

THE MAGAZINE OF THE INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION • FEBRUARY 2019 • ISSUE 80



Recreating the Staffordshire Hoard helmet

Also in this issue

Meet our new Chief Executive • The CCCT Diploma • An interview with Simon Cane



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FEBRUARY 2019 Issue 80



From the Editor

Happy New Year to all our readers!

And with the new year comes a new Chief Executive, Sara Crofts, to whom we extend a very warm welcome. By the time you receive this magazine Sara will have been in post for less than a fortnight. But happily, back in

November, well before she took up her Icon mantle, Sara kindly agreed to write an introductory piece about herself for this issue, so that we have a sense of who she is and her background.

Our terrific cover image shows the outcome of the meticulous work that has gone into trying to understand how the magnificent helmet found in the Staffordshire Hoard might have looked and worked. And our interview with Simon Cane about his career in conservation and beyond includes some interesting comments about the management of the Hoard's discovery and its aftermath.

Other topics covered in this issue include the description of a long-running project on Irish Ordnance Survey maps and a report on the Conservation & Collections Care Technicians Diploma, where the first students have completed the programme to achieve this new qualification.

Lynette Gill



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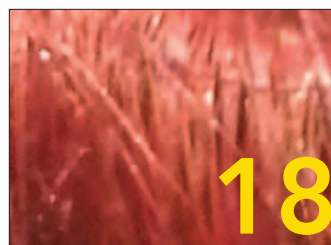
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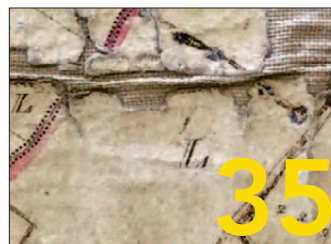


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Cover photo
Close up of the reconstructed Staffordshire Hoard helmet on its stand. Side view. © Birmingham Museums Trust

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Deadlines for adverts and editorial

For the April 2019 issue
Friday 1 February

For the June 2019 issue
Monday 1 April

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professional update

Introducing Sara Crofts



Our CEO tackles the Chiltern 100 sportive cycling challenge

Our incoming Chief Executive gives an introductory interview

Q: If you could do any other job for a day, what would it be?

A: I would enjoy treading the boards with the Royal Shakespeare Company. I was lucky to go to a school with strong English and drama departments and it would have been interesting to have pursued acting as a career. Instead, I now indulge myself with trips to Stratford-upon-Avon and the Barbican to see the RSC in action. Their stunning and visually captivating performances always bring something new to the texts; and the stories are still highly relevant to our modern lives.

Q: If you could go back in time, what year would you to travel to?

A: I wouldn't mind passing through Pompeii in the spring of AD79, but not lingering too long... The glimpses of the architectural splendour of the Pompeian houses and their sophisticated decorative schemes and furnishings that can be found in the ruins are quite tantalising. Imagine what the buildings must have looked like in their prime!

Q: Do you collect anything? If so, what and why?

A: I don't collect anything – unless you count bikes and cycling kit! There's a formula that says that the ideal number of bikes for a cyclist is $n+1$, where 'n' is the number you currently own. I have five at the moment...

Q: If you won the lottery, what would you spend the money on first?

A: A new top of the range road bike of course – and a trip to a training camp in Majorca to learn how to get the best from it!

Q: What TV series are you currently watching?

A: We've just finished catching up on *Mystery Road* – a really gripping detective story set in a bleakly beautiful landscape in Central West Queensland, Australia. And I'm looking forward

to *The Long Song*, a BBC adaptation of Andrea Levy's novel about the last days of slavery set in Jamaica in the 19thC and shortlisted for the Man Booker prize in 2010. I've made a few trips to Jamaica to carry out some building conservation training and advocacy work in recent years and the island has got under my skin a little. It's a fascinating place – there's some wonderful classical buildings from the Plantation era and enigmatic vernacular structures too, but there's also some tremendous challenges. Protecting the past while securing economic growth for the future is a difficult balancing act.

Q: What is your favourite type of heritage?

A: That's never a fair question! But as I am an architect I think I ought to say historic buildings – with a dash of archaeology – though in truth I can get fascinated with just about anything that helps us understand the past. We recently visited Portugal and I expected that the highlight would be the Museu Nacional do Azulejo with its stunning collection of Portuguese tiles (azulejos) but the Tejo Power Station, which is now part of the Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology stole the show. There was something magical about walking in and around the huge coal furnaces and seeing all the working parts of the early 20thC power station. The buildings and the machinery spoke for itself; very little interpretation was required.

Q: Why did you first become interested in cultural heritage?

A: Childhood family holidays were an exercise in notching up as many visits to castles, stately homes and archaeological sites as possible. I recall being captivated by the pietra dura table tops in the grand drawing rooms of grand country houses – the vibrant colours and intricate patterns really caught my interest.

Q: Who is your favourite historical figure?

A: I'm interested in Sir Patrick Geddes FRSE (1854-1932) – an innovative Scottish biologist, sociologist, geographer, philanthropist and pioneering urban planner. I was especially delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund was recently able to support the rebirth of Riddle's Court, a picturesque late 16thC A-listed merchant's house in Edinburgh as the Patrick Geddes Centre. The exquisite painted and plastered ceilings, fireplaces and panelled rooms have been painstakingly repaired by skilled craftsmen without compromising the integrity of the original building and the building is now in use as an education centre.

Q: Who is your role model and why?

A: It's got to be champion cyclist Beryl Burton! During her career she won more than ninety domestic championships, as well as seven world titles, and set numerous national records. Perhaps her most memorable achievement came in 1967 when she broke not only the women's twelve-hour time trial record, but the men's too; she recorded 277.25 miles, surpassing the men's record by 0.73 miles. And in 1996 Beryl died as she had lived – out on her bike. Her strength, athleticism and dedication to her sport is truly inspirational.



The AGM panel discussion on diversity in the profession

ICON'S 14TH AGM

Icon's 14th AGM took place towards the end of November and it was notable for being Alison Richmond's last as Chief Executive and also for the nature of the post-AGM 'entertainment'.

There is always a certain amount of mental gymnastics required of participants at our AGMs as Icon's legal and financial year runs from 1 April to 31 March. So the Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts refer back to a twelve-month period that ended eight months previously but, following a welcome from our Chair Siobhan Stevenson, the evening began with consideration of the minutes of the 13th AGM. Technical hitches around the availability and accessibility of the previous minutes concluded with a recommendation that in future it would be helpful if they could be re-circulated shortly before the following AGM.

Reporting on behalf of the Trustees, Alison Richmond structured her account of the year to 31 March 2018 around the triple pillars of Icon's 2017 - 2021 Strategy: advocacy, excellence and engagement. Amongst numerous examples of initiatives flowing from this mission in the year 2017/18 was the work of the Policy Advisor, a post generously funded by The Clothworkers' Foundation; the partnership with AIM (the Association of Independent Museums) to help small museums undertake professional care audits, thanks to funding from the Pilgrim Trust; the development of apprenticeship standards; the first conference to be held for accredited conservators, which had focussed on leadership; the provision of an on-line leadership course; work on developing a code of ethics and the success of Icon's *Journal*, celebrating the fortieth anniversary of the first issue of *The Paper Conservator*.

Alison noted that all these projects and many more besides had only been possible with the support of members. She calculated that 475, or 20% of the membership, were regular volunteers, contributing over 6000 hours of their time across the year to Icon's activities and initiatives. With this level of engagement, a growing membership and the confidence of funders to back us, Icon was in good shape for the new Chief Executive to take forward on the next stage of the journey. She concluded with thanks to the senior management team and special thanks to the Chairs who had bracketed her time as Chief Executive: Amber Xavier-Rowe and Siobhan Stevenson.

Iain Boyd then took to the podium to comment on Icon's finances in the 2017/18 year - a year of stability, he noted,

'Icon was the tightest-run financial ship that I've been involved in'. Careful management meant that there was very little fat and a constant search for savings, as exemplified by the recent office move. Reserves stood at a reasonable level and enables Icon to kickstart projects, such as the revitalisation of the Conservation Register. The organisation was very successful at raising sponsorship money and the latest example is the interest at the Getty in helping international delegates to attend #Icon19. Of a turnover approaching £1million, a third comprised membership subscriptions, and two thirds came from events, sponsorship and advertising. Thanks to Alison, he concluded, Icon was in good shape for the handover to its next CEO. A question and answer session probed some detailed aspects of the accounts and was followed by voting on the two formal Resolutions of the meeting: to receive the Trustee's Annual Report and Accounts and to authorise the Trustees to appoint and remunerate auditors. Both were passed.

Icon's Business Manager Simon Green then reported on the result of the elections to the Board. Eight excellent candidates had stood for election to four seats. Hannah Clare, Sophie Rowe, Peter Martindale and Fiona McLees were successful on this occasion but Simon hoped that the other four would stand again in a future year, as they all do good work for Icon.

Chair Siobhan Stevenson concluded the formal meeting with a look to the future. The Board had kindly elected her to a second term of office, she said. 'The role is a great honour. It is a privilege and a pleasure to see progress on so many fronts'. The continuity of the Chair would also provide a helpful transition to the new Chief Executive.

Her report took in some of the key opportunities and challenges ahead. She noted that Icon's three strategic objectives continued in place with Advocacy going from strength to strength. Work is in hand on better recognition of accreditation, including a review of the Register and the aim of achieving a full listing of all ACRs. Under the Excellence heading, Siobhan drew attention to several projects but the one clearly close to her heart is the forthcoming #Icon19 conference, which takes place in Belfast where Siobhan is Head of Collections Care, National Museums, Northern Ireland. An example of future work under the Engagement heading is the task of diversifying Icon's membership, especially by developing the supporter category.

Siobhan concluded by congratulating Icon's staff for delivering the programme of work, often behind the scenes, and then proposed a vote of thanks to Alison for all her work in developing Icon over the years and for all the personal and professional support she had given to the Chair. This was endorsed by a hearty round of applause and the presentation of a splendid bouquet of flowers to Alison.

Instead of a speaker to follow the AGM, we had a panel discussion around the theme 'What should Icon do to improve diversity in the conservation profession?'.

This was master-minded by the energetic and entertaining trio who form The C Word (The Conservators' Podcast) team. Kloe Rumsey, Jenny Mathiasson and Christina Rozeik were joined by Collections Manager and conservator Nerys Rudder and

MORE SIZES = MORE OPPORTUNITIES



(LB / DF. 35.) Photograph
© RBA 2012



Los Angeles County
Museum of Art, Mr.
and Mrs. William
Preston Harrison
Collection (18.1.1)
Photo © 2010
Museum Associates/
LACMA



Installation view of
'The Great Swindle:
Works by Santiago
Montoya', AMA
| Art Museum
of the Americas,
Organization of
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emerging conservator Rebecca Plumbe for a session which was videostreamed live on Icon's Facebook page.

Contributions from the floor and incoming tweets, shown on a screen, made for a fast-moving debate. Christina had lots of statistics at her fingertips to give substance to points made about the current under-representation in conservation of many sectors of society. Serious and interesting issues were raised about the need to create spaces where someone from a different cultural background could feel welcome and a sense of belonging; about the lack of any presence of conservation in some communities and about avoiding tokenism. The role of class also loomed large with its associated financial implications and the impact of low pay, unpaid work and a highly competitive job market. Overall, it is probably fair to say that we were stronger on the analysis of condition issues than we were on the nitty-gritty treatment options but it was good to air a serious topic in a lively format.

MANUSCRIPT CONSERVATION GRANTS

The **National Manuscripts Conservation Trust** offers grants for the conservation and preservation of manuscripts and archives. Since the NMCT was founded in 1990 it has awarded grants of over £3m, which have enabled the conservation of hundreds of musical, literary, architectural and other vital historical documents. The grants ensure that these important collections can once more be made accessible to the public and researchers.

The next deadline for the submission of applications is **1 April 2019** and the results will be announced in early July. If you want to plan ahead, the deadline after that is 1 October 2019.

Grant applications are welcome from non-national institutions such as county record offices, museums, university archives/special collections, cathedral archives and libraries, as well as owners of manuscripts that are exempt from capital taxation or owned by a charitable trust. They can cover conservation, binding and other preservation measures, including digitisation (providing it is part of a wider conservation project). The significance of the collection or items to be

The Conduct Committee of Icon was convened on 20 September 2018 to hear an allegation that Icon member Dr Evelyn Godfrey had made remarks in email correspondence that could amount to a contravention of clause 4.19 of the Code of Conduct.

Having reviewed the decision of the Investigation Committee and having considered all the documentary and other evidence before it, the Committee found proved that Dr Godfrey had used language that was deplorable and unprofessional in email correspondence and had thereby contravened clause 4.19 of the Code of Conduct.

The Committee further determined that it was necessary to impose restrictive measures in the case and recommended to Icon that a reprimand is imposed. The Committee further stipulated that the reprimand be made public, due to the wide publication of the remarks, in order to maintain standards in the profession.

conserved, as well as the proposed conservation treatment, are carefully reviewed by Trustees when making their decisions.

Applications must be submitted on the NMCT application form, which you can download from the website: www.nmct.co.uk.

If you have any queries about whether your project is eligible or about the application process you are most welcome to contact Mrs Nell Hoare, who manages the Trust. You can contact her either through the NMCT's website or at info@nmct.co.uk.

NMCT is the only grant giver solely focused on manuscript conservation and they are keen to spread the benefit of the funding available, so do consider applying.

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

Book and Paper Group

Chair's update

Wishing you all a very happy New Year and I hope you had a restful break for Christmas.

You will have seen that some of the Committee members are coming to the end of their terms and that we are advertising for new Book and Paper Group members to fill those vacant seats. If you wish to learn more about the positions listed below then please visit our Group's 'committee' page on the Icon website where the role descriptions are linked as a document at the bottom of the page, or alternatively please get in touch via email to iconbpg@gmail.com with any questions.

We are looking to fill the following positions:

- Secretary - Organising committee meetings, taking and circulating minutes, compiling quarterly and annual reports
- E&TS Chair - compiling budgets and reports for the E&T sub-committee, chairing E&T sub-committee meetings, ensuring the smooth running of events
- Student Liaison Officer - communication with and visiting conservation students, acting as a representative for students
- SPO - undertaking one-off or short term projects where necessary, assisting other committee/sub-committee members with projects
- Sub-editor - editing formal publications for the committee including quarterly/annual reports and meeting minutes, editing Icon News submissions, drafting Iconnects

We are also adding a new post of Fundraising Officer who will be supported by the Treasurer role to look into different approaches for funding CPD events and workshops to reduce the attendance cost for members, to organise the logistics of establishing a fund for the annual Fred Bearman Research Grant and Memorial Lecture and to seek sponsorship for the next Book and Paper Group conference (in three years' time). We are looking for someone who is organised and professional as this will be an outward facing role, however *you do not need to have any prior experience with fundraising*, although this would be welcomed of course! Our goal is to support people to learn new skills as they volunteer for the committee.

We are also advertising for the committee Chair role, as I will be stepping down. The Chair leads on the strategic direction of the Book and Paper Group in collaboration with the Committee, Group Chairs, Icon's Chief Executive, the Board of Trustees and other specialists as necessary. They attend and chair B&PG committee meetings and attend Group Chairs' meetings.

The committee meets four times a year, with some one-off extraordinary meetings (which are infrequent) and we are a friendly bunch of hard-working and dedicated volunteers. We welcome anyone who feels that they could support the work of the Group or has any ideas to improve the way we currently operate. You do not need any experience in any of the roles listed above, as we are keen to support anyone in learning new skills, and will provide training in specific areas if necessary. We also have committee members all over the country (and one in Canada) and we use remote meeting tools to ensure that we can all be present at meetings even if we cannot physically be there.

I am extremely proud of the committee and the work they have put in over the past year; organising and awarding CPD grants; setting up and awarding the Fred Bearman Research Grant; maintaining a popular and relevant social media presence; liaising with, advising and supporting colleagues and students at Camberwell College during a pretty turbulent time; responding to our members by organising and delivering high-quality training workshops and events throughout the year and delivering a hugely informative and well received conference. 2018 was a busy and successful year, only made possible by the time and efforts of a dedicated committee, and I'd like to thank you all for all your hard work! Here's to an equally successful 2019.

Remember to follow us for deadline updates and news through our social media accounts. We're always on the lookout for photos and content, so please contact Nicole our Social Media Officer with any juicy photos of your current projects.

- Facebook: @ICONBookPaper.
- Twitter: @ICONBook_Paper
- Instagram: @iconbookandpaper
- Email: iconbpg@gmail.com

Liz Ralph

Chair, Icon Book and Paper Group Committee

Events and Training Sub-committee

As 2019 begins, we as a committee are reflecting on our achievements of 2018 and what our goals are for the year to come. We had a very challenging and successful year last year, organising our second-ever Icon Book and Paper Group conference in Oxford back in October. We received great feedback from attendees and speakers and are currently working on the post-prints from the conference which will be made available soon. In the meantime, all of the posters from the conference are available on the Book and Paper Group page on the Icon website and we welcome you to have a look at those.

We have been working to improve accessibility to our events,

as always, and this year we are adding six travel bursaries to cover the travel costs for an Icon member to attend one of our practical workshops. We have also been investing in technology that will allow us to record and live-cast our lectures so that our peers can attend from anywhere in the world. This is something we are aiming to put in place more regularly in 2019 as we gain more experience in using these bits of kit!

Our 2019 AGM is due to be held on Saturday 30 March in London, and after the success of last year's lightning talks session we are planning to rerun it. It is a great opportunity for students and emerging professionals to share their work with a supportive and engaged audience. In addition we have invited an exciting panel of speakers to discuss the challenges of conserving and preserving collections within areas of conflict, a very topical and fascinating subject. I look forward to seeing you there!

Holly Smith, Chair,
BPG Events and Training Subcommittee

Ceramics & Glass Group

Departing committee members

The Ceramics and Glass Group met on Saturday 17 November 2018 at the Craft Study Centre Farnham for a study day and its AGM. We would like to pay our respects and our gratitude to two of our loyal committee members, Jasmina Vuckovic (Events organizer) and Ronald Pile (Nigel Williams Prize coordinator), at what was their last meeting at Icon CGG. Their input and commitment throughout the past years was imperative to allow the committee to offer fantastic events such as the visit to the Craft Study Centre in Farnham and the Gilding workshop held earlier in 2018. We wish them all the best in their careers and look forward to seeing them again at one of our next events.

To read more about the study day and the AGM please go to page 28 for a delightful account of this day by Melanie Howard.

Furniture & Wooden Objects Group

For upcoming events we are pleased to announce our next symposium, to be held on 10 May 2019 at the Linnean Society in London. The day-long schedule will be confirmed shortly.

Past events have included a visit to the British Museum Conservation department - thank you to Alex Owen and all staff involved in hosting our visit. The itinerary started in the organics studio where, after an introduction by Monique Pullan, staff discussed their treatments for objects such as Japanese shadow puppets and a Song dynasty Buddha. In the lab, Caroline Cartright introduced us to the world of wood identification and its role not only for conservation but also her work for CITES. Down in the basement we were introduced to the WCEC stores where Jill Hassell and Jamie Hood discussed their methods for collections care, describing their pest treatments and storage for large scale objects. We rounded off with a trip to the horology department in the original part of the museum building, where Laura Turner presented an overview of the department, discussing wood-related aspects such as cases and movements.

In November we organised another museum visit in



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conjunction with the 14th International Furniture conservation Stichting Ebenist symposium in Amsterdam. Iskander Breebaart hosted the visit to the Rijksmuseum conservation department, followed by a trip to the Amsterdam Historical Museum where conservators Jaap Boonstra and Paul Born gave a guided tour of the museum and conservation workshops. Thank you to all participants and organisers for making these events possible!

We also have a new committee member, Hugh Harrison – welcome Hugh! If anyone is interested in joining us or for any queries, comments and suggestions please contact Michelle Kirk via furniture.events@gmail.com.

The FWOG Committee

Heritage Science Group

Icon Ethical Sampling Guidance update

January 2019 sees the launch of the Icon Ethical Sampling Guidance, a Heritage Science Group initiative to help navigate the complex process of material removal from historical and archaeological objects and sites for scientific investigation.

This document of international importance offers long-overdue practical and balanced considerations from the perspectives of the researcher and the owner/custodian. It has been developed and shaped by Icon members through a workshop in 2017 and on-line consultation in 2018 led by Dr Anita Quye, University of Glasgow and Professor Matija Strlic, UCL, with feedback from the Heads of Conservation and Scientific Research and input from the E-RIHS (European

Research Infrastructure for Heritage Science).

Aiming to be flexible and adaptable, the guidance is not a standard, directive or a policy, nor is it definitive. It can therefore be adopted and shaped for the needs of those involved in making case-by-case decisions.

The Icon Ethical Sampling Guidance is available to download for free from the HSG web page.

Icon Heritage Science blog

Have you recently published a piece of heritage science research or are involved in a heritage science project that you'd like to shout about? If so, how about contributing to the Icon Heritage Science Blog! It is quick to do via one of two online submission forms and committee member Natalie Brown is on hand to respond to any queries you may have. For more details including the online submission forms, please see <https://icon.org.uk/groups/heritage-science/blog>.

Committee meetings

Our latest meeting was held at The National Archives, UK on 14 January 2019 - an update will be published in the next Icon News. The next committee meeting is being arranged for April 2019.

Keeping in touch

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.

Anita Quye and **Helen Wilson** ACR

Historic Interiors Group

We are delighted to confirm details of our AGM and 10th Annual Cambridge Conference for 2019. We will be hosting our AGM at the stunning Leighton House Museum, South Kensington on Tuesday 5 February from 6:30pm. Following the AGM we will hear talks from Daniel Robbins, Senior Curator, and Dante Vanoli, Project Architect (Purcell), regarding the recent conservation of the property. There will also be a chance to talk to Helen Hughes and Allyson McDermott about the architectural paint research and wallpaper conservation undertaken at this time. Booking is through Eventbrite. Our 10th Annual Conference will again be hosted at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge on 12 April 2019. *From Pre-Raphaelites to Arts & Crafts* will follow our chronological progress through architectural style and will include an exciting range of talks looking at Pre-Raphaelite and Arts & Crafts interiors. Check the Group pages for further details.

Photographic Materials Group

Happy New Year from the Photographic Materials Group! Thank you to everyone who attended and helped with our events last year. These included the modern and contemporary photography workshop at the National Archives in February, the workshop and lecture with Debra Hess Norris at the National Archives and St. Bride Foundation in July, and the round table discussion at the Science Museum's Dana Research Centre in November. More information on this last event will be found in the next issue of Icon News.

We have an exciting events plan for the coming year and beyond, so look out for further information on the Icon website, via email and in future issues of Icon News. 2018 saw a number of changes to our committee. In November we welcomed our new treasurer Jordan Megyery, who is currently the Icon intern in photographic materials at the National Archives. We also sadly said goodbye to our previous treasurer Dominic Wall ACR, our social media officer Lorraine Finch ACR and our reporter Louisa Coles. We'd like to thank all three for giving their time to the Group.

Our blog, Facebook page and Twitter feed were very active in 2018 and we aim to continue this in the coming year. Recent blog posts have included exhibition and workshop reviews, an interview with Debra Hess Norris and recommendations for carrying out photographic surveys. We are happy to publish shorter articles as well as longer blog posts, so please get in touch (phmg@icon.org.uk) if you would like to contribute. You can also contact us and check for updates through our Facebook page (ICON Photographic Materials Group) and Twitter (@ICONPhMG)

Icon Scotland Group

Training, events and committee

We ran a two-day course on parchment conservation on 22-23 November at the National Library of Scotland in Edinburgh. The course was delivered by Lara Artemis ACR and Mariluz Beltran de Guevara ACR, who began by examining how parchment was conserved in the past and then proceeded to explore modern-day, remedial and preventive conservation approaches. There were lots of opportunities to put the theory into practice, and the attendees came away feeling better prepared to tackle the complex parchment items in their own collections.

Following on from this was our AGM on 29 November at Discovery Point in Dundee. This included reports from our committee members and from Mel Houston, who is the Icon board member occupying the reserved seat for Scotland. We also bade a fond farewell to Rob Thomson (Chair) and Ruth Honeybone (Vice Chair), both of whom had sat on the committee for at least seven years, and to Damiana Magris (Events/Vice Treasurer) and Katharine Richardson (Secretary), who had also put in very respectable turns in office. In their places we welcomed a new Chair, Christa Gerdwiler, plus Isobel Griffin (Vice Chair) and Gwen Thomas (Secretary). So our committee is now very nearly at full complement, although we still have a vacancy for a Vice Treasurer if anyone is interested!

On 29 November we also ran tours of the new V&A Dundee in the afternoon, followed by our 21st Annual Plenderleith Memorial Lecture in the evening. This was a great success and is reviewed on page 30.

We are now working on our events programme for 2019 and announcements about forthcoming events will be coming out shortly.

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.

Stained Glass Group

Last year the Group held a successful one day conference at the Glaziers Hall in London on 8 May. The theme was '*Conservation, Communication, and Collaboration*', and the event was attended by around fifty delegates. Talks highlighted interesting projects and new techniques from studios in York, Barcelona, Naumburg (Germany) and Branchburg (New Jersey).

Last October our AGM was also held at the Glazier's Hall. During this meeting long standing committee members stood down and a new committee was elected. Details of the new committee can be found on our Icon Group webpage. We would like to thank the outgoing committee for their hard work and dedication to creating a successful Group for stained glass.

The new committee aims to build on this work and will continue to develop and promote the Group, reflecting the feedback from our recent member's survey. Once the events for 2019 are finalised, they will be advertised via the Group webpage and Iconnect emails.

We welcome new members to our Group, though even if you are not a primary or secondary member you can still receive our Iconnect emails by selecting Stained Glass on your Icon membership form.

Stone and Wall Paintings Group

2018 round-up

2018 was a busy year for the Stone and Wall Paintings Group, when we met our ambition to put on quarterly events. In March we held our AGM at Greenwich. The well-attended meeting and lively discussion was followed by two site tours. We saw the magnificent Thornhill paintings from the scaffolding in the Painted Hall, and Sophie Stewart ACR, Lead Conservator, talked us through the conservation project which has recently finished there. Then Rory Chisholm, Clerk of Works, took us on the external scaffolding to see the stone repair and replacement work which is happening across the wider estate.

In May, we made a site visit to Mary Magdalen Church, Paddington, London, to see the recently completed conservation work to Daniel Bell's ceiling painting. Sincere thanks to Polly Westlake and Tim Smare of Cliveden Conservation for leading the tour.

In June, Dr James Hales addressed the Group about bats in churches. The conservation dilemma between our cultural heritage and the natural environment was discussed, with the precise nature of damage to church interiors and artefacts outlined, as well as mitigation and acceptable solutions to the problem. An upcoming five-year project with Natural England and Historic England will continue the constructive discussion, and we will be looking to present a follow-up talk in the future.

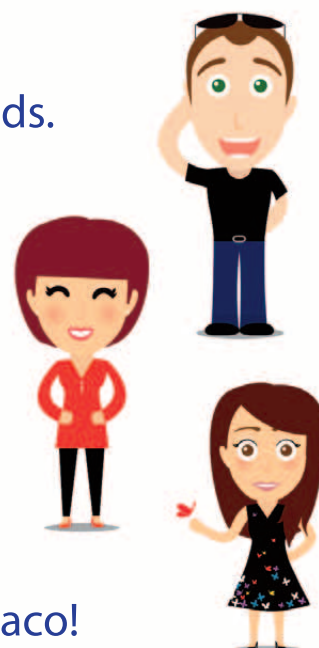
A conference on War Memorials held in Birmingham in

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in the woods,
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November will be reviewed in the next issue of Icon News

2019 is shaping up to be similarly active, with both regional and capital tours planned, as well as a study day and the Triennial Conference in Belfast. The refreshed Committee is looking for active engagement from the members, so please get in touch by email or meet us at our events, and find out how you can participate to help make S&WP the kind of Group you want us to be. We are especially keen for students and new graduates to get involved.

Lizzie Wooley Events Co-ordinator

The Group needs new recruits!

Are you intrigued by what the Icon Stone and Wall Paintings Group does? Are you inspired by event ideas and opportunities to hold conservator get-togethers? Would you like to write reviews or help at events? Are you well-informed and eager to get out the message when you know information that others should know? If so, we are looking for you!

The Stone and Wall Paintings Group is made up of around eight conservators who volunteer to meet up and propose events, run seminars and visits and put out notifications to keep you informed about what is happening. Group members do most tasks independently; the in-person time commitment per year is two meetings plus attendance at as many events as possible. This is a brilliant opportunity to meet up with colleagues and hear about interesting projects.

These are the committee posts: 1. Co-Chair: Stone 2. Co-Chair: Wall Paintings 3. Treasurer 4. Events Manager 5. Secretary 6. Media Rep 7. New Graduate/Student Rep: Stone 8. New Graduate/Student Rep: Wall Paintings

Posts are available. Please apply!

swpconference@gmail.com

And finally

The Scientific Research Department of the British Museum is organising a one-day symposium on 30 May 2019 on recent advances in the conservation and scientific investigation of wall paintings. The event is free of charge and is supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Oral presentations will be of fifteen minutes duration with questions at the end of each session. Posters will be on display. A Closer Look at Murals - Recent Advances in the Conservation and Scientific Investigation of Wall Paintings takes place at The British Museum in London and booking closes on 26 April.

Sarah Pinchin

SWP Group Committee

Textile Group

Icon Textile Group Events

The events team of the committee have been continuing to finalise several workshops, including a tapestry weaving course, for 2019. Once confirmed, details can be found on the Icon Textile Group webpage and via Iconnect.

Save the Date

The Textile Committee are organising a one-day symposium based around the theme of colour, to be held on Saturday 9 March at the People's History Museum, Manchester. Details are still being confirmed but keep an eye on the Iconnect and web page for further details and the call for papers.

In this Issue

On 20-21 November, ALICE & CO and Icon hosted a pattern cutting workshop at the Clothworkers' Centre for the Study and Conservation of Textiles and Fashion at Blythe House in London.

Thanks to Alice Prier and Lilia Prier Tisdall for running the course, which covered the basics of pattern cutting, block manipulations with a focus on historical pattern cutting and costume mounting. Kelly Grimshaw, the Textile Committee's Emerging Professional representative, has written a review on page 24.

Upcoming Events

Icon Triennial Conference, June 2019

Booking details for the Icon triennial conference, *New Perspectives: Contemporary Conservation Thinking and Practice*, Belfast, 12-14 June 2019, can be found on the Icon website (<https://icon.org.uk/icon-conference-2019>).

NATCC Conference, September 2019

The 12th North American Textile Conservation Conference, *Lessons Learned- Textile Conservation Then and Now*, focusing on changes in conservation since the 1980s, is being held in Ottawa, Canada, from 23-29 September 2019. (www.natccconference.com)

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> or by contacting Nadine Wilson.

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 nadine.wilson@nationaltrust.org.uk.

COMPLETING THE CCCT DIPLOMA

Back in April 2016, after many years of work, the Conservation & Collections Care Technicians Diploma was launched. The Diploma saw the combining of Icon's longstanding Conservation Technicians Diploma with the Victoria and Albert Museum's own Technicians Diploma to create a programme which offered greater breadth, allowing it to more fully reflect the roles of technicians working in the heritage sector across the UK.

About the Diploma

The Conservation & Collections Care Technicians Diploma (CCCT Diploma) is a work-based learning programme, where learners complete a series of Mandatory, Core and Optional units, selected to best support their individual job roles and develop their professional practice. Mandatory units include crucial underpinning knowledge for conservation and collections care such as judgement and ethics, health and safety and maintaining records. The Core and Optional units allow learners to develop their skills and knowledge in a wide range of areas from installing exhibitions and projects, providing technical support for the accommodation of objects and object packing and transport to inspecting and monitoring objects, implementing routine conservation procedures, and making replicas and representations.

In order to support the learners, a number of Accredited Conservators (ACRs) have trained as Assessors, and completed the Assessor Award qualification. Their role is to ensure that the standard of conservation practice is consistent across all learners undertaking the programme, as well as ensuring that all assessment decisions are fair and robust and in line with the national standards of assessment practice.

Learners work on a one-to-one basis with their Assessor, using an e-portfolio system to build a body of evidence. The majority of the work is undertaken in the learner's own workplace with the Assessor visiting to action plan, assess and coach the learners through their Diploma.

Since it started, more than twenty learners have been eagerly working on their units – gathering evidence, demonstrating their working practices for assessment and getting to grips with their e-portfolios. The first of those candidates have now successfully completed the Diploma.

The Candidates' View

Read on to hear the thoughts of Kevin Jacques and Timothy Crowley, Technicians at the Ashmolean Museum, who have reflected on their experiences of undertaking the Diploma.

Kevin Jacques Collections and Exhibitions technician:

'Having been a museum technician for over fifteen years there was a degree of uncertainty over how this course would benefit me and what skills I could learn from it. As it was a pilot scheme, I knew that my feedback on the course would be useful for its future development providing a good way of getting the skills of a technician recognised to a wider audience. The course enabled me to question why we do procedures in a certain way and why we use the materials we do, giving me the opportunity to open up discussions with my conservation colleagues in a more in-depth way - resulting in a greater understanding of how my skills and knowledge could help within the conservation department.

'I work across all disciplines having recently worked on projects which involved making supports for plaster casting repairs to a cast which is for our Antinous exhibition, working on moulding for frame repairs, and incorporating the original backboard within the frame of a pastel drawing which had been originally removed as it was causing damage to the drawing. The course has not only opened opportunities for me to progress within the area of conservation but also for my colleagues to recognize my skills and use them within their projects to enhance the skilled work of preventive conservation with the museum.'

Timothy Crowley Collections and Exhibitions technician:

'For me, the most interesting aspect of the Diploma was that it made me stop and reflect on my own personal development, performance and future plans for training and what I would like to focus on in my future career. It helped me appreciate and understand my own role as a technician within the wider Museum and highlight the importance of this role for the care of the Ashmolean collections. My colleagues at the Ashmolean have been very supportive and offered advice and encouragement along the way. It was very constructive to hear some of the critical feedback they produced for my work. The

Diploma has also shaped my move towards the Conservation department and the work I undertake for conservation. To complete certain units, I have had to undertake in-house training for frame restoration and preventative conservation, work I have now amalgamated into my daily role.

'We are due to take on an apprentice this year who will be undertaking a similar work-based learning programme as part of their training for the role. I am excited to get the chance to mentor the apprentice and further develop my supervision skills. I am currently turning some of my coursework from the diploma into a technician's manual which I hope will be a good teaching aid for the apprentice.'

The Organisation's View

For organisations, such as the Ashmolean, there are clear benefits to learners undertaking the Diploma and developing their skills within a structured programme. It is also important, however, that learners are supported to complete their Diplomas; being afforded time to hone their reflective practice skills as well as time to discuss their progress with line managers and mentors helps to embed learning within their job roles, and within the organisation.

Daniel Bone Head of Conservation, Ashmolean Museum:-

'The Conservation and Collections Care Technicians Diploma has worked well for the Ashmolean as well as for Kevin and Tim who carried out and completed the course. It consolidated the level of specialist knowledge they were attaining, and I think the Diploma helped all sides see areas of natural development for their roles. It is perhaps no coincidence that during the latter part of the course the museum restructured the Buildings Services Department they were in and two technician posts were created within the Conservation Department to which both successfully applied. This has given them and the Conservation Department a new impetus and is opening up new opportunities for working more closely together. The body of work and evidence that both have built up as well as the structure of their learning during the Diploma also gives solid foundations for a successful apprenticeship post to join the Department later in the year.

'The course also helped us think about how we share our skills. We already work in studios that cross over conservation disciplines and discussion amongst conservators and conservation students has become a natural part of what we do, in our workspace or over a cup of tea next door. Sharing this further with the technician team as they carried out the course has been a good way of working outside 'training sessions' for this sort of dialogue. Another effect of working through the course was how it generally extended Tim and Kevin's professional network in the museum.

'Perhaps the two colleagues here have benefited by their nature, to take full advantage of the new Diploma. I know they wanted to do even more and finish more quickly. That's probably a reflection of their eagerness to get the most out of the course as quickly as possible, which sometimes put them ahead of the assessment process. Overall, the new Diploma has had a successful outcome for us here and I'd certainly recommend others to invest in this way if they can.'

The Assessor's View

There were unexpected benefits from the Assessor's view point as well as we learn here.

Dana Goodburn-Brown ACR, Freelance Conservator and CCCTD Assessor:-

'Becoming a Learner Assessor for the Conservation Collections Care Technician Diploma represented my biggest commitment to personal CPD for several years, I am delighted now to be a qualified 'Dual Professional' – both an accredited Archaeological Conservator and a Work Based Learning Assessor. My learning period with the CCCT programme involved assessing two very experienced collections care technicians at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford.

'Having spent the majority of my career working with freshly excavated artefacts, and rarely with museum display and couriering issues, I absolutely loved the learning opportunities this role brought to me – observing the well planned and skilled 'choreography' involved in putting on an exhibition or installing a new gallery; as well as general day-to-day behind the scenes activities involving management of museum collections records, access and movement of objects. Being an assessor for a role within my 'umbrella profession' also included being somewhat of a mentor, guiding my learners and helping them to reflect and grow in their conservation related activities.'

'Learning how to assess and guide candidates has often felt to be a reciprocal process, in that I have gained new knowledge on specific materials and techniques in the

Kevin (l) and Tim (r) installing a bronze sculpture in the Ashmolean Museum's Baroque Art gallery



'toolset' of a museum collections technician; but also, a greater appreciation for the individual contributions various members of a museum collections team make. This carries over into my own practice, as I have a better understanding of how my own work fits into the dialogues and timelines of various large and small museum projects. My respect for the value of work-based learning programmes has increased tremendously. It is an honour and joy to observe the work of such skilled museum practitioners and to discuss how they reflect and learn within their own roles.'

Looking Ahead

So, what is next for the Diploma? As an important qualification supporting the professional development of Conservation Technicians, both Icon and the V&A continue to support its uptake and look forward to celebrating the successes of all learners who have chosen to complete the qualification. Furthermore, it is hoped that in early 2019 we will be able to announce the launch of the long-awaited Conservation Technician Apprenticeship Standard, for which this is likely to be one of the qualifications that will be linked to it. So please do watch this space!

Kevin (l) and Tim (r) working on a Qu Lei Lei installation in the Chinese Paintings Gallery



Appointments



Alexandra Baldwin ACR has been appointed to the post of Conservation Manager - Objects at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

Alex graduated from the MSc in Conservation for Archaeology and Museums at the Institute of Archaeology, UCL in 2002. Following short-term contracts at the British Museum, she then became a permanent member of staff there in 2004, working on large-scale gallery and exhibition projects as well as on objects for loans and display and contributing to the cleaning of coin hoards for the Treasure Act. She has worked as on-site conservator at excavations in Albania, Italy and the UK. Research projects have included Iron Age cauldrons and the use of lasers in conservation.

In 2017 Alex took up a contract post at the Ashmolean Museum to conserve items from the Watlington Hoard of Anglo-Saxon coins and hack-silver. Appointed to her present role in April 2018, she has responsibilities for the conservation of objects from within the museum's collections for loans, exhibitions, and storage, the management of the object conservation team and the co-ordination and running of the objects conservation lab.



Our former Chief Executive **Alison Richmond ACR** is not using the excuse of her retirement to rest on her laurels! Last December it was announced that she had been elected a Trustee of the Edward James Foundation, the charity responsible for West Dean College of Arts and Conservation. This seems like a natural fit given Alison's wealth of experience both from Icon and before that from her involvement in education as Deputy Head of the joint RCA/V&A Conservation Postgraduate Programme, not to mention her years of experience working as a conservator.

Commenting on her appointment, Alison described herself as 'a huge admirer of what West Dean College of Arts and Conservation has been doing in the field of conservation education.'

Durham University news



Dr Chris Caple FIIC, FSA, ACR retired as the director of MA in Conservation of Archaeological and Museum Objects course at Durham University last summer. Having run the course for thirty years, Chris feels that 'he deserves a bit of a break'. A graduate of the Cardiff conservation course in 1979, Chris then did a PhD in Bradford and worked on objects conservation at York Castle Museum from 1984 to 1988 when he was appointed lecturer (later Senior Lecturer) at Durham University.

During his time there he has written a number of books (*Conservation Skills*, *Reluctant Witnesses to the Past*, *Preventive Conservation in Museums*, and *Preservation of Archaeological Remains in Situ*) as well as papers on archaeology, artefacts and conservation. He has completed excavations at two Welsh castles; Dryslwyn Castle (published in 2007) and Nevern Castle whose finds he is currently conserving. He is due to publish the Nevern Castle Excavations in 2023-4.

In the meantime he is currently exploring writing an updated edition of *Conservation Skills* and writing books on a series of case studies in archaeological conservation and teaching and learning in conservation, all with colleagues at Durham. He was appointed Emeritus Reader in



Archaeological Conservation following his retirement, so he won't be getting that break anytime soon.

He can be contacted on christopher.caple@durham.ac.uk

Dr Emily Williams FIIC, FAIC was appointed in September as the new head of the MA in Conservation of Archaeological and Museum Objects course at Durham University. Emily was a graduate of the Durham course in 1994 and has worked or interned at the British Museum, Museum of London, Institute of Nautical Archaeology in Bodrum and the Chrysler Museum of Art before becoming the archaeological conservator at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation (CWF) in Virginia, USA.

Whilst there she broadened her experience with sabbaticals at the Western Australian Maritime Museum, the Bermuda National Trust and worked on archaeological sites in Syria, Belgium and Iraqi Kurdistan for University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. She recently completed her PhD through the University of Leicester and has taught courses in conservation at the University of Mary Washington and at William and Mary.

Emily has been the co-ordinator of the ICOM-CC

Waterlogged Organic Archaeological Materials (WOAM) Working Group since 2014 and a member of a number of AIC committees, most recently Chair of the AIC Education and Training Committee (2011-2015). She has edited a number of conference proceedings and is currently preparing for publication her PhD thesis on African American tombstones, US Civil War Monuments and the ways that identity, memory and preservation all impact historical narratives.

She can be contacted at emily.a.williams@durham.ac.uk

Icon staff news



This November, **Lucy Farley** joined the team at Icon as Membership Officer. Working in the office on Mondays and Wednesday to Fridays, she will be responsible for the day-to-day administration of Icon's main membership and Conservation Register databases, while engaging with members and supporting Icon events.

Previously, Lucy has worked at The Courtauld Institute of Art and at The Antiques Trade Gazette as a member of the Publishing Department. Originally from Northumberland, since moving to London she has volunteered for English Heritage, The National Archives and The Japanese Gallery, Islington.

She is also a postgraduate student at SOAS, University of London, where she studies the History of Art and Archaeology of East Asia with Japanese Language.

Lucy can be reached at lfarley@icon.org or on 020 3142 6786 with any queries regarding membership.

Welcome to these new members

We would like to extend a very warm welcome to all those who joined us in October and November 2018. We hope to see you at an Icon event soon!

Patrick Ball
Durham University
Student

Daniela A Boos-Pedroza
University of Oxford
Student

Jen Bowens
Student

Phillip Burrows
Associate

Marina Butt
Student

Maria Giulia Caccia Dominioni
Associate

Viviane Wei-An Chen
Student

Thea Christophersen
Student

Imogen Coker Savage
Student

Daniela Corda
Associate

Valentina Da Costa
Associate

Barry Davies
Barry Davies Sculptor
Associate

Emily Derse
Conservation Studios of
Seattle
Associate

Bryan Dunkel
Associate

Eleanor Evans
Student

Lea Marie Faoro
Northumbria University
Student

Silvia Fioravanti
Supporter

Rowan Frame
Student

Fenella France
Library of Congress
Associate

Adriana Francescutto Miro
Science Museum Group
Associate

Charles Fraser-Fleming
Supporter

Emma Gamble
Student

Kathryn Gilmour
National Trust
Associate

Anastasia Gkouma
Associate

Johanna Gray
Cater Gray Limited
Associate

Rhian Hall
Student

Amber Hamilton
Associate

Catherine Harris
Supporter

Olivia Heckel
Northumbria University
Student

Gael Hobson
Supporter

Leona Holmes
Student

Zoe Hutchinson
Student

Justin Johnson
University of Washington
Associate

Alma Jongstra
University of Amsterdam
Student

Robert Kreuger
Cascadia Art Conservation
Center, LLC
Associate

Tara Laubach
Northumbria University
Student

Alison Morris
Carvers & Gilders Ltd
Associate

Isabel Moseley
Student

Scarlett Jermaine Parry
Leeds Royal Armouries
Icon Intern

Maria Carolina Peña Mariñop
Hamilton Kerr Institute
Student

Laura Perry
Chapel Studio
Associate

Fabiana Portoni
The British Museum
Associate

Beth Potts
Student

Mahrukh Qureshi
Supporter

Mina Rahimi
Kingston University
Associate

Dai Roberts
Henry Moore Foundation
Associate

Liam Robinson
Student

Royal Botanic Garden
Edinburgh
Organisation

Surjit Singh
National Museum Institute of
History of Art, Conservation
Student

Aly Singh
Student

Louise Sire-Nieman
Student

Stella Sudekum
Student

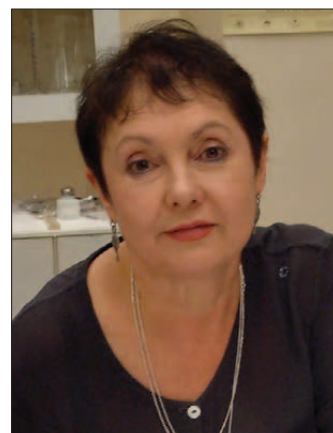
Hans Thompson
Orbis Conservation Ltd
Associate

Cato van Breugel
Student

Sophie Walter
Garden City Collection
Associate

Kezia Way
Student

In memory



Irene Bobkiewicz (1950 – 2018) studied Art & Design at Rochdale Technical College and Manchester Polytechnic before combining the teaching of Creative Textiles and City & Guilds Embroidery at Nelson & Colne College with a curatorial post at Gawthorpe Hall, home of the iconic Rachel Kay-Shuttleworth Collection. At Gawthorpe Hall Irene's care of the collections included ensuring safe storage, access for researchers and preparation of textiles for exhibition. She moved to London in 1976 to pursue a career in textile conservation at the Victoria and Albert Museum, gaining the Diploma in Conservation in 1979.

In 1980 Irene returned north to Manchester in the employment of the City Art Galleries, where, over the course of five years, she set up and equipped their textile conservation studio, organised storage and undertook conservation treatment of items for display in the Gallery of English Costume at Platt Hall. She left Manchester in 1985 and moved to Todmorden working freelance for several years on collections from a wide geographical area. Amongst many commissions she continued to accept conservation projects from the Rachel Kay-Shuttleworth collection, helped establish conservation facilities and

In memory

provided tuition in basic conservation principles to the textile conservation assistant at the Bowes Museum in Barnard Castle in Co Durham, undertook conservation treatment, storage and environmental housekeeping for the Leek School of Embroidery textiles at All Saints Church, Staffordshire and carried out conservation treatment of various objects for the Whitworth Art Gallery in Manchester.

In 1994 Irene took a full-time post in York covering extensive practical conservation and preventive duties across York Castle Museum and Eye of York sites and providing collections care advice to other museums within the area. From York Irene moved to Northern Ireland to the Textile Conservation Studio at Ballycarry, Co Antrim. As with her previous positions, this provided a wealth of object variety and experience, including her beloved embroidery in the form of ecclesiastical textiles, costume and banners, the latter proving pivotal later in her career. She returned to her home town of Rochdale in 2003 to juggle her life-long commitment to conservation with full-time care of her mother who was in failing health. Whilst nursing her mother, Irene volunteered her conservation skills and expertise at Rochdale Museum, helping with preparation of textiles for numerous exhibitions, plus recording and repacking objects for safe storage.

After her mother died, Irene took up her final conservation post in the Textile Conservation Studio at People's History Museum, Manchester, where she worked until she retired in 2012, making a significant contribution to the successful redevelopment of the museum and relocation of the

conservation studio. Her many years of acquired expertise with embroidered textiles, costume and banners proved to be an invaluable asset and she undertook conservation treatment of several historically important banners from the museum's collection and for client organisations. Following retirement, Irene resumed her volunteer role for Rochdale Museums, offering advice and practical support toward their exhibitions programme and care of the collections.

Irene had a distinctive dress style; perfect make up and signature bright red lipstick combined with her customary outfit, which was typically black from head to toe. Woollen beret, leather jacket, leggings and Doc Martin boots made her instantly recognisable. Irene was a very self-contained, retiring person and avoided being in the spotlight wherever possible, leaving little published evidence of her remarkable life-long dedication to textile conservation. Instead she preferred to pass on her skills and expertise on a one-to-one basis, quietly and generously, to those who were around and receptive. She is sadly missed by friends and colleagues.

Vivian Lochhead

Textile Conservator

Maureen Duke BEM was not an Icon member but she taught at West Dean for a long time and therefore taught quite a number of us. Others will know her from her short courses and conference presentations. She taught us trade binding, so that we would understand the bindings we were repairing, rather than necessarily conservation-friendly methods. But she was interested in conservation/restoration, and would ask me what I thought about approaches she was thinking of or to explain the science behind something.

She is also one of the last of her generation, who worked in the trade when it was quite different from what it is now. Her loss is one of several recently, including Chris Clarkson and Fred Bearman, that will mean a huge shift for us as a profession.

She taught me binding and finishing at West Dean from 2010–12 and she taught many binders and conservators before me there and at Guilford College, where she established the diploma course in bookbinding. She had studied there herself some time before that under William Matthews. She talked about 'Mr Matthews' a lot, in the way I now find myself talking about her. I tell my students about how she would give everything 'a bit of lick': leather to assess the porosity and backing boards to grip a little bit more to the textblock. I tell my students to leave 'a bee's knee' amount of gap between the boards and shoulder. I tell them about my first day with her, when she taught us to cut in the sewing stations: I had said 'But isn't that bad for the book stability?' earning an unwavering stare while she told me I could do whatever I liked in a voice that left no doubt that she meant the opposite. I tell them about the day she

taught us backing and Alex was upstairs, and from the sound of his hammer alone she suddenly dashed up, calling as she went that she could hear he was doing it wrong. When I take out my tools I remember her telling us about the old days, when you could take all your knives with you on the plane, declaring triumphantly that it was ok because they were 'tools of the trade'. She gave us each a cobbler's knife for splitting paper: 'they fell off a back of a truck', she said.

When I got married she sent us a slow cooker, saying that it would eliminate fights over why dinner isn't ready yet. When I got pregnant and told her it was twins, she gave the delighted, devilish smile of someone who knew what I was in for. When she could still drive, she'd come to get me after a day teaching at West Dean and take me to the pub, make sure my business was going alright, offer her many tools and books for loan. She told me to name-drop her wherever I thought it would open doors, and it often did. She was a force of nature, and has left in her wake a whole generation of bookbinders who know her funny turns of phrase, her respect for the craft and her unwavering support.

Abigail Bainbridge ACR, Book & Paper Conservator

Bainbridge Conservation
www.bainbridgeconservation.com

THE STAFFORDSHIRE HOARD HELMET

Pieta Greaves ACR (Drakon Heritage and Conservation) and Jane Thompson-Webb ACR (Birmingham Museums Trust) tell the story of its reconstruction



© Drakon Heritage and Conservation

An image of the helmet taken for documentation purposes

BACKGROUND

The Staffordshire hoard was found by a metal detectorist in 2009 in a field near Lichfield in Staffordshire. It is the biggest collection of Anglo-Saxon treasure ever discovered and consists of very damaged objects and fragments crushed and pulled apart from their parent objects. The hoard is manufactured from gold, silver, garnets, glass and niello with a few surviving organic materials and dates to the 6-7th century AD.

Results of the large-scale research project conducted on the collection (funded by the museums and Historic England) will be published in 2019. As part of the research project, the conservation of the collection took place from 2010-2016 and was the winner at the 2015 Icon Conservation Awards of the Pilgrim Trust Award for Conservation. The conservation programme has a dedicated section in the forthcoming monograph. The conservation team based at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery worked with archaeologists, other conservators, material scientists and art historians on the over 4000 objects and fragments that were within the hoard.

Much of the collection is military in nature, and it was clear

from early on that it contained parts of a helmet, including cheekpieces and a channel that is the foundation for a crest. The research project dedicated considerable resources to identifying, sorting and reconstructing the large quantity of stamped silver sheet that made up the decoration of the helmet, which is a very high-status example.

WHY A RECONSTRUCTION?

Towards the end of the research project, the museums (Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery and the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent) commissioned an experimental reconstruction (two identical ones in fact, one for each museum) of the helmet based on the research findings. Despite the intensive research work on the object, led by archaeologist Chris Fern and art historian George Speake, there were questions still to answer about the potential manufacture of it, and how it worked as a three-dimensional object.

In addition, the reconstruction was intended to help with the interpretation of the collection. Essentially, the Staffordshire



The Pilgrim Trust Award for Conservation in the Hoard Gallery, Birmingham Museums Trust

Hoard is a collection of beautiful fragments: understanding the complete objects they derive from requires a leap of understanding that replicas and reconstructions really help with in a museum setting. In the case of the helmet, the original parts are too fragmented and damaged to ever be reconstructed or mounted to resemble a helmet.

ASSEMBLING A TEAM

The reconstruction team was large - Drakon Heritage and Conservation led on the project for the museums; Birmingham City University School of Jewellery recreated the precious metal elements (using modern technology to ensure a close relationship with the original material); Mark Routledge (Gallybagger Leather) created the leather; Jeffrey Hildebrandt (Royal Oak Armoury) forged the steels; Pieta Greaves (Drakon Heritage) was responsible for creating the organic components of the helmet and metalsmith Samantha Chilton assembled the helmet, assisted by Pieta.

CHALLENGES AND CONSTRAINTS

The project took about eighteen months altogether to create the elements, with three to four weeks to finally assemble each helmet. The main challenge for the reconstruction was creating the missing elements: there was nothing representing the substructure of the helmet, probably iron and leather, in the hoard material - not surprising as it contains little other than

Mark Routledge and Pieta Greaves working on the positioning of the cheekpiece



precious materials. The reconstruction uses evidence from similar helmets from across Europe to help with the missing elements. The resulting reconstruction is just that - an informed estimate of how the original may have looked and performed, based on the fragmentary evidence that survives.

The materials used in the reconstruction were not restrained by display and conservation issues. The only exception was that analysis of leather tanned using different methods was undertaken to establish which had higher or lower pH levels, and this information contributed to the leather choice. Otherwise materials were selected based on the research and the needs of the manufacturing process. Budgets did require that the metal elements were made from gold-plated copper instead of the gilded silver and gold of the originals. There were no attempts to recreate original Anglo-Saxon craft techniques, again this was based on financial and technical reasons.

ASSEMBLING THE HELMET

During the assembly the decorative panels and strips were attached to a leather cap using small rivets. The cheekpieces and neck guard were attached using leather thongs. It is also possible that these were originally attached using metal pins or rivets, but leather was chosen to allow a little more flexibility and wearability, given the uncertainty about the original structure. The leather cap with the decorations was attached over an iron base using a number of key fixing points, such as at the front and back of the crest, where larger holes suggested that more substantial pins secured the outer layer to the base.

Scientific analysis of the original objects has shown extensive use of beeswax, animal glues and other pastes throughout the collection, including in the helmet brow band and crest channel, and these results were used as a guide during the assembly. The horsehair crest is a choice, informed by the research - the channel was designed to hold some form of crest, but a range of organic materials are possible, including feathers or other bristles. The red madder chosen as a dye for the crest was available in the Anglo-Saxon period and alum was used as a mordant: the colour was selected to complement the other hoard objects made of gold and garnet. To make the hair stand-up, heat was applied to the horsehair, but no products were applied, this may be reviewed if the hair changes or droops over time.

Each part of the helmet is created from multiple elements:

- Crest: gold-plated cast bronze; madder-dyed horsehair; beeswax and animal glue; linen and copper wire (holds the horsehair to the crest)
- Helm: iron (base); leather - oak bark tanned ox- with linen string stitching (cap); gold- and silver-plated copper (edging, reeded strips, foils, rivets); copper, beeswax, goat leather dyed red using selladern (tray/ browband); gold- and silver-plated cast bronze (cheekpieces and crest)



Metal elements being attached to the leather cap



Sam Chilton uses an awl on the leather to make rivet holes

White horse hair in the process of being dyed with madder





Mark Routledge removing the helmet with cotton gloves

- channel); vegetable tanned goat leather, walnut dye (lining).
- Neck guard: leather - oak bark tanned ox (base); gold- and silver-plated copper (edging, reeded strips, foils, rivets); vegetable tanned goat leather, walnut dye (lining).

MOUNTING AND DISPLAY

The completed helmets are now on display at the museums. Mounts were commissioned for each helmet, each of an appropriate colour to fit into each gallery colour scheme. The main issue from a care of collections point of view is that the organic material will off-gas into the showcase for the immediate future. The decision was made firstly to display each helmet in its own case to ensure no risk to other objects in the gallery. However, each helmet has the potential to damage itself, as off-gassing could tarnish the silver decorative metal elements on the outside of the helmet.

At Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery a square of foam Intercept™, a copper-based pollutant scrubber, has been attached onto the mount inside the helmet itself. The size of the square was calculated using an equation based on the space of the showcase provided by the Intercept™ manufacturer. Similarly, the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery has used charcoal cloth in their case to absorb any pollutants.

In future, condition assessments will be completed to look at how the helmets are aging as well as the off-gassing situation: they are experimental objects, after all. For example, tension was added to the leather from the riveting process and a programme to review this will be necessary to check if the elements of the helmet move over time.

The helmets will be accessioned into both museum collections and will be treated as any other object would be in terms of care of collections. The completed reconstruction was worn briefly by a re-enactor for photography purposes and also to test its workability. As a seasoned re-enactor who has worn many helmets, Mark Routledge was able to test his

ability to move, his field of vision, the weight and balance of the helmet on his head in a practical way that provided insight into the helmet as a functional object.

The public release was very popular, with media agencies both online and in print picking up the story. This was an exciting project, because it is not often a conservator gets to be involved with the physical manufacture of a new object. The full research will be published in 2019 by the Society of Antiquaries and perhaps there will be even more hoard-derived reconstructions in the future.

The Staffordshire Hoard is owned by Birmingham and Stoke-on-Trent City Councils, and is cared for on behalf of the nation by Birmingham Museums Trust and The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery.

The helmet reconstruction project was made possible through fundraising by Birmingham Museums Trust and The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent, and is based on a major research project funded by Historic England and the museums.

Pieta Greaves putting the finished helmet into its display case



Talking to Simon Cane

In the third of our occasional series of interviews with conservators whose careers have taken them beyond conservation, Alison Richmond meets Icon member Simon Cane ACR. This is the first of a two-part discussion

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

AR: How did you get into conservation in the first place?

Like many people, it was by accident. I grew up in rural Hampshire on a farm and we had lots of really old stuff and my dad fixed everything and I used my hands a lot. When I left school I didn't really know what to do with myself. I saw this job at Hampshire County Council Museum Service as a conservation apprentice, thought it was interesting and they took me on initially as a six-month youth training placement.

And so at sixteen I found myself in this incredible environment with a really interesting group of engineers and craftsmen. It turned into a formal apprenticeship and I stayed for five years and did an engineering qualification on day release at college. I developed a practice around the Tasker collection, largely comprising agricultural steam traction engines. Mainly it was a restoration approach. We were taking these engines and returning them to full working order, and I worked with a fantastic group of guys who kept me in line.

It was very practical: fabricating, machining, painting and just learning - learning the materials that were going through my hands. What was really formative for me was the quality of people I worked with both in the workshop, and also the wider staff there: there was an archaeologist, taxidermy, ceramics conservation, textile conservation... so I really became aware of this broader thing called conservation.

When I came towards the end of that apprenticeship, I could see the opportunities but also the limitations. A colleague, Mark Holloway, encouraged us to look at what we could preserve and conserve rather than just replace. He had studied at Lincoln College of Art and Design and he said 'you should go there' and so I did. I joined the HND [Higher National Diploma] in conservation under Kate Foley [at Lincoln College of Art Design] for two years. She had come from English Heritage and had a very clear vision of what conservation could and should be and that really came across in the way that she taught.

The things that I still value from that period are the volume of material that I experienced and the amount of techniques that I learned, even if I didn't master all of them. I did my 10,000 hours and it stood me in good stead: the work ethic, understanding and organising projects, taking an engine to bits, completely rebuilding it again to make it work - it was a huge amount of work with a fantastic range of people.

AR: Training isn't like that anymore and maybe later on you might want to comment on the fact that the craft, if I dare call it that, is not always there in every field now in conservation; that could be something that we've lost.

It is. The push in conservation at the time was very much away from craft. It was moving towards the white coat, professional culture, which was probably the right thing to do at the time, but maybe there's an issue of baby and bath water there as well. It's an interesting point and I still benefit from that hands-on experience.

Once you have a feel for materials - and it is a feel - that was



reaffirmed at later points in my life when I was delivering skills preservation. When I was working on a textile machinery collection in Manchester we were trying to develop operational manuals - to download the head of a sixty-five year old guy who has been working all his life with the machinery - it's about understanding function, and then getting a feel for the operational parameters using knowledge but also the senses, sight, sound and smell. You can capture processes, settings and numbers in a manual but it is experience that really counts.

AR: You've mentioned that Kate really influenced you, and I know she continues to influence you, was there anyone else that you want to mention at this stage in terms of your training?

Well the guys I mentioned at Hampshire led by Gary Wragg. And there were others at Lincoln - Nigel Leeney, one of the lecturers, was an old school craftsman and fantastic on surface decoration, and I learnt a lot working with him. Lincoln was an Independent art college with a long history and a foundation-based approach to teaching skills, ceramics, painting, drawing and surface decoration. So understanding paint and how it works and a lot of Victorian and Edwardian surface finishing, including gilding, glass etching - the point was, you could have a go at anything. Kate was more about empowering you to get on with it and pushing you, whereas with Nigel it was more of a traditional apprenticeship, about good technique.

AR: You're very lucky to have had both!
Absolutely!

FIRST JOB: YORK

AR: OK, so let's move onto your career then.

When I left the two-year Lincoln programme, I moved into the role of object conservator at York Castle Museum, which had one of the first social history collections, covering a wide range of material - imagine your favourite bric-a-brac shop!

And it was my first laboratory, I had the white coat.

And that's where I met Mary Brooks, who took me under her wing and we formed a close working relationship based on our belief in the value and ethics of conservation. It was a typical local government collection, there were collections stored in sheds and attics and it quickly became clear we needed to take a more holistic approach. But we had a busy exhibitions programme there and we did lots of day-to-day conservation work. I was able to start buying kit and really developing my practice. Again, the range and sheer volume of material! I conserved thousands of objects over that period of time.

And then the big opportunity came: we came up with this concept for an exhibition about conservation. The exhibition became **Stop The Rot**. It was such a productive period and Mary worked with me particularly on things like my writing skills, which really developed in this period. We developed three basic concepts: what are things made of? why do they fall to bits? and what do we do about it? In a nutshell that's what conservation is about. And so we tried to create this very accessible and enjoyable exhibition and it went down incredibly well. All of a sudden we've gone from doing conservation and thinking about environmental conditions to being the project managers, the curators, and we're empowered, we've got a budget and it was a great learning curve.

That was a major game-changer for me and we put in for the IIC Keck Award and we won it, didn't we! And so I went to my first international conference, held in Ottawa hosted by the Canadian Conservation Institute, and a landmark in the development of preventive conservation. That whole week of that meeting I met interesting people and was exposed to a broader discussion around what conservation is - it was a really important moment, and I came back from that and went 'OK, I need to move on'. Which I did, in relatively short order, to The Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester.

MOVING TO MANCHESTER

The job was for a Collections Services Officer, working under Gaby Porter, who was Head of Collections and Information [1990 - 1999], and she turned out to be a very important person in my career development. Nobody had done conservation collections care at Manchester, so it was about establishing policy and practice from the ground up and it was a very dynamic institution. They had Mill Engines, vehicle collections, railway collections, machinery, science and technology - it was one of the earlier museums that mixed up all those aspects, very interactive too.

And I developed a couple of things there which were very important to me, one of which was a training programme around collections care and management that I based on *Stop The Rot*. I took that model and converted it into training sessions to improve staff awareness of what conservation was, why we were concerned about it and, why things fell to bits. I was able to develop presentation techniques and that was a confidence booster, the organisation was also very supportive of my being involved in other things like The Care of Collections Forum; I was an active member of what was then, of course, UKIC [the United Kingdom Institute of Conservation], so I was involved in conferences, writing papers, developing training and getting stuff published in conference papers.

Then the opportunity came up to develop what became the Collections Centre; I would argue that it was the first visible storage project in the UK. We developed large central and a large offsite storage facilities to bring collections together from disparate locations across the city. That was a very fruitful

and exciting period; we did not have many resources and so everybody had to get involved.

I also worked on the development of the textile industry gallery and we developed a skills preservation programme, what we now call knowledge transfer, as the people that ran this complex machinery were nearing retirement, and that is my point about feel, it has to be learnt through experience. A good manual will only get you so far.

Towards the end - this sounds really mad - I undertook a part-time Masters at the University of Southampton in Museum Studies, Culture, Collections and Communication which Manchester funded, so I was doing three days on the Collection Centre project and two days in Winchester for a two year period. It was very intense. If I'd tried to do it earlier I wouldn't have been mature enough in many ways. My writing had developed, I was confident enough, and the best thing about being employed was it meant you had some money to fund the extras.

AR: In your job at Manchester, you said that you were the first conservator, so did you then go and hire some more?

Yes, it expanded by an assistant post, and I always welcomed interns from various programmes: Cardiff, Lincoln, London and Durham. Again, a very active period in terms of getting published and going to conferences, where the papers you remember are because of the way they are presented. I learnt about good technique through watching a whole range of people from that period who really were compelling and confident speakers.

So Manchester was important for me, in terms of building confidence and working with good people like Gaby. She was a great mentor, properly tough, but also really creative and inspiring, and really warm. You start to model your own leadership on good leaders, and you learn from the good and the bad. I'd gone as far as I could with the organisation and I had a couple of interviews for various jobs, some went well and some didn't but, again, every time I learnt something about myself. One of the key things, I think, is getting good feedback from interviews, it is really important and actually it's harder these days, because people are so scared of litigation. And so then I went for an interview at Birmingham, for this new Head of Conservation Collections Care post.

FIRST LEADERSHIP ROLE

AR: This is Birmingham Museums Trust?

Well [then it was the] Birmingham Museum & Art Galleries under the City Council. It was a real challenge as the collections were in a bit of a state. But the important thing about Manchester, and to some degree York, was that in both those jobs I felt I left the collections in a better state than when I found them, and that's become a watchword for me. So I moved to Birmingham and would describe that as my first proper leadership role. I had a full team under me, I could budget, and because of my time in York I had an understanding of how city councils worked.

It was a really interesting moment. The *Renaissance in the Regions* programme was being developed by Resource and we got the funding to develop the museum; we got some jobs created and we completely refurbished the conservation studios and then we developed a training programme called *Renaissance At Work* (RAW). Again, this was developing the principles of *Stop The Rot* and the training programmes that I developed in Manchester. I worked with Jane Thompson-Webb to develop a modular approach to training which was delivered across the region to improve standards of care in

local museums with practical, good advice. Jane delivered a lot of the training but we also used established conservation professionals to deliver, and we trained hundreds of people.

There were a lot of spin-offs, too, and the big success was that Birmingham's [scattered] collections were moved into a single storage unit, which transformed our management of the collections improving care and access!

At the same time I was able to look at my own development, lots of training and development, a formal management qualification and the Clore Leadership Programme, which was all about developing as a leader. Throughout this period I was professionally active, writing papers, attending conferences and working with subject specialist groups.

Then Birmingham put a stop on external appointments and the Head of Operations post came up - the post to which I reported. So I applied and got it. I was then looking after all of the business services, covering wider operations, as well as the collections management and conservation team. That was my first foray into senior management, effectively the deputy to the director. And then change came in 2007 when we started to see the finances of local government just crashing. Awful, awful situation, which we have yet to really fully understand the impact of in England. It got very brutal from that point on: re-organisation, cost cutting and five or six really difficult years. And the museum ended up moving to trust status.

[After a number of Directors came and went] the opportunity was right and - fortune favours the brave - [I suggested they] put me in as Interim Director to let the dust settle and get some stability. So in that period I learnt about just how you make an organisation work, dealing with difficult finances, and a challenging board of trustees. What really impressed me was the quality of the people and their commitment to making things work. It was an interesting and challenging period because as Director the buck stops with you but I enjoyed it! I had to make some very difficult decisions, but I learnt a lot about myself and my own resilience during this period.

THE STAFFORDSHIRE HOARD

AR: Tell us about the Staffordshire Hoard project.

Being involved in this massive treasure trove extravaganza was part inspiring and part the most bruising experience of my career. It was difficult from the minute it was found, because that kind of project brings out the best and the worst in people. The Staffordshire Hoard was global news, it was wall to wall, and this rollercoaster ride started.

Usually an archaeological find like this would be announced and then go into hiding and reappear three or four years later with a publication and maybe an exhibition. That clearly wasn't going to happen. There was a huge public response with people queuing round the block to see it, straight out of the ground, covered in mud!

We ended up working in partnership as joint owners of the Hoard with the Potteries Museum in Staffordshire. It was difficult to manage but we developed a really good project around it. We had regular studio tours; we put vlogs out through YouTube and we made documentaries with National Geographic, Channel Four and the BBC. We got coverage like never before and we engaged with professionals around the world. We made it an open process and brought as many people into it as possible. For instance, we had blacksmith interns working with us and they brought knowledge and understanding that the specialist metallurgical conservators didn't have. We brought jewellers in, too.



Image: Mark Holloway

A youthful Simon Cane and the Tasker Economic Engine at Hampshire County Council Museum Service circa 1987

Those were the positives but some of the politics around research and the structures and processes for managing the project were not something I would go into lightly again. At the end of the day we won the Conservation Award [The Staffordshire Hoard Conservation Programme won the Pilgrim Trust Award for Conservation in 2015]; there's a fantastic gallery in Birmingham and the monograph is coming out in 2019. I wish the project well but they were tough, if interesting, times.

[Also during this period] I became Chair of Icon in its second year and we had some real teething problems, as organisations do. I've been one of the members saying 'Oh, Icon should do this and Icon should do that', and all of a sudden you're the one going 'Do they not understand how this works!' But I did enjoy it and having the chance to put something back in.

MOVING ON

Then the Board [of Birmingham Museums Trust] decided to appoint a new Director, I went for the job and they decided not to appoint me. These things happen and then something else comes along. That's when the opportunity came to move down to University College London (UCL). The job was Director of Public and Cultural Engagement, as the Department was then known and I thought 'this is way outside of my comfort zone!' It was a portfolio of services, which included three museums (now four), a public engagement unit and then they added in the Bloomsbury Theatre and Studio.

[It was] a big life change and I've had to get to grips with a very complex shift in landscape. In museums all the staff are focused on what a museum does and pull in the same direction. A university has a clear purpose around research and teaching but is also a very federated system of things pulling in different directions. So I've had to work out what our offer is as a department, how we develop it to serve the needs of the institution and create a vision that is meaningful and integrated. That's been challenging but UCL is one of the world's leading universities and there are some fantastic people to work with who are really, really smart! It stretches you.

[One] big difference is coming out of the museum sector. For example, I saw Birmingham's core budget reduce by over 50% and that's brutal. The Higher Education sector is a lot healthier financially than the situation that local government and other cultural institutions find themselves in. So it's developing change but around a vision of doing things differently for a more positive reason than to meet cuts. And we can dress those up how we like - 'do more with less' - but actually it comes to a point where you are just damaging the institution.

(To be continued)

WORKSHOPS & COURSES

EXCEL TRAINING FOR EFFECTIVE DATA MANAGEMENT

Heritage Science Group
London 9 October 2018

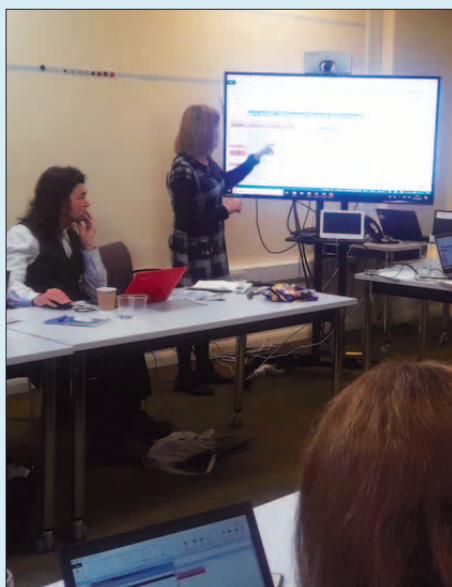
Run by software wizard **Andie Mills** from the IT Training Hub, this one-day course offered delegates guidance on both intermediate and advanced aspects of Microsoft Excel, covering everything from time-saving tips and tricks, to sophisticated methods for data processing.

As we found ourselves gathered around our laptops in a basement of the National Trust's London office, like a comically stereotypical collection of computer geeks each merrily confessing a love for efficient spreadsheets, Andie opened the day by inviting members of the group to introduce themselves and explain their most frequent uses for Excel. Most attendees cited data processing related to environmental monitoring, pest management and project management.

However, the overwhelming response from participants, was that although all used Excel regularly, most considered themselves self-taught, often relying on help from internet searches to find ways to do things. In summary, everyone in attendance was seeking more efficient ways to use Excel, while improving their ability to present data in a meaningful manner.

Swiftly picking up on this response, Andie got the group warmed up with a range of quick-fire tips designed to refresh everyone's minds on some Excel basics, including some fantastic keyboard shortcuts, and formatting tips. Using Ctrl+; to input today's date being a particularly favourite of the group. This was

Intense concentration on Excel training



Delegates at the Photographic Conservation Workshop

followed by several tricks for speedy sheet and workbook navigation, such as employing named cells and using the status bar for quickly ascertaining totals and averages from a highlighted section of data.

From here on the pace of the training session was rapid but highly engaging, with each new topic backed up by an excellent collection of pre-prepared practical examples, which participants worked through on their personal computers, often exclaiming with satisfaction at successfully inputted formulas. A particularly neat example document demonstrated use of What-If analysis to instantly calculate how many grams of certain foodstuffs one could eat to ensure a healthy calorie consumption. Although not directly conservation related, all present saw multiple uses for this application within their own practice, and most agreed they might also use it henceforth to inform their chocolate intake!

Advanced topics covered in the afternoon session included guidance on Charting and PivotTables, both of which provide excellent methods for managing, summarising, and presenting data sets - large or small - through a range of easily manipulatable techniques. With conservators increasingly asked to economically allocate, justify, and communicate resource requirements, these tools have enormous capacity to assist in meaningful presentation of data in a visually accessible manner.

If ever there was a course that everyone entering a modern workplace should be able to attend, this is it. All participants left the basement knowing they would henceforth spend less time battling with software, less time relying on trial and error or asking Google, and more time proficiently processing data - or even getting back to some efficiently organised and perfectly resourced practical work.

If a colleague of yours was on this course, keep a watchful eye out for their laminated handouts - they contain an abundant wealth of tips to speed up your use of Excel!

Keira Miller, Victoria and Albert Museum
Senior Textile Conservation Display Specialist

BASIC CARE AND PRESERVATION OF PHOTOGRAPHS

St Andrews, Scotland 20 October 2018

This workshop was organised and hosted by the University of St Andrews Library, Special Collections Division, as part of the St Andrews Photography Festival and Stereo Photography conference. Led by **Ioannis Vasallos**, the photographic collections conservator at the National Library of Scotland, the workshop was geared towards collectors and curators of photographic collections.

Delegates were taken through the history of photographic processes and shown the characteristics of each process type, which can aid their identification. The descriptions of the different processes and their development were used to introduce the common types of deterioration associated with each process type. The session was followed by an identification test using Ioannis's extensive study collection, which includes a variety of photographic processes, from albumen prints varnished with collodion to Polaroids - some more easily identifiable than others! There was lively discussion throughout the identification test and the participants shared collection care problems which they have encountered with their own collections.

The next session focussed on the safe handling of photographic material and an introduction to basic conservation treatments including surface cleaning, and removing pressure sensitive tapes and staples. Black and white silver gelatine photographic prints on resin-coated paper, depicting the monuments on Calton Hill in Edinburgh, had previously been stapled and covered with pressure sensitive tape and were used for the workshop as mock up collection items to be treated. Dry cleaning was demonstrated using a washed latex make-up sponge, a blown latex sponge, grated Mars Staedler plastic eraser 526-50 and a Prismacolor MAGIC RUB® eraser. Delegates tried their hand at the cleaning and at pressure sensitive tape removal using a blade, micro-spatula and a crepe square. The practical session introduced the participants to new skills while at the same time making them more aware of the skill

and experience needed to carry out even simple interventions to photographic material.

Preventive conservation was covered in the session on display, housing and storage. Ioannis's comprehensive presentation was well supplemented by physical examples of options for housing formats to suit different items, from ready-made four-flap enclosures to archival ring binder files with polyester pockets, and a huge range of samples of suitable materials for housing photographic material – these included samples of archival cover paper, unbuffered museum boards, pHoton paper, Argenta, archival polyester and Plastazotes.

Recognising that not every problem can be addressed in-house, especially in smaller institutions which cannot afford conservation staff, the final session covered commissioning conservation from private conservators. Delegates were informed about the Institute of Conservation, the process of Professional Accreditation and continued professional development and the Conservation Register as a resource for finding a qualified and accredited conservator. The importance of photographic and written documentation to an item's description and condition, and most importantly, full details of any interventions and changes made was strongly emphasised.

With the well thought out structure, Ioannis's enthusiasm and knowledge and the excellent resources to support the event, the workshop was a unanimous success and will certainly be repeated in the same venue. Please look out for notifications of the next workshop.

The organisers would like to thank the sponsors for the huge variety of materials and samples generously provided by: Conservation Resources, John Purcell Papers, Preservation Equipment and most especially Conservation by Design. The event was also made possible through generous funding from the Icon Scotland Group which works tirelessly to promote and strengthen links between the variety of conservation disciplines in Scotland.

Erica Kotze ACR

Preventive Conservator

PATTERN CUTTING **Icon Textile Group**

London 20 – 21 November 2018

This two-day workshop was run by **Alice Prier**, a highly qualified pattern cutter and teacher, and **Lilia Prier Tisdall** who is a Textile Conservation Display Specialist at the V&A. They both co-run Alice & Co Patterns. The event was designed for conservation professionals across the field, to learn how to make a perfectly fitted block, the techniques



Image: Kelly Grimshaw

At the Pattern Cutting Workshop

behind historical pattern cutting and how these techniques can be applied to costume mounting.

Alice provided instructions which were easy to follow, for both those with no pattern cutting experience to those more practiced, on how to follow the unique Telesia system which was designed by Anastasia Vouyouka.

The first day began with learning how to take accurate body measurements and drafting a personal dress block. These blocks were then used to make a cotton toile, including darts to ensure a perfect fit for each individual. It was remarkable how simple the Telesia system was to use and how perfect each fit was with no one needing to make any adjustments.

The second day saw the adaptation of the block and turning a block into a pattern, including the pivoting of darts, creating panels, the slash-and-spread, adding collars, changing the neckline, and adding volume to the design.

Alice and Lilia then moved on to looking at historical shapes, turning pattern cutting 'inside out' which was made more accessible with our new-found knowledge and understanding behind pattern cutting techniques. In looking at historic dress in this

way it allows for a better understanding of the production of past fashions, which in turn will help with mounting these textiles.

Lilia provided a presentation on the applications of pattern cutting within her role at the V&A and how she uses the block and pattern techniques to recreate historical shapes in mannequins and supports, both internally and externally, and provided examples of her work for reference. This insight into practical measures of pattern cutting was beneficial to all and turned into an open discussion of the application of pattern cutting in conservation practice.

Both Alice and Lilia are extremely accomplished in their respective skills and their openness in sharing their experiences and techniques was greatly welcomed by all participants of the workshop. As a student myself at the University of Lincoln I am new to pattern cutting and working with 3D textiles and found this interactive and informative workshop extremely helpful and believe everyone left the workshop with new skills to take forward into their work.

Kelly Grimshaw, Conservation Student
University of Lincoln

Participants at the pattern cutting workshop wearing their perfectly fitting blocks



Image: Lilia Prier Tisdall

JAPANESE PAPER CONSERVATION 2018
ICCROM & Tokyo National Research Institute
for Cultural Properties

Tokyo 27 August – 14 September 2018

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This year I was delighted to be accepted on this international three-week course, which has been offered every year since 1992. It is organised around lectures, visits, and practical work and aims at a deep understanding of paper conservation techniques and materials used in Japan. Only ten participants from around the world are accepted – this year, we came from Argentina, Australia, Bhutan, Canada, Denmark, Fiji, France, Poland, the United Kingdom/Venezuela and Zambia.

Japanese paper conservation materials and techniques have been used in the West for some time now. They are taught in conservation courses all over the world, and the 2015 conference *Adapt and Evolve*, organised by Icon in London, was a testament to how widespread, successful and influential Japanese traditions are in the everyday work of the paper conservator.

As an experienced paper conservator accustomed to using Japanese materials and techniques to treat Western art works, the practical sessions were an opportunity to compare, refresh and update my practice. The sessions focused on creating a hand-scroll, a process that involves the use of different types of papers, criteria for their selection, the use of adhesives processed in different ways, a variety of brushes and the unique Japanese mounting techniques. All

this was explained and demonstrated in detail by two master conservators.

The lectures about *Washi* - a generic term for fine paper developed in Japan - allowed us to identify the different types of paper such as Kozo, Gampi or Mitzumata, as well as to recognise names and characteristics related to plants and regions. During the discussions, we were encouraged to ask the paper representatives/suppliers to provide information about the raw materials, the pulping, the bleaching and the drying methods used on the papers.

There were talks and practical sessions on the use of starches. For scroll mounting, the Japanese use fresh wheat starch (Nori) and aged wheat starch (Furunori). The scrolls are lined with multiple paper layers that will be rolled and unrolled, so the first lining layer is pasted with fresh starch paste but subsequent layers are lined with aged paste. This paste combination, and especially the use of aged paste, is significant in creating a flexible lining that minimises the risk of creases, and it is straightforwardly reversible. We were also instructed on how to handle these delicate hand scrolls and large hanging scrolls. For displaying purposes these items are frequently changed depending on a range of factors, such as the time of year and audience. When not on display the scrolls are stored in tailor-made cypress boxes.

The subject of brushes was an essential part of the practical sessions. In our last week we were honoured to have a presentation on different brushes and their uses by father

and son brush-makers from the KOBAYASHI Brush Shop, and National Craft Technique holders. Their brushes use many types of animal hair (which could be winter or summer hairs, depending on the type of brush). They are assembled using silk threads and sandwiched between two holders made of cypress wood. There was also an informative session on how to look after brushes. Since they are made with real hairs, it is important after washing a brush to remove as much moisture as possible; they pat dry the brush under a soft towel and finish by hanging it up, always away from the wall, so there is plenty of air all around it.

One week was designated as the study tour to Central Japan, to the cities of Nagoya, Mino and Kyoto. We visited a castle, temples, a paper-making museum, a washi paper wholesaler's residence, a papermaker, and independent traditional restoration studios. These visits encouraged us to see tangible and intangible heritage in their context.

The trip to the MinotakeKam Kobo, a traditional papermaking workshop, was one of my favourite visits. This workshop produces Mino papers (Mino is where the paper is made) and it appears on the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage list. Using kozo fibres, the workshop produces handmade papers, which are then dried on ancient wooden boards and later sorted for minor imperfections before packaging. Some of us were invited to make paper.

The visit to Nagoya Castle was also very significant. Built in 1615, it burnt down

Participants and organisers outside the Oka Bokkodo Studio in Kyoto



© Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties

during air raids in the Second World War. The Hommaru Palace (within the Castle) was reconstructed and recently opened to the public. The reconstruction involved recreating the palace's wooden structure and interiors, including sliding doors with exquisite paintings and carvings. On this visit, one can appreciate a significant aspect of the Japanese approach to conservation – craft techniques are protected by law as Intangible Cultural Property. The techniques have been used for hundreds of years and can still be reproduced with precision in the 21st century.

At the end of the course, we had the honour of a brief visit from Katsuhiko Masuda, an expert who in 1985 was invited by ICCROM to lecture on mounting techniques outside Japan, spreading this knowledge to the West.

I am very grateful for the privilege of attending this course. It was fantastic to receive first-hand teaching on the processes involved in Japanese paper conservation, to consolidate and extend the knowledge of a great variety of papers and their production, and to appreciate the different ways in which heritage is interpreted and sustained in Japan.

These three weeks have helped me to update and invigorate my practice, and although I do not do much lining, I use Japanese papers, starch paste, brushes and some of their fundamental techniques in my daily work. The first thing I need to do is to reassess the way I care for my brushes – they were made to last a lifetime, and some are losing their hairs and looking out of shape. This course also gave me the opportunity to meet conservators from around the world and hear about their work, some of them working in really challenging conditions.

I am grateful to the Tokyo National Research Centre for Cultural Properties for the invitation and the financial support to attend this course, and my most sincere thanks go to the instructors, organisers, assistants and translators who worked so hard to make our stay a wonderful experience.

Amelia Rampton ACR

Conservation of Works on Paper

CONFERENCES

ACTING IN CONTEMPORARY ART

The Dutch Foundation for the Conservation of Contemporary Art (SBMK)

The Netherlands, 14 - 16 November 2018

This three-day international symposium, hosted by SBMK, covered themes such as decision-making, artist participation, oral history and stakeholders in conservation. During the summit, there were twenty presentations, twenty-one poster presentations and four 'break-out' sessions, across locations such as the Cultural



All the SBMK conference attendees in the foyer of the Stedelijk Museum

Heritage Agency of the Netherlands in Amersfoort and the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam.

The first day began at the Centraal Museum in Utrecht, with a focus on plastics. **Carien van Aubel** and **Olivia van Rooijen** presented their work on the Plastic Project. Alongside scientists at the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands, they have been developing a plastic identification tool to be used by museums without access to scientific analysis. **Maria Cristina Lanza** then presented on the challenges of conserving kinetic artworks, focusing on a case study made of polymethyl methacrylate (PMMA). In particular, the balance between preserving original material and the functionality of the work was highlighted. It was really interesting to then hear from artist **Folkert de Jong**, a keynote speaker, who discussed the use of plastic in his artworks and his ideas on their preservation.

The second day began with **Hedwig Braam** presenting a poster on the implications of different conservation strategies on socially engaged artworks (artworks in which the public is involved with their creation). It was thought-provoking to think about how conservators can preserve social engagement and the challenges that are faced. **Joanna Phillips** presented on the importance of creating collaborative structures within institutions to care for time-based media artworks, particularly how cross-institutional and cross-disciplinary partnerships are essential to develop new conservation approaches. The issues of time-based media artworks were also highlighted in a poster presentation by **Claire Molgat Laurin**. In her research, Claire developed a process for testing and characterising media installation artworks in order to determine functionality and possible preservation problems.

During the 'break out' session on risks and decisions in contemporary art conservation, **Irene Glanzer** gave a thrilling presentation

on dangerous and hazardous materials that are being used by contemporary artists today. With specific reference to Jan Faber's sculptures made from exotic beetles, Irene told of the strong-smelling pesticides that are used to keep protein-eating pests away and the risks to human health that this poses. On the theme of risks and hazards, **Deborah Cane** and **Sharon Robinson-Calver** gave another exciting presentation on the dangers that can be presented in contemporary art collections with artworks that contain lead, asbestos or even a sample of a 'fatberg'. Many performance art examples were shown that pose complex legislative navigation to be able to be performed.

On the final day, **Veerle Meul** discussed Richard Deacon's outdoor sculpture *Never Mind* that was made for the museum in 1993. Made of beechwood, after a few months it showed major damage because of the outdoor environment. In 2017 it was agreed that the artist remake the sculpture in stainless steel. Veerle raised questions on whether a refabricated sculpture remains an original. **Laura Wolfkamp** then presented on the topic of the artist as a conservator, referring to an experience she faced when an artist wished to conserve their own work and the benefits and challenges that came from this exchange. **Lydia Beerkens** concluded the three days with an engaging presentation on whether beauty plays a role in the conservation of modern art. Lydia explained that as the optical end result of a restoration project is not so well defined, this is often left to the conservator's subjective eye.

Overall this was an enriching event with a real international feel. It is hoped the next summit will be held in the Netherlands or abroad.

Alice Watkins,

Contemporary Art Conservator in Training,
University of Amsterdam

WET PAINT: interactions between water and paintings

Icon Paintings Group

Edinburgh October 2018

This conference, held at the National Museum of Scotland, was a valuable opportunity to consider the effects of water on paintings, both positive and negative. It included talks covering flood damage, mechanical testing and individual treatments and had relevance to all aspects of painting conservation from individual treatments to storage/display considerations. Overall the papers presented new and very useful information to inform best practice for painting conservators.

Two papers gave useful lessons learnt from floods. The keynote speaker **Andrea Santacesaria**, spoke on *The conservation legacy of the 1966 flooding. The experience of the Opificio della Pietre Dure in Firenze through the restoration of The Last Supper by Giorgio Vasari*. He described the details of the treatment but also gave an overview of the management of all the flood damaged paintings. He reflected on the operation, and concluded that there were two lessons to be learnt. One: that the original batons should not have been removed from the flood damaged paintings; and two: that the drying out process for the waterlogged panels was too slow. **Clare Meredith**, *Twenty five years after the Perth Museum & Art Gallery flood: reflections*, discussed the main issues involved in working after a flood. The treatment of Millais's *Just Awake* was described in detail, including its original structure and the damage it sustained. She emphasized the benefits of collaboration between the local teams of conservators but reflected that less consolidation needed to have been done on site and secondly advised 'Have courage!'

Two speakers focussed on the effect of relative humidity on lined and unlined paintings. **Vladimir Vilde** presented *Methodology for monitoring the impact of moisture on lined canvas paintings in historic houses*, co-authored with David Thickett, Dave Hollis and Emma Richardson. His PhD is funded by English Heritage to study the relationship between RH and dimensional changes in paintings, particularly looking at unlined and lined paintings. He described the methodology of Nuclear Magnetic Resonance and Direct Image Correlation and reported significant differences in the response of Beva/polyester sailcloth lined and unlined paintings.

Cecil Krarup Andersen and **Christine Slottved Kimbriel** discussed *Wax-Resin Linings and Relative Humidity - case studies and lab tests*, co-authored with Cecilia Gregers-Høegh, Martin N. Mortensen and Karen-Marie Henriksen. The paper described the effects of temporary storage of some wax lined oil paintings in an



The audience at the Wet Paint conference

unheated boat house with relative humidity well over 70%. The paintings developed bulges after they were returned to lower RH. Lab tests were carried out and showed that wax linings and unlined canvas both undergo permanent deformations when exposed to very high RH, but the wax linings to a much bigger extent. Reference was made to previous studies on mechanical properties of wax-resin linings.

Three papers described case studies cleaning water sensitive paintings. Each emphasized the importance of a good understanding of the materials, and the reason for the moisture sensitivity. Different approaches were described, including research on the artists' original materials and the long term problems, and solutions that would deliver pragmatic results.

Lynne Harrison's subject was *The conservation of two water sensitive 14th century Italian fresco fragments by Spinello Aretino, previously treated and displayed as easel paintings in the 19th century*, co-authored by Helen Howard and Eric Miller. The chosen treatment involved both water and water-based materials despite the water sensitive nature of the frescoes.

Lena Porsmo Stoveland discussed *Addressing issues related to the cleaning of water-sensitive oil paintings by Edvard Munch*, co-authored by Bronwyn Ormsby, Francesco Caruso, Maartje Stols-Witlox and Tine Frøysaker. She introduced current and ongoing research on novel surface cleaning techniques for the removal of soot and dirt from unvarnished surfaces, and described mock-up samples for evaluation of soft-particle blasting; cleaning using CO2 snow; and a micro-aspiration technique.

Rebecca Hellen and **Rachel Scott** presented *'It is a formal problem to represent water, to describe water, because it can be anything...' Watery Subjects, Materials and Conservation Solutions for paintings by David Hockney*, co-authored with Bronwyn Ormsby. They discussed the materials, techniques and preparation of the twelve Tate Hockney paintings for the exhibition at Tate in 2017. The issues involved the artist's use of acrylic based varnishes over acrylic paint surfaces; surface cleaning water sensitive materials; old water based retouching; historic stains and

water damage; the use of agar gels and aqueous cleaning methods.

One paper focussed on cleaning solvent sensitive paintings with water based cleaning methods. In *The Application of Water-based Cleaning Systems in the Treatment of George Stubbs' Wax Paintings* **Annie Cornwell** described testing a number of different types of cleaning methods; including solvents, gels, microemulsions, reagents and found that the best results were obtained using the microemulsions.

The conference was held in the beautiful National Museum of Scotland, and generous catering was provided throughout the day culminating in a wine reception. I was extremely grateful to receive grants from the Anna Plowden Trust/Clothworkers Foundation CPD Grant Scheme and the Federation of Museums and Art Galleries of Wales training grant scheme which enabled me to attend.

Jenny Williamson ACR, Paintings Conservator

National Library of Wales and Glynn Vivian Art Gallery

OPERATING AND CONSERVING HISTORIC INDUSTRIAL & TRANSPORT COLLECTIONS

Association of British Transport & Engineering Museums (ABTEM)

London, 21 November 2018

Following on from the success of earlier seminars focussing on the *Guidelines for the Care and Operation of Larger & Working Historic Objects*, ABTEM's late Autumn Seminar was set in the apposite surroundings of the London Museum of Water and Steam (LMWS).

After a welcome from **Liz Power** (The Museum's Director), **Stathis Tsois** of International Railway Heritage Consultancy (IRHC) Ltd introduced the guidelines and their development. The guidelines are an update to those previously published in 1994. An initial scoping report gave recommendations for updates based on an extensive review of forty years' worth of literature. A draft was piloted by thirteen individuals and institutions, who submitted feedback which was reviewed by a steering committee before the final draft was made

ready for publishing in November 2017. Stathis emphasised the flexible approach of the guidelines, with the main emphasis on decision-making, making them relevant to both private collectors and heritage institutions.

The first case study of the day was given by **Christopher Binks** of the National Railway Museum, who presented the conservation of the dynamometer car which measured the speed of the Mallard when it set the world speed record for steam locomotives. The car had suffered extensive water damage in 2012 when it was displayed outside. It was expected that it would be stable as it was a rail vehicle, but as Chris pointed out: 'it had ceased to be a rail vehicle and had become a mobile antique'. An enlightening account of the conservation work was given, including coating with a removable mixture of Paraloid B72 and Shellsol A recommended by the Getty Institute, as well as the use of Japanese Tissue and Lascaux 498 to fill losses on the roof. The case study underlined the interdisciplinary approach that often needs to be taken with transport collections.

Paul & Joyce Jefford then presented the conservation of a Leyland Tiger Bus - one of the case studies included in the ABTEM guidelines, though they acquired the bus in 1972 long before any such guidelines existed. The bus was of personal significance to Paul, as it had serviced his home town in his youth, and he knew from the beginning that this was the period of its working life he wanted to portray. The couple's philosophy was one of a minimalist approach to 'conservation through use', avoiding

replacement of parts unless necessary for continued running – an approach they felt would have been unachievable with a classic restoration.

Peter Turvey, chairman of the Kennet & Avon Canal Trust, then gave a case study of the ongoing conservation of the Beam Engines at Crofton Pumping Station. The site boasts the oldest beam engine in the world that still operates under full load and can fulfil its original function, but the continued running of such heritage results in a perpetual need for conservation and maintenance work. It was clear that since their first iteration ABTEM guidelines have been a central part of the philosophy of 'operation within limitations' adopted by the Pumping Station. Benefitting from Heritage Lottery funding, the site has recently renewed its approach to widening audiences and will soon be trialling cutting edge monitoring technology for the working heritage in the collection.

Finally, **John Porter**, trustee of the LMWS gave an insight into how things have changed in the last forty years for the museum. In contrast to Crofton's beam engines, John drew attention to the challenges of running steam engines below full load and not in their original locations, and how this changes the approach to their care. The pressures of health and safety regulations were emphasised, and the *Safety of Pressure Systems Approved Code of Practice* was marked as a set of standards of equal importance to the new ABTEM guidelines. John finished with the question of whether or not hydraulic operation of engines with modern technology

sympathetically installed could be a feasible way of ensuring the continued running of engines once running them on steam ceases to be viable.

After the presentations, there was an opportunity to explore the museum with volunteers on hand to talk about the collection. The day gave a great insight into the challenges faced in the conservation of larger working heritage and how the new ABTEM guidelines can be used to inform approaches and educate both volunteers and professionals in order to improve conservation practice and ensure the sustainability of industrial and transport collections. The guidelines are available to buy or download from abtemguidelines.org.wordpress.com

Dale Sardeson

Dynamic Objects Network

VISITS

STUDY DAY AND AGM

Icon Ceramics & Glass Group

Farnham 17 November 2018

Though a member of Icon for some years, it was only recently that I attended my first event run by the Ceramics and Glass Group, which met in November at the Crafts Study Centre in Farnham for its AGM. I had intended to visit the Crafts Study Centre (CSC) for a number of years so this was the motivation I needed. It enabled me to access this amazing resource and combine it with a visit to the annual *Art in Clay* event at the Maltings Centre.

First, the group was to benefit from the knowledge and experience of the Centre's Director, **Professor Simon Olding**, who summarized the history and establishment of the Crafts Study Centre and its collection. The Centre was founded by a group of likeminded individuals, led by printmaker Robin Tanner, for the purpose of making a permanent collection of works by the finest twentieth century artist-craftspeople working in the UK. The Centre's ability to meet its objective greatly improved following the 2004 opening of the purpose-built museum and research centre at Farnham. The collection focuses on quality works by pioneer craftspeople that might otherwise have been lost, particularly in the areas of modern and contemporary ceramics, textiles, calligraphy, furniture and wood, paper, film, photographic and other archives of makers for the 20th and 21st centuries.

The ceramics collection, which was the primary focus of our visit, dates from around 1920 to the present day and represents the work of many pioneer and leading studio potters. The Centre holds an outstanding collection of objects central to the history of 20th-century studio crafts movement in

Peter Turvey addresses the assembled delegates at the London Museum of Water and Steam





Group members at a special guided tour to the archive of the Crafts Study Centre in Farnham, led by Simon Olding (right)

Britain and it is supported by archive materials relating to makers represented in the collections. From a research perspective, the archive is crucial to understanding more about the collections and individual artists and their work.

After our introduction to the Centre and its work, we were divided into two groups for guided visits to the Research Room where there was a display of ceramics from the collection, among them works by William Staite Murray, Richard Batterham, Eric Mellon, Michael Cardew, Lucie Rie, Hans Coper, and Katherine Pleydon-Bouverie. This small selection of pots by key 20th-century makers demonstrates the depth and richness of materials held by the Centre. After a brief overview of the ceramics on show and their origins, Simon Olding explained how and why recent acquisitions were purchased. It was evident that commitment and hard work go into maintaining and developing the collection.

The other group had the opportunity to explore current CSC exhibitions including *Brought to Book* that investigates the way that particular collections relate to a book of some description; Richard Slee's *Framed* wall mounted ceramics; and *David Grimshaw: Crafting the Digital*, an investigation into material and process-led digital making.

After the tours, the formal business of the AGM was dealt with swiftly. New members were voted in and those leaving the Committee were thanked, in particular the Group acknowledged the hard work and commitment of Jasmina Vuckovic and Roland Pile. The Committee announced a three-day conference at the British Museum (5-7 September 2019) staged collaboratively between the Icon Ceramics and Glass Group, ICOM-CC, and the British Museum. This conference will bring together specialist professionals in a prestigious location and will generate a publication that advances the study and care of ceramics and glass.

Members were reminded to promote the bi-annual Nigel Williams Prize, which rewards conservation work in ceramic, glass or other related materials in the past three years.

The afternoon was spent visiting *Art in Clay* at Farnham Maltings. Now in its twenty-second year, the event showcases a diverse range of modern ceramics by UK and European makers. The variety of works from emerging ceramic artists and established makers illustrated the wealth of talent around who continue the tradition of the potters we had viewed in the morning. There were talks and demonstrations by makers and the opportunity to learn more about their materials and techniques. Film screenings included a series of pottery films and documentaries including *The Leach Pottery* (1952) with original footage of Bernard Leach, which linked back to our morning visit to CSC.

The Ceramic and Glass Group AGM and study day provided the opportunity to network as well as visit an amazing collection, to focus on and engage with the very material that made me pursue a career in conservation. At such events, I am always interested to see what various institutions hold and fascinated by the connections I make to other collections or ceramicists I have studied or admired. It was informative and inspiring and I look forward to attending the conference in 2019.

Melanie Howard

Museum of the History of Science, Oxford

TALKS

BOOKS, PESTS, ACCESS: New Challenges for National Trust Libraries

Independent Paper Conservators Group
London

It is impossible to cover in this short piece the quality and wealth of information that **Caroline Bendix ACR** shared with our group at the Freemasons' Hall at this recent talk. The presentation reflected her enthusiasm and dedication to the challenges that the National Trust faces.

Caroline's portrayal of her role as the National Trust's Advisor on Library Conservation and trainer for book projects for heritage volunteers showed how a structured preservation management approach to conservation could effectively control the variety of demands. The size, range and diversity of the historic collections containing some 600,000 books in 160 locations pose their own individual challenges.

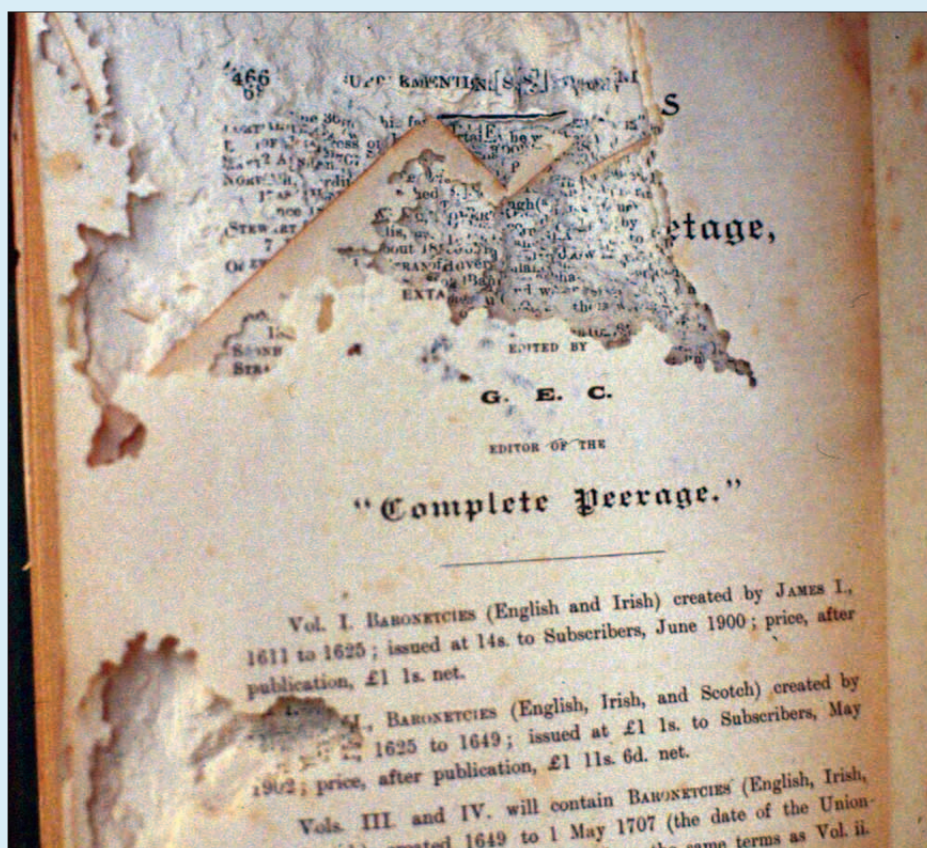
The authentic historic experience expected by visitors to National Trust properties influences how the conservation is delivered and involves a multi-pronged approach; such as forward-planning, training, monitoring of projects, volunteers and environments while maintaining visual harmony to the public and encouraging engagement through exhibitions, talks and research access.

Caroline's main focus is on slowing down the rate of deterioration of the collections and she gave case studies from specific historic sites, showing how the most prominent threats such as high relative humidity, damp, light, dust, pests, extreme weather conditions and public handling can eventually lead to permanent damage.

Her detailed knowledge of identifying damage caused by specific pests, leaks and mould was visually demonstrated in her presentation, followed by suggestions for controlling these conditions before they became problematic. She also drew attention to the importance of maintaining good ventilation especially behind bookcases, effective building management and innovative storage solutions.

She also covered preservation conservation tools and techniques such as surveys, which provide information on levels of deterioration that can be catalogued using a central collections management system. This allows for both provenance and collection care data to be compared and acted upon and ensures that the limited resources and funding available is used most effectively.

Along with the size and multiple locations, problems faced included access to books when surrounded by decorative features. Caroline highlighted the innovative ideas



An example of pest damage shown during Caroline Bendix's talk

devised to protect against mould and dust while maintaining the visual aesthetic and these included enclosures, bookshoes, melinex and taffeta sheets - all used inconspicuously within the bookshelves.

The important role played by volunteers contributed to effective monitoring and oversight of collections. Conservation training implemented by regional teams will lead to 600,000 books being assessed and once a problem is highlighted then a qualified team of conservators would carry out appropriate work, with priority being given to the stability of the books.

Caroline drew our attention to the unique information available in the collections and included examples of historical fine bindings, book labelling techniques, decorative covers, inscriptions and annotations written by authors and readers. The intention is to make it more available to a wider public.

Looking ahead the challenges include: dealing with wood pulp papers, coping with increased opening times, staff turnover and evolving supportive and innovative conservation programmes to suit the ever-changing needs of historic properties. Caroline's understanding of the complexities of her role and her ability to review past and future conservation commitments was fully conveyed through her fascinating talk and made us appreciate her commitment to public interaction with the National Trust collections.

Diane Lockett

Independent Paper Conservator

PLENDERLEITH 18 Icon Scotland Group

Dundee 29 November 2018

Braving the challenging weather, a large and eager group of Scottish conservators attended the annual Harold Plenderleith Memorial Lecture at the Discovery Point in Dundee at the end of November. Dundee was a significant venue city for the 21st lecture in the series, being the birthplace of our 'father of conservation', Harold Plenderleith himself.

The venue is located in a unique context, fronting the River Tay, and now settled as a companion building to the recently-opened V&A Museum - the impressive creation of the Japanese architect Kengo Kuma.

Taking advantage of the opportunity on offer before the lecture, two tours of the V&A were fully booked within hours of advertisement. A range of inquisitive conservators and other attendees were given an open and informative tour by Project Coordinator **Mhairi Maxwell** and her colleagues. Everyone took up the welcome opportunity to enjoy the superb and heterogeneous collections now guarded by this 'new cliffs of the river' building.

In the main event, **Dr David Saunders** delivered his lecture titled 'A clearer view: New Thinking on Lighting in Museums and Galleries'. It was introduced by **Rob Thomson**, the outgoing Chair of Icon's Scotland Group.

Dr Saunders - recently Keeper of Conservation, Science and Documentation at the British Museum and previously Principle Scientist in the Scientific Department of the National Gallery - started

with a comprehensive, chronological overview of the research into the physio-chemical effects of lighting on museum collections since the 18th century. He went on to speak about the issue of visitors and their light requirements and the peculiarities of how and what we see, covering the influence of factors such as age on colour vision and visual acuity.

Here, Dr. Saunders pinpointed the core dilemma for an audience mainly composed of conservation professionals - how to strike a balance between optimal preservation of the object on display while satisfying the wide variety of factors that inform the quality of the 'visitor experience'? The expectations and demands of the viewer and known research findings about deterioration due to light are not entirely compatible.

It was clear from the lecture that many other questions remain to be researched and difficult dilemmas faced on the basis of good evidence. When designing lighting for museums and galleries it is important to consider the demands of current access versus future access needs. But how do we manage expectations? This has led researchers to ask some tough questions: how long do we think collections should last? Or perhaps, how long should they remain unchanged? All in all, it was a thoughtful and challenging lecture which inspired the audience and pulled no punches.

David Saunders' book 'Museum Lighting from Theory and Practice' will be published by Getty in 2019 and is likely to be an essential reference book for conservation libraries.

Pascual Ruiz Segura, Conservator
National Records of Scotland

An attentive audience at the 21st Plenderleith Lecture



A TRIP TO ROME

Last March fifteen members of the Independent Paper Conservators' Group set out on an ambitious three-day visit to Rome. These impressions of their trip have been contributed by Nicholas Burnett ACR, Heather Norville Day ACR, Clare Prince ACR, Maria Vilaincour ACR, Laila Hackforth-Jones ACR and Suzanne Press ACR.

On the Monday morning we assembled at the Istituto Centrale per Restauro e la Conservazione del Patrimonio Archivistico e Librario (ICRCPAL) at the invitation of the director Maria Letizia Sebastiani. Marta Filippini, an intern at the Institute, showed us a fire damaged 14th century Armenian manuscript in a 16th century binding which she had spent a year conserving. It was accompanied by an impressive amount of analytical work with results to match. The studio also treats old master drawings and Simonetta Iannucelli showed us a beautiful sheet of studies by Leonardo for the Francesco Sforza equestrian statue (never executed). Analysis had shown the media to be silverpoint with lead white highlights on an indigo blue ground.

In contrast to these treasures Maria Luisa Riccardi showed us original ledgers from the Nazi death camps chillingly recording meticulous details of every prisoner who went to their death in the gas chambers. These have come from the International Tracing Service near Kassel in Germany¹. With its more than thirty million documents, bulk de-acidification had been employed in the past. Silvia Sotgiu showed us moving

portrait photographs of some of the prisoners, carefully mounted and stored in archival boxes.

At our next stop, the Istituto Superiore per la Conservazione ed il Restauro (ISCR), students have to specialise from the start in either paper, textiles, wall paintings, mosaics, paintings or sculpture. They work with both conservators and scientists, and carry out analysis before treating any object. Maria Vera Quattrini runs the art on paper studio which treats both Western and Oriental art; everything they treat comes from government institutes, churches or through foreign collaboration. Maria Vera had selected some iron gall ink drawings to show us which were severely damaged by woodworm. One untreated drawing adhered to a wooden panel resembled a piece of lace. Woodworm de-infestation of wooden objects is carried out using inert gas.²

Our last visit of the day was to the library of ICCROM (the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property). Following an introduction to the organisation and its library, the manager Paul Arenson walked us through the extensive stacks. The material available for study is in sixty languages and covers a wide range of subjects including museums, built heritage, scientific analysis, legal protection and disaster management. It is a reference library open to anyone on production of photo ID, with no appointment needed.

At a video presentation given by Aparna Tandon and Theo Katrakakis, we learned about the 'Disaster-Resilient Heritage'

The Monastery at Grottaferrata





Retouching repairs on a tapestry cartoon from the Vatican

work which ICCROM has undertaken since 2013 following natural disasters and in war-torn areas. A round table discussion enabled those in our group to share their experiences. Our thanks go to Catherine Antomarchi as head of this section of ICCROM who invited us.

DAY TWO

Our second day started with a visit to the oil paintings conservation studios at the Palazzo Barberini where we were welcomed by Paola Sannucci, director of restoration. Paola, Marisa Milazzi and their team were restoring pictures rescued from the central Italian earthquake zone, including a very early Crucifixion from the 1100s. The studio also treats paper and Alessandra Percoco showed us sections of a 3m x 4m cartoon for a tapestry housed in the Vatican. Areas of missing paper were being retouched with watercolour. They prefer xanthan gum rather than methyl cellulose for poultices, as it is matt and easier to remove.

Our next stop was at the Istituto Nazionale per la Grafica (the National Institute of Graphic Arts), housed in a grand palazzo immediately behind the Trevi Fountain. The Institute owns prints, drawings, books, photographs and the largest collection in the world of printing plates, ranging from the 16th century to the present day. The basement printing hall houses old presses and displays on the history of printing but we were taken upstairs to the bright paper conservation studio under the roof, where flat works were being treated by Gabriella Pace and her team.

We divided into two groups with one taken to see highlights of the print and drawing collections of some 25,000 drawings and 152,000 prints. This group had the rare experience of looking out from a window *behind* the Trevi Fountain towards the watching crowds! The second group visited an impressive secure storage facility for the printing plates. Vertical stainless steel racks slide out of their housing to reveal walls of glistening copper, a superb collection by artists such as Raphael, Michelangelo, Piranesi, and Morandi. Our thanks go to the Director of ICG, Maria Antonella Fusco, Giovanna

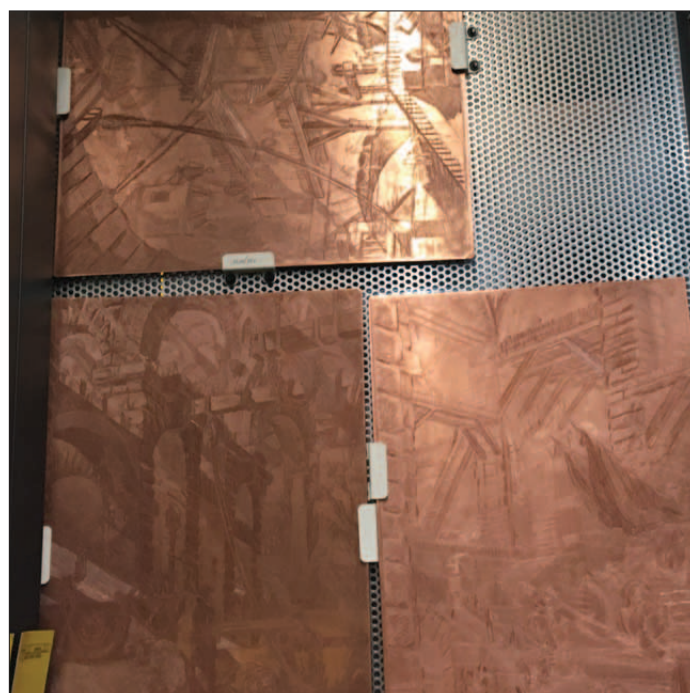
Pasquariello and Matteo Borsoi for showing us around.

Our visit to the Vatican Museum that afternoon was by kind invitation of Barbara Jatta, Director of the Vatican Museums. In a small glass studio in one of the sculpture galleries, Rebecca Fernandez, assistant to the Head of Paper Conservation Chiara Fornaciari, described the care which had been taken prior to moving and relocating an historic mosaic dome. The surface profile details had been intricately copied by applying wet paper pulp to the inner surface of the dome to record the exact position of each fragment. The squeezes when dry had been carefully painted to record the colours of individual fragments. Visitors can see the conservation work on the old squeezes as it happens.

Our next stop was Chiara Fornaciari's paper laboratory where external conservator Christina de Medici showed us some of their large format objects under treatment. This included one of their 19th century scale (1:1) copies of Etruscan and Christian wall paintings from the catacombs; its treatment included the use of Funori to consolidate powdery body colour. A large 4m artwork for Overbeck's painting 'Wedding Sacrament' had had old linings removed and the edges stripped-lined. It was reattached to the stretcher using magnets. We were also shown a globe, which had been treated with a laser to remove the old varnish.

A long walk through corridors brought us to the vast textile conservation studios, where tapestries, curtains, religious cloths and official uniforms are conserved. Chiara Pavan, Head of textiles, and private conservator Marina Zingarelli showed us material currently under treatment for an exhibition to celebrate the 500-year anniversary of the death of Leonardo da Vinci in 1519. A huge and stunning tapestry of the Last

Piranesi etching plates in the printing plate store at the Istituto Centrale per la Grafica





Maria Luisa Riccardi shows the group Nazi ledgers

Supper dated 1550 was estimated to take a year to conserve with three full-time conservators and, unusually, three nuns as part of the restoration team. The silk had deteriorated, the tapestry could no longer support its own weight and light damage had both weakened the fibres and faded the colours. The Vatican undertook a minimal conservation approach to treatment, using overlays of acrylic-tinted gauzes. Smaller items included a medieval gold and silk embroidered facecloth placed over St Cecilia's face on her death and an 8th century Coptic textile presented to the Pope.

We moved from conservation to the bespoke storage facility constructed to house objects measuring 3 x 4 m in size. The installation included mobile screens, vertical and horizontal storage with a pneumatic system for picking up framed and rolled items and even the horizontal drawers to retrieve and move any object.

Our gracious hosts provided a wonderful insight to the preservation of these priceless materials. We were all very grateful and agreed we all had a very productive professional exchange throughout our visit. We finished the day with a walk through the Sistine Chapel, which was virtually empty as it was almost closing time.

DAY THREE

On our final day we drove an hour south of Rome to visit the state library at the Monastery of Grottaferrata, founded by St Nilus in 1004. We were greeted by Anna Onesti (paper conservator, Biblioteca statale del Monumento nazionale di Grottaferrata) and shown round the museum with its wonderful collection of Greek and Roman sculpture, medieval and renaissance artefacts. The abbey church is sumptuously decorated with mosaics and frescos dating from the 11th and 12th centuries and, uniquely in Italy, follows the Catholic Byzantine-Greek rite.

St Nilus was a skilled calligrapher and scribe who invented an

abbreviation system or tachygraphy which gave rise to the peculiar 'nilian' school of writing. Three manuscripts written in his own hand are still preserved in the library. He passed on his skills to his disciples and the tradition of copying liturgical manuscripts in the monastery continued for two centuries.

Grottaferrata continues to be an important centre for the book and the book restoration workshop at the monastery is still active. We talked to a young conservator, Massimo Breazzano, engaged in repairing the leaves of a manuscript, and one of the monks was re-covering a massive archive book in limp parchment in the time-honoured fashion, rapidly piercing the cover with holes to attach the alum-tawed ties and tackets.

In the 18th century Biblioteca Monumentale, Anna Onesti showed us some of their treasures: from a 16th century Italian Herbal (Herbarium by Otto Brunfels) with the flowers and plants hand-painted in appropriate organic vegetable colours to a bomb-damaged book still pierced with a large piece of metal shrapnel. The librarian showed up more great treasures in the upper library, including Dante's *Commedia* of 1491 and after a fascinating morning we headed back to Rome.

Our very last visit was to the State Archives in Rome housed in the Palazzo della Sapienza. The Director, Paolo Buonora, kindly gave us a tour of the building and a brief background to the library collections. His presentation focused on manuscripts with interesting stories to tell. The first was an illuminated manuscript which had been so severely affected by mould around the edges that the leaves were drastically cut down in 1739 and restored with new parchment inlay surrounds. Conservators are trying to rectify the problems of tension and warping of the parchment and the consolidation of pigments and gold leaf. He also discussed the issues relating to a 13th century codex of sacramental music stolen from the collection in the 1970s which had been returned to the library anonymously last year. Greater public awareness has been generated following the digitization of illuminated manuscripts. At the end of the visit Dr. Buonora showed us the stacks housing the impressive collection of Archive of Notaries parchment books, part of the map collection which is currently stored vertically, and their very large Metis flatbed scanner.

Acknowledgements

All of us in the group would like to thank all those who helped organize this fascinating and most enjoyable trip, in particular to Silvia Brunetti, who worked tirelessly over the preceding months to organise the various visits and without whom the trip would not have been possible.

Many thanks also to our translator and local guide Prisca Bianchi and to Beatrice Cuniberti, who trained at Camberwell as a paper conservator and lives in Florence. Our thanks go to all the conservators, curators, librarians and archivists from various studios and institutions who welcomed us so warmly to Rome

Photos by members of the group

1. <https://www.its-arolsen.org/en/>
2. <http://www.bresciani-tr.com/anoxic-disinfestation.html>

the emerging conservator

ORDNANCE SURVEY MAPS

Joey Shuker of the National Archives of Ireland describes a long-running conservation project on a large collection

BACKGROUND

Since 2013, with the support of the Valuation Office, a project to conserve 11,000 Ordnance Survey maps has been running. Under the supervision of the senior conservator, there is a project conservator and a Heritage Council Intern dedicated to this work. I am the 4th Heritage Council Intern and the current project conservator, a former Intern, is in her 2nd year of working on the collection. To date, 4383 maps have been conserved. This article will present the project for the first time to a UK audience and highlight some of the techniques used to conserve the maps.

From the mid-1830s until the 1870s the Valuation Office conducted a national survey of Ireland collecting information for taxation purposes. To conduct the survey, surveyors annotated newly published Ordnance Survey maps. The large planographic maps, which measure six inches to a mile, were used alongside detailed logbooks. It is the annotations of data collected during this survey that make these OS maps unique and of importance to researchers for both social and economic history. The main aim of the project is to enable access to the collection, making the maps stable for handling and ready for possible future digitisation.

CONDITION

The majority of the maps are in a fair state considering they were 'working' documents for over a century. The good condition is largely due to the high quality and weight of the paper, and because the maps were all backed with linen, which contributed to their durability whilst they were being used by the Valuation Office. There are between two to eight copies of each sheet map in this collection, some of the

An example of the ink annotations



Crumpled edges of the maps straight from the drawers

copies are field maps while others are office maps. The field maps, generally created in the field by the surveyor, have often been found to be in worse condition than the office maps, which were copied in the office from the field maps.

Annotations on the maps have been written in a range of inks. The multiple layers of annotations are due to the fact that most counties were surveyed twice when the Tenement Valuation replaced the Townland Valuation. It was thought at the time that the average life of a map would be four years and a revised copy would then be made by the office. The most common inks used to record the valuation data were red and blue and some maps are annotated using iron gall ink and graphite as well. Land and coastal borders are over drawn on the printed map using colour washes, commonly green, red and blue. When the conservation project first began the inks were tested for fugitivity and found to be sensitive, therefore only minimal moisture treatments could be used.

The most common damage to the maps was likely caused by poor storage and handling in the past. The lower edge of each map is usually found to be crumpled and de-laminated from the linen backing. Before treatment begins, a quick condition assessment is done to determine how long the treatment will take. The condition assessment shows the level of damage of each map and relates to a number that represents the treatment time needed. Full treatment of a map can take anywhere between twenty minutes (Grade 1) to three hours (Grade 5).

KEY TREATMENTS

The key treatments, which every map undergoes, are surface cleaning and consolidation. Cleaning and consolidating the maps makes them more stable for handling and storage and also renders the annotations more legible and no longer at risk of being lost.

The maps are dry cleaned, both recto and verso, using a Wishab® sponge. These sponges were designed for use on solid surfaces such as masonry and frescos. Due to the strength of the paper, it is safe to use the sponges on the maps. The sponge is run across the surface and as it picks up the soiling it crumbles away, which restores a clean layer of the sponge constantly. The crumbs left on the surface are cleaned away using a Nilfisk (GM80P) vacuum. A hard yellow Wishab® is used on the verso of the map where surface dirt has collected heavily on the linen backing. A softer white



The Wishab sponge® does its job

Wishab® is used on the face of the map avoiding any graphite annotations; a light hand with the Wishab® removes the surface dirt without disturbing the media.

While most of the delamination occurs around the document edges, some of the maps require further treatment when areas are torn or delaminated in the central areas. As the paper and linen have fluctuated over time due to the environment, tears have formed in the paper layer, referred to as stress tears. The edges of the stress tears are manipulated with a micro spatula and re-adhered to the linen backing, often-revealing information on the face of the map previously hidden. After consolidation the maps are flattened overnight between bondina® and blotter in a hydraulic press. Once flattened any loose threads or frayed edges are trimmed and the maps are re-housed.

The maps are rehoused in large manila folders with no more than eight maps in each and no more than four folders to a map drawer. The conservators on this project have worked closely with the archivist to ensure that high standards of storage are met, alongside ease of access and handling for archive staff to ensure the long-term stability of these maps. Assisting with movement and rehousing of the maps after conservation has been an addition to the role of the intern this year.

FURTHER TREATMENTS

Some maps require extra treatment steps. Around 10% of the maps in the collection have been cut down the middle. It is unclear why this small percentage of maps was bisected before being later re-joined. Due to the large size of the map

sheets (average H650mm x W960mm), their bisection could have been for ease of transportation, storage or to be bound.

The bisected maps have been crudely stuck together using strips of heavy paper and pressure sensitive tape which has failed and left the maps unstable for handling in their current condition. The tape remains are removed with a heated spatula while the paper strip that is adhered with strong glue is often removed mechanically but occasionally requires moisture. Once the old joins are removed the now separate halves of the maps are consolidated and pressed separately.

Cotton strips are cut to the height of the map and 9cm wide, to allow a strong but flexible join. Medium weight cotton is used to match the weight of the linen backing. Linen strips were first used at the beginning of this project but once it was noticed that the linen absorbed too much moisture from the paste and caused tenting, the linen was swapped for unbleached 190g/m² cotton. The cotton now used is aesthetically more pleasing and found to be slightly more flexible than the linen strips of a similar weight. The strips are adhered to the maps using a diluted wheat starch paste; a pounding brush and bone folder are used to ensure adhesion before the re-joined map is placed inside a hydraulic press overnight.

Less commonly found are maps that require a full re-lining. This treatment is only required when the original linen backing is in extremely poor condition and consolidation will not stabilise the map sufficiently. If a full lining treatment has been decided upon, the linen backing is removed from the map. The historic linen is then washed and saved for smaller repairs on maps that have damage to the linen but do not require a full re-lining.

Once the damaged lining has been removed the map is humidified and laid face down onto a silk screen material. Two sheets of Atsu-Shi 67gsm Japanese paper are used for the lining, as individual sheets are not large enough to back a whole map. To ensure a smooth flat lining, the overlapping edges of each of the sheets that meet in the middle, are bevelled with sandpaper. The Atsu-Shi paper is brushed with diluted wheat starch paste and lowered onto the back of the

A stress tear before treatment



The same stress tear after consolidation treatment





An historic paper and tape join

map. The map is then pressed and the edges are trimmed once dry.

Due to the small percentage of maps that require further treatment, the maps are held out of order so that treatment can be done efficiently. This requires constant, clear updating of location records to avoid misplaced maps.

CONCLUSION

The project has evolved over the years and techniques have changed to ensure that time-efficient methods are used to streamline the conservation of such a large collection. Due to

the variations in the level of treatment required for the maps this internship allows for discussion and flexibility to treatment ideas. Each intern has had the opportunity to put forward new ideas. This year I assisted with restructuring the movement and rehousing procedure which was not part of the interns' role until this year. I have also taken on the task of creating content for the NAI's weekly #MapsMonday tweet which is used to promote the collection and provide behind the scenes insights into conservation. The project has provided the opportunity for a newly qualified conservator to gain practical skills working on a large collection within an archive environment and to take part in a long-running project.

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Lowering a map onto its new pasted cotton join



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