

Introduction:

Glasgow Museums has in its care a significant collection of historical banners. During this work placement, five banners were examined, two of which are discussed here; the Ancient Order of Free Gardeners manufactured in 1893, and the Peace March Scotland from 1982. Historical research has been carried out on the Gardeners' banner, and a scientific analysis carried out on the Peace banner. The choice of these two was based on the difference of their iconography, the materials used, and their purposes. The age difference also demonstrated the changes of 90 years in both materials and design between the banners. The findings show similarities between Trade Unions, Friendly Societies, and Freemasonry in the Gardeners' banner in favour of their imagery, and the use of modern materials in the Peace banner. The analytical investigation follows on from work by Juliana Perondini Brandão doing her work placement in Glasgow Museums, 2016.

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Methodology:

The social history offers much information about the trade unions and related societies, and the peace movement, but little on banner-making processes over the last 150 years when professional banner makers dominated much of the market. Both banners were visually observed under the microscope at Glasgow Museums. Fibres and paints samples were taken solely from the P.P.1983.4 banner for Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR).



Friendly British Order of Ancient Free Gardeners Society, Heart of Oaks Lodge No 124.

This banner is dated 1893 and has the signature Bro Neil Toye on the painting. The imagery draws heavily on Freemasonry Symbols, such as the Square and Compass. The front (Fig.2a) shows Eve giving the apple to Adam in the Garden of Eden, a subject associated with Grocers' trade unions^{1/2}. On the reverse (Fig.2b) it depicts a British merchant ship as seen by the red ensign. The title 'Heart of Oaks' comes from the hymn 'Hearts of Oak' which is also the official march of the Royal Navy². The banner shows the connections between, Trade Unions Friendly Societies, and Freemasonry in Scotland.



Fig.2a: Top (front), and Fig.2b: bottom (back).
Friendly British Order of Ancient Free Gardeners
Society, P.P.1985.65. ©CSG CIC Glasgow
Museums.

Peace March Scotland 1982.

Between 1981-83, many protests took place in the UK against nuclear weapons³. The Peace March Scotland (Fig.3) was inspired by the women's march from Copenhagen to Paris in 1981. It was a demonstration against the construction of the Chapelcross nuclear power station, and the dumping of the nuclear waste at Mullwharchar hill. It started with 44 people, lasted for 33 days, and ended with other 4000 marchers. The route went through Dundee, Stirling, Glasgow, and Edinburgh⁴.



Fig.3: Peace March Scotland 1982,
P.P.1983.4., Glasgow Museums. ©CSG
CIC Glasgow Museums.

Scientific Analysis and Results:

The front of the blue (Fig.8a) and black (Fig.7a) paint samples revealed an almost flat surface with the network of cracks being visible, whilst the back showed the fibre indentations and the depth of the cracks. The FTIR spectra for both paint samples (Fig.5, & 6) indicated an acrylic based paint, and no evidence of oil. The FTIR spectra of the warp and weft fibres of the textile (Fig.4) exhibited peaks similar to a polyester control sample, indicating that a modern material (Fig 7a, 7b, 9a, & 9b) was used in the making of this banner and not the more traditional silk material (Fig.2a, & 2b).

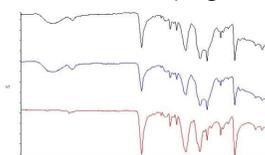


Fig.4: FTIR Spectra of the fibres. Black: pp1983.4_warp,
Blue: pp.1983.4_weft, Red: Polyester_Wadding_Light.

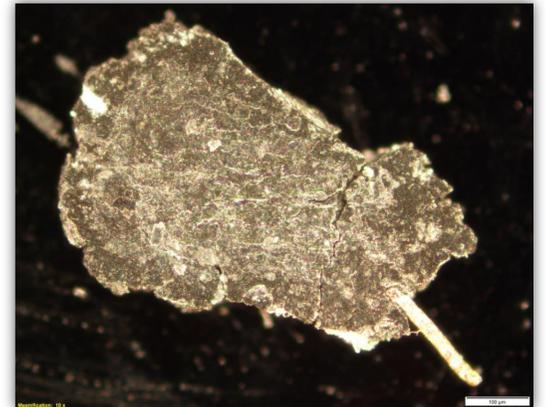


Fig. 1: Sample of the black paint of P.P.1983.4
banner. Magnification DFX100.

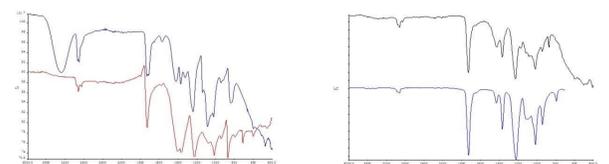


Fig.5: Left. FTIR Spectra of the Black Paint. Red:
pp1983.4_c, Blue: PVA.

Fig.6: Right. FTIR Spectra of the Blue Paint. Blue:
PVA_Solid, Black: pp.1983.4_Blue_Paint_a.

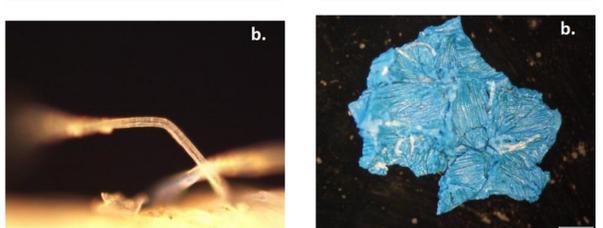
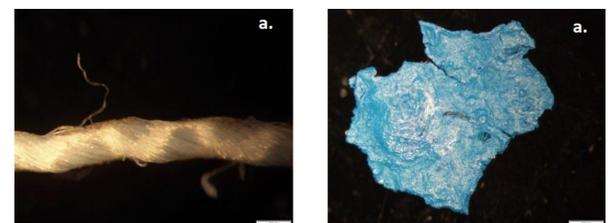


Fig.7: Left column. Sample of the weft fibre of P.P.1983.4.
Magnification DFX50 (a) and DFX200 (b).

Fig.8: Right column. Sample of the blue Paint of
P.P.1983.4. Magnification DFX50. Front (a) and Back (b).

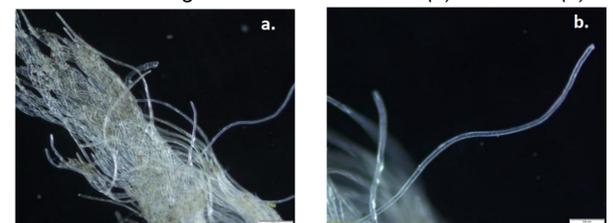


Fig.9: Sample of the warp fibre of P.P.1983.4.
Magnification DFX50 (a) and DFX100 (b).

Conclusion:

The banners represent interesting examples of their period. Fig 2a and 2b are typical of the types used both historically and currently by trade unions and made by professional banner makers. The Peace movement banner shows homemade banner typical of those used during peace marches in Scotland during the 1980s. Analytical research was made of the Peace banner and literary study in the Free Gardeners banners. To understand more about the construction and also to assist in their conservation more analytical research needs to be carried out.

References:

1. Gorman, John. *Banner Bright*. London: Allen Lane, 1973.
2. Ravenhill-Johnson, Annie. *The Art and Ideology of the Trade Union Emblem, 1850-1925*. Ed. Paula James. London; New York: Anthem Press, 2013.
3. Stead, Jean. "The Greenham Common peace camp and its legacy" *The Guardian*. London, September 5, 2006. (April 11, 2017) <https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2006/sep/05/greenham5>.
4. Sale, Maggie. *Banners Tales of Glasgow*. Glasgow: Women's Library, 2016. (Transcript of her speech at the event).