

ICOMOS General Assembly Sri Lanka 1993

Terry B. Morton

Six years after the United States Committee, International Council on Monuments and Sites (US/ICOMOS) sponsored the ICOMOS 8th General Assembly in Washington, DC, 26 US/ICOMOS members flew to Colombo, Sri Lanka, to participate in the ICOMOS 10th General Assembly and International Symposia (July 30-August 7, 1993). With both general assemblies, history was made by this international preservation organization in helping to meet its goal of becoming truly international. The Colombo General Assembly was the first to be held in Asia. It was organized under the leadership of the first non-European ICOMOS president, Roland Silva, of Sri Lanka. The 1987 Washington General Assembly had been the first outside of Europe.

There were also a number of first-time activities that took place at this General Assembly. Perhaps the most impressive was the fact that the President of Sri Lanka, His Excellency D.B. Wijetunga, participated in the outdoor opening ceremony. He then greeted the delegates with a half-hour talk in the convention center. On the way into the assembly hall, ICOMOS national committee chairmen each participated in an Inaugural Lamp Lighting Ceremony. Signora Pia Gazzola then awarded the Gazzola Prize to Sir Bernard M. Feildin (United Kingdom), an internationally prominent English restoration architect who was the Director of the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and the Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) from 1977 to 1981 and is an Honorary Fellow of the American Institute of Architects. The highest award given by ICOMOS to one of its members for life-time achievements in historic preservation, the Gazzola Prize was established in 1981 in honor of Italy's Piero Gazzola (1909-79), who was the first President of ICOMOS. Dr. Ernest Allen Connally, who is now preparing his manuscript on "The Origins of the World Heritage Convention" for publication and who—from 1975 to 1981—was the Secretary-General of ICOMOS, has likened the Gazzola Prize to a Nobel Prize in the conservation of the "patrimoine culturel."

The US delegation included officers, members of the Board of Trustees, and staff of the US National Committee of ICOMOS: John M. Fowler, Chairman; Dr. William J. Murtagh; Roy E. Graham, AIA; Terry B. Morton,



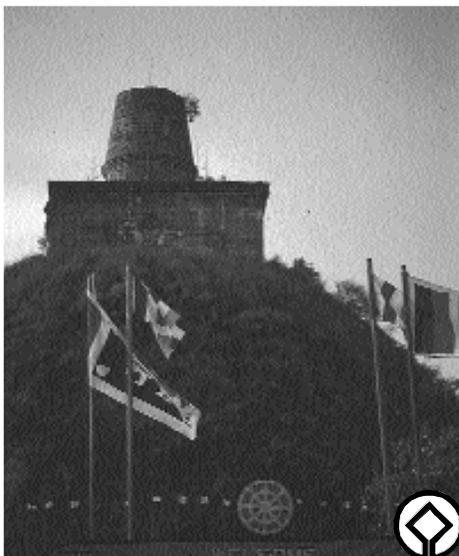
The Golden Pinnacle Stupa at Polonnaruwa, the capital of a Buddhist kingdom in the 12th and 13th centuries A.D. Photo by Barbara Timkin, US/ICOMOS (1993).

President; and Russell V. Keune, FAIA, former Vice President for Programs. Also attending were members of US/ICOMOS who hold or held offices on the international level: Elliott Carroll, FAIA, Vice President; Ann Webster Smith, former Vice President; and Robertson E. Collins, Chairman of the Cultural Tourism Committee (which is provided staff support by US/ICOMOS). Several members of US/ICOMOS presented papers at the Scientific Symposium: Arlene K. Fleming, Carolyn E. Hansen, M. Hamilton Morton, and Janet O'Hare, under the Preservation Economics theme; Ann Webster Smith, under the Cultural Tourism theme; and Barbara Timkin, under the Archaeological Heritage Management theme.

Six US delegates received financial assistance through a grant to US/ICOMOS from the Montauk Foundation. Other delegates were assisted through the National Park Service-US/ICOMOS (World Heritage Convention fund) and the State Department (Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Program fund).

A grant to US/ICOMOS of \$50,000 from the Getty Grant Program made possible the participation of 15 delegates from ICOMOS national committees which would have been unable to be represented without such a grant. These delegates were from: Africa (Cameroon and Ethiopia); the Caribbean (Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Jamaica); Central America (Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Honduras); Eastern Europe (the Czech Republic, Russia, and Slovenia); North America (Mexico); and South America (Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru).

Professor Senake Bandaranayke, Chairman of the Sri Lankan National Committee of ICOMOS, was the chairman of the Cultural Symposium (four sessions on "The Heritage of Asia and Oceania") as well as the chairman of the Scientific Symposium. The Scientific Symposium was organized on four



The Jetavana Stupa at Anuradhapura, built of baked brick, was 120 meters in height, making it one of the largest structures of the ancient world. Anuradhapura was a major Buddhist center and a capital from c. 380 B.C. until 993 A.D. Photo by Barbara Timkin, US/ICOMOS (1993).

themes the (three already mentioned). Mr. Collins was the chairman of the Cultural Tourism theme and Mr. Keune was the rapporteur. They had previously reviewed and selected the papers under this theme and prepared the material for publication. Each of the four themes was also presented through the publication of its papers, which were available on the delegates' arrival. US/ICOMOS also wrote and prepared for publication the "Tourism at World Heritage Sites: The Site Manager's Handbook." The first edition of the handbook is being distributed by US/ICOMOS to all World Heritage cultural sites for review and suggestions for the second edition, which is to be initiated in 1994.

The Sri Lankan National Committee of ICOMOS accomplished many remarkable feats for this general assembly. Among them was the publication of unpublished documents of each of ICOMOS's 15 International Scientific Committees. These ICOMOS specialized-subject committees are on Archaeological Heritage Management, Cultural Tourism, Economics of Conservation, Earthen Architecture, Historic Gardens and Sites, Historic Towns, Inventories, Photogrammetry, Rock Art, Seismology, Stained Glass, Stone, Education and Training, Vernacular Architecture, and Wood. These publications and the four books of papers presented at the cultural and scientific symposia may be obtained through ICOMOS Sri Lanka. Call US/ICOMOS for information on ordering these publications (202-842-1866).

ICOMOS officers reelected at the Colombo meeting are: President, Roland Silva (Sri Lanka) and Treasurer General, Jan Jessurun (the Netherlands). Jean Louis Luxen (Belgium) was elected to his first term as Secretary General. Herb Stovel (Canada), who had served for one term as Secretary General, was unable to serve again in this capacity because of teaching responsibilities. He had been a diligent and active Secretary General; his retirement after one three-year term was a disappointment to everyone.

Elliott Carroll (United States) was again elected a vice president for three years. Other vice presidents elected are Joan Domicelj (Australia), Nobuo Ito (Japan), Esteban Prieto (Dominican Republic), and Andras Roman (Hungary). Newly elected members of the Executive Committee are: Dinu Bumbaru (Canada), Sherban Cantacuzino (United Kingdom), Natalya Douchkina (Russia), Pierre Drocourt (France), Margareta Ehrstrom (Finland), Carman Anon Feliu (Spain), Mohaman Haman (Cameroon), Todor Kretev (Bulgaria), Luis Lapidus Mandel (Cuba), Joseph Phares (Lebanon), Giora Solar (Israel), and Werner Trutzschler (Germany).

To ensure that ICOMOS's International Scientific Committees are "at the heart of scientific inquiry and exchange in their domains," the *Eger Principles* (named after an ICOMOS meeting in Eger, Hungary) were rati-



The fortress and palace of Sigiriya on top of a 600' boulder was built in the 5th century A.D. The formal gardens below the rock are the earliest to have survived in Asia. Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, and Sigiriya are all within Sri Lanka's Cultural Triangle, which was launched as a UNESCO International Campaign in 1980. Photo by John Poppeliers (1984).

fied by the General Assembly. These principles instruct each specialized committee to "actively pursue programmes which define research needs, stimulate and support research activity, and increase exchange and dissemination in order to promote greater understanding in the field." The draft "Guidelines for Education and Training in the Conservation of Monuments, Ensembles and Sites" was accepted and endorsed. Copies of these, as well as the long range plan which was referred to the ICOMOS Bureau and Executive Committee, may be obtained

from US/ICOMOS. The long range plan ("The Future Plan") essentially is "an evaluation and proposal for the future of ICOMOS produced over the past two years by a special committee, based on the results of a survey of the national committees.... The key recommendations of the Future Plan are: (1) to confirm the focus on scientific professionalism, (2) to create a Cultural Heritage at Risk Fund, (3) to simplify organizational structure, (4) to reinforce the Secretariat, (5) to improve information networks, (6) to increase financial support, and (7) to become geographically, humanistically, and professionally truly global. The General Assembly (in Sri Lanka, 1993) endorsed this document and recommended that the ICOMOS Bureau and Executive Committee review it for appropriateness and feasibility."

Delegates giving special early evening lectures for Sri Lankan preservationists and citizens were Elliott Carroll (United States), Raymond Lemaire (Belgium), and Michael Petzel (Germany). All delegates participated in the visit to the World Heritage fortified city of Galle on the island's south coast. Those who stayed for the Sri Lanka tour visited four other World Heritage Sites: Dambulla, Anuradhapura, Sigiriya, and Polonnaruwa. Two days of workshops followed on the subjects of Gardens and Landscapes, Maritime Heritage, Charter for Mural Paintings, and Medieval Fortification.

In appreciation for US contributions, ICOMOS President Roland Silva has written to US/ICOMOS: "We were overwhelmed by the generosity of the American People at the 10th General Assembly. We had assistance from every quarter of the US Please convey our deep appreciation to ICOMOS USA for this and many more, for without such assistance we would have fallen far short of the results reached."

There are 13 new National Committees of ICOMOS: Croatia, El Salvador, Estonia, Georgia, Indonesia, Lithuania, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Thailand, Ukraine, and Zambia. There are now 73 National ICOMOS Committees.

Terry Morton, Hon. AIA, has been for the past 13 years chairman and now president of US/ICOMOS.