Art.i.facts

A Few of My Favorite Things

Ingrid E. Bogel retired as CCAHA's Executive Director in September 2014. During her 23 years at CCAHA, Ingrid witnessed a veritable parade of our cultural legacy passing through the Center's laboratory. Artifacts come to the Center from every region of the world, covering millennia of history—the timeless documents of people and events that changed the world.

For this issue of *Art-i-facts*, Ingrid selected five items that she found particularly inspiring. It is a deeply personal selection, reflecting her passions for pastels, architecture, nature, and so much more.

John Gould's *Birds of Australia* (Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University)

There was a time in 2006 when three intact copies of John James Audubon's legendary *The Birds of America* were in the CCAHA laboratory for treatment. The enormous elephant folio prints were covering conservator's desks throughout the Center, making it a true birders' paradise. As a dedicated birder herself, Ingrid was in her element. At that time, CCAHA conservators were treating Audubon volumes from Lehigh University, the Maryland State Law Library, and the John James Audubon Center at Mill Grove.

But being surrounded by a profusion of Audubon prints wasn't the only thrill for the birder in Ingrid. Over the years, she received opportunities to get to know some of the other great—albeit less heralded—scientific illustrators of the world's birds. For instance, in 2013, CCAHA conservators treated the State Library of Pennsylvania's nine-volume set of *American Ornithology* by Alexander Wilson, America's first great artist of birds whose work was only surpassed by Audubon's masterpiece.

(continued on page 4)

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ABOVE RIGHT / Cockatoo Parakeet, John Gould's Birds of Australia (Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University)

A Happy Pair

Books are often no match for the rigors of childhood play, so it comes as no surprise that children's literature poses unique challenges to conservators. Rogue marginal and interlinear additions need to be excised, torn pages repaired, and all manner of cuts and scrapes mended. These days, many children's books are built to withstand a healthy amount of play, from infants' board books to laminated pages. At the turn of the twentieth century, however, children's literature was far less hardy. In a recent project at CCAHA, conservators faced one of the most common problems associated with children's literature: a weakened binding.

A Happy Pair was published in 1890, and featured poetry by Frederic Weatherly and illustrations by Beatrix Potter. Potter was 24 years old at the time, and sold her illustrations to a German publisher for £6. It was the first book to feature Potter's illustrations, published a decade before the first appearance of Peter Rabbit. A Happy Pair is a fourteen-page volume featuring six illustrations of rabbits based on Potter's own pet rabbit Benjamin Bouncer.

The book was a success and Potter's career grew from that point forward. Hildesheimer and Faulkner, the firm that bought her illustrations for *A Happy Pair*, commissioned several other illustrations. Pleased with her (continued on page 3)



LETTER from the executive director



ABOVE / The Tailor of Gloucester (Free Library of Pennsylvania)

Dear Friends,

It is with much excitement that I write my first letter to the CCAHA community. The atmosphere at the Center this season has been one of reflection and anticipation. The retirement of Ingrid E. Bogel from her position as Executive Director gave us the opportunity to look back on her 17 years in the position and 23 years at CCAHA. At the same time, we are looking forward to the upcoming year and continuing our work of conservation, education, and outreach. This issue of *Art-i-facts* illustrates this theme of endings and beginnings.

For one of this issue's articles, CCAHA Director of Development Lee Price sat down with Ingrid to discuss her tenure as Executive Director. Ingrid spoke about some of her favorite treatments during her time at the Center, from a fragment of Egyptian papyrus to a watercolor by Whistler. Her memories illustrate years of fantastic treatments and a tradition of conservation excellence. To illustrate Lee's conversation with Ingrid, we have highlighted several of the treatments she mentioned, including John Gould's *Birds of Australia,* architectural drawings, and a Beatrix Potter manuscript.

Our second article discusses CCAHA's treatment of a rare copy of Beatrix Potter's *A Happy Pair*. This project prompted us to think about the history of children's literature, as Potter was publishing at a watershed moment for children's stories and illustrations.

In the spirit of Ingrid's self-reflection, this issue's High Watermarks features blogs written by collections managers, librarians, conservators, and those working in the field of preservation. These professionals share articles about their work, projects, and inspirations.

We hope that the new year finds you as it finds us: grateful for what has come before, and excited for what lies ahead.

Sincerely,

Pausa Horz Stanton

Laura Hortz Stanton Executive Director

The Conservation Center for Art & Historic Artifacts (CCAHA) is a nonprofit conservation facility specializing in the treatment of works on paper, photographs, and books through conservation and state-of-the-art digital imaging services. Founded in 1977, CCAHA serves nonprofit cultural institutions, private individuals, and other collecting organizations. CCAHA's preservation services staff present educational programs, conduct preservation assessments, and develop emergency preparedness plans. CCAHA also offers fellowships, fundraising support, and disaster assistance.

WINTER 2014/2015 / STAFF & BOARD

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Designer Danielle L. Lyons **Editor** Amy Heuer success, Potter set out to write her own stories to illustrate. Drawing on her letters to the children of her many friends, she published *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* in 1901. The book was very successful and was soon followed by many other recognizable classics: *The Tale of Squirrel Nutkin, The Tailor of Gloucester*, and more. Potter published over twenty books throughout her career.

Along with her children's books, she published articles about natural science and was a keen advocate of environmental conservation. She had a special interest in fungi, and once entered a paper on a new theory of sporing to the Linnaean Society. Potter used the proceeds from her successful literary career to foster her interest in land conservation. She lived in the area of northwest England known as the Lake District, and became very well known for her acts of generosity and partnerships with the National Trust. Upon her death, she left the nearly the entirety of her vast land holdings across the Lake District to the National Trust; the largest gift ever left to the National Trust at that time. Along with her property, Potter left many of her original illustrations to the National Trust.

Potter's stories were part of a new wave of children's literature. Up until the middle of the nineteenth century, the genre had been primarily religious and moralizing. But in the 1840s, a new, whimsical, imaginative children's literature emerged. Lewis Carroll's fantastical stories of Alice in the upside-down Wonderland and Carlo Collodi's stories of the puppet Pinocchio opened up the doors for a new style of playful writing for children.

This change in tone was twofold; along with new subject matter, the books contained something else: color illustrations through the process of chromolithography. John Tenniel's portrayals of the Queen of Hearts in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and Kate Greenaway's wood-engraved images pioneered a new age of children's illustrations. With illustrators like Randolph Caldecott and authors like Lewis Carroll leading the way, the new reign of children's literature, unfettered by previous precedents, prospered. Today, there are few first edition versions of Potter's *A Happy Pair* extant. A private collector recently brought one of these rare editions to CCAHA. When the book arrived, the binding was in poor condition, with the spine and back board missing. The holes of the stitched binding of the spine had become enlarged and the corners worn round. The front cover was attached by a single thread. The primary binding thread appeared to be original, based on other extant copies of the books, and it was cutting into the leaves of the book. The back cover was completely missing.

In order to reinforce the binding, CCAHA Conservation Assistant Heather Godlewski removed the sewing threads from the binding. She then cleaned the surface of the pages with vulcanized rubber sponges and white vinyl erasers to clear any loose soil and embedded grime. Godlewski mended the ragged edges of the leaves and cover with acrylic-toned mulberry paper and wheat starch paste. Some of the corners of the pages were consolidated with wheat starch paste as well. The front cover spine was repaired with new acrylic-toned paper and more wheat starch paste. The new spine area was then painted with watercolors to match.

The owner of the book provided a TIFF image of the back of a different copy of *A Happy Pair* so that a new back cover could be made. To do this, CCAHA Manager of Digital Imaging Andrew Pinkham altered the color of the image background to match the existing cover and spine and printed it on matte paper. Godlewski then attached the new back cover to the spine with wheat starch paste. To ensure that the book could be displayed flat, Godlewski added a length of acrylic-toned embroidery thread to the original binding thread before rebinding the book.

The palimpsestic result of CCAHA's treatment is typical of the conservation of turn-of-the-century children's literature. The books pass through many hands, and *A Happy Pair* is a testament to years of children's play, a collector's diligence, and CCAHA's careful conservation. Its treatment ensures that the book will be enjoyed for years to come.



-AMY HEUER



1 / A Happy Pair after treatment (private collection)
2 / Conservation Assistant Heather Godlewski adds a length of acrylic-toned embroidery thread to the original binding thread



(My Favorite Things, continued from page 1)

And—even more special to Ingrid—there was the year when CCAHA memorably treated the work of John Gould, Australia's "Father of Ornithology." The Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University brought a copy of their very rare "suppressed" first edition of the first volume of Gould's *Birds of Australia* to CCAHA for treatment. The work was performed in anticipation of a special exhibit, "John Gould and the *Birds of Australia*," presented at the Australian Embassy in Washington, D.C., in partnership with the Academy. One of Ingrid's favorite memories is attending the formal grand opening of the exhibit at the Australian Embassy, an international affair that celebrated a great naturalist and artist while graciously recognizing the conservation team who ensured its preservation.

The First Book of Breathing (Lafayette College)

The First Book of Breathing was a fascinating treatment for the Center's conservators. Dating back to the first century BCE, the papyrus was one of the oldest documents treated at the Center during Ingrid's tenure. The treatment also reflected the flexible skills of CCAHA conservators in working with unusual materials such as papyrus. While conservators at CCAHA specialize in treating works on conventional paper, they are also prepared for the challenge of working with rarer materials such as papyrus, parchment, wallpaper, and early photographic media.

After spending the majority of its existence in a dark, sealed tomb in the dry desert of Thebes, the papyrus scroll was most likely in superb condition when removed in 1858. Exposure to sunlight, humidity, temperature fluctuations, and handling negatively affected the scroll, resulting in its degraded condition when it came to CCAHA in 2003. Not only had the papyrus become adhered to the glass frame, but it had suffered extensively from fragmentation, with numerous fragments dislodged and scattered within the frame. A photograph of Paper Conservator Soyeon

Choi working with these fragments on a light table quickly became an iconic image of CCAHA.

The scope of the treatment extended beyond the walls of CCAHA, involving conservation scientists at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. While conservators at CCAHA worked to remove the papyrus from the original housing and stabilize it, conservation scientists at the Philadelphia Museum of Art analyzed the elemental makeup of the pigments using an electron microscope and energy dispersive spectrometer. Analysis revealed that the color palette of the scroll was different than had previously been assumed, resulting in the creation of an electronic facsimile of the scroll as it would have appeared thousands of years ago.

"Canal, San Canciano, Venice" by James Abbott McNeill Whistler (Westmoreland Museum of American Art)

In 2006, Ingrid was visiting the exhibit "Whistler and His Circle in Venice" at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., when she noticed a very familiar pastel.

This is the way it often works with CCAHA staff. For a brief period of time, a piece of artwork becomes the very center of our world. We come to know it intimately, doing all we can to ensure its long-term preservation. But our time with it is necessarily limited. The work is soon completed and we send it back to its home. Sometimes we never see it again. And sometimes we happen to turn a corner in a gallery and there it is, looking even finer than we remembered.

"Of all the works of art on paper that we treated at the Center, this one spoke to me the most," said Ingrid. "It is exquisitely beautiful."

This pastel by James Abbott McNeill Whistler is in the collection of the Westmoreland Museum of American Art in Greensburg, Pennsylvania. Barbara Jordan, Chief Curator, shares Ingrid's enthusiasm for Whistler's artistry: "We treasure it as part of our collection...I love the way that Whistler conveys the various colors and textures of the stucco walls, clouds, and shimmering light on the water's surface using such spare marks on the paper. It's a remarkable achievement."



1 / Former CCAHA Paper Conservator Soyeon Choi working with The First Book of Breathing on a light table (Lafayette College) 2 / The First Book of Breathing (Lafayette College) 3 / John Gould's Birds of Australia (Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University) 4 + 5 / The Tailor of Gloucester (Free Library of Pennsylvania) 6 / James Abbott McNeill Whistler's "Canal, San Canciano, Venice" (Westmoreland Museum of American Art)
 7 + 8 / U.S. Capitol Drawing Submission from Thomas Jefferson (Maryland Historical Society)

The Tailor of Gloucester by Beatrix Potter (Free Library of Philadelphia)

Shortly after the career-making success of her first children's book, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*, in 1901, Beatrix Potter composed a charming twist on a story she had heard while visiting the town of Gloucester several years earlier. Embellishing the story with a dozen watercolors, Potter presented the hand-written manuscript as a Christmas gift to Freda More, the ten-year-old daughter of Potter's former governess.

Nearly a century later, the Free Library of Philadelphia brought that gift manuscript of *The Tailor of Gloucester* to CCAHA for treatment. Ingrid had just recently arrived at the Center, coming from her previous position at the Philadelphia Museum of Art Conservation Department. As a lover of children's literature and watercolors, Ingrid immediately responded to the beauty and charm of the work. But most of all, she was moved by the opening inscription, a personal and tender note from Beatrix Potter to her young friend:

My dear Freda,

Because you are fond of fairy-tales, and have been ill, I have made you a story all for yourself—a new one that nobody has read before.

And the queerest thing about it is—that I heard it in Gloucestershire, and that is true—at least about the tailor, the waistcoat, and the

"No more twist!"

Christmas 1901

U.S. Capitol Competition Drawings (Maryland Historical Society)

In 2001, the United States Capitol Competition Drawings came to the Center for treatment from the Maryland Historical Society. These architectural drawings were entries in the open competition to design the U.S. Capitol in 1792, including an anonymous submission drafted by Thomas Jefferson, then Secretary of State. For Ingrid, the arrival of these drawings at the Center helped reignite a personal fascination with architecture.

"Architecture was always an interest of mine, but I never received an opportunity to study it at school," said Ingrid. "Being at the Center, with conservators skilled at treating architectural documents, renewed and deepened my interest."

Over the years, the Center's staff have treated important collections of architectural records, representing major architects including Louis Kahn, Robert Venturi, and Frank Lloyd Wright. Ingrid herself was able to further explore her interest in architecture as a part of her professional development, attending a ten day workshop in Chicago hosted by the Society of Architectural Historians. Architectural records have continued to be the focus of national conferences hosted by the Center, starting with a major conference in Philadelphia in 2000, followed by a conference in Chicago in 2007, and most recently in Buffalo in 2014.

-LEE PRICE & ANASTASIA MATIJKIW



QUESTIONS for Laura Hortz Stanton

CCAHA Executive Director / Education: B.A., Anthropology and Archaeology, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA; M.A., History and Museum Studies, The Cooperstown Graduate Program, State University of New York College at Oneonta, Cooperstown, NY / **Years at CCAHA:** 10

You spent 7 years as the Director of Preservation Services. What made you want to be the Executive Director?

Simply put, CCAHA is a remarkable organization and I love this place. I'm continually awed by the astounding treatments done by our conservation team and proud that we're playing a huge role in ensuring that those items are around for future generations. During my tenure in Preservation Services, I worked with hundreds of nonprofit organizations and I saw how far a little support and advice can go in helping an institution meet their preservation goals. I look forward to the opportunity to build upon Ingrid's legacy and extend the reach of the Center even further.

What are your primarily responsibilities as Executive Director?

Honestly, I'm still new to this job! I handle a lot of day-to-day management for the Center, like budgeting and building maintenance. More broadly, my responsibilities are to ensure that we're fulfilling our mission, maintaining our level of excellence, innovating in our field, and meeting the needs of the institutions and individuals we work with. This is a tall order and one that I could not do alone. CCAHA has a remarkable staff and Board that are invested in this organization—everything we do is truly a team effort.

What are you looking forward to the most about being Executive Director?

While it may be cliché, I'm excited to play a bigger role in making CCAHA an even better organization and having the chance to explore new opportunities and expand our services. I'm also happy to learn even more about the work of our conservators. In Preservation Services, most of my work was external, so I'm looking forward to being more engaged in the treatment side of CCAHA.

What are your goals for the upcoming year?

I'm very lucky that I inherited a successful organization with a wonderfully dedicated staff, so my biggest goal is to build upon what's already been done. I plan to look at new potential partnerships and joint ventures that would allow CCAHA to better meet the needs of our clients. I'm also aware of how many institutions and individuals don't know about CCAHA, so I hope to spread the word about our services.

How do you think your experience in Preservation Services informs your vision for the Center?

I'm going to miss my work in the Preservation Services department. In that position, I had the opportunity to work with so many different institutions and help them to achieve their goals. Working with both tiny volunteer-run organizations and large nonprofits taught me to think creatively and to come up with multiple methods of approaching a challenge. As we move forward as an organization, I always hope to remember the lesson that there's no one-size fits all strategy and let that inform our work in conservation and preservation services.

You have degrees in Anthropology, Archaeology, and History/Museum Studies. How has that affected your approach at the Center?

While getting my undergraduate degree, I realized what I loved about archaeology was the act of discovery and working with objects. I pursued my work in the museum field and quickly found my niche in collections management and preservation. I hope that my love of objects and the wonder of unearthing new approaches for preserving cultural heritage informs everything I do at CCAHA.

Fall of 2014 had a lot of changes for you. You had your second son, Elijah, just a month or so before assuming your new job. Do you have plans for which museum to take him to first?

Since Elijah has an older brother who loves dinosaurs, I think that his first museum will probably be the Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University. There are so many wonderful places I want to take him, though! Both kids have a long list of museums that they're going to be seeing, and my husband and I joke that in a few years, they'll be saying, "No, Mama, not another historic house!"

How old is your first son, Teddy? What is his favorite book?

Teddy is almost five! One of his all-time favorites is called *The Big Red Barn*, which was actually given to us by a CCAHA client. We can all recite it from memory. Teddy is also excited by anything that involves pirates. A particular favorite right now is called *Victricia Malicia: Book-Loving Buccaneer*, about a pirate who opens a bookstore.

HIGH WATERMARKS

In each newsletter, CCAHA highlights a few books or websites we think will be of interest to collections managers, conservators, and collectors.



NEW YORK PUBLIC

The New York Public Library (NYPL) has a series of public blogs written by the Library's staff, from librarians to curators. They

aim to illuminate and increase visibility of what goes on at the libraries. The blog titles range from "Food for Thought," a blog dedicated to "uncovering the edible NYPL" through exploration of the archives, to "NYC Neighborhoods," which provides history lessons plumbed from the NYPL archives. *Arti-i-facts* readers might especially enjoy the blogs called "Preservation," "Children's Literature@NYPL," or "Archives: Out of the Box."

>> www.nypl.org/blog



PRESERVATIONNATION BLOG

The National Trust for Historic Preservation is a nonprofit organization that works to preserve historic sites across the United States. Their blog,

PreservationNation Blog, features stories about the Trust's work as well as preservation work in general. The contributions from their various authors run the gamut from series like "Historic Bars," "Preservation Tips & Tools," and "Historic Real Estate," to individual spotlight pieces on saved buildings and interviews with leaders in the field.

>> blog.preservationnation.org

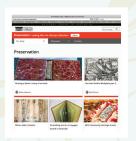


SMITHSONIAN COLLECTIONS BLOG

The Smithsonian Collections blog features articles written by archivists, librarians, and museum staff across the various Smithsonian

institutions. They write about upcoming exhibitions, current projects, or favorite objects and stories from around the collections. The articles tagged as "conservation" cover such topics as the digitization of ancient Near Eastern cuneiform inscriptions and a conservator's version of "What's in my purse?"—an inventory of what she takes with her when she goes on off-site conservation consultations.

>> si-siris.blogspot.com



NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA'S PRESERVATION BLOG

The National Library of Australia has its own series of blogs about the daily work of the Library. Their Preservation Blog features

posts on the activities of its conservation staff. The conservators write specific case studies of current pieces as well as more general articles on topics such as "A day in the life of the bindery" and "All in a day's disaster." There are also some articles that are specific to their building, such as an article written about the conservation of the large lintel sculpture that extends across the main doors of the Library.

>> www.nla.gov.au/blogs/preservation

CONSERVATION CENTER for art & historic artifacts

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CALENDAR of events

MARCH

DISASTER RESPONSE AND RECOVERY: A HANDS-ON INTENSIVE March 3, 2015 Cliveden Philadelphia, PA

HOUSEKEEPING FOR

March 17, 2015 Cliveden Philadelphia, PA

APRIL

THERE'S A FUNGUS AMONG US! FIGHTING MOLD IN LIBRARY AND ARCHIVE COLLECTIONS April 21, 2015 Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University Philadelphia, PA

MAY

COLLECTIONS: DISASTER PREVENTION, PLANNING, & RESPONSE - PART I

May 14, 2015 Rhode Island School of Design Museum of Art Providence, RI Throughout the year, CCAHA offers a number of programs to provide staff at collecting institutions with the knowledge and skills to support their collections care efforts. To register for any of these programs, please visit our website at www.ccaha.org/education/program-calendar.

JUNE

IDENTIFICATION AND PRESERVATION OF PRINTS June 2, 2015 Bryn Mawr College Special Collections Bryn Mawr, PA

STORAGE BOXES FOR FLAT AND 3-D OBJECTS June 18, 2015 Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts Philadelphia, PA

Register online at www.ccaha.org!