



NEWSLETTER OF THE VIRGINIA CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 7023, Richmond, VA 23221

April 2015 ~ Volume 24, No. 5

From the President

Dear Members,

This is my last letter to you as President of the VCA since my two-year term is ending this month. It has been an honor and privilege to serve as President and I hope I have served you well. Aside from having a major surgery bomb dropped on me in the middle of my term, it has been an enjoyable and rewarding period and increased my respect and admiration for the quality and professionalism of our organization.

Over the last few months I have been having conversations with colleagues who work in institutions and in private practice, both veteran conservators and those just entering the field, about what defines and qualifies us as conservators. This is not a new conversation. As artistic and historic artifact conservation is a relatively new field of expertise, I think the conversation will, and needs to, continue for decades to come.

Anyone who has followed the discussion boards on the AIC website over the years or read articles on recent developments in conservation methodology in the JAIC and other related publications is aware that the field of conservation is becoming increasingly specialized and requires progressively more sophisticated and rigorous training. After helping numerous aspiring conservators and interns qualify for post-graduate level conservation programs, I have wondered if I could meet the demanding standards now required to participate. Perhaps you have also. Sometimes the courses I took or workshops I attended even 10 years ago seem so outdated now.

I encourage all of us to be life-long learners honing our artistic and technical skills. This may take the form of admission to a degree program; it could involve auditing a class, participating in an AIC sponsored workshop, online courses, or temporarily working with someone more skilled or knowledgeable in certain aspects of treatment. As I have collaborated with other conservators over the years whose field of expertise is somewhat foreign to me or their knowledge and abilities exceed mine, there is one thing that is clear to me: If the field of conservation is to thrive and flourish, we owe it to the objects we work on to be honestly self-critical of our abilities and standards in order to provide the highest standards of practice.

VCA Members' Meeting Thursday, May 21 5:30 p.m.



Torah scroll drying in the Iraqi Jewish Archive
Photo credit: Doris Hamburg, National Archives

AGECROFT HALL

4305 Sulgrave Road
Richmond, Virginia, 23221

“Iraqi Jewish Archives Conservation Project”

Katherine Kelly, National Archives

More information on Page 3

Bring an appetizer to share!
Beverages will be provided
ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD

BALLOT ENCLOSED

[President's Letter continued from Page 1]

In maintaining our passion, we must have the humility to recognize where we need improvement, and then do something about it!

Additionally, I'd like to encourage you to do one more thing: Reach out and help a colleague, or mentor an aspiring conservator. Share what you know and help someone become as skilled as you are or better. We're not adversarial competitors.

For the integrity of our profession, we must not digress into self-serving tactics. To this end, the VCA continues to be a collaborative partnership of professionals committed to the preservation of historic material. We welcome all who are interested in learning and growing in this dynamic field that we continue to define.

All the best,

Rick Vogt

2015 Calendar

APRIL 22

Cabell Library Multipurpose Room, VCU
CAREERS IN ART & HISTORIC CONSERVATION
3-5pm

APRIL 26-MAY 2

Preservation Week
Many Free Webinars!
www.ala.org/alcts/confevents/upcoming/webinar/pres

MAY 1

Webinar *After Disasters: Salvage and Recovery in Small to Mid-Sized Museums and Libraries*
www.connectingtocollections.org

MAY 12-16

**** AIC ANNUAL MEETING ****

MAY 17-22

Chicago, IL
Users Group for Mass Spectrometry and Chromatography (MaSC)

MAY 18

Art Museum Day

MAY 21

**** VCA MEETING ****

Agecroft Hall, Richmond
IRAQI JEWISH ARCHIVES CONSERVATION
Katherine Kelly, National Archives
Election of Board positions!
5:30pm

MAY 26-29

American Alliance of Museums Annual Meeting
Atlanta, GA

JUNE 1

Virginia Historical Society, Richmond
VAM Workshop
Technology Trends

JUNE 3-7

Fifth International Congress on Construction History
Chicago, IL

JUNE 7-13; AUGUST 16-22

Gloucester, VA
Linking Archaeology with Preservation at Fairfield Plantation
www.adventuresinpreservation.org

JUNE - AUG

School for Bookbinding Arts at
Cat Tail Run Hand Bookbinding
Winchester, VA
June 11-12 Introduction to Papermaking
July 30-31 Fore-edge Painting & Edge Treatment
Aug 6-7 Book Sewing Intensive

JULY - AUG

AIC Online Courses
July 9-Aug 6 Establishing and Conservation Practice
July 27-31 UV 2015: Examination and Documentation with Ultraviolet Radiation
Aug 3-28 Mitigating Risks: Insurance and Contracts

Going to a Conference or Workshop?

Send us your notes!

VCA Publications

Patricia Selinger peselinger@vcu.edu

Dotty Robinson dotrob327@verizon.net

VCA Members' Meeting Thursday, May 21, 2015

*“Iraqi Jewish Archive
Conservation Project”
Katherine Kelly, National Archives
Conservator
Agecroft Hall
Richmond, Virginia*



Photo credit: National Archives

Iraqi Jewish Archive Conservator Katherine Kelly examines a book of writings with rabbinic commentary, printed in 1567.

Since 2003 the National Archives and its partners have worked to preserve and provide access to the damaged books and documents found in the flooded basement of Saddam Hussein’s intelligence headquarters in Baghdad. The materials found at that time were informally named the Iraqi Jewish Archive (IJA).

After cataloging, conservation, and digitization, the IJA is now available online free throughout the world with an online exhibit at www.ija.archives.gov. Katherine Kelly will describe the project’s history, the collection and preservation action plan.

Please be at Agecroft Hall by 5:30 for socializing. A short business meeting with elections for the 2015-16 Board will take place prior to the program.

VOTE!

VCA OFFICER AND COMMITTEE CHAIR POSITIONS

BALLOT

President

Kathy Garrett-Cox

Secretary

Dianne Roland

Programs Co-Chair

Kari Richardson

Bylaws

Heather Logue Emerson

Publications Co-Chair

Haley Beck

Refreshments

David Shakibnia

Education

Keri Ragland

Outreach

Patricia Selinger

If you are unable to attend the meeting, please print, sign, and mail this ballot by 5/18 to

VCA Nominating Committee Chair
P.O. Box 7023
Richmond, VA 23221

PROXY BALLOT STATEMENT

I, the undersigned, acknowledge that I am a VCA member in good standing and that _____
_____ {person designated}
has the authority to vote for me.

Signature/Date

VCA BOARD

Meeting Minutes
April 13, 2015
James City County Library

ATTENDEES:

RICK VOGT
NANCY BECK
KATE RIDGWAY
BILL IVEY
VALINDA CARROLL
PATRICIA SELINGER

February Treasurer's Report:
Current Balance \$2145

VCA Members Meeting Report March 26, 2015 Department of Historic Resources Richmond

Treasurer's Report:

Nancy opened a post office box at the Stewart Station in Carytown. She submitted a change of address form and has closed the old box number. The station where the old box is will be closing this year. Note the new box number: P.O. Box 7023, Richmond, VA 23221. The change has been announced to membership via email.

Nancy called for budgetary requests by April 6 to create the proposed budget for 2015-16. Most areas have the same spending requirements but increases are expected in web management. It's not certain by how much so the Board agreed to have a category "Undesignated Funds" that we would draw on. We will need to engage an IT consultant to help us with the website development and costs for maintaining the site may increase. Online services we seek: email, PayPal, password protected membership area for directory/discussion forum, FAQ, Jobs, Message Board. Also, Patricia learned of a consultant for non-profits who will assess our organization and provide recommendations and put us in touch with others who work to assist non-profits. She learned that there are grants from Flashpoint Fund that will help defray the cost of the consultant. She set up a no-cost introductory meeting on April 20 and invited other Board members to join her at 10am at Lamplighter Coffee, 26 North Morris Street. She will report on the meeting via email.

Programs Committee:

Mary Scott-Andrews was unable to make the meeting, but e-mailed Nancy to ask for the Board to approve honorarium and/or travel expenses for Katherine Kelly, who is speaking at the May meeting. The Board approved \$100 honorarium plus travel expenses to include gas at .57.5/mile and a meal.

Membership Committee:

Patricia created a master list of this year's membership for Bill to work from next year.

Nominating Committee:

Dianne Roland is serving as chair of the committee, with Keri Ragland and Rusty Bernabo. They are hard at work and will have a ballot ready for the newsletter distribution on 4/21.

Outreach Committee:

Patricia said the *Careers in Conservation* seminar is set for April 22, starting at 3pm in Cabell Library Multipurpose Room. She also report on the day she spent at VAM at the VCA booth. Valinda's swirling pen designs were a hit and brought repeat visitors to look at new designs. Many who came to the booth said how much they like the pens.

Rick Vogt called the meeting to order. He spoke on behalf of Valinda Carroll, who was unable to attend. Valinda is looking for a web-based platform for online member services, which would make it easier for people to sign up and pay for trips online. Please contact Valinda if you know of such services.

Marla Curtis then noted the open board positions: president, by-laws chair, education chair, programs co-chair, publications co-chair, and refreshments chair. The members of the nominating committee, Keri Ragland, Dianne Roland and Rusty Bernabo, will be in touch to fill these positions.

Rick spoke again about having a spring party instead of a holiday party in the winter. This would be less expensive and make finding a venue easier. If adopted, the idea will take effect next year. It would not take the place of any spring meetings.

Nancy Beck gave the treasurer's report. The starting balance was \$2,042. Income was \$2,340. Expenses totaled 618.17. We currently have 83 members, 4 of which are students.

Patricia Selinger announced that the VCA directories are available at the meeting, and instructed everyone to pick up their copy and cross their name off the list. Copies that have not been collected will be mailed out soon. Patricia also spoke about Careers in Art & Historic Conservation, which will take place at VCU at 3 PM on April 22nd. There will be 4 speakers, and all members are encouraged to attend.

Bill Ivey said to make sure VCA is in your email address book to ensure you are receiving all the correspondence.

Mary Andrews spoke next about programs remaining for the year. On April 16, we will visit the Chrysler Museum for our field trip, and on May 21, we will have our final member's meeting at Agecroft Hall. The program at the Chrysler runs 10:30am to 2:30pm with a box lunch available for purchase. There will be museum events as late as 10pm if members would like to make a day of it.

Mary went on to introduce the two speakers for the night, Kate Ridgway and Amy Marquardt. Kate discussed her work on the Mt. Vernon weathervane and the difficulties she and her team encountered trying to preserve human remains from a Tangier Island burial site that washed up. Amy, a University of Maryland graduate student, gave a presentation on some research she has been doing on a way to potentially stop tarnishing from occurring on silver. She is looking for feedback and ideas about what to do next with her findings.

The meeting and presentations ended around 7:30.

Museum Emergency Support Teams

Some of you may be familiar with the Museum Emergency Support Teams (MEST), but if you are not you should think about becoming a member or starting a MEST in your area. Conservators are always welcome to join as are any other museum and local emergency response staff.

For those of you not familiar with MEST, it is a regional organization that includes local museums, historic houses, archives, libraries and other cultural preservation groups. The mission is to “provide an active network for local museums, libraries, and archives to improve their collective emergency preparedness, better protect their collections, staff, and visitors, and coordinate mutual assistance in recovery from disasters affecting cultural resources.”

The members meet to discuss disaster planning, local emergency management, what to do after a disaster and other topics. Each member of a regional MEST agrees to help during an emergency involving any of the members in any way they can. This might include preparing artifacts for freezing, providing materials for disaster clean up or just organizing people to help with an emergency.

Past Richmond MEST programs include a presentation by the City of Richmond Fire Marshall regarding ways to work better together during an emergency and a half day training at two member institutions in which members conducted walk through table top exercises to facilitate trainings at our own institutions.

Richmond MEST- 2015

Chair: Tracy Bryan tbryan@vahistorical.org

Co-chair: Libby Howlett Howlett@agecrofthall.com)

List of regional MESTs (none are currently meeting)

Northern Virginia MEST

Tidewater MEST

West MEST

*Katherine Ridgway
Disaster Response Committee Chair*

"Digital Photography for Art Conservation"

Yosi Pozeilov's popular handbook has been released in its 4th edition. The 4th edition is the largest most comprehensive revision to date, double the size of previous editions, and rich in images providing a strong foundation for the beginner digital photographer.

It also offers:

- more sophisticated color management techniques (using Adobe's software) that professionals in this field require
- sections on Conservation Imaging Techniques, aspects of multispectral imaging, including a review of a number of different light sources.
- a procedure for condition reporting using the iPad. A suggested list and procedure for naming conventions in the appendix
- expanded and very comprehensive glossary

Yosi is the staff photographer for LACMA and has trained many of us over the years in his excellent workshops. VCA hosted the workshop “Digital Photography 101” in 2005.

Write to yosi@pozeilov.com for a copy of the index.

To purchase a copy (\$58.76), search for “Pozeilov” on lulu.com.

Field Trip to the Chrysler Museum



We got fired up at The Glass Studio! While we ate box lunches, we were treated to a glass blowing demonstration by Hannah Kirkpatrick and her assistant Emily. The Glass Studio remained open while the Chrysler was renovating. Free daily demonstrations are very popular. Classes are offered and on third Thursdays, music and adult beverages are offered in the evenings.



Mark Lewis, Conservator, recounts the conservation work done on Van Dyck's *St. Sebastian*. Every Friday, he works among visitors to educate them on the conservation process and how the museum cares for paintings. He is in the process of removing the temporary varnish. Other versions of the painting inform his work.



What a treat to see the premier collection of glass art from ancient to contemporary! Diane C. Wright, the Barry Curator of Glass, presented the history of glass. Tiffany's 1915 *Woman in Pergola with Wisteria* is an example of a high art statement piece.



Jeff Harrison, Chief Curator, describes Chrysler's collecting methods through Giovanni Boncori's *The Musical Group* and *The Card Players*. Painted in 1695 in Rome, they were separated for centuries but united here in a new gallery. Visitors got to watch the original frame duplicated.



Amy Fernandez Byrne, a long-time VCA member who lives in West Virginia, worked on the Giustiniani sculptures for a full year. Thirty-three sculptures were brought to the US in 1903, and all were damaged in voyage. The collection was disbursed to various museums. Amy's interest in the collection began when she worked on those acquired by VMFA. Her treatment goal was to distinguish the new damage from the old. In the process, she stabilized damage, described fill materials, and provided full analysis of the marble.



Charlotte's Web by Charlotte Potter (2012) has 864 cameo portraits on individual hooks mapped to where the artist met each person. Visitors are invited to have their picture made into a button and wear someone else's button.

Join / Renew Today!

The Virginia Conservation Association 2015-16 Membership Application & Dues Payment

Name (as you would like it to appear in the Directory):

Address: _____

Title/Institutional Affiliation: _____

Work Telephone: () _____ Home Telephone: () _____

Fax: () _____ Email: _____

Website URL: _____

Conservator

Administrator

Curator

Conservation Technician

Collection Manager/Registrar

Appraiser

Postgraduate (Intern/Fellow)

Framer/Preparator

Collector

Student

Librarian

Supporter

Other (Specify) _____

Areas of Conservation Expertise:

Archaeological Objects

Furniture

Sculpture

Architecture

Objects

Textiles

Books & Paper

Paintings

Other (Specify below)

Ethnographic Objects

Photographic Materials

Are you willing to be a Disaster Response Volunteer in the event of an emergency? _____

Practicing Conservators / Consultant Conservators Only:

Would you like your contact information included in our website VCA Services Directory? _____

The Virginia Conservation Association is open to all interested individuals. To become a member, complete this form and return it with your dues payment of \$30.00 (Regular) or \$15.00 (Student; enclose copy of valid I.D.) Application and dues payment must be received by September 18th for inclusion in the 2015-16 VCA Directory.

NOTE: If you are renewing after September 18th, please apply a \$5.00 late fee to your payment.

Mail your completed application and check made payable to the Virginia Conservation Association to the following address:

Treasurer
The Virginia Conservation Association
P.O. Box 7023
Richmond, VA 23221

