



INTERNATIONAL POLAR HERITAGE COMMITTEE

a scientific committee of ICOMOS

Comité international pour le patrimoine historique polaire

INTERNATIONAL POLAR YEAR CONFERENCE

Barrow Arctic Science Consortium. Barrow, Alaska.

Monday 24th – Thursday 27th September 2007

CONFERENCE SUMMARY

Attendance:

The conference was attended by

Brett Arenz	USA
Susan Barr	Norway
Bob Blanchette	USA
Paul Chaplin	Norway / NZ
Roy Daniel	NZ
Sherrie-lee Evans	Australia
Roberta Farrell	NZ
Anne Jensen	USA
Clint Lillibridge	USA
Cornelia Lüdecke	Germany
Johan Mattsson	Norway
Michael Morrison	UK
Doug Olynyk	Canada
Ricardo Roura	Netherlands
Glenn Sheehan	USA
Ruben Stehberg	Chile
Laura Thomas	USA
Adam Wild	NZ

The following participated via international video link:

George Skarmeas	USA
John Greenwood	Scott Base (NZ), Antarctica
Megan Absolon	Scott Base (NZ), Antarctica

Numerous others from the local community attended at different times.

Monday 24th September

During the registration session Glenn Sheehan (Executive Director, BASC) described the BASC facility and welcomed those attending. He introduced Laura Thomas who had been responsible for many of the arrangements who then explained the various practical 'housekeeping' information.

Delegates then moved to the new Barrow Global Climate Change Research Facility where the conference was to be based. The conference was opened by IPHC President Susan Barr who welcomed all present and invited Community Elder and BASC Board member, Dr Kenneth Toovak to speak. Dr Toovak welcomed delegates to Barrow, described some of the work of BASC and spoke of the importance of this work to the local and international community.

Glenn Sheehan then formally welcomed delegates to the new facility (the 1st of 4-5 stages) on behalf of the President of BASC, Richard Glenn. He then welcomed the president of the Barrow Whaling Captains' Association, Eugene Brower.

Eugene Brower gave an interesting talk about whaling and other subsistence activities of the Inupiat people of the region. He described the dramatic climate and environmental changes that are occurring in the area (ice, current, wind and weather) and explained the effect this is having on the movement of wildlife. He described his early days growing up in the area and of his training and work in modern technological fields.

Presentations

It is intended that the substance of all presentations will be compiled into a new IPHC publication. All contributors have been asked to provide the text of their presentation (about 2,000 to 2,500 words) with high quality illustrations in digital form (300dpi).

George Skarmeas (USA)

"Creating a sustainable future from Barrow's past".
This was presented via video link from Philadelphia.

Roberta Farrell (NZ)

A scientific evaluation of deterioration of Historic Huts of Ross Island, Antarctica.

Adam Wild (NZ)

"Minus six degrees of separation" - An overview of the Antarctic Heritage Trust Conservation programme. This presentation was prefaced with the comment that it represented the views of the presenter and not necessarily those of the Antarctic Heritage Trust.

Bob Blanchette (USA)

Northumberland House, Fort Conger and the Peary Huts in the Canadian High Arctic: current condition and assessment of wood deterioration taking place.

Brett Arenz (USA)

East Base, Antarctica SOS: Deterioration and recommendations for conserving these important historic structures.

Johan Mattsson (NOR)

Mycological decay in cultural heritage at Svalbard.

Tuesday 25th September

Sherrie-Lee Evans (AUS)

Frozen in time: Wilkes - an American station in Antarctica.

Michael Morrison (UK)

Facing up to the management implications of an historic site – with reference to the Antarctic Peninsula.

Cornelia Lüdecke (GER)

German meteorological sites in NW Svalbard.

Ricardo Roura (NL)

Antarctic Research Stations: Environmental and cultural heritage perspectives 1987 – 2007.

Video link with Scott Base (NZ) Antarctica.

“Pole to Pole”

This video link, introduced and chaired by Roberta Farrell is believed to be the longest range video-link ever conducted. Conservators John Greenwood and Megan Absolon explained their work and experiences at Antarctic Heritage Trust’s conservation laboratory.

Wednesday 26th September

Rubén Stehberg (CHILE)

Protection and preservation of the oldest sites of the Antarctic: the case of Fildes Peninsula and Byers Peninsula in the South Shetland Islands.

Susan Barr (NOR)

IPY stations in Jan Mayen and Svalbard: conservation and management.

Follow-up discussions

Because discussion time following individual presentations was limited, a period of general follow-up discussion was provided for at the end of the conference.

In addition to promoting action on a few specific issues, the intention of the resolutions below is to provide authoritative statements that may be used by both the IPHC and individual members to promote the interest of cultural heritage protection in polar regions.

Database of expertise.

It was noted that this conference had been particularly valuable for identifying even wider networks within which polar heritage protection experts could consult more widely. This is one of the major objectives of the IPHC and in order to promote this ideal further it was **RESOLVED THAT:**

The IPHC Working Group update its online database of expertise and take new initiatives to extend this in order to include as many polar heritage protection professionals as possible.

In practice this will require all members to assist with identifying relevant expertise within their own professional networks.

Management actions in relation to climate change

Although it noted that a range of initiatives were being taken by other heritage protection professionals and agencies in many parts of the world, Sherrie-lee Evans was anxious to promote a specific resolution from this conference. It was therefore RESOLVED THAT:

- 1. A detailed analysis be compiled of the projected regional impacts on the cultural heritage of the Arctic and Antarctic, so that the nature and scale of threats can be identified and the vulnerability of cultural places and landscapes be assessed. And,*
- 2. that a comprehensive site recording programme be initiated to capture all possible information from sites where mitigation will not be possible.*

It was however noted that this was not a task that the IPHC had the resources to undertake itself and that this resolution was intended to identify the need for such work and to encourage agencies with the management responsibility for such sites to undertake it.

Site Management

Many discussions during the conference related to situations where inadequate or inappropriate management plans are placing historic sites at risk. This was highlighted in the presentation by Michael Morrison. It was noted with concern that a large number of historic sites and monuments are listed in the Antarctic Treaty System (and more can be listed) with no regard for the subsequent management issues such listed sites require.

As a result it was **RESOLVED THAT:**

(It should be noted that while this resolution focuses primarily on the Antarctic situation the principles apply equally to sites in the Arctic).

There is an obligation on any country proposing a site for listing as an Historic Site or Monument to prepare a management plan for that site. This obligation should also extend to those responsible for buildings, monuments and sites that have already been listed. The Management Plan should as a minimum requirement set out the following:-

The long term objectives for the management of the historic building, monument or site.

- 1. Who is responsible for the management of the site and how this will be appropriately funded.*
- 2. The level of maintenance to be achieved and how this is to be delivered.*
- 3. The standards of workmanship and materials to be used.*
- 4. A proposal for the regular inspection and reporting on the condition of the building, monument or site.*
- 5. The regulations for visitor management appropriate to the building, monument or site*
- 6. The regulations, if appropriate, for the continued use of the building or site for scientific purposes or in an emergency.*

IPHC input to other forums

Another issue related to the need for the IPHC to gain a greater input into any discussion by the Antarctic Treaty System (ATS) when issues with historic site implications are involved. It was noted that the IPHC had previously been acknowledged by the Committee for Environmental Protection (CEP) as an appropriate body to advise them on matters involving historic sites. The IPHC however has never been asked for comment or advice.

In order to address this issue it was **RESOLVED THAT:**

This conference requests the Working Group of the IPHC to take appropriate initiatives to convey to the Committee for Environmental Protection the pressing need to place greater emphasis on the consideration of cultural heritage issues when deliberating on all sites with any historical associations. The CEP should be reminded of the willingness of the IPHC to contribute to this process.

It was further agreed that the same concerns should be conveyed to appropriate international and government agencies involved with the management of Arctic sites (e.g. The International Arctic Science Committee – IASC).

Data-base of the 1st International Polar Year Field Stations

Cornelia Lüdecke reported on her progress with this data-base. Although other commitments had prevented her from making the desired progress with this project some additional work had been done. It was however essential that other members respond effectively when contacted by Connie to contribute information.

IPHC meeting

An informal meeting was held to discuss current issues within the IPHC.

a. Next ICOMOS General Assembly

This will be held in Quebec from 29th September – 4th October, 2008. Please note the dates and plan as appropriate for attending.

On 27th / 28th September there will be an additional international forum of young researchers and professionals in cultural heritage. The 29th September will a day for meetings of International Scientific Committees, with lectures on the 30th and the Scientific Symposium from 1st – 3rd September. The General Assembly will take place on the 4th October.

b. Changes to statutes and membership.

It was noted that changes proposed to the IPHC Statutes had been approved in principle at the 2006 meeting in Munich. Copies of these were distributed and limited discussion took place. *(While it was noted that financial accountability is solely to the funding provider for the Secretariat it was suggested that an overview of this should be included in the Annual Report to members.)* Given that approval in principle has in effect now been given at 2 meetings it was stated that the intention is to begin to implement the provisions of the revised statutes in anticipation of formal approval of them at a meeting to be held in association with the ICOMOS GA in Quebec.

c. Publication and other new projects

All were reminded of the need to now prepare their presentations in text form and assemble the necessary high quality images so the Secretariat can begin preparation of the publication of the conference. Further reminders will be sent out shortly as rapid action is required.

d. Site at Snow Hill Antarctica

The President reported on issues related to unprofessional “conservation” projects at Otto Nordenskjöld’s hut at Snow Hill and more recent initiatives to have the site designated as an

Antarctic Specially Protected Area (ASPA). The IPHC working group has been collaborating with Swedish/Argentine initiatives on this and has been asked to provide formal IPHC support. It was decided by the meeting that support should in general not be given separately to specific initiatives, but through the resolution above concerning long term management of monuments and sites.

e. Secretariat succession - after 2011

It was noted that while there is provision for the current President to be re-elected for one more term at the next formal meeting of the IPHC at the ICOMOS GA in Quebec, the statutes of the IPHC state that *an officer shall not normally remain in office for more than three consecutive terms of three years*. The ICOMOS statutes limit terms in one office to 3 x 3 years. In practice this means that a new president can be foreseen after 2011. A consequence of this is that the funding now provided for the operation of the Secretariat will probably stop. It is important therefore that consideration is given to the establishment of a new Secretariat with new funding from 2011.

All members should therefore give consideration to future elections for President and possible sources of support for a Secretariat.

Closure

The conference ended as scheduled with the President, Susan Barr thanking everyone for their input into what was generally agreed was a successful and worthwhile meeting. The choice of Barrow as a venue had demanded that all present had had to make a major effort to attend and had contributed generously of both time and money to be there. She also extended her thanks to the wider Barrow Community, BASC - Glenn Sheehan and in particular Laura Thomas and the IT support team who had worked extremely hard to ensure the needs of all attending were taken care of.

Before the conference

Roberta Farrell and Paul Chaplin were interviewed on the local Barrow radio station (KBRW) about the conference and related issues and in particular the "Pole to Pole" video link

After the conference

After the conference a number of delegates gave talks to schools in Barrow and travelled to Atqasok and Wainwright to give educational talks to the local schools. This was part of the BASC outreach programme and was sponsored by BASC.