

Issue 48 includes articles about new finds from Egypt, Russia and Ukraine, as well as new information about some old finds from Germany.

Over the past years numerous textile scholars have expressed a wish to have a list of all articles published in the ATN. Since April 2009, the contents of issues ATN 1-45 are available on the ATN website and can be searched for topics or authors. We hope this will be a useful tool for the archaeological textile community. By far the most important event (and not in a good way) of the past months has been the announcement about the closing of the Textile Conservation Centre in Southampton. It is hardly possible to overestimate the significance of this not only for textile conservators but all researchers working with archaeological textiles. Following notice, reprinted from the Antiquaries Journal (March 2009), expresses our sentiments.

Too late for the Textile Conservation Centre?

Though the final decision to close the Textile Conservation Centre in Southampton was announced on 21 February 2009, the UK press only seemed to have woken up to the fact over the Easter weekend when, too late for campaigning to save the Centre, several newspapers reported that the entire staff of the Centre will be laid off in November, bringing to an end decades of conservation work by an organization recognized internationally for the excellence of its work.

Under the headline 'Textile Conservation experts face the sack in a material world', The Times reported that the Centre that had trained half the leading textile conservators in the world 'faces becoming history itself'. 'Like darts, ceremonial pageantry and whisky distilling, textile conservation is one of those specialist fields in which Britain still leads the world', the report said, quoting Peter Longman, deputy chairman of the Textile Conservation Centre Foundation, as saying that the expertise of the staff, built up over more than thirty years will be 'scattered to the winds'. The centre's reputation is founded on the professional training that it offers, he said, and its graduates dominate a vital niche of the heritage world: 'if you go into any major museum in the world, from the Getty Institute to the British Museum, half the trained textile conservators have come from the Textile Conservation Centre'.

Other museum professionals and conservation experts also expressed their sense of outrage. Jerry Podany, President of the International Institute of Conservation, called it 'a betrayal of trust' that would damage the world's textile heritage, while Sandra Smith, Head of Conservation at the Victoria and Albert Museum, called it shocking and catastrophic.

For the Telegraph, which also reported the story, the stark issue is that there will now be nobody to preserve the toy cat Bagpuss, star of children's TV, nor to restore the topsail of Lord Nelson's flagship HMS Victory, the boots worn by Henry VIII or the fake leather trousers of 'Queen' frontman Freddie Mercury.

The **Annual General Meeting for 2009** was held in Hallstatt, Austria on the 7th of June in conjunction with the 4th General Meeting of the DressID project.

Present:

Margarita Gleba, Eva Andersson Strand, Ulla Mannering, Susan Möller-Wiering, Marie-Louise Nosch, Karina Grömer, Peter Bichler, Isabella Bender-Weber and Dagmar Drinkler.

As no additional proposals have been sent in by the members, the agenda was the following:

1. Election of a chairperson, if somebody so wishes: Ulla Mannering elected as chairperson.
2. The report of the board for the period since the previous annual general meeting: Eva B. Andersson Strand, Margarita Gleba and Ulla Mannering reported that the website is functioning well. The fees remained unchanged in 2009. Two issues for 2008 have been published, and there is a regular submission of contributions to the newsletter.
3. Presentation and approval of the revised account of 31st of December 2008.
4. Decisions concerning individual and institutional subscription fee for 2010: the yearly membership fee for individual and institutional will be raised with 5-9 € if necessary to cover rising printing and postage costs.
5. Election of 3 members of the board and 1 deputy member for the current financial year: Eva B. Andersson Strand, Margarita Gleba, Ulla Mannering remain as board members, Carol Christiansen remains as deputy. Karina Grömer was added to the list of *ad hoc* scientific board members.
6. Election of an auditor and 1 deputy auditor member for the current financial year: Marie-Louise Nosch and Lauritz H. Gregersen stay as auditor and deputy.

The editors