



WASHINGTON CONSERVATION GUILD NEWSLETTER

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From the Desk of the President

Happy 40th, WCG!

I am really pleased to be starting my term as WCG President during our 40th anniversary year. WCG is an active, fun, and professional group, and we have much to celebrate. The board met during the summer and began planning activities to commemorate the year, as you will read in the pages of this newsletter. We hope that all the membership will get involved in marking this milestone in WCG's history.

I would like to introduce the rest of the board elected in May: Vice President Eliza Gilligan, Treasurer Steve Mellor, Recording Secretary Julia Sybalsky, and Directors Sunae Park Evans and Susan Peckham. Directors Julia Brennan, Mary Coughlin, Jane Norman, and Larry Shutts are continuing their terms on the board, and Lisa Young continues on the board as our Past President and new Nominating Committee Chair. I also want to thank and recognize the outgoing board members, Treasurer Howard Wellman, Recording Secretary Michelle Savant, Directors Scott Brouard and Davida Kovner, and Past President/Nominating Committee Chair/CRfAA Chair Emily Jacobson.

I also want to thank Linda Edquist for serving as our Refreshments Chair (adding to the long list of her contributions to the Guild!). The Refreshments Chair position is now open, and we are looking for a member to take the reins. The position involves bringing the plates, cups, napkins, ice, and sometimes the drinks to the monthly meetings, and setting up/cleaning up for the reception, with help from others. It is a fun way to be a part of the board and get involved. Please contact me if you are interested.

We also say goodbye to Nominating Committee members Joanna Dunn (who changed seats to chair the Angels Project), Anne Murray, and May Naddaf (thank you all), and welcome the new committee of Ed McManus, Michelle Savant, and Connie Stromberg. Our other hard-working committee chairs are Erin Blake (web site), Joanna Dunn (Angels), Jayne Holt (newsletter), Joanne Klaar (interns), Michele Pagan (CRfAA), Nancy Pollak (booth), and Sarah Stauderman (archives).

Many thanks to everyone for their services and contributions in making WCG a vibrant organization.

Our main focus this year will be celebrating WCG's 40th anniversary. One of our activities is to focus each of the four newsletters this year on one decade in WCG's history. The general themes are founding, professionalism, regional character, and outreach. We hope to interview or get contributions from past presidents and other officers, and include articles, photos, and other items relevant to each period.

We would like to invite other members – You – to get involved in producing these newsletters. You can interview a past president or other officer, write up your own memories of a person or event, write an article about conservation in the relevant decade, look in the archives (or your own storage boxes) for photographs of WCG people and events, or follow any other idea you may have to add to each newsletter. Please do contact me or Newsletter Editor Jayne Holt to contribute to this initiative.

We also plan to hold a birthday party at our December 6, 2007, meeting, where we will honor WCG's past presidents and share some memories and some cake. Save the date.

Another big project we plan to accomplish this year is updating the WCG web site. This project continues the work of the board over the past couple of years to first update our logo and then our outreach booth – both of which look fantastic. We will now move on to the web site, to incorporate our new logo, add more information about our

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outreach activities, and generally update the content and look of the site. We have a committee in place and, as we did for the logo, we will solicit bids from three web site designers and go from there.

If you have not yet seen the new outreach booth, you are in for a treat. Photos showing the booth's debut at the AIC meeting in Richmond can be seen in the June online newsletter. Booth Coordinator Nancy Pollak has a number of outreach activities planned for the year and also hopes to bring the booth to as many monthly meetings as possible.

We are still selling WCG's member-written publication, Conservation Resources for Art and Antiques, 2nd edition (CRfAA), and continue to reach out to galleries, museum shops, and other venues that might be interested in selling it. If you know of any such venues, please contact our new CRfAA Chair, Michele Pagan.

Vice President Eliza Gilligan has been busy arranging venues for our monthly meetings and working with the rest of the board to plan the lectures and receptions for each month. As usual, we will continue to request that members drop a few dollars in the kitty for food and drink at each meeting to help cover the cost of this benefit.

We look forward to seeing everyone at our first meeting on October 4 at the Donald W. Reynolds Center for American Art and Portraiture (SAAM/NPG). It is a fantastic venue and we are excited to have Debbie Hess Norris as our first speaker of the season. Don't miss it!

Most of all, we hope you will get involved – volunteer for the outreach booth events, volunteer to serve on committees of the board, send in your suggestions and comments, take photographs of events for the WCG archives, arrange to interview people for the WCG newsletters and archives, and join us in celebrating the year.

40 is a great age to be....

Best regards,
Claire Peachey
President
wcg@washingtonconservationguild.org



Members of the new WCG Board for 2007-2008
(front row) Mary Coughlin, Erin Blake, Claire Peachey, Lisa Young
(second row) Jane Norman, Julia Brennan, Sarah Stauderman, Sunae Park Evans
(back row) Steve Mellor, Eliza Gilligan, Susan Peckham, Michele Pagan

Upcoming WCG Meetings 2007/2008

Monthly meetings for the 2007/2008 season begin in October 2007 and run through May 2008. The meetings are usually held on the first Thursday of each month. Most meetings begin at 5 p.m. with a reception, followed by the guest speaker's presentation. Please check individual meeting announcements for exact times and locations. Check this space in the September issue of the newsletter for a list of the meetings for the coming year.

October 4

Speaker: Debbie Hess Norris. Held at the Donald W. Reynolds Center for American Art and Portraiture (NPG-SAAM), 8th and G St., NW, Washington, DC (Metro stop: Gallery Place/Chinatown, Red/Yellow/Green lines).

November 1

Speaker: Terry Drayman Weisser. Venue TBA.

December 6

WCG Birthday Party and reminiscences with past presidents. Held at the National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1785 Massachusetts Ave, NW, Washington, DC (Metro stop: Red line, Dupont Circle).

January 3

Three-Ring Circus TBA.

February 7

Speaker and venue TBA .

March 6

Intern Talks held at the Charles Sumner School, 1201 17th St., NW, Washington, DC (Metro stop: Farragut North, Red line).

April 3

Speaker and venue TBA.

May 1

Business Meeting, Elections and Raffle. Held at the Hillwood Museum and Gardens, 4155 Linnean Avenue, NW, Washington, DC (Metro stop: Red line, Van Ness/UDC).

Outreach Booth Update

The Outreach Booth will be starting our new season of public outreach at the Historical Society of Frederick County's Treasured Heirloom event, Saturday, November 3, from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. For the past several years, we have been bringing the conservation message to this "Antiques Road Show" type event, held in Frederick, Maryland, about one hour north of DC. WCG members are on hand to talk to participants about their treasures, explaining conservation and preventive care, and offering conservation literature. If you are interested in helping out at this event, please contact Nancy Pollak.

Nancy Pollak, WCG Booth Coordinator
nrpollak@aol.com or 301-845-1010

Michele Pagan, head of marketing efforts for the 2nd Edition of the CRfAA, is looking for suggestions from WCG members for retail outlets for the 600 copies still available for sale.

Michele can be reached via email:
michele_johnpagan@yahoo.com
or by phone: 202-546-5439.
Your help is greatly appreciated!

WCG Angels Project Suggestions Needed!
We are always looking for new ideas for our future Angels Projects. If you know of a museum, historic house, or any organization that needs a little help caring for its collection, please send us an email at:
wcg@washingtonconservationguild.org

WCG: 1967-1977

As part of the 40th anniversary of WCG, we will commemorate one decade of WCG's history in each of the four newsletters over the 2007-2008 season. This September newsletter focuses on the founding of WCG. We have included interviews with and tributes to a few WCG officers from this period, items from the WCG Archives and other contributions from WCG members. Continue to check the WCG website for additional photos and information relating to this special event.

The WCG Archives finding aid is online at:
<http://siarchives.si.edu/findingaids/FARU7477.htm>

The First Decade

This article was researched using the archives of the WCG, located in the Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 7477 Washington Conservation Guild Records, c. 1968-2006. The author is a sophomore at Vanderbilt University. Over the summer (2007) she interned at the Smithsonian Institution Archives.

The Washington Conservation Guild was established to address the increasing “need for some vehicle for cooperative endeavor among the individual conservators in the area,” as Peter Powers, the first treasurer of the Guild, wrote in a letter to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution in 1967.

The initial idea for a regional conservation group was proposed as early as 1965 when the International Council of Museums (ICOM) Committee for Conservation met in Washington, D.C. Local members of ICOM felt that there should be a regional group to greet them. It wasn't until the summer of 1967 that early steps took place to organize an informal meeting of the first steering committee on October 19, 1967. A number of conservators from the Baltimore Museum of Fine Arts, the Walters Art Gallery, and the Smithsonian Institution were present at the meeting held in the Conservation Analytical Laboratory (CAL) located in the Museum of History and Technology (now known as the National Museum of American History). Among those included were Robert M. Organ, Chief of CAL, Eleanor McMillan, Jacqueline Olin, and Maurice Salmon, conservators at CAL, W. Thomas Chase and R. J. Gettens of the Freer Gallery of Art, Elizabeth Packard of the Baltimore Museum, and Peter Powers, member of the General Counsel of the Smithsonian Institution.

At that first meeting, it was decided that the primary intentions of the group were to provide a social arena where members could gather to talk informally and to sponsor presentations to promote the exchange of ideas among conservators in all fields in the Washington area. The committee concluded that membership should consist of both conservators and non-conservators, such as curators and collectors, from government, non-government, and private institutions in the Washington and Baltimore areas. Also, it was agreed that the Smithsonian Institution could provide initial leadership, but that the group should remain independent, using the Institution only for its meeting spaces and addressograph facilities.

The first official meeting took place on November 7, 1967. Invitations were sent to conservators in the Washington and Baltimore areas who were members of the International Institute of Conservation-American Group (IIC-AG) and to staff members of the National Park Service and the Smithsonian Institution. Ninety-five people attended the informal meeting held at the Freer Gallery of Art, under the tentative name of the Baltimore-Washington Conservation Group. The first officers were appointed at the meeting. These officers helped solidify the organization and structure of the group during the next year. R. M. Organ was selected as President, W. T. Chase as Vice-President, Maurice Salmon as Secretary, and Peter Powers as Treasurer. The first Guild lecture was given at the meeting by Gettens, Organ, and Packard, who reported on the 1967 IIC meeting held in London on Museum Climatology.

The following year, the group attained the support of both the IIC-AG and the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, S. Dillon Ripley. Throughout the next several years the group retained their close relationship with the IIC-AG, who passed the first bylaws of the Guild in 1968. However, when the IIC-AG reorganized and became the American Institute for Conservation (AIC) in 1972, the Guild needed to re-clarify their relationship to the parent group. In 1974, the WCG, then the Washington Regional Conservation Guild, decided to become an institutional member of the AIC, thereby maintaining an informal affiliation with AIC while at the same time remaining an independent association.

After the initial formative meeting in the fall of 1967, the Guild and its membership continued to develop under the leaderships of Eleanor McMillan, Bethune Gibson, and Alan B. Albright. The Guild's membership grew gradually during the remainder of the 1960's and the 1970's primarily by word-of-mouth. By 1977, the membership had expanded to about one-hundred fifty and included

people throughout the greater Washington area who represented all fields of art conservation. Monthly lectures were given by various members of the Guild as a means to exchange technical information about specific conservation issues and encourage participation of members. Overtime, the activities of the group grew to include day tours of conservation facilities and museums, film showings, week-long courses, and workshop tours in the Washington and Baltimore areas. One especially successful activity of the Guild was a weeklong course attended by members on the theory and use of the polarizing microscope for conservators. Dr. Walter McCrone of the McCrone Research Institute of Chicago taught the course in Washington in 1973, which introduced new and up coming techniques in conservation. During the first ten years of its existence, through progressive activities such as these, the Guild effectively built up its membership and its significance in promoting the principles of conservation.

Elizabeth Nichols
Intern, Smithsonian Institution Archives

An Email Conversation with Robert Organ, WCG's First President

Robert Organ has been called one of the great pioneers in scientific conservation. The Washington Conservation Guild is indeed fortunate to be able to claim him as its first president. I had the opportunity to correspond with Robert Organ by email recently—as he lives in Scotland—to ask him about his time with WCG. He related to me some of the background to, and collaborators in, WCG's genesis. I also read the detailed and engaging conservation autobiography Organ wrote in 1999 for the FAIC Oral History Project. From him, I learned a great deal about the early days of WCG and the context in which WCG grew.

Originally called the Washington Region Conservation Guild, WCG was established during a period of great interest and activity in conservation, conservation science, materials research, and museum development. The National Museum Act of 1966 had just been passed, charging the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution (SI) and the Director of the United States National Museum to provide assistance to museums of the United States and abroad. This was to include performing research on, and otherwise contributing to, “the development of museum techniques, with emphasis on museum conservation and the development of a national institute for museum conservation,” and carrying out programs “for training career employees in museum practices in cooperation with museums, their professional organizations, and institutions of higher education....” (20 U.S.C. 65a, National Museum Act of 1966). Also during this period, the IIC-AG (later to become AIC) had adopted its first code of ethics for art conservators at its annual meeting in Ottawa in May, 1967. The DC area museum and conservation community was large and active at this time, and collecting institutions such as the Smithsonian and the National Park Service (NPS) had many preservation and analysis questions and problems to be addressed. As Organ notes about WCG in his FAIC autobiography, “the time was ripe for such an organization.”

Robert Organ had not been in Washington, DC, long when his work with WCG began. After thirteen years at the British Museum Research Laboratory and a few years as first Curator of Conservation at the Royal Ontario Museum, Organ accepted a position at the Smithsonian Institution's Conservation Analytical Laboratory (CAL), starting there in June, 1967. At this time, CAL was located in the basement of the Museum of History and Technology (MHT, renamed the National Museum of History and Technology in 1969, and now called the National Museum of American History). The lab had a staff of about six, including one conservator. “The lab was intended to be a scientific lab at the service of many units of the Smithsonian complex. I had been studying how this task could possibly be achieved; had just looked through all of the lab cupboards to clear out some years' accumulation of unlikely apparatus; had found many dozens of requests for work that were gathering dust because our skilled scientists were not familiar with museum needs; and was considering moving the furnishings around to eliminate some of the lost motion that was hindering productivity. This activity was of intense interest to our staff and to their contacts in other parts of the Smithsonian Institution. Change was in the air!”

Organ reported to the Director of the United States National Museum, Frank Taylor, who was housed with other top administrators in the Smithsonian Castle, across the Mall from the MHT. “From time to time, CAL received visitors from that level, curious to discover what the new boy was doing.” One such visitor was Peter Powers, General Counsel to SI, who in the course of his work had contacts with administrators in other government-funded organizations. Another was R. John Gettens, Head of the Scientific Laboratory of the Freer Gallery of Art, and initiator of the SI committee that had created CAL a few years before.

As Organ recounts, “One day, while talking at the long, general-purpose analytical bench with Peter Powers about what was going on, Powers asked: ‘What about this Area Group?’ Evidently the idea had been ‘in the air’ for some time, without my knowing. ‘Good idea!’ Powers made contacts with the National Park Service, National Gallery of Art (NGA), and others. A small group drawn from CAL, the Freer, and Baltimore museums was gathered together in October 1967 to talk about the possibility. All being enthusiastic, everybody set out to apply his/her own skills to start-up. John Gettens informed the Secretary of the SI and I my Director, to receive their blessings and approval of using SI accommodations. Peter Powers talked with NPS and NGA to get approval for their staffs to attend. Maury Salmon searched the IIC-American Group list for members in the area to notify, some as far distant as Richmond, Pittsburgh, and New York—he found over one hundred. A temporary working committee was set up. Powers asked Ernie

Feidler, Administrator at NGA, to write a Constitution.”

At the first meeting to attract members to the group on November 7, 1967, ninety-five people attended! And it is clear that WCG never lost its momentum.

Lectures were always a focal point of WCG meetings, and the first season of WCG speakers reads like a Who's Who in Conservation (see the list in this newsletter). There was never any difficulty finding speakers on a range of topics—“everybody wanted to know, lots of people wanted to tell”—and occasionally there were other activities like a visit to a Baltimore silversmith and a summer picnic. The membership fee at this time? A reasonable \$3 per year!

The Smithsonian, NPS, and NGA all played an important role in the success of WCG, as they approved and helped provide lecture rooms at no cost. Meetings during the first years were distributed among Smithsonian's MHT, Freer, and Silver Hill facilities, and occasionally at NGA. Lectures in later years were mostly held in MHT, in the room used immediately earlier in the day for Organ's long-running series of weekly lectures for CAL and SI staff on conservation and its chemistry. Visitors from out of town, such as NPS at Harpers Ferry, could then conveniently attend both the CAL lecture and the WCG meeting.

In Organ's FAIC autobiography, he includes a floor plan of the lab at MHT in about 1976, with each person's work station labeled. I'm sure many readers will recognize the names of the people in the lab, some of whom are still WCG members: H. Westley, B. Miller, M.E. Goodway, J. Mishara, W.R. Hopgood, K.G. Cunningham, J.S. Olin, C. Beerman, E. Martin, J. Woodland, L. Scheifler, M. Smith, R.M. Organ, E. McMillan, N. Horton, E. McManus, M.L. Garbin, A.J. Konrad, and W. Angst.

The WCG presidents who succeeded Robert Organ in the 1967–1977 time period were Harold Peterson, Chief Curator of the NPS, W.T. Chase from the Freer, James Smith from NPS, Victor Covey from NGA, and Martha Goodway from CAL. Organ remembers Smith's special interest in adipocere: “He would bring it into conversation whenever mention would shock. He also chaffed me about British word-usage, e.g., ‘inflammable’ for the American ‘flammable.’”

Robert Organ served his term as President and then as Past President, and then continued to attend meetings when possible until his retirement from CAL in 1983. Thanks to his leadership, WCG thrived, and remains strong to this day.

Claire Peachey
WCG President

1967–1968 Meetings

November 9, 1967 5:30-7 p.m. Freer Gallery of Art “The 1967 London IIC Conference on Museum Climatology – A Review” Rutherford J. Gettens, Robert M. Organ, Robert L. Feller, Elizabeth Packard, speakers

December 7, 1967 5:30 p.m. Museum of History and Technology, Dr. Harold J. Plenderleith, Director of the Rome Centre, speaker

January 11, 1968 5:30 p.m. Museum of History and Technology “Conservation of the Small Collection” Eleanor McMillan, speaker

February 8, 1968 5:30 p.m. Museum of History and Technology “Chinese Belt-Hooks: Some Case Histories” W.T. Chase III, speaker; “A Dry-cleaning Technique for Textile Conservation” Colonel J.W. Rice, speaker

March 5, 1968 5:30 p.m. Museum of History and Technology “Fakes, Liability, and Other Legal Problems” Ernest R. Feidler, Peter G. Powers, Huntington T. Block, speakers

March 14, 1968 5:30 p.m. Building 10 (Garber Facility, Smithsonian) “Problems of conserving and storing aero-space specimens” Donald Merchant, speaker; “Recovery and conservation of the U.S. Monitor Tecumseh” Colonel Robert M. Calland, speaker

April 4, 1968 5:30 p.m. Museum of History and Technology “Treatment of a collage by Juan Gris” Marilyn Weidner, speaker; “The treatment of a fire damaged collage” Geoffrey Lemmer, speaker

May 2, 1968 5:30 p.m. National Gallery of Art “Synthetic Resins in Conservation” Dr. Robert Feller, speaker; Business Meeting

Victor Covey, WCG President

1973-1975

Victor C. B. Covey served as president of the Washington Conservation Guild from 1973 to 1975. A Baltimore native, "Vic" worked at the Baltimore Museum of Art for twenty-four years. In 1972 he was hired at the National Gallery of Art where he served as Chief of Conservation before being appointed Chief Conservator Emeritus and Senior Conservator for Special Assignments in 1983. During his time at the National Gallery of Art, Vic treated both sculpture and paintings. He is credited with introducing honeycomb panels to the field of conservation, after working with them on airplanes during World War II. He also designed a lightweight, metal container with slots into which paintings could be slipped. The idea was that one person could roll the container through the galleries collecting paintings for immediate export in the event of a national emergency. Vic was also instrumental in the return of the Crown of St. Stephen to Hungary. In addition to his work with WCG, he served as Vice President on the National Conservation Advisory Council and he was a Fellow of the International Institute for Conservation and the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works. He retired in 1984.

Joanna Dunn

Remembering Joseph Columbus – An Early WCG Officer

Joseph Columbus, a textile conservator at the National Gallery of Art, was involved with the early years of the WCG and served as Secretary in 1972. He had a 20 year association with the Guild. To many young conservators and others outside the niche of textile conservation, Joe Columbus may be little known. But like other early members of the WCG, Joe was deeply involved in shaping the field, promoting professionalism and influencing a younger generation of conservators. He was a respected colleague of the founders of the WCG.

I met him in the early 1980's when he was working at the National Gallery of Art and focusing on the treatment of European tapestries. He was nearing the end of his rich career and I felt honored to spend a little time at the foot of a master. Joe worked for many institutions, collaborating with other conservation professionals, such as Tom Chase, on a project conserving a Polish Royal Crown. He worked at the Textile Museum with Colonel Rice doing intensive cleaning treatments on archeological textiles. He did projects for NYU, Dumbarton Oaks, Smithsonian Museum of Natural History, The State Department and many other institutions. At the National Gallery, he trained and passed on the baton to Julia Woodward Dippold, a textile conservator in private practice in Baltimore. Julia Dippold provided stories and memories for this tribute.

Joe is remembered as the consummate professional and gentleman. He was intrigued with processes and new treatments. He was open minded

From the WCG Archives

On 11/9/1967, Peter Powers, Counsel to the Smithsonian, wrote a memo to Secretary Ripley regarding the formation of WCG. This memo is truly prescient about the role and ability that WCG has had over the past 40 years:

"The formation of the 'Washington Group' comes at a good time. The increasing size of the conservation problems at the Smithsonian, at the Park Service, and at other agencies and nearby museums, has for some time suggested the need for some vehicle for cooperative endeavor among the individual conservators in the area. The 'Group' seems the best way to start, with a rather informal 'let's get acquainted' series of meetings, not limited strictly to card-carrying conservators.

If it succeeds, the Group should in time be of real service in raising professional standards and performance, in encouraging support and new recruits, and as a means of exploring possibilities for joint research and training."

The memo goes on to discuss formalities and recognition of the people at the Smithsonian who will be the players in the formation of the group.

Another important memo is one dated January 4, 1968 from Frank A. Taylor, to Mr. Meredith Johnson, Office of Facilities. Frank Taylor died recently at the age of 104. He was the Director of the Museum of History and Technology (now the National Museum of American History):

"Subject: Use of Smithsonian facilities for meetings of the Washington Region Conservation Group.

The activities of the recently formed Washington Region Conservation Group (headed by Mr. Robert Organ, Chief of the Conservation Analytical Laboratory, MNT) are an integral part of the conservation programs of the Smithsonian Institution. Mr. Ripley has approved the designation of these activities as official business of the Smithsonian. Therefore, the use of Smithsonian facilities, such as auditoria, meeting rooms, etc. for the activities of this group will not be charged for; and any overtime that may be involved will be absorbed by the Smithsonian."

Both memos are located in President (R.M. Organ) Papers, Box 2, RU 7477.

and explored new techniques for treatments and mountings. He was a transitional figure in conservation, bridging the old world methods of restoration and the new school of testing and reversible treatments. He experimented using new materials in old processes, and promoted the importance of documentation and testing. He was extremely thorough and a wonderful teacher and mentor. He is also remembered for his elegant style and dapper dress. He was a professional of a past generation, a conservator who shaped the discipline of textile conservation but was also renowned for his art historical scholarship as well.

Julia Brennan

Tom Chase – A WCG Pioneer Remembers

Tom Chase is known to many of us through his years at the Freer and Sackler Galleries in Washington DC. He was also an early mover and shaker in the WCG, helping to establish the Guild, serving as an officer and as our third president in 1970. He and other Smithsonian employees and area conservators, such as Robert Organ, Peter Powers, Robert Feller, Elizabeth Packard and Rutherford Gettens, all got together in 1967 to form a professional alliance for conservators. The idea was presented to then-Smithsonian Secretary S. Dillon Ripley, who enthusiastically endorsed the new association and offered space for the meetings. In fact the first meeting was held in the Freer Auditorium and was a review of the recent London IIC conference. For years, many WCG gatherings were held at various Smithsonian venues.

The WCG was the first local conservation guild in the US. At the time, AIC had not yet been established, and most of these early WCG founders were members of the IIC-AG – the American Group of the IIC. The Guild was established as the Baltimore Washington Conservation Guild, with a 150 mile radius, and drawing on as wide a group as possible. It was inclusive from the start, and not limited to card-carrying conservators. They wanted a forum to discuss ideas, share professional advancements, and increase camaraderie. The meetings were set at an early time to allow the group to get together for a leisurely and fun dinner afterwards. This was very much a tradition of the early members.

At the first Guild meeting, the Board designed the letterhead and stationary and Ernie Feidler, Counsel for the National Gallery of Art, set up the by-laws. The Guild was well underway and soon attracted members such as Marilyn Weidner and Virginia Greene from Philadelphia. The meetings were informal, engaging and done with the least amount of overhead. One of Tom's favorite talks was given by Charlie Bridgeman from Kodak. Speaking on the topic of x-rays, he is remembered as a beautiful and funny speaker. Maurice "Morey" Salmon, from CAL, is also remembered as a leading light and wonderful speaker.

Besides the monthly dinners, other early traditions included field trips and an annual Christmas picnic. The first yuletide picnic was held at Woodlawn Plantation. One of Tom's favorite outings was to the historic family-owned silversmith company in Baltimore, Samuel Kirk and Sons, in 1969. Here they watched the whole process of traditional repousee work.

Tom is pleased to see the vision of the early founders carried forward today, with a continued spirit of camaraderie and professionalism.

Written by Julia Brennan and based on conversations with Tom Chase

Did you know?

- The first newsletter (volume 1, no. 1) was published in February, 1976, with Nikki Horton as editor. It excerpts from the January 1976 "WCG Illustrated Panel Discussion" featuring Virginia Greene, University Museum, Philadelphia and Bethune Gibson, William Fitzhugh, and Carolyn Rose, of the Smithsonian Institution. The article is entitled "The Conservation of Archaeological and Ethnographic Materials".

- The first membership roster, of March 21, 1968, had 146 members.

- dues for WCG in 1968 were \$3

Do you have photographs for the WCG archives?

The WCG archives, held in the Smithsonian Institution Archives, does not have many photographs, so we are appealing to members to provide photographs of people and events from all periods of WCG's history. The archives can accept color and black-and-white prints or digital images. Every photo must have a caption, and ideally every person in the photo will be identified. Please send an email (not the photos!) to wcg@washingtonconservationguild.org if you have photographs to submit.

Save the Date!

December 6, 2007

We are going to have a WCG birthday party at our December meeting! Come and celebrate with WCG's past presidents at the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Angels Project

WCG is soliciting volunteer participants for our upcoming Angels project. The history of the annual Angels Projects dates to the late 1980s when AIC members began incorporating Angels Projects at historic sites near the AIC annual meetings. WCG has continued the tradition in the DC area. Projects are completed in one day and they have included rehousing collections for storage upgrades, preserving daguerreotypes, backing paintings, rolling textiles, and preparing collections for moving. Last year's Angels Project took place at the Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum. A team of 18 volunteers vacuum cleaned and rehoused over one hundred small tools and household implements.

This year's Angels Project will focus on the objects that were removed from The Peabody Room of the Georgetown Branch of the DC Public Library. The library was heavily damaged in a fire in April 2007, and the curators have relocated many of the objects from the Peabody room to another branch of the DC Public Library. The WCG has been in close contact with the Georgetown library staff, and volunteers are now needed to assist project team leaders with the rehousing, surface cleaning, condition assessment and treatment proposals of the objects from this room. Special items include paper fans, ethnographic materials, metals, ceramics, glass and composites. The Angels Project will take place on October 13, 2007 from 9am to 4pm. Space is limited so sign up early!

If you would like to volunteer please contact:

Joanna Dunn
Angels Project Coordinator
j-dunn@nga.gov
202-236-3103

People

Mary Ballard, Hannah Szczepanowska, and Michele Pagan traveled to Krakow, Poland, to attend the ICOM Conference on Upholstery, which was held from May 14-18, 2007. Mary has served as coordinator of the Textile Group this year, as well as last. Both Hannah and Michele addressed the group of conservators from around the world. Hannah spoke on the topic of the space suits at the Smithsonian's Air and Space Museum, while Michele delivered a piece of research conducted on behalf of the Shelburne Museum, in Shelburne Vermont, concerning their very early Boston Easy Chair. The conference was held at Jagellonian University, the 2nd oldest university in Europe.

Congratulations to **Joanne Klaar**, who got married on June 30th in Maryland. Her new name is Joanne Klaar Walker.

Julia Brennan, of Washington DC, completed Algeria's first ever textile conservation training workshop at the Bardo National Museum in Algiers, summer 2007. A joint project of the Algerian Ministry of Culture and the US Embassy's Cultural Affairs Division, the workshop lasted 6 weeks and trained 10 professional staff. Based in a 16th century Moorish palace, daily work concentrated on the vast holdings of 18th - 20th century Ottoman style costumes, embroideries and ethnographic collections of leather, baskets, toys, dolls and accessories. Training covered methods of textile treatment and stabilization, techniques for storage and exhibition support, and overall museum environmental monitoring. Side trips included visits to 6 local museums, 5 Roman sites, and the famed Casbah.

The US Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) bids a very fond farewell to textile conservator **Lizou Fenyvesi** who retired on July 20, 2007. She was a valued member of the conservation staff and she will be greatly missed. We wish her the best as she continues working in private practice. The USHMM is delighted to welcome textile conservator **M. Cynthia Hughes** who joined the staff on July 23, 2007. Cynthia previously worked at the Textile Conservation Center at the American Textile History Museum in Lowell, MA. Finally, we welcome **Steven Pickman** from the UCLA/Getty conservation program as a Neukon Family Foundation Fellow working with objects conservator **Eileen Blakenbaker**.

Lecture

Modern Paints: Uncovering the Choices
Dr Thomas Learner, Head of Contemporary Art Research
Getty Conservation Institute

Tuesday, September 11, 5:00 p.m.
McEvoy Auditorium
Donald W Reynolds Center for American Art and Portraiture
G & 8th streets NW

Numerous types of paints have been used by artists over the last 70 years, including those intended for household or industrial use. In this talk, Tom Learner outlines common classes of "modern paint" and the procedures used to determine which types are present in works of art. Several well-known paintings will be discussed, including examples by David Hockney, Roy Lichtenstein, Morris Louis, Jackson Pollock, Bridget Riley and Andy Warhol.

Presented by the Lunder Conservation Center.

Symposium

Second Symposium on Corrosion & Preservation of Historic Artifacts

Tuesday, October 23, 2007
All Day
Smithsonian Institution Museum Support Center Theater
4210 Silver Hill Road, Suitland, Maryland 20746

Co-sponsored by:
Baltimore/Washington Section of NACE International
Smithsonian Institution Museum Conservation Institute
Washington Conservation Guild
Symposium Chairman, Harvey Hack

Presentations include previous and on-going work by conservators such as Mary Coughlin (WCG Director) who will be speaking on her assessment and treatment of the Star Wars C3PO at the National Museum of American History. WCG Interns will receive admission free if they are willing to bring their own lunch. More information about the program, time and registration fee will be available through the WCG website in September. Please RSVP early, space is limited.

Attention:

To WCG members who have opted not to receive e-mail meeting announcements:

WCG occasionally sends additional e-mails about special WCG events, upcoming conferences, job openings and other conservation news of interest. If you have opted not to receive meeting announcements by e-mail, you will not receive these additional e-mails. We recommend that you to check our website (www.washingtonconservationguild.org) frequently to remain abreast of all WCG news.

If you would like to change your e-mail status please contact Membership Chair Patricia Favero at wcg@washingtonconservationguild.org.

MEMBERSHIP

WCG dues are \$30 per year, \$20 for students and interns, payable to the Washington Conservation Guild or WCG.

The membership year runs from May 1st through April 30th. Membership forms can be requested by mail from the Membership Secretary at P.O. Box 23364, Washington D.C. 20026 or can be downloaded from our web site. Changes of address or telephone numbers, corrections to the directory, and dues payments should be sent to the Membership Secretary at the address listed above or to wcg@washingtonconservationguild.org

The membership schedule is as follows:

- Early March: membership renewal notice mailed
- Mid-April: 2nd and last renewal notice mailed
- May 1st: Verify Membership Status
- July 1st: Deadline for membership renewals**
- Aug/Sept: Publication of membership directory

*Members who join after July 1st will not be included in the membership directory, but in an addendum to be mailed out in December.

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How to reach WCG

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News from the Editor

WCG Newsletter is printed quarterly (September, December, March, June). Items for inclusion in the WCG Newsletter should be directed to:

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Email submissions are preferred. Please note that articles should be sent at least two weeks before publication. The editor reserves the right to edit copy to fit available space. Special thanks to proofreaders Brett Holt and Emily Jacobson.

Next issue: December 2007

Deadline for submissions: November 15, 2007

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