

Icon NEWS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION NOVEMBER 2005 • ISSUE 1



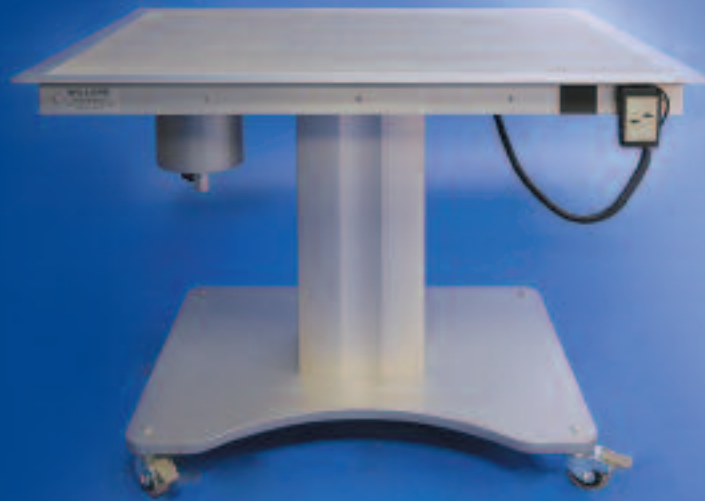
Restoring maritime memorials: ss Great Britain & Cleopatra's Needle

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NOVEMBER 2005

Issue 1

Welcome to Icon News. In this issue you can read about the Institute of Conservation's public launch at Inigo Jones's Banqueting House in Whitehall. And don't forget to make a note of the date of our own internal launch celebration in December. The surroundings may be slightly less glittering but it will be well worth attending: not just a formal AGM but lots of interesting events, things to see and a party. On a rather more sober note, private practitioners in England and Wales can bring themselves up to date on their potential legal liabilities. But more cheerfully – and fittingly as I write this on Trafalgar Day – two private practices celebrate our maritime heritage with the story of their recent projects at the larger-scale end of conservation activity: cleaning Cleopatra's Needle and restoring the ss Great Britain.

Icon News is the brainchild of a newsletter discussion group which was set up about a year ago to consider the broad shape of a magazine for the new body. This in an opportunity to thank all those who took part in its deliberations: Sally Esdaile, Ruth Honeybone, Shulla Jacques, David Leigh, Angela Moor, Cathy Proudlove and Peter Winsor. They laid firm foundations on which the magazine will, I hope, develop and grow.

Lynette Gill, Editor



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Deadlines:
for January 2006 issue

Editorial:
Wednesday 30 November

Advertising:
Wednesday 14 December



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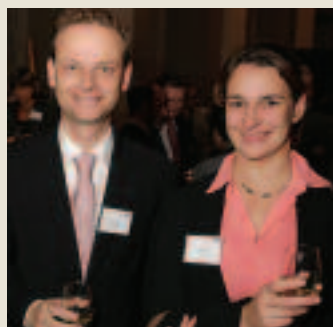
Icon is launched

The Institute of Conservation was given a splendid start in life on October 12th by the Minister for Culture in England, David Lammy M.P. The Minister raised his glass in a toast to Icon and was joined by over 200 guests who had assembled beneath the Rubens ceilings in the elegant surroundings of Inigo Jones's Banqueting House on Whitehall.

There to celebrate the launch was an eclectic and fascinating mix: architects; museum and library professionals, members of heritage bodies; equipment suppliers; insurers; Government officials; religious representatives; auctioneers; archaeologists; campaigners; academics and a fair sprinkling of conservators to tell the rest who we are and what we do. Displays provided by the Museum of London, Historic Royal Palaces, Plowden and Smith and Valentine Walsh also demonstrated to the uninitiated our unique and amazing skills.

The evening was informal and the few speeches lively and well-received. Welcoming everyone at the start, Carole Milner, Chair of the Interim Board, invited three speakers to give a personal perspective on the formation of the Institute. Lawrence Brandes, former Museums and Galleries Commissioner, looked back over twenty years at the evolutionary development of 'a proper profession' which would have 'its own self-administering professional body'. Jack Pringle, President of the Royal Institute of British Architects, rebutted the notion that his profession was only concerned with the modern. New work, he said, is based on the work of the past and architects work hand in hand with conservators. The two professions had a joint interest in the future; in determining what should and must be preserved from the past and in tackling hard issues such as the environment. He drew attention to RIBA's own

Andrew Davies and Clare Dewey of AXA Art Insurance



David Lammy M.P. Minister for Culture, flanked by Carole Milner, Chair and Alastair McCapra, Chief Executive

conservation architecture group and the many related skills of Icon members in stained glass, wall painting, masonry and other areas. Ylva Player-Dahnsjö felt sure that Inigo Jones would have been a member of both Icon and RIBA. We are more than wielders of scalpels, she said, 'we have now begun to show that we are strategic planners, problem-solving and knowledge-sharing'. She went on to pay tribute to all those who had made unification of the profession happen and expressed her excitement and pride in the evening and what it represented.

Conviviality ensued for the next hour. And when the Minister arrived, Carole took to the podium again to reflect on the fairy-tale story which had seen twelve separate conservation organisations begin the process of creating a single body in March 2002. She acknowledged the extraordinary contribution – so much of it voluntary – of all those involved in making it happen. 'I won't pretend that the process has been without its difficulties' she added, but 'together we have managed to set in train something that will really make a difference and that is something we can all be proud of'. That something is an Institute that is to be open, inclusive and welcoming to everyone who shares its aims and values. 'This profession', she concluded 'deserves proper acknowledgement, a place at the highest tables and a bright strong future here in the UK'.

Chief Executive Alastair McCapra, describing himself as having all 'the zeal of a new convert', then highlighted some of the issues which would be important for Icon over the coming year:

David Lammy M.P., Minister for Culture, proposes a toast to Icon



Sir David Green, Director General of the British Council (right) and Alastair McCapra, Chief Executive





Jack Pringle, President of RIBA, (left) with Henry Russell, Chair, RICS Building Conservation Forum



Sam Walker, Director Black Cultural Archives, (right) with Robert Pulley, Principal, West Dean College



Jack Pringle, President of RIBA, addresses the launch

- The formation of an Advisory Council, made up of individuals from outside the profession, which would support the Icon Board and help it raise the profile of conservation
- The search for sponsors to help expand the conservation register website. With 18,000 searches this year and thousands downloading the free guidance leaflets, there was scope to develop this important public resource and undertake a major public awareness campaign.
- A plan to support local communities which want to find grant-funding for conservation work to preserve their own heritage. Icon has introduced for its members a service which matches proposals for conservation projects with available sources of funding. The aim is to open up this service to the public at large.

Alastair then urged the assembled guests to use their power for good in looking after our heritage: to work closely with Icon and influence public debate, policies and practice.

And so to the Minister. Apologising for being a little late, because Parliament insisted on 'conserving' ancient voting practices, David Lammy noted that he was wearing Icon colours with his red tie (whether this was happy accident or excellent briefing we didn't discover). But it demonstrated his enthusiasm for Icon and for its united voice, which is important, he told us, 'when you're lobbying me and when I am lobbying my colleagues'. He went on to comment that

From l. to r. Stephanie Kenna, Manager, Regional and Library Programmes, British Library, Chris Fardon, Senior Adviser, Workforce Development, MLA, Fiona Cameron, Press Office, Dept. of Culture, Media and Sport and Alison Walker, Director, National Preservation Office



we live in times when it seems as though we all value everything that's new but

'We need people who can stand back and concentrate on the detail. Yes, we all want i-Pods but someone somewhere must conserve the CD and the gramophone. It's only when these things are under threat and taken away that we understand the value humans place on objects'

Events in Pakistan and New Orleans, the destruction of the Buddhist statues in Afghanistan and the travails of the Iraq Museum were all recent illustrations of this.

He had, he said, two points to get across. The first was that by coming together we now had an opportunity to create a progressive consensus on conservation such as the environmental lobby had achieved. But it needed to involve more than just us conservators. Commenting on how much he had enjoyed a recent conservation event, organised by the Museum of London with local East London youngsters, he drew the lesson that we needed to get students and their teachers involved. We must, and we can, make sure that young people understand the message of conservation in the 21st century, he told us.

And here he raised his glass to us to bring the formal elements of the evening to a close before he went to look at the displays and the hubbub resumed. The warmth and goodwill all around from non-conservators towards Icon was tangible, and at the end of the evening many people offered to help us with the next stage of our development.



Don't forget that the membership at large can enjoy a get-together at the AGM on December 6. Details of the event are set out on page 24

From l. to r. Lynne Thomas, Icon Project Manager, Rodney Lunn, Risk Management Consultant, Royal and Sun Alliance and Kevin Smith of Plowden and Smith



around & about

Miracles do happen

In the midst of the horror of the Hurricane Katrina news, the New Orleans Public Library was able to announce that the New Orleans City Archive was (relatively) safe. The majority of their records, along with the 19th and early 20th century records of the Orleans Parish civil and criminal courts, are housed in the basement of the Main Library. But although this is some 18 feet below sea level, the basement remained essentially dry and when staff members got access they discovered that there was no flooding and a small amount of water in one area has caused no direct damage to records themselves. The Main Library building itself also came through relatively unscathed. Contrary to early reports, no-one broke in to vandalise or shelter in it. Several windows blew out but minor roof leakage missed the books. The branch libraries fared less well with around half of them under water. The Public Library system expresses determination to rebuild these and in the meantime the survival of the archive leaves staff 'almost delirious with relief'.

More good news: Hayle Mill to be restored.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has granted Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent to P J Livesey Country Homes (Southern) Ltd for the restoration and conversion of Hayle Mill to housing.

Hayle Mill in Maidstone, Kent produced handmade paper from 1808 until 1987 when it ceased to be viable. Over the 8 years of struggle to get permission for restoration and conversion to a new use, the Mill has been damaged by thieves, vandals and arsonists.

The scheme involves restoration of the historic buildings, removal of intrusive modern buildings, conversion of the mill buildings to private residences with a small number of new housing units plus a heritage centre and landscape enhancement and management.

The planning application received a lot of support from conservators and others concerned with cultural heritage from all over the world and those fighting for the Mill's future are very grateful for this.

The Government Press Release on Hayle Mill can be found at:
<http://www.gnn.gov.uk/content/detail.asp?NewsAreaID=2&ReleaseID=170207>>

The more detailed Planning Inspector's report is not available on the web.

Export bar on Viking treasure

A temporary export bar was recently placed on seven pieces of Viking hack silver (cut from silver ingots) and a fragment of a stamped arm-ring found in Northern Ireland. This was to provide a last chance for the money to be raised to keep the silver in the United Kingdom and reflects its outstanding significance for the study of the development of the economy and society in the Viking age, when its use as a form of currency was widespread.

These pieces of hack silver, not much larger than a finger nail or postage stamp, are cut in the same characteristic way as similar finds that have been dredged up from the Blackwater river at Shanmullagh, County Armagh, since the 1990s, many of which are housed in the Ulster Museum. This hoard is unparalleled in the United Kingdom and of exceptional importance in its combination of Irish-Viking and native ecclesiastical metalwork. Only four silver hoards have been recorded as having been discovered in Northern Ireland and some of these were melted down in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Very little is known about Viking Age Northern Ireland, but the Shanmullagh hoard is evidence for the great diversity of items that were in circulation in that part of the country at that time.

Climate change and the historic environment

University College London's Centre for Sustainable Heritage has published the first ever study of its kind in the historic environment, the result of a scoping study funded by English Heritage and supported by the UK Climate Impacts Programme.

Taking as its baseline high, medium and low emission scenarios for the 2080s, the study took the risk factors most relevant to the historic environment and assessed their impact on cultural heritage in situ. Although it focussed only on two English regions, the evidence showed, unsurprisingly, that environmental effects do not respect boundaries and that heritage organisations cannot work alone. Research areas to address these problems over the next 10 to 15 years include a new understanding of traditional building materials and practice in extreme weather; the application of new bio-sensing techniques to assess biological damage to materials and emergency preparedness. The report can be downloaded from www.ucl.ac.uk/sustainableheritage/research/climatechange.

A tale of two conservation centres

National Museums Liverpool has been awarded over half a millions pounds to fund a new exhibition in the Conservation Centre, replacing the current permanent display 'Caught in Time'. The new exhibition will centre on a working laboratory that will present the scientific work of conservators through interpreted displays and demonstrations. Surrounding displays will enable visitors to investigate a wide range of science applications from x-ray analyses of Egyptian mummies to laser cleaning of sculptures. An area with microscopes, databases, interactives and a bank of objects representing the 50 most common public conservation enquiries will allow visitors to explore the themes of the exhibition through connections with everyday objects. In order to create this visitor attraction the Conservation Centre has had to close temporarily over the winter. It is expected to reopen with the new displays in the spring.

The money came from the ReDiscover fund, a renewal fund for science centres and museums across the UK funded by the Millennium Commission, the Wolfson Foundation and the Wellcome Trust.



Derek Massey

Conserving a kayak.

Meanwhile in a rather larger, £13m+ project at the British Library, construction has now started on the Centre for Conservation, intended to be a world-class facility for all aspects of book conservation, along with training and education. With the completion of the Centre in 2007, staff and facilities for book conservation will come together on one site for the first time in the BL's history. The second occupant of the centre will be the nation's Sound Archive with state-of-the-art technical facilities. The visiting public will have access through tours of the studios, demonstrations and lectures.

The Nigel Seeley Memorial Lectures

UCL's Centre for Sustainable Heritage is running its fourth year of a guest lecture programme, which is now renamed to commemorate the life and work of the first Visiting Professor at the Centre for Sustainable Heritage, Dr Nigel Seeley who died in June 2004. The lectures, open to the public, take place monthly at UCL and are given by an international line-up of speakers. They tackle such issues as heritage leadership, heritage governance, and heritage policy as well as preventive conservation and preservation management. For more information see details in Listings.

Collections Description Manual

MDA, the UK's lead organisation in the management of information about collections has been awarded a contract by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) to develop a Collections Description Manual for MICHAEL, a project which will create the first multilingual inventory of collections in museums, libraries and archives across Europe. MLA is the UK partner in the MICHAEL consortium, which also includes representatives from France and Italy. In the UK, MLA has been working to develop the Collections Description Service, a unique set of tools which will draw together descriptions of physical and digital collections.

MDA has been commissioned by MLA to support MICHAEL and the Collections Description Service by creating a manual for culture-sector professionals who will be creating descriptions of their collections. The manual will be launched in October 2005 as an online browsable resource providing guidance and case studies illustrating best practice in describing collections.

Further information about MICHAEL is available from <http://www.michael-culture.org/project.html> MDA is supported by MLA and Scottish Museums Council.

Hadrian's walls collapsing

Salon reports that Italian bureaucracy is being blamed for the parlous state of Rome's Castel Sant'Angelo, built by Hadrian as his own mausoleum on the banks of the Tiber. Later fortified by medieval popes, it is reported to be in such a poor state of physical repair as to be close to collapse. According to the newspaper *Corriere della Sera*, ancient frescos are falling off the walls, ancient woodwork

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is rotting, and an air of seedy neglect hangs over the citadel. In true Roman style, the state of the iconic building is being turned into a political battle, with the castle's two directors blaming the Government for removing their autonomy: 'When we had our own budget', they said, 'we could take care of electricity, carpentry work and exhibits. Now just to change a lightbulb, we have to hack through miles of red tape, and then the money never turns up.' One of the directors, Ms Di Mattia, warned that the Castel would have to shut if the situation did not change, and if that happened it might never open to the public again.

30 years in a suitcase



Illustration from Vanity Fair

The largest ever collection belonging to Victorian illustrator Hugh Thomson has been uncovered after being stored intact for 30 years in suitcases. The collection, which has original drawings for Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* and Jane Austen's *Emma*, contains 540 watercolours, 168 books and many magazine illustrations. It will return to Thomson's birthplace in Northern Ireland thanks to a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

Thomson left home from Coleraine in 1877, working for Marcus Ward and Sons in Belfast, the prestigious printing and publishing firm, before he set sail to England in 1883 to make his fame and fortune. Little did he know that he would soon illustrate all six of Jane Austen's classics as well as working for literary greats such as Thackeray and Charles Dickens. Up until recently his work adorned boxes of Quality Street and is still exhibited around the world.

Many renowned institutions already own some pieces of Thomson's work including the V&A, Imperial War

Museum, British Museum, Yale University and Ulster Museum. As did Coleraine, but with this collection Coleraine's museum will hold the largest known body of his work.

A series of travelling exhibitions is being planned to ensure that as many people as possible have a chance to view the wonderful drawings. No mention has been made of any conservation action planned in respect of the hoard.

Museums and Galleries Month 2006

The Campaign for Museums have announced a new-style, more marketing focused Museums and Galleries Month now taking shape for May 2006. It will start on Saturday 29 April and run through to Sunday 4 June 2006 – all of May with the weekends on either side. The first weekend, May Bank Holiday, will be the WELCOME WEEKEND. The aim is to demystify the experience for those who don't normally visit and to showcase the work of museums and art galleries.

This year's event, May 2005, was the sixth such promotion involving more than 1,000 museums and galleries around the UK. It got off to a great start with a spectacular launch at The Queen's Gallery, Buckingham Palace, hosted by HRH Prince of Wales. Media coverage of the Month was up by over ten per cent, with some 500 separate articles and news items, and website coverage through the 24 Hour Museum reached some 250,000 users. About half the participating museums and galleries attracted additional visitors during May.

The MLA has agreed to continue to provide the core funding for Museums and Galleries Month for the next three years. The report of Museums and Galleries Month 2005 is now available on the MGM website, www.mgm.org.uk.

Photographic research partnership

The National Archives (TNA) has announced the launch of a partnership between its Collections Care Department and RCA/V&A Conservation in a research project to investigate the work of 19th-century photographer Felix Beato. TNA holds an important collection of his photographs, some of which record major historic events such as the Lucknow uprising of 1858. Beato also produced many delicately hand-tinted scenes of life in the Far East which are influenced stylistically by Japanese prints.



The Australian contingent at Handoub Sudan 1885

MPhil student Simon Bloxham began his research at TNA in October 2005, examining the materials used by Beato and the physical qualities of his photographs. Over the next two years, he will aim to identify Beato's photographic methods and evaluate the usefulness of the analytical methods applied. These will be chosen from a range of spectroscopic, radiographic, microscopic and other surface-analysis techniques.

The methods used by Beato produced a characteristic quality of image. Documents have survived which give a partial insight into his practices, but this research will provide a much more detailed understanding of the artist's palette of techniques and their influence on the particular qualities of his work. The outcome of the project will also inform planning for the future conservation and care of the collection.

Mali's manuscripts

The ever-informative BBC news website reports on a joint South African/Malian project to preserve the huge intellectual heritage of Mali, centred on Timbuktu, the famous town in the north of the country. In the 16th century, the town was a centre of Islamic learning with links extending as far as Spain to the north and Central Asia to the east. The legacy of the period comprises thousands of manuscripts, on subjects from music to optics, their paper preserved –for now– by the dry air of the region. The manuscripts are scattered among numerous libraries and collections and there has been no systematic attempt to stop the gradual deterioration of the paper or to provide access for scholars.

The manuscripts are all on paper and none are bound together. The loose leaves are kept together in covers of

wood or leather. Some are intricately decorated whilst others include scientific diagrams or musical notation. Even those containing only writing are interesting for their elaborate calligraphy or the notes which have been made in the margins. And the writing itself is fascinating for revealing the different styles in which Arabic script was adapted by the various nations who adopted Arabic as their language of learning. Happily for the future of this important archive and record of the continent, the South African government is helping to fund a research centre and to develop the skills of those who will work there.

1954 Hague Convention

As the Government consults over the possible ratification of the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, it is timely that Euromed's Regional Management Support Unit publishes the outcome from the April workshop held in Amman Jordan on 'Cultural Heritage Management in Times of Armed Conflict'. This is available on www.euromedheritage.net. Easy links lead to both the full version of the recommendations and the printed leaflet, which summarises the Message from Amman with regards to future actions to promote the Hague Convention and its Protocols. Both of these documents can be downloaded and printed for distribution purposes. It may not be a surprise that the participants of the workshop strongly support the widest achievable ratification of the Hague Convention.

Conservation Provision in the East Midlands

This is the title of a report published in August by EMMMLAC (East Midlands Museums, Libraries and Archives Council). Prepared by Janet Foster, Jonathan Rhys-Lewis and Margaret Crockett, the report is based on a survey of the extent of conservation provision throughout the region, whether from institutions or private companies and individuals, and outlines the need for facilitating the distribution of professional information, and a wider use of existing resources.

The project identified the current position of conservation provision via a questionnaire, telephone interviews and specific visits to a selected group of institutions. The questionnaire provided the quickest and most effective method to collect baseline data about provision, and the commitment of an institution, not only to providing or commissioning conservation services, but also to the preservation management of collections. This data will

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enable EMMLAC to identify specific areas of weakness and match them to areas of strength. The database can be maintained and updated by EMMLAC to ensure that information about conservation provision remains current and can be used to inform future strategy in this area.

The telephone interviews allowed the consultant team to collect views and information from a wide range of correspondents. This was most effective when interviewing private conservators to ascertain the extent and status of external conservation services. It is clear that a number of institutions use private companies or individuals either to provide a specialist skill not available internally or because of the lack of local provision.

The one-to-one interviews and visits provided the best information. The consultants were able to gather a much wider range of data as a result of visiting and auditing provision and the interview process inevitably enables a wider range of questions to be pursued. It is also clear that the interviewees received a better standard of information about the project and its aspirations, and felt more at ease to discuss local difficulties or political dimensions.

The report primarily concludes that existing provision needs to be backed up by EMMLAC through the provision of a wider range of information on stewardship issues, working in parallel with support for existing networks. Such networks should be nurtured and new ones encouraged. Part of this recommendation can be met by drawing attention to under-used resources and services throughout the region. The EMMLAC website has a particular and significant role to play in enabling access to professional information.

A number of ways are suggested in which EMMLAC could provide specific support, especially by bringing together "the provider" and "the client". This could be by enabling the use of spare conservation capacity, the compilation of conservation specifications for funding applications or by awareness raising and targeted training. Building closer links with the commercial sector and volunteer groups is also recommended to ensure that EMMLAC can have the greatest possible effect on the region's conservation and preservation needs.

The following next steps are proposed:

- fund a project to encourage all heritage sites that have not already done so to undertake the NPO's Preservation Needs Assessment and Benchmarks in Collections Care
- undertake a thorough survey of spare capacity within the existing conservation services
- investigate ways to maximise the use of resources by a wider constituency of the heritage community in the region
- assess the implications of administering a spare capacity register and investigate ways for the region to facilitate its implementation

Request for help

Former Chair of what is now Icon Metals Group and Associate Professor for Objects Conservation at the University of Oslo in Norway, Jeremy Hutchings is doing doctoral research intended to improve conservation management of cultural heritage. He is looking for people to complete a questionnaire downloadable from <http://folk.uio.no/jeremyhu/measuring/questionnaire.htm>.

The study focuses on decision-making. Many different types of people participate in the decisions which impact on the protection or use of cultural heritage: including leisure managers, museum managers, curators, conservators, cultural tour operators and security personnel. But to date no attempt has been made to integrate the views and standpoints of everyone involved in the decision-making process.

The questionnaire is intended to produce a refinement of the activities that make up conservation management. A conscious effort has been made to avoid technical language and the questions have been intentionally worded as definite statements so that as many diverse contributors as possible can participate. It should be returned by e-mail to him by 30th November. Return to, or find out more from, j.d.hutchings@iakh.uio.no

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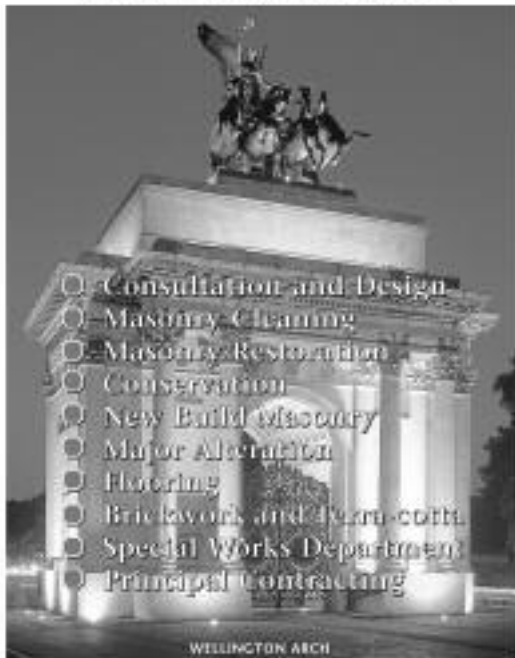
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Professional matters

ACCREDITATION

PACR training provision

There are a number of events organised during the year and at a different venues around the country that are particularly relevant to the PACR scheme. Some are aimed at those working towards accreditation and some are aimed at accredited conservators. The events will be promoted on the PACR website www.pacr.org.uk, and in *pacr-news* as well as through *Icon News*.

PACR introductory workshops

This workshop is aimed at those who would like to find out about the PACR accreditation scheme – conservator, line manager, employer, client – the programme includes everything you need to know about the PACR accreditation scheme.

This type of workshop can also be presented to specific groups within *Icon* on request. One such event is currently scheduled for the Ceramics and Glass Group in mid-December (see Listings for details).

PACR clinics

Clinics are aimed at potential PACR candidates who are working towards the next application deadline. This event will support candidates with their PACR application, address any queries and provide a useful insight to the accreditation process

CPD workshops

Mainly for PACR accredited members but also open to those preparing their PACR application, the aim of the event is to provide participants with a basic introduction to CPD and practical help in producing a personal development plan.

Mentor workshops

Open to accredited conservators who would like to support members either with their PACR application or CPD review.

For details of current events please refer to the Listings section of this newsletter.

For further information about PACR events please contact Susan Bradshaw, PACR Training Officer:
susan.bradshaw@pacr.org.uk or tel/fax 01626 824510.

NEW CHAIR OF THE ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE

Clare Meredith has recently taken on the post of Chair of the Accreditation Committee, following the resignation of Sarah Staniforth from the position. For over twenty years,

Clare worked as an independent easel paintings conservator in her studio near Edinburgh. She now works for The National Trust for Scotland and is Acting Head Conservator. Katy Lithgow has taken up the post of deputy chair.



Clare Meredith

NEW ACRS

Warm congratulations go to the following members, who have recently been awarded their accreditation.

Louise Carroll – Paper, The National Archive of Scotland, Edinburgh

Gretel Evans – Objects (Archaeology specialism), private practice, Edinburgh

Isobel Griffin – Preventive, The National Trust for Scotland, Edinburgh

Lynne Harrison – Paintings, British Museum, London

Ian McClure – Paintings, the Hamilton Kerr Institute, Cambridge

Charles Stable – Ethnographic/Social History, National Museums of Scotland, Edinburgh

Susan Stanton – Textiles, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

Sophie Younger – Textiles and Preventive, private practice, Isle of Islay

CONSERVATION REGISTER

Update

At the meeting of the Conservation Register Advisory Board on 28 September, the three year period of development for the Register came to an end. Of course, the Register will continue to grow and evolve as part of Icon, but the hard work of updating the technology and reviewing all the information it contains has been completed.

Acknowledgements

My thanks go out to all those involved with the Register who have contributed to its overhaul. To the businesses included – thank you for completing your forms and for your feedback throughout the project; to the Advisory Board – thank you for your advice and direction over the past three years; to the funding bodies (English Heritage, Historic Scotland, MLA, The Pilgrim Trust, Institute of Paper Conservation, Glaziers Trust, the Armourers and Brasiers, The Clothworkers' Foundation and the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851) – thank you for the financial support which has enabled us to make the changes necessary to better help those seeking high quality conservation services.

Achievements

So what has been achieved over the past three years? The database itself has been completely rebuilt with improved search facilities, a broader range of search terms and the facility to add hyperlinks to email and web addresses. The website www.conservationregister.com has been created – significantly increasing the number of people accessing the Register's information and providing additional guidance on caring for possessions and collections. The Register's criteria for inclusion have been updated to incorporate the requirement for accreditation – making sure the Register is supporting and promoting the standards in use by the profession and increasing confidence amongst enquirers. Benefits have been negotiated for those included in the Register such as a discount on insurance, free use of the Art Loss Register, discounts on publications through Archetype Books and courses through International Academic Projects. A subscription has been introduced to ensure that the Register has an income that will secure future promotion and ongoing maintenance. All the information included has been checked and updated and the quality of information provided has dramatically improved as a result. Promotional activities such as attendance at trade fairs, leafleting, talks, editorial, direct mailing and advertising have all contributed to raising the profile of the Register and, although there is a lot still to do, use of the Register can already be seen to have increased substantially as a result (see graph).

Next steps

And what now? We still have to add the new guidance material to the website. This will complement the 'Find a conservator' service by providing information on how a conservator can help with the care of different types of objects and materials. We need more people to join the Register, particularly in the areas of ceramics, textiles and books. We will be looking at ways of improving navigation of the website, of building a relationship with the new Icon website and of increasing direct traffic to the Conservation Register website. We will also be reviewing the method of reviewing the information on businesses included in the Register with the aim of cutting down administration for both businesses and the Institute.

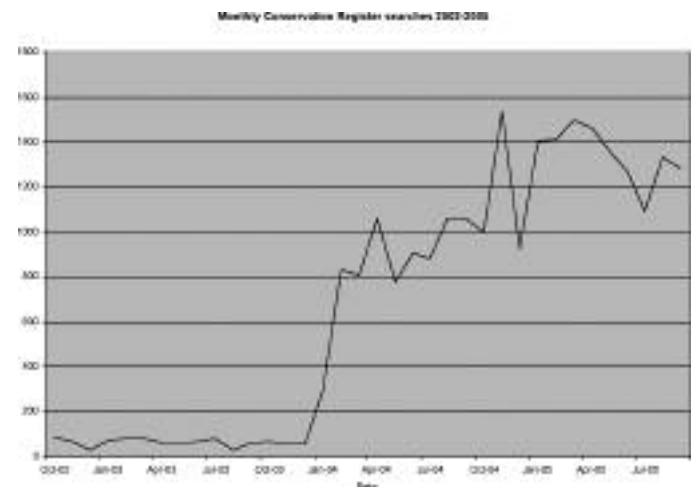
The past three years have been challenging and rewarding. I've spoken to many, many people in that time and am very pleased to have been able to help with enquiries ranging from the daily requests for help with the conservation of samplers to a long and (hopefully successful) discussion about how it was better to talk to a paintings conservator than attempt retouching with a felt-tipped pen! I'm sure the Register will continue to go from strength to strength, and as always, would welcome ideas on how we can continue to improve the services it provides.

Caroline Saye

020 7785 3804

info@conservationregister.com

Conservation Register monthly searches 2002-2005



more professional matters

BUSINESS BRIEFING

The Potential Liability of Conservators – Current Legal Issues

In his thought-provoking and helpful article for *Icon News*, Pierre Valentin of Withers LLP reviews the law relating to issues of ownership, provenance and care as it could affect conservators in private practice in England and Wales.

There are two principal types of risks confronting professional conservators. The first is liability to pay financial compensation. The second is criminal liability. We shall consider each in turn.

In this article, we shall focus on conservators' liability arising in connection with customers' property. We shall not consider general liability arising from running a business.

We shall focus on self-employed conservators. We shall not consider the position of salaried conservators who may be exposed to similar risks but they present themselves differently in the course of the conservator's employment by a museum or antique dealership.

We shall use the term 'conservator' to mean individuals applying their professional skills to the conservation, preservation and restoration of heritage property.

We shall assume that the activities occur in the UK and are subject to the law of England and Wales. If a law other than the law of England and Wales applies to a particular situation, the legal analysis of the facts could be materially different.

The legal issues can be complex and the legal analysis will depend on the facts of each case. In this article, we shall identify the main areas of risk. We cannot in the short space available to us address in detail every area of risk and their financial implications.

Civil Liability

Duty to act with skill and care

A conservator, like any other professional, is under a general duty to exercise proper skill and care when dealing with a customer's property.

The duty to exercise proper care does not mean that any mistake will give rise to liability. Proper care will normally be judged by reference to the care exercised by a conservator of ordinary skill and care. In other words, a conservator will be regarded as negligent if conservators applying ordinary skill and care would not have acted or failed to act as had occurred in the circumstances. This is a matter of appreciation by the Courts.

The law also takes account of the difference between a

specialist conservator and a general practitioner. If a conservator presents himself as a specialist in a certain conservation technique, his standard of care will be assessed by reference to the ordinary skill and care of another specialist in the same technique. He may be found liable in negligence whereas a non-specialist conservator may not in the same case.

If found to have acted negligently, the conservator may be liable to pay financial compensation to the customer.

Duty to care for the property

In addition to providing conservation services, the conservator will be looking after the client's property whilst the property is being held in the conservator's studio. The delivery of the property to the conservator will give rise to a relationship of bailment between the customer, the bailor, and the conservator, the bailee. The duty of the conservator will be to take reasonable care of the property in his custody. This includes taking reasonable action to protect the property against theft or damage. In the event of a dispute, the Courts will decide whether reasonable care was exercised in the circumstances. If it was not, the conservator may be liable to pay financial compensation.

Both the duty to act with skill and care when conserving property, and the duty to care for the property, may arise in a dispute with the customer or with the conservator's insurance company in the event that the insurance company has compensated the customer and is seeking to recover its loss.

It is possible to limit or disclaim liability by way of contract. Where there is a written contract with the customer, and the conservator seeks to rely on a clause in the contract designed to exclude or limit his liability, an issue will be whether the contractual limitation or exclusion of liability is enforceable. That may depend on the language of the contract and on whether the customer is a consumer.

Liability for unlawfully interfering with another person's property

One of the bailee's obligations at the end of the bailment is to return the property to the bailor. A failure to return the property without lawful excuse may render the conservator liable in conversion. In legal jargon, conversion can be defined as an unlawful act of interference with goods inconsistent with the right of a third party whereby that party is deprived of their use and possession.

Conversion will also arise where the conservator, having received notice that there is an ownership dispute related to the property in her possession, wrongfully delivers the

property to one who is not entitled to receive it. The remedy is primarily damages; but where property is detained by the conservator, the Court may order its return. Damages will be assessed by reference to the value of the property. Damages may be awarded for consequential loss arising out of the conversion.

Suppose the conservator has completed restoration work over a piece of furniture for an antique dealer. The conservator is contacted by a third party claiming ownership of the furniture and demanding delivery. The conservator rejects the third party's claim and returns the furniture to the antique dealer, his customer. The third party may claim conversion against the conservator on the grounds that the conservator deprived her of her right of use and possession over the furniture which is in fact hers. If the Court found for her, the conservator could be liable to compensate her by paying her damages in an amount equal to the value of the furniture. It must be emphasised that the liability of the conservator does not depend upon any deliberate or negligent wrongdoing. He is liable in conversion to the true owner even if he was totally innocent and acted in complete good faith.

The risk of liability arising in conversion explains why auction houses and storage companies when faced with a title claim normally refuse to part with possession of the property subject to the claim. This is generally the safest course of action because if the professional in possession hands the property over to the wrong party, he exposes himself to the risk of liability in conversion to the other. A conservator in possession of property subject to a title claim may decide that the best option is to advise the parties to the dispute that he cannot decide who owns the property as this is a matter for the courts. The fact that in our case, the antique dealer is the customer does not give him a better right of ownership over the property. For example, the property may have been stolen and the antique dealer is not aware of it. Property will be released if the parties jointly instruct the conservator to release the property to someone they both agree should have possession, or pursuant to a court order. If either party behaves unreasonably or if the parties refuse to talk to one another, the conservator can apply to the Courts to rule on the ownership dispute.

Criminal Liability

Handling Stolen Goods

Handling stolen goods has been a criminal offence for many years. A person handles stolen goods if knowing or believing them to be stolen, he dishonestly receives the goods (e.g. he stores them) or dishonestly undertakes or assists in their retention, removal, disposal or realisation by or for the profit of another person. The maximum

sentence is 14 years in prison. The offence of handling stolen goods extends to items stolen abroad.

A key element of the offence is dishonesty. By taking possession of a statue in order to restore it, the conservator will not necessarily commit the handling offence if he does not know that the statue was stolen. But turning a blind eye is no defence. If clear signs ought to have put the conservator on notice that the statue was stolen, and the conservator did not make any enquiries, he could commit the offence.

It is worth noting that in many countries (e.g. most Mediterranean countries), excavated material belongs to the State. Accordingly, any recently excavated material which finds its way to the UK may have been stolen from the State of origin. A conservator dishonestly handling that type of material knowing or believing that it has been recently excavated may commit the offence of handling in the UK.

Dealing in Tainted Goods

This is a relatively new offence. The purpose of the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003 is to "provide for an offence of acquiring, disposing of, importing or exporting tainted cultural objects, or agreeing or arranging to do so". In other words, it targets individuals who, in this country, dishonestly handle "tainted" cultural property.

The main purpose of the Act is to make it an offence to handle property unlawfully removed from a building or site, where theft cannot be proved and therefore the person handling the property cannot be prosecuted for handling stolen goods. For example, if a landowner excavates an object on his land, assuming that title vests in him under local law, no offence of theft will have been committed. However, he may have committed another offence, for example by failing to report his find. Another example might be for the owner of a protected building to remove a statue or panel permanently attached to the building. Whilst here again, the owner may not have stolen the item, the removal of the object may have been illegal under local law.

The principal elements of the new offence are:

- a** it must involve a cultural object. A cultural object is defined broadly as including objects of historical, architectural or archaeological interest
- b** a person must have dealt with it. Dealing is widely defined. Accepting property to conserve or restore is likely to count as dealing
- c** the person must have known or believed that the cultural object was tainted. An object has become

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tainted in three circumstances:

- i. if it is excavated
- ii. if at any time it formed part of a building or structure of historical, architectural or archaeological interest and it is removed from that building or structure
- iii. if it is removed from a monument

Buildings and structures of historical, architectural or archaeological interest may take different forms and could cover structures as diverse as castles, churches and village pubs. In order to become tainted the object must have once formed part of the structure. This means that the illegal detachment or amputation of structural, architectural or ornamental elements of a building or structure will be tainted, but chairs, tables and, usually, works of art hung on the walls, will not become tainted if they are illegally removed even though the building itself may be of historical, architectural or archaeological interest.

Monuments are defined as any work, cave or excavation; any site comprising the remains of any vehicle, vessel, aircraft or other moveable structure or part of any such thing. This wide definition includes prehistoric sites, cemeteries, battlefields and ceremonial sites. An object will become tainted if it removed from a monument even where it was not attached to it. So busts or coins illegally removed from a wreck or a tomb will be tainted

- d** the person has dealt with it dishonestly. This is a key element of the offence. The burden of proof falls on the Prosecution. For example, if a conservator takes property on consignment and when it transpires that the property is tainted she takes immediate action, e.g. she reports it to the police, she will have dealt in tainted cultural property but the lack of dishonest intent should mean that she will not be prosecuted.

The maximum sentence if convicted of the new offence is 7 years in prison.

The Act is not retroactive. It only applies to cultural property stolen or excavated after 30 December 2003. Property does not become tainted if it was illegally exported from another country.

Illegally Removed Iraqi Cultural Property

Since June 2003, it is a criminal offence in this country to receive or possess illegally removed Iraqi cultural property. Illegally removed Iraqi cultural property is defined as any item of archaeological, historical, cultural, rare scientific or religious importance illegally removed

from any location in Iraq since 6 August 1990. If a conservator is found in possession of an item of illegally removed Iraqi cultural property, he will be guilty of the offence, unless he can prove that he did not know and had no reason to suppose that the item in question was illegally removed Iraqi cultural property. Negative proof is difficult to adduce. The best protection is to hand over to the police any item that could possibly have come from Iraq after 1990.

Pierre Valentin
Withers LLP
July 2005

Pierre Valentin heads the Art & Cultural Assets Group at Withers, a London law firm with offices in New York, Geneva and Milan. The Art & Cultural Assets Group is a specialist art law practice advising art collectors and art market professionals on all issues arising when buying and selling art and when doing business in the international art market. Pierre was European Legal Counsel for Sotheby's. He has advised art market professionals for 10 years.

Note: Icon News would like to bring similar advice to conservators in other parts of the United Kingdom and hopes to do so in a future issue.

INFORMATION SOURCES

AATA Online

AATA Online: Abstracts of International Conservation Literature, the conservation community's authoritative bibliographic research tool, is a free online searchable database available at www.aata.getty.edu. A compendium of over 100,000 abstracts of conservation literature dating back to 1932, AATA Online is updated quarterly with abstracts of both new and historic publications.

AATA Online is produced as a service to the field by the Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) in association with The International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (IIC) and with ICCROM (International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property).

For more than 50 years, AATA Online has relied upon a network of volunteer abstractors to cover the literature of the field. Submissions are fully reviewed by subject specialists before being posted to the database. The strength, quality, and relevance of this resource will continue to be based upon the continuing commitment to service of conservation professionals around the world who read and abstract literature relevant to their work. The breadth, depth, and timeliness of coverage in AATA Online ultimately depend upon the ongoing participation of volunteers.

The GCI, IIC, and ICCROM invite you to use AATA Online and to join the network of volunteer abstractors and become actively involved in strengthening AATA Online. For additional information about using or contributing to AATA Online, please contact the AATA Online staff at aata@getty.edu.

Luke J. Swetland

Senior Manager, AATA Online & Bibliographic Services
Getty Conservation Institute

INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY DATABASE

The Institute of Archaeology at University College London now has an on-line database of the archaeological sites it has in its collections. The Institute's collections are fairly large (around 40,000 objects) but are comparatively unknown, despite having material from the excavations of such luminaries as Flinders Petrie, Max Mallowan, Kathleen Kenyon, Leonard Woolley and Mortimer Wheeler.

Details can be found on the UCL website
<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/ioacollections>.

The database is part of an ongoing initiative to provide online access to information about all the UCL collections of archaeology, natural history, geology, art, ethnography and science. The Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology already has an online database of all 80,000 of its objects (with images) at www.petrie.ucl.ac.uk/index2.html.

FUNDING

Royal Institution wins PRISM funds

The MLA (The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council) has announced a grant of of £20,000 from the PRISM Fund to help the Royal Institution with its plans to exhibit its unique collection of 8,000 scientific apparatus. The collection is the work of great scientists such as Michael Faraday and Humphry Davy and the money will pay for a full-time objects conservator for a year. More information about the project can be found on www.rigb.org

The Fund for the Preservation of Industrial and Scientific Material (PRISM Fund) is administered by the MLA and awards grants worth £250,000 a year to support the conservation and acquisition of objects of outstanding scientific or technological importance. Over the course of 2004/05, the conservation/restoration share of the Fund went to 15 projects with awards totalling over £104,000. In 2003/04 32 projects were supported to the tune of £239,000. Hopefully this is swings and roundabouts and not a downward trend.

AWARDS

At the recent ICOM-CC meeting in The Hague (reviewed by Lisa Nilsen in the Review section), three medals were awarded, two of them to members of the British conservation community: Caroline Villers and Robert Organ. The third went to Alain Godonou of the École Patrimoine Africaine (EPA), Benin, for his extraordinary work in building up conservation awareness in French speaking parts of Africa.

Caroline Villers's award was, sadly, posthumous. In his citation, David Grattan of the Canadian Conservation Institute said:

'It is an honour to have the duty of presenting the ICOM-CC medal to Caroline Villers, Vice Chair of ICOM-CC in the current Triennium a post which she continued from the previous Triennium. As you know she died of cancer last Christmas Eve – a cause of intense grief to her family, friends and colleagues.

We probably all feel the sadness of this moment in that she is not here to receive this medal. However, I believe it is nonetheless important for ICOM-CC to recognise the contribution of this exceptional person. I would like to reflect on the reasons why the medal is awarded and on why Caroline was a worthy candidate.

The ICOM-CC medal is not awarded for any specific kind of service to ICOM-CC. It is given purely at the discretion of the Directory Board for people they consider worthy. It is thus recognition by your colleagues that you have made an extraordinary contribution to conservation at the international level.'

David went on to enumerate the many reasons which made Caroline such a worthy candidate, in particular, her varied and active contributions to ICOM, including her membership of working groups, involvement in publications and the presentation of technical papers to its conferences. Outlining her career, David also detailed the posts she held on several professional bodies, her editorships and her support for interdisciplinary events.

'Most recently she planned, with Jo Kirby of the National Gallery, and Susie Nash of the Courtauld Institute, a conference on the "European Trade in Painters' Materials to 1700, to be held in February 2005." This very significant conference was regarded by Caroline as her most significant to conservation. Robert Macnab, her husband, described how pleased she was that she was able to hold the actual published postprints just before she died.

She contributed at the international level to better communication between professionals. She was also

more professional matters



Robert McNab, Caroline's husband, receives the ICOM-CC medal from David Grattan, former Chair of the ICOM-CC Directory Board. Members of the outgoing Directory Board are sitting on the platform (Chair, Jorgen Wadum far left).

modest, cooperative and a delight to work with. Finally – and perhaps most important from ICOM's point of view was her devotion to the cause and values of ICOM. Caroline helped to make ICOM-CC an integral part of its international effort to safeguard the World's cultural heritage.

In a nutshell she represented the very best qualities of ICOM members – this medal recognises that'.

Dr Nicholas Stanley-Price, Director General of ICCROM, spoke on the award of the second medal to **Robert Organ**. His accolade, drawing extensively on material provided by Ian McLeod, is summarised below.

'Born during the first World War, Robert studied sciences and languages at school, after which he worked as a Research Chemist and then in quality control of commercial materials – metals, oils, paints, rubber – using a wide range of analytical methods. In 1951 he transferred to the British Museum Research Laboratory. His work space was a laboratory in the annexe at the bottom of the garden of the Museum. This proved to be typical of much of Robert's career: working in inadequate small spaces not well suited to a conservation lab; having to be ingenious and inventive led to some brilliant ideas.

'Robert joined the ICOM Scientific Laboratories Committee (the fore-runner of ICOM-CC), eventually serving as Rapporteur (Coordinator) for the study of

Metals. He remained involved with the Committee for some twenty-five years until 1984. In this period, he also published his landmark book on "Design for Scientific Conservation of Antiquities'

Nicholas went on to describe Robert's time as the first Curator of Conservation at the Royal Ontario Museum, Canada, where he emigrated in 1965, and his subsequent move in 1967 to the Smithsonian Institution's Conservation Analytical Laboratory, where a staff of five was increased by his efforts to twenty three in the 1980s. Amongst many other achievements, he proved the wisdom of preventive conservation, when furniture stored in a basement was saved from flood damage thanks to his storage recommendations. Robert also contributed to Art & Archaeology Technical Abstracts and published countless articles and references. Robert Organ retired from the Smithsonian Institution in 1983. By then he had transformed many practices not only in scientific conservation but also in recording and documentation and in communicating with diverse audiences: the public, schools, TV audiences and students.

Robert is perhaps best known for his contributions to the conservation of metals. He is one of the great pioneers in scientific conservation. But his contribution has been much broader than this alone and 'In all things he has been a leader, an inspiration to young conservators and conservation scientists and, above all, always modest and a complete gentleman'.



Robert Organ



Ruth Partington

NOMINATIONS INVITED FOR ROYAL WARRANT HOLDERS ASSOCIATION PLOWDEN MEDAL 2006

To commemorate the life and work of the late Hon. Anna Plowden CBE who died in 1997, The Royal Warrant Holders Association endowed a Gold Medal, which is awarded annually to the individual who has made the most significant recent contribution to the advancement of the conservation profession.

Nominations for the 2006 Plowden Medal are now invited. A selection board drawn from the conservation community and the Council of the Royal Warrant Holders Association will consider nominations in March 2006.

Nominations (closing date Friday 24 February 2006) must be made on a form which may be obtained from: The Secretary, The Royal Warrant Holders Association, No. 1 Buckingham Place, London SW1E 6HR.

QEST AWARD FOR PAPER CONSERVATOR

Paper Conservator Ruth Partington from Northallerton has won a Queen Elizabeth Scholarship. The £5000 award has enabled her to take up the offer of an internship with the North Yorkshire County Record Office; to take the 'Chemistry for Conservators' course and to attend next year's Icon/Institute of Paper Conservation's Fifth International Conference in Edinburgh.

Ruth studied conservation at Camberwell College of Arts and winning the QEST Scholarship meant she could take

up the offer of a full-time internship conserving paper based collections at North Yorkshire County Record Office's Northallerton studio. She was subsequently offered the position of Conservator (Works of Art on Paper) at the Middlesborough Institute of Modern Art (mima) starting at the beginning of October).

As Conservator, Ruth will be responsible for preserving and conserving works of art on paper and the wider conservation management of mima's collections.

Ruth will be entitled to use the new QEST logo which was developed to celebrate the Trust's 15th birthday. The Trust was endowed by the Royal Warrant Holders Association and is designed to advance education in modern and traditional crafts and trades in the UK. Scholarships, open to men and women of all ages, are awarded twice a year and this autumn five awards were made totalling £40,200.

Ruth Partington can be contacted on 07766 797036

Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust: www.qest.org.uk
Royal Warrant Holders Association: www.royalwarrant.org

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Institute Briefing

From the outgoing Chair of the Interim Board

November 2005 and here is the very first edition of Icon News, carrying our new name, image and style and all the content our members have said they wish to see in their regular newsletter. As I write this, we are about to launch our new Institute- Icon- to external partners and stakeholders. Nominations have just closed for Icon's first elected Board and we have a strong, diverse and exciting field of candidates. As you know, in the summer we moved into wonderful new offices overlooking the Thames in the heart of old London – a powerful symbol for a modern organisation, rooted in the past but with its face firmly set to the future. We have a committed Chief Executive who, coming in from outside the profession, again symbolises our wish to look outwards, to be open, inclusive and welcoming to all those who share our values and goals. So far we have 3000 members on our books – and growing. We know we're not there yet but the wind is set fair and, as we've already proved, we have the determination to get where we want to be.

Goodness knows we've had our trials and tribulations. Since that day in March 2002 when the twelve members of NCCR (National Council for Conservation-Restoration) resolved 'to explore the possibility of dissolving all existing structures and creating a new single body representing the whole of the conservation profession' we've had to deal with endless issues. Change is never easy. We've all done a lot of learning and we want Icon to continue to be that sort of an organisation – one which listens, learns and moves on constructively, not one that focuses on blame and criticism. We've endured and, for the first time ever in the UK, we are on the verge at last of having a unified profession that embraces all our aspirations, is open to all who share our aims and values, and provides the services the public and our heritage deserves.

After almost four years of travelling down this particular road, I am now standing down as Chair. To those who have most closely shared this journey I want to say thank you but, above all, to acknowledge the huge sense of solidarity, the reserves of goodwill, forbearance, humour and mutual encouragement that have been evident, even when everyone was utterly exhausted and feeling low. Those who have never been at the centre of such a

process will not (and, to be fair, cannot) be aware of the amount of personal time and energy that is expended and how this impacts on the lives of each of those involved. I have come across no other profession with such qualities, values and altruism.

I no longer practice my profession, but I love it. I have deep respect, admiration and affection for my conservation colleagues, going right back to my beginnings in Italy, to our battles in France to gain recognition for the profession, to the early days of ECCO and, of course, in the UK. Our profession performs the most extraordinary feats of skill, sensitivity, intelligence and humility. It deserves proper acknowledgement, a place at the highest tables and a bright, strong future here in the UK. My personal hope for the future is simply that this will now be achieved, with your help, through our new Institute of Conservation, Icon.

Carole Milner

THE VIEW FROM LONDON BRIDGE

Autumn may be drawing in, but this is definitely not the time to start hibernating. Or if you really must start bedding down for the winter, trying doing it with a new group of people.

Since I first entered the world of conservators a few months ago I have been aware that many members are very much head-down in their specialist field. Particularly if they work independently, people can start to feel they are losing touch with what is going on in the wider conservation community. One of the hallmarks of a mature profession is the cross-fertilisation of ideas between members with different areas of expertise, and the creation of Icon gives us a wonderful opportunity to make this happen more effectively than ever before.

Some members may not have picked up that in Icon you are free to join as many member groups as you want, at no cost. There are no group subscriptions and you do not have to be a specialist in a particular field to join – you just have to be interested. All you have to do is contact the office and ask to be included on the group's mailing lists.

The Team at 1 London Bridge

To help you put a face to a name when you contact the Icon office, here is the line-up:



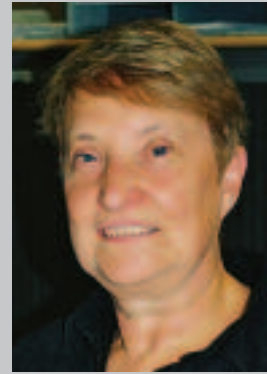
Alastair McCapra,
Chief Executive



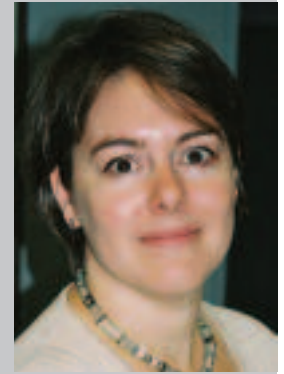
David Leigh,
Communications
Manager responsible
for publications, the
website and the
Conservation Awards



Caroline Saye,
Development
Manager looking
after the
Conservation Register



Diane Copley,
Administrator



Charlotte Cowin,
Membership
Secretary and
general enquiries

Not based at London Bridge but working from her home in Devon is **Susan Bradshaw**, Training Officer responsible for PACR accreditation and CPD

Many members were involved in more than one vanguard body, so they are already benefiting by not being charged a subscription for each one. But my message in this column is to those of you who have only ever been a member of one group. I am asking you to take full advantage of the wonderful organisation you have created. By all means stick to your own specialist group for all the obvious reasons, but I invite you to push yourself a bit and sign up for something new. You may find it very enriching and you have absolutely nothing to lose.

However we are not going to leave everything to individual members. One of the ways Icon will work to actively build that cross-fertilisation of ideas is through the formation of new groups. Two are presently in the process of coming together. One is for conservators in private practice, and it is bringing together independent conservators from the book & paper, photographic materials, textiles, metals and archaeology groups. The other is for conservation science, which will also be multidisciplinary in its membership.

Both of these new groups will be launched at our AGM and members' day in Birmingham on 6 December, where I hope to meet many of you I have not yet encountered. I want to ensure that our groups are lively and productive, that there are opportunities for members to share their experience, and that the organisation as a whole is developing energetically in the directions you want it to grow in. Now that convergence is finished with we are free to forget about the mechanics of how to bring everyone together and to turn our minds to more interesting and productive things. The opportunities are there. Join one new group before the end of the year. Join one of the new groups, or better still, help on one of

the steering committees. And please come to the AGM, enjoy yourself, meet old friends and make some new ones. Winter has never been more exciting.

Alastair McCapra
Chief Executive

THE PAPER CONSERVATOR AND THE CONSERVATOR: LIVING IN HARMONY

With the inauguration of Icon, the publications of the five conservation organisations that have merged are being elegantly brought together. This has also involved looking closely at *The Conservator (TC)* and *The Paper Conservator (TPC)* and working to improve both publications and bring them closer together stylistically.

The Conservator and *The Paper Conservator* are the two only peer-reviewed journals of the conservation profession in the UK. *The Conservator* was originally created with two aims: reproducing lectures given by the UK Group of IIC and later as a means of publishing papers commissioned on various subjects. The first issue appeared in 1977 (and Chairman of the Publications Working Party at that time was David Leigh). Volume 1 of *The Paper Conservator*, subtitled 'the journal of the IIC UK Group paper group', was published in 1976. At that time, IPC was a specialist group and subsidiary of the UK regional group. The journal grew out of the need for increased awareness of the context of conservation at that time through exchange of information and by facilitating contact between members. Both new publications were supported by grants from the Crafts Advisory Committee.

Style

Stylistically, in the early days both journals were very similar with a two-column layout and numerical references in endnotes, to a design by Guy Petherbridge. *The Conservator* has remained largely unchanged since then, moving to the Harvard referencing system in 1998. *The Paper Conservator* has undergone a number of changes, most significantly a complete redesign in 1997 and a new cover design in 2001.

At present both journals are working to become closer in style, and this coincides with a desire on the part of *The Conservator* for modernisation. As *The Paper Conservator* has had a thorough redesign recently, fewer changes will be noticed by its readers. The next issue of *The Conservator* will follow the design and layout of *The Paper Conservator* and will be produced by its printer, L&S Printing. For its part, *The Paper Conservator* is considering moving to the Harvard referencing system and will adopt *TC*'s use of key words. The next issues of both will bear the new cover design, incorporating the Icon visual identity.

Publication dates

The two journals will appear six months apart; *TPC* will keep its September publication date and *TC* will now appear in March rather than in December. This means that the next *Conservator* will bridge two years with a publication date of 2005/6.

The future

It is hoped that those articles which might formerly have been included in the *SSCR Journal* (not peer-reviewed) will now appear either in *Icon News* or in one of these two journals. With the creation of Icon, all publications have come under scrutiny; this is an opportunity for positive changes and strengthening of our position as a profession. It may be that ultimately *TC* and *TPC* will form one journal, published twice a year, under the guidance of a joint editorial board. In the meantime, the journals will be maintained separately. In content, the two publications will continue to reflect their specialisations. Both will pursue their stated aims of improving the profession through communication and now mutual support. The rigorous peer review process will be practised by both and reflected in the quality of information. Articles published in both journals are eligible to be considered for the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) at British universities.

Under the Icon umbrella all members will receive both *TPC* and *TC*. Icon members are encouraged to submit original, well authenticated articles on all aspects of conservation and now have two excellent places to publish. We hope you enjoy both journals and contribute to their continued success.

Jane Eagan, Editor, *The Paper Conservator*.
jane.eagan@magdalen.oxford.ac.uk

Irit Narkiss, Editor, *The Conservator*.
irit.narkiss@manchester.ac.uk



Irit Narkiss (left) and Jane Eagan (right)

OUR PRINTERS HAVE A SOFT SPOT FOR CONSERVATION.

When managing director, Richard Lomasney, was setting up the business nearly 30 years ago, his first contract was with the Institute of Paper Conservation. Copy would be delivered to the works in Worthing on the south coast by Guy Petherbridge, the then editor, using a little yellow french van which had seen better days. The van became something of a standing joke; not least, Richard recalls, because it refused to leave the car park for the best part of a year before Guy's return from foreign parts. He is pleased that he and designer Malcolm Gillespie, who has also been with the firm since those earliest days, now have the care of the whole stable of Icon's conservation publications.



L&S Printing Company at work

THE ICON WEBSITE

The new website is undergoing construction. Consultants Northern Creative are doing this, working from a site map which builds on the best of the groups' former websites. They are also applying to it the design principles which

were established by consultants Rufus Leonard, who devised Icon's visual identity.

It is intended that the content of the site will be managed from the Icon office and that Group editors will be able to maintain their areas of the site themselves. Access to some parts of the site will be available only to members.

It is hoped that the new site will be going live soon. Meanwhile the Interim website, kindly created by Adrian Tribe, carries the latest news and incorporates the pages of all the constituent groups, albeit in their earlier style.

The intention is also to provide regular electronic mailings of recent or urgent news and of job vacancies. Our coverage of email addresses is uneven. If we have your email address, please let us know if you do not receive these mailings, so that we can check we have the correct address. One such mailing went out during September. If we do not yet have your email address, please let us know it. We are taking it that providing your email address give us permission to email in this way, though it is your right not to receive these communications. Let us know via admin@instituteofconservation.org.uk or 020 7785 3807.

INSTITUTE AIRS DOUBTS ON RESEARCH ASSESSMENT

Every few years UK universities are subjected to an assessment of their research. The Research Assessment Exercises are important in ensuring that research funding is being well spent and important to university researchers themselves, because their research rating helps determine their funding for future years. Plans are now afoot for a new round of assessments in 2008, known as RAE2008.

The Institute of Conservation has been keeping in touch with the preparatory work for RAE2008. It is now in dialogue with the RAE team, concerned to ensure that assessments of conservation research departments are carried out with the help of conservators and conservation scientists, so that assessments are soundly based and fair in a field which crosses most of the conventional disciplinary boundaries.

WHITTINGDALE WINS OUR VOTE!

The word 'conservation' doesn't often pass the lips of our parliamentarians. As the exception to the rule, John Whittingdale M.P. has earned himself Icon's nomination for a Charity Champion Award 2005 in the culture and heritage category. These awards honour the hard work and time which Members of Parliament devote to charitable causes and are run by politics website ePolitix.com

Our nomination was in recognition of the work of the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee of which John Whittingdale is the chair, and in particular for his championing of good conservation work as a key

foundation for our country's commemoration of the bicentennial of the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805.

Recognising the plight of our great historic ships and the serious lack of resource put into conserving them for future generations, the Committee was highly critical of the Government initiative to create a new National Historic Ships Unit 'The budget is paltry and the staffing, however expert, minimal.', it said, accusing the government of paying 'lip-service to the value of historic vessels as part of the UK's cultural heritage' while being 'unable to produce what the sector desperately needs above all – adequate funding.' In addition, charities which act as custodians of our historic ships and which conserve them for the future, such as the Cutty Sark Trust, will potentially benefit from his committee's advocacy of VAT relief on repairs to historic structures. It is pleasing to be able to report that our nominee has reached the shortlist. The awards ceremony is on 1 December and we await the final choice with interest.

See www.charitychampionawards.com for more information.

WORKING WITH THE PROJECT CULTURE

The CD of the Conference: first come first served

In July 2004 UKIC held a conference which explored the challenges and successes for conservators of dealing with the project culture. Those who received the final number of *Conservation News* also received a copy of the CD of the event – comprising sound recordings of the lectures and discussions, transcripts, extended abstracts and the slides.

Much of the content of this CD could also be of interest to other members of Icon. While stocks last, copies of the CD are available to Icon members free of charge. Request your copy from admin@instituteofconservation.org.uk or 020 7785 3807.

"OPENING UP ON DISPLAY" : STILL AVAILABLE

Postprints of 2004 UKIC Textile & Historic Interiors Sections Joint Forum

This one-day forum covered a range of issues relating to open display, including the problems of displaying large objects, environmental management and visitor interaction with objects. There was particular focus on display within historic settings at Hampton Court Palace, the Museum of Welsh Life, the Tyntesfield estate and the Little Castle, Bolsover.

Copies of the postprints are still available, priced £10.00, plus 80p postage. They can be obtained from Maria Jordan at the Textile Conservation Studio, Apt. 37 Hampton Court palace, East Molesey, Surrey. KT8 9AU. Tel: 0208 781 9812/6. Please make cheques payable to "Institute of Conservation". Any remaining copies will also be on sale at next year's AGM and Forum.

FORMAL NOTICE OF AGM AND MEMBERS DAY 6 DECEMBER 2005

Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery

Notice is hereby given that the first AGM of the Institute of Conservation will be held on Tuesday 6 December 2005 at the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery.

The AGM is an opportunity for members to hear about progress made so far, but, more importantly, to take an active part in Icon's future. The present Interim Board will be handing over to the newly-elected Board so there will be fresh faces to meet and much to discuss. The AGM will look at forward plans for the Institute and input from members will be a vital part of developing our organisation in a way which meets your needs and expectations.

Following the AGM will be the inaugural meetings of two new member groups – one for conservators who work independently, and the other for conservation science. Steering groups for both of these are already at work and will be bringing proposals to the launch meetings. If you have an interest in either group please come along, get involved and help the new groups get off to a flying start. If there are other topics you want to discuss with fellow-members please let the office know and we will try to arrange break-out facilities to allow for this. If you prefer to take a break from meetings, Simon Cane has kindly agreed to organise a visit to the Museum and Gallery conservation labs.

The rest of the afternoon will consist of three sessions on digital imaging, identified as a key CPD issue by accredited conservators. The preservation and management of digital images is of multi-disciplinary relevance to conservation professionals working either independently or in larger institutions. The seminar will be followed by a drinks reception for members to celebrate the formation of the Institute of Conservation and to bid a fond farewell to its constituent bodies.

We look forward to an interesting day and encourage members to come along, get to know each other and enjoy themselves.

Please contact

membership@instituteofconservation.org.uk or
call 020 7785 3807 to confirm your place

Programme

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 1300–1400 | Opportunity to visit the conservation labs |
| 1400–1445 | Annual General meeting. Interim Board hands over to elected Board. Presentation of plans and priorities for 2006. |
| 1445–1530 | Session 1 – (split sessions) <ul style="list-style-type: none">i First meeting of Private Practice Groupii First meeting of Conservation Science Groupiii Building national/regional structures for Icon across the UK Those not attending one of these three meetings may visit the conservation labs |
| 1530–1600 | Session 2 – Suzanne Keene, UCL – Introduction: issues in long-term preservation of digital images |
| 1600–1630 | Tea Break |
| 1630–1700 | Session 3 – Rory Mcleod, British Library – 'Image management and standards' |
| 1700–1730 | Session 4 – Adrian Brown, National Archives – 'Practical Approaches to long-term preservation' |
| 1730–1900 | Drinks Reception |

Members will have free entry throughout the day to an exhibition of paintings by Preraphaelite artist Simeon Solomon in the Gas Hall, adjacent to the room we are meeting in, and to an exhibition of Chinese woodcuts in the Water Hall, across the road.

Subscriptions reminder

Everyone on Icon's database will be receiving this issue of Icon News. But you will continue to receive future issues only by making sure that your subscription is paid.

People

ON THE MOVE

Dr Sebastian Strobl FMGP, ACR – a personal tribute

At the end of October Sebastian Strobl will be returning to Germany after 15 years as Director of the Cathedral Studios at Canterbury and a position at the heart of stained glass conservation in Britain.

On arrival to take up one of the most challenging posts in English stained glass conservation, Sebastian quickly won the respect and affection of his colleagues and peers. With qualifications in both art history and conservation, extensive experience in the glazing world and a long-standing family connection with stained glass, he brought an academic rigour and a high degree of professionalism to a discipline that in England lacked any formal training structure and standard career pathway. He soon made an impact on the Cathedral Studios, providing firm leadership, consolidating and enhancing its reputation as one of the country's foremost practices. He also found time to become active in the affairs of both the British Society of Master Glass-Painters and the British committee of the Corpus Vitrearum. In particular, he became active in the evolution and promotion of a professional accreditation scheme for stained glass conservators, culminating in the launch of the BSMGP Accreditation Scheme. He was one of the scheme's most active and energetic advocates and served as the determined and effective chairman of the Society's Conservation Committee from 1995 to 2002, and as chairman of the Stained Glass Committee of the UKIC from 2000 to 2003. Professional accreditation has proved to be a development of the utmost importance for the status and enhancement of the profession. In 1996 his services to British stained glass were recognized by his election to the Fellowship of the BSMGP.

Sebastian has also been unstinting in his support of the Stained Glass Museum at Ely, of the York Glaziers' Trust, the Council for the Care of Churches Stained Glass Committee and of the Worshipful Company of Glaziers, of which he became a Liveryman in 1999. On the international stage, he has acted as advisor to the Cathedrals of Siena and Leon, and since 1998 has been Secretary of the International Conservation Committee of the Corpus Vitrearum. In this capacity he was a major contributor to the international conservation guidelines of the Corpus Vitrearum, published in 2004.

Somehow he has also managed to find time to write and publish in the field. In addition to numerous articles, in 1990 his PhD thesis was published (*Glastechnik des Mittelalters*, Gentner Verlag) and his major technical book, *Conservation of Stained Glass* (Butterworth-Heinemann) is in preparation.



Sebastian Strobl

Sarah Brown MA, FSA, Hon FMGP, Chairman, Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi, Great Britain

NEW APPOINTMENTS AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Natalie Ceeney has been appointed as the new Chief Executive of The National Archives, following the retirement of Sarah Tyacke. Ms Ceeney took up post in October from her previous job as Director of Operations and Services at the British Library. Before that she had managed clinical services in the NHS and led strategic consultancy projects across a range of industries at McKinsey and Co.



Natalie Ceeney

The National Archives are based in Kew, west London and still perhaps better known to many under its old name of the Public Records Office. The post of Chief

Executive at TNA incorporates the role of Keeper of Public Records and Historical Manuscripts Commissioner.

Konstantinos (Kostas) Ntanos has been appointed Conservation Research Assistant at The National Archives (TNA), Kew. His responsibilities will include implementation of a materials testing programme and development of the conservation research database for dissemination via the Internet.

Kostas initially trained in conservation in Athens and took up his post at TNA after graduating from the RCA/V&A Conservation course in July 2005 having completed a 3-year MA in Conservation Science with the British Museum.

Contact: kostas.ntanos@nationalarchives.gov.uk



Kostas Ntanos

IN APPRECIATION

Christine MacKay 1942 – 2005

The world of paper is inhabited by many remarkable people, one of whom, the paper conservator Christine Mackay, a member of the British Association of Paper Historians, sadly died in July of this year. Her death came after a long and courageous fight against cancer, only a few months after her retirement as Senior Paper Conservator at the National Museum and Gallery of Wales, Cardiff. She came to paper conservation through picture framing and trained as a paper conservator at Camberwell School of Arts and Crafts from 1983–7 where she made many deep and abiding friendships. She joined the National Museum and Gallery of Wales from the British Museum in February 1990 and was responsible for setting up the present paper conservation studio, print room and prints and drawings storage. Over the years she contributed much to the Institute of Paper Conservation and at the time of her death was a member of its Executive Committee.

She will be remembered with great affection by many, not only for her kindness but also for her pastoral tutoring of many interns and students and for her remarkable efficiency and energy in running the paper conservation studio. But her many interests and friendships were not confined to her professional life. She travelled widely and developed a deep love of India which she visited many times, initially as visiting conservator to the Calcutta Tercentenary Trust. As a consequence of this she developed strong connections within Cardiff's Indian community. She presented a fascinating and illuminating paper at BAPH's Swansea Conference in 2003 on several aspects of her work in India, but sadly her illness prevented her from preparing this for publication.

She exhibited the National Museum and Gallery of Wales' important but almost unknown collection of nineteenth century Kalighat paintings, carrying out groundbreaking research into the pigments used by this school of Bengali Artists, and published a book on them with Aditi Nath Sarkar. (1) She later presented an important paper at the Smithsonian in Washington on the subject, 'Kalighat Pats: an examination of techniques and materials' also co-authored with Aditi Nath Sarkar, including some valuable insights into the use of paper by

Indian artists during the nineteenth century.

When she was first married she farmed in Kent, where she brought up her two sons, Rupert and Damien. Always a keen horsewoman, she was very involved with the Pony Club and even on one of her last visits to India she spent two weeks riding with three broken ribs. Christine was warm and kind, tough, energetic, efficient, and determined to have fun. She shared an extraordinary and very beautiful house, Erw Surn, near Harlech where she spent a lot of time; it had running water but no electricity.

I first really got to know Christine early in her time at Cardiff when we worked together after her fascinating discovery of the previously unknown painted backing sheet JMW Turner's 1790s watercolour of Llandeilo



Christine Mackay

Bridge, one of the highpoints of her career and a discovery that provided important insights into Turner's working practices at a crucial stage in his development as an artist. I also very much appreciated her efficiency, humour and generosity when carrying out my research into Thomas Jones' use of paper prior to the 2003 Bicentenary Exhibition 'Thomas Jones (1742-1803) an Artist Rediscovered'.

It didn't matter where we met, walking along together under the elevated railway in Chicago, in the store rooms and conservation studios of the NMGW, a friend's garden in South London, in the misty drizzle at Thomas Jones' house at Pencerrig in Central Wales, the work was always serious and always fun.

Peter Bower

Very many thanks to *Christie Wyld* for helping with the detail of Christine's early life and her photograph of Christine with her dog, Dai, taken last Christmas.

1. Christine Mackay and Aditi Nath Sarker, *Kalighat Paintings*, Lustre Press, New Delhi, 2000, in conjunction with the National Museum and Gallery of Wales.

Christine Lachelin 1964 – 2005

The sad news of Christine Lachelin's sudden death on 27th July 2005 was reported by *Conservation News* in September. It shocked and stunned all those who were privileged to have known and worked with her, particularly as those who had seen her recently knew that she was filled with excitement and enthusiasm at the prospect of her new job as Preventive Conservation Manager with Historic Royal Palaces, after eight years as a preventive conservator with the National Trust.



Christine Lachelin

Christine made a speciality of inventing new posts and taking on new challenges. Having successfully managed an architect's office in London, she switched her career to conservation when she took a first class honours degree in 1993 in the History of Art at the University of East Anglia, and then completed a three-year post-graduate diploma in textile conservation in 1996 at the Textile Conservation Centre.

After an internship at the Burrell Collection in Glasgow (funded by Historic Scotland) Christine became the first full time Conservator in Northern Ireland for the National Trust in 1997, where she advised on preventive conservation in historic houses and the organisation of remedial conservation programmes. She raised professional standards and the profile of collections conservation among the management team and property staff. Her sensitivity, humanity, tact, courtesy and diplomacy meant she was particularly effective in politely but firmly ensuring that good practice was maintained.

On top of all her day work, she also successfully completed the Open University Professional Certificate in Management.

Christine left Northern Ireland to become the first Territory Conservator South for the National Trust in 2002, where she recruited, led and managed a team of five Conservators, as well as advising a portfolio of historic houses on their preventive and remedial conservation needs. She also represented the interests of conservators, curators and archaeologists on the Management Team of the South East Region at Polesden Lacey in Surrey, where she was based. She exemplified how well conservators work in multi-disciplinary teams by embedding herself successfully within the regional structure, whilst remaining part of a centrally managed team of conservators.

With this extensive experience in preventive and remedial conservation management in heritage sites, Christine was exceptionally qualified to fill the new post of Preventive Conservation Manager for the Historic Royal Palaces, where she was to lead a team of ten preventive conservators. Although with her new colleagues for only ten working days, she established an immediate bond with them, impressing them with her informed and sensible judgement, her focus on producing results, and keenness to be involved at all levels, pitching into even the most routine activities. She communicated about conservation with zest and confidence, being keenly aware of the importance of ensuring the right balance of conservation and public access to historic properties. She was well respected and established in the conservation community, and poised to develop a leading role in the profession.

In addition to being the highly organised and efficient person that her career history demonstrates, Christine was a gracious, generous person, with a sense of humour that accompanied all her activities. She took a personal interest in all colleagues wherever she worked, making them her friends along with her personal network, with whom she sailed, danced, dined and relaxed. Christine was born in 1964 to Prue and Tom Lachelin, the eldest of four sisters, Lucinda, Susannah and Katherine. Her family provided her with an extensive network of relations who joined with her many friends and colleagues to fill the Sacred Heart Church in Cobham at her funeral on 11th August. There her zest for life and sense of fun were recalled, in particular her smile, her willingness to try new things, her good company, and her elegance. Her fighting spirit and determination led us to believe that she would overcome the health problems that troubled her, but it was not to be. She will be hugely missed by all who knew her. Her untimely death has robbed her friends and family of a truly fine person and our profession of one of its most promising practitioners.

Katy Lithgow, Head Conservator, The National Trust, with contributions from *Frances Bailey*, *Sue Savile* and *Kate Frame*.

Conservation of the ss Great Britain

The restoration and dynamic display of the ss Great Britain has been greeted with great acclaim. Conservation lay at the heart of the process and here we go behind the scenes to hear the story from the perspective of Eura Conservation Ltd, who were involved in this large-scale treatment project



ss Great Britain Trust

The ss Great Britain in Sparrow Cove, The Falkland Islands, before her rescue in 1970.

BACKGROUND

The ss Great Britain has an illustrious past. Brunel's second ship, she brought together the cutting-edge technologies of the mid 19th century. At the time of her launch by Prince Albert in 1843, she was the world's first iron-hulled, screw-propelled, steam-powered ship. As the world's first great ocean liner, the ss Great Britain transformed the way Victorians approached mass travel and communications, including the timetabling of long distance voyages. She survived a beaching at Dundrum Bay, Ireland, in 1846, and went on to take 15,000 emigrants to Australia. Passengers included the first All England Cricket Team to tour Australia, in 1861, and author Anthony Trollope. The ship was commissioned as a troop carrier for the Crimean War and Indian Mutiny. In 1882, with the engine removed, she became a cargo carrier, before ending her working life as a floating

warehouse in Port Stanley, The Falkland Islands. She was finally abandoned in 1937 when she was towed across the bay and scuttled on the beach in Sparrow Cove before her eventual epic rescue and return to Bristol in 1970.

Once secured in her original dry dock in Bristol she was looked after by the ss Great Britain Project with help from a large number of volunteers and contractors. There is no doubt that without the efforts of the early trustees and their helpers the ship would not have lasted as she did. However, in spite of their best efforts it became clear in the mid 1990s that the ironwork was rusting fast and a different approach was needed. The trust employed a specialist marine curator/director and we were appointed a little later as consultant conservators. Our first job was to survey the ship and collaborate with the curator over the possible treatment options available. This work eventually led to volume 2 of the Conservation Plan (see www.eura.co.uk)

A DIFFERENT APPROACH

During early 1998, as our survey work progressed, it became apparent that a window of opportunity of only a few years existed, before the battle against corrosion of the great ship's hull would be largely lost. The iron which had been the source of much wonder in her early years, and which had given her the strength to weather many an Atlantic storm, was finally proving her downfall. The ship's iron hull had been subjected to continuous aggressive chloride attack from seawater. Once thick, strong plates came to resemble lace and were in danger of being unable to support the ship's weight.

This damage accelerated following the return of the ss Great Britain to her Dry Dock in 1970, where the relative humidity (RH) often reached 80% and the average is higher than in Sparrow Cove. In addition to iron corrosion, the ship's timber and lead work had also suffered degradation. Without intervention, this national treasure would have crumbled away.

The survey work and early discussions between curator and conservator provided the framework for a plan that



ss Great Britain Trust

You can visit the
ss Great Britain, Bristol

Details:
www.ssgreatbritain.org
0117 926 0680

Very corroded iron

would do credit to Brunel, and hopefully act as an example of good practice for large-scale conservation projects across the world. That plan was to control the RH around the original iron in as many areas as possible. This is obviously a process well known in museum conservation but very difficult to achieve in large outdoor objects. It became vital for the Trust to develop a design team consisting of experts who exhibited not only skill, knowledge and understanding in their respective fields,

but also demonstrated a real empathy for the project. The curator was determined that conservation should lie at the very heart of the whole project and, needless to say, this was music to our ears.

We are experienced in the conservation of most metals and specialise in large outdoor objects. Other professionals were retained to join the design team to solve the significant engineering, architectural and design problems that would have to be overcome if the conservation plan was to be put into practice. The Trust also commissioned scientific research from Cardiff University to complement the conservation work and underpin the business plan. (see proceedings of Metals 04 – Canberra)

Portside view of the glass sea



ss Great Britain Trust

Eventually it was decided that a glass waterline plate would be designed and installed so that it sealed the gap between the wall of the dock and the ship. This would allow the entire hull below the waterline plate and the whole of the interior of the ship to be dehumidified. This left the external topsides (the area of the hull between the waterline and the gunwhales) to be treated 'conventionally'. Although this decision could be seen as something of a compromise, several factors allowed us to reach this as the ideal conclusion. These included the fact that the topsides were less contaminated with chlorides than other areas; that some areas here had been replaced with mild steel during the post 1970s treatment; that the external topsides were comparatively easy to treat with the minimum of irrevocable treatment and that the glass waterline plate, or glass sea as it came to be known, would have considerable visitor appeal.

Eura's role then developed from conservation consultant to that of conservation contractor when we won the tender for the treatment of the original ironwork. What made this project even more challenging for us was that work had to be undertaken whilst the ship remained open to paying visitors. It was crucial that the Trust continued to generate income from visitors to help meet the costs of the work, and to meet public demand. This approach required us to work closely with the Trust's Director and Interpretation and Communications team.



Lace-like iron after priming



Hydroblasted iron

This ensured that the public was kept informed of progress and project milestones through a series of initiatives including 'hard hat' tours, and frequent media events, and an exhibition, called Extreme Iron, dedicated to the conservation process.

THE CONSERVATION PROCESS

The conservation plan provided the broad framework for conservators and design team to follow. Our guiding principles were:

- All work to Brunel's iron would be undertaken under the supervision of a PACR accredited conservator
- Treatment would be documented
- Conservation repairs would be, wherever possible, reversible.
- Intervention resulting in irrevocable change would be considered only on a case-by-case basis involving discussion between the conservator and design team. The conservator and curator would be the ultimate decision-makers. In the event, we only sanctioned the paint preparation method for certain areas [irrevocable treatment – low-pressure blast cleaning] and the fitting of a disabled access lift [irrevocable treatment – removal of a very small part of a late deck hatchway].

CONSERVATION WORKS TO THE HULL

- The fundamental conservation action is the provision of a very dry controlled environment on the surface of the iron, inside and out.
- Recording: Work has been recorded using a database written especially for the project, including photographic images. A photogrammetric survey of the hull and dock was commissioned where this would be cost effective. Where not an EDM (electronic distance measurement) survey was carried out to complete the picture. These will enable future monitoring of the ship and her dry dock and provide an advanced warning system if further treatment should be required.
- Cleaning and ironwork conservation of the upper hull: The Trustees, curator and conservators were at one in their determination to minimise the intervention to original ironwork. We used sensitive and non-sensitive cleaning as dictated by the state of the ironwork. Sensitive cleaning involved removal of post 1970 failing repairs, dry closed circuit air abrasion, moist air abrasion and pressure washing. The iron was cleaned to SA 2½, washed with clean water, allowed to surface rust, re-cleaned to SA 2½, and primed with a zinc-rich, two-pack, wet-application epoxy primer. Areas to be non-sensitively cleaned were hydro-blasted to HB2½ with clean water at a pressure up to 2500 bar (50,000 psi), allowed to surface rust, re-cleaned to HB2½ and primed with a zinc-rich, two-pack, wet-application epoxy primer.
- Painting: Once all areas had been primed the topsides were stripe coated and airless sprayed with two-pack epoxy paint followed by top coat of two-pack urethane sheen paint.
- Strengthening the hull: Following an initial assessment and development of a 3D structural model of the ship by Fenton Holloway, the ship's engineers, potentially weak areas were identified. Repairs were carried out with no irrevocable treatment utilising existing holes in the ship's hull, where available, to attach strengthening members. Where not, an inventive mix of clamps and props was agreed with the engineers to achieve the desired result.
- Stonework conservation: The Dry Dock not only is home to the ss Great Britain, it is also of historic importance in its own right. A Grade II* Listed building, the dock was built especially for the construction of the ss Great Britain from the late 1830s to the date of her launch in 1843. Work was required to the Dry Dock, to minimise moisture ingress and relieve water pressure behind the dock walls and this was carried out for us by Nimbus Conservation in conjunction with Arup's Bristol office.
- Waterline plate to hull connection: The final piece of work to be undertaken on the topsides was the



Artist's impression of the waterline plate or 'glass sea'

attachment of a stainless-steel tee piece that would take the flexible membrane that connected the glass sea to the ship. Originally it was intended that this would be attached using existing holes. It quickly became apparent that this would result in a large and ugly connection. The glass plate engineers, Arup's Cardiff office, devised a series of trials for us to undertake to test the possibility of using glues. The chosen glue should work effectively with the paint system applied to the topsides, should provide sufficient long-term strength & weather resistance and, of course, be completely reversible.



Eura Conservation oversees the move of the historic main yard arm into the new dockyard museum

WORKING BEYOND THE INITIAL BRIEF

As well as continuing our watching brief for conservation and treating the topsides, we were also called upon to move some large and delicate iron artefacts from the quayside, the Dry Dock, and the Maritime Heritage Centre into the new Dockyard Museum. These ranged from the main yard arm (33 metres long), to the propeller lifting frame (17 tonnes) and numerous smaller, yet historically important iron artefacts. When the Trust was gifted with a funnel section, the sole remaining iron part of Brunel's third and final ship the Great Eastern, we were retained to collect the object from Wessex Water and install it in the Dockyard Museum.

The completed topside treatment





Museum interior showing the main yard arm and propeller lifting frame

The propeller lifting frame after its move by Eura Conservation into the skeletal building which by July 2005 has been rebuilt as the new Dockyard Museum



Visitors under the glass 'sea'

View from under the waterline plate



View of the bow after treatment

View from under the waterline or 'glass sea'



THE PRESENT

Today Brunel's ss Great Britain rests securely in the very same Bristol Dry Dock he originally built for her. Since the ship's 'Re-launch' in July, visitor numbers have more than doubled (50,000 visitors between end July and end September). Beyond the state-of-the-art interactive Dockyard Museum, and the ship, what is proving a major visitor attraction is the descent under the glass 'sea' to stand below the magnificent hull and propeller.

As visitors enter the pavilion entrance and descend into the giant dehumidification chamber, they experience the change in atmosphere as RH approaches 20%. They also have the impression of going underwater. There is considerable visual excitement as the glass sea appears to keep the ship afloat at the same time as obviously acting as a roof to the dehumidification chamber.

Those minded to do so can delight in the technology. Visitors can view the dehumidification plant, look through the specifically designed glass panels to see its interior workings and watch as computer screens display the conservation process.

Funding for the £11.3 million project has come from a grant of £8.8 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund, plus support from ReDiscover, the renewal fund for museums, charitable trusts, companies and individuals. At the time of writing the ss Great Britain Trust still has £239,000 to raise.

Robert Turner can be contacted on 01952 680218 or robert@aura.co.uk

Conserving Cleopatra's Needle

If you need proof of the remarkable skill of the ancient Egyptian stone mason without having to take an expensive trip to the Nile, then ask Iain McLean of Antique Bronze Ltd. This summer he was cleaning Cleopatra's Needle in the heart of London.

It would be fair to say that we have something of a proprietorial interest in this famous monument, which stands 21 metres high on the banks of the Thames. We were up there 26 years ago giving it a full clean and were back again this summer at the request of Mr. Mahinda Peiris, Service Officer (Highways), Westminster City Council. In the process we discovered that each of its four faces has an almost perfect straightness: our measurements of its width show a precise inward slope of 88 degrees on all sides and at all heights. To carve it out in one piece with such precise dimensions is an incredible piece of craftsmanship.

We also found that it is in remarkably good condition despite its 3500 years of often turbulent history and exposure to far from ideal conditions. The time line (see overleaf) gives a flavour of its chequered past. Even its journey to London continued its eventful story, when a heavy storm hit the steam ship towing the obelisk in its specially constructed barge. The barge was cut loose and thought to be lost until it was spotted a few days later. Later still in 1917, it survived a nearby bomb explosion unscathed. So it is a minor miracle that it is intact and that most of its hieroglyphs are legible – albeit to varying degrees – despite the actions of wind, waves, sand and the military. The fact that it is a single piece of granite has no doubt helped it to survive, since there are no weak mortar joints to fail over time. Localised damage on the corners and the loss of the tip of the apex pre-date the Needle's arrival in London.

But we can't be complacent. Our initial inspection showed that its original colour had been completely lost. The surface was very dark, except for a much lighter band running from top to bottom on the south west corner. And, not surprisingly, there was a thick layer of guano on the apex. Contour decay was evident all over the surface, though there was much less of it on the lighter band. This process is part of the natural life-cycle of granite and was already observed and reported on in 1879. Some of the flakes created by this decay, none of them more than 4mm thick, could be easily detached by hand and behind



East face of the obelisk before conservation treatment



East face of the obelisk after conservation treatment

them was a black powdery residue and green organic matter.

Our next step was to analyse these findings more scientifically. Sample flakes, taken from all areas of the monument, gave us our first and perhaps most significant result: the Needle was made of Syenite, a comparatively weak form of granite. Our most worrying finding was that the black powder was a mixture of dissolved hornblendes and micas, both of which can dissolve in acid rain. This vulnerability will exacerbate the decay and allow debris and organic growth (this was identified as algae and lichen) to increase the rate further. And, of course, the



South-east corner, pre conservation

freeze / thaw effect and thermal expansion are far more devastating when water takes advantage of flaking to penetrate deeply into the stone.

The darkness of the stone's surface was a layer of fine carbonaceous deposits – a cocktail of carbon, sulphur, grime and an oily residue, all typical of prolonged exposure to London's environment. Not just passive dirt, this layer appears to be a more aggressive coating which is dissolving the minerals, by combining with acidic rain to form weak sulphuric acid. The lighter band on the south west corner proved rather more puzzling – it lacked the flaking and dark carbon deposits but had higher levels of magnesium and a light yellow coating under the general dirt, which turned out to be hard to remove. We can only speculate as to whether the prevailing south westerly winds are playing some sort of role here, perhaps by drying out this corner more quickly after rainfall and making it more difficult for airborne pollutants to stick.



Full scaffold erected, with monoflex sheeting. Hoarding with warning signs 'No public access'



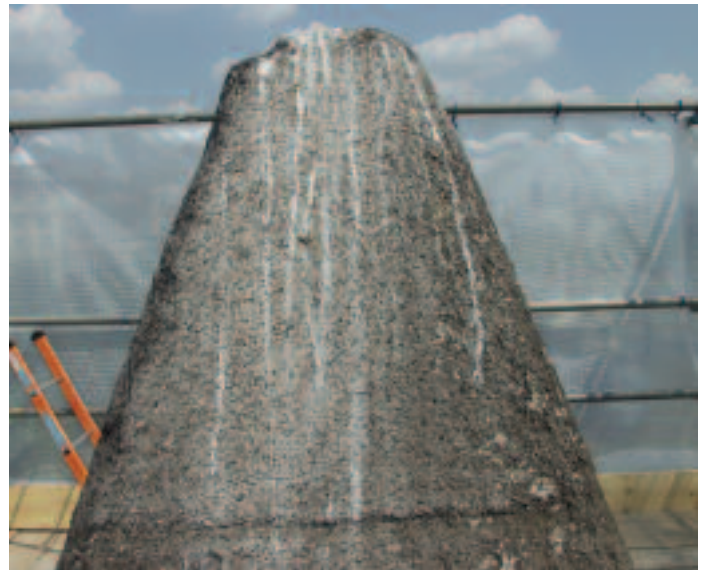
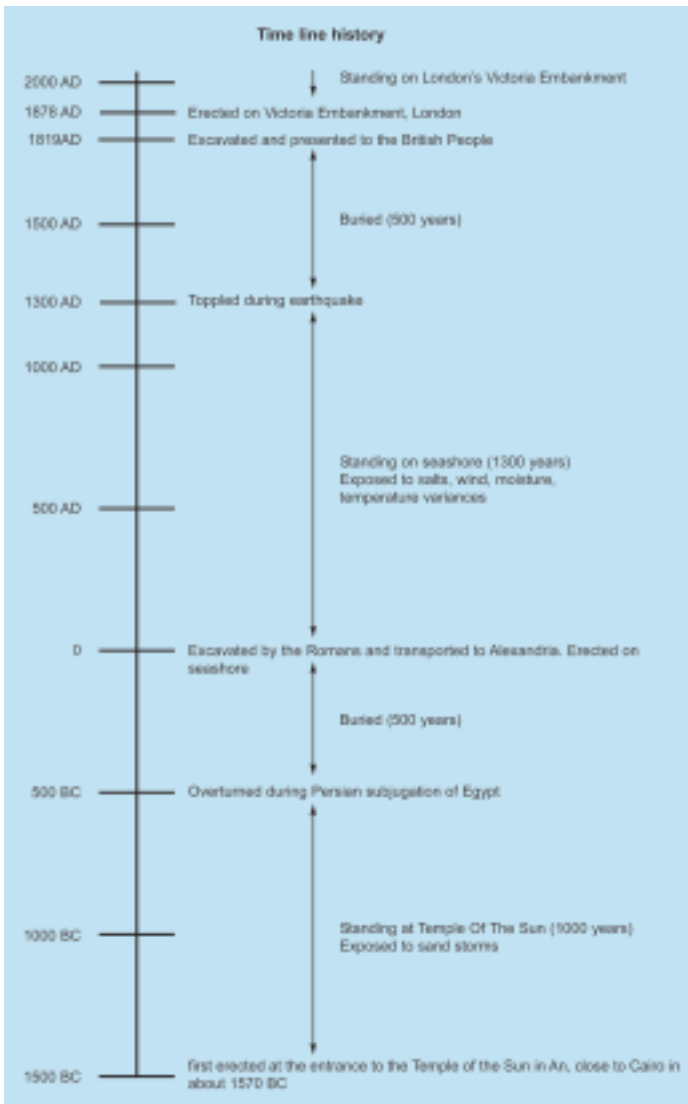
Drinking water containers ready for use with DOFF machine

The damage and weathering are part of the monument's unique and eventful history. So there was no question of restoring or consolidating the stone, even if these were viable options on this scale. Our recommendation was cleaning to minimise further decay, carried out in the summer months to avoid any cold spell as well as dangerous high winds, as we laboured high up on our scaffolding. We ruled out various methods, such as abrasive and chemical cleaning, as unnecessarily risky and even rejected the use of high pressure water, which would penetrate too deeply into the stone.

We opted instead to use high pressure steam (known as the DOFF system). It utilises very little water and much of it is vapourised as soon as it leaves the nozzle. Used in conjunction with soap solution and nylon brushes, the steam heats and softens the dirt and the rest of the effort was provided by our muscle power. Time-consuming, it took us eight weeks and numerous applications, although that allowed us to monitor carefully at every stage. We used imported drinking water and had two 900 litre tanks, one at ground level and the second mid-way up the scaffold fed by a pump. The DOFF's own pump could then feed right to the top.

The first few applications were slow to yield any improvement but gradually the surface lightened and the final result was a dramatic improvement, revealing once again the original light pink shade of the granite. As noted earlier the south west corner was more stubborn and its yellow staining could not be removed entirely. The safe removal of the pollutant, organic matter and airborne debris will slow the rate of deterioration of the granite's surface.

Once the surface was clean the difference in the hieroglyphs was more evident. Whilst erosion and decay will have caused some deterioration, neighbouring



Before conservation



Top level being cleaned with the DOFF system

After conservation



hieroglyphs exhibit great differences in depth and clarity even when the overall surface appears to be sound. Perhaps they were originally carved to different depths? In any case, having viewed some original images from the 1880s, supplied by English Heritage, we concluded that they are in a similar condition to when the Needle arrived in London.

The final element of the work concerned the Victorian additions, which accompanied the fixing of the obelisk in its present site in 1878: the bronze collar, plaques and flanking sphinxes. Their surfaces are in good condition, the original patina intact, and they needed only a thorough clean and wax. However, structurally the collar needs some work: the winged corner sections are loose and after discussion with Westminster City Council, it was decided to strap it as a temporary measure to prevent any further movement. Full repairs will need to be carried out with a reinforced scaffold as these bronze sections are extremely heavy.

Cleopatra's Needle was presented to the British people in 1819 in recognition of Admiral Nelson's victory over the French fleet, at the battle of the Nile in 1798. In this Trafalgar memorial year it has been satisfying to work on this other reminder of the great man's successes and a great London landmark.

Iain McLean can be contacted on 0208 340 0931 or iain@antiquebronze.co.uk

news from the groups

ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP

Welcome, Archaeology Group members, to the groups' news section of Icon News! We hope to be able to keep you up to date with current news and information from the group here, inform members of what the committee is doing and advertise future events, publications etc. If you would like to contribute to this exciting new publication please send any articles or news items to the group's editor Erica Paterson at epaterson@yorkarchaeology.co.uk.

The UKIC Archaeology Section had its last AGM as part of UKIC on Monday 11 July 2005 at the Department of Archaeology, University of Durham following the group's summer outing to Vindolanda and Durham Conservation Laboratories. The chair Kirsten Suenson-Taylor reported a very busy year for the committee, especially with the move towards convergence. The much awaited publication of the metal detecting conference is due this autumn. As well as papers and consultation documents to comment on, issues that concern the committee continue to be jobs and pay, promotion of conservation, the portable antiquities scheme and conservation of marine artefacts.

The Christmas meeting has been organised for Thursday, December 15th 2005. See listings for further details or contact Liz Barham.

New blood is required on the committee with the resignation of Jo Dillon, Jannicke Langfeldt and JNAPC co-opted member Amanda Sutherland. The treasurer Graham Morgan has served two terms but will stay until convergence is completed. The committee is always looking for keen new members, so if anyone would like to join please contact Kirsten.

Erica Paterson Group editor

BOOK AND PAPER GROUP

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the first newsletter of Icon. In its pages there are articles across the range of conservation practices which I am sure you will find of interest. In addition, news will be made available via email and the book and paper section of the website will be posting specific paper-related materials, including up-to-date news, reviews, listings and jobs. The 2006 programme of training events, workshops and talks is being developed and as I write it looks as if the evening talk 'Keeping Fit for Conservation' is booked out and will be a great success. If anyone has any suggestions for training events please contact Joanna Payne from the Book and Paper Group Committee. Other future activities of the committee include carrying out a review of our leaflets and creating a conference stand to take to professional events; could

any volunteers willing to offer their time to supervise the stand at conferences please contact the committee. We hope that you enjoy the newsletter and continue to send in articles, reviews, comments and news so that we can maintain our high standard of information exchange.

Christine Mackay

It was with great sadness that we heard the news of Christine Mackay's death earlier this summer. There is a full obituary elsewhere in these pages but I wanted to add a few words regarding her work for the profession. The last time I saw Christine was at an IPC committee meeting in December 04 and as it turned out it was my first and her last. Christine was planning to spend her retirement helping to develop and organise training events and as an PACR accreditation assessor. She would have brought the same level of committed energy and enthusiasm to her role on the committee as she did in all areas of her work and her sudden death was a tragedy and of great regret to all who knew her.

Helen Lindsay Chair

CARE OF COLLECTIONS GROUP

The committee has met twice since the Annual Meeting in April. The last issue of the CCF Newsletter was published in June and the committee is now planning events for the next 12 to 18 months. These include a conference on health and safety risks associated with collections for summer/autumn 2006. Details of events will be posted on the website and published in Icon News. If you have ideas for events, publications or study visits please send them to a member of the committee:

Gael Dundas: 020 7416 5405 GDundas@iwm.org.uk

Robert Entwistle: 01473 433549

robert.entwistle@ipswich.gov.uk

Frances Halahan: 020 7703 0806 halahan@dircon.co.uk

Andy Holbrook: 020 7814 5665

aholbrook@museumoflondon.org.uk

Robin McDermott: robin.mcdermott@ymlac.org.uk

Cathy Proudlove: 01603 493622

cathy.proudlove.mus@norfolk.gov.uk

Zoe Roberts: 020 8781 9739 zoe.roberts@hrp.org.uk

Emma Roodhouse: 01324 504689

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David Singleton: 0117 922 3607

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Helen Spencer: h.spencer@nms.ac.uk

Claire Fox: 020 7973 3317

claire.smith@english-heritage.org.uk

Jane Thompson Webb: 0121 303 4589

Jane_Thompson-Webb@Birmingham.gov.uk

Peter Winsor: 020 7273 1457 peter.winsor@mmla.gov.uk

CERAMICS AND GLASS GROUP

The future is in your hands!

Welcome to the newly named Ceramics and Glass Group of the Institute of Conservation. The Group was formed in 1984 and has grown into an active group of around 200 conservators and restorers. However, despite having one of the largest Group memberships, meetings have generally been poorly attended. Practical porcelain restoration is the only subject guaranteed to produce a fully subscribed meeting, however there are only so many times that this subject can be presented. Committees have widened the scope of meetings to include technology and conservation of related materials in order to broaden members' horizons and knowledge. The two-day Spring meetings are opportunities to visit collections, hear lectures and most importantly to socialize in a relaxing atmosphere but are necessarily expensive since accommodation and meals are included in the cost. They are attended by a core group of members including those from abroad. Attendance at one-day Autumn meetings is variable.

Although the original aim of the Group was to bring museum and independent conservators-restorers together, there are now so many conservation conferences that members working in museums attend those that are more relevant to their needs. Students are especially important in this respect as they are exposed to the latest techniques and materials at College and it is vital for our future that they are active in the Group from the start of their careers. However students seem not to be encouraged to join the Group despite being given one year's free membership of Icon, and reduced fees for Group meetings, neither do colleges consider attendance at Group meetings as being worthy of financial support even though they are both educational and an opportunity for students to network within the profession. There are not enough full paying delegates at meetings to enable the Group to offer further subsidies either to students or low wage earners.

How to go forward? Do we need to reassess the original aims of the Group some of which will be met by Icon? How do members now view the Group's purpose? Will the Group be affected by a division between members who become accredited and those who choose not to? There should be a place for all. One solution might be to merge with another Group or to organize joint group meetings in order to spread costs and effort.

The Group exists for its members, to act as a forum for discussion and the dissemination of information on materials and techniques. We hope to see Group members at the Professional Accreditation Day that has been organized by Susan Bradshaw on Wednesday

December 14th especially for ceramics and glass restorers whether or not they decide to proceed with accreditation (see separate PACR announcement). On March 24–26th 2006 a really interesting meeting has been organized in Cardiff with visits to Cardiff Castle and The National Museums and Galleries of Wales. Looking farther ahead, the Spring 2007 meeting: Use and Manipulation of Materials will be held at West Dean College (information to appear in meetings listings).

Your Group Needs You if it is to Survive – Please Respond!

Ros Hodges Group Chair
Sandy Davison FIIC ACR Vice Chair

HISTORIC INTERIORS GROUP

A rallying call from the Chair!

The establishment of the section was principally a response to the new project culture. This has changed the nature of conservation at every level. The aims of the group may be summarised as follows:

- 1 To provide a forum for the exchange of ideas, experiences and new techniques.
- 2 To encourage team-working and foster communication, both within our field and to the wider public.
- 3 To lobby for the support of our professional body on such issues as insurance, taxation, liability, health and safety, site protocols, tendering and specification.
- 4 To apply pressure for the representation of conservation at management level from investigation and survey through to planning and implementation.

In order to present a strong, united front, it is essential that we formulate and apply guidelines which place us on a par with the professionals we work with daily. Without such professional criteria, we are too easily isolated and misused as 'craft' sub-contractors rather than highly qualified practitioners capable of adding genuine value to the project from its inception. To this end, we should develop targets and timetables to agree such criteria.

As the Historic Interiors Group of Icon, we have the potential to exercise long term influence for the benefit of our profession. I urge all members to embrace this endeavour and adopt a pro-active role in supporting your committee by contributing your ideas, experience and, most importantly, your time.

Allyson McDermott Conservator and Consultant

more news from the groups

News Flash: ICOM-CC 14th Triennial Meeting
11–16 September

At last month's meeting it was agreed, in view of the growing recognition of the importance of historic interior studies, that the polychrome and sculpture working group should expand its remit to include architectural finishes. An interim meeting of the group, probably to be held in Brussels, is being arranged. We will provide details for members wishing to become involved in the group when they become available.

PHOTOGRAPHIC MATERIALS GROUP

At last! The formation of Icon as the profession's National voice for Conservation has become a reality. The PhMG would like to thank all its members and members of all the other participating bodies IPC, UKIC, SSCR and CCF for making it possible. Without the commitment and sacrifice of a few key individuals from the respective participating groups and a clear mandate from their members Icon would not have been possible. To celebrate this significant achievement and the Official Launch of Icon The Photographic Materials Conservation Group under its new name of Icon Photographic Materials Group held a one day meeting and Reception at the Scott Polar Research Institute, Cambridge. The meeting was well attended and all participants had a very informative and enjoyable day, a full Report of which will appear in the January issue. The current committee and I would like to thank all those who have supported the Group through the emergence of Icon. In December when the new Board of Icon is in place the Committee will stand down and there will be open elections to select a new committee which will take the Group on in this new and exciting phase. We are confident that the Group has an exciting future with Icon and will play its full part in ensuring its continued success, the preservation of our unique Cultural Heritage and the promotion of our unique profession. The Committee of the Icon Photographic Materials Group wishes all Icon members and member Groups all the very best for the future. Please join Icon and the Group and make a difference.

Ian L Moor Chair

SCOTLAND GROUP

The Scottish Society for Conservation and Restoration (SSCR) committee and a group starting up the Scotland Group of Icon are now working together to wind down SSCR and launch the new group. At an open meeting organised in April this year, Scottish conservators and related professionals brain-stormed on how Icon could work in Scotland. There was consensus that the Scotland Group should continue the good work successfully carried out by SSCR for almost 30 years, for example excursions, workshop visits, social events and the annual Plenderleith Lecture. They also emphasised working more politically with the Scottish Executive and other channels, and raising awareness more generally about conservation.

In August, we tried to reach as many Scottish UKIC/IPC/CCF/PhMCG members as possible via email and the SSCR website, to give an update and encourage people to work with Icon. We had a wonderful response, and our first meeting was on 26 September, where we were also joined by Alastair McCapra. Around 15 people are now involved in an interim committee to take the Scotland Group of Icon forward to the elections in 2006.

If you would like to be on the email list for the Scotland Group, or even join the interim committee, please contact Lisa Nilsen on lisanilsen2003@yahoo.co.uk. Ruth Honeybone (r_honeybone@yahoo.com) is the Scotland Group contact for contributions to the Icon newsletter.

PS. This year's Plenderleith Lecture will take place on 9 December 2005. Dr Jim Tate will speak on *Twenty-six things about conservation*. Afterwards we will have a great SSCR farewell party and a big welcome to Icon (see Listings). The event isn't confined to Scottish or Scotland-based conservators. All are welcome.

TEXTILE GROUP

The committee is continuing its programme of events, training and visits and is always pleased to receive suggestions for future activities and offers from institutions willing to host a workshop. In September a successful workshop and study day on framing was held at The Museum of Scotland, a review of which should appear in January's issue. The Icon website will soon be available to provide a forum for discussion, where shorter reports, information on training and workshop notes can be posted. If you have further ideas on how we can best use this facility please contact Marilyn Leader or Jane Taylor-Bouvard. Flora Nuttgens will continue to co-ordinate Textile Group contributions for Icon News.

We have decided to continue the pattern of an annual forum and next year it will be on the subject of Tapestry Conservation; it will take place on Monday 24th April 2006, at The Clothworkers' Hall, London. Please see the call for papers and posters in the last issue of *Conservation News*. The programme is being co-ordinated by Sung Hyun Im. It promises to be a full day and we may break with tradition and hold the Textile Group AGM in the early evening rather than before the forum. Further details will be sent out in early 2006.

This year has been a very sad one for the textile conservation community with the sudden and untimely deaths of Fiona Hutton and Christine Lachelin. Both seemed at the height of their careers – Fiona with a fully booked studio full of tapestries and Christine having just started a new job with Historic Royal Palaces. Fiona and Christine are greatly missed.

The Textile Group committee members are:

Clare Stoughton-Harris, Chair c.stoughton-harris@ntlworld.com
Deborah Phipps, Secretary phippswarne@tiscali.co.uk
Claire Golbourn, Treasurer
General.textiles@nationaltrust.org.uk
Flora Nuttgens, Editor flora.nuttgens@ashmus.ox.ac.uk
Maria Jordan maria.jordan@hrp.org.uk
Marilyn Leader leadertextile@hotmail.com
Jane Taylor-Bouvard Taylorjane8@aol.com
Sung Hyun Im Si1@soton.ac.uk

Committee members usually serve for three years and we welcome applications to join us from both students and experienced professionals, where vacancies arise.

Clare Stoughton-Harris Chair.

CALLING ALL CONSERVATION STUDENTS AND GRADUATES: VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

For the past two years a 'Graduate Voice' page has represented paper and book conservation students and graduates in *Paper Conservation News* – the newsletter for The Institute of Paper Conservation (as it was formerly known), now the Book and Paper Group. We would like to continue 'Graduate Voice' in Icon magazine and we want it to represent all conservation disciplines within Icon.

The idea is to dedicate space to conservation graduates and students, and their reviews, articles, opinions and news. We aim to provide an informal means of communication for newly qualified conservators and those still at college, with future employers and other established conservators.

We would like to hear from you if you would like to become involved or make a contribution. All kinds of contributions are welcome including reviews of excursions, conferences and classes, educational tools, books and even websites. We seek to promote graduate work via listings, or even internship or equipment enquiries. If you have ideas about what graduates today need, or simply need to know then please get in touch through Heather Marshall.

Heather is on the graduate liaison sub-committee and works alongside Graduate Liaison representative Ann-Marie Miller (who is on the Book and Paper Group executive committee); Caroline Harrison and Erica Kotze are also on the sub-committee to provide graduate support. The address for making contact or submitting contributions is heatherx.marshall@bl.uk.

PS. There is also a lighter side to the activities of a graduate group: the Book and Paper Group's second Beer Meeting was held at the Old Bell on Fleet Street and, as dark and sinister rendezvous in city haunts go, this was a great success. We had a healthy turnout from LMA and the British Library, three new graduates, one of whom had come down all the way from Northumberland, a Tate old timer, a splattering from the Wellcome Trust and a lone mariner from Greenwich.

reviews

BOOKS

PIGMENT COMPENDIUM SET: OPTICAL MICROSCOPY OF HISTORICAL PIGMENTS AND A DICTIONARY OF HISTORICAL PIGMENTS

Nicholas Eastaugh, Valentine Walsh, Tracey Chaplin and Ruth Siddall

Butterworth Heinemann 2004
ISBN: 0-7506-6461-4 Hardback,
2 volumes, 950 pages

.....
'Hints towards a classification of colours'¹

'...there is at present no trade (especially in the retail business) where description of the goods is so unreliable as in the colour trade.'²

The proliferation of both pigments and pigment names in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with colourmen, scientists and centres of manufacture all lending their names to artists' colours, led to vociferous dissatisfaction concerning the confusion surrounding pigment nomenclature. Zerr and Rubenkamp, translated into English in 1908, largely blamed the manufacturers and, more specifically, the retail trade who '...think themselves entitled to fix the name of any kind of colour they are going to produce, or have mixed or compounded from others, or to which they have done nothing beyond undertaking the sale of the article'³. They also condemned 'the deplorable lack of technical knowledge among users of artists' and painters' colours'. This ignorance was again highlighted ten years later at a meeting of the Royal Society of Arts when Joseph Lovibond exonerated the artist for lack of scientific understanding, instead seeing the gulf between the sciences and the arts as practically unbridgeable, in part because of the language surrounding pigment names: 'The standpoints of the artist and the scientific man were quite different, and their nomenclature even had little in common.'⁴

By 1935 there seemed to have been little change and again the Royal Society of Arts Journal identifies names as a major impediment to clarity when dealing with pigments: '...one of the great barriers to progress in both the teaching and in the practical use of colour, both commercially and aesthetically, has been the confusion of terms.'⁵ However, this is not just a phenomenon of the last 200 years. As early



as 1686 Waller attempts a classification of colours and pigments in *Philosophical Transactions*⁶ and some nineteenth-century commentators expressed the opinion that little had changed since 1755, when Dr Johnson could describe brown as 'the name of a colour composed of black and any other colour', puce as 'of a dark brown colour', and pink as 'a colour used by painters'.⁷

These critics would therefore have welcomed this extensive publication by Eastaugh et al. which makes a wide-ranging and scholarly contribution to the literature of pigments, providing a dictionary, bibliography, classification system and visual and documentary guide to the optical microscopy of historical pigments in two volumes. Although slightly cheaper when sold as a set, it seems likely that the users of this publication will split along the lines dividing the two volumes; technical art historians and conservators without a grounding in microscopy or chemistry finding the dictionary most useful, while the more scientifically trained readers and those actively engaged in optical microscopy will find the companion volume enriches and informs their research.

The Dictionary has an invaluable reference section, which documents over 2,000 years of publications on pigments, from Vitruvius in the first century BC to works published at the start of the twenty-first century, and comprises over 1,500 books, articles, treatises and manuscripts. These include the familiar – Field's *Chromatography* of 1835 – and the more obscure – Li Ch'iao-p'ing's *The Chemical Arts of Old China* of 1948, the specific – Mackay's *Beta-ferric oxyhydroxide-akaganéite* of 1962 – and the general – Abbot's *A brief description of the whole worlde* of 1599, and in themselves

The Pigmentum Project won the Bronze prize in the 2004 L'Oreal Art and Science of Colour prize. Ruth Siddall, Valentine Walsh, Tracey Chaplin, Nicholas Eastaugh.

are an illuminating chronicle of the power of pigments to engage human interest and research.

Where relevant, each pigment entry in the main text cross-refers to this reference list, making it easy to identify, for example, the single publication relevant to Stone Ochre and the mass of material relating to Yellow Ochre. The individual pigment records include an enormous range of names, from 'aal' to 'Zwickau yellow' and indicate colour, the chemical group to which they belong and provide a discussion of their properties and literature. The dictionary deliberately avoids lengthy discussion of use, unless this is essential for an understanding of their context, and this is where the literature references are so useful, to send the reader to more detailed papers on individual pigments and their occurrences on works of art. In an attempt to avoid the confusion over nomenclature that is a feature of so many historical publications on pigments, the Dictionary indicates whether the name given is a synonym, variant or common name, for example 'gas blue' for a low grade of Prussian blue, a generic compound, such as 'copper tin oxide', or a group term, for example the 'cobalt group' and the many pigments derived from it. In addition, there is a separate section on pigment classification towards the end of the dictionary, listing compounds found as pigments, again with a literature reference, where available. In its entirety, the Dictionary is both a starting point for those researching a specific pigment, a reinforcement and augmentation of

existing knowledge in an accessible, single-volume format and a graphic demonstration of the range, complexity and relentless historical inconsistency of this subject and is both an erudite and comprehensible attempt to create order out of considerable chaos.

While the Dictionary is an important resource in itself and could be purchased independently, those intending to use Optical Microscopy would be well advised to obtain both volumes. For most researchers, the identification of a pigment is only made relevant or interesting if something of its nature and the history of its use is known. Optical Microscopy presents the physical and chemical characteristics of pigments with commendable clarity; however, the analyst needs to know more, particularly about the approximate time parameters of a pigment's usage (only found in the Dictionary). Having suggested that scientifically trained readers would be those most interested in the microscopy volume, it is to be hoped that the more technical art historians and conservators might be encouraged by these supportive publications to engage in this accessible branch of light microscopy, promoting a stimulating form of primary research.

Polarised light microscopy (PLM) is described in the publication as 'perhaps the most widely applied analytical technique currently used for identification of historical pigments'. This could be so, but few of those professionals concerned directly with paint artefacts have the time or the resources for the routine identification of paint. Many conservators have been trained to use PLM, some in their initial training, others on short courses, and a number possess a polarising light microscope. Moreover, materials scientists, often employed by large institutions, can employ PLM, but they also have access to more sophisticated, and sometimes more secure means of analysis, such as EDX, Raman and XRF, which has often led to neglect of the simpler method, a situation Walter McCrone has lamented.⁸ Unless this type of microscopy is practised on a regular basis, the skill soon atrophies. So what is the motivation for a busy conservator to devote time to identifying pigments?

Partly it is the beauty of discovery itself. Polarising light microscopy is like scuba diving. Through the mask of the microscope, and amongst a myriad of common species, a rare and exotic fish suddenly becomes visible. Its colours and beauty dazzle the viewer, and, as the polars are crossed, its nature and identity is revealed. The microscopist, swimming

alone, is the first to see this pigment, is the first to know what was loaded on the painter's brush.

However, there are also sound technical reasons for exploring PLM: it is not simply a technique to use when the more sophisticated apparatus is unavailable, but one that will give vital information about a pigment that other instruments will not. The variation of colour within a pigment particle, or the range of shapes and sizes of the particles is invaluable information for any researcher – whether for pure research or for conservation purposes – and samples from paint rarely comprise only one pigment; so that mixtures can be readily discerned.

Certainly, easily identified pigments such as azurite, orpiment or dry-process vermilion, and the difference between green verditer and Emerald green remain unforgettable⁹, but numerous nineteenth-century yellows, or the characteristics of more rarely encountered pigments such as a cobalt violet or vivianite, are not as readily retained in the mind's eye. Optical Microscopy provides an essential aide-memoire in the beautifully presented photographs of a selection of just under two hundred historic pigments.

Alongside each set of photographs (in different lights and magnifications) is a concise summary of significant data with exemplary descriptions of particle characteristics, and, although an approximate notion of the dates of usage might have been usefully bracketed here, it does refer the reader to literature, which is then sensibly expanded in an appendix. For those unfamiliar with geological descriptions, a bookmark with terms, measurements and a chart of interference colours visible under crossed polars has been attached. Inclusion in the book itself might have been a sensible precaution since it is very likely to become detached from its cord during use of the book. However, the introduction includes a clearly articulated reminder of the key terms and procedures involved. Eastaugh and colleagues do not pretend that the PLM is infallible. Acknowledging that not all pigments can be unambiguously identified by this method alone, but estimating that a high percentage can be recognised, they advise the reader to build up their own reference collection, and a personal familiarity with pigments.

Excellent though this compendium is, it has, as already noted, a number of idiosyncrasies, and those readers employing it as a reference book on a regular basis, will have to come to terms with some navigational problems. The introduction explains the system of listing

as being ordered 'loosely' in colour groups. It might be assumed that, for example, when trying to identify an unknown blue, the starting point would be to investigate that group, but not all the blues occur together. How is comparative data to the unknown pigment obtained? The authors of this book dismiss the flow-chart as unreliable, and offer no explanation of the non-alphabetical order in which the pigment compounds have been presented here.

It would be, Eastaugh et al claim, 'absurd' to list the pigments according to their common names, which are admittedly problematic, but which are subjugated to such a degree that it is only by looking closely at the text of the pigment labelled 'Hexacyanoferrate(II) compounds [1]' that non-scientists remember that it is commonly known as 'Prussian blue'. Both compounds and common names are usefully listed at the back of this volume, (though in small type), and this essential path of access ought to have been given more prominence. Any historic pigment researcher, whether scientist or art historian, needs to be familiar with all the classification, both scientific and common. The extraordinary plethora of meticulously researched documentary information and nomenclature in the Dictionary indicates all the more clearly that the latter is both an important adjunct to Optical Microscopy and an independent source of reference in its own right.

These are the type of flaws that are bound to occur in such an ambitious and time-consuming project, which tries to reach out to a broad readership, and they do not belittle the extraordinary achievement of Eastaugh, Walsh, Chaplin, and Siddal. In these two volumes the authors have provided a springboard for those who, having learned the techniques of PLM, and being provided with an invaluable set of images for comparison purposes, might be persuaded to take the plunge again. The Dictionary will probably gain wider appeal as a key to unlock the door of serious pigment research, but both books will be an asset to any materials science, technical art history or conservation unit. It is clear that the authors' considerable achievement in producing a work of this quality and range should be both well-used and internationally appreciated.

Libby Sheldon and Sally Woodcock
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Not reviewed here is the alternative CD which offers a huge store of information about each of the many pigments stored on its database. Conservators and conservation scientists especially can use

this CD to enhance their work. The database works on numerous levels. It includes all the background information about each pigment: Basic data (composition, associations and notes); Morphology; PLM data – how pigment looks under microscope, essential for identification; Other data references including abstracts; Images – thumbnail and full size – giving text information of where the image is from searches can be refined down to the smallest detail, for example pigments can be identified by optical properties.

Butterworth Heinemann 2005
ISBN: 0-7506-4763-9
CD-ROM 52 pages

- 1 This was the title of a paper read by Professor J.D. Forbes before the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 1848 and published in the *Philosophical Magazine Series 3*, vol. 34, no. 228, March 1849.
- 2 Zerr, G. & Rubencamp, R., translated by Mayer, C., *A Treatise on Colour Manufacture*, 1908, from *Handbuch der Farbenfabrikation*, p. 73.
- 3 *Ibid.*
- 4 *Royal Society of Arts Journal*, Vol. LXIII, 18 December 1918, p. 93.
- 5 *Royal Society of Arts Journal*, Vol. LXXXIII, 15 February 1935, p. 312.
- 6 Richard Waller, 'A catalogue of simple and mixt colours', *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*, XVI, 1686.
- 7 Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language*, London, 1755.
- 8 Walter C. McCrone, 'Polarized Light Microscopy: a Personal Perspective', *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*, Vol. 33, no. 2, 1994, p. 101.
- 9 As Libby Sheldon first experienced on Peter MacTaggart's memorable training course in *Polarising Light Microscopy*.

CONFERENCES

ICOM-CC 14TH TRIENNIAL MEETING: 'OUR PAST – YOUR FUTURE'

THE HAGUE 12-16 SEPTEMBER 2005

I looked forward to this conference with great anticipation. I had the privilege to attend the Triennial Meetings in Lyon 1999 and Rio de Janeiro in 2002, and the impact they had on me and my work was fundamental. For readers who have never been to an ICOM-CC Meeting, I can tell you that it is a very special experience. Over 70 nations are represented, and though mostly from Western Europe and North America, many delegates come from other parts of the world. In all, we were over 900 participants. The Meeting is spread over five days including a half-day excursion; lectures and presentations in plenum for 3 half-days, and thereafter presentations of 166 papers in 22 different Working Groups (e.g. Preventive Conservation, Textiles, Theory and History of Conservation etc, see www.icom-cc.org for more information). Every lecture room has a box where interpreters are sitting, translating simultaneously to French, Spanish and English. You are given a head set if you need translation. It is a major event.

The theme of the plenary sessions was communication with the public. Stone conservator Simon Warrack gave a fascinating account of the local community's involvement in the decision-making of the conservation and restoration by Western conservators of a venerated statue of Buddha in Angkor, Cambodia. Similar examples of working with local communities were given by conservation professionals from Mexico and India – the Western concept of conservation cannot readily be translated to other parts of the world. In many communities, their cultural heritage is still very much in use in the form of religious symbols in temples or churches. Another thing that rocked my picture of the world, was when Professor Amaeswar Galla who when working in Vietnam, described those with whom he worked as veterans of the "American war". Of course. But I had to think a second or two before grasping that. Perhaps it is that sense of seeing things from a different viewpoint that I really appreciate about the ICOM-CC meetings. Having said that, in conversation with conservators from Chile, I realised that they have the same problems with their historic houses (we talked about the Pablo Neruda houses in particular) that we have in the National Trust for Scotland. And the Colombian conservator had the same problems trying to persuade management and staff about the risks from high light levels as I have. And so on.

In the Working Group sessions, Britain was very well represented with several papers from England and Scotland. I did not attend every one, of course, time did not allow for that since there were five simultaneous Working Group sessions. But, of the ones I went to, Helen Lloyd and her colleagues' research on dust was very interesting, as were the studies by May Cassar et al into the effects of climate change on the cultural heritage. The Modern Materials and Contemporary Art Working Group also had some extremely interesting presentations. These, and all other Working Group papers, are published in the pre-prints, available from the website listed above.

The theme on communication was followed up very well indeed with the Task Force on Public Engagement in Conservation, coordinated by Simon Cane. An outcome of what they have been doing, since they started in 2002, is the inclusion in tourist guidebooks, such as *Rough Guide*, *Lonely Planet* and *Michelin*, on conservation and good behaviour when visiting heritage sites.

If there are negative things to say about this ICOM-CC Meeting, the first will absolutely be the conference fee. I had to pay over £300 for the week, excluding hotel and travel and I would not have been able to make it without external grants. Another rather gloomy thought is that some British speakers spoke much too fast, not considering the interpreters and completely ignoring the fact that many participants had English as their second, third or even fourth language. Some also insisted on speaking without the microphone in the Q&A sessions, though they were perfectly aware that the interpreters could hear only through their headphones. It is thoughtless and excluding. There is also among some of the conservation scientists a kind of club mentality. An example: I heard references by the Chair during a Q&A session to Stephan Michalski of the Canadian Conservation Institute, as "the guy with the new haircut", not mentioning his name. That is perhaps funny and makes sense to people who know him, but to others it might be completely incomprehensible. Perhaps I am exaggerating, but inclusion and communication was the big theme at this conference and if we cannot be clear enough in our communication to each other, how on earth shall we be able to communicate with the public?

There is still no news on where the Triennial Meeting 2008 will take place. The last words of the new Board were that it will take place '...somewhere outside Europe'.

Lisa Nilsen National Trust for Scotland
With grateful acknowledgements to Historic Scotland Conservation Bureau, ICOM-UK and The June Baker Trust

2ND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE CONSERVATION OF THE GROTTOS OF THE SILK ROAD.

Organised by the Getty Conservation Institute and the Dunhuang Academy.

June 28 2004 saw the beginning of a week-long conference on the conservation of ancient sites on the Silk Road, held in the Dunhuang Academy at Mogao, in north west China. The cave temples of Mogao, situated near the old Silk Road oasis of Dunhuang, are on the southern border of the Gobi desert, where the north and south routes of the Silk Road meet. The joint conference was followed by a ten-day tour in and around Kuqa, Urumqi and Turpan in Xinjiang province, visiting some of the grotto sites around the northern perimeter of the Taklamakan desert.

For most people in the UK the term 'grotto' is a bit of a misnomer, conjuring up as it does a vision of a folly in an eighteenth century garden. The Grottoes of the Silk Road are actually temples consisting of a well proportioned room, or series of interlinked rooms, carved into the hillside. The walls are usually finished with a form of mud render and a coat of chalk distemper or limewash, richly decorated with highly sophisticated paintings. Many of the grottoes contain statues of Buddha attended by bodhisattvas and temple guardians; some of the statues have been damaged in the past, which allows one to see the construction. The statues were sculpted in a mud daub over an armature of wooden sticks and bundles of reeds or grass, coated with a lime or chalk ground and then painted. Most of these grottoes

date from the fourth to the fourteenth centuries AD. The ones at Mogao¹ have been dated by documents from a cave sealed in the fourteenth century, discovered and opened in 1900.

The Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) and the State Bureau of Cultural Relics of the People's Republic of China's Ministry of Culture first began exploring the possibility of collaboration in 1986. In September 1988 they formed a team to examine the sites and their problems and to discuss a conservation programme. This initial collaboration was supported by UNESCO and an agreement was signed in 1989 to initiate a three phase conservation programme, which began in 1990 and resulted in the first international conference held at Mogao in 1993. The collaboration has continued and was supposed to have culminated in a second international conference in June 2003. However, the outbreak of SARS necessitated its postponement until July 2004.

The week of the conference saw over 80 papers given by experts from 18 countries with subjects covering: conservation principles, practice, and training; scientific research in conservation, with a particular focus on deterioration processes; recording and historical research and issues affecting site and visitor management².

The dominant themes of the conference were: the progress made during the last 10 years' with site sand control, comprehensive environmental and visitor capacity monitoring and advances in conservation treatment, with particular emphasis being placed upon the work in Cave 85; a set of guidelines developed by

the Chinese authorities with assistance from the GCI and the Australia Heritage Commission entitled 'Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China' usually referred to as the 'The China Principles'.

The importance of community involvement and the need to carefully balance the influx of international involvement with enabling local communities to take responsibility for the conservation and management of their own heritage was emphasised in papers given by representatives of UNESCO.

A number of the caves at Mogao were opened for us to visit in small groups, at intervals, during the conference, but unfortunately there was a strict 'No Photography' rule apart from in the two caves where conservation work was underway. These were caves 85 and 29 where the lower metre of paintings were lost when the river Daquan flooded in the past (there is now a barrier to prevent further flooding). In these caves the combination of soluble salts deposited by the flood waters and salts that have permeated through the bedrock have been causing both the mud plaster and the paint surface to delaminate. We saw the monitoring of environmental effects on test samples of different mud mortars in cave 29, a ninth century, late Tang dynasty grotto, renovated in the Western Xia (1038 – 1227) and again in the Qing dynasty (1644 – 1911); and conservation of the wall paintings in cave 85, a Tang-dynasty grotto commissioned by Zhai Farong in 862 and renovated in the tenth and thirteenth centuries and again in the Qing dynasty. This conservation is currently being undertaken by a combined Getty Institute

Delegates were given a description of the scientific investigations and conservation trials to date that had been carried out in Cave 29, Mogao



A detail from the side wall of Cave 85, Mogao





A document from the Library Cave, Mogao being treated in the conservation department of the National Library of China in Beijing

and Dunhuang Academy team.

The afternoon of the second day saw ten papers given by members of the team involved in the conservation of cave 85, who described the scientific investigations, conclusions, treatment and recording carried out to date. The first intervention by the Dunhuang Academy in cave 85 took place in the 1950s when large plaster losses at the base of the walls, towards the back of the cave, were filled. Further treatment in the 1970s involved the application of polyvinyl alcohol and polyvinyl acetate to the flaking wall paintings. Plaster losses and

flaking of the paint continued, resulting in this cave being chosen for the collaborative case study.

Pigment analysis has found azurite, malachite, atacamite, red lead, cinnabar, iron oxide, lead white, orpiment, carbon black and a blackened lead pigment. As well as a number of organic colours, used both as paint and as glazes – of these, only lac has so far been identified. Most of the binding media used was apparently a 'standard glue' though a number of different gums were also used.

Considerable research was made into finding a suitable lightweight adhesive grout and plaster for repairing the substrate. They found that the 'plaster' in cave 85 consisted of 36% sand, 45% silt and 19% clay, yet the local river mud had only 1% sand, 71% silt and 28% clay. Eighty different mixtures were tested, the results tabulated and grafted before choosing the one that is now being used, which consists of: washed and finely crushed river mud, glass micro spheres, sieved pumice and whisked egg white. In order to avoid staining and to reduce the soluble salts, absorbent layers in presses are applied to the surface after grouting. Over a 3–4 week period these drying layers are changed and analysed to assess the salt reduction.

We heard a number of fascinating papers on conservation work being carried out in other parts of China. Particular interest was the contribution by a conservator from Munich, describing the successful lifting (using cyclododecan – an evaporating wax) of sheets of excavated body-armour,

consisting of a series of small stone plates linked by (fully corroded) copper links. This type of body armour is the same as that represented in the armour worn by the soldiers of the 'Terracotta Army'. Her colleague's paper described the conservation of polychromy on the Terracotta Army soldiers using electron beam polymerization of methacrylic monomers. The armour had two layers of lacquer, of which the upper, brown layer, had discoloured to a virtual black. As the newly excavated figures dried out, the moisture sensitive lacquer curled and flaked away. Conservation was carried out in a climate box using acrylic monomers which are water miscible, while the blackened upper layer of lacquer prevents the u.v light passing through and damaging the pigments beneath.

One paper covered trials using different laser wavelengths for the removal of soot from the paintings. The conclusion was: in general it was an unsuitable method of cleaning for wall paintings but of particular interest was the fact that red lead which had discoloured during cleaning reverted to its original colour a few weeks later.

There were a number of papers on different methods for recording wall paintings, such as accurately drawn, coloured copies (a reproduction of one of the Mogao caves was recently exhibited in the British Library 'Silk Road' exhibition); 3D laser scanning; the CRISATEL system for high-resolution, multispectral imaging, and photographs taken by cameras mounted on scaffold towers which ran on 'railway' type tracks.

A completely different sort of conservation problem was presented on the conservation of the Baiheliang (White Crane Ridge) in the Yangtze River near Fuling City. Along a 45 metre, normally submerged, stone ridge, low-water level years have been recorded since 763 BC, with inscriptions, poems and beautifully carved fish recording particularly low levels. The inscription on a stone erected in the river in the ninth century states 'No. 1 Ancient Hygrometric Station in the World'. When the water level of the Three Gorges Dam rises to 145 meters in the summer of 2006 both this stone and the ridge will be completely submerged. The speaker described the installation of a concrete-shell shelter to cover the stone ridge, with a filtration system to remove mud from the river water inside the shelter and, a mainly glass, underwater viewing tunnel within the shelter, all of which is due to be completed by the summer of 2006.

The Dunhuang Academy used the conference to announce a joint initiative with Lanzhou University to begin a new three-year Masters degree in wall painting conservation beginning in autumn 2005 with support and collaboration from both the Getty Conservation Institute and the Courtauld Institute of Art.

On the penultimate evening of the conference we were all taken to The Crescent Lake where some of the delegates seized the opportunity to ride on camels and slide down the sand dunes, while their more sedate colleagues walked by the lake

A newly constructed poplar wood walkway gives access to the Tuyuk Grottoes



and headed for the nearest bar.

Although the conference and post conference tour provided a great and much appreciated opportunity for informal meetings and discussions with conservators, curators, art historians and conservation organisers/managers (such as representatives of UNESCO and the Getty) from 18 different countries, there were disappointingly few opportunities to meet Chinese conservators even during the post conference tour when most of the Chinese travelled in a separate bus and seemed to have different accommodation arrangements. However, a number of international friendships were formed. One of the fruits of the conference emerged from discussions on the desirability of being able to inspect and record wall paintings from ground level, without a scaffold. Since returning to England the authors have been experimenting with a new technique in which high resolution images, of small areas of a wall painting, are taken from ground level, using a Meade telescope fitted with a digital camera. A mosaic of these images is then stitched together to provide a very detailed picture of the condition of the painting. Although still in the early stages of development these experiments have produced some exciting and very promising results. Further information will be forthcoming shortly.

Ann Ballantyne Mediaeval wall paintings conservator and *Haida Liang* Scientist, Nottingham Trent University

A companion piece describing the post-conference tour, including numerous colour images depicting the natural and artistic wonders of China, can be seen on the Section website

¹ Mogao has a 2 kilometre cliff with 492 caves, which contain 45,000 square meters of wall paintings and 2,415 stucco images of the Buddha and Bodhistvas.

² See journal review: Gowing, Robert. 2005. *Conservation & Management of Archeological Sites*, Vol. 7, No. 2. James & James (Science Publishers) Ltd. pp.117–124. The conference proceedings are expected to be published in the near future by the Getty Institute

MOUNTING AND HOUSING ART ON PAPER FOR STORAGE AND DISPLAY: HISTORY, SCIENCE AND PRESENT DAY PRACTICE

British Museum 19–20 May 2005

The British Museum was at the forefront of the development of 'museum style' mounting, with the introduction of the 'sunk' mount in the mid nineteenth century, which replaced earlier ways of mounting in albums and on loose sheets of paper. With this valuable contribution to the advancement of the display and care of paper artworks, it is fitting that the museum organised and hosted the mounting and housing of art on paper conference which took place in May. Conference delegates and contributors travelled from all over the world to attend the two day event and the Scottish conservation contingent was well



copyright British Museum

Judith Rayner opening the conference

represented.

For two days the packed audience in the BP auditorium of the Clore Centre was treated to presentations about the significance of mounting in the historical study of prints and drawings, the preventive care of paper artefacts and the management of paper collections. With presentations, poster displays in the Sackler Rooms and a trade fair the conference was concentrated, informative and very interesting. A range of problems and solutions for dealing with art works were addressed through various case studies presented in both talks and posters. The presentations covered work in tropical climates, permanent display in historic houses, digital artwork and modern installations with no obvious mounting. Contributors also discussed past experiences of and possible future developments in the use of mounting systems to create micro-environments for objects.

A beautiful exhibition, held in the Prints and Drawings Gallery, was specially arranged for the delegates to the conference to coincide with the drinks reception after the first day of presentations. The display of a range of artworks on paper from the Museum's

Department of Prints and Drawings and Department of Asia illustrated a wide variety of historical and contemporary mounting practices.

Included in the exhibition were mounting styles of European collectors up to the mid-nineteenth century, European artists' mounts (focusing mainly on those of British artists from c.1730 to 1830), historical



Alan Donnithorne talking to colleagues during the display of mounting in the British Museum Print Room

Bridget Leach next to papyri mounts with Alice Rugheimer, David Giles and Bryan Clarke in the background





Hugh Phibbs looking at historical mounts

mounting styles for prints, Islamic and Far-eastern mounting methods and British Museum mounting – including historical methods and styles as well as contemporary styles including papyri. The reception as well as the breaks throughout the conference enabled delegates to mingle and exchange ideas and information and added to the overall success of the event.

The conference pre-prints are entitled 'Art on Paper, Mounting and Housing' (published by Archetype in association with the British Museum ISBN 1-873132-99-9), and contain 31 well illustrated articles produced for the conference either as presentations or as poster displays. The pre-prints, which were generously provided to all delegates, give detailed information consolidating the information presented over the two days. The preface describes the publication as a follow up to the comprehensive 'Conservation Mounting for Prints and Drawings: A Manual Based on Current Practice at the British Museum' by one of the conference organisers, Joanna Kosek. Both of these publications are vital for any conservation studio which treats art on paper.

Erica Kotze

A list of the presentations and the poster displays will appear on the website

'DELIVERING COLLECTION CARE NATIONWIDE'

Tate Britain 19 April 2005

This report from the Care of Collections Group continues a series begun in the Group's previous newsletter. It summarises sessions from the Group's Annual Meeting which aimed to provide an overview of the impact of Renaissance in the Regions and other collections care initiatives in the museum, library and archive sectors in the UK. The sessions recorded below took a broader look at what is going on in organisations other than museum hubs. Further summaries will follow, including coverage of the position in Scotland and Wales.

English Heritage collections management strategy 2005-2010

Over the past two years, English Heritage (EH) has been undergoing a modernisation programme that has resulted in the formation of curatorial and collections management teams. The latter is an amalgamation of the collections care team, easel painting studio, registrar, and collections technicians. The ultimate purpose of the reorganisation is to enable curators to focus on improving the presentation of sites and access to collections. The collections management strategy, developed through a process of consultation, outlines priorities for the next five years within a framework of long-term aims, objectives and targets.

Collections management at EH is defined as an activity which enables the long-term display and conservation of objects. It is undertaken by the collections management and curatorial teams, with support from all staff involved with EH's sites. English Heritage is responsible for a vast range of collections from fine art to archaeology. They are located in 131 sites including large and small historic properties, purpose-built museums, and stores. EH's duty of care also extends beyond our properties and collections to enabling and supporting others to conserve the heritage environment.

The collections management strategy is divided into five areas, each with the overall aims listed below.

- Research: to characterise the risks that are specific to collections displayed in context, and to develop holistic strategies to minimise them.
- Collections care: to communicate, achieve and maintain realistic standards of collections care at all historic properties and stores, working with all stakeholders.
- Conservation and restoration: to

increase the long-term stability of, and access to, collections through professional standards of practical conservation and restoration.

- Documentation: to maintain accurate information about all the collections, and provide appropriate access to them for staff, researchers and the public.
- Skills development: to develop at all levels a sense of pride, responsibility, skills and confidence to achieve realistic standards of collections care.

The strategic priorities for the next five years are:

- Research:
 - ▷ Deliver the collections management research strategy
 - ▷ Complete the national collections risk and condition audit
- Collections care:
 - ▷ Publish performance standards
 - ▷ Deliver EH's stores strategy
 - ▷ Improve disaster salvage preparedness
 - ▷ Put hospitality on a sustainable footing
 - ▷ Support delivery of presentation projects
- Conservation and Restoration
 - ▷ Open the collections conservation studio
 - ▷ Develop a prioritised national collections conservation programme.
- Documentation
 - ▷ Reduce the inventory backlog
 - ▷ Achieve museums accreditation
- Skills development
 - ▷ Deliver and develop the EH/UCL 'Safeguarding Historic Collections' short course programme
 - ▷ Develop an interactive 'Collections care' programme CD-Rom.

Existing resources within the curatorial and collections management teams will be used to deliver this strategy with ongoing support from site teams. The appointment of territory conservators and the centralisation of collections care assistants (formerly historic contents cleaners) will help to establish realistic collections management standards on the ground.

Curatorial and collections management budgets are now prioritised centrally by the Head Curator and Head of Collections Management which has encouraged more effective targeting of limited financial resources. By 2010 the benefits of following this strategy will be evident through the following achievements:

- Physical and intellectual access to more objects at sites and stores
- Curators able to spend more time on research and access campaigns
- Reasonable collections care standards at all 76 sites and stores with significant collections
- Museums Accreditation for at least 32 properties
- Completion of the collections risk and condition audit for 131 sites, resulting in national, territory and site action plans adopted by all stakeholders and progress measured on an annual basis
- Every object accurately recorded on the heritage objects management system
- Disaster salvage planning established at 76 sites
- Effective collections care practices at 'heritage hospitality' properties
- Greater understanding of the factors that reduce the natural ageing of objects
- Objects conserved and restored to professional standards.

The ultimate measure of success is that all staff involved with historic properties are actively engaged in developing and delivering sustainable solutions to collections management.

Amber Xavier-Rowe, Head of Collections Management, English Heritage

The National Trust: Collections Care Progress and Opportunities

The National Trust has changed significantly in recent years and, along with external changes such as Renaissance in the Regions, this has resulted in a number of developments.

A staff structure review in the early 2000s created a number of new conservation posts, with 40 conservators supplemented by about 16 freelance material-specific conservation advisers. There is now more opportunity for cross-section working and more awareness that all staff have a role to play in collections care. Assistant Conservator and Assistant Curator posts were introduced as training posts.

Museums Accreditation: About 150 of our properties are registered as museums under the former Museums Registration Scheme. The NT welcomed the fact that certain basic elements of Benchmarks for Collections Care remain in the published standard for Accreditation. A Preventive Conservation Audit is being developed internally to meet the specific requirements of the historic house museum, incorporating the Accreditation requirements.

Renaissance in the Region and Regional Agencies: The impact of Renaissance on Trust properties varies considerably. In the West Midlands staff have benefited from various courses through Renaissance at Work (RAW). They are a great opportunity not just to learn, but also to meet people from other organisations. Staff are also benefiting from the Skills Training.

In the North East, where close links with the regional agency have always existed, meetings will be held to explore options for Disaster Preparedness, and NT staff are tapping into curatorial expertise, eg., for geology collections. In some regions grants have been awarded through the Small Grants Scheme, and have included funding for projects such as large metal storage cabinets for Cherryburn, and environmental monitoring equipment for Ormesby. In Northern Ireland grants awarded by the Museums Council have been an important source of funding for the four registered properties, and have included the 3rd year of a textile curator's post at Springhill.

Collections Conservation Prioritisation and Condition Surveys/Remedial treatment: Our collections are vast and several years ago the conservation backlog was estimated at £millions. In 2002 a general project fund was created to address the problem. There has been a rigorous internal process for applying for these funds, with projects scored from 1–4 on 13 criteria, such as stability, importance and public benefit.

10% of the money allocated each year has been awarded for surveys to identify priorities for remedial conservation. Large preventive conservation projects include the work at Snowhill: structural repairs and the installation of updated fire, security and environmental control systems.

The Manual of Housekeeping: The Trust has always invested in preventive conservation programmes through investing in the environment and training house staff in conservation-approved methods. Both the internal staff and the external advisers have been producing a completely new version. It will be the main source of reference for Trust property staff and will benefit the profession as a whole.

Partnerships: Although we are becoming more outward-looking, it is also important to retain what is good about the National Trust. Partnerships through research projects have gone on for a number of years and these include: The Dust Project, COCCINELLA, MASTER and others. The research findings will benefit the wider profession. Some have been funded through the Leverhulme and others through the EU program. A new Collections Management System is being developed for the Royal Collection and the National

Trust in partnership, due to be completed in January 2006.

Disaster Preparedness: the Trust's Emergency Manual has been updated and, reflecting a more outward-reaching environment, states that properties can explore links with local heritage organisations. There are great opportunities here for mutual support, shared personnel and expertise, shared training, sharing of equipment in a dire emergency, and temporary storage space for contents that have been salvaged. Again early days, but something we would very much wish to be part of.

Specialist Networks: we welcome this concept, both within the hubs, and as identified in the Museums' Association's consultation paper: Collecting in the Future, and DCMS's Understanding the Future: Museums and 21st Century Life. The Value of Museums. We would like to contribute to the networks, and the advisory (Hubcaps) groups, capacity permitting. We welcome the emphasis on training and international links in DCMS's consultation paper, and look forward to working closely with others in the further development of collections care.

Fiona Macalister, Preventive Conservation Adviser – Technical, National Trust

VISITS

BIRMINGHAM MUSEUM & ART GALLERY STORAGE FACILITIES

In September 2004, a group of 16 Care of Collections Forum members visited the collections' storage facilities of the past, present and future at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery (BM&AG). We saw premises that will soon be a distant memory, areas that will continue to be in use for an as yet unspecified time, and, in an uplifting end to the day, the future location of storage at the recently acquired and newly extended Museum Collection Centre at Duddeston.

Charlotte Street offsite store

We were met at the main museum building by Jane Thompson-Webb, who took us on a short walk to the offsite store at Charlotte Street, where Deborah Cane showed us round. This store is a former print works in a conventional light-industrial building. Its problems are myriad – unheated and poorly weather-sealed, with a range of pests including clothes moth, carpet beetle and furniture beetle, it is an unsympathetic environment for the storage of museum collections. Unreliable electrics have added to its inconvenience as a place of work. But anyone looking for inspiration to give their collections a brighter future would find it here.

Deborah explained that work had been going on for about six months to vacate the store once and for all. Collections are being moved as economically as possible, only using archival materials next to the surface of the objects themselves and relying on polythene film and cardboard boxes to provide basic outer packaging. Bubble pads and tissue snowballs have been used widely to support objects in their cartons, being cheaper than Cellaire and Plastazote. Deborah agreed that this was not ideal, but emphasised that the budget demanded it and that objects were currently expected to be contained in this packaging for a maximum of 18 months, by which time the unpacking phase at the Museum Collection Centre should be completed.

The packing is being done by a small team of between two and seven casual packers, trained by Deborah and Jane, who work in bursts according to how quickly stages in the project move ahead. We were told that students from museum and gallery Diploma and MA courses have been a good source of labour but that naturally they need supervision. Jane, and later Deborah, had to be in constant attendance during packing phases, both to demonstrate packing methods for different types of collection and to maintain a sense of

urgency. On this last point, it is clearly crucial to have someone with a sense of personal ownership of the project to be present throughout. We heard that there are also times when novice staff, who can be inordinately willing, have to be reminded that manual handling guidelines must be observed or that this or that task needs a specific risk assessment. Deborah noted wryly that in a building like Charlotte Street it was sometimes a challenge to avoid turning risk assessments into an epic.

Decanting the collections from the store has been, and continues to be, something of a trial. The ambitious target had been to complete the job on a budget of £80,000. This was subsequently cut by half but will hopefully be increased again following a budget discussion. It is an understatement to say that the situation called for ingenuity in maximising the value of available resources. Attempts to save money have included shopping around for low prices, single-sourcing a range of products in order to negotiate a discount, using archival materials sparingly, and even re-selling used cartons and stillages for recycling. The shortage of time and funds has meant foregoing certain activities that should, perhaps, have been an automatic part of the project. For instance, although documentation is being reviewed as the team goes along, there is no time to check the condition of, and photograph, each object – the exception being objects discovered and accessioned as the packers worked. Frustratingly for Jane and Deborah, this means that a systematic trawl through the collections, gathering information for management purposes and potentially for online collections access for the public, will have to wait for a separate funding opportunity when it could have been combined with the current process.

We heard about other instances where the decanting process has exposed an unforeseen need for funds and the importance of having a strategy for dealing with them. One example is the Hardman Archive of drawings for stained glass windows, which, having survived in the face of fire, flood and skip, is now recognised as needing major project sponsorship to pay for full documentation and conservation.

BM&AG basement stores

Jane then took us back to the main museum, explaining on the way that the Council House extension in which it is housed was not designed as a museum. This resulted in backstage activities like storage and conservation being carried out in whatever spaces were available. The basement store rooms have high ceilings – in the Egyptology and social history stores

we saw static open racking over 3m high, with short runs fitted quite tightly into the floor area. Retrieving objects from the higher shelves must be quite tricky. To add to the difficulties of access, the parquet floors in this part of the building are lifting and have become uneven because of earlier instances of flooding that caused the blocks to swell.

The objects were stored in various ways, – some in solanders, some unwrapped pieces on shelves with localised bubblewrap or Plastazote cushioning, and many in boxes tailor-made from folded Artcore. We also saw some large static screens made on-site out of heavy-duty pallet-racking end-frames with sheets of mesh attached by wire threaded through the perforations. These support framed prints and other two-dimensional items. A locally made wooden storage cupboard called a Gupwell cabinet is also widely used: it has a lockable and fully removable front panel, and slim drawers which have to be opened carefully as they lack safety stops.

While a lot of time and energy could have been expended on raising the standard of storage in these rooms, the process began after our visit on decanting these collections to the Museum Collection Centre.

Museum Collection Centre

After lunch we caught the train to the Museum Collection Centre at Duddeston, a couple of stops from New Street station. The centre is situated in a busy industrial estate, and had previously been the council's stationery and general store. It consists of a block containing a reception, waiting room, and some storage over two floors, that adjoins a huge single-space warehouse with a floor area of about 3,060m² and headroom of 20 metres.

The waiting room in the side block, together with the lift in reception, reflect BM&AG's intention to offer some form of public access here, although plans have not yet been finalised. A ground floor textile store is almost ready for handover, while above it a high-security metals store is already in use. This has new plan chests and wall-mounted racking supplied by Museum Polstore; Jane would be happy to talk to other potential museum customers about the details of the contract. The plan chest drawers have low-density Plastazote linings. Heating is delivered to this room, but without humidity control, a strategy that is likely to result in drier-than-normal conditions appropriate for the type of collection. But a lot of dust had drifted into this room from the work going on below, indicating a need for better exclusion strips around the door.

Jane explained that the main warehouse had been given over to storing the contents of the former Museum of Science and Industry which was taken out of service in the mid-1990s. This collection is held in pre-existing VNA (very narrow aisle) racking which takes up the full height of the space and occupies about 60 per cent of its floor area. Access is provided by a pair of man-up VNA fork trucks, one of which came with the building, the other a refurbished model which was purchased. This type of truck is painfully expensive at around £60,000, depending on the specification. The weight of objects to be lifted and the height of lift required are defining factors in using this equipment. Very large objects are stored at ground level for ease of access, whilst interesting or aesthetically pleasing objects have been placed on the first or second levels where they are most visible. Shelf heights can be adjusted, but this is avoided as far as possible because above two metres there are health and safety issues to be considered and it is recommended that contractors are used for the task, which can be costly. In general, shelf heights are continuous for each whole of each run.

The store gets some daylight, as well as light from standard pot-type downlighters; emergency lighting is provided by wall-mounted, battery-powered light fittings. Heating is via ceiling ducts from four suspended gas-driven units which are effective in reducing humidity. A Hanwell system records conditions, although the sensors are not linked to a building management system.

A new extension has been built alongside the main warehouse, with a footprint of about 90 by 22 metres and three storeys with ceiling heights of 4.2 metres, 3.2 metres, and 2.8 metres (on the top floor). The floors look spectacularly strong, much stronger than the 5kN/m² that architects try to persuade museums to accept in all parts of their buildings – this is a real achievement. They were formed by pouring concrete into metal trays, as is common practice in warehouse construction, but the supporting steel beams are much deeper and occur more frequently in the standard 7.2m grid than usual. Beams and columns are coated in intumescent paint with an overcoat in an eye-catching yellow which may help to reduce collisions as goods are moved around. An opening will be made through the dividing wall so that a fork-truck in the main warehouse can present a load directly to the upper floors of the extension.

This project was funded entirely from a percentage of the capital receipts from the sale of the site of the former Museum of Science and Industry for redevelopment –

an unusual approach given the current predominance of lottery-funding. The concept for the Museum Collection Centre has evolved throughout the project. Where once it was to be a store for only a part of BM&AG's collections, it is now visualised as the main store and will be accessible to the public. BM&AG is currently developing an operational plan for the site to make this a reality.

David Goodwin Museum storage consultant

VINDOLANDA AND DURHAM Archaeology Group Visit 10-11 July 2005

On Sunday 10 July a select group of die-hard archaeology group members met in a beautifully sunny car park in Vindolanda for an interesting tour of the current excavation and talk about the conservation work by the Vindolanda Trust. The visit started with a discussion, from Andrew Birley, of the excavations past and present. This enabled us to get a better understanding of the site and where the objects have been coming from. We were also shown some examples of artefacts recently excavated. We then had time to explore the camp for ourselves, an opportunity to wander through the rooms and buildings of the old camp, and to get a feel for the place.

At the museum Barbara Birley talked about the conservation of the objects found during the excavation season. Vindolanda has many objects discovered in an excellent state of preservation, due to anoxic deposits. It is also unusual, in that it is a private Trust and has a dedicated onsite conservation section, responsible solely for artefacts from the site. As a result it is possible to treat all objects from one season before the next starts. Although members of the section had questions about some of the treatments chosen, it was hard to ignore the advantages of this dedicated service.

The next stop, after a short detour, was the Roman Army Museum. This was an interesting chance to see how some of the finds from Vindolanda and other sites have been used to illustrate life in the Roman army.

Monday morning saw a gathering in the Archaeology Department in Durham. During the course of the morning we heard an interesting talk from Jenny Jones about her work with armour from Carlisle; Clare Hucklesby spoke about her research on the anthropology of conservation and value hypotheses, and Chris Caple brought us up to date with the current situation with regard to in-situ preservation.

The head of the Department of Archaeology Dr Graham Philip then

enlightened us as to the reasoning behind Durham University's interesting choice to close the conservation MA, reasons found not to be entirely satisfactory by many. Graham explained the draft strategy for the Russell Group universities which concentrates on two main points; research of excellence and creating a sustainable institution. The university is being asked to provide profitable teaching and to be research generating. The conservation course at Durham was considered insupportable on economic grounds, with a high input of staff and facilities. In the past this type of cost could be absorbed, but today there is pressure to increase fees or reduce the level of training.

A discussion then followed on the provision of conservation training in the UK. The section was lucky to have Janey Cronyn, one of the founders of the Durham course present. She admitted that teaching conservation has always been costly, and suggested that bursary schemes may be a way of funding future training such as those at the Textile Conservation Centre. However these schemes can be expensive to set up. It was suggested that central conservation institutes might work better at attracting funding. It was recognised that different UK courses have differing views on how teaching should be structured. One idea was to have a basic skills undergraduate course together with apprenticeship schemes, with possible HLF funding in order to gain the relevant experience.

Research provision was discussed, and it was recognised that there is no shortage of topics for research, with a large wish list at Durham alone. However research needs large amounts of money to fund it. Perhaps a larger conservation training institution would more likely to attract money for such work. It was concluded that the archaeology group needs to focus on solving one or two major issues in this time of increased pressure and change.

Antonia Craster Archaeology Group Committee Member

In practice

A PRAGMATIC SOLUTION TO PACKING TEXTILES

Conservators from the Museum of London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (LAARC) and AMTeC Co-op Ltd describe an improved method of packing archaeological textiles for long-term storage.

The project to bring the collection at the LAARC up to a good basic standard of packaging has given archive staff the opportunity to evaluate past and current materials and methods (Lanyon and Langfeldt, 2003). The packaging systems for most types of materials have proven to be successful, but a new solution was needed for packing archaeological textiles. A number of different systems for packing textiles have been used over the years but none have proved to be entirely successful.

While working on similar textiles, Dana Goodburn-Brown of AMTeC proposed a new method which archaeological conservators at the Museum of London tested on a large group of textiles of varying sizes and types. The collaboration has led to a solution that is simple, inexpensive and relatively quick to achieve.

Past methods: The benefits and drawbacks of the past methods of textile packaging at the Museum are outlined in Table 1.

New method: The new method involves using card covered with a cloth support that has a 'nap' (eg brushed cotton) to gently hold the textile fragments in position (as described in Peacock and Griffin 1998). Netting is used to hold the fragments in place (see diagrams and image).

In Peacock and Griffin, most of the mounted fragments are stored in individual clear crystal (polystyrene) boxes. With space at a premium, it was felt that for most of the Museum's textiles, the mounted textiles could be stored in polyethylene bags rather than in individual clear boxes. Crystal boxes come in a limited range of sizes and cannot be modified to fit the textile, while polyethylene can be cut and heat-sealed to the exact size.

This is described in detail below:

- Machine wash the brushed cotton and netting (without detergents) so that surface finishes are removed. Tumble drying will remove loose lint from the cotton.
- Cut acid free card or acid free blotting paper to size of the bag, allowing at least 1cm around the textile fragment.

Packing method	Advantages	Disadvantages
Acid free cardboard frames (eg window mount) with the textiles resting inside the frame. Inside a Melinex (polyester) sleeve.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose made cardboard cut-out, no pressure on textile from overlying plastic • Easily accessible, can be seen through the Melinex 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Static electricity from the Melinex • Must be stored flat and handled with care, otherwise the textile may slip out of the frame • Time-consuming
Loose in crystal (polystyrene) boxes, or on a layer of tissue in the crystal box	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a rigid support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Might be crushed by lid • Static electricity from crystal box • Large clear shallow boxes not available • Boxes take up more space
Wrapped in acid free tissue in polyethylene bag	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A fast method 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not visible through bag • Might be crushed
Sealed in Melinex, with airing holes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A fast method 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Static electricity • Lack of support for large pieces
Card or blotting paper support in polyethylene bag	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A fast method 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Falls into the lowest corner and may not lie flat

Table 1 Packing textiles at the Museum of London: past methods

- Cover card with brushed cotton, staple or sew it to a tight fit. Note: if using staples, Monel (rustproof) staples should be used when in direct contact with the archaeological textile.
- Cut netting larger than the card backing in one direction and cut holes for the cotton tape.
- Place textile fragment directly on the brushed cotton and cover with the netting, tying the back with cotton tape. Note: for thick textile fragments or textiles with projecting details/attachments, cut polyethylene foam strips to fit the sides. Cut a slit into the foam (see

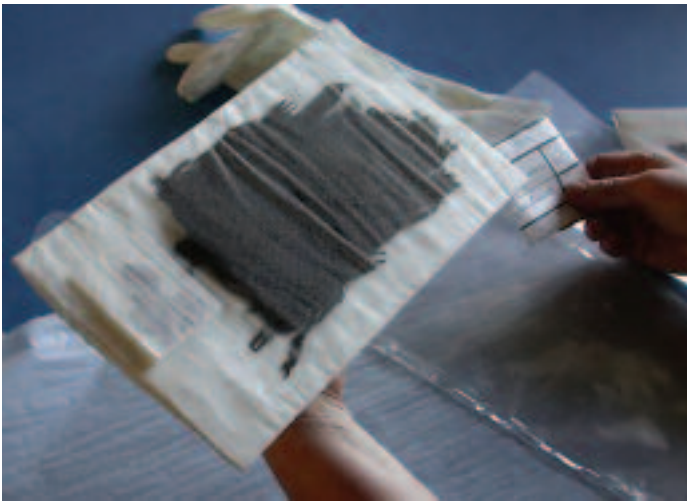


diagram b) and slot this onto the side of the covered card.

- Place the 'package' in a perforated polyethylene bag and staple shut

One advantage of this method is that the textile fragment can be turned over easily. This textile packing method has also been used for large and degraded pieces of leather.

The new method does take longer than some of the previous methods; however the method gives support and accessibility using relatively inexpensive materials and with only a slight increase in time. We welcome any comments and suggestions to improve the method.

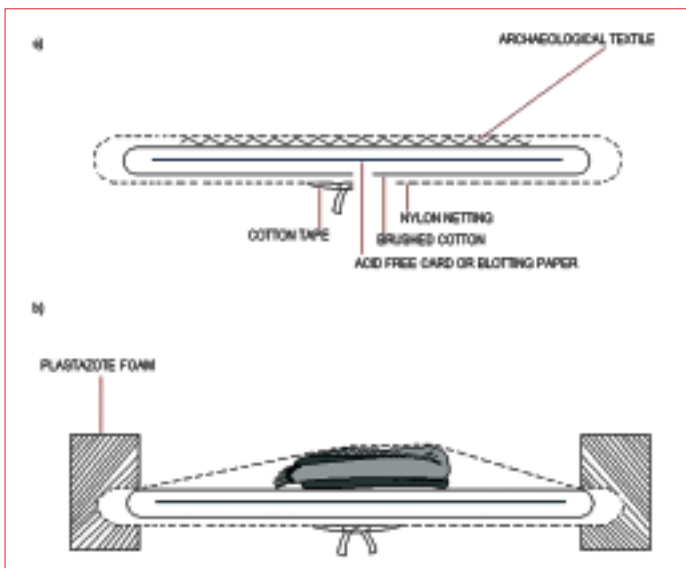
Dana Goodburn-Brown, AMTeC Co-op Ltd,
amtec@adept.co.uk

Jannicke Langfeldt, LAARC, now at the Science Museum,
Jannicke.Langfeldt@NMSI.ac.uk

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<http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/laarc>

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Acknowledgements: Many thanks to staff at the Museum of London and Odette Nelson, long-term volunteer at the LAARC, for comments on the text; also thanks to Jack Davidson for the illustration and Dan Nesbitt for the photograph.

EVIDENCE-BASED COLLECTIONS CARE AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

A New Focus

A new approach to conservation and preservation is now being developed at The National Archives (TNA) following a comprehensive review of its conservation-related activities. Under director Mario Aleppo, the re-named Department of Collections Care has adopted a more holistic and outward-looking view of its role. The introduction of evidence-based collections care will reflect a shift away from a single-item based approach, towards life-cycle management of the collections from the creation of a document onwards.

Underpinning the new approach will be a focused programme of research designed to provide credible evidence supporting decision-making at all stages. Nancy Bell, Head of Conservation Research, and Anna Bülow, Head of Preservation, have reviewed the range of current preservation, conservation and conservation research activities, and secured agreement from TNA top management to an integrated strategy up to 2007.

The context for the conservation research programme is the national research agenda for libraries and archives in the UK, Future Life of Collections, which sets priorities for research into the preservation of archive and library collections over the next five years. The research programme is geared to the particular needs and strengths of TNA's own collections and includes plans for projects aimed at predicting the long-term stability of the materials in its care. Better understanding of modern archival materials will be a primary focus. It is hoped that the results of research projects now in planning will be relevant not only to the in-house collections, but also to other paper-based collections.

Collection Profiling

Collection profiling is seen as an essential first step towards a framework for collections care planning, as detailed profiles will enable priorities to be set for preservation and conservation within the collections. The first to be profiled is the photographic collection. It is estimated that TNA holds five to eight million

photographs scattered throughout its vast record holdings, including many that document historic events. Major British photographers such as Emerson, Biatti, Muybridge and J Dixon-Scott are well represented.

The aim will be to produce an overview of the contents of the collection and its current condition within three years, thus providing a benchmark that can be monitored over time. A pilot survey is now under way and plans are being put in place to exploit micro-sampling methods to reveal the materials and techniques used to create the icons of the photographic collection. It is envisaged that with a clearer understanding of decay mechanisms in different types of materials, resources can in future be more precisely targeted to providing suitable treatments at the most appropriate time in the lifetime of a record.

Preservation Risk Assessment

The profiling exercise will include the findings of a major three-year Preservation Risk Assessment project to survey the collections, based on a model developed by Dr Rob Waller of the Canadian Museum of Natural History. This project, launched in October, will generate key information to enable strategies to be put in place to manage the risks identified. The survey will record material types and their state of preservation, highlight the significance of different types of deterioration and identify overall risks to the collections. The initial phases of the project aim to identify the most serious risks, plus risks related to the buildings where collections are housed. Issues of concern will be highlighted and followed up in depth by the Collections Care Department. Complementary work to inform the project was carried out over the summer by Anna Bülow, who investigated the attitudes and expectations of users and staff handling damaged documents.

Wider Communication

The new strategic thinking lays greater emphasis on sharing information with the conservation community and more widely, with archivists and librarians and others concerned with preservation of documentary heritage. A priority will be to develop more effective methods of communicating the outcome of research in an accessible way. TNA aims to give a national lead by pursuing lines of research which can support advice to conservation professionals.

Current initiatives include:

- creation of an online database of materials used in conservation treatments, designed as an accessible Web-based tool for conservators.
- website publication of the results of the materials testing programme recently introduced in partnership

with the British Library, aimed at evaluating the performance of conservation materials in use at TNA. It is hoped that the first results, on boards and adhesives, will be available by the end of the year.

- establishment of a new standard for archival boxes used by TNA.
- a streamlined advisory service for the conservation community, recently included in a review by Nick Kingsley, head of the National Advisory Services.
- a three-year research project starting this autumn at Cardiff University, supported by The National Archives and The National Archives for Scotland, to investigate collagen degradation in parchment.
- work on under-investigated modern archival materials such as plastics and synthetics, a variety of fibre finishes and digital printing technologies.

A communications programme is planned to update conservators and others with an interest in progress with these initiatives through relevant journals and newsletters, as well as online.

Susan Hughes

A NOTE ON A RECENT PROJECT AT KEW PALACE

Kew Palace is one of Britain's most important royal palaces. The family country home of King George III and Queen Charlotte between 1800 and 1818, Kew Palace is all that remains of buildings which comprised the extensive royal residence in the famous botanic gardens. King George III convalesced here during his illness. Large parts of the palace had remained untouched from that time until 2004, which marked the start of a £6.6 million two-year conservation project.

Allyson McDermott was commissioned to establish the decorative wallpaper scheme which existed during George III's residence, using analysis and research to determine the original materials and techniques and then to recreate exactly the initial decoration. The scope of the project included the removal of modern boarding, detailed examination of tacking, canvas and paper fibres, recording of all wallpaper fragments and removal of representative samples. The samples were examined using polarised light microscopy, chemical testing, ultraviolet, raking and transmitted light together with instrumental analysis. The evidence in situ and the results of microscopy were used to piece together the original scheme.

The recreated paper is being installed over a stretched linen canvas support, with hemp-linen paper to cover



The George III verditer wallpaper scheme at Kew Palace was recreated using authentic materials. The significance of all surviving wallpaper fragments throughout the building was considered high, therefore they were recorded and conserved as samples. The photograph shows eighteenth and nineteenth century wallpaper samples

tack heads and a hand-made lining paper (produced in wooden moulds by Griffin Mill, Co. Mayo, Ireland). Rolls of hand ground Verditer distemper paper have been made by the wallpaper specialist, using self manufactured Verditer, as the pigment has not been commercially available for over a century. A varnished green Verditer Greek key design flock border has been produced and applied to the edges of the wallpaper. In keeping with the Company philosophy of using materials and craftsmen from the local area the flock was made using a hand-carved wooden block from a pear tree near the studio and wool from local sheep.

The original decorative wallpaper scheme has been faithfully recreated in four rooms at the palace, based on the evidence gathered from research. The palace is due to reopen to the public in spring 2006.

TEACHING IN BELGRADE

In 1996 Mila Popovic-Zivancevic, Head of Conservation at the Diana Centre for Preventive Conservation in Belgrade, contacted the Ceramics and Glass Conservation Section of UKIC with a view to providing training at Summer Schools in the conservation of ceramics and glass in Serbia & Monte Negro (then Yugoslavia). Pamela Warner inaugurated the teaching in 1997 at the site of Djerdap and has continued in Belgrade. I have taught glass conservation in Belgrade since 2002.

Sandy Davison giving a demonstration in Belgrade



Economic and social conditions in Serbia are extremely difficult and it is amazing how much has been achieved. It has not been possible to establish a full time conservation course so that the conservators working at the Diana Centre were students or graduates of archaeology and art history who have given their time voluntarily between Summer Schools. Over the past eight years their knowledge has been supplemented by lectures and courses given by foreign conservators most recently a successful Field Conservation Course at Djerdap run by ICCROM.

There are many difficulties associated with teaching in Belgrade including the social and economic conditions which make organization difficult, and the fact that the practical courses have had to include those who have attended previous courses, newcomers and occasionally practising conservators. It has also been uncertain how many objects will be available for treatment before I arrive. Since the students have no formal conservation training, courses have to include subjects such as ethics, health and safety and an understanding of the properties of materials – every year! It has been extremely important to provide well-illustrated course books for future reference. The Centre does not have the possibility of buying materials directly from abroad and those that can be purchased from suppliers do not include instructions for use and may be out of date. However there is progress. There is now a core group of graduate students at Diana who are helping to run the programmes. Those with a working knowledge of materials are beginning to find some of them in Belgrade at art shops and dental suppliers. This year I arrived to find the room where glass is conserved beautifully clean and laid out with students' names at their places, health and safety notices on the walls, protective aprons, gloves and dust masks and all solvent bottles labelled! Progress indeed!

There needs to be a way of co-ordinating and developing the programme of courses so that they don't overlap and of developing the courses themselves so that the more experienced students can be included in the teaching process, for example as demonstrators. In the future it may be possible to link up with the University of Belgrade to provide a full time conservation course. At present there is nothing in place to test the learning. Malena Stojčev (who teaches the students English and translates documents for the Diana Centre) and I are currently working on a dictionary of English and Serbian terms for use by conservators and archaeologists. That is proving to be quite a challenge!

Sandy Davison FIIC ACR The Conservation Studio, Thame

listings

UCL Centre for Sustainable Heritage Evening Guest Lectures Programme 2005/6

Venue: UCL Campus, Bloomsbury, London.

10 November: Michael Day, Chief Executive, Historic Royal Palaces.

15 December: Sanjay Trivedi, Head of Education, Arts & Leisure, Bovis Lend Lease Consulting.

12 January 2006: Jim Williams, Senior Programme Specialist for Culture, Chief of the Africa Unit in the Division of Cultural heritage, UNESCO

9 February 2006: Christian Manhart, Programme Specialist, Tangible Heritage Section, Operational Activities in Europe, Asia, Pacific, Division of Cultural Heritage, UNESCO

16 March 2006: Ian Campbell, Cultural Resources Specialist, Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development, The World Bank, Washington D.C.

Cost: free, 6pm start.

For information contact Sophia Mouzouroupolous on s.mouzouroupolous@ucl.ac.uk.

The Wallace Collection Study Session: Behind the Scenes in the Conservation Department

11 November, London

The Wallace Collection, Manchester Square, London, W1U 3BN.

A unique chance to discover more about the work of the Conservation Department with Head of Conservation, David Edge, and Furniture Conservator, Jürgen Huber. Enjoy a talk about the role of the department followed by a visit behind the scenes to see conservation of furniture and metalwork in progress – including a marriage-coffer decorated with brass and turtleshell marquetry. Cost £10 (£8 concessions), 2.00-4.30pm.

The Third Twentieth Century Furniture Research Group Conference

11 November, High Wycombe

Programme of lectures aimed at furniture historians, furniture conservators, design historians, curators, students, researchers and others with an interest in primary research into twentieth century furniture, related materials and design.

For a booking form contact Catherine Pinot de Moira, Third TCFRG Conference, Faculty of Design, BCUC, Queen Alexandra Road, High Wycombe, HP11 2JZ. Tel: 01494 522 141, email: cpinot01@bcuc.ac.uk.

Nautical Archaeology Society (NAS) Annual Conference

12 November, Historic Dockyard, Portsmouth.

The 2005 NAS Annual Conference is an opportunity to discuss research, review the archaeological activities of members and exchange ideas on managing our maritime heritage. Subjects include the effects of the tsunami on maritime heritage in Sri Lanka; the ongoing survey of the Spanish Armada wreck, *La Trinidad Valencera*, in County Donegal, Ireland; the archaeology of the Red Sea; submerged prehistoric landscapes and the excavation of an Elizabethan merchantman in the Thames. Full details can be found at <http://www.nasportsmouth.org.uk>

Colonial Williamsburg Conservation of Archaeological Materials: Current trends and Future Directions

13-17 November, Williamsburg, Virginia, USA

The full prog details and information on registration is now available at <http://www.colonialwilliamsburg.org/conted>. The conference will cover a range of topics from site management to the creation of archaeological repositories and archives, as well as the role of archaeological conservators when working with other communities.

ICON METALS GROUP

Care and Conservation of Firearms

16 November, Leeds

Firearms are found widely in many museum collections and require specialist care to ensure that they are conserved effectively and stored and displayed safely and legally. Using the collections of the Royal Armouries this one-day workshop will provide participants with useful background knowledge into the care and conservation of firearms. The day will begin with an overview of the historical development of firearms, and then go on to cover dismantling, treatments methods, collections care, preventive conservation and the legal and safety issues of firearms in museums.

Due to the practical nature of the course numbers are limited to twelve.

Cost: £50, lunch not included. For further information and registration details contact Suzanne Kitto, tel: 0113 220 1936, email Suzanne.kitto@armouries.org.uk

ICON STONE AND WALL PAINTINGS GROUP

Seminar on Tendering

17 November, London

Bridewell Hall, St.Bride's Institute, Bride Lane, London EC4.

Afternoon seminar of benefit to conservators, architects, surveyors and others to exchange views about the tendering process, what it is trying to achieve and how best all the professions involved can attain those goals.

A number of speakers, representing English Heritage, architects, surveyors, quantity surveyors and conservation companies (both large and small) will give their perception on the current situation and encourage discussion as to how improvements might be made.

Cost: Free, open to all but pre-registration is essential. Please contact David Odgers for further information on david@odgersconservation.co.uk

To register, please contact membership@instituteofconservation.org.uk

Museums Association **Surplus to requirements: A practical guide to disposal**

21 November, London

Venue: Charity Centre, 24 Stephenson Way, London NW1 2DP.

This one-day conference looks at all aspects of the disposal process, drawing on the experiences of museums that have undertaken such a review. Although underpinned by ethical thinking, the conference is fundamentally practical in nature and provides advice and guidance that will allow delegates to manage a disposal exercise.

To download a booking form or to book on line visit <http://www.museumsassociation.org/ma/10866>

For further information contact Lorraine O'Leary, events coordinator, Museums Association, 24 Calvin Street, London E1 6NW, tel: 020 7426 6940, fax: 020 7426 6961 or email: lorraine@museumsassociation.org .

Society of Apothecaries and Dr Johnson's House **Apothecaries, Art and Architecture: Interpreting Georgian Medicine**

24–25 November, London

Venue: Apothecaries' Hall, Black Friars Lane, London EC4.

The aim of this symposium is to further research and study into the history of medicine and pharmacy by exploring different aspects of health and sickness in Georgian England. It is a cross-domain collaboration between archives, museums, libraries, historical societies and specialist interest groups.

The organisers are keen to have representation from conservators involved in treating medical equipment, ceramics, specimens (animal, vegetable and mineral), paintings, engravings, drawings, plans, etc. of the period. For more information contact Dee Cook at the Society of Apothecaries, tel: 020 7248 6648, email: archivist@apothecaries.org.

Art and Microscopy

29 November, London

National Portrait Gallery, London

Recent advances in the analysis of paintings are leading to a revolution in how we look at art, the people who made it and, perhaps surprisingly, the social and economic climates in which they worked. By looking in detail at the material structure of paintings we can learn much about the choices artists made, why they made them and how and where their materials came from. An

essential strand in these developments is the application of various forms of microscopy. This one-day meeting will look at the forefront of this field, from Roman wall paintings to the current fight against forgery, from simple surface microscopy to the most advanced laser Raman analysis, from why an artist might paint the way he did to what the choice of materials tells us about when and where the picture was painted.

Speakers include: Dr Nicholas Eastaugh (Pigmentum Project and University of Oxford), Valentine Walsh (Pigmentum Project), Dr Ruth Siddall (UCL), Jane Davies (Independent Consultant).

For a booking form, please see www.rms.org.uk

Independent Paper Conservators' Group **Discussion on Tendering**

29 November

An opportunity for members to discuss the process of estimating and tendering for conservation work with those representing the customer's point of view. To be led by Amber Rowe, Head of Collections Management at English Heritage.

Places are limited, please contact Catherine Rickman, tel: 020 7586 0384 or email: catherine@rickman.co.uk .

For more information about the group please contact Laila Hackforth-Jones, tel: 020 8883 8809, or email: Laila.hj@blueyonder.co.uk .

INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION ICON

1st AGM

6 December, Birmingham

Venue: Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery.

Half-day made up of constitutional, professional and social events along with the results of the elections for the Institute's first Board of Trustees. There will be three workshop sessions on the preservation and management of digital imaging and discussions on the formation of new Icon Groups. There will also be an opportunity to visit the Birmingham City Art Gallery and an evening reception.

Cost: free to Icon members.

ICON SCOTLAND GROUP

8th Annual Dr Harold Plenderleith Memorial Lecture

9 December, Edinburgh

Venue: St.Columba's-by-the-Castle, 14 Johnston Terrace, Edinburgh.

All are welcome to this farewell to SSCR and launch of Icon in Scotland. Dr Jim Tate, Head of the Department of Conservation and Analytical Research, National Museums of Scotland, will give a lecture titled 'Twenty-six things about conservation'. Food and drink will be served and there will be musical entertainment. Doors open at 6.45pm, lecture begins at 7.30pm. Cost: £5.

For further information contact Maeve Woolley, email: maeve@freeola.com .

ICON ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP

Christmas meeting

15 December, London

Venue: UCL Institute of Archaeology, Gordon Square, London.

An afternoon of talks from archaeological conservators on recent archaeological conservation projects, followed by a Christmas party with food and wine. More details on ICON's email announce-lists shortly.

Cost: £10 Please send prior to the meeting to reserve a place.

For information contact Liz Barham, email: ebarham@museumoflondon.org.uk or tel: 0207 814 5646.

Metals in Paper

2nd International Iron Gall Ink Meeting

January 2006, Newcastle upon Tyne

Venue: University of Northumbria

Conference aiming to respond collectively to specific threats to European paper based cultural heritage. Risks include the deterioration, conservation and storage of paper and ligno-cellulosic objects that have been affected by e.g. metal-tannin corrosion throughout, many of which are stored in archives, libraries and museums. Themes include:

Themes include:

Fundamental scientific aspects of paper degradation – to focus primarily on diagnostic and analytical techniques, studies of degradation processes (including endogenous and exogenous factors), and methodologies for paper stability evaluation.

Chemical aspects of active conservation – to include conventional conservation methods as well as the use of inhibitors and deacidification techniques

Physical aspects of active conservation – to include paper splitting, strengthening, leaf casting and cleaning

Preventive conservation issues – to include environmental aspects of storage, boxing etc.

Call for Papers

We welcome papers, poster and exhibitors for this conference.

If you are intending to submit a paper/poster related to the aim of our network you are welcome to send your abstract (500 words maximum). This can be sent to info@miponline.org OR john.havermans@tno.nl OR jean.brown@unn.ac.uk.

The scientific & technical committee will referee all incoming papers.

Visit www.miponline.org for more information.

dcms Heritage and Public Value

25-26 January, London.

DCMS, HLF, English Heritage and the National Trust are planning a conference to explore current thinking on the value of heritage – in particular the application of ideas about Public Value. The conference will be of interest to people involved in policy and practice, in heritage research and in making the case for the value and

benefits of heritage, as well as to people in other areas of the DCMS family such as arts or broadcasting who have been looking at ideas of Public Value. Details of the event and speakers have not yet been finalised. To register an interest please email mtyler@hlf.org.uk.

ICON BOOK AND PAPER GROUP

Simple Protective Folder and Box Construction

31 January 2006 (6pm), London.

Venue: The October Gallery, Londonia House, 24 Old Gloucester Road, Bloomsbury, London WC1N 3AL. Explanation and demonstration for making some simple enclosures and containers by hand for those conservators without access to mount cutting & box making equipment or technical assistance. Cost: £6 (students £3, with card) – correct money at the door please

European Science Foundation

Heritage (Ideology, Politics, Culture)

20-22 February 2006, Slovenia Academy of Sciences

'Heritage' has a range of distinct connotations that reflect the differences in the traditions and historical experiences of individual European nations during the past century. The conference will consider such important questions as: What is the meaning of 'heritage' in different European states?

How has the meaning of 'heritage' impacted on practices of conservation and restoration?

What roles does 'heritage' continue to play in ongoing debates about cultural identity and politics?

How does the issue of 'heritage' relate to the sphere of memory (both individual and collective)?

In what ways have specific states defined their heritage over the past 100 years?

Call for Papers

Speakers are requested to submit a 200-word proposal for a 30-minute talk by December 8th 2005 to Marta Filipova email: marta.filipova@eca.ac.uk. The working language will be English, but participants may also present in French or German, provided that an English-language version of their presentation is available in advance of the workshop

Weave Analysis Workshop

March 2006, London

The 2-day workshop will also include an additional optional morning visit to a textile reference collection. Cost: £75 and £25 for the optional visit.

For further information please contact Marilyn Leader, email: leadertextile@hotmail.com or tel: 0208 855 4672.

ICON CERAMICS AND GLASS GROUP

Challenges in Ceramics Conservation and AGM

24-26 March 2006, Cardiff

Venues: Cardiff Castle, National Museums and Galleries of Wales and the Angel Hotel.

Weekend of talks and tours including a private view of

Cardiff Castle, which is currently undergoing major conservation, and visits to the stores and Conservation Department at Cardiff Castle. The AGM will take place on Sunday.

For more information, contact Alex Patchett-Joyce on email: APatchett9@aol.com or Ros Hodges on email: roshodges@waitrose.com

ICON TEXTILE GROUP FORUM

Tapestry Conservation

24 April 2006, London.

Venue: The Clothworkers' Hall, London.

The Textile Group's first forum is timed to coincide with the publication of *Tapestry Conservation: Principles and Practice* and recent research projects.

Call for Papers:

Deadline: 1 December. Papers are sought that not only discuss current practice and recent case histories of tapestry conservation projects, but also examine historical treatments. Contributions are also welcome that look at the broader curatorial issues and the close relationship between conservation and restoration. Contact Sung-Hyun Im at the Textile Conservation Centre, University of Southampton, tel: 02380 597100, fax: 02380 597101, email: si1@soton.ac.uk

Third International Conference Preservation and Conservation Issues Related to Digital Printing and Digital Photography

24–25 April 2006, London

Following the successful conferences in October 2000 and April 2003, The Institute of Physics in collaboration with the University of the Arts London are staging a third two-day conference to examine progress and research on materials and processes used for producing digital prints and photographs for archival storage. The conference will cover the areas of fine art prints, photographs and digitally printed textiles, with the aim of informing those responsible for the preservation and conservation of digitally produced material about the developments in digital photography and printing technologies, the progress in research on inks and substrates and their significance for the archiving of artefacts. The conference is aimed at an international audience of conservators, preservation personnel, conservation scientists, curators, archivist, photographers, the digital printing industry as well as ink, paper and textile R&D departments.

Contact Dr A.Manning, School of Printing and Publishing, The London College of Communication, University of the Arts, London, Elephant and Castle, London SE1 6SB. Email: a.manning@lcc.arts.ac.uk, or Dawn Stewart at the Institute of Physics, email: Dawn.Stewart@iop.org

ICON CERAMICS AND GLASS GROUP

New CVMA Guidelines for the Conservation & Protection of Stained Glass

27 April 2006, York

Venue: Kings Manor, York Conference Park
Conference to discuss the theory and principles of the new CVMA guidelines illustrated with a selection of case studies.

Contact Derek Hunt, Limelight Studios Ltd, Crown House, Main Street, Medbourne, Leicestershire LE16 8DT or e-mail: derek@limelightstudios.co.uk for more information.

CAC Conference and Workshop Risk Management for Cultural Institutions and Collections

May 2006, Canada

This workshop aims to make conservators and those in related professions more aware of their responsibilities to collections in their care and the options available to help manage the associated risks.

Call for Papers

Deadline: 31 December. Proposals for presentations from conservators, collections managers, insurance specialists, risk management educators, and others with relevant experience are invited on the following topics:

Types of risks to collections, estimating their magnitude, and risk mitigation.

Evaluating the relative costs, benefits, and collateral risks of different mitigation strategies.

Advocacy of Risk Management: How to strengthen co-operation among conservators, managers, preparators, insurers, educators, board members, and other stakeholders.

First-hand experiences with disaster recovery and insurers.

Speakers interested in presenting are should contact Elisabeth Joy on email: ejoy@sympatico.ca

The Getty Conservation Institute, the National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C., and Tate Symposium – Modern Paints Uncovered

16-19 May 2006, London

Venue: Tate Modern, Bankside, London.

Call for Papers and Posters.

Speakers are invited to submit proposals that address the conservation concerns and challenges of modern paint media. These might include the characterisation, manufacture, stability and innovative use of modern paints; analytical techniques for identifying their components; novel and practical methods for conserving modern painted surfaces; and the evaluation of the methods and techniques used for treating and cleaning them.

Further information and directives for proposal submissions are available at:

www.getty.edu/conservation/science/modpaints/mpu.htm

3rd Triennial Conservation Conference at Northumbria University The Alum Meeting

11-13 September 2006, Newcastle upon Tyne

Venue: Northumbria University.

Alum (aluminium potassium sulphate) was used in the production and processing of a wide range of materials incorporated into much of our cultural heritage including textiles, paper, leather, photographs, watercolours, stucco etc. and is therefore of particular interest to those responsible for the care of collections. The Conference will be a cross disciplinary event that will not only draw together our understanding of this widely used material but also contribute to our care of artefacts into which it has been incorporated. Papers will include the following:

The techniques of alum extraction and processing.

The alum trade.

The physical and chemical properties of alum.

The historic use of alum in conjunction with a wide range of materials .

The affect of alum on the condition, care and conservation of collections .

There will also be a trip to the alum extraction and processing sites in North Yorkshire as well as an exhibition on the alum industry.

Contact Miss A. Jean E. Brown Senior Lecturer Conservation, Burt Hall, Northumbria University, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8ST. Tel: 0191 227 3331, fax: 0191 227 3250, email: jean.brown@unn.ac.uk

ICON TEXTILE GROUP

Study Trip to India

November 2006

There are a few places left for the trip to India. For details, or to reserve a place, contact Janie Lightfoot, Textile Conservation Restoration Studio, 21 Park Parade, London NW10 4JG. Tel: 0208 963 1532, Fax: 0208 963 1623, email: janie@janielightfoot.co.uk .

REVIEWS

If you are due to attend one of the events listed and would like to see your review published we would like to hear from you. Contact Mike Howden (mike.howden@lineone.net) before you attend the event to express an interest in providing a review and we will issue you with guidelines.

DATES AND DEADLINE

PACR APPLICATIONS

Deadline: 10 January 2006

For more information go to: www.pacr.org.uk.

TRAINING

English Heritage and the UCL Centre Safeguarding Historic Collections for Sustainable Heritage Short Course Programme

January 2006, UK-wide

Taking place in the Regions located at four different English Heritage historic houses. Solutions-based approach to learning emphasising participant involvement. Handling original historic objects guided by experienced and engaging teachers. Residential and non-residential fees on a cost-recovery basis.

24–26 January 2006 Conservation Housekeeping; a comprehensive knowledge of housekeeping principles using the historic rooms and collections at Audley End House, Essex (maximum number 16).

For further information and to book, contact Sophia Mouzourouopoulos, Short Course Co-ordinator, UCL Centre for Sustainable Heritage, tel: 020 7679 5903, email: s.mouzourouopoulos@ucl.ac.uk

MacGregor and Michael Leatherwork Workshop Leatherwork: Restoration and Repairs

7-11 November, Tetbury

On this 5 day course students learn about restoring and repairing objects made mainly from leather. These can include luggage, leather wall-hangings, furniture, containers, sporting equipment.

Techniques covered include: the choice and identification of leathers and how they are made; moulding case corners; simple colouring, colour matching and 'ageing'; paring for leather patches, lap joints and bindings; stitching – how to repair straps, corners, seams and decorative stitching; decorative techniques including incising, stamping, embossing, modelling and gilding leather for repairs or to replace damaged areas. Course notes are provided. Cost £490 (£200 deposit required). The workshop offers a variety of short courses relating to all skills associated with hand stitched leatherwork. A maximum of 5 students per course.

For details contact Valerie Michael or Neil Macgregor at The Workshop, 37 Silver Street, Tetbury, Glos. GL8 8DL. Tel/Fax: (0044) 01666 502179, email: valmichael2000@yahoo.co.uk

10% DISCOUNT TO ICON MEMBERS

Courses in Building Conservation and the Use of Traditional Materials and Processes

November, Sussex

Venue: Weald and Downland Open Air Museum, Singleton. A wide range of practical workshops and seminars for surveyors, architects, craftsmen and anyone else with a keen interest in building conservation to include the following:

7–11 November Intermediate Timber Framing: wall framing; a five-day practical course for students who have attended the Timber Framing from Scratch course. Cost £450.

All courses suitable for CPD (each day seven hours). Enquiries about these, and other courses yet to be announced, to Diana Rowsell, Head of Learning, Weald & Downland Open Air Museum, Singleton, Chichester, West Sussex. Tel: 01243 811464, email: courses@wealddown.co.uk, web: www.wealddown.co.uk. We are very receptive to the needs of the conservation industry and set up bespoke courses for small groups of surveyors, architects and conservation officers on request. Please let us know the needs of your organisation.

PACR TRAINING

Introduction to CPD

10 November, London

Venue: V&A, Seminar Room A, Cromwell Road, London To provide participants with a basic introduction to CPD and practical help with personal development plans. Cost: free.

For information contact Susan Bradshaw PACR Training Officer on email: susan.bradshaw@pacr.org.uk or tel/fax: 01626 824510. To reserve a place please contact Diane Copley, Icon Administrator on email: dcopley@instituteofconservation.org.uk or tel: 0207 785 3805.

PACR TRAINING

Introduction to PACR Accreditation

22 November, London

Venue: Conference Centre, British Library, Euston Road, London.

Afternoon workshop aimed at those who would like to find out about the Professional Accreditation Scheme (PACR). Cost: free.

For information contact Susan Bradshaw PACR Training Officer on email: susan.bradshaw@pacr.org.uk or tel/fax: 01626 824510. To reserve a place please contact Diane Copley, Icon Administrator on email: dcopley@instituteofconservation.org.uk or tel: 0207 785 3805.

ICON CERAMICS AND GLASS GROUP

Introduction to PACR Accreditation

14 December, London

Venue: Conference Room A, 3rd Floor, Downstream Building, 1 London Bridge, London.

Afternoon workshop organised in response to the short questionnaire circulated to Icon Ceramics and Glass Group members earlier this year, and is an opportunity for members to find out more about the Professional Accreditation Scheme (PACR). Cost: free.

For information contact Susan Bradshaw PACR Training Officer on email: susan.bradshaw@pacr.org.uk or tel/fax: 01626 824510. To reserve a place please contact Diane Copley, Icon Administrator on email: dcopley@instituteofconservation.org.uk or tel: 0207 785 3805.

Courses at West Dean College

January-March 2006

22-27 January Conservation of archaeological ceramics (PC5602) Fully inclusive residential fee £675 Non-residential fee £500

6-9 February Conservation and repair of brick, terracotta and flint masonry (BC3D84) Fully inclusive residential fee: £515 Non-residential fee: £410

19-24 February Introduction to the conservation of transport collections (PC5603) Fully inclusive residential fee £675 Non-residential fee £500

27 February-2 March Conservation and repair of architectural metalwork (BC3D85) Fully inclusive residential fee: £515 Non-residential fee: £410

13-16 March Specifying conservation works (BC3D86) Fully inclusive residential fee: £515 Non-residential fee: £410

27-31 March Art and object handling (PC5604) Fully inclusive residential fee £550 Non-residential fee £410 For full information about all of the above courses please contact Liz Campbell, Administrator, tel: 01243 818219, or email: liz.campbell@westdean.org.uk.

Florence Art

Gilding and Decorative Painting Courses

Classes are held in a restoration studio in the old artisan district in the centre of Florence, Italy, or at the Villa of Maiano overlooking Florence.

Spring 2006

6-13 May: Six day Intro gilding plus intro decorative painting combination course at the Villa of Maiano, €1490 (full days including accommodation)

15-19 May: Five Day intro gilding, €550 (am in Florence)

15-19 May: Five day advanced gilding with real gold leaf, €650 (pm in Florence)

Autumn 2006

23-29 September: Six day Intro gilding plus intro decorative painting combination course at the Villa of Maiano, €1490 (full days including accommodation)

intervention

Conservation and the UN Millennium Development Goals

By Professor May Cassar, Director, Centre for Sustainable Heritage, University College London

'Make Poverty History' – remember? Only a few weeks ago we were all being swept away by a tide of good will. In case we have forgotten the context, making poverty history is in fact one of eight United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which exhort us to:

- Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education
- Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women
- Goal 4: Reduce child mortality
- Goal 5: Improve maternal health
- Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability
- Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development

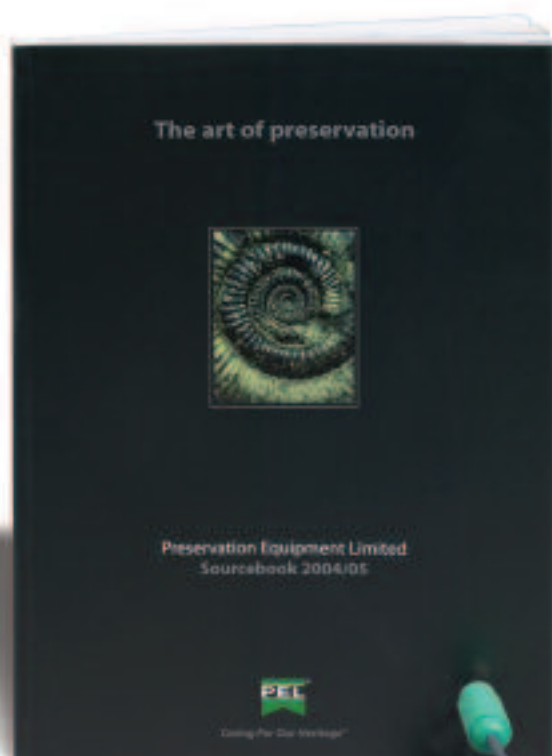
These MDGs which range from halving extreme poverty to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and providing universal primary education by the target date of 2015 form a blueprint agreed to by all the world's countries and all the world's leading development institutions. They have galvanized unprecedented efforts to meet the needs of the world's poorest people.

Now you may guess and then wonder about the link I am about to make with conservation. The fundamental argument upon which I will base this link is that the conservation of cultural heritage – those who practise it and those who uphold it – cannot stand apart from the thoughts and actions that are shaping tomorrow's world. It is true that it is difficult to see how the practice of conservation could contribute to all the MDGs, but this is the case with every walk of life. What we need to do is to consider each goal in turn, to see how our workplace decisions might be better aligned to support these goals.

It seems to me that goals 3, 7 and 8 should be within our sights. Let me just consider goal 7: environmental sustainability. This is a relatively straightforward goal to start with. Sir Crispin Tickle was right when he said that without environmental sustainability we cannot have social or economic sustainability. It should be easy to see that it is a few clear steps from conservation, to preventive conservation, to environmental management and then, to environmental sustainability. We can do much to convert our efforts at controlling the environment within cultural heritage buildings to caring also for the environment outside as well.

Professor Sir David King, the UK Government's Chief Scientist has warned about the consequences for 16 of the 19 major world cities that are threatened by climate change. Conservation professionals must become involved, not only by being part of the mitigation strategies to reduce carbon emissions into the atmosphere, but by also being part of the adaptation strategies to ensure that cultural heritage becomes more resilient in a changing world.

So when you next have a quiet moment, pick a MDG and think about your conservation work in relation to this goal. It is the millions of little decisions that we all make everyday that make the difference. Let's all make a difference and in doing so let's give conservation a broader meaning.



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