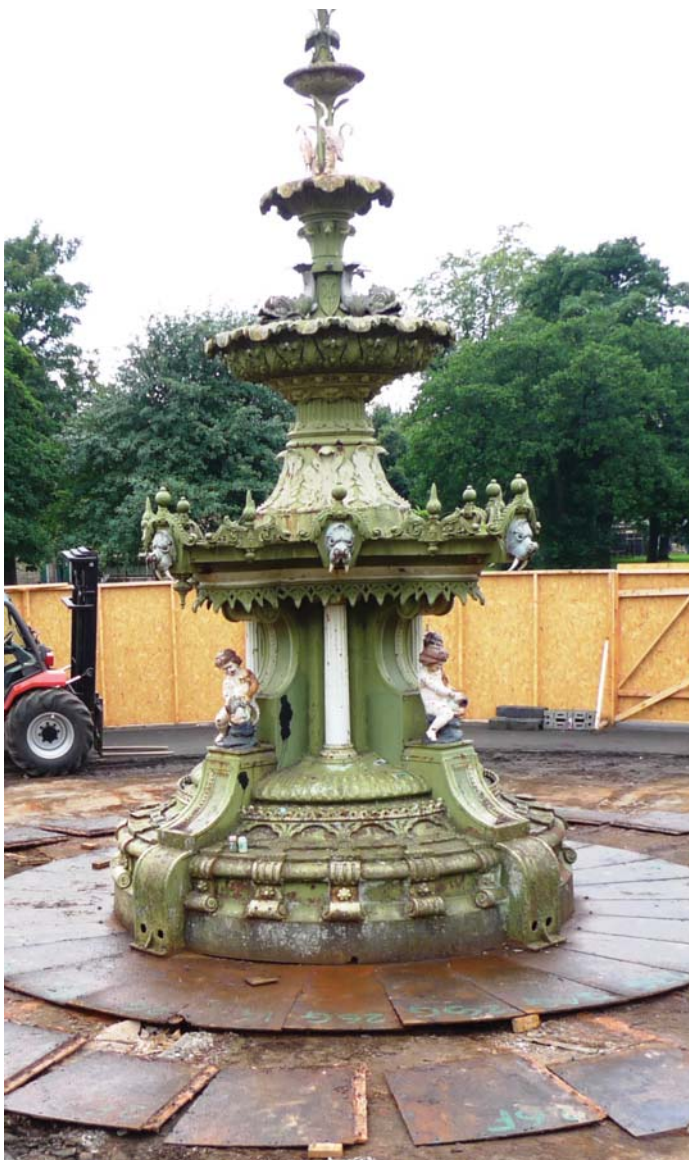
www.cityandguildsartschool.ac.uk

Paisley's Grand Fountain

Disassembly: Jim Mitchell ACR continues the story started in the last issue

This Category A listed cast iron structure stands over ten metres tall and its dismantling had to be carefully planned from the outset. While the eccentricity of the Aesthetic Movement-influenced design is certainly attention grabbing, the twenty metre diameter pool proved to be the greater challenge. Made up from over- and under-lapping plates, also in cast iron, each was bolted to the next with $\frac{1}{2}$ " wrought iron bolts, all hand forged and carrying the Whitworth screw thread which had rapidly become standard during the Crimean War. Before its introduction most manufacturers had their own screw form, making the interchanging of parts extremely difficult.

The pool floor is partially removed



The bolts (over one thousand) were beyond recovery but each had to be removed without damaging the surrounding cast iron. We achieved this by drilling a clear pilot hole through each of them to their full length, then 'washing' away the wrought iron bolt material using a 'cooler' pencil flame of oxy-propane gas. This required immense patience and concentration, taking over three weeks to release, number and metal-tag every plate.

The hundreds of constituent parts of the structure must be separated, one from the other, to ensure that all of the interfaces are treated. Each numbered part was therefore allotted its own Conservation Record Sheet (CRS) both in

One of the walrus: undignified but safe



The masonry kerb revealed: the only foundations found





paper and digital form, which will follow the part through the conservation process, giving its location, number, name (to an agreed nomenclature), condition, proposed treatment, paint sampling record, actual treatment / repair and so on. This recording was and is vital in creating a long term record of the work but also in slowing the process down to allow careful re-assessment of the dismantling strategy as it progressed.

As the base of the cast iron barnacled 'rock formation' around the fountain was excavated, the only evidence of any attempt at a foundation was revealed in the form of an ashlar masonry circle. Within that, a loose mortar and rubble screed carried the iron plates and indeed the central core of the fountain itself. The two hundred floor plates were removed in sequence towards the central core then scaffolding erected around the main structure to allow dismantling.

We shouldn't forget the four, 1.5 tonne iron walruses which had to be lifted away in the process. These chaps do look a bit sad with their moustaches and tusks removed in some 1980s' safety purge.

As Historic Scotland (HS) and the Heritage Lottery Fund are the key funders, their interest and enthusiasm for the project has been encouraging. In fact Renfrewshire Council arranged for senior HS conservation staff to give a talk in Paisley Town Hall, telling the story of Glasgow iron foundries and, in particular, the Sun Foundry which produced the 1867 fountain.

Next time we will talk about the dismantling of the main structure and the revealed hints as to Daniel Cottier's amazing colour scheme.

Below, the 'rock work' and interlocking iron floor and, above, their dismantling in progress



Shopping in 'Poundland'

David Odgers ACR and Art Conservator Claudia Fiocchetti suggest a budget shopping trip as a precursor to cleaning alabaster historic monuments

In the summer of 2012, two freelance conservators Claudia Fiocchetti and James White, working under the guidance of Odgers Conservation Consultants, undertook conservation work to the monuments in the Clopton Chapel at Holy Trinity Church in Stratford Upon Avon.

The Chapel contains two significant 16th and early 17th century alabaster monuments to William and Anne Clopton (1590) and Joyce and George Carew (1629). The condition of the monuments was generally good but they had in the past received a number of coatings of wax (probably beeswax). This has attracted a lot of dirt particularly from gas lighting in the Chapel in the late 19th century; as a result, in places, the

underlying stone was completely obscured behind a dark brown layer of dirt. The situation was particularly bad on the horizontal surfaces and at low level where accessibility meant that more wax had been applied.

Small-scale cleaning trials were carried out with the intention of removing the dirt and thus revealing the alabaster. There were a number of polychromed areas and cross sectional analysis of these showed that there had been a number of restorations to the Clopton monument but that the Carew monument had never been painted until the restoration in 1892.



Detail of alabaster base of monument to William and Anne Clopton showing surface magnified x150 before and after cleaning

Detail of cushion of monument to William and Anne Clopton showing surface magnified x150 before and after cleaning; polychrome residues have been retained but the surface wax removed



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Of the solvent cleaning trials carried out to the plain alabaster, the most effective solvent was a 2% solution of ammonia in water. However, this was not completely satisfying as it had an inconsistent finish and took a long time. Alternative methods had to take account of the facts that alabaster can be slightly soluble if left too long in contact with water and that solvents tend to reduce the sheen of the surface produced as a result of the original finish and subsequent polishing.

It was found that the best cleaning result was obtained by using different kinds of micro-porous sponges wetted with warm water; spontex sponge, PVA sponge and melamine foam (aka Sponge Eraser). These all ensure that no water remains on the surface and they also produced no reduction in surface sheen. The Sponge Eraser was the most effective but initial research on the internet (see references below) suggested that they might cause some abrasion of the surface due to the action of the melamine 'hooks' that make up the sponge.

A microscopic investigation (using x150 USB microscope) was therefore undertaken to view the effect of the melamine foam sponge on the alabaster surface. No damage was visible and it obtained the same level of cleaning reached with ammonia in a more homogeneous way and in much shorter time.

Conservators rightly always ensure that they are using the appropriate methods and materials. However, the use of this sponge also highlighted another issue. As a profession, we can sometimes be guilty of over-complicating our treatments and overlooking materials that are readily available and have been the subject of extensive industry research. As examples,

one of the best ways of cleaning polished granite is a material called Bar Keeper's Friend (a readily available cleaning product formed of very weak citric acid, pumice powder and surfactant), and Autosol (available from all good car spares shops and consisting of 2-ethoxy ethanol and pumice powder) has been used for many years for conservation cleaning of a variety of materials. The melamine sponges used for cleaning the alabaster monuments in the Clopton Chapel were bought in Poundland where they are sold for £1 under the name of Clean Zone Sponge Eraser.

For further information on the use of melamine sponges, please refer to the following online articles:

<http://cool.conservation-us.org/byform/mailling-lists/texcons/2005/11/msg00015.html>

<http://cool.conservation-us.org/byform/mailling-lists/cdl/2012/0277.html>

<http://home.howstuffworks.com/magic-eraser1.htm>

<http://www.basf.com/group/corporate/en/literature-document:/Brand+Basotect-Case+Studies—The+Magic+Eraser+made+from+Basotect-English.pdf>

<http://cool.conservation-us.org/byform/mailling-lists/cdl/2007/0235.html>

<http://cool.conservation-us.org/byform/mailling-lists/cdl/2012/0317.html>

A day in the life of a Conservation Assistant Volunteer at Osterley House

Puneeta Sharma broadens her conservation education

In March this year, I began working as volunteer with the Conservation Assistants at Osterley House, a National Trust property in Middlesex.

My role as a conservation volunteer covers many elements of preventive conservation, such as integrated pest management (IPM), managing daylight and the daily care of collections with deep and routine cleaning.

MOULD ALERT

Recently, a severe mould outbreak has been discovered on a wooden display cabinet in Mrs Bunce's Room, located on the basement floor of the house. Not only had the mould grown on the inside and outside of the display cabinet there was also evidence of mould on the wooden floor. Both the display case and floor are historic, so it is important that the correct cleaning treatments are undertaken to ensure that no further damage can occur.

The cause of the mould outbreak is due to incorrect RH and temperature in this room as a result of its basement location. Rising damp from a drain underneath the wooden floor has resulted in the growth, which was fluffy and white in appearance.

The Conservation Assistants, Hajira Mohamed and Kate McCormack, highlighted the problem to the team and the Regional Conservator for the Trust was consulted for advice on how best to clean the display cabinet and floor.

It was suggested that we first dry clean the mould using a hog's hairbrush and vacuum to collect its spores and then monitor the object for some time, keeping an eye for any

further growth. Failing this, it has been suggested that we use propanol-2-ol to prevent any further growth.

SPRINGING INTO ACTION

The task of cleaning such a large piece of furniture has to be undertaken in a few sessions. We began cleaning the lower half of the wooden display cabinet first, on the outside and inside, as well as the three drawers inside the cabinet. Using the brush, I gently swept the mould towards the vacuum head, all the while wearing a 3M face mask, essential when dealing with outbreaks of mould, of course, to ensure that no spores are inhaled. After cleaning the three drawers and lower half of the cabinet, the drawers were placed back inside and the doors left open, to allow a good airflow around the object. The next stage will be to clean the upper half.

A VARIED ROLE

This is just one of the many tasks I have undertaken whilst working at Osterley House; every day varies and that is what I find exciting about my role with the Trust. Recently, there was evidence of carpet beetle in the world famous Tapestry Room, which required the Conservation Team to vacuum the carpet using a special mesh. This was another really useful experience: carrying it out during opening hours, it was a great way to talk to visitors about the importance of preventive care.

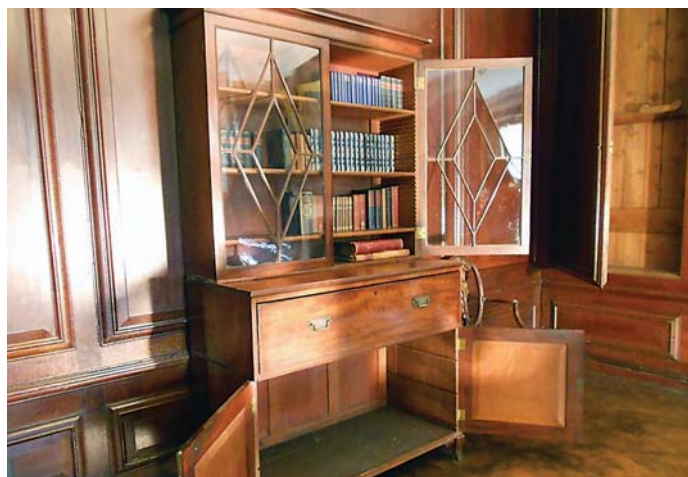
Whilst taking light readings, which have also been done during visitor hours, I often get asked what I am doing, and I take great pride in explaining what a light meter tells us and the reasons why we do this.

Taking light readings and cleaning mouldy drawers: the varied tasks of a conservation assistant volunteer





The mould in close-up



The infected display case



The lower half of the display case before and after



REAPING THE BENEFIT

I am currently studying MA Paper Conservation at Camberwell College of Art, undertaking my final year. Working for a National Trust property has allowed me to gain a thorough understanding of how preventive conservation works, whilst undertaking various tasks myself. I would highly recommend to anyone interested in collections care to sign up as a volunteer with the National Trust as a Conservation Assistant; not only is it extremely rewarding but you learn a great deal about the history of each historic house.

I would like to thank the wonderful house team at Osterley for their continued support and kindness whilst working as a volunteer and undertaking research for my master's projects. A special thanks to Hajira Mohamed and Claire Reed for the countless questions they answer for me, with a smile every time.

 **THE CLOTHWORKERS' FOUNDATION**
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Research Fellowship

A grant of up to £80,000 is available to a UK public institution to enable a senior conservator (employed by that institution) to pursue a research project sabbatical for two years.

During the sabbatical the post will be covered by an externally recruited junior conservator.

The grant will meet the salary and on-costs of the junior conservator and the project costs of the work undertaken by the senior conservator.

Closing date: Monday 3rd March 2014

Full details and application form:
foundation.clothworkers.co.uk/fellowship

around and about

In-Gallery Conservation Event

Over four days in August at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery the conservation team – Hoard Conservators Deborah Magnoler, Cym Storey, Cardiff student Chi-Chun Lin, Hoard Conservation Project Manager Pieta Greaves ACR and Collections Care Officer Deborah Cane ACR – demonstrated in view of museum visitors the conservation process on the newly discovered objects of the Staffordshire Hoard.

The first step of the event was relocating the conservation lab

up into the galleries to give a real behind the scenes experience; we were now ready to let in the visitors.

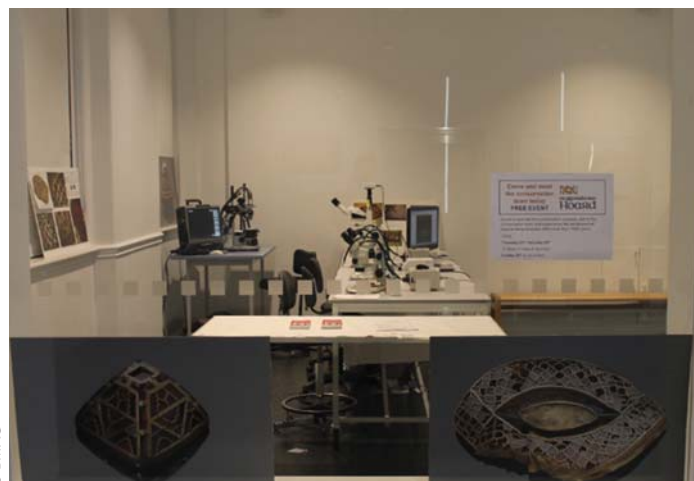
We had some fabulous questions and discussions about the conservation and the hoard. Everyone was very interested to see the thorns in action and experience the excitement of objects being revealed after more than 1400 years. Popular discussions featured the numerous theories surrounding the hoard and the astonishing technicality of the Anglo-Saxon craftsmen. Further information and conservation blogs can be found at www.staffordshirehoard.org.uk/blog/



© BMAG

Conservation team ready for action

The conservation set up ready for the demonstrations



© BMAG

Pieta discussing the object and conservation



© BMAG



Sculptures of modern materials can pose extra challenges: here synthetic resin and powdered stone in a 1959 sculpture

Supporting sculpture conservation

The Gabo Trust celebrates its silver anniversary this year and its role in supporting sculpture conservation was never more needed as museum funds and education grants are squeezed.

The Trust was set up to celebrate the sculptor Naum Gabo (1890–1977), a pioneer in the use of experimental and new materials such as plastics. As we know, these materials present challenges to their long-term preservation and the Gabo family founded the Trust to promote the conservation of modern and contemporary sculpture, the education of sculpture conservators and the funding of research into sculpture conservation.

As well as grants to purchase specialist equipment, the Trust provides grants to attend conferences and other professional development opportunities, along with bursaries for post-graduate internships. Research projects funded have included patination, staining on white marble and the degradation of plastics. Currently the Trust funds an annual bursary in sculpture conservation at the City and Guilds Art School, where Jennifer Dinsmore ACR is a tutor on the course and herself benefitted from a Trust award to study stone sculpture conservation in Italy. Icon Trustee Frances Halahan is another



A Gabo Trust conservation intern, Melanie Rolfe, examining an X-ray of Tate's cast of Degas' Little Dancer

former beneficiary of a Gabo Trust Travelling Scholarship.

A recent new direction for the Trust has been to provide proactive support for institutions by funding the work of qualified conservators to assess collections and make recommendations for their care. Last year saw an extensive survey of the National Gallery of Scotland's sculpture collections and a second survey is planned with Pallant House Gallery in Chichester. A major initiative to celebrate the Trust's twenty fifth anniversary will be to extend this programme to



Gabo Trust beneficiary of a travelling scholarship award

benefit other regional museums, which, similarly, do not have a dedicated sculpture conservation team.

In the quarter century since its foundation the Trust has made in excess of seventy five grants totalling over £375,000 and we hope that it will continue to thrive, so that sculpture can benefit from a similar munificence over the next twenty five years.

Museums Showoff

If you fancy yourself as something of a performer or just like the sound of it, then why not go along to an open mic event for people who work in, study or are interested in museums, libraries and collections. It takes place every other month, usually in London but occasionally at other venues around the country; Cambridge, Norwich and Manchester have featured this year. The next event is in London on 2 December. You can find out about how it works at <http://museumsshowoff.wordpress.com/about/>

The Pentillie conundrum

Cornwall's own Richard III conundrum has finally been resolved. In 1713, Sir James Tillie, resident of Pentillie Castle died. Sir James requested that he not be buried, but remain seated in his chair looking out over the view. The project included dismantling, conservation and re-construction, including re-carving of damaged sections and works to rebuild and recreate damaged parts of the carved monument depicting Sir James.

And during all this work further investigation took place to the vault beneath. There, untouched for over three hundred years, was found a leather chair, complete with bones - presumably the man himself. The conservation works to the monument have been carried out by staff from Cliveden Conservation with much support from the Coryton family owners. The project was shortlisted in the *Best Craftsmanship employed on a Heritage Rescue* category of the English Heritage Angel Awards 2013, which celebrate the efforts of local people who have saved historic buildings and places.



Mausoleum of Sir James Tillie, Pentillie Castle, Saltash, Cornwall before conservation work

The Scottish Ten go to Sydney

Back in November 2011 (Icon News 37) we covered the initiative to do a 3D digital scan of all five of Scotland's UNESCO-designated world heritage sites, along with five other international sites, of which Sydney's famous Opera House is one. It is the only modern building included in this historic, global project and the work of surveying it inside and out by a team of laser scanning experts got underway earlier this year.

The Scottish Ten scheme is an ambitious five-year collaboration between Historic Scotland, experts in 3D visualisation at The Glasgow School of Art's Digital Design Studio and the not-for-profit digital heritage organisation

The Scottish Ten team scan the sails of the Sydney Opera House





Sir James Tillie's Mausoleum: conservation work completed



A point cloud image of the Sydney Opera House

CyArk. The Opera House joins Mount Rushmore, India's Rani ki Vav (The Queen's Stepwell) and China's Eastern Qing Tombs as the fourth international site to be preserved for posterity.

The innovative, interactive rendering of Australia's most famous building was timed to coincide with its 40th anniversary celebrations in October. It will provide comprehensive building-management and conservation data to help preserve the Opera House for future generations, along with an unparalleled opportunity to engage with its 8.2 million annual visitors in entirely new ways.

October also saw the launch of the CyArk 500 Challenge to an audience of representatives from over thirty countries in London. The challenge is a global call-to-action to digitally record five hundred cultural heritage sites across the world within the next five years. The Scottish Ten provides a model others can learn from and the 3D data it provides is already being used to conserve, manage, promote and interpret heritage assets for current and future generations.

More information about the project and the technology, along with lots of stunning images from: www.scottishten.org

Chainsaw, 1990s. Homelite. Component count: 268





© 2013 Todd McLellan

Accordion, 1960s. Argus. Component count: 1465

Things come apart

*Things come apart: a teardown manual for modern living** is a book about objects like no other. Published this year by Thames and Hudson, it showcases the preoccupations of photographer Todd McLellan and his unique photographic vision of the material world.

As a child he took his toys apart; now his approach is more methodical. Fifty objects, rejects of mass consumption, are displayed piece by piece, exploding in midair, or meticulously laid out against a neutral background with every single component of each object revealed. For even the smallest of objects it can take three days or more to disassemble and then compose the tableau of the parts.

The book moves from small objects to ever larger ones and simpler to more intricate. From swiss army knife to sewing machine, accordion to aeroplane, there are one hundred and seventy five colour illustrations and a component count of almost 22,000 pieces. The book is a challenge to our disposable culture and disassembling the objects, many of them once treasured and now neglected, in order to create these montages serves as an act of homage to show their intricacy and quality.

The chapters of photography are interspersed with four essays by people who work within the world of disassembly in one shape or another. One of these – *Taking Apart The Past* – is written by Icon member Penny Bendall, a freelance ceramics conservator. Her detailed explanation of the techniques, decision-making processes and ethics of conservation brings the subject to a readership with which we might not normally engage. So three cheers for Penny seizing an opportunity to communicate our messages to the wider world!

* ISBN 97805005167680

9th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 9th Annual General Meeting of the Institute of Conservation will be held on Monday 2 December 2013 at 17.00 at the Chancellor's Hall, University of London, Senate House, Malet Street, London, WC1E 7HU.

Please see map at <http://goo.gl/maps/dJhYH>

AGENDA

- 1 Welcome and Introduction by the Chair Juergen Vervoort
- 2 Apologies for absence
- 3 Minutes of the 8th AGM on 3rd December 2012
- 4 Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts for year ending 31st March 2013

5 RESOLUTIONS

Ordinary Resolution 1 – To receive the Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts for the Year ending 31st March 2013.

Ordinary Resolution 2 – To authorise the Trustees to appoint the auditors to serve until the end of the next Annual General Meeting.

Ordinary Resolution 3 – To authorise the Trustees to decide the remuneration to be paid to the auditors.

Extraordinary Resolution 4 – To change Articles of Association 11 and 12 and delete Article of Association 22.3 so that the Articles would be as shown in a draft previously made available to members.

An explanatory memo and copy of the draft articles can be found on the Icon website at <http://tinyurl.com/k6cmmf3>

- 6 Results of the Elections to the Board of Trustees
- 7 Close of formal meeting

Following the close of formal business, there will be an update and discussion on the development of the new Code of Conduct for Icon

Members are invited to stay on afterwards for a glass of wine

Simon Green, Company Secretary

November 2013

BOOK

CONSERVATION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SHIPS AND BOATS – personal experiences

Per Hoffman

Archetype Publications 2013

ISBN: 9781904982821

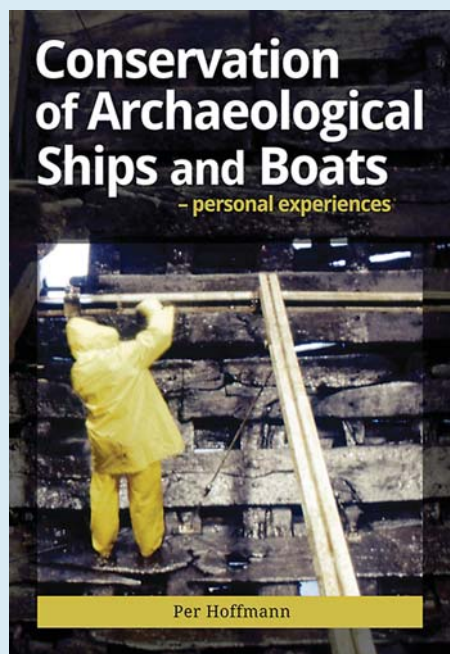
This slim and beautifully illustrated book explains how to deal with large projects of waterlogged wood from excavation to presentation in a museum gallery based on Hoffman's own research and experience with the Bremen Cog, as well as advising and collaborating on many projects in Europe. The chapters take you through the different phases of a large-scale project, highlighting the issues that need to be addressed at each stage and offering practical suggestions that have been used to deal with problems by including case studies.

Most of the book is a synthesis of Hoffman's own work, which means that the chapter on wood evaluation, (Chapter 2), is probably the only text most conservators need on the subject, although a reference to using the Sibert drill* would have made it complete. Similarly, the chapter on polyethylene glycol (PEG) impregnation covers most variations of the technique using both immersion and spraying systems and is full of practical tips and advice on how to choose the best method for your project.

There are individual chapters on the use of sucrose, lactitol and melamine formaldehyde, methods that have rarely been used in UK but could be useful in many countries where the cost of PEG is prohibitive or in hot humid climates where PEG creeps. Freeze-drying is covered, but by a different group of authors and doesn't have the same easy dialogue of the other chapters. I found this chapter difficult to follow and with less detail about the chemicals and concentrations used. It would also have been useful to have more information on the oxidation of iron sulphides, as these are a serious problem for many projects.

Once the timbers have been conserved, the next monumental task is the presentation of the structure in a museum environment, and chapter 10 includes a variety of surface treatments, re-shaping methods and different support cradles that have been used. Once installed in a museum, the wood will still need to be monitored to keep an eye on how it reacts in its new environment, and examples of the problems that might occur, with how to avoid some of them, is included along with a long-term care plan.

This book is very accessible to read, as Per is consistently encouraging despite the fact that many of the projects included in the case studies must have been very strenuous and stressful for the teams involved. So, when the phone next rings in the conservation lab and an excited



archaeologist tells you they have found a prehistoric boat and they need your help, this is the book you will reach for.

Jacqui Watson

*Panter, I and Spriggs, J (1996) 'Condition assessments and conservation strategies for waterlogged wood assemblages', in P.Hoffman, T.Daley, T.Grant and J.Spriggs (eds) *Proceedings of the Sixth ICOM Group on Wet Organic Archaeological Materials Conference: York 1996*, 185–201

CONFERENCE

INNOVATION AND INVENTION

Icon Archaeology Group

Royal Armouries Museum, Leeds 7 June 2013

The Icon Archaeology group held a highly successful one day conference, focusing on new and underused methods for archaeological conservation. The presentations inspired enthusiastic discussion and insight into concepts which, although familiar to other specialities, are not widely used in archaeological conservation. The topics included treatments, tools and on-site conservation.

Ellie Rowley-Conwy from the Royal Armouries Museum discussed the removal of microcrystalline wax pigmented with

lampblack from iron objects in the Colonial Williamsburg collections. Ellie reflected on three treatment methods and their outcomes, including methods used at other institutions. Hannah Stallard discussed the use of Vetwrap, a self-adhering, rubber bandage used at UCL to secure objects during adhesive curing. It is an inexpensive, reusable short-term material; however it is unstable and eventually embrittles. Hannah provided an excellent alternative to temporary consolidants, particularly for ceramic vessels.

Cymbeline Storey from Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery discussed the use of dry-ice blasting, which has been used to remove adhesive and clean objects with smoke-damage. Cymbeline's presentation documented tests on ceramic tiles, as well as health and safety concerns with using dry-ice. Carmen Vida, a UCL student on placement at the Museum of London, investigated the use of room temperature acetone-rosin on waterlogged wood. Carmen compared the method to heated acetone-rosin, emphasising impregnation rates and health and safety; she also discussed the results of a condition survey on objects treated with this method thirty years ago.

Beth Werrett from Wiltshire Council CMAS examined the use of solvent gels in archaeological conservation, providing insight into a useful technique which could be easily replicated and modified. John Price discussed the use of steel bases to lift objects from archaeological sites; providing stability when carrying the object from site.

Holly Marston, a Durham University student on placement at the York Archaeological Trust, discussed the use of flexible ophthalmic scalpels. The presentation showed numerous uses for the scalpels, whilst highlighting problems with cost and procurement. Theo Sturge, a leather conservator in private practice, discussed using BEVA 371 for gap-filling leather. The presentation included a demonstration of casting BEVA from a mould, highlighting its

The group gathers for a demonstration by Theo Sturge





Another visitor to the Leeds Royal Armouries Laboratories

use for replicating embossed surfaces.

Overall, the presentations and discussions provided an excellent insight into the various techniques used in individual laboratories and practices, and encouraged the delegates to be creative in their conservation methods. The positive and enthusiastic atmosphere at the conference made attendance a joy.

Holly Marston

Emerging Conservation Professional

TALK

FIRST OF ALL RESPECT YOUR PAPER
Independent Paper Conservators' Group
Freemasons' Hall, London 8 October 2013

It was appropriate that it was **Peter Bower**, the one man wikipedia of paper, who launched the new series of evening lectures to be organised by the IPCG; he would certainly be able to recognise in any piece of paper in a conservator's hand a huge wealth of information about its history, provenance and manufacture. The talk, as he acknowledged, was an idiosyncratic selection of his knowledge of European paper making; but each nugget was indicative of a whole gold mine.

Peter took us through a brief history of paper making with small digressions, any one of which I am sure he could have effortlessly expanded on: the importance of the water used in governing the tone of the resulting paper, the development of the 'best invention ever' the Hollander beater and how, by the 19th century, there were seventeen different grades of rags bought and sold in a huge international trade in the vital raw material for paper making. Sorting the rags was perhaps the worst task of the stinking, back-breaking and risky process of making paper. It is something to marvel at: that pristine white sheets were the end product of such a dirty business.

The vatman, at the top of the hierarchy of workers, would have served an apprenticeship of seven years; his final exam



Rag women cutting and sorting rags (top) and washing and cutting rags (below). From Jérôme de LaLande, *L'Art de faire Le Papier*, Paris, 1761

would be to make six imperial sheets in a minute, of exactly the same weight. This was obviously a feat of strength but, more significantly, it was also a tremendous feat of skill: each time the mould was dipped into the pulp, the concentration in the vat would change, so each dip needed to be different.

Paper makers have always been counterfeiters and the trade in paper has always been global: mills in France put watermarks in their paper to suggest that it was made in Holland or Britain. Watermark dates may provide an indication of the first year in which a paper was manufactured but the same moulds were used for years without changing the date.

Whilst they can never be entirely trusted,

watermarks can provide crucial evidence of the authenticity of artworks. Until recently, there were only 137 works by Jacques le Moyne de Morgues (c.1533–1588), an artist who had travelled to the New World, known to exist. Twenty four new drawings emerged, and then a further eighty, which looked stylistically right but for so many to appear of an artist whose canon was so small, it was surely likely that they were forgeries. Peter was able to demonstrate, by comparing the paper and watermarks of the known works with the new, that they were the real deal. In contrast, a collection of drawings from the 1920s on Hahnemühle yellow paper were analysed. There were tiny inclusions of optical brightener in the paper which could

only mean that it had been made after 1945: the drawings were forgeries.

Peter showed several images of paper mills including Cozen's view of Vietri, on paper made at Vietri. He would love to know of any drawings of paper mills for a future dream project of an exhibition about paper making. He also promoted membership of the British Association of Paper Historians for anyone interested in any aspect of paper history.

The evening, in the palatial Robing Room of the Freemasons' Hall, was well attended and the venue was ideal for the socialising following the talk, with refreshments generously provided by Conservation-by-Design. The only aspect to be improved upon: the height of the screen, as those in the rows furthest from the front had their view obscured.

Clare Reynolds ACR

Paper conservator at the Museum of London and in private practice

IPCG, the Independent Paper Conservators' Group was set up twelve years ago to create better contact between conservators who work independently or alone. IPCG is independent of Icon or any other professional organisation and there are no charges for being a member. Meetings and workshops are mostly mid week evenings in London but we also have day trips to institutions, studios and manufacturers and have also started a series of open lectures. We have had many workshops on practical subjects eg. cyclododecane and gels and have been on two-day trips to studios and laboratories in Paris. IPCG's own Google Group site allows members to contact the whole group and encourages informal discussion of treatments and materials. If you would like to know more about the group or wish to become a member contact Laila Hackforth-Jones at laila.hj@blueyonder.co.uk

WORKSHOPS

SILICON MOULD WORKSHOP

Icon Ceramics and Glass Group

Ashmolean Museum 7 September 2013

It was an early start to a Saturday morning getting up at 5.30 a.m. and heading off to The Ashmolean Museum in Oxford for a silicon mould making workshop. The Icon sponsored event, taught by **Dana Norris** and **Kenneth Watt**, walked participants through the process of making silicone moulds from deciding on the orientation of the mould to casting. Kenneth and Dana alternated demonstration of the process from beginning to end, even presenting several case studies during setting periods to show where they've used this process professionally.

The silicone mould process requires three primary materials: modelling wax, silicone rubber and plaster. Kenneth and Dana provided these materials and a corresponding supply list. They also recommended which materials to use when



Demonstration by Kenneth Watt at the Silicon Mould Workshop

under less of a time constraint. I personally found this very useful as someone who is still learning the range of supplies available and which materials are better for specific situations.

We found every aspect of the course fascinating. Although we have taken moulds before, this was our first experience of silicon mould making. After working through each stage of mould making we felt happy that we had a good grasp of the processes and would be able to use them in our work.

The 9-5:30 schedule was ideal, as it enabled participants to experience the entire process from beginning to end without rushing.

There was plenty of time for discussion and one-on-one assistance. As tutors, Dana and Kenneth were friendly and helpful, providing advice and assistance as required and demonstrating each stage with a professionalism that inspired confidence. Additionally, the tea breaks and luncheon provided allowed time for casual discussions and mingling with the other participants.

The workshop was an amazing value, and we would fully recommend it to anyone interested in silicone moulds, whether you have any experience with them or not. The Ashmolean Museum was a wonderful host and ideal location, and Kenneth and Dana couldn't have been better instructors. At the end of the course, all of the participants asked if the two would offer more classes in the future, a request we reiterate here!

Kate Becker Intern, Museum of London

Sarah Delves Conservator in Private Practice

THE USE OF VACUUM IN PAPER CONSERVATION

Icon Book and Paper Group CTR course
Camberwell College of Art July 2013

This two day course covered a multitude of topics and techniques available to paper conservators using a suction table. **Alan Buchanan**, an engineer, private conservator and lecturer at the college, lead the course. Students travelled from the US, Belgium, Germany and various parts of the UK to attend and added to the sharing of

techniques and knowledge.

After we introduced ourselves and heard the welcome from Alan our class began. Alan discussed the benefits and drawbacks of the various models and described how each functioned. We then broke into smaller groups of two and three and practised the techniques presented on four different suction tables.

Day one was spent humidifying and washing objects on a suction table. The pros and cons of various techniques were discussed. After lunch we lined our samples. We then experimented with various solvents and additives to aid the washing treatment. On day two we removed adhesive tape carriers and their residue, followed by repairs with tissue and in-filling with coloured pulp. A short period was available at the end to discuss individual works, previous problems encountered and possible solutions.

This course was very beneficial due to the information gained and the opportunity to experiment with a selection of four different suction tables. Throughout, Alan stressed that we were not finished when we left and would need to continue to use and perfect techniques learned to gain the most benefit. Pulp in-fills were particularly difficult and require a finesse we were not able to master in such a short time. However, the system developed and utilized by Alan creates a beautiful and honest repair that certainly deserves the time spent to perfect its use.

Talitha Wachtelborn MA,
Paper Conservator

Alan Buchanan's pulp infill colour charts, helping to select the exact tone of pulp for infill





The 19th century Jacquard loom at Toye & Co.

VISIT

TOYE & CO.

Icon Textile Group

Bedworth, Warwickshire 9 September 2013

Toye & Co. is one of the country's oldest family-run businesses, established in 1685, when the Toye family, Huguenot refugees, arrived in England. Settling in Bethnal Green, they resumed their family trade – making gold and silver wire, lace, embroidery, and weaving. By the 19th century, the company was specializing in ribbons, later in silk banners for trades unions and friendly societies, and also in Masonic regalia.

Toye & Co. was granted a Royal Warrant after the Queen's coronation in 1953. With metalwork production located in Birmingham's jewellery quarter and textile production at Bedworth, the company also creates honour badges and ribbons, including military and civic awards.

Icon's Textile Group organised a visit to the Bedworth factory, which specializes in narrow fabric weaving, embroidery, manufacture of caps, and mounting of medals. Bedworth is

in the environs of Coventry, an historic centre for silk weaving. In fact, by the 1820s almost one quarter of Coventrians were employed in ribbon production. Toye & Co. have a magnificent surviving example of a 19th century Jacquard loom in their factory.

Our tour began with a collective gasp of delight as we saw the ribbons being woven in a variety of colours and styles and much time was spent taking arty shots of threads and bobbins. Synthetic fibres dominate the production, for their strength, durability and cost, but silk ribbons can also be woven on demand. The uses of Toye's products are widespread, including fashion, uniforms, the defence industries and for furnishing medals. Plain ribbons are given a moiré effect by running them through ribbed copper rollers, applying heat and pressure. Silver and gold braids are also produced, with multiple strands plaited together at an unnerving speed to create trimmings for formal dress. Another machine spins metal wire into purl (also known as bullion) and gives it a silk covering in the process.

We moved on to see where hats, caps and berets are made, many of which incorporate the ribbons, embroidery and badges from

elsewhere in the factory. Toye & Co make headgear for the armed services and emergency services, corporate clients and caps for international sports appearances. From cutting, to piecing, decorating, steaming and quality control inspection, we saw each stage of the process, with one or two longing glances thrown at the huge array of wooden hat blocks in the corner of the room.

Our last port of call was the medal mounting workshop. Both contemporary and historic medals are dealt with, often involving interesting family histories or grieving relatives. Military and civic medals are identified, refurbished with new ribbons if necessary, and mounted into presentation frames for safekeeping and display.

The two hour visit flew by, and was much enjoyed by all, which just leaves me to thank all the staff at Toye & Co. for their time and their patience with our intense questioning of every process and every product!

Katy Smith Textile Conservator
Victoria and Albert Museum

COURSE

THE NORFOLK COUNTRY HOUSE:

Collections and networks

The Attingham Study Programme 2013
Norfolk 12–20 September 2013

For the cognoscenti of the cultural heritage world the profession may be divided into those who have 'done' Attingham and those who have not. Those who have benefited from attending any of the three annual courses offered by the Trust are bonded by the Attingham experience.

My first experience of Attingham was in 1995 when I took part in the Summer School. Since Attingham's foundation in 1952, the Summer School – the flag-ship course – has enjoyed outstanding success and is highly regarded by museums, universities and historic preservation societies throughout the world for its careful selection of members and sustained academic standards. The aim of the eighteen day course is to examine the architectural and social history of the historic house in Britain and its gardens and landscape setting and study the contents of these buildings – their paintings, sculpture, furniture, ceramics, silver, textiles and other applied arts – as well as the planning, decorative treatment and use of the interiors. But the primary purpose of the school is to bring together a range of international professionals from different disciplines to stimulate debate on problems relating to the conservation and presentation of the country house and its contents.

All of the Attingham courses require commitment and energy and the Summer School is particularly demanding because of its sheer length and intensity but it is



Attingham scholars being greeted by the house manager at the Entrance Hall of Holkham Hall

perhaps the most valuable and magical of the Attingham courses. It is aimed at emerging and mid-career heritage professionals and it was a career-defining course for me as it gave me an understanding of how other specialists approach their work and how conservation decisions depend on contexts. I look back at my summer school experience with great affection and happy memories and still enjoy the loyal friendship and support of the Attingham Class of '95. In fact we are now planning our twentieth anniversary.

But one can only attend the summer school once. However I have been fortunate in being able to continue my connection with the Trust by attending two of the Attingham

Study Programmes. The Study Programmes offer a shorter and more detailed examination of a particular region or period. I gained a partial grant to attend the study of *The Country House in the Netherlands* which was held in 2010, and this year I was fortunate to gain a further grant for a place on the 2013 Programme: *The Norfolk Country House: Collections and Networks*.

The thirty scholars who took part in this year's programme came mainly from the USA and the UK but others came from Russia, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Canada and as far away as Australia and New Zealand. The group, together with course leader Dr Andrew Moore and course administrator Kate Morgan, and visiting

The Saloon at Houghton Hall – with paintings on special loan from the Hermitage Museum to reconstruct Walpole's original hang



Attingham scholars in the grounds of Sheringham Park

lecturers, stayed at the Duke's Head Hotel in the centre of Kings Lynn. We learned about the importance of Kings Lynn for the region and its international trading links.

Every morning we left early on a private coach to follow an intensive programme of mainly private visits to country houses in the north Norfolk area. Such is the status enjoyed by Attingham that the group enjoyed a whole day at Holkham Hall as guests of the Earl and Countess of Leicester. The scholars were informed about management issues of the entire estate and learned how revenue from the farm, leasing of the caravan park and revenue from car parks were essential for the survival of the historic house and its contents. The long day ended in true Attingham fashion with a wine reception in the Marble Hall, a delightful flute recital in the Saloon and dinner in an hotel on the Holkham Estate.

We also visited a wide range of private country houses of various sizes and fortunes and engaged in all of the issues which face families tasked with taking on the management of the splendid but expensive properties. The highlight of the trip was visiting Houghton Hall to view the hanging of Sir Robert Walpole's paintings, which were sold to Catherine the Great and are on loan from Russia for a special exhibition. Again we enjoyed a private visit to the house and gardens – and as part of the evening reception visited the private apartment of the Marquess of Cholmondeley. These spectacular rooms and the modern art they contain would put the Saatchi to shame – and is perhaps a reminder that good art cannot be commissioned by committees.

I would like to encourage Icon members to consider applying for a place on an Attingham course – full and partial scholarships are available. But beware it will require stamina!

www.attinghamtrust.org/
Helen Hughes ACR FIIC

IDENTIFICATION OF PIGMENTS ON 18TH CENTURY FRENCH CURL WITH TURKISH SPOT

Abigail Bainbridge, Book Conservator & Lecturer in Conservation Science at Camberwell College of Arts, discusses her preliminary exploration of the pigments on marbled paper

The binding that provides this case study is a mid 18th century French paper binding. This marbled paper binding had at some point been cased between boards, which I disbound and put back in something closer to its original format.

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

This period of French bookbinding is particularly interesting, due to the sudden availability of contemporary sources and styles which were on the verge of changing with 19th century demands for speed and economy. Whilst before the 18th century, there were very few texts explaining the trade secrets of bookbinding, the Enlightenment created an interest among academics in detailing and explaining the 'mechanical arts'. The 1751–1772 *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire Raisonné des Sciences des Arts et des Métiers*, edited by Dennis Diderot and Jean-Baptiste le Rond d'Alembert, included over a hundred articles on bookbinding, not to mention the related subjects of papermaking, board making and paper marbling. In 1772 René Martin Dudin followed with a text on bookbinding and finishing, as part of the series *Descriptions des Arts et Métiers* (1761–1788). Smaller texts and mentions in dictionaries were also published.

With one exception, the 18th century publications that emerged were thus not the work of a bookbinder explaining his own craft but that of an academic, after some time observing and asking questions of the binder. Whilst in some respects, the descriptions are quite detailed, in others they miss a complete understanding or give conflicting information: the style of binding described in most of the *Encyclopédie* seems of the higher end, while the edge

Detail of the marbled paper under investigation

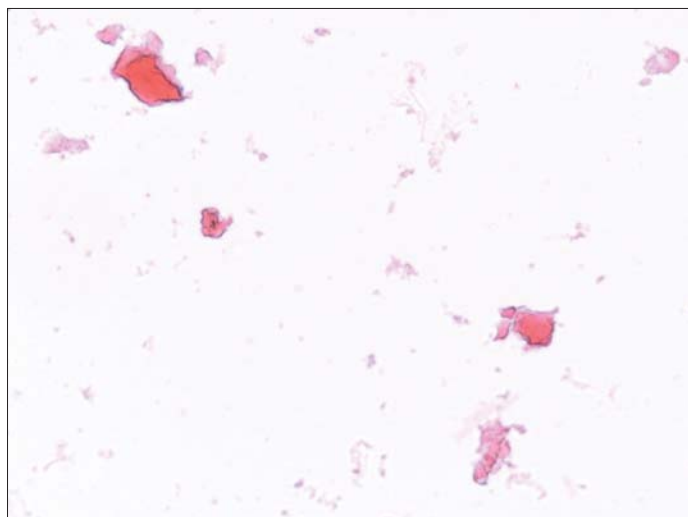


Figure 1 Red under plane polarised light

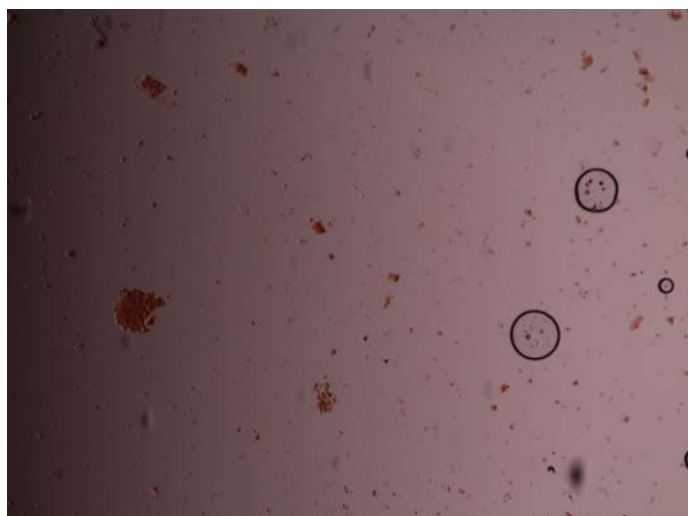


Figure 2 Red under modified Van der Kolk test

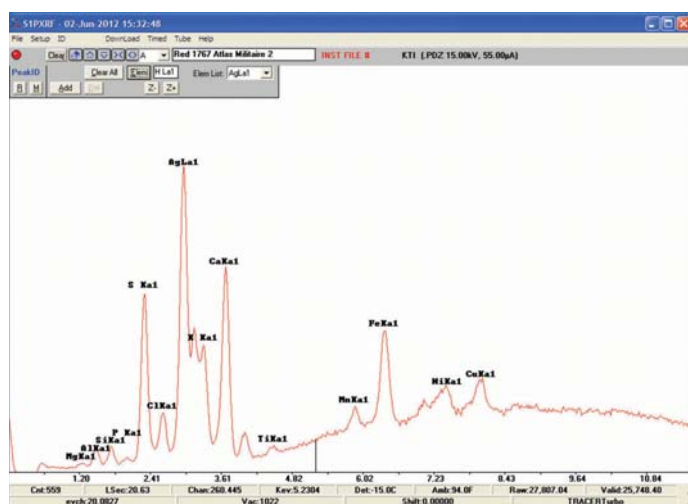


Figure 3 XRF spectrum of red; the Ag peak in this and all other spectra is from the instrument

decoration described is a simple red edge, one of the cheaper options. Furthermore, the unknown author – in this case – describes using brazilwood for these edges, while so far, my XRF analysis of book edges has identified only vermilion.

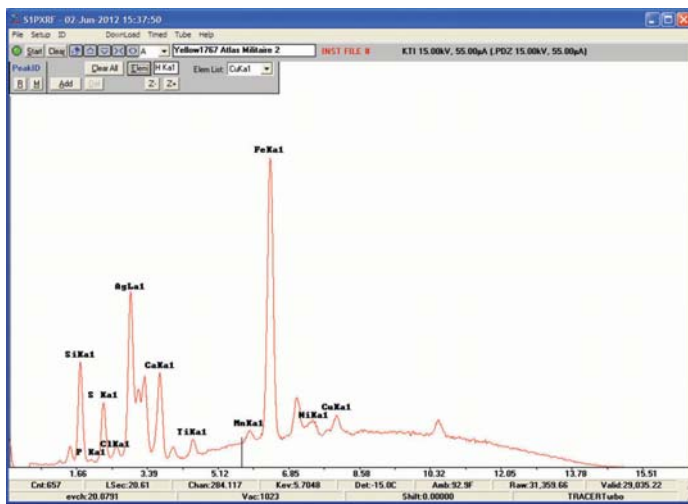


Figure 4 XRF spectrum of yellow

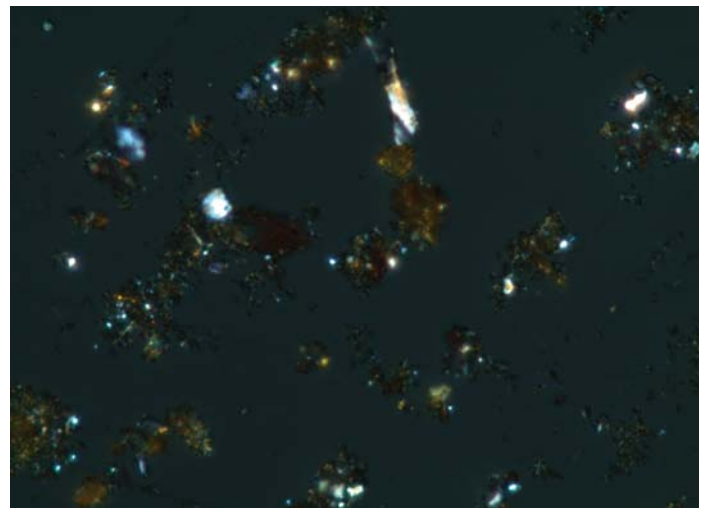


Figure 5 Yellow under crossed poles



Figure 6 Yellow under modified Van der Kolk test

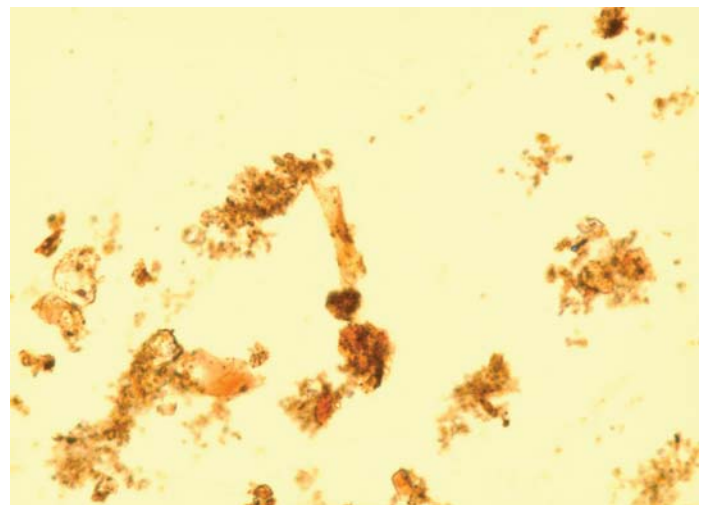


Figure 7 Yellow under plane polarized light

THE THEORY

And so, in order match reality to these sometimes unreliable historic witnesses, I attempted to identify the pigments on this example of marbled paper.

The marbling of the binding is typical of mid to late 18th century France: blue, yellow, and green on a red ground, with white 'Turkish' spots and a counter-clockwise curl. Despite a wide variety of available colours, French curl is virtually always red, blue, and yellow, sometimes with green and/or black, and sometimes with 'Turkish' spot. The red, as on many contemporary French curls, has somewhat lifted, leaving a pink stain on the paper and particles of red have become lodged in the other colours. The green, blue, and yellow do not appear to be lifting.

According to the marbling article in the *Encyclopédie*, blue was indigo; red was 'la laque plate' or brazilwood, boiled then added to calcium oxide; yellow was ochre and green was ochre mixed with indigo.*ⁱ

Searches for blue, red, yellow, and green in other articles in the *Encyclopédie* yielded the following relevant pigments and dyes:

~ Blue: azure, smalt, Indian blue, indigo, lapis lazuli, lapis armenus, and Prussian blue

~ Red: carmine (cochineal boiled with alum and water), vermillion, brazilwood or 'tanner's red', and realgar

~ Yellow: Naples yellow and the following dyes: 'tanner's yellow' made from berries (rock buckthorn, *la graine d'Avignon*); a high-quality dye made from weld (*la gaude*); one made from turmeric (lesser quality); one made from the Bay Rum tree (*le bois d'inde*) and the lowest quality one made from savory (*la sariette*).

~ Green: usually made from yellow and blue mixed; otherwise, verdigris, terre verte and copperas.ⁱⁱ

Diderot identifies his source in this article as the elderly widow of a marbler, which leads one to believe the information may be out of date in addition to the questionable accuracy of some information in the *Encyclopédie*.ⁱⁱⁱ

THE ANALYSIS

In an attempt to verify the information he provides about marbling pigments, and to understand the extent of variance in reality, X-ray fluorescence (XRF) and polarised light microscopy (PLM) were used to analyze the four colours on this sample. PLM samples were taken from the gutter of the 20th century rebinding, where the flyleaves had been tipped onto the marbling and had dislodged flakes of colour.

Red: Brazilwood or carmine?

Under crossed poles the sample was black (isotropic), which narrowed down the possibilities considerably to alum-based lakes, consistent with the lack of elements such as Hg or as in the XRF spectrum (Figure 3). Conchoidal fractures (Figure 1)

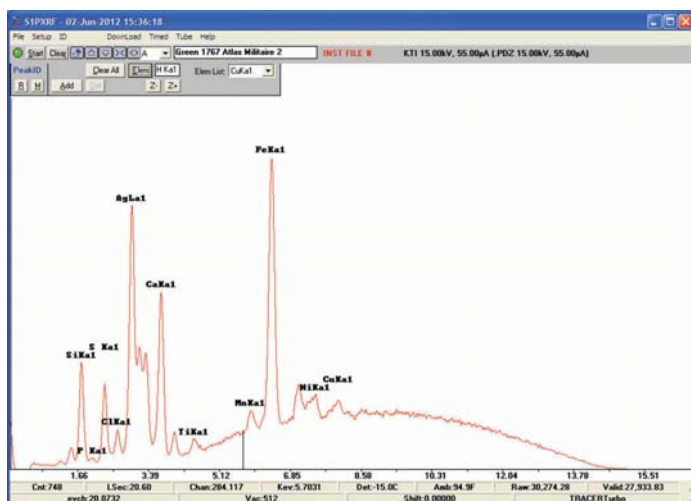


Figure 8 XRF spectrum of green

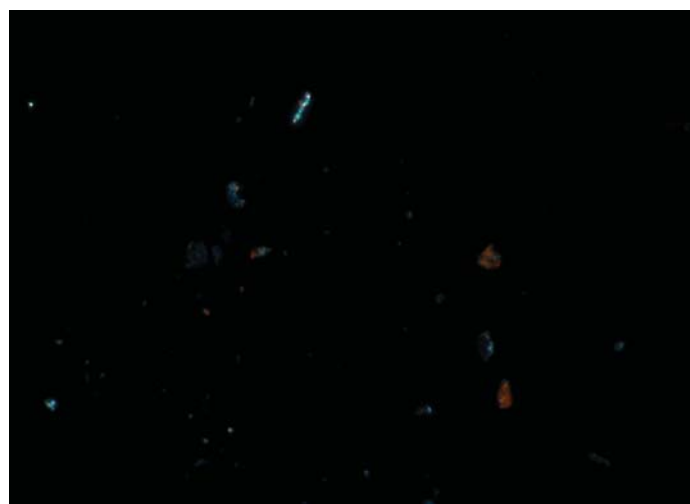


Figure 9 Green under crossed poles

and refractive index (RI) greater than 1.66 (Figure 2) confirmed this; lack of fluorescence under UV eliminated madder lakes.

The XRF data bears this out; the high level of calcium compared with other spectra of pigments on the same paper may be the result of precipitating the dyestuff, whether cochineal or brazilwood, on chalk or other ground calcium-based white material with which the colour would be mordanted. Because both would be extracted with alum (K, Al), which would also appear in the paper size, it is not possible to distinguish between carmine and brazilwood with these methods.

Yellow: probably yellow ochre

The yellow is precipitated, indicated by the clusters of small particles under magnification (Figure 7), and anisotropic (Figure 5) with a RI over 1.66 (Figure 6), which eliminates Naples yellow and yellow lakes. XRF data (Figure 4) further narrows down the possibilities to yellows with high iron content: raw sienna or, as Diderot suggests, yellow ochre.

Green: terre verte

Homogenous particles (Figure 11) mean that the colour was not mixed from yellow and blue; anisotropism (Figure 9) and a RI lower than 1.66 (Figure 10) limit the possibilities to verdigris and terre verte. It is most likely the latter because the XRF spectrum (Figure 8) showed high levels of iron and negligible amounts of copper. This is consistent with the lack of any apparent copper corrosion on the paper.

More work needed

Unfortunately I was unable to identify the blue pigment so will not attempt any guesses here. At the time, I did not have access to a modern FT-IR spectrometer which would allow non-destructive analysis, but would help distinguish between brazilwood and carmine and may help identify the blue as well. Further research is obviously required to make any conclusions about the use of these pigments in marbling overall, but it was an interesting start.

** Black was carbon black mixed with indigo and violet was brazilwood, carbon black, and indigo but because none of these patterns involve black or violet, these will be ignored for the moment.*

i Diderot, Denis, 'Marbreur de Papier', in *Encyclopédie ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, ed. Denis Diderot and Jean Le Rond d'Alembert, vol. 10 (Paris: [Chez] Briasson, David, Le Breton, and Durand, 1765), 72.

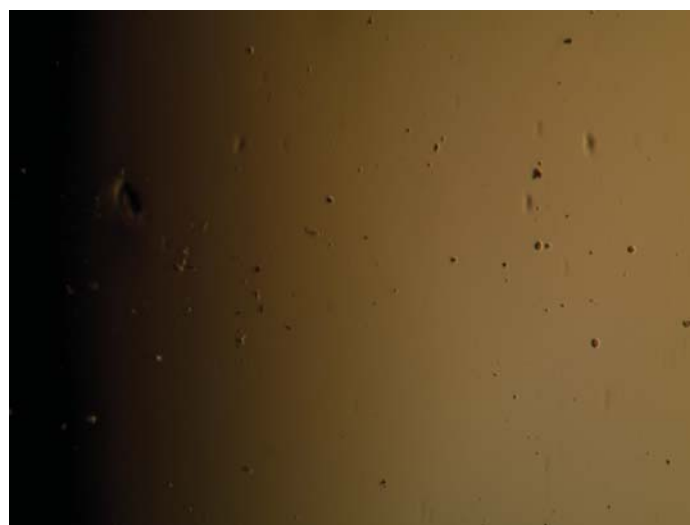


Figure 10 Green modified Van der Kolk test

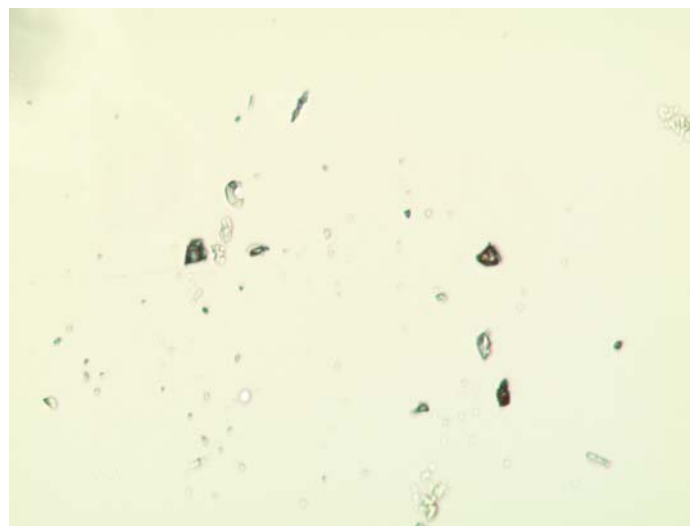


Figure 11 Green under plane polarized light

ii Denis Diderot and Jean Le Rond d'Alembert, eds., *Encyclopédie ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* (Paris: [Chez] Briasson, David, Le Breton, and Durand, 1751).

iii Richard J Wolfe, *Marbled paper: its history, techniques, and patterns : with special reference to the relationship of marbling to bookbinding in Europe and the Western world* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990).

MY PLACEMENT'S CROWNING GLORY

Gabrielle Flexer conserves a Norwegian bridal crown for her student placement project

Introduction

This summer I finished a nine month placement at Manchester Museum and subsequently my conservation degree at Durham University. Reflecting on my student placement and in talking with experienced conservators I have come to appreciate the luxury of the time we students have to absorb ourselves in the history, research and treatment of complex objects and I've loved every minute of it!

One such project I had the opportunity to work on was a Norwegian Bridal Crown which was transferred to Manchester Museum from Salford Museum in 1969. The condition of the object meant that it was un-interpretable and was recorded in the transfer records as possibly Indian in origin. I spent three days trawling museum image archives before a fortuitous encounter with an old postcard from my Dad gave me the comparative example I needed to identify the object as a beaded bridal crown from the Hardanger region of Norway typical from the 1800s onwards.

The crown consists of two distinct sections: a fabric head band decorated with glass beads, edged with ribbons of woven metal threads and trailing silk ribbons from the back. On top of this sits a complex metal crown resplendent with bead work, silver and gilt ornaments, woollen tassels and yet more metal threads.

Condition and Issues

The main issue with the object was that its damaged structure made it difficult to interpret and certainly not suitable for display. The structural wires of iron and copper had broken resulting in many loose pendants and beads and much of the metal crown was detached from the headband. The object was also dirty, its bright colours masked by thick black dirt and the silver pendants heavily tarnished.

The many different materials combined in the object made treatments quite complex as the individual treatments for each area could have detrimental effects on the surrounding materials.

My aim was to restore the object to a state that could be displayed and easily interpreted as ceremonial headwear by visitors. To achieve this a mount would have to be created to allow the metal crown to be supported in its original position without risking damage to the fabric headband. The detached pendants and beading would need to be repositioned with the possibility of replacing missing parts. Of course the first job was a thorough recording leading to analysis and cleaning.

Analysis

Before considering cleaning the metal threads, analysis of their condition was carried out with an SEM (scanning electron microscope) at the National Conservation Centre, Liverpool. This revealed traces of silver on the threads used on the headband, strictly limiting the possible treatments to gentle dry cleaning with a soft brush so as not to remove any remnants of the silver coating.



Manchester Museum

The finished bridal crown on its display mount

There are four shapes of pendant hanging from the crown: geometric roses, oak leaves and tear drops made of copper sheet gilded in silver or gold and diamonds made of beads. As many of the pendants had come loose, comparative examples were examined and matched with the few pendants still in their original position to determine the probable locations of the others. This analysis also highlighted that around a quarter of the pendants and beads were missing.

Conservation

Cleaning

Much of the bridal crown was cleaned with dry cleaning techniques while the thousands of glass beads were cleaned with water and IMS mix. The tarnish was removed from the silver pendants using precipitated calcium carbonate in water which gave a very pleasing finish without scratching the surface. Consolidation was required for the flaking enamelling

The conservator tying the crown to its support



Manchester Museum



The crown as I found it in storage

on the metal threads of the crown for which Paraloid B72 was used, unfortunately the fragile surface meant that these threads could not be cleaned at all before or after consolidation, so the bright red colour remains masked behind the dirt.

Support

A head form to support the headband was created from buckram covered in wadding and fabric. A stainless steel support for the crown is fitted to the top and a Perspex stand holds it aloft to allow the metal weights on the end of the ribbons to rest on the table surface. As the support was required for indefinite support of the object, the Perspex stand was made to be removable so that the mount could be used for both storage and display purposes.

Replacing lost elements

Replacement beads and pendants were felt necessary not only to give the object a more complete look when finished but also to ensure the crown was evenly weighted on all sides. It would also allow the integration of original pieces whose connections were missing rather than risk them being disassociated by remaining loose. To make sure that replacement parts did not distract the eye or risk being mistaken for original components, transparent/translucent materials were used. Clear plastic beads of appropriate sizes were bought and pendants were cut from sheets of styrene and misted with micromesh abrasive.

A close up of the beaded fabric and metal threads making up the headband



The many loose pendants

Assembly and storage

Once the support structure had been made and replacement parts sourced and produced I could begin to reform the original shape of the metal crown and rebuild the arrangement of beading and pendants. The beading was restrung with polyester thread and the crown was attached to the metal support with nylon fishing wire. Once complete and securely attached to the support, the crown could be lifted from its temporary Plastazote base and placed in position above the headband completing the treatment of the object.

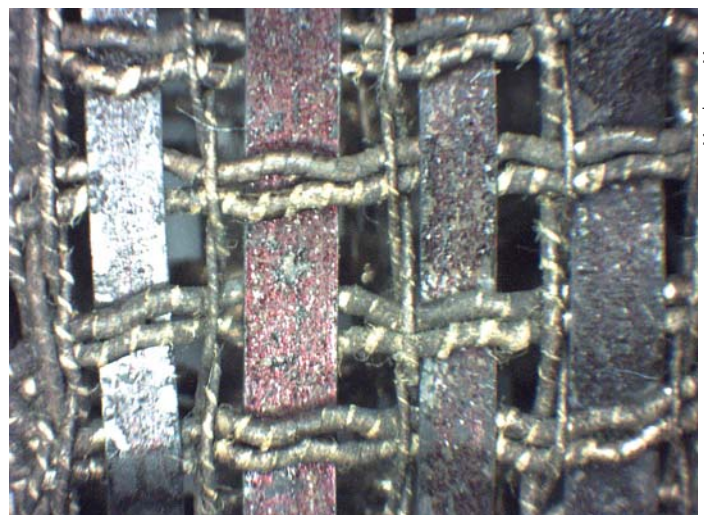
A hat box with collapsible sides was created to house the object and the new mount whilst in storage. To minimise the size required for storage and for added protection the ribbons were rolled round a support of Plastazote and Tyvek.

My final task was to complete a beading diagram to detail which of the pendants and beads were and were not in their original position and which had been replaced so that future conservators or researchers could fully understand the work carried out on the object.

Conclusion

Whilst completing my placement I was given the opportunity to work with an amazing collection and a fantastic team of experienced conservators always willing to provide advice and assistance and to experience life in the 'real' world as a museum conservator. I enjoyed the challenges of working

The flaking red lacquer on the metal threads used in the crown through the microscope



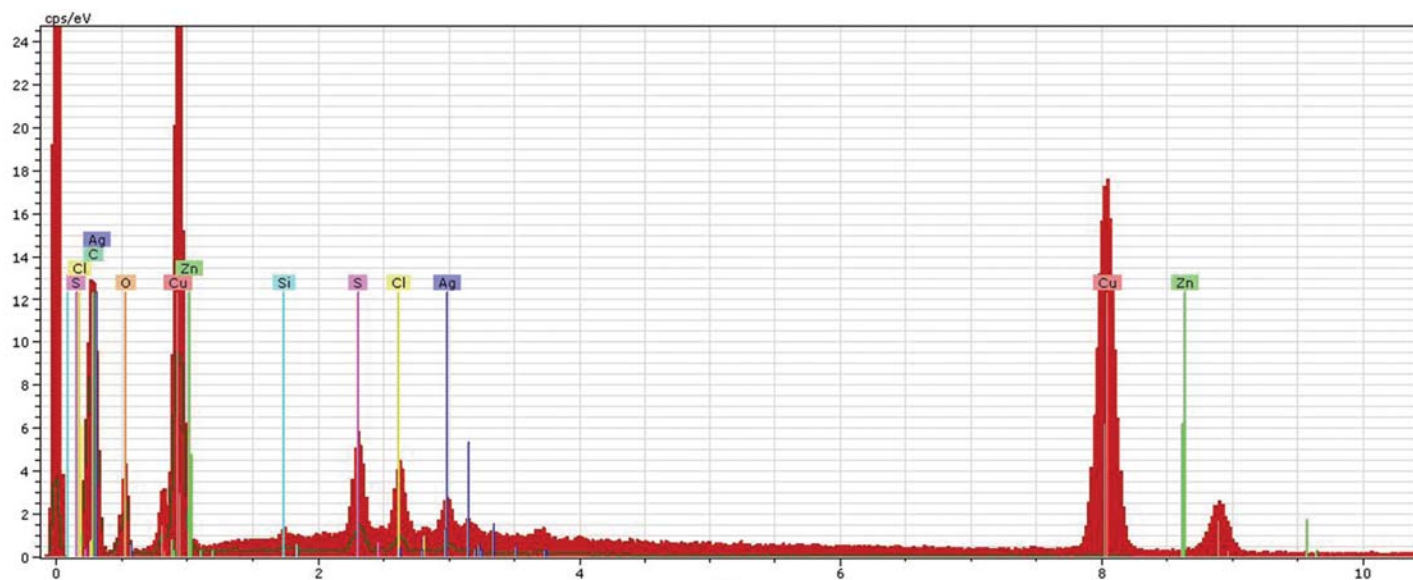


Fig. 5

Three geometric rose pendants, one before cleaning and a gold and silver after cleaning

alongside the team on time critical projects such as the redevelopment of two permanent galleries and collaborating with the education team to complete various engagement projects for visitors. Above all, however, I feel the opportunity to really explore all aspects of projects such as this Norwegian bridal crown has allowed me to more fully understand the diverse aspects of conservation. Of course the museum has benefited too with a beautiful object now ready and suitable for display.



Replacement pendant made of styrene compared to the original



The crown prepared for storage with the ribbons rolled in tyvek.

I would like to thank all the conservators and staff at Manchester Museum and Whitworth Art gallery for their help and assistance on this object and all aspects of my placement and Siobhan Watts at the National Conservation Centre, Liverpool, for her assistance with the material analysis.

From beetles to The Beatles



Entomology Products (Pages 71-75)



Phonograph Record Storage Sleeves (Page 27)

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