

Reading between the lines

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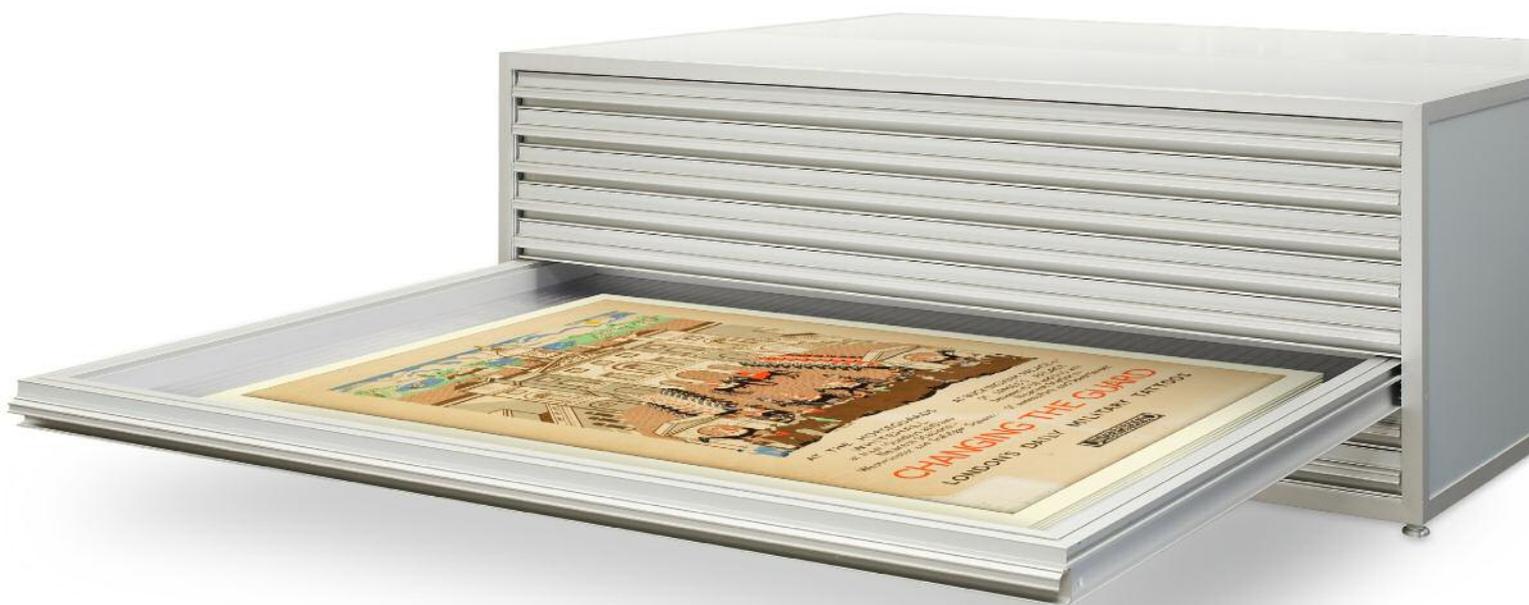
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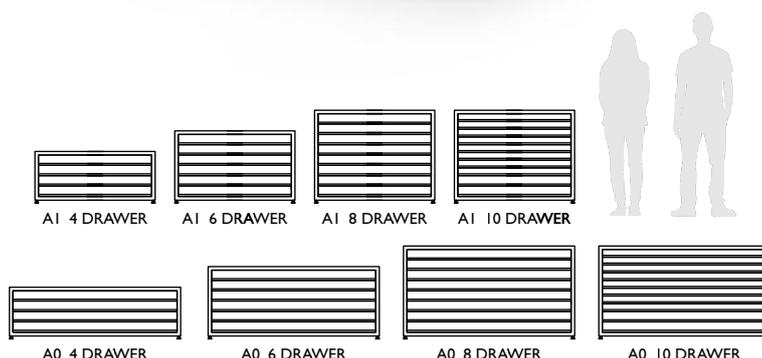
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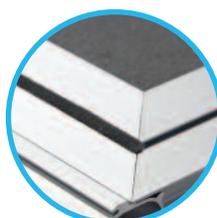
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AUGUST 2017 Issue 71



From the Editor

Herewith your summer Icon News! I hope you find plenty in it to interest you and that you will agree with me that it is especially colourful, from the front cover to the splendid Rose Window of York Cathedral on the last page.

The stunning front cover image was provided for us by the winner of the Heritage Science Group's photo competition and proves that science and art – which are entwined at the heart of conservation practice – are not worlds apart. The Rose Window article tells the same story with the added message that the science moves on in what it can (hopefully) do to ensure that the art endures.

We have an interesting contribution from the United States about a long-running project to capture the history of conservation as told by its practitioners. Alongside it, we have an example in practice – the interview with Sarah Staniforth exploring the progress of her career.

Finally, a rather unusual In Practice piece, written neither by a conservator nor indeed for conservators. But it does seem to me to show the powerful appeal of conservation and the interest it can inspire once someone has discovered it.

Lynette Gill



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Cover photo
Picture of mould taken under UV fluorescence by Laurent Cruveillier. Courtesy of The Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland. See story on page 20

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For the December 2017 issue
Wednesday 4 October

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professional update

Icon and Its Trustees

In a change from the usual Chief Executive column, in this issue we are shining a light on Trustees. Jenny Williamson ACR has written her impression of her first two and a half years in the role. Jenny has specifically been asked to focus on what she gets out of it. Our Chief Executive Alison Richmond ACR takes another tack and looks at what benefits Icon's sixteen Trustees bring to the organisation. Both authors are expressing a personal view.

WHY DID I BECOME AN ICON TRUSTEE?



What do you need to be a Trustee?

I have learnt that I did not need specific skills to be a Trustee of Icon, rather a passion for conservation, a preparedness to work with others to develop Icon, a desire to learn and time to dedicate to the work. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as a Trustee and would recommend other Icon members to consider it.

Why did I stand for election?

I was asked by another Trustee, Adam Webster ACR, to consider standing as a Trustee. I had not thought of it before. I did not think that I had the right skills or experience for the role, but Adam discussed it and explained what it would entail. I agreed to stand because I thought it would be challenging, I was interested in finding out more about Icon and I hoped that I could ensure that it included the interests of all conservators.

What is my background?

At the time, I was working as a freelance paintings conservator based at the National Library of Wales, and also lecturing part-time at Aberystwyth University. I had been a member of Icon since convergence, and a member of UKIC* before that, and had completed my fast-track accreditation in 1999.

What have I learnt?

I have now been a Trustee for two and a half years. The first year was a steep learning curve. I have since been on a number of committees and Task & Finish groups. From these, and the Board Meetings, I have learnt and developed skills including reading budget sheets, rigorous document editing, strategic and analytical thinking, evidence-based decision-making and communication skills. I have increased my

understanding of Icon, and my appreciation of what it is doing for conservators and conservation.

What other benefits have there been?

It is good for my CPD. I enjoy the regular visits to London and some of my Trustee experience has been helpful in two recent job applications. I have particularly enjoyed meeting and working with the staff of Icon and the other Trustees, who include conservators from other disciplines and co-opted Trustees from a variety of backgrounds including media, law and education.

Jenny Williamson, ACR

* United Kingdom Institute for Conservation, one of Icon's predecessor bodies

WHAT DOES ICON GET OUT OF ITS TRUSTEES?

Strategy

Trustees set the strategic direction of Icon. They raise their eyes above the operational and management aspects and look into the future. Where do we want Icon to be in five, ten, twenty years? Where do we want the sector to be? Trustees bring different perspectives to the table.

Trustees who are members of the conservation profession bring their knowledge and experience not only of the different roles and disciplines of the profession but also of the contexts in which conservation and heritage science is practised: in micro businesses, not-for-profit and large public organisations and universities. This is vital if Icon is to, in Jenny's phrase, 'include the interests of all conservators'. Some Trustees have had long careers in one discipline, others have management positions in large, complex organisations. The Board is strengthened by the bringing together of many different viewpoints.



Trustees who come from the Icon membership are well positioned to ensure that member benefits are of central strategic interest to the Board and that members' concerns are brought to the Board and followed up. Some Trustees have had other roles in Icon, for example, as an officer of a special interest group. Their perspective is useful and they can act as a 'critical friend'.

In recent years, we have had a number of younger Trustees join the Board. This has been a huge boon to Icon. Younger Trustees have brought their own awareness of social change and challenge Icon to consider what role we want to have in society. Younger Trustees also remind us that not all members are accredited and of the barriers to accreditation that are experienced by those members. We are reminded to ask ourselves, how can we be relevant to younger members of the profession?

Over the last few years, Icon has had the privilege of recruiting Trustees from a range of professional contexts. These individuals are hugely accomplished respectively in business, media, communications, law and education. It is, to my mind, a measure of the success of Icon that these leaders in their fields want to give their time to Icon. Their perspectives are particularly important when the Chief Executive comes from within the profession (as I do), to counterbalance what might become conservation 'group think' at Board meetings. It was helpful to hear the same message from all of our Lay Board members: Icon needs to be better known than it is. This reinforced what members were telling us and required us to prioritise advocacy in our strategy.

Governance

The primary function of a Trustee Board is to have oversight of the organisation's management to ensure that Icon is well governed. This is the principle. In practice this means asking the staff what might appear to be awkward or challenging questions. Why are you doing it this way? What are your other options? Have you thought of....? And what effect will this action have on our bottom line? Sometimes staff are so close to the coalface that having someone who can view the situation from one step back is invaluable.

Trustees sometimes have more than one charity in their portfolio. This can benefit Icon by providing comparisons or through sharing information. It can be satisfying to know that we are not the only ones struggling with a particular challenge.

Trustees help Icon to make good decisions. Having a group of people whose role is to question assumptions means that we are able to look at a range of possible outcomes. Decisions may be hard to make and/or the outcome may be hard to take. It is the Trustees' role to ensure that the difficult decisions are made even though the outcome may not be popular. I also have to admit that, at times, Trustees take some of the heat off individual members of staff who may have to implement an unpopular decision.

CONSERVATION SHORT COURSES

Masonry Cleaning
9-12 October 2017

Art and Object Handling
6-10 November 2017

Mortars for Repair and Conservation
13-16 November 2017

Conservation of Leather
11-14 December 2017



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A learning organisation

If I had to have one motto for Icon, it would be: more heads are better than one. We have recently been granted funding to train Icon staff and Trustees in fundraising. This is a necessary skill if we are to fund our strategic objectives. I have had individual coaching before, but learning together was much more effective in thinking through Icon's tailored case for support. Trustees brought their knowledge from their own working environments. This added so much value to what we as staff members could have done on our own.

Trustees are experts in their fields. Icon has benefitted enormously from that expertise. For example, a Trustee in digital communications helped Icon to develop a marketing strategy and prioritise the development of our own website. His leadership was crucial to Icon being able to commit some of its reserves to building a state-of-the-art communications channel.

Leadership

That brings me to leadership. The Chair of the Board has a particular role in leading the organisation. We have been very fortunate in having great leadership from the Chairs that I have had the privilege to work with. It is a hugely demanding role not only in terms of workload but also in the heavy responsibility of reaching the right decisions. I am enormously grateful to all of the Chairs of Icon, past and present.

At a meeting with the Group Chairs that I attended a few months ago, the Group Chairs extended 'a warm welcome to incoming Trustees and thanked those new and existing Trustees for their service to the Board'. We are tremendously

fortunate to have the high calibre of Trustees on our Board and it is great to know that the Trustees are appreciated by members. If the key to a strong and successful organisation is a good Board of Trustees, then we are all set to go from strength to strength.

Alison Richmond ACR



A NEW POLICY ADVISOR POST

In Icon's last membership survey, members rated advocacy a priority for development, and this summer, the Trustees will be launching our next five-year strategy which prioritises advocacy as one of three main aims. Now is an ideal time to make another step-change at Icon by strengthening our capacity to engage with policy and advocacy.

We are very fortunate to have been granted funding from The Clothworkers' Foundation to support the salary and costs of a new post at Icon – a full time Policy Advisor. Working with the Chief Executive, Trustees and members, the Policy Advisor will focus on influencing the policies of governments, of non-government and other voluntary and professional bodies of all of the home countries. This role will support and strengthen and strengthen Icon's capacity to respond to consultations and, by strengthening thought leadership, to take the initiative in policy debates. This role will build on and increase Icon's strategic partnerships to enable us to become an effective advocacy body.

We will be advertising over the summer and aim to have recruited a new Policy Advisor by the autumn. Please stay tuned for more details.

The Clothworkers' Foundation has supported Icon in the past and continues to do so in many different ways. Their primary interest has been to strengthen Icon and support its strategic leadership of the sector. Their funding for Icon has been innovative, timely and supportive, for example, from 2009–2013 the Chief Executive's salary and costs were funded by the Clothworkers', enabling a transformation of Icon to the resilient organisation that it is today.

TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE NEWS

After several months of research, investigation and planning, the location for Icon's next triennial conference is now confirmed!

For the first time ever, Icon is heading to Northern Ireland. Our next triennial conference will be taking place in Belfast, over three days in June 2019.

While the fledgling conference team assessed many potential options, in many ways Belfast was a natural choice offering unique advantages. In particular, Icon's triennial conference programme has taken in Wales, Scotland and England so far,

so Northern Ireland is clearly the next stop. And the attractions of Belfast are many. A short and inexpensive flight from major UK cities, many can expect to arrive in town in less time and expense than they would have spent travelling to previous Icon conferences.

Ten years into Belfast's spectacular regeneration, the Icon team was spoilt for choice when selecting conference venues. The team has now pared down the list to two main front-runners. Beyond the main venue for the plenary talks and parallel sessions, there are also several strong contenders for the traditional opening reception and the conference dinner. Both venues will be selected according to criteria emerging from past experience and feedback on Icon's last triennial conferences in 2013 and 2016. After sifting the options and turning the long list into a shortlist, it is expected that final venue choices and contracts will be signed by the end of July – good reason to stay tuned to Iconnect!

The conference team has also envisaged an invigorating programme of tours on either side of the conference, focussed both on local and regional conservation and on Belfast and Northern Ireland more broadly. While there is quite a list of options so far, it is always good to hear more – so if you have an idea for a tour or conference event, please let Michael know to get it on the radar! More details on the tour programme will be available as these plans develop.

Michael Nelles mnelles@icon.org.uk

JOURNAL UPDATE

There is good news to celebrate on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the *Journal of the Institute of Conservation* and its predecessor incarnations.

Increasing impact

June's extra-large 40th anniversary issue came at an interesting time for the *Journal* as it continues to move from strength to strength. 2016 saw an increase in core institutional subscribers and article downloads for the year were up by 65% over 2015 (at an impressive 27,476), and again by 58% when comparing the first quarters of 2016 and 2017. Interestingly, last year's inclusion of Abstracts in Mandarin has had immediate effect with, for example, The National Palace Museum in Taiwan featuring in the top ten downloading institutions, with 154 downloads in 2016, compared to a high of 534 for the top-downloading UK institution other than Icon.

Academic citation indexing

Progress for application to the Thomson Reuters citation indices – now taken over by 'Clarivate Analytics' – was confirmed in a recent meeting with the publisher, Taylor & Francis. The expansion of the Editorial Panel to include three new international members – combined with the *Journal* now appearing regularly on time since our previous Editor Janet Berry got it on track – has greatly helped with our application and the *Journal* has now been accepted onto the ESCI Emerging Sources Citation Index. This means that we will be



Past Editors celebrate the Journal's 40th Anniversary

It's great that the *Journal* has reached its 40th anniversary! I was in at the start, we had no idea nor come to that any worries about how long it would continue.

Suzanne Keene, Editor, *The Conservator*, 1983–1988

The *Journal of the Institute of Conservation* is a key cornerstone of the conservation profession. Throughout its forty years it has sought to impart practical knowledge to conservation practitioners in an accessible way. **Professor May Cassar**, Editor, *The Conservator*, 1989–1992

As the first editor of the *Journal of the Institute of Conservation* I worked hard with the publisher to retain the two identities of the previous two journal titles ...[but] it was clear that, certainly editorially but also for readers and contributors, combining content would give the *Journal* a new lease of life; it would allow more rapid publication of papers, it could offer interest across specialisms and it would likely encourage more contributions ... The *Journal* can move into this next incarnation thanks to the continuing high standard and relevance to the profession of its contributions and, increasingly, its recognition within academic publications. It was a privilege to have been involved in a small stage of its life and I wish it many more years to come. Happy anniversary! **Shulla Jacques**, Editor, *Journal of the Institute of Conservation*, 2008–2010

One thing that struck me when editing was the similarities between different conservation disciplines, and the potential for more inter-disciplinary sharing of knowledge and skills. To that end, I see the recent move to all-discipline issues of the *Journal* as a huge step forward for the *Journal* and the profession. **Janet Berry**, Editor, *Journal of the Institute of Conservation*, 2009–2015 (maternity leave 2011–2012)

assessed in the next twelve months for inclusion in two Clarivate citation indices – Arts & Humanities (A&HCI) and either Science (SCI) or Social Science (SSCI).

A huge debt of thanks!

Inclusion on academic indices has been a long held ambition that previous Editors have worked hard towards and we earnestly hope that the *Journal's* incorporation into Clarivate is ultimately successful. Not only will it be a fitting tribute to the dedication of all those who have given so much over the last forty years of *The Paper Conservator*, *The Conservator* and the *Journal*, but it would be a fantastic milestone with which to herald the next forty years!

Finally, a debt of deep gratitude goes to all Editorial Panel members, both past and present, for their tremendous and enthusiastic support and advice, given freely over the years, and an equal debt of gratitude goes to all those peer reviewers whose generosity and professionalism has ensured that the *Journal* continues to be a key resource for the conservation profession.

Practicalities

You can sample the *Journal* at <http://tandfonline.com/toc/rcon20/current>

The *Journal of the Institute of Conservation* (JIC) primarily publishes peer-reviewed Full Articles and Shorter Notices detailing innovative research and practice focussed on the preservation of cultural heritage in all its forms. Book Reviews are also warmly welcomed.

If you would like to discuss potential articles for any of the issues, please contact me on journal@icon.org.uk

Dr Jonathan Kemp, Editor

A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY!

Members will be aware of the new Gold Open Access Fund recently launched by the National Heritage Science Forum (NHSF). In the June issue of *Icon News* (p.5), it was announced that an article by *Icon* members, Dr Helen Wilson and Sarah VanSnick, was the first to be published with a grant from the NHSF. Nevertheless, it has been suggested to me that members may not be aware that they are eligible to apply.

The NHSF Gold Open Access Grant is available to NHSF member organisations – their employees, students and members. What this means in practice is that **any *Icon* member** can propose an article for consideration. Trustees of

NHSF are not eligible to apply as the lead author of a paper but may be listed as a contributing author. As I am the NHSF Trustee representing Icon and as I am not a lead author on any heritage science papers this is not a risk!

The purpose of this fund is to maximize the impact and public benefit of heritage science research, and encourage interdisciplinary knowledge exchange and collaboration. If you are submitting an article for publication, please consider applying to the fund. The fund covers the 'article processing charge' so that the published article will be immediately available online and freely available to everyone. NHSF have made the process as light-touch as possible.

The criteria, application form and contact information are all available at <http://www.heritagescienceforum.org.uk/what-we-do/gold-open-access-fund>. NHSF will work with successful applicants to promote their research post-publication.

Alison Richmond

THE CONTEMPORARY ART NETWORK

Two years after launch, Icon's new 'Network model' has resulted in three new forums of considerable diversity, providing the means for Icon members to come together to discuss cutting-edge issues in the sector.

The latest addition is the new Contemporary Art Network, spearheaded by Deborah Cane and Louise Lawson at Tate Modern. The Contemporary Art Network aims to raise the profile and spark discussion of the unique challenges involved in conserving contemporary artworks, inviting participation from conservators right across the spectrum.

Condition checking of K.Beasley, *Your face is /is not enough*, 2016



Memory vessel 44, 2016 by Bouke de Vries ACR
Early 17th century Italian earthen ware Majolica (Rome) drug jar and glass 330x270x387 mm

The new Network particularly aims to support conservators working with contemporary art, and raise the profile with new collaborative projects that will engage training institutions; promoting the development of new thinking and innovation.

Unique challenges faced by contemporary art conservators include the management of planned obsolescence, working with living artists, storage of complex artworks and multi-installation pieces, and the ethics of collecting, preservation, conservation and display.

After several months of planning, Icon's new Contemporary Art Network will launch in style at the Zabłudowicz Collection in Belsize Park, London, late this July. Following close on the heels of this will be a full-scale day conference, for which planning is underway.

AWARD NEWS

The **Zibby Garnett Travel Fellowship** awards for 2017 have just been announced and six of the twelve recipients of grants this year are Icon members. You can find out who they are and what they are planning to do with their awards in the People section of the magazine.

In total £10,730 was disbursed this year but over the seventeen years of ZGTF's existence the total approaches £150k, allowing 117 conservation students and trainee craftspeople to visit over forty countries, where they have learned traditional techniques and broadened their hands-on skills.

To be eligible for awards, candidates must be in their formative years but there is no upper age limit. Their study subject should be conservation-based and should fall into one

of four categories: historic buildings; historic gardens and man-made landscapes; artefacts; and allied trades, techniques, skills and crafts. Candidates should be studying or working in the UK but need not be British

Grant applications are considered once a year and for more information about ZGTF and how to apply, visit www.zibbygarnett.org

The **Icon Journal Award** is a newly created award of £250 generously provided by Taylor & Francis – publishers of the *Journal of Institute of Conservation (JIC)* – for Icon to present to an author who has contributed to the Journal.

The award winner is selected based on meeting one or more of three criteria: a new author; a new accredited member of Icon or an emerging professional. The award will be made retrospectively each year and you can find out who has won the award for Volume 39 in the People section of this issue.

Contributors to all three issues of Volume 40 will be the next authors to be considered. If you are thinking about submitting an article to JIC please email the Editor Jonathan Kemp on journal@icon.org.uk. Guidance about writing an article for JIC is available on the Taylor & Francis website

CHANTRY LIBRARY UPDATE

Work continues in the Chantry Library to organise the collection, and we were very grateful to have an offer of volunteer help from Cathrin Wieduwild, a student conservator from Germany. Cathrin is temporarily based in Oxford during a pause in her paintings conservation studies at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste in Dresden, and is keeping her hand in by processing items in the book collection.

Mastan Ebtehaj has now sorted and archived material from the Institute of Paper Conservation and Icon days of the library, and has carried out a preliminary stock check. Her next project is to look at the journal collection, a core part of the Chantry collection.

Cathrin (left) and Mastan (right) barcoding and bookplating the book collection



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THE ARTS SOCIETY



A new organisation in the cultural firmament? Well, not exactly. Earlier this year, the National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Societies - NADFAS for short - revealed plans for a new visual identity and its new name: The Arts Society.

NADFAS, as it had been generally known, was felt to be an opaque name

which made the organisation and what it does difficult to understand, despite its being the largest arts education charity in the UK with its 90,000 members and 385 local

The new look of The Arts Society in use



societies. So fifty years after its founding, a re-branding exercise was undertaken to forge a new and accessible identity, which was launched in mid-May with a striking and flexible new visual identity to match.

For those who do not know it, The Arts Society is a global network of local membership societies that connects people to the arts and each other. They offer enjoyable and expert ways to explore the arts, through lectures and visits and volunteering programmes. And it is in this last capacity, as Heritage Volunteers, that The Arts Society members may well have made common cause with Icon members to preserve and protect the nation's heritage.

We wish the 'new' Arts Society well in its next fifty years !

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

Book and Paper Group

Chair's Update

We welcome Nicole Monjeau, who has been voted in as our new Social Media Officer. Nicole has already started to build up our Twitter account. You can join in the conversation by following us: @ICONBook_Paper. Nicole plans to set up Book & Paper Group Facebook and Instagram accounts in the near future, so please keep an eye on the Twitter account and the Icon website for updates.

We would also like to congratulate Nicole Karen Eugenie, Mito Matsumaru, Françoise Richard and Mathilde Renauld, who have been offered the professional development bursaries during this round. We look forward to reading about their experiences.

Michelle Stoddart, (Icon Book & Paper Chair)

Events & Training Update

Events & Training has two special courses for the Book & Paper Group lined up for later this year. Cambridge University Library conservators Jim Bloxham and Shaun Thompson are providing a two-day masterclass focusing on a 12th century English Limp Tawed Skin Binding (**4–6 October**, British Library). Previously taught at the Montefiascone Book Conservation Summer School, this is another chance for conservators to recreate the binding of manuscript Pembroke 119, and gain further insight into the craftsmanship of the Romanesque period.

Our second event to watch out for is a rerun of 2016's very popular Parchment Conservation Course, which we are repeating in full with the same tutors and speakers. As before, it will be possible to book separately for the practical sessions and/or the lectures depending on which elements you wish to attend. The course will take place this time at The National Archives in Kew, and the confirmed dates are **19–22 October**. Provisional timings are that 19–20 October will be the lecture/study days, whilst 21–22 October will be the practical sessions.

Please watch out for further details on how to book for both of these courses in your email inboxes!

And finally, a very special announcement: following the success of 2015's Icon Book & Paper Conference *Adapt & Evolve*, we are now planning our next conference for book and paper conservators, to be held in Oxford next year. So please save the date: **1–3 October 2018!** We hope to have further details available soon, and a call for papers will be issued over the next couple of months.

Fiona McLees, (Events & Training Chair)

Furniture and Wooden Objects Group

Symposium 2017

The Group is glad to report that its annual symposium, held in May, was a great success with speakers from across Europe delivering a range of interesting and thought provoking talks. The convivial surroundings of the Linnean Society in Piccadilly provided a great backdrop for a day of discussion and networking. Huge thanks go out the Group committee for all their hard work in helping to organise this event. Look out for Rachel Dealey's review elsewhere in this issue of Icon News.

CPD, training, and events

The Group is collaborating with the Wooburn craft school to provide a range of courses teaching relevant craft and hand skills. The courses are usually a week long and are being held across the summer. Topics include marquetry, carving and French upholstery. More details are available on the Icon website or by googling Wooburn Craft School. Tickets are available via Eventbrite

We are also very pleased to be able to offer two events that are being held jointly with other Groups. The first is a two day event held in conjunction with the Textile Group on the conservation of upholstery. Taught on September 4 & 5 at Knole House by Heather Porter, the event is being heavily subsidised by both Groups. As well as providing a range of insights and information on how to approach the conservation of upholstery, the course also aims to foster communication between practitioners at this overlap of practice.

The second event is being held in conjunction with the Gilding and Decorative Surfaces Group and is again being heavily subsidised, this time primarily by the GDS Group (thanks are due to their committee!!). The event is a one day tour of the new conservation studios at Knole and will include talks by the conservation team on their recent projects and a tour of the house. Held towards the end of September, the event promises to offer an enjoyable and stimulating opportunity to see the new set-up at Knole.

More details on both events are available on the relevant Group pages of the Icon website and tickets are available via Eventbrite.

Other Group news

The recent updates to the regulations surrounding the use of dichloromethane as a paint stripper will be of interest to a huge swathe of conservators, not just those specialising in furniture and wood. As such, the committee has been working with Icon HQ with the aim of producing clear and concise information regarding the legal parameters for the chemical's

use, details of the need for licensing, and ideally a list of HSE approved training providers. More details will follow, probably via Iconnect.

The committee has also been working hard to improve dialogue between other special interest Groups and with Icon HQ, with the aim of fostering a collaborative environment within which to better address the needs and interests of you, the membership. In the shorter term the product of these new connections are the joint events with the Book and Paper, Textile, and Gilding Groups. Taking a longer view, a number of issues were raised by the Group Chairs at the recent Group Chairs Forum with Alison Richmond and the Chair of Trustees, Siobhan Stevenson. These primarily included details relating to streamlining the running and organisation of the Groups, particularly regarding financial matters. Work has also been done to address issues around ensuring that those who claim accreditation are entitled to do so. More details on this topic will no doubt be made available as part of the work Icon is currently doing to update the Conservation Register.

As ever, if you have any questions or queries about any of the above topics, or have an issue or problem that you think the Group should be helping with, then please don't hesitate to get in touch. Contact details for committee members are available on the Icon website or contact the Group Chair, Alex Owen on aowen.cons@gmail.com

Finally, as part of the ongoing process of improving the way the Group is run and the way it communicates with the broader Icon community, the Furniture Group intends to produce a set of guidelines governing the processes and procedures by which the Group is run. The aim is to have this document finalised and sent out to members prior to our next AGM in early 2018 and, ideally, for it to be passed at that meeting.

Heritage Science Group

On April 26 committee member Nigel Blades hosted the Heritage Science Group meeting at the National Trust headquarters in London. The highlight was a visit from Icon Chief Executive and NHSF Trustee Alison Richmond, who updated the Group on activities within Icon and NHSF and thanked Icon HSG chair Matija Strlic for his help in recent advocacy work for these bodies e.g. the Industrial Strategy and AHRC Strategy.

In view of our discussion the HSG would like to remind Icon members that the following resources are available for their use: the NHSF Kit Catalogue (<http://www.heritagescienceforum.org.uk/what-we-do/kit-catalogue>) which provides a means of sharing analytical equipment; and the NHSF Gold Open Access grant (<http://www.heritagescienceforum.org.uk/what-we-do/gold-open-access-fund>) which covers the full cost of making accepted heritage science-based research papers freely available online immediately after publication.

In other news, we've produced a HSG Communications Strategy to guide our communication activities, are building our networks, and have firmed up our events schedule for 2017-18. Upcoming events include 'Building conservation

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science at Heriot Watt University' to be held at Heriot Watt University on August 16 and 'Historic document analysis using pXRF' (title tbc) at The National Archives, UK on September 11. See our events page (<https://icon.org.uk/groups/conservation-science/events>) for more information.

Finally, keep an eye out for our notices in Iconnect, on our webpages, and on Twitter and get in touch if you would like to become more involved in the Group's activities.

Helen Wilson

HSG Communication Officer

Metals Group

There have been several changes to the Metals Group



Committee in recent months. We wish to thank Jacqui Ready, Katrina Redman and Deborah Cane for their years of service on the Committee, and we welcome new members Johanna Thunberg and Jerrod Seifert.

Johanna Thunberg (left) is a teaching associate in conservation at Cardiff University where she previously worked as an objects conservator conducting practical conservation on a large range of archaeological and



historical materials. She is particularly interested in sustainable management of archaeological metals, and has recently been awarded AHRC funding to investigate the applicability of visual assessment to identify active corrosion in copper alloy artefacts and to study the efficiency of benzotriazole as a corrosion inhibitor for copper alloy artefacts.

Jerrod Seifert (above) is a PhD Candidate in Conservation Science at Cardiff University, where he researches corrosion rates of treated maritime cast iron from The Mary Rose in different display environments. This exciting study will, it is hoped, lead to a deeper understanding of the efficacy of metals treatments employed by conservators. Jerrod holds a MSc in Conservation Practice from Cardiff University and BAs in Classical Archaeology and Art History from the University of Minnesota, and has worked as an objects conservator both privately and for the Science Museum of London. He currently works as an archaeological conservator at Çatalhöyük, a UNESCO World Heritage Neolithic proto-city in central Turkey. He will be taking over the role of Treasurer for the Committee.

We are planning an autumn conference and AGM (details to be announced soon); please check the Icon website for the latest information. You can also follow the Group on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.

Photographic Materials Group

The Icon Photographic Materials Group is looking for five enthusiastic committee members to join our team. The Group organises two events each year as well as promoting photograph conservation with blogs, short articles and social media, and by responding to enquiries.

We are hoping to fill the following roles:

- A Chair, who ensures the Group fulfils its responsibilities to Icon and its members;
- A Secretary, who plans and organises committee meetings, reports and documents the work of the group;
- An Event Coordinator, who provides practical help and advice to those running events;
- An Event Assistant, who works with the Event Coordinator;
- A Communications Officer, who compiles the Group's news for publication in Icon News, email bulletins, and the website.

Note: although committee members must have an enthusiasm for photographic materials, they do not need to be working with photographs to apply for a role.

Committee meetings are conducted by teleconference and in person. When meeting in person (usually at least once a year), expenses are reimbursed.

For more information on any of these roles or to submit an expression of interest, please contact Jacqueline Moon, Acting Chair (jacquelinemoon@hotmail.com), stating which position you are interested in and why you'd like to join the committee. The deadline is Monday 21 August, and submissions will be circulated to the Group's membership prior to voting.

Icon Scotland Group

The Icon Scotland Group worked with the Archives and Records Association (ARA) to deliver a 'Conservation for Archivists' training event on 30 May. This was hosted by the Centre for Research Collections at the University of Edinburgh, and covered a range of useful preventive conservation and re-housing approaches which archivists can implement. It was well attended and provided a great opportunity for conservators and archivists to interact.

The Group has also been firming up its events timetable for the rest of the year. We are hoping to deliver a joint event with the Care of Collections Group, most probably to be held in Edinburgh in October. The 'Building a repertoire of basic book conservation techniques' course is still going ahead and will be held at the National Library of Scotland's Causewayside building in Edinburgh, with new dates of 14 and 15 November. The annual Plenderleith lecture will happen in late November, with a fantastic speaker who we know will appeal to a wide audience (details to be released shortly!). Then we have a joint event with the Scottish Museums Federation in December, and a repeat of the popular two-day practical workshop on magnetic box-making in late 2017 or early 2018.

In addition to events, the Group has been working on its blog, aided by a new committee member, Hazel Neill, who has been travelling the country to find out what conservators in Scotland get up to!

PACR grant

We're keen to make members of the Group aware of our grant of £350 towards the PACR fee. Details of how to apply are on our Group page.

Contact and keep in touch

We obviously welcome primary and secondary members, but remember that all you need to do in order to receive the emailed Scotland Group Iconnects is tick the Group on your Icon membership form. You can also see our latest updates on social media: our blog is at <https://iconscotland.wordpress.com>, our Facebook page is <https://en-gb.facebook.com/iconscotlandgroup> and our Twitter feed is @icon_scotland.

Textile Group

Committee News & Upcoming Events

Early June saw the first Textile Committee meeting since the AGM (in March), having welcomed two new members. Freya Gabbutt (Social Media) has been raising the profile of the Icon

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Textile Group on Twitter and Facebook, posting information about textile-related visits, exhibitions and work being undertaken by Group members, either in national museums and institutions or in private practice.

Melina Plottu has joined the Events team, which has been organising a two-day joint workshop to be held between the Icon Textile and Furniture Groups, from 4–5 September 2017 at Knole House, Sevenoaks in Kent. *Approaching It Differently: Upholstery Conservation*, will be led by Heather Porter (Senior Conservator of Upholstery), who is based at the newly-opened National Trust conservation facility at Knole. Delegates will be introduced to upholstery conservation and the history of upholstered furniture with consideration to both the frame and the textile. Practical sessions will demonstrate simple upholstery skills, attaching and removing textile from the frame. There will be an opportunity to explore the showrooms at Knole and to see the new conservation facilities on-site.

Tickets for the workshop are at a subsidised rate of £120 (members) or £157.79 (non-Icon members), including refreshments, buffet lunches and a shuttle taxi service to and from Knole to Sevenoaks station. Bookings can be made on Eventbrite (linked through the Icon Events page) or for further details contact katysmith@vam.ac.uk. If you are attending this workshop and are interested in writing a review for the next issue of Icon News, please email nadine.wilson@nationaltrust.org.uk.

Other upcoming textile-related events can be found on the Textile Group's webpage or in this section of previous issues of Icon News. Later this year is the IIC-PM Hong Kong Symposium: *Unroll & Unfold: Preserving Textiles and Thangkas to Last*, being held at the Hong Kong Museum of History, 24–26 November 2017. For further details go to: www.lcsd.gov.hk/CE/Museum/Conservation/en_US/web/co/iic-pm-2017_hongkongsymposium.html.

2017 Textile Forum Post Prints

The post prints from the forum in Bath on 27 March will be sent out to delegates later this year in a downloadable PDF format.

Due to publication deadlines, it is not always possible to mention all events so please check the Icon website and Iconnect for details. If you have anything that you would like mentioned in our communications please contact nadine.wilson@nationaltrust.org.uk.

Appointments



This March, Icon member **Liz Ralph** took up a new position as Conservator at the House of Lords. Working in the Parliamentary Archives, Liz will manage risk to the collections through book conservation and preservation activities and work closely with individuals from across the Parliamentary Estate to advocate for conservation, preservation and collection management.

Previously, Liz was Senior Conservator at the College of Arms, where she worked in a small team to conserve the collections housed there. At the College she also trained and supervised student volunteers, undertook condition surveys, gave handling sessions to Officers and Staff of the College, and completed complex practical conservation treatment.

Liz has also worked privately in Dorset and prior to this she completed a two year traineeship at PZ Conservation C.I.C., a private studio in Cornwall.

A Special Projects Officer and Private Practice Liaison for Icon's Book and Paper Group Committee, Liz also played an active role on the organising committee for the Group's successful 2015 conference *Adapt and Evolve*.

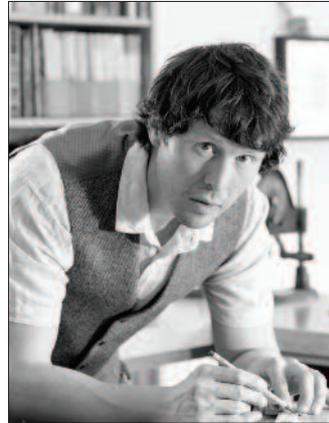
Icon members will be interested to learn that **John Barnes** has been appointed Chief Executive of Historic Royal Palaces (HRP).

An architect by profession, John worked in local government and then spent ten years in private practice with a number of leading architectural conservation firms. From 1994–2001, he held a succession of senior roles at English Heritage before moving to HRP in 2001 to take up the post of Conservation & Learning Director.

In this role he has been responsible for the conservation, presentation, learning provision and interpretation of the six palaces and collections in the charity's care. He has led the development of the distinctive learning and creative engagement programmes for which the charity is renowned and transformational changes at each of the palaces.

John is a Trustee of Old Royal Naval College, Greenwich, and Chair of DEMHIST ICOM, a committee of the International Council of Museums, concerned with historic house museums.

Awards



Congratulations to **Arthur Green** who has won the newly created Icon Journal Award of £250, generously provided by Taylor and Francis, the publisher of our *Journal of the Institute of Conservation*.

The article which won Arthur the prize appeared in Vol.39, No.2 as a Shorter Notice. It presented a well-illustrated account of the use of a compensation endband for a late medieval parchment manuscript.

At the time of its writing, Arthur was working at the Bodeleian Library. He now runs his own private book conservation studio in Oxfordshire: Green's Books Ltd. (www.greensbooks.co.uk)

This year's Plowden Medal has been awarded to Professor **Sharon Cather** for her outstanding contribution to conserving wall paintings. Professor Cather is the Shelby White and Leon Levy Professor of Conservation Studies at The Courtauld Institute of Art, where she set up the Conservation of Wall Painting Department with Professor David Park in 1985.

The Department's work has extended beyond the UK to projects across the globe, and as the programme's research and technical director, Professor Cather has worked

closely with the Getty Conservation Institute, English Heritage, the Dunhuang Academy as well as other major international conservation organisations. She has also been instrumental in the creation of dedicated conservation training programmes in China and India, and in 2014 she was presented with The People's Republic of China Friendship Award, China's highest award for foreign experts.

This year's Zibby Garnett Travel Fellowship Awards have benefited a number of Icon members

Rebecca Doonan – studying at Glasgow University for an MPhil in Textile Conservation. Her placement is with the textile conservation studio of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam

Cécilia Duminuco – works at the Cambridge University Library as a book and paper conservator for the Charles Darwin Library. She has a placement to study conservation for Ethiopic binding at the Montefiascone Conservation Project in Italy

Welcome to these new members

Daisy Graham – studies at Glasgow University for the MPhil in Textile Conservation. Her placement will be studying the conservation of costumes and related accessories, preparing for an exhibition on Mariano Fortuny with the Palais Galliera in Paris

Jordan Megyery – studying at Northumbria University for an MA in the Conservation of Fine Art, specialising in works of art on paper. Her placement will involve working on a collection of 18thC drawings for an exhibition at the Amsterdam City Archives in The Netherlands.

Mathilde Renauld – studying at Camberwell College of Arts for an MA Conservation (Art on Paper). Her placement will focus on conserving fine pastel drawings and objects at the private studio of L'Atelier del Restauro in Malta.

Kimberly Roche – studying at Cardiff University for an MSc in Archaeological Conservation. Her placement will cover the conservation of marine archaeological artefacts with the Mariners Museum in Newport News in Virginia, USA.

See p. 6 for more information about the ZGTF Trust

We'd like to extend a very warm welcome to all those who joined us in April and May 2017. We hope to see you at an Icon event soon!

Elisa Albano
Student

Deborah Aldridge
Triskele Art
Associate

Margarita Alexandrou
Associate

Nuria Argemi
Student

Donatella Banti
Courtauld Institute of Art
Student

Chelsea Blake
Student

Claudia Callau Buxaderas
Associate

Larry Carr
Associate

Naomi Cox
Student

Morgan Creed
Cardiff University
Student

Valentine Dubard
Louvre Museum
Associate

Juliet Ferguson
City and Guilds of London Art
School
Student

Valentina Gatto
Associate

Elannah Griffiths
University of Lincoln
Student

Davina Jakobi
Rijksmuseum
Associate

Laure Jeannotat
Associate

Mark Lidster
Corbel Conservation Ltd
Associate

Clara Low
Student

Kathleen Martin
Student

Giorgia Marucci
Northumbria University
Student

Josephine McKenzie
Student

Isabel of Mar
Student

Charlotte Okparaeke
Student

Olga Osip
Associate

Bethany Palumbo
Associate

Justine Provino
Associate

Fiona Reid
Student

Eve Reverchon
Northumberland Estates
Associate

Shannah Rhyndard-Geil
Associate

Christina Ritschel
Victoria and Albert Museum
Associate

Helen Roadnight
Associate

Rachel Robbins
Associate

Elina Rodriguez Millan
Spectrum Heritage Ltd.
Associate

Nora Rudolf
Student

Carla Russo
Supporter

Letizia Stefanazzi
Student

Eve Taylor
West Dean College
Student

Rodney Vousden
Associate

Nicholas Webb
Nicholas Alexander Design Ltd
Associate

Cathrin Wieduwild
Student

Talking to Sarah Staniforth

Alison Richmond meets Sarah Staniforth CBE in the second of our series of interviews with leaders in the heritage sector who started their careers in conservation and have broken through the 'glass ceiling'

Can you tell me a little bit about how you got into our field of conservation?

Yes, I read chemistry at Oxford but quite early on I felt that lab work wasn't for me. At some stage I must have seen a film or a documentary about conservation so I went to see the Science Museum in London and asked them about possible careers in museums and in conservation. Of course, the Science Museum doesn't have a lab, which amuses me no end, particularly as I'm on their Collections and Research committee now! Then quite by chance I learned about the Scientific Department at The National Gallery and I went to see Garry Thomson¹ who advised me that it might be a good idea to do conservation training first.

I went to The Courtauld and studied on the easel paintings conservation course. I rapidly found that it requires more patience and attention to detail than comes naturally to me! However, I was very well taught and I loved the science teaching we had from Gerry Hedley² and right from the start I was very interested in preventive conservation and the effect of light, relative humidity and pollution on paintings. After my diploma course I started a PhD but within six months I landed a job in The National Gallery's Scientific Department with Garry Thomson, which was like having another wonderful training/apprenticeship for five years.

Who were the people that influenced you the most?

Garry Thomson. He was the most incredible mentor and boss and he really set me off in the right direction about what in those days we were calling 'the museum environment' but was, of course, preventive conservation. I thought it much more interesting working at the scale of whole collections. We were beginning electronic monitoring, particularly light levels and humidity, less so pollution in those days. Ironically because of Garry's good work over all those years, things were really good at The National Gallery and ultimately that made me slightly dissatisfied because I didn't feel that I was making a difference.

Garry had also been asked to advise at various National Trust properties and he sent me to some of them. The very first one I went to was Knole – we are talking 1984/1985 – and I advised them to do various things, including getting some heating because there wasn't any and we talked about picture lighting because you couldn't see the pictures there. And that advice is only now being implemented and I'm still involved, which is great! After five years at the National Gallery, I applied for a job at the National Trust.



At this stage of your career what did you call yourself? Were you calling yourself a scientist or a conservator? Or neither?

At the National Trust I was hired as Paintings Conservation Advisor, because I had gone back to my speciality of paintings conservation. I was not doing any studio conservation, indeed it wouldn't have been right after being away from that for over five years but the real heart of the job was to survey the condition of the paintings at NT houses, and there were about 10,000 spread over more than two hundred places. So it took a good five years to get round them all, and then for each property to write a plan for how the conservation of paintings should be approached.

I did that for about a year and then I dug my heels in, because I realised that the Trust had been restoring paintings and putting them back in awful environments. I said 'we're wasting our money and I would like to take on an additional

role of advising on the environments in the houses'. Having someone specifically doing that was a new thing for the Trust.

Then the question was: how do you control the environment in an historic house? Back then in the late '80s the government was putting money into energy saving and Bob Hayes, a civil engineer paid for by the Department of Energy, was doing interesting surveys at National Trust houses, looking at the heating systems. We realised that heating up to comfort level conditions during the day (in those houses that had heating systems – a lot didn't) and then switching it off at night time was the worst thing you can do as you've got alternating dry and damp conditions. So we put our heads together and came up with what ended up being called 'conservation heating', which was really looking at ways of just adding enough heat to get the relative humidity down to the target band – in those days between 50% and 65%.

When the electronics improved, as they did through the '90s, we could replace thermostats with humidistats and just switch the heating on and off under humidistat control, and for that we got one of the very early Conservation Awards for innovation. That was a game changer in National Trust houses, and it is still, and I think will continue to be, the way in which humidity is controlled in historic houses, because it's very sympathetic to the structure of the building.

Would you say that this is one of your most significant contributions to the field?

Yes, I think so, in terms of the difference and the influence that it has had, not just in the National Trust but English Heritage and Historic Royal Palaces and a lot of small museums and historic buildings as well. We did quite a bit of work looking at how much energy was being saved and we were able to show that conservation heating ticked both the energy saving box and the environmental control box.

One of the things that really embedded preventive conservation in my understanding was the Uppark fire in 1989. It was like a light bulb going on in my head. The morning after the fire we were allowed into the house in case there was anything salvageable, and I found this melted blob on the floor which I knew was a Squirrel data logger (one of the early temperature and humidity control monitors). It made me think 'I've worried so much about UV filters and sun blinds and getting the temperature and humidity right, and what a waste of time, when the whole house has been burnt down'. It made me realise how important it is to get your priorities right; there is very little point worrying about temperature and RH control unless you've got all the more extreme risks sorted out first. There's nothing like going through it yourself in real life.

I was advisor on paintings conservation and environmental control for seventeen years. I got stuck, big-time actually. One of the opportunities that I missed was when the National Trust's Surveyor of Conservation retired. I was on maternity leave and just not in a position to apply for the job. The next opportunity came with a major change programme at the Trust, which happened between 2001 and 2002. I was lucky. I was spotted to be on the change-management programme

board, we worked with management consultants, which in itself was fantastic training of course, to actually plan the new structure of the National Trust.

One of the things we achieved with the change programme was a much more equal status between the disciplines: curators, archaeologists, building surveyors etc. So the conservators went from being people who reported to curators to being on the same level. And as part of the implementation I was appointed Head Conservator. After that my career moved really fast because when the then Historic Properties Director retired in 2005 I took over from him. And in that post the Head of Archaeology, Head of Building, Head Conservator, Head Curator, Head of Gardens, all reported to me at equal status.

It was my first job above the level of head of a professional discipline and was a very big jump. Being on the senior management team wasn't just about understanding archaeology and buildings etc, it was about absolutely everything: having to understand finances, the commercial operations, the visitor experience, membership, fundraising – all those things, and to think about them not as a specialist but in its broadest sense. That is a huge step for anyone to take. You have to think about the good of the organization, not just your own little area within it.

So that was the best job I had at the Trust, but then inevitably after a number of years there was another reorganization and I became Museums and Collections Director, still on the senior management team but without any management responsibilities, which was amazing. My significant contribution was to develop 'spirit of place' training for all the general managers as the majority of them did not have any background in heritage or nature conservation. They all loved it and you could see them applying it in their work. It is a conservation thing, in its broader sense, understanding the significance of places and how that influences the management of them. It was a very nice way to end my career at the National Trust.

But what I have not talked about is all the other things that I did during the time I worked at the National Trust. I was the Chair of the PACR Accreditation Committee for three or four years. I was on the ICOM-CC³ Directory Board; I had been on the Council of IIC⁴ through most of the 1990s; I was teaching on the Getty Conservation Institute prevention conservation course; I was teaching on the ICCROM⁵ Wood Conservation Technology course in Oslo. The Trust was always good at supporting me with my external roles.

It was also really good in supporting me in training: internal courses, management courses, and the University of East Anglia Museum Leadership Course, which I did when I was Head Conservator. Formal training in leadership versus management was very helpful and of course it meant I had really broad networks, with both national and international colleagues who I could call on for help or advice.

The period when Fiona Reynolds was Director of The National

Trust was very exciting; she was the first woman in that post and by the time she left the senior management team was more than 50% woman. She appointed me as Historic Properties Director, and I think there were two grounds on which I wouldn't previously have got that post: being female and being a conservator. Fiona gave me that break and she really did move The National Trust to bringing places to life, encouraging conservators to think constructively about how we could do things like light fires in the houses and sit on some of the chairs. And the conservators really rose to that challenge and understood that their jobs involved thinking about visitor experience as well as conservation.

Was it you who coined the term 'Managing Change' because I hear that quoted everywhere I go? It has had a very long-lasting legacy!

Yes, certainly we formally defined conservation for The National Trust in 2003 as part of the formation of the new Conservation Directorate. 'Conservation is the careful management of change. It is about revealing and sharing the significance of places and ensuring that their special qualities are protected, enhanced, enjoyed and understood by present and future generations.'

When I left the National Trust I was sixty and I'm very conscious of the next generation and not blocking roles. I wanted to leave while I still had the energy to do other things. By then I was already President of IIC. The National Trust asked me to do consultancy work for them two days a week: being on the project board at Knole and other nice things. Then I had to think about the pro bono and voluntary things I wanted to do: the Heritage Lottery Fund South West Committee, a Landmark Trustee, a Pilgrim Trustee, Trustee for the Hunterian Museum at The Royal College of Surgeons and an English Heritage Trustee.

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

I'm really interested in this question: how we conservators move beyond heads of conservation roles

Well the word that I haven't used at all, which is absolutely vital for anyone who wants to lead, is ambition, you've got to want to do it. Of course, it would be an absolute disaster if all conservators wanted to be managers and give up the important practical conservation work and run heritage organisations. I just think that in order to have balance – and you particularly see this with things like implementing the BIZOT⁶ environmental guidelines – you need to have a conservator's voice at senior management level, it makes the debate much better informed.

There's only space for a few percent of conservators to have these ambitions to break through the glass ceiling and it doesn't matter what the profession is: what percentage of professionals actually end up leading organisations, or at least on the senior management teams? But, given that people have the ambition – and we know that many conservators do and were at the session that we did at the Icon2016

conference – why are they not succeeding? What are the barriers that are being put in their way?

I think there's no doubt – and I definitely encountered this myself – that there is an assumption that for heritage organisations and museums, the person in the director's position is going to be a senior curator, and always had been in the past. So it felt like I had to overcome this barrier of the curators being first among equals. Interesting though, now, if you look at the directors of the national museums, they don't just come from curatorial backgrounds.

And I think there is a recognition that business skills are being more valued than they were in the old days

Perhaps we ought to make a distinction between being a Chief Executive and being on the senior management team. I only got to senior management team level, conservators who have made it to director level are very far and few between. As far as being on senior management teams is concerned, actually that would be an interesting thing to survey, because I am not clear about how National Museums organize themselves. Some have directors of collections. I don't know if any of them are conservators and if they are on the senior management team.

How have your views on conservation changed over your career?

It's much more about conservation in its broadest sense, being an enabler, helping things to happen which support the aims of the organization. That could be the aim to achieve the organisation's mission but it could also be the sustainability aims, and I don't mean sustainability in the green sense, but in the business sense. What do we need to do to generate the income that generates the money that can be spent on conservation?

When you look at it like this, you see what our role is in organisations. When I was a young conservator, I didn't understand how the management of the National Trust worked for years! Because it's so complicated and I was just doing my own paintings conservation and environmental control thing. I started to understand when the NT had some 'introduction to management for beginners' and I asked to go on those courses and they really helped. When you're working for a bigger organisation maybe one of the main obstacles you have to overcome is that you need to understand how the hell the organisation works!

And think of things from other people's perspective, put yourself in other people's shoes, certainly as far as visitor experience is concerned. We think conservation is absolutely fascinating and as it happens quite a lot of visitors do too. But you can't assume that, you have to find out, to always be thinking about your audience and what they want because otherwise you're not going to get the support that you need to run any organisation, particularly the charities. I don't think I was really interested in detail, although a lot of conservators are fascinated by it. I was much more interested in the bigger

picture stuff and how conservation fits in with everything else organisations are doing. Maybe it should be a rule for life as a whole: thinking about what other people think, understanding other people's positions on things.

Another attribute of a good leader is, without doubt, emotional intelligence. It is extraordinary when you see people who don't have it and the difficulty they have taking people with them. Some of them do it just by sheer force of will power, probably using management power to force people to do things. So another attribute is the ability to engage. A lot of leaders don't do that; they are just out there way ahead and everybody else is trailing in their wake. And it may be that in that engagement your vision changes a bit because people improve it and they inform it. The ideal leader can do all of those things

Not many people have all of those attributes

No, not many people do and then the knack is to surround yourself with people who are complementary to what you do. There have to be enough management skills there to make sure the delivery happens.

And organisations go through phases...

Yes, and they need to for their health! And I would never denigrate the value of doing a solid management and administration job, because all organisations need that. As far as the general managers are concerned, they love all the new computers at the National Trust because they've been at the sharp end of tills and credit card machines not working!

One of the interesting things that we came out with at a recent Winterthur Leadership Course is the way that you change your leadership style according to the situation you're in. And that comes with emotional intelligence, because emotional intelligence allows you to see what leadership style will work at any particular time.

I think the advice that you'd give to the next generation of conservators is a good way to end

Having a mentor is really helpful, and this is where I do think that Icon could have a role because it's one thing to have a mentor for PACR, but now we're talking about a different thing: a mentor to help you at any stage in your career, to help you think through what you're doing and where you want to be in five years' time.

Networks are fantastically important. When I did the University of East Anglia leadership course, we had to map our networks, and my networks were absolutely enormous. Being involved in other organisations really helps. I had a Winston Churchill Travelling Fellowship, went to the States when I was at The Courtauld in 1978. A lot of the people I met then, like Joyce Hill Stoner, Debbie Hess Norris and Merv Richard, are now all at the top of the conservation departments, if not higher, in the States. And those networks made at the beginning of my career, have stood me in such good stead all

the way through. My Getty network is really solid as well, so I think having a network and never missing an opportunity to go to a conference or a meeting or a lecture.

And then... having goals: where am I going to be in five years' time? Maybe it is difficult to think further ahead than that, but don't think that your future only lies in conservation; you might have a much greater contribution to give in the broader museum and heritage world. Oh yes, and don't hang around too long! I think that – I really do!

This is an edited version of the interview.

1. Garry Thomson CBE: 1925 to 2007. Research Chemist at the National Gallery in London 1955–1960, then Head of the Gallery's Scientific Department and Scientific Adviser to its Trustees from 1960 to 1985
2. Gerry Hedley: 1949–1990. Reader at The Courtauld Institute of Art and a leader of pioneering research in conservation. Founder of the eponymous annual student symposium that celebrated its 35th event this year
3. ICOM-CC: International Council of Museums – Committee for Conservation
4. IIC: International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works
5. ICCROM: International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property – an intergovernmental organisation
6. BIZOT: The Bizot group: the informal name for the International Group of Organizers of Large-scale Exhibitions comprising the directors of some of the world's leading museums and galleries. Drew up environmental guidelines for museums that were subsequently adopted by ICOM-CC and IIC in 2014

The FAIC oral history project

The Foundation of the American Institute for Conservation is compiling an oral history of conservation as its Associate Director Rebecca Anne Rushfield explains

Notwithstanding an explosion of conservation literature in recent years, information on many topics in art conservation is not readily available in published sources. For instance, a researcher investigating John Brealey's philosophy of the cleaning of paintings would find only a few articles on that subject. However, in the archive of the Foundation of the American Institute for Conservation (FAIC) Oral History of Conservation the researcher could find the transcripts of three interviews with Brealey, in which he discusses his approach to conservation, in addition to transcripts of interviews with a number of his protégés and colleagues discussing his methods and philosophy.

THE FOUNDING FATHER

The FAIC Oral History of Conservation Project is a little more than forty years old. Its genesis was a talk titled 'Thoughts Apropos A History of Conservation' which Rutherford John Gettens, one of America's pioneer conservation scientists, gave at the American Institute for Conservation meeting in Cooperstown, New York in 1974. In his talk, Gettens noted that the profession was then at a point when it needed to begin thinking about collecting material for a history and he expressed concern about 'the amount of important information about the past in the heads of the retirees and others of my generation which may never be put down on paper. There are personal recollections, anecdotes, and informal doings which tie together serious events'. After the meeting, Gettens began to write this history, putting together notes about his experiences in the laboratory of the Fogg Art Museum, but he did not get far as he died ten days later.

EARLY DAYS

Eager to continue Gettens's proposed project, George Stout, W. Thomas Chase, and Joyce Hill Stoner met in March 1975 and discussed the possibility of starting an oral history project and an archive of early records associated with the conservation profession. In September 1975, the board of directors of the FAIC approved the project, which was to be led by Joyce Hill Stoner. The first interview – a round table discussion among George Stout; Richard Buck; Gettens's widow, Chase; and Stoner – took place in Mexico City on September 4, 1975.

Gettens and Stout both emphasized that the conservation history project should be international in scope. When the FAIC project began there was a very limited budget and no such thing as inexpensive long distance telephone calls, email or Skype to link people in different parts of the world easily and cheaply. Interviews were arranged by mail and

interviewees were for the most part American conservators. Sessions were recorded on tape and had to be transcribed locally. Constrained by these logistical issues only one or two interviews were conducted each year and were typed on manual typewriters.

As personal computer technology developed, interviews could be arranged more quickly, sent out for transcription anywhere in the world, and readily shared. The number of interviews conducted each year increased dramatically. Today, the FAIC Oral History Archive contains more than 330 interview transcripts, at least one sixth of them from interviews conducted with conservators living outside of the U.S. (A complete list of interviews is available at http://www.conservation-wiki.com/wiki/FAIC_Oral_History_Project_Interviewee_List.)

BRITISH INCLUSIONS

The British conservators, art historians, and conservation scientists who have been interviewed thus far include Jonathan Ashley-Smith, the Earl of Antrim, David Bomford, John Brealey, Norman Brommelle, David Bull, Anthony Cains, Alan Cummings, Vincent Daniels, Karen Finch OBE, Ernst Gombrich, Stephen Hackney, Max de Liss, Bettina Jessell, Herbert Lank, Rosamond Harley, David Leigh, Frances Lennard, Patrick Lindsay, Margaret MacDonald, Patrick Matthiesen, Ian McClure, Andrew Oddy, Harold Plenderleith, Joyce Plesters, Ambrose Scott-Moncrieff, Robert Shepherd, Norman Tennent, Joyce Townsend, Sarah Walden, Tony Werner, Raymond White, Renate Woudhuysen, and Martin Wyld. Andrew Oddy compiled a 'wish list' of conservators in the UK who should be interviewed; this list is handed out to willing British interviewers.

HOW THE SCHEME WORKS

Interviews are conducted by both conservation students and experienced professionals. Most first-time interviewers find the experience rewarding and ask to conduct further interviews as their schedules permit. Riley Cruttenden, a conservation student at the University of Glasgow who has recently begun serving as an interviewer for the project, 'highly recommends that other emerging professionals consider contributing to the project by signing up as interviewers'. He noted that he has 'had the opportunity to meet conservation professionals whose work is shaping the discipline and to learn about the paths, people, and experiences that have informed their perspectives on the field'.

Alison Richmond, Icon's Chief Executive, has found that 'interviewing senior members of the conservation and heritage science professions has increased my already considerable appreciation for the contribution that these individuals and many others have made to the development of our profession. I feel that today's conservators stand on the shoulders of these remarkable people... I have learned so much, not only about what happened before I entered the field but also about the historical development of disciplines other than my own. I feel this is a very important perspective for the head of the professional body in the UK to have'.

The recordings and transcripts of the interviews are housed in the Winterthur Library (Winterthur Museum Garden and Library, Winterthur, DE). Most transcripts are in digital format and are available readily upon written (usually emailed) request. Recent users of the archive have investigated preventive conservation, conservation in New York City, the history of the Fogg Art Museum, textile conservation treatments, and the careers of Sheldon and Caroline Keck.

LOOKING AHEAD

At present, the FAIC Oral History project is making a concerted effort to interview conservators in countries other than the United States—particularly England and Wales, Scotland, Ireland, and Canada. We hope that more conservators will volunteer to interview and to be interviewed to aid in the compilation of the history of our profession. Interviews usually last from one to two hours and are scheduled at the interviewee's convenience.

An oral history interview gives a conservator the chance to share important information that is unlikely to appear in a conservation journal article or conference paper, including the influence of early mentors and former materials and approaches. To allay any concerns that one has spoken a bit too freely or unwisely, the interviewee is given the transcript to review and may ask that portions be embargoed for a period of time or deleted altogether before it enters the archive.

The FAIC Oral History project is eager to enlist additional interviewers. Perhaps more conservation students will be inspired by Riley Cruttenden who encourages them that 'even by volunteering to conduct a single interview, you'll have a chance to develop professional skills while broadening your understanding and appreciation of conservation practice'.

For more information, to request transcripts, or to volunteer, please contact Dr. Joyce Hill Stoner at jhstoner@udel.edu or Rebecca Anne Rushfield at wittert@juno.com.



THE INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION

Notice of Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the 13th Annual General Meeting of the Institute of Conservation will be held on Wednesday 29th November 2017 at 5.00 p.m. at the St. Bride Foundation, Bride Lane, Fleet Street, London, EC4Y 8EQ, to consider the following business:

Ordinary Resolution 1: To receive the Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2017.

Ordinary Resolution 2: To authorise the Trustees to appoint the auditors to serve until the end of the next Annual General Meeting and to authorise the Trustees to decide the remuneration to be paid to the auditors.

A member of the Institute of Conservation who is entitled to attend and vote at the meeting (being a paid up Accredited, Associate, Graduate or Student Member) is entitled to appoint a proxy, who need not be a member of the Institute of Conservation, to attend and vote instead of them. Proxies may be appointed via the web portal or to the registered office so long as they are received before 5.00 p.m. on Monday 27th November 2017. Those received later will not be counted.

If you are eligible to vote you will be sent an email by our election support provider mi-voice inviting you to access the Proxy Notice enabling you to register your instructions on-line. If you do not have an email address, please phone the mi-voice office at 0845 241 4148.

We will advise you of any changes or additions to the Agenda as soon as they become available.

Members are invited to stay on after closure of business for a glass of wine.

So that we can estimate numbers for catering please let us know if you are planning to attend by sending an email to membership@icon.org.uk

Simon Green, Company Secretary

1st July 2017

around and about

Our front cover star

The Icon Heritage Science Group are very pleased to announce that **Laurent Cruveillier** is the winner of the photo competition, for his contribution entitled *Mould Between the Lines*. His prize is to see his winning image on the front cover of this issue of Icon News!

The competition was launched by the Group last February to encourage members to contribute some images for use on the Group's pages of the Icon website. The entries were judged by Alison Richmond, Icon's CEO, and Eleanor Schofield, an Icon Heritage Science Group Committee Member. Eleanor Schofield said 'We had a great response, with a wide variety of entries capturing what heritage science means to them. We felt Laurent's entry not only did this but was also visually very appealing'.

Laurent explained his image, saying: *Mould between the lines* is one of about two hundred pictures under UV fluorescence I took to get a better understanding of the objects I was trusted with for my MA Conservation final project at Camberwell College.

'Together with a thorough analytic observation, a series of different tests using FTIR, phloroglucinol, bathophenanthroline, potassium iodine, microscopical pigment, fibre and mould analysis... they gave me a better understanding of the objects and helped me to devise an ethical, minimal, respectful and efficient treatment protocol.

'I was going from one thrilling forensic discovery to another! In this case, assembling the images revealed the mould infestation pattern: it followed Rorschach test-like shapes along former fold lines. Together with the historic context in which the objects were produced, lived and are used today, and a methodical approach to treatment testing, a scientific view on my objects was pivotal in the decision-making process. I am very grateful for the conservation scientific knowledge and attitude that my course gave me.'

Conservation Craft event

Another opportunity to spread the word about conservation arises in September when Icon member Michael Stokes of MDS Stained Glass Ltd and Nottinghamshire architect Alan Wahlers are jointly organising the second Conservation Crafts and Trades event day at Southwell Minster in Nottinghamshire. This traditional crafts fair takes place on 16 September from 10pm to 5pm.

Michael told Icon News that 'The first event we organised in 2012 proved to be very successful, displaying over forty businesses involved with the conservation sector, both local and national. It was featured in Church Building and Heritage Review issue 136. It is expected that there will be as many exhibitors this year on show in the Minster's nave and crossing, with a wide range of specialist conservation businesses involved in the preservation of historic buildings and their contents.



The Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham

Southwell Minster, a glorious setting for a conservation crafts fair

'Specialisms represented include timber preservation, book binding, stonemasonry, organ builders, stained glass, church window protection and casement renovation, ecclesiastical builders, joiners and lime and mortar suppliers. In addition, charitable organisations such as the Nottinghamshire Building Preservation Trust, the Nottinghamshire Historic Churches Trust and the National Churches Trust will also take part, offering advice and information about grant funding and other support for churches.'

As Michael rightly comments 'The splendid setting of Southwell Minster will provide a fitting venue for such a wealth of conservation crafts and trades'. This lovely Norman Cathedral has been sitting in its charming rural setting since building began in 1108. Grab this chance to see it and support the spreading of the conservation gospel!

A living archive

François Linke (1855–1946) was one of the most important Parisian cabinet-makers of his day, supplying luxury furniture to an international clientèle during the Gilded Age, a time when the worldwide influence of French fashion was at its height. The Linke Archive has an extraordinary collection of cabinet-maker's plans, three-dimensional models of wax, wood and plaster including life-sized *gabarets* (wooden models), and master models for the gilt-bronze mounts used by Linke, which all tell the story of how leading workshops of the late 19th and early 20th centuries operated. Some of these have been put on display in the Wallace Collection, and give us a unique window through which to view the activities of these master craftsmen and show how the working methods had changed little since the eighteenth century.

By kind permission of Dirk Meyer



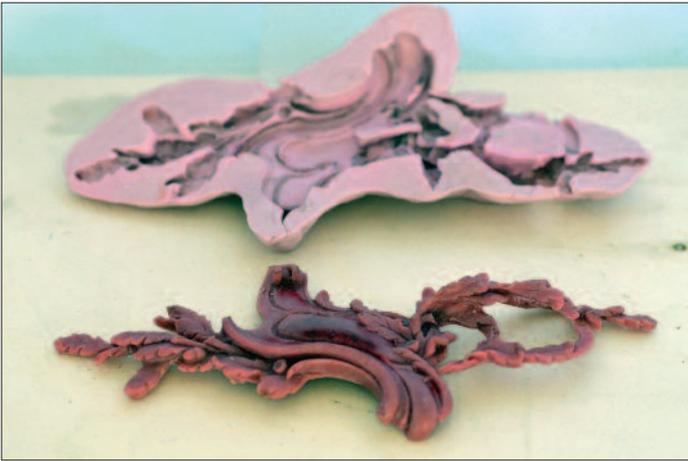
Master mould from the Linke Archive



The new mount in copper alloy

By kind permission of Dirk Meyer

By kind permission of Dirk Meyer



Silicon rubber mould and the wax mould taken from it



Half-way through the mercury gilding process

By kind permission of Dirk Meyer

In order to show how relevant the Linke Archive is today, it was decided to create a new mount from one of the master models. This would help explain the eighteenth-century process of making gilt-bronze mounts, something that is no longer very widely understood. Jürgen Huber ACR, Senior Furniture Conservator at the Wallace Collection, took silicon

Stages in the mount-making process. L to r: the rubber mould, the wax model, a copper alloy mount partially gilded, the fully gilded mount



Dirk Meyer chasing the new mount

By kind permission of Dirk Meyer

By kind permission of Dirk Meyer





Linke's petit bureau Louis XV with the original wax model for it

rubber moulds from some of the master models and arranged for them to be cast in the Dirk Meyer workshop in Bavaria. From the silicon rubber moulds a wax model was made, which was used to cast the new mounts in a copper alloy. Once cast, the mounts were reworked to enhance the detail, and then fire-gilded using the traditional mercury-gilding method, but of course with modern health and safety standards in place. Care was taken to use a warm French colour gold, and the highlights were burnished.

The various stages of the mount-making process are on display in the exhibition alongside the Linke Archive master models, drawings and a life size wooden model – all for one of Linke's most successful pieces of furniture, the Petit Bureau Louis XV, for which he won a gold medal at the Paris Exposition of 1900. The display is a unique opportunity to see working models and archival objects alongside each other and runs until 24 September 2017.

The Gilded Age: Models from the Linke Furniture Workshop At the Wallace Collection in London until 24 September 2017

Going back to school

Dr Nigel Blades ACR, Preventive Conservation Adviser with the National Trust, went back to school for a day in the middle of May. At the invitation of the Head of Science, Nigel visited The Meadows School, Wooburn Green in Buckinghamshire, where he led a session on conservation and deterioration of objects in environments for the pupils of Year 5/Year 6.

Nigel reports that the children were very interested to learn about insect pests and the damage they caused, and how



Nigel Blades ACR in class

different environments around the globe (desert, tropical, frozen, temperate) affect preservation of materials. For his part, Nigel said that it was fun and he would be interested in doing more if the opportunity arises.

A voice from the past

In the March 2015 issue of Icon News we featured the work going on at Doddington Hall, just outside Lincoln, to conserve its 17thC Flemish tapestries. Conservation of one set of tapestries, in the Holly Bedroom, was completed in 2016. Now the team is working on a set of six tapestries (in nine pieces) which were cut up and nailed to the walls of the Yellow Bedroom in 1762.

They were removed from the walls in 2013 and there were discoveries aplenty along the way, including a long-hidden cupboard, blocked up fireplaces, chalked up sums and a signature, not to mention a dead bat. And now there is another intriguing discovery to report: a poem inscribed in the plaster so faint and dirty that it has been hiding in plain sight for the last three years. As the afternoon sunlight raked across the bare plaster of the east wall, some eighteenth century graffiti was revealed. In a scrolling hand, in the centre of the wall, the following words were just legible:

*Great folks are of a finer mold
Lord! How politely they can scold
While a coarse English tongue will itch
For whore & rogue & dog & bitch*

These turn out to be the words of a poem written by Jonathon Swift, author of *Gulliver's Travels*. It seems likely that the graffiti was written at the time of Georgian renovations to Doddington Hall in the 1760s and before the tapestries were nailed to the walls. So this is the first time the lines have been seen in over 250 years. Whoever wrote them was clearly in the grip of some strong emotions!

The Yellow Bedroom is being prepared for opening to the public, so sadly the poem has now been covered up again. However, it has given the conservation team the opportunity to fully document and protect this exciting find and enable it to be rediscovered by future generations.

Congratulations to the team of Louise Joynson, Alison Stanton and Hannah Vickers, under the guidance of Melanie Leach ACR, for uncovering the past and enriching the store of



Doddington Hall/Andy Tryner

heritage stories. You can follow their progress with weekly updates on Instagram at [conservation_at_doddington](https://www.instagram.com/conservation_at_doddington) and find out more about the Doddington Hall Conservation Charity at <http://www.doddingtonhall.com/blog/>

Conservation for rehabilitation

Stanford Hall is a Grade II listed 18th-century English country house near Loughborough in Nottinghamshire; it has had a chequered life passing from one owner to another until in 1945 it was sold to the Co-operative Union to house its Co-operative College. When the College relocated to Manchester in 2001, for the next decade the Hall passed through the hands of various developers whose plans for conversion to luxury flats and a hotel came to nothing. Finally, in 2011, it was purchased as a potential site for a Defence and National Rehabilitation Centre (DNRC). The Government approved the project in mid-2014 and work started on it a year later.

The conservation team removing tapestries from the Yellow Bedroom walls

The heart-felt poem on the walls of Doddington Hall



Doddington Hall



© Cliveden Conservation

The Italian Terrace, one of the areas being carefully restored to retain the unique setting of Stanford Hall

As part of the overall works being carried out to build a world class clinical rehabilitation centre for the Ministry of Defence, Cliveden Conservation has been appointed to repair and restore the decorative mosaic floor of the Italian Terrace courtyard garden. The Italian Terrace is one of the areas which is being carefully restored to retain the unique setting of Stanford Hall and its open parkland landscape which will play an important role in supporting patient rehabilitation.

Hundreds of floor panels will be produced using original and new tesserae



© Cliveden Conservation

The coloured mosaic floor is thought to be from a redecoration carried out in the 1930s by Sir Charles Allom, principal of a large and fashionable interior decorating concern. Cliveden Conservation has painstakingly removed all the surviving pieces to be restored at its Norfolk workshop. From the remains of the mosaic Cliveden Conservation could easily identify the geometrical pattern of the whole floor which comprises blue and ochre rectangles with curved lines each united with a white square in each corner. Three types of mortar have been observed presenting the same characteristics, which has enabled the creation of new suitable substrates.

Work is now taking place to clean the existing tesserae and reassemble the rectangular panels of the mosaic. This complex procedure involves drawing a rectangle on glass with a wooden template and placing the tesserae face down on glass to ensure it is correctly positioned. Many hundreds of panels will be produced in the workshop using original tesserae and new tesserae. The panels will then be transported back to Stanford Hall to reconstruct the decorative mosaic floor around the central octagonal fountain (currently used as a planting bed) within the square Italian-inspired courtyard terrace.

It is planned that the existing formal terraces and gardens, such as the Italian Terrace, will be restored and new landscape areas created to form a range of formal gardens, courtyards and less formal landscaping which will enhance the therapeutic environment. The project is due for handover in 2018 when the DNRC relocates from its current home at Headley Court in Surrey.

(www.clivedenconservation.com)

BOOKS

MEETINGS WITH REMARKABLE MANUSCRIPTS

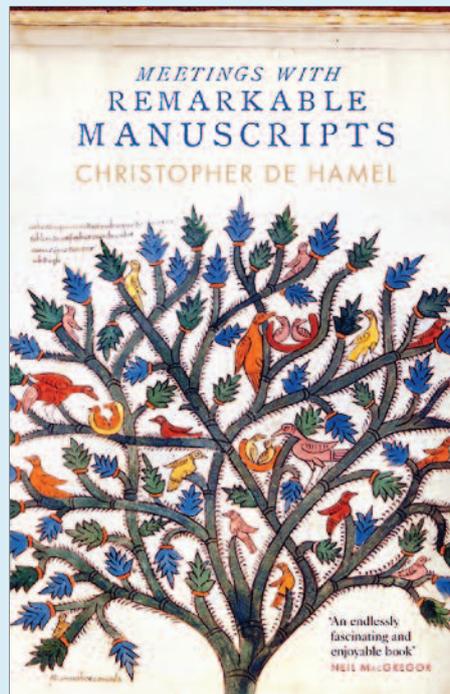
Christopher de Hamel
Allen Lane/Penguin 2016
ISBN 978-0-241-00304-6 631pp

Twelve chapters, twelve manuscripts, nine mentions of books supports, six conservators name-checked, fifteen comments about white gloves (of increasing acerbicity 'those wretched gloves'), and one of the best opening lines I could ever imagine reading in a book of this sort ¹.

Meetings with Remarkable Manuscripts takes us on a very personal journey with a remarkable companion. The breadth of de Hamel's knowledge is immediately evident and I would recommend the initial two chapters on the Gospels of St Augustine and Codex Amiatinus to all book conservation students, as much to show them 'why medieval manuscripts matter' as to remind them the same applies to any class of material they may treat in their future careers, for 'lucky chance or sharp-eyed observation' will stand them in good stead ². This book is unapologetically populist and aims to open a closed world to the reader, promising intimate conversations with twelve of the most famous illuminated medieval manuscripts, and the chance to 'see, handle, and interview' them. The book is extremely well illustrated and almost all major points in the text are accompanied by very good photographs; one of the most interesting elements is that the opening photo of each chapter shows the manuscript in question photographed closed, from directly above, and at the same scale as the other eleven, allowing for direct comparison.

As for handling the manuscripts, there is a tremendous amount of physical descriptive information about these books, with some well deserved nods to the research into materials by conservators, notably Jiri Vnoucek whose parchment research has obviously been an influence (38); de Hamel seems very aware of parchment quality, noting flaws, flayholes, natural edges (214), natural curves and undulations, neck rings (249), parchment makers' repairs (252), etc. For me, and I suspect other readers, the promise of being able to interview the manuscripts isn't quite delivered, but rather this book gives the reader the chance to observe a most fascinating conversation between a highly perceptive guide and his 'restless' and most individual subjects (567).

In the introduction, de Hamel explains his choice of manuscripts – and he certainly has chosen twelve 'glamorous' books – but there is also a range of the types of books found in the middle ages, presented chronologically from the sixth to sixteenth century. Each chapter begins with an amusing sketch of the library in which the manuscript is kept,



sometimes leaning toward the sardonic, but usually good tempered and tolerant. The variety of approaches towards custodianship will be interesting to conservators, ranging as it does from strict and unbending reading room rules, to a more relaxed approach where readers use pens, and popping a whisky-flavoured chocolate supplied by reading room staff is acceptable (p.488, 'I declare her a saint among manuscript librarians'). These very frothy and atmospheric chapter openers are then followed by the densest scholarship worn extremely lightly, where even collation formulae are enjoyable, all Latin or non-English text is translated, and there is no assumed 'insider' knowledge and little condescension. The extensive bibliography and notes at the end allow the interested reader to follow up a detail from the main text easily.

For a conservation audience, it is interesting to see ourselves as others do, and it is clear from this book that we have had, and continue to have, a positive influence on the long-term preservation of de Hamel's 'remarkable' manuscripts, and that for all the times we have got it wrong, we have also got many things right. As these are the most glamorous of glamorous medieval manuscripts they have inevitably been the subjects of numerous binding, repair, conservation campaigns, which de Hamel notes, but with a healthy serving of respect, and certainly the understanding that methods and approaches come and go.

Perhaps chapter 3 on the Book of Kells is of particular interest to book/manuscript conservators, with its description of Roger Powell's 1953 binding as old fashioned (it is, after all, sixty four years old), in an Arts and Crafts style, with obtrusive sewn parchment repairs, new untuned endleaves and repair parchment, and the 'neat and tidy' flatness of its leaves. And, in chapter 5 (the Morgan Beatus), he mentions Deborah Evetts' rebinding of 1993 along the principles developed by Cockerell, Powell, Clarkson, saying that 'this is a style which we too use

now for new bindings at the Parker Library', yet mentioning that the Morgan curator 'chuckled disapprovingly that it now looks like a wedding album' (201). One could perhaps point out that his aesthetic judgements on earlier rebinding practices relate to work carried out nigh on fifty to sixty years ago; he also does not comment on how the bindings work or how successful they are. He is a little unkind about the untuned parchment infills applied in 1956 to the National Library of Wales' Hengwrt Chaucer, saying that 'the colour of every opening is as piebald as a spotted spaniel' (436). Most of us will wince a little and think of how our own work might be seen in even ten years time!

In addition to being a keen observer of conservation/binding work, de Hamel's observations are also keen in the area of book structure. He comments for example on evidence visible on pastedowns, offsetting, rust marks, lacing impressions, etc. in the Bodleian Library's Hugo Pictor manuscript (254); he also notices the original sewing structure under the seventeenth-century repairs, saying: 'in 1602 the manuscript was still pegged into its thick contemporary wooden boards covered with leather (...) perhaps to make it lighter to transport, the pegs were knocked out and the boards were discarded. Then, after arrival in Oxford, the original eleventh-century thongs were simply re-threaded into cheap new pasteboards and were recovered. The unnoticed thousand-year-old structure underneath is still functioning soundly.' (254).

A thin-skinned reviewer might chafe at the carping about white gloves, but it is quite humorous and has a grain of truth; far better to shrug off these minor points and admire de Hamel's enthusiasm, dedication and conviction that palaeography 'is a field with infinite opportunity for discovery or complete revision as further pieces of knowledge come to light, which they will, every time someone looks at these and other manuscripts' (570).

I take exception to only two of de Hamel's statements, the first that 'modern conservators care little about romance' with reference to the closure in 2011 of Duke Humfrey as the main reading room for manuscript readers at the Bodleian Library (238), and the second that 'Today there are no butterflies in the hermetically-controlled reading-rooms of the Getty Museum. Conservators have disproportionately great power in modern museums, like compliance officers in businesses' (540). I am afraid he gives us too much credit for bringing about this kind of major change!

I was delighted to read *Meetings with Remarkable Manuscripts* and unsurprised to learn that it has been the recipient of numerous awards, including most recently

the Wolfson History Prize for its readability and excellence in writing and research. The recognition is well deserved!

1 Page 10: 'At the end of this chapter I will recount how Pope Benedict XVI and the Archbishop of Canterbury both bowed down before me, on live television, in front of the high altar of Westminster Abbey.'

2 Epilogue, 570

Jane Eagan ACR, Head Conservator
Oxford Conservation Consortium

REFASHIONING AND REDRESS: Conserving and Displaying Dress

Mary M. Brooks and Dinah D. Eastop (eds)
The Getty Conservation Institute 2016
ISBN: 9781606065112 256pp

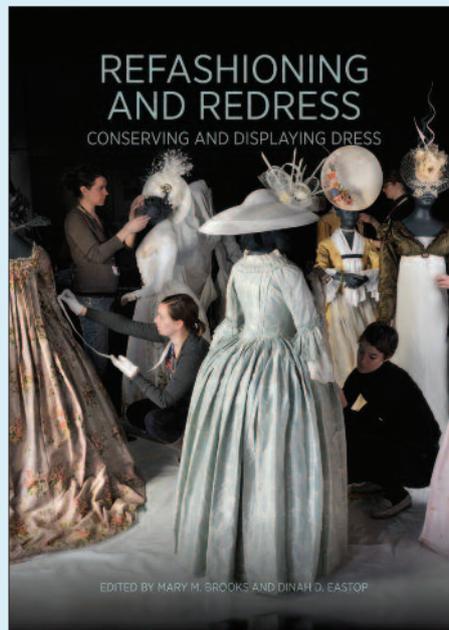
Prepare to go on a textile-themed tour with this book and its numerous case studies from all corners of the world! A healthy mix of seventeen papers written by conservators, curators, artists and designers intermingle in this volume to form a varied yet coherent ensemble. The editors have set out to explore the 'what' and the 'how' of both treating and exhibiting dress; and to stimulate critical discussion of how we can achieve these things.

From philosophical topics such as biographical clothing and the human form, to practical matters of politics, pressure mounting, and how to deal with fragmented garments, this book covers a lot of ground. I was so excited by all the things I learned that I repeatedly annoyed everyone around me by sharing snippets as I was reading through the chapters: a good measure of how engaging a book of case studies really can be.

The editors are the very same who brought us '*Changing Views of Textile Conservation*' in 2011 and their steady editorial hand ensures there is a clear conservation voice throughout the volume. While this is a cross-disciplinary publication that can be enjoyed by museum professionals across the board it is certainly meant for conservators – but importantly it has appeal to all conservators, not only textile specialists. It explores inherently fascinating concepts about the human shape, fashion, and the memory of clothes without either boring or oversimplifying.

As a solitary objects conservator who increasingly finds herself dealing with costumes and wearable textiles of all sorts I leapt at the opportunity to review this book. It did not disappoint – I particularly appreciated that the authors shared their decision-making processes and sometimes even their sources of inspiration. Who knew couture retailers could inspire the way a museum might display their dress, for example?

With its emphasis on collaboration and dialogue between departments and



stakeholders this is a refreshingly inclusive and positive publication with plenty of good ideas. It won't have you in stitches but it will help unravel some of the mysteries of working with dress in a museum context. While I occasionally wished for even more images I definitely found it both helpful and inspiring. Well worth a look!

Jenny Mathiasson, Conservator
Clifton Conservation Service (Rotherham
Metropolitan Borough Council) and The C
Word: The Conservators' Podcast

CONFERENCES

**LIFTING THE LID: Oxford Storage Study
Day**
Icon Care of Collections Group
Oxford, 16 May 2017

Having been on the CCG calendar for almost a year and following a ticket sell-out so rapid that it set the bar at a new high for bookings, forty five delegates gathered in the impressive Blackwell Hall at the

Bodleian's Weston Library to enjoy the Oxford Storage Study Day. The format was a morning of brief presentations from representatives of four of the main central university institutions, each with recent experience of storage changes, and then an afternoon of visits to three of the venues to contextualise what we had learned in the morning sessions.

Stacks of space

The first speaker was **Alexandra Walker**, Preventive Conservator at the Bodleian Libraries. Alex started with a brief history of the changing nature of the Bodleian on the site that is now occupied by the Weston Library. The collection growth in the previous New Bodleian building rapidly exceeded available space and by the time the library closed in 2012 for the £80m redevelopment it was over its maximum capacity by 30%. Keeping only the facades, the building was essentially hollowed out and Alex showed the enormity of this undertaking through a time lapse video of the project's progress.

She went on to highlight the collections care features of the Weston, including cleverly specified roller racking to fit within the complicated architecture of the building. Specialist collections care areas are available for the first time, with a quarantine room and cold store, both of which have housed the recently acquired Fox Talbot Archive. Alex detailed the environmental controls in the Weston, from the mitigation strategies employed to counter the inevitable high humidity during the drying out period to a slide showing enviable flat-line data for one stack area. The future aim is to gain even greater sustainability for achieving these impressive results whilst reducing the environmental impact of the storage.

Bagatelle sets from the John Johnson collection housed at the Bodleian Library



Photo: Victoria Stevens



Photo: Sarah Hamlyn

Textile conservator Sue Stanton leads the group in the Ashmolean organic and textile stores

'After it all seemed carefully housed'

Daniel Bone, Head of Conservation at the Ashmolean Museum, was the second of our speakers. Daniel was part of the conservation team that oversaw the whole collection decant in preparation for the total redevelopment of the museum between 2006 and 2009. Focusing on how the storage and status of museum collections has changed over time, Daniel showed how an original concept, cases with extensive storage below, had been adapted to provide a more visitor-focused display philosophy and an opportunity for visitors to interact more actively with the collection. The museum's teaching function is central to this philosophy, with study rooms having direct access to storage areas.

Daniel completed his presentation with an engaging case study of how a discrete collection's status is reflected in its storage provision, and the impact this can have on its treatment and care. The changing fortunes of Francis Chantrey's original plaster models from high to low status objects within the collection, and their subsequent revival to be displayed proudly once more in the main Ashmolean atrium space, was a very clear illustration of Michael Thompson's *Rubbish Theory*. This was reinforced further by the charming, but unsuitable, original housing materials currently on display in the Conservation galleries, showing how storage itself has become part of the collection and teaching offer of the museum.

Sharp, pointy and poisonous

Our third speaker, **Andrew Hughes**, Pitt Rivers Move Project Team Leader, provided a perspective on a current storage project to quantify, describe, pack and move the 120,000 objects in the museum's off-site store. The diversity of the collection is remarkable, with the irregular and outside item formats and inherent hazards in an ethnographic store being intensified by a severe lack of space. The difficulties of the collection and the site are further compounded by uncertainty as to the length

of time the items will remain in storage once moved. A housing approach for long term storage using two standard box footprints has been adopted but with packing designed to allow ease of access to items.

The project has enabled the fourteen-strong team to improve the documentation for the collection to include basic information such as materials and hazards identification and an image of each item. A simple but smart box labelling system has been developed to allow instant identification of not only the risks that the collection poses to users but also the vulnerability of the collection to external factors, such as pests. The importance of this information was made chillingly clear with Andrew's last slide of a man-trap stored open on an upper shelf; the room gasped in horror and sympathy.

Impressive storage space in the Huntley Room at OUMNH



Photo: Victoria Stevens

Collections care in a cathedral to science

The final speaker for the morning was **Zoë Simmons**, Curatorial Officer for Life Collections at the Oxford University Museum of Natural History (OUMNH). Zoë's focus was on the restrictions historical buildings place upon housing and display, and how conservators at the museum have to ensure a high level of collections care in listed spaces. This was illustrated by the need to box outside objects to remain in situ during the 2013 extensive roof repairs, and how conservation accommodates the historic swift colony nesting in spaces adjacent to an entomological collection containing approximately 5.5 million specimens.

The lack of uniformity in the original collections' storage and display methods and the inflexibility of the linear accessioning model have resulted in some intelligent use of sealing and boxing as well as collections amalgamation to maximise available space. The gradual replacement of old specimen cabinets, new accessioning protocols to reduce the risk of pest introduction and the replacement of non-standard packaging have all contributed to the increased level of storage management in these important but fragile collections.

The afternoon tours provided delegates with the opportunity to see first hand some of the issues raised in the morning session. Highlights included the impressive Huxley Room at OUMNH, which houses the majority of the insect specimen collection in original cabinets below the vaulted roof space of the museum.



Photo: Victoria Stevens

Zoë Simmons highlights the challenge of mixed collections care in historic buildings

BI-ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM
Icon Furniture and Wooden Objects Group
 London, 12 May 2017

More than sixty delegates and speakers from the UK, Italy and The Netherlands attended the Group's second bi-annual symposium at The Linnean Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly. The day provided the opportunity to share and debate ideas and experiences in conservation practice and to catch up with fellow conservators over refreshments and lunch served in the stunning double cube library.

CEO **Alison Richmond** introduced the event, and spoke enthusiastically about the future of conservation and the challenges ahead, not least how to keep practical skills alive in the profession.

Francesca Cialoni and **Federica Traversa** from the Istituto di Restauro delle Marche, showed us how they combined traditional and contemporary methods to conserve and restore an 18th century painted and wooden balcony, one of a group of seven inside the church of S. Vincenzo Martira in Macerata, Italy.

Charles Stable of National Museums Scotland explained the conservation, logistical and funding challenges involved in the reconstruction and installation of the Hamilton Palace State Drawing Room at the National Museum Scotland. It was interesting to hear how they not only harnessed 21st century technology to engage the public in fundraising efforts, but also used an array of modern scientific techniques including dendrochronology, light microscopy and digital X-ray.

For anyone who had seen the previous stack areas at the Bodleian, the improvement created by the redevelopment of the site was remarkable, with flexible, highly specified and equipped storage and specialist processing areas.

With storage space always at a premium the tour of the Ashmolean Museum's Eastern Art Organic Store demonstrated how a diverse collection can be stored effectively by using configurable racking which can be adapted for different types, formats and sizes of material.

The committee would like to thank Conservation and Collections Care at the Bodleian for hosting the day, and to all speakers and tour leaders for providing such a comprehensive and candid insight into the storage of their collections.

Victoria Stevens ACR

Jurgen Huber delivers his presentation on Riesener's work



Photo: Oliver White

I first saw *Nigritella Nigra*, a striking and contemporary chest of drawers, when I visited the conservation studios of the Rijksmuseum with Icon back in November; the ethical issues around working on an object whose creator was still living intrigued me. Fortunately, **Tirza Mol** of the University of Antwerp/Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, gave an excellent presentation on the conservation of this object, including a recording of her conversation with the artist.

Ines Bravo, City and Guilds of London Art School, showed us how conservators can play an equal role with curators in investigating the provenance of an object, whilst **Jurgen Huber** of The Wallace Collection demonstrated the benefits of collaboration between collections. Using graphics, including a scaled down 3D printed chest of drawers, Jurgen helped us to understand Riesener's materials, techniques, and workshop practices.

Oliver Heal, former chairman of Heal's, gave an illustrated talk about the life and works of his grandfather Sir Ambrose Heal, a significant figure in early 20th century furniture design.

Chelsea McKibbin, of the Natural History Museum, London, managed to convey the enormous challenges of working against the clock to conserve a very large, immovable object in a museum still open to the public.

Boudewien Westra, a furniture conservator working for Plowden & Smith Ltd in London, described the conservation of nine Japanese botanical panel paintings, working to a tight brief from the client, and drawing on similar conservation projects previously carried out in their studio.

Finally, **Yannick Chastang** gave an entertaining and informative review of products and chemicals in common workshop practice; his clever presentation reminded us that most manufacturers do not produce products specifically for decorative arts conservation. Yannick stepped in at short notice, so we appreciated his humour all the more.

The Linnean Society was an excellent choice of venue, suitably historic and inspiring, close neighbour of the Royal Academy of Arts, and located centrally between Green Park and Piccadilly tube stations.

Thanks go to the speakers for their courage in putting themselves and their work in front of an audience of their peers, and to fellow delegates for their respectful questioning and clarifications. **Alex Owen** and the rest of the Furniture and Wooden Objects Group committee should congratulate themselves on delivering another very successful and enjoyable day.

Rachel Dealey, Conservator, Private Practice



IDA symposium venue, the Oslo Konserthus

**FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION:
Sharing knowledge, Connecting people**
IADA (The International Association of Book and Paper Conservators)
International Symposium Oslo 2017,
3–5 May 2017

I attended this symposium as a speaker, co-presenting a paper with a fellow author from the Bodleian Libraries but also hoping to meet international peers and gain knowledge from the rich and varied programme of papers and events.

The first day brought together conservators from different backgrounds and countries to explore effective methods of knowledge transfer across generations. This included

papers presenting the varied approaches of different conservation schools; internship and apprenticeship models worldwide; and innovative work-based collaborative research schemes.

Of particular interest was a paper presented by Harvard Art Museums conservator **Penley Knipe** concerning the shared study of a Qajar Artists' album by a conservator, curators, scientists and graduate students; the joint exploration of this album focused upon using hands-on practice and teaching with real objects in order to gain and disseminate information. Another stimulating approach to sharing knowledge was presented by the National Archives of Sweden, who have trialled interviewing

Fiona McLees (l) and Alexandra Walter co-presenting





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bodleianconservation Papyrus collections & conservation tools with the conservators @nasjonalbiblioteket - including another unusual written document. The shard of pottery was used to write a receipt on, a handy way of recycling scraps and often used for small notes such as this. #papyrus #beforepaper #iada2017 #oslouniversity #bodconsontour #conservation

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Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford

Sharing the visit to the University of Oslo's papyri collection through the Instagram account

conservation colleagues close to retirement or just after retirement, with the aim of facilitating access to the methodologies of past conservation, bookbinding, and research activities and as a way to navigate the wealth of institutional history available.

The second session looked in detail at the use of new innovations such as internet platforms and social media as a way of exchanging information. This was the session in which **Alexandra Walker** (Preventive Conservator) and I gave our presentation, co-written with Bodleian Book Conservator **Andrew Honey**, showing how Conservation & Collections Care has been using Instagram and Twitter to share our work more widely. We were delighted that our paper inspired many positive questions from the audience, and we received the impression from many people that the Bodleian is one of the few European institutions at the forefront of using social media to share conservation images. The afternoon session was closely followed by a reception at the Nasjonalbiblioteket where we were able to continue discussions on this topic with many international participants, and we realised that we have been very fortunate in having support from colleagues across the Bodleian in allowing us a large amount of freedom in managing our own social media accounts.

The second day of the symposium focused more upon practical conservation issues, with topics including an historical survey on the use of lamination (eek!) for paper objects, and the development of 'invisible' paper repair methods in the early 20th century. Of particular relevance to our collections at the Bodleian was a detailed

study of conservation methods for wax seals which was the outcome of collaborative research undertaken in Germany. This paper re-evaluated the existing methods and materials used for conserving wax seals, as well as taking into account historic recipes for seals, and concluded with guidelines on the best ways to preserve them.

Two other papers to highlight were one describing the treatment of large 18th century pastel portraits in the UK's National Maritime Museum and another concentrating on tailoring aqueous cleaning treatments to suit the object being conserved. The first of these was presented by paper conservator **Emmanuelle Largeteau** of the NMM and **Clara de la Peña McTigue** (now Head of Paper Conservation at the Royal Collection) and showcased the use of a micro-suction HEPA vacuum with hair tip to remove mould from the surface of the pastels. This technique would also be useful for other kinds of very sensitive, friable media requiring mould or dirt removal, and would be worth considering for future treatments of such objects.

The second paper mentioned came from private paper conservator **Daria Keynan**, based in New York City. Through case studies, she juxtaposed use of traditional aqueous methods for stain removal with newer approaches such as using gels and 'adjusted' waters. This latter category is a relatively unfamiliar concept to me, and introduced me to the idea of adjusting the conductivity and pH of water in order to control the effect upon the paper object. This approach also encompasses evaluating

the pH and conductivity of the paper in order to create a bespoke water for each treatment.

The last day of the symposium consisted of visits and tours to various institutions around Oslo. In the morning, I attended a session at the University of Oslo focusing on their papyri collection. Conservators and curators discussed the content of the collection, as well as digitisation, research and conservation projects. The session was particularly interesting as several other attendees worked within the field of papyrus conservation, and we were able to discuss current practice in conservation and housing.

The second visit of the day was to the Prints & Drawings Room at the National Gallery, where visitors were shown a variety of their treasures including Old Master drawings, a Friedrich drawing and Munch woodcuts. A 19th century album sparked particular debate about whether it was appropriate to remove drawings for loans and exhibitions, and how to protect objects in historic albums made from acidic or otherwise detrimental materials.

I would like to warmly thank the Anna Plowden Trust and Bodleian Libraries Staff Development for supporting my attendance at this event.

If you would like to see how Conservation & Collections Care at the Bodleian Libraries has been using social media to share our work, please find us on Twitter @bodcons and Instagram @bodleianconservation.

Fiona McLees ACR



Attaching a Japanese guard to an item

WORKSHOP

FASCICULING WORKSHOP

Icon Book and Paper Group
Drayton St Leonard, Oxon May 2017

This one day workshop in Oxfordshire was held at Green's Books, a light, well-equipped studio where Arthur teaches bookbinding and conservation techniques. I attended the course on fasciculing, a method for archival storage which I had not previously come across, other than in the literature. For a novice, Arthur's class was perfect as he gave background information on previously used techniques, conservation, materials and an easy to follow step-by-step practical within a small group.

Fasciculing was developed at the Bodleian Library in the early 1980s by that prominent figure in book and manuscript conservation the late Christopher Clarkson. Students such as me are continuing to learn from the vast amount of accessible knowledge he contributed and it was timely that his work directly informed the workshop. The word fascicule comes from fasciculus meaning 'a part number of a work published in instalments'. Fascicules are ideal for housing together special collections of letters, photographs, newspaper clippings and pamphlets. The technique allows for single or double sheets of loose ephemera to be stored in a secure way.

The scrapbook style system came about as a replacement for overcast bindings, guard books, stub-bindings, and storage of loose leaves in boxes: these solutions were often not secure and caused further damage. The recto and verso of each item can be seen clearly and they have a hinge of Japanese tissue attached to the left hand side. These are then placed into the pamphlet style binding which have hooked guards for compensation. The archival quality paper used in the fascicule was chosen specifically for the way it drapes, and because each item is inserted onto its own page there is no abrasion between them. The fascicules come in a series of uniform sizes based on

Nicholson's shelf size scheme, the pages are bigger than the items inserted, thereby adding protection and making storage of them easy; collections of them could be kept together in one box.

In the workshop, each work station was well organised with all the materials needed, written instruction and itinerary, even tool and supplier lists and references for further information.

The attention to detail, from making paste to the most economic way to cut the guards and best practice for efficient work flow, made sure everyone created a high standard of work that you felt confident you could replicate. More problematic pieces were demonstrated from items with irregular or torn edges, photographs and insertion of polyester pockets into the fascicule and sewing in pamphlets and the making of larger compensation guards for these thicker items. Folding over a page to sew in a

pamphlet made it possible to hide the knot ends but meant the loss of a page. Each fascicule has around twelve pages that items can be attached to; this makes for a nice sized pamphlet binding and the pages turn well. However if you are losing pages to thicker items, thought needs to go into what is best to be displayed in this way. More than one item can be attached to each page, which was demonstrated in the workshop by staggering them so that they moved in unison as the page turned, this could work nicely for a letter and envelope to keep them together.

The fascicules are relatively expensive, so popular but rare items are perhaps more suited to this form of storage. It was also noted that extra care must also be taken when adhering pieces which are very water sensitive, or where the media used is; and the choice of tissue needs to be lighter in weight than the object for it to turn over securely. I thought the D size fascicules work well for the small items we had, though larger sizes are available. In addition if an individual item in the fascicule ever needed to go on display in an exhibition the pamphlet binding made it easy to remove the whole page onto which it was attached.

The fascicule was a perfect and simple way to store a wide variety of ephemera, keeping collections of different items together for easy and secure viewing. The workshop was comprehensive and Arthur's willingness to share his knowledge made for a very informative day.

Jess Phipps Wardle
MA student Camberwell

Jess Phipps Wardle (l), Arthur Green and the other workshop participants



BOXES FOR THE STORAGE OF AIR PISTOLS

A collector of antique airguns, Edward S. Hems came across the world of conservation by chance and profited from his new knowledge to better protect his collection and advise other collectors

INTRODUCTION

Original boxes are highly valued by collectors of air pistols. Whilst protecting a gun from dust and physical damage, the acidic nature of the old cardboards used in their construction may accelerate corrosion in the long term. A survey of conservation literature has afforded a list of storage considerations for materials commonly used in the construction of air pistols, and this set of guidelines for collectors in the construction of archival quality boxes for air pistols has been compiled.

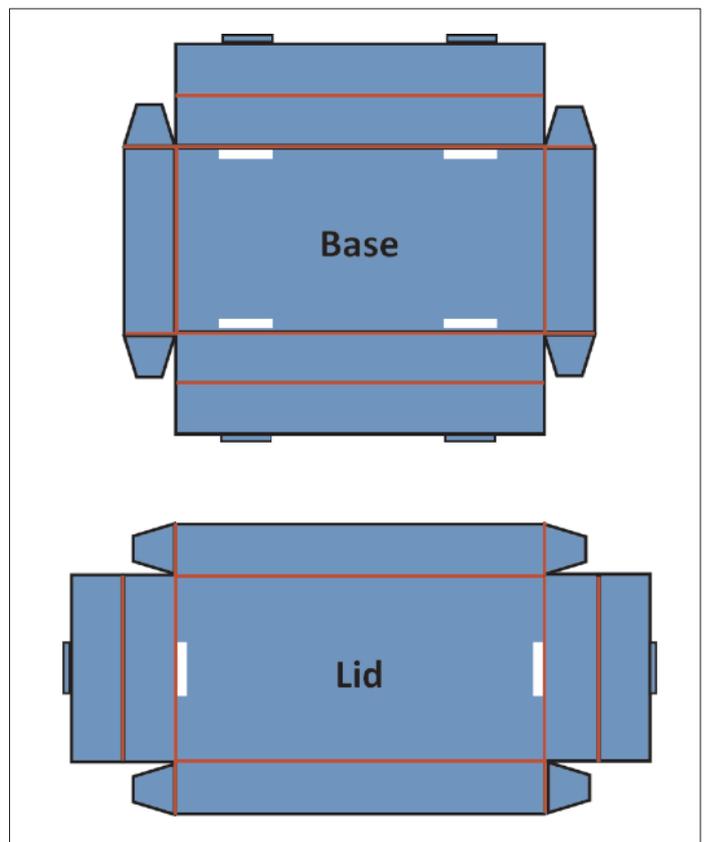
A well designed conservation grade box made from an acid-free buffered board can help to protect an object from atmospheric pollutants and fluctuations in humidity, as well as 'neutralising' any volatile acids released by the object itself.¹ This article summarises the literature the author consulted when designing a 'conservation grade' storage box for some Webley air pistols. It also details the final box design and manufacture, and materials suppliers are discussed for the benefit of the collector who is new to archival grade storage products.

INCOMPATIBLE MATERIALS IN AIR GUNS

The storage of air guns presents an interesting challenge due to the combinations of incompatible materials they contain. Steel of varying qualities may be encountered in frames and barrels and is best kept at the lowest possible relative humidity (RH) at neutral pH. Wood found in the grips and stocks of some air guns is naturally acidic and can expand and contract with changes in temperature and RH.² Wood is best kept at slightly basic pH, but can shrink and crack if kept at low RH.³ Leather is often used for air pistol washers and is not only naturally acidic but is best stored at neutral pH.⁴ Very occasionally horn grips may be encountered. Plastic grips and stocks may be used as an alternative to wood and, in older air pistols, are often made of Bakelite or ebonite. Plastics in arms and armour are covered in considerable detail in a paper released by the Royal Armouries Conservation Department.⁵

ORIGINAL ANTIQUE BOXES: PROBLEMS

Most cardboard is high in acid content, and over time this acid can leach out and damage objects.³ The acid is released by the breakdown of lignin which is a component of the wood pulp contained in the card. This acid can in time lead to an increased rate of corrosion of metal stored in the box. If the collector would rather keep an air gun in an original or reproduction cardboard box they may be well advised to line the box with an inert physical barrier such as polyester film.⁵



Example box net which allows assembly of a two piece box not requiring adhesive. The red lines represent folds. Adapted from the library of box nets supplied with the KASEMAKE box making machine

CONSERVATION MATERIALS AVAILABLE

Acid free board

Acid free cardboards are ubiquitous within conservation and are available with or without buffers. Buffers are bases (commonly calcium carbonate) added to the board during manufacture which help to protect objects against migrating

Table 1 – Storage requirements for various materials encountered in antique air pistols and handguns

Material	Humidity Tolerance (%) ²	Storage	Degradation
Steel	< 30	Unbuffered ³	Degrades leather
Leather*	45 – 60	Unbuffered ³	Corrodes iron
Wood	45 – 60	Buffered ³	Acetic acid
Horn	45 – 60	Unbuffered ³	
Bakelite	Can respond dimensionally to changes leading to cracking.	Buffered**	Carbolic acid ⁵
Ebonite (Vulconite)	Lower slows acid release.	Buffered ⁶	Sulphuric acid ⁶

* Leather may be damaged by buffered storage materials

** There is no direct guidance in the literature, but this would seem the best option based on the off-gassed acids.

acids.³ These work by neutralising acids found in air pollutants as well as those given off by the object itself. Buffered boards are supplied at about pH 8.5, although it must be remembered that the buffer will be depleted with time.

Unbuffered boards are supplied at neutral pH but have no ability to resist changes in pH by migrating acids. Unbuffered boards are often used where the buffer may have an adverse effect on the stored object, most commonly colour photographs. It is difficult to find advice relating to the storage of metal objects in buffered boxes, as inert sealable plastic containers are normally used for purely metallic objects.

Foam

Once a suitable box has been constructed it may be useful to create a foam template to prevent the air gun from moving around in transit.⁷ Many commercial plastic gun cases sandwich the air gun between two 'egg box' pieces of foam. This could lead to an increased rate of wear to the finish of the air gun, and as such it is perhaps more elegant to cut a piece of foam to shape inside the box. A popular foam in conservation is nitrogen expanded polyethylene, which is sold under the brand name Plastazote®. The combination of inert plastic and inert blowing gas means that the foam should not chemically damage air guns over time.

Plastic Film

Chemically inert polyester sheets can be useful for lining original boxes to provide a physical barrier to acid migration. Polyester pockets can also be a successful way of storing the original paper work and manuals that came with air guns in the box. Conservation grade polyester sheets are sometimes sold under the brand name Melinex®.

Adhesives

Wherever possible adhesives and staples should be avoided when constructing archival storage boxes. This includes the fitting of reproduction labels which should ideally be avoided. Adhesives can off-gas solvents as they dry, but may also leach acids and plasticisers over time. Staples can rust over time, and can also scratch the object being stored in the box.

BOX DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION

The air gun used in this project was a 1925 Mark I Webley air pistol in .177 calibre. These guns have leather piston washers and wooden grips. The gun in question is in good working order and retains much original finish.

Initially it was difficult to decide whether buffered card would be compatible with the steel metal frames of air guns. However for air guns with wooden furniture, buffered card seemed the better choice, plus the buffers had the added bonus of offering some protection from acidic atmospheric pollutants. Buffered 1.3 mm corrugated board was used to make the boxes. A two piece box design was chosen for simplicity and durability, and a template selected that allowed the base and lid to be constructed with no adhesives.

I was fortunate to have access to a box making machine at the time pre-programmed with the template shown in the illustration opposite. However it is possible to make a box to size based on the suggested template by hand. The red lines represent folds, and the best results will always be obtained by pre-creasing the board before folding. It is important to remember that the lid must be made slightly larger than the base.

To protect the metal from the buffer in the board, and also to protect the board from any oil from the gun, a sheet of Melinex® was placed across the top one third of the box. To hold the air pistol in place in the box, three pieces of 30 mm Plastazote® were cut to shape; it was found that a large kitchen knife gives a nice clean cut. The Plastazote® pieces were fixed inside the box using low melt glue. This has the advantage of not off-gassing organic solvents or slowly releasing moisture as it sets. The illustrations show the final box with the pistol in place. A strip of Melinex® lies underneath the air gun cylinder but is not visible in the picture. The reproduction manual is printed on acid free paper and is contained inside a Melinex® pocket.

STORAGE POINTS TO CONSIDER

Unlike objects stored in museum collections, most private collectors will enjoy occasional careful use of their air pistols. This means that the air pistols will experience fluctuations in temperature and relative humidity if used outside. The pistol should ideally be allowed to warm back up to room temperature before being placed in its box to avoid trapping moisture.

A secure storage location in a room unlikely to undergo fluctuations in temperature or humidity is preferable. Storage in wooden cabinets or drawers should be avoided due to the acetic acid released by wood over time. Some collectors like to use a protective layer of oil on the metal work to delay the onset of corrosion, and research by the Royal Armouries conservation department has found that BrunOX® and Youngs 303 Gun Oil are suitable for long term storage.⁸

MATERIALS & SUPPLIERS

Acid free box board, Plastazote® and Melinex® are all readily available from conservation suppliers. However minimum order sizes can make material outlay prohibitively expensive. A good alternative is to source custom boxes made to fit your gun. In the UK, Lancashire and Norfolk record offices are both well equipped to make custom sized acid free boxes to order, and the author is sure both would supply Plastazote® and Melinex® off-cuts at reasonable prices if requested. The box and materials for this project were supplied by the Norfolk Record Office and cost less than a modern reproduction box.⁹

Lancashire Record Office
Box.clever@lancashire.gov.uk
+44 1772 533039

Norfolk Record Office
norfrec@norfolk.gov.uk
+44 1603 222599



The completed box with its shaped foam and Melinex® fittings

Acknowledgements

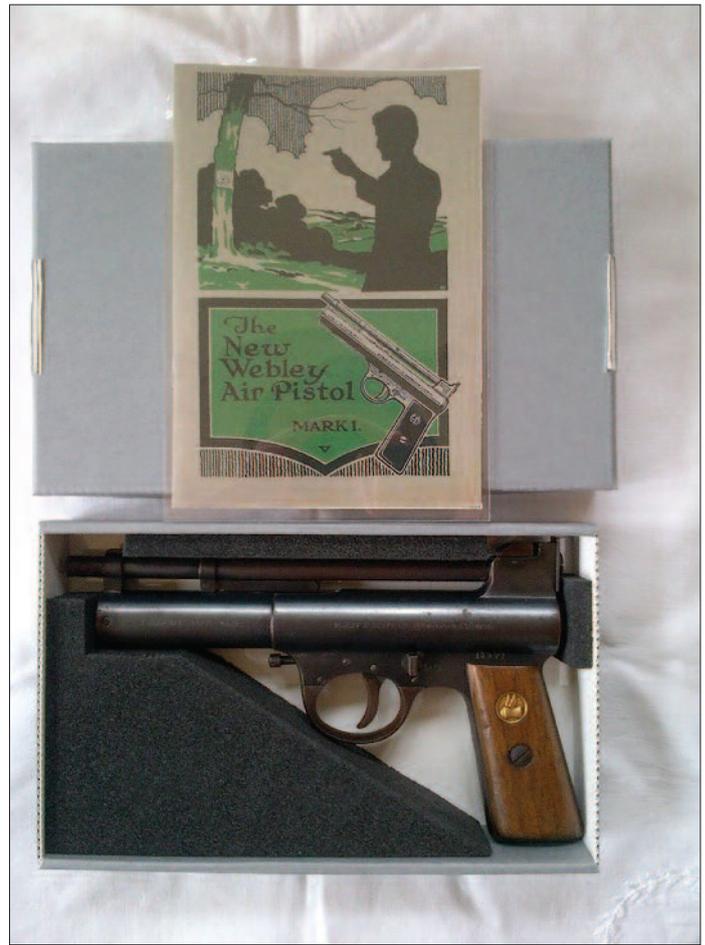
My interest in this project was sparked by a placement during my Ph.D with the Norfolk Record Office. I must therefore thank Antoinette Curtis for introducing me to the world of conservation, and Nick Sellwood and Kasey for all of their help producing boxes and testing boards for this project. I would also like to extend my thanks for Suzanne Dalewicz-Kitto ACR of the Royal Armouries in Leeds for help and advice with the storage of firearms and writing this paper.

Further Reading

Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI) Notes – available online, these are a comprehensive set of free-to-access notes on caring for cultural objects depending on material. (<https://tinyurl.com/yaqt5x7z>)

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Pistol in the archival box. The metal air cylinder is in contact with Melinex® and the wood in direct contact with the buffered card. A reproduction manual is stored in a Melinex® sleeve to act as a barrier against acids from the paper.

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Note: Edward's work at the Norfolk Record Office led to an article co-authored with Antoinette Curtis which was published in the *Journal of the Institute of Conservation: Decolourising isinglass derived from aqua-farmed sturgeon by sonication* (Volume 38, 2015, issue 2)

YORK'S ROSE WINDOW Shining tribute to a Conservator

Recent graduate in stained glass conservation Celeste Flower reflects on Peter Gibson's legacy

Stained Glass conservator Peter Gibson, who died in November 2016¹, is recognised for his contribution to the preservation of many and varied windows, across the UK and Europe. Among his many achievements he will certainly be best remembered in his home city for his determination to rescue York Minster's iconic Rose Window.

Set in thirteenth-century wheel tracery, the Rose contains examples of glass from the sixteenth century, in the form of double-red and Tudor roses and sunburst images, which Gibson believed to be the work of visiting Flemish glaziers.² Major interventions and additions were carried out to the window during the eighteenth century by York craftsman William Peckitt (1731–95), notably the sunflower (or marigold) medallion at the centre of the design. Sun motifs, commissioned in 1970 from the Norwich studio of Dennis King to commemorate the death of Roger Lumley, the Earl of Scarborough and benefactor of York Minster, appear in thirty-six panels of the seventy-three panel scheme.

That the window survives in its present form at all is a tribute to the work of Gibson and the York Glaziers Trust (YGT). Most recently restored following a devastating fire to the Minster's South Transept, caused by lightning strike on the night of 8 July 1984, the story of its renewal was well-documented in local and national media. However, it is less commonly known that the Rose Window was entirely re-leaded by YGT during conservation work just fourteen years earlier. Gibson believed that this robust lead-work was to a great extent responsible for the later survival of the glass, retaining it securely in spite of intense temperatures. Whereas solder joints had melted, the lead matrix remained stable and acted as support for the catastrophically cracked and fire-crazed glass, which he was convinced after an initial assessment could be safely removed from the aperture for conservation work to take place.

Determined that not a single one of the estimated 40,000 fragments of historic glass should be lost, with further cracks appearing in the glass as it cooled over the course of the next week, Gibson's team turned to twentieth-century materials to safeguard the fractured glass. Fablon® self-adhesive fabric was applied to each panel before the window was dismantled and only removed once an adhesive had been applied in the workshop. Edge-bonding the glass fragments proved a painstaking process, carried out only after rigorous research into the conservation grade materials available at the time.

An adhesive with water-white clarity was required, one that would match as closely as possible the refractive indices of the glass to which it was applied, have a suitable viscosity to allow for application via pipettes and, because of the pressures of time, be rapid-curing, if the Rose was to 'shine again in restored glory'³. After consulting widely, Gibson selected a two-part epoxy resin polymer (Ablebond 342-1). As a further precaution against the elements and time, most of the historic glass pieces were also double-plated, secured



Peter Gibson assesses the extent of damage to the Rose Window.
Image: Acc.2015.8 G12

between un-contoured sheets of 2mm plate glass sealed at the edges with silicone, prior to re-leading in wide-heart comes.

That this rescue operation was a success cannot be doubted. More than thirty years later, the Rose Window remains impressive, bright and clear, and with the naked eye it is still almost impossible to detect the extent of the repairs that were carried out after 1984. Binoculars give a clearer sense of the seriousness of the original fire-crazing and the scale of the work achieved by Gibson and the YGT team. It must be remembered that the materials used in the conservation of the window were relatively un-tested at the time and in any case never designed for use with historic architectural glass – subsequent studies into different formulations of epoxy-resins and silicones, for example, have revealed that the very composition and durability of these polymers may store up difficulties for future conservators.

The Rose Window of York Minster is a stunning memorial window. The rose motifs in themselves are traditionally believed to commemorate the marriage of Henry VII (Tudor) and Elizabeth of York. In 1970, Lord Scarborough, first High Steward of the Minster, was memorialised by the inclusion of the new sun and S-monogram motifs, acknowledging his part as leader of the campaign to rescue a Minster that was collapsing. In the twenty-first century the window takes on a new significance for the conservation community, its very survival owed to the experience and expertise of a great conservator, Peter Gibson.

A major difficulty is imposed by a lack of easy access to the



Rose Window by Nick Teed YGT 2016

window, and as a result a full assessment of the glass and supporting materials has not been conducted since its re-installment in the late 1980s. Recent research by the author has highlighted conservation concerns for the twenty-first century custodians of this national treasure, including possible impending failure of the epoxy resin bond, the effects of thermal shock on the much-fragmented glass, and the danger of silicone off-gassing to lead.

There is still much to be learned from study and analysis of twentieth-century materials and conservation methods in service, rather than in laboratory trials. Close monitoring of the condition of the original materials and the manner in which they react with conservation materials in the Rose Window would provide an opportunity to further knowledge of these aspects of conservation, and indeed must be part of the ongoing care and maintenance for the Rose, as for any historic window. Peter Gibson recognised the importance of the Rose both for history and for the future and, to his

memory, every effort should be made to preserve the Rose Window in optimum condition.

1. Peter Gibson's obituary appeared in *Icon News* issue 69, March 2017
2. Peter Gibson, 'Restoring a Tudor Rose', *Architect's Journal* 186, 43 (1987): 59
3. Peter Gibson frequently stated this aim in the many interviews he gave whilst working on the window

Celeste Flower graduated from the University of York in January this year with an MA in Stained Glass Conservation and Heritage Management. The history of the Rose Window's conservation was the topic of her dissertation and she is also an accredited volunteer guide at York Minster. She is currently working for the York Glaziers Trust.



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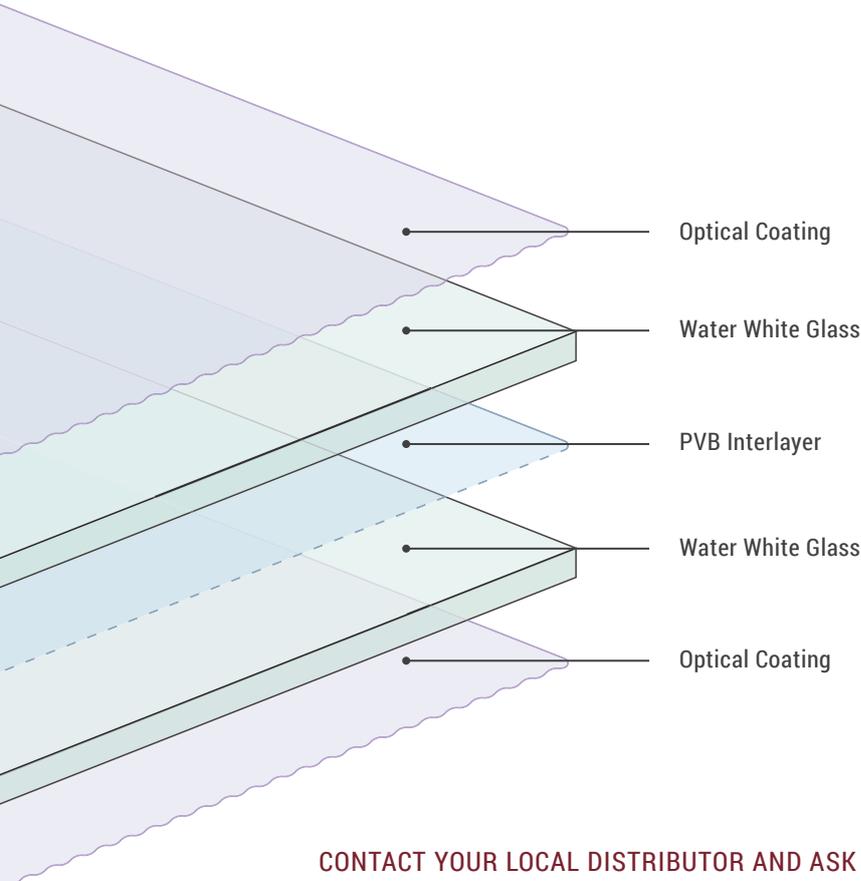
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