

ICOMOS National Committee activities

The main event for the International Day of Monuments and Sites Bam workshop on post-seismic conservation of earthen architecture

In December 2003, the ancient city of Bam, in Iran, was devastated by an earthquake leaving some 40 000 dead, including some of our colleagues. Cultural heritage also had its victims. Most of the 30 historic monuments of the living city of Bam, such as the ancient bazaar, fell. Arg-e-Bam, the ancient mud brick citadel kept as an archaeological site, suffered greatly but still stands.

The Iranian Cultural Heritage Organisation (ICHO), UNESCO and ICOMOS are co-organising an in-situ workshop to learn from the earthquake, its effects on the cultural heritage in Bam, the conservation interventions required, and to establish sound guiding principles for the medium and long term conservation, rehabilitation, and sustainable utilisation of the cultural resources in Bam, within the overall recovery process of the city. The workshop will provide a key-opportunity for experts from Iran and abroad, as well as international organisation representatives, to review the phenomenon of seismic damage using the diversity of earthen architecture in Bam, taking into account the influence of traditional building know-how and maintenance or of weakening factors, in order to define, for Bam and other similar sites in Iran and elsewhere, guidelines for preventive measures that would be both useful in the seismic context and respectful of that particular heritage. The workshop will also provide an opportunity to review specific issues related to the future treatment of Bam's cultural heritage, in particular the Arg-e-Bam ensemble. The dates of the workshop, 17 to 20 April, were chosen to coincide with the International Day of Monuments and Sites which ICOMOS dedicated this year to earthen architecture in solidarity with Bam.

For more information on this conference see the 18th April web page on the ICOMOS web site :
<http://www.international.icomos.org/18april2004.htm>

ICOMOS AUSTRALIA

To commemorate the International Day for Monuments and Sites' theme of 'earthen architecture', ICOMOS Australia is organising a joint activity with the National Trust of Australia (NSW). The Architect, Anita Krivickas, will present an illustrated talk about her work in Chihuahua, in the north of Mexico, for a non-profit organisation called 'Misiones Coloniales'. Essentially the brief was the conservation of the Jesuit and Franciscan buildings, the majority of which are in adobe.

Date: Thursday, 22 April 2004 at 5.30pm

Venue: Annie Wyatt Room, National Trust, Observatory Hill

ICOMOS BELGIUM

The section Wallonia-Brussels is dedicating its newsletter number 17 (April 2004) to earthen architecture, in the Belgian Hainaut (to be issued at the end of April), through two synthetic articles, one on clay and straw mortar architecture, and the other on timber frame and clay architecture in the Land of Hills (Pays des Collines) . ICOMOS Wallonia-Brussels invites everyone to open their eyes on the witnesses of this particular heritage that still survives in certain regions of Wallonia and deserves increasing vigilance.

ICOMOS CYPRUS

The National Committee has organised an event in collaboration with the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus to commemorate the International Day for Monuments and Sites, on April 19th at the monastery of Agios Nicolaos at the village of Orounta, a monument of earthen construction in rural architectural style which was recently restored. Children from local as well as other schools in the area of Nicosia were invited to attend. Short talks were given by the President of the ICOMOS National Committee, the Curator of Ancient Monuments, Department of Antiquities, the representative of the Ministry of Culture, the Local Bishop as well as the archaeologists and architects in charge of restoration. At the back of the monastery an additional complex for the nuns is being constructed in the same traditional mud-brick architecture and the contractor together with the architects in charge had a group of craftsmen mixing the earth and making mud-brick as well as building a wall for the children to see the whole process. The children were then guided to the nearby village to houses of traditional earthen architecture still in use.

A pamphlet on the history of earthen architecture in Cyprus with photographs was published and distributed on the weekend of 16-18 April to all museums and monuments in Cyprus. A press release

was issued and interviews were given by the President of the ICOMOS National Committee to newspapers and the national radio.

ICOMOS COSTA RICA

In 2004, the 18th April will be celebrated jointly with the Municipality of San José and the Ministry of Culture, focusing on the role of built heritage in the process of re-population of the capital city. Activities will include a National Television programme presenting the attractive urban spaces which our city boasts, a children's painting competition on the theme "The house I like the most", our traditional photography competition, an exhibition on the typical gastronomy of the seven provinces, conferences and round tables, and the prize giving ceremony for the "18th April prize" awarded each year to the institution or person which has distinguished itself in the field of conservation.

ICOMOS CZECH REPUBLIC

The National Committee will participate in the ceremonial meeting in Prague Castle's Spanish Hall and in the cultural heritage seminar organised for the International Day on Monuments and Sites.

ICOMOS GUINEA

The National Committee is distributing a plea "Conserve, protect and manage our cultural and natural heritage, for a human, better and sustainable development in Guinea", due to the problem of taking into account monuments and sites in the Guinean context. Articles and audio-visual programmes on earthen architecture have been prepared. The President of the ICOMOS National Committee is in charge of getting in touch with the public and private sectors and civil society, to reinforce the echo of our action to raise awareness.

ICOMOS ITALY

"Remarks (comments or reflections) on Architecture and landscape between safeguard and enhancement"

Tuesday 13th April: Conference at Alberobello, Trullo Sovrano - "Safeguarding the dry stone landscape in Europe and the creation of common cultural itineraries" – Presentation of the results of the work developed with the project "la Pedra en Sec" within the framework of the European programme "Culture 2000".

Wednesday 14th April: Naci, "consulting" auditorium via Pio XII°, meeting and debate - The natural parks and the Barsento area: preservation in a changing economy. Introduction : Dr. L. Plantone : "Mapping geosites as a model for environmental upgrading".

Thursday 15th April: Alberobello, Trullo Sovrano, meeting and debate – A compendium for the restoration of the trullis in Alberobello : conservation and enhancement - between policy and conscience

Friday 16th April: Locorotondo, communal auditorium, corso XX settembre, conference and debate - Rural and urban architectural heritage: searching for conservation and enhancement models

Saturday 18th April: Alberobello, Area museum, debate - Eight years since UNESO recognised the "trulli" of Alberobello, a local community between knowledge, conservation and enhancement

Sunday 18th April: "Open Day" at the monuments and museums in Alberobello, guided tour in the historical centre and area, mass at 6 pm at the Barsento basilica and at 8 pm at Alberobello, Rione Monti, music meets stone "sounds and images in the historic centre of Alberobello".

ICOMOS LITHUANIA

The National Committee in collaboration with the department of protection of cultural properties of the Ministry of Culture, the municipality of the spa town Birštonas since 1846, the specialists of the protection of historic towns heritage, organised a celebration for the International Day of Monuments and Sites. The day was dedicated to the evaluation of works done throughout the year. "18th April" prizes were awarded to the best work for the protection and restoration of monuments and sites. This year has also been marked by the creation of a new prize "onion" for the non protection of monuments and sites that is awarded to the people responsible for monuments and sites. During the meeting the participants had the opportunity to visit the monuments of the historic town of Birštonas, special attention was given to the restored heritage linked to thermal waters, pools, baths and fountains.

ICOMOS MACEDONIA

The National Committee will mark the International Day for Monuments and Sites with a press conference on 16th April promoting the 2004 theme, earth as the oldest building material, with a text for

publication in the weekend newspapers (Nova Makedonija) as well as broadcasting on radio and TV in Skopje and the rest of Macedonia.

ICOMOS MALTA

The international theme of this year is earthen architecture but due to the fact that we have no such architecture in Malta, ICOMOS Malta has decided to deal this year with the endangered monuments in Malta. In 1999, ICOMOS Malta was involved in the identification of the ten most endangered monuments in Malta. As a follow up to this work, this year ICOMOS Malta, in collaboration with Heritage Malta, the Ministry of Youth and Art, the Mdina Rehabilitation Committee, and the Ministry of Works, is organising a seminar regarding one of these endangered monuments. The monument selected is Vilhena Palace situated in Mdina, the old capital of Malta. This palace currently houses the Natural History Museum together with the offices of the Mdina Local Council. Recent and ongoing conservation works being carried out in the Palace will be presented during the seminar. This seminar will be followed by a tour of the palace and over a number of days Heritage Malta will be opening some of its archaeological sites that are usually open to the public only on special request. ICOMOS Malta intends to continue with the theme of endangered local sites in the coming years.

ICOMOS NEW ZEALAND

Alberton, Ewelme Cottage and Highwic, the NZ Historic Places Trust's historic houses in Auckland will be celebrating the International Day on Monuments and Sites by opening to the public free of charge on April 18th.

ICOMOS PERU

The National Committee is organising two activities for the International Day of Monuments and Sites

- A Study Day : "Conservation of Monuments - Earthen Architecture"

17th April from 10am to 6pm in the auditorium of the Pachacamac site museum

- A photography exhibition "Interventions on the Pachacamac site throughout time"

To be inaugurated on 17th April in the Pachacamac museum

ICOMOS PORTUGAL

The ICOMOS National Committee is organising jointly with the UNESCO National Commission a conference on "Earthen architecture - heritage and future" and an exhibition on "Earth in the Ibero-American architecture" that will take place on 18th April at the Municipal Chamber in Moura.

ICOMOS SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO

The International Day on Monuments and Sites was marked by the National Committee under the theme of folk architecture, a kind of immovable cultural property in which earth is the most commonly used building material. A meeting of experts in the field of protection and a study of folk architecture was organised in the Knjazevac National (Regional) museum. During this event, work on the project "Index of Folk Architecture in Serbia" was presented. The project began in 2003, in the municipality of Knjazevac, with the aim of recording and documenting the most valuable buildings of folk architecture, thus providing true insight into the wealth of this kind of cultural heritage in Serbia. Other possibilities were introduced for protecting this immovable cultural property in Serbia, whose buildings are disappearing daily forever.

As part of this event, the participants visited a nearby village where they could observe a well preserved site rich with examples of folk architecture. Beside the experts, this meeting was also attended by representatives from the Ministry of Culture, as well as by numerous members of the media.