

The Kyrenia Ship Conservation Project

Kyrenia Ship Collection: Conservation Progress Report

October 2016



Photographs courtesy of Veronica Ford and Cassy Cutulle, 2016

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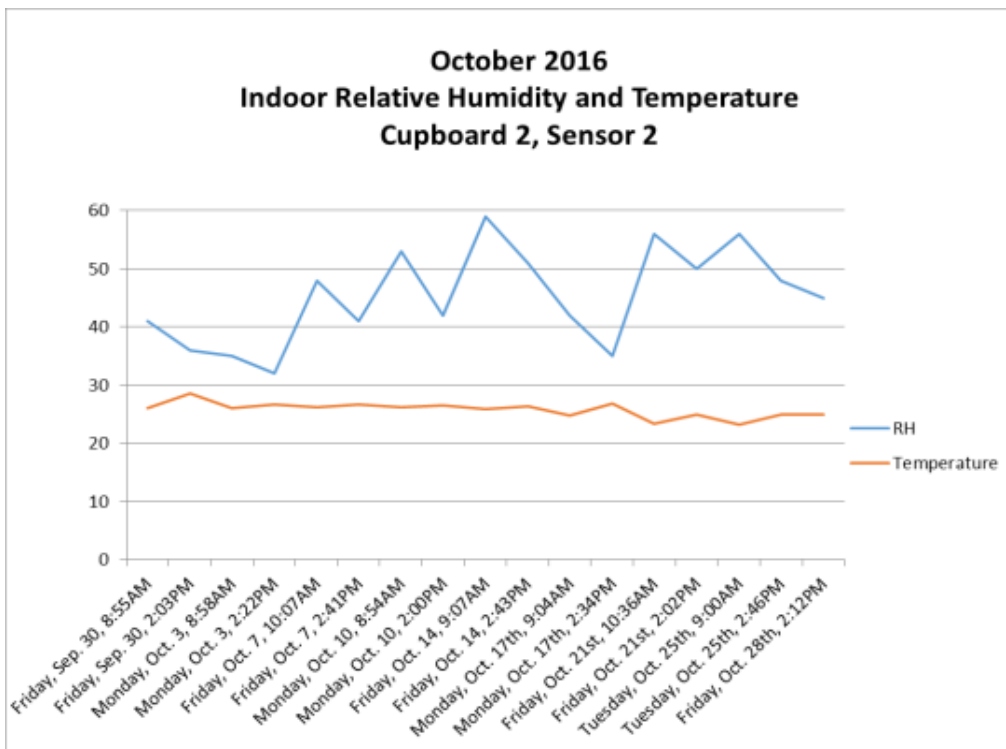
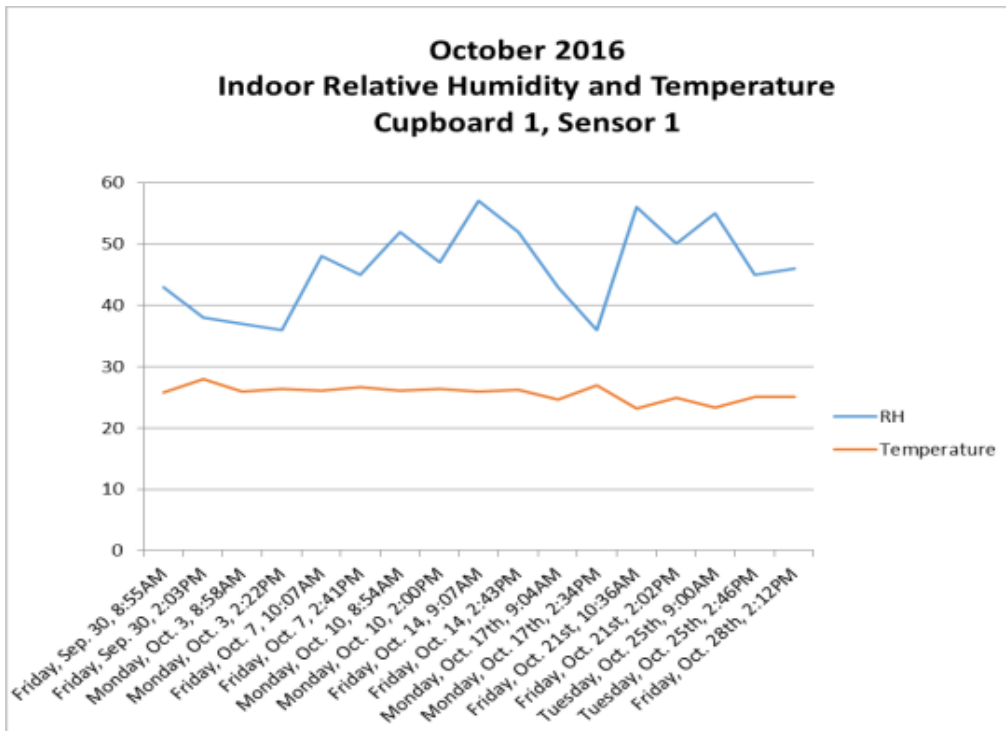
General Introduction

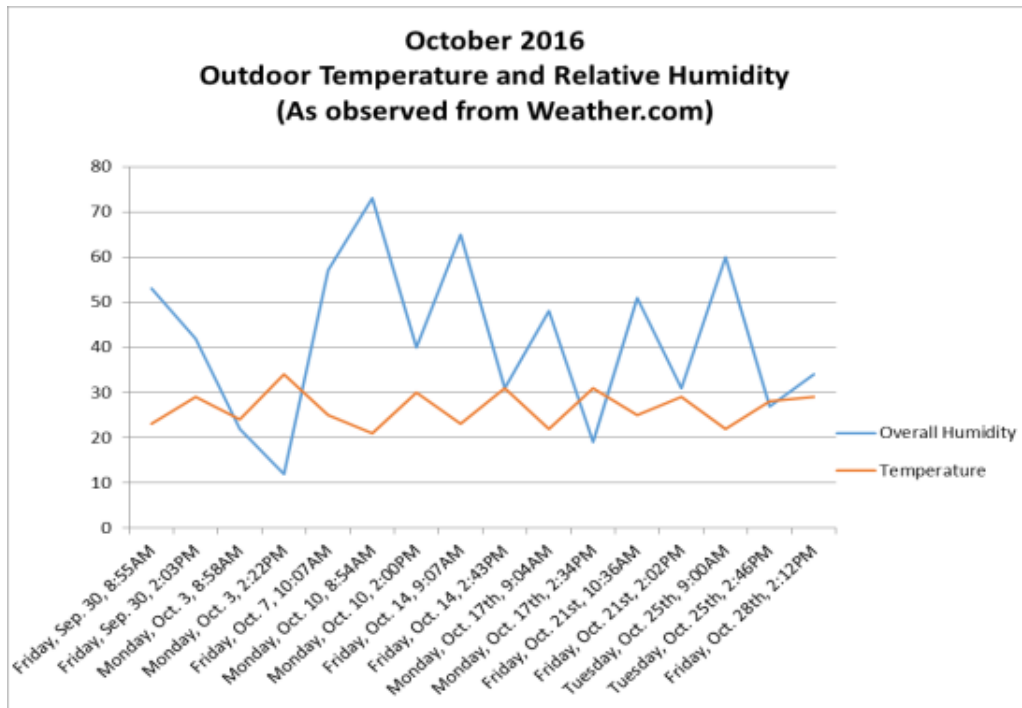
During October, conservators Veronica and Cassy have worked to institute and maintain preventive tasks in the Conservation Laboratory and within Kyrenia Castle, while also continuing remedial activities such as restoration in the Laboratory. Environmental monitoring of the temperature and relative humidity in the Laboratory took place as scheduled while integrated pest management (IPM) was halted temporarily. In mid-October, two continuous logging monitors known as “Tiny Tags” were installed in the Shipwreck Gallery. These devices will continually log the temperature and relative humidity in the room from October to December, producing data which will give the conservators an idea of the environmental fluctuations surrounding the Ship. Restoration activities have commenced and efforts are being made to complete the restoration of ceramic objects P8, P84, P98 and P107. As the conservators work through these first restoration jobs, they are consulting with the Project Team and also modifying their methodology to develop the most efficient means of restoration for the remaining objects.

October 2016: Conservation Tasks in Progress

Preventive Conservation Tasks

In October, Cassy and Veronica continued to log and monitor and the relative humidity and temperature at the Conservation Laboratory in Nicosia. Data from the monitors placed within the object cupboards was recorded, as well as data for the outdoor conditions, which was retrieved from “Weather.com”. The same recording schedule was utilized as previously: logging of relative humidity and temperature took place four times a week—two recordings on Monday and Friday mornings and afternoons at approximately 9:00am and 2:00pm. There are some noticeable gaps in recording, which were due to trips to Kyrenia Castle and other work commitments outside the laboratory.





Figs. 1-3: Line graphs displaying the relative humidity and temperature within the two object cupboards housed in the Conservation Laboratory in Nicosia (top, middle) and the temperature and overall humidity recorded outdoors as per weather.com (bottom) (Graphs courtesy of Veronica Ford 2016).

The graphs above illustrate the fluctuations in temperature and relative humidity that occurred both indoor and outdoor throughout October. The graphs demonstrate that there is very little difference between the relative humidity and temperature in the two object cupboards monitored. In the month of October there was much greater fluctuation in external temperature and relative humidity than had been observed in August and September, as the weather becomes more variable during the Autumn months. This change is also reflected in the greater fluctuations of relative humidity within both object cupboards. Although the readings for both cupboards were similar, object cupboard 2 showed greater variability and was less buffered from the external conditions. This may be due to the fact that this cupboard is closer to a window which was left open for most of the day. Despite this, the metal cupboards continue to act as an effective buffer from the more extreme fluctuations in external relative humidity and temperature. As in September, a gradual decrease of daily average temperature is noted. The temperature of the indoor cupboards has remained stable, with few sharp increases/decreases noted.



Figs 4-6: Photographs of conservators Cassy Cutulle (left) and Veronica Ford (right) installing Tiny Tag data loggers underneath the Ship Hull, along with the location of a newly installed analog thermohygrometer (below) in the Ship Gallery (Photographs courtesy of Veronica Ford, Cassy Cutulle 2016).

In mid-October, two of the Tiny tag data loggers brought to Kyrenia Castle in September were installed in the Ship Gallery. These loggers were placed underneath the ship: one near the starboard side at the bow and one on the port side in the amidships area. In this initial set up, the loggers have been set up to record temperature and relative humidity data every 7 minutes for a period of 2 months (October 12th to December 12th, 2016). By setting the loggers to record data at very regular intervals during these two months, the conservators will be able to better understand the typical degree of fluctuation in the environment of the ship. This will in turn help them to devise a suitable long term logging interval – for instance, if little variation is seen every 7 minutes, a logging time of every 30 minutes or even every hour might be deemed more appropriate. At the end of the logging period, the Tiny tags can be plugged into the computer and the data downloaded to allow for analysis. Additional Tiny tag loggers will be placed in the Kyrenia Ship Museum Gallery and in the Kyrenia Ship Storeroom over the coming months. An additional analog thermohygrometer was also set up in the Ship Gallery, to give a more comprehensive idea of the environmental conditions throughout the room.

During mid-October, external contractors sprayed the conservation laboratory at Nicosia with pesticide. As a result, the pest traps were renewed by the conservators and it is expected that significantly fewer insects will be observed over the coming months.

Remedial Conservation Tasks

The primary remedial conservation activity of October has been the restoration of the ceramics stored at the Conservation Laboratory in Nicosia. After planning, consulting with the appropriate groups and testing materials, the conservators began work on the actual objects. Each conservator chose two ceramic objects with relatively easier restoration fills, to gradually progress into the highly technical work. Cassy is currently working on the restoration of P8 and P98, while Veronica is working with P84 and P107.



Figs. 7-8: Photographs of P8 during preparation for restoration (left) and soon after filling the area of loss (right). Please note, the darker color of the plaster is due to the wetness of the plaster, which lightens upon further drying (Photographs courtesy of Cassy Cutulle 2016).

All of these objects with the exception of P8 were classified as “low-level” restoration jobs, signifying that the fills would be created with white plaster and not painted or pigmented. However, as with many practical activities, the original plan was modified as the work was undertaken since the conservators felt as though leaving the plaster white would be too jarring, and a block color that tonally complements the ceramic would be more appropriate. After consultation with the Project Team, it was confirmed that leaving the fills white would be aesthetically unseemly, and the decision was made to pigment the plaster with dry pigments to achieve a solid earth tone less contrasting to the ceramic fabric. As a result, it was understood that this would add more time to each restoration job as achieving a quality homogenous color fill is difficult and timely and was initially only reserved for those ceramics classified as “medium-level” restoration jobs. While working through these first four objects, the conservators are discussing ways in which they can achieve the best results with least risk to the objects while saving time.

Although the first restoration jobs were considered less technically complex, the process of achieving a uniformly colored fill with the correct shape has been a time-consuming and difficult process. Realistically, the conservator has only one chance to achieve an appropriate restoration fill for an area of loss. Mistakes can easily happen throughout the various stages of the process and in which case, the fill must be cast again as plaster is not a material which cannot be built upon once semi-dry/dry. This has been the case with the four objects currently being restored. The conservators have spent approximately four

weeks thus far on the objects, and more time is necessary to achieve the best results for three of the objects. Veronica has recently completed object P84—a “low-level” restoration ceramic with fills that were pigmented with a single color similar in tone to the ceramic fabric.



Fig. 9: Photograph of P84 after the completion of restoration by conservator Veronica Ford. These fills represent a “low-level” restoration job (Photograph courtesy of Veronica Ford 2016).

These initial experiences have served the conservators well by providing them with a practical basis for which to frame the proceeding restorations, which will undoubtedly increase in difficulty. As a result, the conservators have come away with valuable observations about the best methodology to utilize, the use of plaster and dry pigments in restoration and possible risks involved in such work. These observations could only have been obtained through actually undertaking the work on the objects.

November 2016: Projected Work Plan

In November, the conservators will continue to focus on undertaking the restoration of the ceramics. Priority will be given to ceramics in the 'medium' level category, many of which are intended for display. Preventive conservation activities and supply ordering will proceed as appropriate.

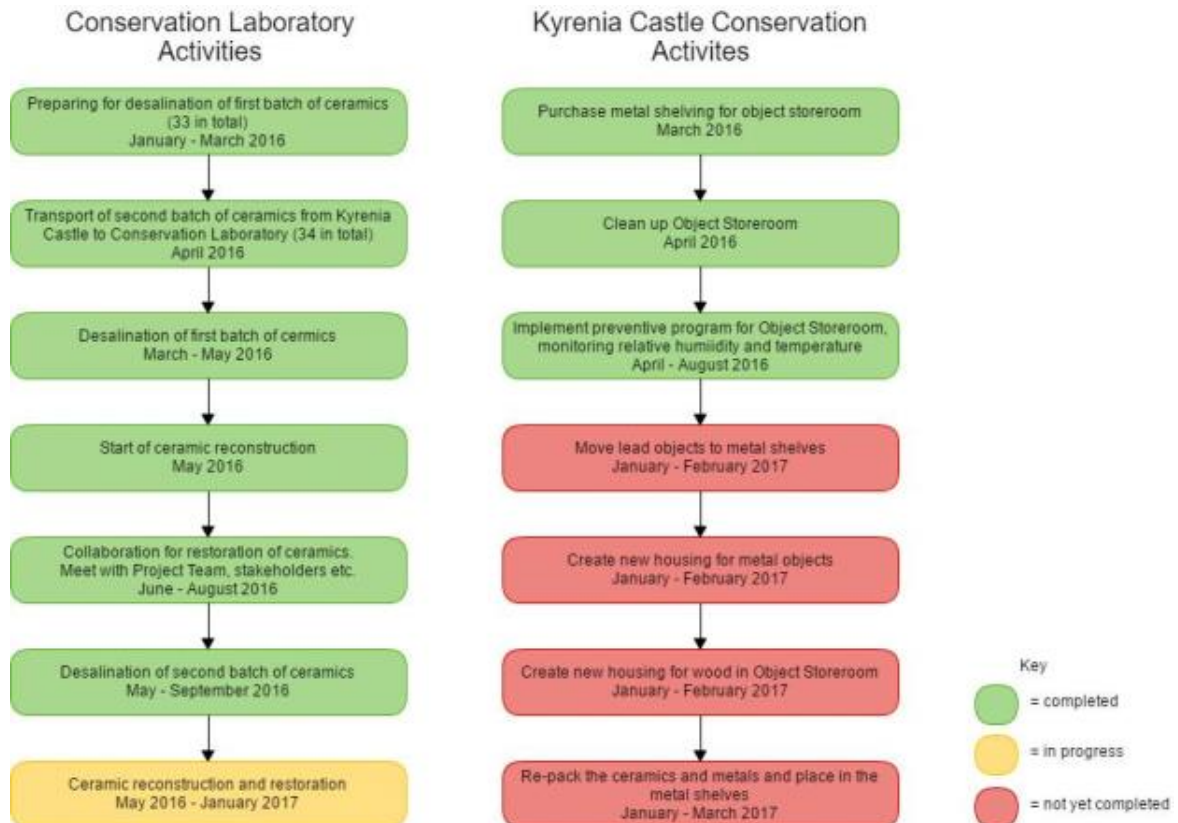


Fig.10: Flow chart displaying the activities to be undertaken by the conservators for this Project and the progress made thus far (Flow chart courtesy of Veronica Ford, 2016).