As the Association for Preservation Technology entered its fifth decade in 2008, the field of heritage conservation was a well-established discipline. At APT’s founding in 1968, very few architects or engineers in private practice were able to devote their efforts to the preservation of historic buildings. Columbia University’s pioneering program in historic preservation was just four years old, and the field of architectural conservation had yet to be born. By 2008 APT’s membership included preservation architects (called “conservation architects” in Canada) and engineers in private practice and government, contractors and tradespeople, professors in historic-preservation programs, materials scientists, architectural conservators, students, and other historic-preservation professionals in government and private employ. This multidisciplinary constituency created a fertile ground for the development and propagation of technical solutions to the often knotty problems of preserving and conserving the physical manifestations of culture.
The early efforts of APT had gone a long way toward developing an understanding of the technology of pre-twentieth-century buildings, primarily in North America. However, the timeline for buildings considered historic or in need of physical attention had shifted dramatically in the intervening 40 years. APT members found themselves working on buildings constructed in the mid-twentieth century and, more frequently, on structures that were younger than they were—a most sobering experience. A cultural change also affected historic-preservation practice: the energy crisis of the 1970s focused attention on energy usage in buildings and on the stewardship of the planet’s resources. These two currents strongly influenced how APT as an organization directed its attention.

The Strategic Plan for 2009–2014

Due in large part to the efforts of the executive committee—which was led by president Barbara Campagna and included Natalie Bull, Anne Sullivan, Brian Robinson, and Nancy McCoy, aided by the new administrative director, Nathela Chatara—APT began its fifth decade with a firm organizational base. On stable financial footing, with professional administration, professional editorial services for the *APT Bulletin*, and professional management of the conferences, APT was poised to strengthen its presence and influence in the field of heritage conservation.

In her article in the 40th anniversary issue of the *Bulletin*, published in 2009, Natalie Bull reviewed the importance of strategic planning to APT’s development. A new strategic plan, for 2009–2014, was developed, both to address emerging issues and to continue to improve APT’s operations and financial stability. Work on the new plan began under the presidency of Brian Robinson and was instituted in 2009 by the Board of Directors and the president, Anne Sullivan. Much of the shape of APT as it stands in its 50th year was established by that plan. Its focus was to establish APT as a recognized resource for technical information, especially regarding adaptive reuse and sustainable practices for existing buildings. The plan placed special emphasis on the role of APT’s technical committees as developers and disseminators of technical knowledge and established guidelines for their activities.

Three active technical committees were in place in 2009—Preservation Engineering (PETC), Sustainable Preservation (TCSP), and Modern Heritage (TC-MH). The strategic plan set out specific goals for the committees, focused on sharing technical knowledge with the APT membership at large. These committees and a fourth, the Technical Committee for Documentation (TC-Doc), created in 2013, surpassed the requirements in striking fashion. Their accomplishments deserve special attention, and each of the committees has prepared a short article in this issue recounting their work. The Technical Committee for Materials, formed in 2017, is poised to make an impact.

The strategic plan was implemented during the Great Recession, a period when construction operations were severely curtailed for several years and employment in construction-related fields was diminished. With the understanding that the fortunes of APT were directly affected by the economy, the 2009–2014 plan put measures in place to protect against episodic changes in fortunes; these measures included the creation of an emergency contingency account for years when conference revenues are insufficient and the establishment of a reserve fund to cover operating expenses in the event of a severe revenue shortfall. As a testament to the esteem in which APT members held the organization, the operating reserve was established despite the dismal economic conditions. Another forward-looking measure was to actively supplement the Endowment Fund, which had been established in 2004. A goal of $500,000 had been set at that time but not achieved. Accordingly, the plan called for contributing a portion of conference profits to the endowment when feasible, actively soliciting contributions, and instituting other fundraising activities. With those measures in place, the goal was finally reached at the end of 2017.

For much of its existence, APT had relied on membership dues and income from the annual conference to fund its operations. The new strategic plan called for pursuing additional advertising and grants and encouraged exploration of other types of revenue. Advertising was first accepted in the *Bulletin* in 1993. More than a decade later, grants were received from the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training (NCPTT) and others for supporting special projects, such as the Building Technology Heritage Library (BTHL). Beginning in 2007, the Getty Foundation provided annual grants to underwrite travel expenses of Latin
American preservationists to attend the annual conference. Another new source of income was the 1% for the Planet organization, through which member companies pledge one percent of their billings to an approved nonprofit organization that supports environmental solutions. Past president Kent Diebolt's company Vertical Access identified APT as a recipient partner. The initial allocation was used to support the Sustainability Summit at the Victoria conference in 2011.

One focus of pursuing additional funding sources was to increase revenues to pay for professional services to compile and edit the Communiqué. The newsletter had been published by a volunteer editor since its inception, but with a growing membership and more information to share, the job of editor had become highly taxing. In 2010 APT engaged Mount Ida Press, publishers of the APT Bulletin, to edit Communiqué. Their first issue was the May/June 2010 issue and was 11 pages. Subsequently, Communiqué has been published every two months, rather than quarterly, enhancing communications among members. Issues of Communiqué now regularly exceed 20 pages.

The 2009–2014 strategic plan also called for establishing an archive. Documents from the inception of APT in 1968, including a complete set of the Bulletin and Communiqué, had been housed at Colonial Williamsburg under the stewardship of Thomas Taylor. In December 2009 the archive was transferred to the Athenaeum in Philadelphia, where it remains today. The collection has been actively maintained by Lonnie Hovey, who has gleaned materials from it to produce a regular column in Communiqué entitled “From the Archives.”

Another leg of the plan called for enhancing APT’s electronic and print publications. A concerted effort in 2006 produced a redesigned website and style guide. In 2010 an ad hoc committee was appointed by president Anne Sullivan to “refresh” the APT website visually, improve navigation, and change the back-end functionality of the site to allow administrative staff to make updates. Committee members included Publications Committee co-chairs Frances Gale and Dean Koga, Diana Waite, Derek Trelstad, Kyle Normandin, Art Femenella, Bhawna Dandona, Kitty Vieth, and Julie Maddox. The committee identified improvements, and the freshened site was launched in 2012.

Enhancement of the APT Bulletin began in 2014. Diana Waite, Bulletin editor, presented new designs for the content pages and the cover, to coincide with the upgrade to full-color printing. The designs were reviewed by an ad hoc committee consisting of the Publications Committee co-chairs Kitty Vieth and Dean Koga, along with Anne Sullivan, Derek Trelstad, and Jeff Greene. The first color issue of the Bulletin was volume 46, no. 1, published in 2015. The additional cost of color printing was more than offset by the increased revenue from color advertisements.

The Strategic Plan for 2015–2020

With implementation of the 2009–2014 plan well underway, president Joan Berkowitz initiated planning for the next strategic plan. At meetings of the Board of Directors, Berkowitz engaged a facilitator to help board members learn how to be better ambassadors for APT and tasked director Ron Anthony to lead a discussion on “visioneering” as the basis for building the next plan.

Under the presidency of Gretchen Pfahl, Anthony continued his visioneering project, leading a task force consisting of Susan Buggey, Frances Gale, Marilyn Kaplan, Patrick Sparks, Tom Whitmore, and Rachel Will at a retreat where they formulated two new strategies for APT. The following strategies were adopted by the Board of Directors at its meeting in Kansas City in 2014, and the committee chairs were directed to develop action plans to fulfill them.

1. To develop and deliver excellent interdisciplinary technical content for the community of practice that preserves the built environment.

2. To identify and define upcoming issues, set the direction for development of best practices, and actively cultivate evidence-based innovative solutions, specific to preservation technology.

The first strategy cites a “community of practice,” which includes all people who treat, or are responsible for treating, the built environment. Discussions that followed recognized APT’s success in bringing technical information to its membership through the Bulletin, workshops, and conferences but also confronted APT’s limited reach beyond its membership. In their action plans, all of the technical committees and most of the standing committees addressed this strategy by identifying outside organizations with which to make meaningful connections.

The second strategy was harder to address in action plans, but two technical committees had already identified major impending issues in their areas of concern. The Technical Committee on Modern Heritage had planned a symposium for the Kansas City conference in 2015 entitled “Renewing Modernism: Emerging Principles for Practice,” which would explore issues being confronted in the treatment of mid-century modern buildings that are not iconic. This discussion continues in an article by Kyle Normandin in this issue.
The Technical Committee for Sustainable Preservation had recognized that climate change had already altered environmental conditions affecting existing buildings and that these effects would progress with time. In partial response, the committee planned a special issue of the *APT Bulletin* on climate change and preservation technology, which became volume 47, no. 1, published in 2016. An article by Sharon Park in this issue, “Sustaining Historic Properties in an Era of Climate Change,” continues the discussion. The TCSP has formed a climate-change focus group to further plumb these problems.

The sterling Nathela Chatara had served as APT’s administrative director since 2006, ably attending to all of APT’s business aspects and providing solid support to the committees and the board, while also attending to other associations. In 2015 she announced her planned retirement at the end of 2016, but the groundwork had already been prepared for finding a suitable replacement. The idea of adding an executive director to the administrative staff had been broached in the 2009 plan, and president Gretchen Pfaehler had polled the membership in 2013 for their thoughts for or against hiring an executive director; many thoughtful responses were received, without consensus.

In one of his first acts as president, Koga appointed a task force to determine whether APT should proceed with only an administrative director, with an administrative director and an executive director, or with an executive director alone. The task force was led by David Hart and included past presidents Gretchen Pfaehler and Natalie Bull, along with Frances Gale, David Fixler, and Dean Koga, ex-officio. They reviewed the duties performed by the current administrative director and recognized that the outreach called for in the plan for 2015–2020, along with raising the additional funds required for the new initiatives of the plan, were beyond the scope of an administrative director’s duties.

In recognition of the changing organizational requirements of APT’s new initiatives, the Board of Directors approved the task force’s recommendation that APT engage an executive director to take on the expanded duties, as well as to perform most of the tasks of an administrative director. Other administrative staff would pick up the remaining duties. After a search process, the task force recommended to the board at its 2016 meeting in San Antonio that APT engage longtime APT member Paul Kuenstner as executive director. Kuenstner assumed his duties in January 2017. In addition to providing support and leadership, he has begun to facilitate engagement with outside groups and secured additional revenue, working with current president Kitty Vieth.

The work of the standing committees of APT has been at the heart of its organizational operations. Highlights of their activities are summarized below.

**Student Scholarships and Outreach Committee**

The contributions and legacy of the Student Scholarships and Outreach Committee appear in a separate article in this issue by Lesley Gilmore and Sue Ann Pemberton.

**Publications**

Although some of the milestones achieved by APT publications have already been stated, their breadth has been extensive. The *APT Bulletin* continues to be the flagship publication and a leading disseminator of the technical knowledge needed by those who work in the field of cultural heritage, aided in no small part by editor Diana Waite and the staff of Mount Ida Press. Access to the *Bulletin* on JSTOR has expanded its reach tremendously. As of March 1, 2018, *Bulletin* articles have been viewed 476,561 times and downloaded more than 283,780 times by readers in more than 100 countries.

One or two special issues of the *Bulletin* have been published every year, with much of the content originating with the technical committees in fulfillment of their charge from the 2009–2014 strategic plan. The Technical Committee on Modern Heritage has guest-edited two issues on modern heritage (2011 and 2017) and a third on modern metal finishes (2015). The Preservation Engineering Technical Committee has guest-edited three issues—on preservation-engineering education (2013) and iron and steel (2012 and 2014). The Technical Committee for Sustainable Preservation guest-edited...
Frances Gale and published in 2008. She also helped publish, in her role as special publications coordinator, the second edition of *Introduction to Early American Masonry: Brick, Stone, Mortar and Plaster* by Harley J. McKee, second president of APT, long out of print. The book is not only an important resource for academic programs but is also a useful resource for practitioners. For the first time in more than 35 years, APT will be publishing an original book-length work, *Structure in Skyscrapers: History and Preservation* by Donald Friedman, in 2018.

Another effort of the Publications Committee was the creation of the Building Technology Heritage Library. *APT Bulletin* and *Communiqué* readers are no doubt familiar with it through columns written by Mike Jackson in every issue. He details its contents and history in an article in this issue.

Expanding its reach, APT established a presence in social media, and in 2011 Tahinee M. Felix Marin became its first social media editor. She moderated the Facebook and LinkedIn pages and established posting guidelines. She was succeeded in 2013 by Margaret Smith, who also became gatekeeper when the LinkedIn page became private. Expanding the breadth of APT’s social media presence, she created Pinterest boards of every *APT Bulletin* cover, along with the contents page and a link to the issue on JSTOR. Pinterest boards of the BTHL created by Mike Jackson were transferred to APT ownership; each board has up to 14,000 followers. Smith has recently taken on the task of coordinating and presenting short videos on the website, which are produced by various APT committees.

**Annual Conferences**

Gretchen Pfahl began her long tenure on the Conference Committee in 2005 and became the lone chair in 2007. During that time she worked on a conference manual to provide guidance for local conference committees. She then took on a good conference model and improved it incrementally, aided by John Diodati who became co-chair of the committee in 2009. Among their accomplishments was streamlining the process for submitting and reviewing abstracts. Meeting planner Dana Saal and her team provided professional support for the logistics of the conferences, thereby allowing local conference committees to devote their efforts to the content, special events, and fundraising. When Saal stepped aside as APT’s conference planner after 11 meetings, the conference committee and Gretchen Pfahl, who had by then become APT president, selected Business Endeavors and its president, Vanessa Olmo, to be APT’s new conference planner. Business Endeavors was able to engage most of the support staff who worked on past APT conferences, thus ensuring continuity. The 2015 Kansas City conference was the first managed by Business Endeavors, and the 2016 conference, held in San Antonio, was the first they also planned. It was a rousing success.

The content of conferences has been slowly transformed. Student Scholars began presenting short papers during the main paper sessions in 2008. Responding to the 2009–2014 strategic plan, the technical committees began to organize paper sessions or complete tracks and conference workshops. At the Kansas City conference in 2015, the College of Fellows presented its first Roundtable, a forum to discuss emerging issues. The Roundtable has since become a fixture at APT’s annual meetings.
A complete list of the conferences, with their themes, has been compiled by Lonnie Hovey for this issue. Although all of the conferences have been memorable, some of them were particularly noteworthy. In 2011 at Victoria, British Columbia, APT co-located with Heritage Canada (later to be renamed the National Trust for Canada) and the International National Trusts Organisation. The theme of the 2012 conference in Charleston, South Carolina, was “Cornerstones: Collaborative Approaches to Preservation,” held in conjunction with the 16th Annual International Preservation Trades Workshop of the Preservation Trades Network (PTN). PTN members made joint presentations with their APT colleagues at APT paper sessions. Reciprocally, some APT members gave demonstrations at the PTN workshop. Expressing joint concern over the shortage of programs to develop craft skills, Joan Berkowitz and Rob Cagnetta, then president of PTN, drafted and signed the Charleston Declaration, agreeing to work together to address the problem. It is the hope of the two organizations that the commitment will help to support NCPTT’s exciting new preservation-trades training initiative.

APT met in 2013 for the first time in the “city that never sleeps,” and the more than 800 attendees had to be diligent about finding adequate rest time among the many offerings of the conference and the myriad riches of New York City. The fact that the conference hotel was on Broadway, in Times Square, added that extra frisson.

The 2017 conference in Ottawa, Ontario, was the largest ever. Held jointly with the National Trust for Canada (NTC) during the sesquicentennial of the Canadian Federation, the conference hosted more than 1,100 celebrants. The affinity between the two organizations is natural, as well as organic. Natalie Bull, executive director of the NTC, is a past president of APT. The missions of the two organizations are complementary, and congruency was underscored by the joint plenary session on sustainability. It was clear at that session that policy and technology are equally important in addressing the impacts of climate change. The success of the conference bodes well for future collaboration.

As a fitting successor, the 50th anniversary conference in Buffalo Niagara will be a physical manifestation of the joint Canadian-American origin of APT. Like this issue of the Bulletin, it will also reflect on APT’s heritage and look forward to the future. The current co-chairs of the Conference Committee, Lurita McIntosh Blank and Lyles McBratney, are continuing to refine the conference model and are planning future conferences that promise to be exemplars of the form.

Training and Education
The annual conference also incorporates workshops and occasional symposia. But such training opportunities are not restricted to the conferences. The Training and Education Committee presents workshops around the U.S. every year. From 2010 to 2013, under the direction of co-chairs Michael Schuller and Carl Elefante, spring workshops were presented at Taliesin in Spring Green, Wisconsin, hosted by Taliesin Preservation, Inc., with support from NCPTT. NCPTT has continued to provide support for other workshops and symposia.

Under co-chairs Janet Null and Amy Lamb Woods, the Training and Education Committee expanded training opportunities. In 2015 the committee presented a stained-glass symposium at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., followed by another workshop, in conjunction with the Technical...
Committee for Documentation, on
documentation technologies; this
workshop had first been conducted at
the annual conference in Québec City
in 2014. With funding from NCPTT,
the committee produced a webinar and
posted it on APT’s website. Continuing
pace, in 2016 it presented the
documentation technologies workshop
in Philadelphia and Boston, a masonry
cleaning workshop in Chicago, and a
workshop in Mesa Verde National Park
in cooperation with the National Park
Service as part of its Vanishing Treasures
Training Program. Erin Fisher became
the third co-chair at the end of 2016,
after contributing significantly to the
successes of the workshops that year.

The year 2017 brought the documentation
technologies workshop to Omaha,
Nebraska, and to Point Reyes National
Seashore in California, again as part
of the Vanishing Treasures Training
Program. In addition, APT and the
Park Service presented three different
workshops in Grand Teton National
Park and two more in national parks
in Arizona as part of that program.
Attendance at standalone workshops
and symposia increased from 35 in
2014 to 112 in 2015 and to 326 in
2016. Workshop attendance in 2017
was similar.

Two special learning opportunities have
been presented overseas. In 2011 Rosa
Lowinger led 30 APT members on a visit
to observe treatment and preservation
of historic sites in Cuba. In March 2018
APT organized a stone conservation
workshop in Stirling, Scotland, in
partnership with Historic Environment
Scotland. Similar collaborations with
organizations outside of North America
are being pursued. APT has signed a
memorandum of understanding with the
Italian preservation group Assorestauro
to present joint workshops and is ex-
ploring other opportunities.

Other Accomplishments
In response to tax-law changes in
Canada, APT Canada was reorganized
in 2016 with a new set of bylaws. Its
Board of Directors includes repre-
sentatives from the major populous
regions of Canada, and the chapters
have been renamed “sections,” although
their functionality remains unchanged.
Their activity however, has increased
since the change, boding well for the
future.

In 2012 the College of Fellows formed
an ad hoc committee, chaired by
Ronald Staley, to develop a program
for APT to officially recognize members
who have the requisite education
and demonstrated experience and
proficiency in their professional practice.
An impetus for the program was to
provide government agencies and
others who specify historic-preservation
services with a formal framework for
reviewing an individual’s preservation
expertise utilizing a quantitative-based
professional-recognition process. The plan for professional recognition was first presented to the APT Board of Directors in 2016, and a pilot program was instituted in the spring of 2018. The designation “APT Recognized Professional” will be conferred upon APT member architects, conservators, engineers, and tradespeople, as well as those from other disciplines, who meet the criteria. Reciprocity with other organizations conferring professional recognition is being pursued.

Much of the information in this article and elsewhere in this issue is a result of the Legacy Project of the College of Fellows. Conceived by Hugh Miller, the project was presented to the Board of Directors by Lonnie Hovey in 2012. Work then proceeded to unearth history hidden in the archives and to conduct oral-history interviews. Hovey’s “From the Archives” columns in Communiqué began in 2015 as a way to share the results of the project. Members of the working committee at this time are Julia Gersovitz, Lonnie Hovey, François LeBlanc, Hugh Miller, Nancy Oakley, and Michael Tomlan. The work of the group has built upon the history of the first 30 years of APT written by Diana Waite and Laura Shore, which appeared in the 30th anniversary issue of the APT Bulletin.

A Renewed Mission

The symposium planned for the 50th anniversary conference in Buffalo Niagara is entitled “The Next Fifty.” While the impact of APT within the field of heritage conservation has been profound, the context and the stakes are changing. APT members form a kinship of shared convictions—that the preservation of the built environment, with its objects and surroundings, represents, in large part, the preservation of human culture but that proper approaches and technology must be brought to bear to accomplish the mission. Many of the tools, devices, and materials available now were scarcely imaginable at APT’s birth in 1968. In the interim, transformative technologies have emerged and been superseded. Remember cassette recorders, Palm Pilots, and fax machines? The iPhone was introduced in 2006, and the technology has become indispensable to most.

We have no idea what tools will be available to us in the future, but we should think hard about what we will want them to do. That, at least, is comprehensible. A major project of the founders of APT was to understand the technology of the built past. It remains for us to begin to make sense of the future. With its strategy of identifying and responding to impending issues, and with technical committees and others in the thick of the process and looking ahead, APT gives every assurance that it is up to the task.

Dean Koga is director of technical services emeritus at Building Conservation Associates, Inc. An architect who has concentrated on architectural conservation for the last 24 years, he has been an APT member since the early 1980s. He joined the Board of Directors in 2009 and served as president from 2015 to 2017.

Notes

1. Documents consulted in preparation of this article included annual reports, committee reports to the Board of Directors, minutes of board meetings, Communiqué articles, APT Bulletin issues, and lists compiled by the APT Legacy Project Committee and by the Publications Committee.


3. According to the U.S. National Bureau of Economic Research, the Great Recession began in December 2007 and ended in June 2009. The effects of the downturn in the construction industry lasted for several more years.


The APT Bulletin is published by the Association for Preservation Technology, an interdisciplinary organization dedicated to the practical application of the principles and techniques necessary for the care and wise use of the built environment. A subscription to the Bulletin and free online access to past articles are member benefits. For more information please visit www.apti.org.