Programme 2002-2005

Stone

Intro
There is virtually no historical period or geographic region where stone has not been used as a material in the fabrication of art or architecture. Consequently, the Stone Working Group was for a long time one of the most vital units within the ICOM-CC system. Unfortunately, its activities have gradually decreased over the last few years and, by the time of the meeting in Rio, the Group was on the verge of disintegration. This decline appears to be the result of several factors, such as less active coordination and the reduced participation of specialists who now must be very selective in choosing among several very active organizations concerned with stone.

Philosophy
Our primary goal is to reactivate and reenergize the Group by making it a forum responsive to the expressed concerns of the members. The Group will be dedicated to assisting members from all over the world — particularly those for whom access to acknowledged experts and specialized libraries is currently either a rare luxury or virtually impossible — in raising their level of professionalism. It is not our intention to duplicate the activities/functions already offered by other institutions or groups. Rather, we hope to serve as a central clearinghouse for all those interested in the preservation of stone artifacts. It is our intent to provide a specialized center for the expedited exchange of questions and ideas, to post information regarding relevant conferences, publications and important projects, as well as to promote and host primarily electronic discussions on specific technical, scientific, ethical and organizational topics. We hope to emphasize the international character of ICOM, and to help eliminate the professional isolation between different geographical regions and cultures.

Short term objectives
- Design and launch a Web page, following the desire expressed by many members.
- Establish contacts with those groups working solely with stone, creating a central site where interested participants can access information regarding events and projects relevant to stone preservation.
- Assemble a list of the people (conservators/restorers, scientists, art historians, administrators, etc.) working with stone — both members and non-members of ICOM to facilitate contact and support between the various branches of the profession.
- Identify the need for translation of materials into other languages and ascertain which languages are the most requested. Subsequently explore possibilities to provide translations of some of the information/discussions on the Web page as well as other important materials of general interest.
- Initiate a “guest corner” online where invited guests who are leading specialists in their respective fields can provide brief information and/or updates of important issues (scientific, technical, aesthetic etc.) as well as answering specific inquiries from group members.
- Attempt to expand the membership of the Group so that it comprises experts and students and participants from all areas.
- Organize an interim meeting (the first in S. America?) focusing each time on the problems and possible solutions for a single important artifact considered for or undergoing intervention.
- Investigate the desirability of eventually expanding the group to include “MORTARS”.
- Apply for grants to support the activities of the group (particularly the interim meeting and producing and distributing information for members who do not presently have access to electronic communication.)
**Long term objectives**

- Initiate and maintain a log of the world’s most important current projects in stone preservation, conservation and scientific research.
- Initiate and maintain online bibliographical information/links for new papers and publications on stone.
- Enlist the rotating participation of an advisory board of experts who will periodically recommend an important paper, the full text of which will be featured online.
- Intensify and facilitate the dialogue between scientists and conservators, primarily by exploiting the advantages of electronic communication.