

Icon NEWS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION • JULY 2007 • ISSUE 11



Starting work on a 13th century stained glass window

Also in this issue

Two new conservation studios

The Faddan More Psalter – a year on

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07

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JULY 2007

Issue 11

It has been a pleasure and a privilege to visit not one but two new conservation studios in recent weeks, providing an interesting contrast in scale and style but comparable in enthusiasm for their new facilities and plans for the future. First was the British Library's Conservation Centre with its large staff complement and important education and training initiatives. The second was the reopened Wellcome Collection and Library, where a small team looks forward to getting the most out of the astonishingly rich Wellcome holdings for the benefit of the collections and their users. You can read about both of them in this issue and Listings (p.49) carries information about tours of the BL Centre specially reserved for Icon members.

Elsewhere, we learn about the issues facing conservators in a range of different areas: dealing with the Faddan More Psalter since its amazing find last year in an Irish peat bog, how to approach an early stained glass window in York Minster and the problems of conserving New Zealand Flax. And lots more besides.

Lynette Gill, Editor



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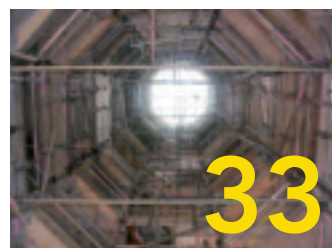
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Cover picture:
Detail of a window, CHnIX panel 2b, in the Chapter House Vestibule at York Minster before conservation work begins. Image © The Dean and Chapter of York Minster.

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around & about



The Cutty Sark Trust

Cutty Sark

*When fire swept through the historic tea clipper, Cutty Sark, images beamed around the world showed an icon of world maritime heritage seemingly lost for ever. But all is not lost, as more than half the ship's fabric was already safely stored for conservation work. **George Monger**, Conservation Consultant to the Cutty Sark Trust, puts us in the picture:*

Conservators may be interested in the current situation at the Cutty Sark following the fire on 21 May 2007. There has been a great deal of discussion in the press and media as to whether the ship will be 're-built', whether the 'restored' ship would be a replica and how much of the ship has been destroyed.

There are too many issues here to go into detail in a short note; however, the facts are: all of the deck housing, furniture, cabin fittings, collections, masts, figureheads and 50% of the hull timbers had been removed in preparation for, and as part of the conservation work.

The major loss has been the decks. However, the deck in the hold area was not original and was due to be removed and replaced with a decking which will allow visitors to be able to see the ship's construction in the bilges. The 'tween deck was a replacement and the main deck – although

having some original timbers – was a composite structure which was going to be re-laid/replaced.

The remaining hull planks were charred by the fire but are thick, dense wood so suffered little loss.

The big question is how much of the iron work has been damaged. It is evident that some of the deck stringers, the sheer strake and hatchway covings have buckled but the



The Cutty Sark Trust



The Cutty Sark prior to the conservation project.

iron frames have yet to be properly surveyed and measured but appear to have suffered little damage.

The result of the fire is that the project has been put back several months, with much of the work in planning and designing the roofing over the dry dock and the cradling and support system having to be started again.

All of this inevitably has increased the cost of the whole project by approximately £5m so that the Trust now needs to raise around £10m which the Cutty Sark Trust and Cutty Sark Enterprises are working hard to raise.

Meanwhile the conservation project continues and the whole project team are determined that this fire will only be a set-back and Cutty Sark will be properly conserved, interpreted and displayed in all her glory.

Book Award

In our May issue Icon News carried a warm review of *Stone Conservation: Principles and Practice*, edited by Alison Henry and published by Donhead Publishing. Confirming that our reviewers' judgements are spot on comes the news that the book has won The Sir Robert McAlpine International Book Award for Construction 2007. The award recognises exceptional writing on the construction and restoration of buildings, building design and building method and the use of new materials and technologies across the construction industry. The award is supported by RIBA and the judges come mainly from the world of architecture; the jury chair commented '...there is a passionate dedication to the topic which, although it is a

collection of pieces by different authors, shines out through proper writing'. As Donhead's managing editor and publisher rightly said on accepting the award '...for a book on conservation to be recognised in this way is a major achievement for this highly specialist field'.

In fashion with Tyvek

Every conservator knows that Tyvek will protect you from dirt, dust, UV rays, chemical spills etc.etc. but many of you probably hadn't thought of its fashion potential. Well now that Prada's Miu Miu range has brought out a jacket made of it, there's no excuse not to get cutting, though – we hasten to add – not at your employer's expense of course. For those of you a bit shaky on your dress-making skills, we recommend Lara Flecker's excellent book recently published by Butterworth-Heinemann: *A Practical Guide to Costume Mounting*. Lara trained as a historical costume maker and is the textile display specialist at London's Victoria and Albert Museum.

UCL offer

University College London's Centre for Sustainable Heritage is offering free copies of its 2007 publication *Engineering Historic Futures Stakeholders Dissemination and Scientific Research Report*, edited by May Cassar and Chris Hawkings. To obtain a copy, email your postal address to Skye Dillon at sustainableheritage@ucl.ac.uk. And see page 19 for news of the important role which May Cassar is taking up in science and heritage research.

more around & about

Collections Link news

More practical advice and help has recently become available from Collections Link. First, updated versions of two publications in the Standards in Museum Care of Collections series can now be had from their website. The series was originally published by the Museums and Galleries Commission (MGC), now the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA). Alongside the six other resources in the series, the updated versions are those on Geological Collections, edited by Mick Stanley in 2004, and Musical Instruments, edited by Patricia Andrew in 2005.

Both standards have been revised to reflect changes in current best practice, legislation and health and safety regulations, and are equally applicable to small local collections or national museums with a huge variety and number of objects. They include advice on a wide range of curatorial tasks from conservation, disaster planning and environmental control to access, loans and research, and include sections linking to sources of further advice and information.

Peter Winsor, Collections Link Project Director and Icon member, commented: 'The Standards in the Museum Care of Collections series is still widely regarded as the best source of information on the conservation and care of different types of collection. We are delighted to be able to make these revisions available via Collections Link, and it is hoped that revisions of other publications in the series will follow.'

The second resource which has become available is CAT. This is the Collections Assessment Tool - a downloadable database developed by the Scottish Museums Council (SMC), designed to enable heritage organisations to record information about the condition of objects in their collections and prioritise conservation work or improved collection care. SMC's user guidance notes and a comprehensive set of supporting fact sheets are also available to download alongside the database.

The CAT was designed to be used by people with a wide variety of experience and skills, and who work with all types of collections, from local community museums to professional conservation teams in a large service. Once downloaded, users are able to adapt the database to ensure that it suits the specific needs of their own organisation and collections. Gill Findlay, Collections Development Manager at SMC, commented that 'museums in Scotland have already found the CAT to be an extremely effective and easy to use resource which helps them to achieve best practice in the care of their collections. We are delighted to be working with

Collections Link to make it available to the wider heritage community.'

CAT and the revised standards join a range of new resources on the website. Also recently added is a section on Emergency Planning highlighting resources from outside the cultural sector, and the London's Screen Archives guide to caring for moving image collections. To download any of these or other Collections Link resources for free, visit www.collectionslink.org.uk.

Mobydoc joins MDA Partners Scheme

French software company Mobydoc – supplier of the Micromusée collections management system – has become the latest member of the MDA Partners Scheme. The Scheme assists museum practitioners in achieving best practice by validating the products of member companies for compliance with SPECTRUM, the industry standard for collections management.

Mobydoc products are used in museums, galleries and archives across Europe, Canada and North Africa, including the Musée des Arts Décoratifs (Paris), the National Museum of Wales and the Sedgwick Museum of Earth Science (Cambridge). Their products are developed in consultation with documentation specialists, archivists and conservators, and are designed to allow users to configure systems to the particular needs of their own institutions. As the ninth member of the scheme, Mobydoc joins an increasing number of companies working to validate their products for compliance with SPECTRUM and their involvement increases the potential of SPECTRUM in the francophone world. For further information visit www.mobydoc.fr

The BL Conservation Centre

The new British Library Centre for Conservation opened its doors to the public in May to reveal a world class facility for all aspects of book conservation and state of the art technical facilities for the nation's Sound Archive.

At around eighty staff, the BL's conservation operation must be one of the largest in the world. But this is the first time in the Library's history that all the staff and facilities have been brought together. Previously they were dispersed across several London sites and separately dedicated to the care of particular types of collections. The purpose-built accommodation provides a greatly improved working environment for staff, as well as conditions tailored to the requirements of the objects and their care.



The main Conservation Studio

The new, three-storey building is approached at its top floor level via a terrace leading from the existing Library building. The visitor first enters the Foyle Visitor Centre, which is a display area providing an initial, interactive introduction to both paper and sound conservation. Adjacent is the 60-seat capacity Foyle Learning Centre. Also at this level are the four main conservation studios. As one would expect, meticulous attention has been paid to providing tight environmental and security conditions and an important design feature is the saw-tooth roof which gives indirect, unshadowed north light for the conservation work.

There are four studios altogether. But the main one is designed to take nearly forty people: six teams, each

View of the entrance to the Centre across the terrace



comprising a leader and five or six conservators, along with extra benches for interns and other trainees. The conservation benches have been designed to the team's own specifications and a lot of the equipment, such as suction and humidification tables, is mobile. The fourth studio can act as a team base but also serves as a flexible space to be used for project work, workshops, demonstrations and training events.

Running alongside the main studio is a shared ancillary area for specialised activities, such as the dedicated wet area for washing and other aqueous treatments. This includes the treatment of iron gall ink with calcium phytate which is currently being piloted at the BL. Other activities involving noise and dirt (such as sharpening and leather paring) or solvents are housed in separate areas and there is a separate space for leaf-casting, a workshop and a facility for archival box-making using a precision cutting machine and computer aided design software. Many of these are on the next floor down, where there is also a quiet room, an examination room, controlled stores and a loans marshalling area. On the lower floor adjacent to the loading bay is the new quarantine room.

In the Conservation Studio



The lowest floor houses the technical services for the Library's Sound Archive with its three and a half million recordings. There are ten transfer studios, one recording studio, a small workshop and a laboratory. In these facilities six permanent staff, supplemented by others brought in for specific projects, undertake the work of high-quality sound recording, digitisation and re-mastering. Exacting audio engineering standards have been required to meet the acoustically sensitive needs. The recording studios are isolated, floating concrete shells, so that even the vibrations of the London Underground trains running beneath the building are imperceptible, although you are aware of them in the – uninsulated – corridors.

As a centre of excellence, the BL is conscious of its role in preserving not just the material collections but also the techniques of preservation. Virtually all staff are expected to have a teaching role as an integral part of their jobs and the team is eager to develop its role in education and training at every level.

From October this year members of the public will be able to join a regular tour behind the scenes or sign up for a seminar/workshop to learn more about the science of conservation. A foretaste was provided on Saturday June 23 with a Family History Archive Day. Five Heritage Lottery funded one-year internships, the first commencing last November, provide opportunities for applicants who already have book conservation qualifications and thought is also being given to other in-house training opportunities, including NVQ training. The British Library and Camberwell College of Arts are working together to provide a Foundation degree in book conservation. Modern Foundation degrees are based on the identified



Peter Durant

The adjacent wet area

needs of industry and partner the HE course work with industry placements to gain valuable practical experience as part of the learning process. Seven sound archiving internships, offering up to five months' training, are also available for each of the next three years, starting this autumn.

For those who can't yet make it in person to the BL, a new microsite has been produced, which introduces the Foyle Visitor Centre and its permanent exhibition. The microsite also informs visitors of other events that are taking place in the Centre and gives additional information on conservation and sound archiving at the Library and opportunities for professional training.

Visitors to the site can watch videos of the Library's Conservators carrying out treatments on collection items. Information on caring for your treasures is also available, as well as links to other websites that offer more guidance. You will find the microsite at www.bl.uk/conservation for all of the above and more.

The new Centre will surely deliver wonderful standards of care for the Library's priceless collections, for the development of the next generation of carers and for the engagement of the public.

Inside the Recording Studio



Peter Durant

BUILDING CONSERVATION

Post-Graduate Diploma Course at the
Architectural Association School of Architecture



This two-year part-time programme, leading to the AA Graduate Diploma (Building Conservation), is designed to provide a multifaceted approach to the conservation of historic buildings. Set up by the RIBA and COTAC in 1975, it is recognised as one of the leading courses of its kind. Students meet on Fridays during term time for lectures, seminars, individual and group projects, and site visits in and outside London.

The course commences in October.

Further details can be found on www.aaschool.ac.uk/bc, or from:



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Telephone 020 7887 4067 Fax 020 7887 4109
Email: conservation@aaschool.ac.uk aaschool.ac.uk/bc

The School is run by the Architectural Association Inc., a Registered Educational Charity

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- MA in Preventive Conservation* (multi disciplinary). FT, PT & DL
- Graduate Studentships
- MPhil and PhD Research
- Workshops in support of Continual Professional Development
- Conservation Conferences

* This course will also be offered on a full or part-time distance learning basis.

For more information visit www.northumbria.ac.uk/conservation

Or for a course brochure contact: Jenny Young

Tel: 0191 227 3250

Email Jenny.young@northumbria.ac.uk ar.admissions@northumbria.ac.uk



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CONSERVATION REGISTER

Now regularly exceeding over 2,000 searches each month, the Conservation Register has proved itself a valuable resource for those looking to promote their business. With demand continuing to increase, accredited conservators are encouraged to apply to the Register for inclusion. The streamlined application form is available in Word and pdf format in the 'Members' section of www.conservationregister.com; applications can normally be processed within two months.

Options are available for those who do not wish their details to be included in general searches made by members of the public. Entries can be made accessible just as part of the listings under business name and through the 'person search' (by which enquirers type in the surname of the person they are looking for). This may be suitable for institutions which provide services to other heritage organisations but not to members of the public, or for private practices with an established client base which are not looking to promote themselves to new clients but still wish their details to be publicly available when looked up by name.

The Conservation Register Advisory Board continues to meet regularly to guide the development and operation of the Register. At its most recent meeting the Board agreed that the Register search terms be reviewed over the forthcoming year and that a survey of users be carried out in the autumn.

For further information please contact Caroline Saye, csaye@icon.org.uk, tel 020 7784 3804.

SOCIAL BOOKMARKING

Adding value to your favourite pages on the Web

Have you ever found an excellent website whilst browsing the internet at home, and then used the bookmarking facility of your Web browser to keep a note of it for future reference? Lots of people do. This is a fairly standard way of organising a list of useful resources ready for easy access. However, when you're at work and in need of that resource but just can't remember the Web address, this bookmark is of no help whatsoever.

What if you could not only access your bookmarks from any computer with an internet connection, but also use them to help find other relevant material on the Web? It sounds too good to be true doesn't it? Well, the phenomena known as social bookmarking can help you to achieve this, and much more too.

What is social bookmarking?

Social bookmarking is a fairly loose term that is often used to describe lists of Web addresses compiled by individuals

but visible to anyone on the internet¹, usually arranged by user-defined keyword classification (known as 'tagging') and/or given a ranking based on user popularity². The use of social bookmarking sites is generally defined by the users themselves, as the applications merely provide a framework. All content is provided by individuals who use these services.

What are the uses?

Access and add to your bookmarks from anywhere

At a very basic level social bookmarking sites are used simply as a method of keeping track of useful resources – providing easy access to favourite websites and providing a simple way of saving links to newly found pages from home, work or any computer with an internet connection and a Web browser. By adding self-defined keyword 'tags' to resources that most accurately represent a website's content³, a user can then retrieve relevant links in the future by clicking on those tags. By using the same tag for websites covering similar topics, users can retrieve all their relevant bookmarks at the click of a mouse.

This basic use of social bookmarking is no doubt very helpful, but there are further benefits to organising your favourite links with such a tool. Many of the most popular bookmarking sites such as del.icio.us⁴, Ma.gnolia⁵ and Furl⁶ will display the number of other people who have also bookmarked a page you are interested in. It is very simple to follow the links through to the lists of bookmarks for other individuals who are interested in similar topics. It is then possible to explore the sites that like-minded people use, and to see whether they use different tags, thus opening up new routes to explore. Alternatively, it is possible to search these sites by keyword or tag in order to find relevant links. Additionally, most social bookmarking networks allow contributors to annotate each of their bookmarks which can help clarify the contents (and possible usefulness) of a website should the title alone prove to be ambiguous.

Ranking of resources by popular consent

Social bookmarking sites such as Digg⁷ and StumbleUpon⁸ work on the same principles as the more traditional bookmarking services mentioned above – primarily offering users the chance to save links to resources that they like or find useful. However, these sites make greater use of commenting facilities and introduce the capability for users to rate sites, thus adding a further dimension to the social bookmarking genre - namely measures of popularity.

Digg users who bookmark a site in their personal account will find that site added to Digg's 'upcoming stories' page. This page allows other users to see what websites have recently been bookmarked by other people and, should

they like what they find, they are invited to 'Digg it' (i.e. bookmark it themselves). If a site receives a certain number of 'Diggs' it gets promoted, initially to the main page of the category it falls under, and then to Digg's front page should its popularity soar. The measure of popularity can be interpreted as a sign of quality, but it should be remembered that anyone with a Digg account can rate the popularity of a website in this way, so quality is by no means assured.

StumbleUpon uses the rating system in a much more user-focused way. Users of this service choose topics that they are interested in when they sign up. Subsequently, whenever the user bookmarks a page they are asked to give it a plus or minus rating. The bookmark is then filtered into the relevant topic area, allowing people with similar interests to explore recently bookmarked sites in their field. As with Digg, users can then add these sources to their own bookmarks and rate them according to their opinion. Again, the more positive ratings that are given, the greater the perceived quality. StumbleUpon calls this 'collaborative opinion', but as it uses the same principle as Digg's popularity measures it should be treated with similar caution in terms of quality evaluation.

Organisation of academic articles and resources online

There are also a number of social bookmarking sites focusing on niche groups. A key example is in the area of academic research, where sites such as Citeulike⁹ and Connotea¹⁰ have developed specifically to cater for researchers, and offer a time-saving alternative to managing citations.² With both these sites academics and researchers can save links to journal articles and classify them using personalised tags, much in the same way as the services mentioned above. However, they have also been engineered with the needs of citation management in mind. For example, Connotea will retrieve information from bookmarked websites to allow it to easily organise the data into an acceptable form of citation. Both Citeulike and Connotea also offer the option of exporting references from their online form to desktop reference management applications such as Endnote (and vice versa).

So, as well as offering the traditional benefits of social bookmarking (access to favourite resources from any internet connected computer, discovery of new resources through shared interest tagging, etc.) the sites with an academic focus also provide user-targeted extras designed to benefit their niche audience and encourage greater adoption of the technology.

The pros and cons of social bookmarking ***The benefits***

For the average user social bookmarking can have some

very practical benefits. The ability to access links to favourite sites from any internet-ready computer can save lots of time that would otherwise be spent searching for what has already been discovered once. With many of these services bookmarks from your Web browser can be easily migrated to your account ready to be tagged. The tagging function then allows a user to organise their resources in a way that is logical to them, thus providing the ability to narrow their resource lists by topic.

Furthermore, the social element can also provide added value to a user. Searching a site like del.icio.us or Furl by tag or keyword can lead to the discovery of new resources that the user may not have previously discovered, merely by tracking the bookmarks of users with similar interests. In some cases users can even track new entries under specific tags by using RSS feeds¹¹ to inform them that new content has been added under a relevant tag. The comment facilities that are provided by many of the social bookmarking sites also offer users the chance to gauge (to a certain extent) the usefulness of that site.

Sites geared to specific audiences (such as Connotea and Citeulike) also tend to have bonus features like the reference exporting facility mentioned above. In the case of niche services it is often true that they were either instigated or developed by practitioners or interested parties in that specific field, who were addressing the needs of both themselves and their colleagues. For the target audiences these services can be particularly beneficial.

Potential pitfalls

Tagging as a method of information organisation is by no means a robust and foolproof system. Unlike standard classification systems that you might be used to (such as Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH), or the Dewey Decimal System), tagging terms are user defined and thus uncontrolled. So there are no ways of guaranteeing that the terminology of one person will be relevant to another. For example, a search of a tag entitled 'conserve' could bring back both links relating to heritage conservation, environmental conservation, or even recipes for raspberry jam! Therefore searching social bookmarking sites solely by tag may result in the user having to wade through irrelevant material in order to find useful new resources.

Services whose users provide ratings of websites, such as Digg and StumbleUpon, can often give the impression that such ratings are a measure of quality. Whilst some people may genuinely be attempting to gauge quality when they rate websites, the reality is that the top rated resources on such sites are based around popularity rather than considered evaluation. It is very important not to confuse popular sites with quality sites. Of course, quality resources

are often very popular, but not all popular resources are of good quality. It is up to individuals to use their own knowledge to evaluate the information provided and decide for themselves whether a website is authoritative or not.

Social bookmarking sites are not infallible lists of resources – even the most powerful search engines can't provide that! They are, first and foremost, personal link managers for individuals and, as with any site relying on user-driven content, are rarely comprehensive or without a certain level of bias. The sites can help users to find new resources, but should be used to complement more traditional methods of information searching and retrieval, rather than to replace them.

To use, or not to use...

Social bookmarking at its basic level can be very useful, especially if you work on various different computers at different times. For this alone it is worth signing up for an account. As noted earlier, it is very easy to migrate bookmarks from your desktop browser to a social bookmarking site, and this leaves you free to tag the resources at your leisure. When tagging resources think carefully about the kind of keywords to use, as this will make retrieving relevant bookmarks a much quicker and easier process.

When adopting this kind of technology think carefully about what you want it to do for you, and then choose your service accordingly. For example, del.icio.us is a very good basic service, and suitable for most resources. Should you primarily want to organise academic papers then choose one of the specialised sites like Citeulike, so that you can take advantage of the additional functions and more streamlined content.

The pitfalls primarily relate to the need to sift through resources and fully evaluate them. This process is necessary for any form of Web search, and so on its own shouldn't discourage the use of social bookmarking networks. At worst they offer the benefits of personalised data collection and storage. At their best they can be invaluable tools for information searching, gathering, organisation and retrieval.

James Andrews
Chantry Librarian

1 Wikipedia (2007). 'Social bookmarking'. Wikipedia [Online]. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_bookmarking [accessed 4th June 2007].

2 Hammond, T. [et al.] (2005). 'Social bookmarking tools (I): a general review'. D-Lib Magazine [Online]. <http://www.dlib.org/dlib/april05/hammond/04hammond.html> [accessed 4th June 2007].

3 For example, the Icon website may be given the logical tag of 'heritage conservation' by a user.

4 <http://del.icio.us/>

5 <http://ma.gnolia.com/>

6 <http://www.furl.net/home.jsp>

7 <http://www.digg.com/>

8 <http://www.stumbleupon.com/>

9 <http://www.citeulike.org/>

10 <http://www.connotea.org/>

11 stands for Really Simple Syndication – these are Web feeds that can inform users of new content on specified Web pages as and when it is added. RSS requires feed reading software known as 'aggregators' to gather the information from websites. Aggregators can take the form of Web-based accounts (such as Bloglines or Google Reader) or desktop software. Modern Web browsers such as Mozilla Firefox and Internet Explorer 7 now have the capability of reading RSS feeds.

AWARDS

VINCENT DANIELS WINNER OF THE 2007 PLOWDEN MEDAL

Dr Vincent Daniels has been awarded the Royal Warrant Holders Association's 2007 Plowden Medal. The award recognises his long and exceptional contribution to the development of understanding in conservation, the excellence of his dedicated research and his ready engagement with practitioners of the conservation profession. He was presented with the Medal by The Lord Chamberlain, the Earl Peel, at the Royal Warrant Holders Association lunch in London on 5 June.

During his 33-year career in conservation science, Vincent Daniels has generated an outstanding body of research work which impacts on most conservation fields. His knowledge of materials and their behaviour is encyclopaedic and his work is cited throughout conservation literature as a reference for research

Vincent Daniels receives his award from the Lord Chamberlain The Earl Peel



methodology and for the insight it provides on specific conservation issues. His publications cover a wide range of topics from materials testing to bark cloth, pigments to textiles, and will be of lasting importance to the profession. He has more papers in 'Studies in Conservation' than any other UK conservation scientist and, as a measure of his international standing, he was one of just eleven UK conservators selected by the American Institute of Conservation to be recorded for their oral history project.

His innovative research has focused on real conservation problems and the results have helped develop both preventive regimes and interventive treatments. In the late seventies he introduced plasma reactions to conservation and in the eighties his rediscovery and application of the Russell effect (an image produced on photographic plates by oxidising material) offered new approaches in the study of materials behaviour. In the nineties he covered a huge range of materials and processes including the influence of metals on paper. His work on washing paper highlights the significance of different treatments and the influence of sizing on the process. His work on pigments and dyes covers a wide range including textiles, ethnographic objects, paintings and works on paper.

The award also recognises the quality of his contribution as a teacher and his generosity and good humour in communicating and sharing his knowledge. A regular presenter at national and international conferences, he also communicates with scientists outside the field, encouraging them to engage with conservation questions. He lectures to university chemistry societies and organised an exhibition on Chemistry and Conservation for the Royal Society of Chemistry at Burlington House, which was subsequently exhibited at several UK locations.

Much of his work was undertaken as a member of the British Museum's staff but following early retirement in 2003 Dr Daniels was appointed RCA/V&A Conservation Research Fellow, where he also contributes to the development of new conservators. He has been an external lecturer and examiner at Camberwell College of Arts for several years and an examiner at the RCA and Manchester University.

Dr Daniels has always tried to gain practical experience of the fields in which he works and for three years studied bookbinding at an evening class. He is also a painter, stained glass artist and holder of a City & Guilds certificate in precious jewellery making. He is currently involved in designing a dye plant garden for the Borough of Waltham Forest's Museum.

The Gold Medal, inaugurated in 1999, is awarded by the Royal Warrant Holders Association in memory of the late Hon. Anna Plowden CBE, the leading conservator who was Vice-President of the Association at the time of her death

in 1997. It is presented annually to the individual who has made the most significant recent contribution to the advancement of the conservation profession and can also be awarded to recognise a lifetime of commitment and achievement.

THE CONSERVATION AWARDS SHORT-LISTS

The short-lists for the five Conservation Awards were announced on 5 June:

AWARD FOR CONSERVATION 2007 (£15,000)

Eura Conservation, Cardiff University and the ss Great Britain Trust

Brunel's ss Great Britain

The Awards judges at Brunel's ss Great Britain.



The Scottish Conservation Studio for Perth Museum & Art Gallery

A rare silk early 17th-century doublet

National Trust Textile Conservation Studio

The Tobit Table Carpet

AWARD FOR CARE OF COLLECTIONS 2007 (increased to £15,000 this year)

Durham University Library

The North East Collections Care Scheme

Book & Paper Conservation Studio, Dundee University Library, for The Linnean Society of London

The Linnaean Correspondence Project

Beamish Museum and Tyne & Wear Museums

The North East Regional Resource Centre, Beamish Museum



Anna Southall discussing the NE Resource Centre with Kate Reeder, Social History Curator, Tyne & Wear Museums - in the attic where the collections were kept before the opening of the Centre!.

National Preservation Office

A national assessment of preservation need

STUDENT CONSERVATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD 2007 (£10,000)

Rachel Morrison and the Courtauld Institute

Surface cleaning of unvarnished paintings

Rachel Morrison of the Courtauld Institute with Ros Savill.



Sarah Maisey and Northumbria University

Materials and ageing of the miners' Cavell banner from Bowburn

Julie Eklund and the Institute of Archaeology, UCL

Effects of preparation and conservation treatments on DNA

ANNA PLOWDEN TRUST AWARD 2007 (£2500)

Professor Norman Tennent, Fyne Conservation Services, and Dr James Nobbs, University of Leeds
Colour-Matching for Ceramic Conservation

Dr James Tate, National Museums Scotland, and Dr Laurianne Robinet, University of Edinburgh and The Université Pierre et Marie Curie, Paris

New Light on Ancient Glass: development of Raman spectroscopy

David Watkinson and Mark Lewis, Cardiff University

Dry storage of chloride- infested iron

DIGITAL PRESERVATION AWARD 2007 (£5000)

The British Library

LIFE (Lifecycle Information for E-Literature)

National Library of New Zealand & The British Library

Web Curator Tool software development project

The National Archives of the UK

Active Preservation at The National Archives: PRONOM Technical Registry and DROID file format identification tool

Bodleian Library, University of Oxford & John Rylands University Library, University of Manchester

PARADIGM (The Personal Archives Accessible in Digital Media)

CRL, RLG-OCLC, NARA, DCC, DPE and Nestor

Digital Repository Audit and Certification

The Awards judges are now travelling around the country visiting the short-listed projects, and the winners will be announced on 27 September at the British Museum.

Last year's winner of the Award for Conservation was Tim Martin of Context Engineering for the conservation of Force Crag mining machinery. A Museum of London team won the first Care of Collections Award for their project to improve access to London's Archaeological Archive.

The 2007 Judging Panel for the Award for Conservation, the Care of Collections Award and the Student Conservator Award is chaired by Dame Liz Forgan, the Chair of the Heritage Lottery Fund, and includes Ros Savill, Director of the Wallace Collection, Anna Southall, the first Chair of Icon and now Vice-Chair of the Big Lottery Fund, Gillian Lewis, the former Head of Conservation at the National Maritime Museum, George Ferguson, a well-known Bristol conservation architect, Maev Kennedy, Arts

Correspondent of The Guardian, Georgina Nayler, Director of The Pilgrim Trust, and Alice Rawsthorn, Design Critic of the International Herald Tribune. The Anna Plowden Award will be judged by the Trustees with advice from Dr David Saunders, Head of Conservation at The British Museum. The Digital Preservation Award is judged by a panel of experts in the field.

The Conservation Awards are sponsored by Sir Paul McCartney and supported by Icon, English Heritage, the MLA and the NPO. Additional support is given by The British Library and The British Museum. See the Awards website: www.conservationawards.org.uk for more information. For details of the Digital Preservation Award short-list, go to: <http://www.dpconline.org/graphics/advocacy/press/award2007.html>

TRAVEL AWARDS

Eight conservation students from all over the country have recently received grants from the Zibby Garnet Travelling Fellowship Trust for study fellowships overseas. Four of them are Icon members: Matthew Brack from the University of Northumbria; Bryony Finn from Lincoln University; Jane Kemp and Rachel Swift, who is an Icon/HLF funded intern at the National Conservation Centre, Liverpool.

With the help of the bursary from the Trust, Rachel will be attending an international conference in Slovenia, where she will be presenting a poster about her internship in Ceramics and Glass at Liverpool and highlighting the opportunities which work-based conservation training can provide. She will also travel to the Diana Centre for Conservation in Serbia, where she hopes to talk about the work she has been undertaking at NCC. Rachel is currently graduate representative on Icon's Ceramics and Glass Group committee but will soon be taking over the co-ordination of the Nigel Williams Prize. She is enthusiastic about the Zibby Garnet Trust and in her words 'their fantastic work'.

Since the Travelling Fellowship was set up in 2000 it has paid for forty nine scholars to travel to other countries to broaden their knowledge of historic buildings, landscape and artefacts, with an emphasis of hands on conservation work. In innovative and adventurous projects, they have travelled all over the world, to America, Canada, Cuba, Japan, Syria, Peru, Australia, India, Indonesia, and Europe.

Grants are awarded once a year, with a deadline for applications of 31 March.

The Fellowship is a charity funded entirely by well wishers. Enquiries and donations may be sent to the Zibby Garnett Travelling Fund, The Grange, Norwell, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG23 6JN. Telephone 01636 636288.



Rachel Swift consolidating the gilding on a framed Wedgwood Jasperware plaque

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CPD FUNDING

For those beyond the student stage but still eager to learn, the deadline is coming up for the last chance this year for some CPD funding from the Anna Plowden Trust. September 15 is the deadline for applications from established conservators for grants towards the cost of attending either a short specialist course or a major conference during 2007. In both cases the Trust will consider funding up to 50% of the cost. Those applying should have more than five years' experience since completing their training. Write to Penelope Plowden, enclosing a stamped and addressed envelope, at 43 Lansdowne Gardens, London SW8 2EL or e-mail her for further information at penelopecpowden@btinternet.com. Application forms can also be obtained from the Trust's website, which is annaplowdentrust.org.uk.

FUNDING FOR ARCHIVES

The National Manuscripts Conservation Trust (NMCT) provides financial assistance to owners and custodians in the UK in preserving the nation's written heritage.

Closing dates for applications each year are 1 April and 1 October. Following the April round, awards of between £5000 and £50,000 were made to Chiswick Parish Church for the conservation of the parish archives, to the Royal Academy of Arts for the conservation of the papers of Ozias Humphry, to The Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester for conserving the Walter Crane archive, to Worcestershire County Council (Worcestershire Record Office) for the conservation of early mining records in the Coventry papers and to The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge for the conservation of Thomas Hardy's autograph of 'Jude the Obscure' and the correspondence, notebooks and sketchbooks of Edward Burne-Jones.

Since April 2004 NMCT awards have been administered by The National Archives. Guidance for applicants is available online at <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/preservation/trust/default.htm>. For further advice and an informal discussion contact nmct@nationalarchives.gov.uk.

institute briefing

LINKS WITH MALTA

Icon Chief Executive Alastair McCapra was recently invited to join a working group in Malta. Maltese law requires that anyone who wishes to practise as a conservator in the republic has to hold a warrant, and the Malta Warrant Board has been working to develop a mechanism for deciding who is qualified to hold a warrant. Obviously with something as serious at stake as potentially denying a conservator the right to practise their profession, the Warrant Board wants to make sure it is working to very robust criteria and operating a completely transparent assessment process. The object of the working group, held on 1 June, was to review the UK's experience of developing and using the PACR accreditation scheme, and seeing what lessons could usefully be learned from that. Naturally Malta will develop its own system to meet its own specific requirements, but it was clear from the meeting that much could be drawn from the professional standards and assessment processes of the UK's PACR scheme. Icon will continue to support and assist the Malta Warrant Board as it works towards the establishment of a new system.

ICON IN CHINA

Icon was the only NGO (non-governmental organisation) from the UK invited to attend an NGO Forum as part of a major international festival of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Chengdu, China, from 23–24 May. Chief Executive Alastair McCapra gave a paper showing how conservation of tangible objects and places can contribute to the preservation of intangible cultural heritage.

At the end of the Forum, more than 40 experts, scholars and government officials from around the world signed the 'Chengdu Manifesto', calling for the international community and governments in different countries to put more emphasis on protecting intangible cultural heritage, such as opera, songs, and dance.

According to the UNESCO definition, intangible cultural heritage refers to practices, representations, expressions, knowledge and skills that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage.

As a member of UNESCO's inter-governmental committee to safeguard ICH, China has been strengthening efforts in ICH protection in the past few years. Some of China's intangible cultural heritages are on the verge of extinction.

UNESCO has proclaimed a number of distinctive Chinese cultural forms to be Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity since 2001. These include Kun Qu, one of the oldest forms of opera in the country,

the Chinese zither or Guqin, a solo musical instrument dating back 3,000 years, the Xinjiang Uygur Muqam, a blend of song, dance, folk and classical music, and Long Song, a type of Mongolian lyrical chant.

Chengdu was chosen to host the event because of its position as one of China's most historically and culturally famous cities, as well as its leadership in efforts to protect and develop cultural heritage. In recent years the Chengdu municipal government has established many programs and initiatives involving surveys on intangible cultural heritage items and their protection.

HERITAGE SCIENCE IN THE LORDS

Many Icon members took part in a letter-writing campaign six months ago following the publication of a report into conservation science by the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee in November 2006. The letters urged Culture Minister David Lammy to appoint a Chief Scientific Advisor to his department who was knowledgeable about heritage science. They also asked him to fund a post within English Heritage to run a secretariat for the development of a new national heritage science strategy. 'To date we have had a somewhat mixed outcome' said Alastair McCapra. 'David Lammy has so far ignored the wishes of the Icon members who wrote to him. No Chief Scientific Advisor has been appointed yet, and the Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) has refused to fund a secretariat post within English Heritage. On the other hand, English Heritage has made a commitment to funding the post itself, and work is underway to develop the national heritage science strategy. The Arts and Humanities Research Council has also announced a funded programme for conservation science research [see the piece about May Cassar's appointment on page 19]'.

On 12 June the Report was the subject of a two-hour debate in the House of Lords, in which over a dozen peers spoke. Virtually all of them took the opportunity 'to put the boot into the DCMS' (as one of them put it) for abdicating its responsibilities to take a lead role. A lot of praise was forthcoming for what has been achieved by the research councils and English Heritage and there were several instances of warm words for Icon. You can read more on the Icon website and there is a link to the full debate.

PARTNERSHIP WITH UNIVERSITIES – RESULTS IN EUROPE

The European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers' Organisations (ECCO), of which Icon is a member, had been working for some time on a professional profile which will be used to define the profession. Indeed, in

some counties it will be used to regulate it and to prevent people from practising if they do not comply with it. For this reason it is a very serious matter and essential that we have a profile that reflects our real needs. The original ECCO draft would have excluded from the profession all those who did not have five years of university education leading to a Masters degree, and the consequences of this would have been very severe for conservators not just in the UK, but internationally.

Together with the Verband der Restauratoren (Germany), Icon has been working hard to chance this profile. As part of our efforts we contacted UK universities offering Masters programmes in conservation and asked them to consider what the effect would be on their student recruitment if they could only take on people who had a Bachelors degree in conservation. They were unanimous in declaring this prospect to be potentially disastrous for them, and they wrote a collective letter to the ECCO President to make this clear. At the ECCO General Assembly itself Icon proposed a motion to throw out the draft profile, and after extensive debate we won the argument, carrying the vote with a decisive majority. Work will now begin with other professional bodies in ECCO to develop a new professional profile based on competencies rather than on education pathways.

DISPOSALS – WHAT IS THE ROLE OF CONSERVATORS?

The Museums Association has published proposals to change its ethical guidelines on disposal, and if museums are going to start thinking more actively about disposal, there will certainly be implications for conservators. On 7 March Icon held a disposals seminar bringing together conservators from a range of national, regional and local museums as well as participants from MLA London and the Museums Association. The meeting was chaired by former Icon Chair Anna Southall and included a presentation by Andy King, curator of the Industrial & Maritime History Museum of Bristol Project.

The purpose of the meeting was to review the roles conservators currently play in the decision-making process about museum disposals, and then discuss the proposed changes coming from the Museums Association and consider their effect on what conservators in museums may need to do.

Among the key points arising from the meeting were:

- the need for active and intelligent collections management
- the role of conservators in advising for or against new acquisitions



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- the role of conservators serving on museum collections policy committees
- in many instances conservators are already the drivers behind disposals programmes

The purpose of the seminar was to produce a range of views on the topic of disposals which can be published for the information and guidance of Icon members. A record of the views exchanged during this meeting, together with other material on disposals and the role of conservators, will be made available to members during the summer.

In his summing up at the end of the disposals seminar, Icon Chair Simon Cane, of Birmingham Museums and Art Galleries, said 'We have a responsibility not to pass on the same mayhem as we inherited to the next generation. For me, professionally, that is the key driver. Having spent 25 years watching objects condemned to slow, cruel and unusual deaths in storage around the country, I don't want to leave that as my own legacy. That is what drives me on.'

HERITAGE WHITE PAPER

On 8 March 2007 the government published a Heritage White Paper for England and Wales (with some UK-wide provisions). The White Paper proposals are based on three core principles: the need to develop a unified approach to the historic environment; maximising opportunities for inclusion and involvement; and supporting sustainable communities by putting the historic environment at the heart of an effective planning system.

Proposals include abolishing the existing systems for listing buildings and scheduling monuments, and replacing both with a uniform designation system. The proposed system will offer all those with an interest in the historic environment a clearer record of what is protected and why. It will also enable people who own or manage historic

buildings and sites to have a better understanding of what features are important. Overall, it will streamline the consent procedures and create a more consultative and collaborative protection system.

Icon responded to the White Paper as part of a collective submission through Heritage Link. Together with forty other heritage organisations Icon said:

- We welcome the opportunity for wider public engagement with the historic environment which the White Paper envisages
- We welcome too the major contribution the voluntary heritage sector can and wants to make
- We are concerned that the White Paper makes no direct statement about the value of heritage
- We feel it represents a limited vision of heritage's role in successful development and regeneration
- If it is to have the desired impact, the White Paper must be supported by investment, training and guidance

The government will consider the responses it has received to the White Paper and will then have to identify parliamentary time within the next couple of years to take its proposals into law. Icon News will report on this initiative as it develops.

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE LIVE?

Held at Olympia over the first May bank holiday weekend, *Who Do You Think You Are Live?* was a new family history event drawing together family history experts, celebrity guests and other sources of advice pertinent to the family history market. Three new titles in Icon's 'Care and conservation' series were produced in time for the event covering documents, books and art on paper. These, and others in the range, were eagerly collected by visitors wanting advice on the care of personal possessions. The new titles are available as pdfs online at www.conservationregister.com/caring.asp.

FROM THE LIBRARY

As noted previously, although the Library specialises in book and paper conservation, we also hold technical information on preservation, analytical techniques, materials research, disaster planning, pest management, environmental conditions, plus works on specific materials and techniques, such as textiles, pictures frames, pigments and dyes and many other subject that may be of interest.

New additions to the library's collection this month include some very recent publications on textiles, glass and architectural conservation. Amongst our new holdings are the following titles:

Muñoz Cosme, A. (2005). *La vida y la obra de Leopoldo Torres Balbás*.

British Standards Institution (2001). BS 5454:2000 – *Recommendations for the storage and exhibition of archival documents*.

Mills, J.S. and White, R. (1999). *The organic chemistry of museum objects* – 2nd ed.

Barclay, R.L. (1998). *Mount-making for museum objects* – 2nd ed.

Koob, Stephen P. (2006). *Conservation and care of glass objects*.

Albus, Stefan [et al.] (2007). *Plastic art: a precarious success story*.

Rhys-Jones, Jonathan (2001). *The enemy within!: acid deterioration of our written heritage*.

Museums & Galleries Commission (1994). *Towards a government policy for museums: the MGC's policy statement and the MGC's response to the DNH policy review*.

Lafontaine, R.H. (1984). *Silica gel* – CCI Technical Bulletin 10.

May, E. & Jones, M. (eds.) (2006). *Conservation science: heritage materials*.

Boersma, F. (2007). *Unravelling textiles: a handbook for the preservation of textile collections*.

Shacklock, V. (ed.) (2006). *Architectural conservation: issues and developments*.

International Council of Museums (2006). *ICOM code of ethics for museums*.

Please feel free to come and use this growing collection. We also supply photocopies of chapters from books or journal articles and conference papers which we can send to you on quoting your Icon membership number.

Introductory tours of the library for you or your group can be arranged and we welcome all donations from members' personal collections of professional literature. Please contact James who will be happy to hear from you.

Librarian	James Andrews
Email	chantrylibrary@icon.org.uk
Telephone	+ 44 (0) 1865 251 303
Fax	+ 44 (0) 1865 251 303
Address	The Chantry Library, Grove Cottage, St Cross Road, Oxford, OX1 3TX, United Kingdom
Website	http://www.lib.ox.ac.uk/ipc-chantry/

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Recently published articles

Below is a selection of recently published articles that may be of interest to Icon members. For a complete list please visit the Chantry Library website at <http://www.lib.ox.ac.uk/ipc-chantry/> and follow the 'New Titles' link.

From *Restaurator*, **28**(1)

Kim, S-S. and Park, E.G. (2007). 'Restoration of Mukujungkwang Dharani Sutra: the oldest and extant wood-block printed Buddhist scripture'. pp. 1–10.

Adamo, M., Magaudda, G. and Omarino, S. (2007). 'Biological measurement of damage occurring to the inner structure of paper after gamma irradiation: preliminary tests'. pp. 39–46.

From *PH: Boletín del Instituto Andaluz del Patrimonio Histórico*, **61**

Villa, J.L.G., Segovia, C.R. and Morón, A.G. (2007). 'Arte y símbolo para el poder: intervención en la Cruz Alzada Procesional de Osuna'. pp. 24–51.

Zamora, E.L. and Moliner, C.D. (2007). 'Materiales y técnicas de dorado a través de las antiguas fuentes documentales'. pp. 110–129.

From *Art business today*, 2007 no. 2

'Framing: trade secrets'. p. 52.

From *Discover NLS*, **4**

Cunnea, P. (2007). 'Digital collections: the gold you can't hold'. pp. 22–25.

From *CBBAG Newsletter*, **25**(1)

Leeb, M. and Isley, L. (2007). 'The material culture and architecture of tipis and its application to artist's books'. pp. 4–6.

Muller, R.E. (2007). 'Textile narratives in book format'. pp. 10–14.

Hartline, S. (2007). 'PB+J press: hands-on printing and design'. pp. 18–20.

From *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*, **46**(1)

Smith, C. (2007). 'George Washington's last will and testament: the manuscript and a pioneering restoration'. pp. 1–14.

Bacci, M. [et al.] (2007). 'Non-invasive identification of white pigments on 20th-century oil paintings by using fiber optic reflectance spectroscopy'. pp. 27–37.

Emery, S.N.D. and Charola, A.E. (2007). 'Coatings on brick masonry: are they protective or can they enhance deterioration?'. pp. 39–52.

From *Western Association for Art Conservation Newsletter*, **29**(2)

Phenix, A. (2007). 'Generic hydrocarbon solvents: a guide to nomenclature'. pp. 13–22.

From *The Quarterly*, **62**

Chamberlain, D. (2007). 'History of paper test instrumentation part 5: colour & brightness testers'. pp. 20–30.

From *The Getty Conservation Institute Newsletter*, **22**(1)

Padfield, T. [et al.] (2007). 'Passive design, mechanical systems, and doing nothing: a discussion about environmental management'. pp. 10–16.

Maekawa, S. and Beltran, V. (2007). 'Collections care, human comfort, and climate control: a case study at the Casa de Rui Barbosa Museum'. pp. 17–21.

Other titles received include *The Quarterly* **61**; *AIC News* **32** (2); *Association des Relieurs du Québec: Le Bulletin* **15**(2); *National Library of Australia News*, **17**(7) and **17**(8); *ICOM News*, **60**(1); *AICCM National Newsletter*, **102**.

CORRECTION

Unfortunately, Icon News was supplied with a misleading caption for a picture in our May issue. Queen Elizabeth Scholar Josephine Beney was shown apparently working on a marble statue. This is, in fact, being conserved by one of her fellow students and the photograph was intended simply to illustrate the range of Josephine's conservation studies.

FRAME TREATMENT RESPONSE

What can I answer to the letter from the Committee of the Gilding and Decorative Surfaces Group published in May's Icon News other than the Group is absolutely right? Yes, frames should be treated with the same respect as paintings or any other objects in public ownership. Yes, I should have taken the time to search the collection for more suitable corners to copy.

The brief was: 'We have spent all the money on the painting. We have four hours (including the report and photographs) to spend on the frame'. I first employed the system described in the article (Icon News, September 2006) on a carved and gilded wooden frame for which we had asked for an estimate from a specialized frame conservator. The quote was £900. I thought that was reasonable as several pieces would have had to be carved to make the frame complete and it would have been beautifully gilded (for real). Sadly, the whole conservation budget for the exhibition had already been spent, mostly on paintings. The other problem was that once beautifully conserved that frame, which was part of a display comprising eight paintings with similar frames (none of them sparkling), would then have shone out and it would have become very noticeable that the rest needed work for which Ipswich had no money. I had three to four hours to do something decent and that is what I did; the frame blends in with the others and nobody has yet noticed that there is a lot of plastic involved.

Unfortunately, visitors do not notice frames, as long as they are not in ruins. The frames are there to enhance the paintings and they certainly would enhance a whole lot more if they sparkled, but explain that to the money people. I know, I know, it would be great if the frames were given the importance they deserve and the labels should also tell about them...but...this is not a perfect world.

Is the treatment being attacked in any other way than lack of 'subtlety'?

- Is it the ammonia? It was rinsed with distilled water and ammonia evaporates without leaving any residue.
- Is it the B72 and Mica? It consolidated the moulding by seeping inside the cracks, gives a bit of glitz and what is left on the surface is very reversible with acetone.
- Is it the use of resin mouldings? Again, because of the use of HMG cellulose nitrate, they can be removed with acetone very easily without any damage to the gilding underneath.

Even if the money and time was available, I would still use resin mouldings rather than carved wood or compo because it prevents most effectively the restoration to be mistaken for part of the original in the future.



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Documentation may be lost; one can mix barium sulphate in the compo to make it show under x-ray or uv or something (I was taught about it at college and my memory of it is dim, I have never heard anybody mention it since); the simplest way remains the use of a material so radically different that no mistake can be made. If the plastic is gilded only the sound of it would show what it is but it would be unmistakable.

I would be grateful if anybody could share their knowledge of a methodology as reversible, as easily identifiable (close-up) as a restoration, as effective at cheering up the frame and as cheap. Nevertheless, I DO regret to not have had the time to recreate corners that are more suitable..

Unlike the Institutions quoted in the G&DS letter, Ipswich is not blessed with 'in house' frame conservators and if it was they would still have to account for the cost. Ipswich Museum owns more than a thousand paintings, most of them could have money spent on them. At an average at current rates of £500 each, this is half a million pounds just for the pictures. The frames would probably only add a quarter of a million to the bill and Ipswich collections would be the best cared for in the world. When can we start? Where is the money?

Dominique Rogers, MA. BSc (Hons), ACR.
e-mail: [<do@pepin.demon.co.uk>](mailto:do@pepin.demon.co.uk)

ON THE MOVE



Good luck to Melangell Penrhys Jones who is leaving her position as Textile Conservator for Bristol City Museums to take up a post at Te Papa Tongarewa, Museum of New Zealand, where she will join Rachel Collinge in the Textile Conservation section. She is looking forward to working on a varied and world class collection of textile objects and the new experience of working in a bi-cultural institution. Her new e-mail address from 16 July will be: melangellp@tepapa.govt.nz.

CONGRATULATIONS

In its June ballot the Society of Antiquaries of London elected another conservator to the ranks of its Fellows – Ian McClure, who is Director of Cambridge's Hamilton Kerr Institute and an expert on the conservation of English medieval panel painting. As we approach the Conservation Awards season, readers will recall that the Institute won the coveted Award for Conservation in 2004 for its work on the medieval altarpiece – the Thornton Parva Retable.

PROFESSOR FOR PROGRAMME DIRECTOR

Congratulations to Icon member Professor May Cassar, who has been appointed Programme Director for the new UK Science and Heritage Research Programme. This appointment follows the 2006 enquiry by the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee into Science and Heritage, to which Icon was invited to give evidence.

The committee produced a report which argued that the UK needs to develop a research programme in heritage science, and this appointment marks an important milestone towards the establishment of such a programme, whilst also recognising May's expertise and

eminence in this area. The appointment has been made jointly by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) and will run for five years from June 2007 to June 2012.

May Cassar, who is Professor of Sustainable Heritage at University College London said ' This is a wonderful opportunity for this interdisciplinary field to grow the capacity of the sector so that the best heritage science is undertaken at the best academic and heritage institutions. More importantly, the programme is about increasing the number of quality researchers involved in this work.'



By kind permission of AHRC

Icon Chief Executive Alastair McCapra said 'Conservation depends on a continuing flow of scientific research to tell us what we need to know about materials, treatments and techniques. Up to now conservation science has had a very hard job to make its case for funding, as it is often quite small-scale and can fall between the stools of various different funding programmes. The establishment of a dedicated Science and Heritage research funding programme is really tremendous news and Icon will be working closely with Professor Cassar to ensure that the conservation community makes best use of this wonderful opportunity.'

VANISHING TRICK

This is the title of Stuart Welch's Intervention column in this issue of Icon News and he has performed a vanishing trick of his own recently, having sold Conservation By Design Limited (CXD) to neighbouring company Arqadia Limited, suppliers to the picture framing industry. Arqadia are part of the International Larson Juhl group of picture framing



Stuart Welch setting up an image for an advert on the new recycled board and boxes

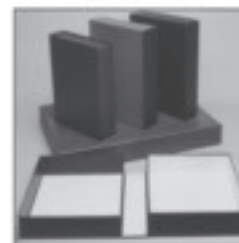
suppliers. CXD will remain an independent company but will be able to call upon the resources of the group when developing new products and services and keeping available difficult and eccentric products.

Stuart started off as an artist but veered off into a career in business and involvement with paper and conservation in 1977, subsequently founding CXD in 1992. It was talking to Arqadia representatives at the Icon Launch eighteen months ago which started the process that has now culminated in his company's sale. Michael Brown, Managing Director of Arqadia Ltd takes over Stuart's role as MD of CXD. Stuart is staying on, happily released from the daily responsibilities of company management to concentrate on creative product and business development – and hopefully now find time for his own artistic pursuits.

Stuart says: 'I have been humbled by the many good wishes for my future and I would like to use this opportunity to thank the conservation profession for all the help I have received over the years. I started my professional life as an artist and getting involved in the conservation world was a bit of an accident but one of the things I like best about working alongside conservators is their integrity and dedication to the work they do. I have been asked to remain in CXD as Development Director for the next five years and I am excited by this opportunity to realise many new ideas while giving me the chance to spend more time painting'.

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Wellcome Home: a collection moved, preserved and displayed

Caroline Checkley-Scott, Senior Conservator at the Wellcome Library, is enthusiastic about the Collection's new premises, the new conservation facility and the new tasks facing the conservation team.

Wellcome Collection and Library are part of The Wellcome Trust, which is the largest charity in the UK and the second largest medical research charity in the world. Wellcome Collection explores the connections between medicine, life and art, providing radical insights into wellbeing and the human condition. It is the first venue of its kind in the UK and forms a significant cultural landmark for London and the country. Wellcome Collection will use contemporary and experimental techniques to challenge and inspire visitors to consider issues of science, health and human identity through the ages, biomedical research and its impact on health and wellbeing. Wellcome Collection is a £30 million venue from the Trust.

The main focus of the work of the Preservation and Conservation Department at the Wellcome Library for the past five years has been the planning of the space and preparation of the collections for the move back to 183 Euston Road, London, in the aptly named Wellcome Collection. With numerous meetings and debates and

countless reports, headaches and sleepless nights, this was a steep learning curve for all involved. The final result is a truly wonderful space which has considered preservation and conservation in all aspects of design and planning.

HENRY WELLCOME AND HIS COLLECTION

As I reported in Icon News last November (issue 7, page 6), Sir Henry Wellcome – pharmacist, entrepreneur, philanthropist and collector – amassed an extraordinary collection which he intended to accommodate and exhibit in 183 Euston Road. His passionate interest in medicine and its history, as well as ethnography and archaeology, led him to gather more than one million objects from across the world. Added to that figure the material collected since his death in 1936 and the total equates to well over 2.5 million objects.

Wellcome Collection (www.wellcomecollection.org) houses a contemporary version of Sir Henry's vision. The nine storey building will showcase over 1,300 objects from his vast collection, spanning six centuries in three gallery spaces totalling 1,350 square metres. Wellcome Collection also includes the Wellcome Library, a café, events space, bookshop, members' club and conference centre.

The new studio





View of 183 Euston Road

THE BUILDING PROJECT

Hopkins Architects re-modelled Euston Road to create Wellcome Collection. In order to do that, a huge team comprising various user groups provided the brief, in all its stages. The Library's work included relocating to temporary accommodation across the road, designing new storage areas to British Standard 5454:2000 and preparing the collections for the move (these include manuscripts, archives, paintings, prints and drawings and sculpture). Up until this time, the majority of the collections were stored on various sites and had to be ferried on trolleys under a tunnel on Euston Road. Input into gallery design and conservation of objects and preparation of condition reports for the exhibitions – these were all part of the process. The most exciting and rewarding part for the Preservation and Conservation Department was the design and build of a new state of the art conservation facility based on the fourth floor.

THE NEW ROLE OF CONSERVATION

There has been a conservation presence at the Wellcome for over thirty five years. Many conservators, from both the UK and abroad, have visited or spent time there on

Medicine Man Gallery



Henry Solomon Wellcome: three-quarter length. Oil painting

student placements or internships during their student days. The previous studio was designed mainly around practical conservation of single objects, concentrating mainly on rare books.

Understanding the role of the Preservation and Conservation Department in a new building like this was the first step. Our role has always been the preservation and conservation of the collections, monitoring the stores, some exhibition work, and other conservation tasks. Exhibitions have recently formed a major part of the work of the team. Added to that, having three new floors of gallery space of our own with frequently changing temporary exhibitions will mean a marked increase in the amount of material to be surveyed, assessed and prepared. External loans are bound to increase now that the collections are more widely known.

Outreach and 'in-reach' now play an important part of



Medicine Man Gallery

library and museum activities and form a major part of our work as conservators. This type of educational activity relies on galleries as aids, and the public exposure of such aids also increases the request for loans from collections. Regular visits from gallery-goers and also conservation professionals will be added to our day. Conservation work on core collection material will be re-established, and with internship programmes, student placements and training sessions the new department will be kept constantly busy.

THE NEW STUDIO

The Preservation and Conservation suite, which covers approximately 270 square metres, includes a bright and airy main studio, wet room, analytical lab, workshop area, conservation library, material store and air conditioned overnight collection store. A team including architects, designers, engineers and furniture specialists to name but a few came together to create an area which really is something to be proud of, and we are! The new studio provides a state of the art facility which will allow both practical and research elements to come together to provide high quality and, hopefully, leading results in conservation.

Each conservator has a bench $2.5 \times 1.5\text{m}$ with integrated light box and storage area. All tables are on wheels so as to allow full flexibility; and include a flat screen computer and nipping press. One of the studio highlights are the chairs, which harmonise excellent contemporary design with ergonomics, and a foot massage ball...and the colour will definitely catch your eye.

Plenty of storage was planned into the design and a reference library adjacent to the space is proving very useful. An early request was to have a dedicated collection store for the department at 16–19 degrees centigrade and 45–55% relative humidity adjacent to the main studio. This means that objects waiting to be worked on have the same storage conditions as those in our stores, keeping the studio uncluttered. After a Health and Safety visit we were required to upgrade our chemical storage, as the previous

metal cupboard did not comply with current legislation. Following a full risk assessment and due to the small quantities of chemicals used by this department, a stand-alone, portable, alarmed, un-ducted fume cupboard with integrated filters was chosen. In the event of a chemical spill, to prevent the spread of chemical fumes the lab is fitted with a damper button which will cut off the air conditioning.

Caroline Checkley-Scott removing Henry Wellcome's hair from a life mask





Lara Artemis taking spectrophotometer readings of objects on display in the galleries

Getting to this point has been a huge commitment both in human terms and financially. Mapping the studio, designing furniture, proofing the many iterations of IT and mechanical and electrical drawings and project plans, pawing over colour and material swatches have meant many long nights for the Preservation and Conservation team. Adding to this, we have been involved in the moving of the Special and General Collections and have just completed the migration of the 250,000 prints and drawings held within our Iconographic Collections; as well as prepared exhibits for the galleries, we have also run refresher handling and disaster training sessions. The three Wellcome conservators have certainly been kept on their toes.

Working at the Library is an immense challenge and we need to constantly balance resources against priorities. But in saying this, the invaluable experience we have gained on this project has been tremendous and we have vastly improved the level of collection care of all the Wellcome Library Collections, which received Museums Library and Archives (MLA) Designation status in 2006.

CURRENT AND FUTURE WORK

Moving forward, the Preservation and Conservation Department has many plans regarding prioritising projects. This includes looking at the DNA of parchment and Henry Wellcome's hair; re-thinking the way we conserve and re-house papyri and assessing the display life of objects in different sensitivity categories. With regard to the exhibition sensitivity of objects, fortunately even during the frantic process of exhibitions, we have had the advantage of spending some time on undertaking visual assessments and spectrophotometry readings, and bringing in a

pigment specialist to analyse pigments on exhibition objects. This information will all be used as a guide to continually assess the exposure status of objects currently on exhibition, and aid the decision making process with regard to future preservation.

Now that we have this fantastic working space, we plan to make real inroads on practical projects that have been identified as priorities in the past but held back while this and other projects took up our time. Watch this space!

YOU ARE WELCOME!

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Amy Junker Heslip conserving a Hogarth print



The Faddan More Psalter

John Gillis, Senior Conservator from Trinity College Library, and Anthony Read, Head of Conservation at the National Museum of Ireland, give a progress update on last year's extraordinary find

The Faddan More Psalter is an eighth century illuminated vellum manuscript, in its original limp, tanned leather cover that was found in a bog in Co Tipperary, Ireland in July 2006. The find has stirred up a great deal of interest, both in the book itself and in the genuinely unique conservation problems that it presents. It is the intention of this report to outline the approach that has been taken to date and to summarise the work that is currently being undertaken.

THE DISCOVERY AND CONDITION OF THE BOOK

The book was found on the afternoon of 20 July 2006 by Mr Eddie Fogarty, who was operating a mechanical digger in the bog at Faddan More, near Birr. Mr Fogarty, somewhat astonishingly, spotted the book as it sprung open in the bucket of his digger and then dropped into the 2 metre deep trench adjacent to where he had been working. He immediately contacted the bog owners, Kevin and Patrick Leonard, who gathered together the fragments and covered them with wet peat before notifying the staff of the National Museum of Ireland. We were indeed fortunate on a number of fronts – that the book survived at all, that it was spotted under these circumstances, and that the landowners had made archaeological discoveries before, had a keen interest in local history, and knew from

past experience exactly what to do with the find to ensure its preservation while still in the bog.

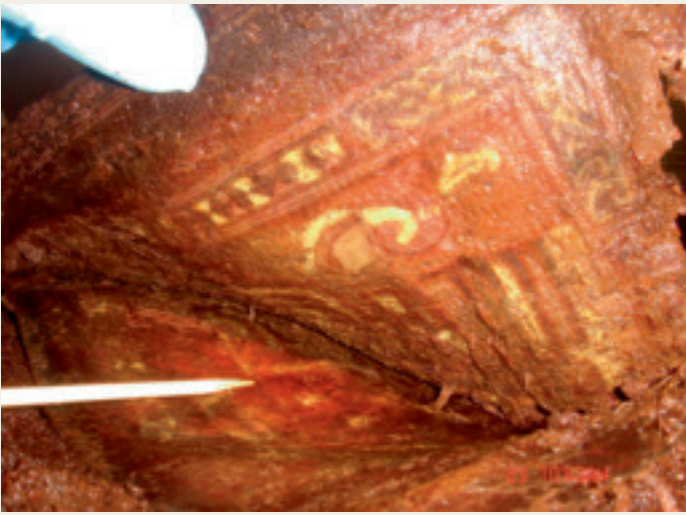
Conservation and archaeological staff from the Museum travelled to the site on the following morning and we were astonished by what we found. It was immediately clear that we were dealing with an early book from the surviving lettering and traces of a yellow border, which were visible on top of the remains. The book itself lay open on the leather cover. However the condition of the find was the cause for a great deal of concern. Descriptions at the time varied from 'like lasagne' to 'alphabet soup'. We clearly had a find of enormous importance but one in very poor condition. The landowners had laid the book on a plastic sheet, which we were able to slide on to a board to remove it from the trench. We then covered the find with cling film and encased it in 'cellocast' resin bandages to encapsulate it for transport back to the National Museum's conservation labs in Dublin.

In Dublin, the Psalter was exposed as fully as possible for recording, was recorded and was then put in to storage while we worked out what to do with it. We did not want to introduce biocides or freeze the book, due to the risk of reactions with the inks and pigments from biocides and the possible deterioration of the vellum from freezing. We therefore stored it in a refrigerator at 4 degrees centigrade, lying on its bed of wet peat from the site, and covered in a 'cellocast' resin cover, moulded to its contours with an intervention layer of silicon mylar. This technique, which has proved valuable at the NMI in storing bog bodies, relies on the natural biocides in the bog water to prevent deterioration. Although mould will grow eventually on any organic material (eg ties, labels etc) stored with the book, it is now nearly a year since discovery and those parts of the Psalter that are still in storage awaiting treatment are completely stable with no signs of mould growth or deterioration.

Examinations showed the vellum book to be a Psalter of large format with a folio size of approximately 30 × 26cm, and 5 gatherings. It was found lying with gathering 3 open, with part of Psalm 83 visible. Early examination found areas of illumination, particularly what may be the remains of an illuminated page with display lettering, found by gently easing the book block back from the cover. The eighth century date is derived from the style of the lettering used, making this the first Irish manuscript book to be discovered for over 200 years.

The Faddan More Psalter as found with overlying peat removed.





Careful easing back of the text block from the front cover revealed a tantalizing glimpse of the highly decorated first page. At the time of going to press this folio remains un-treated.

The book is lying open on its original cover, a limp tanned leather structure with a fore edge flap to which are attached 3 large 'buttons'. The binding has generated particular interest as a unique example of an early binding style that has not otherwise survived in Western Europe from this date.

The condition of the folios, which early tests showed it was possible to separate while wet, varied a great deal. Survival can vary enormously within a single folio and between adjacent pages, presumably depending on such factors as local conditions in the bog, treatment used in preparing

An orpiment border and a capital letter were among the exciting features visible before conservation commenced. ©National Museum of Ireland



the vellum, the nature of the hide cover and the area of the animal that it has been taken from. Condition varied from surprisingly good, with a 'natural' vellum colour and full legibility, to areas where the inks had partially tanned the surface directly below where they were applied, but the surrounding vellum had become gelatinous. Areas were also found where the letters have survived but the vellum matrix of the pages has been lost leaving the letters free to float around with only slight encouragement. There are large areas (60%+) of complete loss. The cover of the book was in good condition and, though ripped by the digger in places, appears to be complete.

It became apparent, as the manuscript was examined and its importance assessed, that a complex conservation project was required, with systematic recording and dismantling in order to extract as much information as possible about it as treatment proceeded. A project was initiated to carry out this process with a high level steering group from the National Museum of Ireland and Trinity College Library, with specialists in different aspects of the work sought for consultation as material related to their fields became available.

OVERVIEW OF THE APPROACH TAKEN TO THE CONSERVATION

It was obvious from the outset that the book presented major conservation challenges, straddling as it does, the fields of book and vellum conservation and archaeological conservation. Archaeological survival of vellum is extremely rare (we have only been able to find one previous instance) and we have not been able to find any record of a previous discovery of this nature.

The first task in the programme of conservation was one of consultation. We could not find any previous discoveries of such a find, so we consulted widely in the fields of both archaeological and book conservation, getting people's reactions to the find, and the approaches that they would undertake if faced with it. We received a quite surprising number of different ideas with regard to approach. Unfortunately this also led to a situation where we have received conflicting advice from a number of highly regarded conservators and have had to act on the basis of experimentation. The range of advice was very wide with that received from the book and archaeological conservation fields hugely varying at times. We have also heard of an initial publication of photographs that was produced of the Psalter, being left in a Conservation Department tea-room as a horror story!

At this point in the process, the Conservation Department of the National Museum of Ireland had been consulting very closely with the Conservation Department of Trinity

Library, which holds seven of the ten pre-1000AD Irish books still remaining in Ireland. We arranged for John Gillis, a Senior Conservator of books and manuscripts to be seconded to the Conservation Department of the National Museum, and it is this combination of experience – archaeological conservators from the National Museum working with a book conservator from Trinity College Library, who are conserving the Psalter. We are immensely grateful to Trinity College Library and their Conservation Department for agreeing to this arrangement and for the level of support that they have given.

An overall approach was agreed for the conservation element of the project with the following structure.

PHASE 1

All investigations of the book that could be undertaken in a non-destructive manner would be carried out, and the object recorded in its 'as found' form in as many different ways as possible. This eventually included photography, drawing, MRI scanning (unsuccessful), multi spectral imaging (unsuccessful) and High Definition filming including close ups. CT scanning and X-ray were ruled out on the basis of reports of X-rays accelerating vellum degradation. Meanwhile tiny samples of the vellum were taken for degradation analysis and bookbinding specialists were brought in to analyse and record what structure in the binding was visible.

PHASE 2

While phase 1 was occurring, samples of historic (18th century) parchment were taken, waterlogged and put under pressure for a period of two weeks. These samples, though by no means the same as the waterlogged archaeological vellum, were used for experimentation to establish the comparative effectiveness of the various drying techniques that had been suggested to us.

As a basic principle, it was agreed that no chemical be added to the vellum that would remain after the completion of the drying process. This principle was established primarily because of concern over the possible long-term effects of chemicals such as polyethylene glycol and glycerol on the inks and pigments present in the manuscript, and unfortunately ruled out some possible archaeological conservation techniques.

The following drying techniques were eventually tested: -

Air-drying

Freeze-drying

Air-drying on a vacuum table

Air-drying under blottings and glass weights

Drying between blottings using a 'vacuum packing' system

All of the drying techniques above were tried from water, but all the techniques given above with the exception of freeze drying were also tried, drying from various solvents, to establish if shrinkage could be reduced by reducing the surface tension of the liquid being removed. Solvents tested included ethanol, acetone and an acetone/ water solution.

A SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS IS AS FOLLOWS: -

Please note that these are broad statements regarding accurately measured and carefully controlled experiments. The statements included here are intended to give an idea of the approach taken, but the experiments will be written up in full elsewhere:-

Drying from Water

Air-drying: (this really acted as a control method and was not expected to be considered as a viable method of treating the manuscript). Very distorted. Loss of flexibility. Becoming translucent in places, leaving a blotchy appearance. 5% shrinkage

Freeze-drying: No distortion. Opacity maintained, but sample 'pulped up' with a noticeable increase in thickness. Loss of natural pigmentation on hair side, becoming almost white, surface now 'spongy'. 3.5% shrinkage

Air-drying on a vacuum table: Vacuum struggled to hold the samples in position. Translucent in places. 5% shrinkage

Air-drying under blottings and glass weights:

Considerable colour changes in some samples with slight translucency in the sample dried through water. 3.5% shrinkage through water

Drying between blottings using a 'vacuum packing' system: No distortion throughout all samples, sample dried through water became very translucent. 1.5% shrinkage.

Effects of solvents

Solvents were tried in conjunction with each of the drying processes (except freeze drying)

Ethanol: Generally reduced shrinkage effects, compared to water and gave a good 'visual' result. Samples that became opaque when dried from water, did not when dried from ethanol

Acetone: Drying was so rapid as to be impossible to control, and the dried parchment had a 'horny' feel.

Acetone 80% Water 20%: The parchment was unstable in the solvent and pieces began to break off the surface during impregnation.

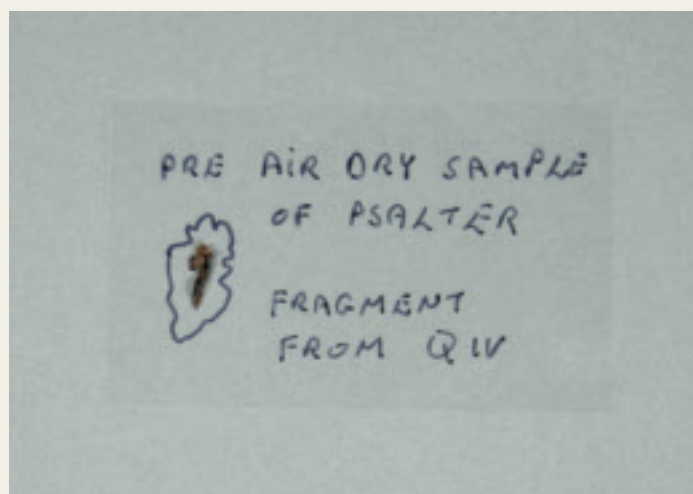
After further trials using the best performers from above and taking into consideration other working aspects of each method, the technique of vacuum pack drying between blottings from ethanol was selected as the technique most likely to give good results when drying the Psalter. The technique involves the replacement of the water in the vellum by ethanol, by immersion in ethanol for 48 hours, changing solution half way through. The ethanol soaked vellum is then placed between layers of fine 'bondina' and then between 100% cotton blotting paper. This is then placed within a vacuum packing bag and put in the vacuum packing machine. The vacuum causes the ethanol to diffuse from the vellum into the surrounding blottings, while the even pressure of the blottings, held in place by the vacuum, controls shrinkage. It is sometimes necessary to change blottings once during the process, which takes about 48 hours.

PHASE 3 – THE SITUATION AT PRESENT

After the test pieces, the technique was tried on a small stray fragment of the Psalter and was found to be successful (after solubility tests for the inks). It was then tried on larger fragments, and eventually large pieces, again with remarkable success. Shrinkage of substantial pages of the Psalter is controlled and is consistently around 2% to 5%. This should be compared to a small and out of context fragment (with no text), which displayed approx. 75% shrinkage and massive distortion when air-dried.

The Psalter is currently being kept refrigerated and is brought out of storage solely for the removal of pieces to be treated. Treatment involves the removal of substantial pieces – generally the remains of entire gatherings, but the

An outline traced from a small detached fragment of vellum from the Psalter and the same piece when allowed to air-dry.



folio 28v 31r before and after the drying process.



book itself and the way it lies dictate the precise nature of the pieces selected.

A piece is identified, carefully recorded and lifted from the book by means of hand tools, some fabricated as required, bondina and silicon mylar – gently inserted as the pages and fragments are teased apart.

The piece is then separated out, using the same techniques, into its bifolia, and is gently cleaned with suitable instruments, deionised water and ethanol. It is again recorded, often by a tracing at this stage. Each fragment is sandwiched between layers of bondina during the process to facilitate handling. When cleaned, it is dried using the technique outlined above.

During the process of dismantling and conserving the book, new discoveries are continuously being made as new pages are revealed, analyses undertaken, and as details of the binding structure become clearer. These are making this a particularly exciting project to participate in.

The project is very much a team effort and we are grateful to everyone who has contributed to it with their time and to the numerous members of the conservation community whom we have spoken to and who have been so generous with their advice.

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news from the groups

ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP

We are pleased to announce the programme of lectures and posters for the joint Icon Archaeology Group/Fitzwilliam Museum conference 'Decorated Surfaces on Ancient Egyptian Objects: Technology, Deterioration and Conservation', to be held at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge in September.

The two-day conference (Friday 7 September and Saturday 8 September) will address topics raised by a broad range of Egyptian decorated object surfaces and substrates. There will be lectures on coffins, mummy shrouds, mummy portraits, cartonnage, basketry, wooden statuettes and bronze, as well as talks on pigments and on the use of radiography in studying Egyptian objects. Conference posters will cover a similar range of topics but also include presentations on decision making and on-site conservation.

Conference attendees are invited to an evening reception and private view of an exhibition of the Fitzwilliam Museum's fabulous, recently conserved papyrus Book of the Dead of Ramose on the Friday evening, and on Saturday evening, to the Fitzwilliam's annual Egyptology lecture (Stephen Glanville Memorial Lecture). This year it will be given by Professor Barry Kemp of the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, University of Cambridge and Director of the Amarna Project. His talk will include discussion of the methods of site conservation developed at Amarna over the last decade.

On Sunday after the conference (9 September), there will also be plenty to do. The Fitzwilliam Museum is offering free guided tours of the Egyptian galleries, conservation labs and stores. There will also be a lecture and film by the team who rescued the Tarharqo wall painting at Qasr Ibrim, and Dana Goodburn-Brown will be conducting her famous mummy-wrapping workshop (charge of £10 to cover materials).

And, as a reminder, on the day preceding the conference (Thursday, 6 September) there will be small-group workshops and practical seminars, primarily intended for professional development, which will allow detailed examination and discussion of objects in the Museum's collection.

Full details of these events, including a list of conference lectures and posters and the Sunday events, are now available on the conference web-site, <http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/dept/ant/aeo2007/>. For further information, contact Julie Dawson (e-mail: fitzmuseum-aeo2007@lists.cam.ac.uk; tel.: +44 (0)1223 332930) or Susi Pancaldo (e-mail: s.pancaldo@ucl.ac.uk; tel.: +44 (0)207-679-4137). For queries regarding conference bookings, please contact Charlotte Cowin (e-mail: membership@icon.org.uk; tel: +44 (0)20 7785 3807).

BOOK AND PAPER GROUP

Survey

Have you seen our survey form? Please complete online or on paper as soon as you can. The web-address is on the form and there is a direct link from the Icon website.

We are keen that everyone takes part, including our International members, in order to gauge your response to the services we are currently providing and so we can effectively plan our future programme. The survey concentrates on Training, Publications, Conferences and the Membership Directory and we very much hope that you will support us by taking a few moments to complete it.

Also, if you are keen to have a hard-copy Membership Directory we need you to indicate this on the questionnaire and provide us with your up-to-date contact details. The Data Protection Act will not allow us to print your contact information without confirmation that you authorise us to do so for this purpose.

Leaflets

We are pleased that this issue of Icon News also includes our three up-dated leaflets – Care and conservation of prints, drawings and watercolours, Care and conservation of documents and archives, Care and conservation of books – plus an order form if you wish to receive more copies. We hope that you will find them a valuable resource to use with your clients or members of the public.

Hope everyone has a good summer but please DON'T FORGET to send in your survey form before you go on holiday. Thanks for your support.

Helen Lindsay Chair, Book and Paper Group

GILDING AND DECORATIVE SURFACES GROUP

As reported in the last Icon News, we awarded our first annual student award to Elizabeth Walker for her final year thesis on the Amalgam Mirror. We are now inviting applications for the 2007 award, which will be jointly sponsored by the Group and John Mylands Ltd. More information and application forms are available on the website.

METALS GROUP

Our study day on Thursday 20 September, 'Submergence and sculpture', offers an opportunity to visit two very contrasting West Yorkshire attractions.

The morning session will be held at the National Coal Mining Museum for England, where delegates will be sent plummeting 439 feet beneath terra-firma to enjoy the unique experience of an underground tour of Caphouse

Colliery, one of Britain's oldest working mines. The tour is led by an ex-miner, who, using models and machinery to depict methods and conditions of mining from the early 1800s to the present, will expertly guide the group through the tunnels whilst adding a personal touch by sharing their mining stories. After the tour, there will be a brief presentation about conservation at NCM.

After a countryside pub lunch, the afternoon will continue with a visit to the Yorkshire Sculpture Park. A curator will be provided by YSP to navigate us through the many exhibits, which include some important Henry Moore sculptures.

As the venues for this study-day are fairly remote, a coach will be arranged to collect and return delegates from Wakefield Westgate Station (on the East Coast main-line). The coach will also be used to take the group from NCM to lunch and then on to YSP. Timing for the coach will be made to coincide with the train timetables and will be confirmed closer to the date.

For further information please contact **Fran Clarke**,
fran.clarke@ncm.org.uk 01924 848806

PHOTOGRAPHIC MATERIALS GROUP

The Group's Annual General Meeting is to be held on 7 November 2007 at Icon headquarters.

Call for papers

Practical Photographic Preservation

Have you just completed a photographic preservation survey?

Are you struggling to identify the photographs in your special collections?

Concerned about which descriptive system is the right one for you?

Then we would like to hear from you!

We are looking for case studies that involve the preservation and conservation of photograph collections. We would particularly like to hear from students working in this area. These can be large or small, ongoing or completed projects.

Subjects that we hope will be covered at the meeting are:

- Case studies of remedial conservation projects
- Cataloguing— methodologies and practice
- Identification of photographic materials and processes
- Practical preservation tips
- Special collections in small specialist libraries and museums
- Digitisation as a preservation tool for photographs
- Family and local history collections
- Photograph albums

- Managing slide collections
- Storage and handling of photographic materials

Proposals for papers covering these issues would be most welcome. Please send short abstracts to:

Icon Photographic Materials Group, (November meeting)
3rd Floor, Downstream Building, 1 London Bridge, London,
SE1 9BG, UK. Telephone: +44(0)20 7785 3805

Fax: +44(0)20 7785 3806 or by email to:

anita.bools@btinternet.com by 31 August, 2007

Free student places

Again we are offering two free students places. If you would like to apply please send a short summary (up to 300 words) telling us how your studies will benefit from attending the meeting

SCOTLAND GROUP

The Group has continued to develop the events programme for the rest of the year, with the annual Plenderleith Memorial Lecture high on the agenda. There will also be further meetings of the pub group and an art tour of the Scottish Parliament to come, details to follow. The Committee is now also involved in the organisation of the forthcoming 'Art, Conservation and Authenticities: Material, Concept, Context' symposium (12–14 September 2007, University of Glasgow) as Gillian Keay is on the Technical Committee. A number of other collaborations are being explored, including working with a Collections Care Group for Aberdeenshire/Angus-based museum volunteers, conservators, collections care professionals and curators. The presentations from the March Iron Gall Inks Meeting in Dundee have been collated and will shortly be available via the Group's page on the Icon website, while abstracts are to be found in this edition of Icon News. Any suggestions for future events, including a speaker for the Plenderleith Lecture, are very welcome. Please contact Kirsten Elliott on kelliott@nationalgalleries.org.

In other Committee business, a grant to support conservators in the PACR process has been re-established. Applicants must be full members of Icon, members of the Scotland Group, and living and working in Scotland. An application form can be downloaded from the Group page of the website or is available by emailing scotland@icon.org.uk. Completed forms should be sent to: The Chair, Icon Scotland Group, c/o Icon, 22–26 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 2PQ. Awards to successful candidates will normally be £100 paid on receipt of confirmation that accredited status has been conferred. Icon Scotland Group hopes to make four awards a year and, in the event of multiple applicants, preference will be given to equal distribution between the disciplines. Applications are reviewed by the Group's office bearers

more news from the groups

and awards are conditional on achieving ACR status. All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence.

The Group is also looking for a new Scotland Trustee for Icon's Board as Jim Tate will be standing down at the AGM later this year. We would be delighted to hear from anyone who is keen to represent Scotland. Please get in touch with the Chair (Linda.Ramsay@nas.gov.uk) or with Jim himself (j.tate@nms.ac.uk or 0131 2474290) for an informal chat about responsibilities and demands of the role. The Icon Board guarantees one place for a Scotland representative, but the Group's members can, of course, apply for any other vacant places on the Board as well.

Finally, the Committee welcomes Linda Fabiani MSP, the new Minister for Europe, External Affairs and Culture at The Scottish Parliament, and we look forward to working with this new ministry.

The next Group Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday 14 August, between 6–8pm in General Register House, the National Archives of Scotland. The Committee is as follows:

Chair:	Linda Ramsay
Secretary:	Amanda Clydesdale
Vice Secretary:	Antonia Craster
Treasurer:	Audrey Wilson
Vice Treasurer:	Gill Keay
Events team:	Helen Creasy, Kirsten Elliott, Erica Kotze, Elizabeth Main
Publications/ publicity team:	Stephen Umpleby and Ruth Honeybone
Ordinary Committee Members:	Wilma Bouwmeester, Julian Watson, Sophie Younger and Mo Bingham
Icon Scotland Representative on the Icon Board of Trustees:	Jim Tate
Observers:	Carol Brown and Clare Meredith

For further information on the Group's events and activities, please see the website.

STONE AND WALLPAINTING GROUP

Three new members have been welcomed on to the committee. These are:

Clara Willett	on two year secondment from English Heritage to run the HLF funded Traditional Building Skills Bursary Scheme
Sophie Stewart	Director of Paine & Stewart; currently involved in the conservation of the Burges interiors at Cardiff Castle
Fiona Hay	Student representative from the City & Guilds of London Art School, Conservation Studies degree course.

Much of the work of the committee involves establishing a regular series of meetings and symposia. After the successful 'Problem Stones' day held at the Tower of London in February, there is to be series of two days on 'Polychromed Wood' at Hampton Court Palace – these will be on 26 October 2007 and 22 February 2008 – see Listings.

During this summer, it is hoped to combine a site visit with the AGM. Other meetings in the early planning stage are:

Spring 2008 Damp in Buildings

Summer 2008 Problem Stones (Part 2)

Any suggestions as to ideas for meetings, or ways of improving them would be gratefully received.

David Odgers – Chair, SWP Group
david@odgersconservation.co.uk

TEXTILE GROUP

This year's Spring Forum 'Dress in detail; display, storage and conservation considerations' offered a very informative look at issues concerning the conservation of historic dress. Speakers focused on practical conservation techniques dealing with complex and varied items of dress, how to cope with making and adapting mannequins often within a tight deadline, and two case histories of how specific sites dealt with the display and storage of collections of dress. Over 120 people attended the Forum and there was a great mix of conservators, curators and collectors. The postprints of the papers presented will be sent later this year to all those who attended. Copies will be available to purchase for those not able to come and details will be given about the cost in due course.

New committee members

At the Forum two members of the committee came to the end of their term of office. Claire Golburn has been a very hard working and conscientious Treasurer who has smoothly steered the Group through the convergence process as well as helping to organise past Forums and events. Marilyn Leader has been a stalwart of the committee, being the liaison for the Textile Group web pages and helping with the organisation of past Forums and editing the 2006 postprints. She has also put together and lead several Weave Analysis workshops which have offered a relaxed and straight forward approach to an often complex subject. Both Claire and Marilyn's support, patience and good humour will be missed on the committee.

Two new committee members were appointed at the Forum and we welcome Rachel Langley and Nicola Yates. The post of Treasurer for the Group has been taken by Jane Taylor, an existing committee member. Thank you to all three for offering their time and energy to work on the committee.

'Back to Basics' workshops 15 and 16 October 2007

We anticipate high demand for these workshops because of the practical review of detergents and so have offered the course on two days. We are also hoping to run the course in Edinburgh sometime in 2008. Numbers have to

Graduate Voice

For my work placement experience at the end of my second year on the Conservation and Restoration Degree programme at Lincoln University, I chose to work at the Royal Armouries, Leeds because of my interest in arms and armour. I had visited the Royal Armouries on a number of occasions and knew that it was a unique collection of international importance.

My time there was spent, as a volunteer, on a project to conserve and audit the Hall of Steel collection. The presentation of the objects on open display has meant that many of them were suffering from corrosion and extensive cleaning and re-labelling was required. The last time the collection had been conserved was for installation ten years previously in 1996 when it was moved from the Tower of London to Leeds.

The Hall of Steel is a giant staircase that connects all five galleries: war, hunting, oriental, tournament and self defence. The exterior walls are glass and some of the displays on the walls are visible from the outside of the museum. Displayed on the interior and exterior walls of the tower are trophies amounting to over 2,500 items: 448 staff weapons, 291 armour pieces, 119 pistols, 4 muskets, 21 cannon, 102 swords, 10 armours, 176 rifles, 1400 bayonets and 4 axes. The trophies mainly consist of 17th century armour and 19th century military equipment. There are many items from the periods of the Napoleonic Wars and English Civil War.



The display before the conservation project

The condition of the objects was generally good and there was no significant damage but the protective layer of synthetic wax that the objects had been coated with before they were placed in the Hall of Steel had broken down and corrosion had set in. The objects were generally caked in dust and there was a thin layer of corrosion on the surface of the iron objects. Some of the accession tags were missing as their plastic ties were not

be restricted because of the studio space needed to run such an event. Due to popular demand we will make every effort to run the course in the future and will alert members via Icon News and the Textile Group web pages.



Reinstallation

UV resistant and had broken off after several years of display. The condition of the objects was recorded and pictures were taken and entered onto the museum's computer database.

The project had been planned before I arrived at the Museum by the Head of Collections Care. Its phases were: preparing for the de-installation of the objects; the de-installation and recording of the objects; their conservation and re-labelling; preparing for their re-installation and re-installing them. This was a process that had to be repeated for the interior wall objects, as it was not possible to treat the interior and exterior objects at the same time. I was lucky enough to work on all but the reinstallation of the interior walls on the Hall of Steel.

There was a lot of work involving moving the objects from their exact individual mounts to temporary storage to ensure the items were kept in their trophy groups. This was hard work as it required working on scaffolding and carrying items up and down the staircases in the heat of the summer.

The conservation treatment took place in the museum's Newsroom, which is usually used as a multimedia centre and for lectures. This had been transformed into a conservation, recording and storage area. Treatment was



Near completion

quite straightforward and of minimum intervention. Dealing with a trophy at a time, the treatment method consisted of using a museum vacuum with a soft head to remove the dust from the object, then old layers of synthetic wax and any old grease or oils were removed with the application of a solvent on a cotton wool swab. Wire wool with Renaissance Microcrystalline wax was sometimes used to remove corrosion, but it could not be used on objects with patinas, blued firearms or the inside surface of the breast plates because they had been painted. If the object had any wood that needed cleaning a solution of deionised water with non-ionic detergent was applied using a damp, lint-free cloth. After this any residues were removed with deionised water applied again using a damp, lint-free cloth and then dried. A protective layer of Renaissance microcrystalline wax was then applied to the surface of the object with a soft bristled brush. On metal surfaces the wax was applied heated. The object would then be lightly buffed with a lint-free cloth and the accession tag would be fixed with a UV resistant cable. A brief condition/treatment report would be filled in for each object. The objects forming a trophy would then be placed back in the mounts where they originally came from on the Hall of Steel, after the walls of the hall had been painted and left to off-gas.

The project took place from the 5 June 2006 to the 23 September 2006 and in addition to working with the Head of Collections Care and fellow conservators I also worked with members of other departments from within the museum, such as the Museum Registrar and the Science Officer, and other volunteers from various institutes.

The project had a fixed budget of £58,000. This money paid for the conservation staff, conservation equipment, specialist scaffolders and their equipment, paint, painters, lighting and graphic panels etc. By the end of the project the Hall of Steel had been completed to schedule and a dusting programme put in place should ensure the protection of the items for another ten years. The newly painted walls of the

Hall of Steel combined with the newly conserved objects and good lighting provide an eye-catching display of arms and armour that will inspire all who see it.

My work placement gave me the experience of working as part of a professional team under pressure because of the time schedule. And I was able to learn about preventative conservation techniques and the conservation of arms and armour. I thoroughly enjoyed the whole experience.

Geraint Duggan

Conservation student at Lincoln University

THE BEER MEETING

Imogen Herford has handed over the task of organising the beer meetings to me. So first off, a big thank you to her for her sterling efforts on our behalf.

I've decided to move the meetings to Wednesdays, mainly because I can't do Tuesdays, and also because it'll be a nice mid-week break to bridge the gap between weekends. They'll be every six weeks, so put the following dates in your diaries:

25th July, 5th September, 24th October, 7th November and 19th December

The venue for the July meeting is a pub called the Nordic, which is 25 Newman Street, London W1T 1PN. Nearest tubes are Goodge Street and Tottenham Court Road, although it's not that far from Oxford Street either. (Try www.streetmap.co.uk if uncertain.) I will be there for 5.30.

The September meeting will be at the St. Brides Tavern, 1 Bridewell Place, EC4V 6AP, close to Blackfriars tube.

From 5.30 as usual!

Do contact me if you have any questions on cattbaum@googlemail.com or 07973 918 738

I look forward to seeing you there,

Catt Baum

reviews

BOOKS

CONSERVATION SCIENCE: HERITAGE MATERIALS

Eric May and Mark Jones, eds.

Royal Society of Chemistry 2006

ISBN: 10: 0 85404 659 3

ISBN-13: 978-0-85404-659-1

376 pages £34.95

What excellent timing, for *Conservation Science* to appear at the end of 2006, just when the House of Lords completed their study of the same subject and published it as *Heritage Science*. A moment of glory for conservation science – or confirmation that the discipline has come of age?

Conservation Science leaves us in no doubt, it is a book which shows throughout how an understanding of the composition and condition of the material of artefacts, combined with scientific knowledge about how and why they degrade, is key to delivering the best conservation treatments. The message is clear: the application of science and scientific methods to conservation are essential elements in the preservation of heritage material.

The book is arranged as twelve separate chapters. All except the first two concentrate on different groups of materials – paper, textiles, leather, metals, glass & ceramics, plastics, stone, wall paintings, conservation of ancient timbers from the sea, and in-situ preservation of waterlogged archaeological sites (well, maybe this one is not exactly a material, but it is quite specific). The first chapter sets the scene with an essay on the roles of the different disciplines, while the second discusses *Methods in Conservation*. From this information alone it is clear that *Conservation Science* is a rather wider title than the actual breadth of subjects covered: for example there is nothing about easel paintings, preventive conservation, or the development or testing of new materials for conservation.

Each of the chapters is written by a specialist author or authors, and this gives both strengths and weaknesses. The strengths are that it is extremely informative, covering many important aspects of materials science and the consequent conservation approaches or issues in an accessible and interesting way. Some chapters stood out for me for their clarity of presentation and for the quality and relevance of the material; if I had to choose three they would probably be glass & ceramics, plastics, and the most substantial chapter, on ancient timbers. One is aware through the book that most chapters can be related one way or another to issues which must have arisen during the Mary Rose

project. I am strongly tempted to choose the *textile* chapter too, where the authors took a rather different approach and dealt with the science and conservation behind three case studies – one being a sail from HMS Victory. The dimensions (24m across) and the casual statement '... weighs somewhere in the region of half a tonne' make it clear why it is important to really understand the mechanisms of degradation of the fibres and to determine their remaining strength.

The main weakness of the book to me is that it reads as a series of independent chapters, the range and depth of which appear to have been left to the individual authors. Thus the second chapter, *Methods in Conservation*, outlines some analytical methods, but not in relation to those used in subsequent chapters, nor do the brief statements about conservation treatments refer the reader to in-depth studies in subsequent chapters. So this chapter, *leather* (where I would have preferred fewer schematic diagrams of organic molecules and more links to case studies), *metals* (which concentrates very interestingly on iron and ships, but with no counterbalancing section about archaeological or historical metals or alloys), were less satisfactory. Equally, *stone*, while presenting really interesting information about the role of microorganisms in stone decay, otherwise just discourses about building stone.

However, no book on such a wide subject could be expected to be fully comprehensive, and even with only half the content the book would be welcomed. I was a little disappointed by the low quality of some of the images and their captions – would anyone ignorant of the expected shape or function of a rudder pintle be any the wiser from the radiograph shown? And surely a publication by the RSC should not show SEM and other images with no scale, details, or descriptive captions to explain the features. The book has the longest index I've ever seen (46 pages, 12% of the book!) – although sadly not including 'scrutched', 'hackled' or 'scroop' which I enjoyed in the text. I would have preferred some of this space to have been given to each chapter to allow references throughout the text rather than just a few references and further reading at the end.

In spite of these quibbles, the Editors are to be congratulated on producing a book that should be in every conservation lab and wherever conservation science is practiced or considered. It should do a lot for raising the profile and understanding of a key discipline.

Jim Tate

Head of Department of Conservation & Analytical Research
National Museums Scotland

CONFERENCES

RETOUCHING COMPLEX SURFACES

Courtauld Institute of Art 20 April 2007

'Retouching Complex Surfaces', jointly organised by Icon and BAPCR, was the third and final instalment of a series of conferences based on the theme of retouching. The previous two conferences were informative and thought provoking and so this promised to be as equally insightful. The event was aimed at addressing the difficulties associated with retouching complex surfaces, ranging from the appropriate selection of materials to the ethical considerations that need to be made. Practical solutions in the form of innovative techniques and use of materials, as well as the application of new technology, were presented in case studies from conservators from Holland, Italy and the UK. The day was organised in a similar way to the previous conferences, with morning lectures followed by workshops and a trade fair in the afternoon. This was a successful arrangement, where it was possible to immediately put to the test information we had been given in the morning.

The first section of lectures focussed on examples where practical solutions were found to potentially complex situations. *Oriana Sartiani* and *Leonardo Severini* from the Opificio delle Pietre dure di Firenze presented their innovative treatment of a large painting by the 17th century artist Michelangelo Ricciolini, which formed part of a series of paintings at the Palazzo Chigi at San Quirico d'Orcia in Siena. The painting had suffered considerable damage in the form of losses to the support and paint layer. In this case, the technique employed by the artist posed particular problems in the retouching stages, as Ricciolini had applied paint directly to the canvas in order to create the effect of a tapestry. This resulted in a pronounced weave pattern, which could not be achieved through retouching alone. In order to recreate a weave texture, a canvas that had similar characteristics to the original was re-woven in areas of losses. These areas were then reintegrated by applying pastel directly to the canvas inserts by use of the technique of chromatic selection, as this was found to be the most effective method for capturing the intense colours of the original.

Laurent Sozzani of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam presented the treatment of two paintings that required substantial reconstruction to large areas of losses. This fascinating paper highlighted the practical approaches, techniques and extensive research that were used to reintegrate losses where information on the original is



limited. Sozzani also raised the question of how far retouching should be taken and the ethical concerns that play an important role in that decision. One of the treatments discussed was that of a small oil painting by van Kessel, entitled *Still Life with Insects and Flowers*, where nearly a quarter of the whole composition was missing. Removal of a previous retouching campaign that covered intact areas of the original paint was required, so that a more accurate composition could be reconstructed. This was achieved by using fragments of the design that still remained, along with studies of other van Kessel paintings and from actual insect and plant specimens.

In the considerably larger painting, *Italian Landscape with Umbrella* by Hendrik Voogd, areas of the sky had been greatly altered due to a past over-zealous cleaning. A black and white photo taken before this had occurred provided information on the design, shape and characteristics of the missing design, but decisions on colour had to be made by the conservator, guided by ethical parameters. Sozzani gave an informative description of the techniques used to great effect in retouching both paintings.

The second part of the presentations focused on the application of new technology or materials as a solution to retouching problems. Stig Evans of the Royal Pavillion in Brighton and Andrew Hanson, Senior Research Scientist at the National Physical Laboratory in Middlesex, gave both an amusing and thought-provoking presentation on the use of a portable spectrometer for retouching, in this case the ava-mouse spectrophotometer. They demonstrated the many ways in which this device could be beneficial, such as providing consistent colour matching, which is especially useful for large-scale projects where more than one conservator is working on the same painting. The device is small and easily portable, closely resembling a computer mouse which is connected in the

same way to a laptop. A pilot study has been set up between the Royal Pavillion and the City and Guilds College Conservation course where two panels taken from the same organ in the Pavillion will be retouched separately in London and Brighton. The spectrometer will be used to take colour measurements, which will then be discussed between conservators.

The final presentation was given by Patricia Smithen of Tate Gallery and Peter Konecny, a private conservator in London, on the use of Paraloid B72 gel as a retouching medium. Konecny first developed these gels in the early 1990s and has found them to be effective for retouching a large range of difficult surfaces. As the handling properties of the gels are closer to that of the artist's original paint media, he states that it is easier to replicate the surrounding paint layer when retouching. The gels are available in different consistencies and concentrations which can be manipulated to create the desired effect.

In the afternoon workshops, delegates were given the opportunity to test the gels for themselves, with Peter and other conservators on hand for any questions that we may have had. I found that when using the appropriate gel, it was possible to replicate impasto with smooth or crisp edges that held its shape, whilst with another gel a transparent glaze could be achieved in which the pigment was easily and evenly dispersed.

Alongside the workshops, the trade fair included demonstrations from conservators on texturing fills using silicon moulds, as well as using the portable spectrophotometer.

Overall a very informative series of conferences with excellent information on practical techniques and materials for all aspects of retouching.

Emma Fisher

Conservation and Collections Officer
Glynn Vivian Art Gallery, Swansea

IRON GALL INKS: APPROACHES TO CONSERVATION IN SCOTLAND

University of Dundee Library 31 March 2007

The following abstracts from this one-day event have been provided by the speakers in order to give an overview of this interesting, informative, and enjoyable day. Most of the presentations were given in the morning, in a session chaired by Phillipa Sterlini, while the final paper and a lively discussion session chaired by Vanessa Charles were in the afternoon. This was an excellent opportunity for information exchange and professional development and thanks are due to Erica Kotze, event organiser, the Book & Paper Conservation Studio, Dundee and the speakers.

The presentations in full, along with additional information and a transcript of the discussion session will shortly be available on the Scotland Group page of the Icon website.

Iron Gall Ink Recipes

Emma Fraser, Book & Paper Conservation Studio, Dundee

The earliest use of iron gall ink is hard to establish but there are early references to a solution of iron compound, known as 'shoemakers ink', which was used by the Romans for blackening leather. The earliest writing inks were carbon inks, sometimes referred to as Chinese ink. However, iron gall ink had some distinct advantages, which led to the eventual displacement of carbon ink. Ironically, the attempt to produce a more indelible ink than carbon ink resulted in the potential for iron gall ink's long-term discolouration and destruction. In the twentieth-century iron gall ink was gradually replaced by inks made from synthetic dyes. These were seen as less chemically aggressive than iron gall ink and more suited to writing on paper. There are many different recipes for iron gall ink including official specifications used by the seventeenth-century Dutch United East Indies Company and that used by the German government until 1974. Most recipes for iron gall ink include three basic ingredients: tannins, ferrous sulphate and gum arabic. However, there were also a large number of additives and the amounts used can vary enormously. To quote David Dorning, 'the extent of degradation, and the degrees of permanence and varying response to conservation treatments, must all depend to a significant extent on the nature – and therefore the original recipe – of the ink'. (David Dorning, 'Iron Gall inks: variations on a theme that can be both ironic and galling'.) To finish, slides documenting the process of making iron gall ink as carried out by my friend and artist, Lisa Gribbon, were shown.



Summary of Iron Gall Inks – Issues and Conservation Treatments

Francoise Richard, Book & Paper Conservation Studio, Dundee

This summary aims to give an overview, from a conservator's perspective, of the problems caused by iron gall ink and the various conservation treatments available. It is necessary to consider the chemical reactions involved in the historic recipes used to make iron gall ink in order to understand why this kind of ink causes specific degradation to the paper support. Sulphuric acid is formed as a by-product and there is very often an excess of iron II ions. Acidity facilitates hydrolysis of cellulose while iron II ions accelerate oxidation of paper fibres. As a result of these two degradation processes, ink corrosion, or 'ink burn', is commonly observed on iron gall inked supports.

Various factors, such as the composition of the ink, the nature of the paper and environmental conditions influence reactions involved. Prior to any conservation measures, a characterisation of the degradation stage of simple items or large collections helps to prioritise the aims of the future intervention and to choose the best treatment from the different possibilities. It is up to the conservator to choose mechanical reinforcement (i.e. lining, encapsulation, local repairs), chemical stabilisation (i.e. washing, deacidification, use of antioxidants) or a combination of several treatments.

Rothes Papers Conservation Project

Erica Kotze, Book & Paper Conservation Studio, Dundee

Looking at three case studies of recent projects – the Rothes Papers Collection, the Linnaean Correspondence Project and a David Hume letter – this presentation aims to illustrate the range of treatments, from most to least interventive, which have been carried out to iron gall ink documents at the Book & Paper Conservation Studio in Dundee. For several years up until the start of the Rothes Papers project, it had been the studio policy that aqueous treatment of inks was to be avoided in most cases. However, severe water and mould damage to most of the items meant that aqueous treatment was necessary. Washing of the collection was followed by calcium phytate treatment and resizing or repair with Type B gelatine. The Linnaean Correspondence Project was a fascinating project carried out over a three-year period. Chemical treatment was beyond the scope of this project but innovative developments during

this project include the use of a condition rating form as part of the documentation procedure and the use of sieved cold Type B gelatine for paper repairs. The final case study is the treatment of a letter written by David Hume, and has been chosen to illustrate the range of intervention, which as in this case is often minimal.

Case Study: Conservation Treatment and Mounting of a Panoramic Plan by David Altmann, 1640

**Johana Langerová, the National Archives of Scotland, Edinburgh, previously of the National Archives of the Czech Republic
Zuzana Zajačiková, the National Archives of the Czech Republic**

This case study illustrates a project to conserve and mount a large panoramic plan from a collection of the Royal Canonry of Premonstratensians at Strahov in Prague. The plan, ordered by the Abbot of Strahov monastery in 1640, depicts a landscape view on the river Vltava and its close surroundings and is painted on a 2700mm long by 290mm wide strip of handmade paper. Improper storage and handling caused mechanical damage to the paper carrier and the pigment layer also exhibited abrasion, powdering and loss of material and damage caused by a corrosive green pigment. Previous repairs had not improved the condition, rather the contrary. Conservation treatment was preceded by analysis and tests. Treatments included local consolidation of pigment using Klucel G in ethanol; use of a Preservation Pencil® for separation of strips of the plan; repairs; non-aqueous deacidification and flattening and the eventual decision to mount the plan on a Karibari style board (3000 x 610 mm) and house in a protective four-flap folder.

Investigation Into the Use of Fixatives with Iron Gall Ink

Elizabeth Main, Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments, Scotland, Edinburgh

This presentation describes the results of an investigation into the effectiveness of several fixatives used to protect a moisture sensitive iron gall ink during aqueous conservation treatment. The research was carried out during the author's MA in Conservation of Fine Art course at Northumbria University in 2005. The research was prompted by the production of a treatment proposal for a work of art on paper with a brown ink inscription. The proposal suggested washing, alkalisating and, if required, bleaching. To protect the inscription during treatment, a series of tests were proposed to investigate the effectiveness of fixatives on a series of test samples. These included Klucel G (in alcohol and water in four different concentrations), Paraloid B72 in acetone (also in four

different concentrations) and the wax-like hydrocarbon cyclododecane (applied molten and mixed with petroleum ethers). The talk was comprised of a description of the item that prompted the investigation, a definition of fixatives and the results of the tests carried out. Following this, there was a summary of the actual conservation work that was directly informed by the research and a description of some further experiences of the use of fixatives in professional practice following graduation.

CONSERVATION SCIENCE

May 2007 Milan Italy

The papers from *Conservation Science 2002* are some of those I refer to most often, so when this conference was announced I knew I wanted to attend. (Plus two days in Milan – there are worse things to do with your time...) The conference was grouped into three main themes with a plenary session entitled *from science laboratory to conservation practice: the role of conservation scientists*. The session included a number of talks defining conservation science. In fact opinions varied whether it should be called conservation science, heritage science or was actually an area within archaeometry. I'm not sure how much this discussion helped; actually I'm now more confused as to what archaeometry is! Perhaps given the title of the session, it may have been more useful to discuss the future of conservation science rather than the semantics of the name.

Developments in Conservation Processes

During the plenary session a comment was made on the lack of developments in

The registration desk



Dr Gianluca Valentini



Group Photo

conservation techniques being published. These two sessions seemed designed to address this issue. A number of papers were presented which focussed on understanding treatments but there was little on developing new methods. For me the stand out presentation of these sessions was Ian Gibb's 'Shake, Rattle, and Roll – Vibration Effects at the Hampton Court Music Festival'. This talk demonstrated how to study the anecdotal damage to windows and masonry due to a music festival within an historic palace. It provided data on the actual vibration due to music and fireworks as well as changes measured in window glass. It also gave sensible approaches to tackling the problems without preventing hospitality events occurring.

Non Invasive Investigation Techniques

Split over the two days these sessions focussed on what is often seen as the holy grail of analytical approaches. The first session included interesting talks on methods of studying Daguerreotypes and the use of fluorescence spectroscopy. While the second session focussed on various techniques that can be applied to analyse paintings. The third session covered a wider range of materials, including some newer instrumentation combinations: XRF with XRD (for in situ pigment analysis) and Raman with SEM (to identify brick degradation products).

Conference catering in style



Polymers, Wood and Paper Conservation

In the final two sessions there were a variety of presentations on possible future paper conservation techniques and wood consolidation materials. Although I think it would be fair to say that all those presented still require some further development before they would be available to conservators. There were also a number of presentations on biodeterioration. Of particular personal interest was the presentation on the attack on synthetic polymers by microorganisms. This opened up an area of research previously unbeknown to me. The other highlight was a method of analyzing the fungal and bacterial communities in dust deposits within libraries and archives. This may provide a simple method and greater information on the risks posed than is available through the current methods.

In the closing remarks one of the aims of the conference was given as facilitating discussion. Unfortunately a common comment by participants was the limited number of questions possible due to the overcrowded programme. This meant that any discussion was limited to smaller groups in the breaks. The conference would have definitely benefited from either extending to a third day or reducing the number of papers, in order to allow more time for discussion. However the breaks did provide plenty of networking opportunities and

Intent delegates



The poster displays

ample time to visit the vast array of posters that were displayed. The conference also offered a variety of social events including the conference dinner in the fantastic Castello Sforzesco, a truly beautiful location.

The work presented during this conference is something I'm likely to revisit over the coming years; be it different methods of analysis or a greater awareness of materials. For those not able to attend, the post prints should be a further useful source of papers to refer to.

Naomi Luxford

AHRC Collaborative PhD student with the Textile Conservation Centre and English Heritage

TRADITIONAL PAINT FORUM - SETTING THE SCENE

Teddington 23–24 March 2007

Day 1

Finding the right venue for any conference can be challenging but the Normansfield Theatre proved to be the ideal location. For those of you who have never seen Normansfield Theatre, I highly recommend a visit: it as an absolute delight, retaining all its original Victorian splendour. What makes it even more remarkable is that it was built by Dr. Langdon Down to encourage his patients, children and adults suffering from Down's Syndrome (at the time referred to as Mongolism), to learn music and drama as part of their education. In 1858 Dr. Down was appointed Physician Superintendent for the Royal Earlswood Asylum for Idiots but ten years later opened a private home, Langdon Park, for children and adults with learning difficulties; a remarkable accomplishment in a time when they would otherwise have been condemned to spend their life in an asylum. His study led to a greater understanding of the condition and more sympathetic approach to its treatment.

The history, design and importance of Normansfield Theatre was explained by Peter Longham (a Trustee of the Langdon Down Centre Trust). As one of the few extant theatres of that date, most having burned down, it typifies a layout which had a limited stage, thus requiring theatre sets of painted flats and drop cloths to create the illusion of space and setting. Gas lamps at the front of the stage illuminated the actors while candles attached to the back of the flats provided light for the back areas of the stage. The original Victorian flats and drop cloths, which were in poor condition with tears, missing sections and paint losses, have been conserved by textile conservators at the Textile Conservation Centre in Winchester. During the conference, delegates had the opportunity to wander onto the stage to view the flats and drops and the array of ropes, pulleys and floor channels which enabled the sets to be changed.

To understand the development of the theatre, Dr. James Fowler traced its origins from the Greek amphitheatre cut into the hillside with its circular stage through to open theatres with surrounding wooden palisades (to keep the audience within and exclude those who could not pay) to the emergence of the Elizabethan theatre. Historically, sets were very limited and the atmosphere and setting were created by the actor's words. Dr Fowler also discussed the use of elaborate floats which filled medieval town squares with costumed actors often balancing precariously from the intricate framework.



John Earl

Inside London's Apollo Theatre

Timothy Easton continued the history theme discussing the close association of theatres and pubs in the 16th and 17th centuries – one that encouraged enjoyment and drink. Pubs were constructed with a first floor viewing gallery overlooking the courtyard which served as the actors' stage. Hunting lodges also served as theatre sites, as did temporary tournament stands. The development of highly decorative schemes is best exemplified by the Globe Theatre. Whilst there was no attempt to create stage settings other than as an architectural structure through which the actors could enter and exit, this area and the fronts of the tiered seating would have been richly decorated. However, little evidence survived to inform the decorative scheme for the Globe itself. Therefore, Easton's extensive research into contemporary examples from theatres in London and East Anglia provided the evidence for appropriate designs. Two schemes for the Globe were considered, one having marbled balustrades and columns, panelled painted fronts and elaborate plaster coving; the other incorporating black and red painted stripes on the rear walls of the tiers, black and white lozenge and diamond shaped designs to the fronts and striped columns. Easton's research suggested the latter scheme was most authentic.

Tony Banfield's presentation revealed the history of scene painting. In later Greek and Roman theatres, painted panels denoting Tragedy, Comedy and Pastoral were inserted in the structure. By the mid 16th century, books on stage designs began to appear. Figures were painted onto the scenery to give a sense of perspective and by 1618 the first proscenium arch appears separating the audience from the stage. During the Restoration period, the fore stage appears and there is further development of the use of flats and back cloths to create the illusion of space. In the 18th century, Garrick introduces two point

perspective and the craft of the scene painter begins as fine art painters are unable to produce work on such a large scale. By the 1870s a more realistic approach to set designs appears as real objects are incorporated into the set.

Hilary Vernon Smith, Head Scenic Artist at the Royal National Theatre, provided a fascinating insight into the work of the scene painter both in terms of the history of this craft and also the physical side of creating sets. One has no idea of the sheer scale of the operation unless you have had a chance to see the variety of methods which enables the painters to work their way up and down the huge back drops on either movable or static platforms. Her description of the preparation of the hot size, its smell and the burns sustained by the painter during its application created immense admiration amongst the delegates. After the 1970s scene painters began to use acrylics and PVA emulsions and employed techniques such as spray painting. In the modern theatre a variety of paint techniques, canvases (including gauze for its transparent effect) and other supports can be used to create fantastic sets but it became readily apparent that that it is the skill and imagination of the scene painter which is the crucial ingredient.

For pure visual pleasure, the restoration of the Apollo Victoria, London, presented by John Earl, John Muir and Kathy Littlejohn is unbeatable. This amazing Art Deco ciné theatre opened in 1930 and is overwhelming in terms of colour, architectural detail and extraordinary alabaster light fixtures. Prior to the recent restoration, many of these features had been removed, painted over or hidden behind later alterations to the theatre in order to accommodate the long running performance of *Starlight Express*. Through paint analysis and archival research, the original paint scheme and decorative fixtures and fittings have been recreated to return the theatre to its original appearance.

It is worth buying a ticket to *Wicked* just to see the interior.

On a more restrained note, the recent redecoration of the Theatre Royal in Bury St Edmunds provides a unique opportunity to view one of the few late Georgian theatres in England. Anna Forrest and Christine Sitwell of the National Trust described the extensive archival and analytical investigations involved in the recreation of the theatre and its decorative scheme. Designed in 1819 by the architect, William Wilkins, and decorated by the scene painter, George Thorne, the theatre has had an unhappy history of misuse and neglect, serving at one time as a barrel store for its owners – the Greene King Brewery. In the 1960s the Brewery kept its promise to the local council and restored it, employing the services of John Fowler. Using the scraps of evidence which remained he devised a decorative scheme for the interior. Recently the Trust has undertaken a major restoration project to return the theatre to its original appearance which has included major alterations to re-instate the fore stage (cleverly designed to be lowered when not in use), the pit area, the lower and upper boxed dress circles and the decorative scheme. The theatre now reflects the social division for the audience seating which includes a separate entrance for the pit area and individual boxes for the more affluent theatre-goer. Extensive archival research, paint analysis and infra-red reflectography on the scraps of evidence from the fronts of

the dress circles and the proscenium arch as well as all the paint surfaces provided information for the recreation of the decorative interior.

David Harrison of Hayles and Howe presented an amusing insight into the materials used to create the decorative plasterwork in theatres as well as the disasters which occur when the structure of the building fails. He described the use of lime plasters and fibrous plasters to create ceilings, covings and decorative sculptures and the systems which held them in place. His images of the hidden spaces above the ceiling and the intricate framework required to support the ceiling as well as the subsequent haphazard repairs were an eye-opener. More appalling were the disasters which occur when water infiltrates the building causing entire ceilings to collapse and the daring exploits required by the specialists to assess the damage.

The Royal Festival Hall in London is a well known feature for most Londoners but many would be surprised to realise that hidden under the uniform white decorative scheme is a more subtle use of colour. Patrick Baty of Papers and Paint undertook extensive paint analysis which revealed localised use of colour in different areas of the Hall to create a more complex colour scheme. Having identified the colours as being based on the 1931 British Standard colour range 381C, he provided further information on contemporary thoughts on paint colours

in building, citing in particular the Hertfordshire Schools Project which specified the colours to be used on the interiors of schools. His research into colour and the development of the British Standard range of paint colours of 1995 and the Archrome paint range provided the audience with a greater understanding of mid 20th century paint colours and helped to place the Royal Festival Hall within that context.

The first day ended with a delightful talk on Vermont Painted Theatre Curtains by Christine Hadsel. She has been involved in a large project to document and conserve about 175 historic painted theatre curtains dating between 1885 and 1940. These curtains were the primary artistic feature of every town hall, grange hall, opera house and community centre in small towns and villages throughout Vermont. They served as the backdrop to a variety of activities and were painted with colourful, romantic images of British and European landscapes and even the occasional majestic landscape of America. Conservators undertook remedial treatments to clean, stabilise and repair damages to the cotton muslin fabric and retouch paint losses. Once conserved the curtains were re-introduced to their original setting as they were to be used and enjoyed.

Christine Sitwell

National Trust, Committee Member Historic Interiors Group

Day 2

An impressive party gathered on Saturday morning outside Elms Lester Paint Frame. Most of us confessed that although we all knew this part of London, just off Centre Point, we had never spotted this hidden gem. The small building has an odd almost triangular elongated plan. The previous day's lectures had provided a steep learning curve in the art of scenery design and manufacture which most of us had never really considered. The creation of large canvas backdrops – or cloths – combined the skills of an artist with a scale more commonly tackled by house-painters. We were shown around by Fiona Mackinnon who explained the mechanism of the actual paint frame – basically an enormous stretcher which could move up in the light well and down into the cellar, allowing the painters to remain in a fixed position at ground level. The cloth being prepared during our visit was for yet another production of *Mama Mia* (apparently there are over twenty versions of this musical being performed all over the world). The novel space provided a wonderful continuous link with nineteenth-century practice – we could smell the paint. The edges of the floor and the walls were thick

The interior of the Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds in the 1960s.





Elms Lester Paint Frame

with paint splatters. The traditional distemper used to paint backcloths and flats has largely been replaced by modern PVA purpose made paints such as 'Rosco' and spray paints. This paint frame survives thanks to the owners, who resisted offers from property developers and actually invited English Heritage to consider the building for listing. This instigated a review of ancillary theatre buildings. Sadly other paint frames in the West End were destroyed before they could be listed. The building is maintained by income from film shoots and exhibitions, but priority is given to keeping the paint frame in use and accessible for professional scene painters.

The next hidden discovery was Wilton's Music Hall in the East End of London – another inspiring project which is keeping history alive. We were completely entranced by Frances Mayhew's enthusiasm and story telling skills. Outside the building she recreated a vivid picture of the nineteenth-century scene, a thriving pub on the corner which serviced the locals and the sailors from the nearby docks had been extended in 1858 by the entrepreneur John Wilton to create a Music Hall (and brothel). The main purpose of the entertainments was to keep the customers spending money on food and drink. Wilton had bought up the adjacent buildings and created a theatre in the area formerly occupied by the gardens. The

works were completed within months using a range of odd fittings Wilton could acquire: flagstones stolen from the nearby Georgian square and strange spiral columns, which were probably destined for a more exotic location but never made it onto the ship. The interior resembles a building site, indeed only 40% of the building is structurally sound: but it remains a working theatre. Exposed lathes, bare bricks, wallpaper fragments and junk furniture all contribute to creating a stimulating space which invites further investigation. The gerry-built nature of its construction has left a legacy of structural problems but the actual design of the theatre hall is very good, and today it offers an atmospheric and intimate space for a variety of events. Wilton's heyday was in the late nineteenth century and the famous song 'Champagne Charlie' had its premier performance here. When the music halls declined in popularity it was used as a Methodist church but then fell into disuse and was only saved from demolition by the intervention of Sir John Betjeman. It has provided the location for several movies and television and dramas. The existing scheme which appears to be 'as found' natural decay and the accretions of time, is in fact a recently created 'fake' by scene painters who were asked to obliterate the lurid paint effects applied by the last film company. This 'faked' distress caused some discussion over lunch.

We then crossed the Thames to lawless Southwark and the Globe Theatre for another entertaining tour by a theatre staff member who was delighted to meet such an enlightened group. Timothy Easton's lecture on the Globe and his involvement into the research behind its current presentation meant we arrived well armed to make a critical assessment of the decorative scheme. It was evident that there had been 'a love affair' with the timber beam construction of the building which perhaps should be hidden behind plaster – but the Globe is clearly attempting to move towards a more exuberant, less sanitised atmosphere. To accurately recreate Shakespeare's Globe would mean flouting all health and safety regulations, blocking up fire exits, encouraging urination at the side of the stage and allowing prostitutes to ply their trade in the stairwells – so it would seem churlish to get pedantic over paint issues. We stopped to watch student actors, wrapped in overcoats, deliver their lines on the open air stage – and remembered what theatre is all about. It was a wonderful day which complemented the previous papers. Special thanks are due to Saskia Paterson for her meticulous planning.

Helen Hughes

English Heritage, Member Historic Interiors Group

in practice

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE CONSERVATION OF WINDOW CHnIX, CHAPTER HOUSE VESTIBULE, YORK MINSTER

by Helen Bower, Conservator, York Glaziers Trust

Following the completion of an eight-year project on the St William Window at York Minster, conservators at The York Glaziers Trust (YGT) are currently undertaking work on the Chapter House Vestibule Window, CHnIX (Fig.1). This article aims to introduce the project and highlight some of the issues YGT are faced with.

Window CHnIX was removed and taken into safe storage at YGT in 2001. Repairs were long overdue, but recently YGT have been granted permission to begin the work by the Cathedrals Fabric Commission for England (CFCE). The project is funded by the Dean & Chapter of York Minster.

Description of the Window

CHnIX forms part of a very important early scheme of windows, dating from c1290–1300. It is located on the west wall of the Chapter House Vestibule, first from the south. It is a narrow window consisting of two lancets, of nine panels each, measuring approximately 290 inches tall overall, with tracery lights above. Four of the panels contain Royal figures within an architectural setting and canopy (Fig. 2). The remaining panels have a geometric lead matrix, although now somewhat distorted, within which are set decorative roundels or shields. The painted detail shows a natural vine leaf design intertwined with a basket weave pattern.

Condition of Panels before Conservation

The Chapter House vestibule glass has never had any form of protective glazing, and its condition has suffered as a result. This is perhaps the most deteriorated of all the existing Minster glass.

Fig. 1 Minster plan showing the location of window CHnIX



Fig. 2 CHnIX panel 5a full size transmitted light

The surviving medieval pot metal glass has become pitted and corroded on both surfaces (Fig. 3). Interestingly the tinted glass has suffered even more, with the corrosion spreading fully across both surfaces of the glass, so that it appears opaque and no longer retains its glass-like quality.

The poorly ventilated position within which the window sits, and the damp conditions within which it was stored during the 2nd World War will no doubt have accelerated the damage.

The tinted medieval glass has become paper thin and delicate (some less than 0.50mm thick), with multiple breaks (Fig. 4). In places, holes have appeared where the damaged glass has disintegrated or fallen away (Fig. 5).

Apart from the corrosion deposits, a layer of dust has built up on the glass surface. Much of the painted detail has been lost due to the corrosion of the glass surface, although some 'ghosting' of the painted design remains.



Fig. 3 CHnIX panel 5b full size reflected light

The pot metal colours have not lost as much painted detail as the tinted glass as they have not suffered as much corrosion damage.

Previous Restoration

The panels, each divided by lug bars, were last re-leaded in the mid 1940s and are therefore structurally quite robust. $\frac{5}{16}$ ", $\frac{3}{8}$ " and $\frac{1}{4}$ " leads have been used throughout. Some are mending leads holding together fragmented pieces. These leads appear quite thick and obtrusive and a distortion of the original lead matrix has resulted.

Fig. 4 CHnIX panel 5a showing thickness of glass

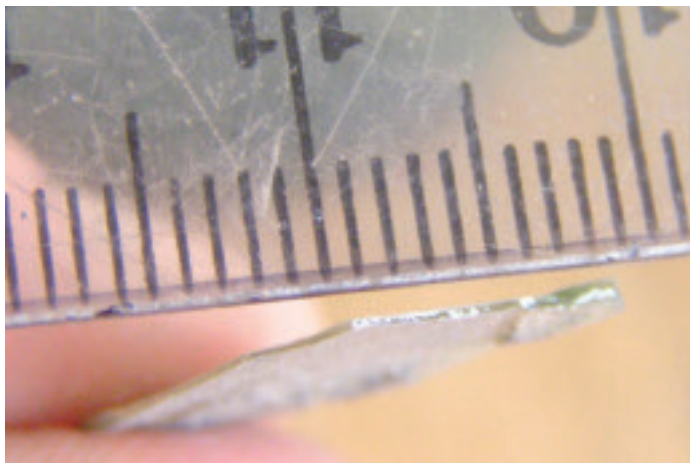


Fig. 5 CHnIX panel 8a reflected light showing corrosion damage and breaks

Some very fragmented pieces were edge-bonded with resin, which has discoloured over time, and sandwiched between two pieces of clear glass (Figs. 6 and 7).

Treatment of the Window to date

Before any work can be carried out a full rubbing of each panel is taken. This picks up the entire lead pattern and provides an accurate template for our extensive documentation diagrams.

A full photographic record is taken before, during and after conservation. The documentation provides details of any cracks or holes in the glass, the lead types and sizes, previous restoration insertions, the painted detail and any other interesting marks or symbols.

The amount of original medieval glass in each panel varies considerably from between 80% to 50% in each panel.

Later additions consist of:

- Modern tinted antique glass, covered in a heavy black painted stipple.
- Victorian or earlier glass with a deliberately abraded surface.
- Miscellaneous medieval fragments and misplaced medieval glass from the same scheme.

Dismantling of the panels, i.e. removal of the glass from the lead structure, has already started on light a. It is a painstaking but simple mechanical process. The lead is slowly eased from the glass with small pliers and then cut away.

Prior to cleaning the glass, the stability of the paint is



Fig. 6 CHnIX panel 5b painted head in double plates before removal

checked using a binocular microscope. Each piece of glass is cleaned with cotton wool swabs moistened with deionised water, rolled gently across the surface, only attempting to lift loose surface accretions and not firm corrosion deposits. Where necessary, old glazing cement is carefully removed from the edges of the glass with scalpels – the compound first being softened with deionised water swabs. All pieces are then placed on a clean copy of the full sized rubbing.

At this point we are faced with a clear picture of the glass we have to work with. Decisions as to how we progress to the next stage are made by the conservation team, (working closely with an advisory committee, appointed by the Dean and Chapter of York) and are presented to the CFCE, to ensure that no ethical matters are overlooked and all needs are met.

The next stage of the process is to prepare a new cut-line drawing for each panel. This is a lengthy process that determines the pattern of the lead matrix of the finished panel. Placing the full sized rubbing under a blank sheet of paper, we redraw the lead matrix, leaving out any obtrusive lead repairs where possible, or recovering the design if evidence allows, so that the legibility of the panel is improved. Any changes have to be carefully considered and no hypothetical restoration is attempted.

All panels of light a are now dismantled, cleaned and laid out so that the entire light can be viewed clearly and worked on as a whole. This approach allows for continuity in thought and process.

The treatment of the severely fragmented, paper thin and fragile pieces of glass poses a serious problem. Traditional

stained glass edge bonding techniques may not be adequate to repair these pieces:

Silicone Sealant

This is ideal for single clean breaks and is flexible in nature. However, the Chapter House glass, at 1mm or less in thickness, will not hold successfully with this material.

Copper Foil Method

This uses a sticky backed foil applied to the edges of each individual piece of glass to be mended. The foils are then soldered together. This method cannot be recommended for the Chapter House glass, as the applied heat could cause further risk of damage to the delicate fragments.

Epoxy Resin

This can be used for more complex breaks and two methods are widely used:

- 1 Taping the broken pieces together tightly on the back surface, turning the piece over and applying the resin to the crack on the front face. This method works well, but only if the back surface is smooth so that the resin will not leak from underneath the burnished tape.
- 2 Taping the broken pieces together on the back face and applying a film of dental wax to the back surface. This work is heated so as to fit into all the undulations of the glass and avoid leakage of the resin.

Both the above are valid methods but the Chapter House

Fig.7 CHnIX panel 5a fragments of painted head after removal from lead matrix



glass is too thin and delicate for such mechanical and heat pressures to be applied. Also, much of the glass surface has been heavily corroded, so they have to be ruled out as options as the tape will not prove effective in holding the glass together in the initial stages of edge bonding.

To Summarize

There are many questions to ask in order to determine the conservation direction for this project. Should we remove the broken glass from such a sound lead matrix or do we not have a choice if we want to save the glass? If we do dismantle, how do we put the panel back together again? Could, or should, we improve upon the legibility of the design or should we re-lead the panels exactly as they were without any alterations? Is it justifiable to remove any previous restorative pieces and where do we draw the line as to the part they play in the history of the window?

One decision that has already been made is that in spite of the stable nature of the lead, our opinion is that, in order to save these panels, there is no other option but to completely dismantle them. This will allow us to stabilise and protect the glass, which is in a serious state of deterioration.

Another important question is how to put the broken fragments back together once they have been removed? What practical methods and materials can we use? Do we accept that some of the badly broken fragments have come to the end of their life, or can we prolong that life a little longer so that another generation will be able to appreciate what we can see today?

We are still at the very early stages in the development of the project and it is hoped that a future article will outline the decisions made and the methods chosen by the team at The York Glaziers Trust.

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CONSERVING HARAKEKE AT THE ROYAL ALBERT MEMORIAL MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY

by **Daniel Cull, Andrew W. Mellon Fellow in Conservation at the National Museum of the American Indian/Smithsonian Institution**

Introduction

In 1793 Jacques Labillardière, a French naturalist, visited New Zealand. One of the plants he entered into the binominal classification system was *Phormium tenax*, commonly known as New Zealand Flax. To the Maori, who make extensive use of the plant, it is most widely known as Harakeke (fig 1). Harakeke, although relatively stable in



Fig 1

itself, when dyed black often becomes a major conservation concern. Several objects within the 'designated' world cultures collection at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery (RAMM), are made of Black Dyed Harakeke, including Kaitaka, Poi balls, and Piu Piu. (See glossary at end.) This project aimed to improve their stability and storage.

The deterioration of Black Dyed Harakeke has concerned conservators for a number of years (Scott 1988) leading to the development of several conservation solutions. In addition to being concerned with the conservation options available, this project also looked at the manufacturing processes and care of these objects from a Maori perspective, which will be reported elsewhere. Suffice to say, none of the conservation options were ruled out, and despite the ad-hoc nature of the consultations, they were extremely valuable.

Deterioration

Research undertaken on black dyes has focused upon Iron Gall Inks, used in writing throughout Europe. Limited work has been undertaken to research the black dyes used by Maori artisans. Recent investigation at the British Museum initially focused on identifying the dyes and the dyeing process. Daniels (1999 (a) p.75) reported on the method of dyeing, citing unpublished reports that state that the 'dye

is an iron/tannin or, more correctly, an iron/plant polyphenol complex, similar to iron gall ink'. The methodology of dyeing is increasingly better understood thanks to the work of Maori and Pakeha conservators and scientists in New Zealand. However, the chemical nature of the deterioration is not fully understood and matters are further complicated by slight variations through time and space that inevitably occur in any tradition.

The situation is complicated by multiple agents of decay; the raw materials, the processing and use are all factors. Plant fibres contain cellulose which provides stability, hemi-cellulose and lignin which provides stiffness. Daniels (1999 (a) p.74) notes that: 'Compared with other commercial plant fibres, *P. tenax* has a relatively low cellulose and high hemi-cellulose content'. The conservation literature explains the principal reactions in terms of oxidation, and acid catalysed hydrolysis. Free iron ions from the dyeing process catalyse the oxidation reaction, whilst acetyl groups contained in the high hemi-cellulose fibres form acetic acid which breaks the iron-polyphenol bonds and catalyses the hydrolysis of the fibre; reactions that occur faster at high relative humidity.

Conservation Options

Phyate solution and Magnesium bicarbonate

A well established method within paper conservation

involves the use of phyate (phytic acid) and magnesium bicarbonate. Phyate acts as a complexing agent blocking the oxidation reaction, whilst the magnesium bicarbonate acts to deacidify the fibres, and provide an alkali reservoir in order to buffer acid catalysed hydrolysis reactions. This method when transposed to object conservation has often been combined with the use of various consolidants.

Methylmagnesiumcarbonate in methanol

The British Museum developed a method utilising 1.6% methyl magnesium carbonate in methanol in order to reduce the effects of fibre shrinkage identified with the use of aqueous solutions. However, Daniels (1999 (b) p.583) stated that 'this phenomenon was not seen on deacidification but was later seen to be a problem with consolidants, when the adhesive qualities of the consolidant stuck the fibres together'.

Hinau extract, and zinc alginate

In New Zealand the use of Hinau extract coupled with zinc alginate is undergoing research and development. The method works by scavenging acidic species, such as those that contribute to the acid catalysed hydrolysis, and despite being in the early stages it is said to be effective. (More et al 2003, Smith et al 2005). If this method proves successful in a real life situation it has the advantage of using materials used in traditional Maori weaving.

Fig 2

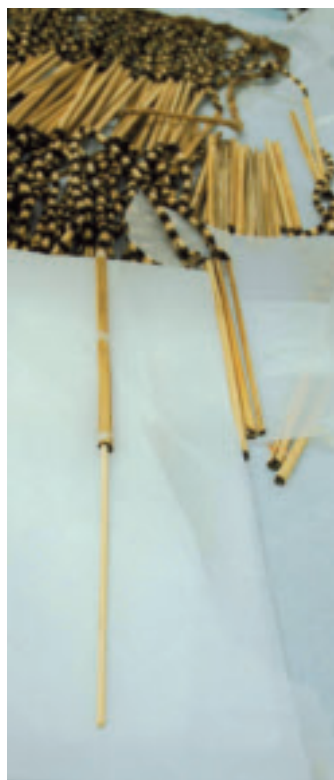


Fig 3



Conservation Choices

Many factors play their part in making a conservation decision. An organoleptic analysis was undertaken on the samples from the British Museum experiments. These concurred that of the methods tested methylmagnesiumcarbonate was most effective but only slightly so. The decision to reject this method was based on this slight improvement, and the major health and safety concerns with the use of methanol, and the level of technical skills and equipment needed to undertake the preparation. The same health and safety concerns played a part in the rejection of the use of Hinau; although this method does allow alternatives to methanol, it was felt that these were insufficiently tested and understood.

A cursory reading of the dyes conservation field will reveal an expanding knowledge base, therefore the ethical standpoints of minimal intervention and retreatability were the watch words for the decision-making process. The decision was taken to use the phyate method, where necessary. Physical support was used in place of consolidation, with calico backings couched to the Kaitaka and Japanese tissue Frankensteins adhered using starch paste to support loose sections of Piu Piu (fig 2). This was combined with an improved storage system utilising flat trays for each object, and surrounding the object with

Method	pH
Untreated	3.5
Nebulizer	failed
Brush (3 times)	5 – 5.3
Dahlia Sprayer (1 time)	5 – 5.3
Ultrasonic (5 times)	4.5 – 4.7

Fig 4. Table of pH results for differing applications

calico painted with an alkali buffer to absorb excess acids. This approach was possible as the objects were not intended for display.

Testing Application

The choice of application method is an important consideration. Pokinikini samples were used to test a selection of application methodologies, making pH level comparisons (fig. 3). The recommended pH Level for stability in cellulosic paper is 5.5, and this has been used as a guide for objects (British Standards Institute 1973). However, pH should not be the only factor in deciding to treat an object.

The pH results (fig. 4) are only half the story, as applicability is also a major factor. The brush was found to be too slow, on undulating surfaces. The dahlia sprayer caused the dyes to run when used with magnesium bicarbonate. The ultrasonic was considered a suitable compromise, and with additional passes was found to raise the pH higher. The choice was made to use the dahlia sprayer for the application of phyate, on as gentle a setting as possible, and to use the ultrasonic for the application of magnesium bicarbonate.

Conclusions

As processes of deterioration and their conservation solutions become increasingly understood, it is hoped that alternative solutions, especially those using Hinau extract, will be sufficiently tested and trialled, for suitability in real life conservation contexts.

Phyate and magnesium bicarbonate, despite the known limitations, have proven effective, and adaptable to the needs of the conservator and the objects, coupled in this case with improved physical support and storage solutions. This treatment provides stability, without limiting future retreatability. It is hoped this treatment will assist in the long term survival of Maoritanga.

Recipes

Phyate Solution: 0.25% v/v Phytic acid and 0.5% w/v sodium carbonate solution in deionised water.

Magnesium bicarbonate solution: 1.5% w/v solution of magnesium bicarbonate in deionised water, made by bubbling carbon dioxide through a suspension of magnesium hydroxide carbonate in deionised water, using a soda stream.

10% Starch Paste: 9g – arrow root starch, 1g – sodium alginate, 100 ml – deionised water.

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* Available in the Chantry Library

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Glossary

Harakeke	(also known as korari) New Zealand Flax (Phormium tenax)
Hinau	Metacarpus dentatus (produces a black dye)
Kaitaka	Plain unadorned cloak
korari	Also known as Harakeke
Maori	Meaning 'normal', 'usual' or 'ordinary.' Became the collective term for the indigenous tribes.
Maoritanga	Maori culture, values and heritage.
Pakeha	A non-Maori New Zealander, having characteristic of European descent.
piu piu	skirt
Poi	'Poi ball' used in dances.
Pokinikini	Dried cylindrical strips of harakeke leaf, with dyed sections
Taeare	The longer Harakeke.

Contact the author for a larger glossary or more information at National Museum of the American Indian/Smithsonian Institution, Cultural Resources Center, 4220 Silver Hill Road, Suitland, MD, 20746. cullD@si.edu

listings

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

24 July, 6.30pm

Icon Paintings Group

The Painting Techniques of William Etty

Venue: Icon Offices, London

Speaker: Louise Hackett, Manchester City Art Gallery

Cost: £5 (£10 non-members)

Contact: Clare Finn on tel: 020 7937 1895 or email: membership@icon.org.uk

You must be registered to attend by 12 noon 19 July.

9–12 August

Society of Bookbinders

Education & Training Conference

Venue: The University of York, York.

Contact: SoB Conference Organizer, 8 Wildwood Close, Woking, Surrey, GU22 8PL.

20–24 August

ICOM Triennial Meeting

Venue: Vienna, Austria.

27–30 August

ICOM-CC working group Glass and Ceramics interim meeting

Venue: Nova Gorica, Slovenia

5–7 September

AIC and Northumbria University

Printed on Paper: The Techniques, History and Conservation of Printed Media

Venue: The Sage Centre, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

6–7 September

The Parker Library Now

Venue: Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

A two-day symposium to discuss conservation, preservation, digitisation and scholarship of the Parker manuscripts.

Cost: £90.

Contact: Christopher de Hamel, tel: 01223 339994, email: cd281@cam.ac.uk, or Gill Cannell, tel: 01223 338025, email: gc110@cam.ac.uk

6–8 September

Icon Archaeology Group and the Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge

Decorated Surfaces on Ancient Egyptian Objects: Technology, Deterioration and Conservation

Venue: Cambridge

Contact: Julie Dawson, tel: 01223 332930 or email: fitzmuseum-aeo2007@lists.cam.ac.uk

10 September

Icon Textiles Group

Studio tour and visit to Burghley House, Lincolnshire.

Cost: £28.

11–14 September

BigStuff 2007 International Conference

Large Technology Objects: Beyond Conservation – Industrial Heritage Management

Venue: Deutsches Bergbau-Museum, Bochum, Germany.

Contact: email info@BigStuff07.net

12–14 September

Art History Department at Glasgow University Art, Conservation, and Authenticities: Material, Concept, Context

Contact: Erma Hermens, History of Art Department, Glasgow University. email:

E.Hermens@arthist.arts.gla.ac.uk

or tel: 0141 3303943/5677.

14–15 September

Icon Book and Paper Group

Islamic Binding Workshop

Venue: Book Conservation Studio, Victoria & Albert Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 2RL.

Organiser: Jane Rutherford ACR (Tel: 020 7942 2085)

Only one place left!

Cost: £145 plus £30 for materials.

Contact: Charlotte Cowin, tel: 020 7785 3805, email: ccowin@icon.org.uk for booking

15 September

The Anna Plowden Trust

CPD Awards for 2007

Grant application deadline.

Contact: Penelope Plowden, 43 Lansdowne Gardens, London SW8 2EL or e-mail:

penelopecplowden@btinternet.com. Application forms can also be obtained by following a link from the Icon website.

20 September

Icon Metals Group

Submergence and Sculpture Study Day

Venue: National Coal Mining Museum and Yorkshire Sculpture Park

Cost: £25

Contact: Fran Clarke on email fran.clarke@ncm.org.uk or tel. 01924 848806

17–21 September

11th IADA Congress

50th Anniversary of the International Association of Book and Paper Conservators (IADA)

Venue: Vienna, Austria.

17–21 September

International Symposium: Studies on Historical Heritage

Venue: Research Centre for Preservation of Cultural Heritage, Yildiz Technical University, Antalya, Turkey.

24 September

Icon Textiles Group

Studio visit and review of solvent cleaning for textile conservation

Cost £8.

24–26 September

**University of Oxford International Conference
Plaster Casts – making, collecting, and displaying
from classical antiquity to the present.**

Venue: Oxford

Cost: £30–£60

Register via the Icon website

24–28 September

CCI Symposium 2007

**Preserving Aboriginal Heritage: Technical and
Traditional Approaches**

Venue: Ottawa, Canada.

25 September

Icon Book and Paper Group

Day Out in Oxford

Contact: Sophie Laubin, Conservation, The British Library,
96 Euston Rd, London NW1 2DB. Tel: 020 7412 7847,
email: sophie.laubin@bl.uk .

27 September

**Icon Textile Group and Book and Paper Group
Everyday Issues for Freelance Conservators**

Venue: Icon Offices, London

A seminar day to look at aspects concerning the everyday practice of freelance conservators. Topics that will be covered include insurance, health and safety, and standards in report writing.

Contact: Sarah Howard, e-mail:

sarah.howard@hants.gov.uk

27–29 September

**Forbes Symposium: Scientific Research in the Field of
Asian Art**

Venue: The Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution,
Washington D.C, USA.

27–29 September

Best in Heritage 2007

Venue: Dubrovnik, Croatia.

5 October, 6.30pm

Icon Paintings Group

Tate AXA Art Modern Paints Project

Venue: Icon Offices, London

Speaker: Bronwyn Ormsby, Senior Conservation Scientist

Cost: £5 (£10 non-members)

Contact: Clare Finn on tel: 020 7937 1895 or email:
membership@icon.org.uk

You must be registered to attend by 12 noon 2 October.

15 October (repeated 16 Oct)

Icon Textiles Group

**Life After Synperonic N: new surfactants in textile
conservation**

Venue: The Textile and Fibre Studio, The British Museum,
London.

16 October, 6pm

Icon Book and Paper Group

The Do's and Don'ts of Photographic Conservation

Venue: The October Gallery, Londonia House, 24 Old
Gloucester Street, Bloomsbury, London WC1N 3AL.

Speaker: Susie Clark

Cost: £6 (students £3, with card) – correct money at the
door please.

16 October 2pm (and repeated – see below)

British Library Centre for Conservation

**Tours of the new centre specially reserved for Icon
members**

Venue: The British Library, London

A maximum of 20 people can attend.

Further tours on 30 October at 10am;

20 November at 10am and 27 November at 2pm.

Contact Alison Faraday to book: alison.faraday@bl.uk
0207 412 7776

19–20 October

Icon Historic Interiors Section

**The Glories of Scottish Interiors from the 17th
century to the 20th.**

Venue: Edinburgh and Leith.

19–20 October

**Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland (AHSS) and
Universities of Stirling and Dundee National
Conference**

Understanding the Scottish Town

Venue: Lesser Albert Hall, Stirling

Contact: Dr Susan Buckham at AHSS National Office,
tel: 0131 557 0019 or email: nationaloffice@ahss.org.uk

26 October 2007 & 22 February 2008

**Icon Stone & Wall Paintings Group
Polychromed Wood**

Venue: Weston Room, Hampton Court Palace

Conference in two instalments on the care and conservation of polychrome and gilded wood including architectural panelling, structural timbers and wooden statuary both in-situ and in museums.

Contact: Richard Lithgow,

email: richard@perry-lithgow.co.uk

6–10 November

6th NATCC

Facing Impermanence

Venue: Washington DC, USA.

7 November

Icon Photographic Materials Group

Practical Photographic Preservation and AGM

CALL FOR PAPERS

Deadline: 31 August

Contact: Icon Photographic Materials Group, (November meeting) 3rd Floor, Downstream Building, 1 London Bridge, London, SE1 9BG, UK.

Tel: +44(0)20 7785 3805 Fax: +44(0)20 7785 3806 or email: anita.bools@btinternet.com

16 November

Twentieth Century Furniture Research Group Conference

Furniture Design and Manufacture, 1970–2000

Venue: The design Museum, London

Contact: Prof. Jake Kaner, tel: +44 1494 522 141, or email: jake.kaner@bcuc.ac.uk

December

Icon Archaeology Group

Christmas Meeting 2007: Classic Conservation Cock-ups

Venue: TBA London.

Contact: Jim Spriggs on email spriggs.conserve@hotmail.com

17–19 January 2008

Third International Architectural Paint Research Conference 2008

Venue: the Historic Preservation Department in the School of Architecture at Columbia University, New York, USA.

Contact: Mary Jablonski, email: maj152@columbia.edu

25 January 2008, 6pm

Icon Book and Paper Group

Pigment, Extender or Adulterant: a discussion on artists' white, watercolour pigments in the early 20th century.

Venue: The October Gallery, Londonia House, 24 Old Gloucester Street, Bloomsbury, London WC1N 3AL.
Speaker: Jane Colbourne, Senior Lecturer, Northumbria University.

The lecture will review the historic and current literature on the manufacture, usage and issues surrounding the ageing characteristics of these pigments. Of particular focus are the potential detrimental effects to paper substrates when zinc oxide and titanium dioxide are present.

Cost: £6 (students £3, with card) – correct money at the door please.

21–22 February 2008

The British Museum

Holding it all together; ancient and modern approaches to joining, repair and consolidation.

Contact: Department of Conservation, Documentation and Science, The British Museum, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3DG.

Email: science@thebritishmuseum.ac.uk

Fax: 020 7323 8276.

21–24 April 2008

AIC Book and Paper group Creative Collaborations

Venue: Denver, Colorado, USA.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Deadline: 7 August 2007

Contact: Alexis Hagadorn Program Chair, BPG-AIC, Columbia University Libraries.

Email: ah333@columbia.edu or tel: 212-854-3580

27–30 May 2008

IPH Congress

Birth of an Industry – from Forest to Paper during the 19th Century

Venue: Stockholm, Sweden.

Contact: Jan-Erik Levlin, email jan-erik.levlin@iki.fi

2–4 July 2008

6th International Conference

Evaluating Safety and Significance

Venue: Assembly Rooms, Bath.

15–19 September 2008

IIC: 22nd Congress

Provisional title – The role of conservation in the protection and presentation of the world's cultural heritage.

Venue: TBA London.

Contact: IIC, 6 Buckingham Street, London, WC2N 6BA

22–26 September 2008

ICOM-CC Triennial Meeting

Diversity in heritage conservation: tradition, innovation and participation

Venue: New Delhi, India.

Further details to be announced

TRAINING

10–11 September

19–20 November

National Museums Liverpool

Introduction to Laser Cleaning

13–14 September

Icon Stained Glass Group

Stained Glass Conservation Training Days

Venue: Jacobs Well, Trinity Lane, Micklegate, York.

Cost: £300 for 4 sessions or £80 each.

Contact: derek@limelightstudios.co.uk

Workshops on Historic Bindings

27–31 August: Introduction to Byzantine Binding

3–7 September: Limp and Semi-Limp Vellum Bindings

Venue: Monastery of St. John the Theologia, Patmos, Greece.

Contact: Nikolas Sarris Supervisor of Book Conservation Studio, St. John Theologian Monastery, Patmos.

Email: sarris1@otenet.gr

Application deadline: 27 July

2–4 October

Cultural Material X-Radiography – Imaging Techniques, Interpretation and Digitisation

Venue: Norcroft Conference Centre, University of Bradford.

Covers the basics of conventional radiography through to the latest advances and applications of digital radiography. Fees apply.

Contact: Sonia O'Connor Research Fellow in

Conservation on Tel: +44 (0)1274 236498,

Fax: +44 (0)1274 235190 or

email: s.oconnor@bradford.ac.uk.

8–9 November

IADA Seminar: Conservation of Transparent Paper

Venue: Berlin, Germany

Lecturer: Hildegard Homburger

Cost: 285EUR (240EUR for members of IADA)

Contact: Hildegard Homburger Krefelder Str.17, 10555

Berlin, Germany. Tel/Fax: +49-30-3912503 or

email: hombu@freenet.de

UCL Centre for Sustainable Heritage

CSH Short Courses come highly commended by heritage professionals from museums, historic houses and galleries.

Florenceart.net

Decorative Painting, 'Trompe L'Oeil' and Gilding Courses.

Contact: Alison Woolley Bukhgalter, Florenceart.net, Via San Bartolo a Cintoia 15r-97

Firenze 50142. Tel: 055 733 2865

Heritage Conservation Network

Building Conservation Workshops

Annual series of hands-on building conservation workshops in association with local preservation partners in order to further the sites' preservation and provide an educational experience for participants.

International Academic Projects Ltd

Conservation Training

Contact: International Academic Projects, 6 Fitzroy

Square, London W1T 5HJ, tel: 0207 380 0800,

email: info@academicprojects.co.uk

Ironbridge Institute

Historic Environment Conservation Training

Contact: Harriet Devlin, Ironbridge Gorge Conservation

Trust, Coalbrookdale, Telford, Shropshire, TF8 7DG,

Tel: 01952 435969 or

email: harriet.devlin@ironbridge.org.uk

West Dean College

Conservation Short Courses

Including Building Conservation Masterclasses,

Professional Conservators in Practice and CPD courses.

Contact: West Dean, Chichester, West Sussex, PO18 0QZ,

tel: 01243 818219.

York Minster Library and Archive

CPD Workshops for Paper, Book and Photographic Conservators

Individual workshops on leaf-casting, lining and care of glass plate negatives. Cost: £125 per workshop.

Contact: Christine Harbisher, Secretary, York Minster

Library, Deans Park, York, YO1 7JQ,

email: c.harbisher@yorkminsterlibrary.org.uk

Full details for all entries in Listings can be found at www.icon.org.uk under either "Events" or "Education and Training"

intervention

Vanishing Trick

by Stuart M. Welch, Managing Director, CONSERVATION BY DESIGN LIMITED

I have spent the past thirty years supplying materials and equipment to conservators. During this time the main recurring difficulty has been how to meet the minimum production volumes of paper mills and other manufacturers when it comes to developing and producing the relatively small quantities of materials required by the conservation profession.

This is the same today as it was thirty years ago but with the added problem that the sources of manufacture for many of the traditional products are disappearing. The trick now is how to make sure the necessary materials will be available for future conservators.

Jacques Brejoux of the Moulin du Verger hand made paper mill in France is a man who cares passionately about the future of hand made paper. He is trying to raise money to build wooden pulp stampers to beat old linen rags into a pulp similar in quality to that used in early European papers. He wants to make what is known in the paper trade as 'half stuff' pulp sheets. This would be used by future generations of papermakers. He predicts that the biggest problem for European hand made papermakers will be the availability of linen pulp and the skills to rot beat the fibres in a way that will make pulp suitable for producing the finest quality repair papers. We have to remember that when antique papers were made they were part of a thriving industry that did not change until the introduction of machine made paper. Reviving a handmade paper mill with one or two workers is very different from when the mill was working with dozens of workers producing large amounts of paper. It is a heroic act of endurance. The question and problem with Jacques' 'half stuff' is who will finance its production and store it for when it is required?

In Japan the shortage of the crafts people making the special bamboo paper makers moulds has lead to a competitive rush by the remaining hand paper makers to buy up any moulds when another paper maker dies.

Are we beginning to see this occurring now amongst conservators?

I have been involved in trying to resource linen bookbinding cord four times now since Barbour's in Northern Ireland ceased production in the mid-nineteen eighties because it was uneconomic. Along with Christopher Clarkson, I set about trying to find an alternative. The first replacement supplier went into liquidation after the first making. The second went into retirement. The third lost his source of supply and now we can only hope that the fourth will keep going for a very long time. Bigger institutions have been able to stockpile the cord for the future. Those who do not have the funds, or newcomers to book conservation and fine binding, have to take a chance on its continuing availability.

Changes in one industry can impact on the availability of supplies to another. The relocation of the shoe industry to China has lead to the closure of shoe board paper mills that also produced board for bookbinders. The last UK remaining 'Intermittent' board mill closed in 2006.

Stockholding specialist machine made papers is getting harder because, as institutions have moved to boxing rather than large scale rebinding of books, there is a decrease in the demand for papers like our Archival Rag Endleaf. There is still a demand for a high quality cotton paper like this but it is now very small by comparison, although the minimum production quantities have stayed the same. In addition the type of paper mill capable of producing traditional high quality Fourdrinier or Cylinder Mould made papers is getting fewer and very soon it may be a case of last man standing when it comes to the choice we have.

Slow moving stock means that stockists have to tie up cash for long periods at unrealistic profit margins. Understanding how important a product is to our customers is why we do it but we could not afford to stock this kind of eccentric product without the faster moving large turnover products in our range. Therefore successful products are very important to the customer/supplier partnership.

(Read more about Stuart on pages 19 & 20)



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