

## Editorial

This special issue of *International Biodeterioration* is devoted to 'Biodeterioration of Cultural Property'. Many of these papers were presented at the 8th International Biodeterioration Symposium, in Windsor, Canada, in August 1990 as extended abstracts published in the conference proceedings. Other papers were solicited directly for this issue. Included in this issue is a 1721-entry keyworded bibliography specific to biodeterioration of cultural property that provides a single source for much of the important literature in biodeterioration and conservation of cultural materials. Accompanying the bibliography are two review papers on specific conservation-related areas, plus a number of abstracts of other reviews available from the editor.<sup>†</sup>

Cultural property is any item deemed to have artistic and/or historic significance by a society, local or international. These items so deemed are ideally desired to have an immortal existence, in a pristine condition. But, since all material is subject to decay, substantial efforts generally have to be made to preserve these materials. In attempts to do this societies have spawned categories of professionals entitled conservators, restorers and conservation scientists. Each group has complementary functions in the effort to preserve cultural property encompassing

<sup>†</sup>The small group of review studies came from a course given in Spring 1991 at New York University, Institute of Fine Arts, Conservation Center in New York. Part of the purpose of the course was to introduce the conservation students to the literature on biodeterioration. The students in the course who contributed to the reviews were: Rachel Danzing, Patricia Griffin, John Hirx, Marycolette Hruskocy, Nancy Fryer Markus, Denyse Montegut and Jane Williams.

hands-on restoration to researching mechanisms of and treatments for deterioration. The aspect of deterioration of concern in this issue is, naturally, that brought about by biological agents. To understand the issues surrounding biodeterioration of cultural property requires a close communication between the conservation and biological sciences community. One way of doing this is by communicating ideas and research in appropriate journals. That then is the goal of this special edition — to provide a forum in which issues important to understanding and controlling biodeterioration of cultural property can be addressed by both the biological science community and the conservation community.

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