

SOCIETY FOR THE PRESERVATION OF NATURAL HISTORY COLLECTIONS (SPNHC) ACCEPTANCE OF THE CAROLYN L. ROSE AWARD

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I feel particularly honored to have been nominated for and given the Carolyn Rose Award, as, although I have worked with museums for many years, I am not a professional conservator.

A large number of people have asked me how I became involved with museum collections and the heritage world. It all started with a phone call. “We are asking you for help, as we have found chunks of hair falling out of our quagga.” At that time in the mid 1970s, I was working as an applied research entomologist in the Pest Infestation Control Laboratory of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Food at Slough. My work was mainly on the behavior and control of insect pests in food storage and food processing, and I had no idea what a quagga was. I was told that it was a taxidermy specimen of an extinct zebra that was on display at the Tring Museum, an outstation of the Natural History Museum in London. The reason that the hair was falling out of the quagga was because it had been attacked by larvae of the varied carpet beetle *Anthrenus verbasci*, and this was my first of what was to become many encounters with this species in museums and houses in the UK (Fig. 1).

I was one of the project team set up to control the insect pests in the Tring Museum, first by sealing the whole building and then fumigating it with methyl bromide gas. This meant the museum had to be closed to staff and the public for over a week. Although this fumigation would kill the pests, it would give no lasting protection, and so we were then tasked with developing methods to ensure that the collection was not reinfested with insects and further damaged.

We thought about the problem and realized there were many similarities between natural history collections and food storage, and so we applied the principles of Integrated Pest Management (IPM), which we had developed recently in the food storage and processing industries, namely, monitoring using insect traps, prevention by housekeeping, and only using targeted treatments. I then met Bob Child, a conservator at the National Museum of Wales, and together we delivered many workshops in the UK and Europe to teach people about IPM. Another key figure was Jim Black, who runs Archetype Press and International Academic Projects. He organized a number of the IPM workshops and then encouraged me to publish my first book, *Insect Pests in Museums*, a slim volume of 45 pages, in 1989. After a number of revisions, it was replaced by *Pest Management in Museums, Archives and Historic Houses* in 2001, and then again by the all-color, *Integrated Pest Management in Cultural Heritage* in 2015.

The then new concept of IPM in museum collections was first used in the UK by Phil Ackery in the Entomology Department and Alison Paul in the Botany Department at the Natural History Museum. The idea subsequently spread to other collections at the Natural History Museum and then the Victoria and Albert Museum, Imperial War Museum, and the British Museum.

I got hooked on Heritage IPM, and fed up with government bureaucracy, and left the Ministry of Agriculture in 1996 to set up my own consultancy business, DBP Entomology.



Figure 1. Scanned reproduction of a color slide of a quagga (*Equus quagga quagga*) at the Natural History Museum at Tring in 1976.

The next key step was an IPM workshop in 1996 organized and funded by the Getty Conservation Institute in the USA and The Museums and Galleries Commission. This was held over 5 days at West Dean College and included tutors and participants from Europe, North America, and Australia. A key player at this workshop was Tom Strang from the Canadian Conservation Institute. We became firm friends, and since then we have worked together on many projects to help spread the understanding of IPM and thermal treatments.

My first real contact with the Society for the Preservation of Natural History Collections (SPNHC) was at the meeting in Lincoln, Nebraska, in 1992, and I have had contact with a number of SPNHC members since then in London in 2005 and at Leiden in 2009. Although invited, sadly, I was not able to attend the 2016 meeting in Berlin. Collection Forum is an important journal for work on IPM, and more people should be encouraged to write papers to give practical guidance.

I have always believed that it is important to get people actively involved in IPM to demonstrate that it really does work to stop collections being damaged. There are active IPM groups in the UK, Scandinavia, and the USA, and together we have developed traps, pheromone lures, training aids, posters, books, and now websites to help people with the practical side. The “2001—A Pest Odyssey” Conference at the British Museum was groundbreaking in bringing together practical IPM people from all over the world. The following “Pest Odyssey—Ten Years Later” in 2011 and the IPM Conference in

Vienna in 2013 have all helped cement this international progress. The recent 2016 Heritage IPM conference in Paris demonstrated that the interest in IPM is growing and spreading.

In thanking you for this award, I would also like to thank all the many people in the UK and other countries who have taught me so much and made my work so enjoyable. I am confident that we now have young and enthusiastic IPM specialists who will ensure that we can keep our irreplaceable quaggas safe for future generations.

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