

Session Track: Panel Discussion
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Paper: The Americas and Eastern Europe Exchange in Cultural Heritage Conservation

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Speaker(s) Biography

Ken Follett, moderator: specialist in heritage conservation services, president PreCon LogStrat, LLC. President Follett Group, LLC. Former APTI board member, founding member and first past president Preservation Trades Network, current editor PTN NNN (print newsletter), PTN liaison to the board as assistant to the PTN president. Conservation project manager, author, estimator, and business consultant.

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Marek Baranski, PhD: Poland, architect and archaeologist CEO PPKZ. Post-diploma course: 1993 - Conservation of archaeological sites (Getty Conservation Institut, Archaeological Service of Cyprus), 1998 - Research and conservation of architectural surface (ICCRUM) 2004 PhD. Protection of a intangible, immaterial and absent cultural heritage since 1979 professionally in the field and protection of historic monuments, as well as in research and studies of ancient classic architecture of Palmyra in Syria, and Hermopolis Magna in Egypt. Participant of numerous conservation projects in Poland, Syria, Egypt, Macedonia, and Mongolia. Author of the Annihilated Heritage Zabludów Project. Member of ICOMOS, and Association of Historic Monuments Conservators (SKZ). Lecturer and author of numerous publications on research of historical monuments and protection of cultural heritage.

Michael J. Devonshire: Historic Materials Conservation, History of Construction Technology, Architectural Documentation. Partner and Director of Conservation, Jan Hird Pokorny Associates, Inc., since 1997; Columbia University, Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, Since 2003. Education: Roger Williams University, Bristol, RI. Historic Preservation; R.I. School of Design, Providence, RI., Architecture; Aegean School of Art, Paros, Greece; Sculpture; Attingham School for the Study of the English Country House, West Dean, UK.. Organizations: Board of Directors - US/ICOMOS, Snug Harbor Cultural Center, Staten Island, NY (previous), The Victorian Society, NYC Metropolitan Chapter (previous). Board of Advisors: Taiwan Department of Cultural Properties, The Merchant s House Museum, New York City. Manitoga, The Russel Wright Design Center, Garrison, NY.

Abstract

The focus of the session will be from the perspective of each presenter to provide examples and case study examples (Powerpoint slides) that go to the topic of The Americas and Eastern European Exchange in Cultural Heritage Conservation specific to Interdisciplinary Collaboration in Heritage Conservation, Sustainable Heritage Conservation and Conservation Technology and Philosophy.

The moderator will provide continuity of theme and outline interconnections and threads of relevance to the conference theme and subthemes between the individual presentations of the panel participants. The moderator will provide a continuity of viewpoint between APT, PTN, PPKZ, and the Poland Association of Historic Monuments Conservators (SKZ).

Looking back: since 1997 when APTI provided a delegation at Antikon 97 in Szczecin, Poland there has been a continual exchange of visits of traditional trades, architects, architectural conservators and preservationists between Poland and the Americas. These exchanges have involved both APT as well as the Preservation Trades Network and continue to provide a point of collaboration between these two organizations. These exchanges have also brought in to relationship the Timber Framers Guild and the International Log Builders Association.

Looking further back, Marek Baranski's article Polish-American cooperation in the field of historic monument conservation clearly indicates a lengthy history of Americas and Eastern European exchange of technology and philosophy on the themes of cultural conservation. The impulse to establish Polish-American cooperation in the field of monument preservation was the catastrophic damage to Warsaw in 1944. In the fall of 1944 a group of Polish immigrants residing in New York made an effort to create an American fund for the restoration of Warsaw. The Cold War hindered cooperation between monument conservators for many years. In 1963, Prof. Lorentz gave a speech at a restoration conference in Williamsburg, which was published in the conference papers, presenting the almost completed initiative pertaining to the restoration of Warsaw's Old Town complex as an example of Polish experiences with restoration of old city centers.

Looking forward: the panel will present programs of exchange and conservation projects ongoing and envisioned for the future. Discussion will be had as to the current state of the Zabłudow synagogue project, the plan for reconstruction of a 17th century log and timber synagogue near to Bialystok, Poland.

The interdisciplinary element will encompass from the traditional trade practice to the architectural design, project management and archeology, and the lessons to be learned in cross-cultural and cross-language collaborations on projects initiated and developed in an exchange of conservation technology and philosophy between the Americas and Eastern Europe. Though the emphasis of the Eastern European speakers is on Poland the connection of PPKZ is with the network of heritage conservation throughout Eastern Europe and extends into all of the existing Communist and post-Communist world of heritage conservation. As well the emphasis on the Americas includes the entire continents of North and South America.

The theme of sustainable heritage conservation will be focused on the documentation, reconstruction, and maintenance of lost and annihilated cultural heritage sites that go beyond that of the Polish national experience. Mr. Follett's presentation will touch on the subject of heritage conservation of sacred sites within the Chernobyl contamination zone of Belarus and Romania and the relevance to global sustainability of the human, natural and built environment. There will be a reflection on the practice of restoration of annihilated heritage as understood in Eastern Europe in comparison of ongoing activities of APT and PTN in cooperation with the WMF in post-Katrina historic neighborhoods of New Orleans.

There will be an ample coverage of conservation technology but even more so an exposure to the philosophy of heritage conservation as it applies to cross-cultural and cross-language exchanges. A case in point where philosophy, integration of discipline and technology of migration and cultural exchange meet is that traditional log building technologies of Eastern Europe no longer extant in contemporary Eastern Europe trades skills are currently practiced in British Columbia and are being re-introduced to Eastern Europe trades practitioners in their national efforts at restoration and conservation of cultural heritage of traditional wood structures.

The Polish experience of heritage conservation has been in many ways much of a different hue and intensity than in North America. In many respects the perspective of integration of discipline and the wedding of the technological and philosophical challenges have been directly connected to the need for a survival of national and cultural identity as well as the survival of a people. Poland in relationship to the Americas, and to the world, has for decades been in the business to export their trades and craftspeople, primarily through the network of nations inaccessible to the West throughout the Cold War. PPKZ is currently involved in the restoration of St. Petersburg and Poland recently provided a substantial grant to Vietnam for cultural heritage conservation for which PPKZ will provide assistance and training.⁷