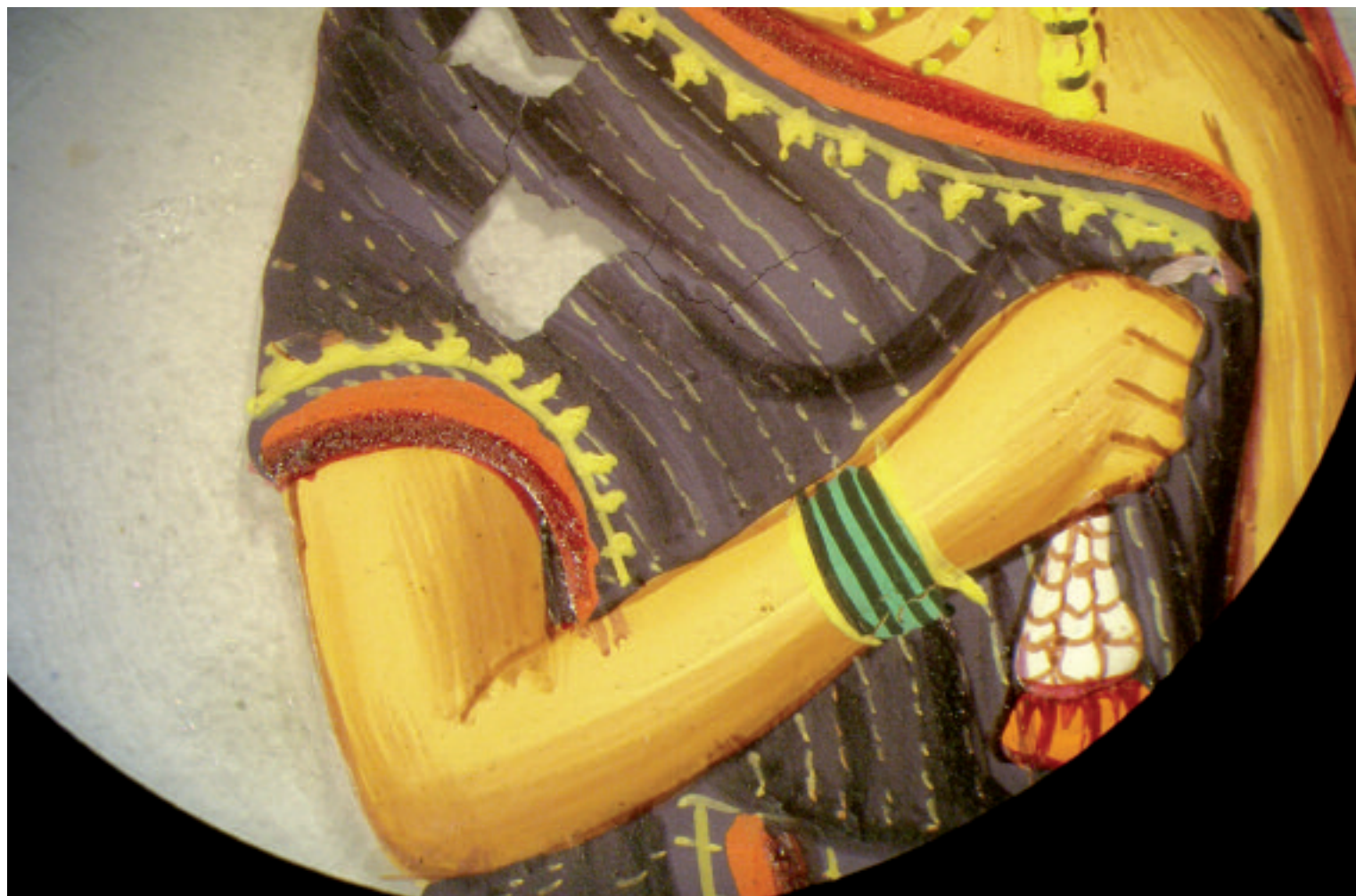


Icon NEWS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION • MARCH 2007 • ISSUE 9



Mica paintings at the Pitt Rivers Museum

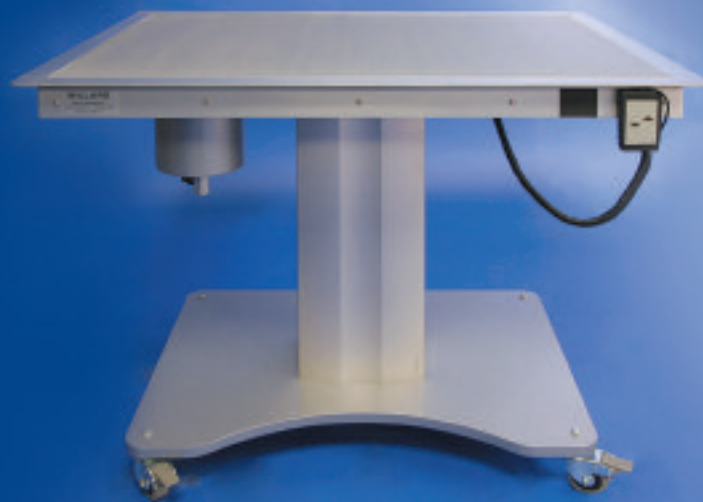
Also in this issue

The Plenderleith lecture

Modern materials network launched in Scotland

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MARCH 2007

Issue 9

The idea of sharing threads its way through this issue: whether it's our role in engaging the public (the Plenderleith lecture); taking a holistic view of the management of cultural heritage (the review of the ICCROM course on Sharing Conservation Decisions) or The Art Newspaper's generosity in letting us share their article about one woman's experience of dealing with the world of conservation when her Grayson Perry pot was broken. Then there is one member's project to share her artist grandfather's archive with the world. And at the other end of the spectrum is the report of a week spent sharing the life of a Lakota family in South Dakota, where our intrepid conservators learn to tan a buffalo hide in its own brains. And if that weren't enough, they then go on to shampoo the hairy side in Pantene Pro-V – probably not an application which is going to feature in a TV ad near you any time soon!

On a completely different note, don't miss our Librarian's excellent article about wikis – all you ever wanted to know but were afraid to ask.

Lynette Gill, Editor



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Microscope view of typical paint loss on a mica painting. Detail of a 'Luppay Caste' wife from an album of Indian people and trades. 117mm x 77mm. Pitt Rivers Museum accession number 1981.34.2.19.

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Deadlines:
for May 2007 issue

Editorial: 2 April

Adverts: 16 April

around & about

A labour of love

An on-line collection of Bernard Fleetwood-Walker's working drawings has been launched to coincide with an exhibition at Wolverhampton Art Gallery of the artist's work from the 1930s. Fleetwood-Walker was born, educated and worked for most of his life in Birmingham, studying at the School of Art and Crafts there, as well as in London and Paris. A Royal Academician, he gained a reputation for his large figurative paintings from the 1930s and as a painter of portraits and children. Examples of his finished works in oils can be found in both public and private collections in the UK and abroad.

Having trained at a time when strong drawing and technical skill was prized, he excelled as a draughtsman, and the on-line collection of over 900 drawings shows the range and diversity of his skills and a rare opportunity to see the development and working methods of a practising artist. Each work has been photographed and catalogued

and is accompanied by a detail to demonstrate his style and craftsmanship.

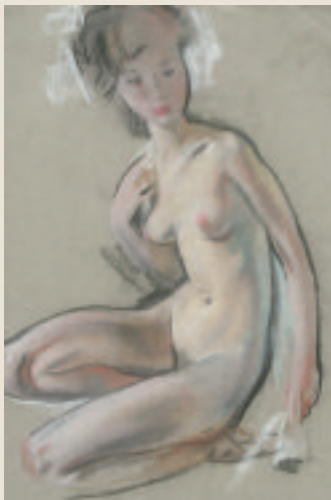
The project is a busman's holiday for the artist's granddaughter, paper conservator Nicola Walker, who is Head of Collection Care and Access at Manchester University's Whitworth Art Gallery. She says: 'With the current revival of interest in art and artists of the 1930s, now is an opportune moment to launch the on-line database. I very much hope that it serves as a valuable resource to researchers at any level and an inspiration to anyone else with responsibilities for a similar collection'.

Apart from being an interesting site in itself, the database is commercially available to others with similar collections. Having tried unsuccessfully to find suitable off-the-shelf software to handle the collection, a purpose-built but simple system was created and developed by Chris Quirk to be capable of handling any size of archive image. It is PC based and can generate answers to any number of queries, so the user can view images by category, key-word searching and various characteristics, such as date, medium, support or watermark. The raw database would be suitable for the management of and access to a range of similar image and text-based collections.

The exhibition runs to 7 July and the archive can be accessed at www.fleetwood-walker.co.uk More information about the database can be found on www.quirknet.com

Scotland's skills shortages

A recent report, *Traditional Building Craft Skills*, estimates that the current shortfall of some 5000 qualified workers is jeopardising the conservation, repair and maintenance of Scotland's historic buildings, especially the 450,000 pre-1919 building stock, of which over 10% is listed. The warning comes from a 'state of the nation' evaluation of the traditional skills industry. The primary demand is within stonemasonry, roofing (slate and tile) and painting and decorating. The report notes that the skills gap exists at both regional and national level; that skilled craftspeople are difficult to find, especially stone masons; that the position will worsen as the traditional building stock ages and that the current £1.2 billion annual spend on repairing and maintaining pre-1919 buildings is insufficient to ensure their survival. With the further education curriculum driven by new-build courses to the detriment of traditional skills, the report highlights the need for immediate action to provide specialist, targeted training for a range of craft skills. Further information from Andrew Mabey at ConstructionSkills on 0207 367 9807 or email andrew.mabey@citb.co.uk



the maidens 276



the family 1924 565r



study for farmer's daughter 590



the maidens 592

Petition No.10!

Meanwhile, in another part of the building conservation forest, a petition has been launched on the Downing Street website to lobby the Prime Minister for the removal of all VAT charges on building repairs to listed buildings. The petition draws attention to the fact that it may cost less to repair an historic building than to demolish and rebuild it, but this is no longer the case once the effect of VAT is factored in. Demolition and rebuilding doesn't incur VAT; repair does.

We may not be able to compete numerically with the anti-road pricing lobby and its much-hyped petition but the large body of organisations and professions across the traditional construction industry ought to be able to muster some muscle. Find the petition at <http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/NoVAToldBuildngs/> (note spelling of Buildngs/)

One last time with feeling

The final move of the Pitt Rivers Museum conservation department

Following three moves in the past six years the Pitt Rivers Museum conservation department moved to its new studio in January 2007. For the first time since the founding of the conservation department in 1970 the new facility is situated at the main museum site within the science area of the University of Oxford.

The move marks the completion of a three-storey extension to the 19th Century Pitt Rivers Museum building costing £7.4 million and funded by the museum, University of Oxford and the Science Research Infrastructure Fund (SRIF). The building, designed by architects Pringle, Richards, Sharratt, provides 2200 square metres of floor space (almost equal to the original museum) and also accommodates lecturer/curators, photograph and manuscript collections, the Balfour library, lecture theatre, seminar room, new temporary exhibition gallery, education, administration, collections management, photography, a display preparation workshop and a quarantine room off the loading bay, as well as extensive space for visiting and contract researchers.

During the three-year project museum employees were dispersed over five University sites away from the museum, with the addition of two off-site storage facilities and the museum itself, so the logistics of being spread over eight sites has been problematic. For several months the museum collections displayed and stored on the two gallery levels were only accessible by staff being escorted



Architects impression of the new Pitt Rivers Museum Research Centre by Pringle, Richards, Sharratt Architects

through the building site wearing personal protective equipment. Despite such hurdles a DCF funded cataloguing project was completed, and conservation, collections and technical staff continued with full programs for loans, redisplay, and work on reserve collections, including the move of the textile collections to a new site just to keep us on our toes. In addition, the conservation department has maintained its internship program with five interns passing through the department for between six weeks and six months during this disruptive period. Oh yes, and two of us decided to apply for PACR in the past year... in for a penny as they say!

While the tight budget for the project has not stretched to the procurement of new equipment for the conservation studio, the new furnishings, additional space, controlled environment and vastly improved access to the collections will make a huge difference to the department. The new facility is a five-minute walk from the University's Research Laboratory for Archaeology and the History of Art, providing additional opportunities for collaborative analytical research projects on parts of the collection. The close proximity of colleagues in collections management and display will ultimately result in better care of collections, plus projects with the education department and group visits to the studio should be easier to accommodate. The additional space may also allow us to expand the internship program in the future.

Later in the year the conservation department are hoping to experiment with running their first workshop and seminar in the new facility and all being well this may lead to providing accommodation for Icon events in the future. The new facilities are excellently placed, with a ten-minute walk taking you to either Oxford city centre or the Chantry Library. We look forward to welcoming some of you to the Pitt Rivers in the forthcoming months.

Heather Richardson, Conservator, Pitt Rivers Museum.

more around & about

In safe hands

It's always good to report on conservation exhibitions – this time at Wakefield Museum under the title Conservation – In Safe Hands. Amongst the exhibits used to illustrate the important work carried out by conservators, are the chariot wheels buried at Ferry Fryston more than 2000 years ago and unearthed in 2003 during improvements to the A1(M) road. The Iron Age chariot had been buried with a body inside it; the wood that formed most of the chariot had rotted away.

The exhibition also examines the bugs, damp and accidents that can threaten anything from paintings and furniture to ceramics and clothes. It has been closely linked to both National Science Week and the needs of primary school teachers. Local councillor Denise Jeffery commented: 'The exhibition promotes science education by showing science being used in unusual and very interesting ways. Hopefully, it will inspire children and students to develop science projects and consider science as a career'.

Mary Macqueen, conservator with Wakefield MDC Cultural Services, clearly has a lot on her plate, what with the rich sources of archaeology locally and two other large projects linked to the regeneration of old industrial areas. In Wakefield itself there is the new art gallery Hepworth Wakefield, with its outstanding collection of works by Barbara Hepworth and other 20th century British artists such as L.S. Lowry and Henry Moore. This will generate major conservation work for local conservators. The second project is the Castleford Forum, which will include a new library and museum to replace an old library and closed indoor market. The Ferry Fryston chariot is just the start.

The exhibition is on until 22 April and admission is free.

The chariot on display



Lifting the chariot

Wakefield MDC Cultural Services

Least worst options

Whilst Wakefield's pride in its cultural heritage appears to be thriving, the position elsewhere is not so healthy. Indeed, the approach taken by different local authorities to budgetary constraints and their cultural services forms a fascinating case study. Bury Council's decision to sell a Lowry painting to meet a shortfall in its budget met with widespread condemnation, debarment from Museums Association membership and the removal of its MLA accreditation. But whether the solution proposed by Wandsworth Council is preferable is open to question. By the time Icon News is published, a decision will have been made whether or not to implement a proposal to axe one of London's few local museums along with fourteen jobs... albeit with the promise of enabling some of the artefacts to be used in schools.

Meanwhile in Glasgow, plans are being developed to transfer the city's culture and leisure services from the Council to a charitable trust. This would affect thirteen museums – including Kelvingrove and the Burrell Collection – and thirty four libraries, along with sports and community centres; the move would involve over 2,400 staff and is estimated to generate £11.5m savings a year. The thinking is that the charity would be able to tap into funding, sponsorship and investment opportunities, such as lottery money, which were not available to the council.

A thought-provoking assessment of the health of cultural services in local authority hands was published in December by Demos. Find it at www.demos.co.uk. The report Local Authorities: A Change in the Cultural Climate? suggests that provision is varied and that we are at some kind of turning point: '...the place of culture could become either more, or less, secure...[it] looks very vulnerable. In some places the threat could take the form of a loss of facilities...In others it could be a gradual withering by a thousand small cuts. But [it]...should not be threatened anywhere at all in our twenty first century democracy.'



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professional matters

RECORD NUMBERS GO FOR ACCREDITATION

The highest number so far! Thirty one new PACR application forms were submitted for the first PACR application round for 2007. This includes eight applications from members who are piloting the Conservation Management 'route' approach in order to apply their work context to the professional PACR standards.

The next PACR application deadline is 25 June – don't forget to submit your register of intention by 1 May – if you are planning to submit a form for round 2. Full details can be found on www.pacr.org.uk

RECORD USE OF THE REGISTER

Use of the Conservation Register increased three-fold over the last year. Now regularly receiving in excess of 300,000 hits and over 1,800 searches by clients each month, this is great news for the businesses included. A couple of issues ago I asked what was holding those of you who have not joined back from applying. Risk and COSHH assessments were high on the list. Risk assessments need not be difficult or scary. There is lots of good advice freely available, including guidance and templates. In particular, see the Health & Safety Executive's leaflet 'Five steps to risk assessment' at www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf or the COSHH essentials website www.coshh-essentials.org.uk. The important thing with both risk and COSHH assessments is to remember that they are context specific. It's not enough to file a chemical data sheet; the purpose of the assessment is to think about how you carry out activities, how often you carry them out, what the hazards are and how you can reduce the risks. Even if you don't employ people it is good practice to carry out risk assessments – indeed the ability to carry out risk assessments is required for accreditation. An updated version of the Conservation Register application form is now available in the 'Members' section of www.conservationregister.com. This can be completed electronically, then printed off, signed and posted with the accompanying documentation (including, of course, the example risk assessment!).

YOUR STORIES

Icon continues to widely promote use of the Register and this year the plan is to increase editorial coverage of conservation in practice and reference the Conservation Register as the means of finding conservators. To do this, I do of course need lots of stories and pictures. It doesn't have to be ground-breaking stuff – particularly as many of the magazines I'll be targeting are aimed at a general public readership. People are interested in conservation

and it helps us to raise the profile of your work if we have case studies. Please bear this in mind as you complete jobs and are taking your photos and drop me a line if you think you have something which might capture the imagination (csaye@icon.org.uk). I'm happy to work up a short story from an outline if you don't have the time to write a piece yourself.

Caroline Saye

THE ANNA PLOWDEN TRUST

CPD Awards for 2007

Once again, the Anna Plowden Trust is seeking applications from established conservators for grants towards the cost of attending either a short specialist course or a major conference during 2007. In both cases the Trust will consider funding up to 50% of the cost. Those applying should have more than five years' experience since completing their training. The closing dates for applications are March 15, June 15 and September 15, 2007. Anyone wishing to apply should write to Penelope Plowden, enclosing a stamped and addressed envelope, at 43 Lansdowne Gardens, London SW8 2EL or e-mail her for further information at penelopecpowden@btinternet.com. Application forms can also be obtained from the Trust's website, which is annaplowdentrust.org.uk.

MORE FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Just launched on-line is the Heritage Funding Directory – a comprehensive guide to sources of financial support (and more) for projects in the UK's heritage sector. It details organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors, from English Heritage and the National Lottery to charitable trusts, that offer grants, loans, scholarships and bursaries, education and various forms of 'in kind' assistance.

Heritage is defined as historic landscapes, parks and gardens; industrial, transport and maritime heritage; churchyards and cemeteries; archives and spoken history; archaeology; conservation; museums and gallery collections; and heritage interpretation and education. It also covers historic churches and other buildings, although the built heritage is covered more fully in the sister website *Funds for Historic Buildings* run by the Architectural Heritage Fund. The Directory is free to users and can be accessed easily and directly from the main Heritage Link website at www.heritagelink.org.uk. Each entry includes a detailed description of the kind of project supported by the funding source, together with contact details and, where appropriate, a link to the source's own website.

The work was undertaken with support from the Heritage Lottery Fund and completed with the benefit of a private donation. Heritage Link is to be congratulated on providing this valuable guide to the complex maze which is the funding scene.

MODERN MATERIALS IN COLLECTIONS:SCOTLAND

A new subject specialist network focusing on modern materials in collections across Scotland was officially launched on 9 November 2006. The launch took place at the University of St Andrews, hosted by the Museums, Galleries and Collections Institute, School of Art History. It provided an opportunity to discuss the functions of the network and the first opportunity to share cross-sector experience.

MMiC:S currently has a working group and smaller steering group, with representatives from Scottish national and local authority museums, galleries and archives, the University of Glasgow, Heriot Watt University, and the Scottish Museums Council. It is co-ordinated by Anita Quye, National Museums Scotland and Graeme Gollan, National Galleries of Scotland.

The launch outlined the clear aims of MMiC:S, which are to:

- support informed and confident decision making for modern materials in museum/art collections,
- identify key issues facing stewardship of modern materials in museum/art collections,
- promote, encourage and advance collecting of modern materials.

MMiC:S is committed to a network for all professionals working with collections in Scotland, including volunteers, curators and conservators. This was reflected in the invited talks covering social history, plastics, contemporary art

MMiC:S logo



Falkirk Council Museums

Flaking white platform heels

collections and archive material, presented by Dr Zelda Baveystock (University of Newcastle), Dr Anita Quye (National Museums Scotland), Dr Andrea Kusel (Paisley Museum and Art Gallery) and Linda Ramsay (National Archives of Scotland).

The main focus of the day was to shape the future of an effective network for Scottish professionals. In advance of the launch, those attending were asked the following questions:

- What are the big issues, e.g. problem collections, material types, where is information lacking?
- What would help overcome these issues?
- How the network should communicate and preferences for how it should function.
- General comments on the topic of modern materials.

On the day, discussion was led through facilitated groups and anonymous Post-it® notes collected from attendees. The big issues were found to be identification of materials, predicting how to handle them, increasing our knowledge about them and knowing where to go for expertise.

There were plenty of suggestions for future work that the network could tackle within Scotland, for example

Cellulose Nitrate



the National Archives of Scotland

producing guidelines on different types of material, training, a directory of experience and expertise, and topical meetings to raise awareness. While the network is focussed on the Scottish sector because good channels of communication and networking already exist, a key aim is to create a general email discussion forum and website for any professional to contribute to and use.

This successful first step in raising awareness of modern materials in collections in Scotland has brought together professionals keen to network by sharing ideas, experience, practical advice and specialised knowledge. The active working group is currently preparing the best way to disseminate the talks and outcomes from the launch, and also developing the next phase for the network. Further details will be shared as soon as they are available, but if you wish more information in the meantime, please contact Dr Anita Quye (a.quye@nms.ac.uk, tel. 0131 247 4376) or Graeme Gollan (ggollan@nationalgalleries.org, tel. 0131 624 6361).

Emma Roodhouse
MMiC:S Steering Group

CPD RECALL – REVIEWING 2006

2006 marked the fourth year of operating the random selection for the CPD annual recall. In total, two hundred and eighty three reviews have been read since 2003. Sixty-seven reviews were read during the 2006 recall, each one by two readers.

CPD Readers annual meeting

At the readers' annual meeting on 31 October 2006 it was noted that on average each reader spends two hours per review to read and write feedback, making that a total of four hours to consider each review submitted – a significant contribution of voluntary time from each reader to the PACR scheme – as on average they read ten reviews each. The CPD readers, at present a group of fourteen, work with enthusiasm and commitment to make sure the feedback is returned to members on time. New readers will join them for the 2007 recall as there is a healthy turnover. Some readers are also active throughout the year as PACR mentors and/or will take part in the CPD workshops*.

At the CPD annual review meeting the readers discuss the recall process and identify its strengths and weaknesses and ask questions like:

- Does the review form work to produce a CPD record and plan that members can use to assist them with their personal and professional development?
- What improvements and support can be offered?
- What can we learn from the recall in 2006?

It is important to note that most of the reviews received in 2006 clearly illustrated the work that people put into their reviews and the high standard that is being achieved.

There are a few main points though that the meeting felt needed to be offered as guidance.

CPD reviews need to be:

- About your overall work as a professional conservator and not just your technical work; reviewers need to think more widely about the experiences of the last period and how they have contributed to their individual professional development.
- A way of reflecting (thinking about and assessing the relative impact) on previous action plans and how the reviewer addressed the objectives of the action plan. This needs to be an honest assessment, reflecting on and accepting both the successes and the relative failures – no one will question a non-achieved objective.
- Able to show deductive thinking – such as realising the benefits from an activity and how they will help with future work or identify a further development need.
- Both a record of your achievements over the past two years and a plan for the next two.

The reviews are not a test but a useful tool for each individual to monitor their learning and identify development needs. For this to be addressed satisfactorily all sections of the review form need to be answered.

Learning logs

Learning logs (see CPD guide on the PACR website www.pacr.org.uk/cpd.html) help by recording your learning on a regular basis; for instance, take five minutes to record your ongoing thoughts about a current project – or note down a course that you want to attend. Then write up a short summary of what you gained from the whole experience. Doing this at regular intervals will help you to remember what you have achieved over a twelve month period – it's just like keeping a diary.

How many of you think 'Oh no I've been recalled' or say 'I don't have the time to do it now!'. By referring to a learning log, the main draft is already done. Your review would not need to include the whole learning log – but at one stage each year you can look back on what you have done and consider (and reflect upon) the things that were most useful to you and include them in your review. They do not have to have been great achievements but the things that you personally learnt the most from. This information will then become your priority list – the things that were meaningful to you and that affected you as a professional.

Section 2 (Describe your activities and projects over the last 12 months to 2 years; what did you learn from the

activities and or projects?)

The readers reported that a quantity of the reviews received tend to be too focussed on business or organisational development and not on personal achievements and aspirations. Learning logs will help you to reflect and realise what you have personally gained from something you have done at work or outside work to support your professional development.

Examples of CPD learning

One of our aims this year is to produce some examples of CPD learning and put them on the PACR website. For example:

'Take up a physical activity that can be slotted into the lunch-break, going to work or on the way home from work. Things like swimming, gym, jogging, cycling or just walking are good for reflective thinking, problem solving and idea inspiration. Many reviewers put down 'make more time for myself' – this addresses that aspiration, gives the opportunity for reflection, makes a mental break from work/home and should lead to improved well-being!'

The list could be endless and we would welcome your ideas too – so that they can be included. Please email pacr@icon.org.uk with one learning activity (great or small) that you found useful so that it can be shared with other members.

PACR scheme review

This year a review of the PACR scheme is being carried out. At the meeting we discussed what would be the main points to be addressed in relation to the CPD review process. Two things were highlighted:

- CPD documents - to be more interactive and less theoretical with emphasis on personal professional development.
- Mentor scheme to be developed and to become established as a support not only for those submitting new PACR applications but for CPD as well.

Please let me have your views on what you would like to see developed in relation to the CPD review process

Susan Bradshaw, Accreditation Manager pacr@icon.org.uk

* For dates of the next CPD workshops see Listings or the PACR website www.pacr.org.uk. And if you would like a mentor please contact Susan on pacr@icon.org.uk.

NW CONSERVATORS GROUP

After a break of over a year a conservators' group was re-launched in the North West on the 7 Dec '06. The initial meeting was held at 'Love Saves the Day' café in Deansgate, Manchester. The meeting was a great success with over fifteen North West conservators attending. The

meeting was quite informal and relaxed but still managed to tackle current issues such as the House of Lords report on Science & Heritage. The group decided to hold meetings every other month with members of the group taking it in turns to host the meetings. The next meeting is to be held on Wednesday 18 April, 2pm, at the Manchester Museum of Science and Industry. All conservators are welcome to attend, if you are interested please email Pierrette Squires, Bolton Museum's Conservator: pierrette.squires@bolton.gov.uk

WHAT IN THE WIKI IS THAT?!

In issue 7 Sharon Oldale drew our attention to *Wikipedia* (1), the free on-line encyclopaedia, and in particular to Richard McCoy's plea on the DistList for a brave soul to update and improve on the entry for 'art conservation and restoration'. *Wikipedia* and the concept of the software behind it will be familiar to some of us, but for others the term will cause much furrowing of brows and questioning looks, so here I aim to provide a brief introduction. Welcome to the world of the 'wiki'!

Firstly, what does 'wiki' mean? Despite sounding suspiciously like a furry creature from Star Wars, wiki is actually an abbreviation of wikiwiki, the Hawaiian word for 'quick'. This is a very pertinent use of language, as a wiki is basically a type of website that allows users to create web pages quickly, and with a minimum of fuss. Like 'weblogs' ('blogs'), which have come to the fore of late with increased use by the print and broadcast media, wikis are a Web 2.0 technology (also known as 'social' or 'collaborative' software). Unlike conventional websites, they allow users to create new pages, edit current content and comment on the work of others. No special Web-authoring skills (such as knowledge of HTML or XML) are necessary – the editing interface is WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) and thus designed to look like a typical word processor. All that is needed is an internet connection and a Web browser.

Undoubtedly the most well-known of all wikis is the aforementioned *Wikipedia* which claims to be the largest reference website on the internet – and with over 1.5 million articles in English (and many more in other languages) this suggestion is hard to dispute. However, this is far from the only wiki available for public use. Additionally, wikis aren't restricted to acting as collaboratively created reference resources. They can be used for a number of different purposes.

Wikis have been used in my own profession of librarianship as a way of showcasing the issues that surround the profession at the moment, as well as providing a forum for practitioners (and anyone else interested for that matter) to

debate best practice and comment on the ideas set out by others. *Library Success* (2) is a good example. It allows librarians from around the globe to engage with each other in real time, to develop new ideas and concepts with others without having to leave their desks, whilst at the same time having the beneficial side-effect of drastically reducing the number of emails clogging up their inboxes – a downside long associated with professional mailing lists.

The growing realisation of the potential of wikis has also led to their increasing use in academic research and in business, where the capability of multiple persons editing and contributing to a document or project through such a medium is proving more and more popular. The Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) in association with several other organisations has recently launched a wiki called *DigiRep* (3) to pool expertise and knowledge in the field of digital repositories. Meanwhile in the corporate world, the publishing/information technology supplier Ingenta (4) uses wikis for a variety of purposes, from sharing information internally between research and engineering departments to interacting with its client base.

So wikis can have many uses and be employed in numerous ways, but what about the information they hold? With the potential for millions of people to edit pages on a resource like *Wikipedia*, can the articles be relied upon? One problem is that there is an element of risk that entries can be inaccurate, misguided or biased, even if the author is well intentioned. Human error is something that can never be ruled out of any project. That said, a study by the journal *Nature* (5) found that, out of a sample of articles taken from both *Wikipedia* and the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (6), a similar proportion of factual mistakes and misleading omissions were to be found in each resource (with instances in *Wikipedia* slightly higher).

A second potential problem with wikis is the possible addition of misleading content (an act that is sometimes termed 'vandalism') or malicious/provocative content (known as internet 'trolling'). This could take the form of the manipulation of an article to encourage readers to visit external sites under false pretences, or a satirical entry on a contentious public figure aimed at stimulating more than just debate. However, such caddish behaviour is usually detected relatively quickly – either by an interested user/contributor or by a site moderator – and the content reverted to that of a previous entry.

Despite these few downsides, wikis can be valuable resources and helpful working tools. Those which are aimed at providing reference materials, such as *Wikipedia* and *Wiktionary* (7), can give helpful introductory information on topics that are unfamiliar. Whilst this information shouldn't necessarily be taken as gospel, it can

often prove to be a good starting point, with external links to other websites offering alternative perspectives and further routes into a topic.

Furthermore, as Sharon Oldale noted, they offer the opportunity for 'gentle self promotion'. Currently the entry for 'art conservation and restoration' on *Wikipedia* is minimal in terms of detail. 'Historic preservation' (to which searches for 'heritage conservation' are redirected) has a more extensive entry, but it is heavily centred on North American interests. By neglecting this increasingly popular resource, conservators are missing the chance to gain much wider recognition of their roles and their valuable contribution in the field of heritage conservation. However, as wikis rely on readers and users as editors and authors, it is left to practitioners (or those with an interest in the subject) to provide useful, reliable content. Perhaps now is a good time to repeat Richard McCoy's plea for someone to add flesh to the bones of *Wikipedia*'s skeletal entry, perhaps developing the UK perspective in the process to help create a balance?

Alternatively, there is plenty of scope to develop a professional practice wiki for heritage conservation. As far as I'm aware no-one has done this to date, and it would be a valuable and welcome addition to the Web. A variety of wiki software is available for free download from a number of sources (for example MediaWiki (8) or JotSpot (9)) if anyone is willing to take up the challenge.

In conclusion, wikis and other Web 2.0 applications are revolutionising the internet by providing the chance for everyone with internet access to make contributions to the ever-expanding World Wide Web. The ability of any one of us to change opinions and broaden public understanding of the conservation profession through this medium has never been greater – so let's make the most of it and get contributing!

(1) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page

(2) <http://www.libsuccess.org/>

(3) <http://www.ukoln.ac.uk/repositories/digirep/>

(4) <http://www.ingenta.com/corporate/>

(5) Giles, J. (2005). "Internet encyclopaedias go head to head". *Nature*, 438, pp. 900-901.

(6) www.britannica.co.uk

(7) http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Main_Page

(8) <http://www.mediawiki.org/wiki/MediaWiki>

(9) <http://www.jot.com/>

James Andrews

Chantry Librarian

institute briefing

SALARIES IN CONSERVATION

Two positive things to report in the long slow haul to improve salaries for conservators:

Local Authorities

Following the concerns some members have raised about the potentially damaging prospects to conservators working for local authorities in England and Wales of the single status salary review, Icon had a meeting with Local Government Employers (LGE) the arm of the local Government Association which deals with pay negotiations. LGE represents employers, not workers, but listened to our concerns and was able to offer general suggestions:

- 1 If you work for a local authority in England or Wales, and the single salary review produces an unfair outcome, remember you have the right to appeal. Make sure you know what the appeal deadline is and make use of the process. 20% of all reviews are appealed.
- 2 The review should be based on a detailed review of your job description. If you don't think this happened or don't think it was done properly, or don't think the job description used for the review was proper, you should definitely appeal.
- 3 If you are asked to review your job description – DON'T UNDERSELL YOURSELF!!!! (e.g. Don't say 'I clean 50 objects a week'!!! Say 'I have the lead responsibility for preserving historic assets in public ownership worth £4m and making them accessible to the local community'). Use the job description as a means of showing how your job differs from other jobs such as admin (especially if they are low-grade). The single status review is weighted towards jobs which have elements of public engagement and of education, so stress these as much as you can. If you need help with this, email Alastair McCapra at amccapra@icon.org.uk
- 4 Join a union (in most cases, this will be Unison).

The Heritage Lottery Fund

Icon has pointed out to HLF that they pay a bursary of £14,500 to trainees on our internship scheme so presumably they agree that this is an appropriate level of income for someone who is not yet fully qualified and able to work independently. On this basis it is difficult to understand why we often see advertisements for conservation jobs which are part of an HLF-funded project, where the salary offered will in many cases leave the conservator worse off than £14,500 after tax.

HLF understood this point and have agreed to make their staff aware of Icon's minimum salary guidelines. They have made it clear that it is not their job to 'enforce' our

guidance on people making bids for conservation work. However they will refer bidders to it, encourage them to make use of it (as they already do with the Museums Association salary guidelines) and will not decide against a project on the basis that it includes provision to pay conservators our recommended minimum rate.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: If you are asked to advise on a salary for an HLF-funded project, please do not recommend a salary below the Icon minimum guideline of £20,295. Likewise if you are bidding for work as part of an HLF project bear in mind that if you make reference to the Icon minimum, HLF will support this if the project manager enquires about it.

MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES MONTH

May is Museums & Galleries month (MGM) which kicks off this year with a 'Welcome Weekend' to coincide with the bank holiday weekend, May 4-7 2007. This year the theme is 'People – who are we?' Hundreds of events around the country will encourage visitors to discover the new, unique and unexpected in their local museum. Do you know of any events being organised which have a conservation focus? For example, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery is organising a special 'Stop the Rot' day for families, showing people how the staff at BMAG look after the treasures in their care. If you know of an event and would like Icon to send Conservation Register information, or would be interested in printing some of our new 'Care and conservation...' leaflets to hand out during the month or at other events – please get in touch. The leaflets which are already in printed format can now be found on www.conservationregister.com/caring.asp and via links from the Icon website.

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE? LIVE

Family history is big business and 2007 sees the launch of a national history show following the success of the hugely popular TV series 'Who Do You Think You Are?' The event will incorporate the Society of Genealogists Family History Show and will also include special areas of Military, House and Social History. The show will offer visitors the opportunity to discover their ancestors with the help of TV historians, family history experts and to take part in workshops and seminars, see www.whodoyouthinkyouarelive/co.uk for more information.

Icon will have a presence at the event which takes place on the bank holiday weekend, 5-7 May 2007 at the National Hall, Olympia. Anyone interested in volunteering to help 'man a stand' please contact **Caroline** on csaye@icon.org.uk or 020 7785 3804.



An exhibitor's artefact at the Museums & Heritage Show

MUSEUMS AND HERITAGE SHOW

Also in May, is the annual Museums & Heritage Show (9–10 May, Earls Court). This year the show is running a series of Curatorial and Conservation Services Seminars as one of five themes. Alastair McCapra, Icon's Chief Executive will be presenting one of the seminars; other topics cover the open display and handling of collections, and a case study of the Antarctic conservation project at Scott Base. The show itself brings together exhibitors with a range of products and services, from exhibition designers and multimedia providers to retail merchandisers, curatorial and conservation services. Both the seminars and show are free to attend and for further information and visitor registration please visit www.museumsandheritage.com

HLF BURSARY SCHEME – UPDATE

Icon's HLF-funded training bursary scheme continues to support seventeen interns in workshop and studio placements around the UK. We have been very pleased with the progress so far and all interns have been producing exemplary reports (see right) and keeping our Regional Co-ordinators busy. Informal meetings have been arranged regionally for interns and supervisors – including a day visit in the West, taking in SS Great Britain and the National Trust's flagship property Tyntesfield in March. It has been very encouraging to see interns making their own connections and contributing to the wider scheme's network.

Plans have now been finalised for thirteen new placements for the 2007–8 intake of interns, starting in September. The advert will appear in May Icon News and will be posted on the Icon website at the beginning of the month. Do spread the word about the scheme and encourage students, volunteers and anyone who has expressed an interest in training to look at the details. Places will again be available to those without formal conservation training.

Icon still welcomes interest from hosts who want to offer placements within the scheme for the remaining two years up to 2010 – do contact the Edinburgh office to discuss this.

Carol Brown – hlfbs@icon.org.uk 0131 240 5032

FROM AN INTERN'S RECENT REPORT

Sarah Rainbow – Icon/HLF Intern at Manchester City Galleries writes...

The outline learning plan I created for my internship in September offered a wide scope of projects for me to study and implement in my six months. So far I have been able to follow this and adapt it as required – I left the timeline for carrying out many of these projects open to allow for the usual factors that influence planning in a large organisation.

One of the weaknesses I identified from the learning plan



Sarah Rainbow gets to grips with environmental monitoring systems



was my lack of theoretical knowledge of environmental monitoring equipment rather than the practical aspects. I have begun to correct this through training courses and 'on the job' training.

To gain valuable first-hand experience of using an environmental monitoring system, my supervisor Amanda Wallace and I have been trouble-shooting the radio telemetric Hanwell system at Manchester Art Gallery. This work has immediate benefits for the Gallery and offers me a fantastic opportunity to learn the system. Part of the trouble-shooting is to recalibrate the Luxbugs and Humbugs, using other types of monitoring equipment as a comparison; I have also been learning to use calibration salts to work out the current reading levels.

To familiarise myself with hand-held pieces of environmental monitoring equipment I took a lux/UV monitor into the Gallery to take some general readings. This highlighted some problems with the levels, some existing issues and some new. Amanda and I decided that this was a good opportunity to carry out a full light survey of the Gallery and make recommendations for improvements based upon the findings. From this we could go on to review the existing light policy and look at making it more accessible to other departments with an interest in setting and controlling light levels. I am now working with Amanda to create a piece of interpretation for the Gallery looking at the effects of light on certain materials; I am also working on a related display demonstrating the effects of human touch on materials and objects.

GETTING INTO SCHOOLS

Icon is participating in a sector-wide project to develop structured work placements to encourage young people to consider a career in museums, libraries and archives. In addition to Icon, the Untold Riches Project Group consists of the Museums Association, The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals, the Society of Archivists, the MLA (Museums, Libraries and Archives) Council, MLA East Midlands, MLA South East, MLA London and two Sector Skills Councils – Creative and Cultural Skills and Lifelong Learning UK.

The project is a response to research commissioned in 2005 by MLA, which highlighted significant barriers to working in the sector from the perspective of young people and those who influence them. These included careers advice and parental influence, young people's perceptions of desirable careers and their perceptions of museums. On the positive side, one in five of the young people consulted said they would be interested in work experience in a museum, library or archive.

The project will focus on pre-16 work placements and careers advice. Pilot work placements for Year 10 children will take place in Lincolnshire, London and either Bradford or Leeds this summer. Further work will also be done on ways of improving careers literature. The aim is to achieve a positive shift in the attitude of young people, their families and careers advisors about working in the sector. Further information from chris.fardon@mla.gov.uk

FROM THE LIBRARY

I am pleased to be able to announce a new exchange program with Germany's Herzog August Bibliothek. The Chantry Library will now receive copies of their excellent publication *Wolfenbütteler Schriften zur Geschichte des Buchwesens* in exchange for the *Paper Conservator*. We have received our first copy (volume 40: *Bibliotheken, Bücher und andere Medien in der Zeit des Kalten Krieges*) and it is now available for consultation in the library.

We have also added a range of new titles to the collection, including a significant number which are building-related with an emphasis on Scotland. Some of them are listed below:

House of Lords Science and Technology Committee (2006). *Science and heritage: report with evidence*.

Kenney, A.R. [et al.] (2006). *E-journal archiving metes and bounds: a survey of the landscape*.

Hughes, J.J. [et al.] (2003). *Mortars in historic buildings*.

Coleman, R. [et al.] (2004). *Development and archaeology in historic towns and cities*.

Centre for Conservation and Urban Studies (2000). *Scottish slate: the potential for use in building repair and conservation area enhancement*.

Hyslop, E. (2004). *The performance of replacement sandstone in the new town of Edinburgh [...]*.

Maxwell, I. and Dakin, A. (eds.) (2000). *Scottish traditional roofing conference: new ideas about old materials*.

Museums and Galleries Commission (1995). *Standards in the museum care of musical instruments*

Scottish Lime Centre (2003). *Preparation and use of lime mortars – revised edition*.

Masonry Conservation Research Group (2003). *The consequences of past stonecleaning intervention*.

Nicholson, K. (2001). *Impact of the Braer oil spill on Historic Scotland monuments in Shetland*.

Ashok, R. and Smith, P. (eds.) (2004). *Modern art, new museums: contributions to the Bilbao congress, 13–17 September 2004*.

Saunders, D. Townsend, J.H. & Woodcock, S. (eds) (2006). *The object in context: crossing conservation boundaries: contributions to the Munich Congress, 28 August – 1 September 2006*.

Foot, Mirjam (ed.) (2004). *Eloquent witnesses: bookbindings and their history*.

Bregnhøi, L. [et al.] (2006). *Paint research in building conservation*.

Forde, H. (2007). *Preserving archives*.

Stirk, Jean V. (2006). *The lost mills: a history of papermaking in County Durham*.

Don't forget that, although we specialise in book and paper conservation, we also have technical information on preservation, analytical techniques, materials research, disaster planning, pest management, environmental conditions, plus works on specific materials and techniques, such as textiles, pictures frames, pigments and dyes and many other subjects of interest.

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

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

Email **chantrylibrary@icon.org.uk**

Telephone **+ 44 (0) 1865 251 303**

Fax **+ 44 (0) 1865 251 303**

Address **The Chantry Library, Grove Cottage,
St Cross Road, Oxford, OX1 3TX,
United Kingdom**

Website **<http://www.lib.ox.ac.uk/ipc-chantry/>**

Recently published articles

For a complete list of the recently published articles available at the Chantry Library please visit our website at <http://www.lib.ox.ac.uk/ipc-chantry/> and follow the 'New Titles' link. Here is a taster:

From *Print Quarterly*, **23**(4).

McDonald, M.P. (2006). 'A genealogy for the Count Duke of Olivares'. pp. 359–382.

From *Restaurator: international journal for the preservation of library and archival material*, **27**(4).

Zervos, S. and Moropoulou, A. (2006). 'Methodology and criteria for the evaluation of paper conservation interventions: a literature review'. pp. 219–274.

Calvini, P. and Gorassini, A. (2006). 'On the rate of paper degradation: lessons from the past'. pp. 275–290.

From *Conservation-restauration des biens culturels*, **24**.

Jallet, P., Dubarry, P. and Joseph, F. (2006). 'La grotte de Lascaux: du constat d'état à la création d'une base de consultation'. pp. 11–20.

Houssay, A. (2006). 'Le violon d'Ingres, un violon très symbolique?'. pp. 21–29.

Binet, C. and Echard, J-P. (2006). 'Utilisation de la fluorescence X in situ: comme aide à la reconnaissance de l'os, de l'ivoire et de la corne sur des objets patrimoniaux'. pp. 59–62.

From *PH: Boletín del Instituto Andaluz del Patrimonio Histórico*, **60**.

López Fernández, I. (2006). 'Diseño y programación de itinerarios culturales'. pp. 20–33.

Fundación El Legado Andalusi (2006). 'Legado Andalusi: recuperando una memoria del pasado para mejorar el presente'. pp. 98–105.

From *The Getty conservation newsletter*, **21**(3).

'Preserving world heritage: a discussion about rock art conservation'. pp. 10–15.

From *Art business today* 2007 no. 1.

Clews, M. (2007). 'Level pegging' [article on contemporary frames]. pp. 78–81.

Ruston, A. (2007). 'Which mountboard?' [framing article]. pp. 82–85.

From *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation [AIC]*, **45**(3).

Brooks, M.M. and Eastop, D. (2006). 'Matter out of place: paradigms for analyzing textile cleaning'. pp. 171–181.

Greene, V. (2006). 'Using case studies to examine the decision-making process for cleaning ethnographic objects'. pp. 183–199.

Sutherland, K. (2006). 'Measurements of solvent cleaning effects on oil paintings'. pp. 211–226.

Other titles received include *AIC News* **31**(6), *Discover NLS* [National Library of Scotland] Issue **3**, *The Ephemerist* **135**, *ICOM News* **59**(3), *AICCM National Newsletter* **101**, *The Guild of Book Workers newsletter* **169**,

Moving on... Moving in...

In the last six months the post of Head of Organic Artefacts Conservation in the Department of Conservation, Documentation and Science at the British Museum (BM) has changed hands :

MOVING ON...

Allyson Rae, holding the post since 1991, moved on to greener fields, literally, when she left the BM in September 2006. The lure of Norfolk's open spaces lead her to develop a private conservation practice from her new home, where she will be pursuing her specialist interests in ethnography, feather work, textiles and insect pest management.



A Fine Art graduate, Allyson joined the BM in 1978 as an assistant conservator, gaining her Certificate in Conservation from the Museums Association in 1984 and professional accreditation in 2000. Working with conservators in the Canadian Museum of Civilisation and Te Papa Tongarewa, National Museum of New Zealand, fuelled a passion for ethnography and the intricacies of intangible heritage. She also enjoyed activities on the Academic Advisory Board for the AHRC Research Centre for Textile Conservation and Textile Studies, PACR as a Reader for accredited conservators CPD and the Prospect Union as an Out-stations and BM Heritage Group Rep.

As Head of Section, Allyson led a skilled and enthusiastic team of conservators in a lively Department through some challenging periods. She helped to develop a vibrant internship programme and greatly appreciated the stimulation of working with students and mid-career conservators from UK and abroad. Many who passed through the studio will remember the magnificent red feather headdress from Tanzania which helped them to get to grips with feather conservation – a legacy which Sherry Doyal will now have the pleasure of seeing through to completion.

After 28 years, Allyson will miss the rich mix of colleagues, friends and collections which made the BM such a wonderful working experience. Private practice will keep her feet firmly in the world of conservation, even if they do stray onto the many Norfolk footpaths from time to time !

Allyson can be contacted at allysonrae@btinternet.com

MOVING IN...

Sherry Doyal moved her tools to the BM on 4 December and is being gently broken in by the team there.

After studying art, Sherry worked for York Archaeological Trust but a winter season, without covers, decided her on a warmer job! She completed conservation studies at Lincoln in 1981 and, in 1984, gained a post graduate certificate in upholstery conservation from the Textile Conservation Centre. For the next decade Sherry specialised in furnishing textiles and upholstery conservation (the leathery, furry, feathery, hairy, rush, cane and grassy bits) at the TCC, Royal Historic Palaces, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the V&A.

In 1998 Sherry gained a teaching qualification using her experience as an intern supervisor and visiting conservation lecturer for the TCC, Cooper- Hewitt NY, The MGC, The National Trust, London Metropolitan University and Camberwell School of Art. Her skills were put to use as a trainer for Devon and Exeter Racial Equality Council.

Employment with The National Trust followed, where her role included outreach coaching of collections staff in preventive conservation for twelve registered museums from great houses to green houses, industrial archaeology and chapels. In 2005 Sherry was appointed Historic Properties Advisor to the Devon and Cornwall Regional Director, representing the interests of curators, conservators and archaeologists as an active member of the Regional Management Team.

Sherry has been interested in First Nations collections since a western United States childhood. This interest turned professional with posts at The Horniman Museum and Exeter City Museums – both designated ethnography collections. Over time, and with the help of a Millennium Fellowship and CPD, her interest has focused on plant material collections and she is due to complete a Diploma in basketry this summer. Sherry looks forward to working with the Organic Artefacts Conservators, the wider Conservation, Documentation and Science Department and other BM staff.

Contact Sherry at: sdoyal@thebritishmuseum.ac.uk





Dominique Rogers

Sandy Davison surveying the chandeliers in Casteltown House near Dublin

SANDY DAVISON RETIRES

After a career spanning forty years Sandy Davison is hanging up her scalpel! A school fossil-hunting trip at the age of five began her interest in archaeology; and a visit to the conservation department of the Institute of Archaeology (UCL) at sixteen sparked her fascination with conservation. Sandy received a Diploma in the Conservation of Archaeological Materials from the Institute in 1967 and joined the staff of The British Museum where she worked until 1981. She has made a conscious decision to avoid management or administrative roles preferring to remain in touch with objects. In 1976 she learned glass restoration in Germany and then developed methods of conservation/restoration, lecturing and publishing widely including a definitive work *Conservation and Restoration of Glass*. In 1979 she was awarded fellowship of IIC for her promotion of conservation as the founding co-editor of UKIC News and founding editor of *The Conservator*. She served on an early UKIC committee and more recently as chair of UKIC CGCG (Icon Ceramics and Glass Group).

After a brief spell in Saudi Arabia Sandy returned to the UK in 1982 to become self employed, trading as *The Conservation Studio*, initially with Patricia Jackson whom she credits for her move into private practice. 'Self employment has been precarious at times but has allowed me the freedom to pursue a varied career working alongside conservators and students around the world'. In addition to working on archaeological sites, in museums and other institutions in the UK Sandy has worked briefly in Eire, France, the Czech Republic, Malaysia and Saudi Arabia, taught glass conservation/restoration in the UK, Denmark, Egypt, Malta, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Serbia and the USA, lectured in Finland, Germany and Portugal and acted as a consultant for The World Monuments Fund in St. Petersburg.

'Travelling the world alone has involved some tricky situations such as arriving in Cairo at midnight carrying translation equipment that included radio transmitters. I and the equipment were impounded in customs and the driver sent to transport me to Alexandria left without me. I was put into an unofficial 'taxi' and driven without lights ('to save the battery!') at breakneck speed through the night to Alexandria. I've never been so frightened in my life. The equipment arrived two days later and was found to be faulty and I had to teach through an interpreter. During a post-conference trip in an old bus in Borneo, the radiator over-heated, the driver went in search of water, the handbrake slipped and the bus began to roll backwards towards a ravine. Fortunately in the ensuing pandemonium someone had the presence of mind to re-apply the handbrake and everyone piled out. Rocks were placed behind the wheels, one of which was discovered harbouring a bees' nest – pandemonium again! When everyone had calmed down it was noticed that I was wearing odd sandals (having rushed to catch the bus after a radio interview) so of course the Malaysian delegates all wanted to photograph my feet!'

In 2000 Sandy became an accredited member of Icon under the Fast Track Scheme. Now owning a bus pass, a rail card and entitled to free prescriptions, Sandy intends to close her studio at Easter and to continue with writing, consultancy and a reduced amount of extra mural work, but in the main finding time to do all the things that make life interesting. Some conservators don't retire they just fade away.....

MATTERS FOR CONGRATULATION

..... to **David Bomford**, Senior Restorer of Paintings at the National Gallery London and former Secretary General of IIC on his new post as Associate Director for Collections at the J Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, which he will be taking up in April. At the Getty, he will be responsible for six curatorial and four conservation departments, as well as the Registrars' office.



David told *Icon News*, 'it will be a huge change after so many years at the National Gallery – but, with a brilliant new director of the museum and a terrific new president of the Getty Trust now in place, it is a wonderful time to be going there.'

..... to **Heather Newton**, who featured in last November's *Icon News* article about Canterbury Cathedral. Since then she has been promoted to the position of Assistant Clerk of Works.



.....and to **Mary Davis**, archaeological conservator at National Museum of Wales, on her election to Fellowship of the Society of Antiquaries



Good luck to **Lisa Nilsen** who has decided to leave Historic Royal Palaces to return home to Sweden, where she is going to start her own company consulting on collection care and preventive conservation. She confesses to some nervousness and the probable need to take part-time work in a supermarket initially to keep

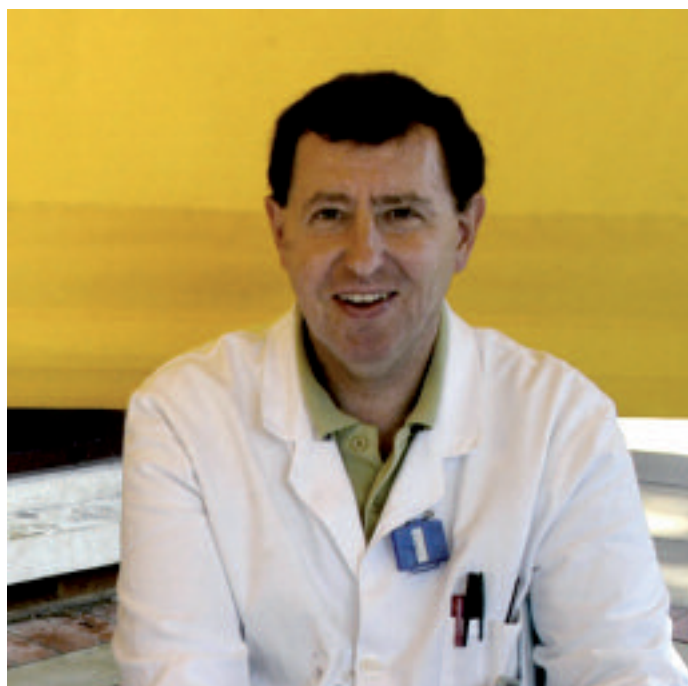
the wolf from the door! But she will be keeping up her membership of *Icon*, particularly given her recent accreditation.

IN APPRECIATION

Phil Carter 1951–2006

Conservators in East Anglia were shocked and saddened by the news of the death of our colleague Phil Carter from a massive heart attack on 6 December 2006.

Phil had been working in the conservation labs at the Verulamium Museum, St. Albans since 1980 after studying archaeological conservation at the University of Cardiff. Before moving into conservation he had spent several years as an industrial chemist with Crosse and Blackwell. Disenchantment with working in this field led him to indulge his interest in archaeology and chemistry to study



and pursue a career in conservation.

Phil's skill and ability was obvious to see in his work at St. Albans, exemplified by his work conserving important Roman burial material from Turnershall Farm near Wheathampstead, found in 2002, and his work cleaning a folded mail coat from the Folly Lane royal tribal cremation site.

He was well known for working quietly, determinedly and efficiently, belied by his easygoing exterior. He was always good natured and helpful to colleagues and casual enquirers, no one had a bad word for Phil; as many have said – he was such a nice man. Andy Calver, now at the Museum of London, remembers his time as an intern with Phil fondly 'Phil introduced me to the pragmatic side of conservation and I remember my purist ethical approach was shocked by Phil keeping a bottle of copper sulphate by the microscope to touch up any accidental scratches on copper alloy objects – but I soon came to see the value of this practical approach, in this and so many things Phil did. He also gave me my first experience of working for a museum service, where you have to be practical and adaptable and understand the needs of others to get things done – a situation miles away from what I had been used to in a large national museum – thanks Phil'

He leaves a widow, Debbie, and two children, Emma and David.

George Monger

Friend, and Convenor of the East Anglian Conservators' Forum

Caring and sharing: Conservation and Cultural Politics in Scotland

The 9th Annual Harold Plenderleith Memorial Lecture given by
John Leighton at the National Galleries of Scotland on
30 November 2006

The contemporary Dutch artist Teun Hocks produced an image a few years back that would strike terror into the hearts of many conservators. He depicts a man standing on a chair in front of a row of paintings and, with a neat piece of *trompe l'œil*, the man's head seems to disappear into the actual space of one of the pictures. I imagine that this work may be intended as an ironic commentary on the urge towards realism in art. However, for me, as a museum professional, I am drawn to it as an example of what you might call 'deep looking' – the kind of intense engagement with objects and works of art that all of us would like to encourage. Here, man and art seem to be at one, and you could say that the image evokes the kind of appreciation and wonder that should be part of the gallery experience – albeit perhaps not accompanied by quite the same degree of physical proximity.

My work and that of my colleagues at the National Galleries of Scotland is geared towards the public and their relationship with the collection. In common with many cultural institutions we like to think that we are responsive to the needs of our audiences and that we put people at the heart of what we do. The political context in which we work certainly encourages this. In Scotland, as elsewhere in the UK, there has been considerable pressure on all aspects of the arts and heritage sector to intensify our engagement with the public and to ensure that the collections that we hold are made available to as wide an audience as possible.

As a newcomer to Scotland and its cultural politics, I am still familiarising myself with the setting. I have encountered a lot that is positive, dynamic and encouraging. Culture is on the political agenda and there are many opportunities for the future. But I have questions as well. I have read a large number of policy documents that stress the need to open up our collections and to make them more accessible. At the same time, I see relatively little attention being paid to the consequences of this. I read a lot about the need to engage the public but

relatively little about the need to invest in collections, in their care and maintenance, in knowledge and research or all the other tools that we need to achieve these goals of wider public access.

I am convinced that we need a balanced approach that recognises the importance of maintaining, researching and developing collections as part of the effort to engage the interest of the public. Preservation and presentation, caring and sharing go hand in hand and I would suggest that we have an urgent task to get this message across. I would also propose that there is a crucial role for conservators in using their skills and knowledge, not just behind the scenes in the studio but on the front line of public engagement, helping visitors to look longer, to look harder, to understand and relate to objects of all kinds. I concede that we may not want our visitors to stand on chairs but we do want them to have a deep and meaningful contact with the objects that we look after.

The distant history of many museums in the UK and across Europe lies in the reforming zeal of the late 18th and early 19th century. Many of our great museums were founded for the purpose of instructing and educating those classes of society that did not have access to the experiences and privileges of a wealthy elite. The origins of the National Galleries of Scotland are typical in this regard. Making fine examples of art available to students was part of a wider effort to reduce poverty in Scotland by inspiring education and promoting knowledge of craft and industry.

But with time, these founding ideals often became obscured. In the 20th century, the focus in museums and galleries tended to shift away from a missionary, reforming ambition to something more inward and removed from social purpose. Collections came to be viewed as being important in their own right, an end in themselves, representing ideals of beauty, self-contained knowledge and connoisseurship. It would be unfair to say that

museums had turned their back on society but they often seemed at a distance from it. Objects were taken out of the maelstrom of the market, and subjected to lavish care and attention. The public was welcome to visit but their needs were not a primary concern. The collection and all it represented was the top priority.

A mission to recover the social relevance of museums and their collections probably began earlier in the United States before it swept across Europe with great vigour in the 1980s and 1990s. Driven by both politics and commercial factors, museums and galleries were increasingly forced to prove their value and interest to the public that paid for them. More attention was paid to visitor numbers and to the effort to draw in audiences from social groups that had previously been excluded through disinterest or lack of opportunity.

Since 1997 it has been the policy of the UK government to use culture as an instrument for social change. There has been intense pressure on museums to justify their public funding through their educational mission and to broaden their audiences. In response, we have become more skilled and more creative in finding ways to draw the public in and to take the collections out to them.

Not everyone has welcomed this new sense of purpose or the new orthodoxy as it is sometimes known. Museums have been criticised for following political agendas too closely; as one observer has put it:

'Once a museum puts the perceived needs of the people at the heart of its work, the collection will quite naturally lose its importance and value. (...) In the people-centred museum (...) social ends tend to take over. Outreach programmes, attempts to involve local communities in the museum's activities, and the outright dispersal of the collection into community centres: all these blur the museum out of existence.'¹

Not many people in our profession would endorse this view. But concerns are often expressed that the drive towards new audiences has been carried forward at the expense of other, collections-related activities. A recent report by a House of Lords Committee on Science and Heritage has criticised what it describes as the short-sighted policies of the London government for ignoring the consequences of its encouragement of greater use of collections by an ever-expanding public. The report focuses on a threat to sustainability and the preservation of heritage that it sees as being inherent in policies that prioritise public access.

'...increased access means increased wear and tear – surface erosion, disfigurement from dust accumulation, flaking and cracking from fluctuating humidity and

temperature, along with the risk of more immediate and catastrophic damage to precious objects.'²

This is a welcome call to reconcile the implications of wider access with those of long-term conservation. But the challenges of more sharing and of greater public access are not limited to issues of wear and tear. There is also a debate that centres upon the type of experience that we provide and the level of intellectual access that we offer to the public. The reception of the newly-reopened Kelvingrove Museum and Art Gallery in Glasgow demonstrates how the drive for popular attention can be both successful and controversial.

The authorities in Glasgow have been praised rightly for turning around a trend of neglect and lack of resources for the care and maintenance of their collections. They have invested in better storage and in conservation. And in the revamped displays at Kelvingrove there has been a genuine attempt to represent the collections in a way which will appeal to a wide audience. Traditional Victorian divisions of subject matter have been abandoned in favour of a more modern, flexible thematic approach. Individual texts accompanying the objects have been limited and instead curators rely on contextual resonance in the way that they have arranged and grouped the displays.

The public has come in great numbers as if to vindicate the popular approach. Predictably, the reactions of the critics have ranged from highly positive to extremely critical. For some observers, the move towards greater accessibility has led to, they say, superficial displays and a loss of the individual power and magic of objects and works of art.³ Happily, it is free so we can all easily judge for ourselves.

We have reached an interesting phase for public museums and galleries in this country. There is huge interest in what we do and the level of demand for our collections, programmes and activities is at an all time high. There are also huge opportunities to build on this in the future. Yet at the same time, the very strengths that we need to exploit this demand have never been under greater pressure. This is not simply a question of funding or of resources being diverted from collections management to the outward facing services of education or outreach. It is the lack of a rounded or balanced vision and understanding that combines the traditional strengths of the museum world in collections care with new skills of communication and outreach, caring and sharing.

Policymakers in London have been criticised for ignoring the consequences of one-sided policies. Here in Scotland, where cultural politics are in a volatile phase, we have a window of opportunity to ensure that a healthier balance is

struck. At a moment when politicians and their civil servants are looking to renew aspects of cultural life in this country, there is a chance to ensure that more attention is paid to conservation and to research as an essential foundation for the public functions of display, education and audience development.

Within the context of a devolved government, culture has been seen as an area where a new government can make its mark. Both in terms of reinforcing a national sense of identity and international branding, a vibrant cultural sector has been seen as one of this country's greatest potential assets. In a now well-known speech delivered on St Andrew's day back in 2003 Scotland's First Minister Jack McConnell placed culture high on the political agenda, declaring his wish to:

'(...) back human imagination, our innate creativity, as the most potent force for individual change and social vision.'⁴

Since then, we have had a wide-ranging enquiry for a cultural commission, a government response to that Commission and a Culture Bill for Scotland, which is now in its consultation phase.

Running through this material there is an encouraging commitment to quality and recognition of the national and international standing of our heritage and culture sectors. The desire to mobilise more of these collections and to make better use of them is also a strong theme. For the national collections, including the National Galleries of Scotland, for example, this means that there is pressure to make more of the collections available across the country. An equally strong theme is the wish to engage a wider public in culture and in appreciating and learning from the objects in our care.

But if you examine the various policy documents what you generally will not find yet is sufficient commitment to fostering the conditions that are essential for the successful development of these ambitious policies. The need to invest in conservation, in collections management and research - which should be the foundations - are either referred to in general terms or passed over. At a moment when Scottish cultural policy is still in a fluid and formative phase, there is still a chance to get across the argument that a commitment to making more use of our collections must be linked to a determination to look after them properly - and there is a need to invest in the caring as well as sharing. Of course we would like to get more works into circulation, and of course we would like to get more works out of storage - but it requires an investment in collections management and conservation to achieve this.

The argument goes further than simply saying that we

need to protect and preserve as well as to display and present. There is, in my view, an important role for conservators in promoting knowledge, understanding and a genuine engagement with objects and works of art. Perhaps this is still the hardest task we face in museums and galleries - creating the conditions to spark the imagination of the public; to find ways to draw them in and to unlock the meaning and magic of our collections.

In this regard there is an opportunity to make more use of the skills and expertise of conservators. The detailed knowledge that they develop about individual pieces, the understanding of how a work was created, how it was originally seen, the accidents of history and the background to its present appearance - all of these are of interest not just for the processes of conservation but also for the mechanics of presentation, drawing the viewer into detailed contemplation and a deeper appreciation of an object or work of art.

I think this starts with developing a culture in which conservators are encouraged to share their knowledge and to work alongside other colleagues to make this available to the public. The role of the conservator has of course changed dramatically in recent decades. David Bomford has aptly described the modern conservator as a narrator, an expert with the power to make the histories of creation and survival visible for the present-day viewer.⁵

It is important to keep looking for ways to raise the profile of conservation. We will not always have the opportunity to work in the public eye to such a prominent degree as Michael Gallagher, our former Keeper of Conservation, when he cleaned the National Gallery's giant Benjamin West in public, although it was a fantastic exercise in encouraging public interest in your profession.

There are other, quieter ways to find an interface between the conservation studio and the public. At my previous place of work, the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam, we started a number of projects with pupils in secondary education to visit behind the scenes, learning from technicians about how works of art are cared for and how they are packed for transport. These teenagers were vocational pupils from schools that historically never went near a museum or art gallery. Yet it was a resounding success and wonderful to see how the contact generated interest, care and respect from the students.

Through publication, through contact, through the internet and television, there are many ways in which we can reach a wider public. A recent television documentary focussed on the controversy surrounding the attribution of the *Skating Minister*, perhaps the most famous work in our Scottish collections. The debate between supporters of the traditional attribution to Sir Henry Raeburn and those who

have proposed that it is by the French artist Henri Danloux made for excellent television. But the most compelling parts of the programme were the detailed analyses by the former Keeper of Conservation at the National Galleries, John Dick, accompanied by close-up photographs which brought the issue to life and helped us to see the picture afresh. Here, indeed, was the conservator as narrator, taking us closer to understanding the intricacies and mysteries of how this masterpiece was made and why it looks the way it does today.

I believe that we have an opportunity to break out of a cyclical pattern of neglect and attention in the management of our collections. The political and public enthusiasm for more access to our collections can be harnessed to better collections care and management but we all have a role to play in raising awareness of the issues. There is perhaps a natural tendency on the part of conservators to keep to the background and to stay away from the spotlight of public attention. Too often they can be cast in the role of the difficult colleague who has to put on the brakes and say no, obstructing rather facilitating the mobility of collections. Or there is a tendency to be wary of publicity for fear of attracting attention to controversial treatments.

But the visual arts need many ambassadors especially at this crucial moment of change. All of us in the museum profession, curators, educators and conservators, need to be on the front-line arguing the case that caring and sharing are intimately linked. The prize is not just that we are better able to perform our function – to look after our collections – and that the public is more aware of the work that we do. The ultimate prize is being able to offer new ways to spark off the imagination of the public, to draw them into a world of deep contemplation and wonder.

My thanks to Jacqueline Ridge, Gillian Keay, Carol Brown and Jim Tate for help with the preparation of this lecture.

1 Appleton J., *Museums for the people?*, in *Museums for the people*, Institute of Ideas, London 2001, p.18.

2 House of Lords, Science and Technology Committee, 9th Report of Session 2005–06, Science and Heritage, London, 16 November 2006, p.9.*

3 See for example, Dawber S. 'Blairism on the walls at Kelvingrove', *Variant* 27, Winter 2006, p. 18ff.

4 McConnell J., speech delivered on 30 November 2003, see www.scotland.gov.uk

5 Bomford D., 'The Conservator as Narrator: Changed Perspectives in the Conservation of Paintings' in M. Leonard (ed.) *Personal Viewpoints. Thoughts about Paintings Conservation*, The Getty Conservation Institute, Los Angeles 2003, pp.1–13.

* Available from the Chantry Library



JOHN LEIGHTON

John Leighton was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland in 1959. He studied in Ireland, Scotland (University of Edinburgh) and England (Courtauld Institute of Art) and taught art history at Edinburgh before being appointed in 1986 as Curator of 19th-century paintings at the National Gallery in London, a post he held for over ten years. At the National Gallery, Leighton organised a large number of exhibitions, including Caspar David Friedrich's "Winter Landscapes" (1990) and the award-winning exhibition on the techniques of the Impressionists, *Art in the Making: Impressionism* (1990). He was co-curator of the highly successful shows, *Degas: Beyond Impressionism* (1996) and *Seurat's Bathers* (1997). Leighton contributed to the catalogues for these exhibitions and has published and lectured on various aspects of 19th-century art.

As Director of the Van Gogh Museum from 1997 to 2006, John Leighton was responsible for the world's most important collection of Van Gogh and one of Europe's leading collections of 19th-century art. The Van Gogh Museum is now the busiest museum in the Netherlands with well over a million visitors from all over the world passing through its doors every year. Under his directorship, the existing building underwent a major refurbishment and a new wing was built to hold temporary exhibitions (1998-1999). Designed by the world famous architect, Kisho Kurokawa, the new addition virtually doubled the capacity of the Museum. Since its reopening in 1999, the Museum has hosted on average six exhibitions each year, many of them international collaborations. The permanent collection has been significantly strengthened with major purchases including works by Claude Monet, Edouard Manet, and most recently, Gustave Caillebotte and Toulouse-Lautrec. The Van Gogh Museum has a substantial research programme focusing on Van Gogh. Under Leighton's tenure, the Museum placed special emphasis on education and now has extensive programmes for schools and other groups.

In 2006 Leighton was appointed Director-General of the National Galleries of Scotland.

Seeing ourselves as others see us

or breaking (and conserving) a Grayson Perry pot and other tales of disaster

The following article about an encounter with the world of conservation first appeared in *The Art Newspaper*, issue 175, in December 2006. We are grateful to both the author and *The Art Newspaper* for their kind permission to reprint it here.

INTRODUCING THIS LOOK AT US FROM THE OUTSIDE IN IS THE CONSERVATOR IN THE CASE BOUKE DE VRIES:

As conservators we mostly get to work on antique objects. Having always also been interested in contemporary arts and crafts, I have been fortunate to have worked on a fair amount of important studio pottery, including pieces from the estates of the potters Lucie Rie, Hans Coper and Bernard Leach. Then a few years ago I had the first opportunity to work on a vessel by Turner Prize winner Grayson Perry. I'd been a fan of his art from when he first started potting in the early 1980s, and this first piece was a work he had created for our mutual friend, the sculptor Andrew Logan. I was subsequently approached by Grayson's gallery to conserve several other pieces by him. It has been very exciting to work as a conservator on objects made by a living – and cutting-edge – artist, whose chosen medium happens to be ceramics. In the following article, the journalist Louisa Buck tells the story of what happened to another one of his pieces – from her point of view as the owner/client.

THE DAY MY SON SMASHED MY GRAYSON PERRY POT

Funerary Urn was broken into over 25 pieces by a bouncing ball

The sound of a Grayson Perry pot hitting quarry tiles is one that will remain with me forever. I have been friends with the artist for over 20 years and own a number of his works, but *Funerary Urn* was a particular favourite. I first spotted it across a seething private view at the now defunct Birch and Conran gallery in Soho in 1988, and knew that I had to have it. I loved its occult elegance and mischievous inscriptions, each of which seemed deliberately designed to deter any purchaser. One side declared that "in this urn are contained the ashes of potter Grayson Perry and his lifelong companion Claire", while the other delivered the

disquieting news that "Grayson Perry made this urn to earn the money to buy the motorcycle on which he was killed". Defiantly ignoring any potential bad Karma, I parted with the then (for me) considerable sum of £400, and the pot was mine.

Over the years, *Funerary Urn* survived three house moves, a multitude of drunken parties and one car crash. But it proved to be no match for two bored teenagers and a gym ball on a Saturday afternoon last year. I asked my son and his friend to stop bouncing the ball. They rolled their eyes. I even pointed to *Funerary Urn*, perched precariously on a nearby mantelpiece. As I left the room the bouncing started again. And then that unforgettable crash. At least the guilty pair had the decency to look appalled. *Funerary Urn* in smithereens was a terrible sight. Weeping, I collected the myriad pieces and carefully wrapped each shard in kitchen roll. I even preserved the pulverised dust. It felt as if I was laying out a corpse.

Still sniffing, I called Grayson, who sounded shocked. He couldn't fix it, but he knew a man who possibly could. He gave me the number of his conservator. The word struck doom in my heart. I had no insurance.

I left a shaky message on an answering machine. Soon I was listening to the soothing tones of Bouke de Vries, for whom calming the agitated owners of smashed ceramics is obviously part of the job. He assured me that nothing was impossible, that things always seemed worse than they were, and asked me if I had picked up and wrapped all the pieces. I took *Funerary Urn*, now shrouded in its own coffin, to Bouke's studio in West London and hoped for the best.

In the ensuing months, I began to research and write *Owning Art*, a book devoted to the collecting and custodianship of contemporary art. Discussing the detailed dos and don'ts of caring for works of art, their shipping, was an uncomfortable process, overshadowed by the uncertain fate of my own unsecured, uninsured urn. But, as the horror stories came in thick and fast, I soon discovered that I was not alone.

Heavyweight contemporary art collector David Teiger, who is based in New York, told me how his three-year-old



daughter had coloured in the Andy Warhol that he bought from the artist's first exhibition (Andy's response was apparently to declare, "Now you own a Teiger!"). Another major New York collector's eyes filled with tears as he recalled how a wall-mounted Rachel Whiteread bookcase sculpture crashed to the ground in a pile of pulverised plaster (the artist made him another one) and even the widely revered collector and patron Agnes Gund once discovered that her maid had thrown away the wrapping from a Christo piece and confessed that her cats had used part of a Mary Frank sculpture as a litter tray. All of which inspired me and my co-author Judith Greer (whose own son and friends had recently smashed the glass on a Hatakeyama photo piece) to call a section of our book, 'Beware Animals and Children'.

So what of *Funerary Urn*? For a while its future seemed in abeyance as it turned out to be rather more troublesome than Bouke had originally anticipated. Perhaps the spirit of Claire was making mischief after all (certainly, in the intervening time between the pot's purchase and its fall from grace, Perry's eponymous transvestite alter-ego had mutated from demure Camilla Parker Bowles look-alike into a demonic Little Bow Peep, who looked capable of a curse or two).

Apparently it wasn't the shattered shards that were causing the problem, but the surface. Having put the pot back together, Bouke had first of all filled the gaps with a special white filler which he then retouched to match the nebulously-coloured greenish-blue, grey-black glaze. But every mark showed up. As he explained, he could have

made the joins invisible with an airbrush but this would have involved repainting the entire surface of the pot. So he took the pot back into pieces and mixed pigment into the filler which, after considerable effort, eventually matched the original colour. 'I decided that the best approach with this object was to do as little as possible,' he said, 'because it is a pot made by an artist.'

Doing as little as possible still meant doing a great deal. Yet at the same time as Bouke was brilliantly repairing *Funerary Urn*, he was also doing something else very important. By consciously deciding against a spurious perfection which would have involved him literally painting-out the memory of the mishap, he was allowing *Funerary Urn* to retain both its texture and its identity. If you look closely, you can still see traces of cracks and chips but you can also see Grayson's brushstrokes – they are all part of the character of the piece, there for all to see.

Another passage in *Owning Art* sternly declares 'Don't Buy Art to Make Money' and frowns on those who put financial considerations before those of the art itself. Yet while I never had – nor have – any intention of selling *Funerary Urn*, I was nonetheless curious to know whether its tumble from the mantelpiece had been accompanied by an equally devastating plummet in value. But the news from Katharine Burton, specialist in contemporary art at Christie's, was surprisingly good. 'Obviously everything has to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, but given the particular circumstances and given the provenance and the fact that the pot has been restored to museum standards by the artist's chosen conservator, there shouldn't be a

huge depreciation in value,' she told me. 'We do have to allow a little bit for the condition issue, but assuming that the artist feels the condition of the piece doesn't detract from the quality of the work as he originally intended it, then there's no real reason why it should have a major impact on its sale.'

Thankfully Grayson declares himself to be content with the current incarnation of *Funerary Urn*. 'I think it's fine, in a way it adds another layer of history to it.' He told me: 'It's like the Ashes, the cricketing trophy which is also that shape. The destruction and the creation are one, and I like that a lot.' So now, *Funerary Urn* is back on my mantelpiece, but this time it is secured by a robust Perspex bracket screwed into the wall. All exercise balls, animals and children have been banned from its vicinity. Even though, all things considered, things turned out unexpectedly well, I never, ever, want to hear the sound of that terrible crash again.

Footnote by Bouke de Vries

As there was much evidence of brushstrokes in the way Grayson had applied the slip decoration to the object, I decided that minimum intervention was required. The join lines of the fragments were consolidated with Paraloid B72 (5% in acetone) and bonded with Paraloid B72 (50% in acetone). The join lines were filled with Modostuck with powder pigments. Any break lines running through the design were touched in with acrylic paints.

Bouke can be contacted through the Conservation Register or at bouke@boltblue.com

Louisa Buck is the author, with Judith Greer, of *Owning Art: the Contemporary Art Collector's Handbook* (Cultureshock Media, 2006), 276 pp, £14.95 ISBN 0954699912



Mica paintings revisited

Last year, in Issue 4 of *Icon News*, we ran an article on how the Indian paintings on mica were rehoused in the Wellcome Library. We revisit the subject of mica paintings here to look at another approach taken by the Pitt Rivers Museum. Gali Beiner, Conservator at the Museum, describes a more interventive project and a different storage solution for display and research requirements

BACKGROUND

Many visitors to the Pitt Rivers Museum (PRM) delight in opening the glass-faced drawers in the museum galleries and peering through the locked glass cover to see the objects stored therein. Storing collections in drawers under the display cases has long served the dual purpose of keeping the PRM objects both safe and accessible to the public. Drawers on the ground floor, in the court, are available to public viewing; drawers in the galleries on the first and second floors do not have glass covers and therefore are locked. All of the drawers are part of the display cases used by the museum when building work on the original Pitt Rivers Museum was finished in 1886, at the back of the neo-gothic grade I listed building currently housing the Oxford University Museum of Natural History.

As the decades passed, the collections had grown from the starting point of around twenty thousand items to over half a million. Many objects were added to the drawers while accessioning procedures changed and evolved. Currently, the objects in the drawers are gradually being assessed and identified by means of funded projects: the starting point had been a Designation Challenge Fund (DCF) project aimed at transcribing all the old written records into a computerised museum database. The first project evolved into other DCF projects, and by the time the 2004-06 DCF project entitled 'What's Upstairs?' was conducted it became a useful tool for identifying materials and tracing the background of each object. A new DCF project ('Cutting Edge', planned for 2006-8) continues this trend, with a focus on arms and armour. DCF projects enable the Museum to complete baseline interpretation of the permanent display and work towards achieving the aim of completing location-coding for all PRM artefacts by 2015.

In the course of the DCF teamwork, objects were unearthed from the storage drawers in the display galleries that had not been closely examined for many years, resulting in identification of those in need of conservation. In addition, the building of a new extension to the current PRM building (See page 3) resulted in the



Figure 1 Scene showing Europeans on a tiger hunt

formation of a new temporary exhibition space and an opportunity to reorganise part of the gallery display. Marina de Alarcon, a senior member of the PRM Collection Management team, had recently searched the museum drawers for objects suitable for a new display on the subject of painting, decoration and pigments. This resulted in a group of Indian paintings on mica coming into our conservation lab. Of the total of one hundred and four paintings, twenty two had been stored in a used cardboard

Pitt Rivers Museum collection acc. no. 1981.34.1.3



Figure 2a Detaching paint before treatment

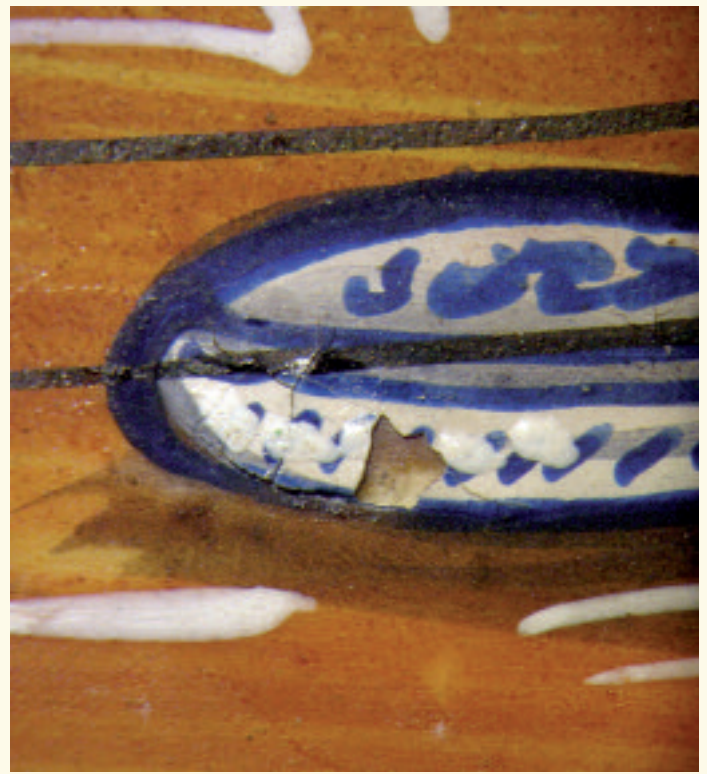


Figure 2b Detaching paint after treatment

Kodak box, thirty four had been slotted into page holders formed by cuts in the paper in one album and forty eight had been stuck to the pages in another album.

THE PAINTINGS

Although not always readily visible to the public, Indian paintings on mica are present in several collections in the UK. Previous publications have presented the collections in the Victoria and Albert Museum¹ and the Wellcome Trust². Many of the paintings were made for the colonial tourist market: dating can range from the 1830s to the 1910s. According to the PRM computerised database, which contains information gleaned from old handwritten museum registers, the paintings in the albums were donated to the museum in 1981 by Anthony Cuthbert Baines and have no exact dating. Those in the Kodak box were acquired by the museum as early as 1879. The old records defined this collection as 'paintings on talc', a definition that was copied into the computerised system. Entry into the conservation lab gave us the opportunity to discuss the correct definition with other museum staff: talc is a hydrated magnesium silicate with the chemical formula $\text{H}_2\text{Mg}_3(\text{SiO}_3)_4$ or $\text{Mg}_3\text{Si}_4\text{O}_{10}(\text{OH})_2$, a soft mineral with a greasy feel. Mica, on the other hand, is a hydrated silicate of aluminium or potassium, a very tough mineral with the ability to split into thin leaves. There are several varieties of mica. It had been noted previously¹ that Indian artists often used Muscovite, with the formula $(\text{H}_2\text{KAl}_3\text{SiO}_4)_3$.

The specimens that entered the PRM conservation lab mostly represented various trades, e.g., cook and his wife, shepherd and his wife, barber and his wife etc. One of the two albums also contained scenes such as a troupe of actors enacting a play or Europeans on a tiger hunt (Fig. 1). Each painting consisted of a thin, flexible sheet of mica painted on one side with gouache colours. All three groups of paintings (in the box and in each of the two

albums) had suffered from three main problems: paint loss (Fig. 2a), damage to the mica substrate (delamination of layers, tears and losses) and continued fine flaking of paint. Many of the paintings displayed cracks in the paint around paint loss areas, as well as cracking and lifting in areas without losses (Fig. 3). Quite a few paintings in the albums had detached from the paper and were lying loose (Fig. 1). The paintings in the Kodak box had been separated by means of tissue, but the box had been too large for the paintings and they had moved and chafed each other. Some of the paintings in the box had paper tissue stuck on them (Fig. 4a) and some evidence of old adhesive (Fig. 5). At the time of entry into the lab, it was not yet clear which and how many of the paintings would be selected for display, therefore any conservation work had to result in a system suitable both for long term storage and for display. The possibility of their being handled by researchers was also a highly desirable feature, due to the continued research done on PRM collections by academic visitors both from the UK and abroad.

Following previous publications on the subject, we organised visits to two major collections of paintings on mica. Mike Wheeler at the V&A and Lara Artemis at the Wellcome Trust very kindly explained how the storage system in each one of these two institutes had evolved. In both cases, storage rather than display had been the main goal. At the PRM, we had neither the time nor the resources needed to mount each painting as some of the V&A specimens had been. Additionally, because most of our paintings were inside their original albums, individual mounting was not an option. Even for the twenty two loose paintings, packing inside the type of box used by the Wellcome Trust was too space – consuming for storage in the PRM gallery drawers. In addition, direct conservation was necessary to enable display. Our display technician indicated that selected loose paintings would be

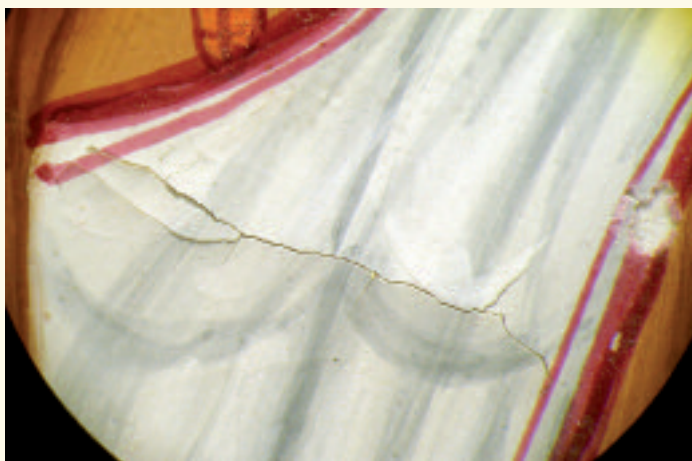


Figure 3 Cracked and lifted paint layer

sandwiched in Perspex™ for vertical display. Albums would be opened at the chosen page for horizontal display. Therefore, the end result could not include any excess material, such as acid-free cardboard frames or wide edges of sheets of polyester (Melinex™), and the paintings had to be stabilised. Consequently, work proceeded in two stages: stabilisation of the paintings and preparation of a storage/display system.

STABILISING THE PAINTINGS

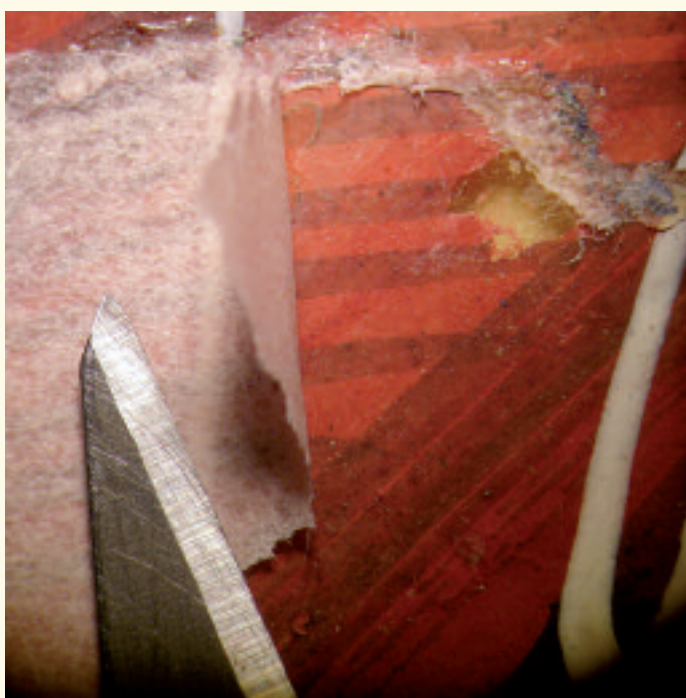
The first stage of work involved interventive conservation of the paintings. Nearly all of them had suffered loss of paint and most were still actively flaking. Use of water-based consolidants, e.g. Lascaux 4176, was not possible because water quickly dissolved the gouache paints. Other types of consolidant such as Klucel G also had to be ruled out because their solvents, e.g., IMS or acetone, both immediately dissolved the paint: a solubility test confirmed that point. One solvent that did not dissolve the paint was isopropyl alcohol, also known as propan-2-ol. Since many of the paintings also suffered from tears and delamination in the mica substrate, it was considered important for simplicity's sake to be able to use the same substance for repair of mica and for consolidation of paint. Paraloid B72 was therefore chosen as both adhesive and consolidant. Paraloid B72 is not readily soluble in isopropyl alcohol: solutions were prepared by adding a few drops of IMS. To further facilitate solution, the mixtures were slightly warmed during preparation.

Solutions of 2%, 5%, 10% and 30% were prepared. For specimens with ongoing fine flaking of paint, particularly the loose paintings in the Kodak box, the 2% solution proved especially useful and did not change the overall appearance of the colours. Where there was fine cracking in the paint layer, the more viscous 10% solution worked well and seeped into the cracks when applied under magnification with a very fine brush. In cases where a network of fine cracks was apparent under magnification (Fig. 6), consolidation with gradually increasing concentrations was very effective, starting with 2–3 applications of the 2% solution and moving up to 2–3 applications of the 10% solution. Occasionally, an additional solution of 20% was also used for consolidation purposes.



Figure 4a Paper tissue atop paint layers

Figure 4b Removing paper tissue



All larger cracks with detached bits of paint required application of the 30% solution with a syringe (Fig. 2a). Application by syringe was also useful for applying the 10% solution to delaminated mica, while a fine brush proved best for re-adhering torn bits with the 30% solution. No backing material was required: if there was a join, the 30% solution was able to hold the bits together. Once dry, excessive consolidant could easily be removed by rolling a swab slightly wetted with isopropyl alcohol under magnification. No in-painting was applied to paint loss areas: because of the 'minimum intervention' policy practised at the PRM, it was considered sufficient to stabilise the loss. Where large bits of paper were obscuring the painting, the paper was slightly wetted with saliva to soften the adhesive, then lifted slowly under magnification with a scalpel (Fig. 4b). Testing proved that cleaning of old excessive adhesive in areas of previous repair was potentially damaging, so old repairs were left untouched.



Figure 6 Fine cracking in paint layer

PREPARING THE PAINTINGS FOR STORAGE AND/OR DISPLAY

The second stage of the work involved the setting up of a storage/display system. After considering all the requirements, and modifying an idea previously applied at the V&A¹, the loose paintings were placed inside custom-made, heat-sealed Melinex™ pockets. Each pocket had a printed accession number attached to the back on the exterior face of the polyester with Paraloid B72 in acetone, invisible from the front. A Correx™ box was then made to house all the loose paintings in two separate layers, to prevent excess weight.

The albums posed a greater difficulty: preparing a pocket for each page would have resulted in such an increase in volume as to make the closing of the albums impossible. A compromise far less hazardous to the safety of the album spines and covers was found in cutting a sheet of Melinex™ to fit the size of each page and attaching it to the page with acid-free paper strips adhered to the reverse side of each page with wheat starch paste. This was done after repairing torn page holders with wheat starch paste and replacing irreparable ones with strips of acid-free paper cut to resemble the originals in appearance (Fig. 7a). Printed accession numbers were attached to the external face of each Melinex™ layer with Paraloid B72 in acetone.

As a result, the loose paintings (Fig. 7b) can now both be handled by researchers and placed between Perspex™ sheets for display, and the albums can be opened for display or closed for storage. Any album not chosen for display now has the potential to continue to delight visitors who open some of the museum drawers, while the box is clearly labelled and its contents can easily be handled by collections staff and researchers. Hopefully, this project is an example of how many apparently conflicting requirements can be met when the experience of previous conservation work is modified and applied to the new situation.

¹ Wheeler, M. (2000) Conservation of Indian Mica Paintings, *V&A Conservation Journal* 35, pp.8–11*

² Fleming, N. (2006) Rehousing Indian Paintings on Mica, *Icon News* 4, pp. 31–33*

* Available from the Chantry Library

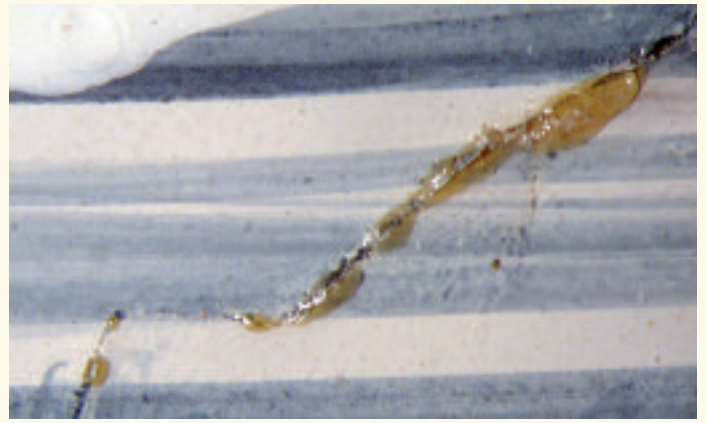


Figure 5 Remains of old adhesive



Figure 7a Repairing 'page holders'

Figure 7b Loose painting after treatment



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news from the groups

ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP

Events for 2007

Presenting Conservation to the public: Visit to new labs at York Archaeological Trust Tuesday 8 May, York

All conservators with an interest in archaeological conservation are invited to this York event in May. With a theme of 'Presenting conservation to the public', it will be a great opportunity to tour the newly fitted out conservation laboratories at York Archaeological Trust since their move in September 2006 and view some of their recent conservation projects. We will also get to see exclusively behind-the-scenes at Jorvik Viking Centre and at 'Dig' the new childrens' interactive archaeology experience, and hear about the conservation aspects of both of these. The day will be hosted by principal conservator Ian Panter and assistant conservator Mags Felter, starting at 11am and finishing at about 4.30pm. The labs are within walking distance of the train station, in the city centre. Further details and booking information to be announced shortly. Any queries, contact Mags Felter: mfelter@yorkarchaeology.co.uk

Decorated surfaces on Ancient Egyptian Objects: Technology, Deterioration and Conservation, Cambridge 6–9 September 2007.

Preparations for this event are now well advanced. The focus of the conference (7–8 September) is decorated surfaces on any substrate – from polychrome wood to coloured basketry, from patinated metal to painted textiles. There will be something of interest to conservators from a range of disciplines. There is still time if you wish to submit an abstract for a paper or poster: deadline 31 March!

The main conference will be preceded by a Seminar and Workshop Day on 6 September. This gives delegates the chance to look in detail at areas of specific interest. Subjects to choose from include:

Looking at Egyptian woods

Egyptian Basketry

Looking at Egyptian 'bronzes'

The technology of cartonnage mummy cases

Animal mummies

Looking at Egyptian Pigments

Mummy portraits

Each half-day session will be led by a specialist, will be limited to 10 participants and will use objects from the Fitzwilliam's collections to examine aspects of technology and conservation. These seminars and workshops are intended primarily as professional development sessions. Although based around Egyptian objects, they will certainly be of use and interest to conservators from a range of disciplines.

On 7 September there will be an evening reception in the Fitzwilliam and a private view of *Passport to the Egyptian Afterlife: The Book of the Dead of Ramose*. The finely illustrated Ramose papyrus (see cover of November 2006 *Icon News*) will be shown in its entirety for the first time and the exhibition will highlight the extensive programme of examination and conservation that has made this possible.

To conclude the conference, on the evening of 8 September, the Fitzwilliam's annual Glanville Lecture on an Egyptological subject will take a conservation theme when M. Emmanuel Laroze, Director of the Centre Franco-Égyptien d'Étude des Temples de Karnak speaks about conservation and restoration projects at Karnak.

For those with sufficient stamina, there will be guided tours of the galleries and conservation laboratories on offer on 9 September. For everyone else, a lazy Sunday sight-seeing in town and punting on the river is highly recommended.

Full information, details of fees and how to book the seminar day and conference, can be found at www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/dept/ant/aeo2007/ or contact Julie Dawson +44 (0) 1223 332930 or Susi Pancaldo +44 (0)207 6794137

Christmas Meeting: Classic Conservation Cockups
Call for talks

There may still be about 300 shopping days until Christmas but we like to get our call for papers in early. This will be our usual very enjoyable Christmas meeting with short talks of about 15–20 minutes each. We would like to invite you to present any archaeological conservation project you've been involved in, large or small, that has gone wrong, the causes of the problem, how the work was salvaged (if it was!) and what can be learned from the experience.

The meeting will be held this December in London, final date and venue to be confirmed. It will be followed by a Christmas party in usual *Icon Archaeology Group* style! To propose a talk, please contact: Jim Spriggs spriggs.conserve@hotmail.com

BOOK AND PAPER GROUP

STOP PRESS! Don't forget the Book & Paper Group Annual Meeting: March 27 at 6pm at the Art Workers Guild, 6 Queens Square, London.

A CORRECTION: 'Day Out in Oxford'. Previous announcements about this September event have indicated that the trip would include a visit to a private studio. In fact, the visit will be to the Oxford Conservation Consortium, a co-operative studio providing collection care to ten colleges of Oxford University and the National Trust. OCC is managed by Jane Eagan and shares its premises with the Chantry Library.

CARE OF COLLECTIONS GROUP

The first annual general meeting of the Care of Collections Group will take place on Wednesday, 25 April in the Clore Auditorium of Tate Britain, London SW1. This will be during the lunch interval of the 'Responding to Climate Change' conference (see events listings) held on that day. The AGM is open to all members of the CCG but there is a conference fee for those attending the rest of the day's proceedings.

Documents relating to the AGM and the organisation of the CCG can be found on the Group's area of the Icon website. If you do not have access to the internet then printed copies are available on request from Peter Winsor, CCG Coordinator, c/o Icon office. Further information will be circulated via Iconnect.

Peter Winsor, CCG Coordinator

HISTORIC INTERIORS GROUP

The 2007 Traditional Paint Forum Conference

'Setting the Scene', Normansfield Theatre, Teddington, 23 March 2007.

There has been a long and close association between the theatre and paint, covering not only the decoration and embellishment of these grand 'palaces of dreams', but also the skilful use of paint in creating illusions with stage sets, scenery and even grease paint. This conference will look at many of these aspects, with papers from some of the leading practitioners of scene painting describing the materials and techniques used for centuries, but which are now in danger of being lost through dramatic technical changes that are taking place. Recent work in theatres, showing changes of style, materials and regulations will also be discussed. Case studies will include buildings as diverse as the Globe, The Royal Festival Hall, 1920 Art Deco Cinemas and the Normansfield Theatre. On the Saturday following the conference, a private tour 'behind the scenes' is planned at several theatres including the Globe, Wilton's Music Hall and the Drury Lane Paint Frame, still in use today in the listed paint shop.

Contact details: Christine Sitwell,
Christine.Sitwell@nationaltrust.org.uk

Third International Architectural Paint Research Conference 2008

The Third International Architectural Paint Research Conference, January 17–19, 2008 is to be held in New York hosted by the Historic Preservation Department in the School of Architecture at Columbia University. In addition to paint, papers will be included on the architectural use of stains, varnishes, glazes, gilding and wallpaper. There will

be five sessions covering the following topics:

- Cultural significance. The examination of finishes as a social, economic and cultural component of material culture. Papers can address issues such as colour taste and history.
- Paint materials. Their development and history.
- Health and Safety. Issues related to finishes which can include possible alternatives to historic finishes that no longer meet health and safety requirements or issues that arise in the recreating of historic finishes or handcrafted finishes.
- Analytical and Instrumental Techniques. Papers should examine how various analytical and instrumental techniques are used in architectural finish research and standards for these techniques.
- Practical Applications. Replicating, recreating and conserving historic finishes. Papers should address the context of the original finish and how it is reproduced or conserved.

Contact details: Mary Jablonski, maj152@columbia.edu

ICOM-CC working group on polychrome sculpture and historic interiors.

At the last ICOM-CC triennial meeting in the Hague, September 2005, the desire to extend the scope of the working group from polychrome sculpture to include painted decorations in historic interiors was proposed and accepted. This confirmed a general belief in the similarity of historic paint technology and the importance of a multidisciplinary approach when dealing with 'ensembles' where sculpture, paintings and painted decorations are combined within an architectural setting. Two co-ordinators have been appointed: Erica Rabelo, conservator of polychrome sculpture, IRPA, Brussels, and Line Bregnhoei, conservator of historic interiors, National Museum of Denmark. Line Bregnhoei was instrumental in the 2005 conference, and subsequent publication 'Architectural Paint Research in Building Conservation' (Paint Research in Building Conservation, Ed. Bregnhoei et al., Archetype in association with the National Museum of Denmark, London, 2006. Reviewed in Icon News, January 2007.) An interim meeting of the newly extended working group, is to be held at the IRPA in Brussels, kindly hosted by Miriam Serck-Dewaide, the director of the 'Brussels Institute' IRPA, on the 30–31 March 2007.

Contact details: Co-ordinator and editor of the Newsletter, Anne Van Grevenstein-Kruse, a_van_grevenstein@hotmail.com; Assistant co-ordinators, Line Bregnhoei, line.bregnhoei@natmus.dk and Erika Rabelo, Erica.rabelo@kikirpa.be.

more news from the groups

METALS GROUP

AGM and spring meeting

Date: Thursday 24 May 2007

Venue: Museum in Docklands, London.

Cost: Students: £35.00

Metals Group Members: £40.00 Non Members £45

This year our meeting will consist of two contrasting themes.

The morning session will explore, through a series of case studies, decorative and technical surface finishing found on a diverse range of metal and composite objects.

Our AGM will be held before lunch. Those people who do not wish to attend can enjoy an extended networking period.

The afternoon session will start softly with a humorous and entertaining account of conservation in extreme conditions in Antarctica by Nicola Dunn, Museum of London.

The last session will give an insight into how three high profile museum hubs are managing and delivering their regional collections care programmes. We will hear from representatives from the North East, the Midlands and the South East regions. This is a very high profile and politically pertinent topic in the light of the pending DCMS Select Committee report looking at collection care.

This session will be chaired by Simon Cane, Icon Chair.

Lunch is not included

To all those interested in attending this meeting please check Icon events listings, the Metals Group web site or Iconnect bulletins for information updates. Or for further information please contact Sharon Wilson, Sharon.Wilson@twmuseums.org.uk 0191 2772195

PAINTINGS GROUP

The Paintings Group has been restructured:

Acting Chair –	Clare Finn
Secretary –	Rachel Turnbull
Mid-Careers Officer –	Jim Dimond
Student Liaison Officer –	Alice Tetlow
Group News Officer –	Nancy Wade
Group Editor –	Tom Caley
Treasurer –	Rebecca Gregg
Voluntary Help Officer –	Ambrose Scott-Moncrieff

We hope this restructuring will help us meet the memberships' needs more readily as well as support the Icon Strategic plan. We plan also to appoint Regional Officers but thought it best to spend some time settling in

and rethinking through these new roles. As you all know, we, your committee, do this voluntarily and in order to be an effective and vital force we are asking you, the membership, to also volunteer to help us. We need people to look out for news items to add to our web site, we need a volunteer to précis some news items we have already sourced and Clare says she wants someone to help her open wine bottles at the next evening lecture on the 12 April on Packing and Shipping Fine Art – any volunteers?

PHOTOGRAPHIC MATERIALS GROUP

A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY!

The Photographic Materials Group is holding a COLD STORAGE meeting on Monday 11 June 2007 from 10.30 to 16.00 hosted by the National Trust at Heelis, the Trust's new Headquarters at Swindon.

Preliminary programme for the day consists of:

- 10.30 – 10.45 Registration and coffee.
- 10.45 – 11.00 Introduction by the new Chair of the Photographic Materials Group

followed by:

- various talks on the subject of cold storage
- a tour of the National Monuments Record Office Cold Store
- a visit to the NMRO conservation studio
- a tour of "Heelis" – the award-winning "green" building that is home to the National Trust

Call for papers

Deadline: Monday, 16 April 2007. We are looking for papers, posters, and short presentations. All ideas relating to COLD STORAGE and its related issues would be welcome. We would particularly like to hear from people, including students, who are currently working in the field, or have recently completed research in this subject.

Hurry and BOOK NOW for a chance to meet colleagues on an informative and fun day out!

There are limited places available so tickets will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

Costs for the day: Icon Members £25 Non-members £30 Students and unwaged £20

We have two free places available for students. If you wish to apply for one of these places please send us a short summary (up to 300 words) telling us how your studies will benefit from attending the meeting. Deadline for applications is Monday, 16 April 2007. Please send to: The Photographic Materials Group (Free places), Icon, 3rd Floor, Downstream Building, 1 London Bridge, London SE1 9BG, UK.

Further information will be available on the Icon website shortly, or contact the meeting chair, Anita Bools, anita.bools@nationaltrust.org.uk or vdperki@aol.com

Other forthcoming meetings

The Photographic Materials Group Annual Meeting will be held at Icon Headquarters on Wednesday, 7 November 2007. Please put this date in your diary and keep an eye on our website – more information will be available soon.

Let's Talk About Photography. Angels Arribas, the Group's professional development committee member is organising a series of evening talks that will be given by photography practitioners, historians, and conservators. If you are interested in giving a talk or would simply like to hear more about this new venture, please contact Angels at: angels.post@3xl.net

SCIENCE GROUP

The strong support given in the House of Lords report to Heritage Science last November has generally met with wide agreement. Most recently the DCMS published their response where, while welcoming the study, they make an excellent case for their arms-length financial support of heritage. Not surprisingly therefore they do not offer any new funding, but they do support the proposals for development of a more coherent national strategy. This itself will require some support, and we wait to hear whether English Heritage, the body identified in the HoL report as most appropriate to provide the infrastructure to develop strategy, will be able to take it on.

The Research Councils, notably the AHRC, have been more enthusiastic, and are actively welcoming their clear role as the research council to support heritage science research. You can read all about this (and much more) at <http://srs.dl.ac.uk/arch/>, a site set up by the Daresbury Laboratory, organisers of the meeting Looking Forward to the Past held at Tate Modern at the end of last year.

In both the HoL report and the DCMS reply, Icon is seen as the body to take forward several aspects of the communication of heritage science and its integration with conservation practice. These are worthy causes which we should take up, and provide opportunities for members of the Science Group in several ways, not least developing grant applications for necessary resources.

Preparation for Conservation Science 2007 in Milan are going extremely well, with a full programme of talks and posters over the two day meeting on 10–11 May 2007. Details can be seen at www.conservationscience.info where your registration form can be downloaded, and where the detailed programme will be posted by mid-February. Information for UK members who might understandably

wish to pay in sterling to the Icon office can be seen under the events sections for 10-11 May on www.icon.org.uk. The conference postprints will be published by Archetype, and a copy is included in the registration fee.

After the Milan conference we will be planning UK meetings in Cardiff, Brighton and an AGM in London. We hope to talk to other Icon groups about holding a series of joint meetings to explore applications of conservation science in their specialist areas.

We are assessing the demand for accreditation among conservation scientists, for whom there is currently no PACR accreditation route, unless preventive conservation forms a major component of their skills set. If you are interested in pursuing accreditation wholly or in part as a conservation scientist, please register your interest with Dr Jim Tate, j.tate@nms.ac.uk as soon as possible.

SCOTLAND GROUP

The Group has continued to develop its events programme for 2007, with the forthcoming Iron Gall Inks Meeting in Dundee on 31 March and the 13 April beer meeting. Details of both these events can be found on the Scotland Group webpage. Other proposed events of this year include tours, studio visits and CPD and training sessions. Once details have been finalised, information about these events will be posted in Icon News and the Scotland Group email update and will also be found on the website.

Unfortunately, the 6 February 2007 Scottish Parliament event had to be re-scheduled and will now take place after the parliament and local government elections in May.

The Scotland Group now collaborates with the National Museums of Scotland to provide monthly, free seminars on conservation and collections related topics ranging from the Kelvingrove New Century Project to the application of conservation science at Historic Royal Palaces. In addition, preparations for a conference organised in collaboration with the Stained Glass Group have begun.

In other Committee business, a grant to support conservators in the PACR process has been re-established and further details will follow. In addition, a working group to formulate a response to the Draft Culture (Scotland) Bill has been set up. The next Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday 10 April, 6.00pm, venue to be advised.

The Committee was sorry to learn of the death of Donald Forbes, just before Christmas. Donald was Senior Paintings Conservator at the National Galleries of Scotland from the early 90s and had worked during the previous decade as Paintings Conservator for the Scottish Museums Council. Well-known to curators and conservators alike around

more news from the groups

Scotland, he was a popular Chair of the Scotland Group's predecessor, the Scottish Society for Conservation and Restoration, from 1994–1996. Donald will be remembered by many international delegates as a charismatic and welcoming host during SSCR's successful ICOM-CC conference in 1996. He was also instrumental in the establishment of the Conservation Forum, which helped forge the early work on convergence of the professional bodies in conservation. A well-loved and warm personality, Donald will be sorely missed by colleagues and friends.

The Group Committee is as follows:

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

STONE AND WALLPAINTINGS GROUP

Look out for **All Manner of Murals** – details below – which is to be published this month. It brings together the edited proceedings of the Stone and Wall Painting Group symposia series dedicated to the history, techniques and conservation of British secular wall paintings, and celebrates the many ways we have decorated our day-to-day surroundings with wall paintings. The 20 selected papers explore over 500 years of secular wall paintings, right up to contemporary work, looking at why and how they were painted, and the best ways of caring for them to ensure that future generations can also find in 'all manner of murals' a source of wonder and of kinship to their past.

All Manner of Murals. The History, Techniques and Conservation of Secular Wall Paintings, edited by Robert Gowing and Robyn Pender. Published by Archetype Publications in association with Icon and English Heritage. ISBN 978-1-904982-11-1 Casebound, 240 pp. illustrated in colour. Price: £39.50

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Introduction

Designating the domestic – mural paintings and the heritage protection review *Roger Bowdler* (Head of Territory Designation, Heritage Protection, English Heritage)

Part 1 History, development and care of secular wall paintings

Elusive Sources for Renaissance wall paintings
(*Anthony Wells-Cole*)

Was there a Guise Palace in Edinburgh? (*Michael Bath*)

Secular wall paintings in the Welsh Marches
(*Kathryn Davies*)

Pattern and colour in late 16th- and 17th-century secular wall and panel paintings in Suffolk: an overview
(*Andrea Kirkham*)

The art of the housepainter: vernacular mural decoration c.1650–1841 (*James Ayres*)

Painted Kings and painted Gods (Continental copy or English Inspiration? The painted Baroque interior)
(*Giles Worsley*)

'The negligence of men' - Restoration techniques and the altered appearance of Baroque wall paintings
(*Jane Davies*)

Mural paintings within the Historic Royal Palaces: our approach to their continuous care
(*Kate Frame / Sophie Julien-Lees*)

Changing rooms: changes in use and their impact on wall painting conservation (*Tom Organ*)

Image and identity in mural painting in British public buildings, 1840-1940 (*Clare Willson*)

Contemporary mural painting – trends and traditions
(*Ernestine McKay*)

Part 2: Conservation and Research Case Studies

The Catherine Room, Windsor Castle (*Ann Ballantyne*)

16th-century wall paintings at the Forge, Much Hadham, Hertfordshire (*Jane Rutherfoord*)

The public and private face of English Baroque wall painting: Milgate House and Chelsea Hospital
(*Caroline Babington / Richard Pelter*)

Bedfordshire's Baroque masterpiece: The Thomas Archer Pavilion at Wrest Park (*Stephen Paine / Sophie Stewart*)

The rediscovery of the lost ceiling decorations in the Saloon at Burlington House
(*Pauline Plummer / Peter Schmitt*)

The treatment of the Entrance Hall at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge: changing approaches to the conservation of 19th-century polychromy (*Tobit Curteis*)

Tracking historic attitudes towards wall painting conservation: Lord Leighton's frescoes at the V&A
(Robert Gowing)

Rex Whistler: a comparative study of three decorative schemes (Marguerite O'Leary)

More myth than mural: a study of the Hans Feibusch murals at South Civic Centre, Newport, South Wales
(Kate Hunter / Elizabeth Holford)

Special Icon Offer

Archetype Publications Ltd is offering an introductory discount to all Icon members, as well as all delegates of the symposia. For all orders placed before the end of May 2007, members can purchase this publication for £30 (rrp £39.50) plus postage by contacting Archetype Publications directly at:

info@archetype.co.uk; tel number 0207 380 0800;
fax 0207 380 0500

On your order, please put your Icon membership number, or identify which of the symposia you attended.

THE BEER MEETING

A big THANK YOU to Sophie for keeping things going while I've been away but now I'm back I thought some bevies at the Retro Bar (2 George Court, The Strand, WC2N 6HH, 020 7321 2811) on Tuesday 27 March would be a very good idea. It's a little different to what we've been used to in the past, as the write up says the clientele includes 'the more alternative contingent of WC2' but contrary to its name it is still more of a pub than a bar so please don't be scared off. To find it, walking up The Strand from Charing Cross, turn right at Superdrug into George Court. I will be there from 5.30 and please feel free to email me on imogen.herford@bl.uk if you have any questions.

Imogen

Royal College of Art Victoria and Albert Museum Conservation

RCA/V&A Conservation
MA & Research Student Symposium

Tuesday 8 May 2007
1.30 – 5.30
Lecture Theatre 1
Royal College of Art
Kensington Gore
London, SW7 2EU

RCA/V&A Conservation invites you to attend our MA and Research Student Symposium. Students will give presentations on a diverse range of issues arising from traditional and contemporary conservation practice, technique, and theory. A programme of talks will be produced nearer the time. If you would like more information or would like to attend, please RSVP to:

joanna.baden@rca.ac.uk
Tel: +44 (0)20 7590 4532
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www.rca.ac.uk



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- Reminders for events, application deadlines or other information

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Email Charlotte Cowin on
membership@icon.org.uk

reviews

TALKS

VELAZQUEZ'S PAINTING TECHNIQUES

Icon office London December 8 2006

In 2000 I encountered Las Meniñas in the flesh for the first time at the Prado. I was captivated by this dramatic microcosm of a long lost courtly world. As an art foundation student it was an introduction to the work of an artist I have revisited often. By 2006 I was a Fine Art graduate and had a year's experience in book and paper conservation, but have become more and more interested in painting conservation. So when the chance came to visit the Velazquez exhibition at the National Gallery, and attend a talk given by Larry Keith, one of the Gallery's senior restorers, it wasn't something I was likely to miss.

On a blustery dark December evening it was very comforting to enter the inviting atmosphere of the conservation painting group and be greeted by a large friendly crowd of well informed people, eager to get a glimpse of the underworld of Velazquez's paintings.

The speaker Larry Keith, a tall, quiet, well-spoken American, gave a very erudite and elegant talk accompanied by PowerPoint display which took us to the very heart of the fibres and pigments of the paintings.

He calmly and clearly contextualised the nature of Velazquez's personal working methods alongside the requirements of the

commercial workshop. Paintings on loan from the Apsley House collection at Hyde Park Corner were compared alongside paintings from other collections to decide the part each painting played in the process of creating art for a very particular market place.

Larry convincingly demonstrated that the version of Innocent X in the Doria Pamphili may have been based on the Apsley House version. The overlay of one head upon the other, made possible through digital photography, showed compellingly that the two were so closely similar as to have been taken from the same design – perhaps one from the other, or even from a (lost) cartoon. The greater freedom in the brushwork of the Apsley House version speaks for its having been the earlier version.

As each slide went by, it became clear that extensive fading had occurred over the centuries and had affected the 21st century viewer's enjoyment of the true original colours. How splendid to have been able to see the drapery of the Toilet of Venus (1647-51) in all its luscious refinement as the technical wizards of the imaging department at the National Gallery tried to show with the magic of Photoshop! But alas light and time can be cruel to paintings where lakes have been heavily used. Use of materials such as mastic varnish, walnut oil and fir balsam each brought their own characters to bear on the surface of the paintings.

Larry also demonstrated how smaller busts

of paintings of Pope Innocent X and Philip IV could have been used to make up full length portraits to meet the demands of Philip's court and other affluent buyers who wanted to buy into the art world to show off their own prowess as much as their wealth. It was very interesting to hear the story of how the Apsley house paintings arrived there with the Duke of Wellington on his way back from the Napoleonic Wars.

Coupled with the considerable effort by the organiser, Clare Finn, to make sure everyone was treated to enough wine, mince pies and stollen to make them feel at home this was a very well done, worthwhile event which I was glad to attend and look forward to more of the same in the future.

Sian Jones

CHANTRY LIBRARY TALK

Dundee December 2006

In the wake of the Icon Annual General Meeting, held at the Royal Society in Edinburgh, and the 9th Annual Harold Plenderleith Memorial Lecture, a meeting was held at the Book & Paper Conservation Studio in Dundee. On 1 December 2006, James Andrews, the first full-time librarian of the Chantry Library, spoke to an audience of book and paper conservators about the Library, its services and his role.

Most of us were already familiar with the Chantry Library not only because we are former members of the Institute of Paper Conservation but also from reading the library page in Icon News and taking note of those leaflets which fall out of the Conservator and the Paper Conservator. It wasn't until listening to James' presentation, however, that I was made fully aware of how the service which the Library offers could be of great use to conservators from all disciplines.

James mapped out the history of the Library, which started as the reference library of the Institute of Paper Conservation under the supervision of the late Judith Chantry, in whose name the Library continues today, and went on to outline the contents of the Library's collection and the current services that are offered to Icon members. The Library's small but significant collection of books, journals and conference papers is available for use by both Icon members and interested members of the public. The strengths of the collection are in conservation science, collections care, materials and techniques and, of course, paper conservation. The Library holds around 150 journals from all over the world, and includes conference papers from AIC, ICOM, IIC, IPC, NPO and UKIC. We were pleased to discover that, subject to copyright guidelines, all Icon members are



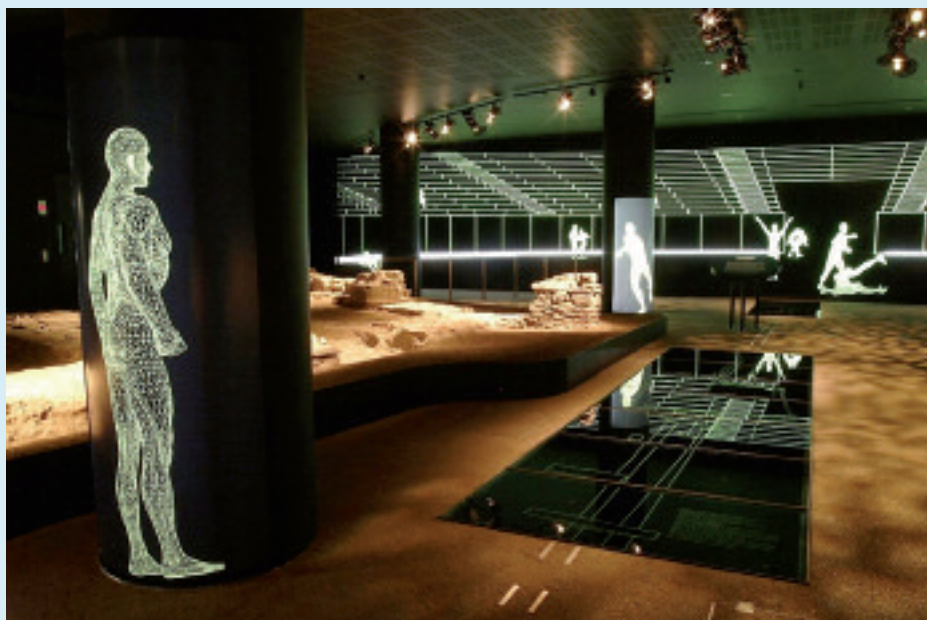
entitled to free photocopying from the Chantry Library. The website, <http://www.lib.ox.ac.uk/ipc-chantry/index.htm>, is updated regularly with a list of new titles, which have been added to the collection and, unlike the Icon website, there is no need to log into the website. Online browsing of the Library's entire book collection by subject is possible from the comfort of your studio through the Chantry Library website, or through OLIS, the Oxford Libraries Information System, for which you will need to know the title, author or ISBN number for the title being searched for.

James was keen to communicate potential future directions for the Library's development, and sought feedback from the audience regarding new services that would be most beneficial to us as conservation practitioners. With a full-time librarian, the Chantry Library is looking to develop its holdings and services for the benefit of the wider conservation community. James views the Library as facilitating life-long learning and is, therefore, focused on the website for the future of the Library. Plans are underway to develop a FAQ blog page, bibliographies covering a variety of conservation disciplines, web resources pages – similar to those found on Conservation OnLine – and online skills tutorials in a range of areas from wikis, blogs and metasearch engines to publishing in conservation peer review journals.

After listening to the presentation it was very difficult to come up with suggestions for library services which James had not already identified. We were all very impressed to learn that at the time of the presentation James had only been in the position for two months, yet he clearly displayed an understanding of the needs of Icon members and a familiarity with many of the internet resources of relevance to the field. As internet technology develops it is reassuring to have someone as well-qualified as James to direct conservators in the most efficient ways to identify, access and use online information resources. With the increasing focus in the conservation profession on continuing professional development and the need for graduates to work towards accredited status, the support which the Chantry Library aims to offer Icon members is yet further evidence of the great success of convergence.

Erica Kotze

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courtesy of Museum of London

View of amphitheatre showing in-situ remains to left and treated wooden drains installed below floor level running down centre. Green lit graphics have been used to illustrate the original use of the amphitheatre.

VISIT

HIDDEN LONDON

2 December 2006

This year's Archaeology Group meeting was a well attended tour of the hidden sites of Roman London. The tour consisted of visits to three sites of Roman remains in London, which have survived, below the modern buildings, in-situ.

It started off with a visit to Billingsgate bath house on Lower Thames Street. Jenny Hall, a Roman curator from the Museum of London, explained the history of the site including the conservation work. This was a particularly interesting site as it is preserved in the basement of a building, making providing access difficult. This issue led to a discussion on how different proposed schemes, such as walk-way development, might impact on the condition of the remains.

Our next stop was the Roman amphitheatre a section of which can be seen inside the Guildhall Art Gallery. Helen Ganiaris and Jill Barnard from the Archaeological Conservation Department at the Museum of London explained how the building had been constructed around the remains preserving them in-situ, an exceptional feat of engineering with the remains being left suspended between the floors of the building. As well as being able to see the stone remains, parts of the wooden drainage system have been treated and replaced in position. Helen and Jill gave a short talk on this fascinating project including the preparation of the timbers in galleries at the Museum of London.

The final stop on the tour was the fort gate which is preserved beneath a modern car park near the Museum of London. This site is not usually accessible, although the Museum of London does give scheduled tours. Once again Jenny Hall gave a talk on the history of the site and some of the

problems of maintaining the remains. Although the salt efflorescence was a problem familiar to many of us, the site had also been affected by tar dripping onto the remains after road resurfacing work above, a less common issue! Jenny pointed out that maintenance of in-situ remains depends greatly on communication among all affected parties including those responsible for the surrounding streets and buildings.

After this interesting and thought provoking tour the group retired to the Museum of London for discussion and mince pies, an enjoyable end to the day.

Our thanks to those who organised the meeting and to the Museum of London for the talks and party venue.

Sarah Morton and Katie Etre

Conservation students Institute of
Archaeology UCL

COURSES

HERITAGE MALTA

Conservation Practice and Education

With over thirty museums and sites to manage, the staff members of Heritage Malta's Conservation Division have no easy task to fulfill.

Established in 2002, Heritage Malta is the national cultural heritage agency responsible for all national museums and archaeological sites on the Maltese Islands. Since it absorbed the Malta Centre for Restoration in March 2005, Heritage Malta is focusing, more than ever before, on building a good team of conservation staff to preserve its priceless collections and sites.

The wealth of its cultural heritage is disproportionate to the Maltese Islands' size and population. With an emphasis on its prehistoric and Baroque periods, its

collections are amongst the richest one can imagine in the Mediterranean. The numerous archaeological World Heritage Sites and their upkeep are also entrusted to our agency.

Heritage Malta has a vast and varied number of artefacts in its custody, ranging from drawings, prints, archaeological objects, canvas paintings, costumes, historic wall painted buildings, natural history collections, as well as numerous palaces, historic buildings and fortifications. This means that it is both the container and as well as the contained that need attention.

The Conservation Division of Heritage Malta currently employs forty conservation staff members in its different departments to manage and preserve its collections and sites and to work on its education programmes through its teaching arm, the Institute of Conservation and Management of Cultural Heritage (ICMCH). The departments cover the conservation of paper, textiles, paintings, polychrome sculpture, wood, glass, stone, metals and ceramics. Apart from the hands-on conservation studios, the conservation division also includes the scientific diagnostic laboratories, the documentation and preventive conservation sections as well as the projects' office. Together they are complementary and work alongside each other on most projects.

The Conservation Division is situated in spacious premises across the Grand Harbour in Kalkara away from the Valletta Head Offices. Originally the largest royal navy hospital built in the Mediterranean during the British period (19th century), the large surgical block and main hospital building, now house the laboratories, studios and workshops of Heritage Malta. From a hospital for patients, the buildings are now wards for the care and treatment of precious objects. With its large recovery halls and doorways, and numerous windows offering natural light, the site lends itself particularly well to a conservation working



The paintings conservation studio

environment.

Heritage Malta is also involved in a number of exchange programmes with institutions and museums abroad. One such exchange is that with the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, UK. Only very recently the Book and Paper Department together with the textile conservators and ship model makers and restorers of Heritage Malta had a workshop, delivered by Paul Cook, paper conservator from Greenwich. The workshop involved methods for storage and display of various maritime paper items such as plans and charts, as well as composite objects such as models of ships.

Apart from working on Heritage Malta's own collections, the Conservation Division acts as a consulting agency on both public and private projects. It offers scientific analysis and documentation services to external individuals and entities. Furthermore, through the ICMCH, it assumes the role of educator in the degree courses it offers at vocational, graduate and post-graduate level, and works at promoting and creating awareness of the conservation of Malta's cultural heritage.

The Institute of Conservation and Management of Cultural Heritage (ICMCH)

Heritage Malta's ICMCH works at promoting and co-ordinating the pursuit of interdisciplinary training at professional, technical and vocational levels in aspects of conservation-restoration and management of cultural heritage. The institute makes use

of the extensive facilities of Heritage Malta's Conservation Division, providing courses including those leading to degrees conferred by the University of Malta and certificates awarded by the Malta College of Arts Science and Technology. With all its courses internationally recognized, the ICMCH has also recently been accepted as a member of ENCoRE (European Network for Conservation-Restoration Education) and benefits from collaboration, dialogue and exchange of information between European partners. The languages of instruction for the vocational courses are in Maltese and English while the graduate courses are conducted in English.

At **vocational** level the courses offered are on masonry heritage skills. For entry into this course one must have completed compulsory education in Malta or must have the international equivalent of secondary education.

The **undergraduate** bachelors course in conservation, B.Cons.(Honours), is a four-year degree course and has an equal share of theory and practical components which when combined are equivalent to 60 European Credits Transfer System (ECTS) credits per year. The four areas of study on offer are the following:

- Paintings and Polychrome Sculpture
- Ceramics, Glass, Metals and Stone
- Textiles
- Books and Paper

During the four years of conservation-restoration education at the ICMCH the

Frank Chetcuti, stone conservator, discussing with students treatments for Roman remains



Conservation Division of Heritage Malta. The building on the far left is the conservation studio and on the second left is the administration block, science laboratory and library.



student is given the opportunity to carry out hands-on work on artefacts and/or sites of local and international importance. Students are encouraged to go on internship abroad at least once during their four-year course. The ECTS further facilitates this exchange opportunity.

The B.Cons(Hons) course is open to applicants in the possession of the general requirements for admission into courses on offer at the University of Malta (www.um.edu.mt). Students must also possess a pass at Intermediate Level in chemistry at grade C or better. Foreign students can apply through the International Office of the University by presenting qualifications equivalent to those referred to here. In addition, all applicants must sit an entrance examination organized by the Institute which assesses both academic skills as well as manual dexterity.

At **postgraduate** level, the ICMCH offers two courses: a Masters in Applied Conservation Studies (M.Cons) and a Masters in Cultural Heritage Management.

The two-year full-time M.Cons degree specifically addresses students who already have a sound background in conservation. The first year of the two-year course is taught and is intended to give conservators an in-depth knowledge of the specific materials they are dealing with. The second year focuses on what the research students are carrying out for their thesis. Candidates can choose any area of study which is offered on the Bachelors course. Wood conservation is also on offer for the Master's degree. The course is open to applicants in the possession of a first degree in conservation and restoration, with at least a second class grade. Candidates normally have to attend an interview prior to selection.

The Masters in Cultural Heritage Management is intended to contribute to the formation of management professionals who are capable of managing museums and sites, organizing cultural events, attracting cultural heritage funding and responding to the needs of the cultural tourism sector. This course is two years part-time and a first degree in a related subject is an entry requirement.

Additional course information including admission requirements and procedures, course regulations, course overviews and course fees, is available by contacting courses@heritagemalta.org

Theresa Zammit Lupi

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MONTEFIASCONE

Summer 2006

In Northern Lazio, about two hours north of Rome by train, you'll find the breathtaking medieval hill-top town of Montefiascone. Here during four weeks each summer the town comes alive with the local wine festival. It also becomes a renowned centre for Book Conservation which since 1988, thanks to Cheryl Porter, is a stimulating and fascinating international environment of learning.

The Montefiascone Project has evolved over the past eighteen years but the Seminary Library, that houses the locally and nationally important collection of Cardinal Barbarigo, has remained at its heart. The Southern European style collection is sometimes known as a 'White Library' because of the large number of volumes bound in

parchment and vellum. The collection combines texts from all over Europe and is a rare example of an intact seminary library.

Last year I was fortunate enough to be awarded the Nicholas Hadgraft Scholarship 2006 sponsored by Conservation By Design. Stuart Welch established the scholarship in 2005 to commemorate his great friend the conservator Nicholas Hadgraft. Some years ago I was lucky enough to have an opportunity to meet Nicholas, although I had no knowledge at that time of his work in Montefiascone. By all accounts he had a great passion for books and bookbinding, and enjoyed sharing his knowledge and enthusiasm through teaching courses and supporting the work of the Montefiascone Project. The award of £1000, given by Conservation By Design, assists with the cost of attending as many courses as the recipient feels would be useful. Anyone can apply for the scholarship, from student to experienced conservator, as it is designed to encourage and support a passion for bookbinding and conservation at all levels.

I decided to attend two courses; Archival and Account Bookbinding led by Enrico Flaiani, (Head of Conservation at The Vatican Secret Archives) and The Syriac Binding, taught by Caroline Checkley-Scott (Senior Conservator at the Wellcome Trust Library) and John Mumford (Head of Book Conservation at the British Library) with accompanying lectures from the inimitable Dr Nigel Allen (former Head Curator of Oriental Collections at the Wellcome Trust, now retired).

The courses were held in the basement of the old town's public library and art gallery; a superb and atmospheric environment to work in during the height of an Italian summer!

Archival and Account Bookbinding

The first thing Enrico taught us was the true meaning of the name 'Vatican Secret Archives'. It is derived from the Latin Archivum Secretum Apostolicum Vaticanum, where Secretum simply means 'private'. In reality it translates as 'The Private Archives of the Pope'. According to Enrico there is no conspiracy or clandestine meaning. On hearing this explanation an audible sigh of disappointment was heard from all fifteen participants of the course!

The course was designed to show two modified designs of an Archival Account Ledger (Ligatore Archivio) traditionally used at the Vatican. Students were able to construct one or two of these ledgers. Traditionally produced by the Cartollio (the paper sellers or makers) and not by the binders, they are known as stationary bindings. It is a non-adhesive structure with the sections sewn onto three split leather straps (approx. 12mm wide). This flexible



Account and archive ledger made by Rachel Lloyd



Account and archive ledger made by Rachel Lloyd

The Syriac Binding group



sewing is independent of the cover. The cover of the first book was made of vellum with three dark leather straps, which are held onto the cover with decorative alum-tawed lacing. The second book was bound in dark leather with three alum-tawed straps. The covers were attached to the text block, through the sewing supports, with tackets of twisted parchment.

There was a great deal packed into the week and, although time and space were at a premium, invaluable skills and understanding of the mechanisms of this type of structure were learnt. This enabled me to make another book when I returned home. During the course we were shown slides of other collections held at the Vatican and we were able to visit the Seminary Library, in Montefiascone, to view similar ledgers there.

The Syriac Binding

My second course was spectacular. Alongside the practical work, we were given a sociological, historical and geographical background to where and how these types of books were traditionally produced. Through lectures given by Dr. Nigel Allen we learnt that in the present day the ancient area of Edessa, where the Syriac language was spoken from c.7th Century BC, would have encompassed Southern Turkey, Iraq and Northern Syria. Syriac was considered an important learned language.

The text-block is sewn with an unsupported link stitch and then independently sewn onto quarter-sawn wooden boards. The linen spine lining extends from the head and tail to form the core for a primary endband which is decorated with a woven chevron pattern. The teaching given by Caroline and John was superb and the whole class ended the week with a complete Syriac Binding. We also had a greater understanding of the importance of this structure and its influences. Towards the end of the week we had the opportunity to evaluate as a group what we had learnt during the course. Through discussion with John and Caroline we were able to assess the practical application of these skills to our work as conservators back home.

I am grateful to Stuart Welch and all at Conservation By Design for the award, as I couldn't have got there without them! Thanks also to my employers, Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Archives Service. The Montefiascone Project was great fun and a wonderful thing to be part of, thanks to Cheryl Porter whose astounding work continues to benefit all.

Rachel Lloyd

For further information on the Montefiascone Project:
www.montefiasconeproject.com
www.conservation-by-design.com

SHARING CONSERVATION DECISIONS or Who's afraid of Cesare Brandi? ICCROM Rome

16 October–10 November 2006

Aren't we all? After all he is the author of a book called the Theory of Restoration¹. The word 'theory' strikes terror in the heart, and we British conservators are rather contemptuous of the term 'restoration'. And anyone who has ventured to read his book will have found its style rather impenetrable. Well, you might be heartened to know that even the Italians find him heavy going. But this was the first attempt to define a methodology for conservation and although his ideas are being re-evaluated they provided the basis of the 1964 Charter of Venice and had a dramatic effect on twentieth century conservation. To attempt to side-step Brandi, especially when attending a month long course, in Italy, entitled Sharing Conservation Decisions, would be as unthinkable as discussing the history of conservation in the UK and omitting Ruskin. Attending this ICCROM course last autumn provided me with an opportunity to face my fears and embrace a world view of modern conservation theory. ICCROM – The International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property – is 'that place in Rome'.² The centre was established in 1956 with the aim of improving the quality of, and to raise awareness of the importance of, conservation by promoting research, co-operation, exchange of information and training. I took part in the third run out of this highly acclaimed course devised and directed by Rosalia Varoli-Piazza. It is the only course which invites conservators to take a holistic view of the management of cultural heritage and is consequently heavily oversubscribed. The course's emphasis is on understanding the values which direct conservation in the context of the dramatic developments in the profession during the last twenty years. These changes are a response to the vast expansion of what is now considered to be 'cultural heritage' and a tolerance of the wide and diverse range of values which direct its management. The traditional conservation template, developed since the eighteenth-century by connoisseurs for western fine art collections in museum environments, has been shown to be inadequate, especially for the cultural heritage of indigenous peoples and First Nations and living heritage and intangible heritage. Art historical authority and decisions led by aesthetic values of objects are now being challenged. At the same time, the potential of the object 'to be read' and the conservator's leading role in this process to interpret narrative and negotiate its future – these are regarded as one of the most exciting developments for art history

and value assessments.³

While such ideas may now be commonplace observations in daily discussions in important institutes, conferences and publications, they and the new confidence they imply have yet to percolate into real-life practice.⁴ Conservators at the Getty and ICCROM are well aware of the realities of the workplace:

*'In many museums, the conservators report directly to the curators so they have difficulty in not following curators' instructions. In some European countries, the situation is more difficult because much of the conservation of museum objects is done by freelance conservators who, in an ethical disagreement, possibly face alienating themselves from future work at that institution.'*⁵

That this hierarchy is in place and the fact that modern conservation theory has made little impact in our country was confirmed by a survey carried out by UKIC in 2004 to assess how conservators were regarded by senior heritage professionals⁶: conservators are generally regarded as restrictive over-cautious technicians. A review of salaries within the museum sector compared salaries of conservators to university technicians while those of curators were compared to university lecturers.⁷ It concluded that conservators were fairly remunerated, curators were underpaid. As if to confirm this, before going to Rome I was asked what was the point of me, a conservator, attending a course about decision-making, because 'conservators do not make decisions'.

So with all this in mind in mid-October I ventured down the maze of cobbled backstreets in Trastevere to the famous address 13 Via di San Michele where I and the seventeen other course participants, all from different countries, were warmly gathered into the ICCROM fold. During the next four weeks we were exposed to a rich and meticulously organised programme of discussions, lectures, systems analysis and site visits. Tuition was provided by a stream of over thirty of the world's most eminent conservation professionals who invited us to assess, question and analyse every aspect of cultural heritage. We were supplied with copious notes, handouts, bibliographies, exercises, role playing and teaching aids. I felt as a young misunderstood wizard must feel turning up for his first term at Hogwarts – I had found my professional home.

And we all spoke the same language! Well, actually, we spoke about twenty languages but as a group we developed our own version of global English. Those fluent in several languages were well aware of the British conservators' hesitancy to engage with theory. They realised that in English

'theory' means 'something philosophical and very scary', in other languages it simply means 'methodology' – the established framework within which we carry out our work. How many training courses in the UK do not teach methodology because they are too busy getting on with doing conservation? And as for our UK reservations about 'restoration', everyone on the course was very happy to describe themselves as a 'conservator-restorer' because they consider what they do as a two fold process.⁸ They first stabilised the object, and then made a subjective decision about treating it so that it can function – depending on the context of its intended use. It is perhaps worth noting here that it was Ruskin who made that often quoted retort, 'Do not let us talk then of Restoration. The thing is a Lie from beginning to end!' which continues to fuel tensions in the conservation/restoration debate.⁹ Perhaps I have to ask myself am I scared of Ruskin? – am I lying in not openly proclaiming that I carry out restoration? However as 'conservation' may now be understood as having a much broader meaning as 'another way of understanding cultural heritage' perhaps we should not get too concerned with semantics.

As for 'sharing' – the crucial word in the title of the course – we were also asked to consider the concept. Do the much vaunted benefits of multidisciplinary collaboration indicate a meaningful sharing of ideas and a breaking down of disciplinary boundaries, or is it merely a tokenistic term used to mask the simple exchange of data? 'Although everyone sees the advantages of interdisciplinary contact, it is rarely achieved in practice.'¹⁰

The course was divided into five units: decision-making processes, decisions in context, objects as a source of information, decision-making in emergency situations, and implementing decisions and tools for future use. We considered these topics with reference to a wide range of sites, buildings and objects, especially examples around us in Rome. The long and complex histories of the Coliseum, the Pantheon and the classical sculpture of Laocoon, Richard Meier's new museum which houses the Ara Pacis: all illustrated a wide range of decision-making issues and provoked a lot of discussion. But the course focussed on five key case-studies outside Rome: the management of the site at Herculaneum, the conservation of an eighteenth-century Christmas Crib in the Museum of San Marino, Naples, the impact of the 1966 floods in Florence, the decisions made at the Basilica of St Francis of Assisi after the earthquake in 1997, and issues surrounding the creation of a new anthropological museum Le Musée du Quai Branly in Paris which offered a new perspective on non-

Western cultures. These projects, their history, conservation and role and influence of the professional participants were scrutinised from every angle and repeatedly reassessed. We considered the living tradition of the nativity scenes wandering past the workshops in the narrow streets of Naples, walked under lava flows into the buried rooms of Herculaneum which once had sea views, and climbed over the restored vaults at Assisi. We met the staff still treating the backlog of books damaged in the Florence floods. Our main question during all our visits was why? and for whom? were these objects and places being conserved rather than how?.

But we began the course by looking at the psychology of decisions and exploring how the process can be manipulated by the way we choose to present data – highlighting from the start the subjectivity of the whole decision-making process. Over thirty conservators and other experts such as – Marian Kaminitz, Jo King, Jukka Jokilehto, Gamini Wijesuriya, Stephan Michalski, Dinah Eastop, Simon Warrack, Robert Gowing and Gael de Guchen, to name but a few – guided us on different journeys through the history of conservation, assessment of values and statements of significance, and planning systems. Starting with the 500 BC conservation of a 1000 BC temple, Marie Berducou of the University of Paris provided a historic perspective, which continued through into the Renaissance, Winckelmann and 'the father of art history' to the stalemate of the nineteenth-century debate to conserve or restore personified in the figures of Ruskin and Viollet le Duc. A pertinent essay written by Camillo Boito as a dialogue between the two men, (alas not translated into English and therefore ignored in the UK) attempted to resolve the debate by suggesting a compromise position that there is no right or wrong solution and that we must accept an element of doubt in conservation practice.¹¹ We considered Alois Riegl's ideas about the relativity of values, the fact that these change with time and from one social group to another and the importance of intangible factors. These theories informed the 1931 *Athens Charter*. The twentieth century saw the development of a scientific approach to conservation, away from workshop training, and a greater respect for original fabric and signs of age, insisting on the discernable restoration of an object. This resulted in the *Venice Charter* which can also be seen as a response to excesses of post-war restoration. Brandi who founded the Istituto de Restauro in Rome, which was the first conservation establishment to incorporate science, social science and practical studios was extremely influential in the drafting of the Charter. He stated that 'we restore only the matter of the work of art' the value of an object is determined by

people and this can constantly change. This idea of relativity of values underpins all conservation decisions and poses the question: what is important: the object or the values it represents?

The issue of values is the crux of the decision-making process – for, after all, we conserve buildings or objects (heaps of atoms) because of the values placed upon them by different people, different societies, different ages. A tea-cup which Napoleon (allegedly) drank from is more highly valued than the rest of the cups in the set – and so it might be taken out of the cycle of manufacture, use and destruction and placed in a museum. But essentially there is no difference in the surviving tea-cups except the associational value we place upon one of them. And should we deny people the thrill of drinking from Napoleon's tea-cup?

But today respect for global diversity demands a new way of thinking about the conservation of cultural heritage and intangible values. Conservation projects are now seen as cultural projects – 'not just a matter of glueing pots together'. If we are to establish a very basic methodology for decision-making we must first examine social and cultural contexts before we consider the cultural and physical biography of an object. We must not impose Western traditions, 'the weight of Europe', on other cultures.

As a group we then experimented with various systems developed by industry and the military for problem analysis. It was refreshing to step outside the traditional, academic and institutional mindsets. The COM (Metaplan) System, a moderation technique developed in Germany and now used by large businesses for commercial decision management, demonstrated that identification of the problem usually identified a solution. It also ensured that all participants were involved in the decision making process. We used actual data from the Herculaneum project for 'prospective planning' of the project. We created scenarios of what we would like to happen and what scenarios we would want to avoid, factoring in the role of the key actors and their relative influence and dependence upon each other. How dependent is the project on the grant of a millionaire sponsor? How influential is the project manager? Do the local businesses gain any benefits from the site?

Early in the course we held a mini-conference where the students and lecturers presented their own problematic case-studies. This gave us an opportunity to understand each other's professional and cultural background.

But during this time we students became increasingly uneasy. We all enjoyed the challenges of the course but we knew that



Rome - venue for the ICCROM course

this idyllic period would come to an end and we would return home to the reality of life as a conservator. We voiced our discontent: this was a wonderful experience but it was cruel to taunt us with this vision. But as the course proceeded we became aware that its purpose was to expose us to an ideal – of what was possible in the world of shared decision making. ICCROM did not intend to supply an instruction manual but rather to provide us with a useable tool-kit of ideas, examples and systems we could use and adapt to suit our own needs and situations, with the aim of making the ideal to which we had been exposed into a reality. We were told that we would be contacted after the course to see how it had influenced us.

The course made me aware that unless the modern conservation theory is understood and implemented by all conservators the discipline cannot develop. We must embrace the subjectivity of all conservation decisions. The three myths of late twentieth-century conservation: the concept of 'minimal intervention' – (minimal intervention to achieve what exactly), the idea of 'equality of treatment for all objects' – (is it unreasonable to spend more resources on the Gainsborough than on an art school daub); and the lie of 'irreversibility' – (please name a treatment which is truly reversible) – have been exposed as indefensible conceits.

However these ideas represented the core values taught in the 1970s and 80s which constructed the professional identity of conservators, effectively relegating them to the role of objective white-coated technician and absolving them from making any subjective decision. And are these ideas still taught in conservation schools where the syllabus is so full of technical aspects of conservation as to allow no room for any consideration of methodology or to notice this wind of change?

The question Velson Horie posed in the last issue of *Icon News* 'Can conservators read (or write)?' is a pertinent one. But I might point out that 'relevant papers in conservation literature' are so often written in such convoluted post-modernese that not only are conservators put off reading them but they are also intimidated from attempting to write anything.

I would whole-heartedly recommend the Sharing Conservation Decisions course to all Icon members, but as it can only offer at best one place every two years to a UK conservator it is hardly going to remedy the chronic lack of training in conservation methodology which has been identified.

If anything I have said has struck a chord and you feel that conservation in the UK would benefit from a discussion of the methodology of conservation and you would like to help plan or attend such a course, get in touch with me through the Icon office. I am currently in discussion with West Dean College about the possibility of starting a course 'Sharing Conservation Decisions – UK' as part of their 2008 Professional Conservator in Practice Programme.

So what I am really asking in my opening question – Who's afraid of Cesare Brandi? – is why are conservators so afraid of talking about why and for whom we are conserving cultural heritage? Unless we abandon outmoded tenets and engage with the issue of relative values – and question existing hierarchies, conservation will not develop as a professional discipline and, more importantly, we will not have a significant position in safeguarding our cultural heritage. After all we are the professionals best placed to know 'that once it's gone it's gone'.

Helen Hughes

English Heritage

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* Available in the Chantry Library

WORKSHOP

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS:

Conservation and Lakota Cultural Traditions
Rosebud Sioux Reservation USA August 2006

Five members of the Conservation Department from the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI), Washington DC, were invited by the Sinte Gleska University (SGU), Rosebud, South Dakota, to participate in a workshop on the traditional Lakota technique for brain-tanning a buffalo hide. The workshop was taught by Steve Tamayo and the NMAI participants stayed with him in his family home. The workshop included traditional prayers, ceremonies and meals, all pertaining to the buffalo.

Although the pretext of the visit to the Rosebud Sioux Reservation was to learn the technique of brain-tanning buffalo hide, the overall experience had a far broader impact on us as we attempt to show here

Steve Tamayo's Internship at NMAI

Early in 2005, personnel from the NMAI visited the Reservation to promote the internship program at the museum.¹ Steve Tamayo, a Sicangu Lakota Indian from the Plains of South Dakota, and a Traditional Arts tutor at SGU, was selected to participate in a ten-week internship that autumn. Due to Steve's interest and experience in traditional arts and craft technology, his internship placement was with the Conservation Department.

During his tenure, Steve's expressed desire was to show the department, through example: 'the four values of the Lakota; *woohitika* (courage), *woksape* (wisdom), *wowacintanka* (patience), and *wacantognaka* (generosity). ... Woohitika was seen as I left my secure environment and my most cherished asset, my family. There was a need inside me to go and gather as much information as possible to bring back to the people of my reservation. Woksape is valued more than any monetary gain. Caring for others and living a humble life is probably the wisest power of all. Wowacintanka is also a sign of respect which we share with each other. Everything on earth must be on the same level for us to live in harmony. Wacantognaka is a trait learned early in life. We are to take care of the old, the young, and those in need. Our status is measured by how much we give rather than what we possess. ... Living by these values have allowed the Lakota people to survive on the imposed reservation lands. Yet they still exist today as



Sinte Gleska University Buffalo Herd

Lakotas and are still practising the beliefs passed down by their forefathers'.²

Steve, a regalia maker, learned aspects of his trade from an elderly *Umohan* (Omaha) Indian, Howard Wolf. '[He] was a very calm, warm-hearted gentleman who had the patience to show me how to construct regalia used in contemporary dance styles for today's powwows. Howard would also explain the significance of each item. I am able to utilize this knowledge, as I gladly pass this knowledge to my pupils. This will hopefully create an impact on future generations'.² Whilst at the NMAI Steve gave a series of small workshops for members of the conservation department, teaching beading and moccasins construction; techniques he learned from Howard Wolf.

In the conservation lab, Steve worked on the preparation of objects for *Identity by Design*, an NMAI exhibit of women's dress from North American Plains, Plateau and Great Basin tribes. As a regalia maker, his knowledge of materials, construction and design, and insight into traditional working methods, was invaluable to the conservation process. Steve's presence in the lab facilitated a closer working relationship with conservation staff, fellows and other interns, where discussions of technologies, treatments, and objects allowed for the exploration of working practices, and how these are dictated by the Lakota culture.

It is common practice for the NMAI to hold consultations with tribal representatives to discuss and determine the treatment, appearance and interpretation of objects from the collection.³ Through these interactions relationships are developed between the museum and the tribal representatives. The ten week period of Steve's internship prolonged the opportunities for dialogue, leading to a deeper, more meaningful engagement with many aspects of the Lakota culture, not usually possible during the more concentrated consultation process. Our relationship with Steve ultimately led to his generous invitation to the Rosebud

reservation to witness and take part in the cultural context for the conservation work that we undertake.

A Week in Rosebud – A Cultural Immersion

Our visit to Rosebud included being invited to stay with the Tamayo family and tan the buffalo hide in Steve's yard. In addition to our hands-on workshop at his home, we helped with family meals, giving hospitality to other guests in the Tamayo household, and we put up a canvas tipi to sleep in at night. The hide tanning work began as soon as we arrived by soaking the hide in a cattle watering trough.

Brain-tanning is a traditional process of tanning hide which has been handed down for generations amongst Plains Indians. The technique uses the animal's brain to preserve its hide. The tanning method involves multiple sessions of scraping to remove the flesh layer from the hide, interspersed with stretching to break the collagen fibres in the hide with axe handles, to encourage further removal of fats. Once the fats have been worked out of the hide and the skin stretched sufficiently, the brains are applied. The hide can then also be smoked, which aids the tanning as well as waterproofing the skin.

The greater understanding of brain tanning obtained through this workshop has allowed us to read, interpret and appreciate the physical characteristics of the hides we encounter at the museum. It is easier to identify the patterns or marks left on the hide as a result of processing, such as scrape marks and veins, as well as holes around the perimeter of the hide originally used to tension it on the frame. The reason for the sometimes uneven flexibility of hides also became apparent, due to the uneven distribution of natural fat throughout the hide; this unevenness is difficult to remedy completely and can result in a hide that is stiffer in some areas. The experience enriched our appreciation of the technology and the sheer physical hard work involved in processing a buffalo hide as well as the

consummate skill needed to get great results.

The hot summers of the South Dakota plains meant that our hide tanning work was restricted to the early morning, late afternoon and evening, leaving the middle of the day for other contextual cultural activities as described below.

Visiting SGU Bison Ranch

The buffalo is central to Lakota culture. Before the Lakota's removal onto reservations, their survival depended upon the buffalo, which was used to provide shelter, clothing, and everyday items. So the Bison Ranch is an essential component in the reinvigoration of Lakota culture and is emphasised in the SGU educational program.

Wildlife biologist Tom Fredericks, the Buffalo Project Coordinator at the Ranch, took us to see the herd and told us about the project. The ranch was founded with two buffalo donated by the Montana Education Consortium in 1994. Currently the herd totals 500 bison which live on 7500 acres of natural prairie grasslands on the Reservation. They live as wild an existence as possible; there is no breeding program or other intervention in their natural life cycles. So they are not reared like commercial herds; for example, they are not fed high protein food stuffs or supplements but, due to limited pasture land on the reservation, their diet is supplemented with additional food in the winter, such as alfalfa.

Every year, 50 buffalo are culled from the herd and slaughtered. Part of the meat from the slaughtered animals is used to provide food for the reservation community and the University, and the remainder is made into jerky and buffalo sticks that are sold at the University Bookstore. The hide that we tanned was from one of the buffalo from the Bison Ranch herd.

Lectures at SGU

Several visits were made to the Sinte Gleska University (SGU). The four-year degree granting University, established in 1992, was developed from a community college founded in 1968 to provide higher education opportunities for tribal members unable to leave the reservation. The university was named after Sinte Gleska (Spotted Tail), a respected Sicangu leader who recognised the importance of education for the survival of the Lakota people. SGU's hub is the Lakota Studies Department. It is a central tenet of the department that; 'Lakota values and beliefs have much to offer the world today and can provide a vision to follow into the future. ...Lakota values are not just merely talked about in the classroom, but are integrated



Steve Tamayo and the workshop participants in front of the hide after tanning.



The hair side of the hide was shampooed with Pantene Pro-V. (Standing: Marian Kaminitz, Left to right: Anna Hodson, Corey Smith, Kim Cullen Cobb)

into daily actions'.⁴ To underline the importance of Lakota culture, all academic programs within the university require enrolment in *Lakota Language* and *Lakota History and Culture*. The Department also takes a very active role in cultural protection, preservation, and restoration.

During our time in Rosebud, staff members from the Lakota Studies Department gave our hide tanning work cultural context with a series of informal lectures. Albert White Hat Sr. and Duane Hollow Horn Bear talked to us about their lives, their beliefs, their origin stories and view of Lakota history, and what led them to become teachers and cultural leaders; as well as the difficulties their students, Lakota and non-Lakota, have in coming to terms with their shared history. They also provided cultural information relating the central importance of the buffalo in sustaining the Lakota people, and their dependence upon the brain-tanning process to provide the items essential to their survival.

Rosebud Fair and Pow-wow

Our visit coincided with the annual Rosebud Fair and Pow-wow. The run-up to the Pow-wow brought a frenzy of activity to the Tamayo home; from the creation of a new Pow-wow dress for the youngest Tamayo, to the arrival of extended family members and friends who stayed with us. We assisted in sewing, ironing, and cutting out or designing the various components for the Pow-wow dress, and preparing the extra

food required to satisfy the increased demand at mealtimes. The context for many of the outfits that we have worked on for the Dresses Exhibit at the NMAI was brought to life by these preparatory activities, and the celebration of music and dance at the Pow-wow.

The week spent on the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota was a life-altering experience. Our understanding of Lakota culture was broadened and deepened by its juxtaposition to life on the reservation. The short but concentrated immersion in Lakota culture increased our understanding of traditional life-ways and customs and gave us a stronger background that we can bring to understanding the collections that we help to care for at the NMAI. We enjoyed the opportunities to meet and learn from the staff of the Lakota Studies Department. We are grateful to Albert White Hat Sr., Duane Hollow Horn Bear, Steve Tamayo and his family, and the staff at the Sinte Gleska University for their generosity in sharing their knowledge, stories and cultural practices.

Our understanding of the objects that we work with daily, as conservators working with ethnographic collections, is enriched by interaction with the intangible aspects of the cultures from which they originate; whether this be through the stories that surround them, or the beliefs, processes, materials, language, music, and dance that animate them, the enriched contexts bring the

objects to life.

As Steve has so succinctly stated 'Through this experience, the conservators came to an understanding of the Lakota people and their values. A mutual understanding amongst the Lakota, non-Natives, and Mother Earth was reached. This led to peace and wolakota (harmony) for all involved'.²

We would like to thank the Andrew W. Mellon foundation for financing this opportunity.

Anna Hodson and Kim Cullen Cobb
with contributions from
Steven A. Tamayo.

¹ For information on the NMAI internship program go to: <http://www.nmai.si.edu/>

² Written communication with Steven A. Tamayo, 2007.

³ For more information on the consultations see, Kaminitz et al., 2005. First Person Voice: Native Communities and Conservation Consultations at the National Museum of the American Indian. In: International Council of Museums Conservation Committee, 14th Triennial Meeting, The Hague, 12–16 September 2005, Preprints volume I. London: James and James; 96–102*, and Johnson, J, et al., 2005. Practical Aspects of Consulting with Communities, *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation* 44(3): 205–213.*

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Sinte Gleska University -
<http://www.sinte.edu/lis/>

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in practice

PILOTING A NEW VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME

by Helen Ganiaris, Senior Conservator Archaeology, and Liz Goodman, Collection Care Officer, at the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre

Early in 2006, the Museum of London was awarded a Your Heritage grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to pilot a one-year learning programme building on existing collection care programmes. The Museum of London has had an active volunteer programme at its archaeological archive (LAARC – the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre); since its launch in 2002, over 300 volunteers have taken part. This has been described in *Conservation News* (May 2003 and 2004) and was acknowledged with the first Conservation Award for Care of Collections in 2005. The enthusiasm of the participants of all ages and backgrounds for collection care work encouraged us to think about how more people, particularly from the local community and the non traditional museum audience, could get involved.

This meant turning around our thinking about volunteers and considering what collection care work could offer to them, rather than what they could do for us. Collection care work has the potential to offer many life and work skills and is a practical way to introduce heritage work to people who may have had no exposure to career opportunities in this field. Along with the work placements for secondary school students offered by the LAARC, this is the type of initiative that can make a significant contribution to broadening diversity in museums.

With the new programme, known as the AVLPL (Archive Volunteer Learning Programme), the primary aim is to assess the resources needed to run and maintain a volunteer programme where the needs of the volunteers are put first, with the work on the collections secondary. The key to this was to have dedicated staff to develop training materials and induction sessions, make contact with organisations which could provide participants, supervise and work with participants, and evaluate the programme.

Two staff were employed four days a week for the pilot: Mark Thornhill (learning officer) and Liz Goodman (collection care officer) working alongside the existing archaeological archive staff. Having a specialist in learning dedicated to developing a learning programme based on collection care work was essential; his first task was to establish links to support organisations which could provide volunteers. Over thirty organisations were contacted; four have been the main source of participants including two local probation services. This part of the

project required two months lead-in time before the collection care work could start and required a concerted effort to find the right contacts and explain the project; the organisations required assurances that the work offered was suitable for their clients' needs - all unemployed and some with learning disabilities such as dyslexia.

Potential volunteers start with a tour of the archive giving them an opportunity to decide if they want to take part. The programme is flexible allowing the volunteers to choose how many days they want to volunteer. Induction includes an introduction to archaeology, archiving and collection care, and health and safety. The work involves repacking finds to current Museum of London standards (<http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/laarc/new/profmenu.asp>) and checking documentation (both manual and electronic). Volunteers are able to work on their own or in groups depending on their preference. Each volunteer or pair of volunteers is given an entire site to repackage and curate, effectively giving the volunteer a form of ownership over that site. As volunteers develop, we have found that some of them have enjoyed the problem solving aspects of the more difficult sites. Some have acted as mentors to newer volunteers which also gives them new skills and confidence.

For each volunteer, a training plan is developed. Each element of archive work requires basic skills such as numeracy, literacy, problem solving and comprehension.

Two AVLPL volunteers helping schoolchildren wash finds at the Museum's community excavation at Bruce Castle Museum, north London



Courtesy of Museum of London

The prototype displays a virtual colour reconstruction on a small section of one tapestry



Historic Royal Palaces

Taking part provides instruction and practice in these skills along with other transferable skills such as IT and manual handling. The pastoral care element is also important; we have found that we have to be flexible and take into account personal issues that may cause practical problems. It is essential that costs for travel and lunch are reimbursed by the project so that this does not create a barrier to participating.

The volunteers also have the opportunity to take part in outreach activities such as the Museum's community excavations and open days at the LAARC. To broaden their experience, they have been on tours of other departments within the Museum of London group and other museums. Some of the outcomes from AVLP have been unexpected, for example the repacking work has led to ideas for creative work. One volunteer was inspired by patterns on medieval tiles to make stencils which were used to decorate the plain white walls of the archive.

Although completion of collection care work was a secondary aim, during the first half of the year, twenty sites were repacked. The number of participants has been greater than expected (36 to date) with some choosing to continue as long-term volunteers. At the end of their time at the LAARC, each person is given a reference detailing the work and skills they have learned; for many, this provides the essential first step to enter or re-enter the job market or take on further study. Our evaluation of the programme will include following up the progress of the participants after they leave the LAARC.

One of the virtues of this project compared to other inclusion projects is that the volunteers know that they are taking part in real work, handling genuine archaeological material and are contributing to the long-term needs of the collection. Our evaluation hopes to show that this approach could be applied to other types of collections. We also hope to show the huge potential that collection care work can offer in providing skills and learning to people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds and to broadening the diversity of the heritage workforce.

This project is supported by the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund.

VIRTUAL REALITY FOR TAPESTRIES AT HAMPTON COURT PALACE

What did the tapestries at Hampton Court Palace look like in Henry VIII's time? We know they have faded as a result of exposure to light over the centuries, but how much have the colours changed? To answer this question, we are developing the technology to produce a 'virtual' colour reconstruction of a tapestry. Many of the spectacular tapestries at Hampton Court Palace are nearly 500 years

old, and have been on near-permanent display since Victorian times. The once-bright colours of the tapestry threads have faded, and the gilt threads have tarnished. Although still magnificent, the view we see today of our tapestries is a shadow of the original glittering designs.

In partnership with The University of Manchester, Historic Royal Palaces is funding a PhD student, Ruth Perkins, to develop the technology to produce images of the scientifically-derived original appearance of a tapestry, which can then either be projected onto large screens or, as has been done successfully in the preliminary study, onto the existing hanging tapestry. We are grateful for equipment provided by the Clothworkers' Guild to help us in this research. Visitors will be able to see the tapestries in their original splendour for the first time in centuries.

The research involves accurately measuring the fading and colour properties of the tapestry (front and back) and the production of a digital archive of images. Using this data, we will reconstruct the original appearance of the tapestry, and project this onto a tapestry on display. The exhibition lighting design for the tapestries will also be re-assessed to ensure no significant increase in the total light dose received. The total lux-hour dosage which the tapestry receives during the exhibition (both from the colour projection, and the ambient lighting) will be closely monitored. The virtual recoloured tapestry image will be projected for very short periods of time: for example, for one minute's duration at no more than 6 times throughout the day. This will minimise the added total light dose received by the tapestry, to reduce the risk of significant additional light-induced damage to the fragile textiles. This project will help us to better understand the precise fading characteristics of the materials used in the historic tapestries.

Work started on the project in October 2006, and the final imaging projection will be finished in Spring 2009, to coincide with the celebration events planned by Historic Royal Palaces to commemorate the 500th anniversary of Henry VIII's accession to the throne.

For more information, contact **Kathryn Hallett**, Senior Conservation Scientist, Historic Royal Palaces (email: Kathryn.hallett@hrp.org.uk)

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT www.icon.org.uk
FOR FULL DETAILS OF ALL EVENTS.**

Scottish Centre for Conservation Studies Master Classes 2007, Scotland

Venue: Hunter Building Lecture Theatre, Edinburgh
College of Art

All events begin at 5.30pm

March 8 – Michael Morrison, Purcell, Miller Tritton
Architects, Norwich. Conservation in the Deep Freeze:
Challenges of the Antarctic.

March 22 – Andrew Clegg, The Errol Brick Company.
The Conservation and Repair of Traditional Brickwork in
Scotland.

Cost: £20 per lecture, ECA students £5, non-ECA
students £7.50, by ticket only from Moira Seftor,
Tel: 0131 221 6072, or at the door.

Courtauld Friends Lecture Series 2007 Discoveries in Conservation

13 March, London

Venue: Kenneth Clark Lecture Theatre, Courtauld Institute
of Art, Somerset House, Strand, London WC2R 0RN.

Speaker: Yoko Taniguchi (Research Fellow, Japanese
Centre for International Cooperation in Conservation,
National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo)
– Bamiyan after the Taliban: Saving the Wall Paintings of
One of the World's Greatest Buddhist Sites.

Lectures are free and open to all. Held at 5.30-6.30pm.

Contact: tel: 0207 848 2909 for further details.

The Anna Plowden Trust CPD Awards for 2007

Grant application deadlines: March 15, June 15 and
September 15.

Once again, the Anna Plowden Trust is seeking
applications from established conservators for grants
towards the cost of attending either a short specialist
course or a major conference during 2007. In both cases
the Trust will consider funding up to 50% of the cost.
Those applying should have more than five years' experience since completing their training.

Contact: write to Penelope Plowden, enclosing a
stamped and addressed envelope, at 43 Lansdowne
Gardens, London SW8 2EL or e-mail:

penelopecpowden@btinternet.com for further
information. Application forms can also be obtained by
following a link from the Icon website.

ICA and OULS

Seals: International Round Table

19–24 March, Oxford

Venue: Merton College

The International Conseil des Archives (ICA) and Oxford
University Library Services (OULS) are pleased to
announce that there will be a Round Table Congress on
recent research work into the nature, condition or
conservation treatment of seals/sealed documents, of
seal attachments such as cords or tags and historic seal
enclosures. Visit the Icon website for details.

2007 Traditional Paint Forum Conference Setting the Scene

23 March, London

Venue: Normansfield Theatre, Teddington.

There has been a long and close association between the
Theatre and paint, covering not only the decoration and
embellishment of these grand 'palaces of dreams', but
also the skilful use of paint in creating illusions with stage
sets, scenery and even grease paint. This conference will
look at many of these aspects, with papers from some of
the leading practitioners of scene painting describing the
materials and techniques used for centuries, but which
are now in danger of being lost through dramatic
technical changes that are taking place. On the Saturday
following the conference, a private tour 'behind the
scenes' is planned at several theatres including the
Globe, Wilton's Music Hall and the Drury Lane Paint
Frame, still in use today in the listed paint shop.

Contact: Christine Sitwell on email

Christine.Sitwell@nationaltrust.org.uk for further details.

ICON CERAMICS AND GLASS GROUP

Spring Conference: The Use and Manipulation of Materials

23–25 March, West Dean College

Lectures have been organised for Saturday and Sunday
morning and a series of demonstrations covering various
aspects of conservation and restoration in the afternoons.
Several traders have been invited to set up stands. Also
posters will be on view and the authors available to
discuss their projects. Full programme details and
booking form are available on the website
www.icon.org.uk. There are still a few places available,
send your booking form and payment ASAP to Alex
Patchette-Joyce at email info@apjconservation.co.uk

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

March 24–26, Glasgow.

Three day symposium to discuss and debate the notion of 'authenticity' within the context of the conservation of art and the production of art, in the past and at present. Contact: enquiries to Erma Hermens, History of Art Department, Glasgow University. Email: E.Hermens@arthist.arts.gla.ac.uk tel: 0141 3303943/5677.

ICON BOOK & PAPER GROUP

AGM

27 March, London

Venue: The Art Workers Guild.

Speaker: Andy Ellis - Director of The Public Catalogue Foundation.

The Public Catalogue Foundation is a registered charity based in the National Gallery, London. It was set up to photograph and record all oil, acrylic and tempera paintings in publicly owned collections in the UK. This includes works in museums (both on display and in store) as well as paintings in council buildings, universities, hospitals, police stations and fire stations. It is estimated that there are over 150,000 such paintings in the UK. However, at any one time some 80% of these are hidden from public view, being either in storerooms or public buildings in official use. The aim of the Foundation is to improve public access to these paintings by producing a series of affordable colour catalogues on a county-by-county basis. These will later go online allowing the public free access to the works they own. The benefits to the collections are considerable and include free digital images, improved records, an income stream for painting conservation and education, and improved publicity. These benefits come at no cost to the collections, many of which face severe financial constraints.

Contact: Joanna Payne tel: 020 8747 5047, fax: 020 8994 5020, email: jw@joannapayne.com

Benjamin Franklin House Conservation Lecture Series

Each lecture will be delivered by Sharon Manitta, textile conservator and journalist. Sharon has a graduate degree in textile conservation from the Courtauld Institute of Art and has worked for museums in the UK and America.

27 March - Textiles as Historic Objects.

17 April - Caring for Cultural Objects or Why 'Restored to its Former Glory' is a No-No.

15 May - England Expects: the Textiles of HMS Victory.

Cost: £8 per lecture; 6.45pm arrival 7pm start.

Contact: Book now as places are limited by emailing info@BenjaminFranklinHouse.org or tel: 020 7839 2006.

Further details are available on the Icon website.

ICON SCOTLAND GROUP

Iron gall inks – approaches to conservation in Scotland

31 March, Dundee

Venue: Book & Paper Conservation Studio, University of Dundee.

An informal one-day meeting on the subject of iron gall inks. The meeting will take place from 10.30am until 4.30pm, and aims to draw together paper conservators in Scotland in order to discuss current approaches to the treatment of iron gall ink being used in Scotland. The day will start with a summary of issues surrounding the treatment of iron gall inks followed by three case studies and a presentation of a research project on fixatives. The afternoon session will be devoted to questions and discussion. Cost £15. Lunch is not included.

Contact: To book a place, please email Helen Holden at h.holden@dundee.ac.uk; booking is essential as places are limited to twenty.

ICON PAINTINGS GROUP/BAPCR

Retouching Complex Surfaces

20 April, London

Venue: Courtauld Institute of Art

Complexity can encompass a wide range of topics from matching glossy, matt, or unvarnished surfaces to the invisible retouching of textured, colourfield or mixed media paintings; the selection of retouching mediums for modern solvent-sensitive paint; to ethical issues that influence the extent and nature of the retouching. The emphasis will be on practical methods and innovative solutions.

As at the previous conferences, a series of lectures will be held in the morning, followed by informal demonstrations in the afternoon.

ICON COLLECTIONS CARE GROUP

Meeting and AGM – Responding to Climate Change

25 April, London

Venue: Clore Wing, Tate Britain

This meeting aims to help the heritage sector begin to understand how best we can look after collections while reducing our contribution to global warming. We hope to identify some actions that are indisputably beneficial, while showing which areas remain controversial, needing more research.

The morning session will include an explanation of the "carbon footprint" and how to tackle energy audits and assess sustainability as it affects collections through the everyday operations of museums and archives. There will be a review of standards relating to the environment for collections followed by a discussion of the need for change in this area.

Later sessions will look at the problems that climate change is already bringing, with case studies showing how museums, archives and historic properties are

tackling them. Individual items will include buildings and services; lighting; pest management and emergency planning.

The AGM will take place at lunchtime.

Contact: For detailed programme and booking form please contact Charlotte Cowin at Icon, 3rd Floor, Downstream Building, 1 London Bridge, London SE1 9BG or e-mail: membership@icon.org.uk

Natural Sciences Collections Association NatSca Annual Conference & AGM

25–26 April, Sheffield

Venue: Sheffield Museums & Gallery Trust

Further details can be found by following the link from www.icon.org.uk

Conservation By Design Ltd 3rd Nicholas Hadgraft Memorial Scholarship

Application Deadline: 30 April.

The scholarship is an award of £1000 sterling to assist a student wishing to attend the annual Montefiascone book conservation summer school run by Cheryl Porter. The school runs for four weeks in August. Each week offers a different course and tutors. It takes place at the same time as the town's wine festival so participants can be sure of lots of fun as well as learning a thing or two. Montefiascone is an Italian medieval walled city situated on a huge lake, roughly half way between Rome and Siena. Each summer, conservators, librarians, archivists, art historians and other interested in the history and structure of the book come from all over the world, to meet up and participate in classes, which are held within the city walls.

Contact: Denise Troughton at Conservation By Design Limited on tel: 01234 844 260 or email:

denise.troughton@conservation-by-design.co.uk. The application form is also available by following the links from the Icon website.

ICON ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP

AGM and Meeting – Presenting Conservation to the Public

8 May, York

Venue: York Archaeological Trust.

A great opportunity to tour the newly fitted out conservation laboratories at York Archaeological Trust since their move in September 2006 and view some of their recent conservation projects. We will also get to see exclusively behind-the-scenes at Jorvik Viking Centre and at "Dig" the new childrens' interactive archaeology experience, and hear about the conservation aspects of both of these. The day will be hosted by principal conservator Ian Panter and assistant conservator Mags Felter. Further details to be announced shortly.

Contact: Mags Felter, email: mfelter@yorkarchaeology.co.uk

Museums and Heritage Show

9–10 May, London

Venue: Earls Court.

With 140 exhibitors offering a wide range of products and services, over 30 free seminars given by industry professionals (including a Curatorial and Conservation Services stream), Museums Association Live Interpretation event, Design & Interpretation Surgery offering free advice, and over 1000 industry professionals visiting; this is the largest event in the industry.

Contact: For more information follow the link from the Icon website.

Conservation Science 2007

10–11 May, Italy.

Venue: the Politecnico di Milano.

The Institute of Conservation Science, in collaboration with the Centre for Conservation and Promotion of Cultural Heritage of the Politecnico di Milano and the Department of Food Science, Technology and Microbiology (DiSTAM) of the University of Milan, is organising an international conference, building on the earlier ICS conference held at the National Museums of Scotland, Edinburgh, Conservation Science 2002.

See [Icon News – issue 8](#) or visit www.icon.org.uk

ICON BOOK & PAPER GROUP

An investigation into the appropriateness of using fixative prior to the cleaning of pencil drawings and inscriptions

15 May, 6pm, London

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

Speaker: Dr. Aeli Roberts

This will include an examination of architectural drawings as case study objects.

See [Icon News – issue 8](#) or visit www.icon.org.uk

Plastics: Looking at the future and learning from the past

23–25 May, London

Venue: Victoria & Albert Museum

This three day conference, covering the various issues raised by the instability of plastic materials, will present a broad view of the issues involved in this complex area including: Scientific investigation; Conservation of plastic – is it possible? Collection – Does the prospect of a shorter lifetime influence collecting decisions & policies? Artists intent.

For further information contact: Dr Brenda Keneghan, Conservation Department, Victoria & Albert Museum, South Kensington, London SW72RL. Tel: + 44 (0)20 794 22119, email: B.Keneghan@vam.ac.uk

ICON METALS GROUP

AGM and Spring Meeting

24 May, London

Venue: Museum in Docklands.

The morning session will explore, through a series of case studies, decorative and technical surface finishing found on a diverse range of metal and composite objects.

The AGM will be held before lunch.

The afternoon session will start with an entertaining account of conservation in extreme conditions in Antarctica by Nicola Dunn, Museum of London.

The last session will give an insight into how three museum hubs are managing and delivering their regional collections care programmes. We will hear from representatives from the North East, the Midlands and the South East regions. This is a very high profile and politically pertinent topic in the light of the pending DCMS Select Committee report looking at collection care. Cost: Students – £35.00, Metals Group Members – £40.00, Non Members – £45. Lunch is not included.

Contact: Sharon Wilson, tel: 0191 2772195, email: Sharon.Wilson@twmuseums.org.uk for further information.

LIBER Think Tank

The future value of the book and of digital documentary heritage

24–25 May, Stockholm

Venue: National Library of Sweden

See *Icon News* – issue 8 or visit www.icon.org.uk

ICOM

Preparation for painting: the artist's choice and its consequences

31 May, London

Venue: The British Museum

This 2-day conference will focus on the preparatory layers and their influence on painted and drawn works of art.

These layers are fundamental to the creative process, and to the perception of the work. They play a crucial role in the treatment options available for the object.

Further details can be found on the Icon website.

ICON PHOTOGRAPHIC MATERIALS GROUP

Cold Storage

11 June, Swindon

Venue: National Trust Headquarters Heelis

The day will include various talks on the subject of cold storage, a tour of the National Monuments Record Office Cold Store, a visit to the NMRO conservation studio and a tour of "Heelis" – the award-winning "green" building that is home to the National Trust.

Call for papers

Deadline: 16 April. We are looking for papers, posters, and short presentations. All ideas relating to cold storage and its related issues would be welcome. We

would particularly like to hear from people, including students, who are currently working in the field, or have recently completed research in this subject. Costs: Icon Members £25, Non-members £30, Students and unwaged £20.

Contact: Anita Bools, anita.bools@nationaltrust.org.uk or vdperki@aol.com. Further information is available on the Icon website.

Forum for the Conservation and Restoration of Stained Glass Windows

Stained Glass Window Techniques in the 19th Century

14–16 June, Belgium

Venue: Moulins de Beez, Namur

This is a very wide subject and covers both the techniques used to make stained-glass windows in the 19th century and the specific problems that these have caused for their conservation now, and the basic materials (manufacture and suppliers of glass, lead, colours), and even how workshops were organised and training issues.

Further details can be found on the Icon website.

ICON BOOK AND PAPER GROUP

Linings Workshop

11–13 July, London.

Venue: Paper Conservation Studio, Victoria & Albert Museum, Cromwell Rd, London SW7 2RL.

Organiser: Merryl Huxtable ACR (email: merrylh@vam.ac.uk)

A three day workshop which will cover the historical methods of lining works of art on paper, the various types of lining used today and the materials and equipment used. Time will be given to looking at and discussing objects on display in the galleries. Practical work will include lining and flattening posters using oriental techniques and methods for attaching them to supports for display and storage purposes. The emphasis will be on larger format objects. The course will be aimed at the less experienced conservator who has perhaps not had any or much training in lining using oriental techniques. Cost: £200 each, 10 places available.

Contact: Charlotte Cowin, tel: 020 7785 3805, email: ccowin@icon.org.uk for booking or download a form from the Book and Paper section of the Icon website

Society of Bookbinders
Education & Training Conference

9-12 August, York

Venue: The University of York
Demonstrations, lectures, suppliers' fair, competition.
Julie Biggs, James Brockman, Paul Delrue, Mirjam Foot, Edwin Heim, Robert Holroyd, Derek Hood, Paul Johnson, Peter Jones, Hedi Kyle, Trevor Lloyd, Douglas Mitchell, David Pearson, Clare Prince, Eleanore Ramsey, Lori Sauer, Alain Taral, Sün Evrard, Michael Wilcox.
Contact: SoB Conference Organizer, 8 Wildwood Close, Woking, Surrey, GU22 8PL, or follow the link on www.icon.org.uk and visit the website

ICOM
Triennial Meeting

20-24 August, Vienna

Details TBA

ICOM
Working group Glass and Ceramics interim meeting

27-30 August, Nova Gorica, Slovenia

See [Icon News – issue 8](#) or visit www.icon.org.uk

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

5-7 September, Newcastle-upon-Tyne

Venue: The Sage Centre
This conference aims to bring together a wide range of experience and expertise to expand the vocabulary on the broad subject of printed ink on paper – imagery and text, historic and modern.

See [Icon News – issue 8](#) or visit www.icon.org.uk

The Parker Library Now
A Two-Day Symposium in honour of Professor R.I. Page

6-7 September, Cambridge

Venue: Corpus Christi College.
This symposium will include papers on library history, conservation, digitisation and its application, new discoveries and directions in medieval manuscript scholarship, and the benefits or problems of access to some of the most precious illuminated manuscripts in existence. Speakers will include Christopher Clarkson, Nicholas Pickwood, Melvin Jefferson, and Christopher de Hamel. Cost: £90 (non-residential) includes all lunches and refreshments.

Contact: Visit the website via Icon or contact Christopher de Hamel, tel: 01223 339994, email: cd281@cam.ac.uk, or Gill Cannell, tel: 01223 338025, email: gc110@cam.ac.uk

ICON ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP AND THE FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM, UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

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

6-8 September 2007, Cambridge

The main focus of this conference will be Ancient Egyptian decorated surfaces on any substrate. The conference will be held on 7-8 September, preceded on 6 September by a day of small-group workshops and practical seminars.

For further details please see the conference website by following the links on www.icon.org.uk, email: fitzmuseum-aeo2007@lists.cam.ac.uk or call Julie Dawson, tel: 00 44 (0)1223 332930.

BigStuff 2007 International Conference
Large Technology Objects: Beyond Conservation – Industrial Heritage Management

11-14 September, Germany.

Deutsches Bergbau-Museum, Bochum.
see www.icon.org.uk for more details

ICON BOOK AND PAPER GROUP

Islamic Binding Workshop

14-15 September, London.

Venue: Book Conservation Studio, Victoria & Albert Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 2RL.
Organiser: Jane Rutherford ACR (Tel: 020 7942 2085)
The course will be aimed at mid-term and experienced book conservators in order to cover all the work in two days. The tutors will be David Jacobs of The British Library & Barbara Rogers. Students will sew and cover a small format Islamic style binding.
The course will include; video, sewing, endband structure, board attachment, integration of flap – when it should and should not be used, decorative techniques.
Cost : £145, six places available. Students will need an additional £30 for materials which will include goatskin leather (grade II) ready thinned, paper for textblock, silks for endbands, thread for sewing, board and aerolinen. Tutors will provide these items.
Contact: Charlotte Cowin, tel: 020 7785 3805, email: ccowin@icon.org.uk for booking or download a form from the Book and Paper section of the Icon website.

11th IADA Congress – 50th Anniversary of IADA

17–21 September 2007, Vienna, Austria.

Focusing on the latest developments in the profession such as collection risk management, outcomes of scientific research projects, art technology and ethical considerations in conservation.

International Symposium: Studies on Historical Heritage

17–21 September, Antalya, Turkey

Research Centre for Preservation of Cultural Heritage, Yildiz Technical University

The full list of symposium topics can be found by following the link from the Icon website.

SYMPOSIUM 2007

Preserving Aboriginal Heritage: Technical and Traditional Approaches

24–28 September, Ottawa, Canada

Mutual Learning, Respect, and Ethics; Working Together; Technical and Traditional Approaches; Long-term Impact; Pesticides – Session co-hosted by the ICOM-CC Working Group on Ethnographic Collections.

Visit the Icon website for contact details.

ICON BOOK AND PAPER GROUP

Day Out in Oxford

25 September, Oxford

An opportunity to visit several conservation establishments: the Chantry Library – its facilities and services by James Andrews; the Oxford Conservation Consortium – a co-operative studio providing collection care to ten colleges of Oxford University and the National Trust; the conservation studios at The Bodleian Library and the paper conservation studio at The Ashmolean Museum – with Alexandra Greathead.

Contact: Sophie Laubin, Conservation, The British Library, 96 Euston Rd, London NW1 2DB.

Tel: 020 7412 7847, email: sophie.laubin@bl.uk

Forbes Symposium: Scientific Research in the Field of Asian Art

27–29 September, USA

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

See [Icon News – issue 8](#) or visit www.icon.org.uk

Best in Heritage 2007

27–29 September

Dubrovnik, Croatia

Annual presentation of the best, awarded projects in museums, heritage and conservation.

Visit www.icon.org.uk for a link to further details.

ICON BOOK AND PAPER GROUP

The Do's and Don'ts of Photographic Conservation

16 October, 6pm, London

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

Speaker: Susie Clark

Some of the techniques and materials used in paper conservation can be successfully applied to photographic conservation. However, some techniques and materials can actually be harmful and cause further problems. This talk will outline some of the main similarities and differences between the two fields.

After qualifying in paper conservation at Camberwell School of Art and Craft, Susie Clark ACR was the conservator for the BBC Hulton Picture Library (now Getty Images). Since 1990 she has been a freelance paper and photographic conservator working primarily for institutions. In 1996 she won the MGC Jerwood Conservation Award for Research and Innovation for her work on wet collodion positives. Cost: £6 (students £3, with card) – correct money at the door please.

6th North American Textile Conservation Conference Facing Impermanence

6–10 November, Washington, DC

The sixth biennial North American Textile Conservation Conference (NATCC) will focus on theory and practice of preventive conservation.

ICON ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP

Christmas Meeting 2007: Classic Conservation Cock-ups

December, London

Call for Papers

This will be our usual very enjoyable Christmas meeting with short talks of about 15-20 minutes each. We would like to invite you to present any archaeological conservation project you've been involved in, large or small, that has gone wrong, the causes of the problem, how the work was salvaged (if it was!) and what can be learned from the experience. The meeting will be held this December in London, final date and venue to be confirmed. It will be followed by a Christmas party in usual Icon Archaeology Group style!

Contact: Jim Spriggs on email

spriggs.conserve@hotmail.com with your proposals.

Third International Architectural Paint Research Conference 2008

17–19 January 2008, New York

Hosted by the Historic Preservation Department in the School of Architecture at Columbia University. In addition to paint, papers will be included on the architectural use of stains, varnishes, glazes, gilding and wallpaper. There will be five sessions covering the following topics:

Cultural significance. The examination of finishes as a social, economic and cultural component of material culture. Papers can address issues such as colour taste and history.

Paint materials. Paint materials, their development and history.

Health and Safety. Issues related to finishes which can include possible alternatives to historic finishes that no longer meet health and safety requirements or issues that arise in the recreating of historic finishes or handcrafted finishes.

Analytical and Instrumental Techniques. Papers should examine how various analytical and instrumental techniques are used in architectural finish research and standards for these techniques

Practical Applications. Replicating, recreating and conserving historic finishes. Papers should address the context of the original finish and how it is reproduced or conserved.

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

IIC Congress

Conservation and Access

15–19 September 2008

The 22nd IIC International Congress will take place in London at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre.

Call for papers:

Deadline for summaries is 30 April 2007; proposals can be submitted via the IIC website or by post or fax.

Contributions should report on contemporary thinking, current research or examples of best practice in balancing access and risk.

www.iiconservation.org

TRAINING

Full details for all of the Short Courses listed here can be found in a new section under **Training and Education on the Icon website:** www.icon.org.uk

West Dean College

Conservation Short Courses

Detailed information is now available on the Icon website covering the specialist training provided by West Dean College, including Building Conservation Masterclasses, Professional Conservators in Practice and CPD courses. Contact: West Dean, Chichester, West Sussex, PO18 0QZ, tel: 01243 818219.

International Academic Projects Ltd

Conservation Training

A full list of the short courses provided by IAP is available by following the links from the Icon website.

Contact: International Academic Projects, 6 Fitzroy Square, London W1T 5HJ, tel: 0207 380 0800, email: info@academicprojects.co.uk

Florenceart.net

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

Florenceart.net have released this year's dates for their Florence based events. Visit the Icon website for a list of the short courses available. Accommodation is in holiday apartments on site at Maiano, a 15th century hamlet overlooking Florence.

Contact: Alison Woolley Bukhgalter, Florenceart.net, Via San Bartolo a Cintoia 15r-97 Firenze 50142. Tel: 055 733 2865

Heritage Conservation Network

Building Conservation Workshops

HCN is a non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of architectural heritage around the world. HCN produces an annual series of hands-on building conservation workshops in association with local preservation partners in order to further the sites' preservation and provide an educational experience for participants. A list of the training opportunities is available on the short courses page at the Icon website.

York Minster Library and Archive

CPD Workshops for Paper, Book and Photographic Conservators

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

Contact: Christine Harbisher, Secretary, York Minster Library, Deans Park, York, YO1 7JQ, email: c.harbisher@yorkminsterlibrary.org.uk for information or booking. Full details on this and other short courses are available on the training pages of the Icon website.

National Museums Liverpool

An Introduction to Laser Cleaning in Conservation

12–13 March

14–15 May

10–11 September

19–20 November

National Conservation Centre, Liverpool.

This 2-day course provides an introduction to the use of laser cleaning in conservation. It is aimed at conservators with very little or no experience of this technique.

Numbers are restricted to 5 per course, allowing a significant amount of practical work. By the end of the course, the conservator will have a good understanding of how laser cleaning works, the type of work to which it is suited and the practical aspects of working with a laser.

Ironbridge Institute

Historic Environment Conservation Training

13–14 April – the use of lime in historic buildings.

7–28 April – the conservation and repair of stone

11–12 May – ferrous and non ferrous metals in construction.

25–26 May – the conservation of twentieth century buildings.

8–9 June – conservation of non structural and structural timber in historic buildings.

22–23 June – ceramic building materials.

6–7 July – recording historic buildings.

20–21 July – large object conservation.

3–4 August – the management of traditional estates

For more information or to book contact Harriet Devlin, Ironbridge Gorge Museums Trust, Coalbrookdale, Telford, Shropshire TF8 7DG. Tel: 01952 435969 or email: harriet.devlin@ironbridge.org.uk

PROFESSIONAL ACCREDITATION FOR CONSERVATOR-RESTORERS (PACR) EVENTS

Introduction to PACR

23 May, London

This workshop is aimed at those who would like to find out about the PACR accreditation scheme – the programme includes:

Everything you need to know about the PACR Accreditation scheme

- What is PACR accreditation?
- How does the PACR scheme work?
- The professional standards and the application process
- The assessment process
- The assessment visit
- Continuing Professional Development

These are half day events and are free of charge

For further details please contact Susan Bradshaw, PACR Accreditation Manager pacr@icon.org.uk or tel/fax 01626 824510

Bookings: Please use the PACR events booking form on www.pacr.org.uk and return to Diane Copley admin@icon.org.uk

PACR clinics

21 March, London

3 April, Edinburgh

18 April, Welshpool

26 April, Oxford

Clinics are aimed at potential PACR candidates who are working towards the next application deadline. This event will support candidates with their PACR application, address any queries and provide a useful insight to the accreditation process

These are half day events and are free of charge

For further details please contact Susan Bradshaw, PACR Accreditation Manager pacr@icon.org.uk or tel/fax 01626 824510

Bookings: Please use the PACR events booking form on www.pacr.org.uk and return to Diane Copley admin@icon.org.uk

Next PACR application deadline 25 June 2007

Introduction to Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

19 April – Birmingham

2 May – London

This afternoon event will provide an opportunity to gain a general understanding of CPD including how to record and plan your professional development and how to get to grips with your PACR CPD review form. Cost: Free.

Contact: Susan Bradshaw, Accreditation Manager, tel/fax: 01626 824510, email: pacr@icon.org.uk. To reserve a place please complete the PACR event booking form available on www.pacr.org.uk or contact Diane Copley, tel: 0207 785 3805

Professional Conservators in Practice

For more information contact The Admissions Office, West Dean College, West Dean, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 0QZ, tel: 01243 811301, email:

bcm@westdean.org.uk

PCIP courses in 2007 are:

26–30 March Art and object handling

23–26 April Conservation of leather

2–5 July Conservation of plastics

29 October – 1 November Decorated papers

5–8 November Sharpening edge tools

And **in conjunction with Icon**: a new course in Preventive Conservation led by Linda Bullock from 26–29 November

intervention

Thinkers! Your Country Needs You

By Peter Burman, Director of Conservation & Property Services at
The National Trust for Scotland

Reading Velson Horie's Intervention piece in the January 2007 edition of Icon News, I was struck by the justice of his remark when he said 'Thinking must be seen to be part of normal professional practice'.

The National Trust for Scotland is unusual among conservation organisations in having its own set of *Conservation Principles* – there are twelve of them – which take into account the international thinking promoted by ICOMOS and ICOM, and in particular the architectural conservation thinking that lies behind the ICOMOS *Venice Charter* and its Australian daughter the *Burra Charter*. It is easy to say of a set of principles that each one is important but I have lately been challenged to say which of them is the absolutely indispensable principle. I have come to the conclusion that it is the second one, which reads: 'All conservation decisions should be based on a systematic approach to evaluation of significance based on thorough knowledge and understanding, and a coherent policy framework'. In other words, there must be research, a thinking process, a debate, the development of knowledge – with an acknowledgement that this will go on growing – and a reaching towards a truer understanding of a monument or a work of art (which may equally be a garden or a designed landscape as a Batoni). The coherent policy framework is also vital, and must constantly be subject to scrutiny and a willingness to change.

One issue which, at the moment, causes me a good deal of food for thought is to do with specialist committees, or Advisory Panels – as we are now learning to call them in the Trust. I see these as being analogous to the idea of having executive and non-executive directors on the Board or governing body of a company or a charity. The roles must not be confused. But while the executive directors are *doing*, it seems to me that (and this was triggered off by Velson Horie's piece) it is vital that the non-executive directors are doing some *thinking* – and moreover, in spite of the fact that they naturally develop a commitment to an organisation, doing it from the position of *independence*.

It is surely the same with specialist advisory panels or committees, such as the Fabric Advisory Committee of St Paul's Cathedral, which I chair, which has a great deal of loyalty and passion for the cathedral but also brings that dimension of independence from the daily issues of action

and necessarily rapid decision-taking. Our membership includes the Director of one of our greatest art institutions and two former heads of the London Division of English Heritage, and a balance of other distinguished members including a practising artist and a senior historian. Every meeting is a delight. Our eight new advisory panels at The National Trust for Scotland promise to be no less significant in our life, work *and thought*. We have just reached the point where we have been able to interview candidates for the chairmanships of all eight panels*, and our recommendations will now go forward to the Board. After that will come the challenge – and the huge opportunity – of appointing members. However, the anxiety arises because relatively few people seem able or willing to put themselves forward for such advisory panels. I have seen the same phenomenon also in relation to the Historic Environment Advisory Council for Scotland, where it has to be explained to prospective members that – taking into account days of meetings, days of reading and (yes) thinking, and maybe participation in one or other of the working parties – the commitment could add up to as many as twelve days in a calendar year. HEACS advises Scottish Ministers on the whole range of matters which arise in relation to our cultural heritage and it has already produced four quite striking reports which seem likely to lead to further reflection on the part of the Scottish Executive, and to some actions.

My plea, therefore, is that all members of Icon should consider reflection on what we do to be part of our daily professional practice; and also that, where circumstances permit, more members should consider setting aside some of their time to serve on advisory panels (in various contexts) so that we make a corporate as well as an individual contribution to our developing professions. The enrichment will flow in both directions.

The author is also a member of the Scottish Ministers' Historic Environment Advisory Council for Scotland, Vice-Chairman of the Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland, a trustee of the Hopetoun House Trust and of the Falkland Heritage Trust, and Chairman of the Fabric Advisory Committee of St Paul's Cathedral.

* Archaeology; Architecture; Archives & Libraries; Countryside & Nature Conservation; Economic Development & Communities; Education & Interpretation; Gardens & Designed Landscapes; Interiors & Collections.



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