



## WOAM NEWSLETTER

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ICOM-CC WORKING GROUP

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#### 1. FROM THE COORDINATOR

This issue primarily informs on conferences and courses in conservation. If you have heard of other conferences, have attended interesting meetings, read some marvellous articles or written one, you may use the WOAM Newsletter to tell your colleagues about it, like Emily Williams has. Also consider if there are student theses of interest to our group.

I have received several names for the list of people who would like to be referees of papers

for the future WOAM proceedings. The list is still open. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you wish to sign up as a potential referee.

Sincerely, *Kristiane*

#### 2. COLLEAGUES' CORNER

**Use of a Chloride Electrode in Sodium Hydroxide solutions** - but how to avoid that the sodium hydroxide solutions turn into sodium carbonate, by absorption of carbon dioxide from the air? Has anyone got a simple procedure? The question was raised in Newsletter 35 by Anthony Crawshaw ([acrawshaw@yorkarchaeology.co.uk](mailto:acrawshaw@yorkarchaeology.co.uk)), Conservation laboratory, York Archaeological Trust) and I have received this reply from Christian Degrigny, ([cdegrigny@mcr.edu.mt](mailto:cdegrigny@mcr.edu.mt)) co-ordinator of the ICOM-CC Metal group:

*"I have read your message and I think that the answer has already been found in many labs applying titration technique. Furthermore you must know that there is a CCI technical document specifically on this issue of chlorides measurements.*

*When I used to work in France, at Arc'Antique, a laboratory specialized in the treatment of marine artefacts we had a selective chloride electrode that we used with a double junction potential reference electrode to measure difference of potentials that we recorded versus the addition of sodium nitrate. The alkaline treatment solution (KOH, NaOH or whatever) was first acidified in concentrated HNO<sub>3</sub> solutions.*

*Some time ago I sent the analytical protocol to use to a Finnish colleague. The problem is that due to my recent move from one laboratory to another I lost the document. As soon as I get it I will send it to you.*

*Best regards, Christian D.”*

## **2. CONFERENCES AND COURSES IN CONSERVATION**

### **Report from The Conservation of Archaeological Materials: Current Trends and Future Directions**

“The Conservation of Archaeological Materials: Current Trends and Future Directions”

was held at Colonial Williamsburg from November 13<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> 2005. The conference was planned in conjunction with the Archaeological Discussion Group, a subgroup of AIC’s Objects Specialty Group. The aim of the conference was to communicate new technologies and to serve as a forum for discussion regarding both the present practice and future development of archaeological conservation and its interactions with other professions and communities.

The conference was divided into five sessions focusing on: defining archaeological conservators; on-site documentation and stabilization; conservators and the technological record; archives and repositories; and finally, collaboration and community involvement. Each session was anchored by a “keynote speech” which was intended to focus on the development of the field and the greatest perceived challenges for it within that area of focus. These keynote speeches were delivered by Chris Caple of the University of Durham, Rae Beaubien of the Smithsonian Center for Materials Research and Education, Patricia Griffin, Hedley Swain of the Museum of London and Glenn Wharton of New York University.

During the first session several interesting conceptual models were put forward as tools not only for conservators to evaluate their own strengths and weaknesses but also for communicating the underlying philosophies of conservation to external audiences. The second

session included information on potential new treatments for archaeological iron and waterlogged cork and on the uses of 3-d scanning for documenting and replicating artifacts. The third focused on the conservator’s ability to add to the technological record both through artifact studies and through non-destructive testing. While all the papers in this session were fascinating, one in particular brought a new analytical technique—the use of Neutron diffraction analysis for the non-destructive testing of iron artifacts—to the table. The session on archives and repositories stressed the need to begin to take control of the process of creating archaeological collections as well as their use. Materials needs to be cared for so they can be used, but greater efforts need to be made to ensure that collections care is done holistically and that it is sustainable. This is true not only of physical but also digital collections. The role of conservators in this process was stressed by most speakers. The final session focused on four broad overlapping areas: outreach, professional collaboration, community involvement and the political/ regulatory arena. Paper topics ranged from working with volunteers and involving descendant communities to the conservator’s role in areas of conflict and the conservator’s ethical responsibility regarding looted artifacts.

The conference was well attended—over one hundred conservators and archaeologists from 7 different countries participated—and the discussion periods were fully used. One of the most heartening things about it was the number of archaeological conservation projects that are being carried out across the United States and within the Middle Atlantic region in particular. Projects such as the conservation of the Monitor, The Hunley and the Queen Anne’s Revenge have focused new light on the field and brought new energy and enthusiasm to it. It is intended that the proceedings of the conference will be published within the year.

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## 7th EC Conference

### "SAUVEUR"

Safeguarded Cultural Heritage  
Prague, 31<sup>st</sup> May to 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2006

**OBJECTIVES:** The aim of the conference is the consolidation and impact assessment of results achieved in EU research projects related to movable and immovable cultural heritage. There will be a special focus on exploitation and spin-offs of cultural heritage research results and testing of the acceptability of new sustainability approaches and new technologies by the user community, SMEs, and owners, managers, restorers and conservationists of cultural heritage.

#### PROGRAMME

- Innovative Applications and New Ideas on: movable heritage, immovable heritage, cities, villages and landscapes (including archaeology)
- Research Infrastructure – sustainable scientific impact of EC research projects on: movable heritage, immovable heritage, cities, villages and landscapes (including archaeology)
- Impact of EU policies and directives on European cultural heritage diversity and sustainable safeguarding; impact of cultural heritage research results on society and support for policy needs
- Coordination of National Research & Education

**TIMETABLE:** Submission of abstracts:  
(extended) 18th November 2005  
Acceptance of abstracts: December 2005  
Submission of abstracts for posters:  
(extended) 30th March 2006  
Conference: 31st May-3rd June 2006

**WHO CAN ATTEND?** All involved and interested professionals, namely cultural heritage researchers, research planners, restorers, heritage managers, architects, urban planners and policymakers. Students involved in cultural heritage research and studies are welcome too.

**CONFERENCE VENUE:** The Conference will be organised in Prague Castle and its State Rooms. The official opening session with poster session and the poster exhibition will take place in the Ball Game Hall, a historic building dating from the 16th century in the Prague Castle Gardens. The conference will be held in the Spanish Hall, Rudolf Gallery, Rothmayer Hall and New Gallery.

**LANGUAGE:** The official language of the conference will be English

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Deadline for contributions to  
Newsletter no. 37 is

**18 AUGUST 2006.**

Mail to: [kst@natmus.dk](mailto:kst@natmus.dk)  
or send a letter to:  
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Co-ordinator WOAM  
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## Third Triennial Conservation Conference

### The Alum Meeting, Newcastle- upon-Tyne, 11-13.09.2006

**OBJECTIVES:** Alum was used in the production and processing of a wide range of materials incorporated into much of our cultural heritage including textiles, paper, leather, photographs, watercolours, stucco, etc., and is therefore of particular interest to those responsible for the care of collections. The Conference will be a cross-disciplinary event that will not only draw together our understanding of this widely used material, but also contribute to our care of artefacts into which it has been incorporated.

#### **PROGRAMME:**

Papers will include the following:

- the techniques of alum extraction and processing
- the alum trade
- the physical and chemical properties of alum
- the historic use of alum in conjunction with a wide range of materials
- the affect of alum on the condition, care and conservation of collections.

There will be a trip to the alum extraction and processing sites in North Yorkshire and an exhibition on the alum industry.

#### **CONFERENCE VENUE:**

Newcastle-upon-Tyne, United Kingdom

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## 3rd Symposium on Preserving Archaeological Remains in situ

### PARIS3

**OBJECTIVES:** Preserving Archaeological Remains in situ is emerging as a new discipline in archaeology since the Valletta treaty calls for "the conservation and maintenance of the archaeological heritage, preferably in situ". This means that archaeological sites should be actively taken care of, instead of being left to the burial environment, as it happens to be.

As soon as one starts to actively take care of an archaeological site, questions arise, such as:

- i) How fast do archaeological materials and soil features degrade in the soil environment and
- ii) Which measures can we take in order to promote the sustainable preservation of archaeological sites?

In the past two decades, it has become clear that the questions above, and many related questions, cannot be answered easily. Research into preservation in situ started in Great Britain and many results were presented during the first two PARIS symposia, organised by English Heritage, the University of Bradford and the Museum of London Archaeology Service.

Following the spread of research into the subject over Europe, PARIS will jump from London to Amsterdam in December 2006.

**CONFERENCE VENUE:** Amsterdam, Netherlands

**CONTACT:**  
Institute for Geo- and Bioarchaeology  
[paris2006\(at\)falw.vu.nl](mailto:paris2006(at)falw.vu.nl)  
<http://www.falw.vu.nl/paris>

The 10<sup>th</sup> triennial meeting in the ICOM-CC **WOAM**, working group for **Wet Organic Archaeological Materials**, will take place in

**Amsterdam, 10 – 15 September 2007**

The meeting will be hosted by the ROB/National Archaeological Survey  
(A merger in 2006 will change this name to RACM).

The venue for the WOAM meeting is in the **Tripp-building**, which is the headquarters of the Royal Academy of Science; KNAW). It lies in the very centre of the town and has a great ambiance (see also: <http://www.knaw.nl/organisation/history.html> ).

The preliminary programme is as follows:

Monday 10 <sup>th</sup> September 2007	Evening registration and reception
Tuesday 11 <sup>th</sup> - Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> September 2007	Conference
Saturday 15 <sup>th</sup> September 2007	Excursion to Lelystad

A call for abstract will go out in June 2006 by then a website will also be up and running to provide information and news on the conference.

People visiting the ICOM-CC Metal Conference will have one day of (Sunday the 16th), after which ICOM-Metal starts the 17th of September probably in Rode Hoed in Amsterdam.

**Hans Huismann**

#### **4. ICOM-CC DIRECTORY BOARD NEWS**

##### **Membership issues**

At the triennial meeting in The Hague, several WG coordinators described problems for people to become members of the various ICOM groups. The ICOM-CC Directory Board (DB) will look into these problems, but information from you is required to solve them. The DB needs information on how many people:

- have problems to become a paid member of ICOM?
- have trouble to become a voting member of ICOM-CC?
- have problems to become a friend of ICOM-CC?
- have other problems related to joining ICOM/ ICOM-CC?

The problems may vary: the fee for bank transfer may be way over the registration fee for becoming a student or friend of ICOM-CC; ICOM national committees in some countries may have strategies which may make becoming a member of ICOM difficult for conservation professionals, etc.

**Please describe your problem and send to the WG coordinator, Kristiane Strætkevorn, ([kst@natmus.dk](mailto:kst@natmus.dk)) by the end of May 2006.**

When the DB has the results of this inventory and numbers that come out of this survey, they will be in a better position to try to solve the problems. In the meantime, the treasurer is investigating the possibility of paying fees through electronic payment, which would be easier and much cheaper for the potential ICOM-CC friend. However, a cost-benefit analysis has to be made before the DB can

take action. In the future, the WG-coordinators shall only include ICOM-CC paying members and Friends of ICOM-CC in their Working Group membership lists.

### Website issues

The DB has decided, that all WG documents will be placed on the first level of the ICOM-CC website, to be accessible to all, until all attempts to resolve membership issues have been made. The DB hopes to achieve this soon after the joint meeting between the DB members and the WG coordinators in October 2006.

**In case of any problem with the ICOM-CC website, please connect the webmaster Mr. Joris van Gelder by his e-mail [joris@occhio.nl](mailto:joris@occhio.nl)**

### The 2008 Triennial meeting

The next ICOM-CC Triennial meeting will take place in New Dehli, India, and the DB and the LOC members have agreed on the following theme: **DIVERSITY IN HERITAGE**

## CONSERVATION: TRADITION, INNOVATION AND PARTICIPATION

In general, the DB would recommend reducing the registration fees for both members and non-members. It was suggested that the difference between members and non-members could be higher than EUR 75.

### 5. WEB NEWS

A new tool has been developed at Centre de conservation du Québec. It is a database for preventive conservation called Preserv'Art, and it is available through the web page. ([www.ccq.mcc.gouv.qc.ca](http://www.ccq.mcc.gouv.qc.ca)) Written in French and English, it is intended as a tool not only for the conservator, but for museologists, technicians and also the general public.

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### Become a Friend of ICOM-CC!

Registration via ICOM-CC secretariat in Rome at [secretariat@icom-cc.org](mailto:secretariat@icom-cc.org)

**Benefits:** access to the ICOM-CC Professional Network, which includes the following exclusive benefits:

- A year's subscription to the *ICOM-CC e-Newsletter*.
- Membership of one working group including subscription to electronic information from that group.
- Participation in the ICOM-CC Triennial Meetings at the same reduced price as ICOM members.
- A priority to have accepted papers included in the Pre-prints and poster session under the same criteria as for ICOM members.
- ICOM-CC website 2<sup>nd</sup> level access, providing electronic information on Conferences, Triennial Meetings and on Interim Meetings of Working Groups.