

COLLECTION MANAGERS COMMITTEE

WINTER 1992 NEWSLETTER

News and Business

The Collection Managers Committee is offering a scholarship in the amount of \$300 to attend the Texas Association of Museums Annual Meeting in April. The meeting will be held in Waco, Texas this year March 31st through April 3rd. Qualifications include membership in the CMC, new to the Registrar/ Collection Manager museum profession and financial need. Letters of nomination for the scholarship should be sent to Kim Peel, Witte Museum, San Antonio, Texas, 78299-2601 by February 1, 1993; or contact Kim at 210-820-2132.

It is once again nominating time for officers. Vacancies this year include the positions of Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Officer-at-Large. Elected officers will assume their duties April 2, 1993, at the TAM Annual Meeting.

The Vice Chair's duties shall be to supervise the Program Committee of the Collections Managers committee for the Annual Meeting and to assist Chairs of the workshops, seminars, and presentations sponsored by the Committee aside from those at the Annual Meeting. The Vice Chair is empowered to appoint the Chairs of Program Committees, as needed, and will work with the individual Chairs to appoint their Committees. The Vice Chair will fulfill the duties of the Chair should the Chair be unable to serve.

The Secretary's duties shall be to maintain an up-to-date mailing list, to record minutes of all meetings, summaries of seminars or programs and to preserve examples of newsletters or other publications distributed by the organization, and the annual reports of the officers.

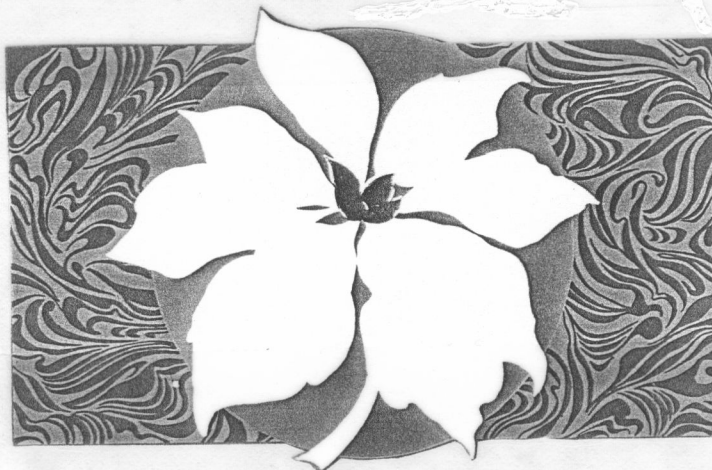
The Officer-at-Large is responsible for supervising the various committees as may be prescribed by the Officers including, but not limited to a Publications committee, Membership committee and Special Event committees; and shall gather and disseminate information to the membership in the form of a regular newsletter.

The term of office is for two years.

Nominations must be submitted by January 20th to Kathy Roland, Ft. Concho National Historic Landmark, 213 East Avenue D, San Angelo, Tx 76903, 915-657-4440. Ballots will go out February 2nd.

Outstanding Member Award: Take some time to think of the CMC member who has contributed "beyond the expected" and then share your thoughts with one of the officers. The Board will meet during the January 30th workshop in San Antonio and select the outstanding member. The recipient of the award will be announced at the TAM Annual Meeting in Waco.

Remember that CMC dues expire with the calendar year. Membership costs are \$10.00 for Professional or Associate levels. The newsletter includes a list of current memberships that will expire January 1st. Make your check payable to COLLECTION MANAGERS COMMITTEE, and mail to Lisa Rebori, Houston Museum of Natural Science, One Hermann Circle, Houston, Tx 77030.



WINTER CALENDAR

January 15, 1993 Application deadline to Texas Committee for the Humanities Mini-grant program for projects beginning after May 1, 1993. TCH, Banister Place A, 3809 South Second Street, Austin, Tx 78704, 512-440-1991.

January 22 Application deadline for IMS General Operating Support grant. Write Institute of Museum Services, 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20506, 202-606-8536.

January 29 Applications due to Map II (Collections Management). Contact: American Association of Museums, 1225 Eye Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005, 202-289-1818.

January 30 Conservation workshop sponsored by the CMC. Look for the registration form at the back of the newsletter.

February 21-25 The National Conference on Cultural Property Protection, Washington, D.C. For more information contact Thomas Bresson, Program Chairman, Smithsonian Institution, 202-357-1630.

February 25-26 APPM and Archival Cataloging workshop, U.T. Austin. For information contact David Terry, Assistant CE Director, or Mrs. Mel Boggins, Director of Placement and Continuing Education, Graduate School of Library and Information Science, 512-471-8806.

February 26 Applications due to MAP III (Public Dimension). Contact: AAM at the above address.

TO HAVE AND TO (BE)HOLD:

A Collections Care Seminar

October 1, 1992

by Becky Shulda
Student/Volunteer
Strecker Museum

Sherry Humphreys, Curator of Exhibits for the Star of the Republic Museum, opened the seminar by welcoming us and introducing the first speaker, Steve Pine, Decorative Arts Conservator for the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, our host museum. While showing slides that focused on furnishings suffering from light exposure and humidity fluctuations, he explained the damage that had occurred, how it could have been prevented, and possible solutions to the problems. Humidity should be kept below 60 percent for mold thrives above that level. Organic materials will react the same in dry conditions, ie. both ivory and bone will split. Even glass will react to changes in humidity, some of it crazing when dry and weeping when moist. Over zealous cleaning of metals over a period of time will distort shape and remove detailing. Most metal cleaners contain ammonia which clings tenaciously to metals eventually causing corrosion. Linseed oil based cleaners for wood build up and discolor the finish. This discoloration is not a patina.

Mary Ellyn Voden, Director of Education for The Children's Museum of Houston, began her talk with a brief history of children's museums. The Boston Children's Museum was one of the first institutions to use the multisensory approach in exhibits and programming. She urged us to consider Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences in planning programs. His theory asserts that each individual has the propensity for one or more different categories of learning ability. For instance, some people are more musically inclined than others, some more athletic, others pick up languages more readily. Ms. Voden made the point that children have preconceptions of how the world functions, and that it is difficult for us to know what those preconceptions are. One visit to the museum will not accomplish real learning; that only comes with multiple visits. "Time and reflection are important components in education," she said. Ms. Voden then described an object to us and asked us to try to guess the object's identity from the description. We were each given the object wrapped up and asked to feel it through the wrapping for additional clues. Once we guessed the object (it turned out to be Hershey kisses), we separated into groups and used her handout, "34 ways to look at an object," so that we may come to some conclusions/observations about the object. It certainly was a lot of fun, revived our interest, and set us to thinking. Around the country, children's museums are involving children in the planning of programs, other museum staff are being trained in collections management, exhibits are moving from object-based to idea-based, encompassing library resources into exhibits, resource sharing and developing national standards for education collections.

After lunch, Bill Griggs, President of Southwest Museum Services, examined the interplay of artifacts and exhibits. He related to us the story of a visitor to the Smithsonian Institution, who saw with his own eyes the Hope Diamond. The visitor made a point to tell his friends back home that he had actually seen this whopping gem. Coincidentally, he later viewed a documentary on the Hope Diamond. What do you suppose impressed him the most?

Dr. Griggs visited the Arctic exhibit at the Denver Art Museum. When he walked into the gallery, he noticed that the temperature had dropped to about 38 degrees and the wind was blowing. We have to do things that people will remember; that will keep them coming back. Getting to the "bottom line," if a donor with a million dollars is trying to choose between a museum with static displays or another with excites its visitors, which one do you suppose he will choose? Today's museum visitors are much more sophisticated than 20 years ago. So we will have to work harder to keep them interested. Use interactive exhibits.

Rick Casagrande, Consultant for the San Antonio Museum Association and an Appraiser, led the group in discussion on the handling of objects by visitors. When should it be allowed? Interactive exhibits encourage touching. How do you keep people from touching when they have become accustomed to interactive exhibits? Are we sending visitors a mixed message? Charles Carroll felt it important that we teach visitors how to touch, that often visitors are unconsciously rough. What are the ethical concerns in displaying reproductions? Shelley Adams, Collections Assistant for the Strecker Museum, felt that placing a reproduction on display rather than the original article (especially when age has taken its toll) gives the visitor a more accurate picture of the time period represented. As a child, she remembered seeing 19th C. clothing in a museum and thinking people 100 years ago must have gone about in worn, tattered and faded clothing. When does an object become an artifact? Dr. T. Lindsay Baker, Curator for the Governor Bill and Vara Daniel Historic Village of Strecker Museum, answered that an object becomes an artifact when it is so designated, citing the four Long John Silver's mugs collected by Strecker for the Columbian Quincentenary.

Sherry Humphreys closed the seminar with the announcement that the CMC would offer two scholarships to TAM annual meeting. The CMC is now requesting nominations for Outstanding Collection Manager. After the seminar, Ms. Voden gave us a tour of the Children's Museum of Houston's new facilities. A robotic cow, a mountain village in Mexico and a typical Chinese market town are just some of all the new exhibits. A wonderful way to end the day.

COLLECTION MANAGERS COMMITTEE TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF MUSEUMS

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME _____
INSTITUTION _____ POSITION _____
MAILING ADDRESS (CHECK ONE) ☐ MUSEUM ☐ HOME
STREET OR P.O. BOX NUMBER _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____ - _____
MUSEUM PHONE(____) _____ HOME PHONE(____) _____
MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES: ☐ PROFESSIONAL ☐ ASSOCIATE
ARE YOU ☐ A RENEWING MEMBER OR ☐ A NEW MEMBER?
ARE YOU A MEMBER OF TAM? ☐ YES ☐ NO
ALL CONTRIBUTIONS BEYOND THE ANNUAL \$10.00 DUES ARE WELCOME AND HELP TO FURTHER THE GOALS AND PROGRAMS OF THE CMC. MEMBERSHIP IS VALID FOR ONE CALENDAR YEAR AND EXPIRES ON DECEMBER 31ST.
MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO COLLECTION MANAGERS COMMITTEE.

MEMBERSHIP DUES \$10.00 + CONTRIBUTION \$ _____ = TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ _____

**Collection Managers Committee
Winter Workshop**

MANAGING YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Saturday, January 30, 1993, 10:00 a.m.
The Institute of Texas Cultures
San Antonio, Tx

The two things most museums have in common is that they have collections and they have a building in which they maintain their collections. This workshop will address issue which deal with your building and how the collection's environment affects its well being. Conservator Carl Patterson will conduct this day-long session and will start on the roof of a "typical" museum and work his way down to the basement, illustrating with slides potential problem areas.

Carl is Conservator at the Denver Museum of Art and has conducted numerous museum conservation surveys throughout the United States over the pst several years. Mr. Patterson will address historic structures and traditional institutions, and as such, this workshop should be of vital interest to a variety of museum professionals.

Saturday, January 30, 1993

The Institute of Texan Cultures, San Antonio

Registration and Coffee 9:30 a.m.

Registration fee: CMC members \$20.00, Non-Members \$25.00
(CMC membership is \$10.00)

Make checks payable to Collection Managers Committee

Mail to Lisa Rebori, Houston Museum of Natural Science, One Hermann Circle Drive,
Houston, Tx, 77030 no later than January 20. Late registration will be accepted at the door.

For additional information, please contact Leah Lewis, Institute of Texan Cultures,
210-226-7651 or Kim Peel, Witte Museum, 210-820-2132.

REGISTRATION FORM

Name	Title
Address	Phone
Institution	