



# THE INTERNATIONAL TRUST FOR CROATIAN MONUMENTS

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## PROGRESS REPORT

August 2010

Including visits to Zagreb,  
Dubrovnik, Cavtat and Cilipi

The book, *CROATIA, Aspects of Art, Architecture and Cultural Heritage*, published by Frances Lincoln, was launched in London at Henry Sotheran Ltd in November last year. I thank HE The Croatian Ambassador Dr Ivica Tomic and Lord Norwich for giving the address and Sotheran's and their trustees for the opportunity to launch the book in their splendid bookshop. Most of the contributors to the book and many other people came to the launch and I thank them all and I am particularly grateful to Dame Jennifer Jenkins, a member of the Committees of Honour for the concerts with Maestro Ivo Pogorelich that the Trust had organised in the past, for coming.

In Zagreb, the book was launched in the perfect setting of the Museum of Arts and Crafts, a "cousin" of the Victoria & Albert Museum, in February 2010. I am most grateful to the director of the Museum, Mr Miroslav Gasparovic, and his able staff who organised the launch and to Algoritam Bookshop, the British Council and Hotel Dubrovnik in Zagreb for their support. Representatives of the Ministry of Culture and all major museums and art institutions were present, including Miljenko Domijan, the head conservator of the Ministry of Culture, and Mrs Stjepan Mesic, the wife of the former President of Croatia. Three contributors to the book were present: Josko Belamaric, Branko Kirigin and, from England, Sir Timothy Clifford. Tim and Jane Clifford were great ambassadors for their country on this occasion. During their few days in Zagreb, they visited all the major collections and, under the guidance of members of the Croatian Conservation Institute, several of their conservation workshops where they saw much fascinating material, which may result in publication. I wish to record my thanks to all who came and supported the launch.

The book has been well reviewed in scholarly journals in England, Croatia and the United States and it is selling well. Its design, with the impressive photographs at our disposal, has received much praise, for which I thank Maria Charalambous, the designer for Frances Lincoln. We hope that the book remains a beacon for a long time and leads to further research.

Henry and I were in Dubrovnik at the beginning of February for the Feast of St Blaise, their patron saint. It is always a rewarding experience to see the devotion and faith of the people of Dubrovnik and its surroundings to their saint and the importance they attach to preserving this long tradition, now in its 1038<sup>th</sup> year. In 2009 the St Blaise Festival was included on the UNESCO List of Non-Material World Heritage. As always, we visited the Franciscan and the Dominican monasteries and Villa Stay, the regional branch of the Croatian Conservation Institute. There is evidence of progress everywhere and the dedication of the priests and conservators to their various tasks is impressive. Henry and I are grateful to Goran and Renata Strok for giving us such a welcome in their hotel in Dubrovnik, the Excelsior.

We had two more reasons for visiting Dubrovnik at this time. In Cavtat, an exhibition of paintings by Vlaho Bukovac, 1855 – 1922, was to open at the Bukovac Museum. This was a donation of ten paintings, which had been given to Cavtat by the late Sir Alexander and Lady Glen through the Sandi and Zorica Glen Charitable Settlement. Zorica Glen was a step grand daughter of Vlaho Bukovac and it is appropriate that these rather intimate paintings are

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now in the artist's town of birth. We were glad that Robin Holland-Martin, trustee of the Glen Charitable Settlement, was able to be present.

At the same time in Cilipi, in their Ethnographical Museum, an exhibition of our "Flax and Linen Workshop" from Ivanic Grad, near Zagreb, was taking place. A weaver and a loom and several representatives of the Linen Workshop arrived and it is hoped that this linen exhibition will lead to others, encouraging the preservation of old crafts. We all stayed, including Dr Anthea Brook, a long-term supporter of the Trust, as guests of Marina Desin, curator of the Ethnographical Museum in Cilipi, in her home in Cavtat.

I am glad to be able to report that Mate Pribilovic, who completed his one year course in Historic Stone Carving at the City & Guilds of London Art School last summer with a full scholarship from the Headley Trust, is now working for the Croatian Conservation Institute in Pula on their big project of cleaning and preserving the Roman Arena. We found Katija Hrepic, who spent three months at the British Museum as an intern in their Textile Conservation Department last autumn, working in Zagreb on a pre-historic blanket, a shroud about 3600 years old, found in Livno, Bosnia, in 1984. It looked a real puzzle, pieces of wool laid flat, which they hope to put together one day. Gordana Car, who spent 6 months in the Textile Conservation Department of the Victoria & Albert Museum in 2004, was working on a Renaissance bed cover from the Rector's Palace Museum in Dubrovnik. The Textile Conservation Department of the Croatian Conservation Institute in Zagreb is a real treasure trove of beautiful objects. At the time of our visit, and also seen by Tim and Jane Clifford, they were working on two altar frontals, both 14<sup>th</sup> century and based on cartoons by Paolo Veneziano and stitched in Venice, one from Dobrinje on the island of Krk and the other from the Benedictine convent in Zadar. They had been made to order for the two convents.

The work on the cleaning of Diocletian's Peristyle at Split, where a number of students who had been helped in their studies by the Trust, are employed, will continue for another three years.

This summer, Jelena Bandur completed her two-year post diploma course in conservation at the City & Guilds of London Art School. We have also helped Ivo Kipre from Konavle to complete a year's training in furniture conservation at the New Buckinghamshire University at High Wycombe. With a kind donation from the Glen Charitable Settlement we have been able to support the following projects this year: the conservation workshop on the island of Lopud, we have sent a supply of conservation material to the State Archives in Zadar and enabled a book and paper conservator, Iva Gobic, from the State Archives in Rijeka, to attend a seminar by Professor Christopher Clarkson in November. We hope that a paper conservator from Zadar may come next year as an intern to the Library at Durham University. With a small donation, we have also helped a conservator from Split to attend a conference in Istanbul this autumn, organised by the International Institute of Conservation.

A full list of all students supported by the Trust throughout the years can now be found on our web site, [www.croatianmonuments.org](http://www.croatianmonuments.org), with grateful thanks to the architect, David Wylie.

The work in the Renaissance garden of the poet Hanibal Lucic on Hvar continues. With kind donations from a number of people, including friends of Colonel Edward Cowan who visited the garden and other places in Croatia last summer, we now have enough funds for three more pillars. We shall concentrate on the focal point of the garden, the fountain in the middle and the pillars and planting surrounding it. We also hope that the Croatian Conservation Institute will become involved in the project.

A book and paper conservator, Karen Vidler, spent a week in Zagreb in June holding lectures and workshops in the Croatian State Archives. Conservators from regional State

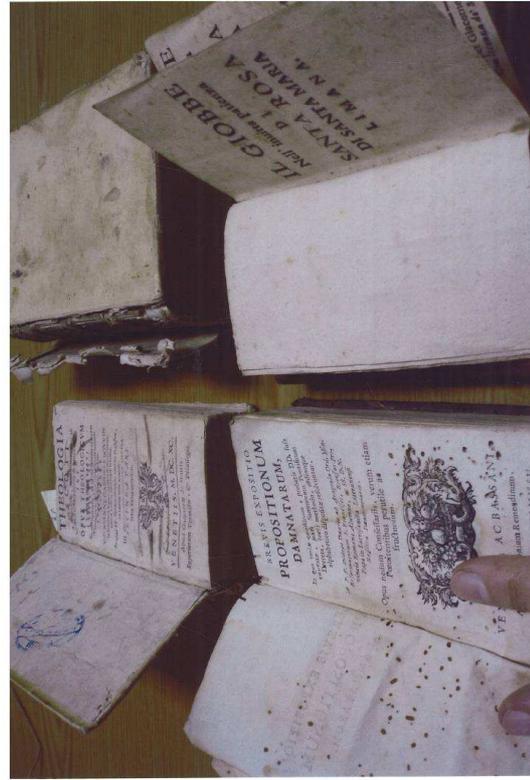
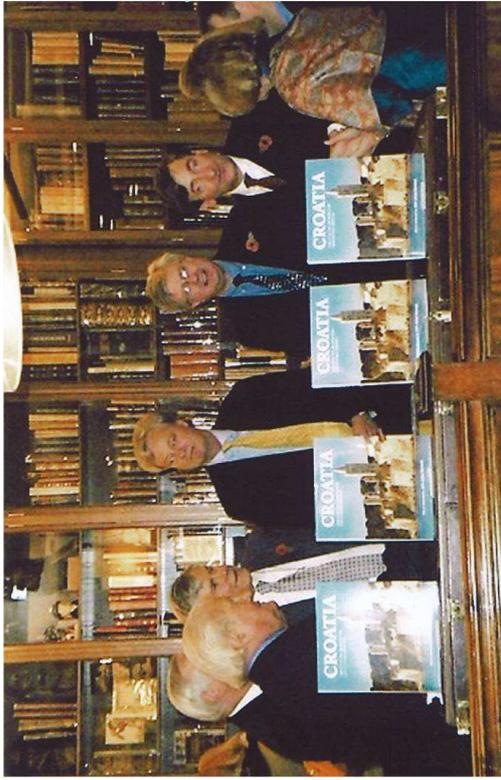
Archives attended and, according to reports, much was learned. Karen brought along samples of different material, including leather, and our Trust will help to obtain books for the Archives. Karen may return some time in the future when conservators from other institutions will be invited too. While at the Archives, I saw again some of the books from the collection of the Franciscan monastery in Vukovar. In 1991, they were taken away and kept in Serbia for a number of years and now need urgent treatment. There are about 480 books waiting to be preserved and we hope that, with kindness of people, we may be able to make a contribution again. However, thinking of the enormous task they face, the preservation of so many damaged books with insufficient hands and funding, I recall a suggestion from an American art historian friend, Lynn Roberts. Lynn thought that we should try and involve students of paper and book conservation from Western countries, especially the United States, where they simply do not have any longer any damaged books to repair. This would give the students an excellent opportunity to gain valuable experience and be of lasting benefit to the collection. I would be grateful for advice and suggestions on this matter.

On our visit to Zagreb in June, we had a happy day with the linen project, organised by the director of the Open University in Ivanic Grad, Palma Klun Posavec. A field of flax was planted again this year, the plants were long and healthy looking and if the weather is kind, we hope to have a good harvest. Although this is a small project, we have revived the growing of flax and the art of weaving and looms and old tools have been restored and are in use again. It gives everybody much pleasure and as a result we have beautiful, traditional towels and other linen products. In order for the project to survive, they need to be sold. I always have some at home and I would like to thank again the people who help us to sell them in this country; Volga Linen, Swann's Way, Postcard Teas, Livingston Studio and maybe next year again, Dalesford Organics.

In January this year, I was asked in Zagreb to help find an untraced portrait of the eminent Croatian scientist, mathematician, architect, poet, diplomat and Jesuit priest Rudjer Boskovic FRS, 1711 – 1787, painted by Robert Edge Pine, 1730 – 1788, in 1760. In my search, much interesting material has emerged and we do hope that the portrait will be found. To mark the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Boskovic next year, the Royal Society may mount a display of his works in November 2011.

Next year will also mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the International Trust for Croatian Monuments.

I would be glad, as ever, to give more information on any of the points raised in this progress report.



Clockwise, from top left:

The launch at Sotheran's

The launch at the Museum of Arts and Crafts, Zagreb

Conservators at the Croatian State Archives, Zagreb

Conservation at Villa Stay, Dubrovnik

Rudjer Boskovic FRS, after Robert Edge Pine

Books from the Franciscan Monastery in Vukovar

The Church of St Blaise, Dubrovnik. Top right, the sculpture of "Faith" restored with funds raised by the exhibition "Royal Academicians in Dubrovnik", 1996



*Aug. Boskovic*

