

WOAM NEWSLETTER

No. 52

Jan 2013

ICOM-CC WORKING GROUP

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1. FROM THE COORDINATOR

This will be a short Newsletter.

WOAM Conference

The organization of the next WOAM conference, to be held on May 13-17 in Istanbul, Turkey, is proceeding. Papers have started to come and there is a full slate of papers and posters. Please note that the conference is now a full 5 days, rather than the traditional 4 days, with optional tours of Istanbul on Saturday and following this, tours of Ephesus and Bodrum, or Cappadocia. There is a Draft program posted. This has already changed but should give you an idea of the variety and depth of the papers. The prices, accommodation, social events and tours are now listed for those of you who need to apply for funding or book flights. I hope to see many of you in May.

There is a beautiful website for the WOAM conference with many pictures of the archaeology and conservation being undertaken at Istanbul University's

Department of Conservation of Marine Archaeological Objects.

www.woam2013.com

Please Note: Online registration is now available.

Early bird registration ends April 13, 2013.

ICOM-CC Conference

The next ICOM-CC Triennial will take place in Melbourne Australia from 15-19 September 2014. The theme of the conference is "Building Strong Culture through Conservation". The 21 Working Groups in ICOM-CC hold individual sessions to present papers at this conference. There is also a common poster session. The conference publishes these papers in a Pre-print. A call for papers should be published soon. Anyone interested in presenting at this conference at the WOAM session should keep an eye out for the announcement on the ICOM-CC website.

Again, any contributions to the Newsletter are welcome. I would be interested in reviews of papers relevant to our field published in journals or books which might not normally be read by conservators. Websites of interest can also be sent to me.

Partial Funding Opportunities for WOAM 2013 Conference, Istanbul Turkey

The Wet Organic Archaeological Materials Working Group will be offering partial funding to seven conference participants to cover the cost of Registration for the upcoming WOAM 2013 conference in Istanbul, Turkey from May 13-17. This amounts to 350 euros (ICOM-CC member) or 400 euros for (Non-member). Anyone may apply but preference will be given to students or recent graduates of a full-time conservation program or relevant heritage field (recent is defined as within two years of graduation). If insufficient recent graduates apply, presenters of either papers or posters from recession-hit countries will be considered followed by all other applications. Members or Friends of ICOM-CC will be given preference within each category.

Registration includes all conference and poster sessions(M-F), abstract and program booklet, delegate pack, am/pm break refreshments, post-print of conference proceedings and all social events: Welcome reception at Istanbul University's Professors' House Restaurant, cocktail prolonge at Istanbul Archaeological Museums, field trip to Yenikapi Theodosius Harbour Excavation Site-IU Yenikapi Site Lab – Istanbul Archaeological Museums Site lab, visit to the Naval Museum in Besiktas, boat trip along Bosphorus strait and conference dinner on board.

A Student Application should include your name, mailing address, e-mail address, the institution you attend/attended, the date of graduation, the name, the mailing and e-mail addresses of a professor from the institution who will act as a reference and a scanned copy of your last transcript. You should state if you are a Friend or ICOM-CC member, your membership number (if applicable) and if you are presenting a paper or poster at the WOAM conference.

Other applications should include your name, mailing address, e-mail address and a short narrative (one page or less) as to why you should receive this funding. You should state if you are a Friend or ICOM-CC member, your membership number (if applicable) and if you are presenting a paper or poster at the WOAM conference.

All applications should be received by Sunday, Feb 24, 2013 (12:00 pm Ottawa time)

Please send applications to: Tara Grant

tara.grant@pch.gc.ca

2. COLLEAGUE'S CORNER

Book Review

WreckProtect: Decay and protection of archaeological wooden shipwrecks

Edited by Charlotte Gjelstrup Björdal & David Gregory with assistance from Athena Trakadas

Published by Archaeopress, Gordon House, 276 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 7ED, UK

ISBN 978-1905739-48-6

This book is the culmination of two years of scientific research into the biological deterioration and long-term preservation of wooden shipwrecks, submerged archaeological sites and other coastal maritime infrastructure located in the brackish waters of the Baltic Sea. The project, named WreckProtect, commenced in 2009 and was funded by the European Commission's Seventh Framework Programme (Environment) (FP7-ENV-2008-1 No. 226225). It was an inter-disciplinary consortium involving researchers with expertise in maritime archaeology, conservation, chemistry, wood technology, microbiology, marine biology and GIS. The project's primary foci was studying the biological deterioration of submerged wooden heritage, especially by the marine borer, *Teredo navalis*, predicting the possible spread of this notoriously, damaging marine organisms into the Baltic Sea and assessing the methods available for the long-term protection of these sites in situ.

The book is a high quality production, printed on acid free paper with very high quality colour photographs throughout. Only a minor point but one I enjoyed immensely was that the binding is loose enough that the book remains open on the page you choose. However, there are a few minor typographical errors and no index, which would be helpful.

The chapters are presented in a logical order. Following the preface is Chapter 1, a more in depth introduction to the project outlining in more detail the objectives and the major achievements obtained from the research project. Chapter 2 highlights the diversity and distribution of the rich cultural resource in the Baltic Sea and hence, the potential threat by biological attack. This is

further illustrated by a number of case studies briefly describing the archaeological remains on the wreck site and the general state of preservation. Although not essential, there was no mention of any important submerged archaeological settlements or maritime infrastructure which would have made an interesting addition to this chapter.

Chapter 3 widens the scope of the book by providing information relating to sites located in the Wadden Sea and the Mediterranean. This chapter emphasizes the difference in the marine environment of these bodies of water in comparison to the Baltic Sea and highlights the problems facing marine archaeologists and cultural heritage managers in preserving underwater cultural heritage in these particular areas. Chapter 4 introduces the geological history, the oceanography and the physical and climate characteristics of the Baltic Sea. This chapter assists the reader to better understand the physical characteristics of the Baltic Sea and hence, their effects in controlling the flora and fauna composition.

Chapter 5 presents an overview of wood as a material, briefly describing the structure, anatomy, chemistry and durability of wood species. Chapter 6 then describes in detail the major organisms responsible for biological degradation of wood in marine environments. The chapter's primary focus is on the marine-boring bivalve *Teredo navalis*, however the effect of fungal and bacterial decay are also discussed. Chapter 7 becomes more specific and succinctly describes the biological, physical and anthropogenic causes of shipwreck timber degradation that may occur in different environments in the Baltic Sea. This chapter emphasizes the fact that generally, decay

processes are extremely slow for wood located in the Baltic Sea, buried in sediment.

Chapter 8 describes in great detail the spread of shipworm in the Baltic Sea both from a historical perspective and from the more recent results of the project obtained through the development of a GIS-base modelling study. Basically the study concludes that over the next decade the spread of shipworm is likely to be confined to the western Baltic.

Chapter 9 describes different in situ preservation techniques that can be used to protect shipwrecks from biological and physical deterioration and discusses advantages and disadvantages of each technique. It includes some handy “tips for use” for each method and emphasizes that follow-up monitoring of the site after stabilisation is an essential part of the overall management program. There is also some discussion regarding the cost effectiveness of in situ preservation versus recovery, conservation and storage/display. Finally Chapter 10 discusses further research requirements including determination of the decay status of historic wrecks in the Baltic Sea, continued tracking of *Teredo navalis* by testing and refining the GIS model and further studies into which parameters are relevant to monitor in terms of estimating decay rates for wood degradation.

With the recent ratification of the 2001 UNESCO Convention and the decreasing amount of funding being issued to heritage and the arts, the focus on in situ management programs for underwater cultural heritage sites is going to become increasingly popular in all regions, not just in the Baltic Sea. Hence, archaeologists, conservation scientists and heritage managers alike will find this book an extremely valuable resource.

By Vicki Richards, Conservation Scientist,
Western Australian Museum,
Fremantle, Western Australia

3. CONFERENCES AND COURSES

12th ICOM-CC Conference on Wet Organic Archaeological Materials Conference

13-17 May 2013

Istanbul, Turkey

www.woam2013.com

17th ICOM-CC Triennial

15-19 September 2014

Melbourne, Australia

The theme of the conference is “Building Strong Culture through Conservation”.