Field Trip Report

Recording, Documentation and Information Management (RecorDIM) – Vienna, Austria

Mar. 23-28, 2003
By: Francois LeBlanc, Head, Field Projects

RecorDIM Initiative Meeting of Partners

RecorDIM is a five-year (2002-07) international initiative that is all about records and information management. It is a “goodwill alliance” between several international organizations and institutions. Working in a collaborative way, their goal is to identify and bridge the gaps between information users and information providers.

At this time the partners in this initiative comprise ICOMOS, CIPA Heritage Documentation, English Heritage, World Monuments Fund and GCI. Several other government agencies and institutions have expressed interest in joining the “alliance” and taking on the task of bridging gaps that have been identified during the first round-table held at the GCI last year.

This meeting of the partners was held in Vienna, the hometown of Peter Waldhäusl, the CIPA liaison officer for RecorDIM. The goal was to review current initiatives and Task Groups and proposed new ones.

The following were reviewed and discussed. All commitments made by the partners for the five-year period of this Initiative are understood to be conditional to human and financial resources available within the framework of each organization’s budget and administration process.

Getty Conservation Institute

Represented by F. LeBlanc, the GCI offered to take on the following tasks:

- **Principles and Guidelines for the Recording and Documentation of Cultural Heritage.** A publication covering the breadth of this subject has yet to be published. The GCI is organizing a meeting of “users” and “providers” at the end of May 2003 to discuss what such a publication should contain and identify the experts who could write each section. The GCI will then take on the task of getting the publication done.

- **Handbook for Recording and Documentation of Cultural Heritage.** During the May meeting, the development of a handbook on this subject will also be discussed and on the basis of the suggestions made concerning content, structure and format, the GCI will proceed to have the handbook done.
• **International Coordination.** The GCI will continue to support the coordination of this Initiative at international level. R. Letellier, a CIPA Vice President, is the international coordinator for the Initiative.

• **Web presence.** The partners have accepted the GCI’s offer to host the RecorDIM web presence on its web site.

**CIPA Heritage Documentation**

Represented by its current President, Petros Patias and former President, Peter Waldhäusl, this international committee created by ICOMOS and ISPRS offered to take on the following task:

- Guidelines for the Monitoring Records of World Heritage Sites.

The World Heritage Committee has given ICCROM the responsibility to develop guidelines for the monitoring of World Heritage Sites. ICOMOS is also involved in this initiative. CIPA will contact both organizations and offer to develop standards for World Heritage Sites monitoring records. This will cover such things as the scale for maps, standard color codes for monitoring change, standards for photographs etc.

**World Monuments Fund**

The WMF (through Gaetano Palumbo not present at meeting) offered to take on the following task:

- Examine current approaches to managing archaeological resources using GIS or other database management systems, and propose best practices for using this tool in ways that are easy to implement, maintain, and share. GIS is used in archaeology as a research tool, but its potential as a monitoring and predictive tool, and its wide ranging applications in the field of urban and territorial planning are largely unknown to the archaeological practice.

**English Heritage**

English Heritage, represented by Sarah Lunnon, offered to take on the following task:

- Metric Survey (part of Heritage Recording): Concentrating on the area of Heritage Recording the task group proposes to provide material and resources which can be used to develop training and learning programs on the uses and application of metric survey to historic buildings and cultural landscapes. The programs will provide a mechanism for pooling knowledge, with some requirement for professional peer to peer teaching from the task group to interested bodies at a national and international level. The aim is to provide effective tools for the improved understanding of the process involved in the metric survey of historic buildings and ancient monuments. This will be achieved by the design of programs for Information Users and Information Suppliers.

**Public Works Canada**

PWGSC (through Natalie Bull not present at meeting) offered to take on the following task:

- RecorDIM Information Warehouse, a web-based information system that will offer links to web sites and documents on the web that may be of use to those looking for information or
tools for recording, documentation and information management of cultural heritage. It will also point to publications and other tools available to users and providers.

Several other proposals were discussed but they will require further talks with their authors before they can be initiated. The partners will discuss them again during the course of the year and during their next annual meeting.

**CIPA 2003**

The participants discussed their participation to the CIPA 2003 international meeting. It will be held in Antalya, Turkey from Sept.30 to Oct. 4. The RecorDIM initiative will receive a great deal of exposure as a full day of discussions will be dedicated to explaining to participants the various tasks being undertaken by the RecorDIM partners and discussing how best to bridge some of the important gaps still left unattended.

**Enter the Past**

Dr. Ortolf Harl, Chief Archaeologist for the City of Vienna, introduced us to “Enter the Past”, an important event that will take place in Vienna from April 8-12. Already more than 500 participants have registered.

In recent times, computers have come to play an indispensable role as an aid during prospecting, excavation, processing, publishing and presentation of cultural sites and monuments. “Enter the Past” hosts two conferences focusing on the latest development in computer aided research on the relicts of the past: CAA 2003, celebrating its 30th anniversary and Workshop 8 – Archaeology & Computer. Together, they form a platform for all those interested in the latest scientific results within this field.

**The New Vienna Protection Zone**

The RecorDIM partners were invited to meet with Mr. Rudolf Schicker, Executive City Councilor for Urban Development, Traffic and Transport for the City of Vienna. The City is on the World Heritage List. The conservation of its urban heritage is an important concern but not the only one.

Mr. Schicker shared with us that another important concern for him and City Council is to bring more residents to the heart of the City to ensure its healthy survival. One of the solutions to this problem is to increase density in the core by adding one or two stories to the existing buildings. He believes that it can be done in a harmonious way that respects the historic heritage, but he is meeting stiff opposition from international organizations such as ICOMOS that argue that this will seriously affect the world heritage value of Vienna.
Dr. Robert Gross and Architect Peter Scheuchel introduced the RecorDIM partners to the City’s Cultural Heritage GIS System and the New Vienna Protection Zone Scheme. The system is fully integrated into the City’s planning process. All departments contribute to its enrichment. Thus if someone wishes to build, demolish or modify a building, the heritage information concerning values or restrictions that apply to the site or building is automatically made available to the officer issuing the permit.

The GIS system analyses heritage information, stores photographs, maps and historical texts. It is also being developed in such a way that contributions from the public can be made. Family pictures and stories will be added to the database as the program unfolds thus instilling a sense of place and a sense of belonging in its citizens.

The system currently contains 33,000 photos of buildings, a description of the characteristic features of each one, references to literature, the age of the buildings, the architect’s name and other miscellaneous information. It is available to everyone through the Internet and can be accessed at: http://service.wien.gv.at/kulturkat/

Schoenbrunn Palace

Dr. Wolfgang Kippes, Director General for the Castle of Schoenbrunn, introduced our group to the visitor management system of the castle. Whether a visitor buys a ticket on site or through the Internet booking system, the date and beginning time of the visit is printed on the ticket. The visitor cannot begin his visit of the Castle before the set time. A sophisticated computer system manages the visitor program and ensures that there are never more than 800 visitors in the Castle at one time.

It is through the staff’s experience that this number was arrived at. It ensures that visitors will have a quality experience. There will not be too many persons in the same room at the same time. Experience has shown that when there are more than 800 visitors on site during a given time, some of them begin to touch the objects, cause damage to the property, are disrespectful, and feel uncomfortable. Levels of humidity become excessive for the collection.

Dr. Kippes also explained to us that there is no mechanical HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) system at Schoenbrunn. It is through a sophisticated natural ventilation system that air quality and temperature is maintained in the castle. Dr. Kippes did his master’s thesis on this particular subject. He left a copy of his thesis with me and I will share it with my colleagues in Science.

We also were introduced to the children area and programs for Schoenbrunn Castle. Children learn the 17th and 18th centuries customs by experimenting them. They get to dress in period costumes, use make-up, set the table, learn basic dance steps, salute the Emperor, and many other every day traditions that were practiced in the Court.
For the sum of 70 Euros (approx. 70 US$), a group of 10 children can hold a birthday event at the Castle. The group gets special treatment and is introduced to all the traditions mentioned earlier. Last year, the Castle hosted more than 400 such events.

Schoenbrunn has extensive and beautiful gardens. Dr. Kippes is interested in leading a Task Group within the RecorDIM Initiative to monitor the state and condition of historic gardens.

**Short History of Schoenbrunn**

In the 14th century, at the edge the river Wien and amid forests and meadows stood a beautiful farm called the Kattermuehle (Katter-mill). Emperor Maximilian II acquired it in 1569 and redesigned it as a hunting castle, which was destroyed by the Hungarian prince Stephan Bocskaj. Emperor Mathias rebuilt it again in the year 1614. He also is responsible for the name Schoenbrunn. During a hunting game, he discovered a spring. He edged it and called it "Schoener Brunnen (beautiful fountain)" or in short, "Schoenbrunn". This fountain can still be seen today in the garden. During the second siege in 1683 the Turks completely destroyed the castle; a renovation was not possible after that.
Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach designed a new hunting castle by order of emperor Leopold I. It was to be built on the hill where the Gloriette presently stands. The project was never realized. Instead, the current symmetrical building was constructed with two Seitenrisaliten and two Seitentrakten as well as the Ehrenhof on the city's side and the magnificent garden on the other side. The official opening was on April 28, 1700 though the castle was still unfinished.

Empress Maria Theresia (1717-1780) gave orders to Nikolaus Pacassi and Valmagini for redesigning the castle into a summer-residence. The beautiful external staircase, the large and small galleries, where events took place and the castle's theatre were all constructed during the period 1743-1749. The menagerie was opened in 1751. It originally was dedicated for the emperor’s amusement. Today the Viennese zoo is housed there. In 1775 the Gloriette was constructed and in 1781 the Neptune fountain was built at the foot of the hill. Schoenbrunn was heavily damaged during World War II. After the war the castle and the garden were reconstructed.

**Inside the palace Schoenbrunn**

In the castle there are about 1400 rooms. Only 40 rooms are accessible for visitors. Further interesting are the Wagenburg (emperors coaches), the gardens and the Schoenbrunn Zoo. The rooms are designed in the style of 18th and 19th century: Rokoko, magnificent floors, craftsmanship, and East Asian elements, corresponded to the fashion for that time. In almost all rooms of the castle there are magnificent ovens. This is remarkable, because Schoenbrunn was planned to be a summer-residence, but the evenings in Vienna can be cool also in the summer. The most ovens were heated from the backside. In the castle thus there are narrow and hidden ways, from where the servants could heat the ovens without disturbing the aristocrats. In almost each room are to be seen gilded ornaments on the walls. Chiefly it corresponds with gold covered woodcarving. In the rooms there are also paintings with scenes from the castle Schoenbrunn. Van Meytens was one the most important painters of Schoenbrunn.

**The history of the gardens and park of Schoenbrunn Castle**

The original game preserve from the time of the Katterburg was transformed into the pleasure gardens of Schoenbrunn, an artificial park in the French Baroque style, by Jean Trehet around 1695. However, the park owes its present form to the horticultural designers Nicolaus Jadot and Adrian von Steckhoven who laid out the gardens during the reign of Maria Theresa (1740-1780). Between 1775 and 1780 the three most ambitious architectural features in the park – the Gloriette, the Roman Ruin and the Neptune Fountain - were erected to designs by the architect Hetzendorf von Hohenberg. In 1881 the Palm House was opened by Emperor Franz Joseph, its construction having taken a mere 15 months. The palace and its park lie in the valley of the River Wien between the municipal districts of Meidling to the east and Hietzing to the west. Situated in the western part of the park is the Zoo, which was founded by Emperor Franz I Stephan, the husband
of Maria Theresa, in 1751. It has existed for almost 250 years and is thus the oldest still-operative zoo in the world.

**The Gloriette and viewing terrace**
Standing at the summit of Schoenbrunn Hill, the Gloriette constitutes the crowning architectonic feature of the gardens.

Erected in 1775 after designs by the architect Ferdinand Hetzendorf von Hohenberg, it consists of a central section, which today houses the Café, Gloriette, and two lateral wings which open out into a colonnade of eleven arches between Doric columns. Three flights of marble stairs lead into the interior, and a spiral staircase leads up to the 20-metre high viewing platform from which one has panoramic views over Vienna and its surroundings.

The central section bears the inscription JOSEPHO II. AUGUSTO ET MARIA THERESIA IMPERANTIB. MDCCLXXV (Erected in 1775 during the reign of Emperor Joseph II and Empress Maria Theresa). This central section was glazed around 1780 and was used as a dining room. The edifice is crowned by a massive eagle perching on a globe and surrounded by trophies. Four trophies with huge suits of armor in the antique style are to be found on the lateral flights of stairs which are intended to symbolize the link between the Habsburg rulers and the Roman emperors. The sculptural decorations were executed by Johann Baptist Hagenauer and Benedict Henrici. The architectonic effect of the Gloriette is heightened by its reflection in the low-lying pools on either side.

**The Palm House**

The Palm House is located on the site of the former Dutch Garden and was erected in 1881/2 to designs by Franz Xaver Segenschmid. One hundred and thirteen meters long, the Palm House consists of a 28-metre high central pavilion and two lateral pavilions which are three meters lower. Linked by tunnel-like passages, the pavilions contain different climatic zones: a 'cold' house to the north, a temperate zone in the central pavilion and a tropical climate in the south pavilion. The necessary temperatures are achieved by means of a steam heating system, which means that rare specimens from all over the world can be grown here.

This impressive iron construction used the most modern technology of its time, with the materials determining its form. The proportions of the convex and concave lines of the central and lateral pavilions are perfectly balanced and endow the iron structure with a perceptible lightness despite its massive dimensions. Inserted into the framework of the external iron construction, the glazing clings to the curved iron girders like a skin. The Schoenbrunn Palm House was the last of its type to be constructed in continental Europe.
Vienna

I find it interesting to learn a bit of the history of the place where our meetings are held. In this case, there is no “short” history of Vienna. So many events and famous people lived in this wonderful city. To keep things simple, I will share only a small portion of Vienna’s history, from WWII to present.

Vienna under the Nazi-Regime (1938-1945)

At the time Austria was practically surrounded by fascist countries in the shape of Germany and Italy, and the country found it increasingly difficult to withstand both the political and the economic pressure. In March 1938, the "Anschluß" was affected and Austria became part of Hitler Germany. During his first visit to the Vienna Town Hall, Adolf Hitler commented that it was imperative to provide the right setting to this "jewel in the crown". However, his policies proved devastating not only for Europe and the world at large, but also for Austria and Vienna.

Anti-Semitism, which had been widespread in Vienna for many centuries and had become more prevalent since the turn of the century, eventually combined with the Nazi policy of what ultimately proved to be Jewish extermination. In November 1938 the city's synagogues, the very points of crystallization of the religious and social life of Vienna's Jewry, fell prey to the destructive fury of a single night's rampaging, in the "pogroms of November" (Reichskristallnacht).

As early as October 1938 the city had seen a tremendous extension of its territory, following the example of Greater Hamburg. 97 Lower Austrian communities were incorporated into Vienna, the number of urban districts increased from 21 to 26, the extension cut deep into the Lower Austrian territory, in all directions, and, at the end of the day, the urban area had tripled. This was the kind of city that experienced the Second World War, which, unlike the earlier war of 1914-18, directly and brutally affected the city and its residents. From 1943 the city suffered repeated Allied bombing, and when the war was brought to an end in April 1945 fighting was going on in the very heart of the city.

Reconstructing the city - The years of the allied forces in Vienna (1945-1955)

Within days of the end of the fighting, i.e. in April 1945 still, the provisional city government was constituted and the political parties re-emerged. The situation of the city was far from encouraging. More than 20 % of the housing stock was partly or completely destroyed, almost 87,000 flats had become uninhabitable. In the urban area, more than 3,000 bomb craters were counted, many bridges were in shambles, sewers, gas and water pipes had suffered severe damage. The imperative of the immediate after war period was to solve the most basic problems and get
the city back to some degree of working order. The political context was no less complicated, the Allied Occupation Forces refusing to accept the Nazis' territorial expansion. The bottom line was that those districts which had existed until 1938 were divided into four Allied zones and the inner-city district was administered by all four powers, as the so-called "Inter-allied Zone". Districts 22 - 26, namely the 97 Lower Austrian communities which had been merged with Vienna in October 1938, were considered to form part of Lower Austria and, hence, came under Soviet control.

In November 1945 the first City Council elections were held in Vienna, and the city was restored to democracy. The 100 seats of the Vienna City Council were divided among the Socialists (58), the People's Party, or Conservatives (36), and the Communists (6). The first and foremost priorities of the new city government were to ensure welfare programmes for the young and the elderly, to repair the city-owned utilities and rebuild the city - altogether a programme that continued essentially until the early 1960s. As early as 1946 the so-called "Territorial Review Act" (Gebietsänderungsgesetz) was passed, aimed at more or less repealing the 1938 expansion of the city. Approval by the Allied Occupation Forces was withheld for eight years, however, since the Soviet forces in particular baulked, so that it did not come into effect until 1954. Since then the urban area has comprised 23 districts, and, compared to the pre-1938 situation, the territory that now forms the 22nd district north of the Danube and the 23rd district at the southern extremity of the urban area has been part of Vienna. A year later, in May 1955, the country was restored to freedom through the conclusion of the "Austrian State Treaty". In Vienna, the economy took a decisive turn for the better, not least as a result of assistance granted under the Marshall Plan but also because confiscations of industrial property by the Soviets ceased.

From the "Austrian State Treaty" (1955) to the Austrian membership in the European Union (1995)

The old problems soon gave way to a new set of problems and a new set of demands on the city government. Mention must be made in this context of the growing volume of traffic, especially a dramatic increase in private motorised traffic, which has not been contained even by an extensive development of public transport. In the 50s and 60s still, a number of road building programmes involved the demolition of historic buildings, the radical clearance of trees along boulevards, which steps began to be more and more in contrast to the growing environmental awareness of the population.

In the early sixties the municipal budget reflected a clear refocusing of policies in that greater attention was paid to the extension of public transport and welfare programmes, particularly in the health sector. In 1966 the Vienna City Council approved plans for the construction of an Underground system, the first line of which, running north-south, was opened in 1978. Meanwhile the Underground system has become quite extensive, linking the northern Danube bank with the southern periphery and operating also a very powerful east-west link across the city. In the hospital sector, the landmark event has been the new construction of the Allgemeines Krankenhaus, or General Hospital. Its construction has not been without problems, and the philosophy of building huge hospitals of this kind has meanwhile come under fire. Medical care in the neighborhoods north of the Danube has improved dramatically since the completion -- at a fairly late point -- in the 1990s of another hospital, the "Socio-Medical Center East".

A new awareness has arisen not only with respect to the urban environment, and more and more attention has also been paid in recent decades to preserving the priceless architectural heritage of the city. This has resulted in a number of rehabilitation and regeneration programmes in the densely built-up old inner-city areas. In this context valuable assistance for certain neighborhoods
has also been provided by the Federal Office for Monument Protection, through programmes aimed at protecting architectural "ensembles". Large building projects which have been launched since 1945/55 have had a dramatic impact on urban development. They have included the redesign virtually from scratch of the Danube riverfront, the first such radical change since 1875. In 1972 new construction programmes were embarked upon. A new river bed was excavated in the inundation area, i.e. a wide strip of riverfront on the northern bank, and a man-made island, the so-called Danube Island, created. This made it possible not only to contain the constant threat of flooding but also to open up an entirely new recreation area for the urban population. Closely linked to this redesign is the construction of the UN Center on the northern bank of the River Danube. As early as the 1950s the first of a number of international organizations set up its headquarters in Vienna (1956: International Atomic Energy Agency, IAEA; 1965: Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, OPEC; 1967: UNIDO). With the inauguration of the UN building on the northern bank in 1979 and the International Conference Center a little later, Vienna established itself as one of the three UN headquarters, alongside New York and Geneva. These aforementioned developments of the recent decades have brought the city full circle to its earlier history -- and its renewed position not only as a supra-regional but also as an international center. The chemistry of all this has yet again changed in the recent past. When the Iron Curtain was in place, Vienna served as a bridge between the West and the Communist countries of Eastern Europe. This role became obsolete in 1989 and consequently Vienna's significance has somewhat diminished, and the city must now try to hold its ground against such tough competitors as Prague or Budapest. On the other hand, membership in the European Union since 1994-95 has flung open a new gate, namely the embracing of the country and the city in what was originally an economic and is now an increasingly political community.
We visited an interesting exhibition of Edvard Munch paintings at the newly renovated Albertina Museum.

Vienna architecture. The last image illustrates the question of adding new stories to existing historic buildings.

Historic Vienna – Painting and Model in City museum

Klaus Hanke  Franck Neuwirtz  Alejandro Alva, ICCROM  Robin Letellier  Wilfried Lipp, Icomos Austria