



**International Federation of Library Associations  
and Institutions**

**Preservation and Conservation  
Section**

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# NEWSLETTER

**Issue 27  
November 2009  
ISSN 1028-3714**

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## **Message from the Chair**



By Per Cullhed  
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The theme for the WLIC 2009 was *Libraries Create Futures: Building on Cultural Heritage*. Being in Milan, we were constantly reminded of the background for this theme. The

cultural heritage is abundant, one sees it everywhere, and in Italy, the last part of the theme, "building futures," is very much a reality. Being there, one lives in it, and Italians also live by it, thereby shaping futures. However, it is also evident that the problems of preserving this heritage are a challenge. Italy is known for hot summers and this year was no exception. During the meetings it was often a relief to feel the temperate air within the

Fiera or Milano Convention Centre, and at the same time recognizing that air-conditioning is not only a relief for humans, but is also a necessity to slow the deterioration of library collections. For example, a controlled temperature makes collections less habitable for insects, but to a large extent this depends on cheap energy, something we cannot take for granted in the future. That the future may be more different for those in charge of preserving collections was a topic in many discussions among the delegates.

The year 2009 was the first year of the new Special Interest Group for Environmental Stability and Libraries, <http://www.ifla.org/en/environmental-sustainability-and-libraries>

hosted under the auspices of the Preservation and Conservation Section. They made full use of their one-hour session. A paper presented by Christel Duchemann described the creation of a municipal media-center in Méricourt in the region of Nord-Pas de Calais in France. Having the opportunity to build a new center was a one-time chance to consider environment and energy efficiency. In the discussions during this meeting it was clear that many municipalities have a clear understanding of the benefits of low-energy solutions even as they are in a constant struggle to make ends meet in times of cut-backs. Since autumn 2008, with a financial crisis having an impact all over the world, savings have been on the agenda for many state and municipal libraries, and one of the issues is the cost for the air-conditioning of stacks. Preservation specialists have to be both eloquent and have a briefcase full of fact-based arguments to be able to convince their funding authorities of the benefits of climate control in the stacks. This fight might prove to be even more important in the future as low-temperature stacks may be one solution for the "mass-treatment" of acid paper which for cost reasons cannot be deacidified.

Such low-temperature storage, with temperatures as low as 13°C. normally cannot be maintained without extensive air-conditioning. Even if, as in the case of the National Library of Norway, where they have a cold mountain for storage, one probably will have to use a considerable amount of energy to keep humidity levels at an acceptable level. Energy, environment and preservation are closely connected to each other. Either it is too warm, too dry, too humid, too windy, or too prone to flooding, etc. This is the now and this is the future for preservation specialists, and the IFLA Preservation and Conservation Section's share of this responsibility is to use advocacy to keep this issue on the agenda. Preservation and environmental sustainability was already chosen as the theme for the next year's conference and we have kept this theme even though the venue was changed from Brisbane to Gothenburg. We are planning a joint session with the IFLA PAC-Core programme.

In Milan the PAC Section joined forces with the Rare Books and Manuscripts Section in a program dedicated to dispersed cultural heritage collections. Many interesting papers were presented and corresponding member Helen Shenton, from the British Library, presented a paper called "*Virtual Reunification, Virtual Preservation and Enhanced Conservation.*" These papers showed, among other things, that digitization is a powerful tool for the cooperation between countries sharing parts of the same cultural heritage, such as the famous Codex Sinaiticus and items within the International Dunhuang Project. Cooperation included both conservation and documentation, and the cultural heritage treated within these projects. This was of such importance that a side effect of the work itself was a sort of "cultural diplomacy", so called because the collaborative nature of the undertaking was beneficial to international relations and contacts. It is useful to see this put into print, as the multifaceted importance of cultural heritage objects need to be put forward on the positive side of library and museum balance sheets.

The section's post-conference in Rome was held at the Istituto Centrale per il Restauro e la Conservazione del Patrimonio Archivistico e Librario, abbreviated as ICPAL. The venue was at capacity, with more than one hundred registered delegates and two full days of interesting papers and visits to amazing libraries. The Vatican Library has a great commitment in transforming its building, including the conservation department. The prefect, Monsignore Cesare Pasini, spoke of the ongoing works. PREM, the Italian organization for disaster prevention and mitigation was put to test after the April 2009 earthquake in L'Aquila in the Abruzzi

region east of Rome. Armida Batori, Director of ICPAL put disasters in perspective with her personal experiences from the Florence flood in 1966.

The second day included both museums and preservation and presentations from three robot-scanner manufacturers, Treventus, Zeutschel, and Kirtas. The panel discussion that followed made it clear that in the world of digitization, change and development is the norm. For example, we cannot safely know which file formats, TIFF, JPEG 2000, and DNG, etc., may be best for long term storage but we do know that they may change and then we have to adapt. As for the robot scanners, it may be wise for libraries to collaborate with developers of hardware and software. It was interesting to hear that the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek use robots for approximately 50% of their work. The rest have to be scanned manually and all robots have to be supervised during operation.

Next year, the WLIC will be in Gothenburg and with the swift change from Brisbane to Gothenburg, the normal administrative procedures of IFLA had to be changed. For example, satellite meetings, which normally are decided in Spring, will be decided in December, thus shortening the time for preparations by half a year. However, the section is planning to have a satellite meeting in Uppsala, Sweden, with the theme of new scientific methods and their use in the conservation and examination of library material. Our partner again is the Rare Books and Manuscripts Section. As soon as information is available in December, we will be able to give more details and present a call for papers, so watch for updates.



**IFLA World and  
Information Congress  
2010**

**76<sup>th</sup> IFLA General  
Conference and Council**

**"Open access to knowledge – promoting  
sustainable progress"**

August 10-15 2010, Gothenburg, Sweden

<http://www.ifla.org/en/ifla76>



Collapse site April 28, 2009

## City Archive of Cologne

We are all aware of the tragic collapse of the City Archive of Cologne in Germany this Spring. I was a part of the Blue Shield response originating from the Netherlands from April 27 – May 1<sup>st</sup>. The call from the Blue Shield came to me through the Conservation Distribution listserv and I mentioned it to my director, Dr. Edward Papenfuse. Since he knew of my interest and training in disaster recovery he asked if I would be willing to go if he could secure the funding for my travel expenses: Of course, I said “yes!”

I arrived in Cologne and found my way to the lodgings. This space is maintained by the City of Cologne for use in emergencies and all meals and lodging were provided courtesy of the city. I met up with the Blue Shield group from the Netherlands and found that it was comprised of archivist, librarians, conservators (of several kind) and curators: We were from the Netherlands, France, Switzerland, Brazil, Sweden and the USA. There were so many of us that the schedule was changed from two 8-hour shifts to three 5-hour shifts every day.

The bus picked us up and drove us out to the warehouse site where we checked-in and donned our Tyvek suits, masks and gloves. Conservators were taken upstairs while all others remained on the lower level. Those untrained (in conservation) were put to work unloading material collected at the site, logging in what the items were (in a general way), brushing off the items and then putting all the items into large blue bins. I believe that boxes from specific areas of the site were combined and placed in the numbered blue bins (as you would at an archeological dig). The blue bins were sent upstairs to the Conservators.

Once upstairs the blue bins were unloaded and placed on large 2 or 3 shelved carts, always with their number placed prominently on the cart. All the material of any kind from the blue bins was put on the cart; parchment, photographs, loose paper files, books and slides. Everything kept together; everything on one cart. While none of the wet material from the collapse site was taken to the warehouse occasionally something a little damp might be found in the materials. Conservators were encouraged to interleave any and all materials they felt might be damp on the carts. These carts were then wheeled into temporary “drying chambers” where the temperature was elevated and the relative humidity was reduced. After carts came out of the drying rooms they were neatly put into boxes, the number from the cart was transferred to all the boxes and all the boxes were put together on pallets.

Three of my four days were spent in this way. One day I did some refolding of oversized architectural drawings and plats. This included removing items from the folder, dusting with a brush, putting them in new folders and transferring information from the old folder to the new one.

At the end of our week in Cologne, the city was kind enough to give us a walking tour of the oldest, central part of the city and of the cathedral. It was a fascinating and heart rending experience. I have lately read that 85% of the archival material has been saved and they are still excavating at the site to retrieve more items. I was honored to go with the Blue Shield group from the Netherlands and look forward to helping again in anyway possible.

*Vicki Lee  
Head of Conservation  
Maryland State Archives*



Blue Shield members dusting oversize material

## Postscript

Half a year after the dramatic collapse of its city archives building, Koln's documents are to be given a new home. The city council announced September 10 that it plans to spend over 97 million euros on a new, purpose-built building that will also provide space for a variety of other cultural institutions. –Medieval News, Sept. 11.



## In case you missed it



Milan with its rich history of heritage collections formed a wonderful backdrop to the IFLA conference. One of the highlights was visits to the Biblioteca Ambrosia which also houses a very important gallery of Italian paintings and sculpture. The name derives from St. Ambrose who is the patron saint of Milan and was founded by Cardinal Frederico Borromeo in 1609 with hundreds of manuscripts that he had collected from all over Europe. Built on the location of the Roman Forum, the Ambrosian still occupies the same building that was built to house the library. Despite being badly bombed in the Second World War and despite alterations to the original reading rooms, it still retains the feel of what it must have been like when it first opened to the public.

From the outset it was a public library, the Bodleian library in Oxford being the first. It contains an extraordinary range of codexes – Greek, Roman, Medieval, Arabic and Oriental. Included in these treasures is Leonardo Da Vinci's Codex Atlanticus. This has been digitized and it was on view in an exhibition of Turning the Pages in the Palazzo Marino.

Perhaps in keeping with their tradition of being a public collection, there was for IFLA a special showcase in the Centre of the great bustling Galleria displaying for one night only Luca Pacioli's De Divina Proportione illustrated by Leonardo Da Vinci. As this was in such a busy thoroughfare there was a lot of interest from tourists and members of the public. The glass case containing the work was

flanked by security as well as the enthusiastic scholar from the Ambrosian Alberto Rocco who delighted in talking with people about the manuscript and about the library. One of the interesting aspects of the Ambrosiana Library is that it has a college of Doctors who are able to use the library for their research.

*Jocelyn Cuming  
Camberwell College University of the Arts*

## Statistics and Evaluation

This was an interesting combination of the Special Interest Groups – Statistics and Evaluation, Information Technology and Preservation and Conservation.

The Statistics and Evaluation Section has concentrated on establishing statistics as a vital component of cultural and educational information. The section sees the powerful role that statistics play in advocacy. No where could this be truer than in the field of conservation and in the IFLA PAC Program.

Mary Chute from the Institute of Museum and Library Services outlined the broad statistical findings from the American Heritage Health Index showing the impact on public awareness that this study has had. The papers presented by Irmild Schafer and Alison Walker (presenting) and Julia Foster were more concerned with highlighting the value of statistics in formulating specific preservation strategies. Faced with literally millions of items in libraries, archives and museums there needs to be some way of being able to assess the condition of collections. This knowledge is vital if informed decisions are to be made.

Irmild Schafer from the Bavarian State Library illustrated her talk with beautiful images of some of the collection items from the Library which houses over 10 million objects including 20,000 incunables (the highest number in the world) Understandably condition surveys undertaken at the Bavarian State Library take into consideration issues such as significance and use in formulating a preservation plan, as well as taking into account the condition of the binding and text block. Surveys that they have been carrying out looked at appropriate environmental conditions. Irmild Schafer also looked at particular collection items and compared costs of conservation with antiquarian money value. In the instances she cited the antiquarian value of the book far outweighed the conservation costs. This was an interesting perspective as often there is the assumption that conservation more often than

not outweighs monetary value. The Bavarian State Library staff are still analyzing results and thoughtfully seeking to resolve issues such as:

1. Do we offer all books in their original format?
2. Would the digitized version be sufficient?
3. Should we do any measure at all?
4. Should we put damaged books in phase boxes to protect them from further damage?

Alison Walker spoke about two statistical tools for gathering information about assessing preservation needs - the National Preservation Office Preservation Assessment Survey and the Collection Risk Assessment survey developed by Robert Waller at the Canadian Museum of Nature. This paper gave a very useful summary of these two tools. The Preservation Assessment Survey (PAS as it is widely known) has been used in the UK and Ireland since 2001 and has been used on more than 200 libraries archives and museums. It has helped to build up a national picture in a very systematic way that makes this survey perhaps a lot more useful than many more generic surveys. An interesting and encouraging finding is that institutions who used the survey are wishing to redo it in order to be able to assess the impact of changes that have been made as a result of the survey. This surely must be one of the major proofs of an effective survey tool. In the past huge numbers of surveys have been done but there has been little attention to how this data can be used and interpreted.

The Risk Assessment devised by Robert Waller and well known to the conservation community through the publications of Stefan Michalski at the Canadian Conservation Institute, is an extremely useful tool. It seeks to analyse the actual risks to collections and is a very powerful tool in focusing museum professionals towards an accurate assessment of prioritising preservation action. It was interesting having a summary from Alison Walker on how this tool has been used at the British Library. The greatest risk was, not surprisingly physical handling. The second was dissociation i.e. separation between the object and knowledge about the object. As Alison Walker points out Waller's methodology, while producing 'robust' conclusions, is time consuming and requires a certain level of both IT and preservation skills. It is worth noting that the whole risk assessment approach is a very useful general way of looking at collections even without applying Waller's statistical formula.

Roswitha Poll gave an overview of the project NUMERIC which aims to measure the progress of the digitisation of Europe's cultural heritage. It is a

European Commission project that is seeking to define empirical measures for digitisation activities, to establish what resources are being put into digital projects and what progress is actually being made within Europe. An important part of the study has been to establish a consistent glossary of digitisation activities. This and later papers, underscored how many archives and museums believe that an object is digitized only if it has a computer description.

An interesting paper was given by Matthias Schulze outlining The German Open Access Statistics project. It aims to be able to implement international standards for how statistics of usage can be recorded. Emmanuelle Bermes and Gildas Illien spoke graphically about the enormity of the challenges of web archiving. Milena Dobrova outlined the well known work of the DISCmap project in setting priorities for collections to be digitised and made the observation that the needs of users are playing a major role. A final paper (Monika Hagedorn and Axel Ermert) gave insights into how statistical information is being gathered from German museums particularly into trends and needs for digitisation. Like many of the other speakers they spoke of ideas and projects seeking to standardise statistics being gathered in order to be able to most effectively capture the information we are needing to collect and interpret.

These papers are available on the IFLA website.

*Jocelyn Cuming*  
*Camberwell College University of the Arts*

**The British Library Preservation Advisory Centre** is the new name for the National Preservation Office (NPO). The change of name follows the NPO's recent integration with the British Library Collection Care department and heralds the start of a new period of development for preservation services.

The Preservation Advisory Centre will build on the NPO's achievements of the past 25 years, and the successes of the recently opened BL Centre for Conservation, will provide a focus for preservation and increasing opportunities for libraries and archives of all types and sizes to equip themselves with the skills and knowledge to meet the challenges of caring for collections in the 21st century.

Offering training, free information services and its unique Preservation Assessment Survey, the Preservation Advisory Centre provides practical support on preservation management issues to address the major threats to the UK's library and archive collections identified in the NPO's 2006

report, Knowing the Need. Activities span a range of free and charged services including:

- Free information resources in print and to download
- Preservation training courses
- Preservation Assessment Survey services
- Preservation visits
- An enquiry service

Caroline Peach has been appointed to lead the organization in its new form. Recently interim Chief Executive of Icon, the Institute of Conservation, she brings experience of working at London Metropolitan Archives, Oxford University Library Services and the London Museums Hub.

Caroline said, "I am delighted to be joining the British Library Preservation Advisory Centre. I am looking forward to working with partners across the sector to inspire organizations of all sizes to take part in preservation activities. I am particularly pleased that we will soon be able to offer a new program of preservation training thanks to the collaboration and funding of the British Library and Research Libraries UK".

Helen Shenton, Head of Collection Care at the British Library said, "The integration of the NPO with the British Library as the British Library Preservation Advisory Centre marks a significant development for Collection Care at the British Library. The events and services provided by the Preservation Advisory Centre complement the successful public programs offered by the BL Centre for Conservation. Sharing knowledge to address preservation needs and to build capacity within the Library and Archive sectors is fundamental to ensure the future accessibility of collections. I am delighted that the Preservation Advisory Centre is leading on these issues."

The British Library Preservation Advisory Centre will be establishing an e-newsletter. If you would like to receive this newsletter, please send an email to [blpac@bl.uk](mailto:blpac@bl.uk) with the word 'subscribe' in the subject line.



## Information Updates

Audio and presentation files from the 50th Annual RBMS/ACRL Preconference, "Seas of Change:

Navigating the Cultural and Institutional Contexts of Special Collections" are now available!

<http://rbms.info/conferences/preconfdocs/2009/2009docs.shtml>

This year RBMS--with generous assistance from OCLC Research--initiated an experiment in providing digital audio files of programs at the Preconference in Charlottesville, VA. Audio files of presentations include: the entire short papers program, /New and Emerging Voices/; one of the seminars; most of the plenary speakers; and a couple of speakers who gave special welcoming and historical remarks. Also available are presentation files of some of the seminars, and PDF files of the print Preconference program and the special 50th anniversary print publication on the history of the Preconference. Additional presentation files may be added later.

*Deborah J. Leslie*  
BMS Chair 2009-2010  
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## New Members Profiles



Frédéric Blin, is a new member of the PAC section for the term 2009-2011; he is also the new webmaster.

He started his position in 2009, as Head of Heritage collections and Collection Care at the National University Library in Strasburg (France), the second largest library in the country. He previously worked for the French Ministry for Higher Education and Research where he was in charge of several issues concerning academic libraries including information literacy, international relations and digitization.

Holding a master's degree in contemporary history from the University of La Sorbonne in Paris, and the "archiviste-paleographe" diploma from the Ecole Nationale des Chartes in Paris, Frédéric is currently working on a PhD in architectural preservation. "Conservateur des bibliothèques" (professional librarian) since 2003, he has been involved in IFLA first as a student translating the IFLA-Express in Berlin, then every year since 2005 as a delegate following IFLA's activities around academic libraries, digitisation, preservation and conservation. He also

contributed to two books recently published by IFLA, with chapters on information literacy in France and academic libraries in Europe.

He is happy to now be even more involved within an IFLA section, and as the webmaster, plans to promote our section's visibility internationally. The new IFLA website will permit more active contribution from every member of the association. Frédéric encourages every member of the PAC section to submit contributions for our page on IFLANET. You can contact him under [frederic.blin@bnu.fr](mailto:frederic.blin@bnu.fr).

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Since 1989, Danielle has been active in the field of the conservation and the preservation of the documentary heritage. She set up the system of preservation at both the cantonal level and at the University Library of Lausanne and in the network of French-speaking Switzerland libraries. This system encourages the shared priorities of preservation and disaster recovery of collections. Since 2004, as president of the COSADOCA, the Consortium of Rescue of Collections in Case of Disaster, (<http://www.cosadoca.ch>), she organized yearly exercises in hands-on procedures and the recovery methods for collections.

At the moment Danielle is working on a global concept of risk management which takes into account the identification of risks, the reduction of risk, recovery, and replacement.

With global warming issues, it has become more and more important to safeguard our cultural heritage - in particular by promoting risk reduction and preparedness. By training experts, both at the national and regional levels regions can prevent, control and recover from disasters. With this aim in view, Danielle wants to develop co-operation with other bodies involved, such as UNESCO, ICA, ICOM, ICOMOS.

As secretary of the section PAC IFLA, Danielle hopes to focus on these activities and other for the section. The conservation and the preservation of the documentary heritage are critical parts of the information society in which we live. It is important that we draw the attention of our colleagues and our institutions to the fragility of these materials and the existing tools and methods to insure their future. Danielle hopes to develop modern tools of communication for the section working with the webmaster and newsletter editors, for example using thematic blogs.

Danielle served on the IFLA Governing Board from 2007-2009, and actively promoted IFLA's strategic directions particularly in the field of universal access to information and cultural and linguistic diversity. Involved in the World Summit on the Information Society since 2002, Danielle continues to be active in this field and advocate to bring libraries to the heart of the information and knowledge society. The crucial role of libraries in information literacy must be sustained by developing literacy, the first step to have access to the information and knowledge society. For that, Danielle and others from the public libraries sections are preparing an IFLA reading manifesto.

In the field of the multilingual and multicultural area, Danielle administers the Libraries success stories database and its translations into 4 languages (French, English, German, Spanish). The construction of the Russian version will begin soon.



## **Preservation and Conservation Section**

### **P&C News from the Editor**

Early in the summer I sent out a survey to assess the interests of the section members. The results lead me to believe that the newsletter provides a useful information dissemination tool while the website provides a continuing resource and the email distribution provides timely notice of upcoming events. With the possibility of new communications tools through the web the information sharing of section members is sure to grow. Thank you to those members who took the time to respond to the survey.

## Translations

Did you notice? The January and July 2008 issues were also available in Spanish from our website. (<http://www.ifla.org/VII/s19/index.htm>)

Would you be willing to provide a translation of our Newsletter? In the past, newsletters have been available in Russian and French. To volunteer your expertise, contact the newsletter editors.

### **P&C Section website**

<http://www.ifla.org/VII/s19/index.htm>

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**Many thanks to members who have completed their terms. Special thanks to Johanna Wellheiser who served as Newsletter editor and secretary.**

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