

I first served on the NCAC Board of Trustees in 1973 when I had just become Director of the ICA Intermuseum Conservation Laboratory in Oberlin, Ohio. My memory of those early years is that the Board met in Washington, D.C. monthly in the process of organizing ourselves and beginning to accomplish useful things. Board members were representatives of each of the major conservation labs and programs in the country. I was designated chair of the regional centers sub-committee, as I represented the only regional center at that time. John Spencer, the head of the new NEA, was eager to have our sub-committee produce guidelines for regional centers as he was receiving numerous requests from institutions in various parts of the country that wanted to call themselves regional centers although they sought funding to create an in-house lab, not set up to serve institutions further afield. So our regional centers sub-committee of three or four people drafted a booklet that essentially described how the Oberlin Intermuseum Laboratory had been set-up and served some 18 member museums as we were the only such entity in the country at that time.

I continued to serve on the NCAC Board and was elected Chairman from 1979-1981. By this time I had moved to the Philadelphia Museum of Art. I remember that we of NCAC had to explain ourselves to other conservators who feared that we were trying to take over the whole field of conservation. I especially remember at one AIC Annual Meeting having to address a special session at which I tried to explain and answer questions about NCAC's trying to serve other conservation organizations. Arthur Beale was one of the conservators most critical of what we were trying to do and yet a few years later he was elected Chairman of NIC and did a good job of leading NIC.

My resume indicates that I served on the NIC Board through 1985. During those later years I remember our concern about the Getty taking over our concept of a National Institute for Conservation, name and all. However, they had the funding to become what we had envisioned to a certain extent so our purposes shifted somewhat. I was pleased to learn that Mervin Richard had become Chairman of Heritage Preservation later on as he was one of our final class of conservators at the Oberlin Graduate Training Program run by the Intermuseum Laboratory in the 1970's.

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