

Icon NEWS

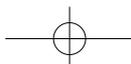
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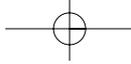


Conservation Awards 2005

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Icon's AGM: A new Board and Chair





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inside Icon NEWS

JANUARY 2006

Issue 2

'Fascinating, glamorous and sexy'. Well, that was how Neil MacGregor, Director of the British Museum, described the public perception of conservation these days, when he spoke at the Conservation Awards in November. And on the same occasion, the Chair of the judging panel, Liz Forgan, referred to 'a quality of heroism' about the award-winning project in the Lake District, (mark you, she did mention 'an element of insanity' too!). But look out in these pages for a rather less flattering view of us from the director of another major national museum. A further perspective on the profession is provided by the feature item, where David Odgers reflects on the difficulties of conveying what conservators do and the mindset needed to cope with lengthy and seemingly monotonous projects. And don't miss the conservator in combative mode, as Helen Hughes takes on the historians in her review of two conferences about Georgian interiors.

The description of Icon's Launch in our first issue referred to the tangible warmth and goodwill. These words could equally well summarise two major professional events which have taken place since then: the Awards and the AGM. It was a privilege to be there and experience at first hand people's pleasure in colleagues' achievements and their pride in the profession. And from the sound of Lizzie Bone's report, the Plenderleith lecture in Scotland shared this atmosphere, too. Let us hope it sets the tone for conservation, and Icon, in 2006.

Lynette Gill, Editor



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Cover picture:
Detail of work in progress
by Ron Mueck.
Photo: Susan Hughes,
taken 28 June 2005 at Ron
Mueck's studio. See
Conservation Awards
page 11

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Deadlines:
for March 2006 issue

Editorial:
Tuesday 1 February

Advertising:
Thursday 17 February

Icon's first AGM

After she first met the members of the Interim Board a year ago, Lynne Thomas, Icon's Project Manager, confided to her notebook: 'lovely people, seem exhausted, don't think they'll make it'. Well, as she would be the first to admit, sometimes it's great to be proved wrong. And 6 December – the date of Icon's first AGM – was that proof.

The event was held at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, one of those splendid Victorian municipal buildings redolent of confidence and civic pride and housing a treasure trove of art and artefacts. So it was a most fitting setting for the AGM, ushering in a new Chair and new Board of Trustees and providing opportunities to discuss developments, learn more about digital imaging, meet old friends and make new ones. There were also terrific exhibitions in the galleries to visit at spare moments and tours of the new conservation laboratory.

THE FORMAL PROCEEDINGS

In the absence of Carole Milner, Chair of the Interim Board, the formal AGM was introduced by Board member Clare Meredith, who took the meeting through the Chair's Report, starting with an overview of the work, key events and key personnel involved in getting through the transition to a single, new organisation. Members of the Interim Board and all staff were thanked for their enormous contribution

Clare went on to draw out some of the lessons learned by the Board during the past year. She noted particularly the impact of Icon's charitable status, which makes it so much more than just a professional body; it must also pursue its charitable aims and reach out to benefit the wider community. This also ties in with a principle dear to the Board – Icon's inclusivity. As the Report puts it 'everyone can find their place with us', from accredited members at the pinnacle of professional expertise to supporters who are interested in conservation.

Clare commented wryly that one immediate lesson learned

An attentive audience



All but two: the new Board of Trustees (except for Amanda Sutherland and Leslie Carlyle)
L. to r. Robert Gowing, Philip Young, Diane Gwilt, Simon Cane, Russel Turner, Emily O'Reilly, Rose Briskman, Anna Southall, Heather Perry, Valerie Kaufmann, Jim Tate, Helen Lloyd, Allyson McDermott, Chris Woods, Alison Richmond, Velson Horie

was the need for a larger room for next year's AGM. She, and subsequent speakers, apologised whole-heartedly to Icon members who hadn't been able to get to the AGM because of limited capacity. The level of interest in attending was encouraging but it had been underestimated and we were promised that they would get it right next year.

Clare also announced the results of the ballots for the representative for Wales – Heather Perry – and for the Chair of the Board of Trustees – Anna Southall. She concluded by asking all the members of the new Board to stand up and say something about themselves.

Chris Woods, the outgoing honorary Treasurer, took over to talk about Icon's finances predicted to the end of the year. This entertaining session clearly conveyed how very complex the task had been of bringing together five



organisations with five different sets of financial arrangements, not to mention the five different membership databases and subscription years. And the process isn't over yet. But the reassuring message is that Icon looks to be on a sound financial footing.

Alastair McCapra, Chief Executive, then delivered his report, concentrating on the Strategic Plan, which had been drawn up to help shape the direction and activities of Icon and its Board over the next three years. The plan, he emphasised, was a living document to be revisited and updated regularly by the Board. But in a world where, if we want our voice to be heard, we need to punch above our weight, the plan will help us to keep focussed on the main tasks and not be pulled in different directions.

You can read the Strategic Plan, along with the Chair's Report and financial projections as well as details of the new Trustees on the website

The final session was handed over to Anna Southall to introduce herself as the new Chair. We learned of her early years as a practising conservator and her pride in being the first conservator to become a national museum director. Anna has gone on to hold a broad range of appointments in the public and voluntary sectors. Icon obviously stands to gain a great deal from having a Chair with such multi-layered experience: of practical conservation, the museum world and the wider world of government and social and cultural heritage in which conservation plays its part.

You can read more about Anna on page 16.

Anna wound up the formal element of the day by paying tribute to the legacy bequeathed by the Interim Board, and looking forward to the work of the new Board, which she promised would be inclusive, accessible and transparent. The Board, she said, 'is honoured to be entrusted by you with developing Icon'.

Sessions

With the formal proceedings concluded, the meeting split into three groups for energetic and positive discussions about the formation of the two new groups – for Private Practice and Conservation Science – and the building of national and regional structures.

In the two final sessions, Suzanne Keene of University College London and Rory Mcleod of the British Library managed, against the odds, to make the subject of digital imaging funny, educational and comprehensible. Though that didn't stop the Luddites in the audience being pleased – and not so secretly at that – to learn that essential information about stored nuclear waste has been documented on papyrus to ensure its transmission down to future generations.

Overall conclusion? The energy level was high throughout the day. As was the sense of being in at the beginning of something new, moving conservation to a new level as a profession.

From start to finish, of both the day and the year, it might have been exhausting but we did make it!



Relaxing at the end of the day

hail & farewell

Icon Scotland Group / Scottish Society for Conservation and Restoration The 8th Annual Dr Harold Plenderleith Memorial Lecture 9th December 2005

Add to a base of conservation information a large slice of humour, a sprinkling of fact and a chunk of motivation. The resulting concoction was the winning recipe for the 8th Dr Harold Plenderleith Memorial Lecture, held on 9 December at St Columba's-by-the-Castle in Edinburgh.



General merriment

The lecture given by Dr Jim Tate, Head of Conservation and Analytical Research at the National Museums of Scotland, was entitled '26 Things About Conservation' and worked its way through the conservation alphabet. A sensible beginning saw the use of (a) air conditioning as the first of the 26 things, and involved a bombardment of facts, figures and costs surrounding the implementation of temperature and RH control in galleries and museums. By (z) zoological conservation, we were contrastingly shown images of Dolly the sheep and the somewhat unpleasant looking injection of a furry feline creature. All factors considered, diversity appeared to be the key to this bizarrely enjoyable voyage through the conservation terrain.

Despite alluding to significant conservation issues within all disciplines, such as relevant concerns ([d]dust), ethical considerations ([e]ethics), instrumental analysis ([x]x-rays) and up-and-coming ideas ([b]born digital), the tone of the lecture was undeniably light-hearted. Graphs were shown plotting the 'general misery trend' of the conservation profession, whilst other graphs alluded to the approach towards 'unloved and uncared for objects'. Cartoons, the comical cards of Edward Monkton and accounts of ridiculous experiments were similarly used for the purposes of entertainment, alongside a witty commentary and

impressive powerpoint presentation pyrotechnics.

In amongst it all, the serious message to us [u] as conservators to promote conservation interests to a greater extent in museums, galleries and among the general public was not lost. Nor indeed was the significance of 'I' for Icon, calling attention to this meeting being the last for SSCR as well as the launch of Icon in Scotland. Whilst striking a note of sadness for the end of SSCR, the bright hopes and expectations for the future of the Icon Scotland Group was expressed.

This message was re-iterated in Icon Chief Executive Alastair McCapra's speech later in the evening. The same motivational note was struck urging conservators to consider how they can contribute to upcoming events such as the 300th anniversary of the Union of Parliament. The speech further outlined the plans of the Institute regarding the opening up of internships and the working together of accredited conservators with those newly qualified for the continuation and growth of knowledge. A toast by Norman Tennent, Honorary Chair of SSCR, read by Lynn McClean, the SSCR Secretary, sealed the handing over of SSCR to Icon and completed a thoroughly enjoyable evening.

Thanks must go to Jim Tate and Alastair McCapra for their contributions, as well as to the SSCR and Icon Scotland Group Committees for the organisation of the event (especially the fantastic buffet). Tribute must also be paid to the band and their ingenious playing of a cello bow on a saw!

Lizzie Bone

MA Easel Painting Conservation Student,
Northumbria University

The band





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around & about

Icon website launch

If all goes to plan, Icon's new website will be launched by the end of January. The site will grow over subsequent months as more content is added, and particularly with the addition of material from all the Groups. There will be open and closed parts of the site, the closed parts being accessible only to members in eligible categories, who will need to log on using their membership number. There will also be forums for discussion, an open one to which everyone can contribute and group-based members-only forums.

Initially the site will be designed primarily for members' use, though a link to the Conservation Register and advice on *How to care for...* will be for public benefit. With help from the Royal Commission for the 1851 Exhibition this guidance is now being considerably expanded, as part of the Register development, and it is intended to further extend the usefulness of the site to the public.

Icon by name.....

When the Institute adopted the Icon identity, the domain name icon.org.uk was not available, hence the rather cumbersome instituteofconservation.org.uk. However, we have now obtained rights to it so that the website will be launched with the name www.icon.org.uk. At the same time icon.org.uk will become part of our new email addresses. The existing addresses will however continue to be usable for some long time.

We will alert everyone to the launch of the new website in Iconnect. Please let us know what you think of it and how it could be improved.

David Leigh

Modern materials

Readers may find www.plasticsnetwork.org of interest, especially the pages of the Plastics Historical Society. The website is the result of a 12 month project to promote an understanding of the study of plastics. It was supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and provides a central resource that focuses upon the design, history, manufacture and application of plastics in design and associated contexts.

Current Archaeology 200

Our congratulations to Current Archaeology for reaching its 200th edition. Founded by Andrew Selkirk in 1967, it has provided lively commentary on British archaeology,

covered over 1000 excavations and reviewed neatly 1500 books. Our only wish for its next 200 is that it might reflect more vigorously than it has in the past the conservation which underlies so many of the discoveries it reports.

Conservation on TV

Look out for *Tales from the Palaces* which started on January 2 on BBC2. First aired on BBC4 but now due to reach a bigger audience, this is a series of 10 half-hour programmes which follows the work of the curatorial, education and conservation teams at Historic Royal Palaces over 12 months. With five buildings in its care, including the huge tourist attractions of the Tower of London and Hampton Court Palace, HRP has to cope with literally millions of visitors. We understand that conservation is a constant thread throughout the series and features in most episodes. Episode 5, for example, looks at how the specialist skills of the original craftsmen are being kept alive and are mirrored in conservation work today. HRP have provided some informative material on their website to accompany the series – a good exercise in educating and reaching out to the public.



Getting rid of pests in Episode 8 of *Tales from the Palaces*

Steven Pond, neam.co.uk

A Collections Development Strategy for Scottish Museums

The re-emphasis on the importance of collections and collecting has recently been demonstrated through a number of reports and documents. The Museums Association's 'Collections For the Future', the Department of Culture, Media and Sport's (DCMS) Understanding the Future: Museums and 21st century life' and the National Museum Directors' Conference's 'Too Much Stuff' in 2003. However there hasn't been a document that has

attempted to present a clear strategy for implementation of these new visions in relation to collections development. Until now that is.

The Scottish Museums Council has long promoted the value of collections and their worth to communities. It is currently drafting a Collections Development Strategy that will take forward a number of issues raised in the MA and DCMS reports and prioritised by their members during consultation. SMC have already produced strategies in relation to Learning and Access (2005) and ICT (2004), and is currently working on another, on Workforce Development (due for publication 2006). The Collections Development Strategy will therefore work to complement these existing strategies.

The work will underpin the SMC's vision for the sector as a welcoming one which 'opens doors and celebrates collections, inspiring creativity, learning and enjoyment for all' and particularly its aim to support development of museums and galleries through its support for stewardship. The Strategy will aim to be wide ranging; considering both established challenges and current opportunities to develop and further utilise museum collections in Scotland.

A questionnaire was sent out to SMC member museums and other stakeholders to find out views on collections shaping, encouraging collaboration and co-operation, promoting access and engagement and raising stewardship standards. Two consultation days were then held. One in Glasgow jointly organised by the Scottish Museums Federation and then in Aberdeen. They provided further opportunity for stakeholders to contribute views and actions to take the strategy forward.

SMC have now gathered together responses that were very positive and supportive in relation to favouring change with collections development and public engagement. The next stage is for a draft strategy to be drawn together, which will then be available for further comment in February 2006. The process is also being overseen by an Advisory Panel, which is representative of a UK-wide range of sector interests and expertise.

The aim is to publish the strategy in Summer 2006 along with a 3-year action plan, which will be implemented shortly afterwards.

For further information contact:
Gill Findlay, Collections Development Officer
gillianf@scottishmuseums.org.uk

Emma Roodhouse, Care of Collections Group
Museum Curator for Falkirk Council Museums,
representing the Scottish Museums Federation on the CDS
advisory panel

Parchment and Prediction: moving conservation science forward

As mentioned in Icon News 1 (p. 52), The National Archives' Collection Care Department has announced an innovative partnership agreement with The National Archives for Scotland. The two bodies have come together to sponsor research into parchment, a material found extensively in both their collections. This is the first time the two archives have collaborated on a major conservation science project. It represents an important first step in taking forward the national conservation research agenda for library and archive collections in the UK and Ireland.

Cardiff University will be the third partner in this three-year project. Two graduate students based at Cardiff's Optometry and Vision Science Department will work under the supervision of internationally renowned expert Professor Tim Wess. Their study will seek to answer fundamental questions about parchment artefacts, with the aim of providing scientific evidence for reviewing current preservation and conservation practice.

The behaviour of parchment will be examined using x-ray diffraction/ scattering technology to improve understanding of the changing interactions with water that may cause damage to collagen. Tests will be carried out on parchments both historic and modern at various stages of degradation.

For further information contact
Nancy Bell
nancy.bell@nationalarchives.gov.uk

English Heritage Research Strategy A consultation exercise

English Heritage has published its first Research Strategy entitled: Discovering the Past, Shaping the Future. The Strategy establishes EH's first five year plan of action for the use of research to support its business and government priorities and the historic environment sector.

A three month public consultation period on the Strategy ends on January 31 2006. English Heritage is keen to hear people's views on the issues discussed in the document and responses should be sent via their website at www.english-heritage.org.uk/researchstrategy or in writing to Feedback c/o James Stevens, Conservation Department, English Heritage, 23 Savile Row, London W1s 2ET. Email to james.stevens@english-heritage.org.uk.

more around & about

Copies of the Research Strategy and the accompanying English Heritage Research Agenda are available from the English Heritage website at www.english-heritage.org.uk/researchstrategy as downloadable pdfs. Hard copies are available from:

English Heritage
Customer Services Department
Phone: 0870 333 1181
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New media: new MA

A new Master's degree begins this April at the State Academy of Art and Design in Stuttgart in the conservation of new media and digital information. The long-term preservation and restoration of analogue and digital photographs, video recordings and digital cultural and archival heritage is, rightly, a topic of interest to museums, archives, libraries and collections concerned to counteract the potential loss of the modern cultural heritage and the course is a response to the growing need for specialists in this area. Expecting an international student group, the two year course will be taught largely in English, although a basic knowledge of German will be needed. Fees, it is claimed, will be low because of a State grant for the course. More information from: www.abk-stuttgart.de
Email: info.knmdi@abk-stuttgart.de

V&A broadcasts first UK museum podcast

The V&A is now broadcasting the first podcast to be published by a museum or gallery in the UK. Podcasts allow computer or MP3 player users to download audio recordings to listen to at a time of their choosing and to subscribe to a series of audio events. In the first edition of the V&A's Podcast, entitled *Every Object Tells a Story*, users can listen to curators, conservators and researchers telling stories about works in the Paintings Galleries, while viewing images of the paintings on an iPod, mp3 player or computer.

Cherishing Churchyards

This is the title of a conference coming up in May (see Listings), run by Caring for God's Acre. The accompanying literature comments on the diversity of historic features such as the crosses, lychgates and memorials to be found in churchyards and refers to the lectures covering such interests as flora and fauna, archaeology, family history, tourism, lifelong learning and churchyard management. Site visits to conservation churchyards are also included in

the event. But as the featured speaker is David Bellamy, one has to suspect that the references to conservation are more of the eco variety than the cultural-heritage ones. Perhaps the recent decision of the Council for the Care of Churches – see Professional Matters – will raise our profile.

Lottery grant for the Stanley Spencer Gallery

The unique Stanley Spencer Gallery in Cookham has won nearly £900,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund to improve the Gallery. Founded in 1962 as a memorial to the artist, the Gallery is the former Methodist chapel which he attended as a child. This setting is particularly appropriate for an artist known for his religious scenes, many of them depicting the village itself. The work funded by the grant includes increasing the exhibition space, improved provision for the disabled and computerised access to the collection and records of the artist's work. Storage and environmental control equipment will be upgraded to improve the conservation of the collection for the future.

Sir Stanley Spencer R.A.



Chocks Away!

Culture Minister, David Lammy, has listed a whole series of historic airfields associated with the First World War, the Battle of Britain and the Dambusters. Although the aeroplanes have largely disappeared, the aerodromes remain with their hangars, officers' messes, barracks and quarters, bunkers and other defences. 19 of the 31 sites with newly listed buildings are owned by the Ministry of Defence. Amongst the sites are those familiar to fans of old war movies – Biggin Hill, Catterick, Duxford, Larkhill – and many more lesser known names with, nevertheless, important associations for the history of military aviation.

One building is given a Grade 1 listing – the underground bunker at Uxbridge containing the Group Operations Room where the vital 11 Fighter Group was commanded during the Battle of Britain.

Lost, found.....lost?

Reports from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport and the Portable Antiquities Scheme published in November show that 67,000 archaeological items and 427 pieces of treasure were found by members of the public over the past year. This represents a big increase in the number of finds over previous years and may be seen as a great success for the PAS.

Studio Rental Opportunities in Birmingham

The conservation studios at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery have recently undergone a programme of refurbishment under the Renaissance in the Regions programme. The renovated studios provide beautiful, clean, light and professional working environments for a range of disciplines. As part of its commitment to improving availability of conservation services in the region, the Museum is offering space in the studios for rent by conservators from the private sector. The studios have all the basic conservation equipment such as local exhaust ventilation, lining table, low power suction table, microscopes etc. Spaces are available for paper, paintings and objects (organic and inorganic) and are situated in the main Museum complex in the heart of Birmingham. If you are interested in this exciting opportunity please contact Simon Cane Head of Collection Care for an informal chat on 0121 303 4509 or email simon_cane@birmingham.gov.uk

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professional matters

COUNCIL FOR THE CARE OF CHURCHES TO USE CONSERVATION REGISTER

Our big news this issue is that the Council for the Care of Churches (CCC) has agreed to advise parishes to use the Conservation Register to find conservators and to discontinue the use of their own list.

Paula Griffiths, Secretary of the Council for the Care of Churches, said: 'Engaging the right expertise is vital when working with the historic and sensitive objects in our churches. Parishes need reliable, up to date and easily accessible details of conservators with appropriate experience and skills. Use of the Register will be easy for parishes and give them a good base on which they can assess which conservator is right for them. The Council is happy to support it.'

This is great news for all those included in the Conservation Register. It is not only of benefit to those working on the buildings themselves but will also be of significant importance to those working on the contents of churches such as banners, church furniture and wall paintings. The Council's endorsement of the Register is only possible because of the Register's explicit support for accreditation and the fact that nearly all the businesses included in the Conservation Register now have an accredited conservator as their principal member. In fact, by the end of January 2006 every business included in the Register will be led by an accredited conservator.

This is an important milestone in the history of the Conservation Register. Getting to this point has taken too long for some, and arrived too soon for others but I think we can now be really proud of the Conservation Register and the fact that it provides access to the best possible standards of conservation advice for everyone. As someone who answers questions about conservation on a daily basis, I cannot emphasise strongly enough the reassurance that accreditation provides to people who are working with a conservator for the first time. It is a real confirmation of an individual's skills. Many conservators have also found the process of becoming accredited valuable as it builds confidence and provides the opportunity to reflect on just how much they have to offer in terms of technique, experience and judgement.

Accreditation also makes the Register much easier to promote. Directories and listings are all very well, but accreditation gives the Conservation Register the credibility that encourages organisations like the Council for the Care of Churches to use it. I hope that other organisations will follow the CCC's lead, and we will be working hard to encourage them to do so. You can help too, by spreading the word (I have free leaflets available for distribution) and letting me know where you would like

to see the Register promoted in the future.

Caroline Saye, Conservation Register, c/o Institute of Conservation
020 7785 3804 info@conservationregister.com

PRESENTING THE CONSERVATION AWARDS 2005

More than 250 guests were in the audience at the British Museum's Clore Centre for the presentation of the 2005 Conservation Awards on 22 November. There was an especially celebratory flavour this year, as this was the tenth anniversary round of the Awards and it was marked by a series of reflections on developments in the areas covered by the five Awards from the distinguished speakers. Former prize-winners and runners-up had been invited back, and a group photograph was taken to commemorate the event.

In his **keynote speech** Neil MacGregor, Director of the BM, saw the role of the conservator becoming increasingly influential within museums. 'More and more, the way we think about using and displaying our collections is going to be shaped and indeed decided by conservators...we have to think about what putting objects into light, into outdoor spaces, does to the objects – what we can do and what we can't.' Factors shaping the future contribution of conservators would include the need for museums to share their collections nationally and internationally and the effects of climate change. Setting out a vision of conservators, curators and scientists working together, he concluded that 'the role of the conservator will be central to museums achieving the purpose for which they were set up'.

Mr MacGregor also presented the **Award for Conservation**, worth £15,000, to Tim Martin of Context Engineering Ltd. for his work to conserve the mine machinery at Force Crag. Liz Forgan, who chaired the Awards judging panel, said that the judges visiting the site on a wild and windy Lake District day had seen for themselves something of the extreme conditions the team had worked under and the vast scale of the undertaking.

Former winners, 2005 winners and others associated with the Awards over the years





10 years of the Conservation Awards

She added, 'This was all the more striking in being coupled with an almost delicate approach to the jumbled heaps of machine parts, which had been meticulously conserved and fitted together in a feat of inspired detective work'.

The new £10,000 **Award for Care of Collections** was won by Museum of London for their project to open up access to the London Archaeological Archive (LAARC) in Hackney. Liz Forgan commented 'A logistical problem faced by many museums had been tackled with vim and vigour, resulting in a huge step-change. We were impressed by their happy band of volunteers and by the effort the museum is putting into engaging young people and the local community in their fascinating collections'. Mark Wood, Chairman of MLA, presented a new trophy, specially made by Steve Conway in oak and limestone, to Jannicke Langfeldt and Eleanor Lanyon of LAARC.

Katey-Mary Twitchett won the **Student Conservator of the Year Award 2005** for her study of the effects of ageing on the materials used in the hyper-realist works of Ron Mueck. Simon Thurley, Chief Executive of English Heritage, presented a trophy and cheques for £5000 to Katey-Mary and to Anne Bacon of Northumbria University, where Katey-Mary gained her MA.

The second **Digital Preservation Award**, worth £5000, was won by PREMIS (Preservation Metadata: Implementation Strategies Working Group). The PREMIS

project carried out ground-breaking work on metadata for the preservation of digital material. Rebecca Guenther of the Library of Congress and Brian Lavoie of OCLC (Online Computer Library Centre) received the Award on behalf of the PREMIS team. Presenting the Award, Loyd Grossman said, 'Digital preservation represents the fact that the whole conservation field is about looking forward, about the future'.

The **Anna Plowden Trust Award for Research and Innovation in Conservation**, worth £2000, was presented to Mark Bambrough for his innovative approach to protection for stained glass which also safeguards the aesthetic appearance of the windows. The presenter of the Award, Trustee Francis Plowden, commented that although all three candidates on this year's shortlist were excellent, this project was considered to have the greatest potential to make an impact on practical conservation techniques. He added, 'It's vital that we continue to value and support research; it not only enhances the discipline of conservation, it enhances the understanding and appreciation of our collective cultural heritage'.

Susan Hughes

For more information and photographs of the event see the Conservation Awards Despatch enclosed with Icon News or visit the website: <http://www.consawards.instituteofconservation.org.uk>

more professional matters

MORE ON AWARDS

Conservation Awards 2007

Although the applause has hardly died down yet for the 2005 Awards event, if you are thinking of applying for the 2007 Conservation Awards, could you please e-mail admin@consawards.instituteofconservation.org.uk as soon as possible. To be eligible, projects will need to reach completion between February 2005 and September 2006 (deadlines to be confirmed later). There is a chance that your project might be filmed while it is in progress! Early notification is to help with the planning process and does not commit you to applying.

THE ANNA PLOWDEN TRUST

CPD Awards for 2006

If you're put off from going on short courses and conferences by the cost, then an application to The Anna Plowden Trust may be the answer, as it will consider funding up to half of the cost of attending a short specialist course or major conference in 2006.

To qualify for help, you need to have more than five years' experience since you completed your conservation training.

Applications are considered three times a year and for 2006 the closing dates are March 15, June 15 and September 15.

Contact Penelope Plowden for more information by email on penelopecplowden@btinternet.com or write to her (enclosing s.a.e.) at 43 Lansdowne Gardens, London SW8 2EL. Application forms can also be obtained from the Trust's website: annaplowdentrust.org.uk

MORE BURSARIES

Help with training is also available with bursaries from the York Foundation for Conservation and Craftsmanship. Two conservators benefited from these awards in 2005: Rachel Sabino-Gunaratna, a ceramics and glass conservator, and book and paper conservator Jenny Pearson. A new bursary of up to £2000 is also being offered this year to facilitate the taking on of new trainees or apprentices.

The deadline for application is 1 April 2006 and forms can be obtained from the Secretary of the Foundation by email on conservationyork@hotmail.com, from the website www.conservationyork.org.uk or by post from The Merchant Adventurers' Hall, Fossgate, York, YO1 9XD

THE HORNEMANN INSTITUTE

Information has come in about a new scientific centre in the field of preservation of cultural heritage.

BPG Chair *Helen Lindsay* provides a summary of its aims and functions

A new organisation in the field of preservation, The Hornemann Institute, has been established in the city of Hildesheim, Western Germany. Two local universities have joined forces to form the Institute which is named after the first German explorer of Africa, Friedrich Konrad Hornemann, who was born in Hildesheim in 1772. Hildesheim is the home of a UNESCO listed World Cultural Heritage centre at the 11th century church of St Michael's and the project is supported by the German Commission for UNESCO.

The Institute aims to provide an international centre for the transfer of specialist conservation information. It will provide services via the internet and by acting as a repository for conservation documentation databases, academic theses and internet-based training modules. Additionally, the Hornemann Institute is disseminating information to the general public via exhibitions, videos, books and CD-Roms and one of its primary aims is to spread knowledge on the importance of cultural heritage, the threats to which it is exposed, possible solutions and preventive measures.

Academic theses on the internet

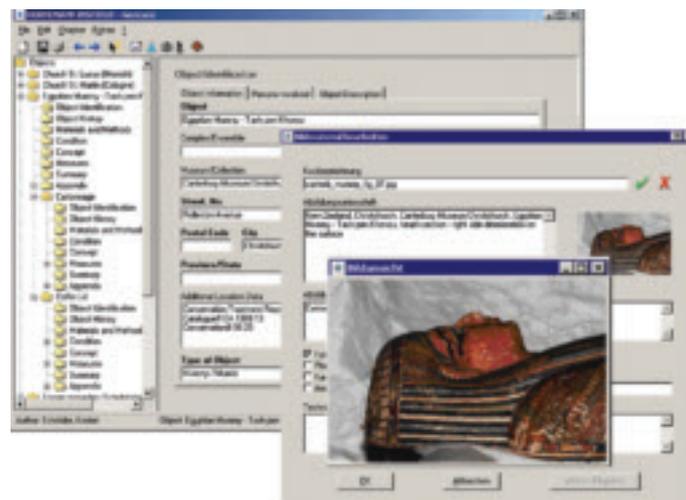
The Institute is making abstracts of new theses from universities in the field of conservation-restoration available for viewing at no charge on its website. The majority of abstracts are illustrated and accessible both in German and English, and some are available for complete download. A simple search function facilitates the retrieval of information. Contact addresses, provided by the authors, enable further information exchange. Currently, more than 640 conservators-restorers benefit from this option and nearly all specialities in conservation-restoration are represented.



The picture logo of the Hornemann Institute. Below: 4C B.C. bust of an Egyptian king, bronze with remnants of gilding; above: view into the cavity of the head before conservation



Pages of the Institute's website 'Academic Theses'



The Institute's website 'Hericare documentation software' and 'hericare online database'

Conservation Records on the Internet: hericare

A second online database of the Hornemann Institute contains conservation records from various scientific institutions and authors. The objective of the database called hericare is to support the international exchange of information between experts.

With the help of the documentation program hericare-docu, conservators-restorers can create documentation records of their current preservation projects in a fast, easy and inexpensive way. The structure of the documentation program stays on a general level, so as to guarantee that all areas of specialization can be covered. Each record will be subdivided into the chapters Object Identification, Object History, Materials and Methods, Condition, Treatment Plan and Measures. Users can attach existing files to particular input fields, or copy text blocks from existing text files and paste them into the input fields. Drop-down menus and internal databases for literature, pictures, investigations, addresses and products assist them in their documentation work.

With the help of the program's conversion tool, the record files can be converted into a common file format and users can easily edit a report in their own text processing program, adapting it, for example, to their corporate design, or to special requirements of their clients. By imparting the files to the Hornemann Institute, documentation records which have been created by means of hericare-docu can be published in the online hericare-database. Currently, the documentation software is available in English and in German.

A forum has been created so that the users of the hericare-database can exchange information, ideas and comments on individual documentation records. The development of hericare at the Hornemann Institute was supported by experts working in the fields of conservation of monuments and sites, database development, software ergonomics and library systems.

Internet-based training modules

There is a growing need for continued training throughout the career of a conservator and the Hornemann Institute

aims to open up new perspectives for education with its internet-based training modules. The modules have been conceived for those active in the field of cultural heritage preservation.

The subject matter of the modules has been put into multi-media form, i.e. text is enlivened by images, videos, animated graphics, checklists, etc., you can check your personal progress with the help of tests and tutors are available to assist students with technical or content-related difficulties. Although the Institute's E-learning courses are presently only available in German a translation of parts into English is planned in 2005. Current courses available are:

- Mikrobieller Befall von Kunst- und Kulturgut (Microbic Infestation of Objects of Art and Cultural Heritage) by Barbara Hentschel & Prof. Dr. Karin Petersen,
- Schädigung von Kulturgut durch Salze (Damage to Cultural Heritage from Salt) by Dr. Hans-Jürgen Schwarz

Information for the general public

The Hornemann Institute has held several exhibitions dedicated to informing the public about the meaning of cultural heritage, about the perils to which it is exposed and about the resulting need to preserve it. An exhibition for EXPO 2000 showed exemplary solutions and new perspectives on future international cooperation prospects, centring around conservation of cultural heritage in the Mediterranean.

At a second EXPO Exhibition the Hornemann Institute presented an exhibition about the conservation-restoration of the cloister of St Michael's, the UNESCO-enlisted World Cultural Heritage Church. The cloister, which dates back to the early 11th century, was facing serious danger to its historical fabric, from its exposure to the climate. Visitors saw a variety of modern technologies used for the purpose of preserving our cultural past and a CD-ROM, illustrated catalogue and film were issued for the exhibition.

For further information go to: www.hornemann-institut.org

letters

CLEAR POLYSTYRENE BOXES

In Icon News 1, the article on the storage of archaeological textiles (In Practice p.60) commented that large, clear shallow polystyrene boxes were unavailable.

I have sourced a supplier who sells a good range of sizes including some large A4 sized ones in a range of heights from 4cm upwards. These are potentially useful for the storage of archaeological textiles etc.

It is the English outlet for the boxes described in the article by Elizabeth E Peacock and Elizabeth Griffin, "Rehousing a collection of archaeological textiles", *The Conservator*, Number 22, pp. 68–80.

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Department of Conservation, Documentation and Science
The British Museum

TAINED OBJECTS

Pierre Valentin's article in Icon News 1 is obviously most useful but some further comment could be made on Tainted Goods. To be prosecuted it has to be shown that a person has dishonestly dealt with a cultural object that is tainted and that the person knew or believed that the object is tainted. The latter comes about if it is illegally removed, causing a criminal offence.

What has to be remembered is that an object becomes 'tainted' only if a building has been listed or a monument has been scheduled or protected or is of archaeological importance.

However regrettable, taking a fireplace out of an unlisted Victorian semi by the owner is not an offence. Neither is excavating and finding artefacts in its garden. A landowner can safely excavate on his/her land, or give permission, provided it does not have an 'official' archaeological status. Legally, he or she, like any other finder, only has to report finds which come under the Treasure Act 1996 and the subsequent Treasure (Designation) Order of 2002. The Act altered the 700 year old Treasure Trove legislation to make it a duty for anyone to report finds that contained at least 10% gold or silver and were at least 300 years old, all coins that contained less than 10% of gold/silver must be part of

a group of at least ten. Any object of whatever composition found with treasure must also be declared.

The 2002 Order extends the Act to reporting the find of any object (other than a coin) any part of which is base metal, which, when found is one of at least two base metal objects in the same find which are of prehistoric date AND any object (other than a coin) which is of prehistoric date, and any part of which is gold and silver. Prehistoric is understood to be of Iron Age date or earlier.

Acts, which may affect whether an object can be tainted, are the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act of 1978, the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973, the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986, the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 and the Merchant Shipping Act 1995.

What I find puzzling is that there is no mechanism in the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act of 2003 for an artefact to be 'de-tainted' so that it stands in this category for evermore. The DCMS suggests in its advisory booklet that subsequent dealing in a tainted object returned to a legitimate owner is unlikely to be dishonest, but surely in the future there will be quantities of fine artefacts that will never be able to be protected by museums?

With all this legislation coming out at a time when there are moves to improve liaison with metal detectorists and conservators, some will say that it is not worth their time or reputation to find out whether they are acting 'dishonestly'. Artefacts may suffer unless the conservation profession provides guidance. It is a pity that a little more thought was not built into this recent Act and UKIC involved in advising MPs. Hopefully, future Acts will be looked at critically by Icon where they may affect conservation matters and some clear guidance information, aimed at conservators, could be issued by Icon for its members regarding the questions of dealing in a conservation working environment involving possibly 'tainted goods'.

Two free booklets issued by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport are worth reading – Dealing in Tainted Cultural Objects (PP639) and the 1970 UNESCO Convention (PP638). Also, an excellent 160 page summary (Code of Practice PP513) of the Treasure Act 1996 was issued by DCMS and contains nine pages of conservation advice.

John Price
Archaeology Group

The latest guidance in this area (PP846) was published by DCMS in October: *Combating Illicit Trade. Due diligence guidelines for museums, libraries and archives.*

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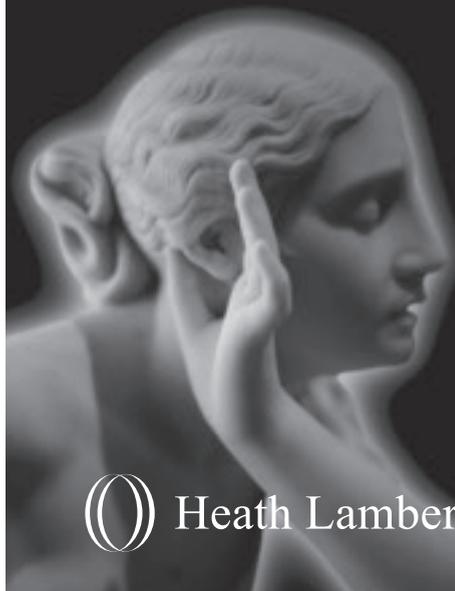
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institute briefing

THE NEW CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES ANNA SOUTHALL

It is a huge honour to have been elected as the first chair of Icon. I am excited both by the task and by the prospect of working closely with a community of people for which I have very great respect and, more personally, considerable affection. Given my age, some readers (not too many I hope!) will be wondering who I am and how I come to be in any way qualified for the position. May I introduce myself?

I was brought up on a farm on the Welsh borders. My home now, which I share with my two young adult sons, is in Bristol but I have previously lived in 8 of the 9 English regions and in Wales. I cannot claim to have started out with a life plan but when a border at a Quaker school I realised that I wanted a career that fitted with my values and involved people. Wealth did not interest me but I was determined to achieve a balance between the rewards of motherhood and of sustained financial independence. I have been moderately successful in both – although I admit that the ‘balancing’ bit has sometimes eluded me.

It was at the University of East Anglia, new and radical in the swinging 60s, that a couple of inspirational tutors first engaged my enthusiasm for cultural artefacts as both objects of intrinsic beauty and sources of knowledge. My first jobs were in architectural conservation. I rose from filing clerk to researcher and discovered that a career as a conservator would allow me to use my artistic skills whilst developing my interests in history and science. Never one to rush into things I went off to think about this while teaching in an east London comprehensive school for a couple of years.

My 24 years as a ‘practitioner’ began with two years’ training as a paintings conservator at Gateshead (now the University of Northumbria MA course). They were fulfilling and, looking back, remarkably carefree years. I served a valuable and happy apprenticeship with Pauline Plummer, a distinguished conservator working on in situ polychromy. In 1976 I joined the Kenwood studio of what was then the Area Museum Service for South East England; 6 years later I moved to Tate. I enjoyed both the range and sheer quality of the artefacts that I was privileged to care for and the stimulation of working with many wise and generous colleagues. At Tate I was encouraged to develop. My initial responsibility for training led to management and strategic leadership, transitions that were helped by my long experience as a member of the trustee board of a charitable foundation and by the political nous that I gained as a trade union rep.

In 1996 I moved to Wales, first as Assistant Director and



Anna Southall

then Director of the National Museums & Galleries of Wales. I am proud to have been only the third woman national museum director, but even more proud to have been the first conservator!

In the course of seven years, we introduced free admission at an early stage, more than doubled our visitor numbers, and won a 70% increase in our revenue funding. Other achievements included devising and delivering NMGW’s Industrial Strategy, including the acquisition and development of Big Pit, the Collections Centre at Nantgarw and the development and fundraising stages of the National Waterfront Museum in Swansea.

In 2002 I became the Chief Executive of Resource (now MLA) delivering the first phase of ‘Renaissance in the Regions’ but, for family reasons, resigned a year later. I now hold a portfolio of public and voluntary sector appointments that include:

- Chairwoman of the Barrow Cadbury Trust, a philanthropic foundation working in the field of social justice
- Executive Committee member of the Association of Charitable Foundations, which supports grant-making trusts of all types across the UK
- Membership of the Spoliation Advisory Panel, established by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport to advise on how to resolve claims, made by descendants of those who lost cultural artefacts under the Nazis, for restitution or compensation by the public collections now holding these items
- Member of the Futurebuilders Advisory Panel, established by the Home Office to advise on a £215

million scheme to invest in the voluntary and community sector

- Member of the interim board of the Big Lottery Fund, which is overseeing convergence of the Community and the New Opportunities Funds and distributes £650 million every year.

Some readers will remember the start-up days of the Heritage Group and the Trainers Forum, and my conviction then that conservators were more strongly united by values and principles than divided by their specialisms; that our diversity of expertise, so often the source of creativity in problem solving, is a strength to be valued and celebrated; and that conservation can only be effectively advanced by working together. Over 30 years of working in the cultural sector I have seen huge advances in the quality of training, professionalism and status of conservators, but there is still much to be done. Through public education and advocacy Icon must continue to raise political, professional and public awareness of the importance of caring for our cultural heritage, and through the provision of services that respond effectively and efficiently to the needs of the conservation community Icon must set, promote and support the attainment of high professional standards in all aspects of our work.

The formation of Icon is a formidable achievement. I joined the interim board (as its Vice Chair) in 2005 and can testify to the considerable care, thought and effort that the board and staff, ably led by Carole Milner and Alastair McCapra, have devoted to the formation of the new body. It is a legacy that is as generous as it is inspiring, and I look forward to working with you all, through the Board of Trustees and its committees, to build on it.

THE VIEW FROM LONDON BRIDGE

The Icon Interim Board recently adopted a strategic plan with four key dimensions – advancing professional standards and ethics; developing member services; undertaking advocacy for conservation with government and key agencies; and public understanding and access. We are bound by our charitable status to ensuring that our activities lead to public benefit, so helping the public learn about conservation and appreciate it is a vital part of what we do. 2006 opens with a number of opportunities in prospect for us to help the public understand us better.

Our new website, aside from the password-protected members' area, will be a public access site and will carry as much public-friendly content as possible. New guidelines on the care of objects have recently been commissioned by the Conservation Register, and these will be available when the new site goes live.

Beyond this, there are increasing signs that television is taking an interest in conservation at last. Work is in hand to

try and secure the televising of the 2007 Conservation Awards ceremony, but several other opportunities to showcase conservation are coming up in 2006 and we will be taking the best possible advantage of these over the coming months.

A further opportunity presents itself with the piloting of a new History and Heritage GCSE, designed to combine academic and vocational elements and prepare young people for careers in galleries, archives and museums. I am in contact with the awarding body piloting the new qualification and I believe we have much to offer, giving young people the chance to do work placements, shadowing or case studies on conservation as part of their coursework.

We live in an age where everything has to be interactive and where everyone has to feel involved. This opens up new potential for public engagement precisely because conservation is hands-on and practical; because it involves making interesting and challenging choices; and because of its power to reveal hidden aspects of objects and documents which were previously unknown. Museums are probably better placed than any other places to lead this change, and there is a challenge here for conservators working in museums to take this forward.

At the 2005 Conservation Awards the Museum of London came away with the new Award for the Care of Collections which involved volunteers on an epic scale. Volunteers are working in conservation on many projects up and down the country, but there is plenty of scope to develop this further. A number of museums, notably the National Museums Liverpool, have put their conservation work right in the public eye, and shown that visitors can quickly become fascinated by something they had very little awareness of before. Museums and Galleries Month 2006 gives conservators an excellent opportunity to think about how they can showcase their work, involve people, and help build solid foundations of public support for what they do. If conservators in museums can take effective advantage of these opportunities the benefit will be felt by the conservation community as a whole. The public are potentially very powerful allies for conservation, and I hope all of us will find new and interesting ways of cultivating their support in 2006.

Alastair McCapra
Chief Executive

Sad to say, in the Charity Champion Awards 2005 (see Icon News 1 p.23) our nominee, John Whittingdale M.P., was pipped at the post by Alun Michael M.P. as winner of the culture and heritage category.

more institute briefing

ICON COMMENTS - ON THE HAGUE CONVENTION

The DCMS has been consulting on the UK Government's proposed ratification of the Hague Convention in the Event of Armed Conflict and its two Protocols of 1954 and 1999. It asked for responses to a number of questions about the identification of cultural heritage which should be afforded greatest protection and respect by invading forces, and about details of its implementation. The Institute responded, in general accepting the current systems of designation of national or international significance, such as Listing, MLA Designation of collections and status as World Heritage Sites. Our detailed response, prepared by Caroline Saye, is on the website.

As DCMS says "Our ratification of the Convention and accession to its Protocols will send out an important message regarding the UK's commitment to the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict and will complete the UK's ratification of the major international humanitarian law treaties."

It is perhaps worth remarking how surprising it is that governments worldwide appear on paper at least to be placing the importance of cultural heritage above the exigencies of battle, as if heritage has some kind of universal, self-evident value to civilisation. It would be good to see this kind of thinking infuse the priorities of our national government too, perhaps acting to balance or enrich the current priorities for access, engagement, etc.

David Leigh

- TO THE HOUSE OF LORDS ON CONSERVATION SCIENCE

The Institute recently submitted comments to the House of Lords in anticipation of its inquiry into the role of science, engineering and technology in the conservation of the UK's cultural heritage.

Among the main points made were that:

- Conservation science underpins the conservation of cultural heritage;
- The UK's world-leading position in conservation science is being steadily eroded;
- Conservation teaching in universities is at risk;
- Science support for conservators outside the national institutions is deficient;
- The importance of conservation science in UK establishments should be recognised by government.

It was also recommended that:

- Collaboration in conservation science between heritage institutions and universities needs to be fostered by the creation of a post of Coordinator for Conservation Science Research Funding.
- Conservation and conservation science should be better recognised within the Research Assessment framework.
- Funding should be allocated to realise the considerable potential for Science, Engineering and Technology to enhance understanding of conservation and appreciation of the heritage

The Institute's full response will be placed on the website.

David Leigh

ASK A LIBRARIAN.....AND NOT JUST ABOUT PAPER AND BOOKS

The Chantry Library, located in Oxford, was established some 20 years ago by the Institute of Paper Conservation. In the early days, the library came under the care of paper conservator and librarian, Judith Chantry, who housed the growing collection and welcomed readers in the tiny paper conservation studio at the Ashmolean Museum until her death in 1999. In 2001, with a generous bequest from the Chantry family, the library moved to new accommodation, shared with Oxford Conservation Consortium. Chantry's librarian, Catherine Scutt, is working hard to publicize the library and make its extensive collection available to all members of Icon.

Under Cathy's care, the library has amassed an extensive and up-to-date collection of conservation literature, with over 1,000 books and hundreds of periodicals. Conservation literature is growing at a great rate and the Chantry library has made strenuous efforts to obtain and make available literature in all conservation disciplines in addition to books and paper. Holdings include sources on collections care, pest management, exhibitions, environmental conditions, history and theory of conservation, plus works on specific materials and techniques, such as textiles, picture frames, pigments and dyes. New acquisitions include:



The Chantry Library

- Touring exhibitions: the Touring Exhibitions Group's manual of good practice
- Fungal fact: solving fungal problems in heritage collections
- Timber: the EC Woodcare Project: studies of the behaviour interrelationships and management of deathwatch beetles in historic buildings
- Contemporary theory of conservation
- Between two earthquake: cultural property in seismic zones
- Ageing and stabilisation of paper
- The art of all colours: mediaeval recipe books for painters and illuminators



Inside the Chantry Library

The Chantry Library is a dynamic and welcoming resource centre. Stock is constantly being updated, with current issues coming in to the extensive collection of 150 major conservation periodicals, new conference preprints, many foreign language publications, and conservation research documents. A great deal of effort has been made to make the collection available on line, through the Oxford University Library System (OLIS, see <http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/oxlip/index.html>). Comprehensive information about the collections, policies and services offered by the Chantry Library is available on the website (<http://www.lib.ox.ac.uk/ipc-chantry/>). Both Icon members and outside readers are welcome by appointment. Photocopies of articles may be obtained for a small charge.

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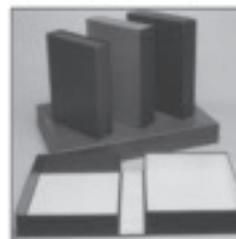
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The Book & Paper Group **First International Conference**
Edinburgh • 26–29 July 2006

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This is the IPC's 5th International Conference and the first under the banner of the Book and Paper Group of Icon. It marks and celebrates 30 years of conservation achievement as we look forward to the challenges of the 21st century.

The conference programme focuses on preservation, current practice and procedures. A selection of noteworthy research papers from key institutions and individuals worldwide are represented, addressing challenging issues on not only a practical level but also the aesthetic and ethical and the future of conservation is addressed by papers looking at new processes and the challenges related to our digital age.

Edinburgh International Conference Centre offers state of the art facilities for all delegates, a visually inspiring auditorium with the opportunity of using the break out facilities for further discussion,

Poster presentations will be on exhibition for the duration of the conference covering research and studies in many aspects of conservation and preservation.

A trade exhibition will be held over the course of the conference at which leading conservation related suppliers' will be demonstrating and discussing their range of products.

There are pre-conference visits available on Wednesday 26 July (although these are fast becoming fully booked) that will give delegates the opportunity to see the conservation facilities at a number of Scotland's leading museums, libraries and archives. These tours are highly recommended but space is limited, therefore early booking is essential.

- National Library of Scotland: Preservation and Conservation Division
- The National Museums of Scotland Department of Conservation and Analytical Research: Paper and Textiles Conservation lab based at the Museum of Scotland

- The Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art: Dean Gallery and Keiller Library (morning session already fully booked, a few spaces remain for the afternoon slot)
- National Archives of Scotland: Conservation Unit
- Hopetoun House: The Scottish Conservation Studio
- The Glasgow Museums Resource Centre and
- The Burrell Collection

A welcome drinks reception will be hosted by The National Gallery of Scotland following registration.

Our evening event is a two course buffet dinner, to be held at the National Museums of Scotland and is devoted to the memory of Clare Hampson, who has bequeathed us a wonderful legacy in the Clare Hampson Scholarship Fund for the future of paper conservation education and training.

Remember early booking is essential to ensure your place and to take advantage of the Members Early Registration fee of £390, return your completed registration form to the conference address below before 31 January.

Contact Details

Booking forms and full details on the conference, venue and recommended hotels can be found on the following websites:

IPC www.ipc.org.uk – then click on heading "noticeboard"

Icon www.instituteofconservation.org.uk – then click link "IPC 5th International Conference: 2006"

All further enquiries:

The Institute of Paper Conservation
Conference secretariat
PO Box 143
Tunbridge Wells
Kent TN2 9AT
UK

Tel: +44 (0) 1435 883659

Email: ipc@instituteofconservation.org.uk

people

ON THE MOVE

Nicola Dunn has been appointed Objects Conservator at Scott Base in Antarctica from January to September 2006, after which she will return to her current post as Applied Arts Conservator at the Museum of London.



Nicola Dunn

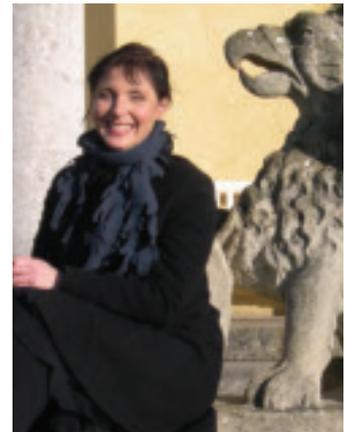
Nicola trained in Metals Conservation at West Dean College and completed an MGC Internship in Preventive Conservation with Northern Ireland Museums Council in Belfast. She then worked as a conservator at the National Museum of Science and Industry, London and has been at the Museum of London since 2001.

Three conservators have been contracted to work on objects such as sleds, scientific equipment and cans of food from Shackleton's hut at Cape Royds which is under the care of the Antarctic Heritage Trust of New Zealand. Previously work has been carried out only during the summer so this is the first time that conservators will be on site during the challenging winter period when temperatures drop to minus 40°C and there is continuous darkness for three months.

We look forward to hearing more about this challenging assignment when Nicola returns and wish her the very best of luck with it

Ylva Dahnsjö has just joined the National Trust as Territory Conservator South, based at Polesden Lacey with the South East Region's team. Ylva was previously Chief Conservator of the Book & Paper Conservation Studio at the University of Dundee, which she joined in 1992. In this role she managed the delivery of preventive and remedial conservation services for paper-based materials, both at the studio and in situ at historic buildings in Scotland. At the National Trust, she will lead a team of 5 Regional Conservators covering nine counties. Ylva has been very

active in developing the conservation profession, and in championing its wider contribution to the heritage field. From 1993 she was a committee member, and from 1999 until 2002 Chair, of the Scottish Society for Conservation and Restoration (SSCR), and from 1996 until 2005 served on the European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers' Organisations committee (ECCO), culminating in two consecutive terms as President from 2003. She has also contributed to the construction of the PACR scheme, for which she is an assessor in paper conservation.



Ylva Dahnsjö

Veronika Vlkova and **Claire Daly**, have been appointed to the positions of inorganic and decorative surfaces conservators at Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery (BM&AG). Veronika moves from the Ashmolean Museum and will take up her post in February. Claire moves from the HLF frames project at BM&AG and has been in post since May. Louise Vaile (nee Cant) has returned as Collections Care Officer after maternity leave and will be job sharing with Deborah Cane ACR who will split her time between Collections Care Officer (3 days) and Objects Conservator (2 days).

Sally-Ann Yates earns congratulations on two counts. First, she has been appointed Head of Collections Management at National Museums Liverpool. Secondly, nominated by Icon, she was selected against strong competition for a place on a pilot leadership development programme at Warwick University. The course is intended for leadership training specifically in the field of museums and archives. It takes place in three stages finishing this month and we hope to hear more about it in the next issue.

RETIRING

Pauline Webber started working at the Victoria & Albert Museum's Conservation Department in the mid 1970s, arriving shortly before they invested in their first electronic typewriter!

Having gained her degree and MA, she worked for Halas & Batchelor in the world of film animation and advertisements. This short introduction to the film world made her well suited, she felt, to join the 'behind the scenes world' of the V&A's Conservation Department – where she worked for 30 years.

more people



Pauline Webber casts a sheet of gampi paper in Japan

Pauline came into the Museum as a trainee conservator and undertook courses and training both within the Museum and outside, often travelling as far afield as Taiwan, China, Japan and Korea, to enhance and improve her conservation skills and knowledge.

After 12 years as Head of Paper Conservation, she then became Head of the Paper, Books & Paintings Conservation Section following the restructuring of the Conservation Department in 2003. Over the years she witnessed many changes both in the V&A and within the conservation profession. The V&A changed its directorship four times and the Conservation Department its leader three times...she was also around for the birth of the Institute of Paper Conservation (IPC) and its rebirth under the umbrella of Icon.

Pauline has a positive, can-do attitude and has always risen to the challenges posed by the conservation and display of works of art on paper – particularly large works such as wallpaper, posters, oriental scrolls, designs and plans of which the V&A holds extensive and important collections.

Her interest in Asian Painting and its conservation has resulted in her being at the forefront of the developing interface between far eastern and European conservation. She has explored in depth, and to great advantage, how techniques used in China and Japan can be applied to western works of art. The fragile nature and large scale of many of the objects has led her to research and devise imaginative and innovative solutions, many of which have been adopted by other conservators. Pauline has been a regular contributor to the V&A Conservation Journal, and to IPC's Journal and its conferences – reaching a wide and diverse audience.

Between 1990 to 2002 Pauline supervised six postgraduate students on the RCA/V&A MA Conservation Course; in the late 1990s she was instrumental in setting up the MA option of 'Conservation of Historic Wallpapers' which was supported by the National Trust. Under her leadership, the V&A Paper Conservation studio has always had a high intake of students and interns from all over the world and a reputation for encouraging and running various

specialised, mid-career training courses for external conservators – often in collaboration with IPC.

Pauline was also involved in external conservation courses and for four years acted as external course assessor on the MA and PG Diploma course at Camberwell College of Art; for two years she was also on the Accreditation Panel for the Irish Professional Conservators and Restorers Association.

With her ability to enthuse those around her with her vision, Pauline has been outstanding as a trainer not only of conservators but also of curators and this has led to the building of many collaborative bridges. She consistently demonstrates the skills that a leading conservator should have; not only does she have in the in-depth knowledge of conservation methods but also a detailed understanding of the manufacture and decoration of a wide range of paper-based materials. Amid her managerial duties she remained a practical and practising conservator and was continually looking for ways to improve the process of paper conservation.

Pauline, both as an individual and through her interaction with and development of those around her, has made an invaluable contribution to the preservation and study of works on paper.

At the end of September 2005 after a long, dedicated and enjoyable relationship with the V&A she took early retirement to join her husband Philip Meredith in Boston USA to embark on the next and even more joyous stage in her life.

Contact her at paulinemereditwebber@btinternet.com or

22 Mason Terrace
Brookline
MA02446.
USA

IN APPRECIATION

Elisabeth Crowfoot 1914–2005

Those of us in the Archaeology and Textile Groups will have been saddened to hear of the death of Elisabeth Crowfoot on the 31 August at the age of ninety one. The memorial service at St Michael's Church at Geldeston, near Beccles in East Anglia on Saturday 15 October was attended by many who knew her.

Her work deserves to be more widely known. Working closely with careful archaeological conservators, often on tiny scraps of mineralised textile found by them on metal artefacts, she built up an unrivalled corpus of information regarding the clothing worn long ago in Britain. She had three careers. Born in Cairo to parents who excavated in



Elisabeth Crowfoot

the Near East, she trained and worked as an actress under the name Elisabeth Bayly but returned to Norfolk in the early 1950s to raise her son and to help her mother to publish pre-war excavations. She also published in 1956 a well received children's book.

Mother (Mollie Crowfoot) was well known in textile circles and would receive material from British and other sources (including the tunic of Tutankhamun and linen from the Dead Sea Scrolls). Elisabeth acquired much practical experience and continued to develop her work. Besides British material she worked on-site each winter for a decade with the Egyptian Exploration Society's rescue expeditions at Quasr Ibrim, an island created by the construction of Lake Nasser.

For many years she was the textile consultant for the Ancient Monuments Laboratory in London, producing over one hundred and fifty AML Reports on Iron Age, Anglo-Saxon, Medieval and later material. She also produced reports for the British Museum and other bodies. No publication of an Anglo-Saxon cemetery was complete without Elisabeth's textile report and there are some yet to appear like Finglesham and Mucking. She examined thousands of textile fragments from Baynards Castle, the resulting work appearing in the HMSO publication *Textiles and Clothing*.

She was always kind enough to explain the significance of textile remains to conservators, particularly students, so they understood what they had been working on.

Her indomitable spirit was shown several years ago when on her way to a meeting in Savile Row she had a fall on the escalator at Oxford Circus and was taken to University College Hospital. Being conscientious, she got one of the nurses to ring us to say she might be late. I (GE) went

across to see her and as she was sitting in a wheelchair in Accident and Emergency her first words were "Darling open my bag and get the files and we'll make a start". She was taken off to x-ray at that point and luckily had no serious injuries so I was able to take her to her niece's house where she had arranged to stay the night.

Elisabeth Crowfoot may have retired 'from the microscope' in recent years but she continued to write up her notes. It is not certain when she first started work as a consultant with the AML but it is believed to be before 1970, providing her with the achievement of having the longest collaboration with the laboratory amongst many consultants associated with it.

John Crowfoot, Glynis Edwards and John Price

Professor John Levy 1921–2005

John Levy became a wood scientist with influence, spending his working life from 1945 at Imperial College with a professorship in 1981 and building up an important research group in wood science well known throughout the world. He was a president of the British Wood Preserving Association and helped to foster links with the industry and the scientific community. Close liaison with the Forest Products Research Laboratory was maintained. As a founding member of the International Research Group on Wood Preservation, he also developed studies on wood structure and the prevention of insect and fungal attack and developed the UK Wood Biology Liaison Group. With his students, and the use of the electron microscope in its early days, considerable work was undertaken on the processes of wood decay leading to the better understanding of methods of wood preservation.

Levy became interested in wood surviving in an archaeological context and wrote a paper on *The Condition of Wood from Archaeological Sites* for the pioneering 'Science in Archaeology' published in 1963. He was consulted on the timber remains of the hull of the *Mary Rose* and the wooden artefacts such as the magnificent collection of bows recovered during the excavations.

It may seem apt that, for an eminent scientist concerned with the science of wood studies, he should have a wooden leg, which he would take off when coxing his boat for Thames Rowing Club, a lifelong passion which led him to become captain and president. He leaves a legacy of wood studies and researchers who will undoubtedly help to illuminate the problems that conservation continually meets on a wide variety of wooden artefacts, both in burial situations and above ground.

John Price

A Conservator's Role

Personal passion and public perception

David Odgers, Chair of the Stone and Wall Paintings Group, reflects on how the cleaning and conservation of the interior of St. Paul's brought into focus a fundamental predicament of conservation.

One of the stated aims of the Institute of Conservation is to bring to a wider audience the crucial role played by conservators in the preservation and enhancement of our heritage. Although an obvious statement which, not unnaturally, would find wide support amongst those of us who carry out conservation work, it will be a considerable challenge given the current understanding of what we do and how we do it. Who amongst us has not inwardly groaned when we are referred to as 'conservationists' - bringing to mind David Bellamy lying in salt marshes or the crew of the Rainbow Warrior - all equally committed people but certainly a world away from our day to day existence?

In May of 2005, the cleaning and conservation of the interior of St. Paul's was completed after more than four years of endeavour by a committed collection of conservators, craftsmen and craftswomen, ably directed and supported by the Surveyor to the Fabric, Contract Administrator and other client representatives. The techniques that were employed had been the subject of significant trials carried out by the consultant conservator and have been covered in other articles elsewhere. But the project, much like any conservation project, required a

mixture of technical understanding, manual dexterity and a bottomless supply of those less tangible qualities that are an essential part of a conservator's make up - patience, diligence, intelligence, pride - and best thought of as a 'state of mind'.

The main work involved the cleaning of over 15000 square metres of stonework using the Arte Mundit latex system but also the cleaning of tens of thousands of mosaic tesserae as well as conservation of monuments, repairs, minor amounts of recarving and other associated works. When the contract was awarded, it was suggested by one person that the bulk of the work was boring and essentially mundane and could be done by anybody with a sound mind and some manual skills. We felt however that the majority of the team should be those who had a background in conservation or related fields - people who could appreciate the quality of the object/building on which they were working, people who had the vision to see beyond the small area on which they were working, people who had the motivation to work through the mundane to achieve the stated aims and people who could work as a team with a shared ethic to complete the project to the highest standards. These criteria may seem obvious, for they are principles for work perhaps in any field but they are particularly pertinent for conservators of whatever discipline. None of us can deny that much of our work can be repetitive and even monotonous but it is, to coin a modern idiom, the 'value added' that makes the difference.

In the middle of 2001, we started to build the team, hoping to find around a dozen people who would enthusiastically embrace the work and the relentless programme that was set for its completion. Because the cleaning process itself was new to this country and certainly new on this scale, it was imperative that the lessons learnt were not then lost by a constantly changing group of personnel. Over four years, there were inevitably a number of changes in this team but some stayed for the whole term and many others for a significant part of it. But there were also those who could not work on a macro scale and a small number who were probably put off conservation work for life; and in delightful contrast a few who started hesitantly but then embraced conservation wholeheartedly.

The first task facing the team (for no obvious reason, a very cosmopolitan collection of individuals) was to vacuum all the surfaces to remove the detritus of decades of London life. This may have seemed a dull and innocuous task but,

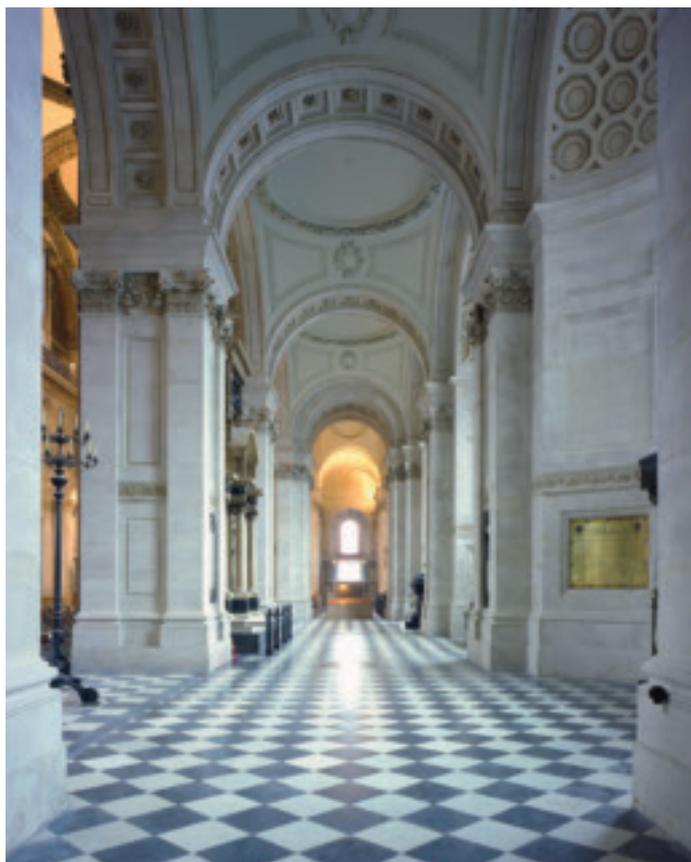
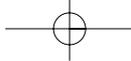
Cleaning areas of gilding



tomlee@constructphotography.com

Removal of significant deposits of dust using vacuum





tomlee@constructionphotography.com

North Nave aisle of St Paul's Cathedral after completion

used creatively, it also enabled a close study of the condition of the fabric and acted as a startling reminder of the extraordinary quality of the carved stonework, mosaics and decoration. There followed perhaps the most tedious element of the work which was the protection of all areas prior to the application of the latex – this involved not only the covering of all the gilding and other embellishments but also the complete encapsulation of each area to be sprayed in order to avoid dust and fumes from entering the main area of the Cathedral. Throughout this process, again it was the care and attention to detail shown by conservators and craftsmen which ensured its efficiency. Thereafter, the Arte Mundit was applied, and within 48

hours, removed and the stonework brushed clean with water – a seemingly simple statement that hides a mountain of effort and dedication particularly to the vividly carved and undercut detail. These indefatigable efforts of the team are reflected in the now gloriously light and vibrant interior.

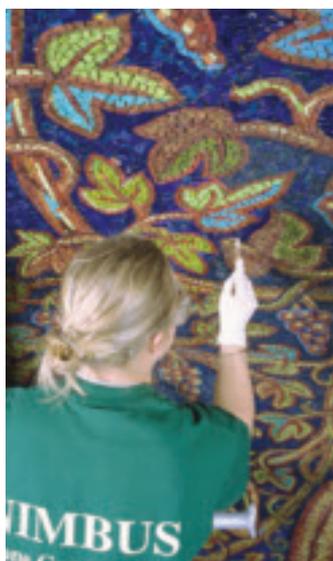
It is interesting to reflect what motivated those who stayed the course to clean and conserve metre after metre of stonework. I suspect that it is much the same as that which motivates a textile conservator to work away millimetre after millimetre on some gem of tapestry or a paper conservator to pick away at a backing. It is firstly the pleasure of what they are achieving, secondly it is the appreciation (even if not the admiration) for the object and thirdly the belief that the object is also of importance and value to a wider community.

This last fact is where conservation provides wonderful opportunities but also grave risks. Although much of what we do may be hidden from view, we are responsible for working on objects, buildings, monuments and artworks of importance to others outside our profession. Whether this wider constituency consists of a few 'interested parties' or the public at large, our work is often under the spotlight.

The work at St. Paul's was, not surprisingly, very much in the public eye. Apart from fulfilling its principal function as a place of worship, it is also a place for music and an internationally significant place to visit which requires constant maintenance. It may be imagined therefore that to become a conservation contractor in that environment was to be like another ingredient in a cauldron of soup. Although many welcomed the addition, others were resigned to it and, to a few, it was an unnecessary intrusion. It was perhaps no surprise therefore that some disquiet was expressed and, as a consequence of that, statements were made and opinions aired that had repercussions which, apart from being an immense trial to all concerned (particularly those who had worked with such vision to establish the project), were also a strong reminder of how the best intentions are often perceived very differently.

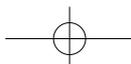
Regular articles appear in the papers in which the result of conservators' work is subject to criticism – whether it be a claimed 'over-restoration' of an easel painting or a supposed inappropriate display of an object. The work at St. Paul's attracted its own share of such publicity catalysed when an art historical magazine published an article questioning the need for, and method of, cleaning the

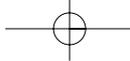
Cleaning of Richmond mosaics with cotton wool buds



tomlee@constructionphotography.com

Detail of mosaic tesserae (over 50,000 cleaned)





tomlee@constructionphotography.com



Washing of intricate carved detail after removal of Arte Mundit

interior. This was picked up by a major national newspaper which started the article with the emotive claim that ‘what the Luftwaffe failed to achieve in the 1940’s, well meaning but ill informed conservators were now carrying out – the destruction of St. Paul’s Cathedral’. Apart from this hyperbolic soundbite, the lack of research and indeed truth in the article was a great disappointment to all of those who had set up the project and were working tirelessly for what they genuinely believed to be an inspirational goal. In this particular instance, it was hard to know how to react to such defamation. The temptation was to enter the debate but the original magazine article was so adamant in its approach, it somehow felt as though there would be no chance of coherent discourse.

It is certainly the case that we as conservators need to appreciate the variety of taste and opinion that exist within the public domain. We can reassure ourselves that what we do is well thought out, justifiable and well executed, but how much does that count for if people do not like or appreciate the end result of what we do? A traditional response is to call for the need to ‘educate’ so that people will be more aware of what we do and indeed many of the initiatives in this direction have been very effective and well received. If delivered in the way that ‘we know what we are doing and you do not’, then that call can seem disrespectful and self indulgent.

When the work at St. Paul’s was complete there took place

a press launch to which the media could come and (hopefully) admire what had been achieved and convey to their readers and watchers the glory of the Cathedral. This day happened to coincide with a press launch for the English Heritage sponsored research into the paucity of training for craft skills such as thatching, masonry and dry stone walling. On at least two occasions, the inevitable question was asked as to whether, given the lack of skills, the work at St. Paul’s could take place in twenty years’ time. Apart from the obvious response that it would not actually need doing for another century or more, it struck me that, for most people, conservation is categorised as a craft skill. This should perhaps be welcomed, as conservators share many of the characteristics such as technical and materials knowledge, dexterity, respect for the object and the ability to make choices based on experience. Often however, conservation sees itself, and certainly can be perceived, to be rather more refined and almost operating on a higher plane. Perhaps one of the biggest challenges for conservation is to demystify what the profession is all about and to demonstrate to the wider public that we too offer those less measurable talents that can only be summarised as a ‘state of mind’ and which are displayed so eloquently in our day to day toils.

Main Contractor	Nimbus Conservation Ltd (The team were Jenny Jacobs, Helen Thorne, Pablo Cal Fernandez, Sam Lenders, Elspeth Morgan, Magda Rogers, Petra Jean Philipson, Oli Don, Joanna Puisto, Patricia Maestre and others)
Surveyor to the Fabric	Martin Stancliffe
Project Architect	Ulrike Knox (Purcell Miller Tritton)
Wall painting sub contractor	Paine & Stewart
Decorative surfaces sub contractor	Hare & Humphries
Mosaic sub contractor	Trevor Caley Associates
Consultant conservator	Deborah Carthy

The author left Nimbus Conservation at the completion of the project and has now set up his own business (david@odgersconservation.co.uk)





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news from the groups

BOOK AND PAPER GROUP

Happy New Year and I hope that those of you who have received our BPG email news have found it informative. Those returning to work in January to find 1,000+ emails in their in-box to sort and respond to might wish for less communication and not more but we are finding that it is increasingly valuable to be able to contact members in this way. Anyone currently not receiving email news and wishing to do so please contact the Icon office. We are keen to encourage contributions from the BPG for the Icon magazine and anyone who is considering producing an article, review or technical paper on book and paper issues could you please contact Jim Bloxham in the first instance, jpb@ula.cam.ac.uk.

The Book and Paper Group will hold its annual meeting at the Art Workers Guild in March or early April 2006 (date to be announced). This will be an opportunity for members to meet and hear about committee activities and we welcome comments and observations on the progress and development of Icon. The meeting will be followed by a glass of wine – everyone welcome.

Our current committee consists of:

- Helen Lindsay** – Chair and acting Treasurer
- Rose Briskman** – Communications (Icon Board of Trustees)
- Sally Esdaile** – Website and publications
- Kate Colleran** – IPC wind-down and Chantry Library (co-opted)
- Catherine Atkinson** – Training Research and Development, Clare Hampson Scholarship Fund
- Caroline Scharfenberg** – Accreditation (retired Dec 2005)
- Joanna Payne** – Meetings
- Ann-Marie Miller** – Graduate liaison and sponsored membership scheme

Some committee members are due to leave us in March 2006 and we are looking for new committee members to take up the reins. In particular, we are looking for 2 roles; committee secretary (take minutes and organise meetings) and someone to organise a group of volunteers to develop and supervise a Book and Paper Group stand at events and conferences. Please contact Helen Lindsay if you are interested – hml4488@yahoo.co.uk.

We are also grateful to the following people for their help and support:

- Amy Junker** – Clare Hampson Scholarship Fund
- Imogen Herford** – Monthly social beer meetings
- Gillian Roy** – Sponsored Membership Scheme

Jonathan Rhys-Lewis – Conservation Register

Jane Eagan and Catherine Scutt – Chantry Library

Wendy Roberts – Bookkeeping

Pamela de Tristan, Angela Thompson, Jane Rutherford, Paul Cook, Heather Norville-Day, Katherine Lockett and Sophie Laubin – Meetings Development sub-group

What does being a BPG committee member mean?

TIME: being a committee member means being prepared to sacrifice some of one's precious time. There are four committee meetings a year, each committee member takes on a specific role and sometimes also supervises a sub-committee to help with activities. Committee roles include the organisation of meetings, publicity, sub-editor, communications, graduate liaison, sponsored membership scheme, Clare Hampson Scholarship Fund and the website, as well as other activities that arise from time to time. The position of being a committee member is purely voluntary, although travel expenses are paid for those who come from out of London.

So what do you get out of it? Well, of course there is the warm glow of having helped your profession and supported your colleagues but also the experience gained from working at committee level will provide you with considerable insight into how organisations function, how to organise and respond to a range of issues in a practical and discerning manner. It can also be enjoyable.....

Meetings and Events

The Book & Paper Group's last evening lecture 'Keeping Fit for Conservation' on 11 October was a great success. It was fully booked and we were thrilled to see so many conservators and museum professionals from other disciplines attending. At our next evening lecture Paul Cook of the National Maritime Museum will speak on 'Simple Protective Folder & Box Construction'. Everyone welcome. See Listings for details.

The Meetings Development Group welcome new ideas and members to help out on lecture evenings. Please contact Joanna Payne on jw@joannapayne.com for any comments, ideas or if you wish to join the group.

Helen Lindsay, Chair

CARE OF COLLECTIONS GROUP

What's on the agenda for collections care?

Change and the promise of new funding is always a spur to creative activity.

Changes in regional funding arrangements for Museums Archives and Libraries gave us the theme for CCF's last

annual meeting. Much of the content has now appeared in CCF News and Icon News. The advent of Icon has set the Group thinking about the subjects that need to be aired and debated among professionals and in the public arena. In future issues of Icon News, we will be highlighting issues and themes that are topical and sometimes controversial. Here are some examples:

Preventive conservation:

- Conserving energy and collections: how far are these complementary?
- What is the profession's perception of standards relating to issues such as environmental control?

Communications:

- How to improve communications with key professionals in the building industry and elsewhere in the cultural and heritage sectors.
- Government agenda: what are they telling us and what messages are we sending them?

Using and managing collections:

- Access: CCF tried to show that more access could mean collections are better cared for. Is it happening?
- "No conservation without documentation" – the need for teamwork when assessing collections, including working with the new national Subject Specialist Networks.

Professional:

- Cross-sectoral working – what learning and expertise can be shared between Museums, Libraries, Archives and Historic Buildings? How do their approaches to collections care differ?
- Workforce development – how to develop the knowledge where it is needed; and who does what? How can all the different professionals, volunteers and users work together for the benefit of collections?

We would like to hear from anyone with strong views or stories to tell in these areas of interest. Which of them are most significant for you, and are there others more important? How is your everyday work affected by the responsibility to promote the long-term care of objects?

In the next few issues of Icon News, CCG will be highlighting environmental management in buildings and its implications for energy conservation.

Conservation heating is now well established as an effective way of controlling the environment in museums as well as historic houses. A report on the recent CCG study visit to Ipswich will discuss their approach. If you have been

involved with a conservation heating installation that has been set up in recent years, we would like to know about it, whether it is an unqualified success, or whether you have had problems. Please contact Andy Holbrook (aholbrook@museumoflondon.org.uk)

CCG committee are working with other groups to organise a 2-day seminar on health and safety risks from objects in collections. More on this to follow.

Cathy Proudlove

(cpcpc@supanet.com) on behalf of CCG Committee

FURNITURE AND WOOD GROUP

You could be forgiven for thinking that the Furniture & Wood Group (formerly the Furniture & Wood Section of UKIC) had ceased to exist. During the politically sensitive period of the formation of Icon and the consideration by other organisations outside the 'Vanguard' group whether or not to join Icon in the near future, development of the Furniture & Wood Group was put on hold.

Now that it has become clear that the combining of UKIC Furniture & Wood Section and the British Antique Furniture Restorers Association (BAFRA) into one group to represent this area of special interest within conservation will not take place, at least, not in the foreseeable future, the emphasis returns to providing services for Icon members. To that end, the remaining committee members from the UKIC F&W Section will hold an event and Group meeting in spring 2006 (Group AGMs are no longer a constitutional necessity) to set a forward programme. New members and activists are very welcome and a revised email address database of Furniture & Wood Group members is being compiled as the primary mode of communication. If email is not a possibility for anyone who would like to be involved, the committee would be very happy to receive postal details through Icon head office. The email address for Group communication is SMITH2040@aol.com

Failure to combine the former F&W Section and BAFRA under the umbrella of Icon is more an indication of the strength, independence and self-sufficiency of a very focussed and successful committee running a small organisation than a comment on the Icon idea. The Furniture & Wood Group committee remain in close and friendly contact with BAFRA and hope to share events and resources whenever possible.

The future is very exciting within Icon providing endless possibilities for combined interest group events, broadening the knowledge and understanding of each others' specialisms and developing networks.

more news from the groups

Please contact the Group committee with ideas or comments on how you would like this Group to develop.

Adrian Smith, Chair

GRADUATE VOICE

Volunteers still needed!

There has been a good response to the last issue's request for students and graduates to come forward to contribute to a Graduate Voice section in Icon News. However we would like to make sure there is a network from all disciplines, so please get in touch!

For those who didn't catch the first issue, here's a reminder. For the past two years a 'Graduate Voice' page has represented Paper and Book Conservation students and graduates in Paper Conservation News – the newsletter for the then Institute of Paper Conservation. We would like to continue 'Graduate Voice' in Icon News and we want it to represent all conservation disciplines within Icon.

The idea is to dedicate space to conservation graduates and students, and their reviews, articles, opinions and news. We aim to provide an informal means of communication for newly qualified conservators and those still at college, with future employers and other established conservators. Please send contributions or ideas to: Heather Marshall at heatherx.marshall@bl.uk.

Look forward to the first Graduate Voice in the next issue of Icon News!

HISTORIC INTERIORS GROUP

The Historic Interiors Group conference in May 2006 will focus on the interpretation of physical, analytical and archive evidence to unravel the history and development of interiors. The practical use of information gathered from broad based research as a basis for understanding current condition and as an aid to conservation and accurate reconstruction programmes will be illustrated and discussed through case studies.

The conference will provide an opportunity to discuss positive approaches to understanding the complex physical structure and development of significant interiors. It is intended to be a very practical day which informs best practice for conservation and authentic recreation projects. The encouragement of team-working and good communication between specialist disciplines is a key aim of the Historic Interiors Group. Therefore it is hoped that the conference will be of interest to a broad range of professionals actively involved with historic interiors.

Committee post vacancy

The Historic Interiors Group committee members are:

Allyson McDermott, Chair,
allysonmcdermott@btconnect.com

Claire Fry, Membership Secretary, Claire.fry@english-heritage.org.uk

Lisa Oestreicher, Secretary, lisa.oestreicher@virgin.net

Jane Davies, Editor, Janedavies@hotmail.com

Mette de Hamel, Events Organiser,
mdehamel@btinternet.com

Christine Sitwell, Ordinary Member,
Christine.Sitwell@nationaltrust.org.uk

David Gibson, Ordinary Member, DGibArch@aol.com

We have a current vacancy for the position of treasurer. Committee members usually serve for three years and we welcome applications to join us from all members of the Historic Interiors Group.

Call for articles and news

If any member of the Historic Interiors Group has an interesting case study, discussion topic, information or news they would like to publish within Icon News please contact: Janedavies@hotmail.com

Jane Davies, Group Editor

METALS GROUP

Decorative Surfaces on Contemporary Metalwork

We are currently planning a conference to be held in Birmingham during November 2006, and scheduled to coincide with the 'Goldsmiths' exhibition at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery.

The aim is to bring together conservators and contemporary artists working with metals to discuss the issues that arise when metal jewellery and works of art are acquired for museum collections. The conference plans to explore how the approach to the subsequent conservation of the objects can be informed by interaction with the maker and through a detailed knowledge of the artists' working methods and the techniques that they use to achieve a range of very specific surface finishes.

We are looking for conservators, artists and curators to present papers so if you are interested in submitting a presentation then please contact Simon Cane for further information on 0121 303 4509 or at simon_cane@birmingham.gov.uk.

Grants for firearms conservation

The Worshipful Company of Gunmakers administers a charitable trust that awards funding to gun apprentices and those in the trade who wish to improve their technical skills through training opportunities. However, they also welcome applications from people working with antique guns for attendance at relevant courses and conferences.

Earlier this year the Gunmakers' Company awarded Donna Stevens of the V&A Metalwork Conservation Department funding towards her attendance at the Metals Conservation Summer Institute at The Higgins Armory Museum, Massachusetts.

To make an application you should send your details to Col. William Chesshyre, The Worshipful Company of Gunmakers, 48 – 50 Commercial Road, London E1 1LP or email clerk@gunmakers.org.uk

PAINTINGS GROUP

A warm welcome to all Icon members from the committee of the Icon Paintings Group, formerly the Paintings Section of UKIC. We have a regular programme of conferences and meetings spread throughout the year to which all members of Icon are warmly invited.

In 2005 we held two one-day meetings on Egg Tempera Retouching in April and on Report Writing in October (see p. 34) and in 2006 we intend to continue with the theme of retouching with a one-day meeting on Retouching with Resins. In response to requests for more information in the field of digital imaging we are also planning an evening lecture in February on Photoshop. Details of these and other meetings will be posted via Iconnect and published in Icon News. In 2006 we are also expecting that the papers from the Big Pictures meeting will be available, published by Archetype Books. This publication will be free to all those who attended the conference in 2000 and we will be contacting all delegates with distribution details as soon as the book appears.

We are always interested in new ideas from the membership as to what subjects should be covered in our programme so if you have any suggestions for future events please contact us. We would be delighted to hear from you.

The current committee members and e-mail addresses are as follows:

Chair: **Kate Lowry** kate.lowry@nmgw.ac.uk

Editor: **Kiffy Stainer-Hutchins**
k.stainerhutchins@btopenworld.com

Web editor: **Mary Bustin** Mary.Bustin@tate.org.uk

Treasurer: **Ambrose Scott-Moncrieff** ambrose@scott-moncrieff.freeserve.co.uk

Secretary: **Rachel Turnbull** Rachel.turnbull@nmgw.ac.uk

Ordinary members: **Rebecca Ellison** ellsnrb@aol.com

Jim Dimond jdimond@ukonline.co.uk

Lorraine Maule lorraine.maule@cls.glasgow.gov.uk

Clare Finn FinnClare@aol.com

Rebecca Gregg breadinabottle@hotmail.com

Tom Caley tcaley@rmshepherd.plus.com

The chair is due to stand down in 2006 having served her allotted term and we plan to hold an **election of new members** to the committee in May next year. If you are interested in getting involved with the Paintings Group in this way please get in touch. Meanwhile we look forward to even more fruitful years of service ahead as part of the exciting new venture that is Icon.

SCOTLAND GROUP

While the SSCR Committee has been concluding the Society's business and transferring remaining assets to Icon, a Committee has been formed to build the foundations of the Icon Scotland Group. This Committee will now drive forward developments in Scotland until the formal election of Committee members and official post-holders in summer/autumn 2006. Mark Bambrough now acts as Chair, with Sarah Maisey as Secretary, Audrey Wilson as Treasurer and Linda Ramsay as Vice Treasurer.

In November, the Committee met for the second time for a productive discussion on the next steps needed to realise a vibrant social and professional Icon Scotland Group. Work has begun to produce an events calendar for the coming year, with seminars, lectures and workshops, along with visits and social gatherings. In addition, a job description for a proposed part-time Administrator has been formulated. It is anticipated that this post will support the activities of the group along with undertaking decentralised tasks for the Institute of Conservation. The Committee also discussed an exciting potential role for the Group within political lobbying, targeting the Scottish Executive on issues that affect our profession.

The next Committee meeting will be on 25 January 2005, venue to be confirmed. If you would like to be involved please contact Sarah on sarah@maisey.co.uk. Ruth Honeybone (r_honeybone@yahoo.com) is the Scotland Group contact for contributions to Icon News.

reviews

CONFERENCES

COMPARE AND CONTRAST: TWO HISTORIC INTERIORS CONFERENCES

The Georgian Interior 4–5 November 2005 – Victoria and Albert Museum

Ten years on – What lessons have we learnt and what have we achieved?

7–8 October 2005 – The Brompton Oratory and the Victoria & Albert Museum

The *Georgian Interior* was the third conference organised by the V&A devoted to the examination of historic interiors of different eras and associated with the redesigned British Galleries, now celebrating their fifth anniversary. This conference addressed the question of taste and the relationship between the various styles, Palladianism, the Gothic and Neo-classicism, which developed during the Georgian period.

In the first paper *Taste, Style and Georgian Aesthetics*, Steven Parissien (Professor of Architectural History – University of Plymouth) humorously illustrated how the term 'Georgian' is now bandied around by property developers to validate bad design. Stephen Astley (Assistant Curator – The Sir John Soane Museum) presented a study of Adam drawings and documents that offered an insight into the calculating efficiency with which Robert Adam ran his office and the fee structure in operation. Astley stressed that most of the drawings in the collection were made for client presentations and should not be taken as a record of realised schemes. Adam rarely made visits and examination of the principal rooms at Chandos House – a Zucchi roundel had been placed in the wrong room – raises question about the degree of supervision given to these projects. Other examples also raised the question: who made these decisions: the client or the designer?

Kate Retford (Lecturer Art History – Birkbeck College) provided a new perspective on the genre of the conversation piece and suggested that, as the same interior represented in paintings such as those produced by Andrew Devis in the 1730s and 1740s was repeated for several different sitters, they should not be regarded as representations of actual interiors. They should be considered as a generalised backdrop, something akin to the photographer's studio. We do not imagine that the sepia photographs of our great-grand parents – posed stiffly beside an ornate screen and a pot plant – represent in any way their home, normal dress (or their interest in plants). Retford suggested that the fictitious interiors of paintings such as

Hogarth's *The Rake's Progress* or *Marriage a la Mode*, despite their metaphorical references and theatricality, probably provide more accurate information about contemporary interiors.

But subsequent papers made little if any reference to the physicality of the Georgian Interior and although one speaker did note that *'taste could be expressed in material culture'* this idea was not pursued and, as the discussion proceeded, yet more *'unworked documents'* were presented. Although it was an interesting and illuminating conference, a more balanced programme, which acknowledged the recent developments in the archaeological investigation of interiors, would have chimed more with the working experience of many of the delegates.

Amanda Vickery's paper (Reader – Royal Holloway College) entitled *'The wrong sort of yellow'* described her analysis of a late 18th century customers' letter-book compiled by a firm of wallpaper manufacturers and what it revealed about the aesthetic vocabulary of the period. Decorative schemes should be 'neat', 'proper' or 'not too showy' and fabrics should match wallpapers. But the paper made no attempt to relate this data to extant schemes. John Styles (Research Professor – University of Herfordshire) discussed research into another unexamined archive – court records of thefts from rented accommodation – which provide an oblique view of the furnishing and management of these *'plebian interiors'* and the quality of common household goods. Contemporary journals and periodicals examined by Lawrence Klein (Professor of History – University of Cambridge) provide more information on dress and manners than furnishings or interiors.

Michael Snodin's paper *Strawberry Hill: The Construction of the Gothic Interiors* considered the sources which were the inspiration for Walpole's design and decoration of the house. Walpole, it seems, derived most of his ideas and designs from prints of buildings rather than the buildings themselves. *'Prints are much easier to look at than buildings'* – an observation which could have served as a strap-line for the V&A conference itself. Current research into the interiors of Strawberry Hill is seemingly also based on watercolours, plans, drawings, and accounts and there would appear to be no investigation of the existing interiors apart from a passing comment on their *'appalling condition'*.

Other speakers provided interesting accounts of the use and decoration of interiors gleaned from letters, diaries and fiction. Records of rules of conduct at

Assembly Rooms were presented and the problems of negotiating poorly spaced columns in wide skirts, lighting large rooms and sanitation were considered. But although many of the interiors of the Assembly Rooms mentioned still exist and we were shown views of them, the potential of interior archaeology to provide further evidence was not explored.

Is there any excuse for the perpetuation of this Luddite approach to historic interiors research? A methodology for unravelling the actual creation and development of interiors has been available for the last twenty years. This branch of building archaeology is providing dramatic new insights into styles and changes in taste but perhaps because it oversteps and challenges the disciplinary boundaries of traditional 'academic' research its intellectual contribution continues to be ignored. Why are we presented with a picture of the Georgian period gleaned from secondary sources – a very traditional art historical approach with its disciplinary boundaries firmly in place and well guarded? A hesitant question about the apparent reluctance to engage in a more forensic unpicking of actual interiors – to examine fabrics, wallpapers, paint colours as they survive in situ – was swiftly dismissed by Professor Klein. He volunteered *'a small defence for not looking at buildings'* and explained that if we want to know what people thought about things we need to consult their words. It is as if the post-modernist attack on history had never happened. The panel of speakers suggested that objects and texts are used to answer different sets of questions and that the study of Georgian taste need not necessarily be tied to material culture. What does this mean? Had I entered a parallel universe?

Less than a month before I had taken part in the Traditional Paint Forum's Annual Conference held nearby at the Brompton Oratory and celebrating a significant anniversary: *'Ten years on – What lessons have we learnt and what have we achieved?'*. The Traditional Paint Forum (TPF), a small but internationally respected body, is unique amongst heritage amenity groups because of the multidisciplinary nature of its membership, which includes housepainters, conservators, curators, architects, paint suppliers and art historians. It was formed to advance the understanding of traditional paint and its use. To date it has organised eight conferences and produced a wide range of publications which have encouraged a holistic view of historic interiors' investigation and presentation. In his review of the TPF, its President, Ian Bristow, suggested that the study of paint



Georgian interiors of Danson House recreated in 2005 by English Heritage. The rooms are: The Entrance Hall/ The Saloon/ Detail of Library/Staircase with painted trompe l'oeil on dome

technology had been instrumental in providing a more detailed understanding of the aesthetics of interiors but that this was often looked down on by 'the non-technical'.

In the light of the Georgian Interiors conference, it is worth examining the TPF's discussion of the recent investigation and presentation of the interiors of two of the nation's most important Georgian buildings: Newhailles (The National Trust for Scotland), Edinburgh and Danson House (English Heritage) Bexleyheath, London. Both projects have been acclaimed for the quality of their integrated research and sensitivity of their conservation and representation. At Danson House little of the original documentation survived but close collaboration between historians, and building and paint researchers succeeded in establishing the original fitting out and decoration of the principal interiors and the later changes which were a direct response to changing tastes and fashions. Using the research findings, English Heritage successfully combined the recreation and conservation of the original schemes of c.1760. In contrast, Newhailles acclaimed as a 'sleeping beauty' had remained untouched since 1917 and retained a range of decorative finishes from earlier periods. These various phases were identified by careful documentary and archaeological investigation. Ian Gow (Curator – National

Trust for Scotland) described the tensions created by the Trust's decision to retain all of the surviving surfaces many of which were so thin and distressed that they '*had gone beyond mellow to being distinctly triste*'. The absence of any awareness of the findings of these important projects at the V&A conference or, more importantly, any awareness of the methodology underpinning the research process is disconcerting.

But perhaps there is hope. Ian Gow, who spoke at both events, may help provide a bridge. His paper at the V&A, *Reviving the Georgian House in Scotland*, discussed the nineteenth-century revivals of Adam style. He was at pains to outline the various alterations made to Adams interiors which historians often 'prefer to forget' and how differentiating original features from later additions does indeed require forensic unpicking.

Perhaps the title of the V&A event was something of a misnomer as there was little analysis of actual Georgian interiors and the focus of the two days was on texts and illustrations from the period. This avoidance of a discussion of 'material culture' – the interiors themselves – seemed rather perverse and became a conspicuous omission during the course of the two days. Building conservators and researchers used to working in multidisciplinary teams may have viewed the proceedings as something

of a quaint anachronism but for the fact that this chilling demonstration of the lack of dialogue between art historians and conservators masks more serious problems for the understanding and preservation of our cultural heritage.

Helen Hughes
Historic Interiors Group

ICOM-CC CONFERENCE: GRAPHIC DOCUMENTS GROUP

The sheer scale of this conference is impressive, with five concurrent sessions on four of the five days, and a weighty two-volume set of pre-prints adding considerably to my luggage. Volume 26 of *Restaurator*, number 3, 2005, is also dedicated to the conference, and contains another six papers, five of which are from 'Graphic Documents'. I stayed with the Graphic Documents group, which was scheduled over the first two days, with occasional sprints to Leather and Related Materials and Scientific Research, whilst wondering what I was missing in Preventive Conservation.

Our paper, given jointly with my colleague Alison McKay, was a case-study of the conservation of a 13th-century Arab manuscript, in which we discussed the difficult decisions that were made to reach a suitable level of treatment which did not compromise the cultural history of the object, but still made it strong and flexible enough to handle safely. The majority of the remaining papers involved some serious scientific research and there is not space here to summarize the wealth of valuable work presented in this section. The finer details of many of these papers went way over my head, but it was invaluable to be aware of the quantity and level of research that is being carried out

I opted for talks that were relevant to the work on paper and parchment carried out by our department. Of particular interest was the work of the collaborative team from the National and University Library and the Faculty of Chemistry and Chemical Technology of Ljubljana, which produced no less than five papers. The team continues to develop its understanding of the mechanisms of the degradation of cellulose, and works towards refining their recommendations for practical treatments. In the case of iron gall ink corrosion, they are making good progress in the search for a non-aqueous treatment, and are meanwhile continuing research on the phytate treatment, in use for some years now, with the aim of giving precise recommendations for the pH value at which it is most effective. A review of aqueous

more reviews

deacidification also aims to specify the best method of treatment.

René Larsen's talk described the work of the IDAP project (Improved Damage Assessment of Parchment), which shows that damage to historic parchment can be assessed at different structural levels using a variety of techniques. The project will provide this information on the Internet, which will enable conservators to detect and evaluate damage in their collections.

Craig Kennedy from the University of Cardiff, a partner in the IDAP project, presented a paper on the application of X-ray diffraction, one of the techniques established by IDAP, to see whether specific conservation techniques were damaging to parchment. I was not particularly convinced by the design of the conservation experiments described here, but hope there will be further research in this area. As a parchment conservator, I was concerned to see that relaxing techniques could cause permanent damage.

A paper given by Matija Strlič, part of the Ljubljana team, described the development of a new user-friendly electrode for micro-determination of paper pH, the only disappointment being that this was not immediately available in the shops.

This conference is a fascinating experience and, another time, I would read up on the more difficult scientific papers later as they are hard to absorb on the day, and feel freer to enjoy the extraordinary range of work that is presented at this truly global event.

My thanks are due to Oxford University Staff Development for their funding.

Sabina Pugh

Conservator: sites and collections
Conservation and Collection Care,
Bodleian Library

COMMUNICATING THROUGH REPORT WRITING

Paintings Group Conference

The Royal Society of Artists October 2005.

This conference gathered together various professionals within the art world to discuss the importance of accurate and concise report writing. The issues discussed ranged from communicating using visual methods to legal considerations.

The morning session was opened by Helen Wilkes, Head of Humanities at City and Guilds of London Art School, who discussed the manner, principles and processes of report writing. She emphasised the importance of clarity: 'a report is an invitation to engage – if you do not write well nobody is going to come to your party'. Clare Finn, freelance painting conservator,

continued this point in her discussion about visual communication. Clare gave a basic but helpful layman's guide to the use of Photoshop. Showing a range of examples, Clare illustrated how to, and how not to, incorporate images within a condition report. She pointed out that, when done well, images can be used to simplify the text and thus create a more direct/understandable report.

Joel Taylor, Research Fellow at the University College London Centre for Sustainable Heritage, discussed the benefits and drawbacks of tick box reports. He highlighted the need to tailor the survey report to the requirements of a particular situation and stressed that a clear definition of the condition of an object is required to avoid ambiguity. Jonathan Silverman, founding partner of Silverman Sherliker LLP, followed Joel with a paper on the legal aspects of report writing. He highlighted the pitfalls for the conservation profession in an increasingly litigious society, and stressed the importance of establishing terms and conditions of trading before a letter of engagement is sent to the client. He also outlined the dangers of misrepresentation in report writing.

Susie Collier, Fine Art and Specie Adjuster from XL Insurance, started the afternoon with a paper covering key insurance principles such as indemnity and 'proximate' cause. She stated that there is no one ideal report – it is dependent on the circumstances of the claim. Chris Wilson, the County Museum's Officer from Rhondda Cynon Taff, then spoke from the heritage and museum sector point of view. He recommends conservators to have a common understanding of the Museum Documentation Standard: Spectrum. Spectrum is available to download and view, free of charge, for non-commercial use from the MDA website: www.mda.org.uk/spectrum.htm.

Alex Bell, Head of Sotheby's Old Master Paintings Department, gave the final talk on the history, requirements, and cost of auction house condition reports, as well as aspects of liability. Conservators tend to focus on the negative aspects of the overall condition; Alex suggested that it would be helpful to summarise not only the negative but the positive aspects also. This was an appropriate way to end a comprehensive and thought provoking conference.

Katey-Mary Twitchett and Kate Bangerter, freelance painting conservators, London.

Conference preprints are available at £5 from Rachel Turnbull:
rachel.turnbull@nmgw.ac.uk

MEETINGS

CERAMICS AND GLASS GROUP MEETING

On 15 October 2005 the Ceramics and Glass Group held its Autumn meeting, 'Caring for our Ceramic Heritage' at the London Archaeological Archive & Research Centre (LAARC). LAARC is administered by the Museum of London (MoL) and is the archive for archaeological and historic material relevant to London. The day consisted of lectures, visits to the archives and object handling sessions. LAARC manager Roy Stephenson gave a welcome address and an introduction to the collections. Louise Burden the County Conservation & Museums Manager for Wiltshire described a team project involving the removal of historic restorations from a collection of Bronze Age ceramic vessels and their re-restoration. Fatma Marii, an MPhil/PhD student at UCL, described the study and conservation of window and vessel glass and glass *tesserae* recovered from a church in Petra, Jordan (late fourth – early seventh centuries AD). Delegates then divided into two groups for guided tours of the archives and the opportunity to handle objects. During the afternoon Jacqui Pearce a specialist in Medieval and later ceramics working for the MoL gave an overview of 1000 years of ceramic in use in London from 900 to 1900AD; and Rainer Geschke from the British Museum described the conservation and mounting of a large sculpture of a Sudanese goddess. Finally Rob Payton Deputy Head of Conservation and Collection Care Department gave a presentation concerning ethical dilemmas and pragmatic solutions to retreating ceramics for a new Gallery in the MoL. There were two trade stands: Mark Vine (Conservation Resources Ltd) and Pamela Warner of (Addington Studio). Full details of the meeting will appear on the Icon website.

KEEPING FIT FOR CONSERVATION

This is an edited version of Judith Gowland's report on the well-attended, BPG-organised meeting in October. It highlights the practical recommendations of the speakers. The full report can be seen on the website.

Joanna Payne introduced four speakers:

Dr Rob Hogan, Optometrist and Professional Services Director with Dolland and Aitchison

Dr Saqib Bashir, Registrar in Dermatology with Guy's & St. Thomas's NHS Trust.

David Tatton, Practising Osteopath and Lecturer in Osteopathy

Dorothea Magonet, Physiotherapist and

teacher of Alexander Technique.

Rob Hogan started with a description of sight problems and disease states of the eye. Task analysis is useful and:

- make sure you are fully corrected and able to use both eyes well.
- only work as close as you need to. People make the mistake of working too close for too long.
- if you must use magnification take advice on the best form. If you can, take examples of your work to your optometrist.
- the more ergonomic the magnifier, the better. The heat/light balance needs to be addressed and you get more shadow with very high magnification. Something internally illuminated may be better.
- minimise the discomfort of glare. With your PC, for example, site the VDU as far away as comfortable and look down upon it.
- take regular breaks, about every half-hour and blink. Do it often; lysozyme the enzyme of tears, is nature's own disinfectant.

Questions from the floor covered

- prolonged use of the stereomicroscope. Even though it seems as if you are homing in on a small world, the microscope is, nonetheless, focusing on infinity. No harm will result if you choose your best focal distance and keep to it.
- working with ultra violet (u.v.) sources. Apart from goggles, one can get adjusted contact lenses but in fact, 50% of our u.v. absorption will have taken place before we are 18 years old and risk of damage lessens with age.
- solvent vapours and other chemical irritants. The answer is an effective fume cupboard, goggles and keep blinking.
- the risks of using a light box. Some small u.v. risk is present; the larger problem is of too much light around the object. Blank extraneous light out eg; with blotters.

Dr Saqib Bashir's presentation on occupational contact dermatitis began with a description of the skin layers. The outer layer protects the living cells beneath and damage to it allows irritants to pass to the living layers. Soaps and detergents diminish the outer layer's barrier effect.

Dr Bashir distinguished between primary irritant dermatitis which is a reaction produced in the skin of a normal person and contact dermatitis which is the reaction of a sensitised person to a causative agent. Common irritants which can produce the white or scaly skin, red knuckles and inflammation of primary irritant dermatitis

are water, soap, detergents, chemicals with irritant properties, cold and heat. Friction by fabrics and wool are also included here. The allergic reaction of contact dermatitis is a life-long sensitivity, caused, for example, by contacts with certain metals (especially in jewellery and watch fastenings), adhesives, perfumes, latex and preservatives in toiletries.

So, what should conservators watch out for? Too much wetting and washing of hands; organic solvents, dyes, irritant dusts, preservatives, adhesives and friction.

What can be done about irritant dermatitis? Here comes the Catch 22 for those of us who actually work with our hands: avoidance of exposure to irritants and use of steroids and/or emollients, neither of which may be practical on a daily basis.

Dr Bashir suggested a non-detergent cleanser for washing the hands (Cetaphil); emulsifying ointment, aqueous cream and heavy emollients under gloves at night for moisturising. Shea butter is also recommended.

When handling solvents remember that many disposable gloves are solvent specific. They should also be replaced very frequently.

In questions from the audience, Dr Bashir recommended:

- where eyelids are affected by solvent fumes – use of full goggles, good extraction and avoidance of hand to eye transfer
- on glove use – ideally don't use a pair continuously for more than 30 minutes and remember that hands inside gloves heat up and sweat and this causes maceration of skin layers and increased permeability
- on stress as related to skin conditions - it can exacerbate but not cause them.

David Tatton explained that an osteopath may manually treat: muscle tension or spasm; strained joints or tendon sheaths; strained ligaments; poor lymphatic drainage and inflamed tissues. The aim is to relieve pain, stiffness and restricted movement and to improve mechanical and neuromuscular activity. Evaluating the treatment need is based upon observing the patient's movement and quality of breathing; the ergonomics of the workplace and especially of the motorcar.

We should all do our own risk assessments and consider such things as repetitive activities, sustained activities, lifting and sitting, in terms of how economically and correctly they are done. For instance, do you always bend your knees when lifting weights? When driving a car, the back and

breathing are adversely affected if your position at the wheel is poor with regard to weight bearing and distribution.

Conservators could consider rest/work ratio, table heights, lighting and task variability. There is much one can do in the way of self-help; for instance a 'vital stretch' routine and remembering to move about regularly, not holding a position for more than a half-hour without moving around. At the computer and the bench, get a good chair. Have your PC screen and keyboard set a little lower: it helps both neck and eyes. Keep your nutritional and fluid levels up and try not to carry on a task to the point of fatigue.

Good seating is vital but an expensive chair badly set up is counter-productive. Lots of sophisticated seating is available but get advice from specialists. Here David was able to recommend the websites of the Health and Safety directorate and www.backinaction.co.uk and www.thebackstore.co.uk.

Questions from the floor covered:

- working across a bench or sink: one cannot properly use the legs to brace in this position and so strain is put on the back muscles. These become fatigued and go into spasm because they are unable to cope with a quick change of movement when rising. Walk round the object if possible or turn the object round. Work shorter periods at one task.
- Yoga- is it useful? If done carefully and not allowed to overstrain the body.
- head and neck problems increasing with age and being obliged to work a good deal over a light box. A spinal twist movement from yoga could be helpful when sitting – hold it for ten breaths, then repeat the twist, turning the other way.

As the final speaker **Dorothea Magonet** explained, Alexander Technique is not easy to quantify. It is as much about learning a set of mind and skills as anything and is not a therapy as such. If you sit for two hours, you need to get up, stand tall, lengthen and broaden. It is a method to encourage psycho-physical re-education.

Alexander himself was an actor and the technique came from observing himself in a mirror, as he learned or rehearsed his lines. He realised that the Edwardian posture tended to exacerbate voice and breathing difficulties, so he experimented with ways to procure postural change which would help voice production.

Gradually, his techniques gained a following. Some of Alexander's postulates are, for example:

- We are a unity. What you think is what you achieve.

more reviews



- Correct use of balance affects more specific functions.
- Habitual 'learned' movements are valuable but one should be aware of tension habits
- We are not always aware of mannerisms. Sensory feedback mechanisms can become unreliable because, due to habits, we do not listen to them.

How to change?

- Stop shortening, narrowing and pulling-in, as a preliminary to action.
- We often over-react in our movements, so, pause, think and do not be governed by habitual reaction
- Primary control: pay attention to how you may go toward a reaction such as answering the telephone. Don't lunge; give direction to the core of the body and co-ordinate head, neck and back movement. Make a conscious decision to pause and stop a reflex action.

Working with an Alexander practitioner is usually a 'one to one' relationship and can be time-consuming. One learns and observes from simple movements such as sitting, standing or walking. It gives part solutions to lifting problems, for example, balancing rather than bracing. One learns to break often and avoid fatigue. It helps to recharge and rethink and the brain can re-orientate.

So, there was a packed evening of expert opinion, well-delivered. Much of it was commonsense; much of it bore upon practical issues and it all inter-reacted – that was increasingly apparent.

The message is: take care of yourselves,

conservators, you are at least as important as those items you attempt to conserve!

The event was sponsored by Secol Limited with thanks also to the British Library for loan of data presenter.

Judith Gowland

Immunologist and Independent Paper Conservator.

DELIVERING COLLECTION CARE NATIONWIDE

Developments in Scotland

Continuing the summaries of the Care of Collections Group sessions at its 2005 Annual meeting

The Scottish Museums Council (SMC) is the strategic agency and membership body for the non-national museum sector in Scotland representing 200 organisations and over 360 museums. It acts as the main channel for executive support and advice on local museums and provides members with professional information and services.

The main developments over the last year came about in anticipation of two specific events: a review of services to members following closure of the SMC Conservation Unit, and the rollout of the Accreditation Standard. The decision to shut the Conservation Unit was a difficult one but our commitment to advocating and supporting collections care and conservation is undiminished. What has changed is the means, outlined below, for delivering that support:

- Publishing guidance on basic preventive conservation and collections care – see especially the Fact and Advice sheets

available in paper format and on our website (www.scottishmuseums.org.uk). And a support pack of guidance on the Accreditation Scheme for members preparing for assessment.

- CAT and email forum – the Condition Assessment Tool is a computer software programme developed to help museum staff and volunteers better care for their collections. It can also provide evidence of a planned conservation programme; help to plan budgets and use resources more effectively, help monitor an object's progress; help users to brief contracted conservators more effectively and achieve consistency between surveys done by different conservators.
- Promoting networks and specialist groups. SMC has done much to promote the popular Preventive Conservation Forum (PCF) and also organises the Conservators' Network.
- Advise on preventive conservation and collections care advice, by assisting our members to ask the right questions so we can direct them quickly to the source they need.
- Advise on how to find and commission a conservator by helping members to use the Conservation Register and understand the steps required to brief and commission independent conservators.
- Training courses – in house and on-site on basic collections care and emergency planning.
- Grants for conservation work. A new two-tier system scheme with simpler requirements and shorter time scales for grants under £2,000 and a single 'large grants' award made annually.
- Preparing a Collections Development Strategy intended for publication in 2006, **Gillian Findlay**, Collections Development Officer, Scottish Museums Council

VISITS

MORE STUFF, MORE ACCESSIBLE TO MORE PEOPLE MORE EFFECTIVELY

National Railway Museum at York, May 2005

The National Railway Collection is Britain's largest single body of historic railway material. The Museum inherited significant collections, started in the late nineteenth century by some of the pre-grouping railway companies. Following nationalisation in 1948 these collections were drawn together under the Curator of Historical Relics. In 1975 the National Railway Museum took over the British Railways collection and

began to develop them to cover most areas of railway.

Today The Department of Knowledge and Collections, under Helen Ashby, is responsible for collections of locomotives, railway stock, railway infrastructure, tools of the trade, signalling, library, archive, pictorial and photographic collections, which are of interest not only to the railway enthusiasts and the general public but also to social historians.

The department was created in 2003 to create a 'one stop shop' for the information needs of users by developing and improving physical and intellectual access. Access is provided to actual visitors, virtual users using web based technologies, and remote visitors writing or telephoning in to the Museum.

The Museum has two stores for large and medium-sized objects, The Warehouse and a nearby secure store, together with Locomotion: The National Railway Museum at Shildon (County Durham), which opened last year.

The Warehouse was the first store of its type in the UK; it is open to the public at all times during normal museum opening hours and directly accessible from the main gallery space. It was clear from the reactions of visitors that they had casually entered the space but found it engaging. The low cost solutions deployed were impressive. Industrial racking has been modified by the addition of Perspex panels held in place with cable ties, and large flat items have been affixed to the perimeter walls. This provides basic protection against dust, handling and theft whilst enabling visitors to view large parts of the collections.

The Warehouse definitely looks and feels like a storage area rather than a display area. This is aided by the racking, which is aesthetically sympathetic to many of the items here, large location numbering and obvious labelling of the collection with their unique identification numbers. The labelling enables the casual visitor to ask object-specific questions of staff and through the availability of database print-outs and clear location information visitors can independently look for objects of interest.

We also visited the current archive storage on site, and heard in detail about the Search Engine Project. This project seeks to transform the current archival storage and reading room facilities not just physically but by changing the tradition of behind the scenes access. The public interface for the new project will be the NRM's Great Hall Balcony, which will house a large informal area that will allow people to drop in as part of their visit to the Museum. This area will



The Works

not only house information resources (books, digital resources, photographs, drawings, artworks, sound and video) but also the Railway Community Archive, which will allow visitors to add their story to the archive.

From here it will be possible to book tours of the archive. The current storage meets the basic needs of the Collection. By re-examining the allocation of space and thinking innovatively about how to accommodate large group visits and how to improve the level of collections care NRM have a clear plan of action.

All that the team need now is £1 million of funding, which they hope to secure from HLF this year. For more detailed information take a look online at:

<http://www.nrm.org.uk/html/searchengine/searchengine.asp>

The nearby secure store houses large and medium-sized collections. Here robust material was housed on open racking; more sensitive material was boxed or held in smaller side rooms.

The session ended with discussion which ranged from how volunteers are used to the NRM's approach to new acquisition. I feel confident that on behalf of the group as a whole I can offer Helen Ashby and her team a big 'thank you' for taking so much time out to spend with us all.

Gael Dundas
Care of Collections Group

Courtesy of the National Railway Museum, York

more reviews

COURSES

'THE PRESERVATION OF MEDIEVAL BOOKS: RECREATING THE STONYHURST GOSPEL'

August 2005, taught by Jim Bloxam and Kristine Rose

This practical course, taught in the picturesque medieval town of Montefiascone, had excited our bibliographic instincts, as our subject was to be the Northumbrian manuscript known as the St Cuthbert Gospel of St John. Also known as the Stonyhurst Gospel and ascribed to the late seventh century, it is reported to have been found in the coffin of St. Cuthbert who died in 687AD, and whose relics were elevated in 698AD, an event which was honoured by the production of the famous Lindisfarne Gospels.

The manuscript is preserved in the oldest surviving decorated European binding, and the fact that it still functions, even with its relatively minor damages, is testament to the elegance and strength of its structure. It is remarkably small in size, approximately 137mm x 95mm, and is uniquely decorated using an underlaid Celtic interlace pattern. The quality of the work is exquisite in its confident delicacy and exactness. Our tutors, Kristine Rose and Jim Bloxam, both from the University of Cambridge Library Conservation Department, had spent several hours observing the manuscript which is currently on loan to The British Library from the Society of Jesus

Its sewn structure is thought to derive from the Coptic Binding tradition as it is sewn with integral board attachment, with a link stitch using four threads, over four stations, sewn in 2 independent pairs using independent needles. This 'Coptic' method of sewing is renowned for its durability and long lasting flexibility, but it was also noted during the production of the facsimile that the strength and flexibility of the link stitch was maximised by the usage of four threads loosely woven together, instead of one thicker thread. This created a locking effect when the sections were 'kettle-stitched' together which provided an even tension throughout.

The intention was that we each gain an historical understanding of the structure and then produce a facsimile of it. We began with a review of the available studies on the manuscript and its historical comparators, in terms of structure, scriptural style and binding decoration. The book that we were about to imitate was clearly a work of art involving the highest levels of craftsmanship,



Jim Bloxam demonstrating the pasting out and covering technique to the group.

whose delicacy of decoration was second-to-none, and yet whose robustness and solidity of structure has miraculously survived the centuries in relatively sound condition. We then set about producing our facsimiles from the well-prepared materials packs, following the regular demonstrations from our tutors. The binding processes included sewing, board preparation, end-banding, covering, the replication of the 'blind-tooling' and the painted surface decoration.

Our group arrived with mixed abilities and interests, from as far flung locations as Sweden and Canada. We had calligraphers, a number of experienced book conservators, and binders with a fascination with medieval bibliography. We were able to learn a great deal from one another, appreciating each other's tools and techniques, as well as those of our tutors. Each member of the class managed to complete their facsimile in the allotted time and went away in awe of the skill taken to produce the actual manuscript binding.

We also had the opportunity to contribute towards the Montefiascone Project in a more direct way. Since 1988, groups of volunteer conservators have travelled to Montefiascone, in order to salvage, treat and maintain the collections of the Barbarigo Seminary Library. The programming of the work required to save this formally destitute collection is organised annually by Cheryl Porter, book conservator and pigment specialist. The internationally

renowned conservation courses that are run throughout July and August are provided in order to fund the work on this vulnerable, scholarly collection. Dedicated teams of conservators have contributed to the project every summer and over time have managed to stabilise the library by monitoring the environment via the production of detailed annual reports; basic treatment for the most damaged items; general housekeeping to improve the library conditions and providing supportive enclosures for the most vulnerable items.

This year the collections were being moved, as the section of the seminary buildings in which they are located is subject to a dangerous level of structural movement. Groups of qualified volunteers, headed by Bob Procter of the Fitzwilliam Museum, were efficiently marshalled into action as we moved the collection, in catalogued order, to the vacant seminary refectory. With good team work and efficient forward planning the move was completed within two weeks and it was our pleasure to have been able to give back to the project, in a small way, after having enjoyed our course so much.

Jackie Coppen and **Ann-Marie Miller**, British Library

Jackie.Coppen@bl.uk & Ann-Marie.Miller@bl.uk

For more information on the Montefiascone Project please go to: <http://www.monteproject.com/> or email cporter@monteproject.com

in practice

PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS TO NEW PROBLEMS: MAINTAINING CONTACT LENSES AT THE SCIENCE MUSEUM

A regular storage check within the Science Museum's Plastics collection revealed that a number of contact lenses stored in vials of saline solution had partially or wholly dried out. Desiccation has resulted in a variety of problems, including shrinkage, curling, embrittlement, salt crystal encrustation and adhesion to the glass vials. We decided that the lenses needed to be conserved and a program of ongoing maintenance should be put in place.

To formulate that strategy we consulted a range of stakeholders and experts, asking the following questions:

- What is the object? The lens only or also the sealed vial and solution?
- What is the significance of this object?
- Is desiccation harming the material structure of the lens?
- Is re-hydration advisable, or even possible?
- Can all of the museum's historical lenses be treated in the same way?

The decision reached in consultation with Susan Mossman, the curator of the Plastics collection, was that as part of a science museum's collection, rather than a design museum's, the significant aspect of the lenses is the polymer technology. The seal on the vials could be broken in order to clean and re-hydrate the lenses.

Andrew Gasson, contact lens practitioner and special advisor to the Contact Lens Collection of the Royal Society of Optometrists, invited us to his practice where he explained how to treat the lenses, the types of solution to store them in, and how to re-seal the vials. He agreed that the lenses should be stored in a hydrolysed state as they are more brittle and easily damaged when dry. Most of the lenses we have collected are 'soft' lenses made of HEMA (2-hydroxyethyl methacrylate) that are hydrophilic and re-hydrate within about an hour. He recommended Bausch & Lomb ReNu, a multi-purpose solution that can be used for cleaning and storing, as it contains dirt and protein removers and an anti-bacterial agent to prevent fungus growth.

We developed the process illustrated here to meet the Science Museum's conservation and curatorial requirements for the preservation of these objects.

Once conservation treatment has been completed, record the date treated and set up a reminder for the next monitoring date, in one year's time.

THE RE-HYDRATION PROCESS



- 1 The original foil sealing cap is broken, removed and retained in a labeled polythene bag



- 2 Bausch & Lomb ReNu solution is poured into the vial to dissolve the salt crystals that adhere the lens to vial. Agitate gently if necessary.



- 3 Once the lens can be removed, it can be cleaned in the palm of the hand with the solution. Remove any salt crystals.

Note: the lens may begin to wrinkle around the edges as it hydrates. This is normal and will not affect the lens adversely.



- 4 Clean the inside of the vial with distilled or deionised water to remove any salt crystals. Replace the lens in the vial and fill with ReNu. The lens will continue to hydrate.



- 5 Replace the original stopper. Cover with a new cap and crimp into place.

Note: The crimping tool may not create a perfectly round, even crimp. Some folding of the metal is not unusual and does not affect the seal.



- 6 Attach the original cap in its polythene bag by tying to the vial with PEL string.

Images of 1984-1524: Six Samples of cosmetic soft contact lenses, five coloured, one with black pupil, by Hydron, 1984.

more in practice

The treatment was successful. All lenses re-hydrated well, without signs of permanent distortion. It was noted that the blue and green coloured lenses had leached some pigmentation into the original saline solution. At the next monitoring session we will check to see if this degradation process is ongoing.

Even with the new, crimped seal on the vials, evaporation of the solution is likely to continue when the collection is returned to the stores. A monitoring program will begin annually, with the condition of the lenses updated on Mimsy XG, the collections database used by the Science Museum. This program of monitoring and re-hydration, when necessary, will also be extended to the objects on display in the Museum's galleries.

Fran David, Collections Care Assistant, the Science Museum
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Abigail Dickson, Conservator-Inorganics/Organics, the Science Museum
abigail.dickson@nmsi.ac.uk

Special thanks to Andrew Gasson, FCOptom, DCLP, FAAO, Contact Lens Practitioner, London.

For information about equipment, materials and suppliers please contact the authors

A SOLUTION FOR TRANSPORTING STAFF WEAPONS

The challenge

The Royal Armouries collection is located at three sites: Leeds, Fort Nelson near Portsmouth and the Tower of London. There are also a large number of loaned items at venues across the museum world. Because of the nature of the collection and the differing shapes and sizes of the objects, safe and secure transportation can be a challenge. The task was to transport over 300 staff weapons from the Tower of London to their new home at the Royal Armouries museum in Leeds, where they will be more accessible to the public as part of the study collection and will be kept in controlled environmental storage conditions.

The main issues in transporting these weapons were the sheer number of objects, their vulnerable nature due to their length and narrow diameter, and the great variety of their lengths and styles. In the past various methods of packing had been attempted. The preferred method involved layers of packing foam laid on the floor of a van with blankets stretched over it. The weapons were laid side by side with large gaps between them with more blankets over the top and more weapons being placed in the



spaces between the previous objects. This was a safe and adequate way to pack the objects but the whole floor space of the van was taken, leaving no room for anything else. Other methods were explored. Wooden crates and tubes were used but these proved difficult to use and bulky to store. The number of weapons that could be transported at any one time using these methods was also very limited and an inefficient use of staff time.

Solution

The transportation system needed to be quick, easy to use and constructed in-house. It also needed to fold away when not in use for ease of storage. A sword rack on display at the Tower of London provided an idea: its basic principle of an object being supported at various points along its length provided the solution.

Construction

Average length and diameter measurements were taken from the shafts of the staff weapons. For transportation purposes it was decided that the shafts were strong enough to be supported in three places with the more fragile objects being dealt with on an individual basis. A small mock-up was produced to test the new method. From a sheet of 25mm thick Plastozote, strips of 50mm wide were cut. A variety of the weapons were laid out on a flat surface and after some experimentation, regular 'V' shapes were cut into the strips 30mm wide and 30mm deep. These cuts were spaced with a 45mm gap between each 'V'. Two strips were cut in the same way, the weapons sit in the 'V' shapes and the second strip placed on top holds the weapons secure. This provided sufficient support for one layer of weapons but it soon became apparent that



Buildig the frame

further layers would add weight and pressure to the bottom layers because of the flexible nature of Plastozote. To combat this, 6mm thick strips of MDF were glued to the Plastozote strips. MDF was chosen because of its stable nature and availability. Although it usually has to be sealed in order to meet conservation standards, its use was justified because of the relatively short length of the journeys and the fact that it didn't come into direct contact with the objects.

Seven staff weapons could be supported in a 600mm length. The line of 'V' cuts below was offset, giving more room for the head of the weapons. As there were over 300 weapons to move, it was decided to try and build a rack to carry up to 49 at a time, seven layers of seven weapons. To save time measuring out each individual strip of Plastozote, a template was cut on a bandsaw from 6mm MDF, along with 48 strips of 25x50x600mm Plastozote. Using the MDF template 42 strips were cut with 'V' shapes, leaving six to be used as spacers for the top and bottom of the racks. MDF strips were cut and glued between two strips of Plastozote to give it extra strength. Three basic frames hold all the individual pieces together.

The frames were made from softwood and MDF. The softwood was cut slightly wider than the thickness of the Plastozote and cut to lengths to form a frame. MDF strips were then glued and nailed to form channels for the pieces to slide down. The top pieces of timber were left loose and were also cut to slide into the channel to hold all the other elements securely into the frames. In the end of each top piece is a wood screw, which has been brazed to a bolt. The bolt slides down two channels in the softwood, which were also cut on the bandsaw, and this enables the top piece to be held in place with a washer and a wing nut, giving strength to the complete frame. Small feet have then been added to allow each unit to stand upright whilst being loaded with the weapons. Once the frames are full, they can be secured to the inside of the van using simple straps and leaving plenty of room for other items to be transported.

A total of 325 staff weapons have been successfully moved from London to Leeds. It took only seven journeys, with no object casualties and has therefore cut the amount of staff time needed for the project. These frames have been a useful development in transporting these particular objects but they could be adapted quite easily for many other types of objects.

Andy Todd

Senior Display Technician
Royal Armouries Museum

PROTECTING THE TERRACOTTA ROUNDELS AT HAMPTON COURT PALACE FROM WINTER FROSTS

In 1521 Cardinal Thomas Wolsey commissioned eight terracotta roundels depicting the heads of Roman emperors to embellish the palace he was constructing at Hampton Court. Remarkably, most or all of these sculptures, by the Italian artist Giovanni da Maiano, continue to adorn the exterior of the palace. Although some of the roundels have been replaced, and others added, the originals remain the earliest English examples of figurative Renaissance sculpture employed as architectural ornament. This year Historic Royal Palaces have begun a long-term programme to research, record, analyse and protect the ten roundels mounted on the palace's walls.

The terracotta has suffered badly from almost five-hundred years' exposure to the elements and in many areas survives only in a fragile state. Our understanding of the sculptures as a set has also been complicated by a history of movement, repair and restoration. We are cautious about carrying out immediate holding repairs, as has been done in the past, due to the risk of introducing further problems. Instead we are researching and evaluating the options for conservation in detail, whilst attempting to protect the roundels from further frost damage this winter by means of

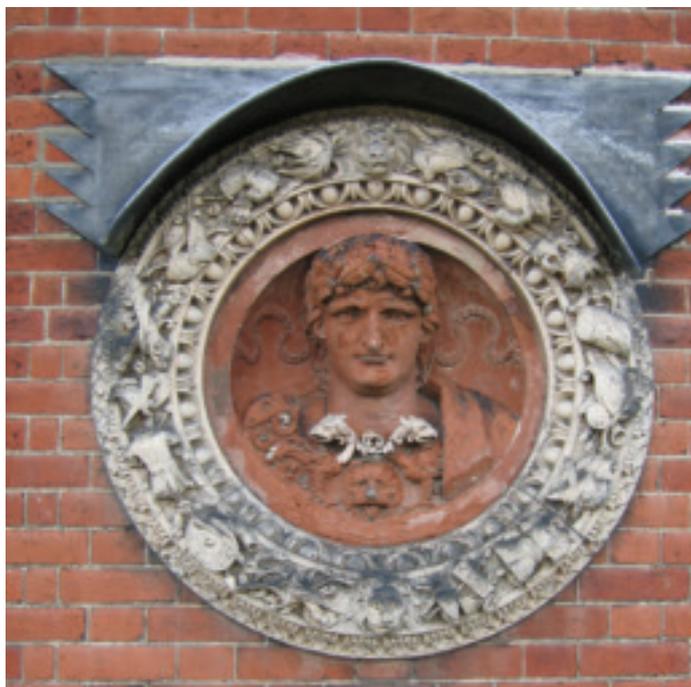
more in practice



Historic Royal Palaces / Kent Rawlinson

A geologist examines Hadrian

Nero, Hampton Court, West Front



Ingram Consultancy

temporary covers. These covers are manufactured of lightweight, but rigid, aluminium honeycomb board, which minimises the intrusion of fixings into the surrounding brickwork. The environmental conditions within these covers can also be continuously monitored.

3D laser scanning, together with high resolution digital photography, is being used to create virtual models of the roundels. These provide a remarkably detailed record of their current condition and will enable us to accurately monitor future deterioration. Traces of pigment remaining on the roundels are being sampled and will be analysed to inform our understanding of their original appearance and subsequent decorative schemes. Initial results confirm the application of gold-leaf, otherwise known from sixteenth-century documentary sources.

Over the next year or so, the results of our various avenues of research will allow us to evaluate the possible means of consolidating the roundels in the long term, both in situ, but also in an internal environment. The possibility of removing the roundels from the building, to ensure their long-term survival, whilst replacing them with replicas, needs to be actively considered as part of this process of research and evaluation.

The work is being carried out by a team of specialist conservators, curators, surveyors and scientists working for Historic Royal Palaces. Assisting us with this project are specialist staff from the Victoria and Albert Museum, West Dean College, the Ingram Consultancy, Dr Angela Geary (Option5), the Scan Team and Technical Resin Bonders.

Sophie Julien-Lees

Commissioned Treatments Supervisor
Historic Royal Palaces

Close-up of Nero's head showing black soiling and delamination of the terracotta



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listings

UCL Centre for Sustainable Heritage Evening Guest Lectures Programme 2006

Venue: UCL Campus, Bloomsbury, London.

12 January 2006: Jim Williams, Senior Programme Specialist for Culture, Chief of the Africa Unit in the Division of Cultural heritage, UNESCO

9 February 2006: Christian Manhart, Programme Specialist, Tangible Heritage Section, Operational Activities in Europe, Asia, Pacific, Division of Cultural Heritage, UNESCO

16 March 2006: Ian Campbell, Cultural Resources Specialist, Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development, The World Bank, Washington D.C.
Cost: free, 6pm start.

For information contact Sophia Mouzourouopoulos on s.mouzourouopoulos@ucl.ac.uk .

Metals in Paper 2nd International Iron Gall Ink Meeting

January, Newcastle upon Tyne

Venue: University of Northumbria
Visit www.miponline.org for more information.

DCMS Heritage and Public Value

25–26 January, London.

DCMS, HLF, English Heritage and the National Trust are planning a conference to explore current thinking on the value of heritage – in particular the application of ideas about Public Value. The conference will be of interest to people involved in policy and practice, in heritage research and in making the case for the value and benefits of heritage, as well as to people in other areas of the DCMS family such as arts or broadcasting who have been looking at ideas of Public Value. Details of the event and speakers have not yet been finalised. To register an interest please email mt Tyler@hlf.org.uk.

ICON BOOK AND PAPER GROUP

Simple Protective Folder and Box Construction

31 January, London.

Venue: The October Gallery, Londonia House, 24 Old Gloucester Road, Bloomsbury, London WC1N 3AL.
Speaker: Paul Cook, National Maritime Museum
After conservation treatment it is often advisable to

provide some level of transit protection or a storage enclosure for an item. For those conservators without access to mount cutting & box making equipment or technical assistance, it may be necessary to make some simple enclosure or container by hand. Although a large range of commercial products are now available, for the occasions where an item is a one off, of unusual size or makeup, or requires a very particular packaging solution, a simply constructed, easily made bespoke enclosure is usually possible.

Paul will illustrate with digital image sequences, simple demonstration and examples, some of the solutions, construction methods - and little craft tricks - that have been devised using paper, card and corrugated board to make enclosures for a wide variety of paper items that have passed through the paper conservation studio of the National Maritime Museum. Cost: £6 (students £3, with card) – correct money at the door please. 6pm.

European Science Foundation Heritage (Ideology, Politics, Culture)

20–22 February, Slovenia Academy of Sciences

For more details see Icon News 1

ICON PAINTINGS GROUP AND BAPCR: JOINT MEETING

Fundamentals of using Photoshop for digital photography

24 February, London

Venue: The Art Worker's Guild, 6 Queen Square, Bloomsbury, London, WC1N 3AT.

Rod Wynn-Powell, internationally renowned expert on Photoshop, has been at the forefront of digital photography for about twenty years during which time he has embraced more innovation and has achieved more than could possibly be reported here.

In this talk he will address some of the fundamentals of digital photography and the use of Photoshop, including: Resolution, Colour correction, and (in brief) colour management. If you want to hear once-for-all from a professional how to 'do it right', this is your chance!
Cost: Members of Icon & BAPCR: £10, Non-members: £15. Payable at the door 6.30 for 7.00 pm.

Weave Analysis Workshop

March, London

The 2-day workshop will also include an additional optional morning visit to a textile reference collection.
Cost: £75 and £25 for the optional visit.

For further information please contact Marilyn Leader, email: leadertextile@hotmail.com or tel: 0208 855 4672.

British Association of Paper Historians Spring Meeting

4 March, London

Venue: Institute for Historical Research in the Senate House.

Lectures and short talks on topics of interest to the membership. It is usually a very interesting and friendly

get-together, all welcome.

Further details can be obtained from Alan Crocker, email: alan@glfd.freemove.co.uk or Phil Crockett, email: phil.crockett@btopenworld.com

ICON CERAMICS AND GLASS GROUP

Challenges in Ceramics Conservation and AGM

24–26 March, Cardiff

Venues: Cardiff Castle, National Museums and Galleries of Wales and the Thistle Hotel.

Weekend of talks and tours including a private view of Cardiff Castle, which is currently undergoing major conservation, and visits to the stores and Conservation Department at Cardiff Castle. The AGM will take place on Sunday.

For more information, contact Alex Patchett-Joyce on email: APatchett9@aol.com or Ros Hodges on email: roshodges@waitrose.com

ICON TEXTILE GROUP FORUM

Tapestry Conservation

24 April, London.

Venue: The Clothworkers' Hall, London.

The Textile Group's first forum is timed to coincide with the publication of *Tapestry Conservation: Principles and Practice* and recent research projects.

Contact Sung-Hyun Im at the Textile Conservation Centre, University of Southampton, tel: 02380 597100, fax: 02380 597101, email: si1@soton.ac.uk

Third International Conference Preservation and Conservation Issues Related to Digital Printing and Digital Photography

24–25 April, London

See Icon News 1, web: <http://conferences.iop.org/PPP/>

ICON CERAMICS AND GLASS GROUP

New CVMA Guidelines for the Conservation & Protection of Stained Glass

27 April, York

Venue: Kings Manor, York Conference Park
Conference to discuss the theory and principles of the new CVMA guidelines illustrated with a selection of case studies.

Contact Derek Hunt, Limelight Studios Ltd, Crown House, Main Street, Medbourne, Leicestershire LE16 8DT or email: derek@limelightstudios.co.uk for more information.

ICON ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP

Archaeological Block-Lifting Conference

Late Spring, London.

Call for Papers

Deadline: 31 January.

If you have recently been on-site block-lifting finds we need to hear from you. Share your knowledge and experiences with fellow conservators. Communicate with archaeological colleagues about your contribution to the archaeological record. Papers need to be pragmatic solutions to on-site problems. Detailed explanations of the processes and procedures. The papers need to address planning for the lift, information about the chemicals and equipment used; including health and safety data and numerous slides to demonstrate the processes. All papers to be published.

More information can be obtained by contacting Claire Heywood c/o The British Museum, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3DG or email: cheywood@thebritishmuseum.ac.uk.

CAC 32nd Annual Conference and Workshop Workshop: Risk Management for Cultural Institutions and Collections

15–19 May, Toronto

See Icon News 1 for further details

The Getty Conservation Institute, the National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C., and Tate Symposium – Modern Paints Uncovered

16–19 May, London

Venue: Tate Modern, Bankside, London.

Call for Papers and Posters.

Speakers are invited to submit proposals that address the conservation concerns and challenges of modern paint media.

Further information and directives for proposal submissions are available at:

www.getty.edu/conservation/science/modpaints/mpu.htm

ICON METALS SECTION

Big-Day-Out in Greenwich

17 May, London

This is a special opportunity to view the progress of the Cutty Sark Project at Greenwich which is an huge conservation undertaking to tackle the problems caused by a combination of seawater, metal, wood and unsuitable past restoration treatments. Cost: £10, lunch not included (but a very good pub nearby!). Other activities will be included in the day but at time of going to press these are yet to be confirmed so please contact George Monger, email: geomcons@tinyworld.co.uk tel: 0144 9677900 or Lucy Branch, email: lucy@antiquebronze.co.uk tel: 0208 340 0931 for a full itinerary.

ICON HISTORIC INTERIORS GROUP**Conference: 'Searching for hidden treasures': Interpreting the evidence of historic interiors**

20 May, Cambridge

Venue: Corpus Christi College, Cambridge CB2 1RH
Fundamental to any successful conservation or re-presentation project is a full understanding of the significance of the subject to be treated. This conference will focus on the interpretation of evidence relating to historic interiors. Through case studies and discussion, papers will present the various archaeological, analytical and archival resources available to unravel the history and development of interiors. Techniques for the in situ assessment and recording of physical evidence, the recognition of important archive sources and the selection of relevant analytical research will be illustrated. Papers will also demonstrate how the information gathered from broad based research may be used as a basis for understanding current condition and how it may then be taken forward as an aid to conservation and accurate reconstruction programmes. Encouraging team-working and good communication between specialist disciplines is a key aim of the Historic Interiors Group. Therefore it is hoped that the conference will be of interest to a broad range of professionals actively involved with historic interiors.

For further details please contact Mette de Hamel, Events Organiser, email:

mdehamel@btinternet.com or tel: 020 7622 1620.

Caring for God's Acre**Cherishing Churchyards**

23-24 May, Ludlow

Churchyards often contain a diversity of historic features such as churchyard crosses, lychgates and memorials as well as grassland plants and old trees. The conference will offer a series of interactive lectures covering aspects of churchyard interest such as flora and fauna, archaeology, family history, tourism, lifelong learning and churchyard management. Speakers include Dr David Bellamy.

There will be site visits to conservation churchyards in South Shropshire and Herefordshire, a series of discussion workshops on issues around churchyard management and a chance for people to network and share experience. Cost: charitable and voluntary organisations £75, others £125

For further enquiries or to register, contact Caring for God's Acre, 6 West Street, Leominster, Herefordshire HR6 8ES. tel: 01568 611154, email: info@cfga.fsnet.co.uk, web: www.caringforgodsacre.co.uk

AHRC Research Centre for Textile Conservation and Textile Studies**3rd Annual Conference: Textiles and Text: Re-establishing the links between archival and object-based research**

11-13 July, Winchester

Venue: The Winchester Campus of the University of Southampton.

Focus on the interrelationship between archival and bibliographic research and the study of extant objects. The full programme and other details will be posted on www.soton.ac.uk/~contex.

The cost will be in the region of £100. To reserve a place on the conference please contact The Conference Secretariat, Textile Conservation Centre, University of Southampton, Park Avenue, Winchester, Hants SO23 8DL. email: contex@soton.ac.uk

Call for Papers

Deadline: 31 January.

Papers will be 20 minutes long and there will be time for questions. Please submit your abstract either as hard copy to Christine Bennett, Textile Conservation Centre, University of Southampton, Park Avenue, Winchester, Hampshire, SO23 8DL or by email to C.G.Bennett@soton.ac.uk.

ICON BOOK AND PAPER GROUP**IPC 5th Annual Conference**

26-29 July, Edinburgh

The conference will mark and celebrate 30 years of conservation achievement incorporating a programme designed to address the broad range of interests within the profession and looking forward with the new challenges of the age. With contributions from leading institutions and private conservators worldwide.

Early bird booking deadline 31 January.

Booking forms and full details on the conference, venue and recommended hotels can be found on the following websites: IPC (www.ipc.org.uk – then click on heading "noticeboard") or Icon

(www.instituteofconservation.org.uk – then click link "IPC 5th International Conference: 2006"). All further enquiries to The Institute of Paper Conservation, Conference secretariat, PO Box 143, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 9AT, tel: +44 (0) 1435 883659. email:

ipc@instituteofconservation.org.uk

IIC international Congress**The Object in Context: Crossing Conservation Boundaries**

4 – 8 September, Munich

For details see: www.iiconservation.org

3rd Triennial Conservation Conference at Northumbria University The Alum Meeting

11–13 September, Newcastle upon Tyne

Venue: Northumbria University.
See issue 1

Contact Jean E. Brown Senior Lecturer Conservation, Burt Hall, Northumbria University, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8ST. Tel: 0191 227 3331, fax: 0191 227 3250, email: jean.brown@unn.ac.uk

ICON TEXTILE GROUP

Study Trip to India

November

There are a few places left for the trip to India. For details, or to reserve a place, contact Janie Lightfoot, Textile Conservation Restoration Studio, 21 Park Parade, London NW10 4JG. Tel: 0208 963 1532, Fax: 0208 963 1623, email: janie@janielightfoot.co.uk .

DATES AND DEADLINES

QEST Scholarships

Application deadline: 20 January

The Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust offers scholarships to fund further study, training and practical experience for craftsmen and women who want to improve their craft and trade skills.

Scholarships are awarded twice a year. Completed forms for spring 2006 Scholarships must be received not later than 20 January. For details go to: <http://www.instituteofconservation.org.uk/1105/06/>

Royal College of Art/Victoria and Albert Museum Conservation, Post-graduate training and research

Application deadline: 13 February

RCA/V&A Conservation offers MA, MPhil and PhD degrees in a range of specialist areas. Applications are currently invited for entry to the programme in the academic year 2006/2007 as follows: MA studentships – 2 years full-time. The places listed are based in the institutions indicated: MA Conservation of European Portrait Miniatures (V&A); MA Conservation of Textiles (V&A – 2 or 3 years depending on experience). Further areas of MA study may be announced.

We also offer in-post MAs for conservation professionals. Please see our website for details: http://www.rca.ac.uk/pages/study/new_inpost_ma_for_2286.html

Research studentships – MPhil research programmes are for a minimum of 2 years full-time or the equivalent part-time. PhD research programmes are for a minimum of 3 years full-time or the equivalent part-time.

RCA/V&A Conservation aims to support research in three

broad subject areas: Materials and Practice in Art; Historical, Social, and Artistic Contexts for Conservation; Decision Contexts for Conservation. We welcome enquiries about these and will also consider novel research proposals from individuals. In addition, we are offering an opportunity to undertake research towards MPhil Conservation of Friable Surfaces on Paper (V&A). Potential applicants are encouraged to visit our website and to contact the Programme:

Joanna Baden, RCA/V&A Conservation Department Administrator, School of Humanities, Royal College of Art, Kensington Gore, London SW7 2EU. tel: +44 20 7590 4532, fax: +44 20 7590 4490, email: conservation@rca.ac.uk, web: <http://www.rca.ac.uk/>

The Clore Leadership Programme 2006/2007 Fellowships

Application deadline: 21 February

From 11 January 2006, potential cultural leaders are being invited to submit applications for 2006/2007 fellowships on the Clore Leadership Programme. The Programme is designed to help develop the knowledge, skills, networks and experience of potential leaders across a wide range of cultural activity. Each fellow will have an individually tailored programme, lasting at least a year, from September 2006.

The general fellowships are sponsored by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) along with Arts Council England, the Clore Duffield Foundation and NESTA. MLA is also funding the specialist Archives Fellowship and joint funding two Libraries Fellowships with the Laser Foundation.

The closing date for applications is 21 February 2006. You can apply online at www.cloreleadership.org or receive a brochure by writing to The Clore Leadership Programme, South Building, Somerset House, Strand, LONDON, WC2R 1LA

ICON CERAMICS AND GLASS GROUP

Nigel Williams Prize 2006

Deadline: 1 June

Applications are invited for this prestigious award for the best conservation/restoration of an object or of a project in ceramic, glass or a related material, which has to have been completed within four years prior to each award year. This is inclusive of research regarding materials/tools used in conservation. The scale of the project is not a deciding factor.

Students and individuals or collaborating conservator-restorers who are working in the public or independent sectors in the UK or abroad are eligible to apply. Applicants must be paid up members of the Ceramics and Glass Group of Icon (in part formerly UKIC). For an application form and the full description of conditions please contact either Ros Hodges, Chair of The Ceramics & Glass Group of Icon, or the current Nigel Williams Prize co-ordinator, Brett James, email brett.james@sarahpeek.co.uk or tel: 01273 243744

TRAINING

English Heritage and the UCL Centre Safeguarding Historic Collections for Sustainable Heritage Short Course

22 – 26 January, Essex

Conservation Housekeeping; a comprehensive knowledge of housekeeping principles using the historic rooms and collections at Audley End House, Essex. For further information and to book, contact Sophia Mouzouropoulos, Short Course Co-ordinator, UCL Centre for Sustainable Heritage, tel: 020 7679 5903, email: s.mouzouropoulos@ucl.ac.uk

PROFESSIONAL ACCREDITATION FOR CONSERVATOR-RESTORERS (PACR) EVENTS

Introduction to Mentoring

22 March, London

Venue: Conference Room, Icon office, London
10.30 – 16.30

This PACR event is designed to support a formal mentoring scheme for PACR.

It is aimed at PACR accredited members who are interested in becoming a mentor. It will provide an overview about mentoring, based on the 'Mentoring Toolkit' that was piloted in June 2003 by members of the Museums Association, CILIP, the Society of Archivists and PACR. Each participant will receive a copy of the toolkit. By the end of the session participants will understand the principles of mentoring, have identified the key skills involved, be able to identify personal development needs related to being an effective mentor, be able to make an informed decision about their role in mentoring and be able to relate mentoring to current developments in the professions.

PACR Clinics

April

March – Manchester – date to be confirmed

4 April – London

5 April – Oxford

26 April – Edinburgh

Half-day event. Clinics are aimed at potential PACR candidates who are working towards the next application deadline 10 June 2006. This event will support candidates with their PACR application, address any queries and provide a useful insight to the accreditation process.
Cost: Free

Introduction to CPD

April – May

27 April – Historic Scotland, Edinburgh
16 May – Conference Room, Icon office, London
Half day event. To provide participants with a basic understanding of CPD and practical help with personal development plans. Cost: Free

For information on any of these events please contact Susan Bradshaw, PACR Training Officer on email: susan.bradshaw@pacr.org.uk or tel/fax 01626 824510.

To reserve a place please complete the PACR event form available on www.pacr.org.uk or contact Diane Copley on tel. 0207 785 3805

10% DISCOUNT TO ICON MEMBERS

Courses at West Dean College

January–March

22–27 January Conservation of archaeological ceramics (PC5602) Fully inclusive residential fee £675 Non-residential fee £500

6–9 February Conservation and repair of brick, terracotta and flint masonry (BC3D84) Fully inclusive residential fee: £515 Non-residential fee: £410

19–24 February Introduction to the conservation of transport collections (PC5603) Fully inclusive residential fee £675 Non-residential fee £500

27 February – 2 March Conservation and repair of architectural metalwork (BC3D85) Fully inclusive residential fee: £515 Non-residential fee: £410

13–16 March Specifying conservation works (BC3D86) Fully inclusive residential fee: £515 Non-residential fee: £410

27–31 March Art and object handling (PC5604) Fully inclusive residential fee £550 Non-residential fee £410

For full information about all of the above courses please contact Liz Campbell, Administrator, tel: 01243 818219, or email: liz.campbell@westdean.org.uk

Florence Art Gilding and Decorative Painting Courses

Classes are held in a restoration studio in the old artisan district in the centre of Florence, Italy, or at the Villa of Maiano overlooking Florence.

Spring 2006

6–13 May: Six day Intro gilding plus intro decorative painting combination course at the Villa of Maiano, €1490 (full days including accommodation)

15–19 May: Five Day intro gilding, €550 (am in Florence)

15–19 May: Five day advanced gilding with real gold leaf, €650 (pm in Florence)

Autumn 2006

23–29 September: Six day Intro gilding plus intro decorative painting combination course at the Villa of Maiano, €1490 (full days including accommodation)

For more information see www.florenceart.net/courses or tel: +390 557 879 097

intervention

And another thing!

By Mark Jones, Director, Victoria and Albert Museum

Conservators are lovely people who do a great job, and museums could hardly survive without them. And some of the behaviours and received ideas listed here are not shared by sensible conservators. But they are too widespread and too damaging to be left unchallenged.

1 'Conservation is good for objects'.

A few years ago I attended a conservation award ceremony at which the distinguished speaker said 'I look forward to the day when every object in our great collections will be regularly conserved.' The view that conservation is like housekeeping: to be done regularly so that everything is in apple-pie order is pernicious nonsense.

Conservation can be necessary to save objects from decay, but all conservation destroys some evidence of the object's history and it is rare to see 'regularly conserved' in a sale catalogue as an inducement to the buyer.

2 'That was then. Nowadays all treatments are reversible.'

All generations seem to believe that while their predecessors were fallible they and their peer group are not. This is a hypothesis which has so far been 100% wrong. Now would be a good time to abandon it.

3 Imposing conditions on others that we do not observe ourselves.

How many museums impose conditions on loans that they do not observe themselves? And still worse, how many impose conditions for display that they do not achieve in their stores? Too many. We should be more pragmatic and realistic, that way we can increase public access to and enjoyment of the collections.

4 Fear of natural light.

How often have I heard it said that a gallery cannot have natural light because it contains light sensitive objects? This is, of course, nonsense. Galleries can easily be designed to admit natural light and allow views of the outside world without raising overall light levels. Most people like natural light: it makes the experience of visiting museums more enjoyable and it is the best light in which to see objects. Funnily enough the ban on natural light is suspended for conservation studios which are normally flooded with it.

5 The 50 lux rule. And the 18°- 25° rule. And the 45% - 55% RH rule.

When will we stop using these standards as a substitute for explaining the reality: that all light does damage and that 8 hours display at 50 lux will do the

same amount of damage as 4 hours at 100 lux; that objects do not 'need a rest', as I often hear, nor will they recover if they get one; that 18°C is a temperature that has no significance for objects, most of which would be better preserved at lower temperature, but which is convenient for people. And so on.

7 Respecting the history of objects

Too often the fact that an object has survived perfectly well in a set of conditions that do not conform to the general norms is simply ignored.

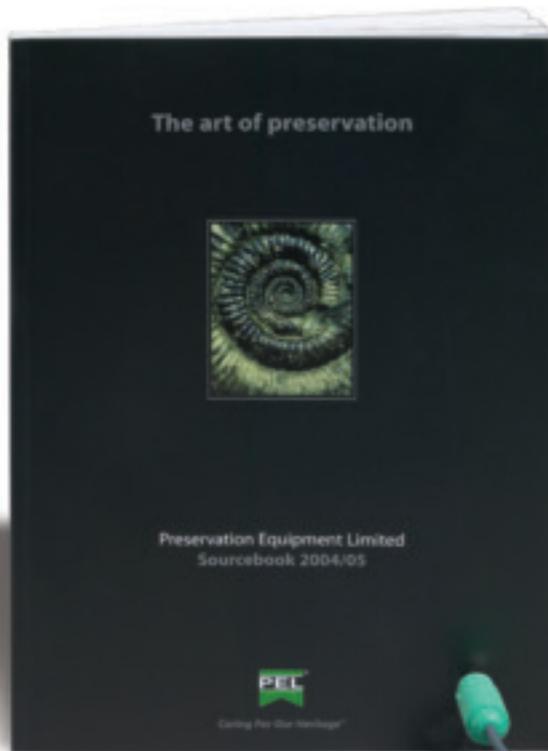
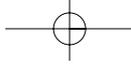
8 Respecting the expertise of others.

I remember being assured, when I worked in the British Museum, that a bronze medal which had been stripped and repatinated looked exactly as it had done before, as though that were an expert judgement, not to be challenged. But it didn't. I have often been told that silver was always meant to be bright. But it wasn't. If you go to the 'Three Emperors' exhibition at the RA you can see two scrolls which meticulously represent the Imperial collection as it was in the 18c. The bronzes have the verdigris patination so highly prized by Chinese collectors. But the bronze on display (from a British collection) does not. A shame really.

8 'Green' in small things but not in large.

Individuals who work in museums are often environmentally aware. But the profession as a whole is responsible for appalling waste. Museums and stores have been routinely provided with close environmental controls at great cost (carbon as well as financial) both in manufacture and cyclical renewal, and in the power needed to run them. These systems override natural conditions and, when they break down as they inevitably do, expose objects to more extreme change than they would encounter in unconditioned spaces. Passive buffering combined with minimal intervention, where necessary, can achieve the slow rates of change which, combined with conditioned cases for vulnerable material, are all that is needed for preservation. If conservators wanted to be 'green' they would challenge, not connive at, the demand for ever more plant and ever closer control.

Thank you for letting me get that off my chest.



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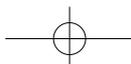
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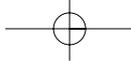
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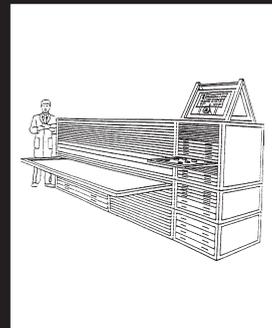
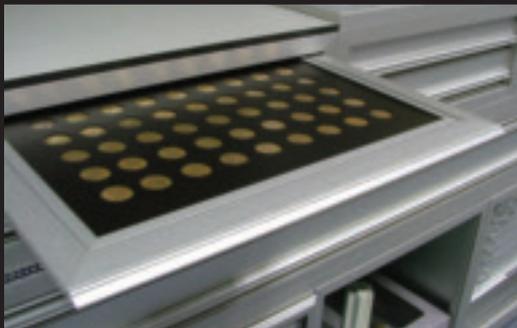
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