

**Internal Advisory Group (IAG) Meeting**  
**Doubletree Hotel, Washington DC**  
**November 14, 2009**

**Call to Order and Introductions**

AIC President Meg Craft called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and welcomed all attendees. She mentioned that notes from this meeting will be posted online.

The meeting officially started with a moment of silence for Toby Raphael, whose funeral took place on same day as the IAG meeting.

IAG members then introduced themselves and stated what their goals were for both the meeting and the future of the organization. Some of their goals included:

- Collecting good ideas for Conservation On-Line (CoOL).
- Increasing cooperation between the Wooden Artifacts Group (WAG) and AIC
- Integrating the Architecture Specialty Group (ASG) with AIC
- Making the Textile Specialty Group (TSG) and AIC more visible to the public
- Improving communication among specialty groups using AIC's new tools
- Being a part of the "bigger picture"
- Using outreach materials for AIC-CERT
- Working with other members
- Improving the Electronic Media Group's (EMG) programming
- Increasing activities of the Paintings Specialty Group
- Getting RATS up to par with the rest of the Specialty Groups
- Building relationships with Specialty Groups
- Promoting accessibility and quality of publications, particularly electronic publications
- Discussing how membership categories will be used in a post-certification environment

**AIC Annual Meetings – 2010 and Beyond**

**2010 General Session & IIC Roundtable Update - Pam Hatchfield, AIC Vice President**

The theme of this year's General Session will be *The Conservation Continuum: Examining the Past, Envisioning the Future*.

- The papers being presented at this year's General Session were selected from a highly competitive field; 8 papers were chosen from over 50 submissions.
- First Session: Discussion Around Theoretical Framework  
The first general session will set the theoretical framework for the discussion of conservation in a changing world with George Wheeler's "Identity Crisis: Critical Identity, the Future of Conservation and the Role of AIC in its Development" and

Shelley Smith's "With Patience and Fortitude: Keeping Conservation Relevant in a Changing Institution." These represent aspects of the profession examining itself, incorporating theory and interpretation into its focus and identity, and, conversely, the necessity of reinventing the role/image of conservation in a public institution

- **Second Session: Specific Applications**  
The second session will proceed from the general, overarching principles and history to specific applications. Steve Weintraub presents "The Evolution of Environmental Standards: the Struggle to Quantify and Simplify Risk in a Complex World," a retrospective look at where we stand on environmental issues. Fenella France and Holly Krueger offer "P3: Pen, Preservation, Political—Establishing a Longitudinal Study for the Exhibition and Storage of Herblock Drawings," which describes a case study, state-of-the-art attempt to capture the impact of various environmental conditions on the long-term longevity of collections. "Challenges of Sustainable Conservation in the 21st Century" by the AIC Green Task Force will follow, with an assessment of the environmental impact of environmental controls and other specific aspects of conservation practice and their sustainability.
- **Final Session: Conservation in a Global Environment**  
The final session on Thursday will describe the place of conservation in a global environment, moving toward the future on several fronts. Frank Matero's "Conservation as Revitalization of Cairo's Darb al Ahmar" describes the global impact of conservation, and a theoretical framework in which we must determine what to preserve and how, linking together the conceptual issues raised in George Wheeler's paper and the practical issues of sustainability raised in the Green Task Force's paper. Questions about conservation theory are further presented by Glenn Wharton's paper "Capturing the Moment: Conservation Values and the Challenge of Time-Based Media," where, unlike architectural venues, the issues are temporal and perhaps transitory in nature. Finally, Michele Marincola's paper "Blink Twice: Making Mistakes in Conservation" will describe an application of mental constructs outside the traditional realms of conservation to inform the decision-making process.
- Each session will be followed by a "discussant" who will summarize and contextualize the information covered in the preceding session.
- The new system for abstract submissions, where all abstracts are sent to AIC first, met with approval from all Specialty Group representatives.

**International Institute for Conservation (IIC) Roundtable – *The Plus/Minus Dilemma: The Way Forward in Environmental Guidelines***

The 2010 Annual Meeting will include an IIC Roundtable from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. on May 13 with a reception to follow. This event will be open to the public. The event is being organized by Jerry Podany, president of IIC, and moderated by Max Anderson, Director & CEO of the Indianapolis Museum of Art and FAIC board member. This event will take the place of an AIC Issues Session at the 2010 Annual Meeting. The Members Business meeting will incorporate time for a "current issues" discussion.

## **Future Meeting Locations Update – Membership & Meetings Director Ruth Seyler**

Locations and dates have been set for the next two Annual Meetings:

- The 2011 Annual Meeting will be in Pittsburgh, PA, May 17-21; the host hotel will be the Hilton Pittsburgh, and the meeting events will take place there as well.
- The 2012 Annual Meeting will be in Albuquerque, NM, May 8-11; the host hotel will be the Hyatt Regency Albuquerque, and the meeting will be held at the Albuquerque Convention Center.

Site Selection is well underway for 2013 and 2014:

- AIC has received a strong bid from Indianapolis to host the 2013 meeting. The following considerations should be taken into account:
  - The bid is for 2013 only; rates for later meetings cannot be speculated on.
  - The host hotel (a J.W. Marriott) is currently under construction, and is not scheduled to open until 2011.
  - The bid includes relatively low room and food and beverage rates.
  - The Indianapolis Museum of Art has expressed strong interest in supporting an AIC presence.
- AIC has received a bid from San Francisco for a 2014 meeting.
  - The Hyatt Regency Embarcadero would be the host hotel.
  - Room rates and other expenses are negotiable.
- Charleston, SC, Kansas City, KS, Fort Worth, TX, and Seattle, WA have all expressed interest in hosting an AIC Annual Meeting in the future.
- IAG participants favored going to Indianapolis in 2013 and San Francisco in 2014, if cost and other considerations can be worked out.

Some suggestions offered by the IAG:

- What is the preferred month for the AIC meeting?
  - The preferred month is May. It was mentioned that May can be hard for Student Members, however the alternatives, April and June, are hard for students as well.
- It was suggested that a blog entry concerning the complications of choosing an Annual Meeting be posted.
- One attendee expressed interest in expanding the meeting to four days.
  - When AIC books space for future meetings we book some extra space, so there is a bit of flexibility on this issue. However, an expanded meeting would mean higher travel costs for attendees.
- New Orleans was raised as a possible meeting site.
  - While New Orleans does successfully host many large conventions, smaller groups like AIC are still experiencing problems there.
- A question was asked if video recordings of Annual Meetings could be made.
  - Two major issues currently preventing this are the costs to do the recording in a professional manner and obtaining the necessary permissions from the authors and the institutions where the authors work.

## **Future General Session Topics – Pam Hatchfield and Ruth Seyler**

The results of the Annual Meeting Themes Survey were discussed. A summary is available at [www.conservation-us.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.viewPage&pageID=1084&nodeID=1](http://www.conservation-us.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.viewPage&pageID=1084&nodeID=1)

Two criteria are important for any Annual Meeting theme:

- Maximum engagement of membership
- Timeliness (themes should be current, relevant), which is why themes should not be determined too far in advance

The floor was opened to suggestions from the IAG:

- A “nuts and bolts” or “hands-on” topic (such as *Adhesives in Conservation*) may be of interest.
  - While this is true, the General Session should not be so specific. Part of the goal is to give us a place to think about our profession more broadly, thinking outside ourselves. Some IAG members suggest that “nuts and bolts” themes should be worked into the mix every few years.
- We need to publish General Session topics, maybe in a particular issue of *JAIC* or some other publication.
- We need to incorporate attendee numbers and marketing strategies in choosing a General Session theme.
- There is a need for AIC to be represented at international symposia.
- There is a need for a public session or outreach component at each meeting
- We should consider partnering with other conservation organizations to represent AIC at other organizations’ meetings.
- Could AIC partner with AAM?
  - Like AIC, AAM has leadership meetings and other events before and after their meeting, so that “piggybacking” without a gap of at least a couple of days between meetings is impossible. Remember Denver in 2008.
  - We are looking to collaborate with other organizations, if possible.

## **Financial Report**

**Ken Beam, AIC Finance Director, for Brian Howard, AIC Board Treasurer (unable to attend)**

Healthy reserves allowed AIC and FAIC to operate normally despite economic fall-off.

### **AIC Budget**

- Investment income represents a 5% allocation from reserves. This is a relatively conservative amount.
- Income from Membership dues is strong and projected to remain stable
- 2010 Meetings income has been adjusted slightly in anticipation of smaller attendance at the Milwaukee Annual Meeting.
- FAIC Overhead Income (the percentage FAIC pays AIC for its share of common expenses)
- Expenses

- Publication income is far less than publication expenses, however, it should be noted that most publication expenses are supported by income from other areas (i.e., Membership).
- Specialty Group expenses are greater than Specialty Group income.
- AIC is in the black by almost \$100K for 2009.
- Projections for future income are conservative; we are planning for a small deficit budget in 2010.

### **FAIC Budget**

- FAIC is a different type of entity than AIC. It is a 501(c)3, organized for educational, scientific, and charitable purposes.
- It secures funds in support of AIC and the field of conservation.
- New expenses in FAIC include AIC-CERT activities and CoOL.
- The bottom line is that financially 2008 was a bad year. However, almost 70% of investment money lost in 2008 has been regained in 2009.
- FAIC Net Assets as of September 2009 total over \$4.5 million
- CoOL expenses are, currently, for maintenance; future enhancements will be funded by grants.
- A question was asked about the profitability of FAIC courses.
  - Courses are subsidized by grants to keep fees as low as possible. The professional development program is not structured to generate income. There has been a decline in registrations in 2009, especially online, where it appears that enrollment may be postponed if it's thought that these online courses will be offered each year.

\*AIC and FAIC financial information are available at [www.conservation-us.org/aboutaic](http://www.conservation-us.org/aboutaic) under the heading "Financial Documents"

### **AIC Position Papers** **Meg Craft, President**

AIC is working on the following "white papers" to publish as "Statements from the AIC Board." Several position papers are in draft form:

- A statement on environmental parameters is being drafted by Meg Craft and Pam Hatchfield in collaboration with the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and the J.P. Getty Museum.
- A statement on the use of functional objects is being drafted by Pam Hatchfield.
- A report by AIC-CERT is being developed into position paper on emergency response by Meg Craft.
- A statement expressing concern about the closing of several conservation training programs is being drafted by Meg Craft in collaboration with ANAGPIC.

### **AIC Communications** **Paul Messier, Director of Communications**

Much of AIC's print media are a fundamental benefit of membership. These include:

- *AIC News*
- *JAIC*
- *AIC Directory*
- Specialty Group publications

AIC also sponsors many publications that are valuable resources for professionals both within and outside the organization.

- A good example is the 2008 book, *The AIC Guide to Digital Photography and Conservation Documentation*, which is selling well to both conservation professionals and a broader audience.

We also have an array of online communications tools that include:

- Website
- Email blasts (often best for time-sensitive information)
- AIC Blog (just register to comment on threads)
- Wiki
  - A \$23,000 grant from NCPTT was designed to transfer the specialty group catalogs to a wiki format.
  - Additional opportunities for wikis are being considered.
- SG websites (great source for member-produced content)
- CoOL and Conservation DistList (great assets, lots of content, working on how they work best in conjunction with the AIC website)
- Social media
  - AIC now has a presence on Facebook, LinkedIn, Flickr, and Twitter.
  - Paul Messier read responses to an AIC "tweet" from earlier in the day.
- A topic was introduced for discussion: would it be better if the print newsletter was retooled to be more of an outreach piece (for news of a broader nature, intended for a larger audience), and use other outlets, such as an e-mail newsletter, for internal news?
  - Many similar organizations have made this change.
  - Some IAG members noted that they don't really read the print newsletter, and that it might be better in an electronic format; however, others noted that they value the print piece highly and save their newsletters for the research articles, which they often refer to later.
  - The consensus was that time-sensitive information should be delivered online.
  - A poll was taken to learn how many favor putting the Specialty Group columns of *AIC News* online. The overwhelming consensus was that the Specialty Group columns should be moved online. Specialty Group news of general interest would still appear in the printed *AIC News*.
- IAG members asked: What percentage of our membership is online? Who would be left out?
  - Roughly 90% of members have e-mail addresses; it is estimated that 5% don't go online at all, and 15% only use the internet sporadically.
  - It was suggested that a paper-based survey be conducted to determine the internet comfort level of AIC Members.

- It was suggested that AIC expand instructional material about how to use the electronic tools on the website.
- The AIC Blog was discussed:
  - About 25% of those attending IAG have checked out the Blog.
  - Some expressed confusion about how to register for it.
  - Anyone can view the Blog; anyone can register; and, all registered viewers can comment. Comments must be approved.
  - Wiki page is much like the blog. Anyone can view it, but you must register in order to make comments. Only designated editors can make direct changes to text.
- Statistics for the new AIC website were discussed. Since July 1, 2009:
  - Site visits: 66,000
  - Page views: 342,000
  - Page views per visit: 5.25
  - Average time on site: 4 minute per user
  - Good bounce rate: about 30%
- Some Specialty Group webmasters in attendance were concerned about the user friendliness and efficiency of the website.
  - The website does have limitations, and the unexpected acquisition of CoOL has affected progress on the new site.
  - FTP access cannot be granted to Specialty Group officers.
  - It was suggested that all Specialty Groups agree on 3 or 4 standard pages that all Groups will have; these would be lightweight and easy to maintain. Major content and documents might be maintained on CoOL.
  - Brett and Rachael will work with Specialty Groups to resolve these issues.

**External Communications – Eryl Wentworth, Executive Director, AIC and FAIC**

- Eryl Wentworth thanked all members who have made public appearances, volunteered for AIC-CERT, or participated in other outreach activities.
- New outreach materials include:
  - Flyers for CoOL and the AIC Wiki
  - AIC-CERT brochures
- Current AIC outreach activities include:
  - Representing AIC/FAIC at a growing number of meetings
  - Beginning collaboration with the American Association of Appraisers
  - Partnership being developed with ACE insurance group
    - Help them with information about preventive conservation as well as emergency procedures.
    - AIC to generate material for agency to distribute to clients.
  - IMLS *Connecting to Collections* initiative
    - Multiyear initiative to reach out to small museums and libraries and educating them on how to get information about caring for collections

- AIC was on contract to help develop and implement the fourth forum, in Buffalo, NY, focused on collections care training and working with conservators.
  - An AIC panel presentation was given at the MAAM (Mid-Atlantic Association of Museums) Annual Conference.
- Question: Can we put together a program for museum studies, art history, and art programs that offers answers to standard conservation questions?
- An outreach campaign idea is suggested: “Objects That Wouldn’t Exist Now”

\*For more information about outreach efforts, visit [www.conservation-us.org/outreach](http://www.conservation-us.org/outreach)

### **Advocacy**

Ruth Seyler provided an update on current advocacy efforts and how members can join in the effort.

- AIC continues to partner with organizations such as the American Association of Museums, National Humanities Alliance, and Americans for the Arts to advocate for funding and recognition for conservation and preservation in the U.S.
- Ruth encouraged members to respond to our email action alerts.
- She introduced AIC’s new advocacy-efforts list and encouraged members to sign on.
- Members were also asked to consider taking part in long-term advocacy efforts by attending one of the Capitol Hill lobbying days organized for arts and humanities professionals.
- And, Ruth suggested ways for conservators to open a dialog with the staff in their own representative’s District office.

\*For more information please see AIC’s Advocacy web page, [www.conservation-us.org/advocate](http://www.conservation-us.org/advocate)

### **FAIC Strategic Plan and CoOL**

**Eryl Wentworth and Eric Pourchot, FAIC Institutional Development Director**

- In 2009, four summits were held to elicit comments on potential roles and activities for FAIC to develop as part of its strategic plan.
  - A three-year strategic plan for 2010-2012 is being developed, informed in part by the summits and the surveys.
- Eric Pourchot discussed recent and upcoming surveys that were undertaken as part of the strategic planning process.
  - Needs Survey (May 2009)
    - The survey was sent to AIC members and non-member conservators.
    - Lobbying and advocacy was the top request; promoting conservation to general public was second.
    - Summary available on website, [www.conservation-us.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.viewPage&pageID=957&nodeID=1](http://www.conservation-us.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.viewPage&pageID=957&nodeID=1)



- Compensation Survey (not published yet, but coming soon)
  - According to the survey, conservation departments are faring better than collecting institutions overall, implying that they are seen as vital components of the institution.
  - Most conservators in private practice are doing work for individuals.
- Survey of people who use conservators (in draft phase)
  - Respondents were small libraries, collections, etc.
  - Perception of conservators and what they do was mostly accurate and positive.
  - Respondents indicated that it was difficult to find a conservator, and even more difficult to compare different conservators.
- End User Survey (prospective)
  - AIC Membership cooperation will be required.
  - AIC Members will provide end users (their clients) with a URL that will take them to an anonymous survey.
  - Ideally, this survey will give information about who is using conservators, what their needs are, etc.
- CoOL
  - FAIC was pleased to be able to assume responsibility for CoOL.
    - It is a valued resource, containing a great deal of material, and includes the Conservation DistList.
    - The DistList is very popular in its current incarnation.
    - Subscribers total over 9,600 people from 91 countries.
    - Walter Henry is on contract to FAIC to maintain CoOL and manage and disseminate the DistList.
  - A CoOL Stakeholder's Meeting was held in Washington, DC in October 2009.
    - The meeting was supported by the Getty Conservation Institute, the National Center for Preservation Training and Technology, and the Kress Foundation.
    - Several international organizations were represented.
    - Using CoOL to reach out beyond the conservation community was discussed, in addition to how CoOL can better serve conservators from all over the world.
    - A survey to gather additional information from stakeholders will be sent out on the DistList later in the year.

## **Wrap-up and IAG Meeting Adjourned**

Meg Craft thanked the members of the IAG for their participation and declared the meeting closed.