



Conservation stories from small museums

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JULY 2010

Issue 29

It is lovely to have two conservation stories in this issue from the perspective of the small museum. Co-incidentally both come from the East of England and concern weaponry and armour but it is not a coincidence that both have been able to conserve an important exhibit from their collections with the help of a conservation grant from the admirable Association of Independent Museums.

What also stands out in these articles is the importance of Friends, volunteers, charitable trusts, enthusiasm and local engagement, not to mention perseverance, when it comes to raising money and getting things done. All these and more will be needed to see conservation through the forthcoming era of austerity, so it is more important than ever to get our stories told.

Following on the last issue's piece about collection care for Indonesian manuscripts, we move to Vietnam this time around with a description of a Belgian initiative to bring conservation training, indeed the concept of a conservation profession itself, to that country, which has met with an enthusiastic reception.

Lynette Gill, Editor



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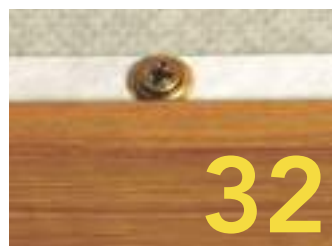
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Cover photo: An important Iron Age scabbard is now back on display at the Wisbech and Fenland Museum following its conservation. The purpose-made mount with its mirrored base allows the visitor to see the underside of the object.

Disclaimer:
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around & about

Treasures of Lambeth Palace Library

Lambeth Palace Library has opened its doors for its largest ever public exhibition to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the foundation of the collection. The 'Treasures of Lambeth Palace Library' exhibition features outstanding items from the historic library of the Archbishops of Canterbury.

Exquisite books and manuscripts, such as the MacDurnan Gospels, written and illuminated in Ireland in the ninth century, the Lambeth Bible, a masterpiece of Romanesque art, and books used by Richard III, Henry VIII, and Elizabeth I are on view. There has also been a series of free short talks by leading experts on Saturday afternoons throughout the exhibition.

The exhibits are in very good condition and were not in need of any extensive conservation treatment before being displayed. The task for the conservators was mainly to prepare book cradles and supports and mount the items.

On one of my courier trips I had the chance to visit studios at the Library of Congress and the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, USA. The conservation staff of the Folger Shakespeare Library introduced me to a new material, VIVAK®, and its use in their cradle making and display system. VIVAK® is a transparent, thermoplastic sheet material. Not

Displays in the Great Hall



only is it easy to cut on the board chopper, it can be bent to nearly all shapes, bonded with adhesive, ultrasonic welding or riveting. And the best of all – it replaces the green foam wedges which are a sore for conservator's eyes.

We purchased a new, rather high case with very limited floor space for the display items such as Charles I's gloves, Archbishop Bancroft's portrait and Laud's tortoise – which usually lives in the guard room of Lambeth Palace. VIVAK® also came in handy for the support of these 3D items. The flexibility and easy manipulation of the material made it possible to arrange the objects on different height levels and create balance within the case.

Any conservator interested in illuminated manuscripts or books should add this exhibition to their diary – it is worth every penny. But hurry as it ends very soon!

Jutta Keddies ACR

EH Website Revitalised

The English Heritage (EH) website has been completely redesigned. Often with large websites it can be difficult to track down conservation information. EH has decided to separate the public from professional pages. The Professional Home page appears as a banner on the 'Public' homepage and is aimed at heritage professionals and those who want in-depth information about EH research, policies and publications. In practice it means you can locate publications and information quickly through the search facility. Type in Collections Conservation for example and a range of technical information, strategic plans and guidance notes are available. There are also various spreadsheet tools like the 'Risk Assessment Spreadsheet for Hospitality Events in Historic houses' and for those into silica gel controlled show cases a number of spreadsheets are available that calculate the lifetime of silica gel in low RH cases. Archaeological Conservation and Technology publications are also available. Building Conservation also has a large presence with a feature promoting their successful Sash Window research with a snappy video. Teams have also been given access to their pages so they can add and remove content to ensure that information remains up to date.

Icon Days Out

In mid-May Icon spent two days exhibiting at the *Museums and Heritage Show*, held at Earls Court in London. We were well received and there were good opportunities to liaise with representatives from the many museums visiting the show, who also took plenty of our leaflets to put on display in their museums. As ever, Dubravka Vukcevic was very grateful to the Camberwell students who helped to staff the stall. She would also like to thank Icon trustee Cathy Proudlove, who kindly helped with promoting Icon and the Conservation Register at the exhibition.



At the Museums and Heritage Show in May.

On Saturday 5 June, Icon attended a 'Family History Day', hosted by the Imperial War Museum. A variety of talks and presentations were held throughout the day and a number of stands providing information about researching family history were set up in the central hall of the museum. Museum Conservators Tina Kelly and Rachel Sharples – along with Collection Care Manager, Andy Holbrook – joined Icon's Dubravka Vukcevic to hand out copies of Icon's 'Caring for' leaflets to interested members of the public and to promote the Conservation Register.

In line with the theme of looking after your family heirlooms, Tina gave a demonstration on how to make a four flap enclosure and had made a selection of archival boxes and enclosures to show how to store books and documents safely. Rachel brought some of the insect pests found in the museum and talked to the public about preventing pest damage to their own items. Children (and adults!) were also kept entertained by an insect pest version of 'snakes and ladders', moving miniature bugs round a board, whilst learning about lifecycles of pests and the types of damage that they can cause.

Overall the day was very successful. It is clear that there is a lot of interest in the simple care steps that can be taken to look after personal items that are important to people, if presented in a simple and jargon-free style.

Awards

The **Museums and Heritage Awards for Excellence** were announced in May alongside the Show – see above – which created them. In the category for Restoration or Conservation, the winner was the Victoria & Albert Museum for its conservation of the *Master Bertram's Triptych of the Apocalypse*.

Recently restored for redisplay in the V&A's new Medieval & Renaissance Galleries, the fourteenth-century triptych, with its forty five scenes of the Apocalypse, can now be seen in all its glory. The original paint surface is extraordinarily well preserved, particularly on the wings, with un-faded red and green glazes. This collaborative project has enabled us to



Master Bertram, Triptych of the Apocalypse, detail, before and after treatment.

transform an object rendered brown with age and inaccurate reconstruction and with a consequently uncertain status, to one securely attributed and glowing with un-faded medieval colour. The joint conservation and curatorial team was led by Nicola Costaras, Rachel Turnbull and Mark Evans. An article considering the treatment options can be found in the V&A Conservation Journal No.58, Autumn 2009: 'Master Bertram's Apocalypse Triptych, To clean or not to clean', pp47–49.

Also on the shortlist for the award were architects Donald Insall Associates for their work on the repair and refurbishment of the Marianne North Gallery at Kew, featured in the March issue of Icon News.

The presentation of the **Europa Nostra Awards**, which have been celebrating cultural heritage achievement across Europe since 2002, took place on 10 June in Istanbul, Turkey as part of the celebration of Istanbul as European Capital of Culture 2010. Twenty nine winners had been selected from nearly 140 projects submitted and in the Conservation category they included St Martin-in-the-Fields, London, praised for the sheer beauty of the work, and St Davids Bishop's Palace in Wales, where the range and depth of the conservation skills and techniques employed by Cadw impressed the jury.

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings was recognised in the Education category for the Faith in Maintenance initiative, which provides free maintenance skills training for people who care for significant historic buildings as their place of worship.

The deadline for the 2011 awards is 1 October and information on the application process can be found at www.europanostra.org/heritage-awards/

Twenty Years of the OCC

The Oxford Conservation Consortium (OCC, or 'The Consortium') celebrates its twentieth anniversary this year. Its roots go back to 1988, when the Libraries Board of the University of Oxford formed a working party to give preliminary consideration to the university's need for book and paper conservation and preservation expertise. This working party identified many shortcomings in collection care in college library and archive collections, and in their report of 1989 noted that there was no formal provision for



Celia Withycombe, Jane Eagan and Victoria Stevens of OCC at the newly reopened Ashmolean Museum

conservation in the colleges. In response to these findings, the Libraries Board established a university Preservation Subcommittee and organised a two-part preservation and condition survey of library and archive collections along with a related programme of lectures and seminars to raise awareness of the problem. Nancy Bell, who had just finished an internship with Chris Clarkson at West Dean College, participated in the survey and started up a preservation consultancy service to a small number of colleges in 1990.

From these modest beginnings, OCC has continued to expand and now has eleven college members, as well as the National Trust, and a staff of six conservators. The move in 2001 to a purpose-built studio provided by Merton College put the Consortium on a firmer footing and facilitated expansion and, importantly, consolidation of the service. The original model of offering a comprehensive collection care service which includes conservation treatment of varying levels, and preservation advice and activities, to a group of historic libraries and archives supportive of this work is still at the heart of the Consortium's activities today. OCC and its members continue to prioritise professional development of conservation staff, and encourage an innovative and informed approach to conservation treatment and preservation. Collections in which we have been active for twenty years are clearly better housed, better preserved, better understood, and better respected!

Jane Eagan

Head of Conservation
Oxford Conservation Consortium

Here's to the Conservation Technician!

The Wallace Collection in London has its own in-house Conservation Department and the activities of its conservators are often published. Its latest exhibition, however, seeks to highlight the work of an unsung hero of the Department, the Conservation Technician, who plays a vital role in assisting in the display of our galleries and special exhibitions and whose work can be both remarkably varied and extremely rewarding.

From Drawing-board to Display... The Work of the Wallace Collection Conservation Technician is on now and runs until 24 October 2010. The Conservation Technician, **Stephen Craig**, will give lunch time talks about the exhibition. Please see the website for further information (www.wallacecollection.org).



NG 296 Andrea del Verrocchio with the assistance of Lorenzo de Credi, *The Virgin and Child with two Angels*, about 1476–8.

© National Gallery, London

Celebrating fakes and mistakes

An interesting exhibition at the National Gallery in London explores the contribution of conservation, science and art historical research to the understanding of Old Master paintings in the collection. Supported by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, which funded the Gallery's gas-chromatography-mass-spectrometer, *Close examination: fakes, mistakes and discoveries* presents more than forty paintings and tells their varied and fascinating

New bone and ebony frame, made by the Conservation Technician



NG915
Sandro Botticelli,
Venus and Mars,
about 1485.



© National Gallery, London

NG916
Follower of Sandro Botticelli,
An Allegory,
probably about 1490–1550.



© National Gallery, London

stories, as revealed by the study of the physical properties of paintings.

The exhibition is arranged over six rooms, representing some of the major challenges faced by Gallery experts; these are categorised as Deception and Deceit; Transformations and Modifications; Mistakes; Secrets and Conundrums; Redemption and Recovery; and a special focus room relating to Botticelli. Illustrating these themes are works by Raphael, Dürer, Gossaert, Rembrandt and others.

One example is *The Virgin and Child with Two Angels* illustrated here. Originally acquired as a work by Domenico Ghirlandaio, this painting was later demoted, attributed to the workshop of Andrea del Verrocchio. However, after removing layers of old retouching work, and examining the underdrawing with infrared reflectography, it became clear that Verrocchio himself painted the Virgin, the angel on the left and the landscape in the background, while his assistant, Lorenzo di Credi, painted the angel on the right and the infant Christ.

At various points in the National Gallery's history, some works were enthusiastically acquired on mistaken attributions to iconic artists. In June 1874 the Gallery purchased two Botticellis – or so it seemed. One of these is now one of the most beloved paintings in the collection. The other was then thought to be a companion to *Venus and Mars*. Some even thought it the more desirable of the two. However, this painting was soon discovered to be a pastiche, painted by a follower in the style of the great master. The paintings are shown side-by-side so that visitors can test their own skills of connoisseurship.

The exhibition runs until 12 September and from the

beginning of this month, detailed information on the major themes of the exhibition can be explored online including extensive research material and recent scientific discoveries: go to www.nationalgallery.org.uk/close-examination.

Streetmuseum iPhone app

Ingenuously harnessing today's technology to tell the stories of yesterday, the Museum of London launched the iPhone app *Streetmuseum* in May as part of the opening of the new Galleries of Modern London. The Museum's extensive art and photographic collections are brought to the streets of the

Bomb Damage at the Bank underground station, 1941.



© The Museum of London



© The Museum of London

Flower Sellers at Covent Garden, 1876–1878.

capital by guiding users to sites across London, where hidden histories of the city dramatically appear.

Over two hundred London sites have been selected where users can look through their iPhones and see the past emerge, locked as an overlay across the present scene. These can be viewed as ghostly alignments, or the archive images can be brought up and explored in detail, along with information about Streetmuseum's photographs and paintings.

The app has proved very popular, even with people outside of London, and at the last count 65,000 people have downloaded it so far, including subscribers from Hong Kong, Russia, Denmark, France, Argentina, New Zealand, USA, Italy, Romania, Hungary and Canada.

Professor Jack Lohman, Director of the Museum of London, has commented that the development 'opens our unique collections to new audiences in a thought-provoking and creative manner. London's stories are varied and many-voiced. This app allows the present and the past to collide and share their secrets'. It is not difficult to see the potential for something similar in the conservation arena.

Streetmuseum is free to download for 3G and 3GS iPhones and is available on iTunes now. Visit www.museumoflondon.org.uk/streetmuseum for information.

The Frozen Thames, looking Eastwards towards Old London Bridge, 1677.



© The Museum of London

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professional update

FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The last few months have been busy ones for Icon. On 7 June, Icon launched the **2010 Conservation Awards** on our brand new website. This followed a review of the aims and format of the successful scheme that ran from 1991 to 2007, which was generously supported by The Pilgrim Trust. The bold effort to relaunch the Awards was led by Icon Trustee Louise Lawson working with a group of volunteers, and we are very grateful for their commitment. This year's Awards, called *Valuing Excellence*, is a streamlined version of the original scheme, revised to ensure cost-effectiveness and sustainability. It focuses on conservation in practice, by recognising and celebrating professional excellence and high standards of training and research. We are absolutely delighted to announce that in addition to the continued sponsorship of Sir Paul McCartney, The Pilgrim Trust is generously supporting the Awards again. Anyone who has carried out a project in the UK between 1 November 2006 and 31 July 2010 should consider entering the Awards. Full conditions of entry and judging criteria for each award are available on the Conservation Awards website.

www.conservationawards.org.uk

The Conservation Awards website is the first outcome of our work-in-progress to improve communication both with members and externally. The Communications Committee, chaired by Trustee Kate Frame, is currently planning a complete revision of the navigation and content on the main website, to complement its forthcoming uplifted design. The idea is to make it easier to get to the information you need and to make that information easier for members of the public to understand. This is a huge task, and **we are looking for volunteers** to help by mapping what is already there and writing new copy. So if you would like to get involved please contact Charlotte Cowin ccowin@icon.org.uk

Consultation on the **National Conservation Education and Skills Strategy** and Action Plan will begin at a meeting on July 9 to be held in London. If you are not able to attend the meeting, and space will be limited, it will still be possible to have your say, by contributing on line. Details will be announced in Iconnect.

The Icon office is currently intensely occupied with **membership renewals** of two kinds. Renewals of subscriptions to Icon are going well with 70% of our 2500 members' renewals having been processed. Members of the **Conservation Register** can expect to receive their renewal forms from Dubravka soon.

Also on matters of membership, the Board of Trustees recently nominated two Trustees, Dr. Clare Finn and Penny Jenkins, to act as **membership champions**. They will be focussing on a membership strategy, so if you have ideas that you would like to share, you will find their details on our website.

If you find yourself thinking about how Icon might do better, you might wish to put yourself, or someone you know, forward

as a candidate for the **Board elections**. At the AGM this year, there will be five vacancies on the Board, one of these is a seat reserved for a member from Scotland. We will be saying goodbye to Kate Frame, Louise Lawson, Russ Turner and Diane Gwilt. (The fifth seat is the one I vacated to take up my current position.) If you would like to know what is involved, there is a job description on the Icon website, but I am sure any Trustee would be happy to talk with you about it. Again, details are on the website.

Diane Gwilt will also be standing down as Chair. As you know, Icon has a two-stage **nomination process** for Chair: the Board of Trustees nominates a candidate, the members are informed of the nomination, and then invited to nominate candidates for Chair. The Board's candidate is Amber Xavier-Rowe, Head of Collections Conservation at English Heritage, and Vice Chair of Icon's Board of Trustees.

Below, Carol Brown announces that nearly four hundred people applied for the sixteen internship places. It is absolutely fantastic news that the internship programme funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund goes from strength to strength. While Carol and Gillian sift through the mountain of applications, we can reflect on the success of Icon's Skills in Practice model and the great opportunities for the interns that have been made available by our partners.

And finally, now that we know the outcome of the parliamentary elections, you may wish to ponder the idea proffered by Laura Drysdale and me at the CF10 Cardiff Conference that the word 'conservation' may never fall on more willing ears! Seize the day and tell everyone you come across that conservation plays a key role in strengthening the link between the past and the future, and that conservators are willing participants in 'going local' and have loads to offer a 'Big Society'. In bringing the benefits of conservation to the attention of friends and colleagues, clients and funders, everyone has a role to play.

Alison Richmond

Chief Executive, Icon
arichmond@icon.org.uk

TRAINING NEWS

New Internships prove popular

Our recent advert for sixteen internships was extremely popular, attracting 397 applicants from a wide range of backgrounds and geographical areas. The placements include twelve from the newly-extended HLF scheme and four placements funded by external sources. Interviews will be taking place during July and August and this initial intake of interns will start their placements in September this year.

Missed this round? There are more placements to come; Icon plans to advertise the remaining eight HLF placements in October this year – to start in March 2011, alongside any additional externally-funded placements we may receive before then.



Interns at the Ashmolean Museum

Current interns news

Of our current interns due to finish their placements in September and October this year, we are proud to note that to date, five are going on to jobs, and two to conservation training courses. This contributes to Icon's excellent track-record, proving the value of work-based training for improving the profession's diversity and for giving graduates a key stepping stone to take their career forward.

Interns enjoyed a great chance to network and hone their presentation skills in April during a visit to the newly-re-opened Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. Co-ordinators, interns and Icon staff together were given an in-depth tour by Head of Conservation Mark Norman, and went on to visit Ros Buck in the Chantry Library where we were treated to short presentations by each intern on their work to date.

Technician Qualification Updates

Icon is currently tying up the loose ends of the qualification's second Pilot, with a view to re-launching on a rolling basis later in the year. New CTQ recipients include **Jodie Dodgson** and **Anna Milsom** from York Glaziers Trust, **Stephanie Carlton** from the Royal Collection and **Toby Gough** from National Galleries of Scotland. (Toby featured in the last issue as the recipient of a Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust Award. He is reported to be full of enthusiasm about his current book binding studies in Sweden.)

Icon continues to work with Cultural and Creative Skills and Dr Stan Lester to align the qualification with the national Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) later in the year. We hope this will help provide funding for employers to offer the qualification within the workplace.

Skills For The Future

Skills for the Future is the title of the Heritage Lottery Fund's new programme for funding work-based training and a list of successful recipients was published on their website in June. Icon intern Leanne Tonkin featured in the launch programme and associated video. You can see this on the Icon website. Icon's Technician Qualification and Interns Framework – *Skills in Practice* – will feature in several of the new schemes. We are delighted to find Icon's services in demand and will update you in future editions on our partnership plans.

New Regional Co-ordinator

Icon is very pleased to welcome a new Regional Co-ordinator to help with the extra workload in our newly-extended scheme. **Sarah Gerrish** is an experienced accredited conservator of furniture and wooden artefacts who currently runs her own conservation business based in Edinburgh, while



Sarah Gerrish

working part-time as furniture conservator at National Museum Scotland. Sarah trained at Rycotewood College and has supervised a series of three successful Historic Scotland furniture internships herself in the last few years; she will be focusing on placements in the North, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

ICON'S GROUP ARRANGEMENTS

As many of you are aware, the Icon Group Chairs formed a Working Party last November with the intention of establishing greater communication and effectiveness for the members of Icon and their Groups. They met on a number of occasions with Icon Board members, the Vice Chair, Hon. Treasurer and Chief Executive Officer.

The following recommendations were accepted and approved by the Icon Board of Trustees and are now being implemented:

1. That the Group Chairs Working Party becomes a standing Advisory Panel.
2. The Advisory Panel will be consulted wherever possible before the Board makes decisions on sensitive and significant policy and on matters with significant financial implications. The Panel will also make recommendations to the Board on matters of policy and practice on membership matters.
3. The Group Chairs being the body which represents most of the members will be invited to propose a co-optee to each of the four main Board Committees (Finance, PSD, Communications and Fundraising).
4. To improve communications and internal information, the Chief Executive will write a regular piece in Icon News, reporting major developments, papers and decisions of the Board.
5. It is hoped that the Groups will take a role in building and retaining membership and the proposed outline trial three year programme below is designed to enable and encourage them to do so. The purpose of these proposals is to arrive at an appropriate, equitable means of funding Group activities with the understanding that it is reasonable for any surplus generated by these to be available for Icon's general charitable purposes.
6. From the 2010/11 membership year, people will be asked to select a Primary and a Secondary Group when they join or at membership renewal.
7. Each 'Discipline' Group will receive a portion of the subscription income based on the number of members who name it as Primary or Secondary. Funds will be available for the year commencing 1 April 2010, amounts still to be worked out.
8. For the year 2010–11 only, Groups will be allocated an

initial basic sum of £30,000 from the members, present designated funds, on 1 April. The remaining balance on the Groups Designated funds shall be transferred back into Icon's unrestricted reserves.

9. In future financial years (1 April to 31 March), the amount available to each Group will be based on the membership data at 31 December of the previous year.
10. Multidisciplinary Groups – Ethnography, Care of Collections, Historic Interiors and Science – may receive a modest annual grant, to be reviewed each year, as they will not receive income based on membership numbers -given that specialist conservators are likely to choose in the first instance, the Primary Group that represents their own 'discipline'.
11. Icon Scotland Group will be funded as described under 10 above.
12. Each Group will retain a modest imprest balance which will be carried forward from year to year. Unless otherwise agreed for planned projects, Group funds held in excess of this balance will be transferred to Icon's unrestricted funds after the financial year end. This means that Groups will have an annual income to be spent in accordance with the charitable objectives of Icon, whilst any surplus generated by these activities will contribute to the core costs of the organisation (e.g. advocacy, education etc.).
13. The funds to cover the amounts to be offered to the Groups in 2010–11 will come from the Groups Designated Funds balance at 31 March 2010. Thereafter, in principle, the amounts would be taken from membership subscriptions.

For the system to work, we as members need to nominate our **Primary** and **Secondary** Group choices. So if you haven't already done so when you renewed your subscription this year, please nominate your Primary and Secondary Groups as soon as possible. This way the Groups will be able to officially register you as a member.

Bear in mind also that as an Icon member you are still entitled to take part in events held by other Groups.

Francis Downing, Chair of the Group Chairs

LIBRARY NEWS

Over the past couple of months, the library has been pleased to host several visits from interested groups, trainees and researchers – including the Oxford University Libraries SCONUL library trainees, and Icon's Archaeology and Textile Groups. Each visit presented a great opportunity to show off our library collection and resources, talk about the history and development of the library, make new contacts, and find out a little more from the visitors about their information needs. If other Icon groups are planning to visit Oxford, maybe to the Ashmolean or Pitt River Museums, and would like to include a tour of the Chantry Library on their itinerary, please contact chantrylibrary@icon.org.uk

On 8 June I was fortunate enough to make a visit myself to meet Teresa Shergold, the Librarian at West Dean College, for discussions in preparation for new 'Information Skills' and 'Writing Skills for Conservators' workshops at the college. A meeting with some of the current MA students proved to be very useful, with valuable feedback from the students which will help shape the content and delivery of the workshops, which are planned for later this year and Spring 2011.

Photocopies of journal articles

A quick reminder that we supply photocopies of chapters from books or journal articles and conference papers, which are held in the library collection. Icon members are entitled to claim ten free articles each year, so please quote your membership number with your requests.

Ros Buck (Librarian, Chantry Library)

New Books

Recent additions to the collection include:

Looking at European Frames: a Guide to Terms, Styles, and Techniques by D. Gene Karraker, Getty Publications, Los Angeles, California, 2009.87pp £12.99 ISBN: 978-0-89236-981-2

A Guide to the Identification and Analysis of Archaeological Artefactual Material by Graham C. Morgan, c/o School of Archaeology & Ancient History, University of Leicester, (in association with The Institute of Conservation – Archaeology Group), 2005, 67pp £15 This copy donated to the library by Graham C. Morgan

Research in Book and Paper Conservation in Europe – A State of the Art edited by Patricia Engel, Verlag Berger, Austria, 2009, 25 Euros ISBN: 978-3-85028-490-5

Photographic Samples

Basic Sample Set (2010 edition) photographic samples from Gawain Weaver, Conservation and Consulting Services in the Care of Historic and Fine Art Photographs.
<http://gawainweaver.com/store/>

Recently published articles

A selection of recently published articles which may be of interest to Icon members is set out below but **for further details of new resources and a full listing of all journal articles received over the past two months, check out the library blog 'Library News'** at:
<http://chantrylibrary.wordpress.com/>

The Book and Paper Group Annual, Vol.27, 2008

(Please note that Vol.26, 2007 is yet to be published – but will be in the next few months)

(Papers presented at the Book and Paper Group Session, AIC, 36th Annual Meeting, April 21–24, 2008, Denver, Colorado)
See the library blog for a full listing of the papers.

Book Arts des arts du livre Canada, Vol.1, No.1, 2010

Replaces CBBAG Newsletter and the Journal

- Profile: *Simone Benoit Roy: A Quebec Bookbinding Pioneer*

- by Jocelyne Aird-Belanger
- History of the Book: *A Byzantine Binding (Part One)* by Joe Landry & Chayle Cook
- The Creative Process: *Exploring New Technologies: Artistamps, Lasers and the Book Arts* by Brian Queen
- Gallery: *Playing the Game in a Book* by Tara Bryan
- Small Press & Print: *A Tribute to Jim Rimmer* by Jason Dewinetz
- Materials, Tools & Type: *Reg Lissel, Papermaker* by Dorothy Field

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- 'Anyone for Sphairistike?'
Ephemera Society visit to the All England Tennis Club pp2–3
- *Spotting the repro* by Graham Hudson pp3–5
How to identify genuine chromolithography as opposed to modern reproduction.
- *Blood and Soil: propaganda postcards of the Third Reich* by John Cumming pp14–22
- *Casualty: the ephemera of railway 'unsafety'* by Mike Esbester pp24–28

Conservation Perspectives: The GCI Newsletter, Spring 2010

Feature Article – Collections Research

- *A Combined Approach to the Study of Works of Art* by Karen Trentleman pp5–8
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Collaborations in Archaeological Science

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Collaborative Research of Early Renaissance Workshop Practice by Christine Sciacca and Catherine Schmidt Patterson pp13–15

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Key Resources on Collections Research p24

HELP WITH CPD COSTS

Don't forget the opportunities offered by the Anna Plowden Trust and the Clothworkers Foundation for assistance towards the costs of CPD activities.

The next deadline for applications to the **Anna Plowden Trust** is 13 September. Established conservators can apply for grants of up to 50% towards the cost of attending a short specialist course or a major conference. The Trust has been awarding such grants since 1999 and normally between ten and twelve are given each year. Applications are particularly welcomed from teachers of conservation and conservators working in the private sector. Applicants should have more

than five years' experience since completing their training and preference will be given to those who work in a team where the skills they acquire as a result of the grant can be passed on to others.



Application forms can be obtained from the Trust's website at annaplowdentrust.org.uk or email Penelope Plowden at penelopeplowden@btinternet.com

The Clothworkers Foundation

launched their Conservation Bursary Scheme last year offering financial support to enable qualified conservators to attend conferences, seminars and events of benefit to their work and careers. Applications are welcome for bursaries of up to £1,000 towards travel, registration and fees, and reasonable accommodation and subsistence costs. Applicant's employers, or applicants themselves (if self-employed) must contribute at least 50% of the cost.



For further details including eligibility criteria and guidance on completing the application, and to download the application form, visit the Foundation's website at www.clothworkers.co.uk.

SCIENCE & HERITAGE PROGRAMME AWARD

A three-year Post-doctoral Fellowship has been awarded through the joint AHRC-EPSRC Science and Heritage Programme to Dr. Elizabeth Willneff as part of Tate's ongoing collaborative research into the conservation and preservation of modern and contemporary painted works of art. The project – entitled 'Interpreting the Surface: The Application of Surface Science to Artists' Acrylic Emulsion Paint Films' - starts in September 2010 and will involve investigations into the surfaces of acrylic paint films and works of art, with a focus on the interface between paint films and accumulated soiling.

This Fellowship combines the expertise and knowledge available at the scientific departments at both Tate (Dr. Bronwyn Ormsby) and the Getty Conservation Institute (Dr. Tom Learner) with the instrumentation and surface analysis expertise available at the Department of Chemical Engineering and Analytical Science (CEAS) at The University of Manchester (Dr. Sven Schroeder). Our understanding of these paint surfaces will be enhanced through the scientific technologies and methodologies to be applied to these paints, thereby contributing to best practice for the care and conservation of these vulnerable works of art.



A student measuring the concentration of volatile organic compounds at the Nationaal Archief, The Hague

A NEW MASTERS COURSE

A new course in Heritage Science is starting in September at the Centre for Sustainable Heritage, University College London. In recent years, much thought has been given to meeting the needs of practitioners in the courses created at the Centre. As Professor May Cassar, its Director and an accredited conservator, has said: 'It is imperative that we bring the classroom and the workplace together if we are to provide practitioners with relevant learning experiences'. Recognising also the interdisciplinary nature of conservation as well as the growing demand for evidence for decision-making, the Centre has consulted extensively with policy-makers, employers, practitioners and academics in order to launch this international course.

The course will cater for interdisciplinary Masters students and for heritage professionals with several years of experience and demonstrable aptitude for research. It will be delivered in blocks of time and can be taken either full time or part time. The fifth and final module, i.e. the Masters Dissertation, can be taken as a placement, to carry out a piece of research which is particularly relevant to heritage institutions.

Bring your own projects !

The course puts investigative conservation at the heart of learning. Heritage science describes all the aspects of research needed by conservation, and for safe access to heritage (e.g. development of new ICT tools), heritage research and interpretation (e.g. dating, provenancing, attribution), heritage management (e.g. development of tools and knowledge supporting strategic decisions) and wider societal engagement with heritage (e.g. heritage values and ethics). Most of the students' time is spent either in state-of-the-art laboratories at UCL working on projects suggested by students themselves, or in field laboratories working directly on problems identified in collaboration with heritage owners.

Benefits to practitioners

The benefits to practitioners of the approach being taken in this course have been recognised by leading international conservation employers. Dianne L. van der Reyden, Director for Preservation at the Library of Congress, Washington DC has said: 'There is a strong need for this new Heritage Science course and the unique approach being taken at UCL'. The Centre for Sustainable Heritage has created a course that is:

- relevant and timely.
- provides access to the latest knowledge, techniques and tools.
- enhances your work and your business offer.
- meets the needs of busy people in the way the course has been organised.

This has been confirmed by Dr Kaori Fukunaga, Research Manager at the National Institute of Information and Communications Technology, Tokyo: 'An exciting course - I would have liked to do it myself!'

To find out more about the course, visit: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/sustainableheritage/mres.html> or contact the Course Director Dr Matija Strlič for an informal discussion (m.strlic@ucl.ac.uk), or the Director of the Centre for Sustainable Heritage, Professor May Cassar (m.cassar@ucl.ac.uk).

WITNESSING THE PAST

Expressions of interest

The AHRC/EPSRC Science and Heritage Programme and the Centre for Contemporary British History are planning four half-day seminars on 8–9 December 2010 in London. The aim of the seminars is to create an oral history of the development of heritage science between 1947 and 2007 when the Science and Heritage Programme was launched. The events will be recorded, transcribed and published. The seminars will address the following themes:



How have concepts of time and change matured?

How has our use of evidence changed?

How has the way we work been transformed?

How has the emergence of heritage science come about?

Expressions of interest to participate in one or more of these seminars are invited from researchers and practitioners in the field covered by, or associated with, heritage science including preservation, conservation, conservation science, archaeological science and architectural science. Please indicate whether you would like to be considered as a primary witness or an audience witness. The events will be by invitation only. Places are limited and they will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Please send an email to May Cassar at m.cassar@ucl.ac.uk explaining your interest. Deadline for expression of interest: 30 July 2010.



Examples of collections with entirely different utility values: Left – archival collection, National Archives, Kew; Right – library collection, part of the historic interior at Brodsworth Hall, English Heritage.

WHOLE LIFE STORIES OF COLLECTIONS

Have you ever thought of books as individuals, and of collections as populations? The new collaborative research project *Collections Demography*, will explore these interesting parallels in a very interdisciplinary manner. A computerised model of collections will be developed, in relation to

- How old they are
- How often they are used
- The environment in which they are housed

One of the novel features of this work is that the model will be seen through the lens of the values attached to heritage.

Led by the UCL Centre for Sustainable Heritage, the interdisciplinary team will include collaborators from The National Archives, University of East Anglia, English Heritage and the US Library of Congress. As explained by the principal investigator, Dr Matija Strlic: 'There is a large body of research on the influences of environment and use on heritage materials and objects. The *Collections Demography* model will pull these research strands together into a single model'.

The heritage partners will play a key role in this project, acting as case-studies for the development of the model. Nancy Bell, Head of Collection Care at The National Archives, was enthused by the idea: 'By viewing collections as dynamic populations growing and ageing in their own right, this exciting study is expected to transform collection management across libraries and archives and beyond'. The involvement of conservators, art historians, chemists, environmental, building and material scientists alongside statisticians will ensure a holistic approach new in this area.

The researchers will start by looking into the future and factoring in expected changes in climate and pollution patterns. They will review the past history of damage and deterioration in library and archival items – effectively their life-stories – and feed essential 'census data' derived from collection surveys into the model. In an innovative move, the team will enlist the help of the general public to gain insights into the aesthetic and practical value of collections, in particular what is valuable and to whom. It is expected that the model will then serve as a test-bed for a range of scenarios of collection management.

The project is funded by the AHRC/EPSRC Science and Heritage Programme. For further information contact

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T: +44 20 7679 5994 e-Mail: m.strlic@ucl.ac.uk

The project webpage is under construction on: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/sustainableheritage/collectionsdemography.htm>

STAINED GLASS CONSERVATION

Recent developments

The stained glass fraternity have been very active in recent years in promoting the 'Art or Mystery' of painted and stained glass, as it is termed in the charter of the Worshipful Company of Glaziers, and in particular the conservation of historic glass.

We are happy to have joined the Icon family through the formation of the stained glass group with all the benefits for engagement with other related conservation disciplines which we now enjoy. Apart from activities within Icon, there are other valuable efforts being made in two areas which are of interest and worthy of wider appreciation and publicity.

First, the Worshipful Company of Glaziers continues its commitment to conservation and education through its charitable arm The Glaziers Trust and its annual awards, including a forty week long 'modern journeyman' award, the Award for Excellence, which allows a student to visit several studios at home and abroad over the period. A stipend is paid to cover expenses. A second award allows a single ten week placement in a conservation studio, whilst a newly developed CPD award scheme allows for one-off CPD based activities such as attendance at conferences etc. Details can be found at www.worshipfulglaziers.com

Another important element of the Glaziers Trust's activities is the part funding of conservation projects involving historic stained glass. The application process is involved, and requires a conservator's report and recommendations to be submitted. In this area the Trust actively supports the PACR accredited conservator, and recommends that applicants seek advice from ACRs. It must be said that the quality of reports put before the trustees is variable, with some non-accredited practitioners particularly at fault, although reports put forward from accredited conservators are sometimes not of the quality expected. The trustees are reassured that Icon and the

stained glass group are committed to raising standards of conservation reports and proposals, and look forward to working with colleagues to keep the bar high.

The BSMGP (British Society of Master Glass painters), the professional body for stained glass practitioners formed in 1921, also has an active conservation brief, with a dedicated committee which organises conferences, and supports education in the craft through close associations with Icon and the Glaziers Company. The well respected BSMGP Journal is produced annually and includes technical and historical papers involving stained glass conservation and contemporary work as well as reviews of publications.

In a recent development the BSMGP has elected to dedicate an area of its website to technical papers detailing conservation treatments. This is seen as a valuable addition to web based information concerning stained glass, and will act as a valuable adjunct to the excellent art historical website 'Vidimus' produced by CVMA (Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi). This resource will be on line in the near future, accredited conservators are being approached to submit technical papers and the response is most encouraging.

The BSMGP website is at www.bsmgp.org.uk. Vidimus can be found at www.vidimus.org.

Steve Clare ACR

Past Chairman The Glaziers Trust,
Chairman BSMGP conservation committee.

ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS FOR COLLECTIONS

New initiatives

Action is now being taken in the UK to revise BS 5454:2000, the British Standard on the storage and exhibition of archival documents, which is ten years old. In the absence of alternative guidance, it has been used as a standard for the whole sector, not just for archives. Scientific understanding of the preservation needs of different materials has moved on over the past decade, and there has been increasing recognition that fresh guidance is needed which takes account of recent research evidence and covers a broader range of collections.

The wider political and economic context has also changed since BS 5454 was published in 2000, with a greater emphasis on using energy responsibly and reducing dependence on fossil fuel. There is support for a re-thinking of current guidance from conservators, curators, archivists, engineers, architects and others working to improve the storage of cultural items. The National Museum Directors' Conference has issued Guiding Principles calling on museums 'to reconcile the desirability of long-term preservation of collections with the need to reduce energy use', adding: 'Environmental standards should become more intelligent and better tailored to clearly identified needs. Blanket conditions

should no longer apply. Instead, conditions should be determined by the requirements of individual objects and groups of objects'.

In response to these concerns, three new initiatives are currently under way to produce updated guidance on environmental conditions:

■ New Specification for environmental conditions for cultural collections: PAS 198

The British Standards Institution (BSI) has recently started to develop a new Publicly Available Specification for environmental conditions (PAS 198), which will cover museums and libraries as well as archives. It will set out requirements for temperature, RH, light and pollution for a range of materials, and will apply to cultural collections in storage, on display and on loan. This work has been co-sponsored by the Collections Trust, CyMAL, the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) and The National Archives. It is scheduled to be published in May 2011.

■ Revision of BS 5454:2000 and its associated guidance document, PD 0024:2001

The relevant BSI Committee began work in January 2010 to create a new Published Document (PD 5454), *Guide for the storage and exhibition of archival material*. This will merge much of the content of BS 5454 with its accompanying guidance, PD 0024, while also bringing it into line with current thinking and updating legal references to reflect recent statutory changes. The content of the new PD will be consistent with that of the PAS, and will be published shortly after it.

■ New European Standard: CEN/TC 346

Development of a new European standard dealing with the protection of objects in all types of collections is due (at the time of writing) to receive final approval. It will take on board the latest thinking on environmental criteria and update advice on - among other things - building construction and protection, fire precautions, storage and packing requirements, modern media and exhibitions. This work, led by UK conservators, should be completed by 2013/14.

The PAS and the PD will provide relevant, up-to-date reference material for practitioners within a relatively short space of time. The work on both will contribute to the thinking on the European standard, which will ultimately become the authoritative new British Standard for all types of collections.

Updates on progress will be published in Icon News and on the Icon website.

For further information, contact:

On PD 5454: Chris Woods conservation@fastmail.fm

On BSI and the European Standard: Stephanie Kosandiak

Stephanie.Kosandiak@bsigroup.com or

[David Leigh dleigh@pavilion.co.uk](mailto:David.Leigh@dleigh@pavilion.co.uk)

On the environmental PAS: Alex Kay Alex.Kay@bsigroup.com

WHAT PASSING BELLS....?and what next?

The future of Historic Interiors Research in the UK

The closure of the Historic Interiors Research & Conservation Unit (HIRC) of English Heritage in December 2009 (see Icon News March 2010) invites further discussion, as it highlights several issues of concern to Icon members. And perhaps the unit deserves some kind of eulogy or acknowledgement of its achievements and legacy promoting the combined investigation of documentation and archaeology of historic interiors.

The department may trace its origins to the pre-War projects of the Ministry of Works such as the 1934-35 restoration of the Queen's House, Greenwich, directed by George Chettle, who was aware of research work being carried out at Colonial Williamsburg, through to the Directorate of Ancient Monuments and Historic Building (later English Heritage) and the work of Chettle and Patrick Faulkner at Chiswick House. A more holistic approach to interiors research and representation was advocated by Peter Thornton, appointed Keeper of Furniture and Woodwork of the Victoria & Albert Museum from 1966, and carried out at Ham House and Osterley Park.¹

During the 1980s the examination of applied decorative finishes to architectural elements was advanced by the pioneering work of Jo Darragh of the V&A and the exacting PhD research of Ian Bristow at the Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies at York University. The Architectural Paint Research Unit (later to become HIRC), established at English Heritage and evolved under the management of Percy Flaxman and Pamela Lewis, formed part of the Crown Building & Monuments Advisory Group (CBMAG). This multidisciplinary group was visionary, composed of inspectors, architects, building surveyors, archaeologists, curators - and architectural paint researchers; it had a dynamic synergy and was able to bring a holistic approach to a variety of major conservation projects which included the representation of Osborne House and post-fire investigations at Hampton Court and Windsor Castle.

CBMAG fragmented into different EH departments during the course of inevitable corporate re-structuring but the potential of architectural paint research, not merely to establish historic colours but to clarify the biographies of interiors and buildings was recognised. HIRC was asked to undertake numerous projects. To cope with the work-load the unit began to offer a series of internships, placements and temporary assistantships. This scheme provided an unique hands-on training to numerous national and international post-graduate students. From 1990–2004 the unit hosted interns from the Courtauld Institute, the RCA/V&A programme, Lincoln University, Bradford University, as well as foreign students from the USA, Sweden, Norway and Denmark, and established a close working relationship with the Maastricht Conservation Course. The unit may claim to have provided initial training to the few consultants currently offering historic interiors

conservation within the UK, and undoubtedly benefitted from the skills and energy of these waves of interns.

The unit also had an active lecturing and publication programme, and offered a neutral point for the discussion of standards for the evolving discipline of historic interiors research which was grounded in the assessment of both documentary and archaeological evidence. The *Layers of Understanding Seminar* (and post print publication) hosted by HIRC in 2000 is recognised as the first attempt to produce standards and training programmes for the newly developing discipline of Historic Interiors Conservation.² This initiative inspired two further international conferences in Copenhagen (2005), New York (2008) and the forthcoming 4th Architectural Paint Research Conference entitled '*Sharing Information – Sharing Decisions*' to be held at Lincoln University next month – see below.

The unit also managed a unique working archive of historic interiors research project reports, some of which date back to the 1950s. The archive holds data on over 500 buildings researched by the unit which includes thousands of mounted paint samples and architectural fragments. This research record is irreplaceable and has proved to be an important starting point for further works in the buildings included in the archive. A database with an effective search facility was developed to facilitate access to it.

Although the trend for major institutions to close in-house conservation departments and buy in consultants as needed has been long established, the ramifications of the closure of such a specialist unit, comparable to the closure of the TCC and the RCA/V&A postgraduate programmes, must be considered (*An Unsustainable future?* Icon News May 2010, Issue 28). So while the closure of HIRC may be seen as an unfortunate consequence of budget cuts, and English Heritage's long-term shift from providing a hands-on service to a more strategic role within the conservation heritage sector can be readily understood, English Heritage's actions imply that there is ample historic interiors expertise within the sector to meet current demands, which is rather disingenuous – and not helpful.

All of the successive architectural conferences highlight the fact that the future of historic interiors research is problematic and the hybrid discipline has not advanced far from its starting position of the 1980s. Willie Graham, keynote speaker at the New York APR conference in 2008, hailed paint research as '*a vital tool for the understanding of architectural change... used to unravel social meaning*' and made a repeated plea for standards and training.³

The National Heritage Science Strategy Report 2 identified the importance of historic interiors research in understanding building development, but stated that 'the greater benefits of historic interiors research as a comparative dating tool... is often overlooked (p.28).⁴ The investigation of building history still remains a largely visual, scholarly activity, based on documentary research. The NSHH report called for organisations to place a greater emphasis on the scientific

investigation of buildings. While proposing that better communication was required, the report rather pertinently suggested that interdisciplinary tensions within building investigation may be the root problem and highlighted difficulties over who interprets scientific data (p.25). Few traditional architectural historians have embraced the potential of architectural paint research and it is regarded as a handmaiden service. The emphasis on and primacy of documentary evidence and research often leads to a dismissal of physical evidence to the detriment of the advancement of historic interior research.⁵

But who will take responsibility for taking forward the NHSS proposals now that English Heritage has 'left the building?' Who now takes responsibility for training historic interior researchers? And in a project driven culture who will define and up-hold standards?

EH's assertion that the closure of the in-house facility would empower the sector may be correct – but only if the sector actively shoulders this responsibility. There is evidence that this is indeed what is taking place. One of the first positive actions of the sector was to secure the future of the HIRC archive. Unfortunately the EH registry at Swindon was unable to accommodate a mixed media archive, and the option of separating the documentation from the mounted samples and other archaeological materials and storing these in different parts of the country would have made it extremely difficult to continue to operate as an active archive. The importance of retaining the archive intact and accessible was recognised and it was agreed to accept the invitation of the Conservation Department of Lincoln University to house and administer the archive. This initiative was actively supported by bodies such as The National Trust, The Traditional Paint Forum, SPAB and private consultants. Lincoln University now provides public access to the archive with microscope facilities and is seeking further funding to house other archives and improve on-line database access. It has been decided that the Historic Interiors Section of Icon will publish much needed Standards and Guidelines for Historic Interiors Research (which when ready will be available to download from the Icon web-site). These will offer guidance for legislators, commissioning clients and practitioners working within the UK. This will be a major step in directing the development of the sector. Future training provision has yet to be established but it may be possible to arrange an Icon internship partnership with a hosting organisation and the private sector.

No doubt the 4th International Paint Research Conference, 'Sharing Information – Sharing Decisions' to be held next month at Lincoln (4–6 August 2010), will provide an opportunity for further discussion and planning. Papers to be presented include 'Architectural Paint Researcher: Puppet or decision maker?' and 'Disciplinary Boundaries in the Heritage Sector' which suggest that issues highlighted by the NHSS report will receive vigorous discussion.

Historic interiors research needs support but perhaps it is now realised that the discipline must take responsibility for its own

future and not depend on others. And if it can do this, the future looks bright.

Helen Hughes

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- 4 Williams, J (2009) National Heritage Science Strategy – Report 2 *The Use of science to enhance our understanding of the past*. English Heritage. Downloadable from www.heritagesciencestrategy.org.uk
- 5 Hughes, H. (2008) 'Your monument... temple, my castle, my home...: A Theory for Historic Interiors Research & Conservation', *ICOM-CC 15th Triennial Meeting in New Delhi – Theme: Diversity in Heritage Conservation: Tradition, Innovation and Participation*, 22–26 September 2008 in New Delhi, India. 15th Triennial Conference Preprints, Vol. II, 1017–1024. Held in the Chantry Library

CONSERVATION METHODOLOGY

Exploring the relationship between theory and practice

- A thoroughly worthwhile experience
- A slightly different take on the issues surrounding the conservation of cultural heritage
- The days were jam-packed with a variety of absorbing and thought provoking events

Following the success of the Conservation Methodology course held at West Dean last November (reviewed in Icon News issue 26) and calls for it to be repeated, the organisers Helen Hughes and Dinah Eastop are pleased to announce that the course will run again on 6–8 December 2010. The location this year will be the Sir John Soane Museum which will provide a stimulating environment for the consideration of a wide range of conservation issues.

Early booking is recommended as places are limited. It is hoped that we will again be able to offer a bursary place to a student (allocated by ballot) and would encourage other students to apply for funding from The Clothworkers' Foundation and The Anna Plowden Trust.

For further details please contact Helen Hughes hh@historicinteriorsresearch.co.uk

WATERLOGGED WOOD

English Heritage has issued a new edition of its guidelines on dealing with waterlogged wood. This is an update on the last (1996) edition, since when new techniques have been developed and others modified. It includes enhanced sections on recording techniques, preservation in situ and reburial.

To obtain free copies of the booklet contact EH Customer Services on 0870 333 1181 or email customers@english-heritage.org.uk, quoting product code 51578. Or await a forthcoming PDF download on www.helm.org.uk/

people

TWO HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE!

Tate appointed two new Heads of Conservation in March 2010: Deborah Potter is the Head of Conservation, Collection and Patricia Smithen is the Head of Conservation, Programme. This innovative split is to create a balance between supporting collection activities (acquiring, storing and collections care) and programme activities (loans, displays and exhibitions). Tate has an increasingly ambitious programme activity across its four sites and beyond, encompassing new voices, challenging media and greater activity. Equally new and complex works are being acquired which require innovative solutions to store, care for and display such as Mike Nelson's *The Coral Reef* (2000) currently on display at Tate Britain. This work is a series of fifteen meticulously crafted interconnecting rooms, populated with items selected from everyday life, including textiles (e.g. a sleeping bag), paper, objects, lighting and time-based media (e.g. handheld video game). The conservation department needs to respond to new directions in collecting activity and support innovative ways of displaying the artworks. The two posts will provide the leadership necessary to shape the conservation department and balance preservation and access both now and in the future.



David Watkinson receiving his medal

PLOWDEN MEDAL AWARD

As announced in our last issue, the winner of this year's Plowden Medal is David Watkinson and he was presented with it at the beginning of June by the Duchess of Northumberland at a lunch given by the inaugurators of the medal, the Royal Warrant Holders Association.

MLA BOARD APPOINTMENT

Nancy Bell, Head of Collection Care at The National Archives, was appointed to the MLA Board on 1 May 2010. The MLA (Museums, Libraries & Archives) is funded by Government as its strategic adviser for museums, libraries and archives in England. It promotes best practice and delivers a range of programmes to develop the sector, including Renaissance, its programme to transform England's regional museums.

Nancy Bell was nominated by the Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, as an advocate for London. The former Director of the Oxford Conservation Consortium, Nancy brings twenty years' experience of working in the cultural and heritage sector to her new role.

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'.



To support this aim, an innovative programme encourages 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 of 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 2010**.

Successful applicant(s) will be informed by **1 March 2011**.

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

Notice Of Board Elections 2010

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

In accordance with Icon's Articles of Association, one third of the serving Board members will stand down at the end of 2010 and their seats are now open to election. This year there are five seats up for election including the Scottish seat which is reserved for eligible members who have their primary address in Scotland. Candidates seeking election to reserved seats may also seek election to unrestricted seats.

Diane Gwilt will step down as Chair at the 2010 AGM, in accordance with Icon's byelaws. The Board of Trustees met on 9 June 2010 to nominate a candidate for the Chair. Their nominee is Amber Xavier-Rowe ACR. In accordance with the byelaws, an invitation is extended to eligible members to stand for election to the position of Chair. All Accredited and Ordinary Members in good standing for whom The Institute holds a preferred address with a UK postcode shall be eligible to seek nomination for election as Chair of the Institute Board. Candidates seeking election to the Chair may also seek election to reserved and unrestricted seats on the Board. If eligible nominations are received for the position of Chair, ballot papers will be issued with the September issue of Icon News to enable all voting members to cast a vote. The successful candidate will be announced at Icon's AGM on December 1st. If, after the specified date, no other candidate has been nominated, the candidate nominated by the Board shall be declared elected without a ballot.

WHAT IS INVOLVED?

- Job descriptions for both Chair and elected Board members are available from the Icon website www.icon.org.uk. The term of office of the Chair is two years, and of a Trustee, three years. There will be approximately four Board meetings in 2011.
- Board members are also asked to serve on at least one committee or panel.
- Members should note that travel expenses are subject to an upper limit of £150 per Board meeting.

HOW DOES THE ELECTION WORK?

- There are five seats open to election in 2010. Four of these seats are open to nominations from all Accredited and Ordinary members of Icon.
- The fifth seat is reserved for Scotland. This means that nominations for this seat will only be accepted from Accredited or Ordinary members who have a primary address in Scotland.
- To stand for election, complete and return the nomination form (available from the Icon website www.icon.org.uk) to the London office by midnight on Friday 13 August 2010. Nominations received after this date will not be accepted.
- Ballot papers will be sent out to members together with the September issue of Icon News and the results will be announced to members at Icon's AGM on 1 December 2010.

Further information can be found in Icon's Byelaws published on the Icon website. If you wish to discuss running for election on an informal and confidential basis, please contact Alison Richmond by email arichmond@icon.org.uk or +44 (0)20 7785 3805.

History Mystery of Pikeman's Pigment

Patricia Collins MA AMA, an Independent Curator in Norfolk, relates how persistence brings conservation expertise – and unexpected stories – to a small museum

'History Mystery of Pikeman's Pigment' is not a headline typical of the regional press. More surprisingly the story does not emanate from one of the region's university or county museums, nor from a designated collection, conservation studio or art gallery. It was the 68 point headline in the Eastern Daily Press on February 15 2010 to a conservation story from a small independent museum.

The pigments are those blues and whites discovered by Suffolk-based conservator George Monger when cleaning seventeenth century armour belonging to Swaffham Museum in Norfolk. The armour comprises breast and backplates, a helmet, a pair of tassets and a two-part gorget. Amazingly the original receipt has survived and is in the care of Norfolk Record Office, so there is a record of the maker and purchaser as well as a record of ownership since it was purchased by the people of Swaffham 380 years ago for £2.4s.4d.

The colours found on the chest plate and helmet came as quite a surprise to everyone. In an article for the Friends of Swaffham Museum Newsletter, George writes 'researching images of 17th century Pikeman's armour suggests that the finish should be bright metal'. The colouration is still under investigation and any readers with any experience are invited to contact the author. Meanwhile the armour is on show in a state of the art showcase in the hallway of the museum in Swaffham Town Hall.

Possible white pigment on the helmet



Body/breast plate of the armour before conservation

Behind the headline there's another story with less mystery and more perseverance. Swaffham is a small, recession-hit market town in West Norfolk. The museum has an annual budget of £22,000 derived from admission fees, shop sales and a small civic grant, 3,250 visitors each year and, apart from a half time education officer, has no paid staff. Its collections were in and out of external stores for the past years while major renovations and remodelling of the museum took place. By February 2009 they had all returned in supermarket cartons, washing up bowls and the rest to the attic store rooms and the volunteer collections and DIY teams embarked on a major programme of collections care under the supervision of an honorary curator.

The trustees of the museum were persuaded to set aside an annual sum of £500 for collections care and conservation. With this as seed money the Friends of the Museum were approached to finance some essential collections care equipment so that the practical tasks of re-packaging, light cleaning and safe storing could begin.

Norfolk's Museum Development Officer, working with the regional conservators, offered a free-to-the museum conservation audit. Although this proved to be a somewhat gruelling two day process, it was invaluable as it created a check list of priority tasks and triaged those things that could be done on a limited budget by supervised volunteer labour and those that would require money and specialist skills. The audit also highlighted the need for a specialist assessment of the very rich, paper-based collections. The museum was fortunate to be assisted in this by the conservators at Norfolk Record Office. They not only advised on suitable housing for various collections items but also invited a party of volunteers



Two-piece gorget or neckpiece before conservation

for a half day training in appropriate care techniques.

The museum applied to the Renaissance Museum Development Fund for a grant towards conservation supplies for preserving the paper-based collections. Hoping for £1500 it was awarded £500. It is ironic that as I write this article, the news breaks about the Renaissance underspend. We could have achieved so much more with the additional £1000.

The armour came into the category of needing big money and specialist skills and the museum decided to make its conservation and re-display the major project for 2009.

Allyson Rae, the conservation auditor, described the armour as needing

‘a surface clean, stabilisation and cleaning of the corrosion spots plus treatment to apply a surface coating to the metalwork to protect it from further deterioration, and to the leather straps to give more flexibility and protection from breakage’.

She also stressed the need for a bespoke mounting of the armour should it be put onto display.

With the audit report in hand, the Friends of the Museum were asked to support the armour project by purchasing a secure case for its display. They identified a suitable showcase from a very helpful Click Netherfield and by coffee mornings, museum talks and tombolas raised £2,000 to buy it. The museum approached AIM (The Association for Independent Museums) for a Pilgrim Trust conservation grant and was awarded £3,600 to conserve and conservation mount the seven pieces of armour.

AIM grants are awarded twice yearly and any independent

Thigh plate or tasset: the surface coating shows the shape of the missing fixing clip and suggests that the pigmentation is original



The helmet pigment in close-up

museum member of the organisation can apply. They are mercifully light on paperwork and applicants are gently guided through the process by a very able Roger Hornshaw.

Each of these steps in the year-long journey was a learning process for the town's museum community. The museum became conservation-conscious. It was wonderful for all the enthusiastic amateurs to have the support and guidance of the equally enthusiastic professionals within the conservation community. Everyone at the museum is keen to continue the working relationships that have been established.

Finally on February 13 the museum was opened for the 2010 season, the armour unveiled and the 'History Mystery of Pikeman's Pigment' revealed.

My hope is that writing this story behind the headline will encourage further interaction between small museums and conservators.

Anyone interested in discussing AIM conservation grants should contact Roger Hornshaw on aimadmin@aim-museums.co.uk

Swaffham Museum is entirely volunteer run, so visitors are advised to contact 01760 721 730 or enquiries@swaffhammuseum.co.uk in advance for information about opening times and the like.

The helmet in close-up after conservation showing possible blue pigment



Wisbech's ancient scabbard

Another East Anglian treasure goes back on display after conservation. Julia Park-Newman ACR, of Suffolk-based company Conservation Services, and Museum Curator David Wright celebrate the event

Wisbech and Fenland Museum, like many small museums, runs on a small budget with a dedicated team of staff and volunteers. Yet, again like many such museums – and the BBC Radio 4 programme *History of the World in 100 Objects* has surely proved this – it has a remarkable collection of both local and national importance. One such object, an internationally renowned ancient scabbard, has recently gone back on display following conservation work.

The prestigious object, known as the Wisbech Scabbard, is the decorated upper part of a sheath for a short sword or dagger and dates back to 300BC. The scabbard, a rare example of the earliest style of La Tène art, is an iconic influence on studies of this early Celtic art. It was given to the Wisbech and Fenland Museum in 1847 by Samuel Smith, who was one of the pioneers of documentary photography. Dr Jody Joy, Curator of the British and European Iron Age Collections at the British Museum, has stated that 'The scabbard is critical to our understanding of art and chronology in the British Iron Age'.

David Wright comments: 'Amongst the archaeology community there is great interest in this object and it's quite remarkable how far the knowledge of the Wisbech Scabbard has travelled. It is also quite rare that an object of this type is in a small, rural museum like ours'. He added 'The scabbard was taken off display in 2005 because it had deteriorated to such a state that it was too delicate to have on display and we had to wait until last year for it to be restored'.

The Museum was able to have the scabbard conserved by Julia Park-Newman with the help of a grant from the Association of Independent Museums. Julia notes that 'The scabbard was in two pieces, the iron of the blade, and the copper alloy scabbard. Previous treatments were removed and the object was cleaned and stabilised. The object had previously been cleaned but any remains of possible niello were retained. Records were made of the fine decoration on the surface, and a full drawing was made to aid interpretation. We found remarkable detail on the decoration suggesting

The Scabbard After Conservation



In the dedicated display case in Wisbech Museum Main Gallery

that the scabbard had been inscribed twice; we also found possible fleece lining on the blade. Part of the conservation process was to be able to re-display the scabbard as a complete piece but without allowing the two metals to touch. The Curator also wanted to view the back of the object where the iron blade exhibited the fleece lining. To do this a Perspex mount was designed and laser-cut to support the object'.

The Museum rose to the challenge of raising further money for a humidity controlled display case. This was purchased from Click Netherfield with the assistance of funds from The Friends of Wisbech and Fenland Museum, The Leche Trust, Cambridgeshire County Council and Renaissance Museums Development Funding.

The scabbard now occupies a prominent position in the museum's main gallery and its return to public view has been acclaimed in the Eastern Daily Press. As David Wright says 'it is very important for the Museum that this treasured object is now back on display and available for visitors to see'.

Microphoto showing decorative techniques



The APEFE Projects: Conservation-restoration training in Vietnam

INTRODUCTION

by Catherine Noppe, Curator of Asian Collections, Mariemont, and Scientific Partner of APEFE

In 2000, at the request of the National Museum of the History of Vietnam (Musée National d'Histoire du Vietnam) in Hanoi, a foundation course in the conservation-restoration of ceramics and metals was launched by Wallonie-Bruxelles International (WBI) through APEFE (Association pour l'Education et la Formation à l'Etranger¹), in partnership with the Musée Royal de Mariemont. Several short practical training courses for technicians in charge of the preservation of archaeological objects were given in the laboratory of the Musée Royal de Mariemont, equipped by APEFE. A bilingual Vietnamese/French glossary of some key terms was put together to provide a much needed common vocabulary. This was important, as for example, in Vietnamese, the word *phuc chê* signifies both 'restore' and 'copy'. In 2004, a temporary exhibition at the Musée d'Histoire du Vietnam showed the modest ground covered by these training courses to the public and cultural heritage professionals alike. At the same time, an international colloquium, '*Conservation et restauration du patrimoine muséal: quels choix pour le Vietnam?*' welcomed nearly one hundred participants. In 2005, a wider partnership was formed under the aegis of the Ministry of Culture of Vietnam, whose department of cultural heritage worked doggedly to produce a 'charter of the conservation-restoration profession', which has recently been promoted and which, aside from certain omissions, has achieved the uncontested achievement of giving birth to a new profession.

In 2006, an expert mission on the situation and the needs of museums was carried out for APEFE by M. Gaël de Guichen, Honorary Director of ICCROM. Subsequent missions consisting of short training courses in conservation have been organised since 2007. The subjects of the courses have been paper, ceramics, textiles, and easel paintings of oil on canvas which developed in Vietnam in the twentieth century. In parallel, Vietnamese cultural heritage professionals have been welcomed into the French community in Belgium to learn about the training and practice of conservation-restoration, notably at ENSAV-La Cambre and IRPA. The main goal of this training is to facilitate the acquisition of basic skills necessary to protect collections by all those in charge of them, in any museum, regardless of size. During the courses, participants are given a syllabus drawn up by the tutors and translated into Vietnamese, which includes a brief overview of ethics. The choice of Wallonie-Bruxelles International therefore completes for Vietnamese museums the other international partnerships which benefit the country in the area of museums: ICCROM's CollAsia 2010 (preservation in ASEAN countries), FSP French in museology, to name only the principal ones.

The conservators-restorers who agreed to deliver this training were approached not only on the basis of their abilities but also their capacity to share and adapt in a country where all

the social, cultural, and professional codes are radically different from ours. I am grateful to them for their commitment and the quality of their teaching.

PAPER CONSERVATION-RESTORATION TRAINING IN VIETNAM

by Dr Anne Liénardy, Professeur, ENSAV de La Cambre

To date, three five-day courses in conservation-restoration of works on paper have been given in Vietnam. Organised along theoretical and practical lines, the first two provided an introduction to basic conservation-restoration principles for paper objects and were held at the Musée d'Histoire in Hanoi in August 2007, and the Université de la Culture in Ho Chi Minh City in October 2008. The third course, based around lining of works on paper, was given in October 2008 at the Musée d'Histoire, Hanoi.

Similar in structure to the introduction given to first-year students undertaking the conservation-restoration baccalaureate at l'ENSAV de La Cambre, the Level I courses began by describing paper as a support for works of art with the aim of teaching the participants about a specific material and helping them rapidly acquire elementary information about conservation-restoration of works on paper. This covered visual and technical examination of works, including the nature of the support and media, their sensitivity, solubility, and treatment approaches which could be considered or rejected at later stages. Solubility and wettability tests were also explained and practised. Several restoration techniques were then described and demonstrated, such as dusting, dry cleaning with grated/vinyl eraser, washing, aqueous deacidification, tear repair with Japanese tissue and wheat starch paste, and humidification/flattening. As a complement, mounting and framing were covered, along with two storage methods: made-to-measure polyester sleeves and paper four-flap folders.

At the end of the first Level 1 course in Hanoi, it was clear that the course had not been long enough to provide an overview of the different problems the participants had actually encountered. In addition, participants were eager to explore in greater depth certain elements relating to the practical work, such as preventive conservation, treatment of large format works and specific treatments such as dry cleaning and backing removal or lining. A Level II course (completion of Level I was a pre requisite) based around lining of works on paper was therefore delivered in October 2008 at the Musée d'Histoire in Hanoi. The course covered the examination of works, solubility testing, removal from mounts and removal of old hinges, dry cleaning with grated/vinyl eraser, washing, lining, aqueous/non aqueous treatments and mounting/framing. Participants were asked to bring along documents that had been conserved post Level I, which was very interesting and instructive for both teacher and students.

An innovation introduced into the Level II course was the



Level I participants visiting the Museum of the History of Ho Chi Minh.

addition of a simple evaluatory test, which took into account the language element and the short duration of the course. The test consisted of ten questions on basic and fundamental concepts which showed the students' attention and comprehension of the new material as well as the effectiveness of the teacher in conveying theoretical and practical concepts in a clear and precise way through the interpreter, also an important consideration.

On a practical level, running these courses over two consecutive years allowed us to make adjustments, taking into account the experience of the previous year. Having had the opportunity in the interim to prepare and run other courses, notably in the context of education of francophone staff members of the Archives Générales du Royaume, we had built up, even though in French, a considerable body of illustrative material in Power Point format. More than 700 image and text slides provided supporting material for presentations – alongside a bilingual syllabus in French/Vietnamese – and was a considerable aid for the translator-interpreter. The key role played by the interpreter in communicating information and terms for which an equivalent in Vietnamese did not exist must be emphasized. We were often surprised by a sudden animated conversation which may at first have seemed disruptive, but then turned out to be discussions among the group about the correct term for a particular technical word that the interpreter did not know in Vietnamese.

Equipment in the studios and space itself was minimal. There were a few tables, chairs, some basic tools such as rulers, synthetic brushes, metal spatulas, scissors, etc. There were no Japanese brushes, nor a Dahlia spray or a humidification chamber. As far as supplies went, the situation was even more difficult: there was no Japanese tissue, wheat or rice starch paste, grated eraser, non woven support fabric, blotters, museum board, polyester sleeves.... These circumstances were challenging and we had to be resourceful and inventive to overcome these drawbacks. During our teaching in Vietnam we have greatly admired the students' eagerness to learn – one would almost say their thirst for knowledge – and also their fertile imaginations, ingenuity, and tenacity. Faced with our requests for supplies, the Vietnamese prided themselves on finding rapid and effective alternatives.

During the first Level I course, faced with a lack of non-woven support material for use during treatment, we were provided with a material which appeared similar in character. However, it turned out that on contact with water, this material completely disintegrated, thus losing its ability to act as a support. We were able to reverse this by interleaving when



Level I participants in Ho Chi Minh during class.

drying between filter paper (it had not been possible to source proper blotting paper). The following year, thanks to an ingenious student, we used small squares of a material similar to non woven textile which performed perfectly well despite the fact that it was meant for use in making up flower arrangements, by Vietnamese and European florists. Boards that were not neutral pH, polyester film, whether Melinex or Mylar, we will never know! Definitely non-archival double-sided tape, and paste exclusively based on carboxymethylcellulose! All of this and more...

Despite the lack of facilities, purpose-made equipment, and conservation-grade materials, course participants exhibited great initiative and enthusiasm. At the start, students were asked to bring documents, works of art, or archival material on which to work. For administrative reasons, often due to a refusal or mistrust at a higher level of allowing participants to work on original material, or for practical reasons such as the difficulty of releasing material from a museum, or simply because the students were coming from a great distance, most treatments were carried out on documents of little or no value, such as the typescripts or magazine pages used for Level I work.

Having given two training courses with primarily the same participants, one year apart, and having seen the practical work and exercises done in the intervening year, we were able to evaluate how the theoretical knowledge imparted during the courses had been put into practice in the students' professional work. Even though the results were not perfect, we were very happy with the development and progress made. There is still a lot to do particularly in central and south Vietnam. The expectations of participants for the course in Ho Chi Minh City from several nearby district museums was proof of this. They would like help with pest control, mould infestations, and the display of works on paper in museums, as well as environmental control, light levels, and environmental conditions in stores. The situation is clearly less pressing in the north, in Hanoi.

Translated from the French by Jane Eagan, Head Conservator Oxford Conservation Consortium

1 Association for the Promotion of Education and Training Abroad, whose members are drawn largely from Belgium federal government departments and higher education institutions. The aims of the association are to co-operate in the study, organization and development of training academic programmes in foreign nations, and to promote/organize all forms of knowledge transfer between the Francophone community of Belgium, the Walloon Region, and foreign nations. For further information, see www.apefe@wbi.be

news from the groups

BOOK AND PAPER GROUP

Thank you to the Book & Paper Group organisers, particularly Sonja Schwill, for arranging a very informative and interesting book and paper representation at the Icon Conference. The day was also joined by the Photographic Materials Group and topics included washing and mounting artworks, new approaches in book conservation and the conservation and re-housing of large collections of photographs and glass plate negatives. A full review will be available soon on the Icon website. Please regularly check the website for this, and other updates.

Lara Speroni ACR, *Nicola Fleming*, The National Archives, Kew, UK.

ETHNOGRAPHY GROUP

The Basketry workshop to be held at the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew on 15–17 September is now fully booked. Many thanks to all who have registered and apologies to those who were not able to register. However, there are still places available for the one-day basketry conference on 18 September. The conference will focus on the conservation, construction and collection care issues of basketry. Speakers will include both representatives from Native American groups and a mix of national and international conservators. You can register for this event at: http://www.icon.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=112&Itemid=

PAINTINGS GROUP

The Paintings Group held its AGM at the Cardiff CF10 Conservation in Focus conference. The Chair's report is now available to download from the Paintings Group section of the Icon website. We would like to welcome a new committee member Angelina Barros d'Sa who was elected at the AGM. Angelina has joined the Talks and Events sub committee and will be helping out with the talks in London.

Recently the Paintings Group has been in contact with the Icon Scotland Group. We are hoping to support them in presenting painting related talks as part of their successful events program. This summer we are launching a newsletter as a new vehicle for communicating directly with our members. Please make sure that your registered email address is up to date so that you won't miss out. Icon.paintingsgroup@gmail.com

The Paintings Group Committee

Chair:	Francis Downing
Secretary:	Rhiannon Clarricoates
Treasurer:	Rebecca Gregg
Student Liaison Officer:	Helen Dowding
Group Editor:	Morwenna Blewett
Group News Officer:	Alexandra Gent
Committee Members:	Ambrose Scott-Moncrief Chantal Thuer Angelina Barros d'Sa Dr. Clare Finn
Co-opted:	

TEXTILE GROUP

The most recent event in the Textile Group calendar was the latest in the Back to Basics workshop series. Held on May 12 at the V&A, the topic Mounting Accessories was designed to complement the theme of the joint Textile and Ethnography group session at the Cardiff conference. The feedback has been really positive and the participants clearly gained a lot from attending the workshop. Thanks to our colleagues at the V&A who gave up their time and energy to organise the event. Make sure to read Maggie Dobbie's report on page 31.

The next workshop in the series is Upholstery – History and Techniques in November. The workshop is fully booked but there is a waiting list so please see the website should you wish to sign up. Other upcoming events are the visits to the Museum of London and Albert E Chapman, London, Upholsterers. Again see the website for further details.

Roisin Morris has been investigating developments in the production of Stabiltex and has provided this update. We all heard last year that Sefar, a Swiss based manufacturer of monofilament precision fabrics, had withdrawn Stabiltex/Tetex from production. This left us with somewhat of a dilemma and no replacement for this much used fabric. Recent news that Sefar had produced white and a batch of coloured Stabiltex for Talas in the US prompted us to return to them and PlastOk again for further information. Sefar moved from dope dyeing to a piece dyeing process, which caused difficulties with colour control as well as distortions in the weave, and they found it increasingly difficult to meet our (the profession's) exacting standards causing frustrations for all.

PlastOK have now confirmed that they still have a small amount of end-of-line in stock (white, black, red, beige and khaki/olive green) but also that they will, in light of these developments, continue to stock this limited range of colours once again. Sefar have agreed to produce a single colour in 125 meter batches. PlastOk will only deviate from the limited range mentioned if they have an assurance that they can sell the batch – probably more than any of us can promise. This is probably also a good time to mention that the price per meter from PlastOk has risen from approximately £39.00 to a substantial £60.82 per metre.

Obviously, this scaling back in the colour range limits our palate considerably. However, we have also been looking into ways of dyeing without requiring pressure. Terasil, a disperse dye for polyester, has been used very infrequently at the V&A for about fifteen years. We contacted Townend (Leeds) plc and they still recommend Terasil for dyeing white stabiltex. The dyes are expensive and the cost of your time to dye will also be a big consideration. We will put Townend & Terasil information – dye costs, dyeing method and a recipe example on the web pages in the next couple of weeks. If you have queries, comments, suggestions the committee would be really pleased to hear them – please contact r.morris@vam.ac.uk

Graduate Voice

A MUSEUM IN TRANSFORMATION

A Fellow's report from Harvard's Straus Center for Conservation

by **Matthew Brack**, Craigen W. Bowen Fellow in Paper Conservation, Straus Center for Conservation and Technical Studies, Harvard Art Museum

A recent graduate from the Conservation of Fine Art programme at the University of Northumbria at Newcastle, I moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts at the end of 2009 to begin my studies as the Craigen W. Bowen Fellow in Paper Conservation at the Straus Center for Conservation and Technical Studies, Harvard Art Museum. This article tries to provide some brief insight into what is arguably an important and distinguished centre in the global field of conservation and, in doing so, reveal some of the surrounding developments within the Harvard Art Museum as it faces a period of transition.

Founded in 1928 by Edward W. Forbes, director of Harvard University's Fogg Museum, the Straus Center is the oldest fine arts conservation treatment, research, and training facility in the United States. A formal Advanced-Level Training Program

for students of conservation has existed there since 1972 to refine practical and analytical skills in the examination and treatment of works from within the Harvard art collections, culminating in the publication of original research findings. Currently, the Straus Center accepts fellows in the fields of paper, objects and paintings each academic year, and offers the three-year position of Andrew W. Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in Conservation Science.

As has already been alluded to, the Harvard Art Museum is in the midst of great change. This change is embodied in the new extension and refurbishment of the original Fogg Museum building by Renzo Piano (creator of the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris) with the result that all three of the museums that comprise the Harvard Art Museum – Fogg, Busch-Reisinger, and Arthur M. Sackler – will be under a single roof along with an expanded Study Center and all museum departments, including the Straus Center.

The more immediate effects of this change are felt in the temporary relocation of most of the museum staff and collections to an off-campus facility a short distance from Cambridge. Meanwhile, an exhibition of highlights from all three museums, together for the first time, is currently on

Re-View exhibition of works from the Harvard Art Museum's three constituent museums at the Sackler.





Edward Forbes teaching restoration techniques at the Fogg Museum in 1944.

display in the Sackler building. For those who had the opportunity to visit the Straus Center at the Fogg Museum after 1997, when it was re-designed by Samuel Anderson Architects, it is perhaps an indication of the scale of this renovation project that the conservation facility will be completely rebuilt. Happily, many of the Straus Center's distinctive cherry wood fixtures have been salvaged, thanks to a careful inventory and relocation by Straus Center staff. Other efforts, by Harvard Art Museum Archives in particular, have recovered many items of historical value from the Fogg building, including examples of original desks and lockers used by the first conservators to train at the museum in the 1920s.

Though occupying a provisional building, the Museum's off-campus facilities have proved very adequate and appear to have provided all staff with the opportunity and, perhaps, the objectivity to reflect on the role of the various departments within the museum, how they interact and how they use space within the museum environment. Indeed, the difference I have found between Harvard Art Museum and other museums I have experienced lies in its mission: despite its extraordinary collection, the focus remains on making its resources available to the student and researcher. The collection itself was originally formed as a study collection to support teaching and research at Harvard University and it still retains that feel, particularly within the gallery spaces curated by University professors for their seminars, or through the continued bequests from alumni and faculty, in all fields, that enrich the collection's depth and diversity.

As the collections are prepared for consolidation within a single building, new approaches to display and collections management are being sought. As a result, several prominent objects are being re-examined for exhibition, including two portable pieces from the Dunhuang region in China – well-preserved examples representing the style and technique of Chinese Buddhist painting on textiles from the Northern Song dynasty (960-1127 CE). These pieces will form the basis of my research project that aims to contribute towards a greater understanding of the Museum's collection and the art of Dunhuang.

My work with these objects involves a comparative technical study investigating the pigments, grounds and supports of each painting with the further aim of identifying a programme



Pigment drawers: A portion of the Forbes Pigment Collection housed at the Straus Center and part of a materials reference database used around the world.

of conservation treatment that will see these ancient materials appropriately displayed in their new galleries. Of particular interest are possible original mountings, which are being examined with the aid of the Accelerated Mass Spectrometry Laboratory at the University of Arizona. We are also drawing on other prominent collections of art from Dunhuang in our research such as those at the British Library, the British Museum, Musée Guimet and Bibliothèque Nationale de France, as well as the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and Freer Gallery. Should these mountings prove to be contemporary to the paintings themselves, they would provide an invaluable contribution to the knowledge surrounding ancient Chinese mounting practices that, ultimately, have evolved to inform our own contemporary practices in Western paper conservation.

The practical conservation training at the Straus Center has naturally been very thorough and I have found that I now feel comfortable in several areas of treatment in which I was previously unpractised, including the conservation of transparent papers, the fixing of inks with cyclododecane and large-scale toning for infilling. Skills in repairing transparent papers have been required in order to treat a drawing of a 1940 architectural design by Bauhaus patriarch Walter Gropius, a Massachusetts resident and professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Design after his arrival from Germany, via Great Britain, in 1937 (findings are presented in poster format for Icon's CF10 Conference). Also worthy of note are three Kotah Indian drawings from the collection of the late Stuart Cary Welch, curator emeritus of Islamic and Later Indian art at Harvard Art Museum, and an example of the important material that continues to be gifted to the museum by Harvard University affiliates. These double-sided drawings have extensive losses, presenting both serious aesthetic and handling challenges, requiring the use of carefully toned papers to stabilise the artworks for display.

This article is but a short introduction to my fellowship and the basic, changing structure of the Harvard Art Museum, of which it is a small part. In closing I would like to thank the anonymous donors who made my position possible; the fellowship is in honour of Craigen Weston Bowen, former deputy director of the Straus Center and paper conservator, who passed away on March 1 2008.

reviews

BOOK

TEXTILE CONSERVATION: *Advances in Practice*

Frances Lennard & Patricia Ewer, eds.
Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann, 2010
ISBN: 9-780-7506-6790-6 336 pages £59.99

This book is a welcome appraisal of textile conservation practice in the UK and USA today and is a great resource for textile conservators, providing substance for reflection on our practice. The editors acknowledge the challenges that the profession has faced and the current economic climate and uncertainty makes this excellent publication all the more timely.



Frances Lennard and Patricia Ewer have co-authored chapters under seven themes which set out current practice against the development of the profession over the past four or five decades. The chapters are:

- textile conservation in the heritage sector;
- treatment options – what are we conserving?;
- engaging communities
- remedial conservation
- preventive conservation
- scientific developments
- future need and influences

The themes are then explored through a series of illustrative and often excellent case studies of best practice with useful references.

It is frequently said that conservators should be showing more initiative, adaptability and be better at communicating conservation to the public. The case studies in this book demonstrate that textile conservators are actively doing all of these things and more, such as through public conservation and education projects (Jordan); facilitating regeneration in a former mining community (Rendell et al) and the transmission of Siletz identity and culture from one generation to the next (Heald) by ensuring that objects can be used in ways that are meaningful to their people.

Several papers review past practice, particularly treatments and mounting (Hillyer; Gill; Gates and Szuhay; Giuntini) and certainly further systematic and scientific reviews of past treatments would be welcome, as might a broader international perspective. Other papers focus on the evolving pressures and changing ways of

working that conservators must and are adapting to, e.g. large touring exhibition schedules at the V&A (Kite) and the skills that we are having to develop (Ewer; Marko and Golbourn; and Hughes). One recurring theme is the need for good communication and cross-departmental working with different stakeholders and freelance colleagues (Squire) and within large institutions (Jordan; Roberts; Silence; and Rendell). There is also much thoughtful reflection on why we carry out the interventions we do with emphasis on connoisseurship and recording (Gentle; Eaton; Haldane et al; and French) and the material culture of the artefacts and their role within their communities (Eastop and Morris; Rendell et al).

'This text is not a how to book but a book about why conservators do what they do' state the editors. However, many of the case studies are so informative that while they certainly do not give 'recipes' they set out clearly how the authors achieved positive engagement with communities (Heald) or developed successful training programmes in countries where there is no formal conservation profession (Takami; Brennan). Orlofsky et al provide a considered account of five factors that can determine treatment: connoisseurship, technology, science, economics and professionalism, illustrated by the conservation of a sampler.

This publication is an excellent addition to the bookshelves of any textile conservator as a practical, stimulating resource. Together with the opening of the MPhil in Textile Conservation at the University of Glasgow it should provide a sense of optimism for what is being achieved by the profession.

Morwena Stephens ACR

Conservator of Textiles and Ethnographic Objects, Exeter

CONFERENCES

CF10: CONSERVATION IN FOCUS Icon Archaeology and Ceramics & Glass Groups session

Cardiff University March 26 2010

The Archaeology and Ceramics & Glass Groups combined to provide a series of informative and entertaining talks under the heading *Off the beaten track – stepping away from standard solutions*.

The session opened with an insight from **Kathy Tubb** (UCL) and **Caroline Cartwright** (BM) into the recovery, examination and conservation undertaken on the Ain Ghazal statue cache. In 1983, threatened by the imminent bulldozing of the Neolithic Ain Ghazal site in Jordan some twenty nine statues dating to around 9000 years old were block lifted by Kathy and her team. Concern

for the long term care of the cache meant that just five weeks later, the statues were being craned in through a window at UCL for micro-excavation and stabilisation. Aside from a 1935 discovery of comparable statues in Jericho, in which the deposit was tainted by the application of hot wax, these statues are the only examples of such material and the evidence they contain is precious

Investigation of materials showed the statues were of lime plaster on a 'corn dolly' type armature, which had since deteriorated. These armatures were replaced with Perspex counterparts during the conservation process. There is an ongoing investigation into what the lime plaster consists of - SEM analysis shows fragments of chert, bone, organic material, and micro fossils, which help to build a fantastic picture of where and how these statues were made. The surfaces were found to have been decorated with a number of materials, which would have been present in the domestic environment at that time. As the objects were in a crushed state it was possible to see inside them, and the interior surface of the plaster showed impressions of the reed bundles and twine binding used in the making of the corn dollies. Some of these objects can be seen displayed at the British Museum, and some have returned to Jordan – where apparently they have become so well known that they figure on stamps!

Liz Goodman (MoLA) then shared her experience of conserving a Roman 'Millefiori' bowl. In 2008, the bowl was discovered in a child's grave in Southwark, which once formed part of Roman Londinium, along with other items dating to the 3rd century. Good communications with the excavating unit helped bring the bowl to the notice of MoLA as quickly as possible – although time, questions surrounding the object, and security constraints meant that avoidable damage occurred during lifting without a conservator present. Aside from the technical challenges of working with the object that was so valuable and rare, Liz was keen to emphasize that her approach to the object was to 'step away' from the connotations of this bowl and see it purely as a material object, giving objectivity to the decision-making process of conservation. After slow drying and consolidation, photocopies were used to create maps of sherd positions and mark the joins. The bowl was carefully bonded from the rim up, the rim being the strongest part.

Liz finished with a very interesting insight into the difficulties presented by press demands on some objects and the importance of having the confidence in yourself as a conservator to place controls on those situations. We were also left with a reminder of the importance of not letting yourself become overwhelmed by the prospect of treating a famous, valuable and

rare object – it is just an object, made of material, and you as a conservator must have the confidence to know what will work and make those decisions.

The next talk, from **Vasiliki Kontogianni** (Cardiff University) looked at the project management, decision making and conservation of three urns excavated in 2007 as part of the Stonehenge Riverside project. Focusing on the approach to the first urn, we heard about the difficulties presented by the fragile state of the urn, which was upturned, had no base, and was very damp and friable with excessive mould growth. This, added to the heavy contents, meant that the urn had to be externally supported throughout the process of micro excavation, which was carried out in 5cm spits, very carefully to ensure the stratigraphy of the soil within was preserved. Each layer was bagged and labelled separately, with each layer photo-documented as the excavation progressed. Throughout the process the urn was sprayed with deionised water to retain dampness and prevent fragmentation – this also aided the micro excavation by softening the soil.

The decision to perform only minimal dry cleaning and localised consolidation on the interior ensured no contamination for future lipids or organic residue analysis – this decision takes into account not only the principle of minimal intervention but also that the main purpose of conserving this urn was the preservation of potential information, rather than a focus on display and interpretation.

Urn numbers 2 and 3 were conserved by Melanie Keeble and Donald Pearson and project managed by Vasiliki, who explained how the differences in these two urns necessitated different decisions on their treatment. Urn number 3 turned out to contain tiny infant bones, which were able to be measured and 3-D located.

Our session rounded off with an inspiring talk from **Christina Rozeik** (Fitzwilliam); its subject was the re-conservation of a ceramic Clazomenian sarcophagus of 470BC – otherwise titled 'Organic Box Delivery'. The alternative title made perfect sense. 'Organic': the process grows with the project, techniques are adapted, things change, questions are constantly asked. 'Box': self-evident given the sarcophagus. 'Delivery': the project had to be delivered on time, meeting budget and gallery refurbishment deadlines.

Since its move from Rhodes the sarcophagus had had two separate conservation procedures and had been permanently displayed since the 1960s. On examination, it turned out that the plaster fills were no longer supportive and the discoloured overpainting and adhesives were distracting and obscuring original material. After discussing the nature of the old restorations and their careful removal, Christina

explained the thought processes and decisions made during the selection of new materials – in particular, the selection of a new fill material – Japanese tissue. Christina explained how ingenious use of twisted strips of tissue, Paraloid B72 and fine surface filler could create a light, strong and fully reversible fill material, with a sympathetic surface texture ready for inpainting. This was carried out in a variety of ways depending on the surrounding areas. One such way, derived from paintings conservation, was to use dilute, mottled acrylic to partially recreate the impression of lost decoration.

Claire Chope Conservator Archaeology Hampshire Museums Service

MULTIDISCIPLINARY CONSERVATION – A Holistic View for Historic Interiors.

ICOM-CC

Rome 23 -26 March 2010

In March 2010 the Joint Interim Meeting of five ICOM-CC Working Groups hosted a remarkable event – a three day conference devoted to the historic interior. The last ten years has witnessed

a growing awareness of the significance of the interior and the need for multidisciplinary collaboration to manage their conservation. The participation of five working groups (1. Leather and Related Materials; 2. Murals, Stone, and Rock Art; 3. Sculpture, Polychromy, and Architectural Decoration; 4. Textiles; 5. Wood, Furniture and Lacquer) marks a new maturity amongst conservation disciplines to look beyond their own methodologies. In many ways the conference reflects the aims of Icon's own



At the ICOM-CC historic interiors conference

The Pantheon in Rome – one of the world's famous interiors



Historic Interiors Section which boasts the widest range of conservation specialists amongst its members. The range of subjects covered by the eighty papers and posters presented at the conference was a heady mix of fascinating subjects and approaches. I was particularly interested in Veerle Meul's paper, which considered a model for preventative conservation for historic interiors being developed in Flanders, and enjoyed Matthew Scott's presentation of a fragile 19thC farm house, Rouse Hill House, New South Wales, Australia, beset by dust storms and termites – its future is finite.

Helen Hughes

CONSERVATION CONTINUUM: Examining the past, envisioning the future

American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (AIC) 38th annual meeting: general sessions, poster sessions and Textile Speciality Group sessions

Milwaukee, Wisconsin, May 11-14 2010

The overall theme of the conference was to examine changes in the philosophy and practice of conservation in the 21st century. It was a large but informal event which provided many opportunities to attend workshops, tours, specialty group business meetings, poster sessions, general sessions and the specialty group sessions.

The general sessions encouraged all specialty group members to attend and they were introduced by Meg Craft, AIC President. Eight papers were presented over two half days and many case studies were presented at a good efficient pace, covering topics such as challenging the relevance of environmental standards within the museum environment and the challenge of preserving time-based media. **Shelly Smith**, Head of Conservation, The New York Public Library (NYPL), presented a paper entitled *With Patience and Fortitude: Keeping Conservation Relevant in a Changing Institution* where she discusses the recent restructuring of the library and how this has affected the representation of the conservation department and distanced them from where the collections are stored. These circumstances allowed the conservation team to question their role within the wider remit of the NYPL, for instance, seeking ways of making the conservators' activities more visible both within the institution and to the public. Education programming, digital initiatives, web-based technologies, public programmes on conservation topics, creative fundraising strategies and institution-wide outreach were some of the initiatives that have been implemented or planned as an attempt to re-establish the conservation department as a vital vehicle within the infrastructure of the NYPL.

The poster session took place alongside the exhibition area and where coffee breaks were stationed allowing the time to take in all forty five research posters! Subjects covered all areas represented by the AIC specialty groups; architecture, book and paper, conservators in private practice, electronic media, objects, paintings, photographic materials, research and technical studies, textiles and wooden artefacts.

The Textile Specialty Group (TSG) sessions were co-chaired by Denise Migdail, Textile Conservator, Asian Art Museum, San Francisco and Patricia Ewer, Textile Objects Conservator, Minnesota. Eleven papers were given in total over a two half day sessions.

Gretchen Guidess, MS candidate, Winterthur/University of Delaware Programme in Art Conservation (WUDPAC) started the proceedings with a discussion on the use of Vivak®, a water-clear, thermoplastic co-polyester as a suitable transparent support to help support dropped filling of an original upholstery piece. Guidess continued to explain how Vivak® has been successfully used to support costume and footwear and is good for long-term use; however, it is not UV stable and will yellow over time causing it to lose physical strength. Despite these considerations, the material does not off-gas and is flexible and excellent value for money.

During the second session **Sarah Stevens**, Associate Textile Conservator, Peebles Island Resource Centre, New York State Parks, Waterford, New York, presented a paper on the New York State battle flag preservation project where many of the flags had been conserved in the 1960s to celebrate the centennial of the Civil War. The paper discussed the 1960s treatment, for instance, the use of a laminate treatment, and the current treatment refinements of some of the flags to help with future stabilisation, such as the use of a huge humidity tent to help with realignment whilst trying to monitor past treatments that could not be removed. Other presentations covered topics such as the use of non-woven fabrics in conservation, sharing conservation ideas in Azerbaijan and the effects of long-term display on previous treatments of two early 19th century trapunto bedcovers.

This was the first time I had attended the AIC conference and I also had the opportunity to present a paper to the TSG based on some of the outcomes of my MA research. I discussed the differences in textile conservation treatments of the Whalley Abbey vestments and the Whalley Abbey altar frontal belonging to Towneley Hall, Burnley. I share my thanks to the Clothworkers' Foundation and the Kress Foundation (USA) for their financial support for me to attend the event and present my paper. This opportunity allowed me to

experience presenting at a major conference first hand. The informal and friendly approach of the organisers and other American conservators made this event a superb place to start!

For further details about the conference go to <http://www.conservation-us.org/>

Leanne C Tonkin Icon/HLF Textile Conservation Intern
People's History Museum, Manchester.

VISIT

ASHMOLEAN VISIT & AGM Icon Archaeology Group Oxford 12 May

Three dozen Archaeology Group members were welcomed by Mark Norman, the Ashmolean's Head of Conservation to visit the Museum's spectacular new exhibition galleries and sun-filled conservation labs before enjoying lunch and the expansive vistas over Oxford provided by the roof-top Board of Visitors' meeting room. The AGM after lunch was itself followed by a visit to Grove Cottage, home of the Oxford Conservation Consortium and the Chantry Library.

Mark Norman's tour included a potted history of the Ashmolean, one of Oxford's earliest museums and first opened to the public in 1683 displaying the 'collection of curiosities and antiquities' bequeathed to the University by Elias Ashmole. Between 1830 and 1886, the books, geological, natural history and ethnographic collections were transferred to the Bodleian Library and the Geological, University, and Pitt River

Museums. With the rise of the new science of archaeology in the late 1800s the Museum's archaeological collections expanded, precipitating their move to a new building in 1894. The Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology was created in 1908 by uniting the Ashmolean with the University Art Collection. The continued growth of the collections through the 1900s included the transfer of entire collections from other University Departments. In its redevelopment, the Museum has broken entirely from the 19thC mould of 'name and classify' to a very 21stC 'world-wide-web' of inter-connectivity.

The new galleries' over-arching theme, *Crossing Cultures, Crossing Time*, supports the development of each visitor's understanding of different cultures' relationships with one another from ancient times up to the present day. With collections of coins, ceramics, textiles, sculpture and decorative arts ranging from the earliest Asian and Mediterranean civilisations to European paintings and drawings, the links forged by the Museum in '...focussing on the different ways in which the many cultures represented in the museum are related to one another stresses the transfer of technologies ... the growth of religions ... and the spread of ideas across cultures.'

The eight galleries on the lowest floor underpin the Museum's strength as a superb setting for teaching and research. Demonstrating, for example, the cross-cultural commonalities of textiles, writing, and money, the Museum establishes a common ground between peoples of every historic period and culture. Examples and descriptions of the materials and technologies used to make objects, and the

The Archaeology Group AGM in progress



scientific means by which the museum's staff examine, analyse, verify and care for them, all help the visitor to appreciate and understand what they will see on the upper floors.

Like slender glass-rimmed ziggurats, the stairways link the Museum's floors together. On the Museum's upper floors, rooms containing cultural highlights from the ancient, medieval, Renaissance, and modern worlds flow into one another, welcoming visitors to a journey of exploration and delight. For us, visitors to the new conservation labs, delight was not too strong a word, for the labs' splendid views of Oxford compare favourably with the view of Sydney Harbour from the labs of the Australian National Maritime Museum. Mark explained the conservators' contributions to the new Museum's design, noting in particular the work required to ensure that the 500 custom-built passive-control display cases met all performance and materials specifications. With greatly-improved on-site storage, the existence of off-site stores necessarily resulted from prioritising floorspace for gallery development.

After lunch, chairing his last AGM, Jim Spriggs noted that the Archaeology Group remains a strong professional body, with an additional seven members this year being accredited conservators and good attendance at all of the Group's meetings and functions. He advised the Group that, although the Heritage Protection Bill had not gone before Parliament in 2009, the two long-winded Planning Policy Guides 15 and 16 had been amalgamated into a simple, single, 15 page document called Planning Policy Statement, Part 5 (PPSP5). Jim recommended that the PPSP5 be used in tandem with the English Heritage Guidance Notes, which provide a lot of detail and procedure.

Angela Karsten advised that the Secretary's report was on Icon's Archaeology webpage, whilst Christina noted that the Group's accounts were not yet, pending production of financial statements by Icon's accountants. She also reported that Icon's central committee was meeting with the Chairs and Treasurers of all Icon Groups to discuss changes to the way in which the Groups are funded. Jim thanked the serving and co-opted members of the Committee, especially the four members retiring as of the AGM. He noted that four nominations had been received to fill the vacant positions, and the nominees were elected by acclamation.

Each of the Committee's Officers was also retiring at this AGM: Jim thanked the Secretary and Treasurer for their hard work, and noted that the new Secretary would be Mags Felter of YAT, and the new Treasurer would be Sharon Penton of the British

Museum. Christina Rozeik, of the Fitzwilliam Museum would step into the Chairman's role. Kathy Tubb proposed a vote of thanks to Jim for his excellent work as the Group's Chairman. After brief discussions on ideas for the Christmas party, pleas for stories for Icon News, notice of RESCUE's 40th anniversary in 2011, and an update on plans to revise First Aid For Finds for re-publication, Jim thanked Mark Norman on the Group's behalf for the provision of such a splendid venue, and closed the meeting.

The Group's visit to the Chantry Library was hosted by Ros Buck, Chantry Librarian. She explained how Judith Chantry's personal library of conservation books and journals had been passed to the Oxford Conservation Consortium. With the hiring of the Library's first librarian in 2006, the original paper and preventive conservation focus of the library's holdings is being expanded to include all branches of the discipline. Both the librarian and the library exist to help Icon members: if the library does not hold an appropriate book or article, the librarian will help to find one.

Barbara Reeve

Visiting Scholar, Wolfson College Cambridge

TALK

PICASSO'S MATERIALS AND TECHNIQUES Icon Paintings Group London 3 March 2010

The evening proved to be unique in several ways, not least for its unfortunate beginning when the fire alarm went off. The ensuing forty minutes were spent, first on a chilly embankment by the Thames, then in the foyer while a team of firemen investigated, all allowed plenty of time for networking, and, best of all, for the speaker and her husband to share their knowledge of Picasso with the audience on a one-to-one basis.

Dr Marilyn McCully, an art historian, exhibition organizer and John Richardson's collaborator on the 3-volume biography of Picasso, has a particular interest in Picasso's use of non-traditional materials, and in the ways in which art historians, conservators and scientists might most fruitfully collaborate on research. A version of this paper was given at the second *Ripolin* conference at the Art Institute of Chicago in October 2009. Marilyn is currently co-curating an exhibition of Picasso drawings for the Frick Collection, New York, and the National Gallery, Washington (2011). In addition, she is curator of the *Picasso in Paris* exhibition for the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam, and the *Museu Picasso*, Barcelona (also 2011). She has recently been working with the Art Institute of Chicago (AIC), on a project investigating the use of household paint in art. Her study

included detailed materials analysis of works by Picasso and Picabia, both of whom are known for their use of Ripolin paints.

The trade name Ripolin denotes a widely distributed brand of commercial house paint; in France it has been known from 1897 onwards. Well marketed, Ripolin as a brand has today come to indicate simply commercially-produced house paints, in the same generic sense that 'hoovering' is used to mean vacuum cleaning. In fact the company Ripolin also made marine paints. It was a highly-regarded product, well-ground and smoother than other house paints, therefore appealing for artistic use to those accustomed to good-quality paints.

The AIC research has included analytical and historical studies, and to do this they have acquired historic Ripolin paint sample cards. The results of that analysis, undertaken by Kim Muir, Gwénaëlle Gautier et al, are published separately.¹ The current talk centred on Picasso's work at Antibes, in the South of France, during 1946 but McCully spread her net further, also putting Picasso's use of materials in context over his wider career. She also discussed the way in which some of the information for Picasso's use of house paints and non traditional supports has been passed on through both documents and literary evidence.

Picasso's use of Ripolin is recorded as far back as the time of cubism, before the First World War. Less well known is his continued use of commercial housepaints after the war. In 1925, the artist was in close contact with Picabia, both were part of the Parisian avant-garde, and Picabia is also quoted as a user of Ripolin (housepaint by implication). An example was given of him using it to obliterate an earlier image with blue/black paint. Picasso would use it in the glossy black paint that strengthens outlines and boundaries in his paintings.

However, although in the past gloss has been used as an indicator of the presence of commercial housepaints in Picasso's paintings, it is not a reliable indicator. All the samples analysed at AIC indicated pigment selection to be a better indicator. Sampling revealed the presence of zinc white, not lead white, and that they had only moderate gloss. Glossiness, Marilyn pointed out, could be increased by adding varnish and/or a commercially available siccative, and documentary sources show that Picasso purchased commercial siccatives such as siccatif de Haarlem.

However, based on observations alone McCully suggested some particular works that might repay technical study and analysis:

- a Picasso painting (1925), *Le Baiser*, now in the Musée Picasso, Paris, worth analysing for zinc white as an indicator of Ripolin

paint use, to support or refute this theory

- a Picasso Vallauris landscape on plywood, now in Bergen Art Gallery, Norway, on plywood and probably done out of doors
- Picasso's re-interpretation of Courbet's *Deux Femmes au Bord de la Seine*, with two horizontal figures, variously described as 'oil on plywood' and 'oil and Ripolin'
- two or three Picasso paintings in family collections inconsistently catalogued as enamel on plywood, which might include oil-based tube paints or Ripolin.

While he was working at Antibes in the South of France in 1946, thanks to receipts for his purchases in the archive in the Musée Picasso, Antibes, he is known to have used 'marine paints' acquired from local sources. In 1952 he purchased Triton (marine) paint from a shop in Cannes called La Boîte à Peinture. This shop stocked Triton marine paints and brushes up until at least 1964. While Picasso is known to have denied previously having used these types of paints, his second wife Jacqueline debunked this denial.

Marine paints were intended to be water-resistant, and hence were suitable for aggressive outdoor conditions, and highly appropriate for substrates that might be damp. They were also sold in large volumes appropriate for painting large areas. In Italian the term for enamel paint is smalto, whereas oil-based paints are termed olio. ['Enamel paint' has also been used in English as a synonym for Ripolin.]

Among art historical publications, Ripolin is occasionally mentioned. Zervos, compiler of the catalogue raisonnée of the artist's works and the magazine *Cahiers d'art*, is one example. Volume 15 of Zervos' catalogue mentions several works in both Ripolin and on plywood – but none of them from the Antibes period. Picasso's dealer Kahnweiler and Louise Leiris, Kahnweiler's step-daughter who owned the gallery after the war were probably more reliable sources on Picasso's paints, and they may have supplied (unacknowledged) information about Picasso's materials for exhibition catalogues, especially in the early 1950s.

On Picasso's supports Marilyn told us that prior to working at Antibes Picasso used fairly traditional supports such as canvas, wood-based panels or recycled panels; he is known to have painted on found objects such as a bed headboard. The earliest example of Picasso using plywood as a support was in the 1920s (although this is an exception), when he was in the south of France and presumably there were no handy artists' colourmen nearby. An example was given of his use of unprimed plywood in which he allowed it an optical role, giving warmth to a grey and white composition.

During 1946 when Picasso was in the south of France with Françoise Gilot, they went to

live near Antibes on the coast. Antibes, with its damp climate was not conducive to the application of typical artists' paints. Picasso would have found marine paint more suitable for his work there. The catalogue to *The Picassos from Antibes*². claims that Picasso used Ripolin on a range of supports; canvas, paper, wood and what they call wallboards. And while this may or may not be marine paint Picasso certainly worked on cement fibreboards, which Marilyn contends was choice based on practicality rather than politics as some of those writing on Picasso's oeuvre maintain. Hence it was not merely a response to a post-war or local shortage of artists' quality materials, as has been suggested in publications.

In 1952–3 Picasso designed and painted panels for installation in the interior of an existing barrel-vaulted deconsecrated chapel in Vallauris on the subject of *War and Peace*. The space with its curved walls and ceiling required curved panels to be fitted as a support for his painting. It was a space that was both large and damp. Here again, he chose fibreboard (but not cement-based, which broke when it was bent), that also had the virtue of being flexible and could be curved to follow the vault's profile. Marine paints would also have been a sensible choice but thus far, there has been little analysis carried out, except that Prussian blue pigment has been reported. The original panels before being installed in the vault were exhibited in Milan in 1953 soon after their completion, yet Picasso was filmed in this period, at work on other temporary panels in the barrel-vaulted space, with materials labelled 'Triton' visible in stills from the film. While the film footage must have been staged, it still provides interesting evidence for the use of Triton paints. Another photograph c.1970 of Picasso actively painting has a tin of Ripolin paint in the foreground.

There is therefore good documentary evidence to support collaborative analytical, technical and art-historical studies of Picasso's post-WW2 paint and in particular Picasso's *War and Peace* paintings at Vallauris. Marilyn concluded by saying, 'The art historian needs to identify works that are profitable for the scientist to study' and called for collaborative research between conservation scientists, conservators and art historians.

Q&As

- *Did Ripolin paints include zinc white but no other whites? Yes, for the French samples produced after Ripolin merged with Lefranc.*
- *So did Dutch Ripolin use lead white as well or instead? Possibly.*
- *Have Triton paints been analysed, in a project like AIC's for Ripolin? No. lack of existing samples would not preclude this*

though, since AIC obtained Ripolin paints and catalogues by buying them recently on eBay.

1. Gwénaëlle Gautier, Anikó Bezur, Kimberley Muir, Francesca Casadio & Inge Fiedler 'Chemical Fingerprinting of Ready-Mixed House Paints of Relevance to Artistic Production in the First Half of the Twentieth Century: Part I, Inorganic and Organic Pigments', *Applied Spectroscopy*, Vol. 63, No. 6, 2009, pp. 597–603.

2. *Los Picassos de Antibes/The Picassos from Antibes*, Musée Picasso, Antibes, Museo Picasso, Málaga, Museo Picasso, Barcelona, 2006.

Joyce H Townsend ACR, Conservation Dept., Tate Britain & Clare Finn ACR, Clare Finn & Co. Ltd

SEMINARS

CULTURAL MATERIAL X-RADIOGRAPHY
University of Bradford 11-13 May 2010

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Course Tutors:

Sonia O'Connor – Research Fellow University of Bradford

Jason Maher – Learner Support Services, University of Bradford

Course Speakers

Ina Berg – University of Manchester

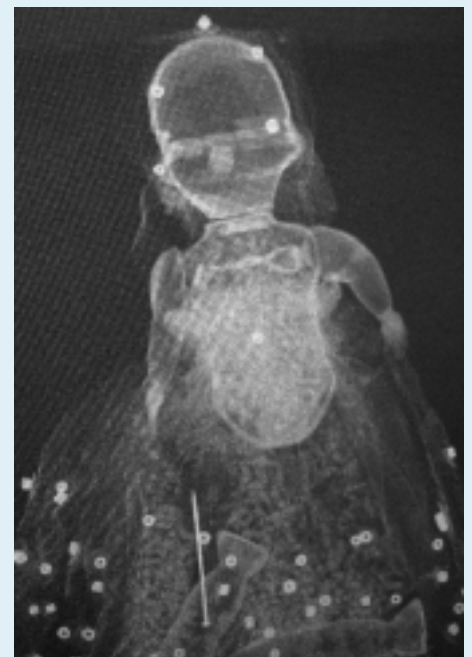
Jo Buckberry – University of Bradford

David Starley – Royal Armouries Leeds

David Crombie – National Museums Liverpool

Lucy Martin – University of Bradford

X-ray of a doll



A thoroughly worthwhile and enjoyable three days was spent at the University of Bradford main campus Phoenix building between 11 and 13 May. The course, *Cultural Material X-radiography*, offered a wide and comprehensive tutorial in the techniques, issues and trends surrounding x-radiography of cultural material both at the moment and looking to the future.

For anyone involved with x-ray examination of such material at any level, this course is a must. The depth of knowledge and experience offered by Sonia O'Connor and Jason Maher, the course organisers, was very impressive. They both had abounding enthusiasm for their subject which was infectious to fellow speakers and students alike. Speakers were plucked from various specialist areas including x-radiography of paintings, ceramics, anthropological objects and large scale artefacts. The course also benefited from the ongoing study work shared with the group by PhD student, Lucy Martin.

Working from the basics of x-radiography through safe practices, specific techniques and the move to digital technology, the group was given the fullest picture to inform the decision making process for those wishing to start x-radiography for the first time, develop existing systems or indeed make the leap from film to digital generation and capture. The options were presented in an informed but objective manner which addressed the needs, aspirations and budgets of prospective users. Each day was punctuated with practical hands-on activity which successfully echoed the direction and content of the course. The last third of the course was dedicated largely to digital modalities, including pertinent issues such as digital preservation and metadata.

The students came from varied backgrounds and abilities but the course successfully responded to the needs of all. I have been responsible for all x-ray examination at the Tate for the last twenty five years but learned much at all levels from day one. Different ways of tackling similar problems were discussed and investigated. My main objective was to learn about future digital initiatives and the potential benefits and risks involved, which I must say was very successfully met. However, as in many cases I came away with more questions than answers but I am now more confident of which questions I need to ask.

Speakers and students bonded quickly and easily over the culinary delights of Bradford which was a bonus indeed for this extremely informative three day seminar. I would certainly recommend anyone wishing to extend their knowledge and experience of cultural x-radiography to attend this very reasonably priced course.

David Clarke

Head of Photography Tate



Accessories workshop

BACK TO BASICS: MOUNTING ACCESSORIES

Icon Textile Group

Victoria & Albert Museum April 12 2010

This workshop was hosted by the Textile Conservation Studio at the V&A and was organised and run by Roisin Morris, Lara Flecker, Sam Gately and Keira Miller. There were fifteen participants from various establishments, both public and private, from across the country.

The day started with an introductory talk by **Marion Kite**, Head of Furniture, Textile and Frames Conservation, who emphasised the demands on textile conservation towards fashion biased exhibitions and the subsequent need for the conservators to be skilled and able to provide mounting solutions for complex objects. *Hats: An Anthology* by Stephen Jones, a temporary and travelling exhibition, was a prime example and Roisin gave an introduction to the day illustrating some of the problems and solutions she came across when working on some of the 300 hats in the exhibition. She also discussed solutions for mounts in the permanent Medieval & Renaissance Galleries and temporary exhibitions such as 'Maharajah: The Splendour of India's Royal Court' and 'Surreal Things: Surrealism and Design'. The day was then divided into three separate sessions each dealing with the methods involved in mounting various types of hats and shoes. The sessions were *Buckram* demonstrated by **Lara Flecker**, *Soft Mounting* by **Keira Miller** and *Clips and Screws* by **Sam Gately**.

Lara's session dealt with buckram mounts for shoes and had a lot of technical information to convey in a short time. She guided us through a complicated technique for made-to-measure supports for shoes involving a combination of Reemay®, Rigilene® polyester boning, pop socks, polyester wadding, fabric and wheat starch. Thankfully she was able to explain it all so it made perfect sense and due to her preparations beforehand we didn't waste a minute. It's clearly time-consuming to perfect the technique but worth the investment as

Elizabeth-Anne Haldane explained when she showed us the mounts she had made for some Egyptian gilded leather shoes now on display in the Medieval and Renaissance Galleries.

Keira's subject was soft mounting and she had gathered a variety of non-accessioned hats and headdresses for us to handle and practise with. She showed us how to judge where best to support the hats depending on the style and what methods and materials solved each problem best. We were then able to choose a hat and have a go at mounting it on a head using polyester wadding, net, jersey and Rigilene® made up into a variety of pads and rolls. She also, very expertly and speedily, covered a solid display head with black jersey showing us how to achieve the perfect finish without a single wrinkle.

Sam talked us through 'Clips and Screws', using materials that most of us only handle occasionally or not at all, including perspex, plastic and brass. She showed us how they were not really scary at all and could be used to make the most discreet mounts, particularly for delicate headdresses such as tiaras. It would take some time to be as expert as Sam but the 'invisible' supports she showed us were very impressive considering how little equipment is needed. We then had a tour of the mount makers' workshop, with Nicola Breen, where we were shown the machinery they use for moulding and shaping Perspex for larger mounts.

It was a fantastic day. A day where you could take the information away and really use it and practise with it and make a real difference to a display. Many thanks to our hosts for so generously sharing their hard won knowledge with us, for their enthusiasm and all the time they spent in preparation and for sending us off with a folder full of information for our future attempts.

Maggie Dobbie ACR Textile Conservator
Riverside Project Culture and Sport Glasgow
Museum of Transport

in practice

WHEN THE PRESSURE IS ON: MOUNTING EXTREMELY FRAGILE TEXTILE FRAGMENTS FOR WORCESTER CATHEDRAL

by Kate Gill and Mike Halliwell

The conservation and mounting of a group of over thirty embroidered textile fragments and three fringes was recently undertaken by Kate Gill at the Textile Conservation Centre (TCC) (Gill, 2008). Elements of the mount preparation, design and assembly were undertaken jointly with Mike Halliwell.

The fragments were discovered in a stone coffin in 1870 during building work in Worcester Cathedral. At some point afterwards the fragments were framed behind glass in the manner of a 'pressure mount'. The mount had supported and protected the fragments over the succeeding decades, but the acidic nature of the materials and the pressure imposed on the brittle threads from the glass and unpadded mount board were contributing to the fragments' degradation.

Prior to treatment (following removal of the outer frame and the glass) the fragments were researched by Miki Komatsu, a recent graduate of the TCC/University of Southampton MA Textile Conservation (Komatsu, 2007).

It is believed that some of the fragments are the remains of a stole and maniple. Their date is uncertain, but possibly thirteenth century AD, perhaps as early as eleventh century. The design includes figures of apostles and prophets embroidered onto the plain weave silk ground fabric (thought to be dyed red originally, but now discoloured to brown) with coloured silks and metal threads, the latter executed in underside couching (Figure 1). The silk and metal thread fringes are fine examples of tablet weaving (Figure 2).

It was clear that the textiles required a full support. Due to their extremely brittle condition and fragmentary state, interventive treatment, beyond surface cleaning, humidification and thread realignment, was not considered advisable. A decision was made to 'pressure mount' the fragments as before, but using a different range of materials and a different method of frame fitting. 'Tried and tested' designs and assembly methods (Kajitani & Phipps 1986; Flury-Lemberg 1988; Windsor, Hillyer & Eastop 2002; Hartog & Zagorska-Thomas 2006) were adapted to meet the needs of the Worcester Cathedral fragments and its

Figure 1: Detail view of one of the fragments, before treatment



limited resources. The research outcomes from recent MA research on the microenvironments within pressure mounts also informed the work (Kataoka 2008).

This article introduces the construction of the 'pressure mount' that was custom-designed for the fragments, and the process of handling and frame assembly.

Textile Fragments

With the exception of the fringes, the fragments were relatively flat and even, with the metal embroidered areas of uniform thickness. The fine silk had a depth of approximately 1mm, and the silk embroidered areas an additional 1mm on both the obverse and reverse face of the silk. The thickest points were created by the metal thread embroidery measuring 1.5 mm on the obverse face and 2.5 mm on the reverse face. In comparison, each fringe ranged in depth from less than 1mm to 7mm thick.

The fragments ranged in size from 1.3 x 3mm to 65mm x 310 mm. They were extremely brittle, and in most cases too friable to turn over to access the reverse face for surface cleaning or examination.

The client wished the mount to have an oak wood frame. The fragments were to be arranged on a moderately sized mount-board measuring approximately 730 mm x 1000 mm.

Mount design and construction

The basic principle of the minimally interventive so called 'pressure' or 'contact' mount technique is to sandwich a (generally) flat textile between a panel of glass (or acrylic sheet) and a padded rigid board to provide full continuous support and a transparent protective overlay. The textile is held in place between the board and glass by means of pressure, thereby obviating the need to attach the textiles by other means (e.g. stitching through the object or use of adhesives).

The aim of this conservation intervention was to produce a pressure mount that would

- accommodate the varying thicknesses of the fragments
- enable the fragments to remain face-up throughout the entire treatment and assembly process
- enable pressure to be applied gently and in a controlled manner
- remain sealed from dust
- not be too heavy.
- act as a buffer to external environmental changes.

Figure 3 is a line drawing of a cross-section view of the mount construction.

The mount board (3-i) comprised a thin (8 mm thick) Hexalite™620 (aluminium honeycomb core with glass fibre/epoxy resin laminates) sheet. It was selected for its lightweight rigid structure, thinness and relative ease of use. The board was tightly covered in a base cloth of fine, strong, downproof cotton (3-h), anchored to the reverse side of the Hexalite™ with adhesive. The cotton fabric provided a ground



Figure 2: One of the tablet woven fringes, before treatment.

to which all subsequent layers could be stitched. The padding consisted of a narrow border of Plastazote™ (3-g). Within the recessed area created by the Plastazote™ border, five panels of cotton domette (3-f), cut exactly to fit the recessed area, were carefully layered on top of each other until the level was slightly higher than that of the Plastazote™. All layers were loosely anchored with stitches to the base cloth and each other. Small recessed areas were created within the lowest two layers of domette by cutting where needed to accommodate the subtle undulations of the fringes. This padded mount with recessed areas created a full support which would minimise tension and provide sufficient pressure to hold the fragments in place. The padding layers and Plastazote™ edging were tightly covered with a top layer of cream downproof cotton (3-e). The downproof cotton extended to the back of the board and was anchored with a row of herringbone stitches to the base cloth. The Plastazote™ edging prevented the edges of the mount board from deforming under the tensioned cotton top cover. This

Figure 3: Cross-section showing the construction and assembly of component parts with mounted textile fragments and backboard in place. (Diagram by Kate Gill and Mike Halliwell)

- Key**
- a – wood frame moulding
 - b – aluminium foil barrier
 - c – glass
 - d – textile fragments
 - e – layer of cotton downproof
 - f – layers of domette showing recessed areas
 - g – Plastazote™
 - h – layer of cotton downproof
 - i – Hexalite® mount board
 - j – layers of Plastazote™
 - k – acid-free card
 - l – Hexalite® back board edged with Tyvek® adhesive tape, screwed wood to frame

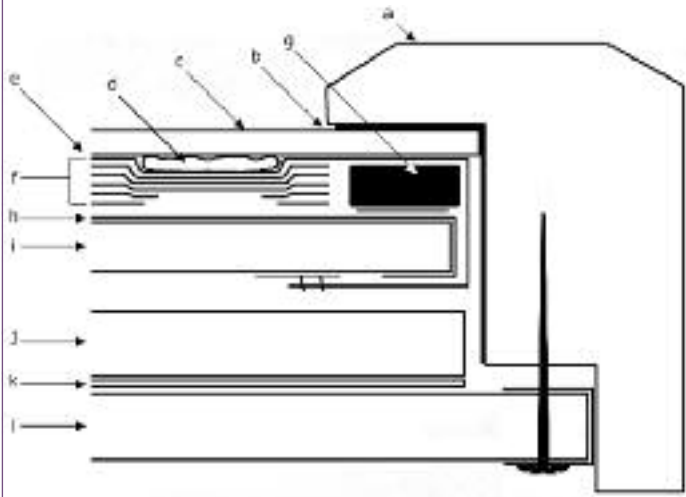


Figure 4: 'Dry run' to ensure the mount assembly would run as planned and as smoothly as possible, all component parts, with pseudo-fragments, were assembled to help determine the optimum pressure to hold the fragments safely.

was an important aspect in achieving a successful pressure mount as the right-angled edges of the mount improved contact and evened the pressure between the glass, frame and board in its assembled state.

Cotton domette was chosen rather than polyester felt as recent studies have indicated that cotton's hygroscopic nature may assist in maintaining the RH level within the microenvironment (Kataoka 2008).

At this stage the backboard was prepared. The role of the backboard was to provide a means of linking the glazed mount and wood frame under controlled pressure with screws. The board comprised a layer of Hexalite™, the sharp edges of which were protected with a length of Tyvek® self-adhesive tape (3-l). The inner face of the backboard was cushioned with layers of Plastazote™ (3-j) and acid-free card (3-k), held to each other with layers of 3M® double-sided adhesive tape. The cushioning was added to enable more subtle increments of pressure to be exerted on the mountboard in the assembly process. In addition it would allow for the option of easily adjusting the pressure at a later date.

The wood frame was customised with two rebates, the first to support the glass and the second to accommodate the backboard and screw attachment and to conceal the screws

Figure 5: Detail view of the screw mechanism penetrating the backboard from beneath and into the wood frame.

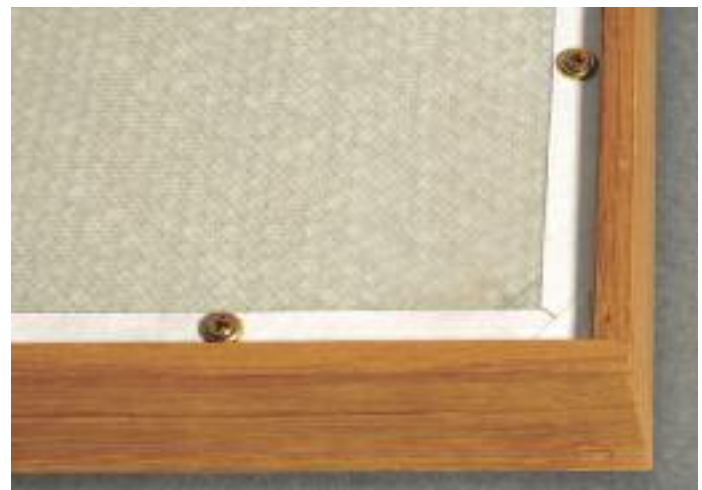




Figure 6: The pressure mounted fragments assembled in the frame, after treatment.

when the assembly mount is viewed from the side (3-a). Both rebates combined with the cushioned backboard provide a barrier against the ingress of dust and other particulates into the frame as well as reducing the rate of air exchange and thereby helping to stabilise the RH level. Since the client required an oak frame the inner faces were sealed with self-adhesive aluminium foil providing a barrier between the mount and the acid volatiles associated with oak wood (3-b).

Dry run and Pre-drilling

To ensure that the mount assembly would run as planned and as smoothly as possible, all component parts, with the exception of the fragments, were assembled in a 'dry run'. Pseudo-fragments were laid on the padded mount to help determine the optimum pressure to hold the fragments safely (Figure 4). This dry run also provided the opportunity to pre-drill the screw holes through the backboard and the wood frame.

Transferring the fragments to the padded mount board

Prior to assembly, to help achieve the desired RH levels within the mount, the padded mount board was left in a humidity chamber for several days until it reached an RH of 55% at 20°C. Concurrently, to reduce static build-up between the textile fragments and glass during assembly, the humidity level in the chamber housing the fragments was raised by approximately 5% (to 55%) about four hours prior to the assembly process. At this point the fragments were positioned on the pre-conditioned mount board, above the cushioned backboard, following the layout proposed by the client. Following surface cleaning to remove tiny fibre and dust particles, the tempered clear glass was lowered onto the mounted fragments. There was no problem with fragments shifting due to static electricity. The wood frame was lowered onto the glazed mount. All layers were secured with a spaced



Figure 7: Detail view of the fringes showing the deeper recessed area to accommodate the extra thickness of the fringes

line of corrosion-resistant screws through the backboard from beneath and into the wood frame (Figure 5).

Evaluation of the pressure mount system

The pressure mount holds the fragments in place with a gentle, even pressure and the surface details of the textiles are not obscured by the glass (Figures 6 & 7). Unlike the previous mount, the current mount does not emit harmful acid volatiles and it provides a more effective buffer to changes in humidity and temperature.

Although the reverse side of the fragments remains inaccessible (unless the frame is dismantled), a full set of images provides an informative surrogate.

The mount enables the continued study and display of the fragments and reduces the risk of further damage.

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listings

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

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

22 July

Icon Archaeology and Metals Group XRF: Going Portable

Venue: Institute of Archaeology, UCL, London.

A one day symposium on Portable X-Ray Fluorescence analysis and equipment. Presentations and open discussion will focus on how this technology is being applied in the field of conservation as well as what the benefits and limitations are.

Cost: £30 (£15 students)

Contact: Clair Chope on email Claire.Chope@hants.gov.uk

3–6 August

4th International Architectural Paint Research Conference

Sharing Information, Sharing Decisions

Venue: University of Lincoln

18 September

Icon Ethnography Group Baskets and Related Materials Symposium led by Sherry Doyal and Barbara Wills in conjunction with the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew.

1–3 September

Society of Archivists Conservation Training Conference

Venue: Ramada Hotel, Manchester

2 September

British Horological Institute Turret Clock Forum

Venue: Upton Hall, Newark

A platform for turret clock conservators, diocesan advisers and historians.

Cost: £25

Contact: Zanna Perry, tel. 01636-813795/6, or email zanna@bhi.co.uk

8–10 September

Society of Glass Technology Annual Conference

Venue: Cambridge

14–16 September

A Bucks New University Fine Art Conference

Preserving the Past, Protecting the Future – Collecting and Conserving Fine and Decorative Arts

Venue: Buckinghamshire New University, High Wycombe

Speakers: Rob Titian, Dana Melchar – Senior Conservator at the V&A, Prof. Clive Edwards – Professor of Design History at Loughborough University, Paul Tear MBE – former Head of Conservation at the Wallace Collection, Clare Parry - Fine Art Underwriting Manager for Ecclesiastical Insurance, Prof. Jake Kaner – Buckinghamshire New University. Evolving ideas in the conservation and restoration of private and public collections, examining issues in furniture, painting and ceramics, exploring contrasts between traditional techniques and the most recent breakthroughs in conservation and restoration.

15 September

Icon Stained Glass Group Colleges, Parishes & Villas, Stained Glass Conservation in the South of England

Venue: Cripps Auditorium Magdalene College, Cambridge, CB3 0AG

Speakers: Chloe Cockerill - Heraldry/Stained Glass, Martin Harrison - Victorian Stained Glass, Prof. Joost Caen, Prof. Sebastian Strobl and Elise Learner – International Conservators.

Cost: £78 (£88 non members)

Contact: Peter Campling on email: peter@mcleadglaziers.co.uk or tel: 01603 891505 for a booking form.

20–24 September

IIC Istanbul Congress Conservation and the Eastern Mediterranean

23–27 September
IPH Congress 2010

Venue: Angoulême, France

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

28 September, 6pm

Icon Book and Paper Group Fakes & Forgeries in Archives and Libraries

Venue: Icon Offices, London;

Speaker: Dr Brian H. Davies

The lecture deals with the various methods that have been used over the centuries both to create forgeries and to detect them. Until the mid-19th century, forgeries were often revealed by critical comment forcing an eventual and detailed confession. Nowadays, increasingly sophisticated scientific analysis, coupled with an understanding of how the technology of writing and printing has changed, is able to detect any inconsistency with alleged provenance.

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

Contact: register by 24 September with Maria Vilaincour on email mariavilaincour@hotmail.com.

October tbc

Icon Textiles Group Visit to Albert E Chapman, Upholsterers, London

Visit this long established upholstery and soft furnishing business, where they undertake conservation, restoration, or complete re-upholstery.

Cost: £10

4 October

Icon Textiles Group Visit to New Galleries and Textile and Costume stores at the Museum of London

Including presentations on the store's refit project and specifications for the boxes used. There will also be opportunity to visit the recently opened galleries and the textile and costume store.

Cost: £5

6–8 October

Big Stuff 2010

Venue: The Imperial War Museum, Duxford

On the conflict and avoidance of conflict between the display and conservation requirements of large technology objects within the museum setting.

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

8–9 October

Stichting Ebenist Restoring Joints, Conserving Structures

Venue: Amsterdam

10th International symposium on wood and furniture conservation.

11–15 October

ICOM-CC Metal WG International Conference on Historic Metals Conservation

Venue: Charleston, South Carolina, USA

12 October (11am–4pm)

Introduction to Conservation

Venue: Icon Offices, London

An event supported by the Metals Group, Icon and BHI

Aims to address the conservation approach, assessment and treatment of composite organic and metal objects. Plus a short session for those considering a PACR application.

Cost: £10

Contact: Shulla Jaques, PACR administration on email pacr@icon.org.uk

4–7 November

Costume Colloquium II: Dress for Dance

Venue: Florence, Italy

A four day conference/event dedicated to the international, interdisciplinary and intercultural themes associated with all aspects of the history of fashion, dress and dance.

Contact Information

Promo Florence Events

Via Del Giglio 10

50123 Firenze – Italia

Tel. +39/055/285588 – fax +39/055/283260

Email: info@promoflorenceevents.com

16 November

The Historic Buildings, Parks and Gardens Event 2010

Venue: The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, London

This heritage conservation day has evolved from, and is held in parallel with, the AGM of The Historic Houses Association who kindly allow, subject to seating availability, visitors and delegates to listen to their President's Address, to their Guest Speaker, Baroness Andrews, OBE and to attend the HHA/Smiths Gore Lecture, this given by Lord Cholmondeley.

Cost: Free of Charge

Contact: Tel. 01462 896688 or email events@hall-mccartney.co.uk to reserve a place.

16 November

Church Buildings Council Conservation Forum 2010 Conservation Issues Caused by the Presence of Bats

Venue: The Guard Room, Lambeth Palace, London, SE1 7JU

Contact: Debbie Cunningham on tel: 020 7898 1863

18-19 November

Icon Textiles Group Workshop: Upholstery – History & Techniques

Venue: Hampton Court Palace, Surrey

Speaker: Lesley Wilson – a freelance conservator working on public and private collections specialising in upholstery and the historic development of upholstery techniques and materials.

Cost: £130

6–8 December

Conservation Methodology – Exploring the relationship between theory and practise

Venue: Sir John Soane Museum, London

A repeat of the successful course held last November.

Contact: Helen Hughes on email hh@historicinteriorsresearch.co.uk

Winter

Conservation Matters in Wales Scary Objects

Venue: Cynon Valley Museum, Aberdare
Case studies of work on scary or dangerous objects or on work that presents safety challenges because of the location.

Contact: Lyn.Weaver@museumwales.ac.uk

19–23 September 2011

ICOM-CC 16th Triennial Conference

Venue: Lisbon, Portugal

26–28 October 2011

A Pest Odyssey 2011: Ten years Later

Venue: The British Museum, London

This international conference will be an opportunity for the profession to focus on developments that have been made in the last 10 years, highlighting international priorities and how these have changed.

Call For Papers, deadline: 1 September 2010

Papers on the Insect Pest Management themes: Preventive strategies and case studies; Control strategies and treatments (pest, climate change and research); Innovative solutions and re-evaluation of existing treatments; Training and awareness

Contact: apply to Dee Lauder at dee.lauder@english-heritage.org.uk

- 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.

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