



Photographic image layer removal

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Icon's new Chair • Policy & communications update • The Wallace monument



A montage of the marbled panels completed by Liz Cherry on a weekend workshop.
See pp 29/30 Image: Liz Cherry

FEBRUARY 2020 Issue 86



From the Editor

Happy New Year to all our readers!

With the damp, dark days of February upon us, what better time to do some serious reading. We bring you a round-up of some of the important work going on at Icon in the field of policy and communications, an update

on the review of the Groups' processes and an overview of the outcome of last year's survey of our members. You will also meet our new Chair of the Board of Trustees. And there is news of the new course in Book and Paper conservation due to open in the autumn at City & Guilds of London Art School.

Work on the Wallace monument continues, our emerging conservator is festooned with prizes, and a fascinating experiment in removing the image layer of a photograph from its substrate shows what magicians conservators can be!

Lynette Gill



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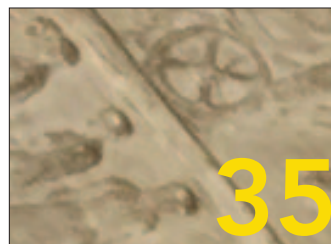
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The image layer of a photograph
removed from its acetate substrate.
Image: Lydia Stirling

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professional update

Introducing James Grierson Our new Chair gives an introductory interview



I'm sure Icon members would be interested to learn something about your career

I'm a Chartered Surveyor and was an Equity Partner and Board Member of a thousand-strong, international firm of real estate advisors. I qualified in London then moved to Leeds and spent the 1980s working on large regeneration schemes. These involved lots of local authority clients and, during the 1990s we broadened this into becoming the largest advisor on strategic property projects to

the UK public sector as a whole. We sold the firm in 2007 and I spent a number of years running our purchaser's consultancy business before opting for a portfolio career a few years ago.

I've always pursued 'outside interests' because I've always felt the experience they give you is very transferrable and because they make life more interesting. I've got quite a bit of experience of serving on boards in the commercial, central government, charity, NHS, cultural and university sectors.

What attracted you to Icon?

My personal interests have always been in the areas of art, culture and heritage and I liked the prospect of being able to put my experience at the service of causes I really care about.

How visible was Icon to you before you applied?

Very visible. I'm not a conservator, as you know, but I've actually had a fair bit to do with conservators. A number of Icon members have worked with me at a small charity called the York Consortium for Conservation & Craftsmanship or received bursaries from the Consortium. I have managed a bursary programme for the last ten years and each year I liaise with about seventy to eighty applicants in a process which provides around twenty bursaries a year to conservators and ten to craftspeople.

So, I have lots of conversations every year about training and skills and career development but also lots of discussions about low incomes, limited opportunities and job insecurities. But through all that, what really shines through is a commitment and conviction about the importance of cultural heritage and its conservation. Each year I've tended to involve some donors on a judging panel where we interview conservator applicants and I do this because I absolutely know that they will be knocked out by the skill, the dedication and the passion.

You also have experience with museums, don't you?

Yes. I'm on the advisory board of Locomotion in County Durham which is a sister to the National Railway Museum and part of the Science Museum Group. More significantly, I've spent some years as trustee and am now Chair of York Museums Trust. The trust has about a hundred and fifty staff, four hundred volunteers, two museums, an art gallery, a park, a ruined abbey, a deconsecrated medieval church and a fundraising appetite of £50m. We also have seven warehouses housing about 1 to 1.5 million objects.

But in amongst these big numbers we don't have a single conservator on the payroll. That's partly because of the way exhibition funding works, partly perhaps because the voice of conservation got drowned out by the voices of curation, interpretation and visitor experience. But it's also because, frankly, the museum sector is not an easy place to work at the moment. Seven years ago, over 90% of our funding came from the local authority, this year above 90% is self-generated and we'll make a small surplus. This insufficient emphasis on conservation is something I would like to change, both in York and nationally.

You took up the role of Chair formally in the New Year, but I know you started meeting Icon staff and members before that. What are your early impressions?

My initial impression is that it's a very professional team with a clear view of where it wants to have impact and I've been impressed with some of the specific proposals that are in the pipeline. I believe we should aim to increase the amount of conservation that society chooses to pay for. Proposals like the new Conservation Register and the renewed Collections Care Audit initiative with the Association of Independent Museums are about making this an easier market to hire and buy from.

I believe Icon's voice can be increasingly instrumental in raising salaries and improving employment benefits through measures like the work with Prospect and by investing in Labour Market Intelligence research. I also think Icon is very well-placed to influence behaviour in the adoption of more environmentally sustainable practices. And I'm intrigued at the many possibilities for Icon to grow its membership and influence, both in the UK and internationally. All of these good things, however, require that we are not deflected from our wider thought leadership and influence.

Whilst I've been impressed at many of the things I've seen so far, I recognise that Icon is poised to enter the next phase of its development and, clearly, has scope to become a larger, more influential and financially resilient organisation.

When you spoke at our AGM you said that you preferred getting out and about to reading board papers. What sort of Chair do you think we can expect?

What I actually said was that non-executive roles don't really seem that worth doing if all one does is read papers and turn up to Board meetings. These things are vitally important but, to me, it's really important to spend time with members and with stakeholders around the country. It's important to be visible, it's vital to really get a good feel for the environment Icon members operate within and, of course, it's enjoyable too. I'm really looking forward to the next few months.

What do you like to do to relax?

My wife, Liz, and I both have lots of interests and a busy social life and neither of us divide our lives into separate boxes labelled 'work' and 'hobbies'. We live in rural North Yorkshire but spend a fair bit of time in London where our four daughters live and also in France.

I like to spend time visiting museums and galleries which is a bit of a busman's holiday – particularly as I've developed the thoroughly nerdy habit of photographing donor boards and recording the names on a database. I spend most of my life talking to people so, for real, proper relaxation I love just tuning out in the garden, fiddling around with my Dahlia and Iris collections, both of which now exceed one hundred varieties.

POLICY BRIEFING

From the Chief Executive Sara Crofts



Climate change

For the last week or so (at the time of writing this), I have been avidly following the social media activity emanating from COP25. COP25 is the 25th annual United Nations Conference of the Parties where delegates from nearly two hundred countries meet to discuss international action on climate change.

The purpose of the COP is to assess global progress in dealing with climate change and to establish legally binding obligations for developed countries to

reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. Around 25,000 people are expected to participate in the fortnight of meetings and discussions being held in the host city of Madrid.

The COP25 summit has various aims but is, more crucially, a key staging point on the route to 2020, which will be the most important year for global climate efforts since the *Paris Agreement* was ratified in 2016.¹ Countries participating in COP25 are expected to upgrade their carbon-curbing plans for the first time and potentially also outline their long-term plans to achieve net zero emissions, ahead of the crunch COP26 summit in Glasgow next year.

It is hoped that the EU's member states will reach an agreement on a net zero 2050 target on the penultimate day of COP25. Normally, the country next due to host the climate talks – in this case, the UK and Italy in Glasgow next year – would play a vocal role but the pre-election purdah restrictions in the UK mean that our Government Ministers will not be able to play a full role until the final day of COP25. However, such restrictions thankfully do not apply to Non-Governmental Organisations and so a number of cultural heritage organisations are taking part in discussions or hosting events of their own this year.

The COP25 summit is particularly important for cultural heritage as it marks a change of gear for the level of engagement between cultural heritage bodies and climate action. In particular, ICOMOS will have a significant role at this year's COP, hosting an official United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change side event on 6 December on the theme of '*Essential Climate Solutions: The Power of Culture, Nature and*

¹ Paris Agreement: <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/the-paris-agreement>

² *The Future of Our Pasts* report can be downloaded from the ICOMOS website: <https://www.icomos.org/en/77-articles-en-francais/59522-icomos-releases-future-of-our-pasts-report-to-increase-engagement-of-cultural-heritage-in-climate-action>

³ Read more about the Climate Heritage Network Action Plan on the Icon website: <https://icon.org.uk/news/climate-heritage-network-launches-plan-to-mobilise-heritage-for-climate-action-icon-to-lead>

Community-led Development in Response to the Climate Emergency' and an exhibition titled '*Communities and Culture: Critical for Transformative Climate Action.*' This activity follows the release of '*The Future of Our Pasts: Engaging Cultural Heritage in Climate Action*' in July 2019.²

'Cultural heritage is a Climate Action issue. Climate Action is a cultural heritage issue.' Alison Tickell, *Julie's Bicycle*

Last week also saw the launch at COP25 of the Climate Heritage Network's '*Madrid-to-Glasgow Arts, Culture and Heritage Climate Action Plan*' designed to help mobilise arts, culture and heritage for climate action.³ This is a really exciting development and something that I, personally, support wholeheartedly. I have been engaged with various initiatives that connect environmental sustainability and cultural heritage over recent years and would suggest that one of my more significant achievements from my time at the Heritage Lottery Fund (as it was then) was to ensure that the Board of Trustees included a commitment to supporting grantees to deliver environmental sustainability in the new National Lottery Heritage Fund strategy.

A role for Icon

I was therefore delighted to be asked to join the International Steering Group of the Climate Heritage Network (CHN) and to be present at the launch of the Network in Edinburgh in October 2019 alongside more than seventy arts, culture and heritage organisations from around the world. During the launch event conference, we asked delegates to help shape the initial priorities for the Climate Heritage Network and, after an intense month of email conversations, the participants' feedback has been honed into the eight key activities in the published *Action Plan*.

I am extremely proud – if perhaps somewhat daunted – to announce that Icon will coordinate the first of the eight activities which focusses on communicating the connection between cultural heritage and climate action. Icon will steer a coalition of organisations, including the Union of Concerned Scientists, Historic Environment Scotland and the Built Environment Scotland Forum, on work to promote climate action through more effectively illustrating the potential for cultural heritage to help address the challenges of climate change. Components of this work may include: guidelines/tips for communicating about culture and climate change; a set of clear, punchy, resonate messages on climate change and culture; a library of good images illustrating climate change and cultural heritage themes collected from CHN members; and an explanatory text setting out the role of cultural heritage in climate action.

The publication of the *Action Plan* kicks off a year of cultural heritage-based climate action that will culminate in 2020 at COP26 in Glasgow. Climate action will therefore be an important strand of Icon's policy and advocacy work over the coming months. Alongside the work of coordinating our *Action Plan* activity we will also be looking at other ways in which we can support conservators to play a role in addressing climate change. There is clearly a role for Icon to act as a sector leader; to bring interested parties together; to help formulate policy and to support the dissemination of good practice in the UK. So, expect to see this crucial topic featuring increasingly frequently in our advocacy and communications work.

Labour Market Intelligence

Another key strand of our advocacy work will be taking the next steps in our Labour Market Intelligence project. Early in the new year we will be initiating the first survey of the conservation workforce for seven years. This will give us an excellent source of evidence to support our employment-related policy work and help us to fulfil our strategic ambition to be the authoritative source of information on conservation in practice, policy, and the profession.

We are increasingly recognised for the strength and depth of our policy work, largely due to the creation of the dedicated Policy Advisor post in 2017 as a result of a generous grant from The Clothworkers' Foundation. The Policy Advisor role has had a significant impact on our capacity to engage in policy and to promote the value of conservation and the profession. Establishing a formal framework for undertaking policy work in early 2018 allowed Icon to increase the efficiency, transparency and consistency of our policy activities and also allowed us to secure our first meeting with a Government minister.

A proactive role

We are now in the process of writing the final grant report for the Clothworkers' Foundation but, happily, the end of the funding does not mean the end of the post. Having seen the value of a dedicated Policy Advisor the post has now been added to the core staff team, but with a slight change of emphasis. The *Advocacy and Policy Framework* was fully reviewed over the summer and a decision taken to strengthen its outward-looking focus. As we move into 2020 we will place greater emphasis on proactively producing policy statements and on active campaigning (including climate action).

Taken together these changes add up to a strong basis from which Icon can continue to influence Government and heritage sector policy. We are confident that Icon's profile within the policy field will continue to grow through the strategic nurturing of relationships and the continued provision of commentary on developments. Icon is poised to become a strong proactive voice in the sector and we look forward to building on the successes of The Clothworkers' Foundation grant in making Icon an even more effective advocacy body in the future.

Postscript: Heritage Declares

Conservators with an interest in climate action may also be interested in **Heritage Declares**. This is a non-affiliated group of heritage practitioners who have come together to urge the sector to react more quickly and effectively to the climate and ecological emergency.

The team behind **Heritage Declares** believes that the heritage sector can play a crucial role in shaping public opinion and action on climate and ecological issues – especially among sections of the public who are not naturally sympathetic to more familiar forms of eco-activism.

In October 2019 the group launched a *Declaration* that sets out ten principles for a more sustainable sector. They are now encouraging individuals and organisations to sign the *Declaration*, as an expression of their commitment to tackling the greatest challenge of our time: <https://www.heritagedeclares.org/>

From the Policy and Communications Manager Anni Mantyniemi



Updating the Policy Framework

The 2015 Membership Survey revealed a need for Icon to do more to advocate for the conservation profession. As our Chief Executive notes above, generous funding from the Clothworkers' Foundation enabled us to respond to this priority through the establishment of a new Policy Advisor post. One of the key achievements of the role was the publication of the *Advocacy and Policy*

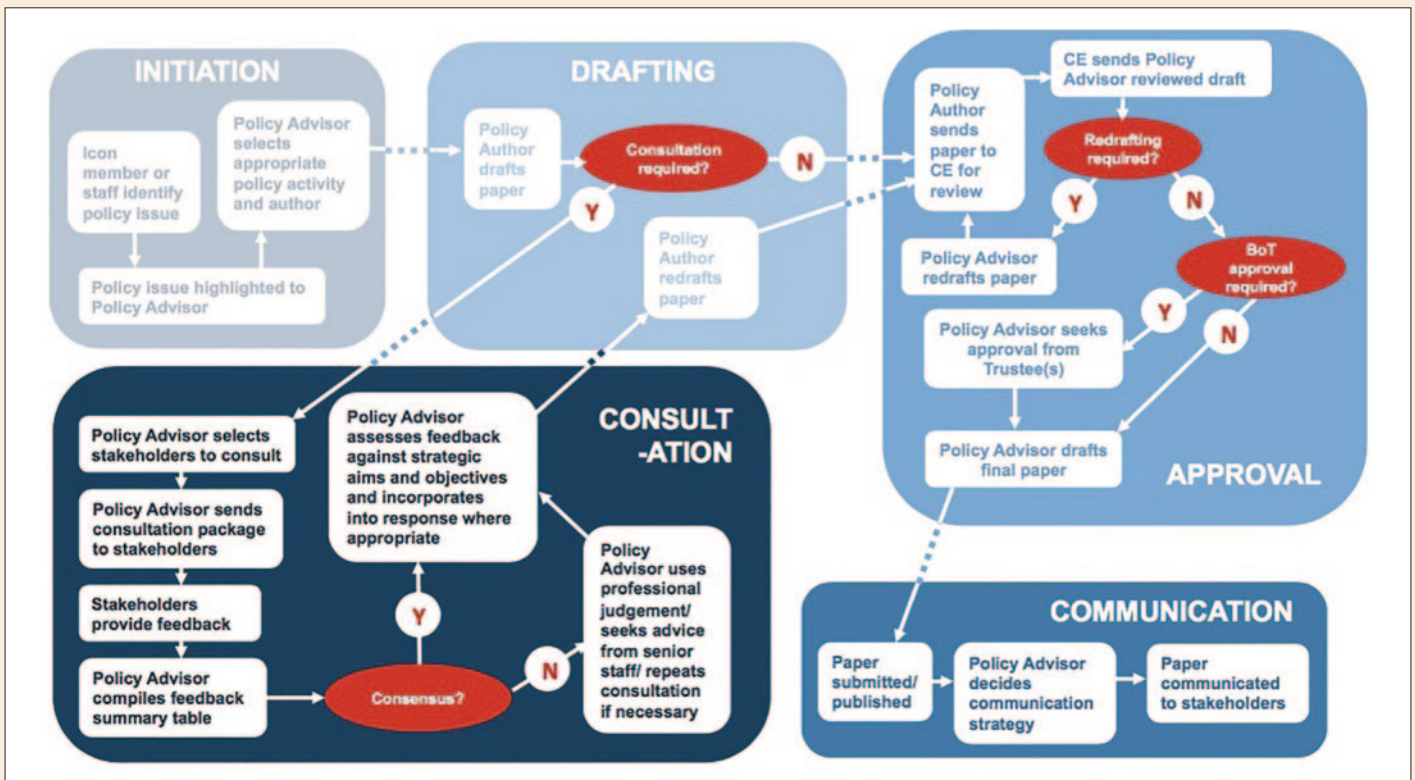
Framework – Icon's first policy on policy – in 2018. This laid a strong foundation for Icon to influence and engage in policy and we are now at the cusp of becoming a leading, proactive voice in the sector.

Maintaining momentum is mission critical, which is why we recently decided to review our *Framework* to ensure that it was still supporting efficiency. Following consultation with members and staff, the *Advocacy and Policy Framework* has been updated and published to reflect lessons learned from implementing the original policy. This included improving clarity and transparency in how advocacy messages are formed. For example, Icon's consultation process with the Policy Advisory Panel is explained in more detail and illustrated with a new graphic (see opposite page).

The revised resource also includes a section outlining how members fit into Icon's theory of change for advocacy and proposes activities for members to get involved in. The policy webpage is being redeveloped and has been updated with information on the impact of Icon's policy and advocacy work. This aims to demonstrate to stakeholders and members the value of Icon's advocacy, explaining through recent case studies the tangible benefit to the sector. We encourage all Icon Groups and Networks to tell us about what they have done so that we can build our library of success stories!

Impact case studies should be 500-600 words in length and should be accompanied by a minimum of 2 images. The aim is to demonstrate the outcomes of your activity, not just report what happened. Ideally, the stories should focus on the difference you made for your audience. The readers will be members, the public and potential funders so try to make your text lively and engaging. To help you structure your case study you can use the following questions:

1. What was the goal we set out to achieve?
2. What did we do?
3. What was the outcome?
4. What did we learn?
5. What will we do next?



Labour Market Intelligence

Publishing and disseminating insightful research that identifies trends and sets benchmarks supports Icon’s strategic aim of becoming an authoritative source of information on conservation. This is why throughout 2019, we have been working with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists in an Historic England funded project to develop a toolkit for collecting, analysing and Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) on the heritage workforce.

The Toolkit comprises accessible instructions for users wishing to set up their own LMI research project. It provides questions and answer options that can be easily copy pasted onto an online survey platform like SurveyMonkey and guides users in the analysis and presentation of their results. We hope that by making the Toolkit open access, we will encourage more consistent and comparable LMI reporting across the heritage sector.

You can expect to see the Toolkit published on the Historic England webpage in early 2020. Icon’s Professional Development Team has already begun planning its use of the Toolkit for undertaking new LMI on the conservation workforce. We’ll be reaching out to members in the New Year to participate in an LMI survey, so get ready to be a part of some very important research!

We are working towards having a new report delivered by April 2020. The research will strengthen our evidence base, enabling us to grow our influence and authority in policy but it will also help us to tailor our support for members and the wider sector.

#AskAConservator

As a part of our Strategy, we aim to inspire people from all backgrounds to engage with conservation. Social media presents many valuable opportunities that we regularly make use of to reach new audiences. On 4 November, conservators around the world participated in #AskAConservator day in a unified effort to engage people in the varied work of conservators through social media. Icon and its members naturally played a leading role in driving the fascinating conversations that filled the Twitter bandwidth. Thank you to everyone who participated and helped spread the word for conservation!

On the day, the question ‘what skills do you need as a conservator’ created significant buzz, with conservators working across national bodies offering advice on patience and flexibility. Audiences were also interested in hearing about the best part of being a conservator but equally about the most disappointing aspects of the profession. A West Dean participant’s response cited the low profile of the profession and how people don’t know ‘how interesting and useful it is’ – demonstrating the profession’s continued demand for more advocacy.

While the event generated lively debate on Twitter, it largely took the form of conservators speaking to conservators. This demonstrates the importance of thinking more strategically about how to reach external audiences when talking about conservation. This is useful learning for Icon’s Communications Team ahead of its plans for relaunching the Conservation Register, which will include campaigns targeting the general public. Such marketing measures will need to be properly tailored to ensure that messaging bears relevance beyond the specialist conservation sector.

From the Head of Professional Development Susan Bradshaw



So what is a trade union?

Not sure what's in it for you? Icon recently invited Alan Leighton, National Secretary (Heritage) at Prospect, to provide us with some key information that may trigger you to think about joining a trade union. Prospect is one of several unions that operate in our field and currently represents more than 6,000 members in the heritage sector across the UK.

Alan's blog is worth a read as it explains why unions are still relevant and why it's important that you should join one, whatever your employment status.

<https://icon.org.uk/news/prospect-working-for-conservators-whatever-your-employment-status>

Many of the benefits people take for granted at work, such as annual leave, maternity pay, weekends, lunchbreaks were won by unions. History proves that unions are essential and integral for rights.

Trade unions are independent of the employer, and enable employees to have a collective voice and raise concerns without risk. They encourage life-long learning and career development, offer a wide range of member benefits and can provide access to free legal advice and representation.

This year Prospect has concluded several substantial pay deals, for example at Tate where the increase on the pay bill was 3.95%, and has been supporting members taking industrial action to secure better deals at the Science Museum Group and Museum of London. In the past, they have won some major equal pay legal cases and reached settlements on equal pay in the heritage sector.

Prospect has also been carrying out a pay survey of their members in heritage, including conservators and they will be working with Icon in relation to the results.

We will be running a follow-up seminar on the benefits of unions in the new year. This will be presented by Alan Leighton and Rebecca Hellen, ACR in February 2020 – details to follow!

GROUPS REVIEW

The Icon Task and Finish Group (T&FG) which reviewed a wide variety of matters relating to its Groups' activities and processes reported its findings to the Board in December 2019. The T&FG was composed of chairs and treasurers from several Groups, office staff and a few trustees and it consulted with the Group Chairs Forum directly before pulling together its Report for the Board of Trustees.

Good progress was made in all the areas that were set out in the Review's terms of reference, with some matters resulting in proactive measures which are or will shortly be put in place. However, the T&FG also identified some larger issues that were beyond the T&FG's remit; these issues will need further research and scrutiny before final solutions can be established.

The main tasks that were established in the T&FG's terms of reference were to

- articulate the purpose of Groups and how their activities support Icon's Strategy and the delivery of its charitable objects
- consider how to best improve the governance structure for Groups
- develop a process for establishing new Groups
- review the financial policies applied to Groups.

Other issues that were addressed included the need for improved processes for managing internal communications between Groups, the Board and staff and also external communications through the Icon website and social media, taking Icon's visual identity guidelines and advocacy framework into account.

In order to enable consistency of practice between Groups a template document called Group Management Regulations has been created. This identifies Group committees' responsibilities and provides for how committee meetings and member meetings, such as AGMs, are to be managed. Various practical resources have also been created to provide active support in these areas such as the new Group Resources hub

on the Icon website: <https://icon.org.uk/icon-resources/group-resources>. Last, but certainly not least, new office support mechanisms are being introduced to streamline financial processes. A new invoice and expenses system is currently being trialled and will be rolled out for all Groups very soon.

Good progress was made with regard to tackling the objective of creating rules for establishing a new Group (and for dissolving them in certain circumstances) but this work revealed that the solution is dependent on the outcome of an ongoing review of Icon Networks.

Significant efforts were also made to reach a pragmatic financial policy in relation to the financial support that is provided to Groups. The T&FG generated a proposal that Groups should be encouraged to move to a financial model where they are cost neutral to Icon rather than being subsidised from core funds. However, the discussions at the Group Chairs Forum revealed that most Groups depend on the central subsidy. The T&FG therefore accepted that there is a need to better understand the complexity of the Groups' financial operations and the external operating environment before progressing a change in policy. Further work will take place in 2020 in order to find a workable solution; Groups will have a voice in this process.

This piece provides a simple overview of what has been achieved and where this wide-ranging Review ended up, and why. On reflection it is clear that the questions that the Review sought to answer were more challenging and complicated than first appreciated and that new methods of communication are needed to ensure that solutions are agreed through an inclusive and collaborative process. There will be more detailed accounts of the individual issues in future editions.

Frances Graupner

Icon Trustee & Chair of the Review of Groups Task and Finish Group

SURVEY RESULTS UPDATE

The results of Icon's 2019 membership survey are finally in!

Icon's mission is to support *advocacy, excellence* and *engagement* – building influence, extending knowledge and encouraging public awareness and participation. In order to ensure that our approaches to achieve these objectives are firmly based on evidence, at this time last year we conducted our second full membership survey. It throws light on the membership's perception of current strengths and weaknesses across the organisation and provides insights into challenges and opportunities facing Icon members across a wide range of employment contexts.

The survey was open for three weeks and gleaned 495 responses out of a potential 2,420 – a response rate of 20%, which is deeply satisfying for a membership survey of such length and scale. The resulting qualitative and quantitative datasets were rich and comprehensive, illuminating the views of survey respondents on a wide range of Icon activities and providing new detail on the present membership demography.

The results of the new survey suggest substantial continuity with previous results but also highlight areas for better practice. Among the good news, membership satisfaction is on the rise – with a full 5% increase in the number of respondents answering yes to the question *Are you satisfied with Icon?* 'Generally speaking,' reported one respondent, 'I think Icon does everything well, given the financial resources etc. I think it punches above its weight at the moment.'

Respondents highlighted our communications tools (defined as Icon's regular publications and Iconnect e-bulletins) as key strengths, alongside the events programme organised by Icon's Groups, Networks and Professional Development Team. 'Icon is really good at keeping conservators in the loop of new research and work and has a really good community with regards to the groups,' said another. Alongside this, Icon continues to benefit from higher-than-average levels of membership engagement with our voluntary groups and committees when compared to benchmarking data obtained by the Professional Associations Research Network.

Although respondents rated Icon communications highly, the survey results indicated a lack of understanding around Icon's advocacy activities – which received a considerable boost with the appointment of Policy Advisor Anni Mantyniemi on the heels of the 2016 survey. 'I don't think it's always visible how Icon is advocating for the profession in political spheres, or at least what outcomes and impacts are made by Icon there,' one respondent asserted.

Other respondents considered the affordability of Accreditation, while a perceived London-centricism of events was also a continuing feature of concern. As ever, the need for Icon to understand and support the professional conservator was key: respondents underscored the need for Icon to emphasise resources to support those in private practice and mid-career conservators.

These areas will now be subjected to new strands of targeted development work, using the survey results as a key evidence base. One respondent commented, 'Icon does most of what I as a professional conservator hope and expect it to do. The increase in advocacy and raised awareness of minimum wage are very valuable. The organisation keeps looking ahead at what it needs to do to help the profession remain focused &

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relevant.' The survey results have provided fresh insights into the needs of Icon members and the challenges facing the broader sector. Icon will continue building on its strengths to make sure that the promising upward trends of the survey continue, whilst also addressing areas where there is room for improvement. We remain committed to supporting our members in the public and private sectors as well as delivering the charitable aims of the organisation.

And, in order to ensure that we continue to provide a means for members to share their feedback with us, we have set up a new email address (feedback@icon.org.uk) that members can use to pass on their reflections on our activities as well as any other ideas or comments.

Michael Nelles

Head of Membership

THE 15TH ICON AGM

Icon's 15th Annual General Meeting took place in London in early December and marked Siobhan Stevenson's last appearance as our Chair of the Board of Trustees after four years in the role and five years before that as a Trustee. Reflecting on the past financial year she noted that it had been a busy one for Icon with achievements and progress across many areas. These included the appointment of a new Chief Executive, the production of a Governance Handbook; the establishment of the Emerging Professionals Network; an increased profile for Icon and conservation at international and Government level and the securing of funding for developments to the accreditation system. She noted the continued success of the Pathway, whilst the establishment of the Policy Advisory Panel had met with a great response.



At the AGM: Business Manager Simon Green, retiring Chair Siobhan Stevenson and Chief Executive Sara Crofts

Lots of membership events organised by the Groups offered networking and skills development opportunities and #Icon 19 had attracted record submissions of abstracts. All in all, it was a worthwhile and successful year that provided a good base to build on for the future.

Iain Boyd, Chair of the Finance Committee, reported a small loss for the 2018/19 financial year. He noted that this was a rare occurrence for Icon and not a cause for great alarm. The Icon office move and unbudgeted but worthwhile expenditure on advocacy work had contributed to this, but much of it was occasioned by timing issues, such as the outlay for #Icon19 falling in 2018/19 whilst receipts fall in the 2019/20 year. Our accountants reported that our position was no doubt influenced by Brexit uncertainties, austerity and funding cuts and was typical across the charity sector. Nevertheless, Icon continues to manage its finances very carefully and had taken steps to improve the situation to ensure a healthy financial future.

Questions followed from the members and covered a range of topics from information about the Labour Market Intelligence toolkit to complaints procedure concerns and the possibility of opting out of printed publications as a sustainability measure. After the formal Resolutions of the meeting – to receive the Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts and to re-appoint the auditors – were voted on and passed, Icon's Business Manager Simon Green reported on the results of the elections to the Board of Trustees. These were hotly contested with ten candidates standing for five seats. On-line voting continues to achieve a higher turnout compared with a paper-based system, and the margins of victory were narrow. So Simon urged those who were not successful this time around to stand again in the future. The newly elected trustees are Duygu Camurcuoglu, Claire Fry, Adam Klups and Pierrette Squires. Joining them are two new co-opted trustees Martin Kirke and James Murphy, along with our new Chair.

Sara Crofts, in her first address to an Icon AGM as our Chief Executive, gave a glimpse into what 2020 holds, structuring her talk around the three pillars of Icon's Strategy: Advocacy, Excellence and Engagement. You can read about several of these developments on pages 3 - 6. Other initiatives include a redeveloped Conservation Register and the celebration of twenty years of accreditation, a new Pathway membership category and a new newsletter to connect with external audiences. Fuller details can be found in the slides of her talk

on our website (icon.org.uk/news/a-few-of-our-favourite-things-in-2020). Sara was followed by another important newcomer: our new Chair James Grierson, who gives a fuller introduction to himself and his links to conservation on page 2.

The meeting ended with some final words from out-going Chair Siobhan Stevenson, who spoke of the privilege it had been to serve Icon, a small organisation which had been transformed over the past ten years despite ups and down during that time. It had been pleasing to see projects and developments coming to fruition at Board level, whilst much of the health and happiness of the organisation was generated by the activities of the Groups and Networks. She concluded by paying tribute to the staff, members and trustees whose contributions were key to the professionalism and impact of Icon.

THE ACR CONFERENCE

A damp mid-November day in London saw some fifty ACRs (Accredited Conservator-Restorers) from across the UK spend a day together to hear talks on the subject of collaboration, to learn about latest developments in the ACR world and to network.

The packed programme was diplomatically kept on course and on time by the Chair Sandra Smith ACR, Head of Collection Care at the British Museum. The format of three talks followed by questions and then a break proved very conducive to maintaining concentration and energy. Within the over-arching theme of collaboration, the topics covered in the main sessions were grouped into sub-themes mirroring Icon's strategic aims of advocacy, excellence and engagement. And since collaboration can be widely defined and take many guises, it was fitting that the speakers, fourteen in total, were drawn not just from conservation but from contiguous and complementary fields.

The topics were diverse indeed, from the role of collaboration in the largest ever archaeological investigation in the UK to sharing and adapting techniques to identify mould; from working with offenders in prison and on release to bringing refugees into a conservation volunteer team, from the cross-disciplinary and recursive nature of conservation thinking and practice today to the value of non-conservation expertise in a survey of medieval stained glass. And this is only a snapshot of the wide-ranging subject matter. What came through in all the talks was the power of conservation to weave tales and invoke emotions; they were in turn heart-warming, thought-provoking and with a sprinkling of humour thrown in.

The first talk on process and business issues was given jointly by Icon's Policy and Communications Manager, Anni Mantyniemi, and the Director of Loud Marketing Stephen O'Reilly. They, together with Historic England and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, have been working to develop a Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) toolkit. Now in its closing stages, the project will benefit not just the project partners but the heritage sector generally; by using the toolkit other heritage organisations will be able to conduct workforce research which will be compatible and comparable between organisations and allow an evidence-based picture to be built up of the workforce across the whole sector.

Icon's Head of Membership, Michael Nelles, brought the meeting up to speed on the re-development of the Conservation Register, which follows extensive consultation and aims to correct what were identified as its weaknesses. A new



From the ACR conference: 'what accreditation means to me'

website service provider has been appointed and the new Register, which will be more closely aligned with the Icon brand and will include all ACRs, should launch very soon, happily coinciding with the twentieth anniversary of accreditation.

In the final session of the day, Sarah Peake ACR, Chair of the Accreditation Committee, discussed the changing composition of the ACR population, with many older members coming up to retirement and over five hundred conservators on the PACR Pathway. She noted the implications for the scheme that 26% of ACRs volunteer their time and energies to support the assessment process.

Having earlier asked those present to note down what accreditation meant to them, Sarah was able to present the results in a word cloud heroically analysed by Patrick Whife, Icon's Training and Development Manager, during one of the breaks. Views were also sought on the look of a possible new logo to designate accredited status and it was announced that twenty events were planned for 2020 to celebrate twenty years of accreditation.

In her closing words Sandra Smith summarised the day's proceedings and drew from them lessons about the increasing maturity and professionalism of conservators, able to embrace collaboration with others with openness and a growing confidence about their own role.

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

Archaeology Group

The Icon Archaeology and Metals Groups are looking forward to hosting a joint one-day conference on the storage, long-term care and investigation of archaeological metal objects on Monday 24 February 2020 at the Museum of London Resource Centre in Hackney. The Post-X Metals Conference will examine the post-excavation treatment, storage and investigation of metal objects, with a focus on Cardiff University research into the use of desiccated microclimates to store archaeological iron and copper alloys. It will also include guided tours of the Museum of London Archaeological Archive. Please follow #ICONPostX on Twitter for more information and live updates on the day. We hope to see you there!

Work on the revised edition of First Aid for Finds is back on track with a new editor. This is Sarah Watkins-Kenney, a long standing member who was involved with an edition of FAFF in the 1980s. Sarah is a projects coordinator based at the North Carolina Office of State Archaeology; until recently she was lead conservator there and has contributed to many publications in the US and the UK. Sarah will lead an editorial board, writers and peer reviewers over the next year with plans for publication in 2021.

The next ClfA Conference, with a theme of Promoting our Profession, is being held in Bath on 22-24 April, 2020. The ClfA Finds Group have set up a session called *Promoting Professional Partnerships - Making the most of your Specialists*, which will focus on collaborative working between specialists, both in the field and during post-excavation. We are looking forward to hearing about some great partnerships which bring added value to an archaeological site or process and hope lots of people come along to the session, which promises to be interesting and informative! For further information about the session please check out the ClfA website: <https://www.archaeologists.net/conference>.

Suggestions for future events and workshops are always welcome. Please watch Iconnect, Twitter (@ICONArchaeology) and the website for further announcements.

Charlotte Wilkinson

Icon AG Communications Rep

Book and Paper Group

At the moment the Book and Paper Group Committee is reflecting on what 2019 has brought us and looking forward to upcoming events in 2020, like the AGM. We have had some fascinating speakers at our AGMs in the past and increasingly we have been looking to invite speakers whose chosen fields relate to book and paper conservation, although perhaps not directly. It is always interesting to see our work when framed within a wider context and to see where the contrasts and overlaps are. This year one of our options for the keynote speaker has stimulated a very interesting and necessary discussion around tutors' fees.

Over the past three years the Book and Paper Group

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Committee has set fixed tutor fees for our events; this was a decision taken by the committee in order to promote equality and fairness. We did not want to pay different fees for tuition to different tutors and felt strongly that everyone deserved equal support. This in turn has helped us maintain (relatively) consistent budgets for our workshops and ticket prices as a result. However there have been a few instances recently which have caused us to question the fees and whether they are still fair and reasonable. Certainly, comparing them to other professions they can seem low. For the sake of transparency we currently offer £90 for speaking at an evening lecture and £320 for a one-day workshop.

The Book and Paper Group Committee would like to be leaders in promoting fair pay for members of our profession. However we also need to acknowledge that any increase in fees will result in an increase in ticket prices for our events as we run all our workshops at cost. We are very aware of the pressure on members of our profession to continue to invest in and provide evidence of their CPD and that this can be a high expense if, for example, they are self employed and this cost needs to come out of their own pocket.

- Would BPG members be willing to pay more for their event tickets in order to allow us to raise our tutors fees?
- Is it more important that ticket costs remain low and affordable even for those who are able to get funding from their employers?

These are all interesting and difficult discussions that we feel should be made with input from our members.

We would be very interested to hear your input on this discussion as we continue to change our approach to support our members as teachers and students. Do feel free to get in touch via email (iconbpg@gmail.com) or via social media to

continue this discussion with us.

Abigail Bainbridge (B&PG Committee Chair) & **Holly Smith** (Events and Training Subcommittee Chair)

Furniture & Wooden Objects Group

Since our Annual General Meeting in September 2019 Michelle Kirk continues her role as Chair of the committee, and Michel Aslangul has taken up the role of Vice Chair. We also welcome a new committee member Hendrik van der Poel who has taken on the role of Web Editor.

Coming up this year the Group will again be providing Dichloromethane HSE courses in Spring with subsidised rates for Icon members. In early summer, continuing our successful conservation studio tours, we will be hosting a visit to a conservation workshop based in Windsor - details to follow soon. The Wooburn Craft School has also announced their new schedule for 2020, including French Polishing & Wax Finishing, Wood Carving and Upholstery short courses. Keep an eye out for Iconnects and our section on the Icon website for full details.

This year promises several exciting Furniture related conferences – in spring there will be the International Stichting Ebenist conference themed *Louis, Louis, Louis!* held in Amsterdam. In September two conferences, one hosted by Malmstens Alumni themed *Woodworking Tools & Techniques – Past, Present & Future* is held at the Skoklosters Castle in Sweden, and from September 16 to 19, a conference hosted by The Association for Furniture Studies, Spain, is themed around *Ibero-American Furniture History*, and held in Barcelona. Details of these events will be on our webpage. Postprints from our 2019 symposium are also in the making. These will be available as downloads on the documents section of our webpage in early summer.

If you are interested in joining the committee, or have any questions, feedback or suggestions please get in touch via email (furniture.events@gmail.com)

Michelle Kirk

Group Committee Chair

Heritage Science Group

National Heritage Science Forum

Members of the Icon HSG committee have attended the 2nd NHSF's members' meeting on the theme of 'What do we need to do to support excellent interdisciplinary research among academic and heritage organisations?' A short summary of the meeting is available in the November's newsletter available on the Forum's website (<http://www.heritagescienceforum.org.uk/news/item/november-2019-newsletter-is-out>). The strategic framework strand on excellent research can be read at: <http://www.heritagescienceforum.org.uk/what-we-do/excellent-research>

#HeritageChat

#HeritageChat is a monthly Twitter chat in which people contribute to a live discussion about heritage. In November 2019 the Chat was Heritage Science themed and aimed to open a discussion about 'how can we encourage the growth of citizen heritage science?'. The chat can be read here: <http://www.heritage2020.net/encouraging-the-growth-of-citizen-heritage-science-heritagechat/>

Committee meetings

At the time of writing the committee is scheduled to meet on 6 January, to discuss upcoming training events (details will be published here: <https://icon.org.uk/groups/conservation-science/events>), and our plans for compiling a database of heritage science publications and publishing summaries of recent scientific papers about Heritage Science in Icon news.

Keeping in touch

Finally, keep an eye out for our notices in Iconnect, on our webpages, and on Twitter (@ICONSci) and get in touch via our Group email address (hsg@icon.org.uk) if you would like to become more involved in the Group's activities.

Lucia Pereira-Pardo, HSG Committee Communications Officer

Photographic Materials Group

The Photographic Materials Group held their third Round Table Discussion at Dana Research Centre and Library in South Kensington, part of the Science Museum, on November 29. It was another successful day of quick-fire talks followed by questions and discussion. The talks were followed by the AGM in which Group Chair Jacqueline Moon updated the attendees on the committee activities over the past year. To read more about the event and the topics of the day, check the events section of the next issue of Icon News. Keep an eye on our Group blog page where we will also be posting an overview of the day. (<https://iconphmgblog.wordpress.com>)

The next event from the PhMG will be a colour slides workshop held at the National Archives in early Summer 2020. This event will involve theoretical and practical sessions focusing on the identification and treatment of colour slides affected by mould. More information will be released in the New Year.

Upcoming blog posts include committee member Jordon Megyery's experiences as an Icon photographic materials intern at the National Archives and Tate, followed by an end of year post highlighting current and forthcoming events, exhibitions and workshops.

As always you can contact the committee via our Group email (phmg@icon.org.uk), twitter (@ICONPhMG) or facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/ICONPhMG/>).

Icon Scotland Group

Training and events

Our final event of 2019 was our 22nd Annual Plenderleith Memorial lecture, *After the dust has settled; rediscovering the spirit of the Mackintosh*, which was given by Liz Davidson on 28 November at the Lighthouse in Glasgow. The lecture had completely sold out a couple of weeks in advance, leaving a few people disappointed, but for the lucky ticket holders it was a fantastic evening, which will be reviewed in the next Icon News.

We also managed to organise an afternoon event before the Plenderleith, entitled 'Behind the Scenes – Mackintosh Recovery project'. This event offered the opportunity to hear about the conservation of some of the artefacts from Glasgow School of Art Mackintosh building, such as light fittings and furniture. Once again, the interest in all things Mackintosh was demonstrated by the speed in which the event sold out, and it was reported to be a fascinating insight into the challenges of dealing with severely fire-damaged objects. We are very grateful to Polly Christie for leading the event, and a blog about it should be coming out soon.

As usual, we ran our AGM just prior to the Plenderleith lecture, and it was well attended and a good opportunity to hear about the committee's recent and planned activities, and to thank outgoing committee members and welcome new ones. Sara Crofts was present and she gave a useful update on Icon's current priorities, including the Advocacy Policy Framework, the Labour Market Intelligence Toolkit, the celebrations to mark the 20th anniversary of Icon Accreditation and the new Conservation Register.

Other happenings

We made full use of Sara during her trip north, involving her in a meeting about the future direction of the Icon Scotland Group, and holding a group discussion event about what Icon can do for private conservators, which was kindly hosted by the Scottish Conservation Studio. This will be written up as a blog so that other private conservators can hear about what was raised.

Contact and keep in touch

We obviously welcome primary and secondary members, but remember that all you need to do in order to receive the emailed Scotland Group Iconnects is tick the Group on your Icon membership form. You can also see our latest updates on social media: our blog is at <https://iconscotland.wordpress.com>, our Facebook page is <https://en-gb.facebook.com/iconscotlandgroup> and our Twitter feed is @icon_scotland. Comments and suggestions for events can be emailed to scotland@icon.org.uk.

Stained Glass Group

Last October (just after the copy deadline for the last Icon News!) the SGG held its AGM alongside a very successful one-day conference in Gloucester Cathedral. The conference addressed the subject of *Accommodating the Past* and speaker's presentations approached this topic from many different angles. Leonie Seliger ACR and Emily Yates discussed the ethical and practical difficulties in creating new infills for missing faces in stained glass windows. Chris Chesney ACR and Linda Cannon ACR reflected on what we can learn from past unsuccessful approaches to conservation, and Finola O'Carroll and Katya Madrid described archaeological glass found in Trim, Ireland. The talks were followed by tours of the Cathedral's fine collection of stained glass. After the conference the AGM addressed Icon's role within the stained glass industry and generated good discussions on a number of pertinent and current issues.

Following on from our event in Gloucester, as well as looking ahead to next year's AGM, the SGG plan to offer techniques-based workshops during 2020. Please keep an eye on our ICON webpage, as well as Twitter and Facebook, for updates on these workshops and any other events.

Please contact the SGG committee if you have any thoughts about how the Stained Glass Group can further support its members at iconstainedglass@gmail.com

The SGG is always delighted to welcome new members into our group. If you would like to join us please remember to tick the stained glass box on your membership form, or email Head Office to request Iconnect updates from this Group.

Sarah Jarron ACR
Chair of the SGG



Stained Glass Group members at Gloucester Cathedral

Stone and Wall Painting Group

The Stone and Wall Painting AGM was held in Lincoln on 2 October 2019 and was followed by a fascinating tour of the ongoing sculpture conservation on the west front of the Cathedral. The project is part of a wider £16 million National Lottery Heritage Fund project to radically improve the setting and visitor experience at Lincoln Cathedral. The tour was expertly led by Head of Conservation at Lincoln Cathedral, Jane Cowen.

The scaffold alone is an impressive feat, specially designed for the project to provide a 'workshop in the sky'. After an exhilarating climb up, we were rewarded with not only views across Lincolnshire but an up-close encounter with the glorious 14th Century 'Gallery of Kings' and the internationally important 12th Century Romanesque Frieze. At an exciting stage in the works, the completion of the central niche was due shortly and the site was set-up and ready for the start of the conservation of the eleven life-size King sculptures and the challenging frieze. Seeing traces of polychrome surviving in protected recesses was particularly thrilling.

The southern run of the frieze had been left covered for protection since 1983, now unveiled for the first time for thirty five years. So the opportunity to see these fabulous carvings in all their glorious detail was a highlight.

The conservation work is clearly the result of careful planning, assessment and analysis. It was clear the team have to negotiate a variety of deterioration types across the west front. These include structural and rainwater dispersal issues and thick deposits blackening the surface of the intricate carvings, amongst others. Addressing these complex conservation challenges has clearly been a huge collaborative

effort. We were also lucky to see a variety of the cleaning methods in progress, including the controllable and precise use of laser cleaning of the stone work. The tour also took in the *ex situ* sections of the Frieze on display inside the Cathedral and its conservation studio.

Textile Group

Happy new year to all from Icon Textile Group!

Since the last issue of Icon News, the committee have been working hard on a programme of events for 2020, including tours, workshops and study days. The Textile Group is also busy preparing the spring 2020 AGM, details on all to follow soon. Keep an eye out for our next Iconnect.

Save the Date!

The Annual Vexillological Seminar, hosted by In Hoc Signo Vinces, will this year be held at the Arme Museum, Stockholm, Sweden from 27-29 May 2020. Focusing on military colours and standards, potential discussion topics are; the production and distribution of military flags, heraldry and iconography, military history, and exhibiting, conserving and storing military flags. If you are interested in participating please contact conservator Johanna Nilsson PhD: johanna.nilsson@armemuseum.se

Recent Events

A free to attend, two-day workshop on the conservation of painted textiles was a sell-out last November at Norwich Castle (Norfolk Museums Services). It was organised by SHARE Museums East and led by textile conservator Vivian Lochhead, formerly from the People's History Museum in Manchester.

With her extensive knowledge of caring for the museum's world-renowned collection of painted banners she led the group through practical demonstrations with hands-on learning enabling the delegates to test, clean and consolidate prepared samples. This was supported by group discussions and comprehensive presentations. Look out for a review of this event in the next Icon News.

The Dress and Textiles Specialists (DATS) conference, also at Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery, took place on 28 and 29 November 2019. This year's topic 'Redressing Diversity: Making Hidden Histories Visible' covered a range of thought-provoking presentations on how museums, and more specifically dress and textile collections, can play a role in trying to represent BME, deaf, disabled, LGBTQIA+ and other hidden histories. During the conference delegates were also treated to a tour of the costume and textiles store as well as an object-focused session based at the Norwich Castle Study Centre.

Upcoming Events

The American Institute for Conservation's (AIC) 48th Annual Meeting

Conservation: Reactive and Proactive.

19 - 23 May 2020

Salt Lake City, UT

19th ICOM-CC Triennial Conference

Transcending Boundaries: Integrated Approaches to Conservation

14 - 18 September 2020

Beijing, China

In this Issue

Professor Frances Lennard ACR, Professor of Textile Conservation at the University of Glasgow, reviews the 12th NATCC in Ottawa-Gatineau which she attended in September 2019.

Julie McBain from the Imperial War Museum reviews the Textile Group's one day symposium 'Conservation in Colour', held on 8 November 2019 at the People's History Museum, Manchester.

On 22 October 2019 The University of Oxford, Bodleian Library, held a one-day symposium 'From Weston House to the Weston Library: the Sheldon Tapestry Maps at the Bodleian library'. This event highlighted the importance of all three tapestry maps in the Bodleian's collection 'Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire and Worcestershire'. A review of the symposium is included in this issue, written by Maria Jordan ACR, National Trust Textile Conservation Studio.

Keeping in touch

Due to publication deadlines, it is not always possible to mention all events so please check the Icon website, Facebook page, Twitter feed and Iconnect for details. If you have anything that you would like mentioned in our communications please contact the Textile Group's News Editor Terri.Dewhurst@nationaltrust.org.uk

Writing for Icon News

Have you recently attended a textile-related workshop, symposium or conference that you think would be of interest to members of the Textile Group? Would you like to write about them for Icon News? Details of how to write for Icon can be found here: <https://icon.org.uk/what-is-conservation/writing-icon>

COURSE NEWS

Icon members have been waiting with interest for an update on the new book and paper conservation course at City & Guilds of London Art School. Just before Christmas we received a press release with this news:

'London's only undergraduate degree course in the conservation of Books & Paper is set to open in Autumn 2020, as City & Guilds of London Art School, a not for profit higher education provider dedicated to educating the next generation of artists, crafts experts and conservators, makes preparations to teach these specialisms, essential for the preservation of artefacts central to our cultural heritage. 'The new course is being developed with the advice and expertise of books and paper conservation specialists, Edward Cheese ACR (The Fitzwilliam Museum), Jacqueline Moon ACR and Valeria Duplat (Tate) and Sonja Schwoll ACR (National Archives) and is due to be validated in January 2020. It will run in parallel to the Art School's existing BA (Hons) Conservation specialism in the conservation of cultural artefacts made from stone, wood, plaster and the treatment of decorative surfaces. Meanwhile the conservation of books and paper will also be available for the Art School's MA Conservation.

'Working with Alan Higgs Architects and with the input of conservation experts in books and paper and 3D artefacts, the Art School's new specialist laboratory and Books & Paper studio facilities will house state-of-the-art technology along with a wide range of traditional tools used in book and paper conservation.

'The new Books & Paper Conservation undergraduate award will equip students with the particular knowledge, skills and experience to work with rare and delicate materials such as papyrus and amate paper as well as pith (a sheet of inner bark cut from the pith plant used in Chinese pith paintings) and parchment. Students will also be trained in the historic skills of book binding, manuscript illumination using pigments, gold leaf and historic decorative crafts as well as the traditional techniques of printmaking championed by the Art School's renowned print room.

'Conservator of Manuscripts and Printed Books at The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, and advisor for the new degree and MA courses, Edward Cheese ACR recently commented 'City & Guilds of London Art School has a long-standing reputation for high-quality conservation training delivered in small groups, allowing teaching to be tailored closely to fit students' needs. Intensive practical work is balanced by thorough grounding in materials science and art histories to equip students for their professional careers. The new Books & Paper courses the Art School is offering will build on this tradition, starting at BA level and progressing to MA, making the training one of the most thorough in the UK'.

'Dr Marina Sokhan, Head of Conservation at City & Guilds of London Art School, cited the many fruitful links the Art School has nurtured with leading heritage institutions, commenting 'Over the years we have built a valued and trusted relationship with many important museums, collections and private collectors across the UK. We work together to support the education of the nation's future Conservators, ensuring they receive a gold standard training that will prepare them for a successful career in the heritage sector'.

'The introduction of this new course follows the closure of the conservation course at Camberwell College of Art,

University of the Arts London. The University has agreed to support the setting up of this new course at the Art School through the legacy of specialist equipment and the provision of student bursaries available for those from groups under-represented in higher education.'

THE PLOWDEN MEDAL 2020

Nominations are invited for the 2020 Plowden Medal. Established in 1999 to commemorate the life and work of the late Hon. Anna Plowden CBE (1938 – 1997), this gold Medal was endowed by the Royal Warrant Holders Association, of which she was Vice-President.

The Plowden Medal is awarded annually to an **individual who has made a significant contribution to the advancement of the conservation profession and whose nomination would be widely welcomed within the conservation community.**

The award covers all aspects of conservation be they practical, theoretical or managerial – and is open to those working in private practice or institutions.

A Selection Board, drawn from the conservation community, the Royal Collection and the Royal Warrant Holders Association will consider nominations in March 2020. Nomination papers can be downloaded from our website: www.royalwarrant.org. The final date for the receipt of nominations is **Friday 28 February 2020**.

CPD GRANTS REMINDER

The next application deadline for the Anna Plowden/Clothworkers Foundation CPD grants is **6 April**.

Grants for attending courses and conferences around the world cover up to 50% of the cost or £1,000 whichever is the lower amount. Applications from those on the PACR pathway are particularly welcome, as well as from early career conservators (and from experienced conservators too, of course!). Conservation students and interns are not eligible and nor are conservators who are employed outside the UK.

Looking further ahead, deadlines for the rest of 2020 are 8 June and 14 September.

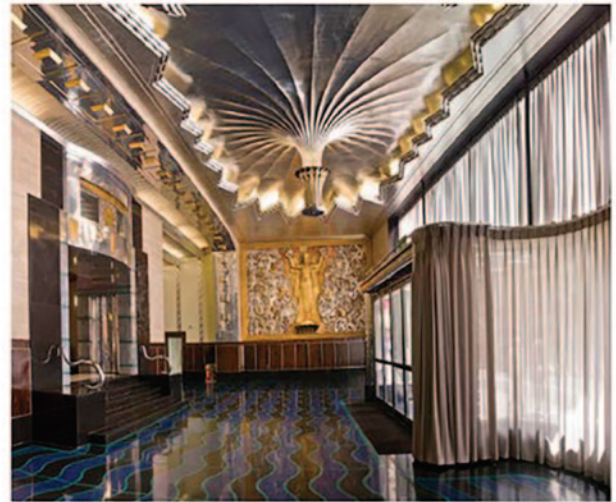
For details on eligibility and to download an application form visit www.annaplowdentrust.org.uk

PUBLICATION NEWS

Historic England has published a new edition of its Technical Conservation Guidance and Research Brochure. It is a quick guide to their range of technical advice. New in this issue is:

- Lightning protection for historic buildings
- Fire fighting in thatched buildings
- Church roof replacement using terne-coated stainless steel
- The conservation of fibrous plaster
- Research report on environmental deterioration of stained glass
- A nine-year research project into the role of soft capping for ruins

Technical Conservation Guidance and Research

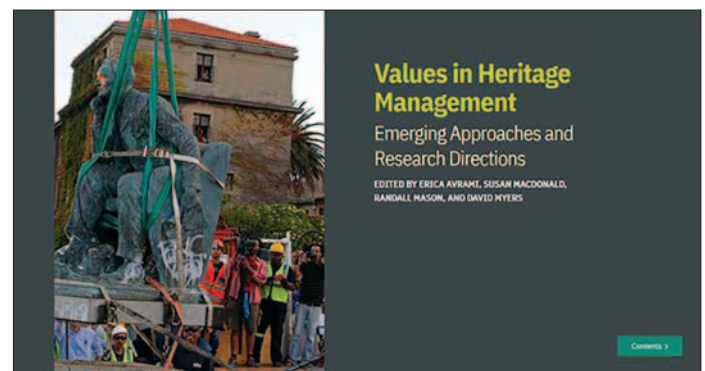


November 2019

The brochure is available online at <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/buildings/technical-conservation-guidance>
For any queries contact: conservation@historicengland.org.uk

The **Getty Conservation Institute** has just published an open-access volume offering a timely look at values-based approaches to heritage management. *Values in Heritage Management: Emerging Approaches and Research Directions* is edited by Erica Avrami, Susan Macdonald, Randall Mason and David Myers. The issues considered by the contributing international practitioners and scholars include how heritage relates to broader societal concerns including politics, cultural identities, economic trends, changing models of governance, and climate change and sustainability; and how values-based methods have come to influence conservation.

This resource is available digitally for free, both online and as an e-book. Or it can be purchased as a paperback for £40.



Icon staff news



Members may have noted that changes were afoot in the Icon Office this autumn, as Icon's Membership Officer **Lucy Farley** departed to take up a new role working for a private ceramics dealer in London.

'It's been an absolute pleasure to meet so many of you,' she wrote in an update. 'My new position is with a private ceramics dealer so I will be staying firmly within the sector and hope to see more of you all in the future, at Icon events and elsewhere.'

Lucy worked closely with Icon members to manage their subscriptions, promote Group events, administrate the Conservation Register and, of course, to progress the annual renewal cycle.

Stepping into Lucy's shoes as the new Membership Officer, **Isabelle Pintado** joined us in November.

Isabelle has moved from Sydney, Australia, to London after working within the membership team at the National Trust of Australia (NSW). She has nine years' experience in customer service and marketing, along with a great deal of interest in the conservation of cultural art and history, particularly in fashion and textiles.

Isabelle has hit the ground running and rapidly come to grips with the complexities of her new role, so she will be your contact for membership queries going forward.

Isabelle works Tuesday to Friday and can be contacted on ipintado@icon.org.uk

Welcome to these new members

We would like to extend a very warm welcome to all those who joined us in October and November 2019. We hope to see you at an Icon event soon!

Michell Adams
Student

Tarja Bennett
Associate

Lucia Blackmore
Student

Claudia Bolling
Supporter

Yan Ling Choi
Student

Kathryn Copeland
Supporter

Kezia Cosson
The Bowes Museum
HLF Intern

Charlotte Doble
Student

Amanda Dodd
Supporter

Rebecca Dolan
Student

Emily Gallagher
Student

Eliane Gomes
Nautilus Boekbinderij en
Restauratie Atelier
Associate

Bethanie Goodman
Student

James Grierson
Supporter

Callista Jerman
Supporter

Senan Kelleher
Kelsen Special Projects Ltd
Supporter

Jihun Kwon
Associate

Tracy Manning
Church of England
Associate

Kirsty Meek
Supporter

Stefanie Mueller
Student

Chrysanthe Pantages
Student

Clive Payne
Clive Payne Restoration
Associate

Lais Perry
West Dean College of Art and
Conservation
Student

Andrea Porto
Associate

Bethany Procopio
Student

Liza Shapiro
Cura Art LLC
Supporter

Haim Shushan
National Library of Israel
Associate

Christina Stephenson
Associate

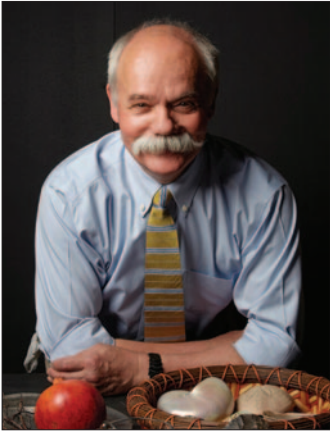
Michelle Sticht
Associate

Jason Struthers
JPS Restoration and Property
Services
Associate

Kah Whai Tham
Student

Michelle Yunque
Associate

In memory



Mark Robert Norman 1949- 2019

Mark Norman, much loved former Head of Conservation at the Ashmolean Museum and Chair of UKIC, very sadly and unexpectedly, died of a cardiac arrest in Guernsey, his place of birth, on 27 October 2019. Mark leaves behind his wife Val and children, Lizzie and Bonamy, and grandson Otto.

Mark was a very special person known to so many people both in the profession and in the Oxford community where he lived. He was generous, knowledgeable, impeccably dressed, courteous and passionate with a delightful irreverence that made him connect strongly with those around him. He was also an effective and committed lifelong advocate for conservation.

Mark trained with a Diploma in Archaeological Conservation at the Institute of Archaeology, London 1973 and subsequently worked with Midlands Area Museum Council and Bristol City Museum. He was a founder member of the UKIC archaeology section in 1976, advocating strongly to bring disparate parts of the profession together. As Deputy and later Chair of UKIC in 1993 he was instrumental in forming the Conservation Forum, an overarching association of UK professional associations. Later

he developed with professional groups, occupational standards for conservation.

This generous and intelligent commitment to integration, professionalism and the raising of standards, was brought to his work at the Ashmolean Museum. In 1985 Mark was appointed Chief Conservator in the Department of Antiquities, and over thirty-one years he transformed the status and professional profile of conservation within the museum and University.

Early on he demonstrated his passion for the Egyptian collections, conserving the largest single object in the museum, the seventh century BC Nubian Shrine of Taharqa, with the conservator Seamus Hannah. This began his longstanding contribution to understanding the conservation of Egyptian objects and his pioneering work on the history of conservation, which uncovered a wealth of information on the way these objects have been treated and used. In 2014, following a major redisplay of five Egyptian galleries, Mark organised and convened an international conference that combined research and conservation practice alongside gallery design and development. The learning had a wider application for all those who work with older collections where repair and restoration were rarely documented in a direct way.

Within a University museum context he understood that the value of the conservator's understanding of the history and behaviour of materials can add to research into collections, and the way they are presented to the academic community and the public. He believed that best practice in collections care should infuse every object-centred activity, from the most humble aspects of housekeeping, to

examination by researchers and teaching.

Mark was chosen to head a new single Conservation Department at the Ashmolean in 1999, bringing together conservators from five curatorial departments as one, allowing Mark to address the needs of the collections as a whole. It aptly illustrates his ability to think strategically whilst always working to bring people together. In 2004, rather than raising money to conserve individual objects, he successfully found money to build a new paper conservation studio for the museum.

The 2004-2009 redevelopment and innovative thematic redisplay of the Ashmolean's collections delighted Mark with its new egalitarian and unstuffy approach, making the museum relevant to wider audiences. The project was a tremendous logistical as well as conservation challenge. Many of the most fragile and complex objects were displayed now for the first time. Mark worked tirelessly, leading on the decant of 500,000 objects, testing 450 cases, providing support for thirty-nine new galleries, the refurbishment of seventeen existing galleries and developing six new stores. A groundbreaking initiative was the inclusion of two permanent public galleries, *Restoring the Past*, and *Conserving the Past*, devoted to the history and practice of conservation. These galleries are embedded in the museum and are unique in the UK, showcasing Mark's commitment to conservation and public engagement.

Improving the conservation for the collections through environmental control and

state of the art conservation facilities, was a core theme of the 2009 redevelopment, which Mark led to a successful conclusion. He was immensely proud of his team and their new home, retiring as Head of Conservation in 2016.

Mark used the growth and developing stature of the Conservation Department, in his final years at the Ashmolean, to foster partnerships in heritage science. In the years following his retirement too, Mark was always ready to respond with support and advice. He returned happily in 2017 to help appoint a new three-year Research Fellowship in the History of Conservation at the Ashmolean, an area of research that was close to his heart and one he did so much to establish.

As a colleague and friend he was approachable, kind and always on side, giving his team unwavering support. Outside Oxford, his influence was widespread and his breadth of knowledge and capacity for detail was legendary, he delighted in it.

A memorial for Mark is being planned for the Spring 2020 in Oxford. For further information please contact Daniel.bone@ashmus.ox.ac.uk

MONUMENTAL CONSERVATION

In the second of his three-part series, James Mitchell ACR of Industrial Heritage Consulting Ltd continues the story of a project to conserve D W Stevenson's 'Wallace' monument

The story so far

Survey work on the 6m tall bronze statue revealed damage both to the statue and to the sandstone niche in which it stands, part way up a 67m high tower. A massive scaffolding was erected and the in situ dismantling of the statue got underway, starting with the sword arm and head. The process begins to shed light on how it had been assembled and erected.

The National Wallace Monument. The six metre Stevenson bronze, about one third of the way up the tower, is dwarfed by the structure



Image: Stirling District Tourism

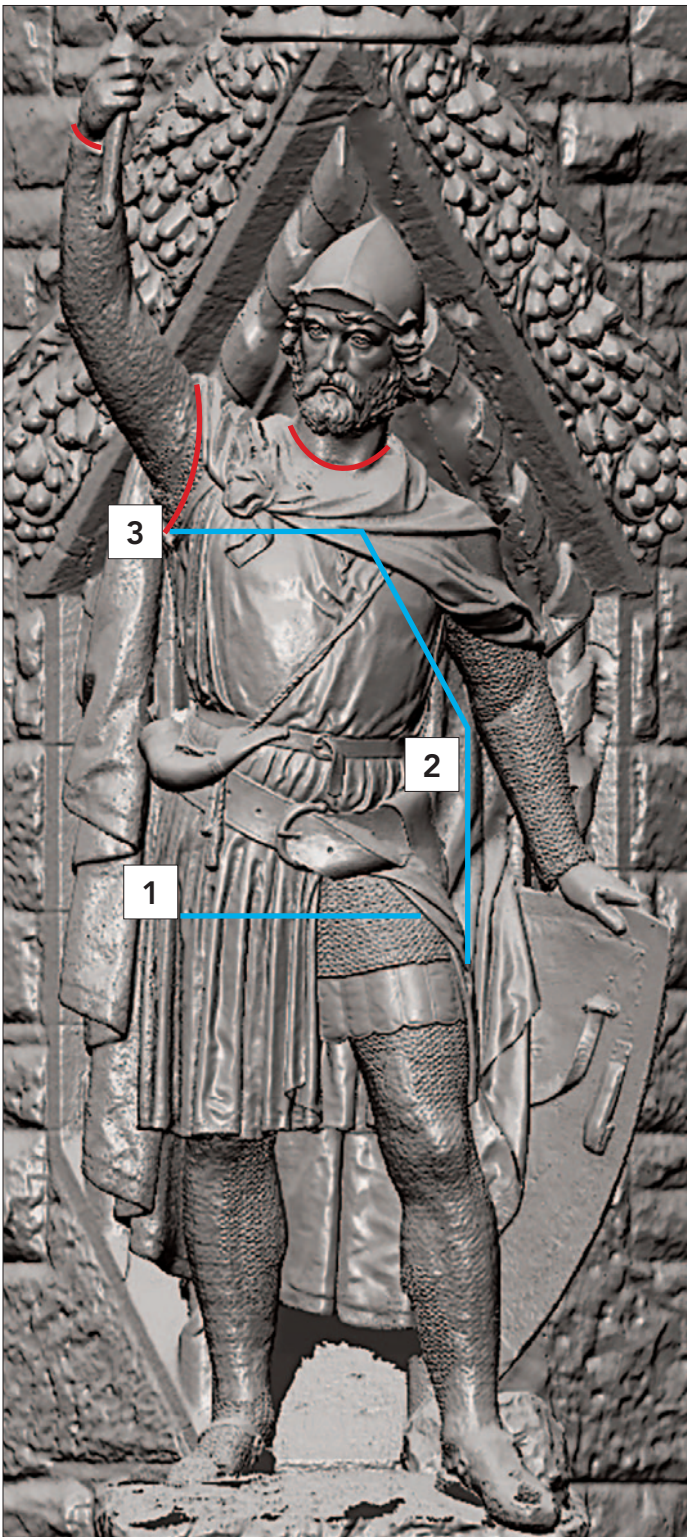


The hips and legs remaining. The slot for the locating cotter can be seen on the far side, the crotch joint is in the centre and the sand filling can be seen below

CONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUE

It was found that the torso and legs were filled with sand and gravel, pieces of wood, a few pieces of brick - basically fill, topped with a layer of moulding sand, all to make up the space below what was in fact, a casting bed. This was repeated at each joint level.

The statue is made up from eight different castings, jointed seamlessly when viewed from the outside. However, the clue to construction was literally writ in the sand. It has been deduced that, first of all, the legs were filled with sand up to where an internal locking wedge at the crotch proved that each leg was formed as a separate casting. The legs were then filled with sand and gravel up to the crotch level. This is indicated by the 1 on the diagram on page 18. A layer of 'Mansfield Red' (moulding sand) was levelled off at the joint line then depressed to form a trough and molten bronze poured in. This was almost certainly done at the foundry, as it would have been impossible in the 1870s to achieve 950 degrees centigrade, twenty metres up on a scaffold.



The red lines indicate where the lead-run joints were made on site. The blue lines shows molten bronze jointing at the foundry

This process was repeated at points 2 and 3 on the image above

It is assumed that damp clay would have been pressed around the outside of the joint to retain the molten bronze until it cooled. The evidence of this pour was found in the form of spatter and overspill in the moulding sand as it was excavated. It is self-evident that the exterior surface was then beautifully hand tooled to match the surrounding moulded surfaces.

This process was repeated by filling up with more sand to the next level which was the waist / torso joint (at 2). This was keyed and locked into place internally and a new layer of moulding

sand was then formed, and a second pour took place. A third fill formed a joint run at the cape and left arm joint - considerably more complicated, with almost vertical elements included, ending up at the left shoulder (3). This brought the sequential sand levels up to the lower left shoulder level: hence a statue full of sand that could not be removed.

As noted earlier, the remaining joints were keyed then leaded from the outside. These are the joints marked in red on the diagram. The sole of the right foot was left open to allow most of the sand to be removed, but (we believe) temporarily plugged for the jointing work. It can only be assumed that for whatever reason, the sand was never removed, either deliberately or because of a blockage

This methodology came to make perfect sense but was not immediately apparent. When the statue was dismantled, each part was weighed and the sand was weighed, both totalling just under 2.5 tonnes. Stories have it that the statue weighed over three tons when installed. The additional weight could be ascribed partly at least to the sand being wetted for casting, miscalculation or even exaggeration. We can never be sure.

The frost-heave damage to the legs (which was limited considering its age) could be ascribed to the moisture in the sand freezing and expanding but as it gradually dried out, this damage would cease or reduce. However other repairs were found in these areas using molten tin, which was almost certainly carried out from the inside and therefore at the foundry, suggesting casting flaws.

The 'ballast' argument for the presence of the sand is further diminished by the presence of a stout iron rod, 47mm in diameter, screwed into the statue at pectoral height, sheathed in copper and run five metres diagonally through the corner of the building, above the window embrasure to the inside. Two smaller, 25mm bronze rods were fitted as shown overleaf, probably as stabilisers to eliminate gyrotory movement in high winds. This, combined with the triangulated foot anchor points, nicely stabilised the structure.

DISMANTLING & DISASSEMBLY

It was decided that dismantling would be carried out using the 'reverse engineering' principle by dismantling the statue in situ, following the assembly method used at the foundry. This allowed much more control and predictable behaviour of each part when lifted, thus ensuring the integrity of the surrounding stone niche, just a few centimetres away. A load cell (a spring balance with a dial) was fitted between the hand operated 3-tonne chain hoist and each lifted section. This meant that the precise load exerted could be compared to the estimated weight to ensure we were not trying to lift the whole monument!

Cutting the joints could never have been carried out with any accuracy without the evidence that was revealed when the head was removed. This allowed internal excavation of the sand - largely carried out with long-handled scoops and vacuuming. Finding the joints internally facilitated a line to be plotted externally and the cuts were made using 1.5mm-thick cutting wheels, reciprocating saws and hand-held blades, depending on the awkwardness of the cut. The process took several weeks and was the most challenging part of the work, high on the monument in extreme weather conditions.



Image: James Mitchell

This shows the torso released and ready to lift. The proximity to the stone niche can be seen

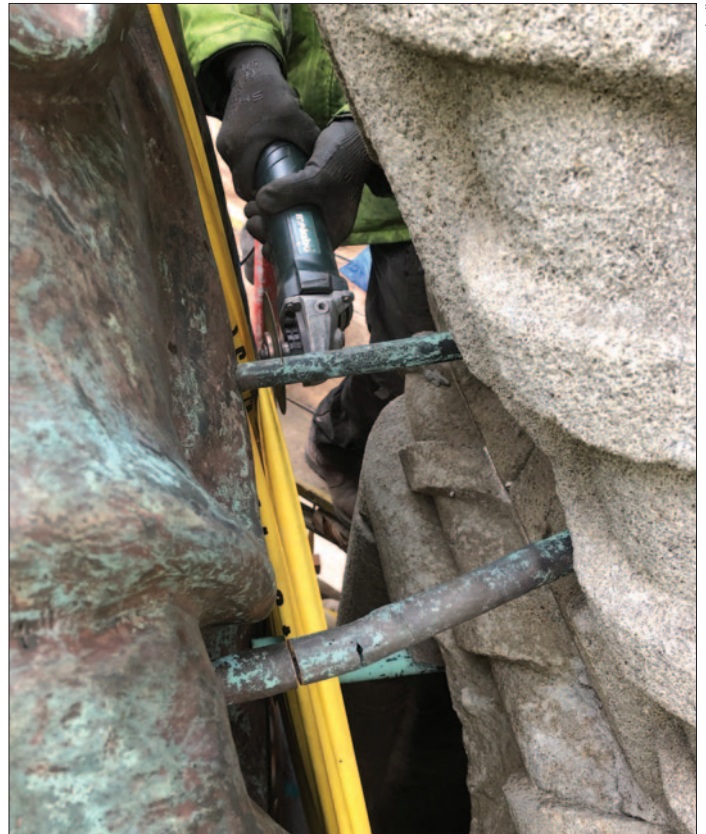


Image: James Mitchell

The bronze tie bars anchoring the statue to the stone work

The two-metre sword and hand, safely boxed at the site



Image: James Mitchell

As noted earlier, the statue was secured using three tie bars in total one of which had already fractured, weakened by an internal flaw. The feet were rooted about 70mm deep into the stone with tangs; two on the right foot, heel-and-toe and one on the left heel, allowing the left foot front to dramatically protrude over the edge of the stone. A fourth protruded from the shield tip down into a boulder-shaped piece of stone. All were sunk into cup-shaped indents, c.150mm in diameter and 120mm deep, then secured and topped out with molten lead. The heel of the left foot was set into the thinnest layer of the stone plinth and the heat of the original lead pour had induced hair-line fractures in the stone. This meant replacement would have to be approached differently.

Dismantling had to be carried out, whilst maintaining stability and being mindful of the nearby stonework, in sometimes ferocious weather conditions so the seven anchor points had to be maintained as long as possible. The tie-bars were progressively cut as the statue was dismantled, preventing undue stress to the adjoining stonework.

Stout 'art' cases were made to protect and transport each of the dismantled parts (six in all) so that they could be packed immediately before being lowered to the ground through the scaffolding. They were then taken to the workshop for de-sanding, assessment and weighing.

However, before heading for the workshop we had to consider the condition of the decorative niche, its over-mantle and pierced crown as well as the painted glass window, which seals off the 5m embrasure.

THE STONE

The monument was built using a coarse and open grained blonde or white sandstone. The large grained structure of the stone, with quartz and mica held in a relatively loose felsparic cementous mass, does not lend itself to intricate carving,



Image: Linda Cannon

The damaged embrasure window with the broken piece removed in situ. The replacement piece is shown below



Image: Linda Cannon

making the detail achieved quite remarkable. However, the extreme exposure of the lofty location, facing into the prevailing wind, has meant that there was considerable erosion with, at some points, holes worn through the stone at the plinth corners by vortex action.

The surround to the niche canopy had suffered erosion and the crown is in a terminal condition. This superb piece of carving from a single block pierced through to create a three-dimensional feature was carved from the locally quarried stone - not really suitable for the level of carving required but a fine piece of work nevertheless. Due to budget and time restraints, the crown has been netted for safety and an agreement has been made between Stirling Council and Historic Environment

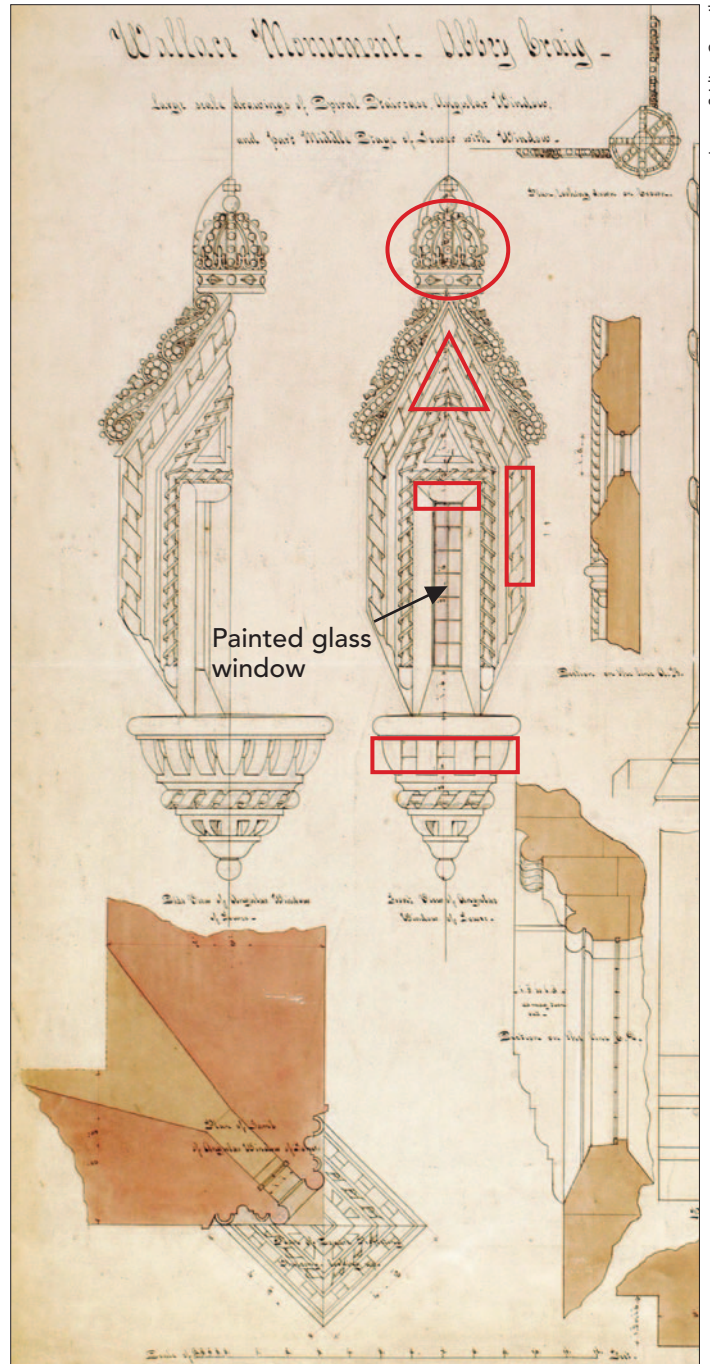


Image: Stirling Council

The architect's drawing of the niche and embrasure detail: annotated to show the window placement and where the stonework repairs were required

Scotland for the crown to be replicated in Catcastle Buff, a blonde sandstone, to be reinstated at a future date.

THE WINDOW

The embrasure was closed off by a fine iron-framed painted stained glass window. This was heavily soiled and there was a clear hole through one section; probably dating back many decades. This was addressed after the statue removal by Linda Cannon ACR who carried out a finely detailed reconstruction and hand-painting of the broken part.

In the final instalment we will learn about the conservation treatment of the bronze statue back at the workshop and then the process of reinstalment

CONFERENCES

FROM WESTON HOUSE TO THE WESTON LIBRARY: the Sheldon tapestry maps at the Bodleian

Oxford 22 October 2019

This specialist symposium, planned to coincide with the *Talking Maps* exhibition and the display of the newly conserved Oxfordshire map tapestry installed in the entrance hall of the Bodleian Library, had a celebratory feel to it. I must now declare my partisanship – the National Trust's Textile Conservation Studio undertook the conservation of all three of the map tapestries belonging to the Bodleian Library (Worcestershire, Oxfordshire and a fragment of Gloucestershire) so my interest in and review of this symposium must be seen in this light!

The event was well-attended, drawing people from academia, heritage, conservation and the general public and the mix made for good questions and subsequent debate. The first part of the day was given over to setting the scene of how the Bodleian Library came to be in possession of these tapestries (two left to the library and one bought in 2007), how the redevelopment of Weston Library building identified a space and an opportunity to display the map tapestries and finally the need for their conservation and the impact this has had on the objects.

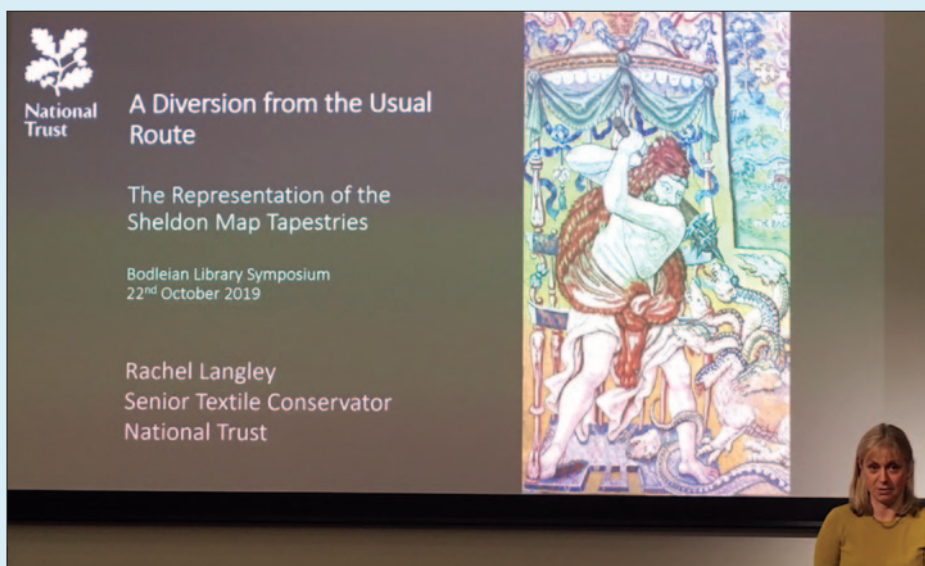
Richard Ovenden, Keeper of Special Collections, and **Nick Millea**, Map Librarian, brought this story to life for us all, commenting that although they understood that conservation was needed they had not expected that the process, both the cleaning and the subsequent stitched treatment, would have such a substantial impact. Often conservation is minimal and the difference, both visually and aesthetically, is hardly visible. However, in this case, with the successful wet cleaning, the bold and varied colour palette used by the weavers was brought to life. Dye analysis, commissioned from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, gave further information about the sources of these dyes and their mordants – the information given in more detail in a paper by **Virginia Lladó-Buisán ACR**.

Following this introduction, two papers were given which set the tapestries in context. For me these were the most revealing as it made connections I had not expected and had not made myself despite having read a certain amount about the Sheldon Map tapestries and other map tapestries. **Peter Barber**, former Head of Maps at the British Library, in his paper *Power, Propaganda, Magnificence: the cartographic background to Sheldon tapestry maps*, explained the difference between a display map and a cartographical map and how display maps have been used for over a thousand years. Maps of England



Alex Walker, Preventive Conservator at Bodleian Libraries, spoke about dye analysis

Rachel Langley ACR gave a presentation on the challenges of treating the tapestries



Rachel Langley ACR pinning and tacking the tapestry fragments to a new backing fabric





A detail of the Sheldon Tapestry Map of Oxfordshire

were depicted in paintings on canvas and paper from as early as 1536, demonstrating that the Sheldon Map tapestries followed not only Saxon's mapping of England (1570s) but earlier examples as well. In addition, Peter Barber explained, maps often depicted places and names of friends and allies of the commissioner of maps, showing their position and power base. The Sheldon Map tapestries are therefore following in this fine tradition.

Katie McKeogh's paper, *The Catholic Gentry in Ralph Sheldon's Midlands*, gave a fascinating insight into the families in the area, the circles of kinship, most particularly those of local catholic families, of which the Sheldons were one. The Sheldon Map tapestries depict these estates along with many others, villages and towns of note. Three sisters of the Throckmorton family, from Coughton Court, married into the Catesby, Tresham and Sheldon families. The Sheldons aside, Dr. McKeogh explained, the other three families were all implicated in the Gunpowder plot.

Other papers during the day looked at the conservation treatments and technical aspects of the tapestries. **Rachel Langley ACR**, Senior Conservator from the NT's Textile Conservation Studio, highlighted the challenges faced in conserving the very fragmented Oxfordshire tapestry and the solutions found in her paper a *Diversion from the Usual Route – the representation of the Sheldon Map Tapestries*. This was followed by curators, **Maggie Wood** and **Sara Wear** discussing the treatment and iconography of Warwickshire County Council's Warwickshire map in their paper, *Now am I in Arden – Exploring the Warwickshire Tapestry Map*.

Hilary Turner's paper detailing further research and findings on the weaving of the Sheldon map tapestries was wonderfully illustrated while **Alex Walker's** paper, *Materiality and preservation: analysis of dyes and micro-fading*, laid out the technical analysis undertaken on the thread samples from these tapestries, looking both at the dyes used and at likely fading rates. The colours are extraordinarily vivid for tapestries of this age and understanding their likely fading rate,

using micro-fading techniques, will inform the appropriate light levels for these splendid tapestries and their display rotation. This will enable the Library to strike the right balance between sharing and preserving these particular objects in their collection.

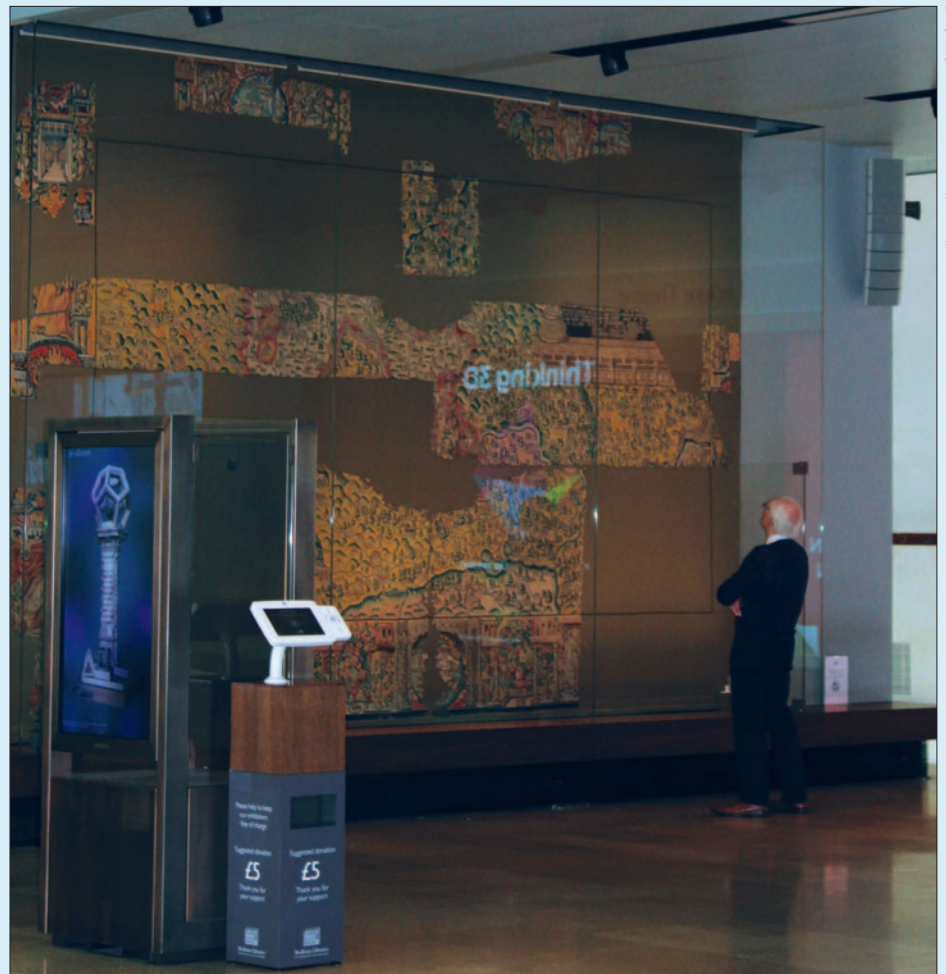
As the symposium was held in a lecture theatre adjacent to the exhibition, we were able to enjoy this at lunchtime and see other

maps, their use and make up. All in all, it was a stimulating and fascinating day of talks and discussion. The exhibition is on until 8 March 2020 and you will find the Oxfordshire map tapestry in the Weston Library atrium. I urge you to go and see both.

Maria Jordan ACR

National Trust

The Tapestry displayed in the Weston Library



CONSERVING CANVAS

New Haven, Connecticut
14-17 October 2019

The *Conserving Canvas* Symposium at Yale University brought together conservators, conservation scientists and curators from across the world to discuss the structural treatment of canvas paintings. The four-day event was the first major gathering to address this topic since the Greenwich Lining Conference in 1974. Due to its popularity (it had quickly sold out) it had been moved to the lecture theatre at the Yale University Art Gallery, which could hold all three hundred and seventy delegates. The symposium was supported by the Getty Foundation as part of the ongoing *Conserving Canvas Initiative*. This review aims to give a flavour of the event overall, highlighting themes and picking out a few specific examples.

After registration with coffee and breakfast at a nearby venue, the delegates gathered in the lecture theatre to be welcomed by **Ian McClure ACR**, director of the Yale Institute for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage and Chief Conservator at Yale University Art Gallery, who also chaired the first session. Starting with the key-note lecture by

Stephen Hackney, the symposium reflected on the progress that had been made since the Greenwich lining conference, with a number of presentations making reference to this event. In their paper **Clare Richardson** and **Camille Polkownik** of the Courtauld mentioned that the films made during the Greenwich Conference are being digitised as part of their collaborative research with Royal Museums Greenwich and will soon be made available. Several speakers, including **Nicola Costaras** of the V&A and **Renate Poggendorf** of the Doerner Institute, highlighted the fact that during their careers in museums they had not needed to undertake linings, emphasising the shift that has taken place in conservation practice towards an approach of 'minimal intervention'. However, this only served to highlight the importance of retaining the knowledge and skills related to lining for those cases when it is still the best treatment available - the last resort.

Experienced practitioners from Italy, the UK, the Netherlands and the USA discussed specific treatments and their general approaches to lining treatments. These ranged from traditional pasta linings, to Beva371 and mist lining with synthetic adhesives, with all the presentations openly

discussing recipes and techniques. For example, **Matteo Rossi Doria** discussed his use of pasta linings and adaption of traditional recipes, illustrated with impressive examples of these linings on a huge scale in historic buildings in Italy; and **Kate Seymour** of SRAL in the Netherlands examined the mist lining technique which has been developed at that institution over many years. The papers placed emphasis on the need for different elements of a treatment (such as consolidation, flattening and tear repair) to be addressed as individual needs, rather than using one treatment to try to solve all structural issues simultaneously.

While the symposium concentrated on the art and conservation practices of Western Europe and North America, other regions were represented as well. Speakers from India, Mexico, Korea and Russia reflected on the structural treatment of paintings in these countries. Additionally, **Emilie Desbarax** discussed the treatment of African paintings in the Royal Museum for Central Africa in Belgium.

Many of the case studies discussed did not involve lining but showed how more targeted treatments - such as highly developed techniques for tear repair - often make the practice unnecessary, especially in relation to modern paintings. **Emily Mulvihill's** presentation put forward an impressive array of complex tear mends on modern and contemporary paintings undertaken at Amann + Estabrook Conservation Associates, which demonstrated adaptations of thread-by-thread mending techniques (though the paintings themselves had to be obscured due to client confidentiality). The private conservator, **Mary Gridley**, also discussed tear-mending for modern paintings; she highlighted the knowledge of conservation and condition amongst contemporary collectors who often demand invisible mending and retention of original components.

Papers also demonstrated new tools and materials with practical applications. One of the most captivating sessions was that devoted to adhesives. **Alexandra Bridarolli** discussed research into the use of nanocellulose for strengthening and protecting canvas, carried out as part of the Nanorestart EU project. **Mona Konietzny** from Bern University of Applied Sciences introduced the adhesive meshes that she has developed. Refinement of this elegant adaption of existing adhesives (such as methyl cellulose and sturgeon glue) continues and she hopes to produce a commercially available product. Finally, **Hannah Flock**, during her presentation of research into adhesives for the thread-by-thread tear mending, introduced a tool for both heating and applying adhesive locally which had been named 'Winnie' after Winfried Heiber - the pioneer of the thread-by-thread tear mending technique.

Matteo Rossi Doria presenting his paper at the Conserving Canvas Symposium



While these papers examined current practice and innovation, others reflected on the treatments of the past. A number gave overviews of historic approaches to structural treatments at different institutions, from the Kunsthistorisches in Vienna to the National Gallery in Rome (where the earliest documented lining can be dated to the 17th century). Discussion of the reversal of historic linings, and more especially those with more modern adhesives such as wax-resin and Beva 371, focussed thoughts on future issues related to past interventions, as well as the implications of more restricted access to certain chemicals due to environmental concerns. Speakers championing traditional glue-paste linings also highlighted the green credentials of this technique.

On Wednesday, there was an afternoon of short practical workshops. Unfortunately, not all delegates were able to participate, due to restrictions on numbers. However, those of us not able to attend made use of the afternoon to visit the Yale museums - the branded conference bags making our fellow delegates easy to spot. The morning and afternoon breaks allowed time for discussion, catching up with old acquaintances and making new connections, alongside viewing the many posters.

The success of the conference was emphasised by the fact that the lecture theatre remained full until the very last session. After four incredibly intense days, I left Yale armed with a greater understanding of a range of treatments and a renewed interest in tackling more complex structural treatments myself. I would like to thank the Robert Shepherd memorial fund, which is administered by the Anna Plowden Trust, for supporting my attendance at the symposium.

Alexandra Gent ACR

National Portrait Gallery

RECENT ADVANCES IN GLASS AND CERAMICS CONSERVATION 2019

Icon Ceramics & Glass Group

ICOM-CC Glass & Ceramics

London September 2019

Last autumn, conservators and conservation scientists from around the world gathered at the British Museum for this conference, which marked the 5th Interim Meeting of ICOM-CC Glass and Ceramics, and the 34th year of dedicated events from Icon's Ceramics and Glass Group. With site visits, papers and meetings spanning four days, it was an exciting professional event and a wonderful opportunity to network and socialise.

After introductory remarks by **Sandra Smith ACR**, Head of Collection Care at the British Museum, the first session focussed on technical art history. **Wendy Meulebroeck** of Vrije Universiteit Brussel and **Valérie**

Montens from the Royal Museums of Art and History in Brussels presented the rationale and initial findings of the FENESTRA project, which focuses on the investigation and conservation of flat glass collections from the RMAH. **Marian Schüch** of the State Academy of Art and Design in Stuttgart then wowed the audience with his reconstructions of spiral-crack-glasses. He discussed outcomes of testing several historic 'recipes' for producing the crack and then demonstrated the flexibility of the novel glasses with a video, which elicited gasps from the audience. **Rachel Sabino** concluded the session with an overview of how the Art Institute of Chicago utilised medical computed tomography scanning to aid in the authentication of a group of West African ceramic figurines, demonstrating the importance of cross-disciplinary collaboration for conservators.

Next came a session on glass deterioration and vulnerability. **Teresa Palomar** of the Universidade Nova de Lisboa discussed how infrared thermography can be used to track the heating and cooling of stained glass windows exposed to direct sunlight and to assess the efficacy of external protective glazing. With a beautiful 19th-century glass flute as an example, **Lynn Brostoff** from the Library of Congress emphasised the importance of utilising multiple tools to characterise glass surface alteration layers, which allows for a thorough assessment of condition and informs preservation strategies. Drawing on his joint research at the Rijksmuseum, the University of Texas at Dallas and the Corning Museum of Glass, **Guus Verhaar** gave an overview of the use of laser ablation-inductively coupled plasma-mass spectroscopy and ion chromatography to investigate ion depletion in unstable

historic glass.

This was followed by a session on polychrome ceramic objects. **Rong Bo** of the Terracotta Army Museum kindly stood in for an absent presenter to deliver a presentation on the polychrome lacquer layers that once covered the famous terracotta warriors and the work his team is doing to develop methods of preserving this fragile pigmentation from disintegrating post-excavation. **Duygu Camurcuoglu ACR** and **Lucia Pereira-Pardo** from the British Museum described their innovative and highly successful use of Er:YAG lasers to clean biological growth from a large collection of Cypriot ceramic figurines.

The day concluded with the award of the bi-annual Nigel Williams Prize to the BM's team project and the Student Prize to Holly Daws, followed by a welcoming drinks reception at the Museum.

The second day focused on treatment methods and materials. Firstly, **Thea Schuck** presented her investigation into the use of Paraloid barrier layers for epoxy resin bonds on glass objects - a simple but effective method to increase reversibility. With a retrospective view, **Norman Tennent** evaluated the application of FTIR-ATR spectroscopy to characterise polymer fills from past conservation treatments. He emphasised the importance of identifying small formulation differences in commercially available products and advocated for the establishment of a comprehensive database of spectra for such materials.

Drawing on the treatment of a large 16th-century glass vessel at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, **Rebecca Gridley** discussed how to adapt vacuum-formed PVC to create double-walled moulds, which allowed her to

Denise Ling, Ceramics and Glass conservator at the British Museum, talking to delegates in the museum's new Conservation Centre





Guided tour of the Wallace Collection for ICOM-CC and Icon delegates. Curator Helen Jacobsen talked about the extensive Sevres collection

cast a large detachable fill and avoid damaging the object's original gilded surface. **Roy van der Wielen** from the University of Amsterdam offered exciting insight into the viability of thermocasting B-72 in silicone moulds, which can circumvent the problems of shrinkage and bubble formation.

There were also a number of excellent presentations by current and recent students of ceramics and glass conservation. **Emily Thomas** encouraged greater consideration of how Biotex stain removing powder may potentially affect ceramic surfaces and **Cassia Balogh** presented a thorough technical investigation of an Attic kyphos. **Lien Acke** examined the use of computer-aided design in creating a digital 'toolbox' to assist with modelling of fills on ceramic objects and **Erato Kartaki** presented the preliminary stages of her research into utilising additive manufacturing technology to aid aesthetic restoration of losses.

With a sticky situation on their hands, **Zoë Bedford** and **Julia Wagner** described the complexities of recreating historic adhesives used for the repair of ceramics from traditional recipes, further complicated by having to utilise modern ingredients. **Ângela Santos** then showcased her investigation of a collection of hand-painted magic lantern slides. **Inês Coutinho** wrapped up the student session with an overview of initial research into Portuguese Renaissance millefiori glass, presenting on behalf of **Francisca Pulido Valente**. It was great to see so many emerging conservators confidently presenting their research.

After a full day of technical papers, the conference dinner at a beautiful Grade I listed building on Pall Mall offered attendees the chance to relax and socialise.

The third and final day saw a morning of meetings by Icon and ICOM-CC specialist Ceramic and Glass Groups' members and an exciting and varied poster session. There were nearly forty posters displayed

throughout the event, from established and emerging conservators, researchers and students from all over the world.

The afternoon began with a session dedicated to salts in ceramics. **Gerhard Eggert**, from Stuttgart's State Academy of Art and Design gave a lively talk about magnesium efflorescence on ceramics discussing at length their potential sources. **Madeline Hagerman**, from Winterthur Museum & Library, covered the conservation of tiles with two differing treatment options for two Delft tiles fireplaces, which proved that as so often in in-situ cases no one solution fits the bill and the conservator has to be adaptive and innovative whilst keeping best practice in mind. This paper was followed by **Tiago Oliveira** and **Inês Feliciano's** paper, which illustrated this principle in the non-aqueous conservation of a beautiful ornate late renaissance tiled stove, where conservation took place in the public arena.

The last session delved into the specifics of conserving glazed bodies. **Corinna de Regt** explained how different production techniques influenced the depth of consolidation of Egyptian faience, whilst **Bert-Jan Bass** and **Luc Megens** from the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands, highlighted several uranium glazes used by Dutch manufacturers in the early 20th century. A useful paper on a subject that is rarely discussed, alerting to a source of radiation.

Tiago Oliveira CGGroup Co-chair
Amy Walsh Emerging Conservator (Objects)

Ros Hodges Private Practice

A Student view of the event

Conservation graduate school can give you tunnel vision. We delve so deeply into our treatment projects and research that even the most interdisciplinary program can feel secluded. This conference brought my

classmates and I into the wider conservation community in more ways than one.

We arrived in London the night before the conference began, jet lagged and excited, and were immediately struck by the history of the city. Each day after the conference ended, we toured the British Museum galleries, Tate Modern, or the Barbican Centre. It was fascinating to see various approaches to historic preservation, especially in a historic city like London.

The conference showed us that if the conservation community is small, the network of inorganic experts is even smaller. This meant that each morning we lined up for coffee with the authors of papers we had been referencing in our coursework. As emerging conservators, it was a unique opportunity to mingle with established members of the field and our international peers. It was especially valuable to attend with the head of our lab and conference coordinator, Lauren Fair. Her passion was contagious. More than anything else, her dedication to the event let us fully appreciate the impact that these international organizations can have on the field.

During the poster session, we presented two projects that incorporated work from our summer internships and first year curriculum. As a student, it is gratifying to apply our academic projects to practical questions in the field, and more encouraging getting feedback from the experts on these topics. The poster sessions also offered us the chance to network with peers from international graduate programs in Art Conservation. We found ourselves side-by-side with colleagues from the National Palace Museum of Korea, the E. Geppert Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław, Poland, and the University of Amsterdam. Discussions quickly evolved from our specific posters to the diverse experiences in international conservation graduate programs. Not only did we have the chance to learn about alternative approaches to conservation education but connect with the burgeoning international network of emerging conservators.

Disseminating and sharing information is fundamental to conservation, and these professional networks are some of the best tools we have. As a student, there is a fundamental difference between reading the post-prints of a conference and listening in the audience while an expert shares a cutting-edge technique. This conference connected our coursework into the larger body of research, making us feel part of the scholarship.

Emily Brzezinski, Katerina Acuna & Marie Desrochers

2nd year Graduate Fellows,
 Winterthur/University of Delaware Program
 in Art Conservation, United States



UDPAC students and faculty on the steps of the British Museum for the joint ICOM-CC and Icon conference.

Back row from left: Katerina Acuna (2nd-year WUDPAC Objects Major), Maddie Hagerman (Instructor in Art Conservation, University of Delaware), Emily Brzezinski (2nd-year WUDPAC Objects Major).

Front row from left: Marie Desrochers (2nd-year WUDPAC Preventive Major), Lauren Fair (Winterthur Objects Conservator, Affiliated Professor in Art Conservation), Lara Kaplan (Winterthur Objects Conservator, WUDPAC Affiliated Professor in Art Conservation)

LESSONS LEARNED: Textile conservation – then and now

North American Textile Conservation Conference
23-27 September Canada

Textile conservation is an international community and a small enough world that we often have good colleagues and friends in many countries. And the North American Textile Conservation Conference (NATCC) is one of the best venues for exchanging information in our field, where it is a great

pleasure to meet up with colleagues and friends from all around the world and to make new contacts.

The 12th biennial conference was a special occasion as it marked twenty years since the first NATCC meeting in 1997 and because of this the conference returned to Ottawa, the original location. The meeting was held at the Canadian Museum of History (CMH), an exciting museum which tells the story of Canada from the different perspectives of its original and colonial inhabitants. It

presented a valuable opportunity to look back at how things have changed in the period since 1997, and reflection and development were key themes of the conference. As **Ela Keyserlingk**, Chair of the first NATCC meeting, said in her opening address, it is only by having the courage and honesty to look back that we can see how to learn lessons for the future. Presentations over two days demonstrated how much things have changed in these twenty years, with speakers reporting on refined conservation techniques, new conservation materials and leaps in science and technology with great advances in analytical methods.

Less tangibly, in a major change over these years, the social contexts of treatment have become as important as the physical considerations. As **Caterina Florio**, the textile conservator at CMH, notably said in her introduction, conservation has become more complex and more layered. While the CMH has worked with originating communities since its foundation, working with different communities has become a much more fundamental part of museum and conservation practice around the world.

In his keynote speech, **John Moses** of CMH asserted that ‘in no other realm have we witnessed such profound developments in conservation practice as within the field of conservation values and ethics.’ He told us that it is a conservator’s duty, and a fundamental part of the museum role, to be aware of national and international milestones in indigenous rights including the internationally significant United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples of 2007. Specifically, he asked us to

The Canadian Museum of History near Ottawa: host of the NATCC event





The Museum's main hall

do our utmost to retrieve and record indigenous terminology when treating indigenous objects, and to document the cultural tradition within which the object was used, part of establishing the necessary truth before any reconciliation can take place. This was a powerful presentation and very timely in a period when the legacy of colonialism and the potential repatriation of objects are key issues in European museums.

Increased levels of access to historic buildings are another key aspect of this development, which puts people alongside objects at the heart of conservators' practice. In a fascinating presentation, **Josie Milne** of Parks Canada Agency explained how she and her colleagues mitigate risks to historic buildings used over an extended period each year to host Halloween events including haunted house tours.

The reach of a textile conservator's work has also extended considerably in this period, with contemporary art playing a much larger role. **Sophia Zweifel** and **Robert VanderBerg** talked about the inherent difficulties in using Micheline Beauchemin's monumental, 1500 kg, stage curtain in Ottawa's National Art Centre which have led to it being put into storage. They demonstrated how the value and significance of an artefact may shift over time, leading to a decline in an institution's will to preserve an artefact, and argued for a greater role for the conservator in the commissioning process.

Documentation was also an important theme with many presenters demonstrating how documentation can reduce the amount of physical conservation needed, or even replace the need for conservation. It was

clear that documentation has improved over the years so that it is now much more likely that the rationale for treatment will be documented in addition to the technical details of treatment carried out. **Sara Reiter's** paper on the 1961 wet cleaning of a 10th century Persian shroud, unusually well documented for this period, showed how important this was, to the benefit of future conservators and other stakeholders.

On a less serious note, for an attendee of many conferences over more than three decades, one of the obvious developments in this period is the transformation of conference technology. I don't miss the days when you had to carefully transport boxes of slides to project during your presentation – nowadays digital imagery, video and snappy presentation techniques make presentations much livelier. A presentation by **Corine Siegmund** on the digital reconstruction of a Maori pui-pui at the Reiss-Engelhorn Museums in Mannheim, Germany, demonstrated the state of the art in this field and its value in presenting a virtual conservation treatment to members of the public.

It was a great pleasure to meet up with TCC and CTC graduates and they were well represented at the conference. **Sarah Owens**, a Southampton graduate now working at Anchorage Museum in Alaska opened the conference with a fascinating talk about the museum's Material Traditions programme which provides a space for indigenous artists to recover traditional skills in working with native materials. Southampton graduates **Christina Margariti** and **Tina Chanielaki** reviewed old and new approaches in the conservation of excavated textiles, demonstrating how scientific advancements sometimes enable less interventive treatments but that conservation, while it may entail a shift in the type of skills employed, is still necessary to communicate objects to the public.

TCC and CTC textile conservation graduates in Ottawa



Emma Schmitt discussed the assessment and retreatment of a Buddhist thangka, also concluding that opinions, processes and contexts may shift over decades. She detailed how the object itself was the best source of information when the 1979 treatment records did not record the rationale for treatment. **Gennifer Majors**, another Glasgow graduate, co-authored a paper with **Sophia Zweifel** on their research project, undertaken as part of the Isabel Bader Fellowship at Queen's University, Canada, looking for traces of historic laundry techniques on objects in the collection. I worked with **Alison Lister** on a paper which evaluated changes in private practice over three decades and the challenges of preparing conservation students to work in a freelance context, based on our common backgrounds in establishing and running Textile Conservation Ltd in Bristol and our shared experience of teaching conservation students.

I also enjoyed a tour of the very impressive stores and conservation labs of the CMH and, memorably, an early morning yoga session in the museum's Grand Hall. I would like to thank the local hosts and the NATCC Board very much for all their hard work in putting together another great conference. The 13th meeting will be in Nashville in 2021 with the theme of Outside Influences – I recommend it.

Frances Lennard ACR

Professor of Textile Conservation
University of Glasgow

For more about textile conservation at the University of Glasgow, go to:
<http://textileconservation.academicblogs.co.uk/>

CONSERVATION IN COLOUR

Icon Textile Group
Manchester November 2019

Icon's Textile Group and the Textile Society collaborated to bring together two days of textile wonderment to the world of conservation and textile enthusiasts. The Peoples' History Museum in Manchester hosted the Textile Group event, whilst the Museum of Science and Industry Manchester hosted the Textile Society's conference on The Power of Colour.

After an introduction on the first day by Group Chair **Ann French ACR**, **Zenzie Tinker ACR** started proceedings with a fabulous, innovative method for the re-colouring of the tester from a magnificent gilded state bed, designed by Robert Adam, at Kedleston Hall. Zenzie had been tasked with covering the original, faded and fragile silk damask with a new blue silk damask. This had to be achieved without attaching the new fabric to the original. Zenzie's team covered the original fabric with an impermeable barrier layer and manufactured



Tour of the Conservation Workshop at the People's History Museum

a thin but strong papier-mâché mould of the object. The silk damask was then adhered to the mould using a thermoplastic adhesive film and the barrier layer was removed. The new blue silk was then held in place on the state bed with the original gilding. A truly mammoth task was made to look really simple.

Nicola Gentle ACR followed with another object designed by Robert Adam: a 1769 carpet from Saltram House with unacceptable earlier conservation treatment. Extensive over stitching repairs had been undertaken with yarns of inappropriate colour that distracted from the original design. However, the structure of the carpet would have been compromised by removing the repair yarns. To unpick, or not to unpick, was the crucial question. Nicola overcame the problem by adopting a technique developed by the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, where the inappropriate colours were retouched using Lascaux's Sirius primary watercolour system and then the carpet was digitally photographed. Visitor interest in the house has increased because of the work undertaken on the carpet.

A set of three 17th century Mortlake tapestries from Cotehele, Cornwall, were the next subject. **Jane Smith ACR** and **Nadine Wilson** offered a treatment for the infilling of large areas of loss with a digital printing technique. Firstly they discussed the removal of previous, failing conservation treatments and the subsequent cleaning undertaken both at the National Trust Conservation Studio, Norfolk and at De Wit in Belgium. A duplicate of the tapestry set was sourced and digitally photographed, with the colours manipulated to match the tapestries being conserved. The images could then be printed onto selected base fabrics. The process was all a lot harder than it sounds and Nadine outlined the problems with scoured fabrics and additional painting that had to be undertaken during the colour matching phase. The printed infills can be easily identified as additions to the tapestries but they give the viewer a better understanding of the original concept.

Laura Peters compared and evaluated the dyeing systems of Huntsman synthetic dyes. Her research has focused on the application methods of specific synthetic dyes; exhaust dyeing and the pad-dry-thermofix method. Laura then compared each to see how fibre-friendly, energy saving and complex each dyeing process was. Avitera®, a dye formulation little known in the conservation world, appears to have the best all round qualities required for the dyeing of historic textiles. Laura still has more research to undertake but it is looking like the best combination of synthetic dyes for their substrate dyeing versatility would be Avitera® and Lanaset®.

A free discussion session then followed with the audience split into groups to discuss their own experiences with dyeing. This proved to be an extremely valuable part of the day and a practice that I hope will be repeated with other topics at future conferences.

Our host venue, The Peoples' History Museum, specialises in the conservation of political and trade union banners, which have their own challenges, especially when they are double sided and painted on silk. It is a common feature for the banner to split at a paint/silk interface. The contrasting colour and material, fabric or paint, can make the stabilisation of these areas particularly difficult. **Jenny Van Enckevort ACR** talked about the use of hand-painted crepeline adhesive patches, and the use of printing pigments on a variety of fabrics to hand colouring natural materials. She then moved onto sublimation printing, a technique new to textile conservation but a technique that has great possibilities for the conservation of painted banners.

Liz Rose from the British Library continued the theme of using digitally printed infills to put the colour back into two extremely degraded silk colours. The more traditional approach of applying dyed silk infills to the areas of loss was thought inappropriate in the conservation of two Royal East India Company Volunteer flags. Liz has a

background in printing and realised that a printed background for each colour could be the answer. After Oddy Testing printing inks and converting the L*a*b* colours into print colours, the inks were colour matched to the original. Flags were printed in the exact size and shape as the degraded colours and the newly washed fragments positioned on top before being netted and stitched into place. The fragments will live to see another day.

Staining in historic textiles is considered acceptable and can often add to the history and story that a textile can tell. **Alison Lister ACR** has been considering the ethics of using colour to camouflage stains on modern printed textiles where the textile only has value because of the art and the artist. In these circumstances a stain can be extremely unsightly and may render the textile unworthy of display. Alison has been looking at the use of retouching in fine art restoration and considering the similarities between 2D textile works of art and fine art. Finally there was a show and tell session where Debbie Phipps, Hannah Sutherland, Emily Austin, Sarah Glenn, Elizabeth-Anne Haldane and Viviane Chen gave brief presentations on their work in the use of colour in conservation.

On the following day the Science and Industry Museum was set for the Textile Society conference, where we enjoyed talks by designers Laura Slater and Caroline Pratt, indigo expert Jenny Balfour Paul and award-winning author Kassia St Clair. The day was rounded off by Stephanie Wood, project curator at the V&A, who spoke about Mary Quant and colour.

The two days were a delight. The speakers gave generously of their knowledge and I am looking forward to adapting what I learnt from the conferences in the conservation of

my own specific objects.

Julie McBain
Imperial War Museum

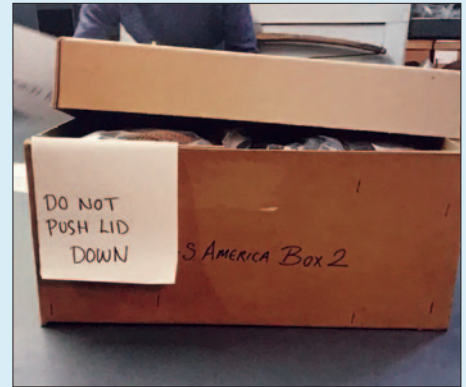
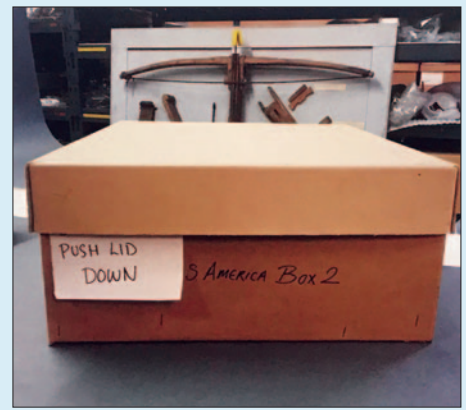
**Storage Moves and Store-Based Projects
Icon Ethnography & Care of Collections
Groups**

Institute of Archaeology
University College London 23 November
2019

An audience of scientists, conservators, curators, project managers, and students came together for this one-day event organised by the Research Network 'Conservation and Development' (Institute of Archaeology) together with Icon's Ethnography Group and Care of Collections Group. Speakers from large national institutions and small local museums shared their knowledge and experiences to explore the topic of storage moves and management. Twelve major projects were presented with three stand-out themes: use technology, be flexible, and collaborate.

The Marguerite programme introduced by **Lucie Monot** of the Musée d'ethnographie de Genève, Switzerland was particularly impressive. By comparing object dimensions with available storage space, Marguerite calculated the optimum arrangement of collections at the new facility. Unsurprisingly, the Science Museum Group also harnessed digital technology. **Emily Yates** shared how the team's use of barcodes and the Asset Panda app enabled faster data collection and facilitated information access.

Moves rarely go as planned and it was refreshing to hear **Mike Bowes** and **Sarah Potter** of the Whitworth Art Gallery in Manchester share what can go wrong. With every setback, the project team



Keeping it simple: from the joint Ethnographic and Collection Care Groups' storage conference

demonstrated successful responses to keep the move progressing. So too did the Instituto de Investigação Científica Tropical, Lisbon. **Catarina Teixeira** aptly summarised their move with the presentation title 'Think fast and do it well'.

The importance of collaboration was best demonstrated by the mass move from Blythe House. Coordinating how to decant three large national institutions from an Edwardian building with a single elevator is an impressive feat. Speakers from the Victoria and Albert, Science, and British Museums emphasised clear communication at every level of the projects and between the neighbouring institutions.

The symposium was engaging, highly informative, and at times inspiring. We look forward to learning the outcome of the projects and to see how store technology and management develops further.

Chrysanthe Pantages (MA Principles of Conservation, UCL)

Annah Adey (MA Principles of Conservation, UCL)

Jo Dickinson (MSc Conservation for Archaeology and Museums, UCL)

WORKSHOP

MARBLING COURSE
Icon Gilding & Decorative Surfaces Group
London 31 August/1 September 2019

On the weekend of 31st August and 1 September the Gilding and Decorative Surfaces Group, in collaboration with The Paint Effect (Kingsland Road, Dalston), held a

Where a textile's value lies in the artist designer - from Alison Lister's presentation



Image: Julie McBain

Image courtesy of Andrew Hughes, Deputy Head of Conservation, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford, 2019

workshop in the painting techniques of marbling given by **Lara Fiorentino**. The aim of the weekend was to produce five panels, each recreating a different marble or stone: Lapis Lazuli, Portoro (black and gold), Malachite, White Carrara and Yellow Sienna. The boards were already prepared with the base coats ready for us to start creating the effects.

Before each panel was undertaken, Lara explained and demonstrated each step of building up the various layers of paint, the colours, the paint fluidity and methods used to create the effects. She gave us enough time to put them into practice, but not too much to allow us to procrastinate or over-work them, before moving on to the next step. Lara was very hands on, moving through the room giving tips, advice and instruction where needed.

Lapis Lazuli and Portoro were undertaken on the first day with the others completed on the Sunday. We received step by step handouts for each effect and on marble in general. Throughout the weekend Lara emphasised that understanding how the stone was created in nature gave us the information on the patina we were aiming to recreate.

Lara Fiorentino puts the top coat on the Malachite panel



Lizzie Cherry's finished panels



Everyone on the Marbling course gathers around for the start of the malachite panel

I found this workshop to be challenging but enjoyable. The Yellow Sienna, for me, was the most difficult and at one point I was not happy with how it was turning out. Lara very calmly looked at it and with instructions on a few small changes helped me to make it look so much better.

I specialise in textiles conservation but I am a trained objects conservator. This workshop was an excellent way to build up my skills. I gained the knowledge of the types of paintbrushes and the materials to use to create the different effects. I also picked up some handy tips about how to correct areas that don't quite go as planned. The other attendees came from various other industries which was interesting and refreshing, from decorators to film set painters.

It was an enjoyable weekend.

Lizzie Cherry

G&DS Group Committee

VISIT

DOMESTIC WALL PAINTINGS TOUR
Icon Stone & Wall Painting Group
Somerset May 2019

The sun shone on Icon's Stone and Wall Painting Group members as they made their tour of domestic wall paintings in Somerset, travelling around the Quantocks in a minibus. Apart from one puncture, the tour ran extremely smoothly and was generally considered to be a great success. It was well attended by wall painting conservators together with a few architects, academics and conservation professionals from Historic England and the Churches Building Trust.

The tour was organised to start in more lowly yeomen's and millers' properties, then moving up the social scale to an archdeacon's house and finishing with a late medieval manor house.

The first property visited was Clerks Cottage in Spaxton – a largely late 15th century yeoman's house. Jenny Cheshier and Cyril have undertaken an extraordinary, sensitive and successful conservation and repair of this remarkable building, which was being used as a cow shed when they first acquired it in 2004.



Clerks Cottage. Detail of the 16th century painted decoration on the screen

The group were given a tour of the whole house by Jenny Chesher, and **Ruth McNeilage ACR** spoke about the conservation of the wall painting on the plank and muntin screen, undertaken in 2006. The screen divides the hall from the inner parlour and the decoration dates from the first half of the 16th century. On the parlour side of the screen (which had been more protected) was a frieze bearing an Aaron's rod design with the screen below decorated with alternate plain bands of colour. Both of these paintings were applied in a size medium.

After the minor hiccup of the puncture we moved onto Splatt Mill, another property in Spaxton. This house was altered in the late 16th century and a coffered ceiling with moulded beams was inserted in the hall. The decoration originally covered all the walls and the timber ceiling. Now the decoration

survives over the fireplace and on one section of wall. Ruth McNeilage conserved the paintings in 2010. The painting is a typical late 16th century/early 17th century grotesque design consisting of scrolling Renaissance-style foliage intermingled with grotesque heads. In the centre is a roundel supported by bare breasted winged figures which emerge from the foliage stem. Ruth commented that this frieze, in common with other friezes of this period, shows clearly the influence of prints imported from the continent. As at Clerks cottage, the area below the frieze was painted with plain bands of alternate colour.

From Spaxton the minibus set off on a beautiful route across the Quantocks to reach Milverton. Here we visited 'The Old House', once the summer residence of the archdeacons of Taunton who were also prebends of Milverton. It was home to

Thomas Cranmer, Archdeacon of Taunton in the fifteenth century. **Anne Ballantyne ACR** talked about the wall painting and the conservation work she undertook to uncover and conserve it. This is a truly stunning and extraordinary wall painting. It is also the only surviving wall painting of Henry VIII. The previous owners put forward a theory that the painting of Henry turns into an image of the devil when turned upside down, indicating that it had a double, possibly seditious meaning. There was a lively discussion within the group as to the validity of this view.

From Milverton we then travelled to Cothay Manor, an exquisite moated manor house owned by Mary Ann Robb. We were given a tour of the house by a tour guide and Mrs Robb who discussed the wall paintings and the conservation programme undertaken by Stephen Rickerby ACR and Lisa Shekede. The wall paintings in the hall, thought to date from the late 15th century, show scenes from the fable of Reynard the fox. There are also scenes with groups of people in late 15th/ early 16th century costume undertaking courtly activities such as jousting. In a small side room on the first floor was a rare domestic wall painting of the Madonna and child which had been previously treated with wax both on the surface and behind. This had led to a rather severe deformity of the surface. (We were not permitted to take photographs of these wall paintings.)

SWP Group members

Splatt Mill. Early 17th century wall painting



IMAGE LAYER REMOVAL

Lydia Stirling ACR, Conservator at Glamorgan Archives, discusses problems with degrading photographic negatives and tries out a technique

INTRODUCTION

Photographic media, including photographs, slides and negatives, are increasingly becoming part of many - if not all - of the collections that are coming into archives. Photography increased in popularity during the 20th century as it became cheaper and the equipment lighter, to the point that today in the 21st century most of us carry a camera around with us in our pockets or bags as part of our phones. We take hundreds of photos, even if we do not print them out. So it is hardly surprising that as we take in more and more 20th century collections, photographic media are becoming more and more prevalent.

THE PROBLEMS

For an archive conservator this poses a number of problems, including how to deal with highly unstable prints and negatives. Plastic negatives revolutionized photography, but unfortunately plastic negatives pre-dating the use of polyester are inherently unstable, can become completely unusable and, in the case of cellulose nitrate, entirely destroy the image and itself.

Cellulose nitrate is chemically very similar to 'gun cotton'. In fact, it was initially manufactured as a military explosive. It was not until the discovery that it could be 'stabilised' with camphor (in a ratio of 4:1) that cellulose nitrate plastic 'Celluloid' and 'Ivorien' were found. It is this similarity to 'gun cotton' that makes cellulose nitrate so unstable and dangerous.

The one thing most people know about cellulose nitrate is that it can self-combust; although it needs to be fairly warm - above 38°C - and to have been in an enclosure into which it has been off gassing for some time, leading to a large build-up of poisonous gasses that are also highly flammable. It will burn without oxygen and underwater (in fact this is what was used on old film sets to create fires underwater). The resulting flame is extremely difficult to extinguish and gives off highly toxic and poisonous smoke containing large quantities of nitrogen dioxide gases.

DEGRADATION PROCESSES

The degradation process of both cellulose acetate and cellulose nitrate can at first, without more knowledge, appear similar and in both cases occurs in a number of stages.

The five stages for cellulose nitrate are:

- Stage I: film support has turned yellow and the image shows signs of mirroring
- Stage II: film becomes sticky, may weep and gives off strong odour of nitric acid. This is nitrogen oxide which, in the presence of moisture, will form nitric acid. Breathing in nitric acid leads to a risk of acid burns to your respiratory system.
- Stage III: film becomes amber coloured and image begins to fade
- Stage IV: the film becomes soft and can adhere to adjacent negatives or enclosures; the image at this point may have completely disappeared.

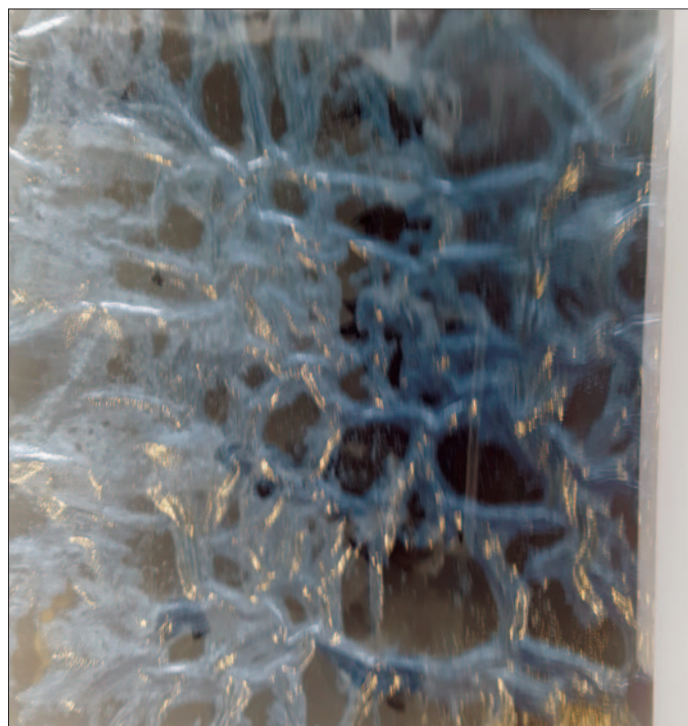


Image: Lydia Stirling

One of the negatives before treatment showing the degradation

- Stage V: the film mass degenerates partially or entirely into a brown acid powder.

The five stages for cellulose acetate are:

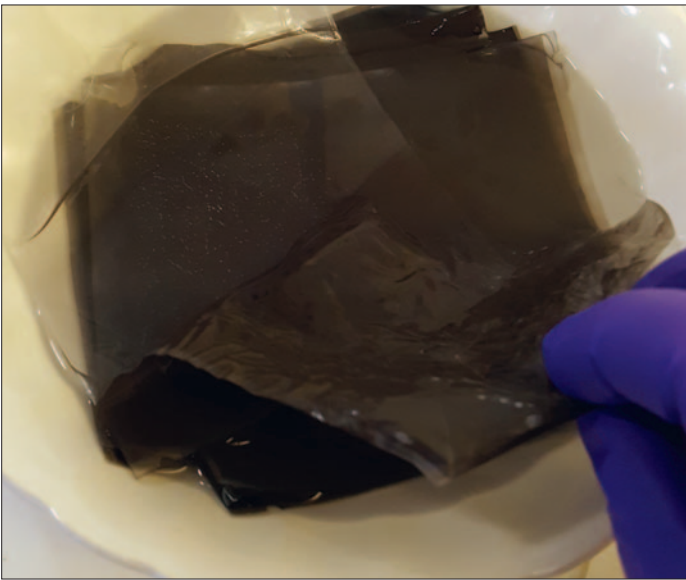
- Stage I: negatives give off a vinegar odour, start to shrink and become brittle.
- Stage II: negatives begin to curl and may show signs of pink or blue staining
- Stage III: negatives warp
- Stage IV: liquid bubbles filled with crystalline deposits form between the layers of the negatives
- Stage V: channels form on both sides of the negative; at this point, it may still be possible to get a legible image from the negative.

STORAGE ISSUES

Glamorgan Archives, like many other archive services, holds a large number of negatives within its Collection. These range from glass plates through to polyester and include most other negative types in between. Amongst these negatives are a large number - somewhere in the region of 40,000 to 50,000 - of degrading acetate and nitrate negatives in various stages of degradation.

They are currently stored in vacuum pack bags in a freezer. Research carried out by the Image Permanence Institute has shown that the only way to prolong the life and to retard degradation of both the degrading cellulose acetate and cellulose nitrate negatives is to freeze them, keeping out as much relative humidity as possible.

The easiest way to do this, and to allow us to fit the most amount of material within the freezer, was to vacuum pack the negatives prior to freezing. The downside of this is that it severely restricts access to the negatives. The whole bag containing the relevant negative must be defrosted and acclimatised to normal room temperature before it can be opened and the negative required removed. This means that a minimum of 24-hours' notice is needed before access to an image can be granted.



Peeling the image layer off the acetate after its first bath of 50/50 ethanol and acetone

THE DIGITISATION OPTION

From research undertaken, there appear to be only two possible ways to make the negatives and the images held on them accessible. The first of these is to digitise the entire collection, creating preservation copies scanned at the highest possible resolution that would in effect become the collection, and from these creating access copies of lower resolution.

There are a number of issues associated with this process. For health and safety reasons, scanning must be undertaken within a fume cupboard in a room that can be closed off from the rest of the building and, if possible, has its own extraction system. The person doing the scanning would need to wear the relevant PPE; in this case nitrile gloves, lab coat and respirator with acid filters.

More pressing is the amount of storage space required for 40,000 to 50,000 scanned images of around 100MB each. This is somewhere in the region of 5TB – in our case more server space than our entire parent organisation currently uses. Digital storage on servers is very expensive and while it would be possible to use separate hard drives to store the images, this would not be a suitable permanent answer because of possibilities of corruption and issues with migrating image files from one storage format to another, including the possible loss of metadata.

IMAGE LAYER REMOVAL

The second option is to remove the image layer from the cellulose acetate or cellulose nitrate substrate. On researching this I found that only two original papers have been written on the subject; all further articles and papers were based on or quoted the 1997 paper written by Doug Munson, 'The Pellicula Burlesque', which he presented to the Conference of the American Institute of Conservation of Historic and Artistic works. The article itself refers to work carried out at the Chicago Albumen Works on 1709 sheet film negatives from the Evans Walker archive held by the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Munson's article gives the instructions, timings and ratios that are needed to carry out removal of the image pellicle. However, having read through the article, I identified potential problems. Firstly, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to get hold of 190 proof (75% to 95%) bootleg grain-based alcohol in the UK,

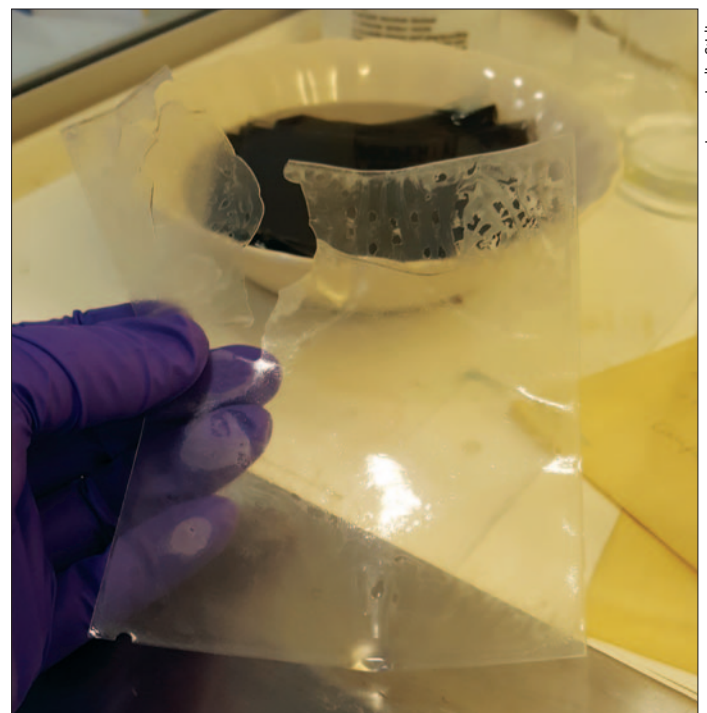


The image layer once removed from the acetate

so we opted to use ethanol and carry out the flattening and drying in the fume cupboard. Secondly, while you can obtain methyl ethyl ketone (MEK) in the UK it is relatively expensive and difficult to source in large quantities. Many people will also find it hard to get, because of local government procurement policies on safer alternatives when buying chemicals.

The process for removing the image layer involves a total of six baths made up variously of chemicals and deionised water. The negatives are placed in these baths successively for varying times, the first bath is to allow the pellicles to be removed from the plastic substrate while the subsequent baths are to dissolve and remove the nitrate binder. The last bath rehydrates the pellicle so that it can be flattened out. Once hydrated the pellicles are flattened out and allowed to dry on archival polyester.

The acetate after the image has been removed



TRYING OUT THE PROCESS

Without access to MEK, I decided to try out the process on three degrading acetate negatives at different stages of degradation using acetone the whole way through. The three negatives were put into the first bath, which was made up of 50/50 acetone and ethanol (industrial denatured alcohol), and left overnight, weighed down using a glass weight with a cover over the bath to prevent the alcohol evaporating.

On checking the next morning the three negatives had loose anti-curl layers and the image layer pellicle was starting to peel away from the film base. These were first put into a bath of acetone for an hour and a half to dissolve any of the remaining nitrate binder or residue. As acetone is slower acting, I added an extra half hour to the timings of this bath. The negatives were then placed into two successive baths of 50/50 acetone and ethanol mix for half an hour. These two baths acted as a rinse to ensure that there was no remaining contamination from the nitrate binder.

When removed from these baths the pellicles were extremely crispy, dehydrated and distorted. To rehydrate them it is necessary to reintroduce a small amount of water into the gelatine so that they become relaxed and pliable - but not soft. Munson did this by using 95% 190 proof grain based alcohol and 5% deionised water in two baths. The first one was for up to twenty four hours and it also removes any remaining acetone, whilst the second was for a short time before flattening out and allowing to dry on a sheet of polyester. Where I differed from this was by using 95% ethanol with 5% deionised water, and carrying out the flattening of the image layer inside a fume cupboard. With the pellicles now flat and drying, they do not, however, stick to the polyester and need to be housed in either archival polyester or archival polypropylene sleeves.

The crispy image layer before it goes into the rehydration baths of ethanol and deionised water



Image: Lydia Stirling



Image: Lydia Stirling

An image being flattened out onto archival polyester once fully rehydrated

IN CONCLUSION

The whole process took four days to complete, working out at roughly five hours of a conservator's time, and required a litre each of ethanol and acetone, which has to be safely disposed of after use due to contamination. This makes it a very expensive and time-consuming process if we were to upscale the project to deal with all of the degrading negatives in this collection.

The unavoidable conclusion we came to was that the method was impractical for such a large collection, especially as these photographs were used as working documents and contain a lot of near duplicates and images of managers in their offices. However, it is something that could be used on very small collections that are of high artistic value and merit or highly significant. This could include some images from within our collections where it is preferable to keep the original image as well as a digital preservation copy.

The image layer flattened out and drying on archival polyester



Image: Lydia Stirling

the emerging conservator

A YEAR TO BE PRIZED

For Icon member Holly Daws 2019 was a good year as her student projects garnered prizes

INTRODUCTION

After a career managing photographic archives, I realised my lifelong ambition to train as a conservator. I specialised in the conservation of ceramics, glass and related materials at West Dean College of Arts and Conservation. During this time, I embarked on two complex conservation projects to embed my conservation practice, firstly the treatment of two large and fragile 19th century plaster panels which required immediate stabilisation due to the extent of impact damage. The second project was my Master's research looking at the use of computer-generated colour matching in ceramic

conservation. I was honoured to receive the prestigious Nigel Williams prize for the plaster project and the Denise Lyall Prize and the Willard Conservation Prize for my Master's research.

PROJECT OUTLINES

A Comparison of Computer-Generated Colour Matching and Matching By Eye to Avoid Illuminant Metamerism in Ceramic Conservation

The aim of this research was to compare the Tennent and Nobbs' Computer Match Colour Prediction System (CMCPS) against colour matching by eye to avoid illuminant metamerism for retouching infills within ceramic conservation.

The methods chosen to investigate this were matching samples to a target colour using CMCPS recipes as well as

Holly Daws at work on her 19th century plaster panels



using the conservator's own pigments and matching by eye. Samples using the CMCPS recipes were created using three methods: accurately weighing the pigments, estimating the ratios of the pigments but not weighing and finally using the pigments with no weight or ratio guidance from the recipe. The hue difference between target and sample were measured to indicate accuracy of colour. Illuminant Metamerism was measured by assessing the intersections of the reflectance spectrums of the target and sample, metameric indices were generated as well as a visual assessment by a panel of observers.

Overall, the results were inconclusive with regard to accuracy of colour matching between CMCPS and the 'by eye' method; however the results show that the system was most effective when the conservator was able to use the pigments from the CMCPS and judge the pigment ratios. The results indicate that the CMCPS samples tended to be less metameric than the 'by eye' samples although this was not fully consistent.

The main conclusions are that the system has potential for selecting pigments that will create less metameric colour matches. The system would be most useful for matching colour on objects where illuminant metamerism is a known problem but is not a replacement for day to day matching colour by eye. The main recommendation is for further research to be carried out using a wider sample of conservators to investigate the practicalities of the CMCPS system.

Awarded: Denise Lyall Prize 2019 and Willard Conservation Prize 2019

The Benefits of Practical Tests and Analysis in Informing the Treatment of a Pair of 19th Century Plaster Panels

Two 19th century large plaster panels required treatment after suffering impact damage. The panels had a network of cracks, as well as areas of loss. One panel was no longer aligned in the frame. The aim of the treatment was to stabilise the panels and improve the overall appearance to allow for redisplay on an interior wall.

Observation of the panels was carried out, as was analysis using UV light and FTIR to identify any coating to plan an appropriate treatment. A range of tests was carried out with dry cleaning materials, consolidants, and support methods to inform the treatment. Dry cleaning materials were tested and the smoke sponge was found to be the most effective method, balanced with minimal abrasion and residues. No consolidation was carried out, due to concerns about staining and overall effectiveness. Areas of loss were filled with a mixture of Paraloid™ B-72 and glass bubbles.

Differing methods of support for the panels were tested using Plastazote, however, filling the areas of loss had stabilised the panels ensuring that no further support was needed. Retouching the fills allowed for the integration of the treatment to the original surface. Overall the treatment was successful and allowed the panels to be returned to the client and redisplayed. The extensive range of tests drove decision-making to ascertain how to meet the treatment aims without

further damage. The wider implications of this treatment were to inform other conservators of suitable treatment options for use with historical plaster.

Awarded: Nigel Williams Prize 2019

MOVING ON

Since completing my Master's, I have used my training to secure a conservation placement with the Artefact Conservation department at the National Museums of Scotland working as part of an interdisciplinary team assessing and treating ceramic, metal and mixed-media objects for a major redevelopment project at the Museum. I was excited to take part in the conservation of an Ancient Egyptian polychrome wood coffin.

I am now working in the private sector and split my time between Kirsten Ramsay Ceramic Conservation and Restoration and TO Conservation. Highlights have included working on a pair of 19th-century micromosaic, which required areas of replacement tesserae, and the conservation of a Martinware jug. I have also undertaken projects with Plowden & Smith working on a large Islamic tile as well as a selection of porcelain figures and bowls for the Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre. Most recently I have been appointed a visiting lecturer at West Dean College delivering lectures on my Master's and research development.

Looking towards the future I hope to continue widening my experience across the private and museum sectors. Receiving recognition from the Denise Lyall, Willard and Nigel Williams Prizes has given me the confidence to work across the conservation industry and develop conservation strategies independently.



Detail of the Sheldon Tapestry Map of Oxfordshire. See pp 21/22
Image: Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford



A section of the stained glass window in the Wallace Monument embrasure after treatment by Linda Cannon ACR See pp 17/20 Image: Linda Cannon