



southeast regional conservation association

## NEWSLETTER

Spring 2019 Volume 2, Number 1

### From the Desk of the Membership Coordinator

Hello Colleagues,

Another SERCA Annual Meeting is in the books, and it was great to see all of your faces, old and new! This last year has been a busy one for SERCA, and a year of substantial growth for our organization. Thanks to the implementation of Paypal and the multiple workshops that SERCA sponsored this year, our membership almost doubled from 40 members in 2017 to 79 members in 2018. We look forward to the infusion of new ideas, professional resources, and collaboration as our organization enters this new phase. That said, SERCA strives to maintain the same small organization feel that so many of us enjoy, and the Board is more than open to suggestions and ideas for how to keep us on the proper path.

One change that was voted on at the Annual Meeting was the membership calendar. SERCA's membership year has traditionally run from May 1st through April 30th. The membership voted to change that to have our membership dates align with other professional organizations from January 1st through December 31st. This is to aid in our accounting of both finances and membership lists, as well as make it more intuitive for you, the member, to know that it is time to renew. A Call for Renewals will come mid-November, giving you a window of six weeks to renew before the membership year ends. We'll be relatively flexible if you lapse before you stop receiving newsletters, but you will not be able to get the member rate for the Annual Meeting in the Spring without a renewal.

For those of you who do not know, we have created a new scholarship called the SERCA Opportunity Grant. The second round of grant applications for this award is due **July 1st**. Please see below for details!!

SERCA has added a new position to the Board, splitting off the newsletter duty from the Membership Coordinator to create a post of Newsletter Editor. We are fortunate to have two people in this role, Tracey Johnson and Ephranette Brown, which will ensure a more regular distribution of the newsletter. See below for New Board Member introductions.

A massive THANK YOU to Kirsten Wehner for her years of service as Treasurer to our organization. She will be missed on the Board, but I suspect she won't be gone for long.

Likewise, this is my final newsletter as your Membership Coordinator. I look forward to all the good work I know that the new board will do, and for the partnerships made between new members and old. Thank you for this opportunity to serve you all!

Best wishes,

Joanne Klaar Walker, SERCA Membership Coordinator (Outgoing)

## Welcome New SERCA Board Members!



### Brittany Dolph Dinneen, Treasurer

Brittany Dolph Dinneen is the Assistant Conservator of Objects at Emory University's Michael C. Carlos Museum. She has enjoyed conservation roles at the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art and National Museum of American History, the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, and the National Gallery of Art; additionally, she has done archaeological conservation work for sites in Greece, Jordan, and Azerbaijan. Her research interests include the application of handheld x-ray fluorescence spectroscopy in investigations of cultural heritage materials, the characterization of accumulative surfaces on African power objects, and the use of agarose

gel in conservation desalination approaches. She received her M.A. from the UCLA/Getty Program in Conservation of Archaeological and Ethnographic Materials in 2014, following a B.A. in Anthropology/Archaeology from the University at Buffalo in 2006.

Brittany can be reached at [brittany.dinneen@gmail.com](mailto:brittany.dinneen@gmail.com)

## Kelly O'Neill, Membership Coordinator

Kelly O'Neill is a paintings conservator based in Miami, Florida with ArtCare Conservation, A Rustin Levenson Company. She has masters degrees in Museum Studies from the University of Florida and in Art Conservation from the Queen's University, Canada. Her focus is in disaster recovery and managing treatment of large private collections. Her extensive research on William Aiken Walker is part of the archives of the Florida History Museum in Tallahassee, FL and the University of Florida.

Kelly can be reached at [Kelly@artcareconservation.com](mailto:Kelly@artcareconservation.com)

## Ephranette Brown, Newsletter Editor

Ephranette Brown is a Conservation Technician at Emory Libraries in Atlanta, Georgia. She was introduced to conservation at the Georgia Archives, where she worked from 2014-18. Since that introduction, she has grown her skills and knowledge through hands-on training, meeting/workshop attendance, and an outside internship. Ephranette is excited to continue to be engaged and challenged by the work that crosses her bench and is looking forward to further opportunities for learning and growth as she moves forward in her career. She holds an MLIS from The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa.

Ephranette can be reached at [Ephranette.Brown@emory.edu](mailto:Ephranette.Brown@emory.edu)

## Tracey Johnson, Newsletter Editor

Tracey Johnson is the Assistant Conservator at the Georgia Archives in Morrow, Georgia. After a brief stint as a cataloging librarian and earning a MLIS from Kent State University in 2013, she developed a love of preserving archival documents through digital preservation. Once discovering the existence of the magical discipline of book and paper conservation, she pursued a career in the profession through training and attending as many workshops and educational events as possible. She is currently taking the Chemistry for Conservators course through IAP and is continuing to expand her knowledge and love for the field.

Tracey can be reached at [tracey.johnson@usg.edu](mailto:tracey.johnson@usg.edu)

## **Reflections on the SERCA Annual Meeting**

**Stuart A. Rose Library and Michael C. Carlos Museum at Emory University**

**15-17 March 2019**

**Submitted by: Michaela Paulson, Assistant Conservator, American Museum of Natural History**

Thanks to generous funding from the Lenora Weaver Scholarship, administered by the Southeast Regional Conservation Association, I was able to maintain my active membership in SERCA by attending the annual meeting in Atlanta, Georgia. Having been mentored by the objects conservators at Emory University for six months of my graduate internship last year, I felt a particular connection to this year's location and its hosts at the Robert W. Woodruff Library and the Michael C. Carlos Museum. I was able to attend last year's annual meeting in Charleston and was enthusiastic to join the group again. This post will summarize my experience at the meeting and some of the key points I carried back to New York with me.

I am an emerging professional - an objects conservator who was introduced to the field by, mentored by, and educated within a bubble of objects conservators. Since graduating, my personal mission is to learn from and with conservators from other specialties. This effort has enriched my treatment toolbox, adding materials and methods previously unknown to me, and greatly influenced the way I approach individual object treatments.

My participation in SERCA provides rewarding experience with conservators from different specialties as they mix in ways that challenge, encourage, and promote each other and their work.

The meeting this year comprised two distinct day-long presentations/workshops about: 1) a mini-workshop with Richard Wolbers organized by SERCA members to refine their knowledge about using gels and emulsions for treating paper and 2) a toe-dip overview of the Modular Cleaning Program with emphasis on a few of the solutions found to be most useful by a paintings conservator. The meeting wrapped with a tips session that involved the sharing of helpful procedures and practices as well as materials and equipment easily found online and in hardware stores.

The initial trio of presentations were bursting with advice for organizing and hosting a workshop as a private conservator (though also applicable to those in institutions) and how to tailor cleaning solutions to effectively and efficiently clean. Thank you to Ginny Newell, Stephanie Watkins, Amparo Escolano, and Katie Boodle for your presentations! Through frank and entertaining monologues, the presenters shared what they learned about how to make a workshop happen (sheer force of will... and some home cooked Southern food) in addition to the finer points of their experiences in applying Wolbers' methods to the specific needs of paper. The afternoon portion demonstrated these methods in the Library's Preservation lab.

Most notable to me included:

- 1) Reminders of the science (terms like isotonic and concepts like pH adjusted water),
- 2) New-to-me equipment and materials (i.e. Laquatwin pH meters by Horiba and Paraprint OL 60, a nonwoven viscose fabric), and

3) The important instruction to: let yourself be a *participant* in the workshop you host; don't get caught up in being the host(ess)

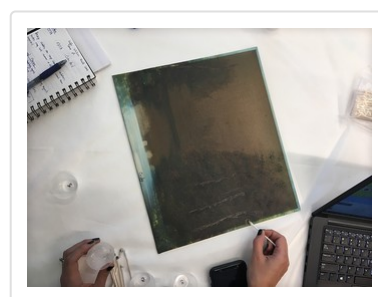
During breaks, there was time to explore Emory through exhibits at the Pitts Theology Library, the Woodruff Library, and the Carlos Museum. My favorites included DO or DIE: Affect, Ritual, Resistance by Dr. Fahamu Pecou installed at the Carlos and the Materiality of Devotion on view at Pitts.

The second day of the meeting provided a brisk overview of the Modular Cleaning Program with a step-by-step walk-through of the computer program - quirks and all – followed by a hands-on session to mix stock solutions of pH adjusted water and two of the more useful cleaning solutions (yay, chelators!). During other workshops I've attended, the masterminds behind the methods present and demonstrate the theory and procedures. This workshop was markedly different, with a practicing painting conservator, Nina Roth-Wells, passing on her expertise in and working knowledge of the topic. The result appeared to be that those with a slight background in the material could benefit from a light refresher of key concepts, practice mixing, ask practical questions, and receive useful answers. The common vocabulary between presenter and participants prompted productive discussion. While this format was not a substitute for the full workshop, the dialogue that I both overheard and participated in was lively, possibly convincing some to pick up their bottles again and others to seek out the full workshop experience.

While the target audience for these presentations did not necessarily include me or my work (currently in ethnographic objects), I found common ground and pulled many valuable lessons and facts from the presenters and their combined knowledge. It was great to be back among this vibrant group, and I look forward to seeing “y'all” at next year’s meeting!



Amparo Escolano, Senior Conservator of Paper and Objects at South Florida Art Conservation, demonstrates the use of Paraprint OL 60 to clean paper



Jessica Betz Abel, Andrew W. Mellon Fellow at the Michael C. Carlos Museum, tests cleaning solutions chosen from the MCP on a fire damaged painting brought in as trial object by a SERCA member

# Membership

## SERCA Membership

We will now be accepting payments ONLINE via PayPal! This will make renewing your membership even easier, as you no longer have to worry about mailing in those pesky checks. You will also be able to register and pay for workshops online.

Please be sure to submit BOTH the Registration Form and the Payment.



As voted on at the Annual Meeting, the SERCA membership year will now run from January 1st through December 31st. If you haven't already renewed, please do so today. And please spread the word to your colleagues!

Visit our website to check it all out:

<https://sercaconservation.org/membership/>

## SERCA Find A Conservator

If you would like to be included on the *Find a Conservator* page of the SERCA website, please contact:

Rachel Penniman, Member-at-large/Website Guru

[rachel.penniman@duke.edu](mailto:rachel.penniman@duke.edu)

# Scholarships

## SERCA Opportunity Grant



Great news!

SERCA announces a summer/fall professional development opportunity grant for SERCA members. Would you like to attend a workshop or conduct research which might also benefit your SERCA colleagues and the conservation community, but lack adequate funds to do so? SERCA is now offering up to \$500 to support a worthy endeavor in the last half of 2019.

To apply: **by July 1, 2019**, please send a brief letter of intent, explaining the intended outcomes of your project, and how

need for financial assistance. Please also include a copy of your resume. Send these materials via e-mail to Julie Newton [jnewt01@emory.edu](mailto:jnewt01@emory.edu) with the subject line **"SERCA Opportunity Grant."**

The SERCA scholarship committee and board of directors will review applications and announce a recipient before August 1, 2019. The grant recipient will be encouraged to contribute a brief blog post about their grant experience for inclusion in the SERCA newsletter.

The SERCA Opportunity Grant was initiated in 2018 to help SERCA members pay for continuing education opportunities. These include, but are not limited to, costs for conferences, workshops, or research trips **excluding** the SERCA Annual Meeting. The grant may be used for registration fees, travel expenses, or any other applicable costs to supplement your continuing education opportunity. In exchange for the Opportunity Grant, SERCA members will be required to submit a brief write-up for the newsletter.

The first two Opportunity Grant recipients, Marianne Schmeisser and Jessica Abel, flank Michaela Paulson, the Leonora Weaver Scholarship recipient in the photo to the left.

## Leonora Weaver Scholarship

Leonora Weaver (1957-2014) was an Atlanta-based conservator in private practice, a long-term member of SERCA and a mentor to many students and emerging conservators across the southeast and beyond. In honor of Leonora's commitment to education, SERCA is dedicated to the maintenance of the Leonora Weaver Scholarship, which covers registration fees and provides a small stipend for travel to SERCA's educational programs.

To apply for a Leonora Weaver Scholarship, please send a resume and brief (one page) statement of how the topic of the prospective program would benefit your long-term educational and career goals. Please send this via e-mail to: **Julie Newton, SERCA Education Chair** at [jnewt01@emory.edu](mailto:jnewt01@emory.edu).

**To donate to either the Leonora Weaver Scholarship fund or the SERCA Opportunity Grant, please either [donate online via paypal](#) through our website, or send a check for the desired amount to: SERCA c/o Brittany Dolph Dinneen, Michael C. Carlos Museum, Emory University, 571 S Kilgo Circle, Atlanta, GA 30322.** Additional queries about the grant can also be directed to [jnewt01@emory.edu](mailto:jnewt01@emory.edu).

# Newsletter Submissions

SERCA's Newsletter is published three times a year. Working on an interesting project? Have an internship or job opening to share? Let us know what's going on in your studio! Items for inclusion in the newsletter should be directed to:

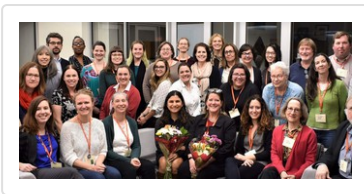
**Tracey Johnson - Newsletter Editor**

[tracey.johnson@usg.edu](mailto:tracey.johnson@usg.edu)

Please note that articles should be sent at least two weeks prior to publication. The editors reserves the right to edit copy in order to fit available space.

**Next Issue: August 2019**

**Deadline for Submissions: July 15, 2019**



## SERCA

 @serca\_se

SERCA Listserv: [serca-l@listserv.cc.emory.edu](mailto:serca-l@listserv.cc.emory.edu)

Facebook: [facebook.com/groups/200719303360945/](https://facebook.com/groups/200719303360945/)

 SeRegionConservationAssoc@...

 [sercaconservation.org](http://sercaconservation.org)