Helping Heritage Survive

Using collections care training to build bridges between communities

Alex Cantrill-Lankester, Helen Merrett and Miriam Orsini
Helping Heritage Survive

- Project background
- Aims
- The Camp
- Why Kosovo
- Outcomes
- Challenges
- Future Goals
Project Background - Who we are
Cultural Heritage without Borders

- Swedish Independent NGO
- Dedicated to preserving cultural heritage affected by conflict, neglect or human and natural disaster
- Experts in Human Rights, reconciliation and poverty reduction
- Reaction to the acute and massive conflict taking place in the Balkans Extensive and systematic destruction of cultural monuments and historic buildings
- Urgent need to find ways to protect and rebuild
Working in the Balkans for 20 years
REGIONAL RESTORATION CAMPS
They aim to aid the restoration of cultural heritage and help to build futures
2014 EUROPA NOSTRA AWARD FOR CULTURAL HERITAGE in EDUCATION, TRAINING AND AWARENESS- RAISING
Camps by Numbers

- 32 Camps held in 10 historic locations across the Western Balkans
- 26 Countries represented by participants
- 25+ professionals represented
- 103+ Restoration interventions
- 828 Participants
Integrating into the Region
We form long-term partnerships with governmental and non-governmental organisations to understand knowledge and skill gaps. Our teams of volunteers support and work alongside local communities to understand, interpret, use and conserve their tangible and intangible heritage. Find out more about volunteering or partnering with us.
Kosovo
Why Kosovo?

- Extremely affected by war
- During the conflict roughly a million ethnic Albanians fled or were forcefully driven from Kosovo
- More than 12,000 people were killed and over 3,000 people are still considered missing.
- Saw destruction and displacement of much local heritage
Area of recent contention

- Last part of the former Yugoslavia to proclaim independence in 2008
- Serbia has yet to recognise Kosovo’s independence
- Relationships between ethnic Serbs and ethnic Albanians in Kosovo remain tense and many are reluctant to integrate with each other.
Working in Kosovo

- Deeply impacted on the relationship of the communities living in the country
- CHwb identified the need to intervene
- Explored idea of a new camp
- Aim to favour a dialogue between the local communities through encouraging participation in the care of their shared heritage
- Set up partnership with the City Museum of Mitrovica to run a Camp focusing on objects’ conservation
Mitrovica
Divided City

• Originally a model town of multicultural harmony

• Physically divided by the Ibar River that runs through the town

• Daily life defined by division

• Communities live under different systems with different languages, currencies, telecommunications
Local Serbs had blockaded the north side of the Mitrovica bridge for the past three years.

The rubble was removed last week. However, it was quickly blocked again with flower pots and earth - described by some Serb residents as a "peace park".

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-27969297

Flash-point in the region
City Museum of Mitročiva
Varied collection reflects the cultural diversity of region
Aims of the Project

- **Aim 1:** Create a training course available to a group of local, regional and international participants from any background and with an interest in heritage with the aim of offering them a chance to learn about conservation and collection care.
Aims of the Project

- **Aim 2** - Offer support and advice to the host museum by involving museum staff in the training, in order to transfer to them basic skills in housekeeping, conservation and collection care and build capacity for long term sustainability.
Aims of the Project

• Aim 3 - The ultimate goal of the Camp is to bring participants from all over the Balkans together and favour interaction between divided communities, using their shared heritage as a communication tool.
Camp Structure

Original training programme focused on:

• Introduction to conservation
• Ethics in conservation
• Preventive conservation measures: measuring parameters, IPM, identifying solutions for problems related to unfit buildings
• Materials and properties
• Degradation processes: Recognising damage on objects
• How to intervene to minimise damage and stabilise objects
• Conservation assessments and records
Camp Structure

Practical:

• Handling objects
• Marking
• Measuring parameters
• Approaches to storage: suitable packing
• Basic cleaning techniques
## Course Programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Monday 9th Sept</th>
<th>Tuesday 10th Sept</th>
<th>Wednesday 11th Sept</th>
<th>Thursday 12th Sept</th>
<th>Friday 13th Sept</th>
<th>Saturday 14th Sept</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00</td>
<td>Registration: &quot;The Regional Restoration Camps: Why Are You Here?&quot; Mirjam Blasi, Chief 30 mins</td>
<td>&quot;Introduction to Conservation&quot; Peta Groves, HwB</td>
<td>Cataloguing Museum Objects - Procedures and Techniques, Helen Merritt, HwB</td>
<td>&quot;Bringing Objects Alive - Interpretation and Communication of Heritage&quot; Sir Diana Warriner, international museum and heritage consultant</td>
<td>&quot;Deterioration Mechanisms&quot; Peta Groves, HwB.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00</td>
<td>&quot;Introduction to Conservation&quot; Peta Groves, HwB</td>
<td>&quot;Documentation - Principles and Methods.&quot; Helen Merritt, HwB</td>
<td>Condition Assessment Activities</td>
<td>&quot;Bringing Objects Alive - Interpretation and Communication of Heritage&quot; Sir Diana Warriner, international museum and heritage consultant</td>
<td>&quot;COB and Health and Safety&quot; Alex Conolly-Hall</td>
<td>Mixing Periloid solutions practical session</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00</td>
<td>Guided tour of the Museum</td>
<td>Handling Exercises/Documentation Exercises</td>
<td>Condition Assessment Activities</td>
<td>Heritage Interpretation in Groups</td>
<td>Object Labelling activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00</td>
<td>Guided tour of the Museum</td>
<td>Handling Exercises/Documentation Exercises</td>
<td>Condition Assessment Activities</td>
<td>Heritage Interpretation in Groups</td>
<td>Object Labelling activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>13:00</td>
<td>MINIRVA LUNCH (until 3.30pm)</td>
<td>LUNCH (1 hour)</td>
<td>LUNCH (1 hour)</td>
<td>LUNCH (1 hour)</td>
<td>LUNCH (1 hour)</td>
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<tr>
<td>14:00</td>
<td>&quot;Introduction to camp practical works and specialists&quot; Mirjam Blasi Chief 30 mins and Alex Conolly-Hall, HwB (1 hour)</td>
<td>&quot;Common Conservation Issues in Museum Collections&quot; Sophie Rowe, HwB</td>
<td>Heritage Interpretation in Groups</td>
<td>Material Experimentation Activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>15:00</td>
<td>Guided tour of MINIRVA TBC</td>
<td>Handling Exercises/Documentation Exercises</td>
<td>Preventive conservation Activities</td>
<td>Heritage Interpretation in Groups</td>
<td>Material Experimentation Activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>16:00</td>
<td>Guided tour of MINIRVA TBC</td>
<td>Handling Exercises/Documentation Exercises</td>
<td>Preventive conservation Activities</td>
<td>Heritage interpretation in groups</td>
<td>Material Experimentation Activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>17:00</td>
<td>FINISH</td>
<td>Handling Exercises/Documentation Exercises</td>
<td>Preventive conservation Activities</td>
<td>Presentations from each group and conclusions of the interpretation activities</td>
<td>FINISH</td>
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<tr>
<td>18:00</td>
<td>Activities: Object Handling Training Object Drawing Object Photography Documentation</td>
<td>Activities: Condition Assessment Prevention: Ped 10 Measuring Light Measuring 80 Ped lead</td>
<td>FINISH</td>
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<td>19:00</td>
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**Notes:**
- Activities: Mixing 50% 872 solutions
- Labelling objects: pens, pencils, pencil template
- Material Experimentation on sacrificial materials.
Handling, Packing and Preventative Conservation
### Course Programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00</td>
<td>&quot;Ethics and Conservation&quot;&lt;br&gt;Alex Cantrell and Helen Merritt, M.A.</td>
<td>Object Conservation Exercise</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00</td>
<td>&quot;Introduction to Textile Conservation Processes&quot;&lt;br&gt;Sophie Ransome, PhD</td>
<td>Object Conservation Exercise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00</td>
<td>Excursion, Object Conservation Exercise</td>
<td>Object Conservation Final Projects</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00</td>
<td>Lunch (until 2:30pm)</td>
<td>Lunch (1 hour)</td>
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<td>13:00</td>
<td>Textile Conservation Exercises</td>
<td>Object Conservation Final Projects</td>
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<tr>
<td>14:00</td>
<td>Sites, Object Conservation Exercises</td>
<td>Object Conservation Final Projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:00</td>
<td>In the Region, Object Conservation Exercises</td>
<td>Object Conservation Final Projects</td>
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<tr>
<td>16:00</td>
<td>Packing Challenge, Object Conservation Exercises</td>
<td>Object Conservation Final Projects</td>
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<tr>
<td>17:00</td>
<td>Object Conservation Exercises Conclusion and Discussion of day's activities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18:00</td>
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<tr>
<td>19:00</td>
<td>Closing Ceremony – final presentations and handing out of certificates</td>
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### NOTICES:

- Dry cleaning techniques
- Folded handling
- Types/cottons
- Dye-fastness testing
- Practice run through complete conservation process. Done all together as a group incl full documentation.
- Discussion and practice at packing different materials
- The Great Packing Challenge Party
- Farewell drinks
Paraloid, Marking, Cleaning Different Materials
Focus on Textiles
Final Projects and Exam

Choose groups supervised by a Conservator.

- Metals
- Ceramics
- Textiles
- Organics
Materials and Sustainability

Focus on sourcing local materials
Need to focus on documentation

Almost all documentation for the collection was lost in a fire in 2009

Expand from just Conservation documentation

Aimed to help put a comprehensive documentation system in place
Expanding Documentation

Theory:

• Principle and methods of documentation
• Procedures and techniques for cataloging objects

Practical:

• Documentation Activity
• Location tickets
Documentation Theory

- Tailor lectures to suit participants and museum
- Simple but effective methods
- Cost effective
- Shared experiences
- Tools need to be sourced locally
- Encompass Government issued documentation
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numri i përkohshëm</th>
<th>Numri i objektit</th>
<th>Koleksioni</th>
<th>Kategoria e Koleksionit</th>
<th>Emri i objektit</th>
<th>Krijoji</th>
<th>Vend i përdrimit</th>
<th>Vend i gjetjes</th>
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<tr>
<th>Materiali</th>
<th>Përmesac</th>
<th>Pershkrimi Fizik</th>
<th>Data</th>
<th>Historia e objektit</th>
<th>Shenime</th>
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<th>Pozicioni i personale</th>
<th>Data e levizjes</th>
<th>Fronesa</th>
<th>Ojëndja</th>
<th>Data e përcakimit të gjendjes</th>
<th>Personat që fotografojnë</th>
<th>Data e fototrahtës</th>
<th>Vend i fototrahtës/ndër i</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<th>Viera</th>
<th>Data e Yërsimit</th>
<th>Regjistruesi</th>
<th>Data e Regjistrimit</th>
<th>Përditësimi</th>
<th>Data e Përditësimit</th>
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**Simple Database**
The Participants
Beyond Conservation
**Egg Packing Challenge**

**The Great Egg Packing Challenge 2017**

- **Rules:**
  - Work as a group
  - Construct protective packaging for one raw egg using any of the materials on your table
  - The packaging should be designed to withstand impact
  - You have ONE HOUR!
Excursion Day - CHwB Restoration Projects
Excursion Day - Mosque
Excursion Day - Orthodox Monastery
Community Projects
Cultural Night
Outcomes

- Camp has been running for 5 years
- 3 years in City museum of Mitrovica
- 2 years in National Museum in Pristina
Outcomes

Since 2013:

• 80 participants

• 12 countries (Kosovo, Albania, Serbia, Macedonia, Hungry, Bulgaria, Croatia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Greece, Italy, Sweden and the UK)

• Continued interest of many participants

• Camp gradually integrated as practical training in the curriculum of BA and MA courses in Cultural Heritage and Archaeology (University of Tirana)

• Long-lasting friendships
Outcomes

• 15 international and local heritage professionals

• Benefitted on a professional and personal level

• Amazing CPD opportunity - project management, budget management, teaching, training, team work, outreach, etc.

• Reconnecting with heritage and museums’ role in society
Impact - Improved Storage and Showcases
120 + objects conserved
Challenges and Future Goals

- Ambitious project
- Building Trust
- Making a difference and achieving sustainability
- Bridging communities
- Facing traditional view points
Building Trust

- Initially staff were hesitant about access to the collections
- Building trust was key
- Important to work with local conservators
- Keep Museum staff involved
Making a Difference: Achieving Sustainability

- Impact on the host museum one of the biggest challenges

- Limit to what can be achieved in a few weeks of the camp

- Camp can act as a trigger and open funding opportunities
Bridging Communities
Sustainability

- CHwB is a charity
- Reliant on funding
- Reliant on availability of trainers
Conclusions
Thanks to…

Alex Cantrill-Lankester

CHwB Albania
Thank you!

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