



## Seeing is believing? A cautionary tale

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### Also in this issue

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BOOK AND PAPER

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AUGUST 2021 Issue 95



## From the Editor

In this issue we say goodbye to Susan Bradshaw, who has served Icon and predecessor bodies for over two decades. During that time conservation has found its voice as a profession, underpinned by exacting standards and code of ethics. A great many Icon members will know Susan for her pivotal role in this process and in their

professional development. We wish her all the best with her future plans.

Several other features in this issue continue a story from an earlier issue. Icon's Business Director provides an update on the fate of his collections from his family's paper-making mill. The story started in our May 2011 issue; it will be a familiar tale to anyone looking for a home for their collection.

The story of the Lambeth Palace Library move unfolds from the scene-setting in last April's issue. Just look at that staircase they had to negotiate! And two more ACRs reflect on their life and times as part of our tribute to long-standing accredited members. Another accredited member expands his skill-set to that of cartoonist, as he fights to save historic buildings under threat in his neighbourhood.

Finally, give serious thought to standing for election to Icon's Board of Trustees. We've given you lots of reasons for doing so.

## Lynette Gill



THE INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION

Institute of Conservation  
106 -109 Saffron Hill  
London EC1N 8QS  
T +44(0)20 3142 6799

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

Chief Executive  
Sara Crofts  
sara.crofts@icon.org.uk

Conservation Register  
membership@icon.org.uk  
www.conservationregister.com

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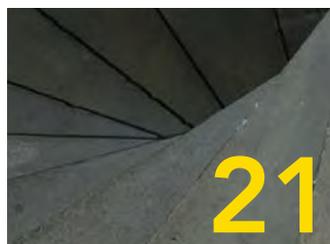
### Icon News

Editor  
Lynette Gill  
news@icon.org.uk

Production designer  
Lee Holland  
leerh1974@gmail.com

Printers  
Calderstone Design & Print Limited  
www.calderstone.com

Advertising  
Display and Recruitment  
020 3142 6789  
Advertising@icon.org.uk



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A tray of flax seeds used to steady a Roman cremation urn during micro-excavation.  
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### Deadlines for adverts and editorial

For the December 2021 issue  
Friday 1 October

For the February 2022 issue  
Tuesday 30 November

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# professional update

## From the Chief Executive



### Sara Crofts on governance

As some of you may be aware Simon Green, Icon's Business Director, has taken some time away from his desk to have a second knee operation this spring and so I acquired a few extra tasks for my own 'to do' list as a result. One of these tasks has been orchestrating the first stages of the annual trustee nominations process, which will lead to elections for the six vacancies later in the year.

Undertaking the elections work has focussed my attention on good governance and the incredibly important relationship between the Board of Trustees, staff, and our members. Governance is, of course, an important topic at any time, but this year it feels particularly critical as Icon is currently in the process of consulting on our next strategic plan – *Strategy 2030* – and the accompanying three-year business plan, which will shape everything that we do for the coming years.

But what does governance really mean in relation to a charity like Icon? NCVO<sup>1</sup> suggests that 'governance is a term used to describe the trustees' role in:

- securing the long-term direction of the charity (furthering its objects or purposes as set out in its governing document)
- ensuring that policies and activities achieve those objects
- ensuring the charity is run in a way that is legal, responsible, and effective
- being accountable to those with an interest or 'stake' in the charity'

It's therefore clear that for Icon to operate well and to achieve its aims it must be well governed. Instilling good governance principles promotes a culture in which everything works towards fulfilling the charity's vision. We therefore need to make sure that the Board of Trustees includes strategic thinkers, change-makers, innovators, and perhaps even visionaries, so that we arrive at a plan that will ensure that Icon and the conservation profession are in fine fettle at the end of this decade.

Fortunately, Icon has always taken good governance seriously, starting from the early days when those involved in the convergence programme painstakingly consulted and collaborated to bring the organisation into being, ensuring that it was soundly constituted and armed with appropriate structures and processes. In more recent years the *Governance Evolution Working Group* set up by the Board and chaired by Jenny Williamson ACR carried out a very thorough governance review using the *Charity Governance Code*.<sup>2</sup> The

*Code* is a voluntary guide created by a coalition of networks and funders to help charities and their trustees develop high standards of governance. It has seven principles:

1. **Organisational purpose:** The board is clear about the charity's aims and ensures that these are being delivered effectively and sustainably.
2. **Leadership:** Every charity is led by an effective board that provides strategic leadership in line with the charity's aims and values.
3. **Integrity:** The board acts with integrity, adopting values and creating a culture which help achieve the organisation's charitable purposes. The board is aware of the importance of the public's confidence and trust in charities, and trustees undertake their duties accordingly.
4. **Decision-making, risk, and control:** The board makes sure that its decision-making processes are informed, rigorous and timely and that effective delegation, control, and risk assessment and management systems are set up and monitored.
5. **Board effectiveness:** The board works as an effective team, using the appropriate balance of skills, experience, backgrounds, and knowledge to make informed decisions.
6. **Equality, diversity, and inclusion:** The board's approach to diversity supports its effectiveness, leadership, and decision-making.
7. **Openness and accountability:** The board leads the organisation in being transparent and accountable. The charity is open in its work, unless there is good reason for it not to be.

Our internal review found that Icon was mostly performing well against the criteria that underpin the seven principles, but that specific work was required in relation to diversity and inclusion (6) and openness and accountability (7). As a result two task and finish groups (T&FG) were set up. The Diversity and Inclusion T&FG, chaired by trustee Pierrette Squires ACR has been very active over the last year, and the Board is looking forward to receiving its report and recommendations in September, with the intention that an action plan will follow. The Board-Member Communications T&FG, chaired by trustee Dr Duygu Camurcuoglu ACR FIIC, submitted its report to the Board in June 2021 and hopefully you will already have started to see the positive changes that have come out of this work, e.g. the post-Board-meeting report recently shared by James Grierson. (<https://www.icon.org.uk/resource/board-report-june-2021.html#>)

Carrying out a governance review and setting up task and finish groups are just a couple of examples of the kind of work that the Board regularly commissions and that trustees lead. Which brings me back to the question of this year's trustee elections...

Icon's Board of Trustees comprises up to twelve Trustees elected from the membership and up to four co-opted Trustees, who are recruited to fill skills gaps on the Board. At present we also have a co-opted Chair of the Board, James Grierson. You can find out more about the current Board of Trustees on the Icon website<sup>3</sup>.

This year one of our long-standing trustees, Peter Martindale ACR, stands down, as he has reached the end of his second term on the Board, and four elected trustees (Fiona McLees ACR, Sophie Rowe ACR, Hannah Clare Harte ACR and Lucie Mascord ACR) are standing down at the end of their first term, but are all eligible for re-election if they choose to stand again. We therefore have six vacancies in total this year, including reserved seats for Northern Ireland and for Wales as well as the newly introduced reserved seat for an emerging professional member.

I hope that by the time this magazine drops onto your doormat we will already have received a healthy number of nominations, but if you are still thinking about whether to throw your hat into the ring then there's still time to submit your nomination. Please do take a moment to consider whether your skills and experience would complement (or maybe contrast with?) the existing Board members. If so, then I'd strongly encourage you to stand for election.

I have been, and still am, a trustee of various heritage

organisations and I find it immensely rewarding and satisfying. I have also gained a lot of knowledge and insight from my trustee roles that I try to bring to my professional role at Icon. I'm happy to say that being part of a board has introduced me to some interesting people and developed my professional and personal networks too. But, like most things in life, you get out of it what you put in. So, if you have time, energy, and a desire to use your skills and knowledge to help Icon deliver its full potential then joining the Board could be the right step for you. Time to get on board?

Wishing you a balmy and enjoyable summer.

*Share your reflections, comments, and ideas with me via [feedback@icon.org.uk](mailto:feedback@icon.org.uk)*

**1** <https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/governance/getting-started-in-governance/getting-started-in-governance-1>

**2** <https://www.charitygovernancecode.org/en/front-page>

**3** <https://www.icon.org.uk/about-us/who-we-are/icon-board-of-trustees.html>

## GETTING ON BOARD WITH ICON 2021

### Reserved Seat for Emerging Professionals

Since becoming Chair of Icon I have welcomed the opportunity to engage with our student and Emerging Professionals Network members. It's been hugely interesting and encouraging to hear from such impressive and committed people in the early stages of their conservation journeys. Your passion for conservation and your creative-thinking and initiative is clear, but it is also clear that these are quite uncertain times, with many members facing significant hurdles as they settle into their chosen career. So, it seems particularly important that your perspectives are available to the Board of Trustees as we tackle the future's many challenges and opportunities.

For this reason the Board of Trustees has decided to create a reserved seat on the Board for a trustee who is a student member or a member of the Emerging Professionals Network. This will be a three-year elected appointment and the successful person will be able to stand for a second three-year term if they wish. In recognition of the time commitment involved for someone who may not yet be earning, or be earning a modest salary, we have decided that their membership fees will be waived for the duration of their appointment.

We're aware that many early-stage conservation professionals will not have considered standing as an Icon trustee, and may be unfamiliar with what it involves or may worry about their lack of experience. Be assured, however, that it's the different perspective that an early-stage professional can bring that is the overriding purpose of this initiative.

So, if you fit the bill, please consider standing for the reserved seat for an Emerging Professional. This will be a stimulating opportunity to expand your understanding and experience, to

build your CV and networks, and to play a valuable role in working with the other trustees to help shape the future of your organisation.

Finally, it is important to say that this initiative as just one step towards making Icon and the conservation profession more diverse, more inclusive and more representative of the society we serve. Our Diversity and Inclusion Task and Finish Group are currently working hard to develop further ideas that we hope to share with the membership shortly.

**James Grierson**

**Chair of the Board of Trustees**

### Why being a trustee matters

Trustees have an important role to play in shaping the future direction of Icon and in making the key strategic decisions that direct how we use our resources to deliver our charitable objects. As we work towards the launch of *Strategy 2030* this is an exciting time to consider nominating yourself for the Board.

Becoming an Icon trustee has many benefits:

- Trustees get a lot more out of their membership, because they naturally become more engaged and pay more attention to everything Icon is doing. This might mean making better use of the CPD opportunities on offer, as well as helping to ensure that work colleagues are aware of Icon activities that are relevant to them.
- Icon is not only a professional body but also a substantial charity, so serving on the Board gives you valuable experience at the top level of an organisation, which is a great thing to have on your CV. You will learn about topics such as finance, leadership and governance which will benefit your career prospects.



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- Serving as a trustee is a great way to extend your professional networks, as you will encounter conservation professionals from lots of different areas of practice. It's also a lovely way to meet new colleagues from different specialisms that you might not otherwise have met, and enables you to gain insights into how other members work.
- Trustees can learn a lot from co-opted Board members who are not conservators, but have other valuable knowledge and experience to share.
- There are lots of opportunities to get involved in different aspects of Icon's work, whether through Board committees or working in 'Task and Finish Groups' to consider key strategic and topical issues more deeply. As a trustee you have a chance to put your effort in the areas that matter most to you, meaning that you will make a difference.

So, if you've not considered it before then please take some time to reflect on the words of our current trustees as they set out below why they value the contribution that they make to our profession and why members should get on board.

.....

'At this stage in my career I want to play an active part to support, develop and promote heritage conservation for the future. I chose to give my time to Icon since I started my career with Icon (and previously UKIC) and grew with it professionally. Using my experiences and expertise in different areas can hopefully help Icon create a well-informed and innovative platform to advocate and engage with the profession.

'Through being a part of the Board I engage with old and new colleagues who come from different backgrounds and special-

isms in the heritage field, and I collaborate with them in very interesting projects to take Icon into the future. I am learning and developing new skills in governance, strategic thinking, planning and communication, as well as leadership, which I believe will be crucial for heritage conservation to be an integrated part of this competitive world'.

**Dr Duygu Camurcuoglu ACR FIIC**

'Icon is our own professional body, formed by us to champion conservation practitioners in a strong, united voice. Members are uniquely placed to understand and articulate at Board meetings the 'what' of what our needs are. Participation as a trustee helps to ensure that our Institute stays on course to deliver the 'how' of support and development to advance us all, as individuals and as a profession. Benefitting from the 'checks and balance' from colleagues in the profession is key to Icon staying true to its founding principles. So, participate in our future and help your colleagues by becoming a trustee'.

**Mel Houston ACR**

'To stay relevant, all organisations must continually question what they offer, why they exist, and what customers, members and audiences need. They must ask whether there are ways they can be better, and whether there are challenges or opportunities ahead, determining how best to respond. This is the role of the trustee – to challenge, to question, to champion and to support. At Icon I've found a highly motivated and enthusiastic staff team and a supportive and dedicated group of trustees who work openly together to ensure that Icon best connects and serves its audience of conservators today, and continues to raise professional standards into the future'.

**James Murphy, Co-opted trustee**

'The important contribution trustees make to Icon has become increasingly evident to me over my two terms serving on the Board. Icon, being a membership organisation, needs conservator trustees to enable it to represent and communicate with that membership effectively. The Board therefore needs motivated trustees from the membership to help shape its future for the benefit of the membership nationally, and increasingly internationally. Serving on the Board is also an opportunity to meet similar motivated colleagues and develop rewarding friendships'.

**Peter Martindale ACR**

'Icon is at heart a membership organisation, so supporting people working in conservation and advocating for the profession is fundamental to what we do. The trustees are responsible for setting Icon's strategy and shaping the direction of Icon and therefore also the future of conservation in the UK. If Icon is to do the best it can for members and the profession, it is vital that the Board represents conservators at all stages of their career and from all specialisms and working environments. There is no typical type of trustee – and that is as it should be!'

**Sophie Rowe ACR**

'One of the best experiences of being an Icon trustee is to be able to shape our strategy. If you work in an organisation normally only a few people at the top get to do that. Every charity has to define its key purpose or 'objects' and educating the public on heritage conservation is a key object for Icon. What's the best way to do that with limited resources? What should we campaign for? These are strategic questions that trustees have to decide. You also get a huge variety of subjects and issues on the Board agendas that you don't come across in day-to-day work. Icon's agenda is very broad because it is both a professional membership organisation but also a pressure group influencing Government heritage policy'.

**Martin Kirke, Co-opted trustee**

'I realise that for those of us in Arts / Heritage it may seem like enough is expected of us in our paid jobs that we would be gluttons for punishment to also volunteer in the sector. However, I have found volunteering for Icon rewarding and it has enhanced my career. Members drive everything that Icon does and have a voice in deciding the direction of the organisation. You can make this voice louder if you volunteer or stand as a trustee. A great solution if you have ideas to share!'

**Fiona Maclees ACR** (via Twitter as part of Volunteers Week)

'Trustees bring expert knowledge and experience of conservation from many disciplines in the UK, and the impact of our accredited conservators underpins the importance of our contribution to the sector. We work with key partners to support the awareness of cultural heritage and to utilise opportunities to build a vision of greater understanding of the value of history and artefacts. Trustees embrace both today's technical challenges and also provide direction for the future of our profession. We act in a leadership role in the broader responsibility of conservation in the heritage sector'.

**Richard Bruce, Co-opted trustee**



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## JOURNAL NEWS

We are pleased to announce that October's issue of the *Journal of the Institute of Conservation* will be the 'Emerging Conservators' special issue with contributions from authors with distinct backgrounds from around the world.

The original call for submissions in June 2020 elicited some sixty-seven responses which, after due process, became a final group of some twenty authors whom various members of the Editorial Advisory Panel have been mentoring. The final selection of articles will be curated from what was a large number of insightful and well presented arguments that made it to submission.

Those accepted articles that did not make the final cut will be published in subsequent issues. Other submissions were also considered appropriate for regular issues of the *Journal* and the first of these, by Rosie Shepley, was published in the June 2021 issue.

## FUNDING FOR MANUSCRIPT CONSERVATION

The National Manuscripts Conservation Trust (NMCT) has been supporting manuscript conservation since 1990 and is the only charity in the UK with the sole purpose of supporting the conservation of manuscripts in our archives, libraries, museums and universities.

Last year NMCT grants totalling over £150,000 were awarded to fifteen institutions across the UK. For the first time ever, the Trustees dipped into reserves to ensure that grant-giving could be maintained. This was vital because it was more



Bundle of probate accounts before conservation which was carried out thanks to NMCT funding

important last year than ever to support beleaguered libraries and county record offices to conserve their collections and, in so doing, to support freelance conservators who have suffered massive reductions in income as a result of Covid-19.

As always, the range of collections that are now benefiting from conservation is huge. They include a 14th/15th century almanac; a processional from Castle Acre; two collections of probate records; the records of the Court of Arches at Lambeth Palace Library; the notebooks of geologist Sir Charles Lyell; and the 16th-century *Historia de Tlaxcala* at the University of Glasgow.

**The next deadline for applications is 1 October 2021.** If you have a project that might be eligible for NMCT's support you can find out more about their grants at [www.nmct.co.uk/apply](http://www.nmct.co.uk/apply) or by emailing Nell Hoare on [info@nmct.co.uk](mailto:info@nmct.co.uk).

## NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

### Archaeology Group

The Archaeology Group 2021 AGM is being held online on 6 August around about the time this issue of *Icon News* comes out. The AGM will be followed by a series of presentations on the theme *A Project I am Proud of*. The topics include a low tech and sustainable way of packing medieval stained glass, treatment of a recently excavated iron assemblage, digital imaging of Iron Age finds to create 3D replicas, preliminary results of a research project on humidity indicator cards, and an examination of insect damage on a Roman leather object that revealed unexpected information. We were pleased to have a variety of topics and thank the presenters for offering their papers; a full review of the event will appear in the next *Icon News*.

Based on the success of the Havering Hoard digital event

earlier this year, we would like to run more lunchtime tours of exhibitions and projects and would welcome ideas from members. Please contact us using our Group email address: [archgroup.icon@gmail.com](mailto:archgroup.icon@gmail.com), if you have any suggestions. We would love to hear from you!

Progress on *First Aid for Finds* continues with the aim to publish in summer 2022. The text is with the authors now for editing and will go to reviewers later this year. We are also pleased that Nick Griffiths, who did the illustrations for the 3rd edition, has agreed to continue with the additional work needed for this edition.

We are grateful to Mary McQueen who is stepping down after three years on the committee. She has been a valued contributor to the Group; we have profited from her years of experience and are pleased she will continue as a member of the Archaeology Group.

Please watch Iconnect, Twitter (@ICONArchaeology) and the website for further announcements. We always love to hear about your archaeological conservation projects big or small; please tag us and #FindsFriday in your posts and follow us on Twitter to see what everyone else is up to and how exciting our jobs can be!

**Charlotte Wilkinson**

Icon AG Communications Rep

### Book and Paper Group

It's been a while, Book and Paper Group! After our hugely successful free webinar series, *Conservation Together at Home*, kickstarted our stay-at-home periods across the UK and the world, we have been pretty quiet ... but fear not, we are preparing to come back with a bang this October for our triennial conference!

As you have no doubt seen, our theme for #BPG21 is 'MOD CONS: Modern Conservation, Modern Constraints, Modern Conveniences'. As we brainstormed ideas for how to structure and focus our conference, there were so many themes committee members wanted to touch on—sustainability from both an environmental perspective and that of sustainable conservation treatment practice, decolonization and social justice movements, and of course, innovation in the field from all angles. We always want to see what our colleagues are up to! In short, we wanted to create a conference that offered BPG members and friends an opportunity to examine what it means to be a conservator at this moment in time ... and what we can do to champion change for the better as we move into the future.

COVID-19 and the associated restrictions have changed our entire landscape—possibly permanently—and many aspects of our lives and practices have been thrown into sharp relief. Our global carbon footprint and the pollution created by long-distance travel; the 'necessity' of in-person meetings and the possibilities offered by videoconferencing platforms and remote collaboration; the loneliness of isolation and the potential for disconnect - all of this has informed our thinking as we developed our 2021 conference.

These factors are not new to the BPG committee. With several international members (including our treasurer, secretary, and editor), we have embraced remote meetings and utilize Zoom, Google Drive, and WhatsApp to stay in touch and direct our efforts. We are a testament to the capability of developing a network and keeping connected, regardless of whether circumstances permit us to gather in person. (Though of course, we look forward to being able to do so in future! Certain committee members may owe certain others a drink ...) This will be our most sustainable and most accessible gathering ever. As a committee, we are galvanized by the drive and leadership of BPG members that we see reflected in our conference content. We hope that each and every attendee of MOD CONS will find the conference as rewarding as it has been to gather submissions and facilitate their presentation. Come and join us! We look forward to welcoming you.

**William Bennett**  
BPG Group Treasurer

### Ceramics and Glass & Stained Glass Groups

The Ceramics & Glass Group can now confirm that the upcoming conference in collaboration with the Stained Glass Group will be an online event to be held on 16 - 17 October. The event will be hosted via the popular and dynamic conferencing platform Accevents. This will not only allow wider international participation but will give attendees the opportunity to take part in interactive Q&A sessions and to socialise and network!

We have an exciting lineup of presentations and posters which we look forward to. These include a talk presented by Julie Monique focusing on stained glass and the ways in which disasters, using the fire at Notre-Dame Cathedral in April 2019 as a case study, allow for reflection on the conservator's role in

disaster preparedness and how these moments also offer research opportunities into the material itself.

Booking is now open and details on purchasing a ticket, along with the full conference agenda, can be found online on the Ceramics, Glass and Stained Glass Conference event page.

### Paintings Group

On 15 July the Paintings Group organised a talk from Christine Sitwell ACR on the history of conservation and restoration at the National Trust. Christine received a Master of Science degree from the Winterthur/University of Delaware Programme in Art Conservation followed by a National Museum Fellowship for an internship in the paintings conservation department at Tate, London. She joined the National Trust in 1990 advising on the conservation of paintings and historic interiors until her retirement in 2020. She is an accredited member of Icon, a fellow of IIC and the chairman of the Icon Historic Interiors Group.

Later in the year we hope to hear from Elizabeth Wigfield from the Art Institute of Chicago, on her conservation treatment of two Del Sarto portraits. We look forward to welcoming many Icon members as well as other interested people to our online talks.



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The postprints from Icon's Paintings Group conference 'Wet Paint - Interactions between Water and Paintings', held in Edinburgh on 12 October 2018, are still available for purchase at the reduced price of £17.20 (including postage within the UK). Payment by BACS and cheques will be accepted. Please email Julia Jablonska at [icon.paintingsgroup@googlemail.com](mailto:icon.paintingsgroup@googlemail.com) to place an order.

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## Icon Scotland Group

### Training and events

We ran a webinar on 8 July about a collaborative European research project: project CMOP: Cleaning Modern Oil Paint. The webinar was given by Bronwyn Ormsby and Judith Kerr and was a fascinating opportunity to share in the findings from the research and see how a big European project operates.

Our next event will be a demonstration of 3D photogrammetry for conservators which we hope to run online in September; information about this will come out shortly.

### Other happenings

We were delighted to be joined by Sara Crofts and James Grierson for our committee meeting in June. We had a lively discussion about the Scotland Group's ambitions for 2030 and the steps that we need to take to get there, and this was a good follow-on from work we have done recently to create a strategy and work plan for the Group.

We have been talking to colleagues in Historic Environment Scotland (HES) about the work HES is doing with Skills Development Scotland to investigate the potential for modern apprenticeships in Scotland, which could potentially provide an alternative route into conservation. We will provide further updates as progress is made.

### Contact and keep in touch

We are always delighted to have new members in the Group; 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://iconsotland.wordpress.com>, our Facebook page is <https://en-gb.facebook.com/iconsotlandgroup> and our Twitter feed is @icon\_scotland. Our general email address is [admin@iconsotland.org](mailto:admin@iconsotland.org) and comments and suggestions for events can be emailed to [events@iconsotland.org](mailto:events@iconsotland.org)

## Icon Textile Group

### Latest News

As the Textile Group is all about happy news stories we'd like to share with you some exciting developments within the committee. We are pleased to announce that our Events Co-ordinator Viola Nicastro gave birth to a healthy little boy, Dante, on 1 February 2021. Both Dante and Viola are doing very well. Congratulations also go to Hannah Joyce (nee Sutherland), our Website & Facebook Editor who married Michael in Kent this May.

Many thanks to all those who joined us online in July for this year's Textile Group AGM. Speakers from last year's meeting were invited back to give us an update on their working life as textile conservators during the pandemic. During the AGM the Group also said a fond farewell to Chair Ann French ACR, as well as other committee members, Kim Thüsing (Treasurer), Emily Austin (Secretary) and Viola Nicastro (Events Co-ordinator). We thank them profusely for their hard work, passion and enthusiasm over the years that they have served the Textile Group. In their place new committee members were voted in, we very much look forward to working with them during the next three years! For a full update on who's who, please see the committee section of the Icon website.

### Keeping in touch with the Textile Group

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

If you would like to submit an article or review an event, details of how to write for Icon News can be found here:

<https://icon.org.uk/what-is-conservation/writing-icon> or by contacting Terri Dewhurst on the address above.

## IPERION HS

### Funded access to heritage science research infrastructure

IPERION HS is the latest in a series of grants aimed at establishing a Europe-wide, integrated yet distributed heritage science research infrastructure. The concept is to support conservators and heritage scientists who have research questions but may not have the equipment or capability to answer these questions themselves. IPERION HS will fund access to research infrastructure and expertise based in other countries. The UK is one of twenty-four partners from twenty-three countries and the project offers access and training in a wide range of instruments, methods, data and other tools.

### The scheme's structure

The infrastructure is distributed among three platforms:

- MOLAB (Mobile Lab) offers access to mobile analysis facilities such as point analysis including various types of optical and X-ray spectroscopy, imaging and remote sensing.
- FIXLAB (Fixed Lab) covers large equipment that cannot be moved such as synchrotrons, aging and dating techniques, laser cleaning, static imaging and analysis methods and environmental monitoring.
- ARCHLAB (Archive Lab) offers access to collections and archives, both physical and digital, and including reference samples and materials.

A further platform, DIGILAB, is planned to coordinate sharing and investigating heritage data sets.

These cover transnational access, so anyone based in the UK can request access to facilities overseas, but not to other UK-based facilities. Similarly, overseas users can request



# IPERION HS

The logo was inspired by Leonardo da Vinci's 'Adoration of the Magi' which was analysed using various techniques to inform its recent restoration

access to the six UK-based providers that are involved in IPERION HS.

The UK contributors to ARCHLAB are the National Gallery, University of York and Historic England. The British Museum and UCL are part of FIXLAB, and Nottingham Trent University offers MOLAB access. **There is a rolling series of calls for access, with the next due to close at the end of November.** The IPERION HS website<sup>1</sup> offers support for anyone intending to apply for access.

### A Europe-wide initiative

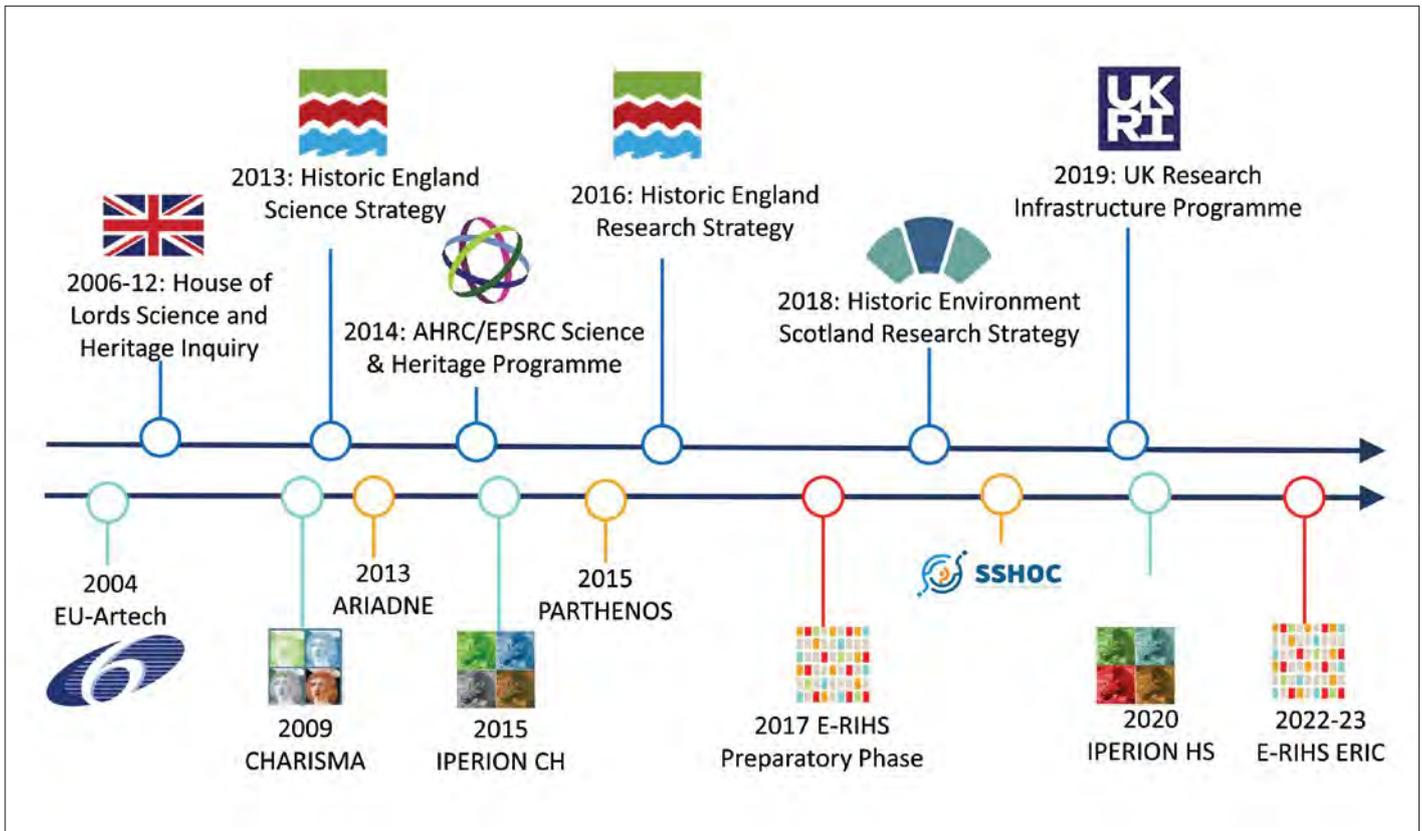
IPERION HS is the latest in a series of EU grants going back twenty years that it is hoped will lead to the establishment of E-RIHS, the European Research Infrastructure for Heritage Science of which there is a UK hub under development<sup>2</sup>. If funded, E-RIHS will act as a hub for heritage science research and training across Europe and further afield.

Integrating facilities into a seamless whole and streamlining access to a wide range of instruments and archive, it is intended to make the best techniques and best practice available to heritage professionals across Europe who otherwise would not have access to these instruments. For anyone with any concerns post-Brexit, the UK remains a full partner in IPERION HS, and the Government has also funded full access to future EU research and innovation through the €95bn Horizon Europe scheme, so let's make use of it!

### A case study

Numerous UK partners have taken advantage of calls for transnational access through previous grants such as IPERION CH and CHARISMA. The IPERION HS page on the E-RIHS UK website<sup>3</sup> lists examples of access visits to and from UK partners such as MacSTONE, a MOLAB visit to the Mackintosh Library at the Glasgow School of Art following the 2014 fire.

Selection of milestones towards a European Research Infrastructure for Heritage Science



May Caesar and Matija Strlic



MOLAB visit to the Mackintosh Library. More details at [www.iperionhs.eu/project/macstone-effects-of-fire-on-building-stone-at-the-mackintosh-school-of-art-glasgow-scotland/](http://www.iperionhs.eu/project/macstone-effects-of-fire-on-building-stone-at-the-mackintosh-school-of-art-glasgow-scotland/)

The fire caused considerable damage to the stone walls of the library, threatening the structure of the building.

Four MOLAB teams visited and carried out mid-FTIR analysis, stimulated infrared thermography, digital holographic speckle pattern interferometry and nuclear magnetic resonance studies. These studies characterised the substantial visible damage to the stone walls of the library but indicated that the remaining stone may be structurally sound, although further work informed by the MOLAB studies is planned.

Of course transnational access does not have to be in response to a disastrous fire, and any potential UK user is encouraged to apply for access. If an application is successful, all costs are covered and there is the exciting opportunity to use techniques that are otherwise unavailable and to take advantage of the knowledge and expertise of heritage scientists from across Europe.

**Professor Adam Gibson**  
Institute of Sustainable Heritage  
University College London

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.iperionhs.eu/iperion-hsaccess/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://e-rihs.ac.uk/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://e-rihsuk.org/iperion-hs-uk-node/>



THE INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION

## Notice of 17<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the 17th Annual General Meeting of the Institute of Conservation will be held online at 5.00pm (UTC+01:00) on 27th October 2021 to consider the following business:

**Ordinary Resolution 1:** To receive the Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2021.

**Ordinary Resolution 2:** To authorise the Trustees to appoint the auditors to serve until the end of the next Annual General Meeting and to authorise the Trustees to decide the remuneration to be paid to the auditors.

A member of the Institute of Conservation who is entitled to attend and vote at the meeting (being a paid-up Accredited, Associate, Pathway, Student or Emeritus Member) is entitled to appoint a proxy, who need not be a member of the Institute of Conservation, to attend and vote instead of them. Proxies may be appointed via the web portal or to the registered office so long as they are received before 5.00pm (UTC+01:00) on Monday 25th October 2021. Those received later will not be counted.

If you are eligible to vote you will be sent an email by our election support provider mi-voice inviting you to access the Proxy Notice enabling you to register your instructions online. If you do not have an email address, please phone the mi-voice office at 0845 241 4148.

**Simon Green, Company Secretary**

7th June 2021

## Awards



Congratulations to **Eleanor Schofield** for winning the Royal Society of Chemistry's 2021 Interdisciplinary Prize awarded to her for 'contributions to understanding degradation processes in archaeological materials, cultural heritage science and conservation'.

Eleanor is Deputy Chief Executive Officer at the Mary Rose Trust and Chair of Icon's Heritage Science Group.

With a background in materials science, Eleanor joined the Mary Rose Trust in 2012 as Conservation Manager with a focus on preparing the ship's hull for drying. She then became Head of Conservation and Collections Care in 2016, with responsibility for the conservation, care and management of the entire collection – ship and artefacts – along with research into new treatment and characterisation methods. This year, Eleanor was appointed the Deputy CEO, adding additional executive tasks to her previous responsibilities.

On top of all this, she holds an honorary lectureship at Imperial College London, an Honorary Professorship at the University of Kent and is a Visiting Professor at the University of Portsmouth.

## New ACRs

The Accreditation Committee approved the accreditation of the following conservator-restorers at its meeting in June 2021  
**Congratulations to all these new ACRs**

**Hannah Barrett**  
 Textiles

**Olympia Diamond**  
 Easel paintings

**Elizabeth Fagg-Shuttlewood**  
 Library and archive

**Beatrice Farmer**  
 Textiles

**Rosalind Hodges**  
 Ceramics and glass

**Martha Infray**  
 Preventive

**Seth Irwin**  
 Book and archive materials

**Alexa McNaught-Reynolds**  
 Conservation management / exhibitions / loans

**Lydia Messerschmidt**  
 Objects

**Natalie Mitchell**  
 Archaeology / objects

**Viola Nicastro**  
 Textiles

**Eric Nordgren**  
 Conservation education

**Rachel Robbins**  
 Objects (modern and contemporary)

**Helena Rodwell**  
 Preventive

**Letitia Steer**  
 Collections care

## Icon staff news



After nearly two years as Icon's Membership Officer, **Isabelle Pintado**, is leaving us!

'I've loved getting to know you all and hearing about all the amazing projects you have been doing for the conservation profession,' she wrote in an update to Icon members. 'This decision did not come lightly.'

Issy's time at Icon has been an eventful one, including the pandemic lockdown, the development of a new CRM system, the launch of a complex membership growth strategy, and an office move. Issy kept up a busy workload even when a festive trip to Australia left her stranded in the midst of another lockdown for several weeks longer than planned.

With her creative flair and eye for detail, Issy's work to smooth processes for Icon Groups, Networks and members will have lasting impact, and she will be sorely missed by the team and by the many members with whom she worked closely.

Our new Membership Officer will be announced in the next issue.

## Welcome to these new members

We would like to extend a very warm welcome to all those who joined us in April and May 2021. We hope to see you at an Icon event soon!

**Sarah Bernardo Almeida**  
 University of Glasgow  
 Student

**Anne Atkinson**  
 Supporter

**Carlijn Bakker**  
 Vakopleiding Handboekbinden  
 Student

**Sarah Bayliss**  
 Pathway

**Elia Bello Alberola**  
 Northumbria University  
 Student

**Isobel Burrows**  
 Student

**Joy Carey**  
 Public Record Office of  
 Northern Ireland  
 Student

**Stephanie Chipilski**  
 Associate

**Kate Clive-Powell**  
 MFA  
 Student

**Julia Crane**  
 Student

**Agathe Daronnat**  
 Associate

**Flora Davidson**  
 Associate

**Ayesha Fuentes**  
 Northumbria University  
 Associate

**Lucie Fusade**  
 Associate

**Tabitha Gibbs**  
 Student

**Mackenzie Higgins**  
 Pathway

**Dominique Hopton**  
 West Dean College  
 Student

## In memory

**Annie Immediata**  
Library of Congress  
Associate

**Miyuki Kajiwara**  
Student

**Petrina Killey**  
Student

**Leszek Knyrek**  
Student

**Wing Chi Leung**  
Associate

**Megan Linford**  
Student

**Jacinta Loh**  
Associate

**Sadhbh M**  
Supporter

**Billie Males**  
Supporter

**Madeline McLeod**  
Pathway

**Anna Meehan**  
Supporter

**Alexandra Mitchell**  
ACT Art Conservation LLC  
Associate

**Laura Mountford**  
English Heritage  
Pathway

**Isabel Okaya**  
Student

**Maria Pereira**  
Associate

**Rachel Rimmer**  
Science Museum Group  
Associate

**Adam Salisbury**  
Northumbria University  
Student

**Michelle Stoddart**  
Associate

**Celeste Sturgeon**  
University of Lincoln  
Associate

**Katja Tovar**  
Associate

**Elizabeth Willetts**  
Student



### **Diana Heath (1956-2021)**

Diana Heath, Senior Metals Conservator at the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A), very sadly died on 31 January 2021. Diana was a treasured colleague with thirty-four years' service at the Museum, who worked with immense dedication, generously sharing her extensive knowledge and international experience with colleagues and students.

After completing a BA Hons. Degree in 3D Design (Silver-smithing and Jewellery) at Sheffield Metropolitan University in 1978, Diana began her career as chief Jewellery designer at T.A. Henn & Sons, Antiques and Jewellery.

The opportunity to train as a conservator came in 1980 when she was accepted on a four-year V&A studentship, successfully attaining the V&A Diploma in Metalwork and Jewellery Conservation in 1984. In 1985 she was employed as Metals Conservator at Snowhill Manor, National Trust, returning to the V&A a year later.

Throughout her career, Diana worked on all types of metals contributing to numerous diverse projects. Her expertise was recognised nationally and internationally and is reflected in her many publications and conference participation. Diana developed a passion for bronzes, collaborating on projects involving their study and care.

Amongst these was the stunning renaissance gilt-bronze statuette of *Meleager* by the Mantuan court sculptor known as Antico, which suffers from a condition akin to bronze disease. From the late 1980s Diana oversaw its technical investigation and long-term preservation.

She also collaborated with an international team researching the history and method of facture of the *Wolsey Angels* following their acquisition by the V&A in 2015. Having overseen their structural examination, she was responsible for their challenging conservation treatment over a period of two years.

Diana's extensive legacy at the V&A includes the survey of the Ironwork Gallery before its reinstallation; the proposal for conservation and reconstruction of the *Hereford Screen*, magnificently displayed at the main entrance of the V&A; the collaboration with the Kunstgewerbemuseum in Berlin for the research and conservation of the previously so-called *Eltenberg Reliquary*, now redisplayed in the V&A's Medieval & Renaissance Galleries, and the conservation of the electrotypes in the Cast Courts, including the reproduction of *the Gates of Paradise* by Ghiberti.

Diana also worked closely with the Asian collections at the V&A contributing towards numerous projects including the creation of the T T Tsui Gallery of Chinese Art; the publication 'Indian Jewellery: The V&A Collection'; the treatment of metal inlays in Japanese lacquer work; and the major conservation of the 15th century Chinese bronze sculpture of *Mahasiddha Virupa*, now on display in The Robert H.N. Ho Family Foundation Galleries of Buddhist Sculpture.

Diana worked part-time at the V&A in recent years, and other institutions were able to benefit from her expertise, notably Westminster Abbey from 2006. Diana treated many metal objects, almost all the Abbey plate and collaborated with textile conservators on the royal effigies displayed in the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Galleries. Diana also undertook examination and analysis of the royal tombs, conserved many of the floor brasses and tirelessly worked on the complex monument to *Henry and Millicent Fawcett* by Sir Alfred Gilbert.

Diana will be most fondly remembered for her dedicated service to the V&A and the warmth of her friendships with so many colleagues across institutions.

### **Colleagues and friends at the V&A**

# SAYING GOODBYE TO SUSAN BRADSHAW

Susan Bradshaw left Icon last month, where she has worked since Icon's inception in 2005 and with predecessor bodies before that. Here we learn about her impact on the profession and how she got from working in a hot glass art studio to being our Head of Professional Development



Susan awarded her advanced diploma in coaching in June

Her own short answer to how she made that transition is '*I worked on my transferrable skills*'.

So let's go back to the beginning.

## EARLY CAREER

Susan graduated in three-dimensional design in 1981 and despite a recession managed to find employment at a glass studio in Cambridge, later transferring to a studio in Devon where she worked for two years until the company closed. And this is when she found conservation.

Appointed by Devon County Council as a trainee conservator in 1984, she benefitted enormously by learning from her senior conservator Clair Walton ACR, who invested in her dexterity, skills and learning.

*'I even won the Archival Aids Award for my book cushion pillow, which I see used in archives to this day!'*

Promoted to senior on Clair's departure, she trained others in conservation, including Deborah Phillips ACR who is in her 30th year! Over her thirteen years of practice, she gradually pursued a more managerial line of study. She was also a volunteer as committee member of the Society of Archivists (SoA now ARA) where she built up a great network of fellow conservators and organised training events for members – including areas that she wanted to learn about too!

Then SoA advertised for a paid training officer to produce a training programme for archivists, records managers, and conservators - one day a week. Susan negotiated with the County Archivist for her to do this work alongside her senior conservator role, as income generation for the conservation team.

As the role developed, she was offered more substantive work and in 1997 she started to work from home for the Society. At the same time she undertook a qualification in training and development from the Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development, which stood her in good stead for the years ahead.

## PROFESSIONAL ACCREDITATION IS BORN

She also became involved in the preliminary work for Professional Accreditation of Conservator Restorers and in 2003 she applied for the part-time role of developing PACR offered by

the National Council of Conservator Restorers (NCCR). Amongst those on the interview panel were Kate Colleran ACR of the then Institute of Paper Conservation (IPC) and David Leigh ACR (then Chief Executive of the United Kingdom Institute of Conservation).

Kate Colleran comments 'I remember asking her what she thought was the most important thing such a position would require. She took a deep breath and said "Patience". Well, she has demonstrated plenty'.

Accreditation launched in 2000 with the three bodies (SoA, UKIC and IPC) each undertaking their own process; gradually they were brought together and in 2003 CPD (continuing professional development) recall was launched.

David Leigh comments 'Susan went on to help develop the PACR process to secure it as the cornerstone of professional practice in the UK. She was indefatigable in explaining and promoting it round the country, with roadshows and other events. In the early days there was a lot of fear and misapprehension which she overcame brilliantly. I always admired her patience and clarity in responding to peoples' concerns. The success of Icon's accreditation owes everything to Susan's vision and commitment'.

## THE ICON YEARS

Icon itself came into being in 2005. In the eighteen years since, Susan's role has changed from that of Training Officer, through Accreditation Manager and Professional Development Manager to Head of Professional Development. Accreditation has been at the core of all those roles.

*'I have been proud to lead that work alongside so many committed Icon members who support the roles required to maintain a robust application and assessment process and CPD recall process. The training of those members to carry out their roles has been very rewarding'.*

### **Alison Richmond ACR, Icon's Chief Executive from 2009 to 2018, takes up the story.**

'Susan was, probably more than anyone else, instrumental in professionalising our workforce. She is a stickler for doing things the right way and, importantly, she knows how to handle the hundreds of volunteers who are key to accreditation's success. Not only that, as a conservator herself she had a real feel for the way conservators think.

'Over the years, Susan has trained everyone involved in accreditation, staff, assessors, mentors and readers. She saw around seven hundred candidates go through their assessments and she oversaw the CPD reviews of hundreds more.-



Susan with her work companion Bojo

This was as far from a mere paper exercise as it could be. In order to appoint the right assessors/readers/mentors with the right combination of knowledge, experience and specialism, and without any conflicts of interest, required close knowledge of all of the two hundred or so volunteers who were active at any one time'.

### **Contributing from the perspective of one of those assessors and later a member of the Accreditation Committee, John Burbidge ACR says:**

'In 2007 Susan invited me to be a PACR Assessor. As well as exemplary organisation, I also remember the continuous and incremental improvements to the process of accreditation, making its objectives clearer and more relevant – for example, becoming dyslexia friendly. The constant striving for best practice in the accreditation process reflected my own

disposition, and Susan set that example in her work. If accreditation is the jewel in Icon's crown, Susan deserves a lot of credit for that'.

**Chair of the Accreditation Committee between 2005-2011, Clare Meredith ACR favours a musical comparison:**

'Wikipedia tells us that the rhythm section of any band provides an underlying pulse, rhythm and harmony. Susan has been the leader of Icon's rhythm section with internships, apprenticeships, CPD and mentoring beating out that pulse within Icon's wider Accreditation framework - which today is so highly regarded and widely recognised. From the outset, Accreditation was underpinned by the Professional Standards to which Susan repeatedly would refer all those involved in the many and varied aspects of delivering such a rigorous process. And, as a profession, we are each and every one indebted to Susan for that rock-steady rhythm'.

**Alison Richmond again:**

'In 2011, Susan took on the role of Head of Professional Development, bringing internships and, later, apprenticeships, into her remit along with a team of up to five staff. For each intern, another subtly nuanced exercise was required to identify the right supervisor and advisor. Under Susan's management Icon's world-class internship programme maintained its momentum when the third round of funding from Heritage Lottery Fund came to an end in 2012 and she brought new partners on board.

'Since leaving Icon, I have watched from afar as Susan's long-held vision for professional development came to fruition. She had always advocated for an online CPD portal for members to record their CPD and for there to be a one-stop-shop for professional development and, thanks to her unswerving commitment to this idea, it has finally happened!'

**The view from her staff**

They say that no man is a hero to his valet, so how does our heroine fare in the eyes of those who have worked for her?

Reflecting on her many years of working with Susan, Shulla Jaques ACR is inspired to acrostic reflections:

**'A for Accreditation** – what an accomplishment! Twenty-one years' steered with astute adeptness. Advancing the profession and instilling pride and a sense of achievement in so many conservators (thank you). The January application round was always my favourite because it meant a trip to your home office and a slice of scrummy Christmas Cake — chocolate the secret ingredient.

**'C for CPD** – consistently and considerately encouraging us all to understand the benefits of reflecting on how our practice, sometimes without even realizing it, teaches us new things. Clear sighted and professional to the core, a super colleague.

**'R for respect** — for your resilience in promoting accreditation so that it and the Professional Standards are recognised across the sector.

Susan (right) with Shulla Jaques ACR and Patrick White



'I benefit daily from your generous investment in my personal development and from seeing how you navigated the ever-changing demands of your role. Thank you for all you have done for the profession. And lucky those who will have the opportunity to be coached by you in the future!'

Training and Development Manager Patrick Whife: 'What have I valued the most about Susan? The huge amount of time, care, sage advice, and support over the years has been so incredibly appreciated. And what is the most important thing that I've learned from her? Almost certainly that you can't plan too far in advance!'

The respect is mutual. Susan takes this opportunity to say: 'I must thank Shulla Jaques, ACR for her amazing support when it was only the two of us working part-time to meet the busy demands of accreditation, and Patrick Whife, who has been a great teammate and asset for professional development. I have made some great friends too – long may that continue!'

## LOOKING AHEAD

We wish Susan all the best in her future endeavours. Her plan is to put her energy into a new business as a professional coach,

as well as doing more creative work. She is a skilled lace-maker among other talents. Where possible she will combine the two passions: supporting people to achieve their goals and in some cases including art and stitching in coaching.

Let's leave the last word with Susan:

'Reflective practice is key to any role and to review what you do both professionally and personally is ongoing. Now in my sixties I have taken my next step to set up as a freelance professional coach – receiving my advanced diploma in coaching recently has given me the confidence to move forward once more. It is my true goal to help others achieve. I know that accreditation gives confidence to all who achieve it and offers an accessible opportunity for all conservators. Going for your goals is always possible, the journey might not be easy or straightforward but it is rewarding when you get there'.

Susan on the back row in the yellow jacket. Hosting the twelve Getty-funded delegates from around the world at the Icon Triennial Conference in 2019 was a highlight for her



# MORE FROM THE COALFACE

The celebration of our long-serving ACRs continues, as we hear from two more Icon members reflecting on their career and experiences

## NICHOLAS BURNETT ACR

My training began in 1980 at Camberwell School of Art and Crafts and my first job was at the British Museum (BM) in the Western Pictorial Art Conservation Studio. In my first week I was handed a Raphael drawing; admittedly on this occasion all I had to do was sand the mount edges but nonetheless! Of course I was a painfully slow conservator but over the next three years or so picked up speed, experience and, particularly as regards retouching, confidence.

Alan Donnithorne had been researching photographic conservation for the museum and it was a pleasure to work alongside him for part of my time there. Camberwell had included an introduction to photographic conservation which

was enough to tell me that we knew next to nothing about the subject. I decided to research the subject alongside my core interest of Western art on paper; I read historic literature and started using old photographic processes in my spare time. This included making some very basic daguerreotype equipment. In parallel I also started putting together a reference collection of different photographic processes and conserving them in my spare time.

There were many benefits to working at the BM, one of which was the chance to use the British Library. Meeting conservators from other disciplines and people from different departments in the canteen was another pleasure. The Conservation Christmas parties complete with pantomime, jazz band and food were a highlight of the festive season.

Nicholas at work



At the end of 1986 I joined Wendy Craig in the South Eastern Museums Service's Prints, Watercolours and Drawings Conservation Studio based within the Fitzwilliam Museum. We worked for non-national museums throughout the South East. With around a thousand institutions to serve we were stretched pretty thinly. One feature of this job was the huge number of collections surveys. I stopped counting after reaching a hundred but carried out a meta-survey of the main threats facing the art on paper collections. Interestingly, in one case it was poor security, so bad that some artworks included in the survey had been stolen by the time my report arrived a few weeks later. In two cases it was fundamental problems with the environment but in the remaining ninety-seven cases it was the presence of unstable, wood pulp mounting boards that posed the single greatest threat.

Wendy left and I was promoted to studio head. Over the next seven years I designed new equipment and raised funding to expand the staff from two to four. In 1995 funding priorities changed so in response I took the studio into the private sector, renaming it Museum Conservation Services Ltd. My intention was to be in the private sector for a maximum of five years - still here twenty-six years later.

During these years another specialism developed in mounting and framing large artworks. Photographic conservation has now become a staple activity in the studio and in consequence we represented the UK in the European Commission Funded Daguerreobase project. Pleasingly, we completed our work ahead of schedule and on budget, receiving additional funding in the final weeks of the project to undertake extra work.

So many pieces of work have been particularly rewarding. Strangely these are not always the ones with the most interventive treatment. The application of a minor attribute of a material to solve a problem is often very pleasing. One of many examples was the treatment and remounting of Verocchio's *Head of a Woman*. The drawing was slightly cockled and the high points tended to lose pigment onto the underside of the mount stored next to it in the Solander box. A deeper mount with a Perspex verso not only allowed the verso and the pricking through to be seen but also provided a slight static electricity charge to hold the paper flat and anchor the loose pigment.

Forensic examination of damaged artworks for insurance loss adjustors is another wonderfully absorbing activity. We tend to be asked when the cause is disputed or not obvious. Pinning down that cause and then writing the report so that it is clear, unambiguous and will potentially stand up in court is truly engrossing.

Pleasing as these activities are, it is seeing junior colleagues and student interns gain experience, speed and confidence that is the most fundamentally rewarding part of the job. There are many things I would say to my younger self if I had the chance. Chief of which would be, where money is involved get any agreements in writing.

Many people have had a positive influence on my conserva-

tion career but the person who had the biggest influence was from before I started in conservation. This was while volunteering on an archaeological site as a teenager. The director, a professional, was firm about standards and made sure everything was done well.

## PIERS TOWNSHEND ACR

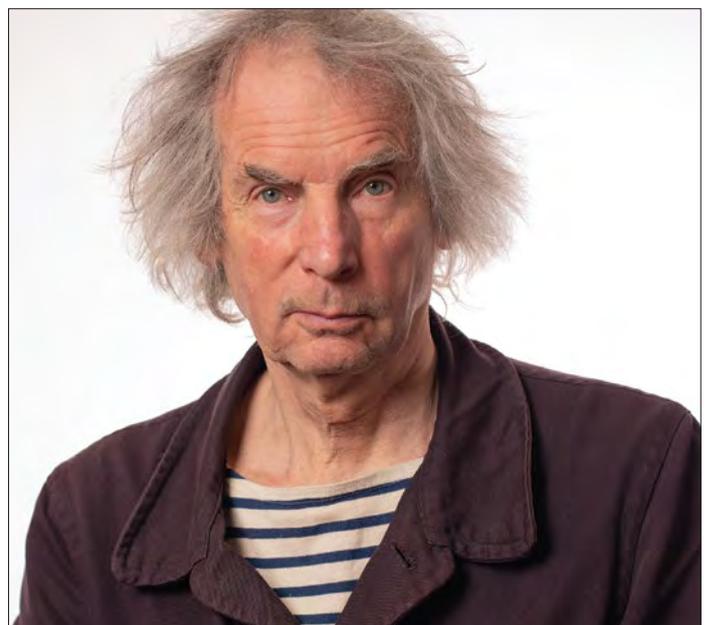
I had the luck to be chosen for a job as paper conservator at Tate in 1980. Kasia Szeleynski and Sheila Fairbrass showed me the ropes. Thirty-three years later it still seemed like fun but I left in search of other conservation adventures. These continue.

A recent issue of *Icon News* got me very excited with its article on picchvai conservation. The WaterPic sounds a useful tool. I too sometimes have to work on these large painted cloths. When they are too big to fit in my studio it means asking to use a friend's space half a mile away. In this particular case the cloth was weakened by mildew and had rat-chewed holes that needed filling. Blotter washing helped to lessen the discolourations, and then a lining of Japanese paper gave the picchvai enough strength to hang on display.

However, when it was time to take the work back to the owner, the budget would not allow for van hire. A large diameter tube enabled the picture to be rolled safely around it, and then wrapped. The twenty minute cycle journey was uneventful. There is much to be said for freight bikes if one needs to make local deliveries.

Low value artworks need low cost treatment and low cost transport, otherwise they may simply be thrown away. Sitting as the only passenger on a Jumbo jet cargo plane recently, with a multimillion dollar picture in its crate under my care, I

Piers Townshend ACR





The picchvai after conservation



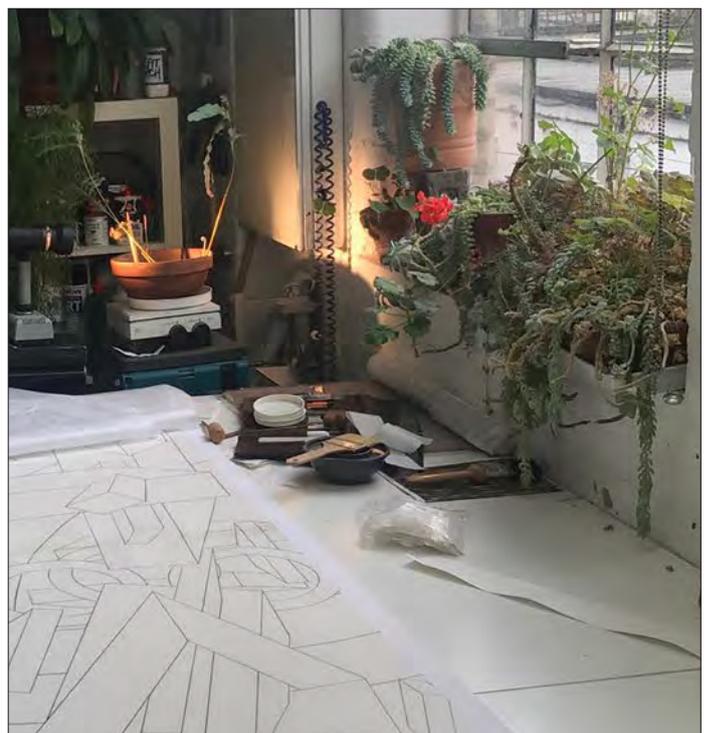
The picchvai ready for delivery

found myself thinking just how differently we have to behave when there is money involved.

Several of my case histories from the last seven years would interest paper and other conservators, such as the torn-up Beardsley drawing that needed fettling for a recent exhibition at Tate Britain, together with the Gerald Scarfe caricature which had to have a curtain in front of it so as not to frighten the horses. Another is Architect Richard Rogers's few remaining drawings for his Centre Pompidou competition entry in 1971. Photos that had been stuck behind the tracing paper were no longer visible because of yellowed paper and discoloured glue - was it heresy to stick them in front instead?

Now that summer is here, my studio in Camberwell is more pleasant to work in. Earlier this last winter it was horribly cold. Many of my neighbours were not coming in and old industrial buildings are not easy to keep warm. This meant that flattening large paper artworks took weeks. Even with tri-wall corrugated cardboards above and below the blotter stack, progress was slow. The heavy glass pressing sheets needed to be warmed up somehow. Electric blankets sounded a good idea, but the ones I found had got safety switches that turned them off an hour after you got into bed. Dog bed warmers are the better option. Only 20 watts of power. A pair of these under my plate glass was able to warm it to around 18°C. And keep it at that all week.

The Clivia has come into bloom, so it is time to open a bottle...



# ON THE MOVE

## Part 2 of the story of the relocation of Lambeth Palace Library and Church of England Record Centre

You would have spotted in our introductory article in April's *Icon News* (issue 93) that during the pandemic we have been moving the studio and collections to new purpose-built sustainable storage, engagement and studio facilities. This follow-up article focuses on the exciting, yet challenging move to our conservation studio. The project proved an excellent learning experience, as you will hear from the team members involved.

### THE NEW STUDIO SET-UP

Between light, space and fabulous design, the Collections Care studio is one of the highlights of the new building. Wright and Wright Architects worked closely with Lara Artemis ACR, the senior conservator, in an outstanding effort to set up a modern and up to date space considering the wellbeing and practicality for all users. The research started a few years ago when the design team visited other conservation

Morton's Tower: the old conservation studio was located behind the third window up on the left hand tower



studios at the Wellcome Library, the Parliamentary Archives and the British Library, thus providing fantastic opportunities to share experiences with other professionals and gather useful information for the design of the new studio.

The conservation studio, located on the ground floor, faces the biodiversity pond in the garden designed by award winning designer Dan Pearson. The studio is furnished by Conservation By Design, providing high quality tested materials, such as height adjustable Trespa benches, Planorama chests and a light wall.

Everything is mobile and adjustable, allowing flexibility for practical applications and comfort of team members. Lantern (pagoda style) rather than flat roof lights, disperse light before it hits the working surfaces, creating a productive, fresh feel in the studio. The ecology pond encourages wildlife and sustainability has been a recurring concept in the creation of the new building, so old workable equipment has been reused and moved to the new site.

The main studio has a spacious open plan layout and separate rooms to undertake specific conservation activities. It has a large vertical light-box for lining and repairing maps and plans. Sizeable workbenches allow oversized items to be comfortably treated and moved safely. Conservators have live onscreen access to the Building Management System, to quickly respond to environmental issues and prioritise subsequent actions with Facilities teams. The new state-of-the-art storage space complies with BS 4971 and building environmental specifications previously set out in PAS 198. Although the building is in the drying out stages, it is responding well, maintaining expected RH and temperature.

The Preservation Suite, with its Zund box-making machine, is the heart of our collection care department. Additional rooms for focused activities include the Workshop, for leather paring, backing and gold tooling, and the Laboratory, with a new *Erlab* fume extraction unit and *Willard* vacuum table, enabling scientific research and chemical treatments. The Preservation Quarantine Room is a purpose-designed space where mould or pest damaged collections can be assessed, cleaned and controlled, before being moved to storage or made available to readers.

Conservators and digitisation teams can make use of a pop-up imaging space to take quick shots of collections being conserved or going out on loan. Finally, the meeting and reading area encourages communication and dialogue between conservators and other departments.

## MOVING THE CONSERVATION STUDIO

The old studio was on the second floor of Morton's Tower (Grade I listed, built in the 1490s), only reachable by a stone spiral staircase. The pandemic, social distancing and PPE made it difficult to navigate with books and equipment, so we worked together and learned from each other to overcome obstacles, transporting items to the new building safely yet swiftly. Being supportive and communicative have been keys to the move's success, using WhatsApp to create an image log, keep us informed and entertained.



© Lambeth Palace Library

The Tower's spiral staircase leading to the studio created challenges for the move

As circumstances developed during the pandemic, we needed to respond with a flexible approach and resilience, adjusting our detailed plan. Decanting the old studio, priorities and supervision tasks were assigned to collection care team members using spreadsheets. We safely wrapped equipment and materials with labels, including large reams of Japanese and Western handmade papers, noting historic features such as watermarks.

Having been interrupted and delayed by lockdowns, we are still in the final stages of the collection move. However, lockdowns have provided us with the opportunity to update documentation, complete risk assessments for the new studio, update COSHH and CPD. We used the time to reflect and evaluate past actions for Benchmark 3.0, a useful tool to



© Lambeth Palace Library

The new studio faces a pond and has a very different feel from the old

establish best practice in collection care. These important tasks will make our department even more resilient when we resume practical conservation activities in the new building.

## THE NEW STUDIO - BY THE TEAM

### *Avery Bazemore*

The most challenging aspect of setting up the Preservation Suite was coordinating the move of our eighth team member: the Zund boxmaker. We played *Tetris* with its position in the room because access to one side was necessary for maintenance. Then, we planned how to move it between sites. I documented the awkward location of Zund in the old library, and the available exit routes, stairs, rough floors, and narrow doors. The moving truck's route was also less straightforward than I thought. Although the new library is a two minute walk down the road, it is a red route used by ambulances and right turns are not permitted, so the truck went three times further to reach a roundabout. At least it is simple from the loading bay at the new library to its new home!

### *Fiona Johnston & Luciana Marques*

We worked on the risk assessments for the tools and equipment we use daily in the main conservation studio in the New Library. Initially, we completed an inventory, looking through cupboards and drawers in the old studio, gaining thorough knowledge of all the tools and equipment available for use. We found that these risk assessments made us far more aware of the hazards involved with their use. For example, safe working on the vertical light wall requires staff to attend working at height training and ensure proper maintenance of kick-stools and accessories. Our new magnetic metal notice board also surprised us when we learned that magnetics could interfere with heart pacemakers. Knowing the hazards has allowed us to mitigate these with various control measures.

### *Arianna Mangraviti*

Whilst arranging and packing our bookbinding equipment, I was transported back to the library's thriving bookbinding past. Although fascinating to analyse leather and hand-made decorated papers, the finishing tools were most interesting. I discovered numerous historical handheld tools, for gold and

blind tooling, and rolls used over centuries and reflected throughout the collection, with some particularly worn from intensive use. Tiny gothic numbers, to large Elizabethan letters, deserved equal attention. Asbestos, previously detected within some tools, had been safely treated and removed. Research into this historic equipment is needed - a project in its own right - as the aesthetic features of books retain evidence of finishing. I learned that when thinking about the collection we normally focus on volumes, but bookbinding and conservation tools also assume historical value and significance over time.

**María Martínez-Viciana**

A brand-new laboratory, with both legacy and new kit, includes our only static element - an old large heated jacket sink - with a new de-ionizer unit. All other equipment was procured to be mobile, enabling us to re-arrange the space as necessary for a smooth workflow. Reviewing the laboratory risk assessment, I noted concerns over the heated sink's use alongside water and developed a step-by-step best practice guide to ensure the handler's safety. Our Collections Care Handbook highlights predominant conservation treatments and provides further guidance. A risk to collections was the

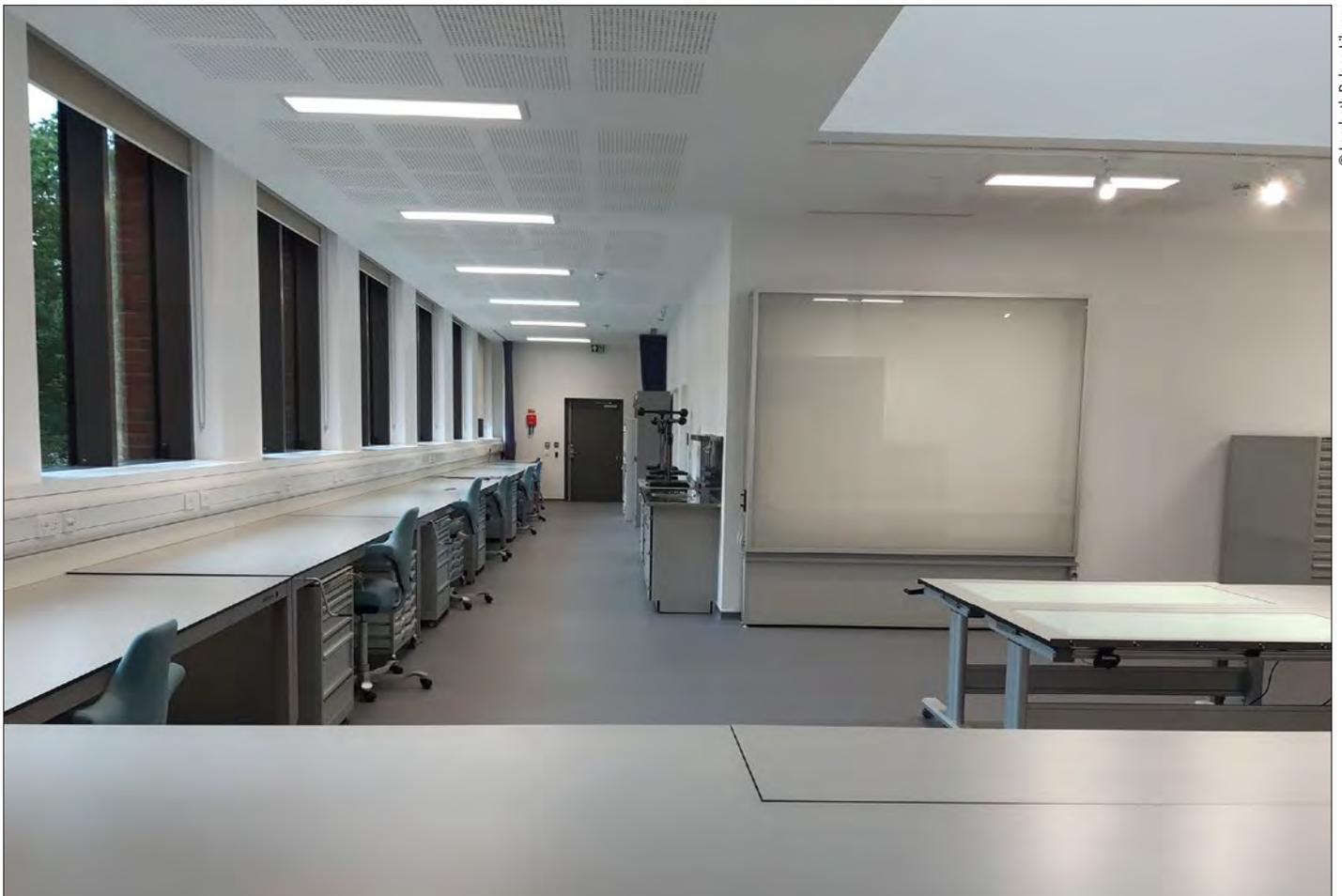


© Lambeth Palace Library

The old studio in Morton's Tower emptied

possible cross-contamination of treatment processes, such as toning leather/paper and other wet treatments near collections you don't want dyed. But we mitigate this risk by guiding the conservator to use appropriate trays and brushes in a *Really Useful Box*!

Inside the new studio



© Lambeth Palace Library

### Atsuko Matsumoto

I worked on the Preservation Quarantine room, which is small but fit for its purpose to deal with the immediate needs of collections, including disaster decant space. It is located closest to the loading area and focuses on the triage management of contaminated collections entering and leaving the building. It has extra security with independent keypad for uncatalogued collections; and a separate HVAC system from the rest of the building to avoid cross-contamination. I really enjoyed setting-up this space, and, especially, found it useful talking to others such as Karen Bradford at the British Library about how best to make the space work. It has been a good opportunity for me to learn practices and case studies from different institutions and then share ours with others working on similar projects.

### FINAL THOUGHTS FROM LARA ARTEMIS ACR

It has been a challenging few years to effectively plan and prepare the collections for moving and getting ourselves ready to transition into our new work spaces. Although move preparation tasks were already in place before the pandemic, lockdowns provided moments to take stock and develop plans for new collections management practices. The team has mentioned the Collections Care Handbook that guides various techniques, materials and standard operational procedures for the specific use of spaces.

However, the real work has been in the quick and effective responses from the team, helping us to manage the overall risk of moving. Between shelf checking, mass cleaning, labelling, jumping on move trucks, shifting a cage out of the way... the team have proved they can do almost anything

that might be thrown at them in these uncertain times.

Even with the short line in our July 2019 move risk assessment that states *'possible delays due to unavailability of staff and movers during impact of a virus'*, we could not have anticipated the huge physical and emotional impact that this brutal virus has caused in the last eighteen months. Nonetheless, when the risk became a certainty (and real concern), that short line did help us to swing into action. The team proactively participated in effective decision-making and taking ownership. They have also learned a great deal, including how to work more agilely and consider colleagues' specific concerns during the pandemic, resulting in us connecting further both as a team and more widely.

I could not be more proud of what we have managed to achieve, with 21km of collections safely moved and new library spaces starting to look like a fully functioning library. We are well on our way to a new and exciting era for the Church of England's collections at Lambeth Palace Library.

This has been the final stage of a long and wonderful journey started over ten years ago. Janet Atkinson and the then team began to visualise the new conservation studio's design to maintain a collections storage facility far into the future. We hope to invite our friends and colleagues to an unveiling of the new studio and library soon. In the meantime, our newly restructured team is slowly settling in, working with our library and archive colleagues to help safeguard and engage more widely the collections of Lambeth Palace Library.

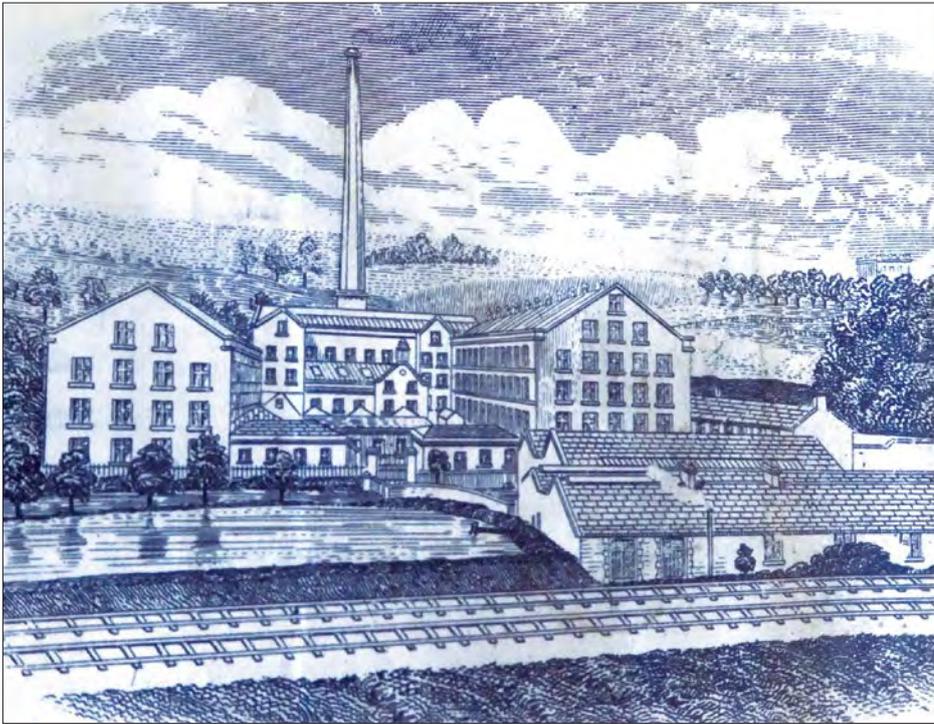
For further enquiries go to [www.lambethpalacelibrary.org/conservationenquiries](http://www.lambethpalacelibrary.org/conservationenquiries)

Members of the Collection Care Team working on the vertical light wall, lining and repairing maps



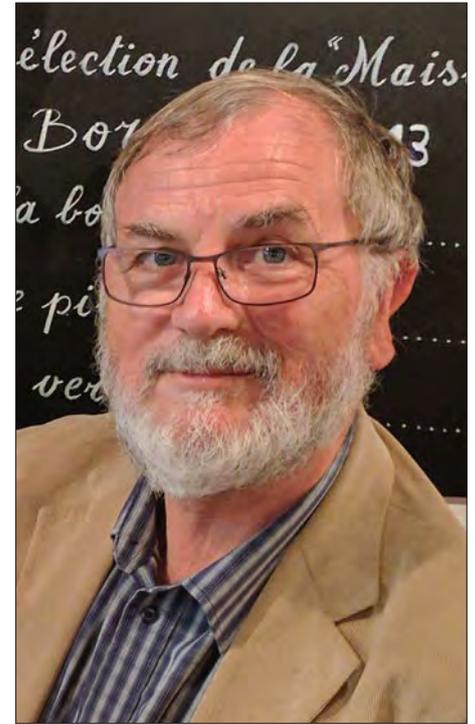
# SO LAST CENTURY . . . . .

Icon's Business Director and Honorary Life Member, Simon Barcham Green continues the story of the collection care challenges he faces with his family's business archive



© Simon Green

Stubbins Vale Mills near Manchester, where Porritt, Bror & Austin made woollen felts for Hayle Mill amongst other paper mills. A typical fine engraving which manufacturers used to impress the world



The author relaxes: another phase of the work is complete

## The story to date

In May 2011, Icon News published an article about the Hayle Mill Archives under the title 'Interim Preservation' (issue 34, p 20). In it, Simon described the history of his family's hand-made paper mill in Kent from its building in 1808 to its closure in 1987. When production ceased, the problem was what to do with the buildings, machinery, equipment and a significant archive of business records. Simon made a start on dealing with collection care and disposal. You can find the downloadable pdf of the story at [www.icon.org.uk/resource/icon-news-34-may-2011-pdf.html](http://www.icon.org.uk/resource/icon-news-34-may-2011-pdf.html).

## Now read on

In some ways, little has changed as the Archives are still in store in Kent and a long-term home is still being sought. However this article is intended to bring the story up to date on some recent developments.

As well as the Archives, I had a large collection of papermaking moulds, a lot of shelving, tools, two papermaking beaters, two printing presses, handmade paper for sale and various other artefacts. Over the years I have sold the

beaters, printing presses, some of the paper and dozens of moulds. A big step forward was the sale of nearly all the moulds to the Cropper Paper Foundation in March 2019.

This is an ideal home for them as they join hundreds of other moulds and artefacts which will eventually be displayed and available for research near Kendal in the Lake District. At the same time, I donated all of the remaining benches and other equipment and much of the paper and even a model of Hayle Mill to the Foundation. More about the Foundation can be found at <https://www.instagram.com/paper.foundation/?hl=en>

## Tackling the archives collection

That left me with the Archives collection and a lot of space. Most of the collection was housed in a small farm building comprising an office and a separate paper store. In 2019 I decided the time had come to deal with thousands of documents stored in five open-topped wooden packing cases in the large, 'naturally ventilated' brick barn nearby.

Because of the way the bundles of correspondence were piled in the cases I had little idea of what was there apart



© Simon Green

Papermaking moulds and other equipment stored in the barn

from being able to see some of the top few letters in some bundles. I realised that I now had plenty of space in the barn to lay out the bundles, list them and store them in a better way. I also thought I had enough space now in the paper store. It already had a lot of the archives in it and had also held a lot of handmade paper and other items that I had given to the Foundation.

I was pondering what to do for some months as new archival packaging would have been very expensive and I also wanted to be able to move the packages around for access and other purposes. One day, I was at the local supermarket and I noticed the ubiquitous plastic crates used to transport bread, fruit and other groceries from the warehouses to the shelves. Could I use these, where would I get some and what would they cost?

Online research revealed that there is a market in second hand 'bale arm crates', so I bought ten. They turned out to

Bale arm crates on dollies and some of the temporarily stacked bundles of documents on pallets



© Simon Green



© Simon Green

The workstation set up by Emily and Rorie for the documentation and re-housing tasks

be ideal. Each would hold two small stacks of my correspondence which is mostly quarto size -10 x 8 inches (203 x 254 mm) - and some foolscap -13 1/2 x 8 1/2 inches (343 x 216 mm). A full crate is fairly easy to lift and they could be comfortably stacked six high without risk of toppling or strain to the operator. Even better, I could buy dollies - platforms on four swivelling wheels in two sizes which could transport either six crates or twelve. Over the next year I bought around a hundred and seventy crates and twenty dollies.

### Cleaning and crating

The next challenge was to move all the bundles from the packing cases to the crates and in the process clean them. I did a few trials to check practicality and estimate quantities and from the start knew that I had neither the time nor the strength to do it myself. My archive consultant Ed Potten ( a Freelance Special Collections Advisor and Bibliographer) suggested that I find a commercial cleaner as I could not expect my listing team (not recruited at that stage) to handle dirty material. More internet searching found a good number of commercial cleaning companies but discussion with all but



This bale arm crate shows the typical condition of the correspondence

two of them led to polite indications that this was not the sort of work they did. One quoted £1,200 a day without even inspecting the collection first.

Then I tracked down Shayne Warden of CICS (Commercial and Industrial Cleaning Solutions). She inspected, quoted me a good price and one of her team, Erjon Gremi, carried out all the work in less than three days. All the bundles were removed from the cases, vacuum-cleaned, put into the bale arm crates and onto the dollies and the whole barn was cleaned up to a height of 2m from the floor to provide reasonable working conditions.

## Documentation and re-housing

Meanwhile I had contacted Keith Lampard who, with Margaret Post, had carried out the main cataloguing in the 1970s. Now retired, he was by then Secretary to the University of Kent and he arranged for the University Archivist Tom Kennet to visit me with a recent history graduate Emily Gooding. We agreed a way of working to compile a complete list of the bundles and that Emily would do the work with Rorie Eunson, another recent history graduate from the University of Leicester.

Emily and Rorie set to work in July 2019 and by the end of September the job was complete. Each bundle was removed from its crate and an entry added to the 'Hayle Mill Archive Record'. This is a very basic Excel workbook. Each entry includes a serial number, the year, name of folder, description and comments. An example is shown below.

Serial Number	Year	Name	Description	Comment
HM/1937/0189	1937	Carriage/ Chemicals/ Coal/ Gas & Lighting/ General Expenses/ Insurance/ Various C-I	Bundle of Folders. Correspondence/ Invoices/ Payments/ Statements/Accounts	Slightly Chewed

This is a very basic listing but it is easily searchable. We now know what we have got and how to find it but there is no detail of individual documents within the folders. This could be a future project and the crates are easily moved and could be catalogued in detail. However I don't have the resources to do this at present.

Fortunately, that summer had perfect weather so the barn was warm until late autumn. A few weeks later in January 2020, we moved all the crates on their twenty dollies from the barn to the paper store. To my slight amazement, my calculations were correct and they just fitted into the space available. Rorie and Emily had done a brilliant job for which I am most grateful.

## Environmental control

Since the crates were removed, I have installed a small domestic dehumidifier to address the high moisture content of the collection. Over a period of nine months this gradually reduced the relative humidity of the main paper store to just over 50%. Given that the total weight of the paper in the rooms is probably 5-10 tonnes, that is impressive and at least gives the collection some stability.

I have been running a similar dehumidifier in the smaller Archives Room (which is mostly material from the 19th century) for several years resulting in a relative humidity of just over 40%). During the winter of 2021, the dehumidifiers shut themselves down at 5°C to prevent the heat exchanger icing so the humidity at times rise to nearly 70%.



© Simon Green

Emily and Rorie move crates on a dolly in the barn

## Where we are now

The entire collection is now stored in reasonable conditions and we have a basic list of what is in it. My wife Dr Maureen Green researched the archives for a number of years as a postgraduate student of the University of London. She completed her PhD some years ago and it has been published and is available from <http://www.thelegacy-press.com/green-hayle-mill.html>. Elements of her research have been incorporated into a limited edition book beautifully published by Claire van Vliet at the Janus Press in Vermont <https://papermoulds.typepad.com/simon-barcham-greens-pap/pappermaking-at-hayle-mill-1808-1987-.html>.

Many of the moulds that I used to own can be seen at my website <https://papermoulds.typepad.com/simon-barcham-greens-pap/>. I have also recently started <http://haylemillar-archives.com> which I will gradually populate with relevant information.

However I don't have the resources to undertake any research on the collection and its storage, insurance etc is costly. I am continuing to look for a suitable institution to provide a long term home for the collection either in the UK or overseas. Anyone interested should contact me at [simon-green22@gmail.com](mailto:simon-green22@gmail.com).

Crates on dollies in the paper store at high capacity but easy to move



© Simon Green

# POSTCARD FROM BENEDITA

John Burbidge ACR (retired) is on a crusade for heritage under threat near his home in Portugal

This is my first ever satirical cartoon and, yes, it does look like a flyer for the circus. It shows the mayor of Alcobaca (the municipal capital of this region in central Portugal) driving a steam roller over the ruins of a large agricultural complex, Quinta da Serra, which dates from around 1730.

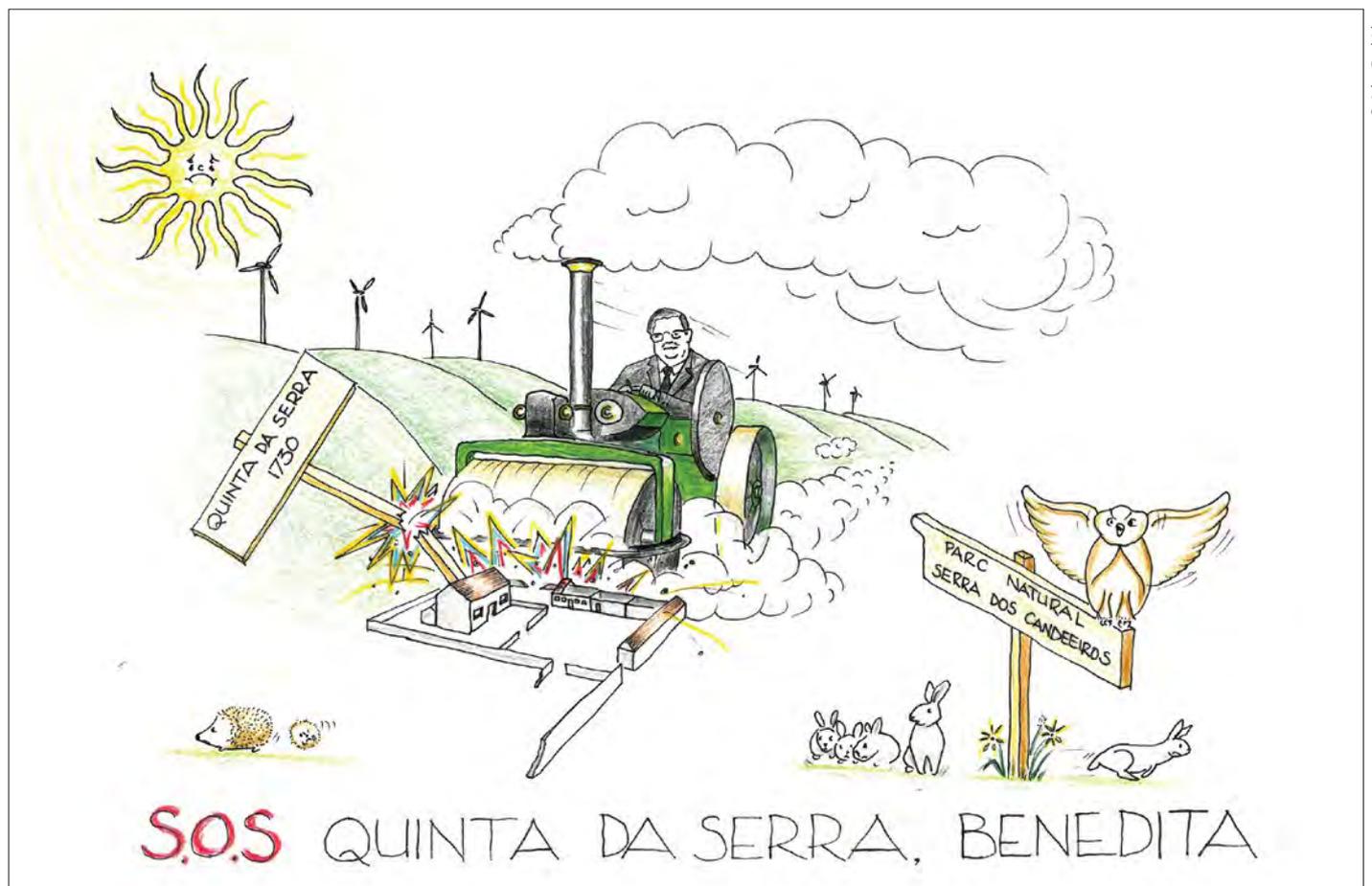
The proposed demolition of the farm is part of a development plan for an industrial park on the outskirts of the parish of Benedita (near where I live), and at the foot of the Serra dos Candeeiros, a protected nature park. The total cost of the development is nearly €9 million with nearly €3.5 million being contributed by the European Union.

The farm buildings are located within a large walled compound with a central courtyard; they reflect the evolution of farming practice in this region over three centuries, including wheat production, the manufacture of olive oil and pig breeding. Towards the centre is a large barn structure which held an olive oil press; above the main entrance is an

engraved stone with the date 1730. Adjacent to this there is a large water tank. Other buildings include the home of the manager, cheese production, a dovecote and a building last used for an aspect of pig breeding, lodging for workers and stables. There was also a large walled horticultural area.

Adjacent to the central barn structure, the outline plan of the walls of an 18th century private chapel can be seen; this was destroyed fifteen to twenty years ago. The only evidence we have discovered of this building are some invaluable photographs taken by local amateur historian Fernando Maurício in 1973.

Benedita is a small industrial town on the busy IC2 road linking three municipal capitals, with a population of about 10,000 people. Despite a history reaching back five hundred years, it has no old buildings (other than the Quinta da Serra complex). The 'old church' built, according to legend, around a chapel commemorating an apparition of the Virgin Mary



© John Burbidge



Image: Antonio Catarino

The outline remains of the 18thC chapel today

(Nossa Senhora) in the 14th century, was destroyed in 1962 following the building of a new church in 1955.

With the 18th century private chapel of the Quinta da Serra already destroyed, the race is on to save the rest of this architectural heritage. An online petition has been created in a bid to prevent its irreversible destruction, (there is a theory that this was the site of a 12/13th century Benedictine monastery), so that it can be better investigated, and possibly restored and re-used.

Your support would be most welcome.

<https://peticaopublica.com/pview.aspx?pi=PT108640>.

P.S. This is not the only example of vandalism in the area. The monastery of Alcobaça has UNESCO World Heritage status. (Queen Elizabeth visited in the 50s). This is currently threatened by the installation of a 5 star hotel within the complex. See <https://tinyurl.com/fyxr4shk>

The interior of the chapel as recorded in 1973

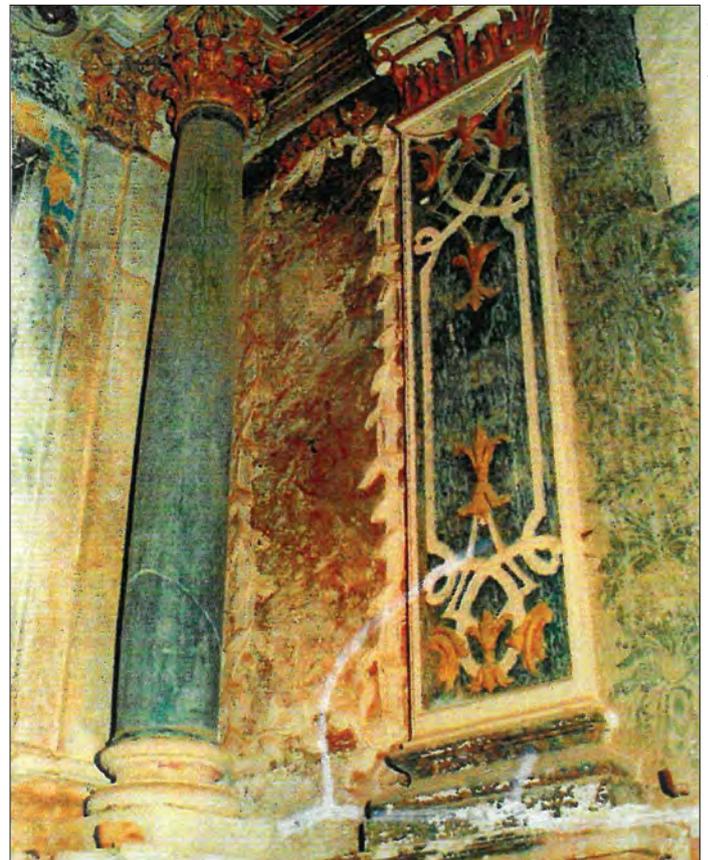


Image: Fernando Maurício

## PAPER CONSERVATORS IN SCOTLAND:

News and Ideas Exchange

Online 12 May 2021

The sixth annual 'five-minute presentations' event looked a bit different this year because of the ongoing impact of Covid-19. The event planned for April 2020 did not take place so it was a delight that it could happen this year. The News and Ideas Exchange was held on Teams with pre-recorded presentations followed by a live Q&A session after each of the three sets.

Each Q&A was chaired by **Tizzy Hepher ACR** with assistance from **Lynn Teggart ACR** and the attendees posed questions via the chat box or by raising a virtual hand. In previous years, attendees would bring in cakes for everyone to share while mingling between the talks. Some members of the audience gladly kept the tradition going despite the lack of in-person networking to complement the tea and cake.

As with previous years, the aim of the event was to be a gathering for Scottish conservators to reconnect with one another, hear what everyone has been up to during these trying times, and offer any help, comments, advice, or support we can. Despite the different, online format, the event was a resounding success, and we had the highest number of attendees of any year with fifty-one members in the audience.

After an introduction from event organiser **Helen Creasy ACR** of the Scottish Conservation Studio, **Julie Bon ACR** from the National Library of Scotland (NLS) gave the first of the seventeen talks entitled 'Maslow's "needs must" management during lockdown'. Using Maslow's hierarchy of needs and theory of human motivation (1943), Julie ran through each of the needs in the context of the first Covid-19 lockdown for both self-management and managing a team, giving us an insight into how she supported her staff during the pandemic. Her aim was to make meaningful contributions to the Library despite the lack of physical access, while re-evaluating what is important both at work and at home.

Next was **Tizzy** from Historic Environment Scotland (HES) who shared her journey with identifying photoreproductions. In the talk she focused on cyanotypes in the HES archive. Tizzy previously conserved the talk's case study *Figure Study of an Angel (1954)* and is looking forward to getting back on site so she can carry out further research alongside the HES Science Team. They will look into the potential fading of these photoreproductions using a chromameter.

**Richard Aitken ACR** from High Life Highland Archive Service (HLHAS) discussed his treatment of a 12ft-by-12ft ordnance survey map carried out during lockdown. The large plan comprised six individual OS maps joined together that had suffered from a host of conservation issues; it was interesting to hear how Richard approached and executed the treatment of such a large-scale object on his



Helen Creasy and Anna Trist attending the Scottish paper conservators' news and idea exchange

own, a task that many of us will know is not always straightforward.

**Lisa Cumming ACR** from the National Museums of Scotland (NMS) presented her cleverly named talk entitled "'Beaky Splendours'" – the collaborative conservation of Audubon's Birds of America prints'. Nine hand-coloured prints were loaned to Northumbria University for the Masters students to conserve as part of their studies. The prints were in poor condition and a good challenge for the students. NMS's two paper conservators oversaw the treatment at a distance but the students had the freedom to come up with their own treatment proposals and do the work during the course of their two-year degree.

**Vicki Hanley** (NMS) followed on with a talk about the conservation of a rare, uncoloured Audubon Bird of America print. 'The Great American Hen and Young' was gifted to the NMS in 2015. After unframing it, Vicki was able to see the full extent of its condition, with previous repairs using a thick Japanese paper and substantial retouching with thick, white poster paint and black pen. Washing enabled Vicki to remove the old repairs and retouching and she re-lined the print before the first lockdown. Back in the studio late last year, treatment continued with paper pulp used to fill the old tears. The before and after photographs were great to see and showed the substantial amount of work undertaken.

**Yolanda Bustamante**, the Fragile Formats Conservation Intern at the NLS, discussed her project about the treatment of iron gall ink, inspired by a Robert Burns letter. With no previous experience treating iron gall ink, Yolanda sought out how to best approach the letter's conservation through a literature review and by asking other conservators for their experiences. Her recent survey of conservators aims to compile data that could be used to inform the treatment of this ink in an easy and consistent way. She created an IGI database for recording the condition of iron gall ink, a treatment proposal matrix with automated treatment recommendations, a decision-making tree to complement the matrix, and a document of treatment recommendations, which is still in progress.

**Lynn Teggart** (HES) gave a talk called 'Reduce, Reuse and Recycle and HES Archive', which was all about the environmental impact of what they

do and how they can reduce it. Lynn discussed swapping high energy fluorescents for long life, low energy LEDs and re-evaluating the need for air-conditioning. Plastic use has been reduced through switching to paper folders instead of polyester pockets and buying second-hand where possible. Deaccessioned materials are used for annual disaster preparedness training, conservation supply packaging has been repurposed for art projects at home, and some unwanted items have been donated to East Lothian Play. Disposable gloves are either reused or recycled with a glove recycling scheme and they are trialling biodegradable gloves.

**Emma Buchholz ACR** gave a talk on creating a sustainable mould strategy for historically mould damaged collections in the HES archives. As the facilities at HES are not designed for the treatment of large amounts of mouldy items, during lockdown the mould strategy was developed to help with the planning and execution of such treatments. Lockdown has proven to be a good time to think about and make plans for these collections and Emma is keen to start the active parts of the project later in the year.

**Mel Houston ACR**, preventive conservator at NLS, talked us through new boxing strategies, posing questions like 'what gets a box?' since the collection cannot all be boxed. Mel has been looking at how much of the collection is already boxed, what it would take to box everything, if groups of items could be boxed in one go where water leaks are more likely to occur, whether it is a good idea to box and zone collections to allow for environmental relaxation, or if a mixture of all these options is best. A visual survey of the collection to estimate the percentage of shelves boxed so far was carried out by volunteers over three days. The data from it will help inform future decision-making around boxing the collection/s.

**Gloria Conti ACR** from the National Records of Scotland shared her at-home adventures with fish skin tanning during the pandemic. Having experimented with different tanning solutions, which can include ingredients such as tea, bark and eggs, Gloria showed us some books she had bound with this unique material as a replacement for leather, making good use of something that would otherwise have been thrown out. Her talk was beautifully illustrated with several 'wow' moments for the



Participants at the online news and ideas exchange

audience. And for those of you who may be wondering, as we were, there is no fishy smell after this process but the material may take on a new smell depending on the tanning liquid used.

In her talk called 'Losing my marbles: conservation outreach from the garden shed', NLS paper conservator **Shona Hunter ACR** described her lockdown craft – making marbled paper out of everyday items, which stemmed from a project doing practical workshops for mental health outreach support. Shona used shaving foam, food dye, a baking tray, and a cocktail stick to create a marbled pattern that she transferred onto scraps of paper she had previously collected; the video she made of the process can be found online.

**Carrie Farnell** from HLFAS spoke about the treatment of the Walls Agency Shipwrecked Seamen's Association volume from 1903, which suffered from water and mould damage, loose sewing, a missing spine, fading ink, and fragile paper. Carrie talked us through how she conserved this bound volume, the contents of which were about shipwrecked or injured fishermen, and provided great before, during, and after treatment photographs along the way.

**Keira McKee** from the University of Glasgow talked us through her treatment of a parchment manuscript in which a group of stubs from excised leaves were causing problems to parts of the text block. Keira created an elegant solution using Japanese paper laminates to replace some of the missing leaves, reduce the mechanical impact of the sharp stub edges, and to provide a visual clue that there is missing content.

Independent paper conservator **Anna Trist** shared with us her role in the conservation of

a frieze at the National Trust for Scotland's Holmwood House. The frieze had previously been conserved to a minimal intervention brief by Fiona Butterfield ACR in 2002. Anna and Helen Creasy spent two days perched upon scaffolding retouching and re-adhering lifting patches on the frieze, to bring it up to a more fully restored finish, in line with the current policy of full restoration and recreation of the interior decor in the house.

**Helen Creasy's** aptly titled talk 'Collabradabra – the collective treatment of a Magician Poster' was about the treatment of a very large poster and the serendipity around infilling losses that occurred in a rather magical way. The eleven constituent sheets, some of which were hanging on for dear life, were treated and repaired along with the hardboard panel support it had been adhered to. With some large losses to fill and no suitable photo of an undamaged poster for comparison, the magic happened when a chance meeting resulted in a magician in California sending Helen an image of the poster that would guide the subsequent reproduction and retouching. A second stroke of luck came when a visitor to the studio who was a wizard in graphic design was able to supply a banner print of the largest missing area, photoshopped to fit and colour match the poster.

**James Berry** from the National Galleries of Scotland (NGS) spoke about capturing watermarks in nineteenth century photographic papers used by artist David Octavius Hill and chemist Robert Adamson between 1843 and 1847. Through the process of beta radiography, James has been able to capture any watermarks in these papers and has linked them to several papermills within three miles of the River Cray, southwest of Greenwich. James talked us through the process of beta

radiography and the watermarks discovered so far as part of the project. With around forty captured so far and another three hundred to go, some amazing results have already been found. The Scottish Society for the History of Photography and the British Association of Paper Historians have both shown interest in this project

The final presentation was given by NGS's **Graeme Gollan**, who built upon James's talk about beta radiography. Graeme used this method of technical analysis to capture the watermarks present in the Galleries' collection of Rembrandt prints. He has been collaborating with Cornell University, which created a website to catalogue all the watermarks found on Rembrandt prints, with the idea of helping others identify and authenticate their Rembrandts based on watermarks.

At the end of his talk, Graeme surprised many of us by announcing his imminent retirement after forty years at the NGS. Many messages wishing him well popped into the chat box and in answer to questions, Graeme described some highlight projects from his long career. This felt a very fitting end to the gathering of colleagues from all over Scotland.

A big thank you to Helen Creasy, Tizzy Hepher, and Genna Bard for making this event happen, and many thanks also to all the speakers and attendees for their contributions. While it was a shame not to be able to meet in person, the event produced a wonderful variety of talks and worked well to reconnect us with friends and colleagues.

**Anna O'Regan**

Paper conservator, Edinburgh



Grain trays used in conservation to steady objects. These trays here contain rice (left) and flax seeds (right)

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT?

A cautionary tale narrated by Angela Middleton with Peter Marshall and Gill Campbell of Historic England

### ONE FINE DAY

So, imagine this: you are sitting in the conservation lab and it's a fairly normal day. Along comes a colleague from the Environmental Studies Team – the people who look at evidence from past environments or past human activities, in essence bones, cereal grains and pollen. And the conversation starts somewhat like this: 'You know the urns you are working on at the moment, we sieved and processed the soil from the fill and came across....' Right, I think I need to give you a bit more background before I can reveal what they have come across.

### IN THE BEGINNING

In 2009 Historic England excavated part of the Roman military cemetery of Hadrian's Wall at Birdoswald Roman Fort. A brief summary of the excavation has been published by Tony Wilmott (2010). In total twelve vessels, principally cremation urns, were block-lifted from site and subsequently x-rayed and micro-excavated at the Historic England conservation laboratories at Fort Cumberland, Portsmouth. The fill of the urns, a

mixture of soil, charcoal and cremated bone was passed on to the Environmental Studies team for further work.

### WHAT THEY FOUND

So what my archaeobotanist colleague came across were some un-charred flax seeds. This was really unusual, as all the other material from the urns showed definite evidence of being charred. Neither did the seeds look recent. Were the seeds preserved due to the properties of corroding metal? But no metal objects were found in this particular urn. Could they be Roman? Now this is really exciting for anyone studying grains and seeds. Had we found evidence of a food offering placed in the urn along with the remains of the deceased?

### WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Now, think back: my colleague and I sitting there on this fairly normal day and talking about different possibilities. How had these flax seeds ended up in this cremation vessel and why had they survived? Diet and human waste did feature! And all the time, I had this thought, this niggling feeling, that flax seeds are terribly familiar to me, not just as part of a healthy diet but also in a work-related context as a conservator. But it was one of those annoying thoughts, that just lingers in the background and when you try to concentrate on it, it disappears.



Close up of the flax seed tray used to steady the cremation urn during micro-excavation.

And all of a sudden it dawned on me: I refer to flax seeds as linseeds! And now guess what conservators sometimes use to steady uneven objects when working on them? That's right – trays with linseeds (or rice, lentils or sand for that matter).

So I got the tray out and showed it to my colleague and we concluded that the conservator at the time, was probably resting the block-lifted pot on a bed of flax seeds and just a few seeds ended up in the fill of the urn, where they stayed until the sample was processed and the contents were

examined. And this is when the flax seeds were found.

This is however not where the story ends. We did go the extra mile of C14 dating some. Not just because we can - no, because we needed to be sure. After all we could have re-written Roman funerary practice ...

## THE JOURNEY OF THE SEEDS

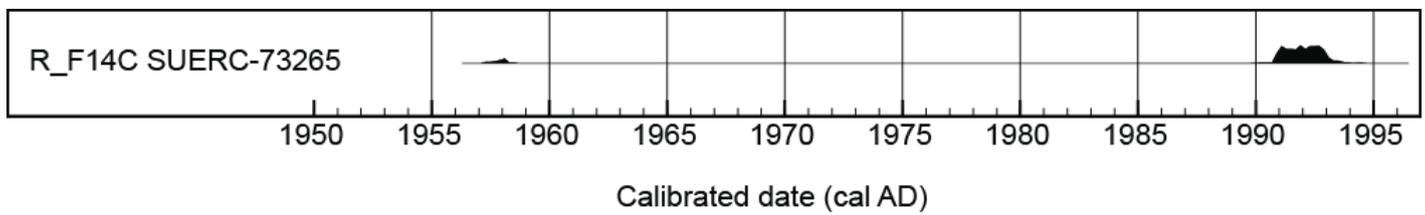
So some seeds were sent to Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre (SUERC) for radiocarbon dating. Here they were washed in hot acid to make sure they were really clean, combusted to CO<sub>2</sub> and then made into graphite (what had these poor seeds done to deserve this!).

But this was only the start. The graphite was then bombarded by ions fired at it from a gun and the resulting carbon atoms produced accelerated around an accelerator mass spectrometer (the clue is in the name). Finally, after passing through a magnetic field the three isotopes of carbon 14C, 13C and 12C came to rest (what a journey) and we have an estimate of the amount of 14C the seeds contained.

As the amount of 14C in the atmosphere has not remained constant, the radiocarbon measurement was then calibrated

Cremation urns on display at Birdoswald Roman Fort





Probability distribution of the date of the Birdoswald flax seeds.

against a calibration curve made up of radiocarbon ages on samples of known calendar date. Our seeds most likely date from the first half of the 1990s. In conclusion this means we won't be re-writing Roman funerary practice.

### THE MORAL OF THE TALE

But a word of caution: despite the light-hearted tone in this contribution, there is obviously a serious message here as well. It is fairly easy for some brown seeds to get mixed up with brown soil. But the person processing and analysing this brown soil, may not be aware of the conservator having used flax seeds, rice or lentils as a bed to steady an otherwise wobbly pot or block-lift. And we did not record the use of a flax seed tray in our conservation report.... Also down the line if starch grain or lipid analysis was carried out on this vessel

what would the results be...

#### The authors

Angela Middleton is Senior Archaeological Conservator, Historic England, Fort Cumberland, Portsmouth, PO4 9LD

Peter Marshall is part of the Scientific Dating Team, Historic England, Cannon Bridge House, 25 Dowgate Hill, London EC4R 2YA

Gill Campbell is Head of Fort Cumberland Laboratories, Historic England, Fort Cumberland, Portsmouth, PO4 9LD

#### References

Wilmott, T 2010 Birdoswald Roman cemetery, *Research News* 14, 16-19 (<https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/research-news-14/researchnews14.pdf/>) [accessed 03/08/2017]

One of the flax seeds found in the soil from the fill of the urn (left), compared to a flax seed from the tray (right)



## A SILVER LINING?

**Jasmina Vuckovic ACR describes the virtual internship undertaken by three students from the West Dean College of Arts and Conservation with the Corning Museum of Glass**

I am sure I wouldn't be the first one to say that as hard as it was, the last year and a half also brought unforeseen opportunities for professional development and networking. By moving online many of us were able to attend events and make contacts with our colleagues all over the world. It was as a result of one such chance meeting that the Ceramics Conservation MA students at West Dean College of Arts and Conservation have just completed what I believe to be the first virtual internship in conservation (at least for both Institutions)!

Last autumn at a Glass and Ceramics virtual café organised by ICOM-CC working group Glass and Ceramics, I finally had a chance to put faces to some names I'd known of for years. One of them was Astrid van Giffen, associate conservator at the Corning Museum of Glass (CMoG) in New York, USA. We discussed the impact of the pandemic and the challenges of delivering conferences and other events online and she mentioned a potential virtual conservation internship with her workplace. This was a very exciting prospect, especially in the wake of ever-changing coronavirus restrictions and the threat to our students visiting actual conservation departments.

Because of the restrictions, the College had already organised an excellent in-house work placement where students worked on a collection condition survey with a collections management team. However, the chance of a complementary learning environment with a world-renowned museum dedicated to exploring glass (a material our students are introduced to in their 2nd year) was not to be missed.

At the beginning of this year Astrid and I started talking in earnest about trialling an online internship. We were soon joined by Lianne Uesato, an assistant conservator at CMoG, and Lorna Calcutt ACR, team leader in Conservation Studies and subject leader in the Ceramics department at West Dean College. We had online meetings once a week for a month, discussing the potential structure and content of the internships.

At relatively short notice Astrid and Lianne organised an amazing online delivery packed with lectures, discussions and

demonstrations. Over the five weeks they covered the history and technology of glass making, deterioration mechanisms, collection management, and set up weekly assignments for our students. They met with the students four times a week, discussing conservation problems and offering support and guidance in students' decision making.

They also organised many guest speakers from other departments at CMoG, discussing photography, loans, marketing etc, which helped the students to develop an understanding of how different teams cooperate together in the museum's daily work and the role of a conservator within that. One of the invited speakers was Adelheid Hansen, a West Dean alumna, who shared her experience of spending eight weeks at the CMoG conservation lab in 2018 and setting up her own business in the UK. Astrid and Lianne generously shared many resources from their archive: from articles and reading lists to videos on making and conservation techniques.

Although the online format of this internship necessitated that it be theory based and content driven, the students also had a chance to do some hands-on exercises. They carried out assessments of the Roman glass vessels from the Ceramics department at the College, and experimented with the working properties of Paraloid B72 films previously provided by our colleagues at CMoG.

The feedback we have received from the students was very positive. They felt that they had extended their understanding of glass and of the conservator's role from acquisition, loan and installation to advocating our profession.

For their final project, on the theme of outreach and communication skills, the students have written a joint blogpost for the CMoG website about Edward James' glass lamp collection. This was a great exercise in consolidating the collaborative spirit, drawing on their experience from both in-house and virtual placement teams.

(You can access the blogpost here <https://blog.cmog.org/2021/05/20/when-glass-meets-minimalism-edward-james-and-his-art-deco-glass-lamps/>)

Although the idea of the virtual internship was born out of restrictions, all parties involved felt that this endeavour was extremely successful and rewarding. We thank Astrid and Lianne for all the hard work they've put into this and hope that our two institutions will continue to collaborate on future projects, and that we'll visit each other in person as well as online!

West Dean Students Rick Li (bottom left), Rose Zhou and Sujin Jung (top row middle right and far right) in conversation with staff from Corning. One of the objects discussed during one of the Teams sessions is shown on page 34



*Mouths to Feed*, Michael Sherrill, Bat Cave,  
North Carolina, 2009. A glass object  
discussed during one of the Teams sessions



2012.4.174  
Cantabrigia Photography  
3/14/2017



POST

No.

11/12/41  
Melbourne } 2/1/42  
N.Z.

Dear Mr. Selby, Esc.,  
Messrs H.B. Selby & Co. Pty. Ltd.,  
254A, George Street,  
SYDNEY,  
N.S.W., Australia.

17th December 1941  
Our ref. JBC/REA

Yours of Oct. 28, 1941  
Ref. BAS/HF

419

Dear Mr. Selby,

Your letter of October 28th 1941

It is extremely nice of you to have sent me a letter for Christmas. I appreciate it very much and I am afraid our Christmas Greetings have got a little bit overlooked in the excitement of the present upheaval.

It is a great relief for us to feel that all the English speaking peoples are now in it and that we did not have to ask them to fight for us. The result of this war is a foregone conclusion, and I hope when we come to victory we shall not be soft and let them off like we did last time, because we do not want our children or grandchildren to be upset by the Hun during their lives. How it is to be done heaven only knows.

Owing to my father's death and my son Remy being in the Tank Corps it seemed better to make this Firm into a Limited Company, but in actual practice it makes absolutely no difference and we carry on with the same policy and the same personnel.

We hope that Australia will not go through the troubles that we have got in Europe, and I can assure you that English people appreciate the tremendous amount of work and fighting that the Australians are doing. I was with them in France and they are the finest fighters I ever came across.

Wishing you and your Firm a "quiet" time in 1942,

I remain,  
Very truly yours,  
J. BARCHAM CREEN & SON

Invoice enclosed.

J. BARCHAM CREEN & SON