

JANUARY 2010

Issue 26

Happy New Year to all Icon News readers!

Although I am writing this on a late December day, this issue looks forward to the spring which brings with it the Icon conference in Cardiff. So you will find within an update from the conference organisers, a piece from one of the main sponsors and the full conference programme, which demonstrates what a worthwhile and enjoyable event it will be. Continuing the Cardiff theme, we also bring you a flavour of the conservation work that has gone on at Cardiff Castle over the past decade. It has been an enormous project and it is only possible here to give a brief overview of the many materials, challenges and solutions which were encountered along the way. Come and see it for yourself: guided tours are being laid on for conference participants during the Thursday evening reception at the Castle.

Of course, there is much else besides to read, such as how to make foxes' ears out of paper, the effect of laser-cleaning on alabaster and the background to the Nigel Williams' prize. Why not have a go at being the next prize-winner?

Lynette Gill, Editor



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Cover photo : Cardiff Castle – venue for the grand reception at Icon's CF10 conference in March and also the subject of a major conservation project to restore its unique interiors. © Michael Sheppard

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Deadlines:

For March 2010 issue
Editorial: 1 February
Event listings: 1 February
Adverts: 16 February

Icon is registered as a Charity in England and Wales (Number 1108380) and in Scotland (Number SC039336) and is a Company Limited by Guarantee, (Number 5201058)



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ISSN 1749-8988

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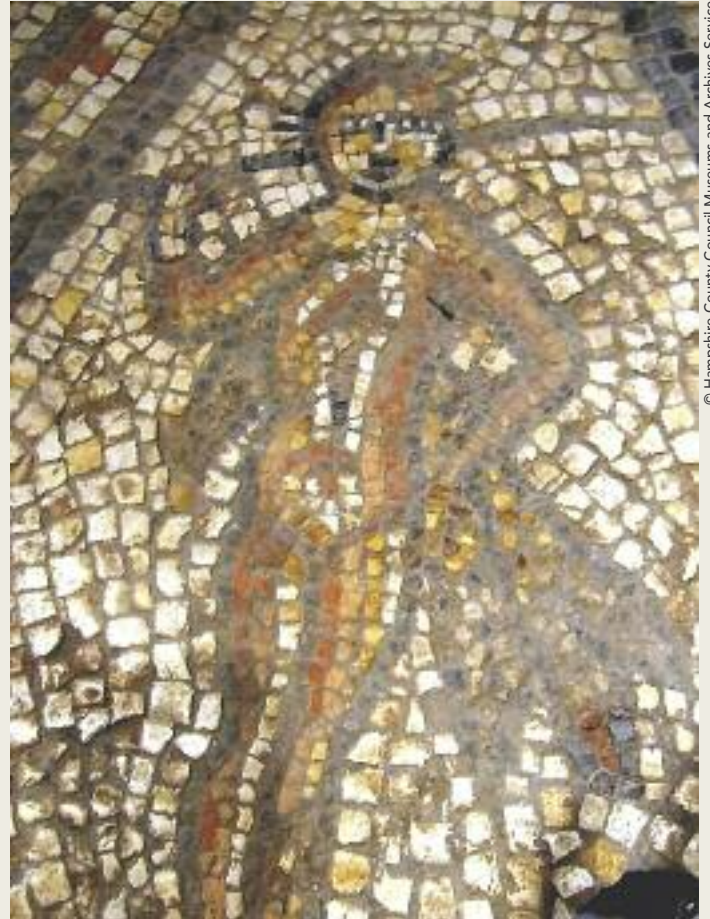
The central Mars figure

The Fullerton Mosaic

A large and detailed section of a 4th century Romano-British mosaic, purchased by Hampshire County Council Museums and Archives Service with the aid of an HLF grant, is to form an exciting new display at Andover Museum, due to be unveiled this month.

Measuring 3.6 by 2.7m, the 'Fullerton Mosaic' carries an

One piece in place on the purpose-built frame



Satyr

impressive image of the god Mars in a central octagon, surrounded by satyrs. Further figures in the corners are presumed to represent the seasons. The mosaic was originally removed from the site of Fullerton Roman Villa and watermill, in the parish of Wherwell, Hampshire, about a hundred years ago. It was installed in the newly built Fullerton Manor in 1904, and remained hidden from public view for most of that century.

Work to lift, conserve and install the mosaic was carried out by Cliveden Conservation in collaboration with HCC Museums staff and Historic Buildings Section staff. Seventeen individual panels were lifted from the Manor and transferred to the Cliveden workshop for assessment, stabilisation and cleaning – the final clean being undertaken with a micro steam cleaner. A bespoke framing system was designed and installed in Andover Museum, incorporating adjustable fixings to mount each individual panel of mosaic in place. Gaps where the panels joined were infilled to match the existing mortar, before the application and buffing of microcrystalline wax, to enhance and protect the surface.

Claire Chope, Conservator
Hampshire County Council Museums and Archives Service



© Stadtbibliothek Nürnberg, Amb.317.2°, f.103r

15th Century mail maker at work

An Indian mail shirt during repair



'We've Got Mail'

A new conservation-related mini-exhibition entitled 'We've Got Mail: the Construction, Conservation, and Repair of Mail Armour' has opened in the lower ground floor Conservation Gallery at the Wallace Collection in central London. Running until Sunday 6 June 2010, this exhibition features historic mail from private collections never before seen in a museum setting, and shows how this complex and fascinating form of armour was originally made, in the late Middle Ages and thereafter, both in Europe and the East. Additionally, visitors will be given an insight into how mail is repaired and conserved at the Wallace Collection by being given a rare opportunity to examine and handle different types of mail for themselves.

CSI: Sittingbourne again

Further to the item in the last issue of Icon News about this community conservation project, there is now a film, showing good coverage of the project, which was made for Kent TV. You can find it at www.kenttv.com/2800

From tea to cake

A long-standing Oxford conservation institution celebrated a significant anniversary at the end of October. The Oxford Conservators' Group (OCG), a cross-disciplinary body of all conservators working in and around the city, marked the advent of its 35th year with an impressive event which celebrated not only the diverse achievements of conservation practice but also the unique historical environments and rich collections many Oxford conservators work in.

The Oxford Conservator's Group 35th anniversary – their visit to Jesus College, Oxford





Sallyanne Gilchrist (current OCG committee member) and Chris Clarkson (OCG committee 1981) in front of a display from the archive.

The aims of the group – specifically, to bring together conservators for developmental and social events – were well matched by the birthday event. A group of twenty conservators and librarians, representing book, clock, ethnographical and paper conservation, visited two college libraries, both of which are under the conservation care of the Oxford Conservation Consortium. The group met at Jesus College to view and discuss the conservation work recently completed on the Fellows' Library by historic wood and furniture conservator Hugh Routh and his team from Tankerdale. This major project to conserve all the book presses, gallery and decorative wooden fittings was completed in 2008 as part of a major refurbishment of this impressive 17thC library, under the supervision of Librarian Sarah Cobbold. The group was treated to entertaining and informative talks from both Sarah and Hugh on the project and the history of the library.

Moving from a macro to a micro project, the group then visited Merton College Old Library. Here, Hugh showed how he was working to stabilise one of the book presses through the use of an unobtrusive method of wall bracketing. Our visit was hosted by Dr Julia Walworth, Fellow Librarian of Merton College, who provided the group with a full resume of the library's history, dating back to the late fourteenth century. Seeing the work on both libraries in juxtaposition allowed the group to appreciate both a full scale refurbishment, where a large aesthetic impact and improvement was achieved, and a smaller scale more interventive solution which does not detract from the aesthetic impact of its original and unique historic environment.

The afternoon's enjoyment culminated in a drinks reception hosted by the Oxford Conservation Consortium where the

group was entertained by a lively history of its own development by honorary Archivist Andrew Honey. Andrew illustrated his presentation with a selection of documents from the archive, and fittingly showed that the group started with an inaugural tea and progressed thirty five year later to a celebratory cake. The archives showed that the anniversary celebrations chimed well with the original purpose of the founder members who would no doubt be pleased by the strength of their initiative so many years on.

OCG welcomes new members from across the conservation community in the Oxfordshire area. Membership is free, and all enquiries can be addressed to victoria.stevens@magd.ox.ac.uk.

Victoria Stevens, Oxford Conservation Consortium

The new Ashmolean Museum

The reopening of the Ashmolean Museum in November brought a wealth of TV, radio and newspaper coverage, glowing with praise for the new building and the new display approach *Crossing Cultures Crossing Time*. The new design includes gallery space dedicated to conservation and a suite of conservation studios, which the Queen visited when she officially opened the building at the beginning of December. Head of Conservation Mark Norman wrote about the plans for the refurbishment back in the July 2006 issue of *Icon News*. We hope that he will find time to bring us up to date with all that has happened since once the conservation department is fully settled in.

Ashmolean Official Opening 2 December 2009 Her Majesty The Queen with Sue Stanton, Textiles Conservator, in the new Conservation Studios at the Official Opening of the new Ashmolean



© Theo Chalmers, 2009

Icon Conference Update

Cardiff 24 to 26 March



THE INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION



Bookings for CF10 have been arriving steadily in the Icon office with many of you taking advantage of the early bird rate. With more than fifty five papers from ninety speakers, the conference promises to offer a real opportunity to engage in debate and develop our knowledge of issues facing conservators. The topics will be as diverse as whether forty is the new fifty, advocacy to a conservative government, patent leather and cold gelatine: the full programme can be found on pages 7 to 9. The early bird rate has closed (from 15 January) but you should still book your place soon as the indicators are that the conference may be a sell-out so don't leave it until the last minute.

A recognition of the significance of the conference has been the amount of warm and generous support Icon has received from sponsors.

The welcome reception will be sponsored by **Metalrax** a shelving company that has recently worked with Icon's chair Diane Gwilt on a project in the National Museum Wales. More details of the project are provided on page 6. The main reception on the Thursday night of the conference has been supported by Cardiff Castle, part of **Cardiff Council**. Contractors working on the project have contributed to the evening reception, so in addition to the exclusive tours of the newly restored interiors there will be a hot buffet for all delegates.

Locating our conference in Wales has also encouraged two divisions of the Welsh Assembly Government to support us. These are **CyMAL**: Museums Archives and Libraries Wales, who are responsible for providing the Minister for Heritage with policy advice and advising and supporting local museums, archives and libraries and **Cadw**, the historic environment service. Not only have they generously supported the running of the

conference, both agencies will also be represented in the trade fair and delegates will have a chance to talk to representatives and find out about the latest developments in Wales. For example, **CyMAL** has recently organised consultation on a museums strategy with collections at its heart and **Cadw** has just completed consultation on their *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* for the sustainable management of the historic environment in Wales

With an eye to the future of conservation, **Conservation By Design Limited** has generously committed to sponsoring the student poster competition. The competition will have two prizes, one nominated by a panel of judges including a representative of our sponsors and another awarded by popular vote. Everyone attending the conference will be given a ballot paper and a chance to pick their favourite. Thanks to Conservation by Design both prizes will be worth £150 to the lucky winners. Conservation by Design were granted a Royal Warrant in 1998 and supply a complete service for conservation storage and display products to conservators and professionals in museums, libraries and archives world wide.

The links to the websites of all of our sponsors can be found on the conference section of the **Icon website** www.icon.org.uk,

Accommodation issues, Questions about Cardiff? First time nerves?

If you want to share information about the conference, perhaps find someone to share a room or a recommendation for a nice place to visit after the conference, make use of our facebook site CF10 are you going? Don't forget delegates may create new or amend existing reservations via www.ConferenceBookings.co.uk by entering the following event code: CDFICON2010.



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government



CONSERVATION BY DESIGN LIMITED



CARDIFF CASTLE
CASTELL CAERDYDD



A WORD FROM OUR SPONSOR . . .

metalraxstorage designs, manufactures and installs mobile and static shelving systems. Whether dealing with purpose built facilities or restricted by old buildings not initially constructed for storing historical material, **metalraxstorage** is able to provide cost effective storage solutions to meet the needs of all.

The company's credentials include

- being approved to ISO 9001 and ISO 14001, the international standards for quality management to meet customer requirements and for managing our environmental duties responsibly
- being a founder member of the Storage Equipment Manufacturers Association, promoting and adhering to the design standards set out in the Association's Interim Code of Practice for static and mobile shelving
- being a holder of the Buying Solutions Framework Agreement for the supply, delivery and installation of high density mobile & static steel storage. Buying Solutions are a government agency set up to maximise the value for money obtained by public bodies through the procurement and supply of goods and services.

metalraxstorage's aim is to 'get it right', by putting the client at the heart of their design. The client is in control of their own inventory so that when the installation is complete, they know where to find each and every securely stored item. The following case study illustrates this approach.

St Fagan's

St Fagan's is one of Europe's foremost open-air museums and Wales's most popular heritage attraction. It stands in the grounds of St Fagan's Castle, a late 16th century manor house donated to the people of Wales by the Earl of Plymouth.

Having provided Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales with storage products and services for many years, **metalraxstorage** was commissioned to provide 800 linear metres of static and mobile shelving in a purpose built collection centre. The building was designed and erected to accommodate the museum's wide and varied collections. These include Eisteddfod chairs, agricultural artefacts, domestic furniture, harps and coracles. There was also a requirement for a specialised textile store. The store was to house over 300 custom built drawers containing items such as jackets and shawls as well as rolls of textiles up to 2700mm long.

A comprehensive survey was conducted by conservation staff to produce an array of bay elevations to house the collections. **metalraxstorage** then incorporated these into an effective and efficient layout.

Many special features were designed and built into the standard shelving system to ensure that the artefacts were kept safe yet easily accessible to museum staff. Pull out

shelves measuring 3000mm wide x 1800mm deep were incorporated into Widespan shelving to store fragile wall paintings taken from the inside of one of the re-erected buildings. The paintings, which are large, heavy and difficult to manoeuvre, can now be kept flat and do not need to be handled to be viewed. Other special features include a roll in-roll out rack which is used to store window and door frames in an upright position. Mobile picture racking is being used to store walking sticks and agricultural implements that were previously laid flat on shelving.

Elements of the contract were amended and in some cases re-designed during the construction phase as unforeseen challenges presented themselves. When **metalraxstorage** left the site, museum staff were able to move the collections into the system in any order they wanted as the location of the items had already been determined.

Working in close collaboration with the members of staff at the museum, **metalraxstorage** were able to successfully design a scheme that accommodated the St Fagan's collections and stay within the original budget.

'Although we had a fairly good idea of how we wanted to utilise the space in the new store, the expert input from **metalraxstorage** proved invaluable in fine-tuning the design. Their creativity has enabled every square inch of space to be used to its maximum efficiency. **metalraxstorage** delivered excellent service and value-for-money.' **Diane Gwilt** Keeper of Collection Services, Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales.



Conservation in Focus

The Programme

WEDNESDAY March 24

3pm The new Glamorgan Record Office: behind-the-scenes tour (limited places)

6pm – 9pm Registration and Welcome Reception at National Museum, Cardiff

THURSDAY March 25

▶ 8.45am Registration

▶ 9.20am Opening remarks: Diane Gwilt, Icon Board of Trustees

Session 1 9.30am

- ▶ Concept, design, development and impact of OCEAN *Graham Martin & Boris Pretzel*
- ▶ Twenty Questions (or There's a RAT in the Museum!). A simple Risk Assessment Tool *Jane Thompson Webb & Simon Cane*
- ▶ Is 40 the new 50? – sustainable relative humidity for mixed collections *Andy Calver*

Coffee 10.45

Session 2 11.15am

- ▶ Tiraz Textiles: a review of past treatments in preparation for the opening of a new gallery of Islamic art at the Detroit Institute of Arts *Howard Sutcliffe*
- ▶ Evidence based conservation at Cardiff Castle *John Edwards*
- ▶ Balancing internal environmental needs with visitor access: a case study of the Queen's Stairs at Hampton Court Palace *Zoe Roberts, Tobit Curteis & Dr Ian Gibb*
- ▶ For your eyes only: on touching or not touching paintings *Carolyn Lamb*

Lunch 12.45pm

Session 3 1.45pm

- ▶ Listening and Talking: conservation advocacy to a Conservative government *Alison Richmond & Laura Drysdale*
- ▶ An unsustainable future? Conservation education and training in the UK *Frances Lennard, Alison Richmond, Mary M Brooks & Dinah Eastop*
- ▶ Research and practice: their role in a sustainable future for conservation *May Cassar & Sarah Staniforth*

Tea 2.50pm

Session 4 3.20pm – 5pm

- ▶ Sustainability benchmarks for collections care *Megan De Silva & Jane Henderson*
- ▶ Sustainable decision making – change in National Trust collections conservation *Katy Lithgow*
- ▶ Conservation expertise: helping to create safe commercial opportunities within historic properties *Victoria Richards & Kerren Harris*
- ▶ I feel included: the Conservation in Focus exhibition at the British Museum *Nicole Rode & Amy Drago*

6.30pm – 10.30pm Grand reception at Cardiff Castle

See the Icon website for further details and the booking form

FRIDAY March 26

Morning 9.30am – 12.30pm

Alternative sessions

A Book and Paper Group Review of book and paper conservation materials and techniques

- ▶ Evaluating cross-disciplinary working: the application of textile conservation adhesive techniques for book conservation
Caroline De Stefani, Arthur Green & Cordelia Rogerson
- ▶ Discussion about the conservation of leather bindings with Japanese tissue
Aline Leclercq & Malaurie Auliac
- ▶ The use of Tyvek in book conservation
Karin Scheper
- ▶ How do we sleep while our inks are burning?
Erika Kotze, Monica Matthews & Philippa Sterlini
- ▶ Elucidating the principles of paper splitting
Masazumi Seki, Kazuho Taniguchi, Takayuki Okayama, Naoko Sonoda & Shingo Hidaka

B Care of Collections & Conservation Science Groups Care of collections

- ▶ Experiments to study silk deterioration in historic houses
Naomi Luxford
- ▶ Making Oddy Testing more accessible: an update on the British Museum's Oddy Testing project
Julie Phippard
- ▶ Low-tech dust monitoring and the Dust Atlas
Helen Lloyd
- ▶ Leakage measurement for buildings, cases, bags and bottles: a practical guide
Andy Calver

C Ethnography & Textile Groups From top to tail: accessories from around the world – investigation and research

- ▶ Disrobing: research and preventive conservation of painted hide robes at the Ethnological Museum, National Museums Berlin, Germany
Anne Gunnison, Helen Tello, Peter Bolz & Nancy Fonicello
- ▶ Conservation of Hawaiian Three Ahu'ula
Beth Nunan & Aimee Ducey-Gessner
- ▶ Reflections of patent leather: the investigation into the degradation of linseed oil and polyurethane finishes in relation to preventive storage techniques
Sally Jubb
- ▶ Bonn voyage – sending our iconic objects on loan
Jeremy Uden

D Archaeology & Ceramics and Glass Groups Off the beaten track: stepping away from standard solutions

- ▶ Ain Ghazal statue cache: recovery, examination and conservation
Kathy Tubb
- ▶ Is big really beautiful? Conservation of an Egyptian vessel
Richard Jaeschke
- ▶ A thousand glass petals: a Roman millefiori bowl
Liz Goodman
- ▶ The re-conservation of a ceramic Clazomenian sarcophagus in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge
Christina Roseik

E Paintings Group

- ▶ From Birmingham to Byzantium and beyond: a mysterious journey with a much travelled painting
Dr Clare Finn & Dr Nicholas Eastaugh
- ▶ **AGM**

F Scotland Group Emergency planning and management

- ▶ Developing best practice in emergency management for museums and the heritage sector. Case study: Riverside Museum emergency plan
Louise Lawson
- ▶ Museum sector requirements for planning: a practical guide for those involved in emergency management
David Massey
- ▶ Overview of emergency planning in the UK and how it can help you develop emergency management. Training and practical advice on how to test your plan and staff
El Parker

G Furniture and Wood Group Umney, Rivers and beyond...

- ▶ Natural plastics and priceless finishes
Dr Campbell Norman-Smith
- ▶ Cyclododecane as a solution to surface contamination during resinous consolidation
David John Burden

Afternoon 1.30pm – 4.30pm

Alternative sessions

I Book and Paper & Photographic Materials Groups Review of book, paper and photographic conservation materials and techniques

- ▶ Washing artworks on multi-layer supports
Nicholas Burnett
- ▶ Think oversize! A critical review of the mounting, installation and storage of six, very large contemporary works of art on paper
Joan Weir
- ▶ Conservation of glass plate negatives – creating a stable future
Jenny Hodgson
- ▶ Conserving a large collection of convict photographs at the National Archives, Ireland: a reflection on treatment approach and pointers for future practice
Louisa Coles

II Care of Collections & Conservation Science Groups Science

- ▶ Monitoring and modelling the storage environment at the National Archives
Sung Hong
- ▶ Vibration monitoring at Historic Royal Palaces: an overview of previous work and recent developments
Constantine Vlachou-Mogire, Ian Gibb, Adrian Philips, Kathryn Hallett & Kate Frame
- ▶ Analysing the energy consumption of conservation heating systems at the National Trust
Nigel Blades, Susan Poupard & Liesl Barber
- ▶ Re-evaluating the treatment of archaeological iron using deoxygenated alkaline solutions
Melanie Rimmer & David Watkinson

III Ethnography & Textile Groups From top to tail: accessories from around the world – treatment and display

- ▶ **AGM**
- ▶ Not just a load of old hat: five years in the life of a hat collection
Roisin Morris
- ▶ Pair of 12th century Egyptian caps
Jacqueline Hyman
- ▶ Stand and deliver: conservation treatment and display of a ceremonial sword and scabbard
Maria Jordan
- ▶ The conservation and display of a pair of slippers from the Museum of Greek Folk Art
Archontina Chanielaki

IV Stone and Wall Paintings Group Ethics and Practice – a convenient truth...

- ▶ Speakers will explore how conservation ethics affect practical interventions and whether the options we consider and the choices we make use ethical considerations as a convenience
Andrew Arroll, Elizabeth Holford, Gionata Rizzi & Veronica Vlkova-Antoniou
- ▶ Conservation and repair of Blue John stone objects
Veronica Vlkova-Antoniou

V Metals Group Metal, in fine fettle

- ▶ Bluebird – rebirth of an icon
Bill Smith
- ▶ From scrapline to headline – conserving the 15F South African Locomotive for the New Museum of Transport, Glasgow
Louise Lawson
- ▶ An innovative method for the display of a 16th century wrought iron gun from Plymouth
Kirsten Kruse & Ian Panter

VI PACR PACR is 10 and growing

- ▶ PACR introduction
Susan Bradshaw
- ▶ New ACRs' perspectives on the PACR process
Caroline Rendell & Kristine Rose
- ▶ Professional accreditation: a contributor's perspective
Fiona Macalister
- ▶ The employers' perspective of PACR
Sandra Smith, V&A Museum, & Steve Clare, Private Practice, stained glass conservation

Cardif castle clock tower



© Cardiff & Co www.visitcardiff.com

professional update

FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Five years ago five conservation organisations took the historic decision to merge and create the Institute of Conservation. As Icon enters its sixth year of operation it is exciting to note that in spite of the economy membership numbers and income are holding up. Those applying for accreditation are again 50% up on previous years; those seeking to join the Conservation Register continue to increase and members' level of active involvement in Icon is significantly higher than before, whether it be through submission of articles for Icon News; volunteering to speak at external seminars; at Icon stands at exhibitions and conferences or as voters in this year's board elections – up by a third this year. This 5th AGM was prefaced the evening before by a terrific Plenderleith lecture given by Neil MacGregor and organised in model fashion by the Scottish Group.

The latest Board meeting also took place in Glasgow on the morning of the AGM and this is my opportunity to report on some of the key issues and papers:

The National Conservation Education and Skills Strategy:

the first draft of a document will go out to consultation in the spring. Its starting point is that the conservation profession needs to take its future into its own hands and develop an education and training strategy, in consultation with key stakeholders such as employers, education providers, sector skills councils and relevant statutory and third sector organisations. It also needs to take account of government skills and higher education frameworks and a rapidly changing scientific, educational and heritage environment. The work is being taken forward by the Board's Professional Standards and Development Committee and the full Board considers a revised draft at its January meeting.

The Conservation Awards: the Board agreed to go ahead with the Conservation Awards again in 2010. They will be formally launched at CF10.

The Conservation Register: the Board received a progress report on the two year project supported by English Heritage, which started last year, to re-structure the Conservation Register database and website and to improve turnaround for those on it, ease of use and the guidance available e.g. on commissioning and managing conservation projects.

Finance: the Board received a report on the management accounts for the first half of the year. **Membership subscriptions make up just under 30% of Icon income this year**, the rest coming from grants (42%), donations, fees and advertising (18%). Set out below is how subscription income is spent: the second column sets out the percentage of subscriptions spent on the various expenditure areas. As other income covers these spending areas too, the third column shows the split. Other activities, such as the Conservation Register and Education are self financing this year.

Description	% of sub. income	Portion covered by subscription income
Icon News/ Journal	13%	30%. Advertising and fees cover the remaining 70%
Other publications	3%	10%. Grants and sponsorship cover 90%
Governance	9%	68%. Grants support 32% of costs
Membership	23%	100%. Covers salaries, database and related costs
Accreditation	18%	62%. Fees cover the other 38%
Advocacy/ policy	5%	66%. Grants support other costs
Office and core costs	29%	56%. Rents, utilities, salary costs, IT, accountancy, website etc. Grants and fees cover 44%.
	100%	

The Board, Group Chairs and Chief Executive Working Party:

Following a well attended meeting between Board members, Group Chairs and Treasurers and myself in November, it was agreed to establish a smaller working party, made up of six Group Chairs, two Board members and myself. The working-party will now meet regularly and become the primary forum for co-operation and partnership between Board, Groups and the Icon administration, with all Board and Group Chairs continuing to meet every six months. In the first instance we have agreed to look at:

- channels of communication between the Board, Groups and members.
- working together to advocate and lobby for conservation
- supporting the Groups to promote, build and retain membership
- a better financial structure for the Groups and their role

The first meeting of this smaller working party was on 1 December and the next is scheduled for 13 January in time to refine proposals for the Board meeting at the end of the month.

As I commented at the AGM, it seems to me that it is a sign of an organisation's maturity that it is able and willing to take stock, listen to its members and make changes to build on its strengths and give strength where it may be weak.

I would be grateful for your feedback on how you would like me to use this column. Do send comments and views to me at jwanamaker@icon.org.uk. I wish you all a wonderful 2010.

Jessica Wanamaker

THE ICON AGM

Icon's 5th AGM was held on 26 November amidst the splendours of Glasgow's Burrell Collection. There was a buzz of camaraderie about the event, inspired by the warm welcome from Glasgow Museums, the relaxed but brisk conduct of proceedings by Icon's Chair Diane Gwilt, the afterglow of a very successful Plenderleith lecture the evening before and the sense of relief that the financial shoals of the previous year had been successfully navigated. However, Diane reminded us that there is no cause for complacency in a recession-hit economy with fierce competition for scarce funds. In these difficult times, it is more important than ever that we articulate what we are about; think long-term and communicate our strengths and achievements. These were the three themes which she developed in her talk, concluding finally that none are achievable without the support of members, the commitment of the Board and the Group Committees and the dedication of the staff. Chief Executive Jessica Wanamaker noted that her priorities since joining Icon in the summer have been communications, financial stability and education and training. She expanded on progress and initiatives in these areas (and has touched on these topics in her column above). Finally, Geraldine Isherwood, Board member and Honorary Treasurer, explained in more detail the measures taken in the financial year 2008/2009 to restore financial stability and maintain it since. A lively Q&A session probed the various issues raised by the speakers – relations with the groups, budgets, membership levels, the nationwide status of the education and skills strategy – to complete the formal business.

The second half of the event, chaired by Icon's Vice Chair Amber Xavier-Rowe, gave us four talks about working on large capital projects, each offering a variety of challenges and often ingenious solutions. Louise Lawson took us through the prestigious development of Glasgow's Riverside Museum, designed by Zaha Hadid to house the Museum of Transport collections and due to open next year. Jim Tate of National Museums Scotland described the feats of engineering needed to redevelop the Royal Museum of Scotland and make the building more user-friendly. Similarly with the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, the renovation of which was described by Jacqueline Ridge of National Galleries Scotland. And as if she had not got enough on her plate, she also gave us a fascinating glimpse into the touring programme *Artist Rooms* and the lessons learned from the logistics of the exercise and the collaboration with Tate. Finally, Nat Edwards detailed the quite different struggles of a project physically small compared to the others but vast in terms of the significance of its collections and its role in Scottish heritage: the Robert Burns Birthplace Museum. All in all, four interesting presentations and proof once again of the endless dedication and problem-solving abilities of conservation practitioners



Neil MacGregor

THE PLENDERLEITH LECTURE

Icon Scotland Group's 12th Annual Harold Plenderleith Memorial Lecture, entitled *The Objects of History: Things and Ideas in the British Museum*, was given by Neil MacGregor, Director of the British Museum. The lecture was held at the National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh on the evening of 25 November 2009. Despite the inclement weather there was 'sell out' attendance, with an audience of 139 people.

Linda Ramsay, Chair of the Group, invited and introduced the speaker. As a current Icon/HLF intern, presently working in Textile Conservation at the National Museums Scotland, I had been told to expect great things from the evening and the speaker. Neil MacGregor did not disappoint, presenting a very informative, inspiring and humorous lecture on a broad spectrum of topics, with conservation and Plenderleith being at the very core.

The lecture transported the audience around the globe, discussing a variety of artefacts from the British Museum's world collection from prehistory to current events. The lecture began in Africa, with some of the earliest objects from Tanzania dating to almost two million years ago, and ran up to the present day, represented by a chair constructed from guns, remnants from a civil war in Africa. The main focus was the astonishing ability of humans to make not only functional objects but also objects of beauty. Among the artefacts covered was the Staffordshire Hoard, the largest hoard of Anglo-Saxon gold ever found. This was discussed in relation to the Portable Antiquities Scheme, a voluntary scheme to record archaeological objects found by members of the public in England and Wales.

Analytical research on a turquoise mosaic of a double headed serpent was presented. The turquoise and the spondylus (thorny oyster) shell used to decorate the object has been analysed and supplied information on the origins of the materials. This highlighted the significance of research to provide further insight into objects and the cultures they represent. This magnificent artefact can be seen in the current exhibition entitled 'Moctezuma Aztec Ruler'.

Neil MacGregor concluded the lecture with the conservation of a rare surviving sail from the South Pacific. The project was used to illustrate the significance of conservation and analytical research to preserve objects for the future and to discover information that can provide knowledge previously lost. In this instance it enabled skills to be reintroduced with community collaborative projects. This is an area close to my heart and the inspiration behind my decision to become part of the conservation profession.

After the lecture a wine reception provided the opportunity to meet other conservators from across the conservation disciplines, as well as curators and other cultural heritage representatives. The evening was a huge success and to quote Clare Meredith, from the National Trust for Scotland, who sums up the evening so perfectly, *'Plenderleith Lectures can't come much better than they did last night - a world class speaker whose challenging subject matter was laid out so effortlessly, followed by a fantastic reception. It all ran so smoothly, thanks to the detailed planning that went before. I felt incredibly proud to be part of Icon Scotland.'*

Sarah Owens

Icon/HLF Textile Conservation Intern

ELECTION RESULTS

The recent election to Icon's Board of Trustees saw the following members elected: Penny Jenkins, Helen Lloyd, and Chris Woods. In addition, Siobhan Stevenson was appointed to the Board as the Northern Ireland representative. Velson Horie has stepped down as Trustee and warm thanks are due to him for his contribution over the last five years.

NEW MASTERS COURSE LAUNCHED

A new degree in conservation practice will be launched at Cardiff University in September 2010. This two year MSc programme will offer graduates from subjects other than conservation the chance to train as professional conservators. The addition of this new degree follows on from the appointment of Panagiotta (Yiota) Manti as a lecturer in Heritage Science during the summer of 2009. Such resounding recognition and support for conservation by Cardiff University is welcome news in what has been a difficult climate for conservation education in the UK. The new degree joins our existing portfolio of conservation Masters degrees: the one year MSc Professional Conservation for graduates with existing conservation degrees who wish to develop advanced professional and research skills and the MSc in Care of Collections (one year) which is open to students from a range of academic backgrounds.

Back in the early 1970s Cardiff University established the first BSc scheme teaching archaeological conservation in the UK and this scheme has developed over time, in 1995 becoming *The Conservation of Museum Objects and Archaeology*. Cardiff graduates now work, teach, conserve and manage in institutions across the world. With a popular undergraduate programme that teaches hands-on conservation and a suite of



Cardiff student Eun Lee carrying out an IPM inspection

Masters courses that refine or broaden skills, the new MSc is the last piece of the jigsaw.

The new degree will encompass both theoretical and practical skills and will provide a comprehensive framework for interpreting, synthesising and critically evaluating objects, collections and evidence from research. The curriculum for the first year will address skills, comprehension and application, with a substantial section of the course devoted to practical projects, where students work on objects to convert theory into practice. During the second year the learning process progresses to emphasise analysis, synthesis and evaluation with the goal of challenging students to solve problems.

Conservation requires us to teach an understanding of materials and their decay mechanisms and to research and test treatment options but we must go further; conservation is more than simply the preservation of materials. Conservation is the preservation of significance or value and its processes must begin by defining those values. Students will be taught how to understand and apply scientific method to conservation decisions. Through this process we hope to make our contribution to developing the next generation of conservators who in turn will sustain, refresh and maintain the current generation.

For more information see our website: www.cardiff.ac.uk/hisar/
Jane Henderson

Cardiff student Nicola Emmerson conserving a sarcophagus



JOURNAL OF THE INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION

Thoughts of a retiring editor

Volume 33, number 1 of the *Journal*, which should be in press as you read this, will be the third issue I have overseen as sole editor. I took the role hesitantly because the responsibility of assessing and commenting on manuscripts from areas beyond my knowledge of paper conservation, submitted by those with much more standing in the profession than me, was rather daunting. I need not have worried however, because any apprehensions rapidly dissolved as the support of the newly formed Editorial Panel, generosity of experts and dedication of the contributors throughout the profession became apparent, whether preparing manuscripts on parchment, stone or house paints philosophy, glass or oil paintings.

It has not only been the sometimes enormous effort and practical support so generously and patiently proffered by authors, peer reviewers, book reviewers and translators that has been striking. Of the contributions themselves what became apparent was the passion and correlation of approach between all the conservation professionals, whether this was striving for the best conservation/preservation treatments or arguing a philosophical point of cultural inheritance. This commonality had several effects, one was that it confirmed my growing feelings that I did indeed belong to a much broader population than that of paper conservators. Another was to show me how much can be learnt from the way others in the profession approach difficult or unusual conservation problems. And though the focus of the research was perhaps outside my own discipline quite often parallels could be drawn and applied to my own practice.

Part of being the editor of the *Journal* has also involved acting as guide to establish the single title under the management of Routledge. Learning to gauge content has been combined with learning about establishing effective production processes that could not have been successful without the great efforts of the Editorial and Production team at Routledge. In particular, I would like to thank Melanie Harris for her considerable understanding and patience as we have discussed and revisited the constantly evolving journal production schedules and style sheets.

Having, I hope successfully, begun the integration of *The Conservator* and *The Paper Conservator* and maintained their standard it is time for me to step down. It was extremely flattering to have been asked to take on the role of Editor of the *Journal of the Institute of Conservation* and it has been a humbling experience. As outgoing Editor my thanks go to all who have undertaken the sometimes exhausting but always rewarding journey from draft manuscript to final published article. My thanks too and welcome to Janet Berry, who I am delighted to report has agreed to be the new Editor of the *Journal*. With Janet's expertise and guidance and your contributions the *Journal* will move forward and continue to promote knowledge of cultural heritage conservation practice.

Shulla Jaques

Welcome to the new Editor

I am absolutely delighted to be given the opportunity to edit the *Journal*. Throughout my professional career, first as an archaeological conservator working on sites and in museums in the UK, Europe, Lebanon and US, and then as I moved into preventive conservation working for the National Trust and National Museums Liverpool, the *Journal* and its forerunners were always a beacon of achievement: a source of information on new treatment developments, interesting approaches to taxing situations and discussions on the profession itself.

It is therefore with great pride that I am embarking on the role as Editor. As a former member of the Editorial Board for *The Conservator* and as a university lecturer, teaching collections care and management on the Museums Studies course at the University of Leicester and most recently as Course Director for the MSc Sustainable Heritage at University College London, I am not unfamiliar with the rigours and expectations of academic publishing. I am aware of the determination and hard work that previous Editors have contributed to the *Journal* and I hope to maintain its quality and reputation.

However, any publication is only as good as its contributors – you! What are you doing at work at the moment that is interesting, new, different? You may be developing a new treatment or treatment methodology, or assessing the effectiveness of old treatments; are you contributing to a development in your institution or as a private contractor that involves applying a different perspective to your work; perhaps you have discovered interesting information about an object or collection during its conservation; or are you currently contemplating the theory of your practice? We need your contributions! If you would like to discuss your ideas please contact me at journal@icon.org.uk.

Janet Berry

THE NIGEL WILLIAMS PRIZE 2010

The origins of the prize

Nigel Williams became something of a name in the museum world of the late 1960s but his story is not one that could be repeated in quite the same way today. Entering the British Museum aged sixteen in the days before the business of conservation was seen as a profession, he was taken on as a museum assistant in the Department of British and Medieval Antiquities, where he found himself working on a wide variety of media. Through a mixture of hard graft, good hand skills, experiment and resourcefulness, (including a touch of showmanship) and, not least, good timing, the name Nigel Williams came to be associated with the conservation and reconstruction of some of the museum's best-known objects, including the Sutton Hoo helmet and the Portland Vase.

However, away from the limelight he was also an energetic encourager at ground level: sharing his knowledge and promoting high professional standards through his teaching of evening classes in ceramics and glass restoration, as well as

undertaking a continuing series of lectures in this country and abroad. Sadly, in 1994 Nigel died quite suddenly while on a British Museum excavation in Jordan. He was 49.

In 2002 the Ceramics and Glass Conservation Group, together with the support of Nigel Williams' family, created a Prize in his name to serve as a memorial to the standard of his work and the professional values he upheld and as an encouragement to future generations of conservators. This biennial Prize is open to all current members of Icon, and given in recognition of a high quality project that focuses on the conservation/restoration of ceramics, glass, or a directly related material.

What we are looking for

The organisers invite projects that are preventive as well as interventive, and the judges' current criteria draw on those professional standards articulated in today's professional accreditation guidelines. Given that opportunities for most of us to conserve or restore high profile objects are rare, and that over time fashions change, techniques evolve and new materials become available, the organisers are keen to encourage submissions from individuals (including students) or collaborations within the private or public sector, that reflect a clear understanding of the many facets of contemporary conservation practice, as well as demonstrating a high degree of technical expertise.

Loretta Hogan, Senior Ceramics Conservator at the British Museum, who worked closely with Nigel for some years, has drawn attention to the fact that 'he was very open to the need to re-evaluate practice in the light of evolving ethical ideas within the field'. Neither accreditation status, nor current participation in the PACR process, are conditions for application, though if you have completed or are in the process of doing so you are welcome to submit a relevant project. All submissions will be considered and ideas can be discussed in advance with the organisers. Perhaps you have been involved in an interesting piece of research or presented with an unusual dilemma during the period relevant to this year's award (the last four years). You may have had to resolve a very real conflict in values, or found it necessary to develop something of a new technique in the face of restrictions, practical or financial. For these and other examples of conservation/restoration in practice, the judges invite you to share your experience with others and enter for the Prize, worth £750 for the winning entry, with £150 each for two runners up.

For details of the Prize, please see the Icon web-site www.icon.org.uk or contact the Co-ordinator
Ronald Pile: ronaldpile37@btinternet.com
Tel: 01223 365006

SOME RECENT LIBRARY HIGHLIGHTS

Early in November, I was fortunate enough to be invited to talk about the library resources to a group of interns (Icon HLF Training Bursaries Programme Year 4 and Icon's externally-funded Interns) at their induction seminar in London. I am hoping they will be able to visit the library in 2010, and find out more about all the resources on offer.

Paulette Hill, Library and Records Manager from Historic Scotland, contacted me a little while ago about visiting the library in Edinburgh to view some documents from their conservation collection which could no longer be housed there. So in mid-November I went to see if there were any books which could be rescued for the Chantry Library. In the event, there were quite a few items we did not have, including some conference reports of great interest - three boxes of materials in all ! Many thanks to Paulette for her foresight and collaboration with this.

The Chantry Library now has its own url: <http://www.chantrylibrary.org.uk/> ...so you can now access the library pages directly. We have also created a new subject category (Ethics and Social Value) for our unique library classification scheme, and I am keen to develop this new collection further. If you have any suggestions for good titles to be included, please let me know.

Last, but not least, we have now sent back issues of both *The Paper Conservator* and *The Conservator* to Routledge Journals, Taylor & Francis for digitization. When completed, this will be a major step forward in being able to search for, and access, these journal articles for Icon members.

For details of new resources, and a listing of recent journal articles, check out the library blog at: <http://chantrylibrary.wordpress.com/>

Looking forward to a busy and entertaining 2010 !
Ros Buck, Librarian & Information Manager

ARCHIVES FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

November saw the publication of a new Government policy for England and Wales on publicly funded archive services. It is the first such policy for ten years and, in challenging times, re-asserts the vital importance of archives as the gateway to the nation's common heritage, while reflecting the extraordinary advances in technology that offer both challenges and unprecedented opportunities. The National Archives and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) are working on a detailed action plan with representatives from across the archival sector, whilst CyMAL (Museums and Libraries Wales) work to produce a parallel version for Wales. This will help deliver the policy's recommendations with the aim of strengthening this key part of the nation's historical, cultural and information offering.

Archives for the 21st Century can be downloaded from www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/policy/aft21c/ .

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RETIREMENT FROM ENGLISH HERITAGE

By the end of 2009 Jacqui Watson will have retired as Head of Archaeological Conservation at English Heritage. Jacqui can look back at an eventful career spanning over thirty years.

Her interest in archaeology was kindled as a teenager when she helped at the excavations at Dragonby then taking place near her home in Scunthorpe, Lincolnshire. With an aptitude for art and chemistry she was fortunately pointed in the direction of conservation and travelled south to London to join the Institute of Archaeology, obtaining the Diploma In Archaeological Conservation in 1976. During this time she worked as a student in the Ancient Monuments Laboratory and not long after graduation was appointed in 1977 as a permanent member of the AML's Conservation Section.

Whilst working on a very wide variety of archaeological materials over the years she developed skills in particular in the recognition and identification of mineral preserved organic remains using the SEM, notably on artefacts from Anglo-Saxon burial contexts, and has since become widely regarded as the expert in this field. Her work has greatly contributed to the interpretation of numerous finds assemblages from sites such as Mucking, West Heslerton, Swallowcliffe Down, Boss Hall and Buttermarket, Ipswich with notable contributions on the character of shields, bed burials and carpentry. The other area of expertise she has developed has been in the conservation of waterlogged materials in which she was an early pioneer in the use of freeze drying. Since 2003 Jacqui has been Head of the Archaeological Conservation Team in which role she actively promoted her specialisms, passing her expertise on to a succession of placement students.

Whilst Jacqui has always worked for English Heritage and its predecessors and has weathered various organisational changes, including the move from Savile Row to Fort Cumberland in Portsmouth, she has continued steadily to build her knowledge of finds through investigative conservation. She has inspired colleagues and students through her passion for 'revealing objects' and her careful approach to investigation, an approach encapsulated in the recent EH guidelines on the subject which she steered to publication in 2008. Her legacy includes large projects such as the Dover Bronze Age Boat which received the Pilgrim's Trust Conservation Award in 2001, as well as over a hundred technical reports and many publications, and of course a large number of qualified conservators who benefited from training under her. We all wish her a very happy and fulfilling new chapter in her life.

Karla Graham, Angela Karsten and Andrew David



THANKS TO SHULLA JAQUES

The Editorial Panel of the *Journal of the Institute of Conservation* bade a fond farewell to Editor Shulla Jaques last October at a meeting at the British Museum Conservation Department. Shulla became the first Editor of the newly combined journal in 2008, seeing the publication through a potentially difficult transition to production and publication by Routledge Journals, an imprint of the academic publisher Taylor and Francis. Typically of Shulla, this changeover was done with a minimum of fuss, a great deal of professionalism, and plenty of understated style. Shulla's dedication and attention to detail were remarked upon by Taylor and Francis who were pleased to find their job during the transition a relatively easy one, as a result. Also a member of Icon's Academic Publications Panel, Shulla has helped guide and position the new publication, making a significant contribution to Icon's publishing efforts and to the area of conservation literature tout court.

Shulla's pre-conservation experience in publishing meant she was ideally placed to act as editor and put the two journals, *The Paper Conservator* and *The Conservator*, onto a stronger footing as the single title the *Journal of the Institute of Conservation*. The Editorial Panel thanks Shulla most warmly for her work and for paving the way for the new publication.

Editorial Panel, Journal of the Institute of Conservation

AWARD NEWS

Congratulations to Chris Daniels and Osirion Building Conservation, one of the winners of the 2009 Marsh Award for Public Sculpture. The Award is given annually for a newly commissioned public sculpture or a restoration project, in this case for the conservation of the Grade 1 listed statue of George III which is a key feature of Weymouth's historic seafront. It recognises the continuing role for the sculpture two hundred years after its erection in 1809 and the longevity of Coadestone (a terracotta product developed in the 18thC). Chris is an accredited conservator with a freelance architectural practice; he also teaches and lectures at various colleges and universities, as well as producing carving, lettercutting and sculptural work.



Shulla with Mike Corfield





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Inside Cardiff Castle

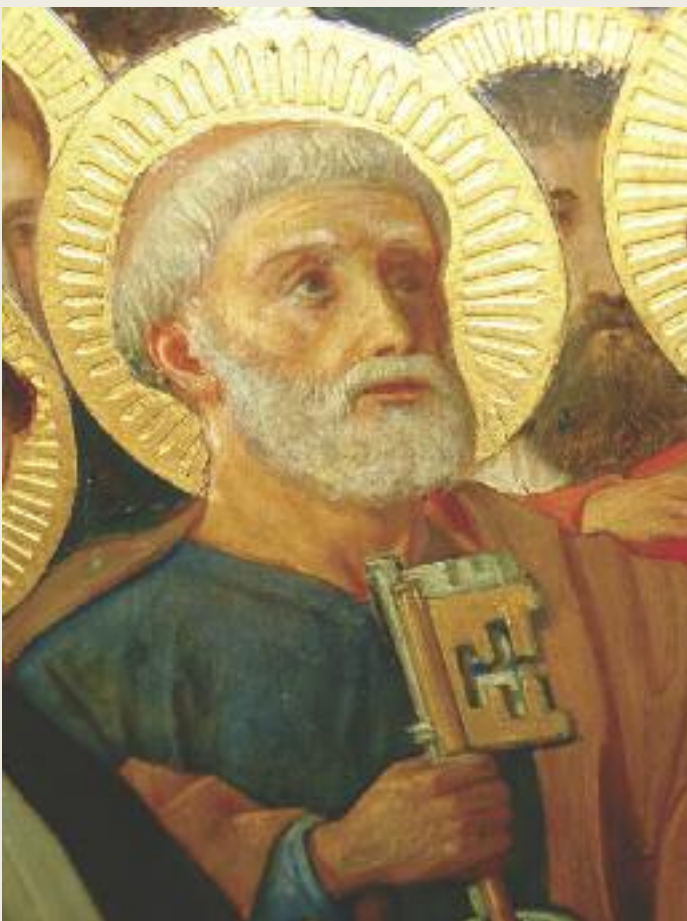
Cardiff castle contains an extraordinary example of high Victorian gothic revival interior decoration. In anticipation of the Icon conference *Conservation in focus 2010*, Michael Sheppard shares his experiences of working on the Castle's unique and prestigious interiors

INTRODUCTION

The Cardiff castle estate became the home of the Bute family in 1766 and the third Marquis, thanks to his father's entrepreneurial genius in developing Cardiff docks, was the richest man in Britain. When he came of age in 1868 he employed William Burges as patron architect to refurbish the tired castle lodgings built in the early 15th century. From then on, until the death of Burges in 1881 their creative partnership flourished. Their imagination, scholarship and sheer high spirits make Cardiff castle, outside and in, one of the most successful and enjoyable fantasy castles of the 19th century.

The project benefited from Lord Bute's infinite wealth with the transformation of most of the original castle house, including construction of new towers, external boundary walls and other exterior aspects of the grounds, all designed to impress. Recent work to stabilise and repair the Lady's Walk found only the thinnest façade wall from this period covering the Roman ramparts and medieval battlements. The focus was on style,

Detail of NHJ Westlake wall paintings on slate within the Chapel



Detail of Fredrick Weekes stained glass at high level in the Chaucer Room

symbolism and developing grand and lavish interiors. Burges and Bute combined their interests in medievalism and cultural influences from their travels abroad, backed up with an intellectual pursuit of myth, magic and allegorical tales to inspire the work. Bute's vision for the transformation of Cardiff castle into something exuberantly 'Gothic' was realised by Burges through his innate talents and artistry.

The opulent interiors are enriched with murals, stained glass, elaborate wood carvings, displays of decorative stones and gilding as well as the most romantically themed furniture and textiles. Burges used the skill and craftsmanship of many eminent local, national and international artisans of the time, including Thomas Nicholls (stone mason), Saunders and Co (stained glass), Frederick Weekes (various design details), H.W Lonsdale and N.H.J Westlake (wall painting designs), Charles Campbell (painted decoration) and Thomas John (principal wood carver).

THE PROBLEMS

In 1947, in accordance with Lord Bute's direction, the castle was given to the people of Cardiff. Since then it has survived various uses and abuses including the residency of the Welsh School of Music and their careful though not entirely informed redecoration of easy to reach elements in 1960s alkyd oil paints. The wholesale restoration of some of the rooms in the 1970s by Campbell Smith and Co, (the same company which had executed some of the original decoration for Bute) came at the expense of some original Burges designs which were



Chaucer Room ceiling

over-restored or even altered. For many years the house was used for celebrations, parties and touring visitors. The price paid for this tradition of gaiety was a legacy of soot from candles, nicotine, wine and gravy stains and breakages, all complicated by well-meaning attempts at cleaning and emergency repair work.

The municipal maintenance regime, though well intentioned, was dogged by inherent weaknesses in the building structure, dating back to the building's inception. The porous nature of the thin blocks of Forest of Dean sandstone and ever-

Arab Room ceiling



diminishing maintenance of the elaborate roof drainage systems meant that the situation could only deteriorate. With the exception of a few lone voices trying to raise awareness of the significance of the interiors it was not until the mid 1990s and the beginning of a collaborative effort between Cardiff Council, CADW, HLF and research conservators that a scope of work began to be defined.

THE TASK

The HLF funded conservation programme at Cardiff castle started in 2002. As part of the whole programme of works, external elements were treated first including the clock tower decoration, all external masonry and aspects of the proximity walls around the castle. It is important to recognise that there had been extensive historical research, analytical work and investigative trials, under the directive of the Surveyor of the fabric, to inform and underpin the work. And as with much in-depth analysis it provided valuable opportunities to look into the past and some tantalising glimpses of the ideal world, just after the original work was completed, as well as evidence for the phases of restoration that followed. The research raised many questions (quite intentionally) to inform the selection of conservators and project management team who could develop a coherent strategy for the work.

Naturally, the conservation plan and funding directives for the interiors mainly focused on the preservation of Burges's original schemes. Where these had been destabilised by rainwater damage, surface pollution and degradation from



One element from the chart of precious metals in the Summer Smoking Room

impromptu treatments, the schemes needed to be conserved with a range of sympathetic techniques and materials. This raised important questions about how much the history of ad-hoc cleaning, repairs and application of new decoration in restoration projects had changed the depiction of the schemes in each room. It was essential not only to preserve the Burges and Bute narrative for future generations but first to understand what that was.

The decorative interior programme was awarded to specialist wall painting conservators Paine & Stewart, who built up a multi-disciplined team of conservators working with many specialists from different fields in order to preserve these unique interiors. Two years of preparation led to the start of the treatment programme in April 2007 and successfully concluded with the conservation of eighteen historic interiors in April 2009, as well as vital remedial work to roofs, gutters and windows.

The following examples illustrate well the complexity of the surface decoration of the rooms that were treated. Setting aside the windows' remedial program and works to the roof drainage system, most of the conservation work took place in these rooms.

- Arab Room – a gilded arabesque tiered extravaganza with crystals, coloured glass, parrots, decorative marble and ornately carved window screens.
- Banqueting Hall – the medieval hall complete with wall paintings depicting the life of Robert the Consul, the 12th century Lord of Glamorgan, painted heraldic wooden ceiling with angels, elaborate screen, painted ashlar design with medieval motifs and marouflaged paintings of mythical beasts.
- Chaucer Room – Chaucer's tales and chivalrous images unfold in wall paintings, figurative painted stone carving, wood carvings and marquetry, wall paintings of Chaucer's characters in a cascade of interwoven nature.
- Chapel – a small space crammed with painting on slate, painted and gilded ribs, columns and capitals studded with

gilded beads and flowers.

- Roof Garden – an Italianate reverie with mosaics, tiles, figurative biblical tales, ornate bronze fountain with creatures and flowers, bronze flower troughs and shuttered windows.
- Small Dining Room – an amazingly decorative carved and gilded ceiling in the Arab style, hessian wall hangings with painted grapes and other fruits with an imposing chimney piece with angels calling to Abraham.
- Summer Smoking Room – a galleried room at the top of the clock tower displaying images of the summer seasons delights, astrological myths, allegories and biblical scenes.

All the rooms were in various states of repair prior to treatment. Only two of them, the Summer Smoking Room and the Chaucer Room, contained a majority of original untreated decoration; the remaining sixteen displayed various historic cleaning, conservation and restoration interventions. Some ceilings retained original designs and finishes, probably due to the difficulty of access at high level, particularly the Summer Smoking Room, Chaucer Room and Banqueting Hall.

Given the complex issues involved in the conservation and presentation of the castle interiors it was essential to have a coherent overall approach and not a localised one. In many areas the overpaint did not conform to the original design concept or subtlety of representation. This was reaffirmed by studying colours, designs and finishes after cleaning trials and consulting the curator on the textiles and furnishings that completed the themes. Many examples of overpaint were wildly inaccurate to the original, including changes of design, deviation of tone and use of incompatible paints or protective coatings often curtailing the narrative for each room. This is not said as a negative comment on past taste or restoration methods. The decorators who used these techniques were perhaps cutting edge at the time, when conservation was not. Criticisms from the Victorian Society went unheeded and subsequently areas of decoration were routinely obliterated, led by a maintenance regime, which included brightening up

Remnants of earlier decoration revealed in damaged areas





The Banqueting Hall before conservation

dull areas for the paying visitors. Unquestionably, the balance of particular rooms was often compromised.

CASE STUDY: THE OCTAGONAL STAIRCASE

The Octagonal staircase is one example of where a 'brightening up' phase of decorating had removed key elements. Surviving records show that a programme of restoration was undertaken in 1979 to remedy the 'very darkened' walls. In the absence of a grand entrance hall (building was stopped due to lack of funds in the early 1900s) the Octagonal staircase assumes this role. We now know that Burges had created a magical mix of heraldic symbols, fairy tales and nature with the exuberance of a Victorian funfair in the heart of the castle but important ingredients of the narrative had been lost. For instance, the lions rampant in the central pillar were completely obscured with cream paint, as was the upper wall decoration. The golden crocodile at the head of the stairs, complete with carving of a child from a famous children's tale, was over-painted with brown/cream household paint. Analysis had provided useful information to help conservators understand historic treatments but the whole balance of the scheme only became clear with good scaffold access and the ability to undertake close physical examination of the whole surface.

Trials were performed to understand how each part related to the original design. There was little historic visual evidence with the exception of some old black and white photographs. Raking light examinations and close observations highlighted the presence of designs. On the basis of all the information, strategic uncovering trials took place on a larger scale and decorated exemplars on card and paper were made for everyone involved to view and to inform the specialist



The Octagonal staircase with efflorescence damage before conservation

decorators. In this case, after conservation treatment, the decorators were responsible for recreating the red lined ashlar pattern and the lions rampant on the pillar and refining the clumsily applied, over-painted parts of the groining. This information was cross-referenced to other rooms in the castle as designs and themes were often replicated. This was especially true of the decoration identified and replicated on the window soffits of the Octagon staircase and the Winter Smoking Room ceiling design. Cross-referencing and constantly assessing the trials was essential in making sure

Application of original design in traditional materials





Detail of conserved and restored crocodile statue

that these small areas were representing the scheme as a whole.

An opportunity arose to extend uncovering trials where there was sufficient original material to provide information for future conservation as well as giving visitors an insight into the presentation of the original surfaces. One area in the staircase entrance is sheltered by being separate from the flow of people and this is also the reason why 90% of it had survived. What remained of the failed over-paint was carefully removed with the most careful scalpel technique using small amounts of solvent.

As part of the original recommendations and specification it was advised that the 1979 restoration, where it did not correspond with the original intention, be removed to reveal the original scheme and integrate the losses accordingly. Upon reflection following extensive trials it was decided that this could be potentially quite destructive and all later schemes are an integral part of the history of the interiors. The 1979 restoration reflected, in many ways, the Burges design. Also the company which undertook it was in the lineage of the original artisan, Charles Campbell. Therefore all areas which could be consolidated and recorded were, a conservation grade intervention layer used and the original design applied in traditional paints and materials.

IN CONCLUSION

To complete such a complex project successfully everyone needed to collaborate to achieve the required standards. A team had to be built up of conservators from different disciplines and highly skilled specialist sub-contractors who could understand the craftsmanship of the original interiors. The decorators had to be able to undertake, often freehand, the most difficult detail with traditional materials and the mason's carving had to be completely sympathetic and work with the original schemes. For their work they needed a safe, reliable scaffold so the specialist asked to install it had to demonstrate responsibility for working in such historic and decorative locations.

It was also essential to use the highest quality materials and equipment. Only the very best conservation grade consolidants, adhesives and paints were used while treating the decorative surfaces. Traditional materials such as lead based oil paints and scumble glazes were applied whenever feasible by specialist decorators to reinstate the original concept and facilitate an appreciation of how the interiors were portrayed originally.



Original section of decoration revealed and conserved

Many unplanned events and elements of the project informed preventative measures and future considerations. Unglamorous items such as gutter clearing and re-leading of leaking parapet roofs, surveying the windows and making them weather tight have also been addressed, thus creating a new environment for the interiors. And as a result of all this effort, with the cooperation of the castle management a whole new culture of care is being generated, particularly with a view to implementing conservation oriented housekeeping, maintenance and training, in order to involve all the staff and safeguard these complex interiors into the future.

CORE PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM:

Principal contractor Paine & Stewart (Stephen Paine and Sophie Stewart)

Site manager – Michael Sheppard

Project manager and quantity surveyor Parry & Dawkin (Anthony Dawkin)

Conservation consultant Odgers Conservation – (David Odgers in collaboration with Jenny Jacobs)

In cooperation with:

The client – Cardiff County Council (Projects Department)

The Curator – Mathew Williams

Cardiff Castle Management team

Core specialist contractors:

Hesp and Jones – specialist decorators

Colourcraft – specialist decorators

Coe Stone – stone masons

Alan & Foxworthy – scaffolders

Norgrove Studios – stained glass

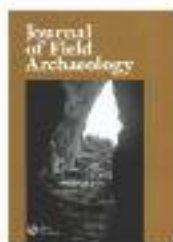
Trevor Caley Associates – tile conservation

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news from the groups

GILDING & DECORATIVE SURFACES GROUP

Following the Group AGM on November 18 at the City and Guilds of London Art School, we are very pleased to announce the election of the following committee members (contact details can be found on the Group's web pages):

Dr Campbell Norman-Smith and **Gerry Alabone** (Joint Chairs)
Ian Newman (Treasurer)

Tom Proctor (Secretary)

Alex Schouvaloff (Ordinary Member/Group Editor)

Anthea Bisson (Ordinary Member)

Claire Daly ACR (Ordinary Member/Icon News and Web Editor)

Martin Body (Ordinary Member)

Suzanne Sacorafou (Ordinary Member)

The committee would like to express its gratitude to Michael Parfett, Colleen Donaldson and Caroline Oliver (née Tragett), who have stood down, for their tremendous contribution to the Group.

Minutes from the AGM and Meeting can be found on the Group web pages, but to summarise:

- many thanks to City and Guilds staff for kindly hosting the AGM and also to Susan Millis PhD for her interesting and revealing illustrated talk: *'It's just carbon, isn't it? Pyrography and the frame'*.
- congratulations to Alison Stock, winner of the Group's last student award, for her paper *'Medieval Gilding Techniques: a practical investigation into the methods & materials for water gilding according to the treatises'*. Alison receives a £150 cheque and £150 worth of goods or materials of her choice from **Mylands**, thanks to the generosity of **Mr Dominic Myland**. We hope to support the publication of Alison's work.
- The Group has held three *'Toning, Reinstatement and Imitation of Gilding'* practical workshops at Guildhall Art Gallery, London and at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. The international conference *'Picturing the Frame: attitudes, context and treatment, from conception to consolidation'* was held at the Royal Institute of British Architects, London.
- ideas suggested at the AGM for future events included a two-day moulding and casting workshop, a decorative plaster-run day, a boule-work and marquetry day and a workshop on scagliola. It is planned to compile a questionnaire to seek



Members' opinions on Group events etc.

Dr Campbell Norman-Smith is to give a paper on the *'Development of Artificial Turtle Shell'* at the forthcoming CF10 conference, in cooperation with the Furniture Group.

Our next event will be a Practical Wood Carving for Conservators day (see Listings at the end of this issue and our web pages).

Claire Daly ACR

Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery

G&DS Group Icon News and Website Editor

PAINTINGS GROUP

The Paintings Group committee would like to wish all its members a happy new year. Our popular series of talks continues this year. Please see the events listings on page 35 or the Icon website for details. As always if you think you can help by ushering attendees or pouring drink please get in touch. We are also always looking for people to review the talks for Icon News. If you are interested in writing a review we have a written a short guide to help which we can email you.

We are planning to print the *Care of Oil Paintings* and *Care of Modern Paintings* leaflets this year. The leaflets are available to download from the Icon website so please take the time to read them and let us know of any comments or amendments needed.

Paintings Group Committee

icon.paintingsgroup@googlemail.com

SCOTLAND GROUP

We are delighted to report that our 12th Annual Plenderleith Lecture in November 2009 proved to be our best yet! Neil MacGregor provided a fascinating and thought-provoking lecture, and we sincerely thank him for it. We had the support of Historic Scotland for this event, and we extend our thanks to them also. The Hawthornden Lecture theatre in the Weston Link of the National Galleries of Scotland was a great location for those who braved the weather for the lecture and the wine reception that followed. Please see the review of the event on page 11, which has been written by one of the Icon/HLF interns, Sarah Owens. The committee would like to thank her for her quick and efficient delivery of it!

Not content to rest on our laurels, we are already planning events for this year – there will be site visits (to Kinneil House for example), the pub group meetings and much more! Details will be posted here and on the website as they are finalised. We welcome any suggestions for future visits or activities. Please contact Kirsten Elliott on kelliott@nationalgalleries.org.

The Icon Scotland Group Committee

Chair: **Linda Ramsay**

Vice Chair: **Kirsten Elliott**

Secretary: **Amanda Clydesdale**

Treasurer: **Audrey Wilson**

Vice Treasurer: **Gill Keay**

Events team: Helen Creasy, Erica Kotze, Kirsten Elliott and Elizabeth Main

Publications/ publicity team: Stephen Umpleby and Ruth Honeybone

Ordinary Committee Members: Sophie Younger, Mo Bingham

Icon Scotland Member of the Board of Trustees: Louise Lawson

Observers: Carol Brown, Craig Kennedy and Clare Meredith

TEXTILE GROUP

The Textile Group Committee would like to wish you all a Happy New Year and we look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the various events throughout the coming year. You should have already received, or will shortly be receiving, the January mailing detailing the new programme. As always we would be very pleased to hear from anyone with suggestions or ideas for events, workshops or visits, we will try to accommodate these as far as possible.

We would very much like to thank Helen Hughes, Alison Lister, Lynn McClean and other members of staff at the Burrell

Collection, Glasgow for organising a second run of the Enzyme Workshop. It was very well received, with participants coming from abroad as well as the UK.

In the coming months we will be looking to recruit some new members onto the committee, there will be vacancies for the Treasurer and two ordinary committee members and a student rep. It is a very good way of getting more involved in the profession, find out what's going on, meeting other conservators and having a say! Also good for your CPD! Please look out for further details in the January mailing and Icon Textile Group web pages.

We hope to see as many of you as possible at the main event of the year which will be the Icon conference in March. The second day will provide opportunity to attend half day seminars hosted by the Icon specialist groups and the Textile Group has joined forces with the Ethnography Group to provide an interesting range of papers on the theme *From Top to Tail: Accessories from around the World – Investigation and Research*, with an afternoon session looking at *Treatment and Display*. This session will also include the Group's AGM. For further information, programme and booking forms please see the Icon web pages.

Graduate Voice

LASER CLEANING ALABASTER: an investigation of alterations to alabaster surfaces when cleaned by 1064nm Nd:YAG laser

The Denise Lyall Prize winner Sarah Jane Short describes her Masters thesis in Conservation Studies undertaken at West Dean College

When exploring topics for research, I found that little attention had been focused on the conservation of alabaster in recent years. Compared to its close metamorphic relative, marble, there was relatively little conservation literature on this material. Alabaster can be found in an extensive array of colours, is often heavily veined or 'mottled' and is admired for its translucent qualities. As a result of such variety in colour and translucency it has been used as a decorative stone for internal architectural features, sculpture, carved mementoes and is most renowned as a material for the carving of religious sculptures, tombs, monuments, icons, or alter-piece panels.

Through bulk chemical analysis I found that the colour and translucency of the alabaster samples used in my project had a direct correlation with the percentage of silicates, or clay particles, in the stone, suggesting that they influence colour and opacity.

During my research I became aware of two different types of stone both known as alabaster.¹ Alabaster 'proper'² (CaSO₄·2H₂O) is a soft stone (Mohs hardness of 1.5-2) easily carved, easily damaged and is generally internally situated. This stone has been extracted in Britain for at least eight

centuries³. The other stone often referred to as alabaster (or 'oriental', 'Egyptian' or 'onyx-marble') is calcite alabaster (CaCO₃), a form of travertine, which has rather different properties. It is harder (Mohs hardness of 3) and is used extensively as a building material, most notably as a replacement for glass in windows of religious buildings. My research concentrated on alabaster 'proper' rather than calcite alabaster.

Amongst the conservation issues concerning alabaster, cleaning often poses a dilemma. There are a few valuable written sources expressing the use of white spirit or a white spirit solution, with de-ionised water, as the most suitable cleaning method⁴. However many other cleaning materials are readily used on the sensitive surface and concern was recently expressed in a public conservation forum about the lack of an accepted collective approach towards cleaning products on the stone. A compilation of cleaning materials known to be used on the stone and their effects on the surface is currently being assessed in the United States⁵, so I took a different route and looked at an 'alternative' or 'complementary' technique to using white spirit on alabaster, namely, laser cleaning. Despite reported success on alabaster, laser cleaning is rarely adopted as the conservator's initial surface cleaning option.

A considerable number of religious alabaster carvings have gilded and pigmented features but my research concentrated on laser cleaning an exposed alabaster surface. The primary aim was to study changes, if any, to the surface of six fresh alabasters of varying colour when using a 1064nm Nd:YAG laser. The 'changes' referred to a surface disruption induced



Sarah Jane Short laser-cleaning a piece of alabaster

by the laser, a colour difference or an alteration to the elemental chemistry after the removal of an applied dirt layer. A light application of standard test dirt was used on the samples and the aim was to remove the dirt material to an extent thought acceptable to a conservator in practice. The variables of the laser, the wavelength, the pulse energy and the pulse rate were all fixed to a fluence ⁶ of 0.25Jcm⁻², which in practice is a reasonably low energy and the laser pen, held by the conservator, is at a comfortable arm's length from the object.

The results proved interesting. Dark coloured, opaque alabasters (grey) and the deep red coloured veins on certain alabasters were found to be laser sensitive at this particular energy level. A very white alabaster suffered from the phenomenon of 'yellowing' and a dense pink alabaster with green/grey striations experienced a dramatic colour change.

The previously mentioned bulk analysis results informed me of iron present within each sample. It has been suggested that even trace elements of iron may influence a change in the colour of certain stones when cleaned with the laser ⁷. Incidentally, the white alabaster had no iron content and the dense pink alabaster had a relatively high content of iron (compared with the other samples), indicating that perhaps iron is not the only element influencing the colour changes apparent on these types of alabaster.

Interestingly, the colour change occurrence on the dense pink alabaster had subsided approximately one month later. It was not possible to make a similar observation on the white alabaster as the sample was carbon-coated for S.E.M (Scanning Electron Microscope) analysis. On the other end of the scale, translucent honey, translucent mottled brown and translucent reddish/pink alabasters (avoiding any deep veining present) did not show signs of surface disruption and the dirt layer was successfully removed.

In terms of chemical changes to the stone, a reduction of the stone's major chemical elements, calcium, sulphur and oxygen was found, 50 microns from the surface. Below 50 microns no chemical alteration was found. I compared samples cleaned using the favoured method of white spirit in a solution of de-ionised water and Synperonic A7 (a non-ionic detergent) with those treated by laser. There was also a reduction in the stones' main elements, up to 50 microns from the surface. After consultation with a geologist it has been suggested that the chemical alteration at such a small depth could be disregarded due to the temperature-dependent stability of the stone. Essentially, the stone's natural process of re-hydration effectively re-forms its exposed top layer. Needless

to say further investigation and observational work into this concept is necessary.

In terms of dirt removal I found that the white spirit solution had a tendency to remove more dirt layers than may be desired, leaving the surface, in some cases, parched. Using a laser for an initial 'light' clean could allow scope to then use the white spirit solution should a more thorough clean be desired.

Overall I was impressed with the laser. It allowed the conservator to clean the surface in a very measured way. The samples treated with the white spirit solution had marginally less chemical alteration but the result produced a heavier clean. I had estimated alterations to the sensitive surface via heat and light energy from the laser and had generally associated laser cleaning as an aggressive technique. The colour and opacity of alabaster are particularly laser-sensitive, however employed on certain colours of alabaster this method can be effective, providing you have access to a laser (another issue altogether). It may be obvious to say, but my project used test samples to simulate a 'real life' situation; in practice, on a 'real' alabaster object other factors may influence the outcome. However I hope the results of this project might prove useful to anyone considering surface cleaning alabaster with a 1064nm Nd:YAG laser.

Notes

1. Confirmed by Freestone Prof. I. C. Head of Archaeology and Conservation at Cardiff University. Email correspondence 2009.
2. Ron Firman suggests that due to ambiguous uses of the term alabaster, any record of the stone in literature should not be accepted unless it is known to have been used as alabaster; he states, 'If a block of alabaster as a whole can be carved and polished it is properly called alabaster'. Thus often referred to as 'alabaster proper'. Firman was a geologist and leading researcher on alabaster throughout Britain.
3. Firman, R J. 1984, 'A Geological Approach to the History of English Alabaster', *Mercian Geologist*, Volume 9, No.3, pp. 161-178
4. Larson, J. 1979, 'The Conservation Of Alabaster Monuments in Churches', *The Conservator*, Volume 3, ISSN 0140-0096, pp 28-33. Hubbard, C. April 1993, 'Alabaster Conservation', *V&A Conservation Journal* No7, pp 8-10. Cox, D. 2001, 'The Conservation of Alabaster', BCD Special Report, Historic Churches, Cathedral Communications Ltd.
5. Elliot, A. Kress Fellow in Objects Conservation, The Walters Art Museum, U.S.A. Correspondence 6/05/2009.
6. Fluence is the power or energy density of the laser light at the surface. The energy is measured in Joules per cm² (Jcm⁻²) and can be calculated by dividing the energy by the diameter of the laser beam spot. These readings are accurate to approximately +/-20% which is substantial but is the current standard discrepancy. Please see Cooper, M. (1998), 'Laser Cleaning in Conservation, an introduction', Butterworth Heinemann for more details.
7. Suggested reading on the topic of stone discolouration and laser cleaning: Colombo, C., Martoni, E., Realini, M., Sansonetti, A. & Valentini, G. 21-25 September 2005, 'Nd:YAG Laser Cleaning of Red Stone Materials: Evaluation of the Damage', *Lasers in the Conservation of Artworks* LACONA VI, Klein, S., Hildenhagen, J. & Dickmann, K. 'Discoloration of marble during laser cleaning by Nd:YAG laser wavelengths', (2001), 'Lasers in the Conservation of Artworks', LACONA IV, Paris, ICOMOS

Acknowledgments

Thank you to everyone who found the time to email me with advice, reports and information. Special thanks to Lorna Calcutt, Ken Watt, David Dorning, Nick Umney, Richard Cook, Dr. David Dungworth, Dr. Martin Cooper, Dr. Anthony Cooper, Mr. Mark Ingham, Charlotte Hubbard and Zachariah Whitridge.

reviews

COURSE

CONSERVATION METHODOLOGY

Professional Conservators in Practice

West Dean College 16–19 November 2009

Introduction

Conservation Methodology was held at West Dean as one of the courses in their *Professional Conservators in Practice* series. It was inspired by and loosely based on the three week ICCROM course *Sharing Conservation Decisions* described by Helen Hughes in *Icon News*, March 2007. The course leaders at West Dean were **Helen Hughes** and **Dinah Eastop**, with additional input from **Roslia Varoli-Piazza**, **Dean Sully** and **Susan Bradshaw**. Here, three participants give their reaction to the course.

I signed up for the course as a direct result of reading Helen Hughes' review of the ICCROM course. I have been a conservator for twenty five years, but have worked for the last seven years at the Whitworth Art Gallery which has a demanding exhibition programme, a dedicated collections access policy and a considerable and growing collection of contemporary works. These factors, together with my part-time PhD studies on a non-conservation subject – embroidery collecting, have combined to make me re-consider the role of conservators within art galleries and museums. I was hoping that *Conservation Methodology* would provide a framework for taking these considerations further, and my hopes were fulfilled. Eleven of us, from a variety of institutions, private practice and experiences spent three days in seminar workshops and lectures. Discussions were honest, lively and varied, and while perhaps no firm conclusions were met; problems were shared and debated, and new pathways opened up and solutions suggested. A thoroughly worthwhile experience that I hope will be repeated for others to enjoy.

Ann French Conservator (Textiles)
The Whitworth Art Gallery
The University of Manchester

Helen Hughes (centre) and Dinah Eastop (r)



Since setting up my private practice in April 2006 I have attended a number of practical workshops but felt that I needed to expand my knowledge of decision making/ethical issues. I must confess, I thought *Conservation Methodology* might be rather dry but I could not have been more mistaken! From the first group session on the Monday evening, when we were each asked to talk about the 'life story' of our given object, through to the 'people based' conservation of a Maori meeting house near Guildford, via an analysis of the preservation issues within the film *Toy Story*, it was clear we were experiencing a slightly different take on issues surrounding the conservation of cultural heritage. It was obvious the course leaders had put much time and effort into the preparation of the material and this, coupled with good company and great food, made for a thoroughly informative and enjoyable four days.

My attendance at the course was made possible by grants from The Anna Plowden Trust and The Clothworkers' Foundation, to whom I am extremely grateful.

Louise Vaile

Partner, Ogilvie Vaile Conservation
Specialising in the conservation of works of art on paper

I was delighted to join this four day course which offers an excellent opportunity to join experienced professionals and to take part in discussions on a wide range of conservation issues and the transformation of the profession today. The days were jam-packed with a variety of absorbing and thought provoking events and we were joined by leading academics presenting a wide programme on the conservation of cultural heritage.

The course encourages conservators to consider the decision making processes from a global perspective and to take part in discussion on challenging issues from the knotty subject of terminology to the power of the conservator's voice. As a student I found it engaging and inclusive, I am grateful to those who made it possible for me to attend and would highly recommend it to any professional or student in the field.

Ms Isobel M Watts

GDP Conservation, Lincoln University

WORKSHOP

BLEACHING FOR THE BEWILDERED

Icon Book and Paper Group
British Museum, Orsman Road
30 October 2009

As soon as the notice came out for the workshop I knew I had to attend and, so great was the interest that it was conducted



(From left to right) Megumi Mizumura, Vincent Daniels, Bryan Clarke and Judith Gowland

on two consecutive days to satisfy demand.

Judith Gowland and **Bryan Clarke** started the day with brief introductions and an overview of the techniques to be covered. We were a mixed bunch of conservators, some recently trained, others like myself with over ten years experience. An interesting point that arose early on was that those who had recently graduated had little experience of using bleach as it was not covered in any depth on their training courses. There were many sharp intakes of breath when the words chloramine T, chlorine dioxide and potassium permanganate were mentioned. To many paper conservators these bleaches are unfamiliar and rarely used – to others a hark back to the dark ages.

We were split into two groups of six and alternated between Judith and Bryan demonstrating the various techniques. Judith showed the groups light bleaching, hydrogen peroxide and the vivid potassium permanganate whilst Bryan tackled the more daring such as chloramine T and chlorine dioxide, coming together at the end to show sodium borohydride in water and IMS. Throughout the day **Vincent Daniels** was on hand to do the 'science bit' and answer the trickier questions.

Treatments were carried out on various types of paper from newsprint, a page from *Punch*, to a water colour, prints and coloured lithographs. Given that we only had a day, and to enable us to get results quickly, the test papers were only used in the various bleaches using immersion but other techniques such as spot and spray were mentioned. It was made quite clear that immersion is not advisable with all the bleaches and on all papers.

The most crucial part of the day was when all the rinsed, dry test papers were laid out together on the desk. The papers treated with potassium permanganate held up surprisingly well and on some papers had worked really well. Chlorine dioxide had the best results on 19thC paper with foxing although it had a detrimental effect on the coloured prints. It was no surprise that light bleaching had the most subtle results, to some maybe enough. It was an excellent chance to see how the different types of paper had reacted to the different bleaches. A new generation of paper conservators have now had the chance to smell that distinctive aroma of paper treated with chloramine T but not rinsed out adequately!

Thanks to Judith and Bryan for turning an idea into a reality as well as those at the BM

particularly Sherry Doyal for allowing us the time and space at Orsman Road; special mention must be made to Megumi Mizumura. It was a very interesting and enlightening day on a subject that has become a bit of a dirty word. Used appropriately and on the right material the results speak for themselves but it is not a panacea for everything.

As ever Vincent had the final word:

'...remember, there are stains that can never be removed...'

Emily O'Reilly ACR (Officially un-bewildered by bleach)
National Museum Wales

MEETINGS

PITH PAINTINGS

Icon Book and Paper Group
London 20 October 2009

Pith paintings usually come with a warning: proceed with care. The Book and Paper Group lecture provided a welcome overview of this obscure genre. There were three complementary elements to the evening: an historical overview by **Ifan Williams**, a conservator's perspective by **Ruth Prosser** and a unique table display of plant materials and artefacts.

Pith is a natural material, cut with a knife, from the inner spongy tissue of a small tree *Tetrapanax Papyrifera*, native to South West China. Once cut, dried and pressed it needs no further preparation and provides a very receptive surface to watercolour and gouache. This particular form of Chinese export art was developed in Canton during the 1820s for the tourist trade. Thousands of these decorative pictures, mounted in brocade albums, were bought back to the West by 19th century travellers. The genre died out in the 1920s.

Ifan Williams showed us fascinating highlights from three collections. First, Count Carlo Vidua, a committed and wealthy traveller visited Canton in 1828 where he bought 350 paintings on pith, which are now in the Municipal Museum in Casale Monferrato. He selected images of Chinese customs and activities, such as silk making; they remain an important reference source. Second, Baron Charles de Chassiron, who went to China and Japan in 1858 as part of a mission to open up trade. Though the mission got caught up in the second Opium War it did not stop him bringing back a large collection of art, including eight albums of pith paintings. The albums contain delightful images ranging from fish to theatrical performers in glorious colours. Ifan talked us through the popular story of 'A boy growing up' – a story richly illustrated with ceremonial figures and family set pieces. And third, Tsar Nicholas, then Crown Prince of Russia, was sent to the Far East in 1890 so that he could appreciate the immensity of the Empire that



he would inherit. His collection of twelve albums survives in the Anthropological Museum in St Petersburg.

Ruth Prosser, a practising paper conservator, gave a highly informative talk about the making of pith sheets and shared her current research work on pith morphology and conservation techniques. The pith plant was identified in 1856 by William J Hooker. Ruth summarised its manufacture: branches from the tree were harvested every few years when the internal stem 'pith' was 2"-3" in diameter; the bark was soaked and peeled away and the pith rods left to dry in the sun; these were then cut in a rotary manner to make thin sheets which were pressed flat and trimmed before painting. Ruth had sourced fascinating material from The Economic Botany Collection at Kew. The EBC have a range of pith related objects, including 19thC samples, a ceramic cutting slab and heavy knives used to cut the rod around the rotary grain. This work required intense concentration and practitioners would make sheets at night when it was quiet. Ruth presented diagrammatic sections of plant stems comparing single-walled cells of parenchyma tissue (that makes up pith paper) with the double-walled sclerenchyma cells in paper. From scanning electron microscope images we were able to see the simple honey-comb arrangement of pith cells compared to the complex structure of paper. The characteristic delicate sponginess of pith is determined by its structure. Unlike paper fibres, pith cells are not processed and therefore retain hemicelluloses, pectins and proteins. Fibres in paper are held together by physical entanglement and hydrogen bonds, whereas pith cells are held together by pectins in the middle lamella. Watercolour pigments fill the cells and produce a raised velvety effect. Ruth cited other research work identifying natural and manufactured pigments. When wetted, pith curls up or expands and can be moulded to retain its shape, hence its usage for flower decorations and hanging ornaments.

Ruth outlined some conservation principles and procedures. Pith requires minimal gentle handling, as it will mark or abrade with the slightest pressure. Washing is not recommended as immersion in water or alkaline treatment is likely to affect the pectins and hemicelluloses and destroy the integrity of the pith tissue. Tears and cracks often appear from mounting constrictions when the sheet shrinks. Sheets were commonly tipped onto paper supports with animal glue at the corners and cut lengths of blue silk ribbon cradled the four sides. Pith substrate cannot be conventionally repaired, as it is not possible to overlap or pare down the abrupt edges of split pith. Ruth made repairs using methyl cellulose and fine Japanese paper strips. Small amounts of water can be applied locally to swell and align the edges. Repairs are held using minimal pressure under small glass



weights. Conventional pressing is not recommended as it would crush the lively surface. When storing or displaying every effort should be made to retain the original ribbon supports or reconstruct the holding method without constricting movement of the pith. They are best kept flat. Pith prefers a cool and slightly humid environment to reduce shrinkage and tearing.

Ifan had assembled a unique array of artefacts. As well as repaired pictures, it was illuminating to see the plant itself and handle pith scrolls and newly cut and pressed sheets from Taiwan. There was possibly the last packet of dyed pith for children's craftwork produced from Taiwan in 1994 and it was humbling to see these rare materials. Finally there were questions and discussions about the medicinal use of pith in Chinese medicine and Canton studios working methods.

Our thanks to the organisers for arranging an excellent evening

For further information on the subject matter, please email:

Ruth Prosser - ruth.prosser@hotmail.co.uk or
Ifan Williams - ifan@ipgwyn.free-online.co.uk

Penny Jenkins

LET'S TALK ABOUT PHOTOGRAPHY

Series 2009 Review

Photographic Materials Group

2009 First Event

The 2009 LTAP series was invited by the British Library to join its 'The Wonderful World of Early Photography: A Discovery Day' on November 7. The event was packed with talks, demonstrations, workshops, preservation advice sessions and a viewing of its photograph exhibition 'Points of View: Capturing the 19th Century in Photographs'.

The LTAP lecture 'Photographic History without Photographs' was the first talk of the day and was given by photograph historian **Michael Pritchard** to a very diverse audience of distinguished photographic historians and academics, conservators and museum curators and many members of the public all interested in one way or another in the history of the medium. Michael's hour-long talk was aimed at all of these audiences and gave a clear and comprehensive review of photographic history without, as is usually the case, concentrating on the photograph. Michael's lecture provided a survey of some of the lesser known and less used sources for photographic history which can help us understand some of the wider influences on the development of photography through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. He invited us to study the history of photography from a different angle and not just only rely on one source to understand its development and impact. For him the



Michael Pritchard

photographic image itself is simply one source that informs the history of the medium. Its content in terms of subject matter and its physical appearance were the end result of a developing technology, changing methods of retailing and marketing and new methods of conducting business, as well as wider economic changes and developments within society. The lecture invited the audience to think about which historical sources we use and discussed how we perhaps have an over-reliance on photographic images to tell their own story.

Michael's research proposes a new history of photography based upon the business and economic history of photographic manufacturing and retailing. This relies on a range of sources that have, in his opinion, been largely overlooked by photographic historians. He used many images to illustrate his thesis and covered four main sources of photographic history: patents, trade catalogues, corporate documents and advertising materials. Patents help us understand and quantify the technological changes taking place within the medium. Analyses of patents have helped revise the dating of the impact of inventions that had been derived previously from other more subjective sources.

Michael exposed how the trade catalogue and an examination of the advertising and marketing of photography give an insight into the way photographic goods and materials were made available to the professional studio photographer and, more importantly, to the amateur photographer particularly from the 1880s and 1890s. He illustrated many of the techniques that retailers use today: discounting, buy-one get-one free, competitions and coupons were all being used by photographic manufacturers (and also in other areas of retailing) from the 1890s. The massive trade catalogues being produced by 'Butcher and Fallowfield', for example, had commercial aims no different from those of 'Argos' and 'Ikea' today. In addition he explained how corporate records can help us to a greater understanding of the history of photography as in many instances they collect information not printed in trade catalogues, as well financial data not usually publicly available.

Michael Pritchard was Director of photographic auctions at Christie's, London, for over twenty years. He has contributed to a wide range of publications on photographic history and is currently working on a PhD at De Montfort University, looking at the development of British photographic manufacturing in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He has just been appointed a Research Fellow. We would like to thank Michael for his time and work, and wish him all the best for his research.

2009 Second Event

For the second year running, the Let's Talk About Photography series travels North thanks to the support of the Icon Scotland Group. At the time of writing, the event has not yet taken place but is organised for 9 December at the General Register House, Edinburgh. The programme contained two talks, the first by **Michael Pritchard** who has kindly agreed to repeat his talk in Edinburgh and the second by **Dr Alison D. Morrison-Low** on the 'The Scottish Society for the History of Photography: past, present and future'.

Future of LTAP series

For my part as the *Let's Talk About Photography* organiser I would like to use this opportunity to thank the Photographic Materials Group committee for endorsing this initiative and all of you that have supported the series over the past three years. It has covered a wide range of topics including the development of a new strategy to update preservation systems for a negative collection, the celebration of the 100 year anniversary of the autochromes process, discussion with contemporary artists/photographers about their work and understanding of photography history from different points of view. Besides the talks themselves, the LTAP series has also promoted in various forms networking and knowledge dissemination. One example has been the collaboration with Scotland Group who kindly hosted and supported the LTAP series for audiences in the North.

After three years, I am now stepping down from this volunteer position and would like to invite you to take over the organization of this fruitful and enriching venture to promote and enhance the field of photography, its preservation and conservation.

Àngels Arribas MA, Conservator of Photographs in Private Practice

SCRAPING GUT AND PLUCKING FEATHERS:

The deterioration and conservation of feather and gut materials.

Icon Ethnography Group
Kings Manor, University of York 6 October 2009

.....

This meeting brought together conservators, natural history specialists and curators from all over Britain as well as Germany and North America to discuss the properties and conservation of two fascinating materials. Split into three sessions, the first third of the day contained presentations on feathers.

Hein van Grouw of the Natural History Museum in Tring showed us the feather as a component of the living bird; highlighting aspects such as structure and colouring, he provided an excellent foundation for the rest of the day. Although health and safety prevented the use of a live bird model it was

also a beautifully illustrated talk. The next paper by **Katrina Cook**, also of the NHM, showed us the breadth of the study collection at Tring and the particular conservation problems she encounters and the solutions for these that she has found useful. **Ellen Pearlstein** then presented a summary of current research at the Getty Conservation Institute/UCLA on feather colour fading. Both the method and findings of this were a fascinating paper with relevance to all the collections represented in the room and I am sure I am not the only one who hopes to hear more from the project in the future.

The next set of talks were all on gut parka conservation carried out respectively by **Kate Jackson** and **Andrew Hughes** of the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford, **Pippa Cruickshank** and **Vanessa Saiz Gomez** of the British Museum and **Sandra Gottsman** of the Reiss-Engelhorn Museen in Mannheim, Germany. The three papers complemented each other having just enough in common to provide an overview of current practice in the conservation of these objects and just enough variance to remind us that with anthropological artefacts the variety is what keeps the work interesting.

Jackson and Hughes' gut skin items had been previously exhibited in the historic Pitt Rivers permanent display and their paper described the re-treatment and remounting of these three objects. Their use of sausage skin as a filler material was particularly interesting to the audience who had plenty of questions regarding preparation and sourcing. Saiz Gomez and Cruickshank's parka had also been previously treated but for once the previous conservation was still performing well; this was particularly cheering to the many conservators in the audience. The paper also described the construction of the mount, a theme in all three papers. Gottsman's paper was strong on the technology of gut parkas with some lovely diagrams of its construction. She also received an enthusiastic response to her use of a papier mache custom mount.

The final segment of the day was a short but illuminating demonstration of feather conservation techniques from the very knowledgeable **Allyson Rae**. An impressive audiovisual setup provided by the venue was a small camera mounted over her bench which relayed immediately to the presentation screen behind her allowing a clear view to all the audience of the cleaning and repair techniques she demonstrated. This, along with the small poster session, bibliography and well timed programming contributed to a thoroughly interesting and enjoyable day.

Georgina Garrett
Deputy Head of Collections Conservation & Care, Horniman Museum, London

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in practice

REPLICATING SKIN TEXTURES AND FUR USING JAPANESE PAPER

by Stephen Umpleby ACR, Objects Conservator in Private Practice and part-time Applied Arts Conservator at the Museum of London

BACKGROUND

As part of the recent relocation, redisplay and reopening of the University of Dundee's D'Arcy Thompson Zoology Museum to the University's Carnelley Building, a number of Natural History specimens were selected for display which required conservation treatment. It was necessary for the

specimens to be conserved to a complete and displayable standard. The condition and variety of specimens gave rise to a need to devise new techniques and to use conservation materials and techniques in innovative ways, often with an interdisciplinary approach. This article will highlight the versatility of Japanese paper, its strength and flexibility in structural repairs not only in the conservation of Natural History specimens but also its possible applications in other areas of conservation in the replication of a variety of skin textures and fur. The following are a few examples showing the use of Japanese Mulberry paper, specifically 20gsm, in conjunction with pH neutral reversible PVA adhesive for structural repairs, the recreation of missing elements and to replicate fur and different skin textures.

FOX (UNIDENTIFIED SPECIES)

It was necessary to recreate large missing sections of the ears of a Fox specimen. The ears were built up in stages from what was remaining of the ears of the specimen using torn strips of Japanese paper coated in reversible PVA adhesive. The long Mulberry fibres and deckled edges of the torn strips were useful in providing strength and flexibility and to make an effective adhesive join with reversible PVA at the torn edges. The Japanese paper was applied in overlapping layers to follow the contours, shape and size of what was remaining of the specimen's ears. To achieve a velvety texture similar to



Detail of ears showing large losses, before treatment



Detail of ears being built up with Japanese paper during reconstruction

Detail of shape and size of reconstructed ears, during treatment



Detail of reconstructed ears with applied dog hairs, during treatment

Detail of reconstructed ears after colour-matching and cutting down of hairs, after treatment





Detail of wire core armature of reconstructed tail



Detail of cellulose compound modelled core of the reconstructed tail



Detail of Japanese paper/PVA covering over core of reconstructed tail, after colour matching, simulating skin and crest



Overall view of the caimen, before treatment



Overall view of the caimen after treatment

that of the skin on the inner surfaces of the ears, strips of dry paper were adhered onto paper wetted with PVA adhesive to achieve a rough surface texture which could be further enhanced by roughing the paper fibres with a stiff bristle brush. The shape and size of the reconstructed ears were based on viewing images of similar specimens of fox as well as following the contours of the existing ears. Due to the extent of the losses to the fur at the ears it was necessary to find a source of hair that was similar in length, colour and thickness to that of the specimen but would still appear as non-original on close visual and technical examination. Loose dog hairs were collected from an unaware but nevertheless willing pet (Bruno) which were first washed in deionised water and dried. The hairs were then aligned as far as possible and arranged in small flattened bundles prior to applying them in position to the reconstructed Japanese paper ears. The thicker bases of the hair bundles were coated and wetted in reversible PVA and applied in consecutive, overlapping lines to build up a covering of hair. The bundles of dog hair were applied in overlapping lines starting at the inner edges and outer surfaces to meet with the existing hairs of the specimen. After a full covering of hair had been achieved, a wash of acrylic paint was applied to the dog hairs to further match the colour of the hairs to that of the specimen. The inner surfaces of the reconstructed Japanese paper ears were further colour matched with acrylic paints. The dog hairs at the reconstructed ears were shaved and cut down with a scalpel as necessary to achieve a uniform appearance and length and

to blend them into the hairs of the specimen. Using this technique it was possible to build up a sheet of skin and hairs replicating the fur of the original specimen.

CAIMEN

During the conservation of a Caimen specimen it was necessary to reconstruct the missing section of the end of the tail in order for the specimen to appear complete for display. To reconstruct the missing tail section correctly the appearance and extent of the tail in its complete state had to be determined, which was done by examining the tails of other caimen specimens to determine the structure and appearance of the tail and how it would have appeared when complete.

The missing section of tail was reconstructed in stages. A galvanised fine wire mesh armature was modelled to follow the contours, shape and estimated length of the missing tail section and secured in position with long stainless steel U-shaped wire dowels which were passed through the wire mesh core of the reconstructed tail section and pushed into the wood fibre internal padding of the specimen. The wire mesh core was then built up in size and shape to meet with the end of the existing tail section of the specimen with a cellulose compound sculpting clay (Amaco Sculptamold). The join between the existing tail section and the reconstructed section was further strengthened with torn strips of Japanese paper with the deckled edges coated with reversible PVA adhesive and adhered to the break edge of the specimen



Detail of proper left leg and foot, before treatment



Detail of proper left leg and foot, during treatment



Detail of proper left leg and foot, after treatment

with edges slightly overlapping at the join.

Successive strips of Japanese paper were then applied around the modelled reconstructed tail section. When coated in PVA adhesive and allowed to dry Japanese paper was seen to achieve a translucent, shiny quality similar to the texture and appearance of the skin and scales of the specimen. Acrylic paints could also be added to the PVA adhesive at the time of coating the paper to achieve an even base colour over which a final colour-matching with acrylic paints could be made. Excess paper strips were left at the top to form a crest of skin, which were then cut and shaped to form a continuation of the crest running along the top of the Caimen's back and tail.

RHEA

The conservation of a Rhea specimen necessitated the repair of tears and losses to the skin at the legs. The skin was extremely brittle, inflexible and unstable with numerous splits, tears, large losses and lifting skin at the break edges and evidence of previous insect damage. The steel internal supports, visible in the areas of damage and loss, were corroded in places with loose surface corrosion but appeared to be stable in supporting the specimen.

Following surface cleaning of the specimen and reduction of corrosion products on the accessible surfaces of the internal wire supports, Japanese paper with reversible PVA adhesive was chosen to make backing repairs to the tears in the skin and to bring break edges back together as well as to provide fills and to conceal the bones and supporting rods inside the legs.

Polyester wadding was used to pad out the cavity between the bones and ferrous supporting rods in the legs and the overlying skin surfaces. The inert padding would not only provide additional support to the unstable and damaged skin surfaces but would also minimise any movement of the skin surfaces and would provide a base onto which any necessary fills and repairs could be made.

The surface texture of the skin scales on the fronts of the legs was replicated using multiple layers of torn strips of Japanese paper coated and adhered together with reversible PVA to form larger, thicker sheets. These thicker sheets of paper, while still wet, were then cut out into individual scales. The curved shapes of the scales were achieved by wrapping each individually cut scale over the handle of a paintbrush as a former while still wet and left until almost dry. Individual scales were then in turn adhered separately, using reversible PVA adhesive and whilst still largely flexible, to the underlying Japanese paper infills, with each scale overlapping to meet with the existing scales on the legs. The infills and repairs to the surfaces of the legs and feet were then colour-matched to the surrounding colour and texture of the specimen with acrylic paints.

CONCLUSION

The conservation of a wide variety of zoological specimens with different skin textures and losses presented many challenges through devising a range of suitable treatment options and techniques. It was found possible to achieve a wide variety of skin textures with varying surfaces and translucency by varying the concentration of PVA adhesive applied to the Japanese paper, as well as in the method of building up the surface in successive layers to the desired thickness. The conservation of the specimens was challenging and I hope some of the solutions utilising Japanese paper and reversible PVA adhesive may be of some help to those who may have to replicate different skin textures and fur in other areas of conservation.

Acknowledgements

I am very grateful to Laurence Simmen, Natural History Conservator at Glasgow Museums, for his help and advice and to Matthew Jarron, Curator of Museum Services at the University of Dundee.

listings

Full details of all the events listed here can be found on the Icon website www.icon.org.uk

Icon Offices: Please note that many events are now being held at the Icon Offices at 1st Floor, Downstream Building, 1 London Bridge, London SE1 9BG. Security clearance for entry into the building must be arranged in advance so please follow any instructions included in the listings entry. The Icon website provides comprehensive directions on how to find the offices – from the home page, go to 'About Icon' and then to the 'Find us' page.

27 January, 6.30pm Icon Paintings Group The Fine Art of Crime

Venue: Icon Offices, London
Speaker: Richard 'Dick' Ellis, Art Management Group.

The specialist art crime investigator will expose the real motives and trends in cultural property crime, show how art is used by organised crime and reveal how art can become the crime itself.

Cost: £5 (£10 non-members)
Contact: register with Clare Finn on email FinnClare@aol.com or tel: 020 7937 1895, no later than 25 January.

3 February Icon Metals Group Soldering to Welding

Venue: Chilcomb House, Chilcomb Lane, Winchester, SO23 8RD
One-day hands-on workshop, providing an introduction into the practical applications of welding and soldering techniques. Learn the basics for a number of processes including Silver Soldering, Brazing, Gas and Electric Arc Welding and how these technologies were applied in our industrial and social history.

Cost: £65 (£75 non-members, £55 students)
Contact: Register by 27 January with Jacqui Ready on email: jacqui.ready@hants.gov.uk or tel: 01962 826700/826719

3 February Icon Gilding and Decorated Surfaces Group Practical Wood Carving for Conservators

Venue: Austrey, Warwickshire
Tutor: Michael Painter
Tuition and demonstrations on correct tool use and handling, chisel sharpening, holding and fixing the carving and the procedure for in-carving lost elements to carved picture frames or furniture. There will be a talk on reverse boxwood moulds, which were used in the manufacture of compo ornaments and a demonstration on how they were carved. Complete beginners and advanced carvers are most welcome and tools and materials will be provided.

Cost: £95 (£115 non-members, £75 students)
Contact: Claire Daly on email Claire.daly@birmingham.gov.uk or visit the group pages on the Icon website.

4 February Introduction to Conservation

Venue: The British Museum, London
This introductory event will aim to address the conservation approach, assessment and treatment of composite organic and metal objects. It will also include a session for those considering a PACR application.

Cost: Free
Contact: Elliott Nixon on elliott.nixon@hotmail.co.uk to reserve a place.

23 February, 6pm Icon Book and Paper Group Globe Sphere X-Radiography at the National Maritime Museum

Venue: Icon Offices, London
Speaker: Paul Cook ACR
An intact globe sphere reveals little of the possible complexities of construction beneath the drawn or printed image. X-ray imaging provides a non destructive method to investigate these otherwise inscrutable structures. Some seventy globes from the Museum collection have so far been X-ray imaged and some of the more interesting and unusual aspects of this investigation will be presented.

Cost: £10 (£15 non-members, £6 students)
Contact: Register by 19 February 2010 with Maria Vilaincour on email: mariavilaincour@hotmail.com

3 March, 6.30pm Icon Paintings Group Picasso, Materials and Antibes

Venue: Icon Offices, London
Speaker: Marilyn McCully, American Art Historian and Exhibition Organiser.
Picasso's activity in Antibes, over a period of several months in 1946, had a number of important consequences for his subsequent artistic practice. From an art-historical perspective, the place itself, changes in the artist's personal circumstances, and the political climate of the immediate post-war years stimulated a revitalized scale and a new subject matter in his work.

Cost: £5 (£10 non-members)
Contact: register with Clare Finn on email FinnClare@aol.com or tel: 020 7937 1895, no later than 1 March.

5 March Icon Book and Paper Group Consolidation Workshop

Venue: V&A Museum, London
Tutors: Alan Derbyshire, Susan Catcher, Nicola Costaras, Merryl Huxtable, Mike Wheeler.

Looking at various methods used by conservators in the Paper, Books and Paintings Section at the V&A for consolidating pigments and friable media. Starting with a general introduction to consolidation followed by practical demonstrations from each of the tutors of their particular process of consolidation, including portrait miniatures, Indian miniatures, paintings, wallpaper etc. Participants will have a chance to try out these various methods for themselves. The workshop will end with an open discussion of the different methodologies and consolidants used.

Cost: £75 (£100 non-members, £6 students)
Contact: Jane Rutherford, Senior Book Conservator on email janer@vam.ac.uk

24 March, pm PACR Clinic, Cardiff Further details via the Icon website

25-26 March Icon Conference 2010 Conservation in Focus

Venue: Cardiff
Two day conference to include plenary sessions for all members and half-day Group events.
Further details via the Icon website.

12–15 April

Society of Archivists Conservation Training Scheme Chemistry Week

Venue: University of Sussex

Tutor: David Dorning

An intensive residential chemistry course organised primarily for trainees on the scheme but suitable for all conservators.

Cost: £620 (Society members £515)

Contact: the Society on membership@archives.org.uk or via the website www.archives.org.uk

13 April, 11.00–15.30

Introduction to CPD Workshop, Oxford

Further details via the Icon website

14 April

PACR Clinic, London

Further details via the Icon website

20 April

PACR Clinic, York

Further details via the Icon website

11 May, 6pm

Icon Book and Paper Group 'The Snail and the Baptism'

Venue: Icon Offices, London

Speaker: Piers Townshend ACR, Tate Gallery

An illustrated talk about paper conservation at the Tate. Conservators are hoping to find a safe way to transport The Snail by H. Matisse to New York. Plus washing and repair of chalk on paper on canvas on a grand scale with the treatment of The Baptism of Ethelbert by William Dyce.

These examples will lead into a discussion about exhibition servicing, possible de-skilling of museum conservators and ways to avert this.

Cost: £10 (£15 non-members, £6 students)

Contact: Register by 7 May with Maria Vilaincour on email:

mariavilaincour@hotmail.com.

20–23 May

Icon Ceramics and Glass Group 'All Things Bright and Crumbly, All Projects Great and Small'

Venue: The University of Lincoln

The conference aims to be a celebration of the diversity within our profession.

Presentations will be divided into three main topical areas: Architectural Ceramics, Related Materials and Current Research and Practice. Practical demonstrations and site tours will be taking place on 22 May.

Cost: £100 members (£220 non-members, £65 students)

Contact: kmagill@thebritishmuseum.ac.uk

Further details via the Icon website

27–28 May

IADA Symposium 2010 Out of Sight – Out of Mind?

Venue: Prague

Dedicated to collections management of paper-related cultural heritage.

Further details via the Icon website

September

Icon Ethnography Group Baskets and Related Materials

Symposium and 3-day practical workshop led by Sherry Doyal and Barbara Wills in conjunction with the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew.

Further details via the Icon website

20–24 September

IIC Istanbul Congress Conservation and the Eastern Mediterranean

Further details via the Icon website

23–27 September

IPH Congress 2010

Venue: Angoulême, France

Three main themes for the event; Side-industries and crafts connected to papermaking, Paper Economy and Trade: national and international interactions, The Uses of Paper: gestures, words, expertise. Further details via the Icon website.

6–8 October

Big Stuff 2010

Venue: The Imperial War Museum, Duxford

On the conflict and avoidance of conflict between the display and conservation requirements of Large Technology Objects within the museum setting.

Contact: Chris Knapp ACR, Conservation Manager, Imperial War Museum, Duxford, email: cknapp@iwm.org.uk

11–15 October

ICOM-CC Metal WG International Conference on Historic Metals Conservation

Venue: Charleston, South Carolina, USA

Winter

Conservation Matters in Wales

Scary Objects

Venue: Cynon Valley Museum, Aberdare

Case studies of work on scary or dangerous objects or on work that presents safety challenges because of the location.

Contact: Lyn.Weaver@museumwales.ac.uk

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- More PACR information and booking forms are in the Accreditation/CPD section.