



An expedition to the Antarctic

Also in this issue

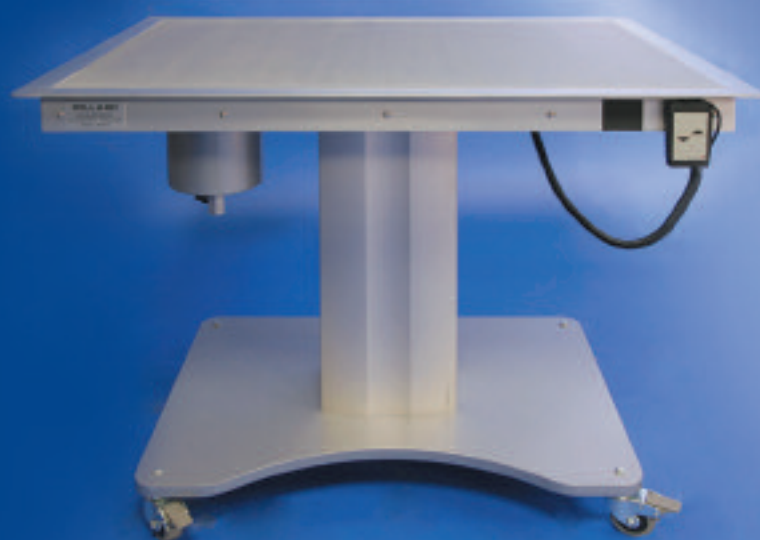
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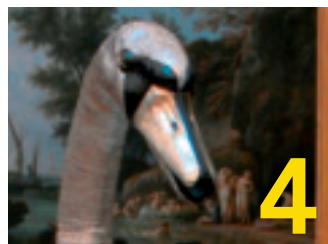
SEPTEMBER 2008

Issue 18

You will notice some changes about this issue of Icon News, most obviously that it is slimmer. As part of the current move to reassess how Icon maximizes best value and service to its members, we've taken a good look at the allocation of resources to Icon News and decided that with some editorial tweaking and design wizardry we ought to be able to offer pretty much the same content for fewer pages and less cost. And if you are wondering about the absence of the back page column, put this down to my abject failure to twist anyone's arm sufficiently hard to get them to give up valuable holiday time to contribute it. But Intervention will be back.

Although you are all busy people, do take time to read the admittedly lengthy article about the work going on to develop European standards for conservation. It is easy to think that such distant discussions have little relevance to you at your bench or in your office. But they will. Fortunately, Icon members are participating vigorously in the debates. Look what happens when we don't – the current proposal to ban dichloromethane based paint strippers is example enough.

Lynette Gill, Editor



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Cover photo: Two tins of pea soup – one before and one after conservation – showing the work of the Antarctic Heritage Trust in commemorating the heroic early explorers of the Antarctic by conserving the remains of their expeditions.

Disclaimer:
Whilst every effort is made to ensure accuracy, the editors and Icon Board of Trustees can accept no responsibility for the content expressed in Icon News; it is solely that of individual contributors

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For November 2008 issue

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Adverts: 16 October

Icon

THE INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION

Institute of Conservation
3rd floor
Downstream Building
1 London Bridge
London SE1 9BG, UK

T +44(0)20 7785 3805
F +44(0)20 7785 3806

admin@icon.org.uk
membership@icon.org.uk
www.icon.org.uk

Interim Chief Executive
Caroline Saye
csaye@icon.org.uk

Conservation Register
info@conservationregister.com
www.conservationregister.com

Icon News

Editor
Lynette Gill
news@icon.org.uk

Listings editor
Mike Howden
mike.howden@lineone.net

Production designer
Malcolm Gillespie
malcolm@ls-printing.com

Printers
L&S Printing Company Limited
www.ls-printing.com

Design
Rufus Leonard
enquiries@rufusleonard.com

Advertising
DP Media
T 0117 904 1283
F 0117 904 0085
sales@dpmedia.co.uk

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around & about

Deconstructing Hadrian

The well-known statue of Hadrian in the British Museum's current exhibition shows the Emperor wearing a Greek mantle and thereby seemingly exemplifying his love of Greek culture. But it has been shown by conservators to be a composite figure whose head does not match his body. The statue was discovered in the 1860s in Cyrene, North Africa and has been displayed at the BM ever since in the Victorian restoration which erroneously assumed that the head (which is definitely Hadrian's) went with the Greek-costumed body.

Stone conservator Tracey Sweek comments: 'There has always been a suspicion that the head of Hadrian did not belong to the body/figure. The exhibition gave stone conservation the opportunity to confirm or dismiss this notion. Initially the plaster make up between the head and the body was excavated to determine whether a fixing existed between the two elements. A metal detector was used to see if there was any evidence of a dowel, though this was inconclusive, as the fixing could be of copper and not detectable. It is common to find dowels of this material used in this early period of restoration. It was soon discovered, after the careful removal

Tracey Sweek examines the statue of Hadrian. Roman sculpture 117–138AD



of the plaster make up, that original surface on both the head and the drapery had been hidden, this was obviously to conceal the fact the head did not belong. As more of the plaster was removed it was clear that there was no fixing between the head and the body; this made our task so much easier. The head was lifted from the body using a cradle of slings. For the exhibition the head has been re-attached and not filled to show the public why the head did not fit the receiving socket'.

A jewel of an Archive

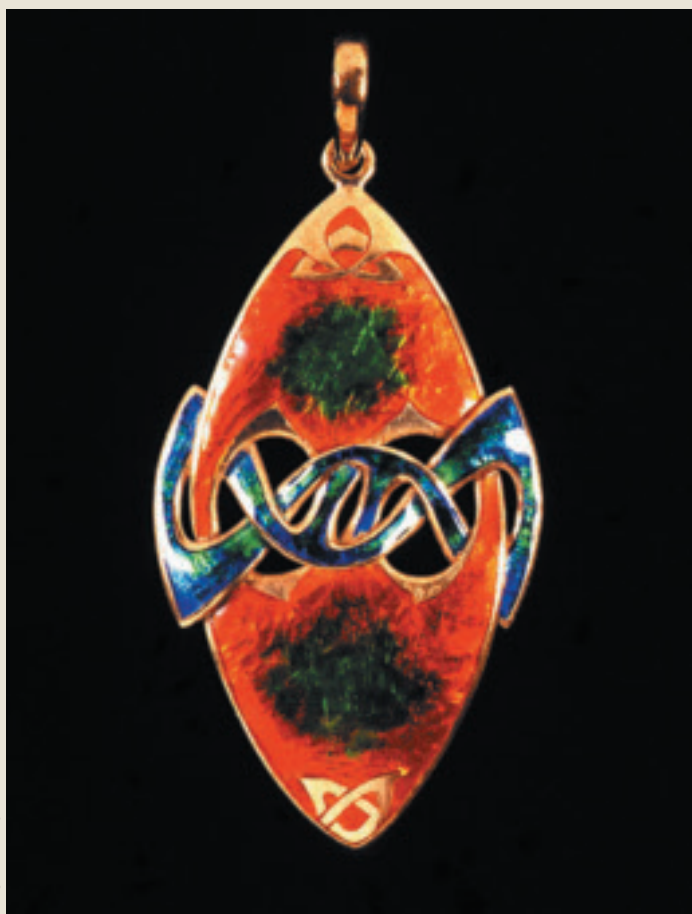
Mid-June saw the Westminster City Archives taking part in the 'Coutts London Jewellery Week'. We hosted a successful exhibition entitled *A Marriage in Heaven* and I gave a lunch-time talk. The exhibition showcased original examples from the prestigious Liberty Collection Jewellery Sketchbooks ideally matched with a selection of precious Art Nouveau Jewels generously lent from the Victor and Gretha Arwas Collection.

The event had three aims:

- fostering new collaborations with eminent partners who shared our passion for jewellery, thus promoting further the creative forces of 21st century London

Jewellery sketches, c.1900-1912 Page 267 (788/64), Liberty Plc





Gold pendant; the red and green enameled body is sliced by a blue and green enameled Celtic entrelac. Designed by Archibald Knox, c.1900 Victor & Gretha Arwas Collection

- showcasing the exceptional Liberty Archives, which are part of the Westminster Libraries and Archives outstanding art and design collections, receiving national recognition by Museums, Libraries and Archives Council
- opening further accessibility to our collections, encouraging new visitors to explore and celebrate heritage, improving life chances for citizens through increased learning opportunities, as a source of delight for the present and inspiration for the future.

The event was well received with plenty of positive comments, including this one from Christos Bitzis-Politis of London:

'What a charming collection of jewellery, I liked each and every one of them! How refreshing to house this exhibition at the Archives, one usually associates such institutions with Parish registers and obsolete documents. Well done!!'

Georgia Vossou. Conservator
Westminster City Archives

Conservators on show

Conservation in focus is a display running from 11 September for six weeks at the British Museum which will showcase a team of conservators working on three categories of objects. Stone will feature from 11–25 September (figure of Bacchus; marble votive relief; marble torso); Organics runs from 26 September to 12 October (bark cloth tunic; bark masks) and then Metal/Ceramics takes up the baton from 13–26 October (Chiseldon Cauldron; Chertsey medieval ceramic tile). This will be an opportunity for the public to discuss the work with conservators, ask questions and watch conservation procedures taking place. Visitors will also be able to engage



© Amy Drago.

BM conservator Toma Munden removing previous (old) restoration fills from a Roman sculpture in preparation for an exhibition called the Body Beautiful. The conservators will be working on similar objects in the exhibition.

with supplementary material including fully conserved objects, conservation tools and material samples and digital screens telling the stories of other conservation projects.

There will also be gallery talks taking place in Room 3 between conservators – all Icon members – and curators:

- Thursday 18 September – Greek and Roman Sculpture, Amy Drago and Peter Higgs.
- Thursday 2 October – Oceanic Barkcloth, Sherry Doyal and Lissant Bolton.
- Thursday 16 October – Medieval tiles, Rachel Swift and Beverley Nenkin
- Thursday 23 October – Iron-Age cauldrons, Alex Baldwin and Jody Joy

Jody Joy, Curator of the Iron Age collections at the British Museum says: 'Through careful excavation Alex will be able to re-construct how the cauldrons looked. This is fascinating as we don't know what cauldrons from this period looked like. Her research will also help explain what the cauldrons were used for and why so many were deposited in a pit in Wiltshire. These are the questions that really interest me.'

BM ceramics conservator Rachel Swift retouching fills on medieval tile fragments. These tiles will go on exhibition in the new Medieval Gallery due to re-open in spring 2009.



© Trustees of the British Museum



Cygnificant conservation

The unique Silver Swan musical automaton, which is a major visitor attraction at The Bowes Museum in Barnard Castle, is to be taken apart into its 1,000 pieces by specialist Matthew Read as part of a conservation project starting this month. The 230-year-old treasure is the only one of its kind in the world. The life-size bird is controlled by three separate clockwork mechanisms; it rests on a stream made of twisted glass rods interspersed with silver fish. When the mechanism is wound up, the glass rods rotate, the music begins, and the Swan twists its head to the left and right and appears to preen its back. It then appears to sight a fish in the water below and bends down to catch it, which it then swallows as the music stops and it resumes its upright position. This performance lasts approximately 40 seconds and although

visitors won't be unable to see it during the three month duration of the project, they will instead have the opportunity to watch Matthew at work.

As he dismantles the Swan, for the first time in its history every component will be recorded – digitally and in hard copy – to provide a complete conservation record, before cleaning, any necessary maintenance and reassembly. Matthew will be looking closely at the texture of the components, identifying original and previously renewed parts and also hoping to find evidence of previous specialists' marks. Gallery attendants will be available at specified times during the day to answer questions from interested onlookers and progress will also be monitored on the website at www.thebowesmuseum.org.uk. The 'stream' of twisted glass rods on which the Silver Swan appears to swim will also receive a spring clean by specialist Ken Robinson, who will remove oily yellow deposits.

The Museum's founders, John and Joséphine Bowes, first saw the Swan at the Paris International Exhibition of 1867 and purchased it five years later from the Parisian jeweller M. Briquet. However, it had already been a crowd puller for almost a century before that, having first been recorded in 1774 in the Mechanical Museum of James Cox, a London showman and dealer, where it was operated by putting a coin in a slot.

When the project is complete Matthew Read is taking up a teaching post at West Dean College in Sussex.

Guernica: the battle continues

Picasso's famous painting depicting the bombing of the village of Guernica in the Basque region during the Spanish Civil War continues to stir tensions in Spain, as it has done throughout its history. The black and white painting, measuring 3.5m x 7.8m, was exhibited extensively around the world and spent many years in New York, as Picasso refused to allow the work to be held in Spain until after Franco's death and the restoration of democracy. It finally moved to Madrid in 1981 where it has remained, despite efforts by Basque interests, including the Guggenheim in Bilbao, to get the painting moved to the region or at least given a temporary exhibition there. The fragility of the work, rolled up for the various moves during its itinerant history, is given as the justification for refusing these requests. And bolstering this position seems to be the rationale behind the current examination of the work involving x-ray, infra-red and other studies set to produce a definitive analysis by 2010. The tests began over a year ago but have only recently been made public, when the x-ray results were announced, showing considerable wear and tear but no serious threat to its health. The service of art in politics continues.

Heavy metal

Manhole covers, supermarket trolleys, copper cabling – there's no limit to the targets of thieves keen to capitalize on soaring commodity prices, as the booming economies of India and China stoke up demand for raw materials. Heritage sources are particularly vulnerable, as the theft of a huge multi-million pound Henry Moore sculpture from Hertfordshire demonstrated recently. Church roofs have, of course, long been targeted for their lead, whenever the price has been right, but now thieves are raiding the graveyards too for any metal objects such as name plaques and railings (Swansea); war memorials are similarly treated (Plymouth) and the Bowes Railway near Gateshead has to ensure that its track hasn't been stolen overnight before its regular passenger service starts up for the day. The Railway is a scheduled ancient monument and the only remaining rope-hauled railway in Britain.



Burghley House Stable courtyard

Conservation space to let

Burghley House in Lincolnshire is a hotspot for conservation as a talented group of conservators rent workshops there which are converted from stables in a courtyard built by Lancelot Brown in the late 18th century. Sadly, with the death of bookbinder Blair Jeary, a workshop has become available and the Burghley House Preservation Trust is looking for another conservator to fill it. A book or paper conservator would be preferred but some other discipline would be considered, provided it did not duplicate one of the existing specialisms. These are fine arts and paintings, furniture and woodwork, silver, textiles and stone masonry. The building retains its original features but also provides a clean, light and professional working environment. If you are interested, contact the Curator Jon Culverhouse on tel. 01780 753996; email burghley.house@virgin.net or by post to Burghley House, Stamford, Lincs. PE9 3JY.

The Bodleian's arch to the future

The Bodleian Library reports the award of £0.5m by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to ensure the preservation and accessibility of digital personal papers – the contemporary versions of manuscripts created by politicians, writers, scientists and intellectuals that are in danger of being lost to future scholarship. Among the Bodleian's many important collections, those relating to British politics of the 20th and 21st centuries are particularly significant. Such collections are increasingly in 'hybrid' form, comprising both traditional paper and newer audio-visual and digital formats. The focus of this new project, named *futureArch* is to develop a system to enable the library to collect, manage, preserve and deliver to researchers these complex archives.

TNA transformed

A £4m. face-lift for The National Archives' reading rooms was completed in June to set a new standard for archives in a digital age. The new facilities bring together all of TNA's family history and historical assets into a one-stop-shop of online resources, with practical face-to-face support to help researchers make the most of the wealth of information available. With vastly increased online access and seating capacity in the new open plan reading rooms, visitors can search online sources, microfilm and the world-class research

library. TNA's digitisation programme has seen the number of online downloads per year go from zero to 85 million in seven years and for every paper document delivered to researchers in its reading rooms 150 are delivered online.

World's oldest Bible on-line

The oldest existing Christian Bible started to become available on-line at the end of July at www.codexsinaiticus.org. The launch of the website is the first phase of an initiative to reunite the different parts of the 4thC Bible now held in four separate institutions. In a ground-breaking collaboration between the British Library, the Monastery of St Catherine (Mount Sinai, Egypt), the University Library at Leipzig (Germany) and the National Library of Russia (St Petersburg), the full text of the manuscript will be accessible in one place for everyone to research and enjoy by the end of the project in July 2009. This first phase involves the complete Book of Psalms and Gospel of Mark from the British Library together with all pages held at Leipzig University Library.



Glass cylinders filled with Holliday Pigments signature blue powder at Science Oxford

Wash day blues

Holliday Pigments signature Ultramarine Blue has inspired artists to put together an exhibition at Science Oxford which examines the manual and mechanical processes and the materials associated with laundry, in all its images, sounds, mathematical and scientific factors. Liverpool's National Conservation Centre also used the blue to provide the right shade for conserving items in an 18thC Wedgewood Jasper collection. But for older readers Holliday Pigments' heritage is as the original manufacturer of the Reckitt's Blue Dolly bag – the famous ingredient marketed as making laundry whites whiter than white.

Artists Annabel Ralphs and Diane Jones Parry prepare the ultramarine blue powder for display at the Science Oxford exhibition





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professional update

From the London office

THREE YEARS ON.....

In 2005, the newly-converged Icon was formally launched by the then Culture Minister David Lammy at the Banqueting House in Whitehall. Looking back, the three following years have seen a tremendous increase in the level of activity and profile-raising for the conservation profession in the UK, the first time we have had a single lead voice to articulate our aspirations, concerns and views in the wider heritage sector. It is very easy to forget how far we have come and with what momentous speed!

We have seen successes in the areas of heritage science, the development of our HLF-supported training bursaries programme, a new Technician Qualification, the review of PACR, and the showcase provided by the last Conservation Awards. On a day-to-day scale, we now almost take for granted the excellent facilities provided by our offices at London Bridge, the popular Icon website, our electronic bulletins and our bright and informative journals and newsletters. Not forgetting the assurance of a complement of cheery and knowledgeable Icon staff at the end of the phone line.

Icon's first Chief Executive, Alastair McCapra, left the Institute in July and Caroline Saye is now acting as Interim Chief Executive. Caroline is working with the Board of Trustees to look in depth at the opportunities and challenges facing Icon over the next few years, and to identify the priorities for investment of our energy and advocacy.

With these three significant years behind us, the Board of Trustees will now undertake a review of the Chief Executive role and aim to advertise the position towards the end of the year. Simon Cane will also come to the end of his two-year term as Chair of the Board of Trustees at the 2008 AGM in

December and members are invited and encouraged to stand for election to the position (see Call for nominations).

So, 2009 is bound to be a year of changes at Icon, but in turn these will provide exciting opportunities, both in terms of the way Icon achieves its mission of championing conservation and in setting and raising standards for the care of cultural heritage. This is also your chance as a member to get more involved in Icon's work. Echoing Simon's call to action in the July Iconnect - Icon is your organisation, so please do get involved – by helping your group committee, by attending events and the AGM, by contributing to Icon News, by standing for election or by spreading the word about Icon and speaking up for conservation!

BOARD ELECTIONS 2008

Call for nominations

Each year a number of places become available on Icon's Board of Trustees as a result of Board rotation. This year seven of Icon's Trustees are standing down and only one is seeking re-election. This is a good opportunity to get involved with the leadership of your organisation – nominations are invited from Ordinary and Accredited members.

Nominations for five unrestricted seats and one reserved seat for Wales

Nominations are invited from Ordinary and Accredited Icon members who wish to serve on the Icon Board of Trustees. There are six seats open to election in 2008. Five of these seats are open to nominations from all Accredited and Ordinary members of Icon. The sixth seat is a reserved seat for Wales. This means that nominations for this seat can only be accepted from members with a primary address in Wales. Interested members can download the Job Description and the Nomination Form from the 'About us' section of www.icon.org.uk. Each application should be supported by a proposer and seconder who must also be current Ordinary or Accredited members of Icon.

Nominations for Chair of the Board of Trustees

Simon Cane's two-year term as Chair of the Board of Trustees ends at the 2008 AGM in December. Simon has made a substantial contribution to Icon over the last two years and we now seek nominations for Icon's next Chair.

In accordance with Icon's byelaws, the Board of Trustees met on 16 July 2008 to nominate a candidate from the Board for Chair. After a process of election, the Board's candidate is Diane Gwilt. Diane is Head of Collection Care and Access Projects at National Museums Wales and has served as Icon's Vice Chair since 2006.

The invitation is extended to Ordinary and Accredited Icon members who wish to stand for election to the position of Chair. If no other candidates come forward then the Board candidate will become Chair. Interested members can download the Job Description and the Nomination Form

2008 AGM

All members are invited to attend Icon's fourth AGM, to be held on 8 December at the British Library. The full programme including registration details will be available in November's Icon News – please come along, encourage your colleagues and support your professional body.

from the 'About us' section of www.icon.org.uk. Each application should be supported by a proposer and seconder who must also be current Ordinary or Accredited members of Icon.

Deadline for nominations

The deadline for submitting completed nomination forms is midnight on 6 October 2008. Nominations should be returned to Caroline Saye, Institute of Conservation, 3rd Floor Downstream Building, 1 London Bridge, London SE1 9BG. Any nominations received after 6 October 2008 will not be accepted.

The manifestos of the candidates for the roles of Chair and Trustee will be posted to eligible members with the November issue of Icon News and will also be available on the Icon website. Ballot papers will also be issued to eligible members with November's Icon News. The successful candidates will be announced at the AGM on 8 December.

CREATIVE AND CULTURAL SKILLS

The Cultural Heritage Advisory Panel is tasked with developing an action plan to address workforce issues affecting the cultural heritage sector. Icon represents your interests on the Panel alongside representatives of other key sector bodies including the Museums Association (MA), the National Trust, English Heritage and the Institute of Field Archaeologists. With the MA's leadership, the Panel has produced an action plan for publication in September which identifies the key challenges for the sector, sets out action points and identifies next steps to address the issues faced by the sector. Entry into the workforce, staff development, leadership, management & entrepreneurship, workforce diversity, and sector-specific expertise are the areas of focus. Icon looks forward to working with Creative and Cultural Skills and the Museums Association to develop programmes of work and practical solutions to workforce issues and to help affect change in the sector.

OFFICE BUSINESS

With just two members of staff at London Bridge now, the London office is particularly stretched at the moment. We are changing the way we work so that we provide the best service we can to members and the public. Charlotte Cowin will be addressing membership enquiries such as changes to details or lost passwords on a set day each week and will aim to respond to enquiries within seven days, so we would be grateful if you could wait a week before sending that follow-up email. If your enquiry is urgent, please call Charlotte on 0207 785 3807.

For those of you involved in Committee work, there is a new expense claim form. This is available from Charlotte (membership@icon.org.uk) or the Chair of your committee. We are also producing new Events and Web manuals for use by the Icon Groups to support their sterling work and to

enable them to maintain a steady flow of information in your direction and to maintain your access to Group resources.

Thank you for sending back the yellow questionnaires about Icon's achievements since 2005 which were distributed in March's Icon News. Your comments on what you value about Icon have been most helpful. This is a good time to reassess what Icon means to you as a member – but what about all your friends and colleagues who are not members of Icon? Why are they not members? Please ask a non-member you know why they've chosen not to be part of Icon – feedback to Caroline Saye, csaye@icon.org.uk (all in strictest confidence of course!).

PACR news

NEW DOCUMENTS 2008

From 1 October 2008 a **New PACR Guide and NEW application form** will be available on the Icon website under the Accreditation/CPD tab.

Whether you are a conservator looking for general information on accreditation or you want to apply by following the three steps in this guide you will be directed through the whole process of becoming accredited. Use this guide to help you understand and prepare for the application process. It will tell you where to find support as you work towards accreditation and it can be used for reference whilst you complete the application form and prepare for assessment.

- **Step 1** introduces accreditation, explains the professional conservation-restoration standards and provides information on seeking support.
- **Step 2** guides you through filling in and submitting the application form. It tells you what to expect on the assessment day and about the results and appeals procedure. You can also download the NEW PACR Application Form from the Icon website.
- **Step 3** gives you an idea of what is expected from an accredited conservator (ACR) and explains continuing professional development (CPD).

More information on events, important deadlines, examples of completed applications and CPD documentation can be found on the Icon website. PACR clinics and introductory events are also noted in Listings.

The next application deadline is 16 January 2009. If you want to apply for this round you will need to submit your Register of Intention form (available on the Icon website) by 31 October 2008.

If you cannot find the answer to your query on the website please contact Susan Bradshaw, PACR Accreditation Manager, Institute of Conservation, PO Box 444, Sigford, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 9DZ. Tel/Fax: 01626 824510. Email: sbradshaw@icon.org.uk

From the training office

HLF INTERNSHIP SCHEME – YEAR 3

We had a good round of intern interviews across the UK in July for the third year's intake of the Heritage Lottery Fund-supported scheme. Again we were pleased to have a fantastic field to choose from and Icon is happy to welcome to the scheme nine new interns who will start their placements by early October:

- **Andor Vince** will be working with Julie Dawson at the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge in preventive conservation
- **Elaine Sheldon** is intern in archives conservation with Teresa Januszonok at Sheffield Archives
- **Lirica Lynch** will work with Jill Kerr in the National Museums of Northern Ireland on Natural Sciences
- **Philip Henderson** is stone conservation intern with Simon Swann in Norfolk
- **Claire Pearson** will work with Caroline Tragett at the Guildhall Art Gallery on frames conservation
- **Anna Rolls** will work on metals conservation at the National Maritime Museum with Laurence Birnie
- **Stefka Bargazova** will work with Juanita Navarro at the V&A on conservation of ceramics
- **Mel Houston** is supervised by Isobel Griffen of the National Trust for Scotland in preventive conservation
- **Elaine Tolley** will spend two years on tapestry conservation with Rachel Langley at the National Trust's studio in Blickling

We were unfortunately unable to appoint anyone for the People's History Museum internship, but hope to move this on to the last year of the scheme. The nine above will join Gary Graves (Stained Glass) and Helen Pedder (Books) who are moving into the second year of last year's 24-month placements. Profiles will appear on the Icon website soon.

HLF YEAR 2 INTERNS – MOVING ON

Building on our excellent success rate for employment and further training for Year 1 interns, at the time of writing we are pleased to note that several Year 2s have sorted their future plans. **Helen Wilson** starts a joint PhD with Manchester University and the British Museum in October, **Zoe Stewart** started a job at the British Steel Archive Project in Teesside in August, **Richard Williams** now works at the Imperial War Museum as Collections Project Officer and Jonathan Leburn has employment with his internship host, Graciela Ainsworth, in Edinburgh. By the time you are reading this, we hope that the whole cohort will be sorted with work or further study, and we will keep you updated.

NEXT MOVE FOR THE CTQ

The second phase of the Pilot for the new Conservation Technician Qualification (CTQ) started in August – thirteen organisations expressed interest in joining the employers' consortium and the project will run for two years – hopefully with up to thirty candidates – with an evaluation period in Spring 2010. Applications to join the consortium are still being encouraged from potential employer-partners up to the end of 2008. To express interest or obtain more information, contact training@icon.org.uk

A reminder of Icon's and employers' main aims for the CTQ:

- To provide technicians and others who support conservation work with a portable and meaningful qualification which recognises their skills
- To improve the diversity of applicants entering the conservation profession by establishing a new entry route and a means of career mobility
- To recognise the contribution of volunteers and support staff to conservation

The new prospectus for this Phase is available on the website on the Technician Qualification page.

ICON INTERNSHIPS AT TATE

The HLF internship scheme has made it possible for Icon to develop a framework for managing and running any internship under the Icon banner – this can be applied to any period of work-based training. We have been encouraging employers and grant-givers to consider using our framework for some time now, and you can read about the benefits of working with Icon on our website at: www.icon.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=512&Itemid=56

Icon is pleased to welcome two new Tate-funded interns to this scheme over the last few months. **Sarah Styler** will be working with Stephen Hackney in Tate Britain on a Conservation Science Projects one-year placement. Sarah is working with scientists and conservators on the EU MultiEncode project for which Tate is an end user and contributing to a range of other EU-funded and Tate projects across the organisation. Sarah has a strong background and qualifications in Environmental Chemistry, with a parallel interest in art; she sees the internship as the ideal way to integrate the two in her ambition to embark on a doctorate in conservation science.

Tate's second intern is **Patricia Falcão**, working in conservation of Time-Based Media supervised by Pip Laurenson and based in Tate Store. Patricia's placement runs for two years – the second of which is funded by the HLF scheme. She hopes to gain first-hand experience in the examination, conservation, preparation for display and documentation of works of art containing time-based and related media. Patricia has a background in photographic conservation and was working as

JOURNAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Reminder of deadlines

If you would like an article considered for publication and which would be of interest to paper conservators the deadline for copy to reach the editor is 1 December 2008.

If your article would be of interest to conservators who do not work on paper-based materials the deadline for copy is 30 May 2009.

Articles should be at a stage that they could be sent for peer review. Abstracts and drafts are welcome throughout the year.

Please contact Shulla Jaques, Editor on either paperconservator@icon.org.uk or conservator@icon.org.uk.

a video conservator before taking up the placement; she sees the two years as a unique opportunity to work with time-based media conservation under the guidance of one of the leading institutions in the field.

INTERN POSTERS NOW ON THE WEB!

Our interns are all tasked to produce short posters for use at shows and exhibitions; HLF Year 1s' are now available on the Icon website and HLF Year 2s' will be posted there by the time you read this – please do take a look and see what our interns have been up to – there are some very interesting projects and individual reflections on the internship process! Go to the Internship tab on the website and 'Gallery' beneath that:

www.icon.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=848&Itemid=106

ARE YOU SEEKING A SHORT CONSERVATION WORK-BASED TRAINING PLACEMENT OR INTERNSHIP?

Remember that the Training Exchange can be used as a noticeboard to post up your own career details and profile. Use the form provided on the website to advertise your details for prospective hosts' perusal. To post your 'cv' and to view placements on offer you must be an Icon member. For more details on the service, go to the Education & Training section of the Icon website:

www.icon.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=470&Itemid=52

From the Library

The end of the academic year 2007–8 coincided with the departure of Chantry's exceptional librarian, James Andrews. He has left the library in perfect order and full swing. We aim to keep it that way until the arrival of the new librarian later this year and will keep you posted on new developments.

The library remains open to all Icon members and any interested member of the public but service is restricted as the library is unstaffed at present. Access, as before, is by appointment only. For this, please email chantrylibrary@icon.org.uk. Please be aware that it may take some time for any telephone or email enquiries to be answered. We appreciate your patience!

The library has a large and important collection of journals. For the full list, see the Chantry Library section of the Icon website (<http://www.icon.org.uk>). Photocopies of articles may be obtained, subject to the terms of UK and EU copyright law. To order copies please write or email us. Photocopy request forms and contact details are available on the same website.

If you would like to recommend titles that we might consider for purchasing, please do so. Best libraries are forums facilitating dialogue. We strive at being such a library, and, as always, we look forward to your thoughts and ideas.

On the topic of new titles, here is a selection of acquisitions and recently published articles:

Podany, J. (ed.) 2006. *Advances in the Protection of Museum Collections from Earthquake Damage*, Papers From a Symposium Held at the J.Paul Getty Museum at the Villa, 3–4 May 2006.

Galinsky, Eva (2001). *Kunststoff-Folien in der Papierrestaurierung 1950–1970 Schwerpunkt Deutschland*, Schriftenreihe zur Bestandserhaltung, Band 1.

From AIC News, 33(4).

Craft, M.Loew (2008). 'Discoveries in Denver: The 2008 Annual Meeting'. pp. 1, 8–9.

From ARC Magazine, 226.

Stocking, B. (2008). 'Encoded Archival Context (EAC)'. pp. 14–15.

From ARC Magazine, 227.

Stocking, B. (2008). 'Integrating Archives and Manuscripts at the British Library'. pp. 16–17.

From The Book and Paper Group, 24 (2005).

Olson-McGuire, A. (2005). 'Conservation of the Original Art for World War II US Propaganda Posters'. pp. 27–36.

Cristina Neagu, Acting Librarian
Jane Eagan, Honorary Librarian
chantrylibrary@icon.org.uk

MISCELLANY

Caring for CDs and DVDs

This is the title of the latest leaflet in the 'Caring for...' series from the National Preservation Office. It can be downloaded free of charge from the NPO website at www.bl.uk/services/npo/publicationsleaf.html. Printed copies are also available free of charge by contacting NPO directly.

Forum for heritage science

The Science and Heritage Programme website is now hosting a new Forum where members of the heritage science community can discuss research issues, seek research partners and post details of resources such as equipment, courses and workshops. It can be found at: www.heritagescience.ac.uk/index.php?section=61

Conservation methodology course

If you are interested in exploring the development of our profession, value judgements in conservation and the conservator's role in the decision-making process (without all the post-modernist jargon), then there are still a few places left on the Conservation Methodology course to be held at West Dean College on 13–16 October. The varied programme offers a series of lectures and seminar sessions, and although it includes imaginative role-playing, objects recounting their biographies and future hopes, and a light hearted film study, the list of lecturers should reassure you as to the essential seriousness of this discussion of conservation theory and methodology. The course leaders are Dinah Eastop, senior lecturer at Textile Conservation Centre and Helen Hughes, historic interiors conservator with English Heritage. Tutors include; Jonathan Ashley-Smith, free-lance teacher, researcher and consultant, formerly Head of Conservation at the Victoria and Albert Museum' and Icon's own Susan Bradshaw, PACR Accreditation Manager. An international perspective will be provided by Rosalia Varoli-Piazza, formerly senior conservation advisor with ICCROM who devised and ran their acclaimed Sharing Conservation Decisions course. To book contact Liz Campbell on liz.campbell@westdean.org.uk or tel. 01243 811301

Ban on dichloromethane

The EU is, as many of you may already know, proposing to ban dichloromethane based paint strippers. The green topped can has always been part of a conservator's workshop and, even when other products have come on the market, there are still occasions when it is required. More information from www.stripperspaintremovers.com/ban.

Your heritage needs you!

After several month's consultation, on 30 July The House of Commons Select Committee on Culture, Media and Sport published its report *Draft Heritage Protection Bill*, (Eleventh Report, Session 2007–08, HC 821. The Bill can be found at www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmcmds.htm). The Committee affirms the Bill's support in principle for the heritage sector but goes on to express some significant

reservations, particularly about the Government's inadequate assessment of the resource implications. The Bill sets out a new legislative framework for a simpler and more unified heritage protection system that will be more open, accountable and transparent. Although dealing principally with the built heritage, it will also cover the scheduling of archaeological sites and monuments, and the statutory provision of Historic Environment Records by local authorities. The Bill also seeks to provide more opportunities for public involvement and community engagement in understanding, preserving and managing our heritage. Icon continues to work in partnership with a joint group of the leading archaeological bodies, The Archaeology Forum (TAF), which will look in detail at the published draft Bill in October. There are already some areas of concern, and Icon members across all groups should familiarize themselves with the proposed reforms and how they may impact on our discipline. If you have comments or want further information, contact Icon's TAF representative Claire Heywood: email: claire_dig@hotmail.com

Guidelines publication – free!

Archaeological conservators will be pleased to note the recent publication of the long-awaited English Heritage guidelines on Investigative Conservation. This profusely illustrated document positions the conservator's role firmly within the MAPII and MORPHE frameworks and explains how research-phase conservation should be planned and budgeted for, and what the archaeologist, museum curator and finds researcher should expect the conservator to be able to provide. Conservators will find these guidelines a valuable resource too, both as an aide memoire and perhaps also as a tool of persuasion to apply to others! Copies are available free from email: customer@english-heritage.org.uk, quoting product code 51411. It is also downloadable as a pdf from the EH website.

Climate change and your home

English Heritage have launched a new website designed specifically to help those who own or manage houses built of traditional construction to understand more about the potential impacts of climate change, how to minimize potential problems and ways to save energy. It also sets climate change in context with a guide to current scientific thinking, Government responses and the wider implications for the historic environment. Further information includes contact details, reading lists and useful links as well as details of what approvals may be required when carrying out energy saving works or works of adaptation. www.climatechangeandyourhome.org.uk

VAT

The European Commission has put forward proposals about VAT that would permit member states to levy a lower rate of the tax on the repair, maintenance and cleaning of places of worship, cultural heritage and historical monuments. If implemented, this would have a significant impact on the cost of maintenance and repair of historic assets. In the UK the

Listed Places of Worship scheme provides VAT relief in the form of grants, but any extension of the scheme in this or any other form is unlikely to be popular with the Treasury.

Volunteering matters

- The National Council of Volunteer Organisations have created a brand new homepage specifically for people within small organisations, or staff new to the voluntary sector. Information on HR, finance, trustee, legal or ICT issues can now be accessed in one handy area. Find it at: www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/smallorganisations
- The results of the first national survey to look at the capacity of organisations to involve and manage volunteers have been published by the Institute for Volunteering Research on www.ivr.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres. The report draws attention to major under-investment in volunteer management; explores the roles and positions of those who manage volunteers and looks at the implementation of different volunteer management practices and issues that organisations face in recruiting and retaining volunteers..
- *The Good Maintenance Guide* recently published by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) has been written for volunteers who care for historic places of worship. It is intended to be a practical source of advice on maintenance matters, with chapters on understanding traditional materials, why buildings decay, maintenance tasks, working with professionals and many references to related sources of help. The guide's message about day to day care can usefully be applied to all historic structures.

IIC 2008 CONGRESS LONDON: CONSERVATION & ACCESS

Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre 15-19 September 2008

It's still not too late to register for attendance at the IIC Congress. Take advantage of this opportunity to join a major international conservation event without having to travel abroad. The full technical programme, visits and social programmes, including dinner on a Thames riverboat, together with online booking, can be found on the IIC London Congress website: www.iiconservation.org/congress.

IIC Congress Dinner now opened to non-registrants

We have received numerous requests for participation in the Thursday evening Congress Dinner on a Thames riverboat, so we have agreed to open attendance at this to those who are not registering as Congress delegates. The cost of this will be £69 per head, the same as it is to participants in the main event. Details can be found at, <http://www.iiconservation.org/congress/socprog.php>, but PLEASE NOTE that if you are booking for the Congress Dinner only you should not attempt to book via the Congress website but should e-mail direct to IIC's main e-mail address, iic@iiconservation.org – please head your message 'IIC Congress Dinner'. Deadline for booking the dinner: 5.00 pm Wednesday 10th September.

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NATIONAL TRUST APPOINTMENT



Nigel Blades, Lecturer at the Centre for Sustainable Heritage at University College London (UCL), has been appointed to the post of Preventive Conservation Adviser (Environment) with the National Trust. He starts work at the end of September, filling the redoubtable shoes of, first, Sarah Staniforth and subsequently Linda Bullock. As well as Nigel's knowledge and experience of environmental

monitoring and control, he brings considerable expertise in science to the Trust, which is particularly valuable given the present focus on science and cultural heritage.

Following a first degree in Industrial Chemistry, an interest in heritage and archaeology led him to a PhD in Archaeological Science at London University. A post in the Victoria and Albert Museum Conservation Department first introduced him to preventive conservation, researching air pollution in museum collections environments. After working at the University of East Anglia and the Bartlett School of Graduate Studies, UCL, he joined the newly formed UCL Centre for Sustainable Heritage in 2001.

Nigel's main professional interests are in the environmental aspects of preventive conservation; the role of building design, materials and services in determining collections environment; computer building simulation; and effects of climate change on heritage.

PHD SUCCESS

Congratulations to **Sonia O'Connor** who has been awarded a PhD at the University of Bradford for her published work entitled 'An Investigation of the Limits and Potential of Radiography in the Study and Conservation of Cultural Material'.

Sonia trained as an Archaeological Conservator at the Institute of Archaeology, University of London, passing with distinction in 1976, and has worked in archaeological



conservation at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London; University College, Cardiff; and the York Archaeological Trust; joining the staff of the Department of Archaeological Sciences, University of Bradford, in 1995. Since 2000, she has been running two and three-day professional development courses in cultural materials radiography for conservators, archaeologists and other heritage professionals both in the UK and abroad. Between 2003 and 2007 Sonia undertook a research project in textile conservation, with Mary Brooks of the Textile Conservation Centre, University of Southampton, for the AHRC Research Centre for Textile Conservation and Textile Studies. A major outcome of this collaboration was the publication of their book 'X-Radiography of Textiles, Dress and Related Materials'.

Sonia's work in raising standards in, and promoting the use of, X-radiography in the field of cultural material was recognised in 2003 when she received the 2002 Nemet Award from the British Institute of Non-Destructive Testing, an award which is given in recognition of 'outstandingly effective use of NDT'.

OXFORD CONSERVATION CONSORTIUM NEWS



Celia Withycombe has been appointed to a new post as Senior Conservator at the Oxford Conservation Consortium (OCC) with effect from 1 October 2008. In her new post, Celia will help implement programmes of conservation and preservation for the library and archive collections of ten colleges of the University of Oxford and the National Trust.

Celia has considerable experience in the conservation of works of art on paper and Japanese prints and drawings in particular, having worked with Bryan Clarke at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, for thirteen years. Her skills in these areas will be of particular relevance to the college collections of fine art. She has also worked in book conservation with Bob Proctor at the Fitzwilliam.

NEW ACRS – CONGRATULATIONS !

Alison Aynesworth, paintings conservator, working at Hirst Conservation on easel paintings and decorative surfaces

Alexandra Baldwin, specialist conservator at The British Museum

Richard Baister, Conservation Project Manager and Director of Eura Conservation Ltd, Telford

Siobhan Barratt, South Territory conservator for the National Trust, specializing in preventive work

Mariluz Beltran De Guevara, book conservator, working as the parchment and vellum specialist at The British Library

Vicki Humphrey, Head of Conservation at The British Library, with a specialism in paper

Sung Hyun Im, Textile conservator seconded as demonstrator to the MA Textile Conservation course at the Textile Conservation Centre

Annette King – paintings conservator at Tate Modern

Chris Knapp – Conservation Manager specializing in industrial conservation at the Imperial War Museum, Duxford

Geoffrey Lee – Conservation Officer at Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust

Irit Narkiss – Conservator, Objects and Access at The Manchester Museum

Catherine Nightingale – Applied arts conservator at the Museum of London

Jacquelyn Ready – Community conservator of social history at Hampshire County Museum and Archives Service

Emma Schmucker – Objects conservator at the Royal Armouries, Leeds

Wendy Toulson – Textile conservator, sole trader based in Herefordshire

Helen Wilmot – Senior conservator at the Wiltshire Conservation Service

NICHOLAS HADGRAFT MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Conservation by Design Limited (CXD) has awarded this coveted scholarship to **E. Betul Cakirca**, a paper conservator at Istanbul Muftulugu, Seri Siciller and Mesihat Archive in Turkey. Now in its fourth year, the scholarship awards £1000 towards the cost of attending the Montefiascone Book Conservation Summer School, a unique bookbinding course held each year in the medieval town of Montefiascone, Italy. (Last year's winner writes about her experience at the school on page 30.)

Conservation by Design managing director, Mike Brown praised Betul's enthusiasm and dedication and added 'there is a great need for trained conservators of library materials in



Turkey; we hope that this award will have long term benefits for book conservation in the country.' Betul plans to attend two of the School's courses at the end of August: The Cambridge Terrier – a fifteenth century chemise binding and The Romanesque Book in Spain and Northern Europe. She said: 'Not only is it a chance for me to learn about European bookbinding, as there are no courses on this in Turkey, but also to share my experience and knowledge of Ottoman heritage with other conservators'

For further information on the Nicholas Hadgraft Memorial Scholarship, contact Conservation by Design on 01234 844 360 or visit www.conservation-by-design.co.uk.

QEST SCHOLAR

Easel paintings conservator **Laura Mills** from Cirencester has won a £9,000 Queen Elizabeth Scholarship which will enable her to undertake a 20 month internship, three days a week, in the Conservation Department of Tate. Laura graduated in History of Art from University College London before undertaking a three year Postgraduate Diploma in conservation of Easel Paintings at the Courtauld Institute of



Art which she successfully completed in July. Her ambition is to become a practical conservator of modern and contemporary paintings. She comments: 'This is a new area of specialization within the conservation profession. I want to ensure as many people as possible enjoy viewing contemporary works of art for generations to come, thanks to the practical care and restoration of modern paintings.'

Application forms for QEST Scholarships can be downloaded from: www.qest.org.uk Or send an SAE (56p) to:

The Secretary, The Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust, No.1 Buckingham Place, London SW1E 6HR. Closing date for applications for the next round of QEST Scholarships is 9 January 2009.

IN APPRECIATION

John Ashurst 1937–2008

John Ashurst was the master. A quiet, private man, small in stature, he was a colossal figure in the world of building conservation. During his forty years of professional life he influenced countless numbers of specifiers, contractors, craftsmen and conservators. Indeed, he was instrumental in showing just how important and valuable the conservator could be to those who had traditionally looked after old buildings and ancient monuments. John was 71 when he lost his battle against cancer on 19 May 2008.

John qualified as an architect from Kingston School of Art and practised in the private sector before joining the Department of Ancient Monuments and Historic Buildings in the Ministry of Public Works in 1969, working in a specialist team which toured the country giving advice on repairing ancient monuments. His continual aim was to help people understand monuments and their conservation and to establish and teach the highest standards of repair techniques and workmanship. He lectured widely, produced invaluable guidance leaflets and carried out pioneering work with scientists, craftsmen and conservators. Fortunately much of this unique experience was published in 1988 in the five volumes of the *Practical Building Conservation* series; still regarded as seminal tomes. Other books which show his true passions were the *Conservation of Building and Decorative Stone* co-authored with Frank Dimes and *The Conservation of Ruins* which is perhaps the most fitting tribute to his life's work.

What set John apart from others, was his consummate ability to spread his message....whether by written word, lectures, drawings, or even videos. He was unusually gifted. His lectures were wonderfully stimulating and delivered with great authority, wit and natural timing; much credit here no doubt to his early days spent in repertory theatre. Audiences were always put at ease and made welcome, no matter how simple their questions. He had a great ability to express himself on paper in a clear and thoughtful way and free from jargon; a sure sign of a mastery of his subject. This talent was matched



by his excellent sketches which grace many of his publications.

John left English Heritage in 1991 to work in the private sector in Canada and returned two years later to become Professor of Heritage Conservation at Bournemouth University. At the same time he set up a consultancy which included experienced conservators. John also continued to work as a consultant for English Heritage, in particular leading the masonry conservation courses at their Training Centre at Fort Brockhurst in Gosport. These courses were originally designed by John and Colin Burns and facsimile ruins were built so that the training was a mixture of lectures, practical work and demonstrations. John gave total commitment to these courses. In the four years that the Centre ran, John did not miss a single lecture; although he sometimes made life uncomfortable for his colleagues by not appearing until five minutes before he was due to speak. A large box of slides would be scattered onto the light table and John would 'just make a quick selection from the trolley', followed by the infamous chuckle; then quickly off to give another sublime performance. A model of tranquillity and calm!

When the Training Centre closed, John continued leading the courses at West Dean College where he and former colleagues at English Heritage devised a range of related courses. John was always convinced that this sort of specialist training is essential if ancient monuments in particular are to be conserved effectively. Thanks to his efforts, people are now realising this. The problem is, of course, that John will be an impossible act to follow.

Chris Wood
English Heritage

European Standards

CEN/TC 346: Conservation of Cultural Property

2008 has seen significant progress in the UK's involvement with the development of European conservation standards. As reported in January's Icon News, a programme has been underway now for several years to establish common standards throughout Europe affecting numerous aspects of conservation. Although this began as an Italian initiative and its main secretariat is UNI, the Italian standards organisation based in Milan, conservation professionals in many European countries are now on board and working to create and then transform draft documents into European standards which – if approved – by default become national standards. To the extent that these might impinge on practice in the UK, Icon has taken the view that it is important to contribute constructively to the process. The UK's involvement, albeit somewhat late in the day, has been welcomed by the other countries, not least because English is the working language in which the standards are drafted.

It should be borne in mind that some of the standards will be rather general and not overly prescriptive, more guidance than specification. Nor are the standards mandatory, but they are available to be used and cited, even set as criteria, by whoever might find them helpful. In the swiftly evolving world of conservation it will be necessary to revisit the standards at regular intervals to be sure they still reflect current thought and best practice.

In Britain, this work falls under the auspices of the British Standards Institution. As it happened, a BSI Committee already existed, focussing on the repair of building surfaces, but it was dormant and has now been revived and re-named to reflect its new role as the mirror group for the European standards project, matching similar mirror groups in other countries. Chaired by David Leigh representing Icon, the Committee B/560 – Conservation of Tangible Cultural Heritage – has grown from a small core Icon group (Janey Cronyn, Velson Horie, David Howell, Barry Knight, David Leigh, Freda Matassa, Dave Thickett) to a membership more widely representative of the cultural heritage as a whole. There is now representation from the RIBA, Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, Church Buildings Council, Buildings Research Establishment, Association for the Study of the Conservation of Historic Buildings, Historic Scotland, Centre for Sustainable Heritage, Museums Association, Collections Trust, The National Archives and British Museum, as well as the organisations represented by the core group: English Heritage, British Library and Bodleian Library, with further representation likely soon, as well as several co-opted individuals including Jonathan Rhys-Lewis and Ian Clayton. It is to the credit of Icon and the BSI that such a comprehensive group should be meeting to debate conservation issues across the moveable/immovable divide. The committee will be able, as time allows, to discuss standards issues beyond those presented by this particular European project.

This project – known as CEN/TC 346 Conservation of Cultural

Property – is overseen by a Technical Committee comprising representatives from the thirty participating countries (i.e. beyond just the membership of the EU). This meets annually to receive reports from the convenors of the five Working Groups, to approve the creation of new work strands and to ensure the progression of draft documents through several stages of formal consultation, culminating in their adoption as European and thence national standards. The working groups, which meet between two and four times a year, are made up of up to twenty individuals, sometimes more than one per country. The UK is now represented on each of the five groups. Drafting, consultation, revision and majority voting, from initial draft to final published standard, can take from three to four and a half years.

The range of topics which could potentially be addressed is huge, so it is no surprise that the project is open-ended; nor that the selection of work areas initially under development may at first appear somewhat arbitrary, since it reflects the enthusiasms of those individuals who initiated the project. There is scope to introduce more topics to ensure more comprehensive coverage. At present it appears that there is no intention to standardise conservation interventions as such – from the UK's perspective an inappropriate and almost impossible task given the uniqueness, complexity and variability of heritage items – but other processes and practice associated with the care of the tangible cultural heritage do appear susceptible to this approach. This is best illustrated by considering the current and planned work of the five working groups (WGs).

Working Group 1: General Guidelines and Terminology

The initial, quite demanding task for this group has been to identify a limited range of commonly used terms and to provide definitions for them, making use where appropriate of specialist dictionaries and glossaries and other relevant definitions where these already exist. Not only is this intended to bring some consistency into conservation terminology, but the definitions will under-pin the use of those terms by the other four working groups. The discussions between the various European representatives has been quite difficult, not just because of the different understanding of the same words in English, but because of underlying differences in national practice. Although the terms will be defined in English they can be translated into words which carry the best currency for their agreed meaning in the language concerned. The exercise is also demanding because even just in English there continues to be so little consistency of use. This draft document is now moving towards a level of completion and agreement whereby it might conceivably be put out for the first formal enquiry by the end of this year.

Among the UK's contributions has been the proposal for a logical framework so that the terms are considered in some sort of hierarchical arrangement, rather than – as previously –



Members of the B/560 Committee, l-r: David Leigh (Icon), Anna Buelow (The National Archives), Peter Rumley (SPAB), Freda Matassa, Tim Yates (BRE), Hilary Bell (RIBA), Velson Horie (British Library), Ian Clayton, Barry Knight (British Library), Janey Cronyn

in merely alphabetical order. This proposal has been adopted.

This group also intends to develop a glossary of damage terms and another of the materials of which heritage items are made, but both these projects have been put on the back-burner in favour of the primary general terminology project.

As reported previously, this work has proceeded in parallel with that of the Conservation Committee of ICOM, which has devised a fresh approach to conservation terminology, developing the earlier ICOM-CC definition, to be presented as a resolution during its General Meeting at the New Delhi conference (see <http://www.icom-cc.org/Documents/icom-cc-terminology-rev23.doc> and the associated commentary.) Both the ICOM-CC Terminology Task Force and the CEN Working Group 1 have endeavoured to use the same terms and define them in the same way, to avoid further confusion. Broadly speaking, both parties are proposing that 'conservation' be used as the over-arching term, embracing three activities: preventive conservation, remedial conservation and restoration. This may not seem a great breakthrough, but if widely adopted would reduce the scatter of terms and their meanings currently employed. However, ECCO has recently declared its preference for retaining the portmanteau term "conservation-restoration".

A small UK terminology panel has been formed as an offshoot of B/560, consisting of Janey Cronyn, Velson Horie, Peter Winsor and David Leigh. The UK representative on WG1 is David Leigh; the convenor is Lorenzo Appolonia (Italy).

Working Group 1 has also spawned two Task Groups, one each on condition reports or surveys for the moveable and the immovable heritage. The UK representative on the former is Chris Woods; the convenor is David Aguilera Cueco (France). A UK representative for the task group on immovable heritage condition reports is still required; the convenor is Terje Nypam (Norway).

Working Group 2: Materials Constituting the Cultural Heritage

This group has been slower than some of the other groups to get started, but is working on:

- Mortars characterisation and glossary/terminology
- The diagnosis of building structures
- Sampling

The group's convenor is Vasilike Argyropoulos ("Bessie") of Greece and the UK representative is Barry Knight, soon to be joined by Tim Yates (BRE).

Working Group 3: Evaluation of methods and products for conservation works.

Its current work plan includes:

- Measurement of water absorption by total immersion
- Colour measurement of surfaces
- Low pressure water absorption (pipe method)
- Treatment of specimens to evaluate water-repellent products
- Measurement of drying index

The group has already sent for formal consultation the following three draft standards:

- Determination of water absorption by capillarity
- Measurement of static content angle
- Determination of water vapour permeability

It will be apparent that much of this work at present relates to the conservation of stone, but in due course it is expected that it will move into testing techniques relating to other materials.

The group's convenor is Vasco Fassina (Italy), who also chairs the main Technical Committee. The UK representative is Barry Knight, soon to be joined by Tim Yates of the BRE.

Working Group 4: Environment

This dynamic group has begun to tackle a wide range of topics. These currently include, at various stages of development:

- Air quality
- Light
- Showcases
- Storage
- Risk assessment

The group has already proposed three draft documents for formal consultation:

- Specification and control of indoor environment – Heating of historic churches
- Specifications for temperature and relative humidity to limit climate-induced damage in organic hygroscopic materials
- Procedures and instruments for measuring of the air and the surfaces of objects.

The UK voted against these documents, requiring numerous improvements in them all before being ready to support them.

This group is convened by Jesper Stub Johnsen (Denmark). The UK representatives have been Freda Matassa, David Howell and David Thickett.

Working Group 5: Transportation and Packing

Working on a draft European standard for packing, this group's efforts have been focussed recently on handling, casing and pictorial marking as well as on unloading, reception, unpacking and repacking. They are also under-



B/560 Secretary
Stephanie Kosandiak

taking a multi-lingual terminology of transport and exhibition.

There is a proposal from Greece that this group should deal with the transportation and packing of archaeological material from excavations, though the group is resistant to extending its scope to that extent. UK representatives consider existing guidance documents, such as *First Aid for Finds*, to be sufficient

The convenor of this group is Anne de Wallens (France); the UK representative Freda Matassa.

The larger picture

UK representatives have been concerned about the lack of an overall structure for this work and, in collaboration with representatives from Germany and Estonia, have proposed a matrix or template which will show the relationship of the various areas of work to each other and to the whole and which will more clearly demonstrate those areas where standards could usefully be developed.

Among the UK's comments on the first draft document is that decision-making has to be a multi-disciplinary process. Environments should not be specified and invasive sampling should not be undertaken without the agreement of a range of professionals, among whom should invariably be a suitably qualified conservator. The informed judgment of experienced conservators is indispensable to conservation decision making. The UK has also been pressing the need for these standards to reflect the principles of sustainability: that environmental standards should impose minimal energy requirements compatible with collection care.

What at first appeared to be a dauntingly difficult and complicated task turns out to be just that, but with the difference from the UK perspective that many more people are now sharing the work, as indeed is the case in other partner countries, and that the benefits of some of the proposed standards, once improved, are becoming more obvious. The combined efforts of committed European colleagues are beginning to ensure a move towards standards which promise to be of lasting value.

Icon is grateful to the BSI for supporting this project, and especially to Stephanie Kosandiak, the secretary of this BSI committee.

If you wish to contribute to this work please contact one of the UK people referred to above. They have access to the BSI Livelink website where all draft documents are reviewed.

Further reports on progress will be provided in Icon News. The first British Standards resulting from this project, subject to their being agreed, are likely to be published in about two years.

Postscript

In his 'Intervention' in the last issue of Icon News Jonathan Ashley-Smith worries about a current fashion for regulation, standardisation and the apparent hunger for solutions that are right or wrong in conservation. He points out that there is rarely 'only one right thing to say or do' and, as referred to above, that 'In the area of cultural heritage the objects are physically and historically complex, their environments are physically and chemically complex and naturally changeable'. How then should we defend this particular pursuit of European standards?

UK colleagues involved in this work would agree that rigid standardisation of conservation interventions (i.e. remedial conservation and restoration) is unacceptable. Fortunately these CEN standards do not at present appear to be attempting that, and we must make sure they do not. But in other areas they arguably do have a role: environmental control should not be subject to rigid specifications, as perhaps it has been too much in the past, but it should be carried out in accordance with norms which are agreed according to the best current understanding available under the guidance of conservators with the requisite experience and flexibility of approach. If such norms become embodied in some widely distributed environmental 'standards' this can only serve to promote good practice, provided of course that the standards are treated with discretion and insight and continue to be revised in accordance with latest thinking. National and international standards do get revised; it is up to us to make sure these are. The unofficial standards which have been operating for many years in environmental control were based on principles brilliantly expounded by Garry Thomson around 1978. Conservators and conservation scientists have been saying for some time now that it is time to revisit them, especially in the light of the need to minimise energy requirements and the impact on the planet's environment without compromising collection care. Standards for scientific tests of materials and the outcomes of conservation processes are required to ensure consistency of measurement and reproducibility, so that it is possible to rely on results across time and across geographical boundaries. In the pursuit of good conservation science this surely can only be welcomed.

It is perhaps relevant to mention that there are three UK standards in conservation which are reported to have been influential over the years. BS 5454, though now badly in need of revision, has helped guide improvements to the storage and exhibition of archival documents; BS 4791 has guided the repair and allied processes for the conservation of documents; while BS 7913 has been widely used to promote the principles of the conservation of historic buildings.

David Leigh

Conservation in Antarctica

(or Learning Something New Every Day)

Fiona Cahill, a Conservator at the Royal Armouries in Leeds, took time out to experience extreme conservation

In February 2007, as a member of a four strong conservation team, I got on a very big noisy C17 aeroplane in New Zealand and flew down to Scott Base in Antarctica to conserve objects from Shackleton's Nimrod Expedition hut at Cape Royds. This was the first of many firsts for me over the next seven months. Before we even started any conservation work we had to undertake AFT or Antarctic Field Training, an integral part of surviving Antarctica and you can't leave base without completing it. Here I learnt, amongst other things, how to pitch a polar tent, use a GPS, ride a skidoo, prime and light a primus stove, keep your water bottle in your sleeping bag to stop it freezing and how to use a F.U.D. (or how to pee like a man).

Living at Scott Base also presented a number of firsts for me. Over the next seven months I would live in an isolated place with thirteen other people for company (not including the other 125 people who lived 'over the hill' 5kms away at MacMurdo Station). I would learn how to don a number of clothing layers in an impressively speedy time. The presence of an espresso machine cultivated a NZ\$30 a day coffee habit that I'm still weaning myself off. I also saw the most spectacular aurora display on the way to a quiz night at MacMurdo. As part of the midwinter celebrations it even made sense to jump into a hole cut into the sea ice when the air temperature was -21°C . It was also the first time I had to conserve a mountain of food tins.

Shackleton took two years worth of supplies for his 1907 Nimrod expedition. These provisions were stored in the hut, in caches and used as a windbreak on the south and east sides of the hut. Since 1987 the Antarctic Heritage Trust (AHT) has been instrumental in the conservation not only of

Shackleton's hut but also three other 'Heroic Era' (1895–1917) huts on Ross Island. Although the majority of the food tins were generic red painted tins made by the Moirs company, I came across brands that are still familiar to us today; Heinz, Hartley's, Lyle's (now Tate and Lyle's) Quaker, Sunlight, Lifebuoy, Lea and Perrins, Rowntrees, Colman's, Lipton's and Jeyes.

Getting objects to the lab was also an interesting adventure. During the summer season the objects were moved 30kms from the hut to Scott Base and stored in shipping containers. The objects were then conserved during the winter season in the Hilary Field Centre (HFC) in Scott Base. Moving the objects from the shipping containers into the HFC for conservation involved warming up a vehicle to drive 100m in the dark. As conservation supplies had to be shipped or flown in the season before (the base is effectively cut off for six months after the last flight goes in March) improvisation was the name of the game.

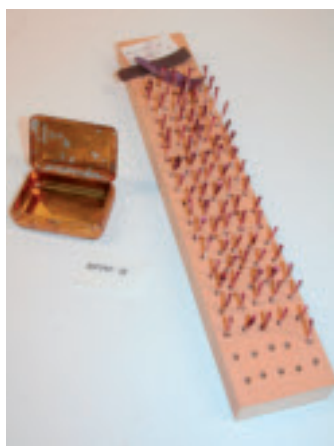
A good case in point was the conservation of metal boxes of Bell's Matches. In all about thirty had been excavated from underneath the hut in generally good condition. They all still contained matches and a retaining cardboard strip. During manufacture the match heads had been dipped in red phosphorus and in most cases this had deteriorated. After the health and safety issues had been addressed we decided to consolidate what remained of the phosphorus on the match heads by dipping them in a 50% solution of Paraloid B72 in acetone. The next problem was how to dry the matches? This was cleverly solved by one of the electricians on base who kindly made us a 'cribbage board' from an off cut of wood. Problem solved!

Emily Fryer, Fiona Cahill and Phillipa Durkin at Cape Royds



Conservation Lab in the Hilary Field Centre.





Bell matches and 'cribage board'



Emptying leaking Lyle Golden Syrup tin.



Paper Conservation – tutor and pupil.

Many of the tins had labels and packaging around them, and we were very fortunate to have a paper conservator with us, Phillipa Durkin. Paper conservation was something I had never come into contact with before and I was interested to see how paper could be washed and not turn to mush. Phillipa was very patient and even gave us a master class on lining a label, another first for me.

Whilst Phillipa worked on the paper items, Emily and I conserved the metal tins. I'm still convinced we got the raw end of the deal when on some occasions we had to empty the tins before conservation could take place. Some of them were straightforward and the contents looked as fresh as the day they were tinned. Others however were not so fragrant and we thought it kinder to everyone to empty these in a lab away from the base.

One of our most successful collaborations was the conservation of the Captain Cookesley's Consolidated Pea Soup tins. 145 of these miniature (4cm in height) tins came into the lab in a rather poor condition. After unpacking they were sorted into two groups, those that could be conserved and those that were beyond conservation. As Emily and I set to work on conserving the tins Phillipa cast her eye over the labels to determine which ones could be rescued. Although the metal conservation techniques we used were basic, with Phillipa's expertise the results were very satisfactory all round, as you can see on the cover of this magazine

Tin of lemons before conservation.



Tin of lemons after conservation showing label.



One of my favourite objects was listed on the inventory as a 'tin of oranges' but after one look in the tin was renamed 'the tin of browns' (they were in fact candied lemons!). Some time in the past, difficult to determine when, the tin had been opened and the lid bent back. Also, the tin had been splashed and had runs of white 'paint' on both the exterior of the tin and on the lemons themselves. I removed the lemons from the tin to swab them with IMS (industrial methylated spirit) in case of possible mould and to allow Phillipa to remove the paper liner for washing. I removed the corrosion mechanically and after much discussion with my colleagues removed the paint from the label as well. I felt that this was the right decision as the paint obscured the label and valuable information about the history of the tin. As an added measure a Perspex 'lid' was inserted into the top of the tin to protect the lemons beneath.

Throughout this project runs the theme of firsts, not only in my own experiences but also those of the expedition team that these items belonged to. Although Shackleton and his men were not the first to reach the South Pole they were the first to: reach the magnetic South Pole, over winter in Antarctica, ascend Mount Erebus, test a motorcar on the continent and occupy their time during the long winter months by producing and publishing a book, *Aurora Australis*.

The Antarctic Heritage Trust states in its Conservation Plan;

'The hut, the provisions, equipment and rubbish that make up the site have no great intrinsic value in themselves, many of them being ordinary day-to-day items of their time. Their value lies in the association with Shackleton and the Expedition, their location, and the relationship of one object to another, and the degree to which they have survived.'

To be involved in such a project was a fantastic experience. Even though we had strict deadlines to work to, the ability to work with such dedication on one project without the interruption of phones ringing, attending meetings and doing ten things at once, was refreshing. It gave me time and made me think more about the conservation decisions I made, and why I made them.

Of course the work continues and teams of conservators go to the ice all year round. To see what they get up to the AHT has collaborated with the Natural History Museum which has a blog on its website (www.nhm.ac.uk/antarctic). I wish to extend my thanks to the Royal Armouries for my sabbatical, the AHT for sending me to such a wonderful place and to the winter over crew at Scott Base.

A helping hand in the North East

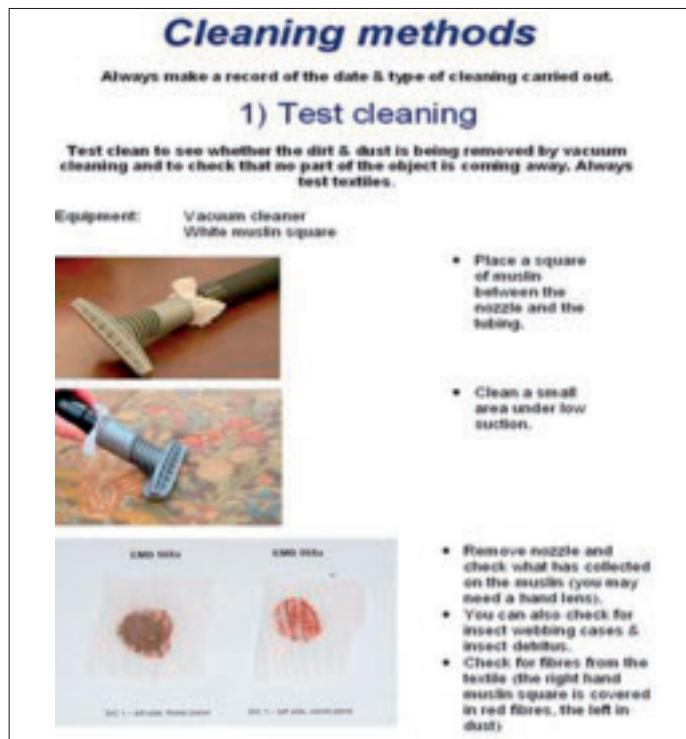
Diana de Bellaigue describes the North East Collections Care Framework.

At a time when very few museums, libraries and archives can afford conservation services, the North East Collections Care Framework (NECCF) has proved to be an extremely welcome free source of support to the North East of England. It was set up in 2006 as an extension to the ground breaking North East Collections Care Scheme 2007 winner of the Icon Care of Collections Award. The initial scheme dealt solely with paper-based collections but with the advent of Renaissance in the Regions and its remit to provide collection care support to regional museums, it was decided to extend the existing MLA North East (NEMLAC as was) funded scheme to include artefact collections. This cross domain approach has been one of the many innovative and interesting elements to the project both for the conservators involved as well as for all the museums, libraries and archives who have received support from the Framework.

The NECCF is run in partnership with Durham University Library, the North East Regional Museums Hub (Tyne & Wear Museums, the Bowes Museum, Hartlepool Museum, Beamish Open Air Museum) and MLA North East. The Museums Hub provided funding for a part-time objects conservator (I was the post holder for two years) and MLA North East funded some time from a paper and book conservator (Liz Branigan, Senior Conservator, Durham University Library). MLA North East and the Museums Hub also offer small follow-up grants to institutions for collections care, provide equipment for loan, (in some cases to be given away) and fund training courses run by the conservators associated with the scheme. Additional support is given by the conservators from Tyne & Wear Museums and the Bowes Museum when required.

The type of aid offered by the NECCF which has been running since 2006 was designed to meet the needs of institutions identified by MLA North East as well as drawing on the experience of Liz Branigan when working on the

Conservation cleaning training day run at Beamish Regional Resource Centre with the help of Bowes and Tyne and Wear Museums conservators.



A page from the cleaning guidelines given to the participants at cleaning training days.

paper-based scheme. This has resulted in the following services:

- Environmental surveys of storage and display conditions to be used when applying for funding or to create action plans.
- Help applying Benchmarks in Collections Care and assistance with Museum Accreditation applications.
- Advice and assistance in creating disaster plans and general emergency planning.
- Support with collection surveying such as the NPO Preservation Assessment Survey
- Training and advice on best practice in the care and handling of collections for display, lending and transport.
- An email and telephone advice service.
- Guidance on accessing conservation services and writing specifications for remedial conservation.
- Training volunteers and staff for preservation projects, for example packaging or mount making.

The scheme is designed to inform rather than dictate to institutions, helping them make decisions for themselves based on the current thinking on best practice. Although there are many sources of advice that museums, libraries and archives can turn to, this can be bewildering for a non-conservator. Synthesising the information available as well as building up relationships with institutions so that we had a



The mock-up disaster scene ready for salvage training at Beamish Open Air Museum..

thorough understanding of their needs has been key to the success of the scheme.

The following case study illustrates how the Framework operates.

A small volunteer-run social history museum in Weardale contacted Liz Branigan; they had been referred to us by MLA North East. (This, along with publicity mail shots and recommendations from other institutions are the main ways through which those wanting help have found the NECCF). They asked us to carry out an environmental survey, which we did following a site visit, giving recommendations for improvements with costings. As a result of this, the volunteers drew up an action plan and have been gradually making the improvements leading to their successful bid for accreditation. They also secured a grant from MLA North East for packaging as well as labelling and marking materials and we returned to the museum to run training sessions on labelling and marking as well as on conservation cleaning. They have rung us several times when they needed a question answered and although they do not need intensive support, they now know that we are there to offer assistance when needed.

As indicated above, as well as working with council run institutions, the NECCF has helped many volunteer-run museums from mining museums to bus preservation groups. It must be said that we have found some scepticism particularly in some institutions, where the volunteers may have a wealth of knowledge about their collection, but may not have come across conservators before. However, we have found that as long as the advice is practical, and we explain the logic behind the methods we recommend, staff are extremely receptive and some of our most successful experiences have been with smaller volunteer-run museums and libraries.

Running regional training days and providing written guidelines has also made up a significant proportion of the NECCF's work. The guidelines, covering topics such as environmental conditions, packaging materials, IPM, writing a disaster plan, how to make a book mount amongst others, were put together with advice from colleagues as well as using existing publications. We felt such documents were necessary to ensure that all the conservators giving advice through the scheme were providing the same information: this is more straight forward for paper conservators who have BS5454:2000 Recommendations for the Storage and Exhibition of Archival Documents to refer to, but for object



A participant salvages wet colour photographs at a regional salvage training day.

conservators the array of very slightly varying advice can be confusing and we wanted to be clear as possible.

Training days have brought together museum, library and archive staff from all over the region. Over forty museum, library and archive staff have now experienced the challenge of salvaging wet and fire damaged artefacts from a mock-up store during a series of salvage training days run at Beamish Regional Resource Centre in partnership with Caroline Rendell of the National Trust as well as colleagues from Tyne & Wear Museums and forty-four institutions have received a free museum vac and conservation cleaning kit with illustrated guidelines after staff attended object cleaning training sessions. The kits and vacs were bought for every museum in the region to be given out following training with funding from the North East Hub.

The NECCF is an excellent scheme which other regions are now showing interest in copying. It has helped disseminate principles in collections care to many museums, libraries and archives that may otherwise never have had any direct contact with a conservator. Long may it continue and long may it be free!

Diana de Bellaigue worked on the NECCF scheme from 2005 to 2007 and is now working at the National Museums Scotland as an artefact conservator. She would like to thank Liz Branigan for her help in writing this article and Sarah Carr of MLA North East for her input.

A volunteer practises her lettering during a labelling training session.




 WEST DEAN
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CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT COURSES

CONSERVATION METHODOLOGY Helen Hughes Institute of Conservation CONSERVATION AND REPAIR OF ARCHITECTURAL AND STRUCTURAL METALWORK Geoff Wallis Dorothea Restorations Ltd AN INTRODUCTION TO THE CONSERVATION OF TRANSPORT AND INDUSTRIAL COLLECTIONS Chris Knapp IWM Duxford	13-16 Oct 12-15 Jan 22-27 Feb
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T: 01243 811219 E: bcm@westdean.org.uk
 West Dean, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 0QZ
www.westdean.org.uk

Clare Hampson Scholarship Fund Publication Grant

Clare Hampson was a founding member and Secretary of the Institute of Paper Conservation for over twenty years before her untimely death in 2002. She was deeply committed to promoting professional development opportunities as demonstrated by her generous legacy 'to provide for an annual scholarship for the study of paper conservation'.



As an Icon Member, you will NOT GET:

- A monthly Iconnect email news service
- Regular notice of conservation jobs
- Notice of events and activities from the groups you are signed up to
- Reminders for events, application deadlines or other information

Unless you give us a current email address. Most Icon members are benefiting from these services. If you're not – perhaps you're missing out?

Email Charlotte Cowin on
membership@icon.org.uk

To support this aim, an innovative programme is being launched to encourage individuals engaged in the field of book or paper conservation, or in related activities to enable them to complete an article or a chapter of a book to peer reviewed publication standard.

Applications are invited by authors with advanced drafts based on completed research. Funding can be sought to support time away from work, travel, subsistence, translation and/or illustration costs. The award panel is keen to support individuals who have not yet published and to facilitate this, editorial support and mentoring may be provided to successful candidates. Grants can be sought up to £3,000.

Further information and application forms can be downloaded from www.icon.org.uk and returned electronically to sophie@zedat.fu-berlin.de by **31 December 2008**.

Successful applicant(s) will be informed by **1 March 2009**.

If you have any questions please contact Sonja Schwoil sophie@zedat.fu-berlin.de.

news from the groups

ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP

AGM & meeting report

The Group's AGM was held during a visit to the HQ of the Newport Ship Project, Gwent on 22 May. Minutes of the meeting, with changes to the committee, are on the Icon website. We were fortunate to have Kate Hunter (now retired) join us for the meeting: she had been the conservator at Newport Museums originally responsible for moving the ship to its current home, a large well-appointed warehouse unit, outside Newport. A review of the visit appears on page 31.

The second AG meeting of the year (reviewed on page 27) was held jointly with the Science Group in Cardiff on 8–9 July. Don't miss the joint AG/CCG meeting entitled 'Access all Areas' to be held in Liverpool on 13 November. Now booking!

IKUWA3 report

Several Icon members attended the third triennial international conference on underwater archaeology (IKUWA3) held in London in July. The packed programme delivered in parallel sessions over three days held much of interest to conservators, covering important topics such as legislative protection of wreck sites; in-situ preservation of wreck materials; innovative surveying and recording techniques; and issues surrounding public access and education. All this was backed up with interesting reports and case histories of projects from around the globe. There was a designated conservation session on the second afternoon with five papers presented, the most interesting and useful perhaps being a comparative study of the treatments currently in use worldwide for the conservation of large waterlogged wood structures and timbers; and on the Marstrand project – the monitoring of modern materials samples deliberately buried in marine deposits to aid our understanding of in-situ preservation and the potential for deliberate reburial. There was also a well-presented paper by Icon member Angela Karsten on the conservation of a lantern made of leather, metal and horn from the German medieval shipwreck.

CERAMICS AND GLASS GROUP

Call for Committee Members

Stopping short of a desperate plea, the Ceramics and Glass Committee are looking for one or two people to take on the role of Conference Co-ordinator. With the full help and support of the committee, the role would include organising venues, catering and accommodation as required and the processing of conference bookings.

It is only with help that the CGG will be able to provide members with the high standard of conferences which we have been accustomed to until now. Serving on the committee is a fantastic way to share and develop skills, network with a diverse range of people and play a part in the progression of our profession. If you are interested or would like further information please contact CGG Chair Rachel Swift: rswiftcgg@hotmail.co.uk

PHOTOGRAPHIC MATERIALS GROUP

Let's Talk About Photography 2008 series kicks off a new season with two events programmed for this autumn. The purpose of these seminars is to encourage networks and discussion about photography and we are therefore delighted that in the first event last year's seminars will be presented in the North thanks to a collaboration with the Icon Scottish Group. We hope others might be inspired to come up with venues and ideas in other parts of the country. The second seminar is back down in London and will be hosted by the Courtauld Institute of Art. Here three artists will be discussing their methods and techniques in their photographic artworks – it promises to be a fascinating evening. For more information about the above please see the Listing section. Do keep your ideas for further seminars coming in – please email Angels Arribas, conservator of photographs, at angels.post@3xl.cat.

SCIENCE GROUP

This is a summary of the Chair's report for 2007–8, delivered at its AGM in Cardiff in July. The full report is available on the Group's webpage.

The Group's most visible activity was Conservation Science 2007, held in Milan in May 2007 and jointly organised by the group, the Politecnico and the University of Milan. It was attended by over 200 delegates from twenty four countries and attracted a very large number of paper and poster proposals; it therefore had a packed programme. Feedback has suggested that more time for discussion on the conservation science profession would have been welcome. The group's least visible activity since has been the editing of the postprints, which are due to be posted to delegates and sold by Archetype from August 2008.

Heritage science activity in 2007–08 has been dominated by the AHRC/EPSRC Science and Heritage Programme led by May Cassar, and the group decided to contribute to its meetings and not to clash with them in timing or theme, to avoid splitting the potential audience. Therefore the group assisted with administration and hosting for the 'speed dating' or research partner brokering event held in October 2007 in London, and with a second such event held in April in Edinburgh.

A visit and research update meeting at the University of Cardiff in November 2007 was cancelled due to poor registration – and recast as the joint meeting between the Heritage Science and Archaeology groups, organised by Siobhan Watts for the group. [It is reviewed on page 27.]

Membership apathy has been a recurring feature. At formation the group's membership exceeded 400 and has expanded since. But the response rate to questionnaires and other methods of asking the group about preferences for the committee's activities and research priorities is still not representative of the group's entire membership and the committee is by now running out of strategies for obtaining members' views.

New members joining from UK universities have asked for

heritage science to feature more strongly on the Icon web page. The committee has worked on this in the past year and the main output is the group's Strategy for heritage science in the UK, now posted on the web site. The group has also pressed for the appointment of an English Heritage-funded coordinator for UK heritage science strategy; two of the committee are also members of the steering group for the post, which is being recruited during July 2008. Additionally, the committee has contributed to the UK input to CEN standards for display and transport of cultural heritage. At the 2006/7 AGM, the level of demand for accreditation of conservation scientists was discussed. However, the committee has not given the issue priority, since the demand is too low even for a one-off accreditation process to be a good use of resources.

The committee has met several times over the year, mostly in London but once in Edinburgh, and also maintains communication by email. It has benefited from having a wide range of conservation professionals among its numbers and we hope that this trend will be maintained in future years. The activities outlined above have not resulted in any significant cost to the group. Committee members' travel to meetings has been supported by their institutions. Group funds stand at just over £3,000 and activities for 2008/09 have been planned on the principle of being self-financing..

Joyce Townsend
July 2008

SCOTLAND GROUP

The Icon Scotland events programme for the last third of 2008 includes a walking tour of monuments in Edinburgh on Saturday 4 October, led by Paul McAuley. Last year's tour was a great success, and this promises to be an interesting and entertaining afternoon. Please contact Helen Creasy on 0131 3315875 or info@scottishconservationstudio.co.uk to reserve a place. The pub group will continue to be a regular event and will be held on the first Thursday of every other month. Dates for the rest of 2008 are 2 October and 4 December. Keep the evening of 27 November free for the Plenderleith Memorial Lecture to be held at the Royal Society of Edinburgh. The Scotland Group also has some exciting collaborations with other Icon groups in the pipeline, including a one-day Pest Conference in Glasgow planned with the Care of Collections Group for December. Please see the Scotland Group's webpage for details of all forthcoming events.

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

distribution between the disciplines. Applications are reviewed by Icon Scotland Group office bearers and awards are conditional on achieving ACR status. All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Committee meetings for 2008 will be held on 23 September, 3–5pm at General Register House, Edinburgh, and 9 December, time and venue to be confirmed.

The Icon Scotland Group Committee is as follows:

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

STONE AND WALL PAINTINGS GROUP

Historic Gravestone Conference – 9 October

Issues surrounding the safety of gravestones in burial grounds is currently a hot topic. Recent fatalities caused by falling gravestones have understandably caused measures by burial authorities to ensure safety. However, this has also led to some knee-jerk reactions which have resulted in over-zealous laying down of gravestones en masse, which has led to distress of relatives and great expense. This timely conference aims to raise and discuss these current issues within the context of historic gravestones and monuments. It also coincides with the forthcoming publication of English Heritage's Technical Advice Note: *Caring for Historic Gravestones and Monuments*. With a line-up of established experts, the Stone and Wall Paintings Group is holding a one day conference – **The Graveyard Slot** – on Thursday 9 October at the Assembly Rooms, Town Hall, Oxford. Registration by 30 September via the Icon website or through conference@odgersconservation.org.uk

TEXTILE GROUP

As the summer is passing into autumn, it's a busy time for the Textile Group with three events to take us into the winter months. Look out for Listings and the website for details of our programme for the rest of 2008. We are busy planning the programme for 2009 at present so if there are any topics you would like to see discussed or any visits you think would be good then please let us know. Also, at the next Spring Forum in April 2009, we will be looking to appoint new committee members so please give this your consideration. Nomination forms will be sent out later this year in time for a ballot of members early in 2009.

reviews

CONFERENCES

ARCHAEOMETRY AND HERITAGE SCIENCE

Icon Archaeology and Science Groups Joint Conference

Cardiff University, 9–10 July 2008

Over two very rainy days in early July, thirty three delegates from across the UK met at Cardiff University to discuss current issues and challenges in archaeometry and heritage science. Sessions were chaired by David Watkinson (Cardiff University), Joyce Townsend (Tate Britain), Jim Tate (National Museums Scotland) and Ian Freestone (Cardiff University).

The scientific component of the conference was far-reaching in scope: some presentations focused on the development of analytical techniques, while others addressed the role that these techniques can play in determining the provenance of archaeological specimens; still others provided new insights regarding preventive conservation in both the museum environment and the field. In a summary of this length, it is impossible to mention each of the sixteen presentations; it is anticipated, however, that presentation materials will be made available to Icon members at a later date on the Icon website.

This conference highlighted the extent to which the engagement of conservation professionals with the broader scientific community has spurred the development of new and valuable methodologies: speakers presented research that incorporated a wide variety of physical and chemical analytical techniques, including digital radiography, CT scanning, on-site 3D digitizing, and X-ray scattering using synchrotron radiation.

In some cases, analytical results have been used to uncover valuable information regarding the provenance of specimens. Ian Freestone's presentation, for example, focused on his use of strontium dating to uncover the sources of early glass samples. Other studies investigated the technology of ancient Greek helmets and Iron Age and Roman enamelled metalwork from a scientific standpoint.

A number of presentations addressed the unique set of issues affecting collections stored in atypical museum environments. David Thickett, for example, discussed his work in returning artefacts to English Heritage sites, most of which are open to the elements in environments that often have relative humidities in excess of 70–80%: hardly ideal conditions! For Rob Janaway and Andy Wilson, even defining the location of the heritage site is

problematic: their talk focused on the difficulties associated with locating, assessing, and conserving historic battlefields in the face of ongoing residential and commercial developments.

The theme of preventive conservation surfaced in a large number of presentations. Several talks focused on the current state of knowledge regarding optimal storage conditions for corroded iron, for example. Evelyne Godfrey suggested that an electronic symposium be organized to codify this knowledge and establish a guide to good practice regarding the conservation of early iron.

Two presentations gave much-needed attention to the biochemical aspect of conservation science. First, Julian Carter discussed the challenges associated with preserving natural history specimens on a biomolecular level. Then, Julie Eklund discussed the often-deleterious effects that conservation treatments themselves have on DNA contained in specimens, and advised that sampling strategies should be designed in concert with treatment regimes in order to ensure that the valuable information preserved in DNA is not irreversibly damaged.

Although the conference programme was busy, the organizers allowed ample time for discussion amongst attendees. Tours of the excellent conservation facilities at Cardiff were also provided. In addition, David Watkinson gave an overview of the conservation programs available at Cardiff; in the process, he emphasized the extent to which the institution strives to integrate theory, practical work, and research in order to produce well-rounded professionals in the field.

Many thanks are due to the conference organizers, Siobhan Watts for the Icon Science Group and David Watkinson for both the Icon Archaeology Group and the University of Cardiff, for facilitating such an enjoyable and productive meeting.

Sarah Styler

Icon HLF internship programme

Sarah is based in the Conservation Department at Tate Britain, where she is undertaking preventive conservation research for three different externally-funded projects, as the main focus of her conservation science internship.

This two day conference brought together members from both the Archaeology and Science groups to discuss the recent contributions made by conservation science in the field of archaeology and to propose areas requiring further research.

David Wilkinson started things off by introducing the conservation programme at Cardiff University. He explained the different

degrees offered and gave a general breakdown about each year. A crossover between management and objects was stressed so as to prepare students for the work environment when they graduate. David also brought up the importance of continuing the Cardiff Programme in face of the recent closures of other programmes such as the Textile Conservation Centre and the potential closure of other programmes.

May Cassar was unable to attend but Joyce Townsend was able to stand in her place to talk about the AHRC/EPSRC Science and Heritage Programme. The talk was composed of an explanation of the programme's aims and objectives followed by a discussion about initiatives to take the programme forward. These included a competition for ten PhD positions as well as the formation of a network of research clusters to exchange ideas and information concerning six areas of focus. This talk spurred a lot of debate between attendees about the difficulties some have experienced when trying to apply for funding from AHRC and EPSRC.

There were three talks which reviewed the literature and previous research about iron conservation and brought up current gaps in our understanding of iron corrosion. Dr. Evelyne Godfrey went so far as to suggest the formation of a symposium to review early conservation treatment, restoration and sampling methods to help conservators identify evidence of these previous activities when there are no written records to refer to. She would also like to see, as a result of this symposium, the publication of a guide to good practice for treatment, storage and scientific analysis of iron objects which would also be accessible to museum curators.

Julie Eklund gave an insightful talk about the effects of conservation treatments on DNA. This was followed by a talk from Julian Carter who discussed the results of his research into fluid-preserved natural research collections. His talk complemented that given by Julie as he reviewed previous treatment practices which have caused the loss of bio-molecular components in these collections. He went on to suggest which the best treatments available were.

Of course a large portion of the talks were focused on new analytical techniques and equipment. These included the use of gamma radiography on in-situ archaeological finds, 3D measuring and reconstruction of finds using a laser scribe, and using a CT scan to investigate the materials and technology used in the production of a 21st Dynasty Egyptian Sarcophagus. Sonia O'Connor gave a detailed discussion on the advances in digital radiography followed by David

Crombie who talked about his experience with digital radiography at National Museums Liverpool. Plus, there were three talks which involved the use of x-ray scattering using a synchrotron particle accelerator to look at biomaterials, Ancient Greek bronze helmets and Egyptian faience.

Other talks at the conference included a technological investigation of Iron Age and Roman enamelled metal work, the complexities of battle field archaeology and the metallic corrosion seen at these sites, as well as a review of research into the early production of glass and recent discoveries made in this field.

In all the conference was a great success incorporating a wide range research and interests. The hosts should be proud, though the timing was never perfect, they were able to organise these diverse topics into a form which flowed and allowed for open questions and discussion. I hope that in future there will be more of these joint conferences offered and that they will attract larger audiences.

Sharon Penton

Institute of Archaeology, University of London and conservation intern at the Petrie Museum.

ART2008

9th International Art Conference Jerusalem 25–30 May 2008

The Israel National Society of Non Destructive Testing ISRANDT was given the privilege of holding this conference in Jerusalem at the Renaissance Hotel. There were over 250 participants from 30 countries, 108 speakers and 75 posters. Prof. Amos Notea, President of ISRANDT, chaired the Steering Committee of twelve scientists and conservators. Dr. Ira Rabin, Sharon Tager, Irit Lev Beyth and I were invited to participate in the work of the Steering Committee in order to ensure a correct balance between the scientific and conservation aspects of the conference. Four good friends and work colleagues, we quickly found that we held similar views on most matters. Our main concern was to arrange the lectures not only in terms of instrumental procedure but also in terms of materials and objects. We had an interest in highlighting the forms of communication between the scientist and the conservator and showing what could be produced by such an alliance.

We looked for a correlation between scientific research and practical conservation and sought the relevance of science in conservation practice. The conservation profession is primarily a technical process dependent on subjective taste and judgment, acquired practical skills and experience with complex, multi component

objects. An informed opinion based on the results of scientific research is essential for a conservator.

The majority of the papers presented at the conference were prepared by scientists working in university or technological faculties with the cooperation of national museums. The essential awareness of curatorial and preservation concerns in formulating the aim of scientific experimental research was quite apparent, indicating a rapport between scientists on one hand, and conservators and museums on the other. Dr. Robert van Langh, Head of Conservation and Research, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, gave constructive criticism as well as praise for this process in his talk on the language between conservators, curators and scientists.

The activities of the now concluded European Cooperation in the field of Scientific and Technical Research, COST Action G8, entitled Non-Destructive Analysis and Testing of Museum Objects, was eloquently presented by the Chair, Professor Mieke Adriaens, Department of Analytical Chemistry, University of Ghent. COSTG8 has now made way for COSTD42 Chemical Interactions Between Cultural Artefacts and Indoor Environment (EnviArt) which focuses on making scientific evidence-based recommendations for preventive conservation practice. The work of this group was also presented by Prof. Adriaens. Science in the service of conservation can benefit the conservator by helping to determine the object's condition and historical context. Different types of mobile compact NDT equipment were discussed in the sessions and exhibited in the trade fair. MOLAB offers a service to conservators in Europe through Eu-ARTECH (Access, Research and Technology for the European Cultural Heritage) currently managed by thirteen EEC countries.

Europe has established a broad interdisciplinary network of cooperation between scientists, conservators and historians aimed at preserving and studying past cultures. Israeli cultural institutions have yet to come to terms with the collaborative learning approach. The Israeli Society for the Conservation and Preservation of Cultural Heritage put up a poster and in the capacity of Deputy Chairman I briefly introduced the aims and plans of the newly formed society. In his concluding remarks at the close of the conference, Prof Notea gave a statement about the promising news of the establishment of the Society.

The Dead Sea Scrolls session was held without competing concurrent sessions to allow for maximum attendance. The Steering Committee considered the

investigation of the DSS to be of prime relevance and importance in Israel. Most of the groundbreaking work is carried out outside Israel. The conclusions of COST G8 in conjunction with observations of current work carried out, for example, on the stratification of parchment by Admir Masic of the University of Torino, the study of the damaging effect of poultice application to scroll fragments by Dr. Oliver Hahn of BAM the Federal Institute for Materials Research and Testing in Berlin and Co. and an array of other NDT studies at the Department of Materials and Processes, Nuclear Research Centre-Negev, TU Berlin, Fritz-Haber-Institute and Cardiff University, provided a clearer picture of the vulnerabilities of the scrolls, and by implication expressed a strong criticism of the handling and treatment of the scrolls by the Israel Antiquities Authority.

Finally, the conference concluded with a short debate on the virtues of destructive and non destructive techniques. Dr. Zvi Koren of the Edelstein Center for the Analysis of Ancient Artifacts, Shenkar College, Israel, explained that destructive qualitative and quantitative analysis is by far the most accurate of the scientific analytical techniques and although it entails the destruction of minute samples, in many instances the loss is of no consequence to an historical object. As he jokingly put it, 'the sample begs: "take me, take me"'

Patrick Ravines of George Eastman House, suggested that we coin the term unperturbed instead of non destructive in order to clarify that the object has not been altered in any way.

In conclusion, there are those from whom to learn and it is clear that Israel has many allies who have declared their readiness to impart their knowledge for our benefit, and to quote Dr. Zvi Koren regarding the quest for knowledge: 'take me, take me'.

Hasia Rimón ACR

COURSES

MOULD MAKING AND CASTING Gilding and Decorative Surfaces Group High Wycombe

As conservators, it is often necessary that we replicate missing parts and lost ornamentation. I have tended to favour a particular moulding material and have devised my own successful system for the replication of missing components. However,

- What if I have to cast an object much larger than usual and my moulding rubbers catalyse too quickly?

- What if my usual method and rubber is not suitable for the task in hand?
- What if I have to cast an object in the round, rather than in relief?

Two one-day seminars, held at the conservation studios at Buckinghamshire New University in High Wycombe, provided answers to these common questions. Both seminars were led by Dr Campbell Norman-Smith, course leader for the MA Furniture Conservation and Restoration course and tutor for the BA Furniture Conservation and Restoration course. Campbell's practical and working knowledge has its roots in many years as a practising conservator as well as insight gained from the family business. His father's business is precision mould making using a refined lost wax casting method.

Mould Making and Casting – Hot Melt Rubbers

The first seminar commenced with Campbell demonstrating the method for using Gelflex Soft (natural), also known as Vinamould. Campbell's opinion is that the expensive rubber-melting equipment, said to be required by the manufacturers, was not necessary provided basic health and safety measures were adhered to. The rubber can be melted in a microwave oven in a Pyrex container, with close observation to ensure that it does not over-heat.

After securing the object to be replicated (double-sided tape suffices), the molten rubber is stippled on with a hog's hair brush. This has to be done with care to ensure that all elements of the item to be replicated are covered and no air-bubbles are trapped. It became apparent that the rubber retained the heat for long periods and it was possible to disturb the previous layers.

After building up a sufficient depth of Gelflex, a reinforcing 'jacket' is made. The purpose of the jacket is to strengthen the mould and provide a stable surface. Modroc (bandages impregnated with plaster of Paris) was the chosen material. A piece of MDF or wood can be encased within the Modroc for stability. Care has to be taken to construct a jacket which can be easily removed, so as not to lock the jacket onto the mould. As this is not always possible, the jacket can be cut later to release the mould and then can be repaired.

To aid drying, the Modroc was dried in the lab oven. Many participants took the opportunity to view the BA Furniture Conservation final show and the impressive achievements of the recent graduates. Treatments to a wide range of materials are covered on the course, ranging from gilded and polychrome surfaces to traditional furniture with a variety of surface treatments and applied decoration to the relatively new area of modern furniture conservation.



Campbell demonstrating the stippling technique in making a Gelflex mould

The afternoon session started with a demonstration in casting with plaster of Paris. Although this is a material conservators are familiar with, there are a few common problems. It can be difficult to calculate the exact quantity of plaster of Paris to mix for a mould and burst air-bubbles can ruin the surface of a casting. The simplest method to calculate the required quantities is to fill the mould with water. This has the added benefit that you very quickly realise if your mould is water-tight. The amount of water from the mould is then poured into a lab beaker. Exactly the same volume of plaster is measured out. The mould should then be wiped dry with tissue paper. The water and plaster are then mixed together by gradually introducing more plaster and mixing by hand, then

sieving to remove lumps. The next process is completely ingenious, de-gassing the plaster of Paris in a vacuum chamber. The container of the mixed plaster is placed in a Perspex dessicator and a vacuum is drawn using a vacuum pump. Eventually the plaster of Paris is drawn up and rises within the container as the air bubbles are extracted.

The de-gassed plaster is then poured (from one point only, to avoid introducing air-bubbles) into the mould. It helps at this point if you have a vibrating plate attached to your table. (Campbell has made himself a home-spun variety in the manner of 'Scrapheap Challenge'). The vibration ensures that any air-bubbles are encouraged to rise to the surface, where they burst.

Campbell demonstrating the use of a dessicator and vacuum pump





Pouring Silastic T4 into a prepared mould

To summarise, this method of mould making lends itself to casting in plaster. However, it is fairly time-consuming. The benefit of this mould is that it is durable enough to withstand many castings and the rubber, as well as being re-useable, is extremely flexible. Unlike Lab Putty or Steramould, for example, Gelflex moulds have unsurpassed flexibility and can be turned inside out completely. The significant disadvantages of using Gelflex are that you cannot cast in metal and certain objects cannot withstand the heat of the molten rubber being applied, as they could be damaged. Due to the prolonged periods of high temperatures directly in contact with objects, Gelflex appears to have fallen out of favour in the conservation world.

Mould Making and Casting – Cold Cure Rubbers

The advantages of making moulds with cold cure rubbers are that versatile moulds can be made in exquisite detail as well as being very durable. Various rubbers available to the conservator were discussed. One particular rubber, Silastic T4, has the added benefit that molten lead, pewter etc. can be cast, as the rubber can withstand extremely high temperatures. As the rubber is semi-transparent, it is possible to view the object. Although adequate results can be achieved without de-gassing the rubber, Campbell feels that to achieve the best results, the rubber should be de-gassed in a vacuum chamber. The disadvantage in this is the cost of the equipment.

As in the previous studio seminar, participants were able to cast a variety of objects to gain the greatest insight. In making a simple mould, the first step is to secure the object to a Perspex (acrylic sheet) base. An open Perspex container is then built to surround the object. The Perspex can be bonded together either with Superglue or chloroform. The bonded joints

are then taped up to prevent possible leakages.

After the volume of rubber is determined, using the water measuring method, the rubber is measured out, the catalyst is added and then it is de-gassed. After pouring the rubber, it is then left to cure. As this takes at least twelve hours, pre-prepared moulds were produced for participants to practice cutting open. After breaking apart the Perspex box, Campbell demonstrated cutting open the mould to release the object. This process requires patience and very sharp scalpels, as the rubber quickly blunts the cutting edge. The first cut is a wavy line, to the full depth of the scalpel blade. This is to ensure that the cut sections will locate again after they have been separated into two or more parts. The mould must then be prised apart and more scalpel cuts are made. This is repeated until the scalpel meets the encased object. Great care is necessary, so as to not damage the object. An extra pair of hands is useful to hold the mould apart during the cutting process.

After the object has been released, the mould is taped together. Due to time restraints, participants cast their moulds in wax, using a pressurised hot wax injector. Examples were shown which had been cast with wax poured from a melting pot. Casting in plaster of Paris and West Epoxy are possible alternatives.

Campbell has undertaken extensive research (and presented a paper at the last Group Conference) on the uses of West Epoxy Systems. Unlike regular epoxy, this can be made to a pouring cream consistency or can be bulked up with West Microlight 410 to produce a palette knife consistency. The epoxy can be tinted with pigments and when catalysed can be sanded, shaped and decorated as required.

Both seminars were useful in introducing conservators to different materials and ways in working. They well-prepared and the techniques are clearly presented with a no-nonsense, common sense approach. The techniques are tried and tested and participants left with knowledge usually only achieved after many years of trial and error.

Claire Daly

Conservator (Decorative Surfaces)
Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery

Suppliers:

Plaster bandages (Modroc), Gelflex Soft (natural) and plaster of Paris are available from:
South Western Industrial Plasters,
63 Netherstreet, Bromham, Chippenham,
Wiltshire SN15 2DP
Tel: 01380 850616

Perspex (acrylic sheeting) is available from:

GP Plastics Limited,
156 Bordesley Middleway, Stratford Street North,
Camphill, Birmingham,
West Midlands B11 1BN
Tel: 0121 772 0033 Fax: 0121 772 6856
Email: sales@gpplastics.co.uk
Website: www.gpplastics.co.uk

Silastic T4 (manufactured by Dow Corning) is available from:

Thomson Bros. Limited,
Mylord Crescent, Champerdown Industrial Estate,
Killingworth, Newcastle NE12 5UJ
Tel: 0191 216 0397
Website: www.thomsonbros.co.uk

West Epoxy System (manufactured by Wessex Resins and Adhesives) is available from:
www.wessex-resins.com where many suppliers are listed

BOOK CONSERVATION SUMMER SCHOOL Montefiascone August 2007

The small hilltop town of Montefiascone may continue to be a well kept secret from the many tourists that flock to its neighbouring Orvieto each year but there is no doubt that its popularity is increasing among the avid group of book conservators and students that transforms the town every August. At the head of this group is the Australian conservator Cheryl Porter. Since 1987, Cheryl has endeavoured to restore the poor state of the collection in the library of the town's Seminario Barbarigo, much of which was damaged during the Second World War. Shortly after this, Cheryl organized a group of conservators to begin repairing the books and manuscripts that would soon become the heart of a thriving conservation summer programme attracting students and professionals worldwide.

The programme, now in its sixteenth year, continues to offer classes taught by conservators from the most prestigious institutions around the world, introducing new techniques and insights into some of the oldest materials, and donating all proceeds to the conservation of the seminary. Kicking off the programme each year is Cheryl Porter's course in 'Medieval Painting', a look into the history, chemistry and re-creation of pigments used in medieval manuscripts. The course is a favourite among old and new conservators alike, and many returning students continue to take part in it. The course offerings for the rest of the summer vary widely in subject and time period, but they are always aimed at the most popular and widely debated issues in book conservation. In 2007, for example, the courses offered were 'The Armenian Manuscript', 'Arab Bookbindings in Spain', and 'Nag Hammadi Codices', taught by Julia Miller. As a result of such variety, the programme is both timely and intense, attracting some of the most ambitious conservators and students each year.

For the past four years, one space in particular has been reserved for the winner of Conservation by Design's Nicholas Hadgraft Scholarship. To many of those returning to Montefiascone each year, Nicholas Hadgraft was a familiar name and face. His enthusiasm for the town and for book conservation was unmistakable and has been commemorated by the scholarship now given in his name. A more than generous amount, the stipend allows one student every year to study whichever course or courses they choose in the setting that Nicholas so enjoyed. Being fortunate enough to receive the scholarship last year, I had the opportunity to study two courses over a two-week period.

'The Armenian Manuscript' was co-taught by Caroline Checkley-Scott and John Mumford with excellent lectures on the history of Armenian Catholicism and culture by Dr. Vrej Nersessian. With Dr. Nersessian's in-depth lectures starting off each day, an inspired and eager class then worked furiously to create an historical model of the seventeenth-century manuscript belonging to the Wellcome Trust Library in London. Having led the class from start to finish, the instructors engaged students in discussions as to how the bindings might have been created, and how several different versions of the distinctive raised end-bands may have been made. In five long but exciting days, all fifteen students made it from the beginning sewing stages, past triple-cord end-bands, and into the blind-tooling that finished the replica, taking away invaluable knowledge to enrich their own work.

In the final week of the programme, Ana Beny, a Spanish freelance conservator, kept up the pace with her course on 'Medieval Arab Bindings in Spain'. In elegantly presented lectures, Beny covered a vast area of cross-cultural influence on medieval bindings. Discussing some of the earliest approaches to conservation held by Islamic binders, she illustrated the importance of such influences in the re-creation of an Islamic manuscript. Given the degree of cultural exchange common to such bindings, many techniques were covered in this course that merged both Western and Eastern practices. To conclude the course, after studying visual examples from Beny's lectures and from books she provided, the class finished each binding in their own adaptation of Islamic design.

The *Nicholas Hadgraft Scholarship* made it possible for me to study on both these courses and to experience the beauty of the tiny hilltop town of Montefiascone. Certainly, the annual wine festival, boasting the town's famed 'Est! Est! Est!' wine, the broad sunsets over Lake Bolsena, and the many friendships made there had much to do with

Toby Jones, project director, showing a frame section from the Newport Ship to AG members



Nicholas's enthusiasm for the programme. My experience was equally inspiring, confirming me in my ambition to pursue a career in book conservation. Undoubtedly, my acceptance to the MA Programme in Conservation at Camberwell attests to the reputation of the summer programme and to Conservation by Design's scholarship.

Alexandrea Cattanea

VISIT

THE NEWPORT SHIP PROJECT Archaeology Group AGM & visit Newport, Gwent 22 May 2008

Discovered in 2002 during construction of the new Riverfront Arts Centre, Newport, and dating from the 15thC, this 35m by 12m vessel is thought to be the largest clinker type ship ever found. With the help of the Welsh Assembly, Newport City Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), the ship timbers have been retrieved, cleaned and recorded. They are now in wet storage awaiting conservation treatment prior to reconstruction and display at the Newport Museum. It was Kate Hunter's inspired talk at the 2002 Archaeology Group Christmas lectures that gave many of us the first indication of the enormity of the project and the passion the local people felt about rescuing the boat. So five years later the Archaeology Group decided to visit to see what progress had been made.

An informative lecture by Toby Jones the curator in charge of the recording and cleaning of the timbers introduced many of us to the FaroArm, a 3D digital recording device which is dragged lightly across each surface of the timber between fixed points to build up a 3D image in the computer. Although the equipment costs approximately £30,000, a 3D image can be

created in a day. This image can then be manipulated to reveal all the delicate tool marks, features etc. At the start of the project there were 1,600 timbers but by the time they had finished the recording, many had been sawn in half for dendrochronology and so it needed four FaroArms to complete the 3,000 plus timber records. Two of the FaroArms have now been traded in for an infra red laser scanner to record the small finds, which will see the completion of the recording phase.

A decision had been taken to dismantle the ship and remove all the iron fittings and caulking, with many samples being kept. During the cleaning process a French silver coin of the 15thC was discovered hidden in a recess between the keel and stem post of the ship, further supporting the dating. The timbers are stored in large marine scaffold tanks in fresh water awaiting the stabilization phase. The conservation assessment (undertaken by York Archaeological Trust) recommended a pre-treatment using tri-ammonium citrate solution to remove residual iron staining followed by a two stage polyethylene glycol (PEG) pre-treatment before freeze drying. The post of project conservator has recently been advertised – a challenging but rewarding job for whoever is appointed that will involve commissioning dedicated large-scale freeze drying equipment. They will be in charge of running this very well fitted-out unit, which is luxury by the standards of most wet wood treatment facilities. It even smelt pleasant, but wait until they put the PEG in! Our thanks go to the members of the committee who organised the day and to all the staff at the Newport Ship Project who gave us a fascinating tour.

Gill Barnard & Liz Goodman
Museum of London

in practice

STREAMLINING CONDITION REPORTING A new approach at the Victoria and Albert Museum

by Helen Nodding, Victoria Oakley and Sandra Smith

The creation of a new role within the Conservation Department of the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A), that of Condition Reporting Administrator, has resulted in dramatic improvements to the condition reporting process. Government Indemnity requires the condition of an object to be recorded before, during and upon return from loan or touring. Last year a total of 152 short loans (involving 1,224 objects) and over 40 international and national touring exhibitions (involving 1852 objects) left the V&A. The Conservation Department has traditionally been responsible for producing condition statements to accompany each object. These can take between fifteen minutes to complete for simple two-dimensional prints and drawings and two hours for more complex three-dimensional costumes. The completion of over 3000 condition statements requires 1.25 full time equivalent conservation staff.

Loans and touring exhibitions are just one of the object-focussed priorities for the Department; preparing objects for exhibitions, gallery refurbishment and catalogues also requires considerable input. The Department has become increasingly effective in delivering these objectives and, in doing so, has challenged traditional attitudes and practice by undertaking systematic reviews of roles and process and embracing electronic systems.

The unique importance of the role of Conservator as assessor of an object's condition was highlighted during a review of the loans process. However, it was realised that the preparation of a condition statement with accompanying photographs could be undertaken by non-conservators with the appropriate skills and training, thereby releasing more conservation time for other activities. It was anticipated that increased efficiencies could be achieved by moving away from traditional handwritten descriptions, drawings and acetate overlays, towards electronic condition statements based on high quality digital photographs.

In August 2007 a pilot post of 'Condition Reporting Administrator' (CRA) was created. Centrally located in the Administration Section, but line-managed by a conservator (Victoria Oakley) with departmental liaison responsibility for the Exhibitions and Loans departments, this post supported both the Conservation and the Exhibition departments. The job description included coordination, administration and scheduling of condition reporting for outgoing loans and exhibitions; creation of clear high resolution digital images to record current condition; downloading images into the required format, filing and archiving; producing condition statements (involving compiling and entering descriptive and administrative details and adding the images); undertaking condition checking of objects on loan to the V&A and training

and development. The role also involved liaison between the Conservation Department, Registrars and Exhibitions teams, overseeing the schedules of colleagues and working with external couriers. The post holder needed good organisational, time management and team working skills as well as technical proficiency in producing high quality digital images of objects and Adobe Photoshop™ skills. Training was provided by conservators, in-house photographers and exhibitions staff in order to familiarise the post holder with internal systems.

Helen Nodding was appointed to the post in August 2007. Her previous work in the Technical Services Department, combined with a good understanding of Museum processes and experience in the use of electronic systems, helped her to rapidly develop within this role. Within four months, savings and efficiencies has been identified to such a level that a successful business case was made to make this post permanent. The CRA has now been in post for 12 months and has been in a unique position to view the condition reporting process holistically. With no precedent for the position, the role of CRA has evolved in response to the needs of conservators and exhibitions staff and the condition reporting process has been streamlined, saving time (and money) for both departments. (See Fig.1)

Efficiencies resulting from the CRA post

• *Creation of standardised condition statements*

The lack of consistency in condition statements across the different studios of the Conservation Department made object assessment unnecessarily complex for couriers on multi-media touring exhibitions. By working alongside conservators, exhibitions staff and couriers, as well as drawing upon her own experiences and reviewing practice in other establishments, Helen has been able to identify best practice and so develop a more 'user friendly' version of the condition statement. A template has been created which includes standardised fonts, colours, layout and the inclusion of a thumbnail image on the front of the statement to act as a

Fig 1: Helen Nodding, Condition Reporting Administrator, at work



Louise Egan. Courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London



Fig 2: Example of a Condition Report following improvements made by the CRA

quick reference guide. She has also contributed to the training workshops for couriers, highlighting aspects of checking objects which might be confusing for non-conservators.

• Use of digital images

Several members of staff may be involved as couriers in the installation and de-installation of objects during multi-venue exhibition tours. In the past, they have often found it difficult to distinguish between old and new damage using statements with written descriptions. At the end of a long tour, the statements were often so heavily annotated that they became difficult to read making it difficult to assess the final condition of the object. The CRA has developed excellent skills in digital photography, photo-editing software (Adobe Photoshop™) and Microsoft® Office and now creates condition statements based on high quality digital images that highlight areas of damage and reduce the need for annotation. A hard paper copy of the statement is printed out to accompany the objects during the loan or exhibition (see Fig 2). The improved format saves time during the assessment and condition checking stages. If necessary, the electronic files of condition statements can be re-used to form the basis of future condition statements more quickly and efficiently than old paper versions.

• Simplifying and clarifying the process

Traditionally, at the start and end of an exhibition, all objects were condition checked by conservators. Exhibitions staff would coordinate appointments for the different materials specialists to view objects as they were unpacked or de-installed. This process was disruptive and inefficient with each conservator often having to make several trips to the preparation area. The CRA, having undertaken training in condition checking now applies this skill to a wide range of materials, reducing the involvement of conservators. The lead conservator for the exhibition China Design Now estimated that Helen has saved her equivalent to a month's work over the installation period.

• Resource usage and financial saving (see Fig 3)

A review of the work undertaken by the CRA in the first full year of the post has shown that 69% of her time is spent on Conservation Department-focussed activities, 24% on work in the Exhibitions Department with the remaining 7% being spent on training and developing skills necessary for the post and passing on those skills to other members of staff.

Job evaluation grading support (JEGS) confirmed that the CRA's roles and main duties correspond to a salary grade two

bands below that of a conservator and one below exhibitions staff. Introducing the CRA post therefore is not only more efficient for the Museum in terms of releasing professional conservation expertise, but has also reduced the costs of delivering loans, exhibitions and their subsequent tours. A saving of at least £6.82 per hour is made on employing the CRA to undertake the work. The approximate total time saving during the last 12 months for Exhibitions and Conservation amounts to 1,456 hours (380 and 1076 respectively) which represents a saving of £9,257 (£1,919 and £7,338 respectively) for the Museum.

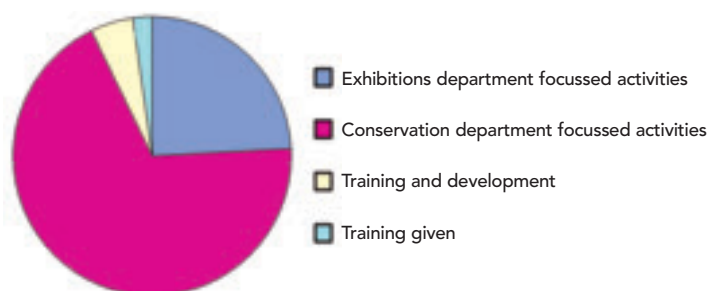
Conclusion

Through the development of a specialist post, it has been possible to improve long standing practice and to rapidly implement museum- wide improvements to the loans and exhibition process. Separating out administrative functions from professional conservation expertise has made the process increasingly efficient as the CRA has developed skills in digital imaging, processing and associated systems that exceed the abilities of conservators, who would otherwise undertake this role, but on a less frequent basis. Whilst conservators remain an essential part of the loans process, their involvement has been noticeably reduced and the Department has recovered almost half a year of professional conservation time to focus on other object-based activities.

The establishment of this post is also enabling the Museum to look for further improvements to the loans and exhibition process. By the end of the 2008, with the help of training from the CRA, it is proposed that the Department will have changed to using completely electronic-based condition statements. The potential for having a central, digital administration point for condition statements is also being assessed in view of the level of success achieved so far.

Fig 3: Pie Chart demonstrating how the CRA's time has been divided over a one year period

Breakdown of activities over a one year period



listings

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

Icon Offices: Please note that many events are now being held at the Icon Offices at 3rd Floor, Downstream Building, 1 London Bridge, London SE1 9BG. Security clearance for entry into the building must be arranged in advance so please follow any instructions included in the listings entry. The Icon website provides comprehensive directions on how to find the offices – from the home page, go to 'About Icon' and then to the 'Find us' page

8 September

Icon Textile Group

Back to Basics – Life after Synperonic N

Venue: National Museums of Scotland textile conservation studio, Edinburgh.

Contact: Sarah Howard on email:

sarah.1.howard@hants.gov.uk for further details.

11–13 September

Conservation of Wet Organic Archaeological Materials

Venue: Germany

Further details via the Icon website

15–19 September

IIC: 22nd Congress

Conservation and Access

Venue: Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, Westminster, London.

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

Also see page 13 of this issue of Icon News

26 September

Icon Textiles Group

The process of tapestry conservation in a day.

Visit to the Shepherd Travis Textile Conservation Studio

Venue: Cobham, Surrey.

The event will be limited to a maximum of 12 people.

Cost: £45

Contact: Rachel Langley on Tel: 01263 735878 or email

rachel.langley@nationaltrust.org.uk

26 September

British Horological Institute

Turret Clock Forum

Venue: Upton Hall, Newark

Presentations will include: pigeon-related diseases, the church faculty process, automatic winding and practical conservation examples.

Cost: £5.

Contact: Zanna Perry at Upton Hall tel: 01636 813795/6 or

zanna@bhi.co.uk

30 September, 6pm

Icon Book and Paper Group

'A Blue Story'

Venue: Icon Offices, London.

Speaker: Dr Brian H. Davies BSc PhD CChem FRSA

A talk to illustrate the changes in the use of blue in heritage and cultural materials and to describe the methods for the identification of the blue colours of inks and paints used on paper and parchment.

Contact: Please register in advance with Charlotte Cowin on tel: 020 77853805 or email: events@icon.org.uk For further information on this lecture please contact:

Maria Vilaincour on email: mariavilaincour@hotmail.com

2 October

Icon Photographic Materials Group

Let's Talk About Photography series travels to Scotland

Venue: National Museums of Scotland Collections Centre, 242 West Granton Rd, Edinburgh

Speaker: Victor Gray Co-curator of the exhibition 'The Dawn of Colour' at National Media Museum in Bradford and ex-director of the Rothschild Archive – Celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Autochrome process.

Speakers: Virginia Llado-Buisan and Elisabeth Carr, paper conservators at the National Maritime Museum – Preliminary work on the potential re-housing of the National Maritime Museum's collection of negatives.

Tour: Introduction to the new National Museums of Scotland Collections Centre

Cost: £25 members, £35 non members

Contact: Linda Ramsay on email Linda.Ramsay@nas.gov.uk.

Register by 26 September.

2 October

PACR Clinic, Bristol

Further details via the Icon website

7 October, 6pm

Icon Photographic Materials Group

Artists and Methods: Contemporary Fine Art Photography

Venue: The Courtauld Institute of Art, Somerset House, Strand, London, WC2R 0RN

Three artists currently exhibiting in 'On Time' will discuss their methods, formats and use of technology.

Cost: £6, £4 students

Register with the Icon office by 26 September.

9 October

Icon Stone and Wall Paintings Group

The Graveyard Slot

Venue: Assembly Rooms, Oxford Town Hall

A one day symposium to discuss conservation issues for cemeteries, churchyards and their monuments.

Cost: £45 Icon members, £55 non members, £25 students

Contact: David Odgers (david@odgerconservation.co.uk) or Mike Sheppard (mjsconservation@gmail.com).

15 October

Icon Metals Group

'Building on the Past, Conserving for the Future' and AGM

Venue: CUBE, 113–115 Portland St, Manchester, M1 6DW
Exploring many important aspects of planning, managing and executing complex and sensitive building conservation projects. In addition a special presentation will discuss the importance of the use of traditional wrought iron within architectural heritage conservation.

Cost: £40, £30 students, £50 non-members

Contact: Fran Clarke, Collections Department, MOSI, Castlefield, Manchester, M3 4FP

f.Clarke@mosi.org.uk Tel: 0161 606 0113

15 October

PACR Clinic, London

Further details via the Icon website

21 October, 6pm

Icon Paintings Group

Working for Hitler: The Restoration Profession and the Nazi Looting Machine

Venue: Icon Offices, London

Speaker: Morwenna Blewett

Using previously classified material and recently rediscovered papers and photographs, this talk will explore the context of looting during this period and then describe conservators' and restorers' roles within this highly organized and ruthless programme.

Tickets: Icon members: £5, non members: £10

Contact: Clare Finn on email FinnClare@aol.com or 020 7937 1895, register by 18 October.

25 October

Icon Stained Glass Group

Conference 2008

Venue: Freemasons Hall, Manchester

A reflection on stained glass conservation techniques both past and present.

Keynote Speaker: Ulrike Brinkmann, Head of Cologne Cathedral Stained Glass Studio.

Cost: £60 members, £70 non-members.

Contact: Helen Bower, 21 Whitby Avenue, Stockton Lane, York, YO31 1EU (include A4 sae), Tel: 01904 415695, e-mail: helenbower1@btinternet.com. Further details on the Icon website.

28 October

Introduction to PACR, London

Further details via the Icon website

4 November

Council for the Care of Churches

Conservation Forum 2008 – The Environment of Church Buildings

Venue: St Botolph's Church Hall, Bishopgate, London EC2

Cost: £50

Further details via the Icon website

6 November

Icon Textiles Group

Back to Basics – workshop on enzymes

Venue: National Maritime Museum, Greenwich

Practical workshop to focus on the use of enzymes in textile and paper conservation treatments. Details of the Albertina Komprese system will be given.

Cost: £95

Contact: Rebecca Bissonnet on email:

rebecca_smith37@excite.com

6–9 November

Costume Colloquium: A Tribute to Janet Arnold

Venue: Florence, Italy.

Further details via the Icon website

7 November

PACR Clinic, Manchester

Further details via the Icon website

13 November

Icon Care of Collections Group

Visit to Brodsworth Hall, Doncaster

A behind the scenes tour of this 1860s Italianate style Victorian country house, to explain why the house closes during the winter and show what really happens when the house is 'put to bed'. Plus an opportunity to visit the gardens.

Cost: £20

Contact: bethan.stanley@english-heritage.org.uk

13 November

Icon Archaeology Group and Icon Care of Collections Group

Access All Areas

Venue: Liverpool

Joint event to discuss display techniques and materials with an emphasis on archaeological objects, covering environmental control, case construction, lighting, etc.

Contact: Emma Roodhouse on email:

emmaroodhouse@hotmail.com

26 November

Introduction to PACR, Birmingham

Further details via the Icon website

2 December, 6pm

Icon Paintings Group

Conservation of paintings at Apsley House

Venue: Icon Offices, London

The English Heritage Senior Collections Conservator (Fine Art) Adam Webster will discuss the treatment of paintings from Apsley House and the approach taken to caring for a historic house collection including a 100% audit, environmental monitoring, conservation treatments and conservation refitting.

Cost: £5, (£10 non-members)

Contact: Alexandra Gent on

email: alexandrarosegent@yahoo.com

Register by 25 November

8 December

Icon AGM

Venue: British Library, London

Look out for more information in November's Icon News

9 December

PACR Introduction to Mentoring, London – FULL

Further details via the Icon website

3 February 2009, 6pm

Icon Book and Paper Group

'Colour lithographic inks in early posters: their history, composition and deterioration processes'

Venue: Icon Offices, London

Speaker: Virginia Llado-Buisan – Head of Paper Conservation Section & Prints & Drawings Conservator, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich

Unlike many printing inks, colour lithographic inks in posters often exhibit softening, bleeding and offsetting during or after aqueous treatments. In some cases, standard solubility testing does not help in understanding the behaviour of the ink on exposure to water. If printing ink is an oil-based medium, and in lithography, functions to resist water, why then should it be affected by aqueous conservation methods? In order to begin to answer this question, it may be worth reviewing the printing process and the composition of early lithographic inks, giving special attention to the pigments used in their manufacture.

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

Contact: Maria Vilaincour on email:

mariavilaincour@hotmail.com. Please register in advance.

April 2009

PACR Introduction to Mentoring, London

Further details via the Icon website

22 April 2009

Icon Gilding & Decorative Surfaces Group

Picture Frames: A view from the conservation/restoration profession

Venue: Royal Institute of British Architects, London

CALL FOR PAPERS Deadline: 30 September

Contact: Michael Parfett on email: mike@mjparfett.fsnet.co.uk or Colleen Donaldson on email: cd1762@aol.com

24 April 2009

The British Museum

Going Green: Towards Sustainability in Conservation

Venue: Clore Education Centre, British Museum, London

Focusing on practical examples of adapting working methods and sourcing alternative materials whilst safeguarding the integrity of professional practice.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Deadline: 1 October

Further details via the Icon website.

1–3 June 2009

Forum for the Conservation and Restoration of Stained-Glass Windows

The Art of Collaboration: Stained Glass Conservation in the 21st Century.

Venue: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

30 August–5 September 2009

XIVth International TICCIIH Congress

Industrial Heritage: Ecology and Economy

Venue: Freiberg, Germany

Sessions will include preservation measures related to Industrial Heritage.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Deadline: 30 November

Further details via the Icon website

16–18 September 2009

The National Gallery

Technical Bulletin 30th Anniversary Conference

Studying Old Master Paintings – Technology and Practice

Venue: The National Gallery, London

CALL FOR PAPERS

Deadline: 12 December

Further details via the Icon website

- Visit www.icon.org.uk for more events and full details of all the entries listed here. There is also lots of information about short training and CPD courses available from a variety of providers. On the website Home page choose Events and Careers & Training and follow the links.
- More PACR information and booking forms are in the Accreditation/CPD section.