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inside Icon NEWS

MAY 2016 Issue 64



From the Editor

It is nice to be topical sometimes in Icon News and in this issue we achieve it with a piece about a splendid conservation discovery in Shakespeare's childhood stamping ground. And, stretching it a bit, we have another reference to the Great Man with an image of 'Elsinore Castle' of Hamlet fame: many congratulations to Willard Conservation! And, yes, there is a connection but you'll have to read on to find out what I'm talking about.

Topical, too, but rather darker is our Chief Executive's article about conservation in the English regions. The impact of budgetary constraints is changing the landscape significantly for traditional modes of conservation employment and activity but there are some positive developments as conservators find ways of responding to the situation. Conservators are nothing if not resourceful.

Resourcefulness is also at the heart of the articles in the Emerging Conservator and In Practice slots where the theme is doing the best you can with a limited budget and time. Just don't choke on anything if you're reading the latter. And that's enough cryptic hints from me about this issue's contents!

Lynette Gill



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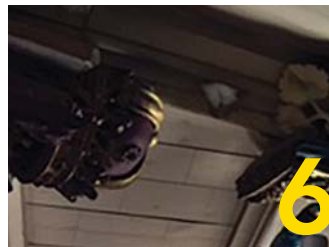
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Cover photo:
After conservation: the 16th century binding of the 1561 text *In Epistolas Apostoli Pauli ad Galatas, et Ephesios Commentarii* by Wolfgang Musculus. Photo: Kimberly Kwan

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professional update

From the Chief Executive



Photo: Matt Wreford

COUNTRIES OF CULTURE

Alison Richmond ACR FIIC on a recent Government inquiry

In the last issue of Icon News, I talked about advocacy and the key role that responding to government consultations has to play. The challenge for Icon as a small organization is to provide well thought out, evidence based responses that send the right messages about conservation. The

consultations from the home nation governments are rolled out at a pace and Icon has to be selective about which ones are critical. While we would like to respond to all of the consultations that are relevant, and in so doing place conservation issues at the centre of all conversations about culture and heritage, we have to pick and choose carefully.

Members can and do help and this is essential if we are to maintain a reasonable level of this activity; deadlines are usually quite short and the more hands on deck the better, as long as the Icon Board maintains oversight of the submissions. We are beginning to get into a good working pattern. Recently the Heritage Science Group has done most of the heavy lifting on two consultations. I am very grateful to Matija Strlic, Chair of Heritage Science Group, for his help. The new Icon Documentation Network has also been working hard on consultations including Collections Trust's Spectrum.

Last month, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee (DCMS) solicited evidence for its Countries of Culture Inquiry. This inquiry is looking at culture and heritage provision in the regions, with special emphasis, among other things, on the impact of local authority funding and new funding models.

It is at times like this that we become critically aware of the gaps in our data. With very little time, we decided to target a handful of members who we thought might be able to put their hands on some hard information or, at the very least, provide anecdotal evidence to support our statements. We also looked at published reports. It is true to say that conservators are people who deliver! Having been given only a few days notice, we received well-articulated responses and I am grateful to those members who took part.

Of course, we must be very careful not to overstate the indications from such a small sample but there were some common themes that emerged.

The regional conservation workforce is a delicately balanced, mixed economy of employed and freelance conservators and support staff, vulnerable to changes in

funding. There is a trend towards reducing core staff complements and moving to external provision. The loss of in-house conservation expertise can threaten the sustainability of collections. Although in some regions, numbers of conservators remain stable, this may be because it is too early to assess the impact of the recent local authority budgetary settlement. Elsewhere, numbers of employed conservators have been drastically reduced since the recession in 2008 and further cuts are planned. Like any species whose numbers are very small, the regional conservation workforce is particularly vulnerable to such changes in funding.

At the same time, related job roles such as technicians, registrars and collections managers are being lost or moving to freelance, leaving employed conservators to cover these areas. Such a mixed economy can offer a level of complexity that demands more management and administration input by specialists who would be more effectively used in specialist activities. But it is also true to say that conservators taking on a wider remit, often with project management responsibilities, can show how our wide ranging skills are valued by institutions. This has been seen both at Bolton and at The Whitworth in the North West.

Project funding for staff is the norm with core funded staff complements reduced to such small numbers as to be scarcely viable. It is not so far-fetched to imagine a future in which specialists are brought together solely to work on a specific project and then dispersed, as is the norm in the film industry.

The English regions are incredibly rich in museums, but many have no access to expert conservation advice of any kind. For example in the South West, two hundred and thirteen institutions are with ACE's (Arts Council England) Accreditation scheme and approximately two hundred and fifty are non-accredited. In Yorkshire, for example, only 15% of museums of the fifty nine museums in a recent survey had in-house conservation staff and 66% of museums contract in conservators to provide advice or remedial conservation.... 'Respondents reported taking conservation advice from non-conservators on a regular basis, with 14 respondents taking advice from their Museum Mentor and 8 taking advice from Museum Development Yorkshire.' (Strategies for Sustainability Survey Report: Conservation and Collections Care in Yorkshire, 2015, Alaina Schmisser, Museum Development Yorkshire)

Museums are having to look for ways to fill the funding gap by generating new income streams, which require additional conservation resource to facilitate. I have been present at a meeting of directors of regional museums who said that the salvation of their museums lies in sending their collections all over the world. What is not stated is how this will be done without increasing their access to conservation expertise.

Income generation targets are the norm for regional conservation departments. Remits of employees are changing to being expected to make back their salaries in private commissions and ultimately to become self-funding. High profile conservation work is now paid for through the



museum's fundraising team's activities. At the same time, it appears to be harder to get funding as more museums go to trust status and are attracted to the same funding pots.

Alternative sources of funding (non local authority funding), e.g. ACE funding and DCMS funding through ACE, are very welcome and considered crucial for conservation services to survive and for future regional initiatives to be viable. There are successful examples of regional partnership working to make the most of scarce resources. In the South West, for example, the South West Museums Development Programme is an exemplar of partnership working and funding. They are also looking at ways of providing a sustainable conservation development service. In the North West, local government museums are working more closely together, for example The Manchester Partnership delivered a collections care and management programme for a range of museums in the region. (Museum Development North West Collections Care and Management Programme 2014-15 Evaluation Report)

Museums reported that they are finding it harder to train the next generation of conservators. With staffing resources having been reduced, it is becoming harder to facilitate. The balance between workload and being able to provide high quality supervision and the right training experience is getting harder to achieve. The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has played a significant role in the training of next-generation conservators, not only in museums but across the heritage domain, and has provided new funding models for training in heritage conservation. In 2015, HLF provided an additional £350,000 to a regional museum (the Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle, County Durham), part of a major heritage grant, for training next generation conservators in Icon's Internship

Programme over five years. This is a successful funding model that should be more widely applicable. But all funding models rely on the availability and willingness of conservation staff to supervise.

We submitted evidence to this inquiry to draw the Committee's attention to the impact of diminishing local authority funding on conservation provision in the regions and to the risks posed to cultural heritage by these changes. As heritage organisations look for new ways to fill the funding gap by generating new income streams, they are looking at increasing the use of and access to cultural heritage assets. The message that we want to get across in our response is that conservation is critical to enabling access to cultural heritage and to reducing the risk of damage and wear-and-tear, thereby ensuring its survival for the enjoyment of future generations. As Helena Jaeschke put it, success going forward 'will depend on public funding of core conservation services and assets working in conjunction with a vibrant and sustainable freelance conservation sector'.

Many thanks to the following for their help with this consultation:

Deborah Cane ACR, FIIC, Dip Cons, MA, Collections Care Manager, Birmingham Museums Trust

Pierrette Squires ACR, Conservator, Bolton Library and Museums

Helena Jaeschke ACR, SW Conservation Development Officer, and Vic Harding and Roz Bonnet, South West Museum Development Programme

Fran Coles ACR, Conservation & Documentation Manager, Bristol Museums, Galleries & Archives

ICON16 UPDATE

It's nearly here – Icon16 is just around the corner!

Over three days this June, *Turn & Face the Change* will bring together delegates from across the heritage sector to examine the context of conservation in the 21st century, exploring the latest in international professional practice in a series of plenary and specialist group sessions.

Late last month, it was announced that the Rt Hon Tristram Hunt MP had agreed to deliver the opening remarks at the conference. Tristram Hunt is a well-known politician, historian, and broadcast journalist, and he will speak to us about the industrial revolution, conservation and the broader heritage debate, with reference to the acquisition of the Staffordshire Hoard and the benefits it has brought to the Midlands and the heritage sector.

At the time of writing, there were still a few places left at the conference, but these have been going steadily. The opening reception is fully booked, but there are still a dozen places available at the conference dinner – after capacity was extended owing to the demand!

Tours of the Staffordshire Hoard conservation studio are fully booked, as are two of the four tours of Coffin Works on

Wednesday 15 June. Spaces are also rapidly filling for the tour of the Birmingham Museum Collections Centre that same day. There is a waiting list for places to become available – so if your plans change, please amend your booking online!

As members may recall, the venue for the conference is the fully-refurbished Conference Aston in the heart of Birmingham. The venue provides easy access to all the attractions of Birmingham city centre, including Thinktank Museum, the venue for the opening reception, and the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, where the conference dinner will take place in the Edwardian Tea Room.

The opening reception will launch the conference in style in the Past Gallery at Thinktank at 7.30pm on Wednesday 17 June. The gallery features an array of vintage machines, including steam engines, locomotives and classic automobiles. Likewise, the conference dinner, in the Edwardian Tearooms at 7.30pm on Thursday 16 June, will provide a key networking opportunity to socialise with fellow conservators, set against the smooth strains of our seven-piece jazz band, Home Brew.

If there are still places available – don't waste a minute!





CHANGE OF ADDRESS REMINDER

Icon's office has moved! But as it's only round the corner and in the same office complex, the change to our address is minimal. Happily it's a slightly larger office for the same rate.

Our new address is:

Icon, the Institute of Conservation
Unit 3.G.2 The Leathermarket
Weston Street, London
SE1 3ER

Phone numbers and email addresses remain unchanged.

THE ICON BOARD REPORT

At its meeting on 16 March 2016, Icon's Board of Trustees discussed conservators' salary guidelines, the Conservation Awards evaluation, the Staff Handbook, the Membership Survey, advertising policy, the Icon office move, the 2016/17 Budget, the appointment of auditors and the state of play with the three Task and Finish Groups set up by the Board.

You can read a summary of the Board's discussions on these topics on the Icon website at www.icon.org.uk. Find it under the About Us heading and then Icon Documents.

NATIONAL HERITAGE SCIENCE FORUM

The last couple of months have been all about talking to people. For British Science Week, NHSF ran a series of blog posts on the theme 'this is heritage science'. The blog featured ten posts, contributed by NHSF member organisations, and spanned glass corrosion issues for Darwin's daguerreotypes, techniques for 'listening' to furniture and 'smelling' heritage, as well as investigations into the use of nanomaterials for conservation at Tate and Historic England's application of x-ray based techniques for looking at medieval window glass. The purpose of this activity is to show colleagues, peers and those with a passing interest what heritage science is, to improve public understanding of it. The posts are all available at <https://nationalheritagescienceforum.wordpress.com/> if you missed them in March.

The other focus for communication has been policy issues. The first few months of the year have seen a glut of announcements and consultations, many of which impact on the landscape for heritage science. NHSF has responded to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport consultation on the Cultural Protection Fund, commenting on the references in the consultation document to the use of scientific techniques to record, protect and make accessible vulnerable heritage sites and asking for greater emphasis on the importance of science in underpinning documentation and conservation projects, as well as training in analytical techniques for local practitioners.

The Forum has also contributed to the Horizon 2020 consultation on potential priorities for research and innovation under societal challenge 5 'Climate action, environment,

resource efficiency and raw materials'. The response identified the modelling of predicted climate change and other external environmental change, and research into adaptation and responses to such changes; research into the resilience and fragility of buried archaeological materials; research into improving energy efficiency in museums and galleries and research into improving the ability to carry out rapid and mobile degradation assessments as key challenge areas under this theme.

NHSF has submitted evidence to the Commons Culture, Media and Sport Committee inquiry 'Countries of Culture', which looks at ways to preserve and promote the UK's cultural wealth, arguing for the benefits of investment in heritage science infrastructure and we have produced a statement in response to the publication of the Government's White Paper on Culture. NHSF's responses are available in the policy section of its website, www.heritagescienceforum.org.uk.

The Forum will have a stand at the Icon16 conference in Birmingham at which you can find out more about its work, how your institution can join and how you can benefit from the Forum as a member of Icon.

Caroline Peach NHSF

JOURNAL NEWS

Call for Submissions

The Journal of the Institute of Conservation (JIC) is now accepting submissions for publication in the forthcoming September 2016 and February 2017 issues.

JIC primarily publishes innovative research and practice-related Full Articles and welcomes Shorter Notices and Book Reviews. The Journal is fully peer-reviewed and focused on the preservation of cultural heritage in all its forms.

Topics encouraged for submission include (but are not limited to):

- advances in collection care, display and archiving
- advances in treatments
- advocacy and ethics
- critical approaches to conservation
- new understandings of decay
- participatory and collaborative processes
- professional and ethical issues
- remedial or preventive conservation
- technical and materials studies of objects and conservation materials

If you would like to discuss a potential article, please contact the Editor, Dr Jonathan Kemp at journal@icon.org.uk.

The Journal now accepts submissions in any discipline all year round through the online system at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/rcon> – for details please see the (slightly out of date) Instructions for Authors



NEW QUALIFICATION LAUNCHED

It's been a while in the gestation but the new entry level conservation qualification has finally launched. Icon has partnered with the Victoria & Albert Museum to develop a new vocational qualification to support the development of skills for entry level conservators and museum technicians within the workplace.

The Conservation & Collections Care Technicians Diploma, as the new qualification is known, has come about through the merging of Icon's Conservation Technician Qualification (CTQ) and the V&A's Technician Diploma.

How the new diploma works

The new qualification is delivered by the V&A Training Centre and is being offered at 'Level 4' which is equivalent to the first year of an undergraduate degree. It will take candidates



Patrick White

through a range of units covering the core skills of conservation, as well as those suited to museum technicians, from developing an understanding of professional judgement and ethics through to implementing routine interventive conservation procedures.

Overall there are twenty-two units for candidates to choose from to help them tailor the qualification to their specific work setting. This qualification provides a great

basis for someone to develop their career in conservation, helping them to develop their practice as well as allowing them to progress to short courses or further vocational or academic study.

Conservation technicians and entry level conservators, for whom the new technician diploma will be suitable, will be given the opportunity to gain a recognised qualification whilst working. Candidates are assessed in the workplace on average every six to eight weeks by qualified assessors who will support and guide the candidates through their qualifications. Importantly this qualification requires that the conservation units are only assessed by Accredited Conservator-Restorers (ACRs). This will help to maintain the rigour of the qualification as well as ensuring that candidates develop a strong understanding of the Professional Standards in conservation. Through this the candidates will build up a comprehensive portfolio of evidence in support of their qualification.

The official launch of the qualification last month saw strong interest from individuals looking to follow the qualification as well as ACRs looking to becoming assessors for the programme. This was really encouraging and further introductory sessions are planned across 2016 which we hope will be as well received.



Launching the new conservation qualification

'We are absolutely delighted to officially launch the new Conservation & Collections Care Technicians Diploma in partnership with the V&A. The new qualification recognises the range of skills required of those working in support roles, and provides a clear base from which candidates can develop their early careers in conservation' said our Chief Executive, Alison Richmond.

Building on the CTQ

This is a great step for the development of the previous CTQ qualification as well. The CTQ was run by Icon from 2009 until 2015 and saw forty-one people pass through the programme who were able to use the structured approach to the qualification in helping them to develop their learning and gain a sound grasp of a range of conservation issues to enable them to develop and progress their careers.

The previous CTQ qualification remains well respected and valued across the sector. However this qualification offers a greater breadth of units for learners to follow, which in turn offers the opportunity for learners who do not solely work in conservation roles to be able to take conservation units – much more representative of the types of entry level job roles within the sector for non-conservation graduates. Importantly, if it goes well, by 2018, the qualification will become a nationally recognised vocational qualification on the Government's Regulated Qualifications Framework, which will allow candidates to use this qualification as a direct entry route to other higher level qualifications.

The conservation sector has a long history of supporting a range of entry routes into the profession. The continued development of a viable vocational route into the sector is essential to complement the academic route as well as providing a viable career development path in those areas where an academic route is not essential and for candidates for whom it is not necessarily appropriate.

The bigger picture

The development of this qualification ties into much wider Government reforms of vocational education to ensure that it is rigorous, stretches the learners academically, is responsive to the needs of individuals and employer demand and fundamentally helps to get people into work and to progress their careers.

It also ties into wider initiatives, which Icon is currently involved with, to support the increasing academic rigour of vocational entry routes into the conservation sector. This

includes Icon's engagement in the development of the new Heritage Environment Practitioner Apprenticeship, in partnership with Historic England along with other key players in the sector. The consultation for this has just closed. However, from this work a series of new qualifications will be created. We will be engaging Icon members with developing these when the time comes.

Patrick White

Training & Development Manager

A NEW CONSERVATION PUBLICATION

In case you missed it in Iconnect, it is worth repeating the news of the launch of a brand new scientific journal published by the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw and called ICAR. Its remit is to publish the work of students and recent graduates of studies in conservation and restoration of works of art and historical objects and cultural heritage preservation.

The mission of ICAR is to publicise the academic achievements of students and recent graduates. Papers will be selected by an academic council and will be published in English. To learn more about the journal, the publishing procedure, its scientific standards, deadlines and how to publish there, visit the website: www.icarthejournal.org

TRAVELS WITH THE MEMBERSHIP MANAGER: Spring 2016



Michael Nelles
Membership Manager

The 2016 AGM season has got off to a flying start since the last issue, with events, tours and lectures heralding the arrival of the spring sunshine.

The events I've attended so far this year have strongly reinforced for me the diversity of our networks, with members working in a variety of contexts ranging from well-established collections in large public institutions to freelance roles on site progressing fascinating project work.

There are many places that Icon members can have access to thanks to our fellow members – places that are

normally off-limits to ordinary mortals. Typically this access is offered through a Group event, and can often sweeten the appeal of an AGM when coupled with a compelling tour. The Stone and Wall Paintings Group married the two brilliantly when they gathered in Winchester last month for their 2016 AGM, lecture and tour.

In Winchester with SWP Group

The Group's visit to Winchester coincided with a project upon which Icon member Ruth McNeilage ACR was hard at work – the conservation of the medieval polychrome bosses on the presbytery ceiling of Winchester Cathedral. It is said that scaffolding tends to be erected only once every hundred years to permit so close a view of the bosses, so the chance to see their conservation in action was both a thrilling and exclusive one. Prior to this, Ruth spoke about the conservation in the lecture theatre of the Hampshire Record Office (see page 25), and this was preceded by the Group's AGM.

The Stone and Wall Paintings Group usually has lively AGMs, with plenty of time devoted to questions and discussion from the floor. The discussion at this year's meeting reinforced for me the difficulty faced by some conservators if they should wish to get more engaged with Icon – particularly freelancers. Indeed, when one tends to work up scaffolding, and that scaffolding is only due to be in place for a strictly limited period of time, how easy is it to get away some afternoons to serve on a Board or Committee, or to attend a networking or CPD event? Owing to this, suggested one member, a series of Saturday meetings, lectures and tours had once been enormously popular; attendees had ample time to talk through working practices.

Having never been up a scaffold in my life until this event, this gave me reason to think how Icon could extend easier access to organisational involvement to those conservators who are simply unable to get away. In practical terms, this could range from investment in podcasting equipment so members up and down the country can catch up with events no matter where they are held, and indeed to provide an archival resource that can be consulted in future. This is certainly something to be considered quite carefully by the Board's Task & Finish Group which is working on strengthening support for professional conservators.

Reflections with B&P Group

Next up in early April was the Book and Paper Group AGM,

At the Historic Interiors Conference





Working on the ceiling bosses in Winchester Cathedral

which convened at the Art Workers' Guild in London. This event saw the end of an era, as Isabelle Egan stepped down from the role of Chair. In her departing remarks, she called for greater integration between Icon's Groups and suggested that more opportunities for cross-specialist meetings would strengthen our organisation.

I think this resonates quite strongly with the notions of regionalism that were such a prominent theme to emerge from the Membership Survey. Excepting the Scotland Group, our cross-specialist forums tend to be limited to the triennial conference, which roves around the UK but by its very nature only occurs once every three years – and clearly not everyone can make it.

It occurred to me soon after I took up my role that greater cross-specialist networking might be most effectively fostered alongside an emphasis on regional variety – general 'members' meetings' held regularly in different parts of the country; where members of all types are invited to hear a lecture or tour a project before socialising over sandwiches and wine. Indeed, this was a feature of the long-term plans I submitted to Icon's Board of Trustees in my first Membership Strategy Review, in the summer of 2014.

This is a model that has been successfully instigated by our friends at the Museums Association. And of course the Icon Scotland Group leads the way in this kind of cross-discipline engagement. Icon would also do well in many places to engage more effectively with some of the regional networks already in operation.

I think regional variety can help to drive cross-specialist networking, and as this was a primary ambition of Icon when the organisation was formed, it is an objective I readily support – and something Icon can definitely work towards in the near future.

In Cambridge with Historic Interiors

This April, I headed to Cambridge to join the Historic Interiors Group for their annual conference and AGM. This format has been a successful one for this Group, which has staged two

previous conferences in the city as well. This was my first time visiting Historic Interiors and, as with so many of these events, it was rewarding to put faces to names that have often appeared in my inbox – especially at renewal season!

One of the most salient issues to emerge as I talked with the committee after the lectures was an issue of importance to all Groups – the need to enhance communication between members. The Iconnect system is a fairly efficient means of raising awareness, with email open-rates that are consistently above-average compared to benchmark data from similar organisations. However, its capacity to provide the means for members to feed-back is not as effective.

From this sprang some of the website development initiatives currently underway to enhance two-way communication and broader discourse within our organisation. We are looking at the feasibility of developing a website forum that will provide members with the means to hold discussions within Group specialisms, to pose questions of colleagues across our broader membership, and to participate in debates no matter where they are in the world.

Also in development – subject to further communication and consultation with the wider membership – is a membership directory, so if 'Sally' meets 'Angie' at an Icon event, they can subsequently make contact even if they are not able to exchange details at the time. Please stay tuned for more news on these developments as the work progresses.

Tales from the Textiles Group

Rounding off the latest series of AGMs was a show-stopping event staged by the Textiles Group in London, celebrating their 25th Anniversary this year. The day featured a programme of textile-themed parallel tours and concluded with a celebration at the Foundling Museum, when four previous Textile Group chairs gave presentations reflecting on their experiences in the role. As I've only been with Icon for two years, listening to this substantial past experience in organisational history was compelling stuff. I think one of the most inspiring insights came from Deborah Phipps, who



recently stepped down as Chair. She explained that a role on an Icon committee 'puts you directly in touch with your peers at major national institutions'. What an opportunity!

Looking ahead

In the near future I'll be off to Brighton and then Birmingham for the conference. I also hope to get up north again this summer. If you've got an event coming up where I might play a role, please drop me a line! I hope to see many of you soon.

Michael Nelles

Membership Manager

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

Book and Paper Group

Goodbye and Hello

We are sad to have said goodbye to a number of colleagues on the Committee over the past couple of months. Rebecca Honold, Mary French and Isabelle Egan have all left the Committee for pastures new. We would like to thank them all for their sterling work and service to the Book and Paper Group over the years, and we wish them the very best for the future in their new ventures.

We are pleased to welcome new Committee members to succeed them. Charlotte Marriott and Natasha Trenwith both become Special Projects Officers, Tiffany Eng will take over as IT Officer, and Michelle Stoddart will be our new Chair. We look forward to working with all of them in the months ahead.

Reviewing the Year

The Book and Paper Group AGM took place on 4 April 2016 and included an excellent Clare Hampson Memorial Lecture by Professor Salvador Muñoz Viñas. A full report will follow in the next edition of Icon News, but below we reproduce extracts from the annual reports presented by Isabelle Egan and Françoise Richard reviewing the past year for the Book and Paper Group and the CTR.

Chair's Review (Isabelle Egan)

This has been another busy year for the Book & Paper Group. The Committee hardly rested from 2015's *Adapt & Evolve*, and here they are again, organising the Group's input to the Birmingham Icon conference 2016. The latter looks to be another successful event. We have once again joined forces with the Icon Photography Group for the presentations and the papers look very inviting as well as having an interesting format for discussions.

Speaking of events, Francesca Whymark and Anna Johnson are taking forward the postprints from *Adapt & Evolve*. They are presently being edited, which represents a huge effort, and the final product should be ready later in the year and available for free download from the Icon website. Please watch out for announcements.

From the surplus of *Adapt and Evolve* the Committee has also agreed to make a contribution towards the development of a new conference proceedings page on the Icon website to enable all Icon Groups to offer publications and other downloads to their members.

The Committee would also like to award some of the conference surplus back to our members in some form and would welcome member suggestions.

The Co-operative Training Register (CTR) continues to deliver targeted courses, with added value this year: the Committee voted to cap the fees chargeable to participants. We also subsidise the courses so that the training we need is within reach of most purses. The true ethos of the CTR is for conservators to pass on their knowledge to other conservators, it is not meant to compete with other course providers. Please send us suggestions for courses. They do not have to be purely conservation courses either: ideas for the future already include a basic computer skills course.

We are very concerned that CTR events are so London-centric and we are therefore striving to include new CTR members from outside London, so that events can move smoothly to other parts of the country.

The Trustees of Icon approved a pilot Documentation Network, whose page on the Icon website gives details of their activities. One of the Network's requests is for a representative from each Icon Group to join the network as the aims of the Network are pertinent to all. The Book & Paper Group's representative is Francesca Whymark.

The Book & Paper Committee have also (over many months) put together a proposal for new volunteer guidelines for heritage institutions. The proposed guidelines are now ready for circulation to the other Icon Groups and chairs for their own input. It is hoped that in due course the guidelines will be presented to the Trustees and CEO of Icon for their consideration.

The Chantry Library 'question' was resolved this year, as the legal ownership of the Library and bequest was transferred to the Oxford Conservation Consortium. The benefits of the conservation holdings will be available soon via Oxford University Online Catalogue. More details will be available on the Icon website in August.

I am extremely proud of our hardworking committee members, who bring all of their energy for the benefit of others in the profession. Their willingness to take so much on and to do it well has been an inspiration to me and I consider myself very lucky to have had them with me for the past two years. Now, it is time to change 'captains' once more and although sad to leave the Committee, I am delighted to hand over to our incoming Chair, Michelle Stoddart.

CTR Review (Françoise Richard)

In total, the Cooperative Training Register offered eighty-five workshop places this year. Five evening lectures were organized (either in relation to a workshop or independently) and four of these lectures also offered an occasion to socialize with a drinks reception.

Collaborative work with the Photographic Materials Group to organize practical workshops was a success. When relevant to other specialisms, evening lectures were advertised to other Icon Groups, attracting a diverse crowd of conservators.

We received extremely positive feedback regarding the





content of the workshops, the teachers, and many comments underlined the relevance of the training received. The cost of training events was sometimes criticised, despite the cap on ticket cost decided last summer by the Book & Paper Group Committee. Other criticisms concerned the handouts or delegate packs, and location of the events, especially the London-centric aspect of many events.

We are very grateful to the following sponsors who provided funds or materials to support CTR activities:

- Clare Hampson Fund
- Conservation By Design

We also greatly appreciate the assistance of institutions who provided a supporting network to CTR training events throughout the year:

- In Scotland: Still Centre for Photography, Edinburgh
- In Cambridge: Corpus Christi College
- In London: the V&A, Lux Darkroom, St Bride's Foundation, the British Library, and the Wellcome Library

The current CTR team includes eight people. I am thrilled to welcome two new committee members, but the workload also discouraged a few volunteers during the course of the year.

Addressing the London-centric aspect of CTR training events is a priority, but the organization of regular regional events is dependent upon the presence of volunteers in the regions. Roles are available.

As announced in the last Icon News, I am personally stepping down at the end of the academic year and hope to make good use of the summer months to arrange a smooth transition with the new CTR Chair.

Upcoming CTR events

Save the date for Bridget Mitchell's workshop: Constructing a drop-spine pressure box for books and manuscripts with parchment textblocks or coverings (10–12 November 2016).

Another workshop is in preparation: Photoshop for conservators, led by Alex Owen. The dates are not set yet but will be announced soon via Iconnect.

Care of Collections Group

With new committee members we are planning some great new events for our members. In the summer we are planning a unique visit to Heritage Cottage in south Wales, one of Cadw's most recent acquisitions. As their website explains '...Heritage Cottage is a great example of a mid-19th century miner's cottage. Uniquely, it retains many of its original features including a stone corner stairs, a cast iron fireplace bearing the date 1854, and a larder complete with its slate slab. The cottage is being conserved and restored using traditional techniques and will be a case study in how historic properties can be efficiently and sympathetically brought in to modern use.'

We hope in the autumn to be launching our first joint PACR/CCG workshop for preventive conservators around issues to consider when specifying practical conservation

treatments. Our annual conference and AGM is likely to be in the autumn also, theme and date to be announced soon. We're working on lots of new event ideas to go forward with in 2017. Please do get in touch with Events Coordinator: Emily Watts (emilywatts2@hotmail.com) if you have any event suggestions.

Gilding & Decorative Surfaces Group Conference Registration Announcement

'Auricular Style: Frames'.

Dates: 5 & 6 October, 2016.

Venue: The Wallace Collection (Goodison Lecture Theatre), Hertford House, Manchester Square, London W1U 3BN. A National Museum since 1900, the Wallace Collection contains one of the finest collections of international decorative arts in the world.

This two-day international conference is the first dedicated to the Auricular style, centring on one of its most significant manifestations, the picture frame. The conference aims to stimulate awareness and study of this important but neglected style by bringing together research in fine and decorative art histories. Speakers from Europe, UK and the USA will consider the origins and development of the Auricular style in different materials, including silver, wood, stucco and leather. Papers will explore how other areas of the decorative and applied arts fed into the creation of picture frames. They will examine the influence of prints, drawings, and the style's dissemination between European centres in Bohemia, Germany, Italy, France, the Netherlands and Britain. Poster presentations will be exhibited during the conference. Running simultaneously with the conference there will be related displays at Ham House and Guildhall Art Gallery.

For the programme, please visit the conference's website: <https://auricularstyleframes.wordpress.com/about/>

Booking details: early bird registration is now open. For online registration and payment, please visit <http://tinyurl.com/hakx5fq>

Early bird ticket prices (including Eventbrite's commission): £100 regular, £90 Icon members, £50 students (ID to be shown at conference). Early bird option ends and prices rise after 30 June. The Theatre's capacity is 150, therefore early registration is recommended. No refunds will be made after 23 September. If you do not wish your email address to be included in the delegates list, please contact the event coordinator gdsgevents@gmail.com

The convenors of the event are Gerry Alabone (Tate / City & Guilds of London Art School) and Lynn Roberts (The Frame Blog) in association with the Institute of Conservation (Gilding & Decorative Surfaces Group).

Paintings Group

The proceedings of the Paintings Group's 2015 Conference 'Colour Change in Easel Paintings', held at Tate Britain, will be published shortly. The Paintings Group plans to offer a discount on the full publication price; please watch out for further details as they are publicised on Icon's website and online media.



people

The next Paintings Group evening lecture will be 'Legislative Lacunae? The Vandalism of Cultural Property: Legal Perspectives for Museum Professionals', to be given by Morwenna Blewett, Paintings Conservator at the National Gallery, on Thursday 23 June 2016.

Morwenna will examine how purposeful damage to cultural property is dealt with by the law of England and Wales. It identifies and investigates the main differences in the legal definitions of property, cultural property, the historic environment and damage as they span different legal mechanisms. It is proposed that reform is desirable to harmonise the differences between these legal approaches so that movable cultural property is not left out in the legislative cold, and might for the first time be able to join its immovable 'cousin' in being considered heritage in a legal sense.

The lecture will be held at our usual venue: Freemason's Hall, 60 Great Queen Street, London WC2B 5AZ (close to both Covent Garden and Holborn underground stations). Doors open at 6:00pm, with the talk held 6:30-8:00pm. Ticket prices are: £10 for Icon members, £15 for non-members, and £5 for students (student ID to be shown on the door); wine and cheese will be available. Tickets should be booked through the Eventbrite website (www.eventbrite.co.uk); note that refunds for those unable to attend can only be issued if you notify us at least two days before the event.

Textiles Group

Our 25th Anniversary event took place on Monday 11 April. Tours took place throughout the afternoon to Portcullis House, The British Library, Blythe House and Kensington Palace. The evening event at the Foundling Museum was very enjoyable with interesting talks by past chairs Mary Brooks, Clare Stoughton-Harris, Sarah Howard and Debbie Phipps and much socialising over wine and canapés. Reviews and photos of the day will appear in the next issue. Thank you to everyone who contributed and attended, making the day so successful.

The AGM also took place during the evening. Three committee members stood down, Alice Brown, Natalia Zagorska-Thomas and Jane Smith. Thank you for all their hard work and commitment over the past three years. Two new members have joined the committee; Branwen Roberts, a treatment conservator at Historic Royal Palaces as an events co-ordinator and Nadine Wilson, a textile conservator at the National Trust Textile Conservation Studio as Icon Textiles Group news editor.

The Back-to-Basics Upholstery Conservation Workshop took place at The Bowes Museum, County Durham, in February. A review of this event is featured in this magazine. Thank you to Heather Porter, for leading this course and to Katy Smith for organising the event.

The Textiles Group committee are planning events which will be advertised soon. Look out for these throughout the year on Iconnects, Facebook and the website. Also if you have any thoughts about events or about our Forum next year, please contact one of the committee members. Email addresses can be found on the Icon website.

Appointments

Icon members will be interested to learn that **Professor Carl Heron** has been appointed as the new Director of Scientific Research at the British Museum. He comes to the post from the University of Bradford, where he has worked since 1990, latterly as Professor of Archaeological Sciences. His research focus lies in the identification of organic matter preserved in association with archaeological materials, and allies analytical organic chemistry to archaeological questions such as the function of artefacts, trade and exchange and the study of technological processes.

Under his leadership the Museum will look to focus its research in a number of key areas over the next five years including new approaches to organic artefacts and residues, research looking at ancient human health, diet and life histories, ancient materials and technologies and finally preserving and protecting the past.

The establishment of the new Department of Scientific Research, supported by the Wellcome Trust, sees the organisational separation of heritage science from conservation at the Museum, with Anna Bülow in the post of Head of Conservation.

New ACRs

The Accreditation Committee approved the accreditation of the following nine conservator-restorers at its meeting in March 2016.

Congratulations to all these new ACRs!

Daniel Cull preventive conservation, Historic Royal Palaces

Carla Flack objects conservation, The British Museum and Carla Flack Conservation

Lucie Graham natural history conservation, Lancashire County Council Museums Service

Laura Jane Hinde paintings conservation, National Portrait Gallery

Sally Anne Johnson preventive conservation, English Heritage Trust

Zoe Louise Miller book conservation, The British Library

Keith Morrison frames and furniture conservation, National Galleries of Scotland

Kirstin Stromberg paintings conservation, Ruth Bubb Conservation of Paintings

Ngaio Vince-Dewerse book and paper conservation, Cambridge University Library

Kirstie Louise Williams objects conservation, Cambridge University Museums



Welcome to these new members

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

Kia Abdullah
Icon Staff

Zuraida Akma
Student

Gemma Baxter
Associate

Ian Baxter
Specialist Blacksmith
Heritage Engineer
Associate

Cristina Beretta
Associate

Ruan Bester
Wallis Conservation Ltd
Associate

Lyndsey Chambers
The British Museum
Associate

Diana Choi
Student

Kasia Coleman
Associate

Ruben Contreras
HLF Intern

Alice Craigie
Student

Sophie Croft
West Dean College
Student

Karla Dayhoff
Student

Tim Earney
Associate

Sophie Elizabeth Evans
Student

Rhea Evers
PZ Conservation
Student

Elfreda Gibson-Poole
National Trust
Associate

Iona Goldie-Scot
Maastricht University
Student

Frances Grauper
Complimentary Publications

Dominic Gwynn
Martin Goetze and Dominic
Gwynn Ltd
Associate

Adelheid Hansen
Student

Stacey Hibberd
Student

Rachael Hills
Associate

Historic Environment Scotland
Organisation

Molly Hughes-Hallett
Courtauld Institute of Art
Student

Richard Ireland
Associate

Penelope Jenkins
Student

Laura Karoniemi
Student

Nanette Kissi
UCL
Student

Beth Knight
Student

Alexandra Latham
Student

Daniel Lea
Lost Art Limited
Associate

Rosanna Leithall
Student

Alexi Lliev
Associate

Giovanna Macelletti
Student

John MacInnes
Associate

Aisling Macken
Student

Juan Jose Martinez Cofino
Associate

Jordan Megyery
Associate

Emma Milgate
Student

Jessica Minshull
Associate

Mariana Moreira
Associate

Tamalie Newbery
Association of Independent
Museums
Complimentary Publications

Emma Newman
Student

Tulin Okbinoglu
Associate

Jill Orr
Jill Orr Conservation
Associate

Chloe Pearce
Student

Kate Pegram
Kate Pegram Stone
Conservator
Associate

Harriet Perkins
University of Glasgow
Student

Emma Prideaux
Student

Nikoletta Psara
Student

Chiara Rech
Associate

Camilla Rooney
Supporter

Belinda Shen
Supporter

Sarah Shepherd
Associate

Geraldine Sim
Heritage Conservation
Centre
Associate

Anastasia van Gaver
Student

Bryony White
Associate

Samuel Whittaker
Associate

Jennifer Wideson
Royal Household
Associate

Helen Wilkinson
Associate

Elizabeth Wilson
University of Lincoln
Student

Lucien Wray
Wray and Son Ltd t/a James
Wray Picture Conservation
Associate



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Disaster recovery made smarter

Sarah Hamlyn ACR & Kim Mulder on transferring British Library Salvage Team guidelines and procedures to a mobile handset

The British Library collection stores are located in St. Pancras in London and Boston Spa in Yorkshire. In addition to corporate disaster preparedness and business continuity procedures, both sites have a dedicated Salvage Team who can respond to threats to the physical collections. Given that over two hundred miles separate them, each team has complementary but site-specific procedures.

The London Salvage Team consists of fourteen members drawn from Conservation and Loans Registry teams. Team members fill one of two roles: Salvage Control Officer (SCO) or Salvage Team Leader (STL). Each week one SCO and one STL are on-call 24/7, with the rest of the team available in case of a large-scale incident.

In the event of an incident the SCO and STL will make a joint assessment and plan their response before taking on their specific duties. SCOs are responsible for managing the incident response in liaison with key internal and external contacts in security, engineering, emergency services, the press office and collection areas. STLs are responsible for the practical response to any incident and any steps taken to protect or remove collection items to a place of safety.

SALVAGE TEAM RESOURCES

In addition to an induction and regular training exercises, London Salvage Team members are each provided with a Nokia mobile phone and a Filofax-style Salvage Organiser that contains the salvage procedures and supporting information. The Salvage Team have responsibility for physical collections in storage, in use and on display at St. Pancras in an emergency.

The complexity of the site means a large amount of practical information is required to ensure an adequate response to any incident. Basements at St. Pancras extend twenty four metres below ground and house over two hundred kilometres of shelving. Above ground there are eleven reading rooms, three exhibition spaces, and staff working areas plus additional collection storage areas. Navigating your way around the building is not a simple task. The hardcopy Salvage Organisers are bulky to carry around, time consuming to update and, if misplaced or stolen, the contents are not secure.

In contrast, the smaller Salvage Team in Yorkshire has one person on-call each week (supported by volunteers). They share one BlackBerry handset which is handed over to the

The previous hard copy Salvage Organiser and individual salvage phones

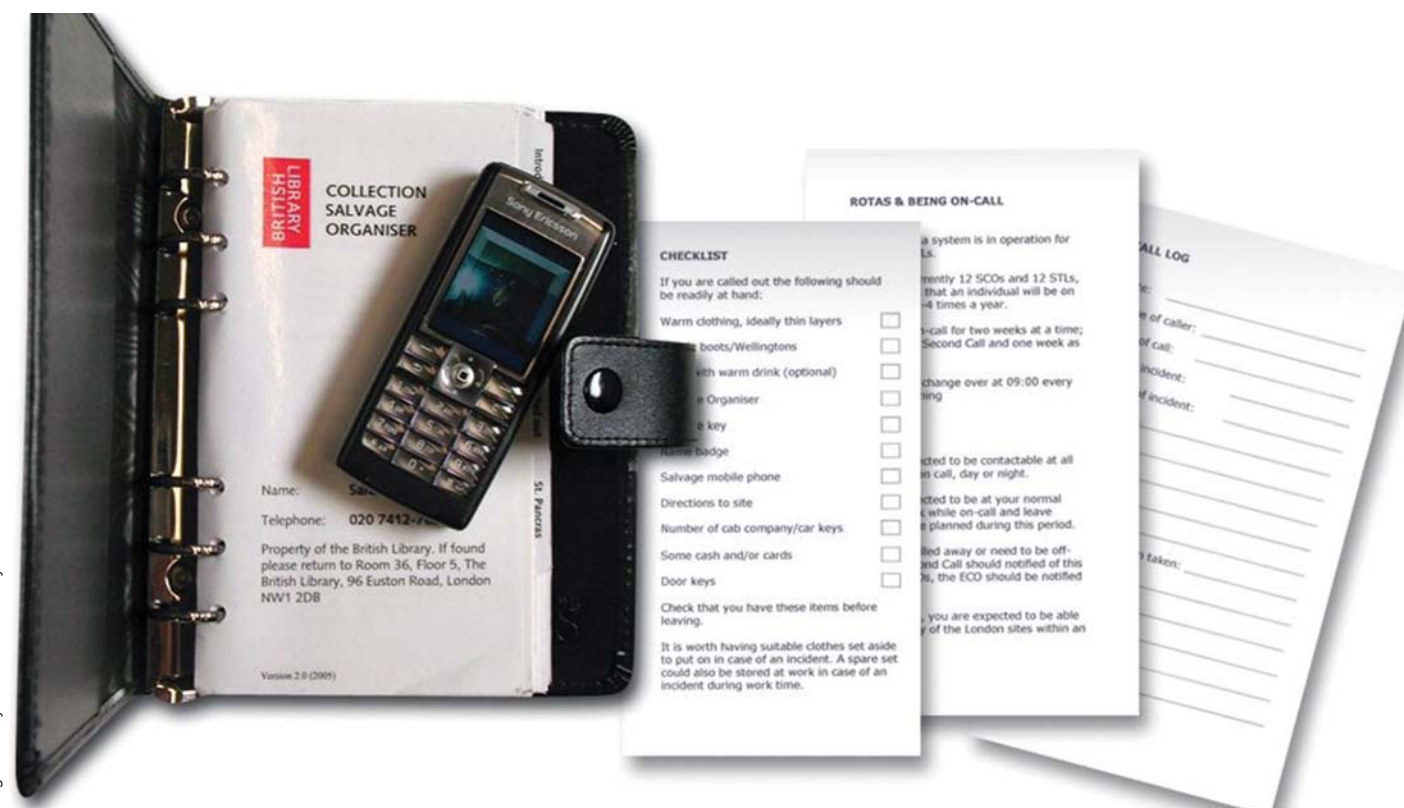


Image courtesy of the British Library



Session held by the authors to test phone layout options; Post-it notes represent the individual files on each screen

next person on call every Monday morning. A PDF copy of their salvage manual is stored on the phone removing the need to carry additional hardcopy information while on-call.

THE BENEFITS OF A SMARTPHONE

A minimum of four handsets were required because of our rota system. Although the initial outlay was relatively high, making a change from individual to fewer shared handsets will reduce on-going costs. The handsets are lightweight and, should the phone be mislaid or stolen, the contents are password protected. It is also easier to update information and ensure that it is consistent across devices. Lastly, it allowed us to use apps, have access to the internet and to the dedicated Salvage Team email account.

The decision to switch phone providers and to acquire smartphones provided an opportunity to make this change. Lead Preventive Conservator Sarah Hamlyn, who manages the London Salvage Team, reviewed and updated the content. Conservator Kim Mulder focused on how the electronic information should be structured and presented. This project was carried out between other work commitments over a six month period.

Budget constraints meant that the latest iOS or Android phones were beyond our reach. Instead we opted for the Samsung Galaxy Ace 4, an older-model Android phone which offered good functionality for the price. We also purchased inexpensive mobile battery chargers, which hold four full phone charges, so team members can charge phones during



Salvage Team member's Mark Browne and Jenny Snowdon taking part in the practical exercise

an incident if necessary without worrying about battery life. The Citrix Worx app provides secure access to email accounts and the British Library Intranet.

DESIGNING A USER-FRIENDLY INTERFACE

Our primary aim was a user-friendly interface with a clear and logical distribution of salvage content. As this device would become essential to our Salvage Team the first step was to establish the ideal system before looking at the specific capabilities and limitations of the mobile handset. The fit-for-purpose system would then be adjusted to the phone instead of letting the structure and functionality of the phone dictate the system.

The content on the mobile phone is an updated version of the hardcopy salvage organiser, which consists of valuable information collected through years of organisational salvage experience within the British Library. Evaluating the information as a whole, it became apparent that it could be logically divided into three groups: general procedural information, location awareness and caring for damaged objects. This would translate into a three-screen content division on the smartphone, with all subtopics within each category contained on one home screen panel.

Imagining walking through the building during a salvage incident and considering what type of information one would require at that particular – often stressful – occasion led us to categorize the content in order of chronological immediacy. A traffic light system allowed us to escalate from Salvage Team procedures (green), to finding your way around the site (orange), followed by treatment guidance for affected objects (red). That decision led to a large Post-it® puzzle to allow us to consider the positioning of each subtopic. This simple structure ties together the concept of chronological immediacy with the topical division of content.

A fourth screen contains content not specifically related to salvage and is excluded from the traffic light system by using understated grey icons. It contains apps that are standard on all smartphones, but may also be helpful during a salvage incident.

SETTING UP A SALVAGE SMARTPHONE

Deciding how to transfer our concept design onto the mobile phone was addressed by extensive online research, primarily through Google, YouTube tutorials, Android forums and the Google Play app store. We briefly considered our own app



but discounted this as we had no additional budget or programming experience to draw on. Instead we supplemented our own content with the ERS: Emergency Response app (NCPTT National Park Service) and asked permission to scan the Pocket Salvage Guide (Museum of London and Harwell Drying and Restoration Services).

Text files were created in a Microsoft Word template designed to fit the phone's screen.

Content was saved in bite size chunks which can be updated easily and also removes the need to scroll through many pages to get to the relevant part. All text and image files were saved as PDF files which could be uploaded to the phone using the USB cable provided. The ES File Explorer (File Manager) app stores the files and allows them to be used for further purposes. We sought to create shortcuts for each file and to then change their shortcut icons to suit our agreed system.

After trying a few options we found two apps designed to do just that: Desktop VisualizeR and IconChanger free. The first works on the premise of using an image either taken with or loaded onto the mobile phone and turning it into an icon, with further options to change the appearance of the image inside the app. The second allows you to change existing app icons to a different colour, which perfectly aids the intended uniformity of the traffic light system. This option has the advantage that files can be accessed offline, without the need for a signal.

LAYOUT

When creating a user friendly interface the layout is equally as important as the multi-layered system underneath. Essentially the user must be able to find the information they require as quickly and easily as possible. Assigning a single colour to a

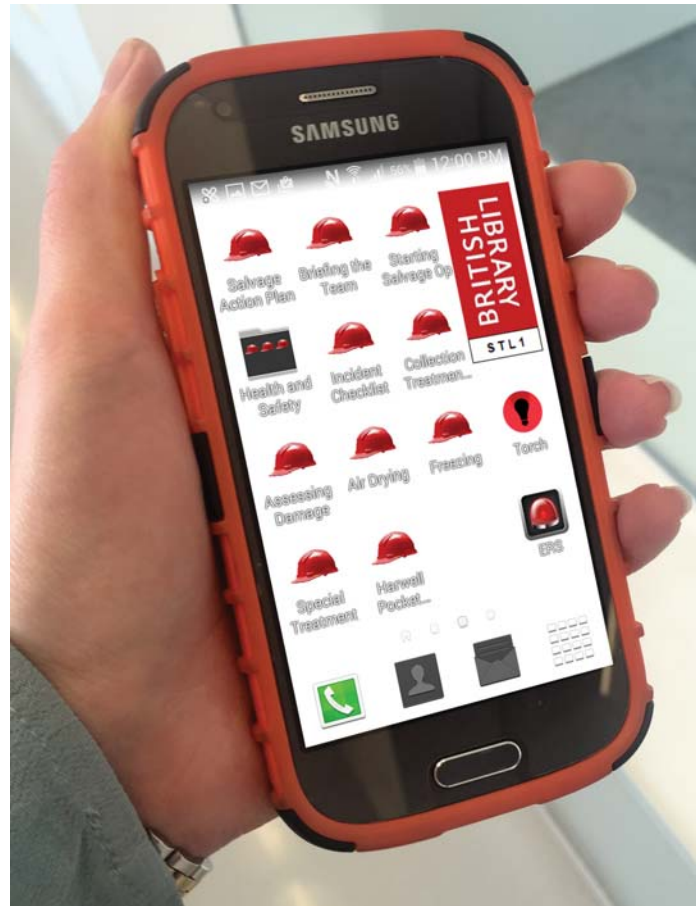


Image courtesy of the British Library

The new Salvage Phone and digital Salvage Manual

screen helps create a visually calm and user-friendly layout.

Initially we considered using red, orange and green as individual screen backgrounds. Instead the three colour-coded sections are indicated by the colour of the icons. Further aiding usability, the traffic light system is carried through to the PDF heading colours, which correspond to the screen they are placed on, and the floor plans are predominantly orange, corresponding to the site orientation screen.

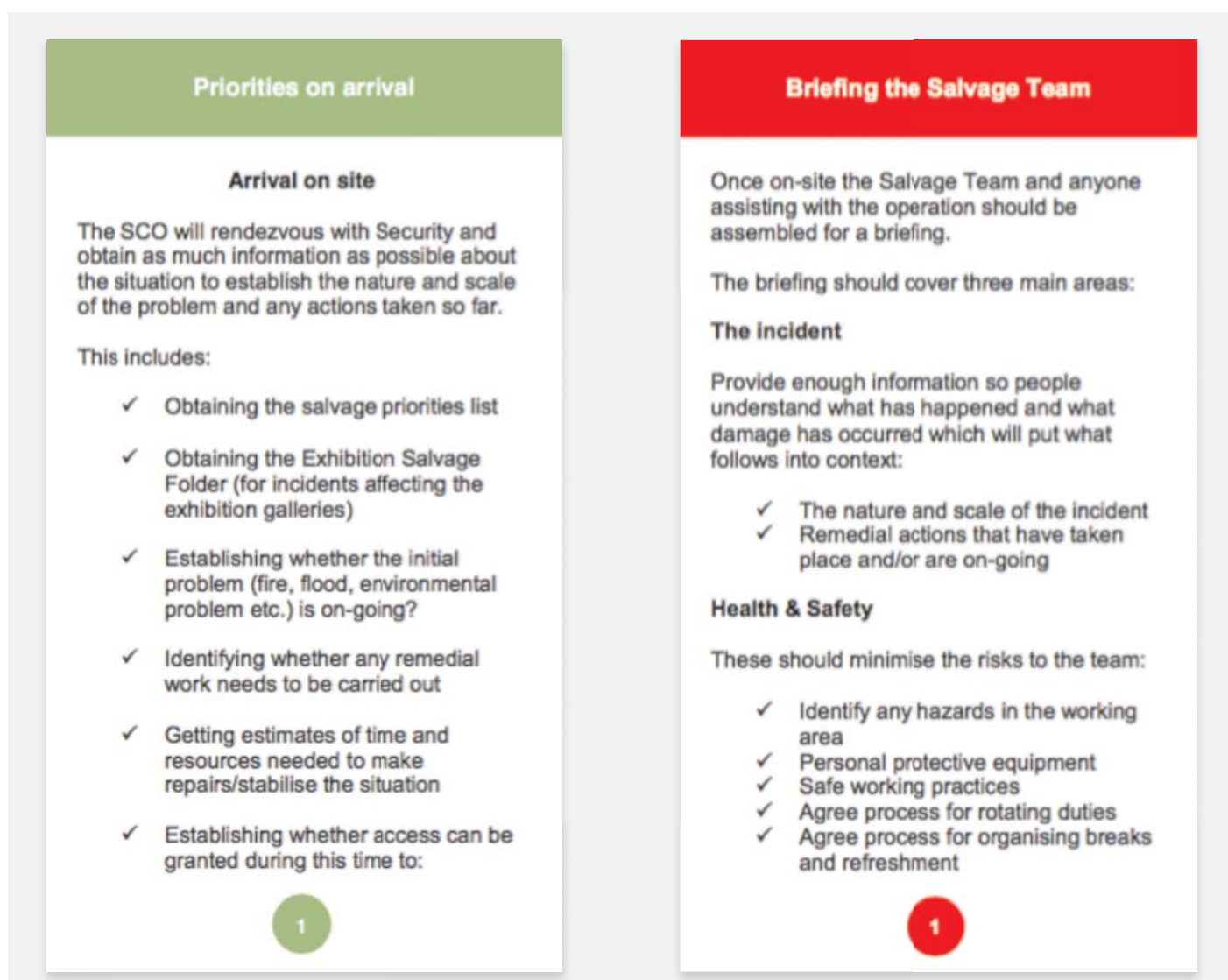
We sought to find an image that is recognisably linked to the

The three traffic light screens and maps



Image courtesy of the British Library





Salvage Manual content saved into colour-coded Microsoft Word templates

British Library and to then transform it into simple green, orange and red icons. Initial attempts to use iconic images, such as the Kings Library Tower or the Eduardo Paolozzi's 'Newton' statue made us realise that they would not retain their recognisability nor contribute to a visually calm layout.

The builder's hat icon became the logical choice as an image that is recognisable in a small format and also has a contextual relationship to Salvage. The British Library logo is visible on all screens with the identifying name of the phone displayed underneath it (SCO 1 or 2 or STL 1 or 2). This is also visible without logging into the phone by pushing the home screen button.

LAUNCHING THE SALVAGE PHONES

We held practical one-hour training sessions for four team members at a time. This ensured that everyone had a chance to use the phone and complete practical exercises to locate certain content and get familiar with the layout.

The phones have been in use for five months now and the system works well. They have colour-coded cases and work on a self-serve basis so people can come into the office and pick up the phone they have been allocated in the week before they are on-call and drop them off when their duty has finished.

Team members think the phones are 'an improvement on what was there before' because they are 'user-friendly',

'logical' and 'easy to use'. We have also kept colleagues in other departments updated about the work we have been doing and there is interest in introducing a complementary system for corporate disaster preparedness information.

Although the design was tailor made to suit the British Library Salvage Team we believe this approach would translate well to other cultural/heritage institutions and collections. We are technically literate but by no means IT-experts and by using freely available resources have achieved our aim of transferring our procedures into a portable electronic format. Our biggest investment was time rather than money. Finding time is always difficult but very little changed between the initial arrangement of content on Post-it® notes and the finished phones; we believe that is because we did invest time considering all the issues.

The overall purpose of this exercise was to move our existing well-developed disaster plan and supporting documents into a logical and accessible format which is practical and useful. Our plans have been updated but are essentially unchanged. We achieved this by thinking critically about the information team members need and the sequence in which they might need it. Ultimately we hope this will support Salvage Team members and make things easier for them during Salvage incidents.

Conservation is a 'cool job'

It's official! Lorraine Finch ACR had it from the arbiters of cool when she set about inspiring the conservators of tomorrow

Coming home from London I was flipping through ES (Evening Standard) Magazine, not really paying much attention to it, when on the last page there was a mention of volunteering for *Inspiring the Future*. 'That sounds interesting,' I thought. 'Maybe I could get involved and inspire the next generation of conservators.' So, I had a look at the *Inspiring the Future* website (www.inspiringthefuture.org) and being excited by their mission I volunteered.

INSPIRING THE FUTURE

I took part in my first *Inspiring the Future* event on 15 December 2015 at Norwich Cathedral. This morning event, called 'Careers Exhibition' was organised by the Harleston Cluster of Schools, for five hundred children, aged from seven to thirteen years old, from five schools.

The Careers Exhibition was very well organised. When I arrived I was given a goody bag (always a bonus to get a treat!) and directed to my table in the 'Arts' section. There were nine sectors in all, covering Finance and Law; Health and Fitness; Technology, Media Advertising, Film and TV; Agriculture and Animals; Construction Engineering and Design; Retail, Food and Hospitality; Arts; Education, Training and Apprenticeships and Something a Bit Different. There were seventy nine exhibitors in total.

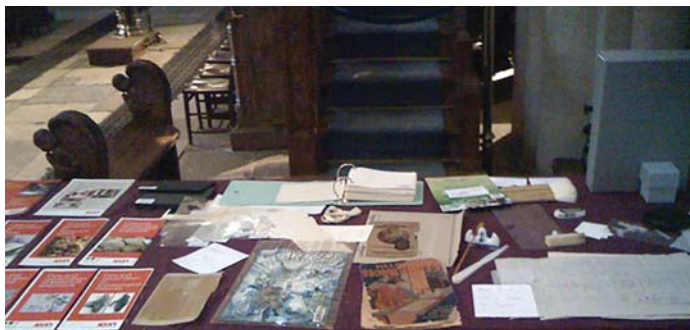
My fellow exhibitors in the Arts section included a jewellery maker, a hip hop dancer, a ballet dancer, an artist, an animator, a photographer and the Sainsbury Centre for the Visual Arts.

PREPARING FOR THE DAY

Prior to the Careers Exhibition I thought long and hard about what the children would find inspiring. I wanted to spark their interest and to let them have a go at some practical conservation. I wanted to show them that conservation is not about old things but includes most of the subjects they study at school including maths, English and science, and that conservation involves problem solving and practical skills.

I took with me a selection of back issues of Icon News, the

The table laid out for *Inspiring the Future*



Icon 'Care and Conservation ...' leaflets, samples of cards, papers and boards used in conservation, examples of good and bad storage enclosures, hand tools, erasers, repair materials and a selection of historic objects ranging from the 18thC to the 21stC.

ATTRACTING THE BOYS

When the children arrived, it was apparent that I had brought too much with me. The samples and boxes were of little interest. What the children loved was surface cleaning. I was surprised by the fact that it was particularly the boys who enjoyed this. Given that we would like to encourage more boys into conservation and that boys clearly have an interest, how do we lose them? Or don't we engage with them fully in the first place?

The boys cleaned so much of my material that I have none left now! If you have any objects that you would like to donate to my teaching collection, I'd love to have them.

One of the objects which helped to draw the boys to my table and to start a conversation was a very damaged comic. To me this shows the importance of stepping outside the conservator's mindset and into the minds of the audience, if we want to engage and be inclusive. It is something that I struggle with. I am set in my ways.

One of the other items on my table which the children were interested in, was the 'Care and Conservation of Geological Material' leaflet. I had lots of questions about fossil conservation and dinosaur conservation. The children were also very interested in Buildings Conservation.

During the event I had the opportunity to meet and talk to the other exhibitors. Whilst chatting to them I was invited to three more events.

A selection of the objects taken to the event





Cleaning and repair materials

INSPIRING YOUTH

The first of these invitations was to an *Inspired Youth* (www.inspired-youth.co.uk) event called 'My Care', on 25 February this year at the Kings Centre in Great Yarmouth, Norfolk. 'My Care' was aimed at fifteen to seventeen year olds who were considering a career in the care industry.

There was some concern about how conservation would fit into an event about the care professions, where the students were interested in a career in health care, social care and animal care. I argued that conservators care for the past, the physical object, the memory of the people who created and used the object and care for the message of the object.

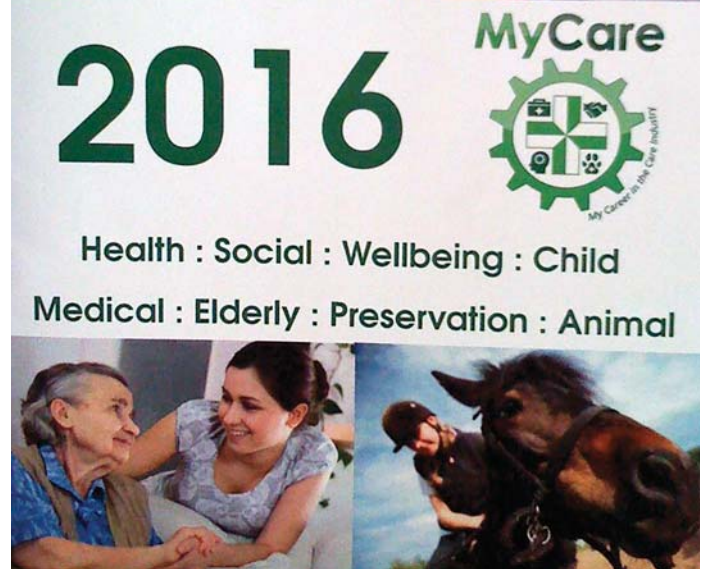
Would this come across? We needn't have worried. The students got it. There were many exclamations of 'Cool' and 'Cool job'. At least four students said that 'It [conservation] was the job for them'. One person even cried because she was so moved by the story behind the object. There were also a few exclamations of 'I've never heard of conservation' and 'Why haven't I heard of this before'. I know we try hard as a profession to raise awareness but there is still plenty of work to be done.

At the end of both of these events, I was as inspired as the children and the students. They reminded me what a privilege it is to be a conservator. I came away enthused and motivated to take part in more events to inspire the next generation of

The table at the Inspired Youth event



xxxx



The 'My Care' brochure: preservation made it onto the cover

conservators and to continue to raise awareness of conservation. I urge you to do the same. It's a great experience and very worthwhile.

Contact details for Lorraine:
Email: paper@lifeconservation.co.uk
Website: www.lfcp.co.uk
Facebook: www.facebook.com/LFCandP
Twitter: @conserve_lfcp





around and about

Secrets in Shakespeare's schoolroom

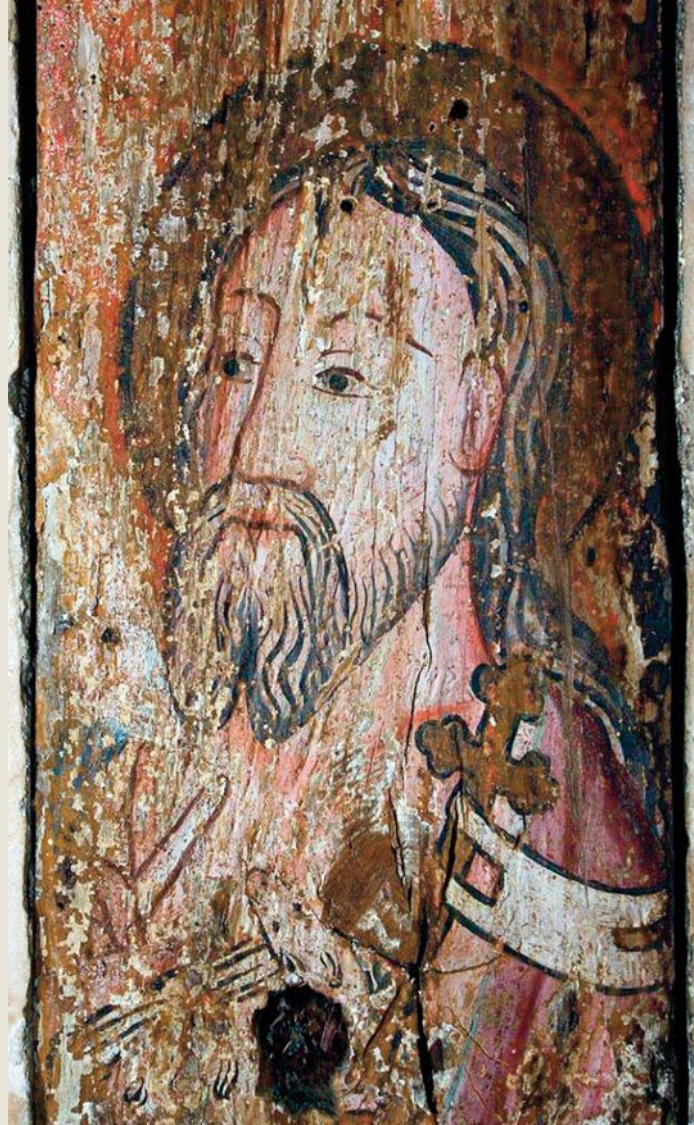
In Stratford-on-Avon last month, Shakespeare's schoolroom and Guildhall opened to the public on the 400th anniversary of the playwright's death. The 15th century, Grade I listed schoolroom in which William Shakespeare was educated is still part of King Edward VI School, and is only now opening its doors to the public to share its unique story for the first time in four hundred years. Historian Michael Wood has described it as 'one of the most atmospheric, magical and important buildings in the whole of Britain'.

At the heart of life in medieval Stratford, the Guildhall was completed in 1420, with the School moving to the upper floor of the building in the mid-1560s. During the following decade, the 1570s, Shakespeare was taught in part of the Upper Guildhall studying the contemporary grammar school curriculum and, as it was the town's only theatre space at that time, this is where he would have encountered his first theatrical performances.

In preparation for the opening of this new visitor attraction, work began on the building last July with the focus on vital repairs to the timber structure, upgrades to the interior and the conservation of important historical elements, including a group of rare medieval paintings. All this was made possible by a £1.4 million grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, secured after a long campaign by the school Trustees.

Of especial interest to Icon News readers is the involvement of our members in making a new discovery in the course of the work. During the conservation of a 15th century wall painting, undertaken by The Perry Lithgow Partnership, a figure of St John the Baptist has been revealed. John the Baptist is shown with a halo above his head holding a staff and book and cradling a small lamb. From head to waist, the figure is approximately 40cm high and is situated on one of the timber uprights of the building's south gable.

Mark Perry of The Perry Lithgow Partnership Ltd told Icon



Shakespeare's Schoolroom & Guildhall

The image of John the Baptist uncovered by The Perry Lithgow Partnership

Faded and fragmentary paintings inside the schoolroom



Shakespeare's Schoolroom & Guildhall

The exterior of the Guildhall and schoolroom



Shakespeare's Schoolroom & Guildhall





Shakespeare's Schoolroom & Guildhall

'Other figures are extremely fragmentary'

News 'This is a particularly interesting and exciting find as no other heads remain within the scheme and all other figures are extremely fragmentary. The exceptional detail evident in the drawing and rendering of the head, in particular, provide a fascinating indication of the extraordinary quality of the original painting and will lead to a reassessment of the importance of this scheme. The painting depicts the Trinity, including motifs from the seal of the Guild of the Holy Cross, and is thought to date from the second quarter of the 15thC.'

Professor Ronnie Mulryne, trustee of King Edward VI School commented 'This discovery, patiently revealed by leading conservator Richard Lithgow and his team, is a wonderfully vivid and exciting addition to the Guildhall's wall paintings. All

visitors who have seen it have remarked on how fresh and realistic the face and garments of John the Baptist appear, almost as though they were painted yesterday not six hundred years ago. This is a major enhancement to a Guildhall which has itself survived almost unchanged for a similar period.'

Queen's Award for Enterprise

Congratulations to Willard Conservation, which has been named a winner of the 2016 Queen's Award for Enterprise – the UK's highest accolade for business success. The

Paul Willard, Managing Director of Willard Conservation Ltd (fourth from left) and his team proudly display the company's Queen's Award for Enterprise flag

Centuries of schoolboy vandalism in Shakespeare's schoolroom



Shakespeare's Schoolroom & Guildhall





The largest conservation table Willard has ever produced is craned over the perimeter wall of Kronborg Castle in Denmark

Chichester-based, family-run company has been commended for achieving outstanding results, most notably by demonstrating five years of growth in international trade.

Willard's will be well known to Icon members for its role in the design and manufacture of equipment for use in our conservation work and at Icon News we are of course very grateful to the company for its loyalty as one of our advertisers.

The firm's tools and equipment are exported across the world, with recent commissions from the firm being shipped to Yale University in Connecticut, USA and the Orientalist Museum in Doha, Qatar, to name but two. Another commission acknowledged by this Award is the largest conservation table Willard has ever produced (measuring over 4m x 3m), for Kronborg Castle – best known as the home of Shakespeare's Hamlet – in Helsingor, Denmark.

Paul Willard, the company's Managing Director says 'We are delighted to receive the hugely prestigious Queen's Award for Enterprise – without doubt, this achievement is due to our fantastic team of technicians'. The announcement of the company's success was made public by Her Majesty on 21 April and this will be followed by a Buckingham Palace Reception on 14 July for all the winners.

From the vessel: a gold and pyrrhotite pendant



© Historic Environment Scotland



A CT image of the vessel and contents

© Historic Environment Scotland

A Viking hoard in Scotland

In September 2014 a metal detectorist in Galloway, Scotland, found a Viking hoard, which had lain buried in a field for more than ten centuries. Amongst the items was a 'Carolingian' (West European) vessel, or pot, which contained a cache of objects. The hoard is the most important Viking discovery in Scotland for over a hundred years and the items from within the vessel, dating from the 9th and 10th centuries AD, come from across Europe and from other cultures with non-Viking origins.

A painstaking conservation project followed the discovery. Richard Welander, of Historic Environment Scotland, said: 'Before removing the objects we took the rather unusual measure of having the pot CT scanned, in order that we could get a rough idea of what was in there and best plan the delicate extraction process. That exercise offered us a tantalising glimpse but didn't prepare me for what was to come. These stunning objects provide us with an unparalleled insight to what was going on in the minds of the Vikings in Galloway all those years ago. They tell us about the sensibilities of the time, reveal displays of regal rivalries, and some of the objects even betray an underlying sense of

Gretel Evans ACR of AOC Archaeology Group at work on the vessel



© Historic Environment Scotland



© Historic Environment Scotland

Amongst the brooches in the pot: a silver-bossed openwork disc brooch

humour, which the Vikings aren't always renowned for!

The project is being funded by Historic Environment Scotland, working in partnership with the Treasure Trove Unit, and the Queen's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer (QLTR). The vessel contents are now with the Treasure Trove Unit, who are responsible for assessing the value of the hoard on behalf of QLTR. The hoard will then be offered for allocation to Scottish museums, with the finder eligible for the market value of the find – a cost that will be met by the successful museum.

Stuart Campbell of the Treasure Trove Unit, said: 'The complexity of the material in the hoard raises more questions than it answers, and like all the best archaeology, this find doesn't give any easy answers. Questions about the motivations and cultural identity of the individuals who buried it will occupy scholars and researchers for years to come.'

Although the objects are not yet on display, a series of images have been made available to give us a chance to see this wonderful treasure.

One of several beads within the pot: a glass bead with metal casing and perforated silver coin



© Historic Environment Scotland

The hoard emerges from the ground: a vertical stack of four annular silver 'ribbon bracelet' arm rings can be seen



© Historic Environment Scotland



reviews

TALKS

READING MACHINES: Problems and possibilities in rare book and manuscript conservation

Independent Paper Conservators' Group
London 22 March 2016

It is a rare pleasure to have the opportunity to listen to an experienced conservator sharing his knowledge and understanding of his craft. **Edward Cheese** is a specialist Rare Book and Manuscript Conservator currently working at the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge.

He began his lecture by introducing us to its premise: how the practices of the modern book conservator are often in conflict, when balancing the needs of mechanical function with the desire to preserve the book's format. When repairing the engineered structure bindings, the well-meaning conservator can often be the cause of removing or concealing vital bibliographical information. Our judgement is exercised in balancing the role of the binding as a means of displaying, protecting and ordering a text block and the desire to maintain its physical context.

In this vein, he highlighted the section in the ECCO professional guidelines where 'Conservation-Restoration' is separated from the very craftspeople that conceived the book in the first place:

Conservation-Restoration is distinct from related fields (e.g. art and crafts) in that its primary aim is the preservation of cultural heritage, as opposed to the creation of new objects or maintaining or repairing objects in a functional sense.

Working with books, one is nearly always repairing objects in a 'functional sense', which is no doubt similar to those working with buildings, clocks and musical instruments. By doing so are we contravening the ethical guidelines that we use to define us? As Edward humorously declared 'I am a paranoid, frustrated idealist... I am a conservator.' The desire to work in an ethical manner, whilst performing interventive treatments, can potentially lead to a state of paralysis.

With regard to our current stasis, he also discussed the approach of 'minimal intervention'. This vague term is often heralded as the modern conservator's philosophical ideal. But by perpetually boxing damaged bindings we are merely dodging the question of how to confront the needs of the book. Our profession is also in danger of losing the skills that it requires. Here lies the crux of the problem – which has primacy: the book or the binding? If you put it in a box, it can still not be read. Digitisation only reduces the use but doesn't eliminate it.

We joined Edward as he covered the subject



© Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

Fitzwilliam Museum MS 251 before conservation and rebinding. The inflexible eighteenth-century spine was splitting

of books as commodities and items of status. He also looked at how, in the evolution of modern bookbinding, the function of a binding was often compromised in order to satisfy its other demands. Sewing structures became routinely abbreviated in order to increase production speed. They were often left purposefully deficient, in terms of the opening of the book, in order to create more solid spines to carry fine quality gold finishing. In this way, the appearance of the binding on a shelf, was given primacy over the accessibility of its text block. In order to perpetuate the function of the text blocks, they were frequently rebound in styles structurally inappropriate for their contents. It is when tackling these complex and demanding objects that we take on our greatest challenges when advising curators and collectors. It was refreshing to hear our position on the ethical tight rope so eloquently described. Edward was frank and open about his conservation decision-making, and showed us how he practises his excellent craft skills to the betterment of the

books that he treats.

Ann-Marie Miller ACR
Independent Book and Archives Conservator
www.codexconservation.com

The Independent Paper Conservators' Group was set up fifteen years ago to create better contact between conservators who work independently or alone. IPCG is independent of Icon or any other professional organisation and there are no charges for being a member.

Meetings and workshops are mostly mid week evenings in London but we have also had day trips to institutions, studios and manufacturers and have also started a series of open lectures.

Our next lecture will be in the autumn. The speaker will be Dr. Vincent Daniels and the title is 'The Sceptical Chymist and paper conservation' Further details & booking instructions will be announced later.

Contact Laila Hackforth-Jones if you wish to have more information about the group at laila.hj@blueyonder.co.uk

Fitzwilliam Museum MS 251 after conservation and rebinding, showing the opening arch characteristic of medieval binding structures.



© Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

VISITS

OPEN DAY: The Centre for Textile Conservation and Technical Art History Glasgow 18 March 2016

The Centre for Textile Conservation and Technical Art History at the University of Glasgow opened its doors once again to a record turn-out for its annual open day. Masters and PhD students, researchers and staff affiliated with the Centre showcased the exciting and diverse range of work that has been happening throughout the academic year.

Each Masters student had one or two objects on display to discuss with enthusiastic visitors and answer some challenging questions on their treatment methods. Having just completed seven weeks of their wet-cleaning module, first year students exhibited newly conserved samplers and a christening robe from Dumfries Museum, scarves from the Westminster School Archive and various objects from the Centre's own reference collection. Also on display were four mounted costumes after an intense two-day costume mounting workshop.

All guests were astounded by the work being carried out by the second year students nearing the end of their training. Their developed skillset allows them to apply a range of conservation treatments to unique objects such as a leather Sudanese dress, assumed to be 19th century and acquired by Glasgow Museums in 1904, conserved by Hannah Sutherland; and a pair

First year student Bevan O'Daly exhibiting objects from the Westminster School Archive to Clare Meredith, Chair of the Textile Conservation Foundation



Misa Tamura introducing the new Barkcloth project to Professor Nick Pearse, Trustee of the Textile Conservation Foundation and Richmond Chair of Fine Arts, University of Glasgow

of 17th century gloves featuring beautiful embroidery and lacework from Platt Hall, Gallery of English Costume as part of Manchester City Galleries, conserved by Michelle Hunter.

Another highlight of the day was an introduction to the new three-year research project on Pacific Barkcloth co-ordinated by **Frances Lennard**. Over the course of the coming years, the team will be examining, researching, and conserving ninety pieces of barkcloth from the Hunterian Museum in an international collaboration with the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, and the Natural History Museum, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C. **Misa Tamura**, the conservator on the project, eloquently spoke to visitors about specific pieces of barkcloth on display from the Hunterian collection and

demonstrated her own experiment of the beating process in all its stages.

As a first year student on the two-year Textile Conservation Masters programme I found the event to be a great experience and an invaluable opportunity to engage with a vast number of specialist and non-specialist visitors, including dotting parents who had travelled specially in support. While anxious at first, it was not long before I realised that I was indeed confident in speaking to the public about my work and the work of my peers. Coming to the end of our first year, speaking fluently about all aspects of the course demonstrated how much we have all learned to date, and how much we have yet to learn. **Clare Meredith**, Chairwoman of the Textile Conservation Foundation told me how impressed she was at how articulate each student was in presenting their work, showing great diligence and passion for their subject.

Never having been to one of the open days prior to commencing my studies, I would encourage any prospective students to attend next year's event, to ask questions and get a real sense of the work involved on the course. Keep up to date with our work in more detail by visiting the Centre for Textile Conservation's Blog:

<http://textileconservation.academicblogs.co.uk/>

Bevan O'Daly, CTC student
University of Glasgow

EDINBURGH CASTLE: Emerging Professionals Trip

Icon Scotland Group
31 March 2016

Icon Scotland (ISG) organized an event this March to bring together students and emerging professionals while learning about conservation at Edinburgh Castle. The event, subsidised by Historic Environment Scotland (HES), allowed for students to explore Scotland's heritage while gaining inside knowledge of how such properties are managed and cared for. It was also an



Emerging professionals on their visit to Edinburgh Castle

opportunity to bring together the upcoming cohort of conservators, who came from across Scotland and England to attend the event.

Rachel Pickering, Cultural Resources Advisor for HES, offered historical insight and guided the group through the castle, braving the Edinburgh winter weather to share her vast knowledge of the site. We learned about preventive conservation and environmental controls currently utilised within the castle buildings from preventive conservator **Rob Thomson**. Rob pointed out monitoring equipment, explained the conservation heating system currently in use and discussed the effect of weather, visitor patterns and building use on the relative humidity levels, and the consequences for conservation and energy use at the castle.

Committee member and paintings conservator at the HES South Gyle Conservation Centre **Damiana Magris** discussed her treatment of the wall paintings in the Birthing Room. She explained the multiple past restorations as well as the most recent conservation effort in the small but richly painted room. By a fortuitous coincidence, surveying and cleaning was also being undertaken in the Great Hall by the castle's team in conjunction with conservators from AOC Archaeology, and we were able to see even more conservation in action.

The event was more than just a lesson in history and conservation. Meeting other students and emerging conservation professionals was a wonderful way to practice networking skills, forge new relationships with students in other specialties, and learn more about other conservation programmes in the north. The tour included students from Lincoln University, University College London, University of Glasgow and Edinburgh University, and ranged from undergraduate level to textile and architectural postgraduate programmes. The ending tea reception allowed for us to talk with each other, as well as for some students to get realistic career knowledge from the

'emerged' professionals on the tour.

This is the second event from ISG aimed towards the upcoming generation of conservators, and the committee looks to continue the tradition annually.

Nora Frankel

Student Representative for Icon Scotland
MPhil Textile Conservation
University of Glasgow

WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL Stone and Wall Paintings Group Winchester 17 March 2016

Ruth McNeillage ACR gave an introductory talk about the work her company are currently carrying out to the bosses on the Presbytery vault in Winchester Cathedral.

The Dean and Chapter of Winchester



© McNeillage Conservation

A foliate boss before removal of the thick over paint

Cathedral are undertaking a huge Heritage Lottery funded project, as part of which the whole roof of the presbytery is being re-leaded, all the windows in the presbytery are being taken out and conserved and the timber presbytery vault and its bosses are also being conserved.

Ruth gave a brief history of the bosses, which were commissioned by Bishop Fox during the reign of Henry VII. The larger bosses are devoted to three themes: Bishop Fox and his bishoprics; his royal patron Henry VII and the Tudor succession; and the emblems of the passion. The date bracket suggested by the heraldry is 1503–9.

The timber bosses under conservation consist of the delicate ornately carved foliate bosses that sit between the junction of the ribs and the much more bulky picture bosses mounted on shields that sit over them. The relationship between the two types is uncomfortable and they do not appear to have been made to sit together. The bosses are of distinctly different styles and many of the foliate bosses are completely obscured by the larger picture bosses.

The vault and bosses were repainted in 1819 and again in the 1940s. McNeillage Conservation undertook detailed paint analysis during which more than forty samples were taken. This revealed four different painted schemes, the details of which have been documented, supported by both analytical and archival evidence. The

Removing superficial dirt with a vacuum cleaner and soft brush



© McNeillage Conservation





© McNeilage Conservation

Painstaking removal of the over paint

four schemes date from the early 16th century, the 1630s, 1819 and the 1950s.

The original scheme showed a sophisticated palette using both gold and silver leaf, with coloured glazes over the silver leaf. The original polychrome included red lead and white lead, vermilion, verdigris, indigo, azurite, carbon black, crimson lake and copper glaze.

The condition survey revealed an accumulation of dirt, localized damage from water penetration and damage caused by the build up of extremely thick later paint layers. Trials undertaken showed that the thick overpaint on the foliate bosses could be removed relatively easily, revealing an extraordinary late medieval painted scheme. The decision was taken to uncover the painted scheme on the foliate bosses and conserve and clean the picture bosses. Detailed recording of the picture bosses was undertaken prior to the project commencing.

After the introductory talk the meeting moved to the Cathedral, where it split into two groups. John Crook, the Cathedral Archaeologist took one group into the Cathedral to see Bishop Fox's work from below and the other group ascended the scaffold to look at the team of conservators working on the bosses. Some interesting questions were raised concerning the distribution of foliate bosses and recording of the nail fixings on the foliate bosses.

Ruth McNeilage ACR
McNeilage Conservation

WORKSHOPS

BACK TO BASICS: Upholstery Conservation Workshop
Icon Textile Group
County Durham February 2016

In February the Icon Back-to-Basics: Upholstery Conservation Workshop run by **Heather Porter** was repeated, this time at The Bowes Museum in County Durham. Heather is a freelance upholstery conservator, consultant and upholsterer

based in London with many years' experience both in museums and in the trade.

The course was designed to give textile conservators a basic understanding of upholstery conservation principles and practice and a chance to get to grips with some of the terminology, materials and techniques employed. This was also an opportunity for those who had not visited The Bowes Museum before to journey to the small market town of Barnard Castle, the site of John and Joséphine Bowes' purpose-built museum, designed in the French style complete with formal parterre garden. The Museum's vast collection of furniture displayed in period rooms offered ample first-hand source material for group inspection and debate.

We arrived at the two day course to be confronted by a table of miscellaneous tools and materials, some more familiar than others. Discussion of their potential usage within upholstery proved an excellent ice-breaker and by coffee time we were familiar

Example upholstery tools and materials



© The Bowes Museum



© The Bowes Museum

A practical upholstery session in progress

with each item plus a variety of upholstery filling materials. We were all rather taken with a tip to identify potential replacement upholstery tacks using a simple magnet test after learning that brass tack heads only started to be applied onto a steel shank in the early nineteenth century.

The course was tailored to our needs as textile conservators with sessions on Upholstery Structures organised by upholstery type rather than chronologically through stylistic developments, prioritising the information required to assess an object, write an accurate condition report and discuss treatments with an upholstery conservator. A tour of The Bowes Collection by Dr. Howard Coutts, Keeper of Ceramics, helped to contextualise the study sessions and the day finished with a critical assessment of available literature for future reference.

Day two focussed more specifically on upholstery conservation, kicking off with Research Methods and Examination Techniques. Heather discussed some issues and solutions encountered throughout her



career illustrating the range of skills required to become proficient in upholstery conservation. Also included were a number of case studies selected to showcase some effective textile conservation techniques used to treat upholstery, with examples of a range of innovative cleaning methods I will certainly consider using in the future. There was just enough time for a quick run around the textile conservation studio and a viewing of the silver swan in action (the Museum's much loved musical automaton) before a final session on Upholstery Conservation Documentation.

Jamie Robinson
Textile Conservation Intern
The Bowes Museum

METALWORKING DAY
Icon Metals Section
Stroud, Gloucestershire 19 March 2016

Following consultation with the Group membership, it was evident to the committee that there was a demand for more practical workshops. As a result, it was decided to trial a workshop on metalworking techniques. The day was hosted by **Alex Coode** and **Simon Doyle** at the Heritage Blacksmiths' Forge in Stroud along with **Katrina Redman** of Hall Conservation. The attendees came from across the UK to take part, with all levels of experience and skills from conservation student to professional conservator.

The day began with a chance to meet and chat to fellow attendees over tea and coffee, and a short health and safety briefing. Attendees were then split into three groups with one group trying their hand at blacksmithing under the tutelage of Alex, one group at repoussé with Simon and one

Simon explaining the repoussé technique



Completed pokers from the blacksmithing session

group soldering and brazing with Katrina. Each session was two hours long, allowing time in the day for attendees to try their hand at everything.

During the blacksmithing session, Alex demonstrated how to turn a rod of steel into an intricately decorated fire poker. In a short space of time, attendees learned about forges, heating, basic hammer blows and shaping mild steel rod. It was a great demonstration of how easily metal can be worked when at the right temperature and how difficult it can be when it is not. Bending and twisting at controlled points, using selective quenching after heating, was another fascinating technique.

The soldering and brazing session with Katrina was to craft a napkin ring from a piece of sheet copper. This involved heating the metal with a blowtorch to make it malleable and bending it by hand, then silver soldering it using a blowtorch. There was an opportunity to add applied decoration to the napkin rings and to



Katrina Redman teaching soldering

experience the different behaviours of melted metals using copper wire and to try using a higher oxygen flame to sculpturally braze pieces of iron together.

The repoussé session, taught by Simon, was a great opportunity to get a feel for the way cold iron reacts to working, takes a shape through hammering and gradually work hardens, until it requires annealing. The careful use of hammers, punches, and anvil stakes allowed some truly amazing shapes to emerge, enabling the attendees to transform flat steel into three dimensional, decorative leaves.

The attendees all enjoyed the day, gaining insights into impressive metalworking skills that take many years to master. They also had opportunities throughout the day to get to know everyone in attendance and to share their own experience and knowledge.

Compiled from write-ups submitted by **Matt Hancock, Ruth Murgatroyd, Eric Nordgren, Laurie Price** and **Katie Snow**

One of the finished napkin rings



CONFERENCE

THE GREAT EXHIBITION OF 1851: the 8th Annual Historic Interiors Conference
Icon Historic Interiors Group
 8 April 2016 Corpus Christi College,
 Cambridge

A spring conference in Cambridge has become a regular feature for many members of the Group and this year was no exception. With the unusual focus not of a period but a single event this year we welcomed delegates to a day focussing on the topic of The Great Exhibition of 1851.

Our chair, **Tina Sitwell**, opened the day by welcoming regular and new faces to the Historic Interiors Annual Conference and explained the itinerary for the day. The first half of the day was structured to set the scene for The Great Exhibition and the Crystal Palace with **Philip Emery**, trustee of The Crystal Palace Foundation, putting the concept of the exhibition and the siting of the palace into context. We were transported from the prized Paxton blotting paper doodle through the unfortunate financial difficulties to the fateful demise of the Crystal Palace in Sydenham in 1936.

After whetting our appetite **Robert Thorne**, engineering and construction historian, took us into the bones of the building structure, the significance of steel and glass structures, the reaction against it and some of the influence these engineering developments had on later buildings. Robert also highlighted the importance of the relationship between designer and engineering contractors. We were, however reminded that not all developments are well received and he highlighted some of the issues experienced for the six million visitors who attended the Exhibition.

Anthony Burton, formerly curator at the Victoria and Albert Museum, guided our minds through what an improvement the exhibition might have on good design and household taste. A look at contemporary publications illustrated that not all designs were well received with the influence about its economic and moral significance disputed.

An extended lunchtime break allowed for two visits. We began with a quick hop across the road to the Maxwell Lecture Theatre in the Old Cavendish Laboratories. A largely unaltered 1870s' interior was brought to life by a member of the university staff with delegates moving on to The Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. A brief introduction by the Learning & Outreach Officer and chance to view collections from across the globe (including a five hundred year old potato!) completed the visit.

The afternoon took us inside the exhibition with **Simon Moore**, natural history specimen



Visiting an 1870s' lecture theatre at Cambridge University's Old Cavendish Laboratories

conservator, kicking things off by taking us into the world of taxidermy and the Victorians penchant for anthropomorphic specimens. A whistle stop tour through dioramas and their fateful demise in popularity was tempered by some frequent issues faced by the conservator including decapitation and case floors full of glass eyes!

From fur and feathers we were then transported to electroform sculpture by **Rupert Harris**, sculpture and metalwork conservator. Thankfully sparing us the scientific intricacies of the process, Rupert guided us through the discovery of the process to the benefits electroform had for detail and mass production. He discussed issues faced by conservators dealing with both large and small scale pieces.

The last speaker of the day, **Dean Sully**, lecturer in conservation at UCL, Institute of Archaeology, challenged us to consider the role of conservation in creating the historic interior. Using Hinemihi at Clandon Park as a

case study, we were asked to consider the choices faced by the profession by considering stakeholders' interests and whether there is a right answer to a conservation problem. How do we justify a decision?

For those who did not need to rush away, a leisurely punt along the river Cam preceded an evening of reflection over the day's events, aided – of course – by the odd glass of something cold.

Having attended most of the Interiors annual Cambridge conferences it is always a fascinating day; the diversity of the talks and attendees makes for interesting conversation and it never fails to broaden the mind and show just how omnifarious this group is.

Charlotte Owen
 Freelance Project Conservator

in practice

PRESERVING DR JACKSON'S LEGACY

Joel D. Rudewicz M.A., Former Associate Collection Manager of the Mütter Museum of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia and Ani N. Hatza M.S.¹, Tovah Mitchell M. Litt.², and George Grigonis M.S.³. describe a practical method of conserving a pioneering medical collection

BACKGROUND

Dr. Chevalier Jackson, known as the 'father of endoscopy', was an American laryngologist who pioneered medical techniques and equipment that saved the lives of choking victims during the late 19th and early 20th centuries in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Dr. Jackson kept meticulous records for at least 2,700 cases which formed a reference manual and index used for teaching and the care of future patients. Supporting the records is his collection of retrieved objects from each of his patients, organized chronologically and stored within glass and wooden trays. The items, believed to have once numbered over 3,000, are comprised of varied materials in varied states of condition. Items include half-digested bolus, pins, coins, nails, jewellery, buttons, teeth, dental devices, coal, bullets, poker chips, small figurines, wire, the eye of a teddy bear, glass, rubber, toys, ceramics, and many other miscellaneous items. One intriguing case involved thirty three foreign bodies removed from one patient, lodged for over a week (Fig.1).

In 1924 Dr. Jackson retired and gifted his collection of 'foreign bodies' to the Mütter Museum. In 2011, a restoration initiative for the Chevalier Jackson Collection began with the scanning of the catalogue, cleaning and formatting of the electronic database and the photographing of each item. At this time, it was discovered that much of the physical collection required immediate stabilization and reconstructive conservation care. Many records were also incomplete. Source material was located and incorporated to provide the most accurate index since its original compilation, and the objects, housings, and mounts were restored to preserve the integrity of Dr. Jackson's original intent, despite limited resources. This was achieved through the utilization of easily obtainable materials, simplified preservation strategies and pragmatic approaches to each individual case.

THE CONSERVATION NEED

Dr. Jackson's original organization and housing of the objects was systematic and protective. Once extracted and dried, the item was affixed to a small square of paper using, individually or in combination, iron wire, mucilage glue, or fishing line. Objects were then placed onto a larger 15" x 9.25" (38.1cm x 23.5cm) piece of blue, grey, or green construction paper as a substrate, and numbered with a typewriter. Similar items (e.g. pins, coins, seeds, etc.) were grouped together and laid out chronologically, resulting in a disjointed numbering system. This was secured with mat-board to the underside of a 15.75" x 9" x 2" (40cm x 22.86cm x 5.08cm) pine frame, painted flat



Fig.1. Thirty three foreign bodies removed from a nine-month old patient. The child was discharged from the hospital in excellent condition about two months after admission having suffered from sepsis and temperatures reaching 103 F (39.44 C)

black. Grooves were cut into the opposing sides of the frame 1/4" (6.2mm) down, to allow a 15.5" x 8.5" (39.37cm x 20.32cm) sheet of glass to be inserted (Fig.2).

Since their donation, most of the foreign bodies have been on continuous display at the Mütter Museum, laid out in drawers, and housed in metal cabinets. In 2012, new wooden cabinets were constructed to enable all known objects to be displayed at once, with the addition of padding in the drawers and a sheet of acrylic over the trays. Despite this added protection, many of the items and trays had already been damaged through decades of reshuffling and ineffective storage techniques.

Items were either missing, absent from the records but present, had come off from the backing, or were breaking apart entirely. Journal publications of Jackson's index were used to fill in gaps in the index and photographic record, and objects were found in various locations throughout the museum. Many backing sheets were discovered to be without frames or only within Mylar sleeves. Moreover, some objects were loose or mixed in with other foreign bodies in envelopes. Still many more were never recovered. Those that were in trays were in varying states



Fig.2. Typical case and item arrangement (glass removed). Trays ranged from twelve to twenty items in a rectangular matrix, with exceptions for larger and asymmetrical sized items. Similar items were grouped together and laid out chronologically. In this case items are fixed by wire, glue or a combination of both using a backing mount for additional support

Fig.3. Acidification was present on nearly all backing sheets and mat-board. This weakened the structural support of the objects and many became detached

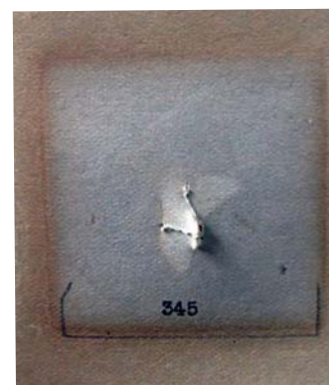




Fig.4. Paper damage and deterioration: additional backing support was rarely used and resulted in the entire combined weight of the glass, frame, objects, and backings being centred onto a single area. Many trays were damaged throughout years of handling, exacerbated by the weakened integrity of the acid-damaged materials

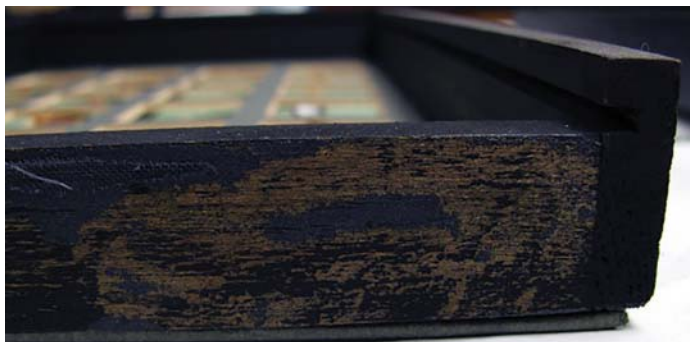
of degradation. The original construction paper density was light (approximately 163 GSM), and had suffered from acidification, crumbling, and tears while the mat-board had yellowed and begun to break apart (Figs.3 & 4). Additional backing support was rarely added by Jackson, and so most of the object weight and structural support was dependent on the combined integrity of the paper and mat-board.



Fig.5. Glass broken along the edges in contact with the wood frame. As a result, shards settled in the cases and became intermingled with objects that had come free of the glue matrix

Housing damage was not limited to the weakened paper. Many frames were separating at the corner butt-joints, and some had broken glass and flaked paint that settled inside the trays (Figs.5 & 6). The greatest concern was for the foreign bodies that had come loose, caused by the weakening and cracking of mucilage glue over time, and the objects that became intermingled. By grouping the foreign bodies by type rather than chronologically, indistinct items that broke into smaller pieces, such as meat and seeds, could not be easily matched to index numbers or patient cases. All of these issues compounded the

Fig.6. Dr. Jackson used a flat black paint over a pine frame. Through its low durability and through tray reshuffling paint had flaked or abraded off. Much of it settled into the trays with the objects



challenges of the restoration work, and prompted concern over the continued loss of a valuable resource.

CONSIDERATIONS OF APPROACH

The principal question was the extent to which modifications should be made. The nature of the collection and its varied materials made a comprehensive conservation approach impossible. Housing could be restored and failing materials replaced, however the foreign bodies' original states at the time of extraction could not be known. Therefore a conscious decision was made to limit work on the items themselves to reassembling, rehousing and upgrading the mounting materials.

Additional considerations were given to Jackson's original organizational intent. The method of arrangement and placement within the paper squares and trays was done in a systematic fashion and should not be changed. Found items further complicated the effort as many had no source of reference relative to their placement or grouping.

ACTION TAKEN

The best course of action was to retain the integrity of the entire collection with as little intervention as necessary. This provided a two-fold benefit: a limited change to the objects, thus assuring no modifications to pre-existing object conditions, and reduced cost using easily obtainable materials. The basic process consisted of removing the mat-board, old paper, and items then reapplying the items to new backings in a similar fashion while replacing, restoring, or re-fabricating damaged glass and frames.

Fig.7. For granular or fibrous material, the bolus was glued to a small piece of paper using mucilage and then glued to the larger construction paper





Removal and Remounting

After removing the glass, the original mat-board was inspected for integrity. If it was considered to be structurally sound, then it was de-acidified and reused. If not, it was replaced with a new acid-free board.



Fig.8. For larger objects in single or few pieces, iron wire was used to attach the object through pin holes in the paper backing

For bolus (food stuffs and seeds), two approaches were used in the original placement. For granular or fibrous material, the bolus was glued to a small piece of paper using mucilage and then glued to the larger construction paper (Fig.7). For larger objects in single or few pieces, iron wire was used to attach the object through pin holes in the paper backing (Fig.8).

For non-bolus items (pins, hardware, jewelry, etc.), wire was primarily used to attach the objects to the backing, although fishing line was occasionally present (Fig.9). For items that had been broken into pieces, a combination of, depending on weight, wire and glue, or glue alone, was used (Fig.10).

For objects embedded within large amounts of glue, no effort was made to extract them if the glue was intact. Those secured by wire were simply cut free. The entire mounting square was removed and re-affixed to the new card-stock with neutral pH water-based adhesive. When the glue was only weakened, it was reinforced with cyanoacrylate.

Broken objects that could be identified as initially being whole (e.g. bones or pins) were reassembled to match their original structure. Small objects that were directly secured to the backing were re-affixed to a new mounting square. Objects that were intermingled were identified using index information, glue marks on the former mounts and old photographs.

In all cases, if an object was large enough, it was remounted with stainless steel wire instead of glue for reversibility (Figs.11 & 12). No attempt was made to clean any item beyond the removal of glue, dust, and other particulates with soft brushes

Fig.9. Objects were attached to their backing primarily with wire and occasionally fishing line



Fig.10. Broken items were attached with wire and glue or just glue according to weight.



Fig.11. Mucilage glue used to adhere object directly to backing



Fig.12. The same object as in Fig 11 with glue removed and remounted with stainless-steel wire

and de-ionized water to preserve the item's condition at the time of its removal from the patient.

Remedial housing

The greatest difficulty in the conservation effort rested principally in identifying, reassembling, and remounting objects. Most extant frames were in relatively good condition. Those in need of attention had loose nails, flaking and abraded paint, or broken wood. These issues were attended to, and a thin layer of gloss black paint was applied to all exposed portions of the frame. This was specifically chosen for its cost, low levels of volatile organic compounds, greater durability, good vapour barrier, and acetic acid emissions that level off quickly.

In some instances the frames had been lost, and only the matted and mounted objects remained. New glass and frames replicated the old design. Frames were cut to the same lengths as the originals and assembled using the same butt-joint construction method. A thin layer of white, neutral pH, water-based adhesive was spread onto the frame edges, and the frames were laid over the new mat-board. Weights were used along the edges of the frames to provide even pressure over the entire frame during drying, and this process was repeated once all mat-boards had been secured to the frames (Fig.13).

Item numbers were recorded in sequence and entered into a word processing template. Clear mailing labels were chosen as a replacement for type-written numbers because of their simple adhesion, ease of use, and clean removal. This was the only modification made to Dr. Jackson's original structure. Number placement was moved from the paper itself to the mat-board below to free up the space within the square cut-outs for the objects; many had previously obscured the number making identification difficult without opening the case. In addition, by using labels placed below the objects the size of the numbers could be increased to improve readability (Fig.14).

Glass free of damage was cleaned and reinserted into the trays. Those that were damaged or missing were discarded, and a new sheet of glass of the same thickness was either cut to size using a ruler, glass-cutter, and glazing pliers, or purchased commercially. The completed tray was then switched out with an unconserved tray on exhibit ensuring that the maximum number of items were exhibited at all times (Fig.15).



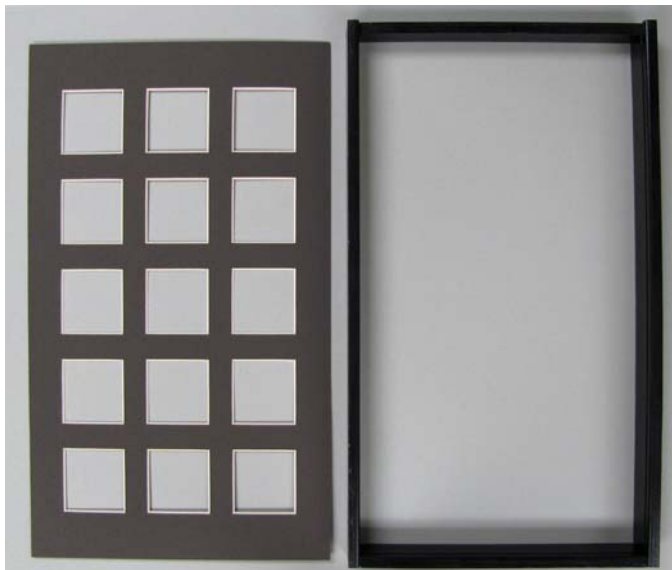


Fig.13. Remedial housing. Frames were reassembled, sanded and painted. New mat-boards were computer cut to reflect the original layout. Neutral pH, water-based adhesive was thinly applied to the underside of the frame and the frame placed atop the mat-board. Weights placed on top of the frame applied firm and even pressure during drying

SUMMARY

As a doctor, Dr. Jackson contributed his experience and knowledge to expand the frontiers of medical innovation, and as a donor, gifted the collection of his life's work to be a record of medical history. It was essential that such an invaluable resource endure, and continue to be used as a teaching tool and reminder of Dr. Jackson's pioneering medical achievements, despite economic and academic obstacles.

A pragmatic 'divide and conquer' approach allowed for latitude in the remedial and restorative conservation of materials and methods for presentation and housing of the foreign bodies. Yet the remedial treatment of the foreign bodies themselves was less flexible in an effort to preserve the objects as they were originally retrieved, ensuring the legacy and intent of Jackson's work. Minimal methods were employed on a case by case basis and enabled processes to continually evolve and adapt to changing remedial and restorative issues, without the need to re-evaluate procedures or to secure specialized expertise. Easily obtainable materials kept costs down, in the context of a limited budget, and maintained the focus on selecting the best conservation approach to each individual item.

A pragmatic approach to conservation is worthy of consideration by any institution that has limited resources and seeks to assure the continued integrity of their collection. Minimal methods make certain that the most serious issues are attended to while allowing underfunded and understaffed organizations room for error and correction. Once broken down into manageable deliverables, even large and daunting conservation issues can be attended to with skillful care without need for elaborate, and expensive, strategies.

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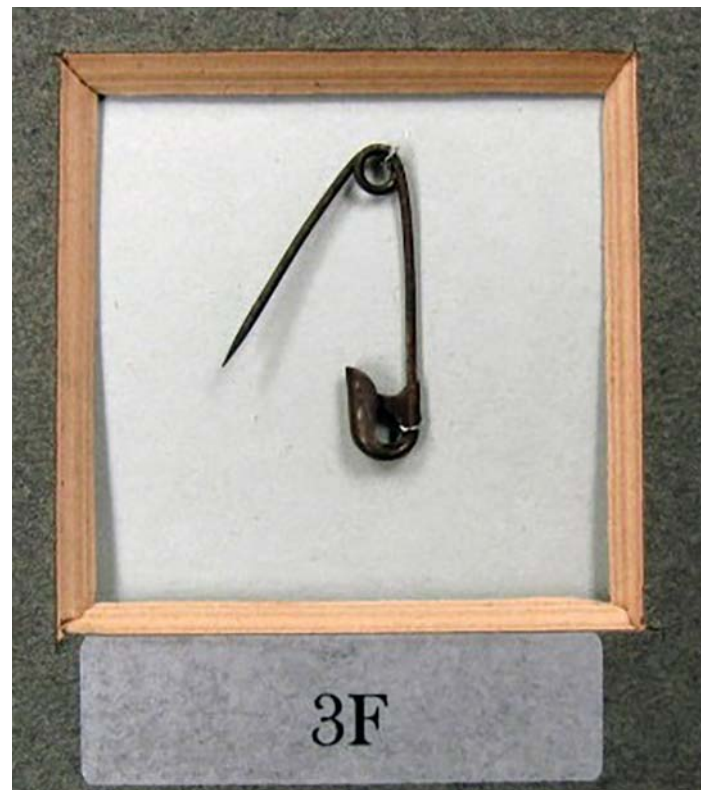


Fig.14. The new labelling format. Moving the numbering from the paper to the mat-board below freed up space for objects that were larger than most and allowed formerly obscured numbers to be larger and more easily read



Fig.15. Before conservation: the left tray shows flaking paint, broken glass, loose objects and acidified paper and board. On the right, an example of objects and tray after conservation. Paper backing replaced with acid-free 160 lbs card-stock, mat-board de-acidified, glass replaced, objects reassembled and remounted, frame repaired and numbering placement moved

3. Collections Manager and Conservator, Mütter Museum of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia.



the emerging conservator

BATCH TREATMENTS WITHIN A LIMITED TIMEFRAME

Kimberly Kwan describes the conservation of a 16th century binding

BACKGROUND

In Epistolas Apostoli Pauli ad Galatas, et Ephesios Commentarii by Wolfgang Musculus was printed in 1561 in Basel. The book's provenance can be traced back to Edward Waple, who was Vicar of Saint Sepulchre and president of Sion College in London in 1704. Upon his death, an extensive collection of books was bequeathed to Sion College Library. On its closure in 1996, the manuscripts, pre-1850 printed books, and pamphlet collection were transferred to the Library of Lambeth Palace, (London residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury) where *In Epistolas* belongs today.

CONDITION ISSUES

The binding is contemporary to the text, with tanned calfskin over oak boards. The decorative style of the binding and

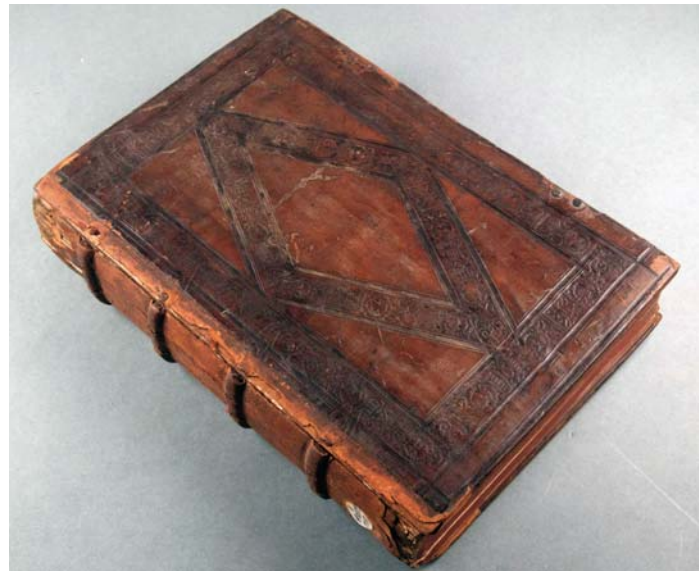


Photo: Kimberly Kwan

In Epistolas before treatment. The front cover image shows the book after conservation

location of the clasp straps on the left board suggest a French or English origin. The poor quality leather from a previous reback had failed at the joints, causing the boards to become detached. Due to deteriorating tanned sewing supports, the sewing structure was compromised and the textblock had split in two areas. The poor condition of the book prevented its use within the collection, and conservation treatments were undertaken to enable accessibility and safe handling. While it was possible to simply consolidate the sewing, a decision was

The left board before treatment



Photo: Kimberly Kwan

The board after treatment

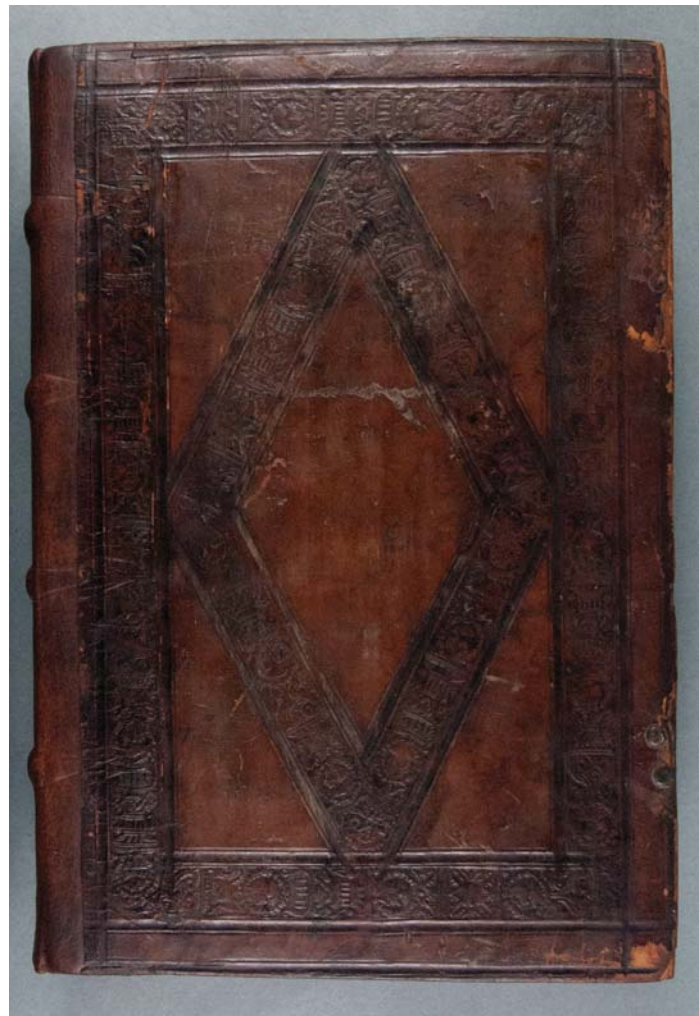


Photo: Kimberly Kwan





Photo: Kimberly Kwan

The fore-edge before treatment and, on the right, after treatment

made to re sew the textblock in order to avoid future damages caused by the deteriorated supports and sewing structure.

ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS

No spine linings had been used for the previous reback, which caused the spine folds in contact with the reback leather to become acidic. After pulling the sewing, it was discovered that all but two of the two hundred and thirteen bifolios required partial or full guarding. A challenge posed was the large amount of animal glue that had sunk into the spine folds of the bifolios within every section, causing them to become adhered to each other along the area. The bifolios were separated either mechanically or after humidification with 50:50 IMS and water, but the animal glue still remained an issue as it had become absorbed into the paper fibres and caused the spine folds to be inflexible and brittle. Adhesive removal for two hundred and nine bifolios was required. As five weeks had been allocated for the treatment of the book, a batch treatment that could fit the tight timeframe was necessary.

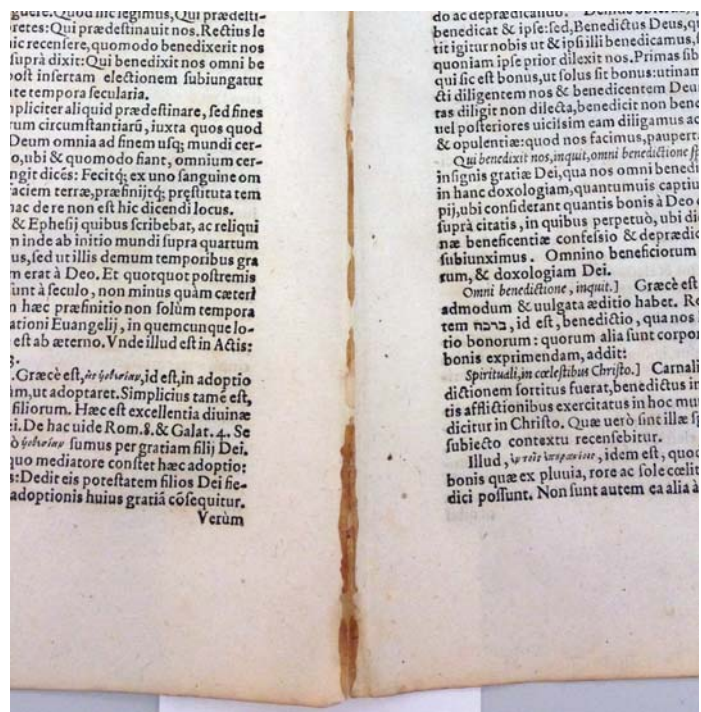


Photo: Kimberly Kwan

(Above) Detail of a spine fold before adhesive removal and (below) the same view after its removal

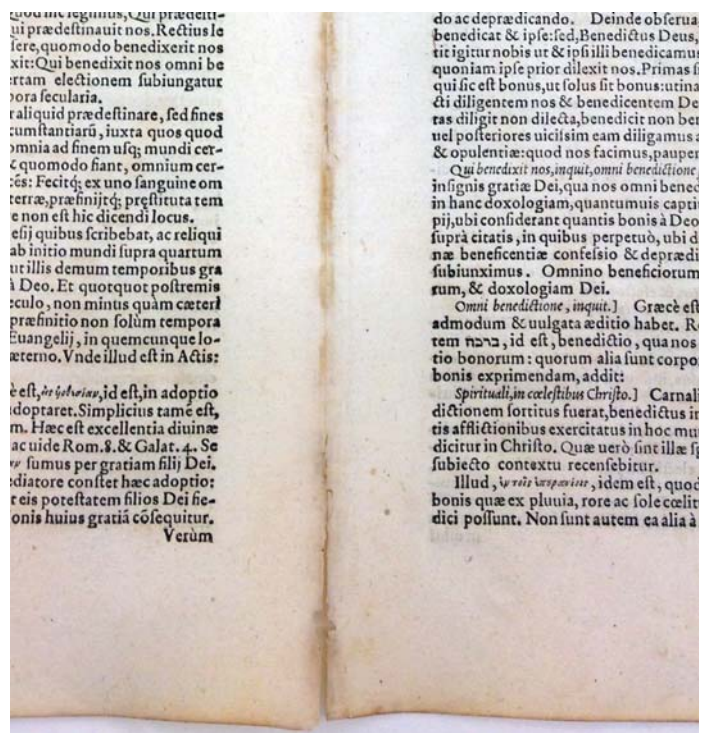


Photo: Kimberly Kwan

CHOICE OF A GEL

Poultices like methylcellulose and wheat starch paste were ineffective on the animal glue stains because the adhesive needed to be actively drawn out of the paper fibres. Unlike other poultices, rigid gels pull moisture along with soluble degradation products back into them after the substrate has become as wet as the gel. As such, agarose was selected to remove the adhesive stains along the spine fold. Being able to pre-cut the agarose into long strips that fit the stained spine folds was also highly convenient in comparison to

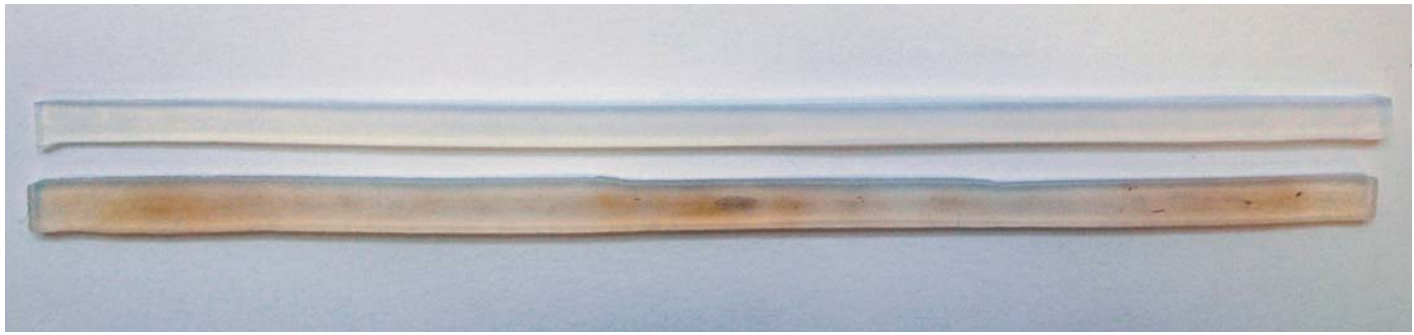


Photo: Kimberly Kwan

Agarose strips before and after use

individually applying a poultice to each bifolio, the gel does not leave a film of residue behind. After the gel has absorbed degradation products during cleaning, it can then be placed in a container of water, where the degradation products will be released from the gel. This means that the agarose strips could be reused, greatly cutting down on the time and resources needed to make enough gel for each bifolio.

TREATMENT METHOD

During initial testing, it was determined that while some staining remained, 4% w/v agarose placed on the substrate for approximately five minutes removed enough animal glue in the spine folds to return the paper's flexibility. The bifolios were first lightly sprayed with water along the spine folds to minimize tide lines caused by the gel. After the agarose had been in contact with the animal glue for the necessary time, the gels were removed and placed in water for an hour to be cleaned. Spine folds were lightly sprayed with 50:50 IMS to water where tidelines were developing. The IMS was added to encourage faster moisture evaporation. The bifolios were then dried under a stack of boards between blotter and bondina.

MAXIMISING AVAILABLE TIME AND SPACE

After timing treatment for individual and multiple bifolios, the best option to reduce waiting time and maximize use of the given space was to treat groups of six bifolios at a time. Working at a steady but unrushed speed, strips of agarose were applied to six bifolios. Treated bifolios that had dried could then be taken out from one of the drying stacks and collated, leaving room for the currently treated bifolios. By this time, the gels would have had sufficient time to work on the adhesive, and the bifolios could be moved to the drying stack. In this manner, one group of bifolio would always be

Pre-cut strips of Japanese tissue for guarding



Photo: Kimberly Kwan

under gel treatment, another drying under boards, and the third being collected from the boards. Likewise, groups of agarose strips would alternate between being used, being soaked in water for cleaning, and resting on blotters to remove excessive moisture in preparation for use.

One cycle of cleaning, collating, and drying bifolios took approximately twenty minutes. Using this time frame, it was estimated that treatment of the entire textblock would require thirteen hours. Based on this estimation, three days were allocated for cleaning of the spine folds. Actual treatment time required for the process took fifteen hours, during which two hundred and nine bifolios required and underwent treatment. The actual treatment time was not too far off from the estimation, and successfully met the assigned three-day deadline.

FURTHER TREATMENTS

With the amount of guarding necessary, inner and outer bifolios of each section were guarded with 12gsm Tengujo while centre bifolios, requiring less support, were guarded

Working out a treatment plan for adhesive removal



Photo: Nikki Tomkins



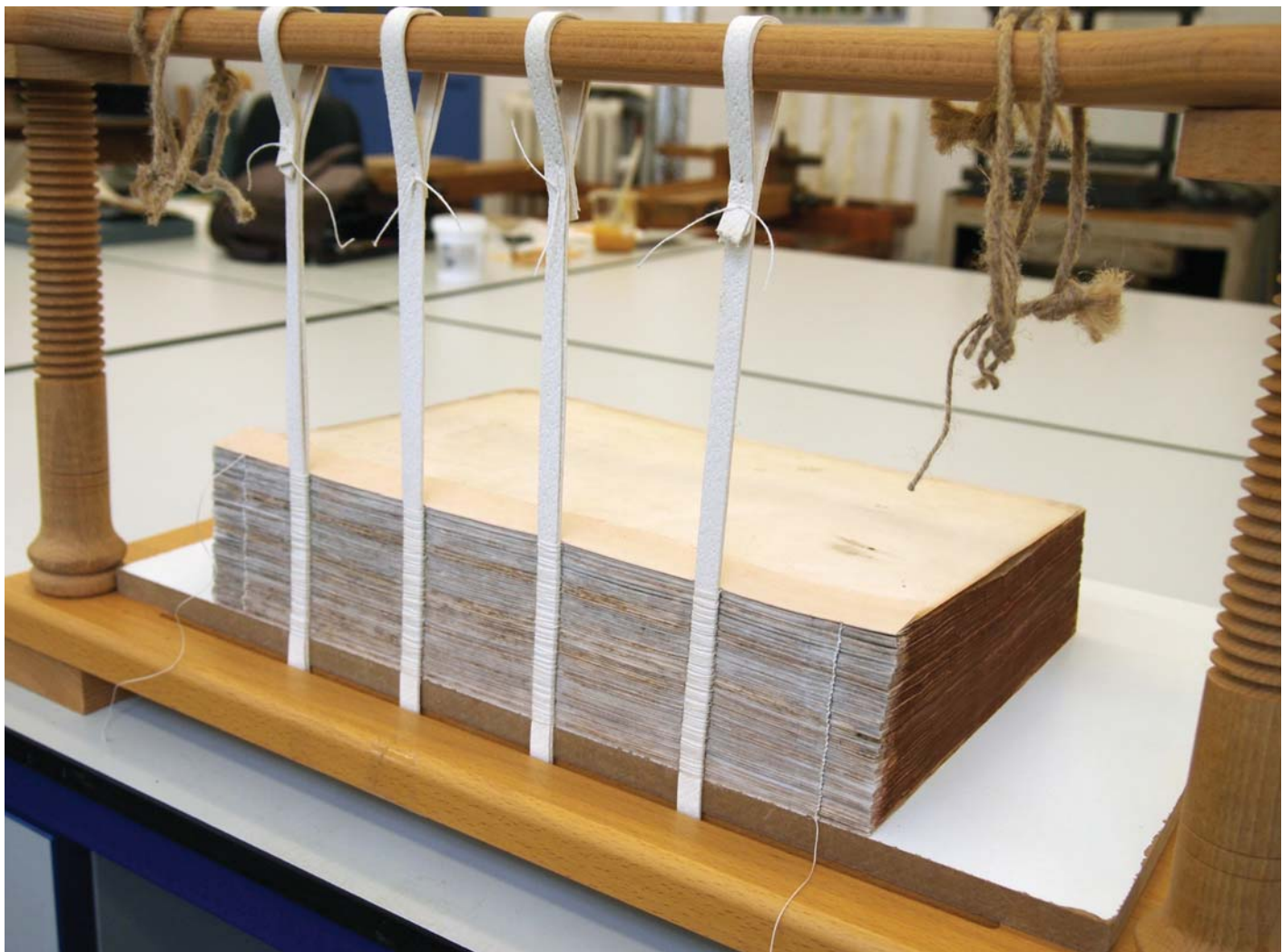


Photo: Kimberly Kwan

Resewing of *In Epistolas* in progress

with 5gsm Tengujo to minimize textblock swell. Trials had been made on sample papers slightly heavier than the textblock to compare 7gsm and 5gsm Tengujo for guarding the centre bifolios, where surprisingly the 5gsm Tengujo was strong enough to withstand sewing when supported between bifolios guarded with 12gsm Tengujo, and thus selected for use in treatment. Prior to resewing, major losses and tears were also repaired. The textblock was then sewn on alum-tawed thongs, and spine lining extensions of 23gsm kozo-shi and aerolinen were added. The boards were reattached using the spine lining extensions and by lacing the new sewing supports into the original lacing-in holes, after which the book was rebacked with tanned calfskin.

LESSONS LEARNED

The amount of spine fold cleaning and guarding during the treatment of *In Epistolas* was significant, and provided a good learning experience dealing with batch treatments. The number of bifolios that could be treated at one time during procedures was calculated with consideration to drying times and available workspace in order to minimize waiting time. Strict time management and precise time estimates for procedures were important in planning out and executing treatment to meet deadlines, and played a crucial role in the successful conservation of the binding.

Kimberly Kwan undertook this work for her final MA project as a student at Camberwell College of Arts. Deepest thanks are owed to the staff at Lambeth Palace Library and Camberwell College of Arts including Janet Atkinson, Abigail Bainbridge, Jocelyn Cuming, and Eleni Katsiani for their patience and support during the project.

Kimberly is currently interning in book conservation with the Harry Ransom Centre at the University of Texas in Austin, USA. To view more of her work, visit her online portfolio at cargocollective.com/kimberlykwan.

Board reattachment using sewing supports and spine lining extensions

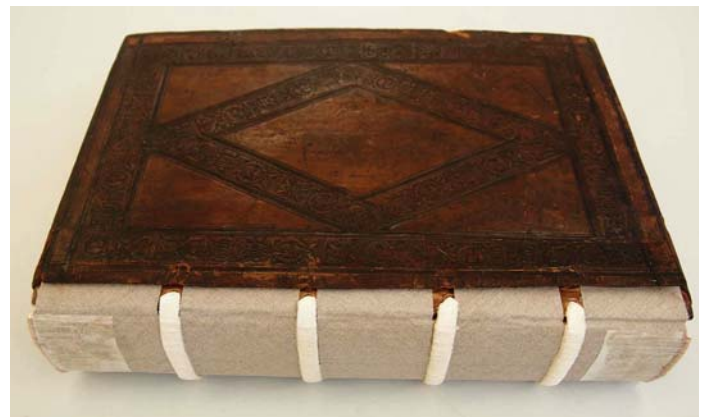


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