

FROM THE CHAIR

Richard Feltham

It is always encouraging to see new members joining us in the MLS. Welcome, and please do make yourself known to me when you are next at a meeting. Even if I look busy, come and grab me.

I am always surprised by the wide variety of interests (other than magic lanterns of course) that members have, and love hearing about them. With lantern slides covering an extraordinarily wide variety of subjects, this means plenty of opportunity to have presentations that educate us in these other areas of interest. We always need people to give presentations at our meetings (*and articles for TML – Ed.*), so if you have slides that illustrate your interests, please do let us know.

We are urgently looking for a Secretary for the Society, with Richard Crangle still doing the job, even though he 'stepped down' at the AGM. If you could consider doing the job, or even just helping out with some of the role, again please let us know.

A date to reserve in your diary for next year is our Spring Meeting on 5 and 6 April 2025, which will be held in Girona (see p. 2). More details will follow in due course. Meanwhile, see you all at Swedenborg House in October, if you can make it.

Questions Answered

I have seen several questions on social media asking about how to remove rust and how to rebind slides. Although I have touched on this subject before, I think it is worth repeating, as I was troubled by some of the answers given. As we are dealing with antiques which have had a previous life, my approach, that may be controversial, is to restore to working condition (where possible) without losing its history.

Rust

There are a number of proprietary products on the market that remove or convert rust. I have found that these products can have adverse effects on materials other than rust. If rust remover is used, it should be carefully applied to the areas of rust only, avoiding paintwork, wood or non-ferrous metals. If a rust converter is used, this will usually turn rust



black and create a protective coating. In both cases it is wise to remove loose rust first.

I prefer not to use rust converter/remover, opting for a more gentle method of rust removal. For light or medium rust, I use a brass wire brush, or fine wire wool with a light oil, being careful not to scratch any surrounding paintwork or wood. It is also necessary to mask off any softer metals (brass, aluminium, etc.) before starting. The best way to remove rust back to clean metal is to use electrolysis. This is a little more complicated but once mastered is the most effective. I use petroleum jelly to coat non-ferrous metals, but paintwork will not be affected by the process. An internet search will provide instructions on how to do this using 12 volt electrics.

Paint

Having removed rust, the surface needs to be protected to stop rust returning. Rust can start to reform almost immediately, depending on humidity. However repainting can be a bit of a dark art. Modern paint is not made of the same materials as antique paints, as my daughter discovered recently when repainting a restoration project where the paint would not dry – she had to remove all the paint and start from scratch. Also, unless you are using cool LED illuminants, a lantern can get very hot, so a VHT or UHT paint is recommended to prevent it 'burning off' the first time you use it. Always paint a small unobtrusive area first to check if the chosen paint will work.

Slide binding

Original slide binding was made from a relatively stiff paper with a water-based glue on one side. This material, although scarce, does occasionally appear for sale on auction sites. The binding is ¼ inch wide and can be made at home (with patience) using children's water-based glue. A piece of cardboard folded over the binding, held in place with a spring clip, will help the strip stick better. **Do not use commercial clear adhesive tape or electrical tape.**

I hope that this helps, all based on my own experience. If you have other, or better ideas, please let me know – and read Mike Jones' article on p. 10 if taking on a major restoration.