



THE WASHINGTON CONSERVATION GUILD NEWSLETTER

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From the Desk of the President

Greetings from Charlottesville!

Happy New Year! I hope everyone is enjoying the thaw, after all the snow that started just after our February meeting at the Phillips Collection. If you made it to that meeting, then you know we had a great location in the Carriage House at the Phillips and our panel discussion offered a very broad range of information related to glazing for exhibits. I would like to thank Tru Vue for sponsoring the travel for two of the speakers and the refreshments. Their support enabled us to have a great meeting.

I would also like to extend my thanks to the vendors who sponsored the refreshments for our January 3-Ring Circus: Invisium; Tru Vue; Archival Art; University Products, Hollinger Metal Edge; Dorfman Museum Figures. Many of these vendors have been long time supporters of the 3-Ring meeting and we were very pleased to have them back for another year.

I have one more "3-Ring thank you" to the Conservation department at the Freer & Sackler Galleries for sponsoring the meeting venue. The WCG is very lucky to be able to count on the regular support it gets from both the Freer & Sackler and the Smithsonian African Art Museum who take regular turns hosting the Guild's biggest meeting of the year.

My final "thank you" is very heartfelt and bittersweet. It is a thank you to Jayne Holt who is stepping down as the Newsletter Editor after eight years of compiling, editing and publishing the quarterly newsletter of the Washington Conservation Guild. Jayne writes "Every few years the Newsletter has undergone a transition. It has morphed from stapled Xeroxed sheets to a professionally printed publication." Jayne has put a tremendous amount of effort into managing some of these transitions and has been very flexible in adapting the print newsletter to the online format. She has done a great job of informing the Board of what is feasible and likewise done a great job of meeting the preferences of the Guild membership who request either a paper or electronic newsletter. As we discussed Jayne's announcement during the board meeting, and the importance of the newsletter to the Guild, one of the board members commented that the Newsletter "was the record of the Guild". It is indeed. Thank You Jayne!!

The Guild is now looking for a new Newsletter Editor, someone to take the Newsletter through its next transition. We are "retiring" the printed edition at the end of this membership year, so the new editor will only have to pick up the online edition. Jayne will be available to help whoever steps into the role as there will be many years of knowledge to pass on. That said the Guild is looking for someone who is eager to take on the responsibility and take the newsletter in new directions. Interested parties please contact me or Jayne to learn more.

Best,
Eliza Gilligan
WCG President
wcg@washingtonconservationguild.org

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Upcoming WCG Meetings 2009/2010

Monthly meetings for the 2008/2009 season will begin in October 2009 and run through May 2010. 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.

April 1

Speaker TBA. Held at George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate and Gardens

May 6

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

Opportunity to Serve the Guild: Newsletter Editor



WCG has been producing a newsletter for its guild members since the very beginning. This is your opportunity to join a long line of members who have served to keep the membership informed and record the happenings in our community.

This is a fun job and one that can be fairly flexible: the newsletter has a history of changing to suit the tastes and technical abilities of its editors. Do you think the format needs to be updated? Would you like to see more features included? It's up to you! All that is required is an ability to format and produce a print quality pdf to send to the website every four months.

The newsletter is a quarterly publication that appears in September, December, March and June of each business year. The main features of the newsletters (meeting summaries, Presidents column, committee updates) are provided by Board members and Committee Chairs. Any additional content may be organized and solicited by you, at your discretion. Your main task is to gather these features, edit and format them for publication.

Contact Jayne Girod Holt for more information (girodj@gmail.com)

December Meeting

WCG Holiday Party and Tips Session – National Trust for Historic Preservation

This year's WCG holiday party and tips session was held at the National Trust for Historic Preservation on December 3, 2009. Nancy Purinton, in private practice in Maryland, and Nancy Pollak, also in private practice, both presented a variety of helpful ideas for useful conservation tools.

Nancy Purinton came across an unusual difficulty in her quest to outfit her private lab – a lack of availability of the traditional lead shot used in weights. She was told lead was hard to come by now due to higher demands in markets in China as well as gun ammunitions. Therefore Nancy was forced to think outside the box to acquire suitable weights. After a friend suggested she use rocks from her garden she began to consider the possibilities of natural stones. As luck would have it, Kitchens That Rock Inc. (www.kitchensthatrock.com), had an excess of scrap material due to a recent windstorm blowing over several slabs of their natural stones. The company, based in Frederick MD, was very willing to work with Nancy in selecting her pieces and cutting them to her specifications. She decided to use both granite and marble pieces 1" – 1" thick in various dimensions from 3x6" to 10x12" blocks. The bottoms of the stones were then covered in polyester felt attached with Jade 403. Nancy recommends that the larger pieces require a slightly thicker layer of felt, about 1/8". These weights can then be used in combinations and stacked, and even occasionally serve as the flattening surface and weight all in one. In the end she estimates these weights cost about \$5-10 each and notes that they are not only effective but beautiful as well.

Nancy Pollak offered several ideas for helpful tools in the lab. First she mentioned expansion bolt corners, available from Pearl Paints, to be used in place of stretcher keys. The system consists of two sleeves over a bolt in the middle. The two ends are screwed into the stretcher and the bolt is adjusted with a 1/2" wrench. In addition to their expansion abilities, the bolts also add a bit of structural support across the corners, which stretcher keys do not. Next Nancy suggested the use of Knipex 8" dolphin nose pliers from Crawford Tool (www.crawfordtool.com). These pliers feature a crooked tip that can be very useful for getting behind things like stretcher bars, and they open vertically allowing one to pull something out with no danger of rubbing against the canvas or hands getting in the way. Finally Nancy advocated the use of PVC pipe as "conservation tinker toys". Using t-joints, elbow pieces, connectors, and various lengths of pipe one can build almost anything. Nancy herself uses them to build support structures for large paintings that do not fit on a conventional easel. The pipes are almost infinitely available, completely adjustable, and come in all imaginable sizes. They don't require any sort of adhesive or expertise to assemble, simply whack them together with a mallet and disassemble when finished.

Melissa Gardner
Painting Conservation Intern,
National Gallery of Art



Linda Edquist and Ernie Robertson get in the holiday spirit at the December Holiday Party

January Meeting: Three Ring Circus

Session I: Setting Up a Conservation Studio: Examples in Institutional, University, and Private Practice Labs

Eliza Gilligan, Conservator for University Library Collections, UVA Libraries, “Starting from Scratch: A Grant Funded Scenario”

Eliza Gilligan recounted some of the difficulties she confronted while setting up a new book and paper lab at the University of Virginia libraries using grant funds. The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation awarded the UVA Library a grant in March of 2008 to support the construction of a book conservation lab and to enhance an existing book repair unit. Eliza was hired by the Library in March of 2009.

After receiving the grant, Eliza faced a major discrepancy between the requested 2,400 square feet of lab space described in the grant application and the 663 square feet finally allocated by the university. According to Eliza, the difference “dramatically affected the program” and forced her to creatively address design processes. For one thing, it meant that the spending plan and timeline in the application was no longer accurate (e.g.: the original plan had called for a fume hood at approximately \$18,000 whereas the allocated space could accommodate a fume trunk for a little over \$2,000). Time constraints imposed by the grant program required Eliza to spend all these funds by March of 2011. While spending this amount of money in so short a time posed its own frustrations, it did enable her to splurge on certain equipment, such as a state-of-the-art DI water filtration system from Millipore.

Moreover, funding was to be spent on goods, not services. Under these restrictions, planning custom work such as cabinetry and shelving became unrealistic. Working with the university’s preferred vendors proved more convenient. While their pre-selected list limited customization, everything was readily available, easy to install and a single vendor could provide sinks, benches, cabinets and countertops among other things. The vendors were able to provide guidance for meeting local and university safety codes. Additionally, Eliza recommended working with the institution’s existing infrastructure to save money and trouble. For example, she is able to use the UVA library’s existing Digital Imaging center for all of the before and after photo-documentation of her conservation treatment projects.

According to Eliza, some lack of flexibility on the part of the institution’s procurement services department caused problems for small specialty vendors unable to set aside expensive equipment for long periods of time without full payment. She describes one vendor who had been holding on to a board shear for over a year without a deposit, nearly selling the machine “out from under me”.

The current lab space is designated as a temporary location for the book lab. The University has a long range goal of building a “collaborative conservation” facility at another location on campus. The other partners in the project would be the University Art Museum, the University Office of the Architect, and the Kluge Ruhe Aboriginal Art Museum. Therefore portability was an ongoing goal during the design process. Every item in her lab can now be picked up and moved, rolled or disassembled for future relocation or expansion.

Access Eliza Gilligan’s blog for photos and a personal account of the planning process: <http://atthebench-conservation.blogspot.com/>

Nora Lockshin, Paper Conservator, Smithsonian Archives, “3 weeks, 3 years, 3 contractors! Building the Smithsonian Center for Archives Conservation”

Paper Conservator Nora Lockshin described the trials and triumphs of moving the Smithsonian’s archives into its new space.

By 2005, a plan was already in place to move the Smithsonian Institution Archives out of the Arts and Industries building on Jefferson Drive. Not only was the building leaking; additional space was needed for a new conservation lab. The move to the new location in the Capital Gallery building on 600 Maryland Avenue S.W began in 2006—though, as the presentation’s title suggests, the move would take another three years to complete.

Through a grueling three-year transition, Nora Lockshin directed the planning and design of the SIA conservation lab. She began the process by touring existing labs in the area, talking to other conservators experienced in lab design, and taking photos for later reference. Her floor plan was determined by the open door policy she wanted to implement, and, she pointed out, a visitor-friendly lab must be especially cautious when it comes to safety. The new SIA lab is a functional space progressing from “dry to wet” that puts the most vulnerable materials—such as those undergoing chemical treatments—at the far side of the room.

While planning the lab, Nora drew up a detailed floor plan, making sure to designate enough space for the operation of machinery and specialized equipment, especially a job backer for book binding. The plans included a 780 sq ft paper conservation lab with north facing windows. Beyond this, the greater archives’ design included other designated areas, such as supply rooms, a digital imaging room, a 140 sq. ft. freezer, a kitchen and break room.

For others undertaking a move, construction or renovation, she suggested reiterating specific technical needs for lighting, power requirements, chemical storage, and ventilation by providing lists and measurements to the architect. She also recommended conservators familiarize themselves with the laws and regulations of the United States Occupational Safety and Health Administration (www.osha.gov) when implementing a chemical hygiene plan and fume hood design.

As the meeting drew to a close, Nora shared a few final tips, which, she revealed, she’d learned the hard way: Install solid colored flooring so dropped items are easy to locate. Make sure all furniture and equipment fits through your doors before you order. Double check the laboratory seals on all your historic stock. And, she concluded, have patience and allow for compromise.

Amy Hughes, pre-program student

Session 2: Conservation Advocacy, Outreach, and Global Preservation of Cultural Heritage

“Preservation Action Team: AIC Outreach and You”, Eryl Wentworth, Executive Director, AIC and Ruth Seyler, Membership and Meetings Director, AIC

AIC is involved in an increasing number of different types of outreach, advocacy and action to raise an awareness of conservation with the general public, special interest groups and with members of Congress. AIC gives out information about past activities to inspire and encourage others and offers support for outreach, such as providing materials and slideshows for presentations. Other recent outreach successes include being published in the Antiques Roadshow Insider magazine and having a Roadshow booth in DC.

Advocacy is especially important with the National Humanities Alliance, who also need help with responding to action alerts, signing up on an advocacy list, and taking part in lobbying days. The difference between advocacy and action is that advocacy is more long range. Action alerts are sent out to ask people to contact Congress to support or oppose legislation. This often comprises sending an email to or calling a representative. Although this may seem daunting, it can make a real difference since congressmen do listen to the electorate and are proud of museums. Indeed, there are two recent examples of this in the form of the defeat of two amendments put forward by Sen. Tom Coburn, one of which was the proposal to prevent museums receiving money as part of the economic stimulus plan. Several organizations – National Humanities Alliance, American Association of Museums and Americans for the Arts – hold lobbying days which offer the opportunity to build a relationship with congressional members and to show appreciation and involvement. Whilst DC has no senators, Eleanor Holmes Norton is the DC Delegate to Congress and takes part in lobbying and debating legislature.

“Institute of Museum and Library Services funding for Collections”, Christine Henry, Senior Program Officer, IMLS

The Institute of Museum and Library Services ([http://www.ims.gov/-](http://www.ims.gov/)) is a federal agency that distributes grants of nearly \$250M to libraries and museums in order to further its mission to sustain heritage, culture and knowledge. There is a great deal of information and advice regarding the different types of grants and their deadlines on the website http://www.ims.gov, and applications must be made online. The website <http://www.grants.gov> can also be used to search for grant programs. Christine described the available grant programs and some of the projects which they have funded; several programs cover conservation, including treatment of specific items such as the American Heritage Preservation Grants, whilst the Conservation Assessment Program enables collections and historic structures to be assessed. Funds are also provided specifically for museums of African American history and conservation and collections care of Native American museums and similar organizations. In addition, projects focused on research, strategic planning and leadership may also be supported by IMLS grants.

Christine’s main recommendations when applying for these funds were to start the process well in advance of the deadline and to use all the online resources available. A great deal of advice is offered including how to write a successful proposal, sample applications and a 24 hour helpline for the software used. It is also possible to sign up to be an anonymous reviewer to assess others’ proposals.

“Connecting to the World’s Collections: Making the Case for the Conservation and Preservation of our Cultural Heritage, Salzburg Global Seminar 28th Oct – 1st Nov 2009”, Debbie Hess Norris, Henry Francis DuPont Chair of Fine Arts, Vice Provost for Graduate and Professional Education and Chair, Art Conservation Department University of Delaware

Set in a beautiful Schloss that was part of the set in *The Sound of Music*, the Salzburg Global Seminar is a non-profit that gets leaders together to solve present and future problems. This particular Seminar gathered 60 cultural leaders, policy makers and conservators from 32 countries to discuss the conservation and preservation of moveable and immovable heritage to ensure that a path forward is identified, rather than simply making recommendations. A full report is available at <http://www.salzburgglobal.org>.

Six plenary sessions took place, concerning advocacy, education, conservation in the developing world, indigenous communities, emergency preparedness and sustainability. From this, strengths and weaknesses were noted and several emerging themes were identified with the idea that the traditional perception of culture is elitist being common to all the sessions. Other conclusions were drawn, such as the need to have a global approach to connections between conservation professionals and the public, the need to consult with indigenous people so that their culture will be respected and nurtured and the effect of climate change on conservation and its involvement in treaties.

The Seminar culminated in the endorsement of the Salzburg Declaration on the Conservation and Preservation of Cultural Heritage which states the importance of cultural heritage and its conservation. This document also encourages professionals in this area to improve public awareness, the international communication of ideas and resources and the development of conservation strategy that is sustainable and incorporated into social and economic initiatives. The Seminar delegates agreed to share the recommendations in the Declaration with their home institutions in order to promote global collaboration to effectively preserve and discuss the needs of the worlds’ cultural heritage.

Elizabeth S J Beesley
Conservation Science Fellow, Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery

Session 3: Innovations in Treatment, Imaging, and Preservation

“They are worth saving: The meaning and materials of public murals” by Amanda Norbutus, Coremans Fellow, Preservation Studies Doctoral Program University of Delaware

Amanda Norbutus’ interesting talk on public murals covered a lot of ground, including the role of public murals in society, the history of mural arts programs in cities such as Los Angeles and Philadelphia, the different types of paints typically used to create murals, conservation issues, and an overview of current research and collaborations taking place surrounding public mural conservation and preservation.

Public murals matter because they can represent public expression, social revolution and national pride. They are artworks seen by everyone, not just those who venture into a museum. For example, the social activism embodied in works by the Mexican mural artists José Clemente Orozco, David Alfaro Siqueiros, and Diego Rivera. In the United States, the Works Progress Association (WPA) hired mural artists during the Great Depression to create images to stimulate national pride. More recently, in preparation for the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles, 10 local mural artists, all of different ethnicities, created murals to represent L.A. to the world, and currently, the Mural Arts Program in Philadelphia employs around 300 artists to create murals with themes of political statements, religious beliefs, and peace and tranquility. The program stimulates community activism and works with city jails.

Often times, murals are located in urban neighborhoods, made with inexpensive materials, possibly by minimally trained artists. They are also subject to harsher environmental conditions than most artworks. Issues of deterioration stem from both the paint system (support, binders, pigments) and the environment (climate, humidity, sunlight). Common condition problems for murals include: fading, graffiti, metal staining, retrofitting, pollution, and efflorescence. Types of modern paints used for murals are acrylic/latex, alkyd, nitrocellulose, and mineral silicate – paints typically used as house paints, artist’s paints, and marine paints. Their advantages are that they are fast-drying, relatively inexpensive, generally miscible with water, and are easy to mix and use.

Research into coatings to protect public murals has been going on at the University of Delaware since 2005 with Dr. Joe Weber and then pre-program intern Jessica Keister and continues today with Amanda Norbutus’ work. Test samples have gone through 4 years of aging, and in most cases it has been found that having a coating in place, of Paraloid B-72 for example, helps to protect the paint from deterioration. The test samples are analyzed to determine which deterioration is related to the paint and its components versus deterioration related to the environment. Most of the test coatings protected the paint from deterioration in varying degrees. Data analysis has shown that each paint brand has its own optimal paint/coating system. In particular, coatings with hindered amine light stabilizers and UV absorbers have proven effective at limiting the damage caused by excessive exposure to UV. The results of this study will be reported in a future publication.

Amanda and the University of Delaware are also working in collaboration with the Mural Arts Program in Philadelphia; Amanda is collecting analytical data in situ on a yearly basis from murals in Philadelphia using a portable FT-IR in order to gain information about the murals’ changing composition due to deterioration. Other collaborations also taking place include one between the University of Delaware and Rescue Public Murals, a group whose goals include creating a database and a national network of individuals and organizations dedicated to saving murals, to develop plans for identifying and documenting public murals in the United States, and to identify murals most at risk in the United States. Collaboration is also ongoing between the University of Delaware and with Tom Learner at the Getty Conservation Institute.

The Rescue Public Murals program has established “best practices for the mural artist” in order to prevent deterioration as much as possible. Some of these guidelines include picking a wall that is facing north and thus not exposed to direct sunlight, knowing the community and considering the neighborhood that the mural will be in prior to creation of the mural, preparing the wall thoroughly before beginning to paint, and considering the impact building materials may have on the mural. Also, the temperature at the time the mural is painted will also have an effect on the extent to which the paint adheres to the wall; painting on cold days will prevent the paint from properly adhering to the wall. Additionally, painting the mural higher up and out of reach of passersby will reduce the chances of graffiti.

Amanda also raised questions about the approach to conserving murals. There are no standard practices for the conservation of murals, and thus there is a need to establish ethical standards for mural conservation. How, or should, museum conservation be applied or modified for mural conservation? Should living mural artists be allowed to “touch up” their work,

thus “improving” but altering the original?

In conclusion, continued collaboration is necessary to preserve murals – collaboration between artists, communities, conservators, those who fund the creation of murals, and scientists and educators. It is ironic that a large part of what makes public murals so powerful, their location outdoors and accessibility to the public, are also what leaves them susceptible to deterioration, both human and nature made.

“Blow it Off: Moving Beyond Compressed Air with Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) Snow” by Hugh Shockey, Objects Conservator, Smithsonian American Art Museum

Hugh Shockey has been exploring the potential benefits of CO₂ snow as a treatment method. In this talk, which he also presented at the 2009 AIC meeting in Los Angeles, he addressed common questions about this treatment method, such as, what is CO₂ snow really? How does it work as a treatment method? What types of objects is it best used on, and what are the limitations of this method?

CO₂ snow is made up of individual crystals that measure about 20 microns in size. In order to make CO₂ snow, one needs a specialized nozzle, compressed or liquid CO₂, plus additional, optional equipment. The cost of equipment needed is in the range of \$3,000.

Hugh described the technique as a high velocity, low temperature, transfer of momentum, surface cleaning technique. The CO₂ snow cleans in two ways: by a limited solvent effect due to the transient presence of liquid CO₂ sublimating from solid to gas on the object’s surface, and by physically displacing surface dirt as a result of the velocity of the CO₂ snow’s stream. The CO₂ snow can displace dirt held to the surface by Van der Waals forces, and other bonds are weakened by the temperature depression. Therefore, in order for this technique to be effectively and safely used on an object, the object needs to be hard, able to withstand a temperature drop for a fraction of a second, from 70°F to 46°F (measured by Hugh) withstand the velocity of the CO₂ jet (46.9 m/s – the same as a category 1 hurricane, also measured by Hugh) and the dirt needs to be a particulate or light hydrocarbon. This cleaning method is not appropriate for use on: fragile surfaces, unstable coatings, rough surfaces, ingrained stains, and soiling material that is highly bound or high molecular weight.

Attention:

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

May 2009 will be the **final** monthly meeting announcement to be sent by postal mail; after that, all announcements will be sent by email.

Also, 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 Secretary Joanne Klaar Walker at wcg@washingtonconservationguild.org.

Additional factors to consider about this treatment include operator experience – Hugh has found that technique and experience are both factors which contribute to the effectiveness of a CO2 snow treatment. One thing that can happen during this treatment is redeposition of the soiling products, so technique does matter. Also, condensation of moisture must be managed, especially for thermoconductive materials like metal and glass. And lastly the source of the CO2 snow affects the snow particles created; gaseous CO2 produces smaller crystal size and uses the gas source more efficiently, while the liquid source produces larger crystals and uses a lot of CO2 in a short amount of time, which could potentially increase the operational cost. The source of CO2 snow does not affect the efficiency of the cleaning, which is relative and more a function of object size and soiling level matched to the cleaning ability of the source.

Hugh shared a couple examples of objects treated by this method, including *Model*, a sculpture made in 1968 by Robert Morris out of cellulose acetate butyrate. The goal of treatment was removal of an aesthetically disfiguring surface haze from the object, which is sensitive to water and almost all solvents. Mechanical treatment was not an option either as this would likely have created scratches on the object. This object was a good candidate for treatment with CO2 snow – traditional treatments were not possible and the object's surface was hard and coating free. During his presentation Hugh then played a video of this treatment to show how it was done, how long it took, and what the surface looked like afterwards. The video was about a minute long and it was possible to see, real time, the haziness leaving the object's surface. After treatment, the "pristine" surface was much improved, but some of the haziness was still present. Hugh points to this as a benefit of the technique – not everything was removed, there is no "scraping" of the surface or overcleaning.

Jessica Arista, Objects Conservation Graduate Intern, Walters Art Museum

February Meeting

A Panel Discussion on Recent Developments in Glazing

Held at the Phillips Collection, the February Meeting featured a panel of three speakers discussing the topic of glazing and preservation framing. Each speaker gave a brief presentation before the panel answered questions from the audience.

"ISO Standards for framing glazing for photography," Daniel Burge, Senior Research Scientist, Image Permanence Institute

Daniel Burge presented an overview of ISO Standards 18902 and 18916, which define the proper materials to use for framing for the preservation of photographic materials. It is important to use proper framing materials because objects are particularly vulnerable to damage caused by environmental conditions such as heat, light, pollution, and moisture while on display. In addition to these threats, framing materials can harm objects directly resulting in fade or yellowing or by reacting with the environment causing further damage. Burge described ISO Standard 18902 as the "parent" document, as it specifically defines proper materials by listing acceptable pH levels, lignin content, etc. ISO 18916 is the "child" document that describes the test method for the Photo Activity Test (PAT) for enclosure materials, which materials must pass to be considered acceptable for framing. ISO 18902 states that glazing must be free of harmful materials, be chemically stable, be of sound and sturdy construction, block 97% of UV light, and pass the PAT. Burge stressed that UV blocking glazing is an absolute must and recommended getting a copy of ISO 18902 from www.iso.org and making it a part of your institution's procurement policies and exhibition practices. He also suggested that it is a good idea to ask how long ago materials were tested when considering using them.

"Anti-Static Options for Acrylic Glazing," Eric Breitung, Conservation Scientist, Smithsonian Freer/Sackler Galleries

Eric Breitung described the different types of anti-static options for acrylic glazing and compared their pros and cons. Anti-

static systems help dissipate or spread electrical charges by decreasing electrical resistance of the glazing, which allows charge to move to the frame or wall. Three types of anti-static options are liquids, air ionizers, and inorganic thin films. Liquids are cheap and effective, but they cause concern because they may be absorbed or wiped off by the object. In the right circumstance, liquids can be stable for years, but because they can rub off, they may need regular reapplication. Air ionizers are only a short-term solution but are good for removing dust before cleaning or wiping. Current inorganic films are conductive networks of tin oxide particles either embedded in a polymer (made by Scicron) or as a layer within a multi-layer stack of tin and silicone dioxides (made by Tru Vue).

Eric compared the pros and cons of two inorganic films. The Tru Vue film is expensive at \$800/sheet, but is both anti-reflection and anti-static. It has a blue-green interference reflection that can be distracting, and fingerprints are quite noticeable. The Scicron film is half the price of the Tru Vue product, but is only anti-static, not anti-reflective. It has little interference coloring in the reflection, and fingerprints are less noticeable. Eric suggested that the Scicron film is a good option for shipping as opposed to display, and he warned that vitrine builders generally do not like anti-static films, as they are difficult to join.

“Best Practices in Microclimates for Paper-based Objects and Preservation Framing,” Kim Andrews, Executive Director, Shofuso Japanese House and Gardens, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Kim Andrews presented a thorough description of sealed packages for the conservation framing of paper-based objects. Proper framing is the most effective preventive conservation measure available. A sealed package is an airtight microclimate that fits invisibly inside a frame and protects against deterioration from environmental conditions. An anoxic case is the best type of sealed package, but is extremely expensive and difficult to make. A basic sealed package consisting of glazing, mat board, and a backing board, taped and sealed with a high strength adhesive and vapor barrier is very practical. It can be put together quickly with only moderate skills and can be made for very large objects, as large as 10 feet by 10 feet. Kim recommends using acrylic glazing rather than glass because it protects against damage from shattering. She most highly recommends Optium acrylic glazing by Tru Vue. Over time moisture can penetrate acrylic, but it takes a long time and affects the package minimally. A heavier 8-ply mat board should be used, as opposed to the standard 4-ply, because it creates more space between the object and the glazing. The most highly recommended mat board is Bainbridge Artcare Mat board, which is 100% cotton with an alkaline buffer and contains zeolites, or molecular traps. The backboard can be either 4-ply or 8-ply, and the rigid backing board should be a corrugated or flute board, like ArtCare Archival Corrugate. Adhering Marvel Seal 360 around the edges of the package with either hot melt glue or an acrylic adhesive tape or film creates an airtight seal. Marvel Seal is a vapor barrier and bonds to itself with heat. It can be trimmed to 1/8 inch on the front to fit inside the rabbet of the frame. This type of sealed package was tested by being immersed in water. After forty-eight hours, only a slight amount of moisture had entered.

Beth Antoine, Fellow in Conservation, Smithsonian Institution Archives



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.

Preliminary Slate of Candidates and Final Call for Nominations

At the May 2010 WCG meeting, the membership will elect new officers and directors to the board. The following positions will be open: Membership Secretary and four Director positions. Below is the preliminary slate of candidates for these positions. Further nominations will be accepted until March 31, 2010. To nominate yourself or another WCG member for any of these positions, please contact a member of the Nominating Committee directly or send a message to wcg@washington-conservationguild.org. Nominees must be members of WCG and must be willing to serve.

Now is your chance to step forward and get involved with WCG!

*Thank you,
WCG Nominating Committee
Claire Peachey, Eileen Blankenbaker, Cary Maguire, and Andrew Robb*

Membership Secretary

Joanne Klaar Walker (incumbent) is a graduate of the Conservation Center of the Institute of Fine Arts at New York University. She was the William R. Leisher Fellow in Modern and Contemporary Painting Conservation at the National Gallery of Art, and has held internships and fellowships in painting conservation at the Scottish National Galleries of Art, Villa La Pietra, Worcester Art Museum, and the Balboa Art Conservation Center. She has been WCG's Membership Secretary for the past two years, and prior to that, was WCG's Intern Coordinator. She is currently in private practice in Maryland.

Director

Genevieve Bieniosek is currently a pre-program conservation intern at the Smithsonian Museum Conservation Institute. She previously interned with the Freer & Sackler Galleries and the Smithsonian Libraries Preservation Services Department, and has worked in the University of Maryland Libraries Preservation Department. Genevieve is also active at Pyramid Atlantic Art Center in Silver Spring, Maryland. She volunteered for the 2008 WCG Angels Project and has served as WCG Refreshments Chair since joining the Guild in 2007.

Director

Patricia Favero (incumbent) received her MA from Buffalo State College, with a specialty in Paintings Conservation, in 2002, and has been a Fellow in Conservation at The Phillips Collection since 2004. She has served as a Director on the WCG board for the past two years, and prior to that, was WCG's Membership Secretary.

Director

Helen Ingalls, the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Objects conservator since 1988, began her training at Mario's Conservation studio. She acquired her formal training at the Cooperstown/Buffalo Graduate Program in Art Conservation. After internships at Colonial Williamsburg and the Walters Art Museum, and a Mellon Fellowship at the National Gallery of Art, she worked for two years at the American Museum of Natural History, New York, on Pre-Columbian archaeological metals and ceramics. Her areas of specialization at American Art have included folk art, outdoor sculpture, Puerto Rican bultos figures, bronze, and marble sculpture. Her work on the Renwick Gallery collection has included all conservation-related aspects of an active loan, display, and acquisition program for contemporary craft. A member of Washington Conservation Guild since 1988, she has served on the board and the Food Committee, chaired the Nominating Committee, and served on the Editorial Board for the first publication of *Conservation Resources for Art and Antiques*, editing the chapter on Outdoor Sculpture for that publication.

Director

Steven Pickman is an objects conservator in private practice within the Washington, DC area, having formed his own firm during the summer of 2009. He graduated from Brandeis University in 2001 with a BA in Anthropology (specializing in Archaeology) and was a recipient in 2008 of a Master of Arts degree from the UCLA/Getty Conservation program in Conservation of Archaeological and Ethnographic Materials. He has had internship experiences at a broad range of institutions, including the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the South Street Seaport Museum. More recently, he has become active in promoting emerging conservation professionals within the field.

Outreach Booth

The WCG Outreach Booth went to Southern Maryland for its annual appearance at the St Clement's Island Museum Appraiser's Fair. Once again we were given a prominent location in the central gallery of the museum. Every time we go to one of these events, there seems to be a different trend in materials that are brought to the booth for consultation - this time around, the emphasis was definitely on paper: old newspapers, books, family documents, and the like. We had enough free time to chat with some of the appraisers, especially the objects appraisers in the next booth over. As a side note, it appears that the appraisers are wary of conservators, but as soon as they realize we won't jump down their throats, they warm slightly...

The next appearances of the Booth will be at the Washington Historical Society's Conservation Clinic, Saturday May 15; and then at the Southern Maryland Studies Center Advisory Committee of the College of Southern Maryland "Bring Your Stuff" Day for sharing historical information June 12 from 10:00 to 2:00 at the College of Southern Maryland, La Plata.

I will need a substitute for the June event, and volunteers are welcome at any time! Please contact Howard Wellman at wellmanconservation@comcast.net.

Howard Wellman
WCG Booth Coordinator
410-474-1226
wellmanconservation@comcast.net

Jobs

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY FOR PAPER CONSERVATOR

The Old Print Gallery in Washington, DC would be interested in helping a paper conservator start a paper conservation business. A complete paper conservation studio is available. Equipment would have to be relocated. The Old Print Gallery in Washington and the Old Print Shop in New York would provide a substantial amount of work including 19th century historical American prints, maps from the 16th century on, 20th century American art prints, etc.

For more information and an abbreviated list of equipment contact James von Ruster at vonruster@verizon.net or 202-232-7192.

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 July 1st through June 30th. Membership forms can be requested by mail from the Membership Secretary at P.O. Box 23364, Washington D.C. 20026 or can be filled out and submitted on 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:

- April: membership renewal notice mailed
- July 1: beginning of membership year
- September 15: Deadline for membership renewals*
- September 30: Publication of membership directory

*Members who join after September 15 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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E-mail: girodj@gmail.com

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 Claire Peachey.

Next issue: June 2010
Deadline for submissions: May 15, 2010

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