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PROGRESS REPORT

August 2012

Including a visit to Zagreb
Osijek and Vukovar

The exhibition, "Rudjer Boskovic and the Royal Society", celebrating the 300th anniversary of the birth of Roger Joseph Boscovich SJ., FRS, 1711 – 1787, was held at the Royal Society from November 2011 to February 2012. This was a happy outcome of my unsuccessful search for the full-figure portrait of Boscovich by Robert Edge Pine painted in London in 1760 at the commission of Dr William Bromfield, founder of the Lock Hospital. I started the search over two years ago, in archives and libraries in this country, while Dr Dusan Razem in Zagreb explored the internet. Although the portrait still eludes us, many people have become aware of our search and we still believe that it is in this country somewhere in a private collection. Recently, the Antiques Trade Gazette also kindly published my letter asking for information about this painting.

The exhibition was sponsored by the Ministries of Culture, of Science, Education and Sports and of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Croatia and accompanied by a comprehensive catalogue by Dr Ivica Martinovic, the curator of the exhibition. We thank the Royal Society for holding the exhibition and Dr Felicity Henderson, Keith Moore and Rupert Baker for their kind help in preparing it. I would also like to thank HE The Croatian Ambassador Dr Ivica Tomic and Professor John Barrow FRS for their enlightening and most interesting opening speeches. The catalogue remains an important contribution to the celebrations held in honour of Boscovich in many countries in Europe during 2011.

This year, three British charitable foundations have generously supported the work of our Trust, for which we are extremely grateful.

The Headley Trust granted us a generous donation towards the project to help preserve historic church vestments, which are no longer in use and found in churches under inadequate conditions and therefore liable to perish. This follows an approach made to us last summer by a textile historian and conservator, Silvija Banic, who was working for the Archbishopric of **Zadar**, helping them to collect such pieces and establish the collection. We promptly bought for them an archival conservation chest for the safe keeping of these precious remnants of the past. Our aim now is to help to do the same in the Diocese of **Sibenik**, beginning in **Skradin**, where there is already a substantial collection gathered over many years by one of the previous parish priests, Don Ante Lovric Caparin. The present parish priest, Don Gabrijel Jaganarec, and his parishioners are very anxious that this collection should be preserved and properly looked after and they are in the process of establishing a museum where some of their treasures will be exhibited. They will accommodate two young textile conservators who will come to Skradin to do the initial work, with help from the specialists from the Croatian Conservation Institute, the Conservation Department of Sibenik and all under the guidance of Dr Josko Belamaric of the Institute of Art History in Split.

We have already, with the Headley Trust donation, supplied the parish church of St Michael the Archangel in **Kostanje**, a small place in the historic Republic of Poljice, with two of these chests, for which the parishioners are particularly grateful. Some time ago, they discovered a treasure trove of silver, paintings and a large number of liturgical vestments in the attic of the parish house and started a campaign to save them. The vestments range from the 17th to the 19th century and include several important and beautiful pieces. The two chests are now safely installed and provide a secure place for the preservation of these vestments. When funds become available, some will be given a full conservation treatment as they are already doing.

We plan to do the same for the Franciscan convent in **Zaostrog**, south of Split, and for the church of the Holy Spirit on **Hvar**, and possibly also for the Diocese of **Dubrovnik**.

The Leche Trust are supporting our work in the Renaissance garden of the poet Hanibal Lucic on Hvar. Their donation will enable us to provide more stone pillars, carved by hand by one of our former students. We have not been able to visit Hvar since May 2011, but we hear that the garden is taking shape and looks better every day. I would like to acknowledge here a kind donation towards this garden by John Nicoll, who was instrumental in the publication of the book, *Croatia: Aspects of Art, Architecture and Cultural Heritage*, published by Frances Lincoln in 2009. I am glad to note here that the sales of the book continue.

The Sandy and Zorica Glen Charitable Settlement are again this year making a contribution towards the project on the island of Lopud where conservators, students and teachers from several countries, meet every year in September and work in one of the many churches on the island restoring paintings, altars, whatever is needed. This same foundation is also again helping us to provide conservation materials for the State Archives in Zadar. I have detailed descriptions of the work they have already done with our funding and it is encouraging to know that many of their important documents and maps are now safely wrapped and stored in acid-free tissue paper and boxes.

I would like to thank again these charitable foundations for their wonderful support, and all who send us contributions, without whose kindness our Trust would not be able to continue.

In February this year, Henry and I went to **Osijek** and **Vukovar**. In **Osijek**, we visited the Stained Glass Workshop, "Teodora", which we helped to establish with funds from the "Art for Art" auction held at Bonhams in 1994 and the expertise of the stained glass specialist Drew Anderson, then working at the Victoria & Albert Museum and sent to Croatia by the then director, Dame Elizabeth Esteve-Coll. The workshop is thriving, with three fully employed stained glass specialists and still, after so many years, restoring the windows of the church of SS Peter and Paul, the Cathedral of Osijek, as it is fondly referred to, which was so terribly damaged in the shellings of Osijek throughout 1992. All the windows of the bell-tower are still to be restored as well as the main and very large rosette.

In **Vukovar**, the Mayor, Mr Zeljko Sabo, kindly received us, and was very optimistic about the future of his city. With funds loaned from the Council of Europe Development Bank much rebuilding is taking place. Ruza Maric, the curator of the Town Museum, showed us the Eltz Manor, where the museum has been housed since the end of the Second World War, which is now almost completely restored and which was so utterly devastated in the attacks on Vukovar in 1991. There was an exhibition of photographs showing the devastation and I was particularly touched by one, reproduced on large scale, which clearly showed the new central roof on the building, funded by our Trust in 2002 following a piano recital by Ivo Pogorelich in the Royal Festival Hall in 1999. The award of the Medal of the Town of Vukovar to me in May, for which I am very grateful, was in recognition of our Trust's contribution to the rebuilding of the cultural heritage of Croatia.

On the archaeological site of **Vucedol**, near Vukovar, a new museum is now under construction, where finds from this Indo-European culture, which flourished between 3000 – 2200 BC, will be exhibited.

We are always happy, within our means, to encourage and help students in their studies of conservation/restoration. This year, with a kind donation from Peter Stormonth Darling, we are supporting a PhD student to accomplish a course in book and paper conservation. We will also be supporting the Academy of Arts at Split to organise a workshop by Professor Richard Wolbers. Last year, Professor Wolbers held a very successful workshop of his new methods of cleaning paintings at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Zagreb. Many students were unable to obtain a place and a repeat of his revolutionary teachings in Split will enable many more to profit from his knowledge.

In **SPLIT**, the complex conservation works on Diocletian's Peristyle are coming to a close. Conducted by the Croatian Conservation Institute, work has been going on for several years now and is scheduled to come to the conclusion next year. This will be a remarkable achievement. A number of our former students have worked hard on this project and traces of their chisels will join those of their predecessors of almost two millennia ago.

We hear that a UNESCO agency will support a conservation study for the Garagnin park in **Trogir**, which, we hope, will lead to the rejuvenation of this central park and a great facility for the town of Trogir.

Following up an enquiry by Professor Anthony Hobson about planned conservation works in the archives and library of the Franciscan convent in **Zadar**, which has a particularly rich collection in need of preservation, we have offered to them, within our modest means, a supply of conservation materials.

We continue to supply books and periodicals to individuals and institutions in Croatia and to support the Flax and Linen Workshop in Ivanić Grad.

Croatia is to become a full member of the European Union in 2013. To mark the occasion, the British – Croatian Society and other NGOs in this country, with the help of the Croatian Embassy, are organising a **WELCOME CROATIA CULTURAL FESTIVAL**, which will include arts, culture, sports and the economy.

As ever, I would be delighted to give more information on any of the subjects mentioned in this progress report.



Far left: VUKOVAR, Eitz Manor and the Archaeological Museum in VUCEDOL, March 2012.
Top centre and above: ZAOSTROG, Franciscan convent, Archives and Library and a church vestment.
Bottom row: KOSTANJE, samples of textiles and the new archival chests.