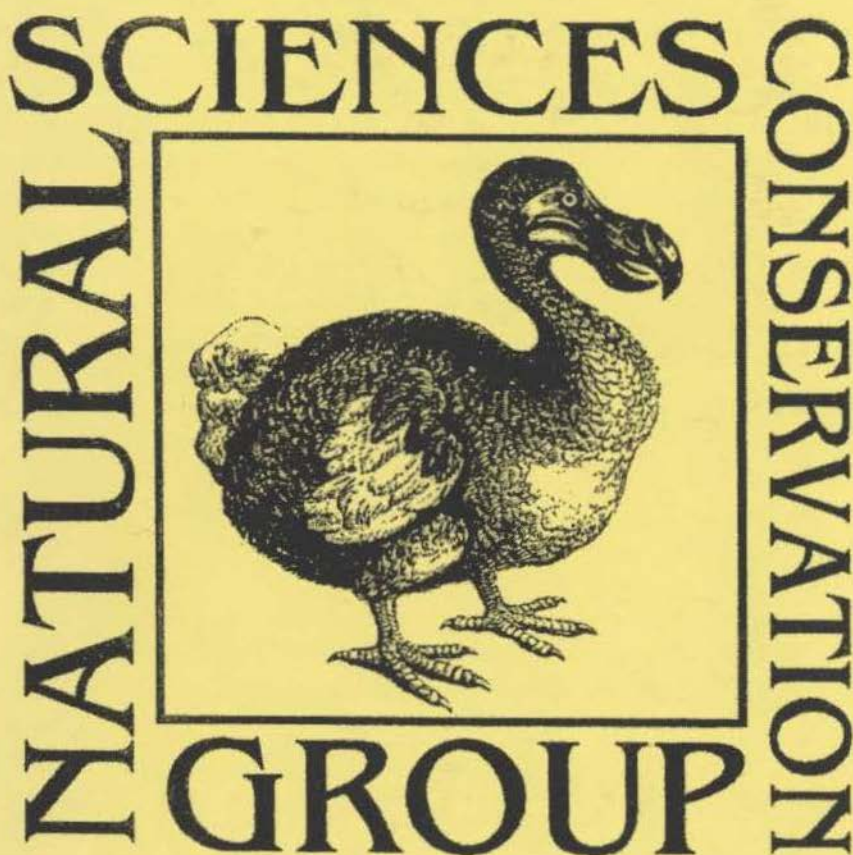


Natural Sciences
Conservation Group
Newsletter

Issue 8

May 1998

ISSN 1462-978X



Insert: Ten Agents of Decay - No.4 'Theft & Vandalism'

Editorial

Welcome to issue 8 of our newsletter.

You will notice that there is a double dosage of 'View from the Chair' this time. The first is from our new Chair Elect Bob Entwistle who many will remember as being one of the founding committee members of the group. Bob has been covering for Kate who had to resign prematurely from her term due to the imminent birth of Thomas. Congratulations and best wishes to you and your husband.

I received Kate's 'Chair's address' for the AGM prior to going to print and thought it would be so fitting as a final 're-view' from the chair. The committee pass on grateful thanks for deciphering (and explaining to us!) the vast amount of paper work we had to wade through before applying for charitable status.

By the time you all receive this newsletter the changes to the Constitution will have gone before the membership at the AGM in Liverpool. The proposed new constitution is printed in this issue.

Our next newsletter will feature issues raised and discussed at this year's AGM and also include write ups of the papers presented at conference.

Once again I will appeal for articles for publication. Any items for our section 'Conservation Focus - news & events from the Conservation World' would be appreciated, including notices of meetings and training events of interest.

One last thing, you may have noticed that we now have an assigned ISSN number. For those who have contributed to prior newsletters, this number can be allocated to any of the previous seven issues, and therefore made reference to when citing publication sources.

Donna Hughes

Any articles for inclusion in the newsletter should be sent to Donna at:
The Botany Department, Liverpool Museum, William Brown St,
Liverpool,

L3 8EN. e.mail: donna@nmgmnhc.demon.co.uk

If on disc or by attached email file: in Word 6 or 7 format. Please also include hardcopy.

View from the Chair

Hello Readers! This is the bit that everyone skips and goes on to read something more interesting. So I presume that you will have read most everything else by now and have begun this a week or two later.

By the time you read this our AGM and conference will be over. The food I have no doubt will have been superb and the wine will have been drunk. You will also have voted in a new Chairman/woman, and hopefully, a new constitution.

The new constitution, required by the charity commission, will allow us to unlock funds previously held in trust by UKIC. We have earmarked part of this sum to produce and distribute a publicity leaflet in a campaign to gain more members and raise our profile.

A larger membership is important if we wish our voice to be heard. Before people can join us they need to be aware that we exist. Our membership covers a wide variety of specialisms and disciplines, which is both a strength and a weakness. A strength in that we are able to call on a wide variety of expertise and knowledge, and a weakness in that we are not as cohesive as a single interest group.

If we are to survive we must grow.

Another blot on the landscape is the dreaded ACCREDITATION. Those of you who have not heard of this before are lucky and those of you who have will either be moved to anger or complete apathy.


Accreditation is the conservation world's method of raising standards, and hopefully wages, by acknowledging conservation as a profession. For us to be a professional body members will need to either pass some sort of exam or have their work assessed.

Many conservation groups are looking into setting up some form of accreditation system for their members, but if we propose to do the same there will be difficulties. Being such a diverse group covering different

disciplines we have set up a working party to investigate what other groups are doing, and we have a member on the Conservation Forum, (Now known as 'ABC': Association of British and Irish Conservators) where the issue is being discussed.

However, DON'T PANIC. There is no compulsion to become "accredited", and we have no intention of alienating our membership. Initially this will only concern those with the word "conservation" in their job title. However one of the implications of this may be that museums may have to use accredited conservators if they wish for grant aid. If we have to set up a system it is best that we do it and not someone else. We will keep you posted.

Bob Entwistle (Acting Chair)



Chairs report, as presented at AGM 1998

Looking back through my files, I find that this is the third annual report that I have written as chair of NSCG. During these three years, we have become fully independent from UKIC, have organised an important seminar at the MA conference and have held two very successful meetings and AGMs. The most recent being held as a two day event jointly with BCG, admirably organised by Julian Carter and his team and generously hosted by the National Museum and Gallery of Wales with a key-note lecture given by May Cassar. I would like to thank all those institutions and individuals involved for a superb event. I'm sure this year's meeting will be just as successful. I hope I shall be there to enjoy it, but the rigors of parenthood might prevent it.

Following discussions at the AGM last year as to the future direction of the group and links to other organisations, the committee set up a working party and requested members thoughts and suggestions. The working

party reported that the group was felt to be a strong and viable organisation, able to support itself and, at least for the time being, wishing to remain autonomous; yet to co-operate with other groups where interests overlapped. In order to achieve this, we continue to have a GCG and BCG committee member at meetings, to exchange minutes and hold joint meetings. We also have links with SPNHC via shared committee members.

One area of co-operation with BCG has been over posts at risk, two of your committee members are also in this BCG cell. This year, our AGM was to have been held at Buckinghamshire County Museum, however, the uncertainty over Nick Gordon's post as we started to organise the event meant that Nick had to withdraw his offer. We hope that Nick's job is now secure and that the future of this well run and award winning museum service can be safeguarded.

We continue to be part of the recently renamed Conservation Forum, a combination of Paul Brown, Bob Entwistle and Kirsten Walker have been representing us at meetings. MGC grant money continues to be available to our members to attend training events such as this AGM and training courses organised by other member groups. Applications need to be made to the NSCG committee on an application form available from the Secretary. Please do apply, the money will cease to be allocated if not taken up.

The Conservation Forum has recently been concentrating on conservator accreditation. This in turn has caused the committee to look again at training and to re-instate the training working party. A standard lecture and slide set are being prepared.

With the desk-top publishing and other IT resources available to Donna Hughes, our new editor, the newsletter has gone from strength to strength. The "Risk Assessment" sections have been very well received and have led to several enquiries for library subscriptions and requests to publish. Once we have covered all ten agents of deterioration, we hope to put together all of the sections with additional material into a booklet for publication. So, if an agent of deterioration has recently posed a risk to

your collection, it's not too late to write it up.

The major project for this year has been the work on charitable status for the group. Maggie Reilly started the ball rolling and handed over to me in the autumn. Tracey Seddon has also helped out. The committee approved a draft new constitution shortly after Christmas with a few amendments after initial discussions with the Charity Commission. After some correspondence, we now await their decision. Hopefully, this will come before the AGM to allow you the membership to vote on the new constitution, if not, we may have to call a special meeting.

With parenthood visited upon me, Bob Entwistle has kindly taken over in my last few months as chair and I would like to thank him for filling the breach. Your committee has formed a coherent and active group following the retirement last year of several long standing members. Those whose terms of office are up this year are myself, Simon Moore and Wendy Simkiss. I would like to thank Simon for his sterling work as editor from the very start of the group and Wendy for acting as our link with GCG. I would also like to thank you the membership for electing me as chair, it's been an enjoyable, if at times complex, job.

Kate Andrew (on maternity leave until mid November 1998)



Conservation Focus

News and Events from the Conservation World

MGC Announces Grant Schemes for 1998/99

The Museums & Galleries Commission (MGC) has announced details of four major grant schemes which would be of interest to our membership. MGC is the national advisory body for museums in the United Kingdom. It provides expert advice to museums and advises the Government on museum policy.

Timothy Mason, MGC Director, commented: "The MGC operates a number of grant schemes which enable it to provide financial assistance towards projects which it considers to be of national importance. These include supporting opportunities for making international contacts for museum and conservation professionals, helping to improve access to information about pre-eminent collections held by non-national museums, and ensuring that conservation expertise is shared and maintained at a high level for the benefit of UK museums."

MGC International Travel Grants Scheme 1998/99

For study tours or attendance at museums and conservation related conferences outside the UK. The maximum travel grant available is £300 for Europe and £500 for the rest of the world. In addition, the MGC recognises the potential for development of longer-term links through extended study trips and will offer up to £2,000 per quarter for one such study trip or secondment. The remaining deadlines for applications are 1 June, 1 September and 1 December 1998.

Conservation Grants: Continuing Professional Development

For conservation professionals to attend short training courses, distance learning and work experience placements in the UK to enable them to maintain and develop their skills and knowledge. Application deadlines are 1 June, 1 September and 1 December 1998.

Conservation Grants: Partnership Projects

For projects to support the pooling of resources and expertise within the conservation community, particularly with a view to long-term co-operation. Any type of project within the basic remit will be considered providing it has the support of a number of partners. The deadlines are 1 June and 1 December 1998.

Conservation Grants: New Professionals

For full-time primary conservation training courses in the UK that lead to a recognised qualification for projects which offer students the opportunity to broaden their experience of professional conservation practice. The deadline is 1 June 1998.

Application forms and guidelines for all these schemes are available from Ruth Seiman, Grants & Lottery Officer and Annie Hollobone, Grants & Lottery Assistant, at the Museums & Galleries Commission, 16 Queen Anne's Gate, London, SW 1 H 9AA, tel: 0171 233 4200.



Courses & Meetings

Geotechniques '98 University of Luton. The programme for this meeting includes Lorraine Cornish (Natural History Museum) on fossil facsimiles; Owen Green (University of Oxford) on new approaches to palaeobiological techniques; Andrew Newman (University of Newcastle) on pyrite oxidation in museum collections; and Steve Laurie (Sedwick Museum). Cost: £45 (both days); £25 (one day).

For information and registration contact: Brian Hunt, Faculty of Science, Technology and Design, University of Luton, Park Square, Luton LU1 3JU.

Tel: 01582 489298

Fax: 01582 489212

Email: brian.hunt@luton.ac.uk

Science Refresher: Plastic or Elastic? Camberwell College of Arts. 16th - 17th July 98.

Fee: £150.

This course provides an introduction to the mechanical behavior of organic materials particularly textiles, paper products, plant materials and adhesives. For further details and booking forms please contact: Camberwell & Chelsea Short Course Unit, Camberwell College of Arts, Peckham Road, London, SE5 8UF. Tel: 0181 514 6311.

The Society of Archivists and The Institute of Paper Conservation:

Care of Photographic, Moving Image and Sound Collections.

20th - 24th July. Booking and registration details from: IPC, Leigh Lodge, Leigh, Worcestershire, WR6 5LB.

UKIC Archaeology Section **The Next Generation**, 12th September, Cardiff. The meeting will discuss issues affecting the future of conservation, including training and accreditation, priorities of funding and effectiveness of research. For further information contact: Susanne Ryder, Institute of Archaeology. Tel: 0171 387 7050 x2298.

Email: s.ryder@ucl.ac.uk

New Technologies for the Long-Term Storage of Oxidising Pyrite - A Solution? 1st Oct 1998. Geological Conservation Unit, University of Cambridge.

The workshop will through practical and lecture sessions discuss;

- Identification of pyrite oxidation.
- Responses to pyrite oxidation in your collection.
- The chemistry of pyrite oxidation in the museum environment.
- Past and current treatments, how they work and their effectiveness.
- Current and future methods for storing pyrite containing and related materials.
- Low cost methods for storing specimens in oxygen free environment.
- Preventative approaches to wards pyrite in the collection.

The emphasis of the course will be on the practical application of techniques discussed during the day. The pros and cons of all the approaches will be discussed and students will leave with a clear understanding of the chemistry of pyrite oxidation and the various treatments that have been developed. The final part of the day will be spent undertaking a practical exercise in the collections linked to the day's work.

Cost: £30

For a booking form contact Chris Collins, Geological Conservation Unit, Dept. of Earth Sciences, University of Cambridge, Madingley Rise, Madingley Road, Cambridge, CB3 0EZ.

Tel: 01223 362522

Fax: 01223 366860

Email: chris@esc.cam.ac.uk

A Future for Fossils, Cardiff

14th - 15th October 98. A two day symposium on the sustainable management of our fossil heritage.

Organised by English Nature, National Museums & Galleries of Wales and Cardiff University.

Papers and presentations on any aspect of fossil site conservation and management are invited. Early registration is advisable. Costs: £20, registration after 10th July is £30. For further information and registration details contact: Mrs Liesbeth Diaz, Department of Earth Sciences, Cardiff University, PO Box 914, Cardiff CF1 3YE.

Tel: 01222 874830,

Email: diaz@cardiff.ac.uk

ICOM-CC: WOAM Working Group Interim Meeting, 19th - 23rd October 98, Grenoble, France.

The Regional Conservation Workshop-Nucléart (ARC - Nucléart) will host the ICOM-CC West Organic Archaeological Materials conference. This will consist of four days of papers followed by a one-day excursion. Official languages: French and English. For further information contact: Céline Bonnot, Conference Administrator, ARC-Nucléart, CEA/Grenoble, 17 rue des Martyrs, 38054 Grenoble cedex 9, France.

Fax: 33 (0)4 76 88 50 89

Restoration 98, 10th - 12th December 98, Amsterdam RAI; the international exhibition of techniques for the restoration and conservation of cultural heritage. The programme will include providers of services and methods for restoration and conservation and suppliers of materials. It will also feature service providers such as contractors and laboratories, together with foundations, government bodies and educational institutions. For further information contact: Loes Roos or Claartje van Mol
Tel: +31 205491212

New Publication

Levels of Collection Care

The MGC published this book on the 20th May. The publication offers clear and realistic benchmarks to enable museums and related organisations to evaluate how well they are caring for their collections. The book gives an indication of improvements which might be needed and provides a benchmark against which future progress can be measured.

Levels of Collection Care follows the framework set out by MGC Registration and uses three levels of care, 'Basic', 'Good' and 'Best' practice, to provide museums with a self-assessment checklist. The outcome of this assessment can be used in a number of ways, in the development of a Forward Plan or as part of the preparation for an application for Registration or a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Peter Winsor, MGC Collection Care Officer, commented: "The general approach used in the (this publication) is to identify the

current situation in order to raise awareness, then outline action to be taken and, finally, implementation and review. It is an essential tool for everyone concerned with the care of museum collections."

Levels of Collection Care is available from MGC Publications priced £6.00 plus £1.25 p&p (UK), £2.50 (overseas). Cheques should be made payable to the Museums and Galleries Commission and all orders should be sent to MGC Publications, 16 Queen Anne's Gate, London, SW1H 9AA. Tel: 0171 233 4200, alternatively, email: n.poole@mgcuk.co.uk

Note from NSCG Editor:

The report given on this publication has come from the MGC themselves. If any of our membership have obtained this publication and would like to review and comment on its practical application the Editor would be most grateful.

Reviews of any new publications concerning the care and conservation in any area of natural science collections are invited.

Document of Pavia

The committee of NSCG received a report on the European summit held in Pavia October last year titled 'Preservation of Cultural Heritage - Towards a European Profile of Conservator-Restorers'. The report contained a 'Document' which we were invited to support and accept. One of the positive points noted was the inclusion and recognition of natural science conservation (see item 2). It was proposed to discuss the document our AGM meeting in Liverpool.

The following is the document and attached comments received from the summit, printed here in their entirety:

Forty five experts of the conservation and restoration sector coming from 16 European countries met in Pavia from 18th to 22nd October 1997, at the invitation of the Associazione Secco Suardo non-governmental organisation. The latter is the leader of the project which is financed by the European Union within the framework of the preparatory actions of the 1996 Raphael Programme, and is partnered by the Université Libre de Bruxelles, Faculté de

Philosophie at Lettres, Section d'Histoire de l'Art (Belgium); the Hochschule für Bildende Künste, Dresden (Germany); the Hamilton Kerr Institute of the University of Cambridge (England); Museums & Galleries Commission (England); the Ecole Nationale du Patrimoine IFROA Paris, Ministry for Cultural and Environmental Heritage, the National Research Council, the Regione Lombardia, and the Province, Commune and University of Pavia also contributed. Patronage was also granted by various European and international institutes and non-governmental organisations. The European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers Organisations (E.C.C.O.) was present, thanks to the participation of Pierre Masson and Nathalie Ravel.

The work was organised on the basis of the following topics: historical perspectives, present and future professional conservator-restorer of cultural heritage, training standards in Europe, definition of the term "competent professional"; the growth of awareness on a public level, both professional and political. To conclude, the Pavia Document was drawn up, discussed and approved

(21 October 1997). This document is dedicated to identifying common guidelines to be proposed to the Community institutions for the adoption of concrete measures.

From the first day on, the E.C.C.O. Professional Guidelines became the reference point during debates, and was inserted as the basic document into the final declaration.

The 45 experts from the various disciplines who operate in the Conservation and Restoration sector and who were involved on this occasion thus gave proof of a perfect and greatly desired interdisciplinary co-operation.

On the last day, the Associazione Secco Suardo and the participants presented the final document to the politics and the public. A message sent by the Italian Minister of Cultural Heritage, Walter Veltroni, was read. It represents a very positive reaction and an important political support for future European initiatives.

Here as follows is the Pavia Document

Nathalie Ravel
General Secretary, E.C.C.O.

THE DOCUMENT OF PAVIA

CONSIDERING that the cultural heritage, both movable and immovable, is a cornerstone of European cultural identity, an identity which respects both national and regional diversities;

CONSIDERING the special nature of this heritage its finite nature, the moral obligation to guarantee access to it for present and future generations and to raise awareness of its origins, history, vulnerability and preservation amongst professionals, the public and decision makers;

CONSIDERING that it is necessary to ensure the highest level of conservation - restoration for cultural heritage, is that which is capable of guaranteeing its integrity and prolonging its existence;

CONSIDERING that this high level of conservation - restoration depends on the professional status of the conservator - restorer being given urgent recognition at a European level;

CONSIDERING that the conservator - restorer must be part of the decision-making process from

the outset of a conservation-restoration project and that he/she must assume, in collaboration with the other partners involved, the responsibilities which relate to his/her own competence (in particular diagnosis, prescription, implementation and documentation of treatment).

The experts concerned with the conservation - restoration of cultural heritage, meeting in Pavia, 18-22 October 1997, recommend that, on the basis of the document prepared by the professional bodies (E.C.C.O. "Professional Guidelines") the European Unions in collaboration with all the specialists in the field, should encourage the following actions:

1. The recognition and promotion of conservation-restoration as a discipline covering all categories of cultural property and taught at university level or recognised equivalent, with the possibility of a doctorate.

2. The development of Interdisciplinary exchange between conservator-restorers and exponents of the humanities and the natural sciences both in teaching and in research.

3. The development of the profile of the conservator-restorer based on the E.C.C.O. professional guidelines (93/94), of his/her role in decision-making from the outset of a project and of his/her responsibility for communicating with other professionals, the public and decision-makers.

4. The development of a definition at European level of the full range of professional competences of the conservator-restorer.

5. The avoidance of the proliferation of training programmes which do not meet the standards of the profession.

6. The assurance of an appropriate balance of integrated theoretical and practical teaching, as well as the teaching of strategies for communication in the education and training of the conservator-restorer.

7. The setting up of a comparative study by the profession of the different educational systems (objectives, contents and levels).

9. The promotion of improved dissemination of information by

means of publication of conservation-restoration projects.

10. The promotion of research in conservation-restoration.

11. The establishment of a regulatory framework to guarantee the quality of intervention on cultural heritage or its environment in order to avoid the negative impacts of market forces. This regulatory framework will include, in particular, provisions concerning:

i) The competence of enterprises or teams of professionals in charge of conservation-restoration projects.

ii) The drafting of specifications for conservation-restoration projects.

12. The publication of a multilingual glossary prepared on the basis of the conceptual definitions to be found in the professional literature.

13. The provision of appropriate resources to ensure improved communication between professionals, the public and the decision-makers.

The experts gathered in Pavia urge the Institutions of the EU to

demonstrate their commitment to the preservation of the cultural heritage by translating these recommendations into tangible co-ordinated actions.

COMMENTS TO THE PAVIA DOCUMENT

Regarding the Pavia Document I would like to stress its importance. The group of eminent experts consisted of scientists, curators, art historians, cultural heritage directors, teachers, representatives of conservation institutes and international organisations and last but not least, some conservator-restorers. It was the practical application of the interdisciplinary principle in our field.

The in-depth work and lively debate of this learned assembly led to recognition of the existence and irreplaceable and essential value of E.C.C.O.'s "Professional Guidelines".

The text that was unanimously adopted after the meeting, "The Pavia Document", includes the essence of the ideas defended by our organization and is explicitly based on our "Professional Guidelines".

As a result:

1. Finally, most professions involved with conservation have officially examined, approved and recognised our official documents.

2. Finally, with one single voice, they have given their support to the claims of our profession.

3. This document, adopted during a European Summit sponsored by the European Union and DGX, can henceforth be used in our external relations. It will carry great weight in our fight for recognition of the profession.

I do believe that this will become a historic document, which will mark an important step in the development of our craft.

On behalf of E.C.C.O., I would like to thank the Secco Suardo Foundation, its associates and all participants for the work that has been done and the support they gave us.

Within E.C.C.O., this recognition is welcome and heartening to all those who have dedicated themselves to this fight since the beginning. At a time when many of the pioneers have or will be handing over to others, this means

recognition of the quality of work done under difficult circumstances, and it also means encouragement to the new team to continue the fight and renew their efforts on the basis of this Pavia Document, which I recommend you all to read.

P. Masson
President, E.C.C.O.



The Ten Agents of Deterioration

An issue by issue guide to the risks facing
museum collections



4. Theft & Vandalism

be to remove if it needs replacing; if it will react with human sweat or survive the wear and tear of people touching it. Even the best way of cleaning the surface without scratching or abrading the film is unknown, and ordinary glass cleaning fluids are no longer usable. However common sense suggests that abrasion may eventually wear the film away or alter its transparency.

When the film was applied to some older cased mounts, labels had to be removed from the outside of the glass. There is some debate over a suitable method of attaching new labels, i.e. if a label needs replacing again how can it be removed without damaging the film. One suggestion given was that only *blu-tack* could be used to attach labels, this is not an option.

The run off from excessive spraying of water has entered some cases at the glazing beads. This has caused some water streaks on the inside of glass, a temporary increase in internal humidity and a very slight staining of some background materials. Specimens were not removed from cases during the application, however there is no evidence that any have been damaged.

A more noticeable affect is obvious where the area of glass has required more than one sheet of film to cover it. Sheets of film have been applied with an overlap up to 5mm at the join. This has left a visible and distracting line at eye level on several cases.

While the work has improved the safety of the galleries, and brought us in line with health and safety regulations, more detailed consultations with staff directly concerned could have lead to a much more satisfactory outcome.

David J. Lampard
Keeper of Botany

Ipswich Museums and Galleries



Natural Science Conservation travelling lectures

The Natural Science Conservation Group is particularly concerned with educating institutions and individuals with its work. Natural science conservation is not a familiar discipline nor is it fully understood. One aim of the NSCG is to promote the work of the group through visiting schools, colleges and Universities. Through talks, lectures and slide shows the work of natural science conservators around Britain can be brought to the individual.

There are many more courses in conservation being established which is in relation to the rise in demand. However, natural science conservation courses are still poorly represented and so the NSCG felt it would be worthwhile to speak to students and lecturers alike to inform them of this particular area of conservation that they could enter into after qualifying. Once the awareness and interest is generated then the demand for more information and therefore training should follow.

The University of Derby has recently embarked upon a conservation science course that is linked to the chemistry department. It is in its first year and was instigated by Dr Trevor Brown, a conservation scientist. A member of the NSCG spoke to a group of students and lecturers from this discipline about the work of natural science conservators within the UK and the influence of NSCG on natural science collections. The lecture was well received with a good deal of feed back afterwards.

Through this communication the wide and varied work actually carried out by British natural science conservators is made easily accessible, and the NSCG can be represented first hand.

Vicky Purewal
NMGW



Conservation Accreditation: The story so far.

The Conservation Forum (from now on renamed the Association of British and Irish Conservators, or ABC) are currently reviewing systems for accreditation with UKIC who will be implementing their scheme sometime this year (1998). Work is also underway to produce a unified view on S/NVQs and their relevance to the conservation profession with input from the Conservation Teacher's Forum.

MTI has carried out a research project with ABC to establish a universal system of membership criteria incorporating their occupational standards with the aim of evolving a cross-sector accreditation system. ABC member bodies participated in the research and representatives were invited to a seminar in April 1997. The Parameter Harmonisation Project Report investigates S/NVQ incorporation into membership and accreditation structures.

Four of the ABC constituent organisations have accreditation schemes already in place. They are as follows:

ABPR, *The Association of British Picture Restorers* (Member, Fellow)

Fellowship requires an associate member to have at least 7 years full time experience and can pass an examination of their work (portfolio), knowledge and professional attitude by Council members before election.

BAFRA, *British Antique Furniture Restorers' Association* (Full, Associate, Employed, Student)

Full Membership requires working within the profession for at least 5 years and passing of the BAFRA Entry Assessment.

BSMGP, *British Society of Master Glass Painters, Conservation Committee* (Accredited Member)

Accredited Membership requires registration on the Conservation Register and passing of the BSMGP Assessment.

SoA, P&CG, *Society of Archivists, Preservation and Conservation Group* (Full, Registered

Conservator, Honorary, Institutional, Student)

Registered Membership requires three years relevant experience plus approved course of qualification and 12 credits of the

pre-registration training and development scheme.

A further two are close to setting up accreditation schemes:-

IPC, *Institute of Paper Conservation* (Individual, Corporate, Student, Honorary)

UKIC, *United Kingdom Institute of Conservation* (Full, Associate, Student, Unemployed)

The remaining five organisations are in the early stages of development if at all:-

ICHAWI, *Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works in Ireland*

IPCRA, *Irish Professional Conservators' and Restorers' Association*

NSCG, *Natural Sciences Conservation Group* (Personal, Overseas Personal, Institutional)

PhMCG, *Photographic Materials Conservation Group* (Individual, Institutional)

SSRC, *Scottish Society for Conservation and Restoration* (Professional, Associate, Institutional, Student)

UKIC decided at its AGM on 10th June 1997 to go for implementation

of their accreditation scheme during 1998 and are looking to incorporate S/NVQs in the existing and proposed systems. UKIC hopes thus to provide a national benchmark scheme broadly appropriate to the needs of all conservators with the flexibility to adapt to the specific requirements of each discipline. Members of ABC organisations will have a diversity of routes to accreditation.

The report studies the key issues for NVQ inclusion, resources to manage a system, quality of assessors, assessment methods and availability of training. Studies are made of other organisations including the new AMA and the differing accreditation systems used. An outline for a Voluntary Independent Accreditation Scheme is also provided, based on the MTI's national occupational standards as utilised in the NVQs available. An individual could be assessed for professional body membership at the same time as for NVQ and all accredited members would join a new conservation register.

Paul Brown, Secretary NSCG



The constitution of the Group has been modified to comply with requirements set out by the Charity Commission. The amended constitution was discussed at the AGM on the 14th May in Liverpool and accepted by the membership present. It is printed here in its entirety for all members reference.

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE NATURAL SCIENCES CONSERVATION GROUP

1. NAME

The name of the charity shall be the Natural Sciences Conservation Group, (or other such name as the Trustees may from time to time decide with approval from the Charity Commissioners).

The Group (hereinafter called "the charity") is an unincorporated association with Charity Trustees elected by its members.

2. OBJECTS

The objects of the charity shall be:

- 2.1 To advance the education of the public in natural science collections conservation.
- 2.2 To promote for the benefit of the public, the highest standards in the conservation, development, preparation, care and display of natural science collections and specimens.

3. POWERS

In addition to any other powers which the Trustees may exercise the following powers in furtherance of their objects.

- 3.1 Power to encourage and develop education, training and research in natural science conservation through publications, regular meetings and seminars.
- 3.2 Power to raise funds and to invite and receive contributions, provided that in raising funds the trustees shall not undertake any

substantial permanent trading activities.

- 3.3 Power to invest the funds of the charity in any of the investments for the time being authorised for the investment of trust funds.
- 3.4 The Trustees shall have the power to provide indemnity insurance for themselves out of the income of the charity provided that any such insurance shall not extend to any claim arising from any act or omission which the Trustees knew to be a breach of trust or breach of duty or which was committed by the Trustees in reckless disregard of whether it was a breach of trust or breach of duty or not.
- 3.5 Power to do all such lawful things as are necessary for the achievement of the objects.

4. CHARITY TRUSTEES

- 4.1 Up to eleven Trustees are elected by the membership at the Annual General Meeting. There shall at all times be a minimum of four Trustees.
- 4.2 The Trustees shall comprise four officers, viz: Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Editor and up to seven other ordinary members.
- 4.3 The Trustees may co-opt such additional members to the committee as it deems necessary from time to time, these co-optees will not be Trustees.

5. MEETINGS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE CHARITY TRUSTEES

- 5.1 The Trustees shall be charged with the organisation and promotion of the group.
- 5.2 The Trustees shall carry out the wishes of the membership as determined at the Annual General Meeting of members.

- 5.3 The Trustees shall meet as a committee at least three times a year in addition to holding an annual general meeting.
- 5.4 The quorum required for any meeting of the Trustees shall be three Trustees or one third of the total number of Trustees whichever number is the greater.
- 5.5 An emergency or special meeting of Trustees can be called to discuss a particular matter with 7 days notice.
- 5.6 The Trustee holding the officer post of chair shall chair all meetings, in their absence this duty can be undertaken by one of the other office posts.
- 5.7 The chair has a right to a second or casting vote when the number of Trustees voting for or against a resolution are equal.
- 5.8 Minutes of meetings shall be taken.

6. TERMS OF OFFICE

- 6.1 The Trustees holding officer posts, viz, Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Editor shall be elected for a period of three years. Ordinary Trustees are elected for a period of two years.
- 6.2 Competent Trustees can in exceptional circumstances be re-appointed after their term of office has ceased but may only be re-appointed if the membership deems them capable of fulfilling their duties.
- 6.3 The Trustees may co-opt members to fill vacancies occurring during a term of office. The co-opted member may serve until the following Annual General Meeting.

7. MEMBERS

- 7.1 Membership is open to all interested in the aims of the Group on payment of the annual subscription.

- 7.2 There are four categories of membership:- Personal, Institutional, Overseas, and Student.

- 7.3 Other than institutional members, all members have full voting rights.

8. SUBSCRIPTIONS

- 8.1 The rates of subscriptions shall be determined at the Annual General Meeting.
- 8.2 Subscriptions are due on the first day of February each year.
- 8.3 Members who fail to pay their subscription within 6 months of the annual subscription date will be deemed to have ceased membership of the group.
- 8.4 The membership of any individual or organisation can also be terminated at any other time for a good and sufficient reason by the committee. The individual or organisation has the right to be heard before a final decision is made.

9. ELECTIONS

- 9.1 Trustees shall be elected by the membership at the Annual General Meeting.
- 9.2 Two personal members of the group shall be elected as auditors at the Annual General Meeting.
- 9.3 Only members whose subscriptions are fully paid at the commencement of the Annual General Meeting and with full voting rights are eligible for election or to vote at elections.
- 9.4 Notice calling for nominations for election shall be issued at least 30 days before the Annual General Meeting.
- 9.5 Nominations for election must be received by the Secretary no

later than 10 days prior to the Annual General Meeting. In the event of no nominations being received, nominations can be made from the floor by two members eligible to vote.

10. ANNUAL GENERAL AND SPECIAL MEETINGS OF MEMBERS

- 10.1 A general meeting shall be held each year.
- 10.2 The Annual General Meeting shall be incorporated within a conference which promotes the aims of the group.
- 10.3 At least 30 days notice will be given of the date of the Annual General Meeting, stating the time, place and general business of the meeting.
- 10.4 The specific business of the Annual General Meeting shall be that agreed by the members present at the beginning of the meeting.
- 10.5 The quorum for an Annual General Meeting shall be ten individual members or one-tenth of the total number of individual members whichever number is the greater.
- 10.6 Minutes of the meeting shall be taken.
- 10.7 Only members whose subscriptions are fully paid at the commencement of the Annual General Meeting and with full voting rights are eligible to vote on the business of the meeting.
- 10.8 A special meeting for the membership can be called with 14 days notice, stating the time, place and general business of the meeting.
- 10.9 The Trustees may organise other meetings as deemed necessary.

11. COMMUNICATIONS

- 11.1 Members shall receive a newsletter on a regular basis.

12. ACCOUNTS

The Trustees will comply with their obligations under the Charities Act 1993 with regard to:

- 12.1 The keeping of accounting records of the charity.
- 12.2 The preparation of annual statements of accounts for the charity.
- 12.3 The auditing of the statement of accounts of the charity in time for the Annual General Meeting by the elected auditors.
- 12.4 The preparation of an annual report and sending of it together with statements of account to the Charity Commissioners.

13. BANK ACCOUNTS

- 13.1 The group shall maintain one or more bank or building society accounts.
- 13.2 Trustees who hold officer posts shall be designated signatories of the accounts.
- 13.3 Two signatures are required on cheques drawn on the account(s).

14. TRUSTEES PERSONAL INTEREST

Subject to the provisions of clause 3.3 and except with the prior written approval of the Charity Commissioners, no trustee may:

- 14.1 receive any benefit in money or kind from the charity; or
- 14.2 have a financial interest in the supply or goods or services to the charity.

15. POWERS OF AMENDMENT

- 15.1 Subject to the following provisions of this clause, the Constitution may be amended by a resolution passed by not less than two-thirds

of the members present and voting at a general meeting. The notice of the general meeting must include notice of the resolution setting out the terms of the amendment proposed.

- 15.2 No amendment may be made to clause 2, clause 3, 4, clause 12, clause 14, clause 16 or this clause without the prior written approval of the Charity Commissioners.
- 15.3 No amendment may be made which would have the effect of making the charity cease to be a charity at law.
- 15.4 The Trustees must:
- promptly send to the Commissioners a copy of any amendments made; and
 - keep a copy of any such amendment with this Constitution.

16. POWER OF DISSOLUTION

If the Charity Trustees decide that it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the charity, they shall call a meeting of all members of the charity of which not less than 21 day's notice (stating the terms of the resolution) shall be given. If the proposal is confirmed by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting, the Charity Trustees shall have the power to realise any assets held by on or behalf of the charity. Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities shall be given or transferred to such other charitable institution or institutions having objects similar to the object of this charity as the members of the charity may determine, or failing that, shall be applied for some other charitable purpose.

NOTES

Elections of Trustees are staggered to ensure continuity. Currently, the posts of chair and editor are up for election in 1998, the Treasurer in 1999 and the Secretary in 2,000.

Hardiness of Anthrenus beetle.

The following article is an additional piece for our insert series on Agents of Decay; No.3 Pests.

Please note that follow up articles on any of the subject areas in the series are welcome at any time.


The *Anthrenus verbasci* beetles seem to be back in force this year already (mid Feb.) with some drawers of insects brought in by a visitor and already well infested.

One of the larval skins contained an adult beetle looking fresh and it was decided to turn it into a dry whole mount preparation for video microscopes. After being placed in the freezer overnight it recovered the next morning after 30 minutes at room temperature and was placed in 80% IMS for 8 hours. It was then removed from the IMS to dry out overnight so that it could be mounted the next morning. I fortunately covered it to prevent dust from contaminating it only to find that next day it was wandering around rather unsteadily under its glass cover!

Immersion in Formol acetic alcohol finally stopped its

wanderings. For the time being our nitrogen tank still gives a thorough coup de grace even if they are becoming resistant to other ways of killing them.

*Simon Moore
Hampshire Co. Council Museums*



Effective Freezing Strategies

Simon's article (immediately preceding this one) clearly illustrates the hardy nature of the *Anthrenus* species. Many readers will by now be most disheartened that their easiest, cheapest and least interventive method of pest control (i.e. freezing) has been exposed as severely flawed and unreliable.

Fortunately, considerable research has been carried out in the field of thermal insect eradication methods and specific guidelines established by the Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI, 1997) and Mary Lou Florian (Florian, 1997) to ensure effective treatments. The guidelines are largely based on lethal temperatures, and exposure times published in the entomological literature; anecdotal

evidence of successful treatments and knowledge of how insects survive cold has also been taken into account.

Basically, the research has indicated that all stages of all insect pests can be killed at low temperatures (high temperatures as well, but that is another story). At any given temperature below 0 °C, different insect species will be killed at different rates. Also, different developmental stages of the same insect species will be killed at different rates, e.g. with webbing clothesmoth, *Tinneola bisselliella* it seems the adult and the egg are easier to kill than the larva (Strang, 1992, p43, ref 111). Indications are that at -18°C to -20°C all stages of *Anthrenus verbasci* can be killed in 2 hours (Strang, 1992, p42), while *Tinneola bisselliella* at the same temperature will take one to two days to die (Strang, 1992, p43).

Domestic freezers will usually achieve around -18°C (if in good order and not too frosted up), specialist freezers and cold rooms (e.g. for the food industry) might go down to -30 °C or -40 °C.

So, how come Simon's low temperature treatment failed?

Almost certainly a low enough temperature was not achieved for the short period of exposure - maybe his freezer doesn't go down to -20°C, maybe it needs defrosting, maybe it was too full and there was inadequate air circulation around the drawers. Also, time must be allowed for the core temperature of the items being treated (the drawers) to reach the minimum temperature of the freezer. In fact, CCI's practical recommendation for low temperature treatments is -20 °C for one week (CCI, 1997, p2).

Until a few years ago double freezing was fashionable (freeze, warm to ambient temperature, freeze again). In recent years it has been shown that this is unnecessary if a low enough temperature (the thermal, mortality threshold) can be achieved, and maintained for the requisite period of exposure - saving on energy consumption, staff time and object handling (possibly). However, if you can not get a low enough temperature to achieve a 100% kill in a single exposure (usually -20 °C or lower), then exposure to a higher temperature (e.g. -8°C) with a subsequent second exposure is likely to do the trick (Strang, 1992, p50). Alternatively, it has been

suggested that at temperatures higher than the lethal exposure threshold a 100% kill can be achieved by extending the treatment time., However, for a single exposure, a temperature lower than -15°C is to be recommended, as insects can achieve short term cold adaptation to this level (CCI, 1997).

So,

- Be aware - and check regularly what temperature your freezer can achieve.
- Take into account what species of insect(s) you are trying to eradicate and assume that all developmental stages right be present.
- Calculate the duration of exposure needed (CCI, 1997, p2) and freeze for at least this length of time.
- Allow additional exposure time for the core temperature of the item(s) being treated to reach the minimum temperature of the freezer. The treatment temperature must be achieved relatively quickly throughout the object - i.e. within 1.2 hours at most - if not, the insects

might have time to adjust, enabling them to survive treatment.

- If the temperature can not be constantly maintained, e.g. if the freezer is periodically opened, extend the treatment time.

It is worth working to the worse case scenario, i.e. assuming you might have the most resistant species and stage - a longer freeze time will not damage objects/specimens. Needless to say, the specimen must be adequately "bagged" throughout the procedure (CCI, 1997).

References

1. CCI, Controlling Insect Pests with Low Temperatures. CCI Note, N3/3, written by Thomas J K Strang, 1997, Ottawa, Canadian Conservation Institute, ISSN 0714-6221.
2. Strang Thomas J K, A Review of Published. Temperatures for the Control, of Pest Insects in Museums, Society for the Preservation. of Natural History Collections, *Collection Forum.*, vol. 8 (2),1992 pp41-47.

3. **Strang, Thomas J K**, A Brief Guide to Thermal and Controlled Atmosphere Treatments for Insect Eradication, Preventive Conservation Section, ICOM-CC, No. 1, Fall, 1995.
4. **Strang, Thomas J K**, The Effect of Thermal Methods of Pest Control on Museum Collections, in Preprints, International Conference on Biodeterioration of Cultural Property, 4-7 July, 1995, Bangkok, Thailand, 199-218.
5. **Florian, Mary-Lou**, Heritage Eaters: Insects and Fungi in Heritage Collections, James & James, London, 1997, p73.
6. **Berkouwer, May**, Freezing to Eradicate Insect Pests in Textiles at Brodsworth Hall, The Conservator, No. 18, 1994, 15-22.
7. **Story, Keith O**, Approaches to Pest Management in Museums, Conservation Analytical Laboratory, Smithsonian Institution, 1985, 70-72.
8. **Brokerhof, Agnes W**, Control of Fungi and Insects in Objects and Collections of Cultural Value, Central Research Laboratory for Objects of Art and Science, Amsterdam, 39-44.

*Tracey Seddon
Senior Organics Conservator
The Conservation Centre, Liverpool*

Information Wanted

Plastic block deterioration

Our SEARCH educational unit fairly recently purchased some specimens embedded in clear resin from a firm in Germany (since gone out of business). Over the past two years these blocks have become surface pitted with small marks about 1mm diameter and about 200 microns deep, giving a slightly clouded appearance. The pitting can be removed by grinding and polishing the blocks. The pitting only occurred on those surfaces that are regularly touched suggesting that the blocks should either be wiped after use or that hands should be cleaned with some appropriate agent before handling these blocks.

The blocks are made of a different type of resin than the usual polyester clear resin, provided via Tiranti, and I have so far been unsuccessful in finding out what this German resin comprises. Blocks made from the Tiranti resin have undergone similar handling but show no signs of deterioration apart from the odd and inevitable surface scratch.

Any advice or useful comments would be most welcome.

*Simon Moore
Conservator of Natural Sciences
Hampshire County Museums Service*

N.S.C.G. Committee Members

Chair-Elect: Robert Entwistle

Ipswich Borough Council
Museum
High Street
Ipswich, Suffolk, IP1 3QH
Tel: 01473 213761
Fax: 01473 281274

Secretary: Paul Brown

Dept. of Entomology
The Natural History Museum
Cromwell Road
London, SW7 5BD
Tel: 0171 938 8903
Fax: 0171 938 8937
e.mail: pab@nhm.ac.uk

Treasurer: Maggie Reilly

Zoology Department
Hunterian Museum
Glasgow University
Glasgow, G12 8QQ
Tel: 0141 330 4772
Fax: 0141 330 5971
e.mail: mreilly@museum.gla.ac.uk

Nick Gordon

County Museum Technical Centre
Tring Road
Halton
Buckinghamshire, HP22 5PJ
Tel & Fax: 01296 696012

Donna Hughes

Botany Department
Liverpool Museum
William Brown Street
Liverpool, L3 8EN
Tel: 0151 478 4373
Fax: 0151 478 4390
e.mail: donna@nmgmnhc.demon.co.uk

Simon Moore

Hampshire County Museums
Chilcomb House
Chilcomb Lane
Winchester, SO23 8RD
Tel: 01962 846337
Fax: 01962 869836
e.mail: musmam@hants.gov.uk

Victoria Purewal

National Museums & Galleries of Wales
Cathay's Park
Cardiff, CF1 3NP
Tel: 01222 573345
Fax: 01222 239829
e.mail: vicky.purewal@nmgw.ac.uk

Tracey Seddon

Textiles & Organics Conservation
The Conservation Centre
Whitechapel
Liverpool, L1 6HZ
Tel: 0151 478 4843
Fax: 0151 478 4990
e.mail: tracey@nmgmcc4.demon.co.uk

Wendy Simkiss

Geology Section
Liverpool Museum
William Brown Street
Liverpool, L3 8EN
Tel: 0151 478 4212
Fax: 0151 478 4390
e.mail: earth@nmgmeps1.demon.co.uk

Kirsten Walker

The Horniman Museum
London Road
Forest Hill
London, SE23 3PQ
Tel: 0181 6991872 x123
Fax: 0181 2915506
e.mail: walker@horniman.demon.co.uk

Glenys Wass

Wisbech & Fenland Museum
Museum Square
Wisbech
Cambridge, PE13 1ES
Tel: 01945 583817
e.mail: gwass@globlanet.co.uk

Contents

View from the Chairs	2,3
Conservation Focus	
<i>MGC Grants available</i>	6
<i>Courses & Meetings</i>	8
<i>New Publication</i>	11
<i>Document of Pavia</i>	12
<i>NSCG travelling lectures</i>	17
Conservation Accreditation	18
Changes to Constitution	20
Addition to 'Pests'	
<i>Hardiness of Anthrenus beetle</i>	27
<i>Effective Freezing Strategies</i>	27
Information wanted	
<i>Plastic block deterioration</i>	31
N.S.C.G. Committee members	32

