Happy New Year, and welcome to the latest edition of the biannual FPIG newsletter. In this issue we discuss the upcoming SAA meetings in St. Louis, present some recent publications and upcoming events, and Randy Haas describes a method for documenting and analyzing perishable artifacts with a flatbed scanner and GIS.

**FPIG in St. Louis**

The St. Louis meetings mark the 75th Anniversary Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology. Several events may be of particular interest to FPIG members. First, the SAA will host guided tours of St. Louis’ beautiful Missouri Botanical Garden on Wednesday, April 14th and Saturday, April 17th. Both tours will run from 1:30-4:00 pm. Space is limited to 26 people. The cost is $38. For more information about the Missouri Botanical Garden, please visit their website at [http://www.mobot.org/](http://www.mobot.org/).

A second event of potential interest to FPIG members is the SAA-hosted trip to Cahokia. Tours will take place on Friday, April 16th from 12:00-4:00 pm and Saturday April 17th from 8:30 am-12:30 pm, 10:30 am-2:30 pm, and 1:00-5:00 pm. Space is limited to 46 people, and the cost is $18. For more information about Cahokia please visit [http://cahokiamounds.org/](http://cahokiamounds.org/). For more information about these or other SAA events, please refer to the preliminary program at [http://saa.org/AbouttheSociety/AnnualMeeting/PreliminaryProgram/tabid/187/Default.aspx](http://saa.org/AbouttheSociety/AnnualMeeting/PreliminaryProgram/tabid/187/Default.aspx)

The FPIG business meeting will be on Thursday April 15th from 6-7pm. Check the the official program for the room number. We encourage FPIG members to come and share ideas, questions, and suggestions.

**Fiber and Perishable Events**

The following are additional conferences, workshops, exhibits, and tours that may be of interest to members. If you are aware of additional events please post them to the Listserv or contact the co-chairs (see listserv and contact details below).

**Conferences**

*Convergence 2010*
Handweavers Guild of America
Albuquerque, NM
July 18-25, 2010
[http://www.weavespindye.org/?loc=8-00-00](http://www.weavespindye.org/?loc=8-00-00)

*109th Annual Meeting*
American Anthropological Association
New Orleans, LA
November 17-21, 2010
[http://www.aaanet.org/meetings/Call-for-Papers.cfm](http://www.aaanet.org/meetings/Call-for-Papers.cfm)

*36th Annual Symposium, Crossroads: From Cowhide to Couture*
Costume Society of America
Kansas City, Missouri
May 25-30, 2010
[http://www.costumesocietyamerica.com/natsym.htm](http://www.costumesocietyamerica.com/natsym.htm)

**Exhibits**

*An Enduring Motif: The Pomegranate in Textiles*
Philadelphia Museum of Art
Philadelphia, PA
Through February 21, 2010

Artists have been inspired by the inner and outer beauty of the pomegranate since biblical times. The objects on view in this exhibition represent a cross-section of textiles from the Museum’s collection that feature this richly symbolic fruit.

[http://www.philamuseum.org/exhibitions/344.html](http://www.philamuseum.org/exhibitions/344.html)

*Traveling the Silk Road: Ancient Pathway to the Modern World*
American Museum of Natural History
New York, NY
Through August 15th

This exhibit presents the history of the Silk
Road, the legendary trade route between Far East Asia and the Middle East.
http://www.amnh.org/exhibitions/silkroad/about.php

Fowler in Focus: African Basketry Arts, Thinking outside the Basket
September 6, 2009-January 24, 2010
The Fowler Museum at UCLA
Los Angeles, CA
These beautiful, ingenious works are mostly examples of basketry not created as containers, but rather serving myriad other functions in African life. See hats, masks, shields, elegant screens, sleeping mats, and other household items—presented in counterpoint to a small grouping of conventional containers including divination baskets, treasure baskets, and more—all made by creatively employing a wide variety of basketry techniques and materials.
http://www.fowler.ucla.edu/incEngine/?content=cm&cm=exhibitions

Workshops and Classes

Care of Basketry Collections
Campbell Center for Historic Preservation Studies
Mount Carroll, Illinois
August 19-21, 2010
Price: TBA
This course looks at various approaches to keeping basketry of any shape, color, or fiber-type looking its best with the least effort and cost. Coping with damaged basketry in collections will be addressed during practical afternoon workshops.
http://www.campbellcenter.org/pages/collections.html#basketry

Care of Textile Collections I
Campbell Center for Historic Preservation Studies
Mount Carroll, Illinois
September 8-11, 2010
Price: TBA
This course will familiarize participants with the chemical and physical structure of textile fibers; the causes and effects of deterioration; environmental standards and standards for storage, handling, and exhibiting both flat and formed textiles; descriptive terminology and simple tests for fiber identification; properties and effects of finishes; ethical limitations and considerations in the treatment of textile pieces including aqueous cleaning. Hands-on practicum will include handling and examination techniques, surface cleaning, and correct methods for textile storage.
http://www.campbellcenter.org/pages/collections.html#caretextiles1

Care of Textile Collections II
Campbell Center for Historic Preservation Studies
Mount Carroll, Illinois
September 13-15, 2010
Price: TBA
Building on the material covered in Care of Textiles I, this class will combine lecture, demonstrations, and hands-on experience in currently accepted techniques for curatorial care of textiles. Course work will include the following: review of conservation ethics and examination techniques covered in the introductory course; documenting condition; determining and documenting the causes of damage to textiles; introduction to fiber microscopy; techniques for the display and storage of fragile textiles; non-intrusive mounting techniques for the display of flat textiles; and basic repair of structural damage, including the selection of appropriate mending materials.
http://www.campbellcenter.org/pages/collections.html#caretextiles2

Care of Textile Collections III
Campbell Center for Historic Preservation Studies
Mount Carroll, Illinois
September 16-18, 2010
Price: TBA
This four-day class will combine reading, lecture, demonstrations, and hands-on experience to review and apply currently accepted techniques for curatorial care of textiles and costumes. Course work builds on experiences from Textiles I and II. This will include the review of conservation ethics; examination techniques; documentation procedures; and emergency preparedness and reaction. Three days will be dedicated for guided treatments of a textile object. This may include: basic wet cleaning; basic repair of structural damage, including the selection of appropriate materials; and aesthetic compensation for loss.
http://www.campbellcenter.org/pages/collections.html#caretextiles3
Care of Textiles
Northern States Conservation Center
St. Paul, MN
April 26-May 21, 2010
Price: $475

Care of Textiles teaches students to identify fibers and finishes, write condition reports, and understand the agents of deterioration that cause the most harm to various fabrics in storage and on exhibit. Topics include preparing textiles for transport, mannequins, and three-dimensional supports and framing.

http://collectioncare.org/training/trol_classes_ms212.html

Care of Baskets
Northern States Conservation Center
St. Paul, MN
February 1-26, 2010
Price: $475

Care of Baskets will cover guidelines for handling, labeling, exhibiting, and storing baskets. Instruction will include condition assessments and an introduction to integrated pest management.

http://collectioncare.org/training/trol_classes_ms225.html

Tour
Textiles/FolkArt/Market Tours
Puchka Peru Cultural Tours
April 16 - May 7, 2010
September 17 - October 8, 2010

PUCHKA 22-day journeys are not just small-group tours, but also hands-on workshops with master spinners, weavers, knitters, embroiderers and gourd engravers from across Perú. These tours visit Lima, a UNESCO designated Heritage Site in Arequipa, the Colca Valley, Cusco, and the Urubamba Valley/Sacred Valley of the Inca. The tour also explores Machu Picchu and other archaeological sites, stunning textile collections and private studios of textile artists, amazing museums, colorful markets and a whole lot more.

http://www.puchkaperu.com/market_tours.shtml

Recent Publications

Barrkman, Joanna

Canetta, Elisabetta, Kimberley Montiel, and Ashok K. Adya

Claro, Ana, Maria J. Melo, J.Sérgio Seixas de Melo, et al.

Degano, Ilaria, and Maria Perla Colombini

Frei, Karin Margarita, Irene Skals, Margarita Gleba, and Henriette Lyngstrøm

Gallo, Jenny M., and Jose R. Almirall

Gillis, Carole, and Marie-Louise Nosch (editors).

Jordan, Peter, and Stephen Shenman
2009 Diversity in Hunter-Gatherer Technological Traditions: Mapping Trajectories of Cultural 'Descent with Modification' in Northeast

Kemp, S.E., D.J. Carr, J. Kieser, B.E. Niven, and M.C. Taylor


Kirkbride, K. Paul, and Silvana R. Tridico


Kraamer, Malika


Loux, Joe, and Suckling, Katie


Mannering, Ulla, Göran Possnert, Jan Heinemeier, and Margarita Gleba


O’Brien, Mary Belle L.


Santos-Granero, Fernando


Tarsitani, Belle Asante


Tehrani, Jamshid J., and Mark Collard


Vanden Berghe, I., Margarita Gleba, and Ulla Mannering


Webster, Laurie D.


**Special Report:**

**Flatbed Scanners, GIS, and Perishable Artifact Documentation**

by Wm. Randy Haas, Jr.

Several years ago, I began an analysis of approximately 238 middle-to-late Holocene cordage artifacts from Old Man Cave in southeast Utah (Geib and Davidson, *Kiva* 64:191-202). At the time, I was moving from Flagstaff to Tucson, AZ, and I was concerned that I would be unable to complete my data collection effort before departing. Having imaged the artifacts with a flatbed scanner (Figure 1) as described by Houk and Moses (*SAA Bulletin* 16(3)), I began to ask whether or not these images could be used for rigorous examination of the metric and colorimetric attributes of the artifacts. After all, the 800 DPI images are resolved enough for low-power microscopic examination, and the scanning method eliminates the fish-eye effect of more traditional camera lenses. But before risking such a method, I tested the metric and colorimetric accuracy of my rather inexpensive flatbed scanner. This article presents my assessment and shows scan-derived data to be impressively accurate metrically and impressively precise colorimetrically. I show that the common flatbed scanner offers more than an imaging tool; rather, it can be a valuable and...
convenient research instrument for fiber-and-perishable analysts.

For my first test, I asked what degree of metric inaccuracy I could expect from scan imagery. I simply scanned a Schaeadler Precision Rule with 0.5 mm graduations at 800 pixels-per-inch. The ruler was rescanned at 5-cm intervals along the long- and short-axes of the scanner glass. The resultant images were then imported into ArcGIS 8, where I digitally measured the full length of the ruler at each position. The length measurements, when compared to the known length values on the ruler, showed average errors of .3 mm along the long axis and 0.2 mm along the short axis of the image. This translates to a mere 0.1 percent error along both axes.

Although I could have used an image editing software such as Adobe Photoshop to generate my measurements, I choose to use ArcGIS in this unconventional way because it creates a record of my measurement locations, and all measurements are conveniently recorded into digital tables—no hand tabulation or data entry required! The resultant tables can be opened in excel, SPSS, or other data analysis packages for exploration and analysis.

I next asked whether or not the error ranges were distributed evenly across the images. To answer this question, I digitally measured the distance between each 1-cm tick mark along the ruler images. For the long axis, the data show that the error is evenly distributed indicating that any measurement will be erroneous by only 0.1 percent. On the other hand, the short axis of the scanner bed showed differential distortion with the greatest distortion near the edges. The worst error was a mere 0.4%. These results compare favorably with digital calipers, which report errors of approximately 0.2 mm. In a worst-case scenario, the scanner in this study would introduce .2mm of error on a 5 cm measurement. More often, however, a 5 cm measurement would introduce less than 0.1 mm error.

As a bonus, this method of metric measurement contributed to the preservation of the cordage artifacts' integrity. More times than any analyst cares to admit, delicate cordage artifacts break when they are straightened for length measurements. The method presented here minimizes such strains on the delicate fibers.

Given the success of the metric test, I next asked whether or not I could similarly derive accurate colorimetric data from the imagery. Colorimetric data are useful for identifying fiber materials and fiber processing methods in cordage. To assess the scanner's colorimetric accuracy, I scanned a Gretag Macbeth mini color checker card (manufactured by Munsell Color Services) at five different positions on the scanner glass and compared the digitally measured RGB values for each of the 24 color squares to their known values. Again, all data were recorded in ArcGIS 8. The data revealed the colorimetric determinations to be very precise, though the accuracy is less impressive. Large samples (>9,900 positions for each color square) showed that standard deviations rarely exceed 1 percent (3/255 color units), but the error averages 8 percent with the worst determination at 18 percent.

These data made clear that my flatbed scanner imagery was appropriate for my analytical purposes. The subsequent analysis of the Old Man Cave cordage assemblages offers a story of potential interest to ar-
chaic-period archaeologists of the Colorado Plateau, but the method may be of broader interest to fiber and perishable analysts everywhere. My analysis was performed with a low-end EpsonPerfection 1260 scanner, which I purchased for approximately $100 in 2001. Higher-end scanners are likely to perform at least as well. We can thus conclude that the flatbed scanner imagery is not only publication-quality but also research quality. Such images provide a record of artifact form and color from which future analysts and remote researchers can feel comfortable deriving quantitative data.

**Perishables Technology Listserv Reminder**

The Perishable Technology Listserv is an e-mail discussion list moderated by Ed Jolie that was formed to stimulate discussion about and disperse knowledge of perishable technologies within as anthropological framework. To join the list, terminate a subscription, or obtain additional information please visit the listserv webpage at [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Perishable_Technology/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Perishable_Technology/).

**Request for Information**

Please submit any information you would like to share with FPIG members to the co-chairs. In particular, we are interested in your research interests, publications, reviews, and upcoming events. We urge anyone presenting a paper on fiber perishables at an upcoming conference to let us know so we can announce it to the interest group prior to the meeting.

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