



CAPC Newsletter

April 2021

President's message

Since the last Newsletter in September 2020, the Board has continued to address issues of concern to our members. The effects of the pandemic on our field were studied through the joint CAC-CAPC COVID Surveys and we have responded with a number of initiatives (see details below). I would like to draw your attention in particular to the opportunity for members to request a reduction in their 2021 dues, an option that was described in the 2021 CAPC Membership Renewal form sent to all members in December 2020. Our prediction that the financial hardship being experienced by collecting institutions would result in the elimination of conservation positions has been borne out by layoffs at the Glenbow Museum, the Royal Ontario Museum, and the City of Ottawa Archives. Layoffs may also have occurred elsewhere but, unless these are reflected in the COVID Surveys, we rely on personal communications to keep us informed. These events are seldom reported in the media.

In light of the current crisis and the tradition of underfunding conservation efforts in Canada, advocacy for the profession is a top priority for the CAPC Board. Carmen Li, Liaison Director, has been working on a communications strategy to make the best use of CAPC's limited resources in this regard. We also continue to engage with CAC on advocacy initiatives such as the joint Hiring Resource Working Group whose efforts have already begun to pay off (see details below). Other CAPC advocacy work includes our participation in #AskaConservator Day as well as the President's participation in Sustainability in Conservation's "Leadership in Sustainability Group", in various museum and heritage sector consultations, and in the Canadian Association for Heritage Professionals' Education Committee where she raised the profile of CAPC members by demonstrating how CAPC's CPD program is an example of best practice. As an Institutional Member of the Canadian Museums Association, CAPC will also be represented at the CMA's upcoming Special General Meeting to give our field's perspective on the organization's future.

In response to the need to address the under-representation of Black, Indigenous and People of Colour in Canada's conservation field and the colonial underpinnings of conservation practice in Canadian collecting institutions, a need that has been around for a long time, but which has received great attention in the past year, the Board issued a **CAPC Statement on Racial Justice** that concluded with an eight-part action plan. As part of this action plan, we have established a \$1000 biennial Originating Communities Consultation Grant that

will assist CAPC members in compensating representatives of originating communities for their participation in consultations. A link to the statement can be found on the home page of the CAPC website and I encourage everyone to re-read it.

This has been a tough year for everyone, including the members of the CAPC Board of Directors. Amongst us we have seen health emergencies and tragedy, heavy loss of income and immense family pressures. Through it all the Board members have persevered, fulfilling their duties with thoughtfulness and dedication, and with compassion to each other and to our members. They have devoted countless hours to keeping up with the day-to-day running of the association, responding to members' concerns, and improving CAPC's ability to serve its members, the broader conservation community, and the Canadian public. They epitomize the professionalism that CAPC stands for. I am honoured and grateful to have been able to work side by side with them. Stephanie, Melissa, Jane, Cathy, Carmen, and Marie-Lou, thank you for all you do.



New members

We are delighted to welcome the following new members to CAPC:

- Anne Marlène Gagnon (Paintings)
- Véronique Belon Slougui (Archival Materials)

CAPC could not exist without those who volunteer their time and expertise on Boards of Examination, and we are all grateful for your dedication.

Conservation Hiring Resource for Heritage Institutions

The Hiring Resource has been completed and distributed to museum and archives associations across Canada. Already, several organizations have used it in crafting their Young Canada Works job ads. Carmen Li and Chloé Lucas also discussed the Hiring Resource in a virtual presentation attended by about 25 museum representatives from Canada and abroad. From the document's introduction:

The Canadian Association for Conservation of Cultural Property (CAC) and the Canadian Association of Professional Conservators (CAPC) have jointly developed these job descriptions to help Canadian heritage institutions to determine the level of qualifications they are seeking when hiring preservation professionals. Emphasis is

put on the use of accurate and meaningful language in advertising employment opportunities in the conservation profession. Notably, the words “conservator” and “conservation” have real and specific meanings when they are used in the heritage sector and this set of documents aims to clarify those meanings for human resources staff and for heritage institution managers, executives, and board members.

The CAC and the CAPC aim to support heritage institutions looking to create or add to their conservation / preservation departments and to encourage the hiring of conservation students, emerging conservators, and established professionals.

We encourage all members to check out the Hiring Resource (available on the CAPC and CAC websites) and to forward it to any organization you feel could use some guidance in hiring conservation professionals.

Many thanks to the Hiring Resource Working Group: Carmen Li, John McElhone, Elizabeth Jablonski, and Charlie Costain from CAPC, and Chloé Lucas, Sally Kim, Sara Bardovagni and Kyna Biggs from CAC

Compensation Survey Working Group

For some time, it has been clear to both CAPC and CAC that we need data regarding compensation for Canadian conservation professionals to effectively direct our advocacy and to provide those professionals with the information they need to argue for appropriate salaries and benefits. Recently, the development of the Conservation Hiring Resource and comments received through the COVID-19 surveys have highlighted this need. CAPC and CAC are therefore teaming up once again to create a Compensation Survey Working Group.

Building on the development of the Conservation Hiring Resource and drawing from the results of the 2020 COVID-19 surveys that highlighted income insecurity in the conservation field, CAPC and CAC are teaming up once more to create a Compensation Survey Working Group.

The Working Group will first undertake research to determine the scope and budget of the survey project and will draft a Memorandum of Understanding between CAC and CAPC. Duties will include researching current compensation surveys and third-party survey companies and developing question criteria and categories. The Working Group will meet every month to discuss and work on the Compensation Survey project. The preferred means of communication will be discussed and agreed upon the formation of the working group.

CAPC is looking for volunteers for this project. Please email the Liaison Director (liaison@capc-acrp.ca) if you are interested.

COVID surveys

The results of the third COVID survey will be published shortly. This joint project between CAC and CAPC has helped both organizations understand the effects of the pandemic on conservation professionals in Canada and has informed CAPC initiatives such as providing a list of COVID-related resources on our website (including links to grant and loan programs), offering the option of reduced 2021 membership dues for members financially impacted by the pandemic, and directing those seeking information about the effects of virus remediation measures on collections to our members as well as to the relevant page on the CCI website.

The first two surveys indicated that those most negatively impacted by the pandemic have been students, emerging conservators, and conservators in private practice. Overall, those with permanent or fixed term positions have been less affected but, as mentioned above, there have been layoffs and we anticipate that there will be more as the pandemic continues to impact budgets.

Summaries of the survey results in graphic form are posted on both the CAPC and CAC websites; look in the News section on the CAPC website. A more detailed report is forthcoming.

Many thanks to the volunteers who put so much time and effort into crafting the surveys, interpreting the results, and producing the graphics and reports: Chloé Lucas, Gyllian Porteous, Charlotte Parent and Katharine Potapova.

Award of Distinction

CAPC's Award of Distinction was inaugurated in 2019. The award recipients in 2019 and 2020 – Ian Hodkinson and Mary-Lou Florian respectively - were selected by the Board of Directors. Since then, the Board has decided that nominations for the award should come from the membership. A call for nominations for this year's award was sent out on March 2nd, 2021. We have not yet received any nominations so please submit one if there is a current or former CAPC member that you feel should be honoured for the extent and value of their contributions to the association and the conservation profession in Canada. A link to the nomination guidelines is on the home page of the CAPC website. If no nominations are received prior to the AGM on May 21st, 2021 we will forgo the Award for Distinction for 2021, and look forward to receiving your nominations in 2022.