Western Association for Art Conservation

The Western Association for Art Conservation (formerly, the Western Association of Art Conservators), also known as WAAC, was founded in 1974 to bring together conservators practicing in the western United States to exchange ideas, information, and regional news, and to discuss national and international matters of common interest.

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Regional News

Nicholas Dorman column editor

Alaska

Ellen Carrlee helped coordinate events around basketry at the Alaska State Museum for visiting NMAI conservators, Tlingit and Haida weavers, and other scholars in conjunction with Celebration: the biennial Northwest Coast Native event. She gave on online workshop on object labeling to Alaskan museums in July. She has been studying Apollo 11 and 17 moon rocks plaques in advance of possible litigation. In Fall 2012, she is headed to the University of Alaska Fairbanks on a semester long leave of absence as part of PhD studies in anthropology focused on Yup'ik use of gutskin.

The Alaska State Museum was awarded a 2012 AIC/ Heritage Preservation Ross Merrill Award for Outstanding Commitment to Preservation and Care of Collections to recognize 35 years of conservation outreach statewide.

Scott Carrlee has been supervising two conservation interns at the Klondike Gold Rush National Park in Skagway Alaska this summer.

Nicole Peters and Katie Bonanno have been working on historic artifacts from the George Rapuzzi collection that will be displayed in the Soapy Smith Parlor Museum when it reopens in 2016. On a recent trip to Skagway, Scott and the interns did a public program titled "What's it Made of, and How do You Take Care of It." Scott put to use for the first time the Alaska State Museum's recently acquired portable XRF to identify metal objects while Katie and Nicole gave advice on the care and preservation of objects and textiles. Scott also performed two assessments at the Duncan Cottage Museum in Metlakatla and the Cape Fox Heritage Foundation in Ketchikan.

Madeleine Neiman, UCLA-Getty Conservation Program graduate student, is interning at the Anchorage Museum with conservator and head of collections Monica Shah. She is treating a Dena'ina Athabascan fishtrap made in the 1950s. In between immersing herself in willow root information and treatment, she assisted both the Pratt Museum in Homer and the Seldovia Village Tribe's Museum. She will be at the Anchorage Museum until the end of August. Monica Shah has been overseeing this work, while also continuing to ready objects for exhibition. Most notably, two totems were donated to the museum last month and were moved to the museum recently, where one will be prepared for exhibition.

Regional Reporter: Ellen Carrlee

Arizona

Rose Cull has finished a public conservation treatment at the Phoenix Art Museum on a contemporary wood sculpture by Cornelia Parker. Rose performed the treatment during museum hours and came down from her ladder twice a day to talk to museum visitors. Rose is the new assistant program chair for the Electronic Media Group (EMG), and she is excited to learn more about electronic media.

At the Musical Instrument Museum Daniel Cull was promoted to the position of Conservator. His recent work has included the conservation of a loan from Elvis Presley Enterprises (Graceland): a decorative leather custom-made guitar cover made for Elvis' Gibson J-200 acoustic guitar. The cover was used in all 20 live appearances Elvis made in 1957. The treatment was a weeklong focus for MIM's facebook page and was also featured in local media including the *Arizona Republic*.

Outside of work, after 500 posts and approximately 4 years and 3 months, Daniel decided to end his conservation blog. During its lifetime the blog seemed pretty popular, and was visited 215,436 times. Daniel has also been busy working on the 2012 annual meeting in Palm Springs, which is coming together pretty well, so he hopes to see you there!

Dana Senge, Maggie Kipling, and Audrey Harrison have been helping Mesa Verde National Park pack hundreds of the most fragile ceramics and organic objects for the move to their new state of the art storage facility. Dana's packing strategies, training methods, and planning for the park has them on track to move hundreds of thousands of artifacts. Dana also unexpectedly traveled to Glen Canyon National Recreation Area to safely pack object collections for travel to the repository in Tucson.

At the National Park Service lab Audrey worked on the stabilization of historic and archeological metals from Chiricahua National Monument and Fort Bowie National Historic Site. **Paige Hoskins** and **Amy Molnar** assisted the lab by working on the mechanical cleaning of a large Navajo rug from Grand Teton National Park.

Brynn Bender traveled by helicopter and foot into the backcountry of the Sonoran desert inside Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument to safely pack and transport four ceramic vessels. The vessels were found days prior by U.S. Border Patrol agents while on patrol near the Mexican border.

Martha Winslow Grimm is trying to ignore the hot Arizona summer and is continuing to treat artifacts from the International Quilt Museum, a project funded by a Save America's Treasures Grant.

Linda Morris is flattening rolled diazo plans and photographs from NPS to be stored in their Tucson archives repository.

Nancy Odegaard presented at the AIC in presentation and poster sessions and led three sessions at the Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries & Museum meeting in Tulsa. She was a keynote speaker and participant in the NSF Chemistry In Art advanced workshop at Villanova University. She lectured at the Museum Association of Arizona meetings, the UA archaeology field school, the UA ethnology field school, and co-taught a UA summer pre-session class in archaeological conservation with **Teresa Moreno**. She did a MAP survey for the Fort Peck Tribal Museum and CAP survey for the Rosson House Museum.

In addition to co-teaching a UA summer pre-session class in archaeological conservation, Teresa co-presented a session at the Museum Association of Arizona with **Gina Watkinson**, gave a lecture at the Arizona Science Center, and presented a paper and co-authored poster at AIC. She worked on objects for several large loans, repatriations, an exhibit, and continued planning work for upcoming building renovations. She recently returned from Greece from her seventh season as site conservator for the Mt. Lykaion survey and excavation project, where she supervised 1st year Queen's conservation graduate student, Sarah Mullin. Teresa continues work on her PhD research on the conservation of American Indian silver jewelry.

Summer conservation graduate interns at ASM are **Crista Pack** (2nd year WUD-PAC) and **Casey Mallinckrodt** (1st year UCLA-Getty). Both are working on various conservation treatments including ceramics, baskets, and repatriation. They participated in a 1 week tour to northern Arizona including work at the UA archaeology field school and a survey project at the Ft. Apache Museum.

Gina Watkinson received travel awards from Museum Association of Arizona (MAA) and the University of Arizona to attend and co- present at the AIC, MAA, and ATALM conferences. She also participated in the northern Arizona tour. Werner Zimmt diligently continues his work in the lab with Nancy and also advised conservation students and interns on their lab projects.

UA Heritage Conservation Science students have been active with research projects; **Brunella Santarelli** presented a poster at AIC and **Elyse Canosa** presented a poster at the C14 conference in Paris. Transitions in the lab include: rock art scholar **David Vogt** (Norway) was a visiting scholar, **Marissa Shaver** left to start her PhD, **Kevin Wohlgemuth** was accepted into the UPenn architectural conservation program, **Martina Dawley** made

presentations at the ATALM and AIC

conferences, and Marilen Pool, project

conservator is migrating from the ASM

pottery project to the new ASM basketry

Regional Reporter: Brynn Bender

Hawaii

project.

At the University of Hawaii Preservation Lab, paper conservator **Seth Irwin**, with the assistance of preservation support technicians, **Kalanikiekie Sherry** and **Malia Van Heukelem**, are continuing to work on material damaged in the 2004 flood. This material is comprised of about 290 rare maps and several thousand aerial photographs.

The Attorney General's *koa* and *kou* wood desk, built in the 1870s by M. T. Donnell will be restored by **Thor Minnick**. The desk is significant in that it is the prototype from which numerous later iterations were made during the Monarchy Period that have been referred to as

"the Classic Hawaiian Desk." He also is continuing treatment of a large collection of Hawaiian *umeke* (calabash) privately held.

Rie and Larry Pace are currently involved in the conservation of a mural painted on a steel bulkhead (8" thick) in the wardroom of the USS Missouri in Pearl Harbor. The original painting depicted a partial world map on old parchment with the routes taken by the battleship during WW II. The painting was done by three of the crew as the ship traveled back to the US after the Japanese surrender. Had the ship's career ended with just one war their job would be much easier, but it was redeployed for the Korean War and for the first Gulf War. Each of those new crews partially, but enthusiastically, modified, repainted, expanded, and added routes to the painting.

In the studio they continue to work on projects for the Honolulu Museum of Art (formerly the Honolulu Academy of Art), the Bishop Museum, and numerous private and corporate clients.

Dawne Steele Pullman is back from Hong Kong and in Hawaii again working for her private clients. Presently she is treating a quite sweet beach bathing scene by D. Howard Hitchcock.

Gregory Thomas is currently providing painting conservation treatments for the Hawaii Volcanoes National Park on the Big Island of Hawaii. Gregory is pleased to have the opportunity to help preserve fine art by several artists in the Volcano School. As time permits between these treatments, he is also providing painting conservation to his other Art Care clients. Most recently he cleaned and varnished a couple of paintings by Shirley Russell.

Regional Reporter: D. Thor Minnick

Los Angeles

Since 2011, LACMA has worked on contract with the city of Los Angeles

to review and further develop the conservation plan for the Watts Towers, as well as provide daily maintenance. Led by senior conservation scientist **Frank Preusser**, conservators **Sylvia Schweri-Dorsch** and **Blanka Kielb** and research assistants **Israel Campos**, **Kimberly Blanks**, and **Colleen Boye** are at work on a variety of fronts, including materials testing, crack monitoring, condition documentation, and database development.

Thanks to funding from the Ahmanson Foundation, over the summer they have been joined by UCLA-trained conservators **Lily Doan**, **Molly Gleeson**, and **Suzanne Morris** in an educational mentorship program with Verbum Dei High School graduates **Hector Morataya** and **Jesus Real**. For two months, mentors and mentees are engaged in a variety of activities including a stabilization survey of selected sculptures, research into past treatments, and an infrared photography survey of the floor.

In September **Anne Getts** started a 1 year Mellon fellowship in textile conservation at LACMA. She is a recent graduate of the Winterthur/University of Delaware program in art conservation.

Paintings conservators at LACMA have been busy with permanent collection projects. Joe Fronek is completing the restoration of John Singleton Copley's Portrait of a Woman, which will be included in an upcoming exhibition of American paintings traveling to Korea. Elma O'Donoghue is completing the restoration of a 17th-c. colonial painting by Pedro Ramirez, Marriage of the Vir-Mellon fellow Bianca May and Ahmanson advanced fellow Susanne **Friend** worked together on the treatment of a pair of 18th-c. Mexican paintings on copper by Nicolas Enríquez. Also, Ahmanson advanced fellow Linnaea Saunders treated a 1940 painting on Masonite by David Alfred Vaughan.

In September **Morgan Hayes**, from the Winterthur/University of Delaware program, began a 3rd year internship in painting conservation at LACMA.

Since June, **Amanda Burr** has been working as a contract paper conserva-

tion technician on exhibitions and loans for the Margaret Herrick Library at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. She also currently works on special collections at the UCLA book and paper conservation lab. A Seattle native now working and living in the Los Angeles area, Amanda has also completed a Mellon fellowship at the Huntington Library and recently concluded a sixmonth internship in paper conservation at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, performing treatments and assisting with exhibitions.

Victoria Blyth Hill is working on the second rotation of thangkas for the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. Working with her are Cara Varnell, textile conservator, and Allison King, a pre-program intern who is currently a student at Reed College in Portland, Oregon. Victoria attended the "Archives: Principles and Practices" two-day workshop in San Diego in early August.

Yadin Larochette had a busy summer preparing Native American costumes and textiles for two exhibitions, one at the Palm Springs Art Museum and the other to be held at the Museo de Oro in Bogota, Colombia with pieces from the Bowers collection. Presentations included a talk to Scripps College summer interns on the field of textile conservation and a lecture on caring for tapestries to members of the American Tapestry Alliance during a workshop held at Chapman University.

Rosa Lowinger recently attended a GCI-sponsored meeting on Outdoor Painted Sculpture. The meeting was held at the Metropolitan Museum and consisted of conservators, fabricators, artist's estate and foundation directors, and individuals from the paint industry. Rosa is presently working with the AIC on the second AIC-sponsored conservators trip to Cuba, scheduled tentatively for the Fall of 2013.

In Decorative Arts and Sculpture Conservation at the Getty Museum, **Julie Wolfe** hosted scientist **Virginia Costa** as a 3-month Getty scholar researching the use of metal coupons as sensors to determine the compatibility of materials for display. **Arlen Heginbotham** has

been working on the analysis and conservation treatment of the wood paneling in the Charles and Ray Eames House in Pacific Palisades, CA. The Eames House has recently been the focus of the Getty Conservation Institute's new Conserving Modern Architecture Initiative.

Katrina Posner with Julie Wolfe and **Brian Considine** just finished a joint treatment with **John Griswold** and his team of Henry Moore's *Bronze Form*. The aging polyurethane coating was removed using stripper followed by dry ice blasting, retaining the existing patina. The bronze was then recoated with Incralac.

Decorative Arts graduate intern, **Raina Chao**, has submitted a paper to *Studies in Conservation* with co-authors Arlen Heginbotham, **Lynn Lee**, and **Giacomo Chiari** titled "Materials and Techniques of Gilding on a Suite of French 18th-Century Chairs." Raina will be starting in September as the Andrew W. Mellon Fellow in Objects Conservation at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Department mountmakers **Mark Mitton** and **Adrienne Pamp** will be publishing a paper in the fall *AIC Journal* titled: "Cast Bronze Mounts for Temporary Exhibition at the JPGM." Mark gave a talk at the 3rd Int'l Mountmakers Forum on earthquake mounts for mid-20^{th-}C. sculptures made of resin and other experimental materials for the Getty's Pacific Standard Time exhibition.

At a symposium held jointly by the Louvre and the C2RMF, "French bronzes: materials and techniques of bronze sculpture (16th – 18th C.)," **Arlen Heginbotham** presented a paper on the examination and authentication of gilt bronze mounts, and **Jane Bassett** spoke about the bronze casting techniques of Jean-Antoine Houdon and about the distinctive 'cut-back core' lost wax technique commonly used in France in the 18th C. Archetype Publications will publish the symposium papers.

Jane and Brian recently took a trip to Southern Germany to study historic methods of restoration of Medieval and Renaissance polychrome sculpture following the Getty's acquisition of a lifesized figure from Swabia, dated 1515.

Patty West and Teen Conlon report that South Coast Fine Arts Conservation Center has been very busy this year dealing with several objects damaged by vandalism. One polychrome statue from Santa Cruz Mission was dragged off the niche above the alter and smashed. Complicating the treatment was the fact that the sculpture had been extremely badly repaired and the original gilded surfaces painted over several times. It took 550 hours of scrapping with a scalpel just to remove the over paint. The whole project took a year to finish and is now back in the Mission Church. A similar vandalism occurred in Modesto California to a 19th-century statue at St. Stanislaus Church, which is now nearing completion.

Three interns, Dinah Parker, Cindy Golson, and Samantha Hochhouser joined them to help with the cleaning of three murals at St. John's Seminary in Camarillo. The studio is also hoping to complete the Santa Barbara County Courthouse Mural Room project this coming year. Funding efforts are in full swing to complete the job.

Regional Reporter: Virginia Rasmussen

New Mexico

Conservation Solutions, Inc. (CSI) is pleased to have concluded the first half of 2012 with the award of a contract to provide conservation oversight for the façade rehabilitation of the West Block of the Canadian Parliament building in Ottawa, Canada. Conservation Solutions will have a team on site for the duration of this project, currently estimated to be ongoing over 5 years.

Successfully completed projects in 2012 include the Pan Am Globe at the Miami

Science Museum, Miami, FL, exterior bronze at the National Academy of Science, Washington, DC, the main gate at Tudor Place Historic House and Garden, Washington, DC, the 1811 bell at St. James Church, NYC, the Grand Ghibellina marble sculpture by Gio Pomodoro at Kykuit, Sleepy Hollow, NY, the Mexican War Monument at the Pennsylvania State Capitol, Harrisburg, PA, the Bel Jon Mural at Pfizer Corporate headquarters, NYC, the US Grant Memorial on the National Mall, Washington, DC, the zinc statue The Spirit of the Fighting Yank, Belmont, NC, as well as a condition survey of the three spires at the US Air Force Memorial, Arlington, VA.

Projects underway or scheduled include the conservation of sculptures and architectural elements at Vizcaya Museum and Gardens, Miami, FL, consulting and surveying for the Menokin Project, Warsaw, VA, stone and bronze restoration at the west façade of the US Supreme Court, as well as at the Federal Reserve Building, Washington, DC, conservation of the Soldiers & Sailors' Monument, Watertown, NY, the Capitol Building 'El Capitolio', San Juan, Puerto Rico, and the Law Enforcement Officers Memorial, Washington, DC.

Upcoming publications and presentations include "Investigating and Restoring Decorative Finishes on Architectural Metals" (to be published Fall 2012 in the Journal of Architectural Conservation), a presentation entitled "The Restoration of the Guastavino Vault" at the Biennial Meeting of the Construction History Society of American in Boston, MA, and two presentations at the 12th International Conference on the Deterioration and Conservation of Stone at Columbia University titled "The Restoration of Marble Statuary at the New York Public Library," and "Outside the Canon: A Review of Unique Approaches to Stone Conservation."

Regional Reporter: Silvia Marinas-Feliner

Pacific Northwest

Josh Summer has joined the staff at **Alice Bear** Conservation of Works on Paper as a pre-program intern.

In May **J. Claire Dean** was in Malawi doing site work and some training for staff at the Chongoni Rock Art Area World Heritage Site, Malawi, followed by additional field work in the Limpopo District of South Africa. Now back in the USA she will be working this summer in various locations including, central Oregon, on the Snake River in Idaho, and at the Hibulb Cultural Center, Washington State.

This August, as a part of a project funded by the National Science Foundation, the Seattle Art Museum Conservation Department is teaming up with **Tami** Lasseter-Clare and Alice England from Portland State University for onsite testing of an Electrochemical Impedance Analyzer which the Portland State University researchers have re-designed to enable field use. The goal is to see if the technology can be useful in determining coating deterioration on sculptures in the museum's Olympic Sculpture Park before there are visible signs of failure. The project will be shared with the public on billboards in the park and on the conservation page of the SAM website.

Liz Brown is also undertaking annual summer treatment of art in the park, including the repainting of a large Oldenburg/ van Bruggen sculpture with Alex **Obney** and his team from Fine Art Finishes, LLC. Nicholas Dorman attended the CAPS III London workshop at Tate Britain (see his conference review pp. 24-27), focusing on cleaning acrylic paintings, and he is researching and treating Jackson Pollock's Sea Change, thanks to project support from Bank of America. Nicholas is working with Kress Fellow Katie Patton and with Elisabeth Mention to inpaint Venus and Adonis, a large painting by Veronese and his workshop.

This spring and early summer **Corine Landrieu** has been working on a range of conservation projects for the Museum of History and Industry and for Seattle's Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs.

Regional Reporter: Corine Landrieu

Rocky Mountain Region

Kyoung-eun Park spent the summer as a Wyoming Community Fellow in the conservation lab of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center. Kyoung-eun graduated from the Northumbria University Conservation program as a paper conservator. She treated many works of art on paper and supervised the housing of an archival collection from the Heart Mountain Interpretive Center.

Fran Ritchie, third year student in the Buffalo State College Conservation Program, was in residence at the BBHC as a Wyoming Community Foundation Fellow. Fran carried out intricate treatments on some of the specimens in the Draper Museum of Natural History. She also researched the use of various adhesives and backing materials for the repair of collection objects made of animal skin.

Jamie Christopher Gleason, third year student in the Buffalo State College Conservation Program, was in residence as a Rumsey Fellow. Jamie carried out complex treatments on some of the outdoor sculpture in the town of Cody, the bronzes in the Whitney Gallery of Western Art, and on the grounds of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center.

The conservation department of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center was fortunate to also have many talented pre-program interns in residence. Emilie Kracen, Jaclyn Rubino, Katie Marie Belton, Joy Blosner, and Kate Catanio spent many hours conserving objects, under the suervision of Bev Perkins, from the Plains Indian Museum, the Cody Firearms Museum, and the Buffalo Bill Museum.

Regional Reporter:
Paulette Reading

San Francisco Bay Area

Candis Griggs Hakim is saying goodbye to her Sebastopol apple trees and vegetable garden and moving to Doha, Qatar! After getting her kids settled, she hopes to keep busy with contract work, as the museum community is growing there almost as fast as the skyscrapers. Keep in touch with her at griggsconservation@ gmail.com.

The Paper Lab at the Legion of Honor welcomes two advanced interns: Laura Neufeld from the Buffalo State University of New York and Nora Velensek from the Akademie der Bilden Künste Stuttgart.

The Objects Lab at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco has been busy with exhibitions. **Lesley Bone** just did an interesting installation with artist Beth Lipman via Skype, which was featured on the FAMSF blog.

Alisa Eagleston has just finished a survey of the ancient art collection on display and is about to embark on the delightful project of bringing twin daughters into the world. They welcomed back 2011 post graduate intern, Tegan Broderick, to fill in for Alisa. Tracy Power is consulting on some sculpture conservation projects, including a brass Roy Lichtenstein head that is on loan from the Anderson Collection.

Sarah Myriam Winston joined Sarah Gates in the Textile Conservation Lab of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco as a summer volunteer intern. Sarah Myriam is fulfilling her 150 hours of practical work for the Costume and Textiles Collection Management Program at CSU Long Beach. She is already employed in collections management at the Mingei International Museum in San Diego as well as being a textile artist known for her handweaving and use of natural dyes. She is on an intensive schedule to make safe storage for hats, shoes, costume, and rolled textiles, and she is completing all projects with enthusiasm and skill.

After a major facility renovation and organizational restructuring, the Oak-

land Museum of California reopened the art and history floors last year, with natural science slated for reopening in 2013. **John Burke**, who retired as chief conservator, was appointed director of the Collections and Information Access Center, which includes collections management, conservation, and registration activities. The museum conservation department is now managed by senior conservator **Julie Trosper**.

Current projects include digitizing and rehousing 645 Andrew Russell collodion glass plate negatives documenting the building of the transcontinental railroad in 1869, coordinated by paper conservator **Peng-Peng Wang** with consultation from **Gawain Weaver**.

The museum is also performing a second IMLS General Survey, over two decades after the original survey and 19 subsequent grant-funded conservation projects. The present survey, focusing on access and participatory practices, is coordinated by OMCA painting conservator Pam Skiles in consultation with Jill Sterrett, Glenn Wharton, Pauline Mohr, Martin Salazar, Denise Migdail, Tom Fuller, and Victoria Binder, along with Debra Evans and Elisabeth Cornu (who were also involved with the 1989 survey).

Other projects include a Museums for America technology grant focused on information asset management and collections CMS development, and the treatment and cataloging of 40,000 political posters from the 1960s for online delivery.

Regional Reporter: Alisa Eagleston

Texas

In May **Jodie Utter** presented her technical study of Charles M. Russell's artists materials and watercolor techniques at "Material Memory" a joint symposium hosted by the University of Tulsa and

Gilcrease Museum, as part of the new Helmerich Research Center. She traveled to Great Falls, Montana to oversee the installation of *Romance Maker: The Watercolors of Charles Russell* and to give several lectures. In July she presented her research at Inter/Micro, a microscopy symposium at McCrone Research Institute in Chicago, IL. Currently she is working on a series of articles about Russell's watercolor paints.

Tatiana Cole, a recent graduate from the Winterthur/University of Delaware Program in Art Conservation, will join the Amon Carter Museum of American Art in October as the museum's first post-graduate Fellow in Conservation of Photographs (2012-2014). Tatiana will work with Sylvie Pénichon on the museum's busy exhibition schedule and will conduct research on photographs from the collection.

Regional Reporter: Ken Grant

An extra note

The general rule for Regional News is that an individual posts information about themselves, and that we include only occasional amounts of personal news. However, a member suggested the following post because he felt our readers would want to know about it.

Sott Blair, proprietor of Conservation Support Systems, has had a bumpy year or two. His wife Diane suffered a heart attack earlier this year (she is recovering well). A couple of months later, a mentally unbalanced intruder attempted a break-in of his home, with all the family, including his recuperating wife, briefly terrorized. It required police intervention and warning shots to subdue the intruder. They have also suffered the loss of two of Diane's brothers, a close friend, and most recently, the death a close friend's daughter. As well, for the last couple of years, they have been caring for his elderly mom. Our thoughts and sympathies go out to Scott and his family.