This is the last WOAM Conference 2004 Newsletter. Other WOAM Newsletters or Bulletins may show up, but the form of our future internal communication is not yet decided. The main purposes of this Newsletter is to say thank you to all of you for the excellent speeches, posters and good discussions during our meeting in Copenhagen. Moreover, I have received Jim Spriggs’ notes of the business meeting to pass on to you. Finally, I would like to wish you all good luck with your research, projects and daily work in the next triennial period.

ICOM-CC WOAM Business Meeting, Copenhagen, June 10th 2004

1) Co-ordinators Report.
Per Hoffmann, retiring Co-ordinator, commended the high level of research activity amongst the membership of WOAM over the last triennial period, particularly in the areas of
- Sulphur/iron acid reaction in treated wood
- In-situ preservation
- Reburial and protection of wrecks
- Reconstruction of conserved wood for display
These topics had been covered during this conference and the mixture of approaches taken had been interesting and stimulating. Papers were still predominantly about wood, but the programme was enriched with other topics and materials and, put together between covers, they would make another fine volume in the series of WOAM ‘Proceedings’. Per said that, over the period of time that he had been co-ordinator, several things had become apparent: that conservation was not a finite process but objects needed permanent monitoring and, occasionally, retreating; that the ‘hands off’ approach favoured by Lars-Uno Johansson was, only an option when we had found out exactly how we can leave objects in situ; and that intra- and international collaborative research (such as the WOAM programmes of ‘comparative treatments for wood’, work on the sucrose technique, and treatments for waterlogged lacquer) were extremely successful. In summing up his report, Per Hoffmann alluded to the traditions of WOAM: freedom of speech, action and thought; and a willingness to welcome into the group anyone involved with the subject area, whether they be a member of ICOM or not.

2) New WOAM Co-ordinator.
Per Hoffmann explained that it was not the tradition within WOAM to hold elections for the post of Co-ordinator, but that it was achieved through common consent. After wide consultation, he was able to confirm that the new Co-ordinator of WOAM would be Kristiane Straetkvern of the National Museum of Denmark. He asked Kristiane to ‘take the chair’ for the rest of the meeting.

3) The new Co-ordinator’s first task was to invite Per Hoffmann to remain as Assistant Co-ordinator, to which he agreed. Kristiane then invited Jim Spriggs (UK) to remain as Assistant Coordinator as well. Moreover, Jim Spriggs, Tara Grant
(Canada) and David Gregory (Denmark) were asked to assist Per Hoffmann with editing the conference ‘Proceedings’, to which all have agreed.

4) Programme of research for next triennial.
The following topics were proposed from ‘the chair’ and from ‘the floor’:

- Sulphur/iron acid formation in wood (The Vasa Group, Sweden)
- *In-situ* preservation (The National Museum of Denmark, Western Australia)
- Conservation of very large timbers by alternative means (Elmer Fabech, Denmark)
- Composite objects of wood/iron etc. (ARC/Nucleart, France)
- Long-term ‘case studies’, e.g. the Newport Ship (Kate Hunter)
- Problems of wood retreatment – practicalities, ethics & risks (by a group of conservators from the national Heritage Board, Sweden, Oldsagssamlingen, Oslo and the National Museum of Denmark)
- An overview of analytical techniques for wood (as no-one actually volunteered for this subject, it remains open. As a start, suggestions, description of methods etc. can be send to Kristiane)

Moreover, the use and abuse of silicone oils in wet organics conservation was suggested. The CCI has relevant waterlogged material for testing the method, but it was discussed to what extent we should spend resources on this method. The main problem is that the method is presented to the archaeologists as an easy “do-it-yourself-method” with negative references to conservators and traditional conservation methods. The use of organic solvent, which is an implied part of the silicone oil conservation process, is a well-known and old technique in our business, and there is nothing new in it. The other problem with the method is, a seemingly uncritical use of various qualities of silicone oil as a conservation agent. It was suggested, that critical information of the method and the book recommending the method is spread to the archaeologists through reviews in their magazines and journals. Poul Jensen and Kristiane Streetkvern at the National Museum of Denmark have already made a review on the book and can be contacted if more information is needed.

5) Any Other Business.
Kristiane Straetkvern suggested that better information output was required from WOAM, and that WOAM should form an ‘outreach’ group aiming information particularly towards archaeologists. The better use of the ICOM-CC website and the production of CD-ROMs as ways of spreading information was discussed. For internal communications within the group, electronic mail or a website versus paper-based newsletters was discussed, and it was decided to ask Tara Grant to assist Cliff Cook in developing further the electronic newsletter and website idea. Per Hoffmann said that it was the intention to publish the Proceedings of this confe-
ence in the same manner as before, but that the cost of publication might well be prohibitive in the future.

Jim Spriggs
Assistant Co-ordinator
June 2004

Our next triennial meeting will be in 2007. No final decisions were made concerning the exact dates or where to go. But negotiations are on going and you will be informed as soon as this has been settled.

Best wishes from

Kristiane Strøtkvern
WOAM Co-ordinator
July 2004