

VCA News

Newsletter of the Virginia Conservation Association

P.O. Box 1314, Richmond, Virginia 23220

www.VirginiaConservationAssociation.org

Volume 18 No. 4 – March, 2008

Upcoming Members' Meeting Thursday, March 20, 2008 Tour of the State Capitol

The beautifully renovated State Capitol has drawn on the talents of many VCA conservators. On March 20 we will have an opportunity to tour the Capitol and to hear the stories behind the projects.

The meeting will begin with refreshments and brief talks at the Library of Virginia. Parking will be available at the Library.



Schedule

5:30 pm Refreshments.
6:15 Business meeting.
6:30 Walk to Capitol. Tour of the newly renovated Capitol and grounds with commentaries by

conservators who have contributed to the renovation work.

8:00: Return to the Library for brief presentations on behind the scenes conservation work.

Please note that the Library garage will be locked at 9:00 pm. All cars must be moved by that time. □

Driving Directions and Special Instructions for the March Meeting at the Library of Virginia and State Capitol

Please be aware that because of numerous street repairs and construction projects, you may experience detours and street closures in the downtown Richmond area.

From Interstate 95 (from the North or from the South) Take Exit 74C. A highway sign will say Library of Virginia. Proceed west on Broad Street until you reach 9th Street. Turn right and immediately get into the far left lane. Proceed down the block and prepare to turn left into the parking deck.

From Interstate 64 West (e.g. coming from Williamsburg) Take the exit for Fifth Street and the Coliseum. Turn left on Marshall Street a few blocks (past the Coliseum on your left) after you exit Interstate 64. Stay in the middle lane and proceed to Eighth Street, and turn right from that lane. The parking lot entrance will be immediately on your left.

From Interstate 64 East (e.g. coming from Charlottesville) Take Interstate 95 South to Exit 74C. See instructions above for I-95.

Parking

There is parking for VCA members at the Library of Virginia in the underground deck on the evening of March 20. The vehicle entrances to the parking deck are located on 8th and 9th Streets just south of Marshall Street in the block between Marshall and Broad Streets. Both of these streets are one-way, so plan accordingly.

Please Note: The entrance to the parking deck is 7 feet high. As a result, not all vehicles can use the parking deck. After you enter the parking deck, you will go a short distance, then turn right or left into the center of the deck, depending upon which entrance you used. There is a parking attendant in a booth in this area. Parking tickets are available from a dispenser. Proceed through the gate and park on the B1 level, which is the level you are on when you enter the deck. After you park, proceed to the elevator at the end of the deck (Broad Street side) to reach the Library's lobby. To exit, the ticket must be validated by Library staff at the Reception Desk in the Main Lobby on the First Floor.

After you park, go to the elevator at the south end of the deck (Broad Street side) to reach the Library's lobby.

Refreshments will be served at the rear of the lobby. □



Report From the January Meeting Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Museum

Patty Silence, exhibitions conservator, and other members of the Colonial Williamsburg Conservation and Collections departments joined forces to host the VCA in the newly opened AARFAM galleries. The tour highlighted both the exceptional collection and the extensive planning that has gone into displaying and protecting these unique objects.

The new galleries have the use of more space, with galleries that can be closed off without impacting access to adjacent galleries, allowing easier exhibit changes. Window louvers that respond to outdoor light levels are just one of the state-of-the-art measures used to safeguard the collection. The floors are yellow pine recycled from a mill building in New England and lend an ambiance of informality and tradition to the folk art galleries.

The galleries are organized by theme—the first focusing on Abby Aldrich Rockefeller and selections from the four hundred objects donated by her that form the core of the collection. Subsequent galleries draw on the four thousand objects that now comprise the AARFAM collection.

“We the People” is the theme for a gallery of portraits dating from the eighteenth century to the present.

The larger gallery space allows for more extensive family displays.

Chris Swan introduced the group to folk art furniture in “Exciting Expressions,” pointing out how important it is to remember what vivid colors the pieces would have had in their own time.

Shelley Svoboda presented the “Carolina Room,” a room imported from north central South Carolina, with painted paneling. Four years have gone into the cleaning of overpaint from the original painting. Incremental de-installation allows the cleaning and technical studies to continue.

Patty Silence explained the “American Stoneware” gallery, noting that what was totally utilitarian in the

eighteenth century became increasingly decorative in the nineteenth.

“Down on the Farm” is a family-oriented gallery with a story line written by Jan Gilliam and hands-on activity for children, complete with background sounds adding to the farmyard ambiance.

Pam Young presented “We See America”, (see photo), which reminds the public that until very recently the population had to rely on artistic representation and written description for their understanding of this vast country.

Jan Gilliam led the group to “Flowers, Birds, and Baskets”, displaying a rotating exhibit of hand-worked bedcovers. Pam Young followed with “Chasing Shadows”, a display of cut silhouettes accompanied by important original frames. Both the Textiles and Paper galleries have motion-activated lighting, which significantly reduces exposure for these sensitive collections.



John Watson closed the show with “Cross Rhythms,” a display of “pre-popular” musical instruments. He noted that the banjo was brought to this country by slaves from Africa, but that this instrument is now known only through early paintings, as none of the first instruments survive. An appropriate finale was the presentation of the “hippoceros”—a carved fantastical beast whose purpose was to house a phonograph and to project the sounds through its mouth with accompanying tongue-wagging motions.

Our sincere thanks to all the people whose efforts and expertise provided this enlightening introduction to the new AARFAM galleries of Colonial Williamsburg. □

Minutes of the VCA Board Meeting February 13, 2008

Attendees: Andrew Baxter, Susan Adler, Carey Howlett, Rick Vogt, Stacy Rusch, Bienvenida Ochs, John Watson, Kathy Gillis and Kathy Garrett-Cox

Thank you to Andrew Baxter for hosting the meeting at his house.

Due to Kate Dvorak's unfortunate news Bienvenida has agreed to also handle the email list. (We are all thinking of you Kate!) If someone needs to send out an email to the entire membership it would be helpful to Bienvenida if you send her already composed emails that she can then send them on.

The newsletter will again be distributed by email only, starting with the next newsletter. Those members who either do not have email or have said that they prefer to get a mailed copy will get one. Bienvenida will send John the addresses of those members who need a mailed copy of the newsletter. John has mapped out deadlines of when items are due to Rick in order to streamline the newsletter process. In general, any items that members would like put in the newsletter need to be to Rick two weeks before the newsletter goes out to the members. Approximately two weeks before the newsletter goes out an email will go out to the members from Bienvenida asking for items for the newsletter, giving the information about where and when the next meeting will be held, and asking those members who did not receive their directory to let Bienvenida know and she will get one to you.

Rick Vogt will have a booth at the Virginia Association of Museums conference in March. Members who would like to put out business cards or brochures are welcome to send their items to Rick. Rick will also put the boards up that were done for AIC at his booth.

Susan talked to Laura Moffet regarding our Christmas party in the executive mansion and was told that there is a lot of competition and that they don't book this far out. Susan will ask David Voelkel for any leads he may have for the Executive mansion. It was suggested we would have a good chance for the rotunda in the Capitol. Or Rick suggested Walkerton in Henrico County as a possible place. He will look into who needs to be contacted to use that space.

Publications Committee

In the next newsletter they will ask for an update for contact information. Susan Adler will report on the last meeting at Colonial Williamsburg. Andrew will put an announcement in regarding his workshop on patination. Carey Howlett will supply information on the next meeting at the Capitol.

Programs Committee

The next meeting will be March 20 at the Capitol. Susan has arranged for us to park at the Library of Virginia

parking garage. The garage will close at 9pm so we will need to be out by then. There will not be any wine allowed in the refreshment area for this meeting. Some of the possible speakers that evening will be Scott Nolley, Bill Ivey, Andrew Baxter, Carey Howlett and Susan Adler. Susan will see if someone from Artex will be able to come and talk about all of the packing and moving of objects that they did. The possible schedule for the evening will be:

5:30 – Refreshments

6:30 – Business Meeting

7:00 – Walk over to Capitol start with bronze outside due to lighting.

8:00 – Walk back to LOV for those presenters who would like to use PowerPoint

Education Committee

Andrew is still working on a possible trip to Washington DC with stops at the Hirshhorn, National Gallery and White House. Also Andrew suggested that we also look into a trip to the tidewater area with a stop at The Mariners' Museum in Newport News, and The Monitor Center. David Voelkel suggested a trip to Ashlawn-Highland. They are celebrating their 200th anniversary and have just opened a large exhibit for it.

Andrew will decide when he would like to offer the patination workshop but it will probably be in late April or early May. □

2007 – 2008 VCA Officers

President:	Andrew Baxter
Vice President:	Stacy Rusch
Secretary :	Kathy Garrett-Cox
Treasurer :	Dotty Robinson

2007 – 2008 Committee Chairs

Disaster Response:	Mary Scott Andrews
Programs:	Susan Adler Carey Howlett
Refreshments:	Nancy Beck Liegh Acosta & Christi Barranger
Education:	Kathy Gillis
Membership:	Bienvenida Ochs
Publications:	Rick Vogt & John Watson
Bylaws:	Dianne Roland

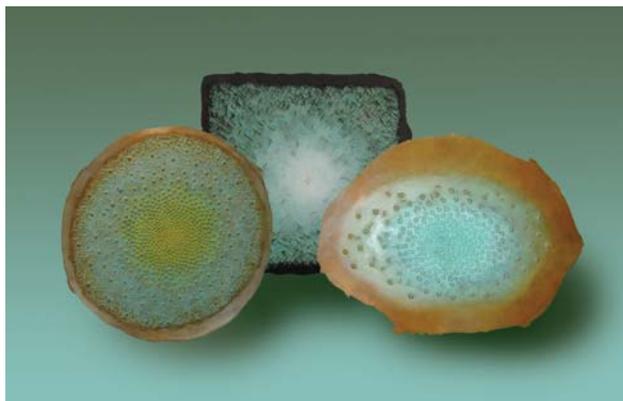
Photo Credits: page 1, 2, and 4-(left): Andrew Baxter; page 3, John Watson; page 4 (right) courtesy Ash Lawn-Highland website.

Patination Workshop

A patination workshop will be presented by Andrew Baxter for the Virginia Conservation Association at his studio in Richmond on April 11, 9:00 – 5:00.

A slide presentation with an overview of patination techniques will open the seminar.

The focus of this workshop will be the chemical patination of copper, bronze, and other copper alloys with heat and cold process formulations. Such application techniques as stippling, tint washing, wet cloth burnishing, and dry brushing will be demonstrated. Basic chemical formulations will be presented, and then more complex combinations such as tinting with dry pigments and dyes, multi layered patinas (ex. Tiffany and Rodin style), and resin smoked finishing will be explored. Cold process patinas (liquid and paste) which impart encrusted and deeply textured finishes will be covered.



The use of copper coatings on ferrous metals, canvas, and stone will be demonstrated with a variety of patinated finishes, if desired.

Safety concerns will be addressed regarding the use of the different chemicals and other materials.

During the afternoon session participants will have an opportunity to use the torch and brushes to apply some basic patina formulas. All materials will be supplied for the workshop. Total cost for the seminar will be \$125, and the class size will be limited to twelve.

Lunch will be provided at the studio. Please contact Andrew or Catherine Baxter at (804) 330-9816 to register. □

From the Membership Chair

Please contact Bienvenida Ochs if your contact information changes or if it is incorrect in the VCA directory. Her e-mail address is bochs@vcu.org and her phone number is (804) 644-5311. □

Virginia Conservation Association Spring Field Trip

The VCA is planning a field trip to James Monroe's Ash Lawn-Highland on May 3, 2008. Executive director Carolyn Holmes has graciously agreed to host the gathering coinciding with a very important event at the property. April 28th will mark the 250th anniversary of our 5th President's birth, and the special exhibition: Dressed for the Occasion: Costume in the Age of Monroe and the New Republic is currently on view.



Historic Garden Week is also during that time, and the gardens will be especially beautified for the occasion. Please come join us to enjoy the gardens with a glass of wine, and tour the extensive interior period collections. Albermarle County should be splendid in early May, and it will be a nice way to gather near the end of our spring season. Specific details will be forthcoming in email and printed mailings. □

Remaining 2007-2008 VCA Meeting Schedule



May 15 Tuckahoe Plantation

The VCA will visit Tuckahoe Plantation, boyhood home of Thomas Jefferson, where architect Carey Thompson Viego will describe her work leading the recovery from damage caused by Hurricane Isabel to the house and collections. □

Member Announcement

Nathan Stolow is finally retiring from many years of active conservation work but continues to offer consultations. He is also working on a book or two on current conservation topics. He is interested in selling or giving away to conscientious conservators a considerable quantity of conservation books, reprints, notes- as well as equipment, tools, devices, materials, pigments, chemicals including a stock of silica gel for conditioning objects to a variety of RH levels. And much more! Please contact with your interests to: stolconres@aol.com or drop a note to Nathan Stolow P.O. Box 194, Williamsburg, VA 23187-0194. □