



## Life with the Staffordshire Hoard

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*incorporating Blackwall Green*

## MAY 2011

### Issue 34

What a roller coaster professional training is riding at the moment. The excitement surrounding the phoenix-like regeneration of textile conservation education gives way to the depressing news of the imminent closure of Dundee University's Book and Paper Conservation Studio and of difficulties at Camberwell. Any diminution in the work of such an important training centre for book and paper conservation must be deplored. Welcome on the other hand to the Book and Paper Group's initiative in setting up a training exchange scheme (see p.8).

There is another divide at the heart of this issue. On one side, grappling to define the ideal, two articles report on the development of conservation standards and on a recent seminar about sustainability and the appropriate environmental conditions for collections. We can also read about the meticulous care, quite rightly, being given to the Staffordshire Hoard. Then, in particularly stark contrast, there is Simon Barcham Green's battle with weather and wildlife on behalf of his Hayle Mill collection and archive. To anyone else owning or caring for a collection housed in conditions which fall far short of the ideal, it is comforting to know that you are not alone and that perhaps Simon's 'interim preservation' is the best you can do.

**Lynette Gill**, Editor



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Cover photo: From the Staffordshire Hoard: a sword pyramid constructed from gold with cloisonné garnet and blue glass decoration. © Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

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# around & about



Close-up of the gold inlay decoration on a late 17th or early 18th century Indian push-dagger (katar)

## Dazzling armour at the Wallace Collection

A new conservation exhibition entitled *Dazzling Arms and Armour from the East: Surface Decoration and Conservation Issues* has opened in the Conservation Gallery at the Wallace Collection in central London. The exhibition features various artifacts from the Oriental Arms and Armour collection, highlighting many different surface decoration techniques, such as gilding, repoussé, koftgari, carving, micro-mosaic, enameling, niello, filigree, bidri etc. Decorative techniques and conservation issues, including common problems and conservation solutions and recommendations are presented. The exhibition will run until 26 March 2012.

## The Sound of Lady Hamilton's Guittar

A series of amazing coincidences recently resulted in the first performance of an 18th century English piano-forte guittar for over one hundred years. MA Museum Studies students at University College London Emma Smith, Joni Rendon, Kat Wulwick and Emily Fildes were researching Lady Hamilton's



Alex Werner and Taro Takeuchi compare Lady Hamilton's Guittar (left) with an identical working example

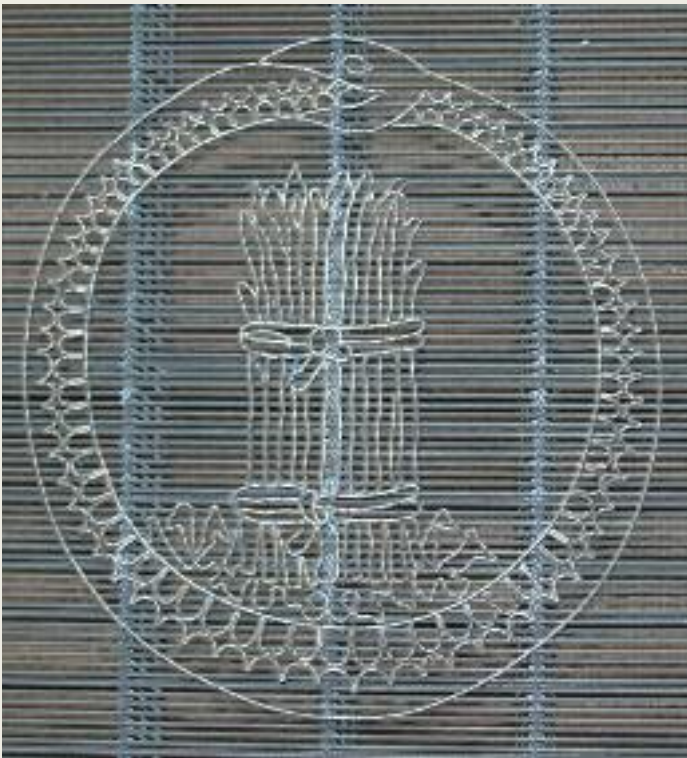
guittar in the Museum of London when they met stringed-instrument conservator Chris Egerton. Chris has worked with this class of instruments for many years along with early strings performer Taro Takeuchi, a champion of the English guittar and its repertoire.

The piano-forte 'keybox' attachment for the guittar was a late 18th century mechanical invention. It allowed the instrument to be played much like a miniature piano with the right hand, while using conventional guitar fingering along the fingerboard with the left. There are no known skilled players of this unusual variant of the guitar, but Taro is currently rediscovering the playing technique for a specially commissioned recording later this year. Chris Egerton is currently conserving and documenting a rare example of a keybox along with several English guittars from museum and private collections.

After the students' symposium presentation of their research, Taro Takeuchi delighted the audience with a short recital of selected pieces from Handel's *Water Music* (c.1780) and Pleyel's *Six Favourite Songs and Six Rondos for the Piano-forte Guittar* (c.1790) using a privately owned working instrument identical to Lady Hamilton's. The incredible *piano e forte* sound of the keybox guittar and its subtle dynamic range were impressive, overturning previous ideas about how this unusual instrument sounded and functioned.

UCL course tutors Marilena Alivizatou and Sarah Byrne and Museum of London Head of History Collections Alex Werner commented how much the performance enlivened the students' research efforts and made the occasion most memorable.

The new research material and filmed excerpts from Taro's performance will be placed in the Museum's archives and the UCL website will be hosting video extracts of the symposium.



Papermould M207

## Handmade papermaking moulds

Amongst the many and varied aspects of his archives, Simon Barcham Green, author of our feature on page 20, has a large collection of papermaking moulds. His photographs of them are available to view online at his website. Simon writes:-

For the last year I have been photographing my extensive collection of papermaking moulds and I am now posting them to <http://papermoulds.typepad.com/>. There are very few collections of moulds in the world and, although a few moulds are on display in paper museums, as far as I know, none of the main collections are accessible to the public. I believe this will also be the first online collection of photographs. Papermaking moulds are beautiful and have been the defining tool for the craft for the last two thousand years.

The picture shows part of a fine pair of two sheet moulds with exceptionally beautiful watermarks. Made by Edwin Amies & Son in June 1894 for the security printers Waterlow & Sons Ltd. Each sheet carries Waterlow's name and an oval device of a snake with its tail in its mouth (an ouroboros - see [www.ireference.ca/search/Ouroboros/](http://www.ireference.ca/search/Ouroboros/)) surrounding a bundle of twigs which I initially thought resembled asparagus tips. I have been unable to find out the meaning of this device or its significance to Waterlows. The Ouroboros symbol appears in both 14th-15th century Albigensian printing watermarks and is also worked into the pip cards of many early (14th-15th century) playing cards, including Tarot cards. The twigs could be 'wands' as used in tarot cards.

## Chertsey Takes Care

*TAKE CARE! Museums and the care of their collections* was a recent temporary exhibition at Chertsey Museum in Surrey

which featured both preventive conservation and conservation treatment. The conservation of a nineteenth century upholstered chair from the museum's collection took centre stage.<sup>1</sup> Ten agents of deterioration were introduced via explanatory wall panels accompanied by artefacts from the museum's collections. For example, the effects of 'Heat' were shown by exhibiting an oil painting above a radiator. The effects of 'Light' were the subject of an activity for children, who were encouraged to take home some light-sensitive paper to see how its colour changed on exposure to sunlight, while a nearby table case displayed a man's waistcoat of c.1745-50, protected from light by a cloth cover; the key message was that light causes fading both at home and in museums. The effects of 'Air Pollution' were demonstrated by an oil painting displayed alongside a photograph showing it half-way through a cleaning treatment. A white flannel hung nearby with a note saying *please do touch*, to demonstrate the effects of handling. A mouse-damaged shoe and paper damaged by insect larvae highlighted the need for 'Pest Control'. The discolouration caused by acidic mounts and the distortions resulting from the wetting of parchment were used to illustrate the effects of 'Humidity'.

Changes in 'acceptable museum practice' were also represented. The frontispiece of Doris Langley Moore's book *The Child in Fashion* was displayed; it shows a photograph of a boy wearing a boy's frock of tartan velvet, 1857, demonstrating that the modelling of historic garments was once common practice. The importance of preventive conservation was emphasised, with a case displaying data logging monitors, a customised storage mount, and archival documents in transparent polyester sleeves. A functioning thermo-hygrograph and a de-humidifier in the exhibition room were labelled to explain their purpose.

Judging from the visitors' responses, the highlight of the exhibition was a short but fascinating DVD<sup>2</sup> which showed the conservation of the mid 19th century, walnut framed, upholstered chair. The DVD presented the materials of the chair (including twenty two layers of upholstery), the practical

The upholstered chair on display, and to the right, the DVD illustrating the conservation process





Thatching at one of the Weald and Downland's cottages

and ethical challenges of the conservation, and its rationale, methods and results. All this was achieved in a fascinating eight minutes of beautifully choreographed still images, with a short section of video footage, with the minimum of captions, and no sound. The DVD conveyed the ethical issues and the practical challenges of the conservation treatment, and the importance of expert examination and documentation of upholstery, and interpretation of the resulting information.

Colleagues at Chertsey Museum should be congratulated for taking up the baton of conservation advocacy as recommended in the Demos report *It's a Material World*<sup>3</sup>; the importance of collective responsibility for the care of collections could have been stressed had the name of the exhibition been *TAKE CARE! Museums and the care of our collections*.

#### Dinah Eastop

1. The upholstery was conserved by Kate Gill at the Textile Conservation Centre in 2009 [www.textileconservationcentre.co.uk/contact/kate-gill](http://www.textileconservationcentre.co.uk/contact/kate-gill)

2. Kate Gill and Matt Grover made the DVD: Gill, K. and Grover, M. 2010. 'Upholstery conservation: a glimpse behind the scenes. The conservation of a 19th century chair with an upholstered and spring seat'. DVD.

3. Jones, S. and Holden, J. 2008. 'It's a Material World'. London: Demos. [www.demos.co.uk/publications/materialworld](http://www.demos.co.uk/publications/materialworld)

## European success

Congratulations to the Weald and Downland Open Air Museum in Sussex for winning a European Union Prize for Cultural Heritage / Europa Nostra Award in the Education, Training and Awareness-raising category. It is one of only three award-winning projects from the UK. The other two are

the Hampshire and Wight Trust for Maritime Archaeology for raising awareness of maritime cultural heritage and the Hackfall Woodland Garden near Ripon in North Yorkshire for the restoration of its mid 18th century Grade 1 listed landscape with its ponds, weirs, paths and ruined follies.

In the case of the Weald and Downland's award, the jury cited the Museum's exemplary initiative and long standing commitment – of over forty years – to creating a centre for training in historic building conservation. 'The wide range of skills taught provides a fine example in creating the next generation of skilled personnel for historic building conservation.' As England's leading museum of historic buildings and traditional rural life, its South Downs setting

#### Learning about timber framing from scratch



features over forty five original historic buildings which have been rescued and carefully reconstructed. They include a medieval farmhouse and a working watermill producing wholemeal, stoneground flour.

The awards will be presented on 10 June during a ceremony at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam in the presence of Plácido Domingo, the world-renowned tenor and president of Europa Nostra. Out of the twenty seven winning projects, six will be named as 'grand prix' laureates at the ceremony as 2011's most outstanding heritage achievements. Fingers crossed!

## Methuselah at 830

Canterbury Cathedral is offering a unique opportunity to see some of its medieval stained glass in stunning detail. As part of a major restoration project, important 12th and 13th century stained glass windows have been temporarily removed from the Cathedral's South Window and are being displayed at ground level in special cabinets in the Crypt.

The series of figures depicted in glass is the most complete known collection of such figures in medieval art; not just the art of stained glass, and, of course, in their normal elevated position cannot usually be examined in such detail. Seen at close quarters, it is possible to appreciate their sophisticated design and to note how the late Romanesque style moved into early Gothic art. Of the original eighty six figures, forty three still survive, twenty two of which have been removed and are now in storage whilst repairs to their surrounding stonework are carried out.

The life-sized figures represent the Ancestors of Christ and the aim is to rotate those on show over the next twelve months or so.

Visitors at Canterbury Cathedral admiring the 800 year old glass



## Star on Board

If you've been watching the BBC series *Petworth House: the Big Spring Clean*, you'll have been amazed and pleased at its coverage of conservation and its principles as practised by the National Trust. It is a terrific coup by the NT to have organised the six-part series, which was first shown on BBC4 but in May moved to BBC2 for a re-run on Friday nights. Introduced by art critic Andrew Graham-Dixon, in the third episode he meets Helen Lloyd, described in the *Radio Times* as 'the National Trust's leading authority on that surprisingly noxious substance' (a reference to dust). In addition to her dust expertise and many other achievements, Helen is, of course, a valued member of Icon's Board of Trustees!

The two ancestors shown here, dating to before 1180, are – on the left – Methuselah (who eventually lived to be 969) and – on the right – a somewhat sprightlier looking Lamech (who only made it to 777), the grandfather and father respectively of Noah.



# professional update

## FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The recent announcement of Arts Council cuts to the bodies that it funds reminds us that the cultural landscape is changing faster than we have ever experienced before. The challenge for Icon is to make ourselves more able to respond effectively to such changes. Partnership is seen as an essential element of building our resilience in the face of such a challenge. The Heritage Lottery Fund and The Radcliffe Trust teamed up recently to offer the sector opportunities to forge such partnerships by providing a forum for thinking about the skills needed in the future in conservation and heritage crafts. The idea behind it was to help funders and grantees work together more strategically at a time when everyone agreed that the conservation/craft skills need particular support in the face of cuts, redundancies, and retirement, leading to an unprecedented loss of skills. Support from foundations and trusts is critical at this time when government funding is diminishing rapidly, and universities are scaling down courses and raising tuition fees. Another aim of the meeting was to share good practice among beneficiaries of HLF/Radcliffe funding. Icon's Carol Brown was invited to show off our highly successful training bursary scheme as a model to inspire others.

With fifteen charitable trusts and foundations present, this was a fantastic opportunity for grantees to communicate strong messages to funders. Icon was among five organisations on a panel presenting messages:

- There is a real need for funders to consider giving development grants to help organisations sustain themselves at critical stages.
- Standards and qualifications developed by the professions were highly valued by funders and commissioners of work, but needed additional support to ensure that they were made available and taken up by the sector, for example by being made essential pre-requisites for funding.
- A training element is often included in major projects, but more needed to be done by funders to ensure that training was actually delivered, and moreover, reached younger people.
- Skills needed to be seen as valuable and as worth preserving as the objects themselves
- Education was under threat and needed to be supported through links with employers
- There needed to be better cooperation between public and private sectors, and in particular support for the private sector to deliver training.

It was gratifying to note that these lined up neatly with objectives outlined in the National Education and Skills Strategy. Our consultation has now ended and the feedback has been positive with respondents welcoming the strategy, and offering support and many suggestions of elements that need to be strengthened. We were delighted to have received forty eight responses and would like to thank

everyone who took the time to send in their views. The next stage will be to revise the draft and launch the strategy in the autumn. In the meantime, an announcement will be made shortly about the vanguard stakeholders group which will be contacting people to represent the different areas of the sector to take the strategy forward. There will be opportunities to contribute throughout the process.

On the one hand we want to influence the funders, but on the other, there are loads of things we can do as a volunteer organisation. The NCESS identified initiatives that would address the need to transfer skills in this climate of austerity and suggested skills banks, and skills exchange and mentoring. Icon's Book & Paper Group has been taking steps to do exactly this and has initiated a Skills exchange hosted on their web pages. The idea behind it is to support members who have skills they would like to share and to help others to find those members with the skills they are looking for. It is a great idea and you can read more about it on page 8. I look forward to watching developments. Right now, BP&G are offering it, but I think it is something that many groups could offer in due course. .,

I would like to draw your attention to a new membership benefit coming on line this month. We are delighted that our publishers, Taylor & Francis, have scanned the entire archive of *The Paper Conservator*, *The Conservator* and *The Journal of the Institute of Conservation*, and are making it available on line for members to access. You will shortly be receiving instructions on how to do this. We hope you will wish to take up this offer and do let us know how you find using it.

Also, this month, Icon bids farewell to Gillian Joyce, our Workbased Training Administrator who has been making our Edinburgh Office and everything to do with workbased training run smoothly for the past five years. She has also generously shared her substantial IT skills with the rest of the team. Gillian, you will be missed!

*Alison Richmond*

## CLOSURES AND CUTBACKS

We have had the sad news through that next month will see the closure of the University of Dundee's Paper Conservation Studio. After a reprieve last summer, it could not survive the next round of cuts. With the four staff leaving, and two deployed elsewhere in the university, this is a significant loss of capacity in paper conservation in Scotland, as well as opportunities for training the next generation. We wish Erica Kotze, Philippa Sterlini, Monica Matthews and Emma Fraser, all Accredited Icon members, and Helen Holden, the Studio's Administrator, the very best in their future endeavours.

University of the Arts London's Camberwell College of Art is proposing to introduce a new four-year integrated MA to replace its current provision, while at the same time running down its Foundation, BA, PGDip and MA courses; a decision that is likely to put untenable strain on the current staff team. A frozen post together with cuts in visiting lecturer budgets

and potential redundancies are all cause for concern. The staff have put forward an alternative proposal which we hope the University will consider carefully.

## A NEW CROP OF ACRS!

Congratulations to the new ACRs accredited in February 2011

**Julia Barton**, Specialist Conservator at the British Museum

**Lara Broecke**, paintings conservator at Hamilton Kerr Institute

**Joy Bunclark**, stained glass conservator at The Cathedral Studios, Canterbury

**Claire Chope**, conservator (archaeology), Hampshire County Council Museums Service

**Daniela Corella**, wall paintings & easel paintings conservator and director of the Associazione Bastioni, Florence, Italy

**Caroline Cotgrove**, conservator in the North West region, National Trust

**Kirsten Dunne**, paper conservator at the National Galleries of Scotland

**Laurence Flood**, senior conservator and manager at Bronze Restorations Ltd

**Claire Fry**, Senior Collections Conservator, English Heritage

**Sallyanne Gilchrist**, project conservator, The Bodleian Library, University of Oxford

**Sandra Howe**, preventive conservator and conservation manager, National Trust

**Erica Kotze**, paper and archive conservator at the Book & Paper Conservation Studio, University of Dundee

**Claire Magill**, regional conservator for the National Trust (Northern Ireland) and freelance ceramics & glass conservator

**Lisa Nash**, RIBA conservator (works of art on paper) at the V&A

**Sophie Reddington**, independent paintings conservator, London

**Victoria Richards**, Senior Preventive Conservator, Historic Royal Palaces

**Zoe Roberts**, Commissioned Treatment Conservation supervisor, Historic Royal Palaces

**Christina Rozeik**, Research Associate (Conservation): AHRC Ancient Greece & Rome Project, Dept. of Antiquities, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

**Bethan Stanley**, Territory Conservator (North) English Heritage, and project conservator JW Evans Silverworks

**Ruth Mary Stevens**, book conservator at the British Library

**Mika Takami**, textile conservator, Treatment Conservation Supervisor (leading Furnishing Team), Conservation & Collection Care, Historic Royal Palaces

**Patricia Tena-Prado**, works of art on paper conservator at the British Library

**Oliver Watkiss**, structural conservator/liner of canvas and panel paintings at Lydeaway Conservation Ltd, (formerly R.C

Watkiss Conservation Studios)

**Rachel Witt**, Head of Easel Paintings and Senior Conservator at Plowden and Smith Ltd

## MAKING A PACR APPLICATION IN JUNE?

*Here you can benefit from ACR feedback to help you with your application form. This article continues from the March issue 'If only I'd known then, what I know now'. The next PACR deadline is 16 June.*

*The form 'merely asks you to reflect on your practice in a structured way.'*

*'The time I spent filling in the application form to ensure that it was as concise and comprehensive as possible helped immensely when preparing for the assessment. What worked well for me was to indicate in brackets at the end of each relevant comment which standard it applied to rather than doing as suggested and using headings. Some issues are relevant to more than one standard and vice versa so this way seemed more concise and space economical.'*

*'Start the application form as early as possible, it took me many drafts and much time before I was happy with it!'*

*'I found some standards to be ambiguous and often overlapped so I kept a log of why I thought each standard was relevant to that project so I could easily remember when it came to the assessment as there is a long period of time between the application and the assessment when one can easily forget the train of thought!'*

*'There is no single correct way to present a topic or project but it is essential that the work is presented in a clear and structured way that is true to yourself and your own style.'*

*Sometimes it does not work out on the first attempt.*

*'After the first application I was rejected, although very upsetting this made me more determined to try again. I got some very good feedback from the board [Accreditation Committee] as to why my application was rejected. With this information my mentor and myself revised my form and I reapplied. The second attempt was successful.'*

*'At first I tried to make my projects fit too many Standards but later realised it was better to have one or two strong examples for each Standard.'*

*Other times it can be straightforward.*

*'I found the Accreditation process clear and easy to follow although some of my colleagues going through the process at the same time found it to be exactly the opposite! I think this reflects the varied nature of conservation itself and the individuals practising within it. Projects and work can range widely in scope and duration so that one finds some work more difficult to convey in a concise and clear manner.'*

*'Much of my evidence was rather unconventional, stemming from long conservation science research projects, rather than bench conservation examples. As a result, in my application I*

may have interpreted some of the criteria differently than my assessors would. I didn't have a mentor, which might have been helpful with this aspect of the process. In any case, my assessors were brilliant and helped me get there in the end!

*This is part 2 of 4 articles 'If I knew then, what I know now about PACR'. The complete article can be found on [www.icon.org.uk](http://www.icon.org.uk) > Accreditation/CPD> For new applicants*

## CPD HELP

Just a reminder that financial help is available if you want to take courses to prepare yourself for accreditation or, thereafter, to develop your professional skills and understanding.

The next deadline for applications to the **Anna Plowden Trust** is June 13 (and thereafter September 12). The Trust funds up to 50% of the cost of a short course or major conference for conservators with over five years' experience after completing their training. Details from [www.annaplowdentrust.org.uk](http://www.annaplowdentrust.org.uk)

Qualified conservators can apply at any time to the **Clothworkers Foundation** for a Bursary to attend a conference, seminar or other event of benefit to your current work or future career. Up to £1000 may be paid with the applicant or their employer expected to meet half the cost. Details from [www.clothworkers.co.uk](http://www.clothworkers.co.uk)

## GILLIAN JOYCE: HEADED FOR PASTURES NEW

Gillian has worked as Administrator for Icon's training bursaries scheme since its inception in Spring 2006 and is leaving Icon almost five years to the day to go on to a new permanent post with the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh. A friendly and reassuring voice on the telephone in Edinburgh, Gillian has been a real anchor for the Heritage Lottery Fund scheme and for Icon – always effective and always willing to tackle any problem, she has made a huge contribution to Icon's excellent reputation with partners and funders over the years.



Personally, I know that the office could not have functioned successfully without her and I will miss both her support and her companionship. Gillian's expertise with IT and website work in particular has been a great asset and it's good to see that she is going on to a job where she can develop her talents in that field. We all wish her the very best for the future and hope that she will stay in touch with all her Icon contacts.

**Carol E Brown**  
Training Development Manager

## INTERNSHIPS

### More internships on offer

Icon's Heritage Lottery Fund training bursaries project has now completed its 6th and final year of recruitment and the last HLF-supported interns will finish in 2012. Icon is pleased however to be offering three placements this month to start in September 2011 in Paintings, Preventive Conservation and Books and Bound Materials – see our advert opposite. Generous funding for these new Icon internships has been made available from a variety of sources – Clothworkers Foundation, The Bute Memorial Fund and HLF's *Skills for the Future* Programme. We are delighted to be working with new funding partners to ensure that the HLF- internship scheme's benefits are sustained. Icon hopes to be offering at least one more place for September start in the next few months, so do watch the website.

### Current Interns visit Leighton House

In April a regional group of Interns, mainly from the West, enjoyed a get-together and visit to Leighton House Museum. The group was given a fascinating tour – concentrating on the restoration project – by Curator Daniel Robbins. Thanks to Historic Royal Palaces, the group went on in the afternoon to the Enchanted Palace exhibition at Kensington Palace.

Interns at Leighton House



## NEW TRAINING DIRECTIONS

### The Book and Paper Group's Co-operative Training Register

Following its approval and launch at the General Meeting on March 11, the Book and Paper Group are pleased to announce an innovative new training initiative for members: the **Co-operative Training Register**.

The committee is aware of cuts to the training budgets of major institutions and the reduction in employment opportunities for highly skilled conservators. At the same time, we have a membership that requires high quality

## Skills in Practice

### Icon internship programme

#### Conservation Internships 2011–13, Educational stipend of £15,500 p.a.

Icon is offering 3 Internships of 6, 12 and 18 months' duration as part of its ongoing internship programme Skills in Practice, arising from the successes of the HLF-funded conservation training bursaries scheme. These placements are generously funded by individual charities, trusts and employers. Note the opportunities currently advertised are aimed specifically at those who have recently graduated from a conservation course.

**National Trust for Scotland, Edinburgh – Preventive Conservation** 12m Ref EFP 11/01

**Guildhall Art Gallery, London – Paintings Conservation** 6m Ref EFP 11/03

**PZ Conservation, Penzance – Conservation of Books & Bound Materials** 18m Ref EFP 11/04

Information on all placements and details of eligibility can be found on the Icon website at [www.icon.org.uk](http://www.icon.org.uk). Interviews for short-listed applicants will be held in July 2011. All internships will start in mid-September 2011.

Apply using the form available on the website.

[www.icon.org.uk](http://www.icon.org.uk)

Please use electronic format for all enquiries and applications. Icon, the Glasite Meeting House, 33 Barony Street, Edinburgh EH3 6NX

**Closing date for applications: 3rd June 2011**

training for CPD and to bridge skills gaps in their practice or within their institutions. The Co-operative Training Register, or CTR, is the Book and Paper Group's response to this dual need. Through this scheme a substantial proportion of the Committee's budget will be ring fenced to fund training events presented by members in areas linked to members' identified training needs. Initially, this is a one year trial originated and designed by the Book and Paper Group and if successful we hope it will be expanded to include all Icon member groups.

#### There are four main benefits to the scheme:

- Trainers are provided with a realistic and reasonable fee for their skills and time
- Members are consulted on their training needs and provided with high quality specialist training tailored to these at a heavily subsidised rate
- Identified training needs can be met by institutions
- A strong focus on the increased provision of regional events

Training proposals and requests can be submitted by registered members via the Book and Paper Group's pages on the Icon website using three online forms. As well as a form for training proposals there are two forms for training requirements, one for individual members and one for group applications. We are hoping for a broad subject base to the training and that proposals will not be confined to practical conservation methods alone, as well as an emphasis on regional availability.

Despite being in its early stages the scheme has already attracted widespread support and interest as well as applications. The Book and Paper Group hope that members will continue to work with us on this exciting new project to provide added benefit to membership, and provide us with the information and feedback we need to develop the scheme into a useful source of high quality training. If you have any questions please contact **Victoria Stevens** at [victoria.stevens@magd.ox.ac.uk](mailto:victoria.stevens@magd.ox.ac.uk).

*The Book and Paper Group Committee*

### A NEW RESEARCH NETWORK

The new Centre for Textile Conservation and Technical Art History at the University of Glasgow is very grateful to the Getty Foundation for the allocation of funding to set up a research network. As well as textile conservation and technical art history, the network will also encompass the field of dress and textile history.

An international advisory panel has been set up and panel members met in March to help refine future plans for the network. Five themed network meetings will be held during 2011 and 2012 with the aim of bringing together researchers in these three fields to initiate new projects and to apply for research funding. The five themes and the meeting dates are detailed below. We already have some ideas for research topics, as listed below, but welcome other suggestions - we anticipate the development of exciting interdisciplinary projects.

We are aiming to keep numbers quite low for the network meetings in order to allow discussion to reach a more detailed stage. If you have a research idea you would be interested in developing in conjunction with the University of Glasgow and are interested in taking part in any of the network meetings, please contact Frances Lennard ([Frances.Lennard@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:Frances.Lennard@glasgow.ac.uk)) or Erma Hermens ([Erma.Hermens@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:Erma.Hermens@glasgow.ac.uk)).

#### Research themes

and network meeting dates, with some initial ideas for research topics:

- 1 Modern materials. 10 June 2011
  - Manufacturing, marketing, consumption
  - Modern and contemporary art: making and meaning
  - Twentieth century dress
  - Sustainable practices
- 2 The real thing? The value of authenticity and replication. 7 October 2011
  - Digital transformations: the danger of loss of the 'real thing'
  - Dress historians and re-enactors: different approaches to research



The Research Network Advisory Panel

- Authenticities and appearances
  - The 'fashion show' : wearing objects
  - Copying, replicating, emulating in 16th and 17th century Europe
- 3** Technical studies: exploring concept, practices and results. 5 December 2011
- Dyestuffs in textiles and fine arts
  - Painted objects, interiors and artefacts
  - 'Cross-over' artists rooted in practical tradition
  - Traditional multi-media works of art
  - Historiography of technical art history
  - Painted textiles
  - Red dyes
- 4** Enhancing the value of collections: investigation and preservation. 30 March 2012
- Translating cultures: China and the West: meaning, conservation, vocabularies
  - Tapestry research
  - Re-evaluation of treatments
  - Object investigation: biography and provenance
  - Skills – professional, value, vocabularies
- 5** Connected histories: making, meaning, interpretation. 14 May 2012
- Stoddard-Templeton Carpets
  - European regional fashion
  - Terminology of colour
  - Embroidery, late 16th century –17th century needlework

#### International conference December 2012

The network will culminate with a two-day international conference on 6–7 December 2012. Everyone is welcome to attend, whether you are an active researcher or an interested observer. The theme for the conference will be modern materials. Further details, including a call for papers, will be published soon.

*Frances Lennard* and *Erma Hermens*

#### UPDATE ON THE TCCF'S WORK

Thanks to the fundraising campaign run by the Textile Conservation Centre Foundation, over £660,000 was secured for the new Centre in Glasgow, for bursaries for all the students who needed support and for the launch of the research network described above.

After the Royal opening reported on in our March issue, the TCC Foundation held its AGM and elected a new Chair, Lady

Shaw Stewart, along with new trustees including Dr Mary Brooks and Professor Nick Pearce. Huge thanks are due to retiring Chair Lord Douro and the other Trustees who retired at the same time for their stalwart determination that the closure by the University of Southampton should not be the end of the TCC's work. Nell Hoare continues to work for the Foundation on a consultancy basis and to undertake fundraising on its behalf. She is now turning her attention to securing bursaries for 2011–2013 and to raising funds for items of equipment needed to support the new research projects at the Centre. If you would like to support the new Centre or find out more about the fundraising effort please do contact Nell via [info@tccfoundation.org.uk](mailto:info@tccfoundation.org.uk).

#### NEW PUBLICATION

##### Decorated Surfaces on Ancient Egyptian Objects

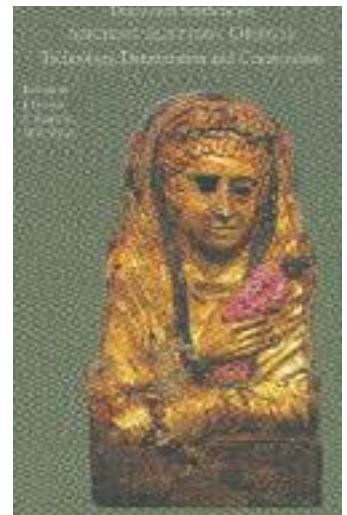
Wide ranging, authoritative and accessible, this book comprises papers from a conference organised by the Icon Archaeology Group, held at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. It is essential reading for anyone concerned with the study and care of ancient Egyptian objects.

From monumental tomb paintings to delicate ivories, ancient Egyptian objects are some of the most complex and fragile encountered by archaeologists, curators and conservators. Those who examine, analyse and treat them face a number of practical and ethical challenges.

This volume of papers, by an international group of experts, focuses on decorated surfaces including polychrome wood, coloured basketry, patinated metal and painted textile. Aspects of technology, investigation and treatment are examined, as well as broader issues of preservation, storage and display. A comprehensive review of past and current treatments for organic objects is followed by thought provoking case studies, technical surveys and innovative solutions to conservation problems.

*Decorated Surfaces on Ancient Egyptian Objects – Technology, Deterioration and Conservation*, edited by J. Dawson, C. Rozeik, M.M. Wright, 2010; 181 pages, 18 papers, 12 poster abstracts, colour images throughout.

Price: £30 for Icon members, £35 for non-Icon members (price does not include postage or packaging). To purchase a copy please contact: [Angela.Karsten@english-heritage.org.uk](mailto:Angela.Karsten@english-heritage.org.uk).



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## LEVANTINE FOUNDATION NEWS

As a postscript to our article in March's Icon News about the Levantine Foundation's conservation work in Egypt, Elizabeth Sobczynski ACR, the Foundation's Chief Executive, has written to say: *You might be interested to know that our training project has been selected by our sponsors the Sawiris Foundation for Social Development as one of the highlight success stories for its 10th anniversary.*

## NATIONAL HERITAGE LIST FOR ENGLAND

Last month saw the launch of the National Heritage List for England, English Heritage's new online database, which brings information on all nationally designated heritage assets into one place for the first time. This is a significant step towards a more streamlined and transparent designation system. The List covers listed buildings, scheduled monuments, registered parks, gardens and battlefields and protected wreck sites. In addition, World Heritage Site records have been added to the Heritage List for England (but are separately designated by UNESCO). Certificates of Immunity (COI) and Building Preservation Notices (BPN) are also recorded. Find it at [www.english-heritage.org.uk/caring/listing](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/caring/listing) and follow the link.

## LIBRARY NEWS

### Migration from OLIS to Aleph

This mysterious sub-heading concerns changes to the library catalogue. Over the forthcoming summer months, Oxford University Libraries are changing their current library cataloguing database system (OLIS – University of Oxford

union catalogue) to a new system called ALEPH. This migration involves the preparation of all catalogued records, installation of new software, and new training for cataloguers. As the Chantry Library collection, books, journals and conference papers, are all catalogued on OLIS, and held as a sub-location of Magdalen College, we are involved with this process. In the meantime, the instructions on how to search OLIS, as outlined on the website [www.chantrylibrary.org.uk](http://www.chantrylibrary.org.uk) (Library Catalogue), are still fine to use. As soon as the migration has been completed, any revisions that need to be made to the instructions will be implemented as soon as possible.

### Workshops

Following on from the *Practical Information Skills for Conservators Workshop* piloted at West Dean College last November, I am currently preparing for a *Writing Skills Workshop* to present at West Dean at the end of May. This workshop will focus on providing sound practical advice on how to write essays and dissertations, for students, and include gathering information, structuring and planning, referencing, revising drafts...and much more! If you are interested to find out more about either of the workshops, please contact Ros Buck, Librarian on [chantrylibrary@icon.org.uk](mailto:chantrylibrary@icon.org.uk)

### Photocopies of journal articles

A quick reminder that we supply photocopies of journal articles, chapters from books, and conference papers, which are held in the Chantry Library collection. Icon members are entitled to claim ten free articles each year, so please quote your membership number with your requests. Articles can be provided either as scanned pages, or in hard copy. Email the Librarian Ros on the address quoted above with any requests, or complete and send the copyright form available on the Chantry Library web pages [www.chantrylibrary.org.uk](http://www.chantrylibrary.org.uk) then go to Library Services.

### New Books: recent additions include:

**Books Will Speak Plain: A Handbook for Identifying and Describing Historical Bindings** by Julia Miller, The Legacy Press, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 2010 ISBN: 978-0-9797974-3-9

**Studying Old Master Paintings: Technology and Practice** edited by Marika Spring, The National Gallery Technical Bulletin 30th Anniversary Conference Postprints, Archetype Publications, London, 2011, ISBN: 978-1-904982-63-0.

The contents can be found here:

<http://www.archetype.co.uk/publication-details.php?id=126>

**Preparing Collections for Digitization** by Anna Bülow and Jess Ahmon, with contributions from Ross Spencer, Facet Publishing in association with the National Archives, London, 2011, 184pp ISBN: 978-1-85604-711-1.

Icon News readers will know the names of the authors, both from The National Archives, from articles they have written for us on digitising collections and other subjects, so they will

know to expect an essential and clearly-written guide to a complex process.

**Line, Shade and Shadow: The Fabrication and Preservation of Architectural Drawings** by Lois Olcott Price, Oak Knoll Press, New Castle, DE 19720, USA, HES & DE GRAAF Publishers, Netherlands, Winterthur Museum and Garden & Library, Wilmington, DE 19807, USA,. 2010,359pp. ISBN: 978-1-58456-237-5. The Table of contents can be seen at: [www.oakknoll.com/resources/tableofcontents/096676.pdf](http://www.oakknoll.com/resources/tableofcontents/096676.pdf)

**Journals: latest issues acquired include:**  
**AIC News, Vol.36, No.2, March 2011**

**ARC Magazine (Society of Archivists Newsletter), No.260. April 2011**

Archives for Education & Learning Special Issue  
The past six months' editions of ARC magazine are available online, usually around one month after publication and can be downloaded from:  
[www.archives.org.uk/publications/arc-magazine.html](http://www.archives.org.uk/publications/arc-magazine.html)

**Art Business Today, Issue 2, April 2011**

Includes articles on art and on framing, and a special section on Retail Issues, sponsored by Arqadia

**Guild of Book Workers Newsletter, No.195, April 2011**

**The Quarterly, No.78, April 2011**

BAPH (The journal of the British Association of Paper Historians)

Includes an article by Simon Barcham Green, author of our feature on page 20

**Restaurator, Vol.32, No.1, March 2011**

Contents page and abstracts are available at: [www.reference-global.com/toc/rest/2011/32/1](http://www.reference-global.com/toc/rest/2011/32/1)

## 'LIFE WITHOUT AIR CONDITIONING?'

*This was the subject of a University Museums Group seminar which took place in Cambridge at the end of last year.*

**Edward Cheese**, a Book and Manuscript Conservator with the Cambridge Colleges' Conservation Consortium, reports on the event.

The newly refurbished Scott Polar Research Institute in Cambridge was an apt choice for the University Museums Group's seminar on sustainability and the museum environment. Alongside displays of objects from early expeditions to the Poles in the main gallery, the museum has made space for touch-screen displays which allow today's climate scientists working at the research camps in the Arctic and Antarctic to communicate their findings to a wider audience. One hundred museum professionals, including a large proportion of conservators alongside directors and curators from across the country, gathered in the SPRI's lecture theatre to hear presentations from Sarah Staniforth, Historic Properties Director for the National Trust, Stephen Hackney, formerly Manager of Conservation Science at the Tate, and Maria Balshaw, Director of the Whitworth Art Gallery.\* After

lunch and a tour of the SPRI, delegates reconvened in the afternoon to discuss the issues involved in adopting a more pragmatic approach to specifying environmental conditions for museum objects, with a view to formulating a possible resolution for publication by the UMG which would, to a certain extent, replace the precautionary principles enshrined in standards such as BS 5454 with a more pragmatic approach based on clearly identified risks to museum objects.

After giving a concise, cogent review of the background to the current debate, Sarah Staniforth put forward the crucial argument for adopting 'appropriate' environmental standards for objects as distinct from 'relaxing' the current guidelines, drawing on her summary of reliance on air-conditioning and building management systems in the latter part of the twentieth century as the 'art of the possible' rather than the 'craft of what is necessary.' The National Museum Directors' Conference, working to reduce museums' carbon footprint, is already acting on this thinking by formulating principles which encourage the promotion of 'intelligent' standards, 'better tailored to clearly identified needs' and stating that 'Care of collections should be achieved in a way that does not assume air-conditioning.' Effectively, the precautionary principles and prescriptive standards which have been the norm for many years are being replaced with an analytical, risk-based approach which is focused on the individual objects rather than on 'the museum environment' per se. As Staniforth pointed out, 'appropriate' conditions for museum objects are inextricably linked to the climate in which the museum is located, a point echoed later in the discussion forum, where the example of ivories kept in very dry conditions in one museum for many years would now be put at risk were they to be loaned to another institution with the precautionary 'ideal' conditions.

So far, so good: a large lump of carved granite does not need the same degree of environmental control as the delicate illuminated leaf of a medieval Book of Hours, and to insist on such control for it is beyond reason and liable to undermine the entire argument for preventive conservation. However, custodians of anthropological and zoological collections pointed out that academic study of bone samples relies on stable and carefully controlled RH levels as fluctuation can cause big problems when it comes to taking accurate measurements during use of these specialist collections. With thoughtful, well reasoned planning, it should be possible to arrange storage facilities and exhibitions so that artefacts have appropriate conditions without wasting valuable resources, and much can be achieved with buffered cases and sealed mounts. But might we not risk being lulled into a false sense of security? Do we actually have enough information about the effects of such decisions to be able to make them in the first place? Staniforth argued, rightly in my view, that observations over a long career in a given institution constitute more than mere 'anecdotal evidence' and should be recorded and passed on to future generations in order that a fuller picture of an object's sensitivities and behaviour

can be built up over the long term. Visual assessment, however, is limited and although damage in the form of a catastrophic split in a wooden panel, for example, is all too easy to recognise, what about the long-term effects of Relative Humidity on the chemical degradation of a fragile paper object? Out of sight, out of mind? Or is the fact that the item is housed in a good mount and not subjected to the wear and tear that potentially endangered it when it was a new sheet of paper in a portfolio enough to outweigh inevitable ageing?

Stephen Hackney's analysis of the behaviour of panel paintings emphasised the importance of making the distinction between the RH of the museum environment and the moisture content of the object. His detailed research was neatly balanced by an important reminder that there is much that we do not know. As he pointed out, 'There is no RH threshold for chemical damage and it does not normally lead to sudden failure, and for these reasons it is not given enough attention.' I was strongly reminded at this point of an article I read as a student which gave an overview of research into the properties and ageing characteristics of paper, in which the author commented that, after many years of endeavour, we have succeeded in finding out a great deal about Whatman filter paper! The aim, I think, was not to dismiss scientific research – that way madness lies – but to remind us of the limitations of our knowledge and warn against simplistic extrapolation and assumptions. The very nature of historic objects is that they have been subjected to conditions which we can only guess at: we can make reasoned deductions from artificial ageing tests, but the challenge of conservation work is that it is not, and will never be, an exact science: the art and craft of the profession, its greatest challenge, is that there is no true 'trial run' – experience (which, as the poet Robert Lowell noted, is so often 'not what you want to experience') is a vital tool. Discussions about the 'safe' amount of variation in RH levels which followed the morning's presentations left me wondering how much the idea of a 'nice round number' was coming into play. Forty to sixty-five percent RH as the minimum and maximum within the space of a week was quoted as being the standard for objects covered by the UK Government Indemnity Scheme, with a maximum of 10% variation in any given 24-hour period. But would 37% to 68% cause that much more damage, over the 'long term' (and how long are we talking about – 5 years? 50 years? 100 years? 500 years? Or is this period, like the environmental conditions, object-specific?). Anyone who has tried to make at least two properly calibrated RH meters come to the same opinion about the RH of a given space at the very same moment will know that even establishing this most basic of facts with the equipment available to most conservators is not easy! The argument that the prescriptive standards often specify conditions more tightly than the accuracy of the instruments used to measure those very conditions allows to be achievable has not been able to answer completely the question as to the implications of widening the old

parameters. The +/- 5% margin of error common to most RH meters does not diminish because the parameters change: should we worry about an 'acceptable' RH range of 35–70% RH, given the margin of error in the metering? And on what grounds are we basing the answer to that question?

Maria Balshaw's presentation on the Capital Development Project at the Whitworth Gallery rounded off the morning session with a case study in specifying museum alterations in line with the Green/Sustainability agenda. It was good to see that the architects on this project had risen to specifications relating to sustainable development set very high, as Balshaw herself admitted, due to inexperience of the practicalities; but one was left with the feeling that, although the completed project will no doubt produce a very beautiful space, the emphasis was once again primarily on the space rather than the needs of the collections. (In passing, and during a day in which the words 'Risk' and 'Benefit' were uttered so frequently in the same sentence, I am still wondering quite what the great majority of primary school children will feel they are missing if they are given reproductions rather than original drawings to look at on the desks in the proposed study centre.)

At the end of an afternoon of group discussions, the conference voted to adopt unanimously, but with one abstention, a declaration which could be published for discussion on the University Museums Group website ([www.umg.org.uk](http://www.umg.org.uk)), governing environmental parameters for inter-UMG member institutions:

'Research over the past 15 years and practical experience indicates [sic] that appropriate conditions for the long-term preservation of the majority of museum and gallery collections in the UK can be achieved without air conditioning (HVAC).

Research and experience support the growing international consensus that appropriate conditions for the majority of items are 40-60% RH with a change of less than 10% RH per 24 hours. Temperature can be allowed to vary to maintain this range and should normally be within the range 16C-25C in public spaces. These parameters should form the basis of a risk-based approach to collections care, which also examines the benefits of exhibitions and use. Any exceptions to these parameters should be supported by evidence.'

One of the most interesting points of the day, a point also raised in at least one of the discussion groups, was that the drive for reviewing tight prescriptive standards seems to be coming from the curatorial side of the heritage sector. This, surely, is an issue on which the conservation profession needs to have significant input and to take the lead. Many of the conservators I spoke to on the day of the conference, although concerned about possible misreading of these proposals as leading to a free-for-all which has the potential to cause serious damage to sensitive objects, also voiced the opinion that a huge number of institutions specifying tight

environmental controls for loaned objects do not and cannot achieve those very standards in their own stores and galleries. With BS 5454 up for review, let us hope that the time is right to set up a constructive dialogue between two vital elements of the museum world, curatorial and conservation-preservation, to make headway in framing and answering questions that take us to the very heart of the meaning of 'Conservation'. Do we really know what risks we are taking? What risks are we willing to take – and why? If we are to be taken seriously as professionals, we need to reason well and take full responsibility for our actions.

\*The presentations from the day can be viewed on the University Museums Group webpage (<http://www.umg.org.uk/> look under Recent News).

## CONSERVATION STANDARDS

Work on the development of conservation standards continues to gather momentum under the auspices of the BSI Committee, B/560 Conservation of Tangible Cultural Heritage. In addition to three meetings a year, much of its work is carried out electronically, partly by email but more often – especially for the European standards – by access to a Livelink web-based platform, which enables the many iterations of documents to be viewed and comments on draft documents to be submitted by Committee members as well as other conservators, architects and scientists. At various stages the UK has also to vote on documents which might be anything from 'Should this proposed topic become a new work item?' or an early draft through to a formal final vote. The work of the committee includes reviewing existing British Standards and developing possible new ones, as well as the on-going development of European standards under the aegis of the European CEN Technical Committee, TC/346 Conservation of Cultural Property. Approved European standards inevitably become British Standards.

### European standards

The UK has proved itself better organised\* in this work than many of the other thirty one European countries involved in this project, our equals or betters including France, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Italy, Norway and Sweden. The UK generally produces many pages of comments on drafts and always votes. That said, all countries find it difficult to muster the expertise, time and energy to keep up with the flow of initiatives in the form of new work items which are generated most often by a few individuals in a few countries, mostly Italy, France and Sweden.

Six of the CEN standards have now been published as new BSI standards, and can be bought via the BSI website: go to <http://shop.bsigroup.com/> and then put *conservation of cultural property* into the search box. A number of others are well on the way to final approval, while many continue to be worked on. Not many proposed new work items have been rejected, because the voting system makes it difficult for an idea once launched to be stopped in this way, provided experts from five countries express willingness to take part.

One proposal which is currently in doubt is on exhibition lighting, which appears to overlap with existing lighting standards. It must be said that the whole process could be better managed centrally by Italy's standards body, UNI, because more time than necessary is being required to review new work items and to amend poorly drafted documents. It is hoped that some structural improvements will have been effected at the plenary Technical Committee in Copenhagen in April.

After initial scepticism, it can now be said that quite a few of the standards will prove to be of lasting value in the UK. Some of the more specific ones, those for instance used in analytical work, will stand or fall by their take-up by conservation scientists. Other more general ones, of wider applicability, could well serve as benchmarks for years to come. They will be revised over coming years in the light of experience, so they will become ever more useful. By their very existence they focus minds on important issues which need to be taken into account by many heritage professionals. They are available for conservators to cite when dealing with other professionals and even to include in specifications. They will also be cited by curators, designers and architects. They will act as benchmarks, which must be good for the care of collections and buildings. The very collaborative process of their production has resulted in energetic discussions both in the UK and across Europe of topics which are rarely debated in such wide fora.

### British Standards

When B/560 was formally established some three years ago, it became responsible for a number of standards which already existed (under the aegis of a former BSI committee), all relating to buildings. It also takes an interest in one standard – BS 5454:2000 – on the storage and exhibition of archival documents, which remains in the remit of another BSI Committee.

The buildings standards, some of them over ten years old, have needed to be re-approved or a case made for their wholesale revision:

- BS 8221-1:2000 – Code of practice for cleaning and surface repair of buildings. Part 1: Cleaning of natural stones, brick, terracotta and concrete;
- BS 8221-2:2000 – Code of practice for cleaning and surface repair of buildings. Part 2: Surface repair of natural stones, brick and terracotta
- BS 7913:1998 Guide to the principles of the conservation of historic buildings

The archival standard, BS 5454:2000 is not being revised, but is to be accompanied by a new Published Document PD5454, a commentary on the standard, which will bring the original into line with current thinking and reflect recent statutory changes and related standards.

Meanwhile, work is well advanced elsewhere in BSI on a new

Publicly Available Specification for environmental conditions for cultural collections: PAS 198. The scope of the PAS covers cultural collections in storage, on display and in transit, and will apply to museums, libraries and archives. This work has been co-sponsored by the Collections Trust; CyMAL: Museums, Libraries and Archives Wales, a division of the Welsh Assembly Government; the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) and The National Archives. Public consultation on the new PAS will begin at the end of May, and it is scheduled to be published in the autumn of this year.

PAS 197:2009 is now due for revision, under the auspices of the Collections Trust. This Code of Practice gives recommendations for the management of cultural collections by collecting organizations such as archives, libraries, museums and other public and private collecting organizations that hold cultural collections. It covers the provision, implementation and maintenance of a collections management framework, including policies, processes and procedures for collections development, information, access and care and conservation.

Work has been approved to start on a new CEN standard led by UK organisations under Chris Woods, dealing with the protection of objects in all types of collections ('New Sites and Buildings intended for the storage and use of collections'). It will take on board the latest thinking on environmental criteria and update advice on building construction and protection, fire precautions, storage and packing requirements, modern media and exhibitions. The outcome of the current PAS 198 and PD 5454 projects will contribute to work on the new standard, which should be completed by 2014.

**David Leigh**  
Chairman, B/560

\* UK experts (who attend meetings of the five Working Groups) are Tim Yates (BRE), Maureen Young (Historic Scotland), Kate Frame and Constantina Vlachou (HRP), Chris Woods, Freda Matassa, Tim Henbrey (NG), Velson Horie, Barry Knight, Richard Storah and David Leigh.

## Annex

### CEN/TC 346, Standards in Conservation of Cultural Property Progress report, Spring 2011

#### Published

EN 15802	Test methods – Determination of static contact angle
EN 15803	Test methods – Determination of water vapour permeability ( $\delta p$ )
EN 15886	Test methods – Colour measurement of surfaces
EN 15757	Specifications for temperature and relative humidity to limit climate-induced mechanical damage in organic hygroscopic materials
EN 15758	Procedures and instruments for measuring temperatures of the air and the surfaces of objects
EN 15801	Test methods – Determination of water absorption by capillarity

#### In progress or under consideration

prEN 15898	Main general terms and definitions concerning conservation of cultural property
prEN 15759-1	Indoor climate – Part 1: Heating places of worship
prEN 15759-2	Indoor climate – Part 2: Ventilation
prEN 16095	Condition report of movable heritage - Visual inspection and description of the condition of movable heritage
prEN 16096	Condition survey of immovable heritage
prEN 16141	Guidelines for management of environmental conditions - Open storage facilities: definitions and characteristics of collection centres dedicated to the preservation and management of cultural heritage
prEN 15999	Guidelines for management of environmental conditions - Recommendations for showcases used for exhibition and preservation of cultural heritage
prEN 15946	Packing methods
prEN 16085	Methodology for sampling from materials of cultural property - General rules
	Transport methods
prEN 16163	Exhibition lighting of cultural property
prEN 16162	Procedures and instruments for measuring humidity in the air and moisture exchanges between air and cultural property
	Procedures and instruments for measuring moisture content in objects and building materials
	Test methods – Low pressure water absorption (pipe method)
	Test methods – Determination of drying properties
	Surface protection for porous inorganic materials – Evaluation of methods and products
	Glossary of damage
	Glossary of technical terms concerning mortars used in cultural heritage
	Characterization of mortars found in cultural heritage
	Characterization of natural stone for conservation purposes
	Determination of soluble salts in natural stone and related artificial materials used in cultural heritage
	Integrated Pest Management (IPM)
	Facilities report for the exhibition of cultural property
	New sites and buildings intended for the storage and use of collections
	Risk assessment methodology for movable cultural heritage
	Assessment and measures for energy efficiency in protected buildings
	Waterlogged archaeological wood – Guidelines for characterisation
	Waterlogged wood - Guidelines for protection and management in terrestrial archaeological sites

# more professional update

## The early bird....

## ...catches the pest. Don't miss the early bird rate.

Booking is now open for the upcoming international conference on pests to be held on 26–28 October 2011 in London.

A Pest Odyssey 2011: Ten Years Later is a follow up to the highly successful conference of the same name held in 2001. The event is being hosted by the British Museum and organised by Icon's Care of Collections Group in partnership with the BM and a wide range of other institutions, including English Heritage, the Natural History Museum, Historic Royal Palaces, the V&A, the Museum of London, the Horniman and Tate.

This new conference will:

- look at how Integrated Pest Management (IPM) has developed over the past ten years to deal with the increasing threat pest attacks pose to collections and buildings
- share new understanding about pest species and the risks they pose
- be a platform for showing how successful training programmes have raised the profile of IPM both within the heritage sector and beyond
- present case studies covering a variety of practical control strategies and how these can work in both the traditional museum setting and the wider heritage context
- formulate a set of guidelines and priorities for future work and research to make IPM even more effective
- enable people to share and discuss their problems and successes

Speakers are coming from far and wide – Japan, Australia, the US, Europe – and include David Pinniger and Tom Strang. There will be posters and papers galore and the conference proceedings will be published in both a hard copy and as a CD.

Delegates will be given the opportunity to attend evening events at the prestigious London venues of both Kensington Palace State Apartments and The Natural History Museum.

For more information and detail on booking please visit <http://www.pestodyssey.org>. Bookings are now open so book soon....that early bird rate doesn't last forever.



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Researchers at the North West Film Archive at Manchester Metropolitan University have exposed a potential threat to the archive of British life on film. Fungal mould can cultivate and eventually consume home cine film, videos, TV and film archive if not stored correctly.

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# The Staffordshire Hoard Conservation Project

Deborah Cane, Hoard Conservation Project Manager, with Hoard Conservators Deborah Magnoler and Cymbeline Storey, tell the story so far of work on this incredible find

The Hoard was discovered in July 2009 by metal detector Terry Herbert on farmland in Staffordshire. Terry unearthed two hundred and forty four 8inch zip lock bags of gold within five days; at this point he contacted the Finds Liaison Officer for the West Midlands Portable Antiquities Scheme. From this point on the excavation was conducted by teams from Staffordshire Archaeology and Birmingham Archaeology. An area of 9 x 13 metres was excavated and over 1662 objects were retrieved, comprising 5kg of gold and 1.3kg of silver, not to mention an array of garnets (2500 noted to date).

The Hoard is striking in that most of the material is martial, including for example eighty six sword pommels and two hundred and seventeen hilt plates and fittings, but with the addition of some magnificent Christian pieces and the inscribed strip with the text 'Rise up, O Lord, and may thy enemies be dispersed and those who hate thee be driven from thy face'. The dating of the finds is however a little more difficult and further study of the styles is needed to give a firmer date, but at present the 7th century is the working date for the Hoard.

The Hoard is also unusual for the unprecedented interest from the general public in the West Midlands and worldwide. This, as well as the efforts of the partner museums, led to the Hoard being declared treasure in September 2009, valued in

November of the same year and by April 2010 it had been jointly acquired by Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery and Stoke Potteries Museum and a selection of the soil covered finds were put on display in July at both museums.

Once the objects were acquired, Deborah Cane was seconded to the role of Project Manger and 'The Conservation Plan' was written in consultation with the Metals Conservation Department at the British Museum (available to view on the Staffordshire Hoard web site). This includes guiding principles, project structure, treatment strategies and an initial timetable. The Plan was written to allow phase 1 conservation examination, cleaning and documentation to begin in order to facilitate requests for objects to go on exhibition. At this point funds had been secured from the Art Fund, the National Memorial Fund, public donations and National Geographic for a team of three conservators for a two year period.

With the funding secured the Conservation programme was able to start. One of the first actions was to set up the Conservation Advisory Panel, a panel of ten specialists from the conservation sector that would provide advice and support to the core team. It meets four times a year and is available to advise at other times. The next actions to be put in place were the appointments of two project conservation

Pectoral cross before (left) and after (right) conservation





Deborah (Magnoler) and Cymbeline select objects to place under the microscope in a trial public tour

posts and the Placement Programme. The Placement Programme was set up to allow both conservation students and conservators in professional practice to participate in the work on the Hoard and to share their knowledge with the team. There were eight student and professional placements on offer and in total there were sixty eight applicants. It is also hoped that the project will be able to engage with local volunteers and back to work schemes. These do, however, have to be well thought out and tightly managed to allow the participants to be involved at a level that is applicable to their skills.

As well as conserving the objects the team has been tasked with maintaining a public profile as there is a strong ongoing interest in the project from the public. A number of activities are planned such as monthly video blogs for the web site and updates on the conservation programme, facilitated public tours to the gallery and studio and presentations to specialist and general interest groups. The blogs are aimed at showing the real life conservation work, edited of course, but filmed and directed by the team. They will aim to introduce the team and the daily work as well as specific types of work such as grouping object types from the Hoard, which may include staff from other institutions. The first blogs can be seen on the Staffordshire Hoard face book site and there will be more to follow. The public tours will be a challenge as the places are limited to a maximum of ten and access and security measures have been reviewed and tightened. Despite this challenge the tours have proved popular with the public as the entire monthly tours are fully booked. The visitors pay a fee of £20 for the exclusive tours and the money raised goes back into funding the conservation, this is explained to the visitors at the point of sale and on the tour. Feedback to date suggests that the public are pleased to have access and are



The Conservation Studio, equipped with microscopes from Meiji and Leica

pleased to be able to say they are helping to fund the conservation of the Hoard.

In addition the team helps facilitate film crews and visits from specialists and researchers. On top of all this activity, nothing must impact on the conservation schedule which is essential to the delivery of the Staffordshire Hoard touring exhibition this summer. Public, media and specialist interest in the Hoard remains strong with forty one visits to the studios in the last six months.

The conservation of the Hoard to meet the varying requirements of the exhibition programme, research teams and analytical teams is a challenge but one that is exciting and rewarding. Working with the co-owners The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery in Stoke-on-Trent, the wider partners, research teams and the British Museum offers many opportunities to the conservation team to learn from and interact with specialists in their fields and gain confidence in their knowledge of Anglo Saxon artifacts. The main challenge may be maintaining the funding for the programme past the initial two years, particularly in the current economic climate.

Further information can be found on the BMAG, PMAG and Staffordshire Hoard websites:

[www.bmag.org.uk](http://www.bmag.org.uk)

[www.staffordshirehoard.org.uk](http://www.staffordshirehoard.org.uk)

[www.stoke.gov.uk](http://www.stoke.gov.uk)

The Icon Metals group are also organizing two visits a year to view the Hoard in the studios and discuss the conservation work with the team. The dates are: Tuesday 6 September and TBC. Places are limited to fifteen. For further details contact Fran Clarke at [f.clarke@mosi.org.uk](mailto:f.clarke@mosi.org.uk) Deborah\_Cane@birmingham.gov.uk

#### Gold eagle mount



# Interim Preservation

Simon Barcham Green, Icon life member and former Chair of the Institute of Paper Conservation, shares thoughts about the fate of many collections and his own in particular

We hear plenty about interim management nowadays but it occurred to me recently that much of our cultural heritage is in 'Interim Preservation' – using both words in the widest possible sense. In this case by *interim* I mean that a collection is being held temporarily between its former use and some long term, stable situation. For example the original owners may just have it in store until they can get round to doing something or maybe it has been rescued to avoid destruction but a permanent solution has yet to be found. *Preservation* could mean anything from being kept rusting on a heritage railway siding to a fairly well organised and protected situation.

The Hayle Mill Archives which I own may be typical of many collections. Hayle Mill, Maidstone was built in 1808 as what was then a state of the art, small handmade paper mill. It was leased to John Green in 1812 and purchased by him in 1817. John Green and his son developed the business fairly successfully and for a while rented and operated another small mill nearby. In the hard times of 1838 they went bankrupt but John's brother, Samuel Green, took on the business and employed his brother to run it. The business flourished and at one stage Samuel's son John Barcham Green owned four paper mills and four other mills. Many more changes occurred over the years and paper was made

Hayle Mill from the north east, c.1870





As bad as it gets, but the alternative could have been a trip in a skip to landfill.

by hand at Hayle Mill until 1987. The archives are managed by my wife Maureen and me and form the subject of her current PhD studies and her recent book *Papermaking at Hayle Mill 1808–1987*.<sup>1</sup>

The early papermaking Greens appear to have been well organised and kept detailed records indefinitely. Having tens of thousands of square feet of paper storage did not encourage a disposals policy so we have a large collection dating back to 1838 with some items from even earlier. The Hayle Mill archives comprise one of the largest collections of business archives in the UK.<sup>2</sup> Archives is rather a narrow word for the collection and its breadth is as much of a challenge as its scale. It includes:

- All the usual business ledgers in various formats and including wage records back to 1837, production, sales and financial records from about 1850 and huge quantities of correspondence.<sup>3</sup> The latter comprise several dozen letter books of outgoing mail whereas incoming letters are mainly folded in their original envelopes. The correspondence and a variety of reports also cover a wide variety of papermaking and other business activity only partly related to Hayle Mill, trade union negotiations, child labour and family matters that have been kept with the business collection. As a whole they give an amazing insight into the way a family ran its business in the 19th and 20th centuries and the many other things that interested them.

Some of the huge vellum covered wages ledgers from the late 19th century



The 1930s to 1950s correspondence in open crates. The 3 bladed wooden stirrers were used to agitate pulp in the papermaking vats

- A variety of papermaking tools including about 200 pairs of moulds, many of considerable interest and beauty.
- Large quantities of paper, including the first making of RWS watercolour paper and the first filter paper made in the UK.
- Photographs dating back to the 1870s including glass plate negatives, some wet collodion.
- Books about papermaking and related subjects.

By the middle of the 20th century we became aware that our business records were of some wider significance and progressively started to catalogue them and take more positive steps to look after them. In the 1970s we had valuable advice from an archivist and conservators at Kent County Archives. The better parts of the collection were gradually brought together in some spare rooms of the former mill owners' house which had been restored in 1978; shelving and archival boxes were procured and an outline retention and disposal policy agreed and gradually implemented. Nevertheless the collection continued to grow. As not everything could be stored in the dry and generally warm house, some of the collection remained in draughty outbuildings.

After production ended, those officials charged with the protection of historic buildings proved most obstructive to finding a viable future use for Hayle Mill which is Grade II\*

The rented barn: our sophisticated, watertight, naturally ventilated artefact collection facility





In this mixed collection, the five wooden crates hide behind the Albion press and a fibreglass water tank with papermaking moulds along the right hand wall

listed. As a result, restoration did not start until 2005, eighteen years after closure. Despite our considerable efforts and expense, the buildings gradually deteriorated and became insecure, causing us to be concerned not only about theft and vandalism but also the risk of fire. In 1999, we rented some farm buildings near Maidstone and moved the archives and many artefacts to what is still intended to be interim storage. The accommodation is in two buildings. The first had previously been converted to offices with storage and is air and weather tight. We have installed storage heaters to minimise damp and in the room containing the most interesting parts of the collection we also have a domestic dehumidifier. This does a good job as about five litres of water are discarded every week or two throughout the year. A cheap digital thermohygrometer shows that humidity is below 40%, the minimum temperature is about 5–10°C and the maximum is similar to that outdoors.

The smaller room has good shelving, a small office area and an excellent plan chest. Two larger rooms in this building also have good shelving although part of the collection is stored in cardboard boxes stacked on pallets. This area also contains the extensive paper collection, both for its historical value (including many fine watermarks) and stock for sale.

We also rent a brick barn with eaves at about five metres and a corrugated asbestos roof. It is watertight and remarkably dry

The collection includes wages records from 1838 to 1987, the oldest being these narrow paperbound volumes



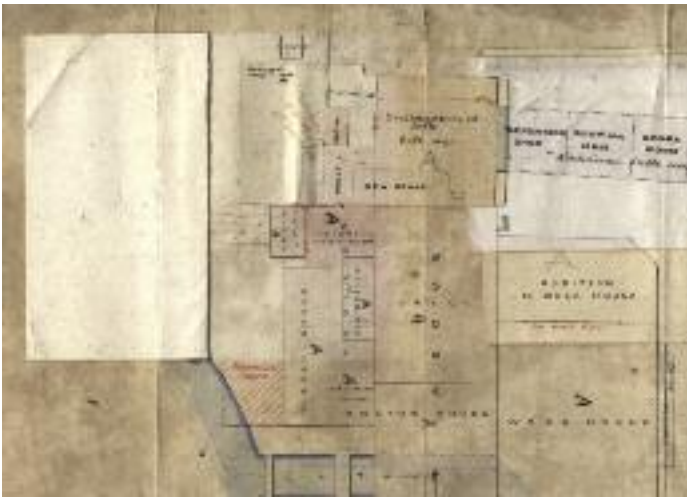
New storage box with typical samples of machine made papers from the 1950s. Stained but not nibbled – in this case at least

considering that it is certainly not airtight; arguably, though, it is well ventilated! The main purpose of this store is to keep the papermaking moulds in as well as some iron hand printing presses and pulp preparation equipment. However spare space attracted other items including quite a lot of furniture and timber from the Mill and a variety of metal and wooden tools.

During 2010 I started working through the barn to sell or dispose of items that had no particular significance to the collection and reorganise those items retained. My approach to de-acquisitioning artefacts is simple. Dust them down, photograph them, sell them (sometimes via eBay) or take them to the dump for recycling or conversion to energy. Sale proceeds help mitigate the huge cost of keeping the collection – particularly rent, insurance, business rates and electricity. One of my aims has also been to make space to move stock around and to provide access to five large wooden packing cases and their contents. These are mainly thought to be correspondence files from the 1930s to the 1950s. This vague description reflects the fact that the collection has never been closely examined although some interesting items were spotted at one time. For example a very spirited letter from my Grandfather Jack Barcham Green to our Australian agents on 8 December 1941; he was

Sundries including: papermaking felts, a 25lb 'Valley Beater' for preparing pulp, a small, very early (1820s) Albion printing press and on the floor parts of an 1835 Columbian printing press (recently sold to a collector in Nuremberg)





Part of a plan of Hayle Mill showing how fold out flaps were added to show changes in the buildings. The base plan was surveyed 20 May 1867.



Wider view of same plan (all flaps flat)

delighted that the Americans were now in the war and did not seem too concerned about the devastation of Pearl Harbour. Now I am sure that letter is in there somewhere, but where? Before these letters were put in the crates, they had been stored in a loft under a slate roof in full sunshine. Considering they are mainly on cheap manifold paper, their condition was remarkably good. Conventional views on paper deterioration would have forecast that they would have crumbled away after half a century of this treatment – the loft temperature was found to be about 40°C when the documents were removed and that was in April.

To get at these crates a large water tank full of bags of papermaking fibre had to be sold first. Through eBay I sold the fibre for £1 to an artist in East Kent. But underneath the fibre I found boxes and bundles of papermaking samples. This was when I conceived the expression *Interim Preservation*. Clearly this situation could not continue and preservation simply meant not taking them to the tip. Some of the plastic bags of soft fibre had split or been chewed open and had provided excellent bedding for generations of rodents, arthropods and even a few snails. My unwanted chore was to excavate the samples, reduce the risk of further major attack and remove the very unpleasant fibre and excreta mixture.

Whilst I did this I reflected that, however much we in Icon may concentrate on great national collections, a huge part of our heritage is actually stored in less than ideal conditions. Does



Part of the collection of two hundred papermaking moulds, many dating back to the 19th century

this mean it has no inherent value or is neglected or perhaps should be dumped? The reality is that people retain material for decades or centuries without having the resources to do so. Nationally and globally we could never afford the resources to look after all this material 'properly' so often the only option is to retain it in less than ideal conditions. On the other hand, a lot of material survives very well in these circumstances, as this is after all what its creators were used to.

At the present time I am gradually selling old paper stocks and papermaking moulds, including some of the most historic ones which I had previously hoped to pass on with the archives to some suitable institution. It has proved very hard to find such a new owner just for the archives<sup>4</sup> and I have reluctantly concluded that the prospects of finding an organisation that has the facilities and interest to take on the archives and the very different moulds are very low. One of our long mahogany packing benches will be put into use to sort through the 20th century correspondence. Most will go to be recycled and I am investing in non-archival plastic boxes bought cheaply on the internet to keep the interesting parts. In the real world of limited resources these will at least provide some protection against dirt and those rodents and arthropods.

#### Notes

1 See <https://sites.google.com/site/simonbarchamgreen/Home/papermaking-at-hayle-mill>

2 In 1995 the Victoria and Albert Museum considered that the document collection and the samples (main collection and security) would need about 346 feet (105m) of shelving and ten 10-drawer (50 mm drawers) plan chests after weeding. This was about ten times the size of the Heal & Son Ltd archive, which at the time was the largest in the V&A's Archive of Art and Design. However this estimate did not include much of the material now stored in the barn which is referred to later in the article. The total volume is probably at least twice the V&A estimate.

3 For more information on the main archive collection see <https://sites.google.com/site/simonbarchamgreen/Home/archives>

4 Anyone with a serious interest can contact me at [simongreen@aol.com](mailto:simongreen@aol.com)

There is more from Simon about his collection of papermaking moulds on page 3

# news from the groups

## BOOK AND PAPER GROUP

Our all day event and General Meeting at the British Museum on 11 March 2011 was very successful and we are pleased to see that it was a full house! The evening was also chosen as the right time to launch the pilot of the BPG Conservation Training Register. We are very hopeful and proud of this initiative, which we believe has great potential. Please do have a look and participate in what could be the first of a wider scheme if it proves successful. The scheme relies on members continuing to give us their training requests and proposals, allowing us to provide the most relevant training and the maximum benefit from your B&PG membership. Its success depends on you. More information on the new Register can be found on page 8 or for more detail about it please do get in touch with Victoria Stevens at [victoria.stevens@magd.ox.ac.uk](mailto:victoria.stevens@magd.ox.ac.uk)

We also launched our wordpress site 'the gathering' and hope to have that up on the BPG part of the site very soon so that you can share ideas and information with each other, as well as enjoy hopefully lively discussions in an informal format. The Gathering is part forum, part magazine, what you will: it's a place to meet up and talk.

Please continue to contribute to Icon News and if you want to share something but do not feel it is quite 'there' just pass it to us for submission on the website.

If you are interested in becoming a committee member, or can volunteer your time for special projects, please contact us and let us know.

We continue to hear stories of cuts and job losses in the sector – please keep in touch with us and let us know if we can do anything to help.

Icon represents you – your membership is important to the continued success of Icon, so do not forget your renewals. If you subscribe to any of the other Icon groups, it is also important that you make sure that the Icon administration office know who your choices are for primary and secondary membership. Please make sure that, of course, the Book and Paper Group is No.1, as our allowance for the year is based on these figures!

*Caroline Checkley-Scott*

## TEXTILE GROUP

April 4 saw the annual Textile Group Forum reinstated at the Victoria and Albert Museum. It was really well attended with excellent talks, as Sarah Howard, Senior Conservator at Hampshire County Council Museums Service reports here:-

This year's Forum 'Incompatible Partners? Challenges of Composite Objects' focused on treating composite objects, objects that don't always fit neatly into other subject areas for discussion. The papers reflected on this theme and the issues around compatibility, whether

considering objects or individual object components, object treatments, or the impact of working on or curating such objects.

There was a good mix of practical treatment papers with detailed descriptions of how complex objects were conserved. Several papers highlighted the benefits of working with conservators in other disciplines on collaborative projects where shared knowledge and experience can provide creative treatment solutions. Imaginative display mounts were illustrated, where additional support was provided when direct conservation intervention wasn't possible. Other papers outlined the benefits of in depth analysis which enabled a thorough understanding of manufacturing processes and the impact these have on the way an object ages. Conservation treatments can be reviewed in the light of analysis and provide the conservator with additional confidence. Conservators can then set parameters for discussion enabling realistic expectations between colleagues and clients. (Abstracts of all the talks are available on the Group's web pages)

The Forum was a great success and thanks must go to all the speakers for their openness and willingness to share their experiences and to review their treatments and thought processes. Thanks also to Alison Lister who so ably chaired the event and to the committee whose tireless work in arranging such a varied programme of papers and organising these Forums is much appreciated by all who attend.

The Forum included the Textile Group AGM at which it was announced that Leanne Tonkin will be joining the Textile Group Committee as Secretary. Leanne completed the MA in Textile Conservation at The Textile Conservation Centre (formerly the University of Southampton) in 2009, and then took up her role as textile conservator at the Textile Conservation Studio of the People's History Museum, Manchester, after completing a successful Icon/HLF internship there. We all look forward to working with Leanne.

Events to look out for in the coming months include the ongoing Back to Basics Workshops, with the second of the 'Upholstery: History & Techniques' in September, this time being held at Burghley House in Lincolnshire. A new workshop is also being offered on 'Taking patterns from historic costume' and this will be held in Norwich. A programme for the visit on 23 May to the People's History Museum, Manchester is on the web page, and don't forget to sign up for the visit in July to Henry Poole & Co, Savile Row Tailor, an excellent opportunity to see behind the scenes. For further details and information on all events please check the Textile Group web page and Listings. If you have any ideas for visits or workshops do please get in touch with a member of the Committee, our contact details are also available on the web pages.

## ARCHIVING A COLLECTION OF HANDMADE PAPER by Fiona McLees

### Introduction

Following completion of an MA in Conservation at Camberwell in July 2010, an opportunity arose for me to undertake a project at the British Museum to archive the Western Art on Paper (WAP) studio's collection of historic handmade paper samples. I was fortunate enough to receive funding from The National Association of Decorative and Fine Art Societies (NADFAS) Patricia Fay Memorial Fund to support three months work on this project and this experience has enabled me to rapidly expand my knowledge of papermaking history. In addition, I have learnt how to image and record watermarks and set up a rudimentary database of the papers and their characteristics. I hope to explain here a little about the genesis of the project and my involvement in it over the last three months.

### The Paper Collection

The samples in WAP came from several different sources and can be divided into three groups: first, like any paper conservation studio, WAP had over the years gradually accumulated many old backing papers, album pages, flyleaves and so on, which have been hoarded to use as repair papers or for research. Secondly, this collection was added to by a generous donation of similar material (album pages, backings etc.) from the print dealer Christopher Mendez. The third group is a gift of papers from American paper conservator Elizabeth Coombs, and this group contains a wide variety of papers, including several from American mills such as the Dard Hunter Mill.

### Aims of the Project

It is hoped that creating an archive of these papers will provide a useful resource for conservators, scientists, and students wishing to research artists' materials. The wide variety of papers in the collection makes them an excellent handling resource as they reveal many characteristics, such as edge chains, deckle edges, unusual textures, and maker's faults such as water-spots, which may be less easy to observe in prints and drawings. Additionally, many of the papers have fine examples of watermarks which will be recorded and imaged, and hopefully add to the extant archive of watermarks. The idea was to create a simple database in which details of each paper could be entered and to have the samples housed in a format that could be accessed via the Museum's conservation library.

### Setting up an Archive

The first step was to decide which characteristics and measurements of the paper it would be most pertinent to record. This was achieved by researching other paper sample archives and watermark databases in order to see how they have been organised, and subsequent to this research I then discussed with the WAP conservators which features they felt were most relevant in defining a handmade paper. Recording the number of chain lines per centimetre was considered to be essential as it would allow users to locate papers which

share a similar laid line structure, whereas recording paper colour may not be relevant, since many of the papers are discoloured and faded as they are over two centuries old. Additionally, classifying paper colour is rather subjective and what some may call 'cream' another may call 'beige'.

A spreadsheet was created in Excel, with columns in which the measurements and unique characteristics could be stored. Some of the information deemed appropriate to record were as follows: basic dimensions, weight, gsm, laid and chain line measurements, watermarks and countermarks, and also the appearance of peculiarities of formation such as deckle edges, edge chains, water-spots, unusual textures etc. Date, country of origin, and mill or papermaker's name were entered where known or if discovered through investigation.

It was important to use consistent methods to record and examine the papers: for example, the measurement of 'height' was always taken in the direction running parallel to the chain lines. Guidelines were established to ensure that these methods would be adhered to, both now and in the future, so that all of the data is comparable. Each paper was then measured, examined on a lightbox and observed using raking light in order to identify its unique characteristics. Watermark text and graphics were also briefly described, using standardised language as far as possible.

Following examination and recording of characteristics, each paper was then scanned using a positive film setting so that an image of the watermark and paper structure could be stored digitally. This use of a film scanner gives very satisfactory results, and also enables further manipulation of the image in order to sharpen indistinct watermarks or compare similar watermarks. A digital scale was added to each saved image.

### Conclusion

So far the project has focused mainly upon the recording of data but the next important step will be to devise suitable housing for the samples so that they can be examined and viewed. To date, approximately fifty papers from the Mendez donation have been examined, imaged and catalogued. I also

#### Examining paper using raking light



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Selection of papers from the WAP collection

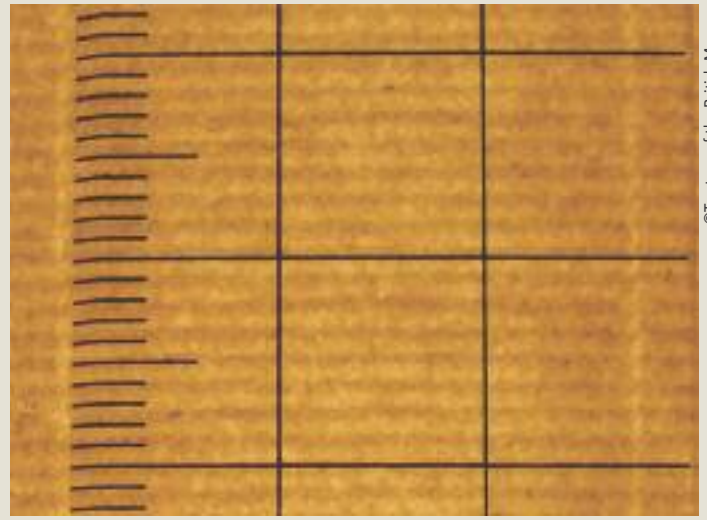
hope to continue working through the remainder of the collection and I am particularly interested to examine and learn more about the American handmade papers.

Closely examining so many papers has given me a much better understanding of the process of handmaking paper, especially as characteristics and structure are revealed in a clarity not always visible in paper that has been used for printing and drawing: blank sheets make it much easier to appreciate details such as surface texture and watermarks. I have been able to identify various characteristics indicative of the sequential stages involved in papermaking. For example, unique details of each mould such as additional edge chain-lines; formation faults such as water-spots or pulp disturbances; interesting surface textures from rough felts and other pressing materials; and back creases showing where the paper was hung up to dry. Hairs embedded in the paper surface and areas where fingers have accidentally pushed at the damp pulp create a wonderful and immediate connection with the papermaker.

The opportunity to handle and examine so many papers has also given me a better idea of what is typical and what is unusual in a paper, so that as a bench conservator I have a more comprehensive sliding scale in my mind onto which I can chart the characteristics of a particular paper. For example, it is more apparent to me now if a paper is unusually textured or has surprisingly widely spaced chain lines. This is knowledge that I would have built up eventually as a paper conservator but would perhaps have taken a longer time to develop without the experience of working on this project. I hope that this project will enhance and direct my future career as a conservator in two important ways: first, a deeper understanding of the characteristics and structure of paper will undoubtedly be an asset when undertaking interventive conservation treatments. Secondly, I would very much like to apply the knowledge that I have gained to examining and studying the papers used by a specific artist, and hope that at some point in the future I will be able to undertake primary research in this area.

### Acknowledgments

Many thanks to all at the WAP studio at the British Museum, and also to NADFAS for supporting my involvement with the project.



Measuring laid lines

### A few useful references (These are all held in the Chantry Library)

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Walsh, Judith and Peck Dirda, Marian (2001) *An Introduction to the National Gallery of Art's Paper Sample Collection*. In *Looking at Paper: Evidence and Interpretation: Symposium Proceedings Toronto 1999*. Ottawa: Canadian Conservation Institute, pp. 76–81

### Websites

Bernstein Project: [www.memoryofpaper.eu](http://www.memoryofpaper.eu)

British Association of Paper Historians: [www.baph.org.uk](http://www.baph.org.uk)

Thomas L. Gravell Watermark Archive: [www.gravell.org](http://www.gravell.org)



Raking light detail revealing impressions from the rough felt used for pressing and unusually deep chain lines

Montgolfier watermark dated 1769 from the papermill in Annonay, France. In 1783 two of the Montgolfier family attempted the first flight in a hot air balloon which they had invented themselves, made from silk and lined with paper.



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# reviews

## BOOK

**POLYCHROME WOOD: post-prints of a conference in two parts organised by the Institute of Conservation Stone & Wall Paintings Group (Hampton Court Palace, October 2007 and March 2008)**

**Odgers, D and Humphries, L eds.**

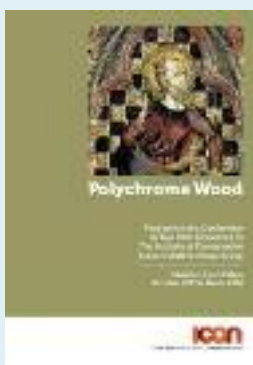
The Institute of Conservation, London, 2010

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£30 to Icon members

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These post-prints contain fifteen authored papers from two one-day conferences organised by the Icon Stone and Wall Paintings Group on the history, techniques, and conservation of polychromed wood. The book brings together a broad and diverse collection of essays by material specialists, conservators, and conservation managers, the majority being based in the UK. The material and sites covered are equally diverse, ranging from delicate early mediaeval carvings and panel paintings to monumental architectural features such as church screens and elaborate ceilings.



The volume begins with a useful introduction by **Jim Coulson** on the physical and structural properties of timber. Coulson attempts to dispel some of the generalisations and preconceptions often attached to the topic. His paper stresses the importance of closely characterising the timber, along with the manner by which it has been prepared and used, as these both have a huge effect on the object's ageing process and long-term preservation.

Other contributions concentrate on the timber support. **Hugh Harrison** draws on his considerable professional experience in the conservation and repair of historic timber structures to highlight the importance of recognising the structural requirements imposed on the timber, and the challenges inherent when that material is also acting as a support for historic paint finishes. Through examples of his work, Harrison demonstrates the necessity of active dialogue between timber and painting conservators to ensure effective decision-making. **Al Brewer's** contribution further explores the structures issues of panel paintings through recent work undertaken for the Royal Collection, and is complemented by **Spike Bucklow's**

research which studied the construction of church retables through documentary research, direct investigations and detailed reconstructions.

**Eddie Sinclair** and **Pauline Plummer** discuss the richness and historic importance of the painted rood screens which have survived within English parish churches, in spite of the Reformation and over zealous Victorian restoration. Both papers identify how ongoing neglect has increased the vulnerability of these works of art to otherwise avoidable damage and loss. The authors demonstrate how carefully planned and modest conservation can restore the legibility and beauty of the surviving polychromy, and increase our understanding of medieval painting techniques, and result in reinstating the screens as a focal point within the churches. Further thematic studies include a detailed and extremely informative review of painted tomb testers by **Lucy Wrapson** and **Marie-Louise Sauerberg**.

Looking north of the border, **Ailsa Murray's** paper identifies another important but largely unrecognised body of historic interior decoration – Renaissance painted timber ceilings in Scotland – and traces the approach taken by Historic Scotland to ensure that they are properly recorded and conserved.

**Lee Prosser** of Historic Royal Palaces and **Christine Sitwell** of the National Trust both examine issues from the perspective of those responsible for the ongoing care of the sites and their objects. In the case of Kew Palace, Prosser discusses the opportunities that arose during the palace's recent restoration to better understand its decorative history. The fascinating discoveries made during the work not only informed the approach taken to the restoration but also to the interpretation and display of the building. Sitwell shares the challenges faced by the Trust in preserving a rare painted Chinese House located in the gardens at Stowe, where issues of exposure to direct weathering and extensive past treatment had to be balanced against the need to make decisions on retention, restoration and reconstruction of damaged or lost elements. **Tobit Curteis's** paper further discusses the vulnerability of painted architectural timberwork to environmental fluctuations, and shows how detailed investigation and diagnostic monitoring of sites provides important data by which the effects of the environment on timber may be better understood.

Although many of the papers cover broad or thematic issues, the publication also includes some detailed conservation case studies, including the conservation of the painted ceilings at the Bodleian Library by **Madeleine Katkov**, and the conservation of

a medieval domestic painted screen and a monumental chapel ceiling by **Ruth McNeilage**. The publication also contains a few technical and scientific studies, notably the work by **Chantal-Helen Thuer** on the difficulties of facing size-tempera painted timber, and **Ian Tyers's** novel approach to the use of dendrochronology on smaller painted wooden sculptures.

This is an important publication, which brings together a topic normally dispersed amongst a variety of historical and conservation disciplines. While beautifully presented, the size of the illustrations somewhat let down the beauty and importance of the objects, however the diversity of the material presented and its relevance more than makes up for it. This volume is a testament to the small band of volunteers within the Icon Stone and Wall Paintings Group, for bringing the outcome of a successful conference series to a wider audience.

*Robert Gowing FIIC ACR*

## SEMINARS

**MISTAKEN IDENTITY**  
**Icon Archaeology and Ethnography Groups**  
London 14 January 2011

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The New Year's meeting was held at the Institute of Archaeology, UCL, and the theme was 'Mistaken Identity'. The individual talks and group discussion covered mistaken material identifications and the need to be sure of identity before proceeding with certain treatments, the inherent difficulties involved in identifying the meaning of the archaeological record, and personal anecdotes of mistaken identity. The meeting was a welcome chance for the Archaeology and Ethnography groups to come together and share ideas and experiences, and then socialise at the enjoyable party that followed.

**Jim Spriggs** spoke about whale products and their absence from the archaeological record; the nature of the material means that much of it does not survive (eg. blubber, oil, ambergris, baleen), and the size of the animal meant that it would have been processed in-situ (at the kill area) rather than there being identifiable processing workshops. Therefore there is a need for us to look for traces of such products, such as in ceramic vessels, if we are to identify their true role in past societies. Whale products also exemplify that mistaken identities can arise due to linguistic terms; baleen is also known as whalebone but it is not bone (it is keratin based), and in historical accounts baleen can (confusingly!) mean either

whalebone or whale.

**Pieta Greaves** also spoke about issues of correctly identifying the evidence in the archaeological record, this time related to the Bronze Age Burial Cist at Royal Forteviot. The Cist is important due to the high amount of organic material that has been preserved, for example it is the first direct evidence of flowers being placed in a grave in Scotland (evidence of the flowers themselves, not just the pollen). The rare organic evidence may shed light on similar burials and aid identification of their contents.

**John Price** gave a talk that covered various instances of mistaken identity in the conservation world, relating to people, objects and treatments, also how technological advances are increasingly helping our powers of identification, and the need to be aware of how our own preconceptions can lead to our misidentifying the evidence before us. The latter point was exemplified with a fun, wintry illustration befitting a New Year's meeting: that because we always speak of snowmen we assume them to be men but sometimes this can be a complete gender misidentification, as the photo showed on closer inspection. Why not build a snowwoman?

As Chair of the afternoon session, **Beth Werrett** then kick-started a group discussion on mistaken identities with her own experience of identifying a comb as cellulose nitrate rather than the tortoiseshell it was imitating, an identification which greatly changed the treatment of the object. The discussion was an interesting chance to hear other such stories, and compare the differing approaches of archaeological and ethnographic conservators, and where such approaches overlap. The party was then an informal setting in which the groups could mingle, continue such discussions and make new acquaintances.

**Elizabeth McCormick**

Objects Conservator  
(MSc Conservation for Archaeology and Museums UCL graduate)

### 'DON'T LEAVE IT UP TO LUX'.

Renaissance East of England  
Cambridge 10 March 2011

*Don't leave it up to Lux!* was a day of seminars on lighting for heritage organised by Renaissance East of England with help from other sponsors and institutions including Icon Care of Collections Group. It took place on a sunny spring day in Murray Edwards College (formerly Newhall), in Cambridge. It was billed as a day that would cater to a broad spectrum of museum people and knowledge bases and so it

covered a broad range of topics. These included the basics of light deterioration and how it can affect different types of material in different ways, different strategies for dealing with lighting in a museum and how these are perceived, a discussion on how humans see things particularly colour and a run down on current LED technology.

Considering the range of experience in the audience and the depth of the topic, the talks covered the basics well and also offered some insights into more technical aspects of light and perception. Of particular personal interest was the talk from Dr. **John Mollon** on perception and colour in which he used well thought out examples and demonstrations to explain what are quite complex theories of colour and vision. **Paul Ruffie's** talk, whereby he managed in a humorous way to detail the basics of LEDs, their pitfalls and positives and examples of use, as well as things to be aware of in specification, was a highlight. He managed to relay so much useful information all in thirty minutes while also keeping it not too technical.

The next talk then focused on a case study on LEDs from a different perspective; that of a facilities manager. **Cat Morgan**, Principal Manager Visitor Services and Operations for Manchester City Art Gallery, gave a run down of the work they have done and are planning to do to introduce LEDs to their galleries. Though this process will involve what might seem prohibitive set up costs, Cat detailed the convincing savings to be made in terms of energy. This means not only environmental benefits but significant energy and maintenance cost reduction.

A mention should also be made of the small but perfectly edited trade show which could be viewed during the tea breaks and lunch; there were some truly innovative and impressive technologies on show and a willingness to explain how they worked.

The Care Of Collections Group AGM took place over the lunch period and Chair **Jane Thompson-Webb**, in addition to the usual business, asked particularly for members to comment on the ideas for activities sheet. This can be found on the CCG webpage and your thoughts emailed to Jonathan Rhys-Lewis, details below. The group is aware in the current economy that some of the events the group used to run, such as the visits, are hard to justify to management and seek to make events of more practical benefit, perhaps even fitting into a CPD plan.

*Don't leave it up to Lux!* was well organised with balanced talks appealing to a mixed audience, I hope everyone found it as useful as I did.

Details of where to send your feedback on Care of Collections Group activities:

jonathan.rhys-lewis@ntlworld.com

**Dervilla O'Dwyer**  
Historic Royal Palaces

## WORKSHOP

### PAPER BINDING WORKSHOP

Icon Book & Paper Group  
London 4 March 2011

Tutor **Tracey Rowledge**, fine binder and conservator, presented a wonderful paper binding structure to members of the Book and Paper Group. The non-adhesive binding is composed of a continuous cover which layers itself around the textblock and closes through the use of hidden tabs on the interior. The text block is sewn to 'tapes' cut out of the cover and additional creases create a yapp-like feature which enables the book to lie completely flat.

We used hand coloured paper of her own design to cover the textblock. As the cover is folded back onto itself, it provides strength without adding too much bulk. Eight scored divisions create simultaneously the spine lining/sewing stations; the inner and outer face of both covers; spine; tabs; and stabilizing flap. All attachment mechanisms are hidden beneath the folds and the inner covers are flush with the gutters, leaving no visible seams. This provides an elegant and clean appearance, but the structure is easily revealed should it be necessary. Adding to the effectiveness of the method, tabs are inserted into the stations which were already cut for sewing. No measurements need to be taken to accurately make the tabs, they are merely lined up with the already existing point of insertion and cut. These tabs are then folded between the rear cover layers without a noticeable increase in bulk. All structural elements are contained within and effected by this paper cover; dramatically increasing efficiency in production by removing additional steps and materials.

Rowledge provided many insights into her creative process, both about the development of this structure and her work as a whole. Her experimentation with the structure was a process that took many years, and she brought examples of previous attempts to discuss what did and did not work in each. As the binding developed over time, we could see the essential aspects of trial and error, reflection upon results, and critical analysis of the desired effects. She explained that in designing a new structure, we must plan it out all the way to the end, so that we may work backwards and know where to begin.

Additionally, she discussed her production process and the applications of skills learned



The spine after the spaces are cut

through the pressures of time and cost. As a self-employed binder and conservator, she has had to learn great levels of efficiency, as well as the communication skills to educate clients when necessary. As many of the participants were students, it was very useful to have these practical aspects of self-employment discussed. Hearing her stories and approaches to running an independent business partnership, and the practical aspect of how effective independent skills are learned, is a necessary tangent to conservation training.

Her teaching style was really superb. She managed the various levels of participants well by always going back to the basics. Each technique was explained right from the start, and we all picked up interesting new techniques in one place or another. The workshop was the perfect length for a one-day course so that we could all work at our own pace, solve problems as they occurred, and get plenty of one-on-one with Rowledge. As there was some time left over towards the end, she discussed some of her other conservation structures. She is an active participant in *Tomorrow's Past*, an organization of binder/conservators who are stretching the boundaries of conservation rebinding. The approach they take is one which acknowledges the continuing life and vitality of the antiquarian book as an object still in use. When rebinding is necessary for preservation or functionality, *Tomorrow's Past* sees it as an opportunity to reinvigorate the object with a sympathetic, yet creative and possibly more functional structure than an historical simulation. She went on to demonstrate her concertina binding, one which is ideal for single sheets or collections of signatures treated as pamphlets. She sews only through the peaks of the concertina, allowing the valleys to be rounded, backed, adhered, or otherwise treated as necessary. This protects the documents from any additive aspects of the binding and preserves the materiality of the textblock while giving the totality features of a common bound book. The practitioner is then freed to work more liberally with the binding as the object is no longer at risk from the process. This was the original intention for the book structure she developed and taught to us – that of

conservation rebinding.

**Colyn R. Wohlmüt**

MA Conservation student, Camberwell

## CONFERENCE

### GOING BENEATH THE SURFACE II

Icon Stone and Wall Paintings Group  
London 25 March 2011

This second single day conference concerned with removing unwanted deposits from decorative surfaces was, like the first in November last year, well attended and well received. The range of topics covered was considerable with detailed case studies from England, Eire and Italy.

Crust formation and its stratigraphy were described in a lively paper presented by Professor **Peter Brimblecombe**, an atmospheric chemist who has studied urban air pollution and its effect on health and buildings. The surface crusts on buildings provide important archaeological evidence of both the historic environment and conservation treatments; even if they are an unwanted eyesore the information they encapsulate is valuable. He described three palaces in Venice, two of which had been cleaned with acid then waxed – the surface crusts providing information not only about the cleaning, but conditions both before and after treatment (to the present day). The change of fuel – coal to oil – has reduced deterioration a hundredfold; modern crusts are thinner, have a yellow appearance, are more like an adhesive and rich in organic materials.

In an upbeat paper, Dr **Eric May**, a heritage microbiologist, considered the impact of microorganisms on stone deterioration. He introduced the concept of a 'biofilm', a range of organisms including higher plants, algae, lichen, fungi and bacteria which co-exist within stone and whose components vary depending on the season. These microorganisms in the world around us turn unwanted stone to soil and they do the same to 'important' stone in sculpture and buildings. Some organisms are able to penetrate deep into the stone, along lines of

fault, leading to exacerbated deterioration. In Cambodia a colleague of Eric's was involved in the process of removing an unwanted microorganism from the surface of an external monument only to allow a less desirable organism replace it! Summing up, Dr May explained that exposed areas of stone are more prone to mechanical damage but protected areas of stone are more prone to damage from biological sources. Tests have shown that the combined effect of salt and microorganisms is worse than salts alone. Biofilms are found everywhere, and in the process of their life cycle secrete organic and inorganic acids, as well as enzymes.

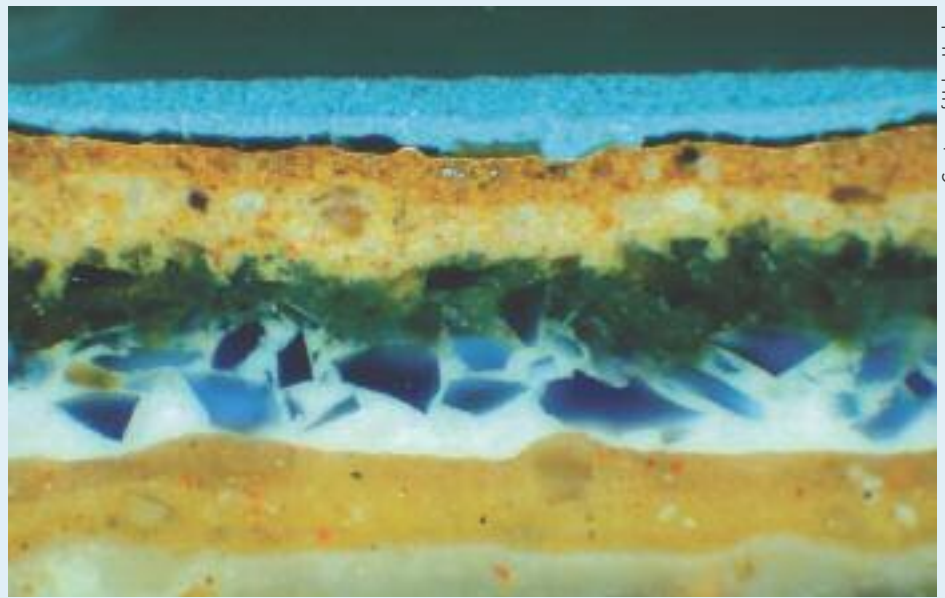
Dr **Nick Eastaugh**, a consultant in the scientific study of paint and paintings, considered the analysis of previous treatments in two case studies, the first of which tied in with the preceding paper. The internal Portland stone walls of St Paul's Cathedral were not long ago cleaned with a latex poultice; following this, limewash trials were conducted which resulted in undesirable brown stains. The client wanted to know the reason for the staining. Detailed analysis revealed it to be due to humic acids which penetrate deep into the structure of the stone, its source being the soil above the stone before being quarried. Humic acids have a characteristic brown colour, and are very resistant to further biodegradation. The application of limewash was drawing the humic acids to the surface leading to the staining. In the second case study, Dr Eastaugh, discussed the nature of an early C15 medieval 'Doom' wall painting in Holy Trinity, Coventry, both original and restoration materials. In particular he focussed on a 'reversible' coating applied in the C19 which had darkened dramatically and led to the painting becoming obscured. The coating was found to contain 'meglip', a mixture containing a drying oil, resin and drier, favoured by artists at the time. The surface of the wall painting is subject to solar radiation which causes the coating to soften and loosen volatile components, leading to cracking and detachment. Fortunately it was possible to dissolve the coating with a suitable solvent.

**Marta Caroselli** (a postgraduate student studying 'Diagnosis and Conservation of Cultural Heritage' at the University of Modena, Italy) described the carefully thought out approach to removing unwanted treatments from the stucco decoration in the Rosario Chapel in the church of San Francesco, Locarno. The decoration dates from the 1630s, but in 1759 it was re-polychromed to match with adjacent wall paintings of a similar date. The proposal was to remove later C19 layers of dirt and decoration revealing the scheme from 1759. To aid with treatment testing a

craftsman in stucco made plaster 'mock ups', painted like the original, and artificially aged. An extensive programme of testing and evaluation followed with the most effective method found to be a poultice made from agar agar gel with 2% triammonium citrate. In conclusion, Marta explained that an important component in the success of the project was the detailed scientific approach, with experimentation and development on both the 'mock ups' and art object.

In a similar vein, **Carolien Coon** described the cleaning techniques employed on two C19 plaster casts from the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) Collection. She was awarded the Nadfas conservation research prize for the research described in her paper. In 1868 the V&A acquired a collection of plaster casts taken from figures in Westminster Abbey by the firm Brucciani & Co Ltd. One of these, a cast of St John the Evangelist, was used as a model to identify treatments applied to plaster casts in the C19, to study surface contamination in museum storage since that time and to analyse current cleaning techniques on the surface of a plaster cast of this age. Carolien explained that in the C19 there were a number of coatings which might be applied to casts (i.e. beeswax, shellac, oil); and noted that unfavourable storage conditions had enabled dust to penetrate into the surface of the plaster. Of the cleaning methods tested, a latex poultice in combination with sponges and cotton wool swabs was found most effective. A second plaster cast of St Stephen was cleaned using a latex poultice, followed with the selected use of a laser.

In the afternoon, **Helen Hughes**, well known for her work in the Historic Interiors Section of English Heritage, discussed issues associated with the removal of overpaint and the decision making associated with removing overpaint. On the latter point, Helen noted that conservators are invariably focussed on 'how', but can be less involved in the 'why'. Three case studies were described: The Star Chamber (Little Castle Bolsover), Cupola of the staircase (Danson House) and the ceiling of the Drawing Room of no. 12 Lincoln's Inn Fields (The Sir John Soane Museum). Crudely repainted in 1976, analysis showed that the original polychrome decoration in The Star Chamber was in part painted using an interesting green comprising smalt (a blue pigment) pounced into the surface of wet lead white paint under a copper resin glaze. Test panels were prepared by Helen and her colleagues to determine how this was achieved – an interesting finding being that if the blue was applied too thickly the resulting green was very dark; but if the smalt was applied more thinly (allowing the white ground to grin through) the result was a translucent emerald green finish. In the Cupola of Danson House



A paint cross-section from The Star Chamber at Little Castle Bolsover in Derbyshire

overpainted trompe l'oeil paterae were revealed. Over the centuries, the blue skied Drawing Room ceiling had been repainted, on one occasion with imitation wood graining; when uncovered unfortunately the blue verditer on the ceiling had degraded to green.

Very much on a practical note, **Jane Rutherford** (Marlborough Conservation of Fine Art Ltd) described two case studies of uncovering using mechanical and water-based treatments. At the church of St James the Less, Little Tay in Essex, early C14 medieval wall paintings had unfortunately been overpainted with walmur in the 1960s which, wrongly thought to be moisture tolerant, caused the medieval paint to flake away. The walmur was removed using hot water injected via a small glass syringe behind the overpaint. This softened it to allow for its removal with an eye surgeon's scalpel – an obviously painstaking task. Jane noted that the 'default' choice of a scalpel blade 10 or 15 may not be suitable in all cases, especially where very detailed work is required. In the second case, a C14 wooden screen in Pilton Church near Barnstable, Jane used a glass engraver to remove a hard layer of red lead paint from an underlying layer of softer vermilion. Layers of overpaint over the red lead were more easily removed with the aid of Nitromors.

The next speaker was Dr **Marina Sokan**, who completed a PhD in Conservation Science at the Materials Department, Imperial College London, on 'The Surface Analysis of Laser Cleaned Museum Materials'. The aim of the paper she delivered was to demonstrate the applicability of the Q-switch Nd:YAG laser in conservation. Lasers were first used in conservation some forty years ago. Although they are easy to use today, one needs to understand the physics of how they work and be aware of the health and safety issues. Lasers employ electromagnetic radiation, and their effect is like drilling holes into the dirt and ablating (vaporising) the unwanted material. The working parameters of a laser are: wavelength, pulse duration, pulse repetition and fluence interval. The dirt layer, the dark layer, absorbs energy; whilst the lighter surface of the object being cleaned

reflects energy. Interestingly the plasma cloud which develops following ablation acts as a protective shield from the beam. Lasers are good at removing overpaint and are environmentally friendly but they are not suitable for polychromy because of the amorphous nature of a paint layer, where pigment particles are locked together in a binding medium.

Thirteen monumental paintings from 1903 by the Irish artist Joseph Carey (1859 – 1937), their conservation history and recent treatment were described by **Kiffy Stainer-Hutchins** (Kiffy Stainer-Hutchins & Co Paintings Conservation). These paintings on canvas were marouflaged to an early form of plywood and adhered to the walls of Ulster Hall, Belfast and set within decorative plaster surrounds. Carey was a watercolour painter and his technique in oil paint employed a watercolour approach using thin layers of paint and a soft 'sfumato' appearance. Over the intervening years the paintings had fared differently with some in much worse condition than others. All were on inadequate stretchers, and these were replaced; some had been stuck onto hardboard which had to be removed. Many had been crudely (and in cases extensively) overpainted with acrylic paint; others had suffered damage from microorganisms. Kiffy praised the client for being well prepared, responsible and perceptive with regard to the conservation programme; a fact which contributed to the overall success of the project.

As both conferences have been so well received, the Stone and Wall Paintings Group aim to publish the papers from both conferences in a single volume. Further details will be announced on the Icon website.

The next conference being organised by the Group is on 23 September 2011 and is concerned with the conservation of Architectural Plasterwork. More information can be found on the Icon website under the events section on the home page.

**Peter Martindale**, ACR and  
**Helen Hughes** ACR

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# in practice

## WHEN DATA BECOMES INFORMATION: Visualizing Archaeological Textiles

by Hembo Pagi, Archaeological Computing Research Group

New technologies have made data collection much easier than before – in a short time period we can produce enormous amounts of data. Often this data will remain inaccessible and unusable for third parties, either because expensive software is required or the context and background of the topic is not familiar.

As part of my master's thesis for the University of Southampton (Pagi 2008) I was working with textile datasets from Quseir Al-Qadim (Peacock 2008) and Amarna Workmens' Village projects (Kemp et al.2001). My aim was to make more than seven thousand textile descriptions easily accessible for the specialist and non-specialist, both physically and intellectually. To achieve that, I created the web application *Textile Recorder & Visualiser* (Pagi 2009) with the main function of helping to catalogue textile finds in an intuitive user interface, with the focus on visual interpretation of the data.

Walton and Eastwood (1983) put together the 'best practice' guide to textile recording where they presented four ways of representing the weave diagrammatically. I was trying to take things a step further, letting the machine do the diagrams, especially if the textile recording process is already digital (see Illustration 1).

Visual interpretation creates the possibility of reviewing data at the time of recording and, even more importantly, it provides new ways of analysis – visualization gives a better understanding of volumes, surfaces and possibility for visual comparison. We all know that an image is worth a thousand words.

The *Textile Recorder & Visualiser* creates two- and three-dimensional images of woven textiles, based on four measurements: thread count, warp thread diameter, weft

thread diameter and the weave type. The outcome is very simplistic and similar to the traditional way of illustrating woven textiles, but it is all produced while you are completing your data entry (see Illustration 2), so no extra work is involved. It is important to mention that it is not an attempt to reconstruct textiles or garments, but rather to provide an illustration and a tool for interpretation.

One of the project experiments was to apply Hammarlund's (2005) visual grouping method to computer-generated images. For example, the user can sort records by textile density and thickness. Combining the visual database with her methodology will bring the results into a photo-gallery style interface (see Illustration 3), making it more informative and easier to review the query results. Even if the real textile record and computer generated image do not match perfectly, the visual output still helps us to understand the textiles in a different style.

The *Textile Recorder & Visualizer* is not only a tool for specialists; one of the goals of the project was to make archaeological data intellectually accessible through public

Illustration 1:Textile Recorder & Visualiser data entry view



Illustration 2: Textile Browser



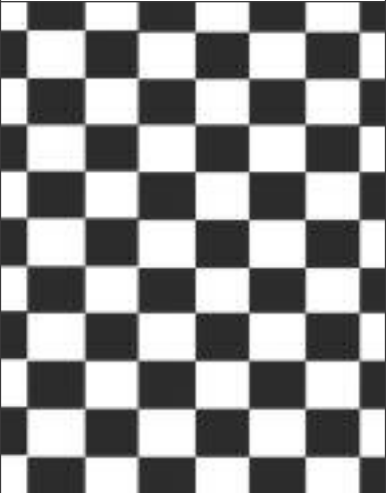
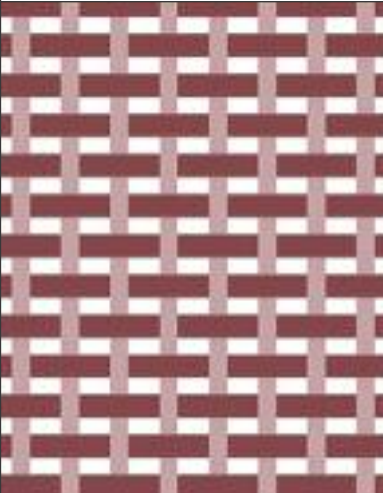

Recorded data	Conventional Representation	Computer generated 2D image	Computer generated 3D image
<b>Type:</b> tabby weave  <b>Warp</b> Thread width: 0.4 Thread count: 10 Spin: s Spin angle: tight  <b>Weft</b> Thread width: 0.5 Thread count: 12 Spin: z Spin angle: tight			

Illustration 3: Different ways of representing textile data

access in both traditional (textual) ways and through the visualizations. For example the *Textile Recorder & Visualizer* lets users browse the database content visually. Without any archaeological or textile-industry knowledge, users can differentiate patterns and fabric density.

Finally, being part of the Word Press blogging/publishing platform it is easy to combine the recorded information and reports, news about the excavation or textile-documenting project.

This was in many ways a learning project, constituting first steps towards a digital archaeological textile management and research tool. The results of the project encourage further work with the archaeological textile data to improve the digital documenting standards for archaeological textiles for the purpose of visualizing, archiving and analysing.

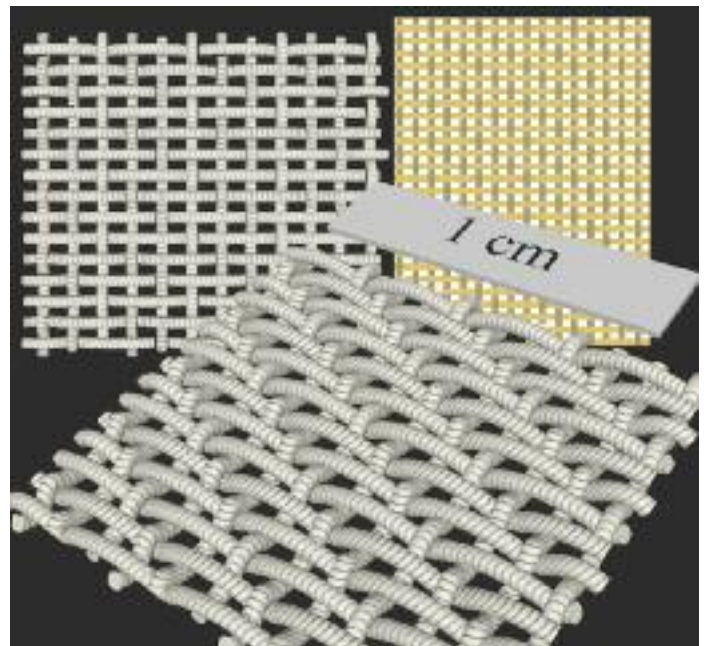
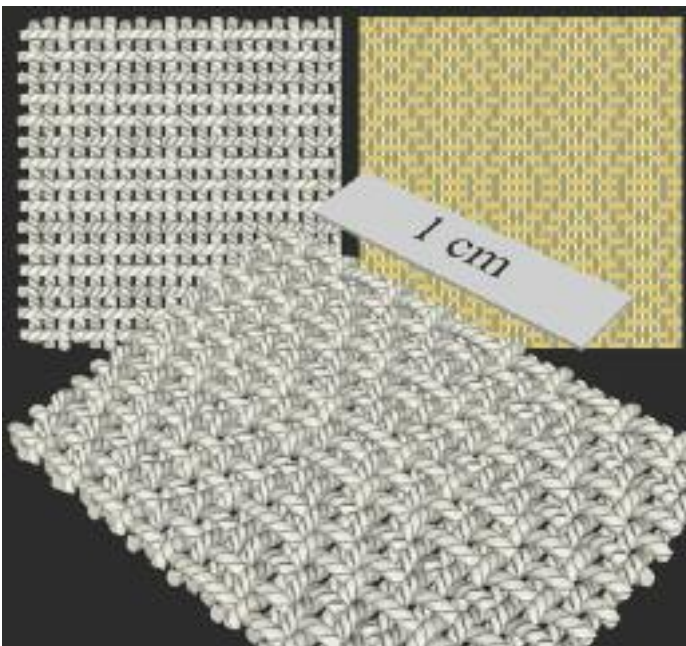
For further information and live demonstration of the *Textile*

*Recorder & Visualiser* visit: <http://trv.arheovision.ee/>

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#### Examples of images produced with Textile Recorder & Visualiser



# listings

Full details of all the events listed here can be found on the Icon website [www.icon.org.uk](http://www.icon.org.uk)

Icon Offices: Please note that small events and meetings can be held at the Icon Offices at 1.5, Lafone House, The Leathermarket, Weston Street, London SE1 3ER. The Icon website provides comprehensive directions on how to find the offices – from the home page, go to 'About Icon' and then to the 'Find us' page.

16–19 May

## West Dean College Conservation for Horologists

An Icon-approved course for professional horologists aspiring to achieve PACR qualification.

Contact: Liz Campbell on t: 01243 818219 or e: [cpd@westdean.org.uk](mailto:cpd@westdean.org.uk)

23 May

## Icon Textiles Group Visit to the new labs at the Peoples History Museum, Manchester

A one day event for up to 20 people offering the opportunity to visit the new labs and explore issues related to conserving and displaying flags and banners.

Cost: £50

Further details via the Icon website

26 May

## Introduction to PACR

Venue: London

Aimed at those who would like to find out about PACR – the programme includes everything you need to know about the PACR Accreditation – what is it, how does it work, the professional standards and the application process, the assessment process, the assessment visit and Continuing Professional Development.

Please book via the Icon website

26 May, 7.15pm

## Icon Book and Paper Group Keeping Fit for Conservation – Part 2

Venue: St. Michael's and All Angels Church Hall, Bath Road, Chiswick, London W4.

Many conservators are afflicted by stiffness in their backs, necks, arms and hands caused by poor working positions. A physiotherapist who teaches Pilates and a trainer will work with the group to advise and show them stretches and other exercises which can be developed into a simple daily routine. \*Please note change of date owing to Royal Wedding holiday.

Cost: £30

Contact: register in advance with Joanna Payne on e: [jw@joannapayne.com](mailto:jw@joannapayne.com)

6–7 June

## Icon Gilding and Decorative Surfaces Group

### Practical Wood Carving

Venue: Austrey, Warwickshire

Including tuition and demonstrations on correct tool use and handling, chisel sharpening, holding and fixing the carving and the procedure for in-carving lost elements to carved picture frames or furniture. There will be a talk on reverse boxwood moulds, which were used in the manufacture of compo ornaments and a demonstration on how they were carved. The workshop will be very hands-on and participants will have the opportunity to put what they have learned into practice by working at their own pace and level of ability.

Cost: £150 (£170 non members, £110 Icon student members)

7 June

## Furniture Research Group 'Preserving the Past, Inspiring the Future' Furniture Conference

Venue: The Gateway at Bucks New University's High Wycombe Campus  
Speakers: include Rod Titian – a BBC Restoration Roadshow specialist and Dr Lynn Jones – Head of the National School of Furniture, High Wycombe.

Looking at new initiatives in predicted furniture activities for the coming century, whilst simultaneously examining key aspects of conservation and historical studies from the past. The event will be of interest to all those involved in the industry, from auctioneers, collectors and conservators, to curators, furniture designers and historians, researchers and students.

Contact: [sharon.grover@bucks.ac.uk](mailto:sharon.grover@bucks.ac.uk) or call 01494 522 141 ext 3583.

Further details via the Icon website where you can also reserve a place.

7–8 June

## The Collections Trust – OpenCulture 2011

### The Greatest Collections Management Show on Earth

Venue: The Custard Factory, Birmingham

A new international 2-day conference covering all aspects of Collections Management in museums, archives, libraries, galleries and private collections. Further details via the Icon website

14 June

## Icon Ceramics and Glass Group Introduction to Conservation – Interpreting Professional Standards

Venue: Conservation Meeting Room, 9 Montague Street, British Museum, London

The event is aimed at both practising ceramics and glass conservators considering applying for accreditation and those wanting a general refresher. Speakers will aim to specifically address the conservation approach, assessment and treatment options of ceramics and glass both in the studio and away from the bench. The day will also include a short session for those considering a PACR application.

Cost: £10

Bookings: contact Shulla Jaques, PACR Administration on e: [pacr@icon.org.uk](mailto:pacr@icon.org.uk)  
Booking closes 31 May.

Further details via the Icon website or contact event organiser Liesa Brierley on e: [liesa.brierley@googlemail.com](mailto:liesa.brierley@googlemail.com)

14 June, 6pm

**Icon Book and Paper Group**  
**Van de Velde Drawings at the National Maritime Museum: a Fine Art Conservation Approach**

Venue: The Wellcome Institute Conference Centre, 183 Euston Road, London  
Speaker: Clara de la Peña

The National Maritime Museum has funded a 5-month conservation project in which part of the collection has been examined and has undergone treatment. These complex works of art combine papers and materials used by the artists themselves with later additions, backings and collectors' stamps. The talk will focus on how to treat compromised and damaged Van de Velde Master Drawings whilst preserving their historical evidence and visual integrity.

Cost: £10 (£15 non-members, £6 students)  
Contact: register in advance with Joanna Payne on e: [jw@joannapayne.com](mailto:jw@joannapayne.com)

1 July

**International Academic Projects**  
**Picture Frames: Early and Modern**

Speakers: Peter Schade, Head of Picture Framing, National Gallery,  
Gerry Alabone, Head of Picture Framing, Tate Britain

Lectures and on-site gallery discussions at the National Gallery and Tate Britain in London examining the changing roles and history of picture frames from the earliest times up to today, giving an overview of the influences of the fashions of collectors and curators. Particular attention is given to the importance of the frame to the picture and how modern curators and conservators approach the display and conservation of picture frames.

Further details via the Icon website

18 July, 11am

**Icon Textiles Group**  
**Visit to Henry Poole & Co, Savile Row Tailor**

Venue: 15 Savile Row, London W1S 3PJ  
Henry Poole & Co, established in 1806, offer bespoke tailoring and supply the Royal Household with Liveries, which are currently being made in preparation for the Diamond Jubilee in 2012. The Chairman, Mr Angus Cundey, has offered a tour of the workrooms where there will be an opportunity to meet the tailors and gain an understanding of history, skills and materials. The visit should last approximately 2 hours.

Cost: £10

Contact: for reservation and queries e: [Rosamund.Weatherall@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:Rosamund.Weatherall@nationaltrust.org.uk)

25–28 August

**The Society of Bookbinders**  
**Education and Training Conference**

Venue: University of Warwick  
Including demonstrations and lectures on bookbinding and artists books by expert speakers from around the world.  
Contact:

[conf.organiser@societyofbookbinders.com](mailto:conf.organiser@societyofbookbinders.com)  
Further details via the Icon website

19–23 September

**ICOM-CC 16th Triennial Conference**

Venue: Lisbon, Portugal  
Further details via the Icon website

22–23 September

**Icon Textiles Group**  
**Back to Basics Workshop: Upholstery – History and Techniques**

Venue: Burghley House, Stamford, Lincolnshire  
The workshop will be led by Lesley Wilson, freelance conservator working on public and private collections, specialising in upholstery and the historic development of upholstery techniques and materials.  
Cost: £130

Further details via the Icon website

23 September

**Icon Stone and Wall Paintings Group**  
**The Conservation of Architectural Plasterwork; Part 1. (Part 2 in spring 2012)**

Venue: Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust, Ironbridge, Nr Telford.  
Within the context of these presentations historic architectural plaster work is considered to include both plain and ornamental plasterwork applied to historic buildings (internally or externally) and requiring conservation. This conference is neither primarily concerned with wall paintings nor the application of new plasters (except where these form an important part of the overall conservation process).

Call for papers and other details on the Icon website

Cost: £55.00 non members: £70.00, Icon student members: £25.00, (students non icon: £35.00)

Contact: Simon Swann on t. 01502 676044 or e: [swannsh@btinternet.com](mailto:swannsh@btinternet.com)

26–28 October

**A Pest Odyssey 2011: Ten Years Later**

Venue: The British Museum, London  
Focussing on developments that have been made in the last ten years, highlighting international priorities and how these have changed. To include new understanding about pest species and the risk they pose to both collections and buildings and practical control strategies that work in the heritage context.

Early bird bookings close 1 July.

Further details via the Icon website

tbc

**Icon Textiles Group**  
**Back to Basics Workshop: Taking Patterns from Historic Costume**

Venue: Costume and Textile Study Centre, Carrow House, Norwich.

Janet Wood, who has in-depth experience of pattern cutting and mounting historic costume, is to deliver the two-day course. It will comprise both theory and practice, to include: developing an understanding of basic modern pattern cutting techniques and relating this to historical methods; looking at methods for measuring costume and recording the information to make a pattern and hands-on sessions where a pattern and toile will be produced using a piece of handling costume. The course will not include mounting.

Cost: £130 tbc

Contact: for provisional bookings and queries e:

[Rosamund.Weatherall@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:Rosamund.Weatherall@nationaltrust.org.uk)

23–24 November

**Remote access to world heritage sites from St Kilda to Uluru**

Venue: Edinburgh

International conference exploring the potential and challenges created by new technologies to develop high-quality remote-access visitor experiences.  
Deadline for early bird registration: 16 July.  
Further details via the Icon website

10–14 September 2012

**IIC Congress 2012**  
**The Decorative: Conservation and the Applied Arts**

Venue: Vienna

Further details via the Icon website

- Visit [www.icon.org.uk](http://www.icon.org.uk) for more events and full details of all the entries listed here. There is also lots of information about short training and CPD courses available from a variety of providers. On the website Home page choose Events and Careers & Training and follow the links.
- More PACR information and booking forms are in the Accreditation/CPD section.



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## PROFILE

### Location

The Metropolitan Museum of Art

### Exhibition

Picasso in The Metropolitan Museum of Art

### Time

April 27, 2010 – August 15, 2010

### Glazing

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Pablo Picasso, *At the Café*, 1905, The Walter H. and Leonore Annenberg Collection, Gift of Walter H. and Leonore Annenberg, 1992, Bequest of Walter H. Annenberg, 2002 (1992-2001); *The Actor*, 1904-05, Gift of Thelma Chrysler Foy, 1952 (52.175); *Saltimbanque in Profile*, 1905, Bequest of Scofield Thayer, 1982 (1984.433.269). All works from The Metropolitan Museum of Art. © 2010 Estate of Pablo Picasso / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Photo: Don Pollard.

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