

### EDITORIAL

The Editorial Committee has been gratified by the number of submissions received for *Technical Notes* and the *Information Exchange*. We believe that these sections meet several of our primary goals, namely expanding the lines of communication between conservators and those in related professions and disseminating information on current research. The increased volume of contributions for these sections seems to confirm that you, the subscriber also find these sections to be of keen interest. It is pleasing to see that articles included in these sections are encouraging interest overseas, resulting in research reports like that on *Archival Xerographic Copying* being forwarded to us from Canada (see *Information Exchange*) and requests from *Abbey Newsletter* to publish Cheryl Jackson's report on "research ... into the permanence of fax papers" (June 1989 issue no. 31).

The newsletter seems to be ever expanding, to the point where we now have to ruthlessly cut back on some sections and actually edit! We would be interested to hear your views on future content of the newsletter, whether you would like to see any sections expanded, reduced, deleted or added. We believe that the membership would be better served with six (6) bimonthly newsletters, as this would overcome problems in sections which become out of date rapidly, like *Conferences and Seminars* and the all important *Positions Vacant*. Unfortunately, at this stage, funding for two extra newsletters per annum is unfeasible. Furthermore, work commitments for the members of this editorial committee do not encourage any additional workload! Again, we'd be interested in feedback on this issue.

Finally, on a note of regret, we have to farewell our Honorary President, Robert Wilmot, who has accepted the position of Curator of Conservation for the Hong Kong Museums.

Robert has been an enthusiastic President, maintaining the high standards set by his predecessor, Dr Colin Pearson and bringing to fruition many long term projects. Important issues achieved under Robert's leadership include:

- A strategic and corporate plan for the AICCM (still to be completed, but well underway).
- Guidelines for selecting a commercial conservator (now being printed).
- Membership of CAMA.
- Clarification of working groups and subcommittees.
- Clear plans for the National Conferences in 1990 and 1991.
- The establishment of an **Exhibitions Working Group** and a successful grant application for a National Co-ordinator to develop National Exhibition standards.
- Establishment of a publicity, promotions and fundraising group.

Robert's optimism and enthusiasm will be sorely missed.

The Editorial Committee.

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### AICCM NOTICES

#### **AICCM National Conference Launceston, Tasmania 1990**

##### **So Where Does The AICCM Fit In The Wider Community?**

The conference to be held in Tasmania has two main objectives: to investigate the role of conservation in the wider community and to coalesce and catalyse the specialist working groups. It is hoped that case studies and student papers will also be presented. The specialist working groups have been approached to hold their sessions on August 13. To date, we have received positive responses from the following groups: Private Conservators, Archival Paper Action Group, and Regional Conservation. Unfortunately, the Preservation of Outdoor Sites Working Group will not be meeting because of lack of interest by AICCM members. Could members reconsider their commitment to this group as this group is particularly relevant to our conference theme. Responses from other working groups would be appreciated.

Listed below are suggested topics for papers. Please regard the list as just that: suggestions. Feedback on the topics, expressions of interest, and possible topics and speakers would be appreciated.

##### **Proposed topics:**

1. Are our conservation practices environmentally sound?  
Bob Brown  
Lab Practice  
Museum Environment  
Properties of conservation materials and their manufacture  
Plan of action  
Is it always necessary to use archival papers?
2. Conservation in the Marketplace  
Interrelationship with dealers and auctioneers  
Contractual services guidelines: selection criteria and fee for services
3. Conservation and Heritage  
National Trust  
National Sites and Monuments  
Gap between the Contemporary and Historical Museums  
Cama Proposals
4. Our role in the international network  
Recent representations and reports
5. Poster Session Discussion
6. Student Papers

Replies to Therese Mulford, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Wellington Street, Launceston, Tasmania.

#### **AICCM Bulletin Vol. 15**

As mentioned in Newsletter No. 30, the 1989 Bulletin editions will be concentrating on the achievements in conservation in the Bicentennial Year. Due to popular demand, we have decided to broaden the coverage from only technical papers to general conservation events.

We hope, as a result, that the volume will serve as a broad record of what we were all up to last year. If any contributors have not yet notified us of articles to be submitted, however short, would they please do so as soon as possible. The official copy deadline is 29 September 1989.

Julian Bickersteth  
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AICCM Bulletin  
Campbell Conservation Pty Ltd  
20 Barcoo Street  
Roseville NSW 2069

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I am responding to your call for opinions on Professional Accreditation (Newsletter No. 31, June 1989). I hold the strong view that **all** persons – with or without formal qualifications – must apply for membership and fulfill the same requirements. No person should be automatically eligible, whatever their qualifications or experiences are. Formal qualifications do not necessarily make a good conservator nor do long years of experience. Every person applying for professional membership should have to submit the same supporting evidence together with their application. This will eliminate discrimination and at the same time give professional membership of the AICCM a greater international reputation, integrity and a considerable professional standing both within Australia and overseas. Membership have selected the Accreditation Panel to make an informed and fair choice and this cannot be done without relevant evidence. On the other hand I also feel strongly that there must be an avenue open for appeal for which a separate and, so to speak, neutral panel with different members should be established.\*

Ulli Broeze-Hoernemann  
Textiles Conservator  
W.A. Maritime Museum

### \*Editor's Note

This point has been covered under point 6 in the "Criteria for Professional Membership of AICCM", printed in the *AICCM National Newsletter No. 28*, September 1988, (p.3).

## PEOPLE AND PROJECTS

### WESTERN AUSTRALIA

#### Art Gallery of WA

John Olive recently returned from 2½ weeks in Egypt with artefacts from 'Gold of the Pharaohs'. The time was reputedly spent completing a lot of hard and very hot (45°C) work.

#### WA Museum

Two interns have commenced work in the Materials Conservation Department. Orlando Abinon, from the Philippines on a UNESCO fellowship, is to spend 12 months researching the conservation of waterlogged organic materials. In particular he will be examining the use of PEG 4000 for consolidating seriously degraded wood, and the effects of PEG 400 on the removal of iron corrosion products from waterlogged wood.

Stephano Pennec has just arrived from Paris where he has been conserving metal objects at the Jalectra Laboratory from 'Electricite de France'. He will be conserving modern aluminium alloys in a remote controlled observation vehicle and studying the electrochemistry of 'bronze disease' in a series of nineteenth century copper alloys from shipwrecks.

Regional Museums Survey: Sarah Murphy (Local Museums Co-ordinator) is continuing a survey of the needs of regional museums with visits to Kununurra, Derby, Port Hedland and other northern towns. Brad Manera (Travelling Curator) is surveying all officially recognised regional museums in WA.

#### Museum of WA Sport

Despite a tremendous amount of support and positive feedback for the Museum, its fate is unresolved. Efforts to secure sponsorship are still without success. A progress report is being submitted to the Ministry for Sport and Recreation in an endeavour to receive more funds until a sponsor is found.

#### State Library Service

Doug Firth, who recently returned from the USA where he attended a workshop on Medieval Book Technology, has resigned to set up his own business.

Allison Holland is taking leave to spend a few months in Canberra working with Kerry McInnis.

## NEW SOUTH WALES

### Campbell Conservation

Deborah Barratt and Jane Maguire, both English trained paper conservators, have joined Campbell Conservation in a part time capacity. Jane has been working on a series of posters for the NSW Department of Health, which has encouraged all staff to brush their teeth regularly.

Holly Le Breton, a second year student from CCAE, was working with Campbell's during July.

### State Library of NSW

The Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) brought its part of the three year bicentennial conservation project, 'Conservation on the Move', to a climax on 3 August 1989. The event took place during a conference sponsored jointly with the State Library of NSW in the new Macquarie Street building.

This conference, 'Conservation on the Move'... onward to 2001, brought together library administrators, librarians, conservators and other interested participants. Dr Jan Lyall, NLA, presented a report on UK, USA and Canadian national library preservation activities and the way we might go in Australia. Jan together with Janine Schmidt, SLNSW, introduced an in-depth report they had prepared for ACLIS (Australian Council of Libraries and Information Services), "Preserving Australia's Documentary Heritage".

Visits to the library's conservation facilities, where many varieties of preservation techniques were displayed, were included in the program. Speakers covered community preservation case studies; a segment on permanent paper; a thorough comparison of microfilm, paper and machine readable records; discussion about conservation in-put into library and archives professional training.

Finally Alison Crook, NSW State Librarian, announced a new community service, "Conservation Access", to be operated from the library. This service will be directed by Alan Howell, Manager of the library's Preservation Department, and co-ordinated by Helen Price, ALIA bicentennial conservator for the past three years. It aims to solve conservation problems for individuals and groups, businesses and professions, government and private sectors by running monthly conservation clinics, carrying out environmental surveys, repairing paper based materials, providing speakers and carrying out house visits.

## AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

### Australian Archives, ACT Regional Office

Stage I of Archives' new repository will officially open this month. It will form part of a 4 module complex to be built over coming years. Conservators have been working towards creating as stable an environment in the repository as possible.

Jennifer Lloyd and Robyn Lowe have completed contracts at the Archives, Jennifer having been working on the most important items from a series of 19th century survey maps of the N.T., and Robyn having seen to the packaging and protective arrangement of previously unidentified exhibits of copyright applications, including manuscripts and posters.

Jane Hinwood, in her final year at the CCAE, is using some of Archives' holdings of architectural drawings as the raw material for her double project.

Susu Nousala has returned to the department after successfully completing the two year National Diploma in Paper Conservation at the London Institute, Camberwell College of Arts.

Cheryl Jackson has been spotlighted by the Australian media after her report on the impermanence of fax papers was picked up by a local public service newspaper. Numerous interviews with journalists from newspapers, television networks and radio stations should help get the message – that fax papers have almost no long term permanence – to a large number of people.

## **Australian National Gallery**

### **Textile Conservation Workshop:**

From 18-24 July, Micheline and Debbie were in Jakarta, sponsored by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, to conduct a week of lectures and a week's workshop on all aspects of textile conservation. In the first week, two students from the CCAE, Debbie Spoehr and Cate Harley, helped Micheline set up the laboratory and storage area in preparation for the workshop while Debbie was lecturing.

Among the participants – predominantly male – some had attended a workshop given by Kerry Head in May 1988, and so had an understanding of basic conservation principles; for others it was a first encounter. The workshop highlighted some differences between the perceptions of Western and Indonesian cultures to textile crafts. Attitudes to traditional items in collections which are still commercially available and hence generally seen as expendable or replaceable, also had to be overcome. While an interpreter was sometimes available, nuances of meaning were inevitably lost.

Workshop participants came from 18 different schools in the Jakarta region and were very enthusiastic. It is hoped that an Indonesian Regional Conservation Centre will ultimately be established to help ameliorate the present difficulties in obtaining regular basic supplies. In any case, it would be interesting to return to Jakarta next year to assess the longer term benefits of the workshop.

### **Staff:**

Erica Burgess has commenced work as Exhibitions Conservator. Mark Durr is leaving the Gallery to join ACT Administration, City Engineer's Dept. as Conservator of monuments, sculpture and artworks. Trevor Hoyne passed through Frankfurt for the third time in ten months, couriering artworks.

### **Australian Archives, Central Office: Film Preservation Services**

Australian Archives is establishing a film preservation unit which will modernise current practices for film maintenance and preservation and will ensure cost efficiency. The unit will service the Archives' own film holdings and make the facilities available to outside clients.

The film preservation unit will consist of film cleaning facilities and the Film Conditioning Apparatus (FICA), a system developed by the Swedish Film Institute.

The proposed film cleaning process is chemical, utilising the locally manufactured 'MATELA' machine and the film cleaning solvent 'GENCLEN' – 1,1,1 Trichloroethane.

The FICA consists of three components:

- i) film rewinder which provides low tension rewinding
- ii) film conditioning cabinet which dehumidifies film to the required moisture content for cold storage and preservation and
- iii) film vacuum sealer which seals film hermetically in a vapour tight bag.

Once a film is processed through the FICA it can be subjected to any external level and fluctuation of relative humidity and any other adverse environmental factors (such as air pollutants, water, etc.) without damage to the film. The conditioning of the film and the evacuation of air from the bag eliminate risk of moisture condensation on the film in case of sudden changes in ambient temperature. The exclusion of oxygen, moisture and other atmospheric factors retards both existing and future deterioration.

Services offered by the Australian Archives Film Preservation Unit will enable adequate maintenance, archival storage and preservation of film. Thus, they reduce high investment and maintenance costs of these operations by eliminating the need for:

- low temperature vaults and/or air conditioning systems with automatically controlled temperature and relative humidity

- air filtration and circulation systems required to prevent entry of air pollutants and contaminants
- special packaging materials such as inert plastic containers required for housing of film.

Adequate and inexpensive maintenance of film, its long term preservation and archival storage can be easily achieved by providing only a cold storage environment (preferably below 0°C) without concern for humidity levels. This could, for example, be achieved by use of commercial freezers.

It is anticipated that these services will be available at the beginning of next financial year. Inquiries about the services should be directed to:

The Director  
Storage and Preservation  
Australian Archives  
P.O. Box 34  
DICKSON ACT 2602  
(062) 433 927

## **Canberra CAE**

The unit Advanced Conservation of Paintings 1.6 at the Canberra CAE has held a program involving guest speakers this year. For a review refer to news from the Paintings Working Group.

## **Australian War Memorial**

Conservators have just prepared over eighty works on paper for an exhibition 'Art in Action'. Special framing was required for oversized works, one measuring 3 x 1.5m.

The exhibition gives insight into the studies and preparation for commemorative works, including painting and sculpture, by various artists commissioned for the War Memorial. Included are Napier Waller's drawings and cartoons for a mosaic in the Hall of Memory.

## **TASMANIA**

Members of the AICCM Tasmanian Division recently visited two properties which were originally owned by the Van Diemens Land Company and settled in the late 1820s.

The first, 'Highfield' (1827), is now an Historic Site under the management of the Department of Lands, Parks and Wildlife. Work to date has included restoration of outbuildings and stables, landscaping, re-establishment of fence lines and structural work on the exterior of the main house.

'Woolnorth' (1829) is still owned by the VDL Company. Conservator of the Cook's Cottage on the property is being done by Mike Chambers of the Restorers Workshop. The project is being funded by the Company. Work is entering its final phase; the main structure is completed and work is in progress on plastering, rendering and finishing. Mike is planning to present a paper on the 'Woolnorth' project at the 1990 AICCM Conference in Launceston. Both 'Highfield' and 'Woolnorth' projects have been aided by access to extensive early company records, many of which are held by State Archives.

## **Microanalytical Support Packages**

Hyperscan, a division of Tas Uni Research in association with the University of Tasmania and the Launceston College of TAFE, is offering a new analytical package which is designed to support the work of conserving cultural artefacts in Australian museums and art galleries. Seven services are available, three for the identification of materials, three for chemical analyses which provide quantitative data on the elemental composition of constituents within a sample, and one for photomicrography of a sample (or part thereof) either as a back scattered electron image or as a major-element distribution image.

For general enquiries about these service packages, contact Dr Ewan Reid, Scientist-in-charge, Hyperscan, Tas Uni Research, GPO Box 252C Hobart, Tas 7001, Tel (003) 315 191 direct or (002) 202 048, Fax (002) 238 318.

## VICTORIA

No submissions for the Newsletter were received from the Victorian Division of the AICCM this quarter. We can only assume the membership is preoccupied with preparations for the National Conference to be held in Melbourne later this month.

## QUEENSLAND

### Queensland Museum

The Conservation Department at the Museum has recently been joined by Dr Don McKenzie. Don's background is in inorganic chemistry. He has held positions in three English Universities and at the Chemistry Department at the University of Queensland. At the Museum, Don will be working mainly on the History and Technology collection.

Christine Ianna has taken unpaid leave for six months to commence her Master's degree in metals conservation at the Canberra CAE.

Rowena Hill is continuing the arduous task of conserving and packing 260 Aboriginal artefacts for loan to the Prefectural Museum in Saitama, Japan. The exhibition will also feature items from the Museum's History and Technology collection, including a 12 ton steam traction engine. No conservator will be accompanying the loan material to Japan.

### Queensland Art Gallery

Gillian Osmond has returned from an exhausting but very satisfying world tour of art galleries, museums and, in the United Kingdom, New York and Los Angeles, conservation departments.

In London she participated in a workshop being given by Richard Wolbers at the Courtauld Institute of Art titled 'Recent Developments in the Cleaning of Paintings'. It was interesting to see how comments from conservators who had attended previous workshops had influenced Richard and possibly changed the emphasis of his instruction from that reported by John Payne in 1988. Significantly, problems that had been encountered during cleaning or in the process of clearing cleaning formulations, prompted a thorough coverage of the role of individual components in the various systems and their activity in relation to one another as well as with the surfaces to be cleaned. It became increasingly obvious that a thorough knowledge of the chemistry involved is essential for effective practice. Gillian intends to present an update on the new cleaning techniques at the Paintings Conservation Group Symposium in Albury in November.

Since her return, Gillian has also been investigating the potential applications of computer imagery to the enhancement of infrared photographs and to X-radiographs of paintings. For further details refer to 'Technical Notes'.

Meanwhile, Tamara Lavrencic is in Abiquiu attending a Book and Paper Intensive workshop. She has taken over many case studies of works currently awaiting conservation at the Gallery to discuss treatment options.

## SOUTH AUSTRALIA

### State Conservation Centre of SA

Sarah Slade has recently been to Los Angeles to pack the 'Dreamings' exhibition of Aboriginal Art and to courier the exhibition back to Australia. Dreamings has been touring the U.S. to New York, Chicago and Los Angeles; it will be shown at the National Gallery of Victoria and the South Australian Museum on its return.

Robert Wilmot will be leaving the SCC in September to take up a post as Curator of Conservation, Head of Conservation Science at the Urban Sciences Museum, Hong Kong.

## INTERNATIONAL

### Parylene at the Canadian Conservation Institute

The February issue of the CCI Newsletter contains an article titled 'Parylene at CCI', from which the following information has been extracted.

Parylene is a trade name of the Union Carbide Corporation for polyparaxylene. It is a polymer which is synthesised in a unique way by direct deposition on a substrate, from which derives its use in conservation as a stable coating or consolidant.

CCI has been applying the Parylene Process to the treatment of cone and leaf mat fossils too fragile for normal liquid consolidation. The Parylene Process involves placing objects to be treated in a vacuum. Parylene dimer is heated to the point at which it dissociates to form active molecules which polymerise or link up with each other to form a clear film when they come into contact with any surface. Since this process takes place in the gas phase, at a molecular level, the coating conforms to the microscopic surface. Thus Parylene has some degree of penetration in porous objects.

CCI is participating in a study of Parylene as a conservation technique. To date, numerous kinds of specimens have been treated including fossils, books and paper, textiles, insects and crustacea. It is planned to carry out a long term evaluation of the stability of Parylene.

For more information about Parylene or if you are interested in participating in the CCI trial, contact Cliff McCawley or David Grattan, CCI, 1030 Innes Road, Ottawa, Canada K1A 0C8 Tel (613) 998 3721, Fax (613) 998 4721.

### Conservation Information Network

A UK Support Service for gaining access to the Conservation Information Network is now available. It is run jointly by The Conservation Unit and the Museum Documentation Association (MDA) in close collaboration with the Network User Services.

In addition to subscription to the Network, it is now possible to send search requests to The Conservation Unit. They will charge for Network usage time.

For organisations intending to subscribe, both the Unit and the MDA offer a help desk service. The MDA will answer all technical enquiries about selection and purchase of equipment and on the use of the Network. The Unit will offer advice on how to use the Network, on good search strategies and on any non technical problems in getting results.

The MDA and the Unit can also put subscribers in touch with one another. A benefit of the Network is its electronic mailing system - ENVOY 100. This can be used to send messages simultaneously to any other subscriber(s) to the Network anywhere in the world.

For further information contact:

Peter Winsor, Information Officer  
The Conservation Unit  
Museums & Galleries Commission  
7 St James's Square  
London SW1Y 4JU  
Tel (01) 839 9340  
Electronic Mail Address: CIN CU

### The Getty Conservation Institute

Research in Progress: Sol Gel Technology Used to Study Stone Consolidants.

The Getty Conservation Institute Newsletter Vol. IV, No.2, Spring 1989, reports that sol-gel technology is being used to study selected stone consolidants in a GCI sponsored research project. The current study is examining the advantages and problems of combining two conventional consolidants, silane esters and acrylic resins.

For information, contact Charles Selwitz, The GCI, 4503 Glencoe Avenue, Marina del Rey CA90292-6537 USA Tel (213) 822 2299.

## INFORMATION EXCHANGE

### Requests

#### Colour laser copies

Tamara Lavrencic of the Queensland Art Gallery is investigating methods for mounting a work by a Queensland artist, Pat Hoffie, titled *Pleasures of the Periphery*. The work consists of 16 overlapping colour laser copies, arranged four by four. Initial trials have failed due to the paper's sensitivity to moisture, causing it to expand by up to 3mm per print if lined, and inducing localised cockling if hinged using a starch paste. A silicone finish on the paper creates further problems to adhesion when heat set adhesives are used, and has a tendency to soften and off-set if temperatures above 80°C are used.

These features would tend to rule out most reversible methods of mounting. A contact adhesive in sheet form manufactured by 3M, #568, Positionable Mounting Adhesive has been suggested, but no research has been undertaken into its ageing properties.

If anyone has any information, advice, words of sympathy etc regarding the 3M product, lightfastness of the pigments used in the Canon colour laser copy process, or alternative methods for displaying the described work, please contact one harried, and not-so-silently desperate conservator, Tamara Lavrencic, at the Queensland Art Gallery, P.O. Box 686, South Brisbane Q. 4101, telephone (07) 840 7296. Eternal gratitude guaranteed!

### Submissions

#### Archival Xerographic Copying

R. Scott Williams, conservation scientist, at the Canadian Conservation Institute, has thoughtfully forwarded us a copy of a report titled *Archival Xerographic Copying*, prepared by Sylvia Subt and John Koloski (US Govt. Printing Office) for National Archives and Record Administration (August 25, 1987).

The report outlines a study which aimed to "recommend a simple, 'on-site' test for determining the fuse quality or adhesion of the image onto the paper". Experimentation showed that a 'tape pull' test using 3M #230 Drafting Tape correlated very well with results of the ASTM D3458, Part 24, "Retention of Print Contrast After Abrasion" quantitative laboratory copy evaluation test method.

The report includes a clear description of the xerographic process, the composition of toners and carriers, discussion on the degradation and stabilization of toner materials, and experimental data on the test methods used.

Conclusions drawn from the study are quoted as follows:

1. Accelerated aging using heat is unsuitable for combination studies of paper and toner. Heat tends to set the toner onto the paper more. If using heat to fix the toner more tightly on a questionable copy, it should be noted that heat degrades the paper properties. That is, the strength properties tend to decrease when using heat accelerated aging techniques. Perhaps aging at ambient temperatures using various concentrations of oxygen would prove useful.
2. Even though the results shown have not been as clear cut as desired, the tape peel test is recommended as an on-site copy evaluation technique.
3. The toner is the more stable of the paper - toner pair. Carbon blacks used in toners should be further investigated to determine if the particle size, concentration, degree of dispersion, and bound oxygen or sulphur are sufficient to inhibit degradation. Only toners containing carbon blacks should be used.
4. Keep the copier machine well maintained. In particular, the copier should operate at the optimum temperature to ensure the toner will melt properly and flow into and around the cellulose fibres.

5. Blocking was not studied but should be a concern based on practical observations made during the aging studies on xerographic copies. Polymers typically found in toners slowly diffuse onto other sheets of paper if left in contact with each other, especially if pressure is applied. This phenomenon also indicates that image adhesion would most likely increase with aging; that is, toners continue to slowly diffuse into the sheet. Copies should not be stacked to avoid the blocking phenomenon, especially at elevated temperatures. Also, copies allowed to be in contact with vinyl or plastic materials such as notebook covers, etc. that contain plasticizer can solubilize the toner.
6. Finally, of the fourteen copying systems examined, twelve systems had mixed "pass and fail" results on each of the copy evaluation procedures. Panasonic FP 3002 consistently failed all the tests, while the Kodak Ektaprint 85 system passed all the tests."

Copies of the report are available from Tamara Lavrencic, Queensland Art Gallery, P.O. Box 686, South Brisbane, Qld 4101.

#### Performance Indicators

Ian MacLeod, Head, Materials Conservation Department at the WA Maritime Museum tabled a report on performance indicators at the last council meeting based on information collected from the Australian Archives Central office, the National Museum of Australia and the State Library of Victoria. That report and Ian's evaluation of the responses received since its circulation are summarised here.

**Introduction:** A trend is developing in public institutions whereby departments are being made more accountable. (Editor's note: For conservators, this can generally be considered unfortunate as the very nature of our work defies assessment by systems designed for administrative positions.) To date, the simplest form of performance measurement has been where the number of reports written and the number of objects treated are tallied; since many objects of a similar kind can be treated in the same time that it takes to determine the nature of a single complex problem, conservators that opt for easy jobs will appear to have superior performance levels. It is essential for the development of our profession that proper recognition be given to the value of complex and time consuming tasks of assessment, research, refinement, treatment and documentation.

**Degrees of Difficulty:** One approach to improving methods for assessing performance is to grade conservation tasks according to the degree of complexity. It is suggested that conservators within an autonomous institution prepare their own guide as to degree of difficulty. However for Commonwealth institutions such as Archives, a regional meeting of all conservators could be called to establish an agreed scale.

**Time Units:** To calculate a total 'job score', the degree of difficulty is matched with a time factor. Time can be drawn up in units to suit the individual needs of a conservation department. To keep a balance between time spent on documenting activities and real work time on objects, a suitable unit may be half days or days. In areas where multiple treatments are common, time units as low as an hour may be more practical.

**Total Time:** Alternatively, total time can be used directly as the job score, operating on the assumption that a complex job will take longer to complete than a simple one. At the WA Museum Conservation Department, total time is considered a reasonable guide of the amount of real effort put into servicing the needs of client departments.

**Conclusion:** Conservators faced with having to rate performance should not be assessed on the same basis as administrative personnel. Only a system that accounts for the variability of our work and the investment of time that is necessary to research and implement new or complex treatments, will be satisfying for staff and provide administrators with an accurate guide of performance.

## TECHNICAL NOTES

### Ageless Oxygen Scavenger

Many of the materials from which museum objects are prepared deteriorate or corrode as a direct consequence of the presence of atmospheric oxygen and moisture. Attempts to prevent this deterioration during storage or display have concentrated primarily upon the removal of moisture given that zero oxygen concentrations are difficult to achieve and maintain. As a consequence, attempts at preserving museum objects by removing all atmospheric oxygen have been largely confined to the treatment of extremely important historical artifacts such as Australia's copy of the Magna Carta at Parliament House in Canberra which is displayed under argon.

In recent years, however, the possibility of storing or displaying museum objects under low oxygen conditions has been reconsidered in light of the development of new materials for constructing air tight cases or structures. The failure of existing conservation measures to stabilize many museum objects has also given impetus to this approach. In general, recent attempts at preserving museum objects under zero oxygen conditions have sought to displace all air by purging the case or storage container with an inert gas, such as nitrogen (1-4). The construction of such air-tight structures, however, is often prohibitively expensive and time-consuming. In addition, purging with nitrogen requires costly apparatus if it is to be undertaken properly. A far more simple means of generating and monitoring low oxygen atmospheres is required. One method whereby this may be achieved both simply and economically is through the use of oxygen scavengers which have recently found application in the food industry as an alternative to conventional vacuum packaging and nitrogen purging techniques for extending the shelf life of food products.

One of the most widely employed oxygen scavengers is marketed by the Mitsubishi Gas Chemical Company of Japan under the trade name of AGELESS. It is described as a chemical oxygen scavenger prepared from an "active" iron oxide which is rapidly oxidized to iron oxides and hydroxides in the presence of atmospheric oxygen. According to the manufacturer, AGELESS will reduce the oxygen concentration in a sealed bag or container to less than 0.01% and will maintain this concentration indefinitely depending upon the oxygen permeability of the packaging material. It is marketed as an alternative to nitrogen gas packaging for a wide range of food stuffs and is described as a safe means of inhibiting aerobic microorganism growth, the oxidation of fats and oils and as a means of killing insects.

AGELESS is packaged in small sachets of varying size depending upon the amount of oxygen to be scavenged. Different types of AGELESS are also available depending upon the water activity of the product to be preserved. AGELESS-Z is recommended for the preservation of dry food products possessing a water activity of 0.85 or less and can be used with a desiccant. AGELESS-S is suitable for food products possessing a water activity of 0.65 or more. AGELESS-FX is recommended for moist foods possessing a water activity of 0.85 or more. Various types of AGELESS also absorb (AGELESS-E) and evolve (AGELESS-G) carbon dioxide.

For use in conjunction with AGELESS the Mitsubishi Gas Chemical Company also markets a product referred to as AGELESS-EYE. It is described as an oxygen indicator and is used as a simple, qualitative test for determining the presence or absence of oxygen. The active component is methylene blue, an oxidation-reduction indicator. It is manufactured in tablet form and slowly changes colour in the absence (pink) or presence of oxygen (blue). The indicator gradually turns pink in the absence of oxygen (<0.1%) over a 2-3 hour period. In the presence of oxygen (>0.5%) it turns blue almost immediately.

The oxygen scavenging properties described in the above for AGELESS-Z have been confirmed by this author (5). AGELESS-Z was enclosed in a plastic bag prepared from a high barrier laminate (p.v.d.c. coated biaxially oriented nylon) sealed on all four edges using a conventional heat-sealing apparatus.

The relative humidity inside the bag was controlled by the addition of silica gel. The oxygen concentration was reduced from approximately 21% to less than 0.05% after 24 hours at 0%, 50% and 70% RH. The oxygen sorption rate of AGELESS-Z increased with relative humidity. At room temperature and 70% RH the oxygen concentration was 8.2, 0.8, 0.2 and <0.05% after 1, 4, 8 and 24 hours, respectively. At room temperature and 50% RH the oxygen concentration was 12.5, 1.7, 0.3 and <0.05% after 1, 4, 8 and 24 hours, respectively. At room temperature and 0% RH the oxygen concentration was 15.6, 3.2, 1.7 and <0.05% after 1, 4, 8 and 24 hours, respectively.

The AGELESS-EYE oxygen indicator gradually changed colour from blue to pink as the oxygen concentration was reduced. At low relative humidity, however, methylene blue is a poor oxidation-reduction indicator and at 0% RH the AGELESS-EYE failed to turn pink even after prolonged exposure to deoxygenated conditions.

The use of AGELESS has a number of implications for materials conservation. In the short term AGELESS would be ideal for the preservation of freshly excavated archaeological material. Provided the appropriate packaging material is selected, AGELESS could also be used for the long term preservation of various oxygen sensitive materials in museum collections such as rubber and many of the modern plastics as well as various geological and biological specimens. At present, this author is investigating the application of AGELESS as an alternative to conventional fumigation techniques for the control of insect pests in museum collections.

Further information regarding AGELESS may be obtained from Swift Watts Winter and Co., 85 Egerton St, Silverwater, NSW (02) 741 9333.

### References:

1. Born, H., 'Bergung und aufbewahrung als wichtige konservierungsvoraussetzung bei metallfunden', *Arbeitsblaetter fuer restauratoren*, 2 (1982) 54-61.
2. Anon., 'A good cheap way to store microfilm', *Abbey Newsletter*, 10, No. 2 (1986).
3. Grattan, D., 'The conservation of a rare World War I stamp cancellation device: coping with the deterioration of rubber', *Journal of the International Institute for Conservation-Canadian Group*, 8-9 (1983-1984) 8-12.
4. Byrne, R., 'An Easter Island effigy figure display case', *Preprints of the ICOM 7th Triennial Meeting*, ICOM, Copenhagen, 1984, 10-14.
5. Gilberg, M., unpublished results.

Dr Mark Gilberg  
Scientific Officer  
Materials Conservation Division  
The Australian Museum  
P.O. Box A 285  
Sydney South NSW 2000

### Compressor for pamphlet boxes

The Alexander Turnbull Library, a division of the National Library of New Zealand, has a large collection of pamphlet material housed in pamphlet boxes. Although the pamphlet box offers limited protection for its contents, its one major disadvantage is the lack of support for loose material when the box is not full. This allows papers to sag and become misshapen causing unnecessary damage, also loosely packed pamphlets may easily fall out when the box is being moved. (This was a major consideration with the impending move of the collections from their location on The Terrace to a temporary storage area for up to one year before the final move into the new National Library building in 1987).

The Serials Librarian asked the Conservation Unit to provide a means by which loose pamphlets might be supported while still allowing easy access to the contents of a box; it would also be necessary to file additional copies with ease. A pamphlet box compressor was the result (Figure 1). Its design is extremely simple yet effective yet I am not aware of this method having been used before. Therefore, I hope the idea may be of use to readers.

The compressor and support are made from 3mm thick 'Dan-plate', a chemically inert polypropylene fluted plastic sheet. It consists of two parts, a supporting board to prevent limp pamphlets flopping over the cut away corner (this would not be a necessary consideration if pamphlet boxes were produced with one corner uncut). The second board forming the compressor is creased at the base to form a concertina fold; when this is placed in the box it expands thereby compressing the contents. Because all the pressure is at the base, the top of the compressor can easily be pulled back to insert or retrieve pamphlets.

If a more rigid support is found to be necessary the board can be creased at both ends and inserted sideways; this will produce a more constant overall pressure, but will reduce ease of access.

Pamphlet box compressors are now produced by Display Promotion Ltd., 429 High Street, Lower Hutt, New Zealand.

O.A. Clarke

Conservation Technician

National Library of New Zealand

Wellington, New Zealand

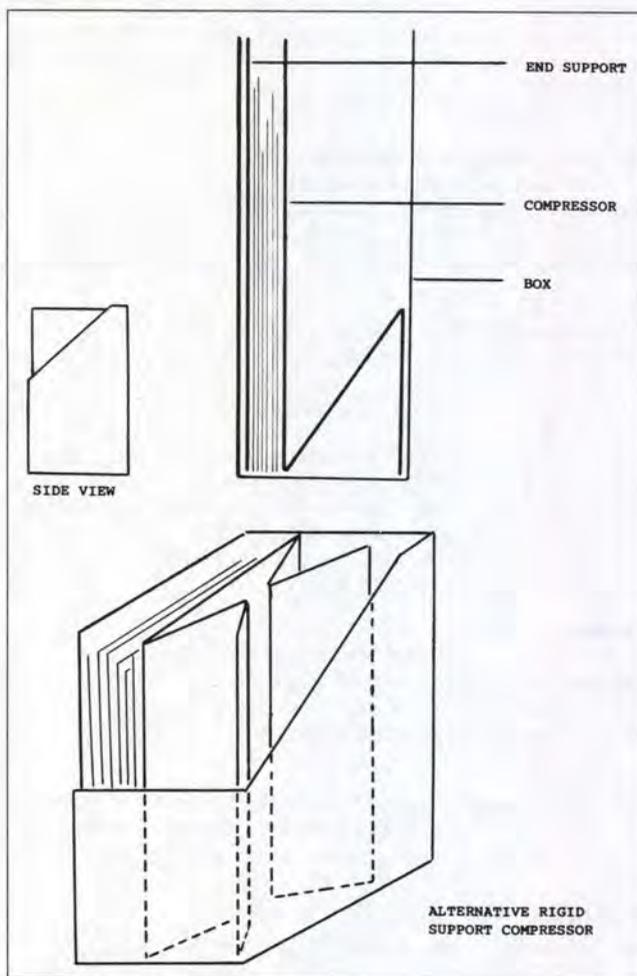


Figure 1 Pamphlet box compressor

### Digital Image Enhancement

Following on from a recent meeting of the Queensland AICCM Division at the Queensland Museum, 12 July 1989, 'Computer Imagery: Its Use in Conservation', potential applications of the technique to the enhancement of infrared reflected and transmitted photographs and to X-radiographs of paintings are being investigated at the Queensland Art Gallery.

To date, Mr Kevin McDougall from the University of Queensland, who presented the lecture, in collaboration with Mike Rowland, field and research archaeologist for State Community Services Department, Queensland, has been using computer imagery to enhance deteriorated rock art.

The system functions by converting photographs, slides or video tapes into digital images which a micro computer program can analyse, separate and enhance.

After a recent meeting with Mr McDougall, it seems possible that details (which are not necessarily visible or distinct using standard printing processes) may be extractable from infrared photographs and X-rays of paintings using computer imagery. There are some problems, however, which must first be overcome. These include:

- i) the examination of large paintings which require multiple sheets of X-ray film to cover the surface; currently, the system can only be used to convert A4 size images, but the scanning of individual X-radiographs from a large composition is impractical\*.
- ii) the processing of standard infrared photographs and X-rays which are recorded in black and white; image enhancement is more effective when applied to colour images where contrasts in hue can be manipulated.

\* If each scan represents only a small section of an image, overall trends of the investigation may be difficult to ascertain. Image conversion is also an expensive process, so the fewer scans that need to be made, the less costly the exercise will be.

Ideas conservators at the Queensland Art Gallery and Kevin McDougall intend to pursue include:

- i) making contact prints of X-rays and assembling these to form a complete image which can be photographed; the photograph can then be used as a source for the computer.
- ii) colour infrared photography.

As a test case, a painting measuring approximately 1m x 1.5m is to be examined. For a work of this size, insufficient detail will be captured if the image is recorded on a single negative. Therefore, it is proposed that the area be photographed in quarters for initial scanning; these sections will then be combined as necessary within the computer for processing. Precautions for achieving as even an exposure as possible over the area will need to be taken.

It is hoped that techniques of digital image enhancement will enable more information to be extracted from forms of technical examination than has previously been possible.

Gillian Osmond.

### Observations on the Packing of Paintings, Great Australian Art Exhibition

The Great Australian Art Exhibition of our bicentennial year provided a rare opportunity to assess the performance of packing techniques used on a large number of paintings travelling to multiple venues. The exhibition was one in which several types of commercial fixtures were used to secure works into travelling frames, and where some attempts to minimise vibrations through those fixtures with rubber washers were made.

The Art Gallery of South Australia was the final venue for this exhibition. At that time an assessment of the packing was conducted by E. Graves, a member of the Installation Team. The following is a summary of his report.

Packing was generally excellent. OZ clips (brass, square hanging type) and OCKER clips (or DOOVER, plastic single piece, not hinged) used in combination with travelling frames have revolutionised methods for packing paintings in Australia. However packing systems could be refined further, according to the following recommendations.

1. **Crates:** standard size hexagonal bolts to be used by all State Galleries and by major crate makers for easy replacement and so that time and expense will be reduced with use of an established socket size.
2. **Anti-vibration aids:** washers on OZ and OCKER clips to be abandoned or redesigned so that (i) the use of spanners or pliers is not necessary to tighten wing nuts in the reduced area available; (ii) they are larger and more readily handled.

3. **OZ Clips:** redesign the OZ clip hanging device or restrict its use to light weight works. Current limitations include distortion of the square ring under heavy loads and difficulties with swinging the device in and out when non countersunk screws had been used to secure the bracket. Use of a triangular hanging device, for superior strength, was suggested.
4. **OCKER Clips:** emphasise that the clips be positioned splayed to prevent any possibility of works riding up on travelling frames.
5. **Screws:** use phillips head screws in preference to slotted screws to reduce the chances of slipping near art works.
6. **Travelling frames:** ensure sufficient space is provided between the frame and the work to avoid rubbing during handling. Slightly undersize holes for bolts in the frames to avoid displacement and time wasting during removal. Also, use bolts of the largest diameter to fit snugly through the OZ clips and with the largest possible wing nuts to facilitate easy removal; consider more carefully the length of the bolts too.

## **FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS**

### **Australia**

#### **MAA National Conference:**

**Museums Towards Tomorrow – Serving the Future Public, 25-28 October 1989, Melbourne University, Victoria.**

In association with this conference, a Workshop in Museum Management has been approved by the National Arts Industry Training Committee. To be held on 29 October 1989, this is designed to serve the needs of between 20 and 30 museum workers who have not previously had access to formal courses in professional training. For information contact MAA Victorian Branch, c/- Ministry for the Arts, Private Bag No. 1, City Road Post Office, Vic 3205.

#### **1989 AICCM Paintings Conservation Group Symposium 16-17 November 1989, Albury City Art Gallery, NSW.**

The Regional Galleries Association of NSW Ltd., in conjunction with the Albury City Art Gallery are hosting this symposium. For information contact Stewart Laidler, Regional Galleries Association of NSW Ltd., Art Gallery of NSW, Art Gallery Road, Sydney NSW 2000, or Allan Byrne, Cultural Heritage Science Division, School of Applied Science, Canberra CAE, P.O. Box 1 Belconnen ACT 2616.

#### **AICCM National Conference:**

**The AICCM in the Wider Community, 14-17 August 1990, Launceston, Tasmania.**

Topics proposed for inclusion in this meeting are conservation practices, conservation in the marketplace and general AICCM issues. For comments contact Therese Mulford, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Wellington Street, Launceston Tasmania.

### **International**

#### **Current Problems in the Conservation of Metal Antiquities:**

13th International Symposium on the Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Property, 4-6 October 1989, Tokyo Japan.

This symposium will focus on rust stabilisation. For information contact Ms Y. Hoh, Secretary, Tokyo National Research Institute of Cultural Properties, 13-27 Ueno Park, Taito-ku, Tokyo 110, Japan. Fax 03 (828) 2434.

#### **Tapestry Symposium in Honour of Joseph Columbus, 10 October 1989, National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.**

Presentations will include recent research by colleagues from North America and Western Europe from the field of tapestry history and conservation. For information contact Mary Ashton, DCL Textiles, National Gallery of Art, 6th and Constitution, Washington DC 20565. Tel. (202) 842 6432.

#### **Nehru Memorial Seminar on Conservation of Wall Paintings, 23-25 October 1989, Lucknow, India.**

This seminar, at the National Research Laboratory for Conservation of Cultural Property, is organised for professionals from South and SE Asia. For details contact The Director, National Research Laboratory of Conservation of Cultural Property, E/3 Aliganj Scheme, Lucknow 226020 India.

#### **Oxalate Films: Origin and Significance in the Conservation of Works of Art, 25-26 October, Milan Italy.**

Organised by the Centre 'Gino Bozza' for the conservation of works of art, together with the Politecnico di Milano, this symposium will be held at the Centre Congressi CARIPLLO in Milan. For information contact Dr Giovanna Alessandrini, Centre CNR 'Gino Bozza', p. Leonardo da Vinci 32, 201 33 Milan, Italy. Fax (02) 2399 2206.

#### **Shared Responsibility:**

#### **A Seminar for Curators and Conservators, 25-27 October 1989, Ottawa, Canada.**

Co-hosted by the National Gallery of Canada and the Canadian Conservation Institute, this seminar is intended to be a forum for the exchange of ideas concerning works of art both traditional and contemporary. For information contact Marion Barclay, Restoration and Conservation Laboratory, National Gallery of Canada, 380 Sussex Drive Ottawa Ontario K1N 9N4 Canada. Tel (613) 990 1941.

#### **International Technical Conference on Structural Conservation of Stone Masonry: Diagnosis, Repair and Reinforcing, 31 October-3 November 1989, Athens, Greece.**

For further information contact the Ministry of Culture, Direction of Restoration of Byzantine and Post Byzantine Monuments, 10 Karytsi Square, GR 105 61 Athens, Greece.

#### **Supports for Works of Art, 2-3 November 1989 Paris, France.**

For details contact the Association des Restaurateurs d'Art et d'Archeologie de Formation Universitaire (ARAAFU), Colloque 89, 7 rue Nollet 75017 Paris, France.

#### **Ethnographic Conservation Meeting, 2-3 November 1989, British Museum, London.**

A joint British Museum/Museum Ethnographers' Group Meeting. For information contact Margaret McCord, Department of Conservation, British Museum, Great Russell St. London WC1B 3DG Tel (01) 323 8116.

#### **Photographic Conservation Seminar, November 1989, National Museum of Photography, Film and Television, Bradford, England.**

For information contact Corrine Hillman, 30 New Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN22 8BT UK.

#### **Wood Restoration:**

#### **Second National Congress, November 1989 Florence, Italy.**

For information contact Ing. Gennaro Tampone, Collegio Ingegneri della Toscana, Lungarno Guicciardini 1, 50125 Firenze, Italy.

#### **The History of Restoration, 30 November-2 December 1989, Interlaken, Switzerland.**

This is the first part of an international conference jointly run by the Swiss Association for Conservation and Restoration, the Swiss Association of Art Historians and the National Information Centre for the Preservation of Cultural Properties. One of the important aims of the conference will be to promote dialogue between restorers and historians and arouse the interest of restorers in the history and changing demands of their profession. For details contact Doris Steinmann, SCR Secretariat, Birchstrasse 33, CL-8572 Seuzach, Switzerland Tel. (052) 53 1549.

#### **Dirt and Pictures Separated, January 1990, London.**

The UKIC in conjunction with the Tate Gallery is to hold a symposium on the removal of dirt from vulnerable surfaces. The intention is to look in detail at the difficult and time consuming problem of cleaning the surfaces of unvarnished paintings. Methods of protecting surfaces will also be considered. For details contact Stephen Hackney, Conservation Department, Tate Gallery, Millbank, London SW1P 4RG.

**Carpet Conservation Symposium,  
1-2 February 1990, Washington DC.**

This symposium, being organised by The Conservation Department of the Textile Museum, intends to address the topics of traditional restoration techniques, cleaning, display, conservation issues and ethics, approaches taken within specific collections or museums, treatment case studies, etc. For details contact Sara Wolf Green, Conservator, The Textile Museum, 2320 "S" Street, NW Washington DC 20008.

**Upholstery Conservation Symposium,  
2-4 February 1990, Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia USA.**

This symposium intends to address materials' history, manufacture and characterisation; history of styles and production techniques; analysis and documentation; deterioration and treatment of fabrics and related materials; deterioration and treatment of frames and supports; conservation treatments; reproduction of historic appearances and materials; and minimal intervention reupholstery systems. For information contact Marc A. Williams, Project Director, Upholstery Conservation Symposium, 87 Depot Road, E. Kingston NH 03827 USA.

**Conservation of Furnishing Textiles,  
30-31 March 1990, Glasgow U.K.**

This conference, organised by UKIC at the Burrell Collection, will include talks covering all aspects of furnishing textiles in the context of their care and conservation. For information contact Margaret Roberts (UKIC), The Textile Conservation Centre, Apartment 22 Hampton Court Palace, East Molesey, Surrey KT8 9AU UK.

**Materials Issues in Art and Archaeology II:  
Materials Research Society Spring Meeting, Symposium G,  
16-20 April 1990, San Francisco, USA.**

Call for papers. This symposium will provide a multidisciplinary forum on developments in technical studies of material culture and efforts aimed at stabilising and preserving that heritage. Papers are solicited in the following areas: the role of technology in material culture; deterioration and treatment; characterisation through compositional and structural analysis; and mechanical and physical properties of art materials. For the special templates on which abstracts are to be prepared, contact MRS Headquarters, 9800 McKnight Road Suite 327, Pittsburgh PA 15237 USA. Deadline for submissions is November 1989.

**UKIC Archaeology Section, April 1990.**

A conference on analytical techniques in conservation will be held to coincide with the AGM of the UKIC Archaeology Section. The meeting will have a particular bias toward the analysis of organic materials. For details contact Robert White, City of Lincoln Archaeological Unit, The Sessions House, Lindum Road Lincoln LN2 1P3.

**AIC 18th Annual Meeting,  
29 May-3 June 1990, Richmond, Virginia, USA.**

Papers are being called for the General Session 'Treatment Choices for Large Collections: Ethical, Financial and Technical Considerations' and the Pre-Session 'Conservator's Role in Travelling Exhibitions' of the 1990 AIC Meeting. The deadline for receipt of proposals is 13 October 1989. Send abstracts to Paul Himmelstein, AIC Vice President and Program Chair, 444 Central Park West, New York NY 10025. Tel (212) 666 4630.

**Appearance, Opinion, Change:  
Evaluating The Look of Paintings, June 1990, London UK.**

A two day symposium on the appearance of paintings is being organised by the UKIC and the Association of Art Historians (AAH). Changes in the appearance of paintings will be considered from a variety of viewpoints including the affect of physical alterations of the painting materials, artist technique and the viewers' aesthetic. For details contact the UKIC Office, 37 Upper Addison Gardens, Holland Park, London W14 8AJ UK.

**Fifth International Conference on Indoor Air Quality  
Research, 29 July-3 August 1990, Toronto, Canada.**

For information contact The Information Centre for Indoor Quality Research, University of Toronto, Ontario M5T 1R4, Canada. Telefax (416) 978 8605.

**ICOM Committee for Conservation Ninth Triennial Meeting,  
25-31 August 1990, Dresden, German Democratic Republic.**

Daily plenary sessions at the Palace of Culture will give participants an overview of major developments in conservation while still allowing time for individual Working Group meetings and visits to local institutions. The State Art Collections in Dresden are preparing a special exhibition titled 'Restored Art Treasures in Dresden' and other exhibitions and publications are planned. To receive the second circular letter, due for release in December 1989, write to ICOM-CC c/-, ICOM Nationalkomitee der DDR, Wildensteiner Str. 7, GDR Berlin 1157. All enquiries about contributions to the 1990 preprints should be sent to Working Group Co-ordinators; addresses can be obtained from Janet Bridgland, Chair ICOM-CC c/- G.C.I., 4503 Glencoe Avenue, Marina del Rey CA 90292-6537 USA.

**IIC Congress 1990. Cleaning, Retouching and Coatings:  
Technology and practice for easel paintings and  
polychrome sculpture, 3-7 September 1990, Brussels, Belgium.**

IIC's thirteenth international congress is to be held in collaboration with the Institute Royal du Patrimoine Artistique. Subject matter will fall into three parts: (i) cleaning and the removal of overpaints, (ii) retouching and (iii) coatings. For information contact Perry Smith, IIC, 6 Buckingham Street, London WC2N 6BA UK.

**Acidic Deposition: its Nature and Impacts,  
16-21 September 1990, Edinburgh UK.**

For information contact the General Secretary of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, 22-24 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 2PQ UK.

**Adobe 90, 14-19 October 1990, Las Cruces, New Mexico USA.**

The sixth International Conference on the Conservation of Earthen Architecture is being organised by the Getty Conservation Institute, Museum of New Mexico State Monuments and ICCROM. Themes include the history and traditions of the use of earth as a building material, current field research, measurement and control of moisture, stabilisation and restoration, seismic mitigation, site preservation, etc. For details contact Michael Taylor, Museum of New Mexico State Monuments, P.O. Box 2087 Sante Fe, New Mexico 87504 USA Tel. (505) 827 8940. Regarding manuscripts and publications, contact Dr Neville Agnew, GCI, 4503 Glencoe Avenue, Marina del Rey, CA 90292 USA. Fax (213) 821 9409.

## **COURSES AND SCHOLARSHIPS**

### **Photographic Conservation Workshops**

The Australian War Memorial will be conducting a series of workshops on the conservation of Photographic Images. Depending upon the responses received, two workshops per year will be held, one in May and the other in the first or second week of November. It is anticipated that each workshop will run for 5 days and cover such topics as:

- Process Identification
- History of Photography
- Conservation of Cased Images
- Conservation of Paper Images
- Conservation of Negatives
- Storage and Display

Applications are invited from individuals or employees from institutions interested in such training. The applicant should indicate any special topic or needs they wish to cover. As numbers will be limited to 4 or 5 persons per workshop, it is expected that participants will have some conservation experience and some photographic knowledge. In order to recover costs a fee will be charged. This is expected to be about \$500 per person. Enquiries should be directed to:

Mrs Jennifer Edwards  
Head of Conservation  
Australian War Memorial  
P.O. Box 345  
Canberra ACT 2601

### **Post Graduate Fellowship in the Conservation of Objects and Sculpture, The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston USA.**

The Museum, supported by The Getty Grant Program, is offering a Fellowship in objects and sculpture conservation beginning this month, September 1989. Unfortunately, no notification of the Fellowship was received until after the closing date for applications. However, for future reference or to make enquiries about further programs, contact Sandra Matthews, Employment Manager, Conservation Fellowship, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 465 Huntington Avenue, Boston MA 02115 USA. Tel (617) 267 9300.

### **Fellowship in Paintings Conservation, Frans Hals Museum, The Netherlands.**

A one year Fellowship in Paintings Conservation supported by a grant from The J. Paul Getty Trust is available at the Frans Hals Museum in Holland. A monthly payment of Dfl 3000 plus discretionary funds for travel and research are offered. The Fellow will carry out restoration of two early works by Jan van Scorel in the permanent collection. Applicants should be graduates of a recognised conservation training program and preferably have additional experience. The starting date is to be discussed. To apply please send a letter of intent and curriculum vitae to include names of three potential referees to Dr D.P. Snoep, Director, Frans Hals Museum, P.O. Box 3365, 2001 DJ Haarlem, The Netherlands.

### **Preventive Care of Historic Photographic Prints and Negatives, 6-10 November 1989, Getty Conservation Institute Training Laboratories, Marina del Rey USA.**

A course to address the deterioration problems of historic photographs, the identification of prints and negatives in need of rehousing or conservation treatment, treatment options and various storage requirements for small and large collections. Guidelines for surveying collections for long term preservation plans will also be provided. For details contact the Training Program, The GCI, 4503 Glencoe Avenue, Marina del Rey CA 90292-6537 USA.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

### **Analytical Research Services Reports**

The Canadian Conservation Institute is offering for sale a set of over 470 Analytical Research Services reports on commercial products. These reports describe the analyses of a wide variety of materials encountered in conservation such as adhesives, cleaning materials, surface coatings and display/storage materials.

To order the list of available reports contact Extension Services, CCI Communications Canada, 1030 Innes Road, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0C8, Canada.

### **Disaster Preparedness Planning Resource Packet**

The AIC Newsletter Vol. 14 No.3, May 1989, reports that a resource packet to assist in the preparation of disaster plans for library and archival collections is now available from the Conservation/Preservation Program office at the New York State Library.

For information contact Roxane McPeter, The New York State Library, 10-C-47 Cultural Education Centre, Albany, NY 12230 Tel. (518) 474 6971.

### **ICOM 1987 Preprints**

Please note: The price of the three volumes of preprints from the 8th Triennial Meeting of the ICOM Committee for Conservation has been reduced from \$150 to \$100 including postage.

Available from the Publications' Officer, AICCM, GPO Box 1638, Canberra, ACT, 2601.

## **NEWS FROM WORKING GROUPS**

### **Paintings Group**

#### **CCAEE Guest Speakers**

The Advanced Conservation of Paintings unit (1.6) at the CCAEE, with Allan Byrne's initiative, has held an interesting program involving guest speakers this semester. I have attended two which I found most informative. The first was chaired by Anne l'Ons who had invited Anne Gray, Curator of Australian Paintings at the Australian War Memorial, and Sue Hewitt, Director of Christies, Australia, to discuss the consequences of restoration as viewed by a curator and a dealer, looking at prospective purchases. Possibly, more questions were raised than could be resolved. There are as many answers as there are different dealers, pictures, buyers and reasons for selling. However, there was general agreement that whilst good minimal restoration would never prevent purchase by a major collecting institution, poor restoration certainly would inhibit any sales... 'Buyer beware', of course, always applies... Mention was made of auction houses here following established practice in circling damages with white chalk. Also, it was pointed out that dealers and major collectors tended to patronise a favourite restorer and would prefer not to have to pay for another's work. A further comment concerned the need for conservators/restorers of paintings to become more publicly 'visible' - through informative writing in related journals ... possibly a small explanatory brochure which major dealers would probably be willing to distribute.

The second talk overlapped and extended these previous concerns. It was given by a private restorer from Victoria, Ross Porritt, who has been working as a conservator for over 22 years, and who spoke thoughtfully and frankly on the pitfalls and rewards - not necessarily financial - of private practice. He ran through the practical steps necessary when first establishing oneself in private practice (presuming that one already has some experience) and continued on only taking work that is within one's limit of experience ... further, to be prepared to learn and experiment on 'op-shop' paintings - for initially, perhaps, 30% of one's time.

Practical financial and management skills were discussed, as well as partnerships, cost-effective work, insurance (Ross finds a truck driver's policy, where the annual average value is the measure, the most useful), and estimating.

Private restorers are usually brought in at the time pictures are about to be sold. (It is important to 'steer clear' of any temptation to become involved in the marketplace.) There are a 'fringe' of people who will try to put pressure on a restorer to make a picture 'look good' ... or even further. Ross gave several examples of requests he had received and asked each of us to come up with our solutions. These differed and none were straight forward.

This introduced the topic which Ross felt was crucial to one's continuance and satisfaction as a conservator - ethics. How to answer the question - "To which of the following is one's first responsibility - the client? gallery director? dealer? artist? picture?" Ross believes strongly that the picture will tell you what to do, every time.

In conclusion, Ross noted the enormous changes that have occurred in this profession over the last twenty years. He believes there will be more incentive for: pooling resources/expensive equipment; short-term workshops; that legal aspects will become more prominent; that computers and other technical advances will be more widely used. In time, also, nearly all 'private' conservators will have had some institutional training.

I am sure that many other painting conservators would welcome the opportunity to discuss these matters - maybe this November in Albany?

Jacqueline Macnaughtan.

## POSITIONS VACANT

### AUSTRALIAN ARCHIVES

CONSERVATOR 2 \$31,416 – \$36,459

CONSERVATOR 1 \$25,855 – \$27,996

#### PRESERVATION AND STORAGE SECTION REGIONAL OFFICE, NEW SOUTH WALES

Applications are invited from suitably qualified persons for the above position.

The Australian Archives is responsible for the broad management of the whole body of the records of the Commonwealth Government. The Archives' New South Wales Regional Office services Commonwealth agencies in Sydney and in New South Wales and provides public access to Commonwealth records under the terms of the Archives Act 1983.

Located at 76 Miller Road, Villawood.

##### Conservator 2 (No. 30265)

**Duties:** Carry out research and conservation treatment for Commonwealth records of all types in accordance with a National Program. Survey and report on the conservation needs of holdings. Advise on the acquisition of conservation equipment and materials. Provide training to other staff.

**Eligibility/Other requirements:** Applicants should be self motivated with good communication skills. They should be experienced in and knowledgeable about conservation methods and techniques. Recognised qualifications in conservation are desirable.

##### Conservator 1 (No. 30266)

**Duties:** Under direction carry out the routine aspects of physical conservation and repair of Commonwealth records. Assist in the analysis, and conservation of records held in custody.

**Eligibility/Other requirements:** An appropriate degree or diploma in Materials Conservation or relevant experience desirable.

**Contact officer for Enquiries:** Ms P. Campbell (02) 296 352

Selection documentation may be obtained from (062) 433 941 – 24 hours answering service.

The Australian Archives is an Equal Opportunity employer and, in addition, has a smoke free work environment.

Selection criteria will be used as the basis for filling the vacancy. It is in the interest of candidates to obtain the selection criteria and frame their applications accordingly.

Conditions of service include four weeks annual leave, cumulative paid sick leave and a comprehensive superannuation scheme. Applicants should be Australian citizens and be able to satisfy requirements as to health and physical fitness (Note: Permanent residents of Australia may be employed on a fixed term engagement in lieu of permanent appointment).

Written applicants quoting duties number, educational qualifications, personal details and relevant experience should be forwarded to:

Director-General  
Australian Archives  
P.O. Box 34  
Dickson ACT 2602

by close of business 18 August 1989. Late applications will be considered.

## STATE LIBRARY OF QUEENSLAND QUEENSLAND STATE ARCHIVES

### CONSERVATOR S5/S7

**Qualifications:** Degree or Graduate Diploma in Conservation Science from a recognized tertiary institution or qualifications which are equivalent. Sound knowledge of the basic chemistry of paper, inks and other archival materials and of the conservation treatments which may be applied to them. Substantial work experience in the field of paper conservation is desirable.

**Salary:** Appointment will be made within either the S5 or the S7 level, depending upon qualifications and experience.

S5 \$23423-31289

S7 \$32189-36648

**Duties:** Manage the Preservation Services Branch and be responsible for the development and implementation of effective programs for the preservation of public records.

Carry out or supervise conservation treatments on archival materials in accordance with accepted principles of paper conservation and within accepted technical standards.

**General:** Queensland State Archives is vitally concerned with the preservation of its holdings and provides a committed and supportive environment for conservation staff. A new State Archives building, due for completion in early 1992, contains a conservation complex of about 500 square metres, including a chemical laboratory, conservation work room, office, bindery, materials and chemical store rooms, photography room and dark room. A further 100 square metres is devoted to microfilm camera rooms and work room.

Applications should be directed to the Manager (Administrative Services) State Library of Queensland, P.O. Box 488, South Brisbane Qld 4101. Applications close 29 September 1989.

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## NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIA CONSERVATION CONSULTANCIES

The Museum is seeking expressions of interest from experienced conservators on a consultancy or short term contract basis to assist with preservation/conservation of the National Historical Collection. Immediate requirements are listed below:

##### Aboriginal Artifacts

- Pigment consolidation – burial poles and bark paintings.
- Survey and phased preservation of artefacts with human and animal hair.
- Basic cleaning – Melanesian and Aboriginal artefacts.

##### Social History Artifacts

- Basic cleaning, paint consolidation and corrosion stabilization of agricultural machinery and horse-drawn vehicles.
- Cleaning, surface protection of objects in the Furniture Collections.
- Measure all horse drawn vehicles and furniture objects and seek quotes for the manufacture of dust covers.
- Preservation mounting/matting of prints, photographs and paper based materials for storage and framing.
- Basic cleaning and surface stabilization/protection to leather, wooden and metal artefacts in the collections.

##### Condition Survey

- In addition to the specific projects mentioned above, assistance is required to accelerate condition reporting of the collection at the object level.

Further information is available from Margaret Alexander on (062) 41 4044. (Written expressions of interest, including a curriculum vitae and availability (e.g. proposed commencement dates) should be forwarded to the Director of the National Museum of Australia, GPO Box 1901, Canberra, ACT, 2601 by 29 September 1989.

**TEXTILES CONSERVATOR  
PAINTINGS CONSERVATOR**

\$22945-\$31814 p.a.

**STATE CONSERVATION CENTRE  
DEPARTMENT FOR THE ARTS**

The State Conservation Centre is a modern, highly equipped centralized conservation facility with a staff of thirty.

Two twelve month contract positions are being offered in the fields of textiles and paintings conservation.

The Textiles Position will be involved in the Centre's Commercial Programs.

The Paintings Position will be involved in programs to support the Art Gallery of South Australia and other organisations. After six months this position may be transferred to Commercial projects.

The Centre has been operating for four years and its programs are expanding to offer a broad range of State and Commercial conservation services.

**Duties:** Undertake preservation, conservation and restoration of artefacts and historic items, participate in program management, maintain records, prepare estimates and costings, undertake research and analysis of items to determine authenticity, composition and condition, carry out collection surveys, prepare reports and supervise and instruct staff.

**Qualifications:** A tertiary qualification in Conservation of Cultural Material or a closely related discipline is essential. Considerable knowledge and experience of established conservation work methods and techniques is required as well as proven competence in the performance of conservation work. Experience in private conservation practice would prove valuable. Appropriate communication and management skills.

**Enquiries:** Mr Ian Cook, telephone (08) 223 1766

Written applications should be forwarded to:

Mrs A. Patsouris  
Management Services Officer  
Department for the Arts  
44 Pirie Street  
Adelaide SA 5000

The South Australian Public Services is an Equal Opportunity Employer and applications are invited from persons regardless of sex, sexuality, marital status, pregnancy, race or physical impairment.

Applications close 6 October 1989.

## **EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES**

### **Preservation Equipment Limited**

Preservation Equipment Ltd is involved in the manufacture of preservation equipment and archival storage. The company is interested in promoting its products in Australia, or making contact with suppliers already based here.

For information contact:

Cliff Gothorp, Director  
Preservation Equipment Ltd  
Otters Holt, Church Road  
Shelfanger  
Diss, Norfolk IP22 2DG  
UK  
Tel. (0379) 65 1527  
Fax. (0379) 65 2740

### **DMF Toxicity**

For those of you who still doubt the toxicity of dimethylformamide, the AIC Newsletter Vol. 14 No.3, May 1989, reports that an article in the New York Times (28 February 1989), carried new incriminating information. In the article, the Federal Center for Disease Control is paraphrased as saying that DMF appears to be associated with an increased risk of testicular cancer.

## **NEW MEMBERS**

Dr J. Roger Bird	Mr David Ellson
Mr Tibor Csongvay	Miss Cate Harley
Ms Virginia Dahlenburg	Ms Isabel Hendriksen
Ms Csilla Felker	Mr Nigel Houston
Mr David Gilroy	Mr Raymond Prince
Ms Nicola King Smith	Miss Catherine Sugerman
Mrs Pamela Naylor	T.E.D. Australia
Ms Lyn Pinkus	Mrs Pamela Luhrs
Mr Duncan Rolley	Dr Elwyn McKenzie
Mr George Bailey	Mr George Sulcs
Mrs Clara Cesarone	Mr Carl Villis
Mr Edward Chapman	
Institut Francais de Restauration des Oeuvres D'Art	

*Hope to see you all in Melbourne.*

The AICCM National Newsletter is issued quarterly and is available free to all members. Membership enquiries should be directed towards The Secretary, AICCM Inc., GPO Box 1638, Canberra, ACT 2601, Australia.

Contributions and correspondence should be typed with double spacing and addressed to: The Editors, AICCM Inc. National Newsletter, PO Box 373, South Brisbane, Q 4101, Australia. Telephone enquiries can be directed to: Tamara Lavrencic (07) 840 7295 or 7296. Final deadline for copy for the next issue is 10 November 1989. Contributions may also be faxed c/- The Old Art Gallery, Fax No. (07) 844 8865.

Publication of technical notes or articles with reference to techniques and materials does not necessarily represent an endorsement by AICCM Inc.

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Editorial Committee: Co-ordinator: Tamara Lavrencic - Divisional News: Lynda Black - Advertising/Coming Events: Gillian Osmond - Typesetting: Wendy Brook.