



Queen Anne's Revenge

Conservation Laboratory Report, June 2004

UAB Conservation Laboratory, Greenville

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June was an exciting month for the *QAR* conservation team. Sarah Watkins-Kenny attended the WOAM conference in Copenhagen, Denmark, while Eric Nordgren represented the *QAR* Project at the AIC conference in Portland, Oregon. Sarah and Eric both funded themselves to attend these conferences. Wendy Welsh took a few objects to the MCAS in Cherry Point to be X-rayed and conservators from Williamsburg, Virginia dropped by to have a tour of our facilities.

ICOM-CC WOAM



Sarah Watkins-Kenny, *QAR* Project Conservator, attended the 9th ICOM-CC WOAM Conference, in Copenhagen, Denmark (June 6-11). The Waterlogged Organic Archaeological Materials (WOAM) working party of the International Council of Museums - Conservation Committee (ICOM-CC) holds an international conference every three years, in a different country. At the conferences research results as well as progress on various projects are reported. Papers are published in conference proceedings and the group also produces a newsletter

One Hundred and forty specialist conservators and scientists, from 25 countries, attended the conference. Forty-two papers and 24 posters were presented over four days. On the fifth day, Friday June 11, delegates visited the conservation labs, shipbuilding workshops and exhibitions

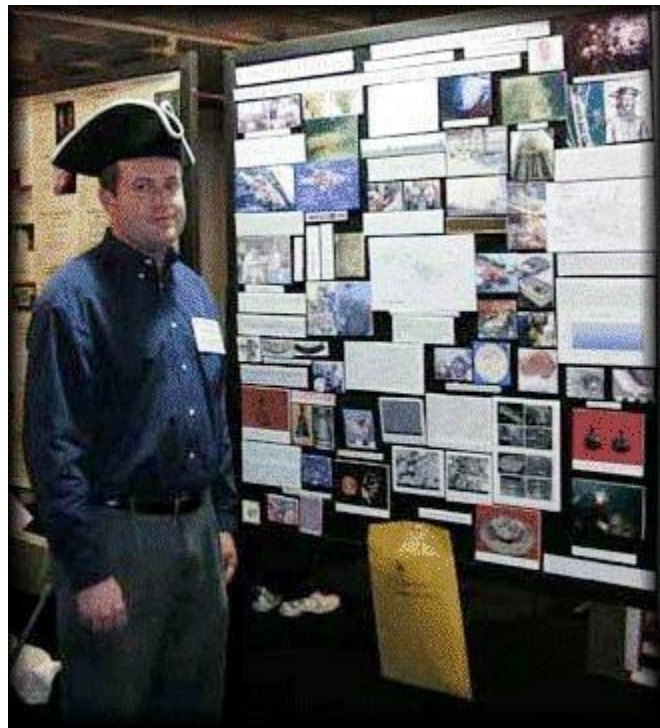
at the Viking Ship Museum at Roskilde. Where they also had the opportunity to try their hand at crewing on one of the Viking ship replicas.

Papers were divided into seven themed sections ranging from in situ preservation to displaying wet finds in museums. Most papers related to conservation of waterlogged wood but there were also some papers on leather, and textiles. Sarah presented a paper entitled: *The Queen Anne's Revenge Shipwreck Project: Recovery, Examination and Treatment of wood*. Co-authors: Sarah Watkins-Kenney, Eric Nordgren, Wendy Welsh, and Nathan Henry. All papers had to be handed in by the end of the conference. Papers will be reviewed and returned to authors for amendments if necessary but the editors hope that the proceedings will be published within the year.

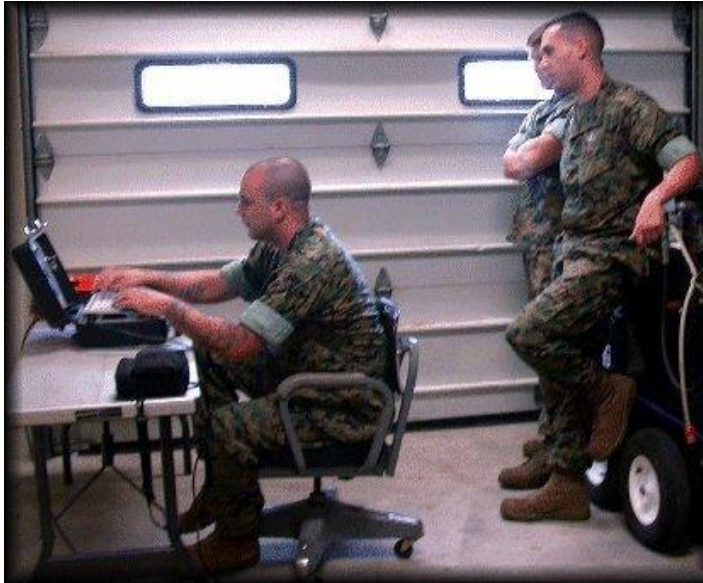
All papers had some relevance to the conservation of the *QAR* artifacts. An excellent aspect of the conference was its overall supportive nature - it was very much a forum in which conservators could present problems and ask for advice, as well as report successes. Another valuable aspect was the opportunity to meet and discuss issues with other conservators in the field. It was also good to renew contacts with conservators attending from the US including some of our 'neighbors', for example, Emily Williams from the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Virginia; Howard Wellman, Maryland Archaeological Conservation lab; Paul Mardikian, Hunley Project, South Carolina and Clare Peachey, Naval Historical Center Washington DC. Helpful discussions were also had with Clifford Cook, Parks Canada, Malcolm Bilz Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI), Vicki Richards, Freemantle Australia; Theo Skinner, National Museums Scotland.

AIC

Eric Nordgren, *QAR* Assistant Conservator, attended the 32nd Annual Meeting of the American Institute for the Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (AIC) June 9th-14th in Portland, Oregon. The AIC Annual Meeting brings together conservators of all types of artistic and historic works including fine and decorative arts, architecture, and last, but not least, objects from historic and archaeological sites. This year's AIC conference focus was on 'Current Thoughts on the Responsibility, Philosophy, Practices, and Controversies of Cleaning Cultural Property'. Through lectures and paper presentations the issues of when, and when not to clean, how much, and defining what is 'dirt' were explored. These factors have important consequences for archaeological conservation as there are times when the 'dirt' preserves important information about the past history of the objects under study.



As well as attending the events and lectures, Eric exhibited a poster presentation on the work of the *Queen Anne's Revenge* Conservation Lab prepared by himself, Sarah Watkins-Kenney, and Wendy Welsh. The 'author in attendance' session was a good opportunity to talk with other conservators about the work being done at the *QAR* Conservation Lab.



MCAS

In April's conservation report we mentioned the jack, [QAR060.000](#), and our hopes to have it x-rayed to possibly determine its gearing mechanism. NC's State Underwater Archaeology Branch Conservator, Nathan Henry suggested contacting the Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) at the Marine Corp Air Station (MCAS) in Cherry Point. Nathan has used the EOD and their services before to X-ray artifacts, including objects from the *QAR*. June 9th, Lab Manager, Wendy Welsh visited the MCAS to see if we could get a glimpse of what is inside the jack as well as a wood frame and half of the full set of concreted cask hoops (QAR236.000).

EOD Chief Warrant Officer Garfield remembered dealing with some of the *QAR* material and was happy to help us out once again. Sgt. Foster, Staff Sgt. Donald, and Sgt. Cortes were among those who helped with X-raying the objects. The cask hoop and wood frame X-rays did not yield much new information, though the jack's X-ray images were quite enlightening. Most of the concretion has been removed from around the jack and what is left is holding the gearbox together. Several different X-ray exposures were needed to reveal the slightest outline of a large gear in the middle of the box. The X-ray images indicate a 2-gear mechanism, which provides a basis for conservators to consider in their approach to preserving this artifact. Information provided by these X-rays is invaluable to conservators. The gentlemen of the EOD were most helpful and their service is much appreciated.





CONSERVATORS VISIT

On June 29th, Conservator, Emily Williams, (middle left) and Interns, Molly Gleeson, (far right) and Colleen Snyder (first left) from Colonial Williamsburg and Carolyn Powell (third left) of Chicago's Field Museum visited the *QAR* Conservation facility. The foursome showed up despite inclement weather and was given a tour of the entire facilities and objects housed here. Exhibiting underwater artifacts while in conservation and sharing the knowledge of what it takes to run an

operation of this magnitude with all visitors is an important aspect of our work. After the tour we all had lunch at CPW's in town, the food was great and the conversation pleasant. We enjoyed having the Williamsburg crew and look forward to working with them in the future.